6 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.1.1. This chapter presents the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which considers the potential landscape and visual effects associated with the construction and operation of the Project.

6.1.2. The objective of this LVIA has been to determine the landscape and visual effects of the Project on the existing landscape resource and visual amenity. The LVIA has been prepared by Chartered landscape architects at WSP and should be read in conjunction with the Project Description in **Chapter 4: Description of the Project**.

6.1.3. This chapter is supported by a number of Figures and Technical appendices contained within **Volume 2: Figures** and **Volume 3: Appendices**, comprising:

- Figure 6.1: Zone of Theoretical Visibility Plan;
- Figure 6.2: Public Rights of Way Plan and Viewpoint Location Plan;
- Figure 6.3: Local Landscape Character Plan;
- Figure 6.4: LANDMAP Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas;
- Figure 6.5: Landscape Designations Plan;
- Figures 6.6 - 6.12: Viewpoints 1-7 (inclusive);
- Appendix 6A: LVIA Methodology and Glossary;
- Appendix 6B: Landscape Character Baseline Descriptions and Sensitivity Assessments;
- Appendix 6C: Viewpoint/ Visual Baseline and Sensitivity Descriptions;
- Appendix 6D: Local Landscape Character Assessment and LANDMAP VSAA Assessment; and
- Appendix 6E: Visual Assessment.

6.1.4. This chapter (and its associated figures and appendices) is intended to be read as part of the wider ES. The preliminary assessment is based on information obtained to date. It should also be read with respect to relevant parts of the following chapters:

- **Chapter 8: Ecology**, which assesses the effects of the Project on ecology assets and habitats.
- **Chapter 9: Historic Environment**, which assesses the effects of the Project on the setting of heritage assets.

6.2 LIMITATIONS OF THIS ASSESSMENT

6.2.1. The following limitations and assumptions have been made:

ASSUMPTIONS

There will be localised tree removal for the construction of the northern part of the underground section (UGC), where underground cable transitions from open grassland to existing road. The LVIA assumes all other existing vegetation within the Study Area would be retained;

- It is assumed the construction phase would last for 9 months, commencing January 2028 subject to planning consent and completion of construction for the consented Foels Trawsnant Wind Farm. The sequence of events would likely be as follows:
  - Six months for the installation of the ducting for the underground route section;

- One month for the cable pull through and jointing works; and
- Two months for erecting the overhead line poles.

- If lay down areas are required, the intention is to utilise areas of hardstanding where available;
- The site access routes to the compound would be via the existing Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm track through forestry and would not require any alterations. All other accesses would be through existing field gates which would require no hedge removal; and
- Equipment would likely comprise machinery to cut trenches within the highway to install the ducting, a cable plough may be used for the underground sections outside the highway boundaries and HGV vehicles required to transport the poles for the overhead lines.

LIMITATIONS

- Viewpoints have been taken from publicly accessible locations only. Therefore, when establishing the views from dwellings and/ or buildings, this has been based on information from a combination of desk-top studies, site work and professional judgement;
- Although field surveys have been carried out, not every landscape and visual and sensory receptor has been visited in the field and professional experience has been applied to the judgements made in the LVIA and accompanying appendices;
- In terms of visual effects analysis, it is considered that screening provided by vegetation cover would not remain constant throughout the year. The assessment of effects is based on an estimate of worst-case scenario winter views, where deciduous wooded species have lost their leaves, with a filtering branch structure remaining; and
- Effects on Cultural Heritage assets/ designations (e.g. listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, conservation areas and historic parks & gardens) are not considered in this report unless they are a tourist destination.

6.3 POLICY, LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

6.3.1. A summary of the relevant landscape legislation is given in **Table 6-1**.

Table 6-1 - Legislation relevant to the LVIA

Legislation	Legislative context
Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015[17]	The Act puts in place seven well-being goals to help ensure that public bodies are all working towards the same vision of a sustainable Wales. In relation to landscape matters, the most relevant well-being goal is the achievement of 'a resilient Wales', which seeks to maintain and enhance a biodiverse natural

[17] National Assembly for Wales. (2015). Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. (Online). Available at: https://www.futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/.

Legislation	Legislative context
	environment. Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 recognises that this goal can be supported by protecting sufficient scales, extent and connectivity of, and between, landscapes and habitats to enable them to withstand the pressures of change and protect and enhance biodiversity and to promote opportunities for social and economic activity based on valuing and enabling access to the natural, historic and built environment
Environment (Wales) Act 2016[18]	This Act requires, under Section 6 – Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty, that a public authority must seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems. This requirement could be interpreted to include landscape as part of the ecosystems approach.

6.3.2. A summary of the relevant landscape legislation is given in **Table 6-2**.

Table 6-2 - Landscape planning policy relevant to the LVIA

Policy	Policy context
National planning policy	
Planning Policy Wales, Edition 12[19]	**General LVIA issues are included in Chapter 6** - Distinctive and Natural Places and more specifically within Section 6.3 Landscape. **Paragraphs 6.3.12 and 6.3.13** relate to non-statutory designations such as Special Landscape Areas that define local areas of high landscape importance, which may be unique, exceptional or distinctive to the area. Planning authorities should apply these designations where there is good reason to believe that normal planning policies cannot provide the necessary protection. **Paragraphs 6.3.20 and 6.3.21** concerns the use of LANDMAP and its role in informing landscape assessments needed to inform local authorities in making local policy, guidance and decision making. LANDMAP and any associated landscape character assessments (including the register of historic landscapes in Wales) should be used to inform local landscape policies and SPG, and to help identify or revise SLAs.

[18] National Assembly for Wales. (2016). Environment (Wales) Act 2016. (Online). Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/3/contents/enacted.

[19] Welsh Government. (2024). Planning Policy Wales, Edition 12. (Online). Available at: https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-07/planning-policy-wales-edition-12.pdf

Policy	Policy context
Future Wales - The National Plan 2040[20]	Future Wales is the National Development Plan for Wales setting the direction of development in Wales to 2040. Future Wales does not contain statements on all land use planning issues, which are set out in Planning Policy Wales (PPW). **Policy 17** –Supports the principle of developing renewable and low carbon energy from all technologies and at all scales to meet our future energy needs and there is a presumption in favour of large-scale wind energy development (including repowering) in these areas, subject to the criteria in policy 18. Policy 17 also states that "*New strategic grid infrastructure for the transmission and distribution of energy should be designed to minimise visual impact on nearby communities. The Welsh Government will work with stakeholders, including National Grid and Distribution Network Operators, to transition to a multi-vector grid network and reduce the barriers to the implementation of new grid infrastructure*".
Local planning policy	
The Site is located within local authorities - Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and Neath and Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC). The majority of the route lies within Bridgend with only the end sections of the OHL crossing the boundary into Neath Port Talbot.	
Bridgend Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033 (Adopted March 2024)[21]	**Policy DP1 – Development in the Countryside** "The policy states '*All development outside defined settlement boundaries must ensure that the integrity of the countryside is conserved and enhanced.'* The Policy goes on to state that there is a presumption against development in the countryside, with 14 listed exceptions including: *7) Transportation and/or utilities infrastructure to enable implementation of LDP allocations* The Policy continues *'Countryside development must be of a sustainable form with prudent management of natural resources and respect for the cultural heritage of the area. Where development is acceptable in principle in the countryside it must, in*

[20] Welsh Government. (2021). Future Wales - The National Plan 2040. (Online). Available at: https://gov.wales/future-wales-national-plan-2040-0

[21] Bridgend Replacement Local Development Plan 2018-2033 (Adopted March 2024). (Online). Available at: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building-control/replacement-local-development-plan/adopted-bridgend-replacement-local-development-plan-2018-2033/

Policy	Policy context
	the first instance and where possible, utilise existing buildings and previously developed land' The Policy notes also state *'The countryside must be protected for its own sake (i.e. for its beauty, landscape quality, natural resources, and its agricultural, ecological, geological, physiographic, historical, archaeological and recreational value). Development in the countryside should benefit the rural economy, whilst maintaining or enhancing the environment. Therefore, new building in the countryside outside defined settlements or areas allocated for development in the LDP will be strictly managed*" **Policy DP4 – Special Landscape Areas.** The policy lists a total of 9 Special Landscape Areas (SLAs). The Policy states: "*Development in SLAs will only be permitted where:* *1) It retains or enhances the character and distinctiveness of the SLA;* *2) The design of the development reflects the building traditions of the locality in its form, materials and details, and/or assimilates itself into the wider landscape; and* *3) The Project is accompanied by a Landscape Impact Assessment (LIA), which takes into account the impact of the development and sets out proposals to mitigate any adverse effects.* *Where development is necessary, and could result in a significant landscape impact, a landscaping scheme will also be required and appropriate mitigation and enhancement measures must be provided. The settings of SLAs will be protected with consideration of the views from those areas to the settlements of the County Borough. New development within settlements must be designed to provide an attractive transition between the urban area and the countryside*" **Policy DP7 – Trees, Hedgerows and Development** The Policy States "*Development that would adversely affect trees, woodlands and hedgerows of public amenity or natural/cultural heritage value, or that provide important ecosystem services, will not normally be permitted.* *Development proposals on sites containing or adjacent to, trees will be required to assess the trees in line with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. The assessment must include:* *1) a tree survey; 2) an arboriculture impact assessment; 3) an arboriculture method statement; 4) and/or a tree protection plan.* *Where trees are to be replaced a scheme for tree replacement must be agreed prior to the commencement of development, including details of planting and aftercare. If tree works are recommended, the works must comply with BS 2998:2010 Tree Works - Recommendations*" **Policy SP18 – Conservation of the Historic Environment** The Policy States "*The County Borough has a rich and diverse built heritage and historic environment. Development proposals must protect, conserve, and, where appropriate, preserve and enhance the significance of historic assets, including their settings. In particular, there is a general presumption in favour of the preservation or enhancement of the significance of historic assets and their settings including:*

Policy	Policy context
	1) World Heritage Sites; 2) Scheduled Monuments; 3) Archaeologically Sensitive Areas and Archaeological Remains; 4) Listed Buildings; 5) Conservation Areas; 6) Historic Parks and Gardens; 7) Historic Landscapes *Any application for listed building or conservation area consent will need to be accompanied by a Heritage Impact Statement in accordance with the Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016*".
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (Adopted Jan 2016)[22]	**Policy EN2 – Special Landscape Areas** The Policy states "*In order to protect areas of high landscape quality, the following Special Landscape Areas are designated (6No SLA's listed -refer to Policy). Development within the designated Special Landscape Areas will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that there will be no significant adverse impacts on the features and characteristics for which the Special Landscape Area has been designated*".

GUIDANCE

6.3.3. A summary of the technical guidance for the LVIA, but not limited to, is given in **Table 6-3**.

Table 6-3 – Technical guidance relevant to the LVIA

Technical guidance document	Context
Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third Edition)[23]	The third edition of this guidance (known as 'GLVIA3') which is produced by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment is widely regarded by landscape and planning professions as the 'industry standard' together with best practice and professional experience. GLVIA3 provides the framework within which the remaining sections of the ES have been undertaken with the detailed implications for the methodology by which the LVIA has been undertaken being set out in **Section 6.10** and in **Appendix 6A.**

[22] Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (Adopted January 2016). (Online). Available at: https://www.npt.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/adopted-ldp-2011-2026/
[23] Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, (2013). Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. 3rd edition. London. Routledge

6.4 CONSULTATION

6.4.1. Consultation with BCBC and NPTCBC took place on 7th February where the initial landscape and visual viewpoint locations were presented and agreed (subject to verification on Site). The viewpoints have been selected to represent the nature and type of visual amenity from a given area or direction of view. It is not offered as the 'only view' but is used to inform a greater understanding of the extent of visibility and the nature of change. The LVIA Site visit was conducted on 12th and 13th February 2025.

6.5 DATA GATHERING METHODOLOGY

STUDY AREA

LVIA Study Area

6.5.1. A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) based upon 1m Digital Surface Model (DSM) LiDAR data, with a viewer height set at 1.6m has been prepared to describe areas within which there would be potential for views of the Project. The ZTV has been calculated based on varying heights of the OHL grid poles being between 11-15m above ground level (ABGL). The Zone of Theoretical Visibility is shown on **Figure 6.1**

6.5.2. The extent of the Study Area was determined through review of the ZTV and was verified in the field to understand the setting of the Project and the extent of likely significant landscape and visual effects upon receptors. A Study Area of 3km was considered appropriate beyond which the potential for significant effects on landscape character and/or visual receptors is judged to have substantially reduced based on the nature of the Project.

DESK STUDY

6.5.3. A summary of the organisations that have supplied data, together with the nature of that data is outlined in **Table 6-4**.

Table 6-4 - Data sources used to inform the LVIA

Organisation	Data provided	Data sources
Ordnance Survey (OS)	Ordnance Survey Mapping	Ordnance Survey (2024) MAPSHOP. Scale 1:50,000 mapping Baseline information on the landscape context including topography, drainage, settlement pattern, land use, tree cover, promoted recreational routes, transport network and infrastructure.
Google Earth Pro	Aerial photography and Street View.	Provides baseline information and Street View images on the landscape context including drainage, settlement pattern, land use, tree cover, transport network and infrastructure.

Organisation	Data provided	Data sources
Natural Resources Wales	National Landscape Character Areas	**National** Natural Resource Wales, (2021). *National Character Areas NLCA*. Available online at: https://naturalresources.wales/evidence-and-data/maps/nlca/?lang=en [Accessed 30/01/2025]. High-level baseline information on landscape character which sets the context for local LANDMAP data.
	LANDMAP Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas (VSAA)	**Regional** Baseline information on landscape character in Wales, recorded and evaluated in a nationally consistent data set. Natural Resources Wales. (2024). Using LANDMAP in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments GN46. (Online). Available at https://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/guidance-and-advice/business-sectors/planning-and-development/evidence-to-inform-development-planning/using-landmap-in-landscape-and-visual-impact-assessments-gn46/?lang=en
	Open Access Land	Natural Resource Wales, (2021). *Open Access - Open Country*. Available online at: https://datamap.gov.wales/maps/new#/ [Accessed 30/01/2025].
Bridgend County Borough Council	Landscape Character	LUC, (2013). Landscape Character Assessment for Bridgend County Borough. Available online at: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/1149/bridgend-landscape-character-assessment.pdf [Accessed 30/01/2025].
	Public Rights of Way.	Bridgend County Borough Council (2024). Web Mapping. Available online at: https://maps.bridgend.gov.uk/webmap9/Map.aspx?MapName=OSWMTSBasemap [Accessed 30/01/2025].
	Local Development Plan	Bridgend County Borough Council (2017) Replacement Bridgend Local Development Plan 2018 to 2033. Available at: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building-control/replacement-local-development-plan/adopted-bridgend-replacement-local-development-plan-2018-2033/
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council	Landscape Character	Neath Port Talbot LandMap (2004) Landscape Assessment. Available at: https://media.npt.gov.uk/media/ponjgtte/spg_landmap_landscape_assessment_2004.pdf?v=20241209172433
	Local Plan	Neath Port Talbot LandMap (2016) Adopted LDP. Available at: https://www.npt.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/adopted-ldp-2011-2026/

Organisation	Data provided	Data sources
Sustrans	National Cycle Network.	Sustrans, (2021). *National Cycle Network Map*. Available online at: http://www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map [Accessed 30/01/2025].

DEVELOPMENTS RELEVANT TO THE CUMULATIVE ASSESSMENT

6.5.4. The study area for the cumulative assessment is 3km to coincide with the study area for the Project. Cumulative developments are shown on **Figure 2.1**.

6.5.5. A number of cumulative developments have been scoped out for the LVIA. Developments which are located beyond the 3km have been scoped out as follows:

- P/16/291/ FUL (Approved);
- P2020/1002 (Approved);
- P2022/0537 (Approved);
- P2022/0694 (Approved);
- P/16/128 FUL (Application); and
- P/19/915/RES (Application).

6.5.6. The following developments have been scoped out for the reasons outlined below:

- P2024/0820 – Mixed Use Residential Development. Scoped out due to no ZTV coverage;
- P/12/877/ BCB – Community Park located in the area of UGC section. There would be no significant landscape and visual effects and therefore has been scoped out; and
- P/23/621/APN – Agricultural building. This type of development is already present within the landscape therefore there would be no significant landscape and visual effects and therefore has been scoped out.

6.5.7. The magnitude of change for cumulative developments effects will be assessed the same way as the main LVIA assessment, with magnitude recorded as high, medium, low or negligible (or intermediatory values). The additional level of effect which is the derived from adding the Project to the baseline of consented/ application developments will then be assessed. The combined magnitude and combined level of effect will then be assessed for the Project in combination with consented developments. Finally, the combined magnitude and combined level of effect for the Project in combination with consented and application developments will be assessed.

6.5.8. In total two cumulative developments are relevant to the LVIA and are included in **Table 6-5** below.

Table 6-5 - Developments within 3km included in the CLVIA

Ref.	Name of Development	Description of Development	Location
P2022/0344 & P2022/0517	Foel Trawsnant (approved Wind Farm)	Wind Farm associated with Project - consisting of 8 turbines with a maximum tip height of 145m.	The proposed Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm site is located approximately 2.3km to the northwest of Maesteg, Bridgend. The Project enters the site from the southeast.
P2024/0029	Y Bryn Windfarm Bridgend / Neath Port Talbot (Application)	Wind Farm consisting of 18 turbines with a maximum height ranging between up to 206m, up to 203m, and up to 250m to blade tip	Approx 0.9km west of UGC and to the south of the proposed northern OHL

6.6 BASELINE OF LANDSCAPE RECEPTORS

THE PROJECT SITE AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING AREA

6.6.1. The Project site is located to the west of Maesteg in south Wales. The majority of the route falls within the county of Bridgend; however, the northern and southern sections of the Project crosses into Neath Port Talbot County.

6.6.2. Starting at the northern-most section, the route begins as OHL west of the A4063 for approximately 1.5 kilometres (km). To the north of Nantyffyllon, the route then transitions into UGC, mainly following the existing highway network south for approx. 5.1 km. At Sychbant Farm, the highway network ceases; this is where and the route transitions back into OHL and continues south for approx. 2.9km.

6.6.3. The proposed northern section of OHL travels predominately through improved grassland and marshy grassland, with some areas encroaching on bracken, broadleaved woodland and scrub. Views to the north are curtailed by the rising topography of Foel Trawsnant and Foel y Dyffryn, and to the south and west where the topography rises towards the coniferous slopes of Mynydd Penhydd, Pen Diggwylfa and Rhiw Tor Cymry. To the east of the proposed northern OHL the topography descends towards the valley bottom floor where the northern part of the Maesteg settlement lies and where visibility of the proposed northern OHL is restricted due to the change in landform. To the east beyond the settlement of Maesteg, the topography rises towards the peak of Mynydd Pwll-yr Iwrch where theoretical visibility of the proposed OHL returns and extends further to the south where there is another hillside, Garth Hill.

6.6.4. The majority of the UGC is contained within the existing built environment. There is a small section – approx. 250m in length – to the north of Nant-y-ffyllon which travels through poor semi-improved grassland and areas of bracken prior to connecting to existing tracks.

6.6.5. The proposed southern section of OHL crosses an area of mainly improved and poor semi-improved grassland, with some minor areas of broadleaved woodland, bracken and marshy grassland.

6.6.6. There is a minor road which runs through the landscape which serves some scattered residential properties and there are private roads leading to scattered properties and farmsteads.

6.6.7. The topography to the west of the proposed southern OHL rises towards the hillside of Waun Lluest wen and Mynydd Margam where the landcover comprises coniferous forestry. West of the central section of the proposed southern OHL lies Y Bwlwarcau fort which is a designated Scheduled Ancient Monument and where a Long-Distance Route (Cistercian Way) passes by to the south.

6.6.8. To the north and east of the proposed southern OHL lies the southern part of the settlement Maesteg and the hillside of Moel Troed-y-Rhiw. There is also a circular hillside with coniferous forest plantation which restrict views to the east of the central section of the proposed southern OHL. Within the northern part of this forest area and screened from view is Llangynwyd Castle. South of the proposed southern OHL the topography rises towards the hillside summit of Moel Ton Mawr which comprises coniferous forestry which also extends further east. The landform and coniferous forestry restrict views further to the south.

6.6.9. There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) as shown on **Figure 6.2** including some long-distance paths and National Cycle Routes. There are three areas of open access land within the northern part of the study area - Foel Trawsnant, Foel y Dyffryn and Mynydd Pwll-y-lwrch as shown on **Figure 6.4.**

DESIGNATIONS

STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

6.6.10. There are no statutory landscape designations, such as National Parks or National Landscapes, within the Site or Study Area.

NON-STATUTORY DESIGNATIONS

6.6.11. There are two locally designated Special Landscape Areas (SLAs) as defined by BCBC Designation of Special Landscape Areas – March 2010[24] within the Study Area and 2 SLAs as defined by NPTCBC Landscape and Seascape SPG (May 2018)[25]. The key characteristics of these SLAs are outlined in **Table 6-6** below along with a reference viewpoint/s where these have been identified.

[24] BCBC SLA https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/3102/sd87.pdf
[25] NPTCBC SLA https://media.npt.gov.uk/media/j42dzulp/spg_landscape_seascape_may18.pdf?v=20241209172432

Table 6-6 - Description and landscape qualities of SLAs

SLA reference and relevant viewpoint	Description and landscape qualities
SLA 1: Foel y Dyffryn (BCBC) Viewpoint 1	The proposed northern OHL is located towards the southern boundary of SLA. The SLA is described as being *'A relatively small area of distinctive upland landscape to the west of Dyffryn and Caerau it provides a visual backdrop to the setting of the urban area along the valley floor. Generally north-east facing, the uplands range from 120m to 350 AOD. Its upland qualities and character are further reinforced by borrowed views to the Brecon Beacons to the north. Its vegetation cover is typically rough grassland, mainly upland heath, interspersed with wetland and boggy areas which are local Biodiversity Action Plan target habitats. It also includes populations of marsh fritillary butterfly. The proximity to the urban edge of its eastern boundaries introduces visual and sensory detractors and is typified by a range of urban fringe management issues – fly tipping, illegal biking, conflict with landowners and farmers'.* There is one visual and sensory aspect areas as outlined with the LANDMAP database that covers this SLA (Mynydd baedan (CYNONVS473) and has an overall evaluation of High.
SLA 3: Western Uplands (BCBC) Viewpoint 3, 4 & 5	The proposed southern OHL and part of the underground route is located towards the northwestern part of the SLA. The SLA is described as '*A fairly extensive upland area abutting Neath Port Talbot in the west. It comprises a series of northeastern facing slopes, ranging from 120m to 350m AOD, typically rough grazing. It has a number of plantations and small woodlands that contribute to the overall character and quality of the area reflected in a number of the LANDMAP aspect area evaluations – VS473 – Mynydd Baedan (High), LH009 – riparian woodland (High) part of Parc Slip (CL019) (High). The geography of the landscape is typical of much of the area, showing evidence of glaciation – classic u-shaped valley with truncated side valleys. Despite the presence of coal measures and other stone quarrying the area retains a largely rural, agricultural character.* *Important historic and cultural associations reflected in landscape archaeology including the settlement of Llangynwyd and its hinterland largely important, despite proximity of industrial towns it retains a distinct rural form and character. The main visual detractors relate to the interface of the SLA with the southern edge of Maesteg, Pont Rhyd-y-cyff, Aberkenfig and Cwmfelin.'* There are 3 visual and sensory aspect areas (VSAA) as outlined with the LANDMAP database that cover this SLA (Mynydd baedan CYNONVS473; Conifer to west of study area CYNONVS731 and Llynfi valley CYNONVS884. The overall evaluations for the visual and sensory aspect areas within this designated area comprise one high area and two moderate values.

SLA reference and relevant viewpoint	Description and landscape qualities
SLA 4: Margam (NPTCBC)	A small section of the proposed southern OHL is located towards the central eastern edge of the SLA. The features and characteristics of the SLA are described as follows: • *Mynydd Margam is a broad, low-lying plateau of NE dipping Productive Coal Formation mudstones and coals between South Wales Pennant Formation escarpment and E-W Millstone Grit ridge to the South, dissected by shallow, alluvium filled valleys of tributaries and the main Cynfig valley. It includes mine workings and the proposed deep mine.* • *Cultural features in the landscape include evidence of prehistoric and later agricultural practices, rural settlements and contemporary forestry activities.* • *It is an evolved landscape containing multi-period cultural expressions untrammelled by industrial exploitation - extensive archaeological evidence of land husbandry, now given over to forestry interspersed with some small farms and thus is a comparatively rare example of a surviving relict landscape.* • *The SLA, which contains Margam Park, with its exceptional examples of architecture; its history as a major Cistercian Abbey and the wider monastic landholdings, provides a combination of high-grade historic visitor attraction and a variety of multi-period pleasure grounds. It contains cultural elements dating from pre-history through every period up to the 21st century.* • *Whilst the SLA contains areas of forested upland these are important to the overall historical context of the area and could be managed to enhance the landscape quality of the wider area.* • *The scenic quality of the area is enhanced by the historic buildings of the Park and the backdrop of scarp creating a sheltered setting which link visually and provide the integrity of the whole. The sense of place for the park is initially prompted with boundary walls and entrance gates. The historic core and deer park make this area unique within the County.*
SLA 6: Foel Trawsnant (NPTCBC)	A small section of the proposed northern OHL is located towards the southern part of the SLA. The features and characteristics of the SLA are described as follows: • *SLA 6 covers the steep, exposed, upland slopes in NE-SW striking N and NE dipping sandstones and coals of the*

SLA reference and relevant viewpoint	Description and landscape qualities
	South Wales Pennant Formation Llynfi-Brithdir Beds (Lower Pennant Measures). • *It forms part of the eastern highlands complex and is one location within the relict landscape of mixed periods which is not covered in conifer plantations.* • *There is no development and the area feels exposed and bleak, access is via foot and bridle paths.* • *The simple landscape features and pattern, upland grazing to 271m AOD creates a local sense of place and distinctiveness.*

6.6.12. The Project is, at some point, located within each of these SLA's. The SLA's will be used to determine the sensitivity of each Landscape Character Area/ Visual and Sensory Aspect area that is carried forward into the Landscape assessment.

NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

6.6.13. Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has developed a series of National Landscape Character Areas (NLCA). These NLCA profiles provide a broad range of information including key characteristics of a given area, description of the natural and cultural features that shape the landscapes, change over time, the current key drivers for ongoing change, a broad analysis of each area's characteristics and ecosystem services, and an array of opportunities for positive environmental change.

6.6.14. The Site and Study Area is located within the South Wales Valleys National Landscape Character Area (NLCA37)[26]. The relevant key characteristics of the NLCA37 character area as follows:

- Extensive Upland Plateaux;
- Numerous steep-sided valleys;
- Ribbon urban and industrial areas in valleys;
- Extensive remains of heavy industry;
- Contrast of urban valley activity next to quiet uplands;
- Large blocks of coniferous plantation and deciduous woodland fringes;
- Heather, rough grassland and steep bracken slopes;
- Improved pastures on some lower valley sides;
- Field boundaries;
- Transport routes restricted to valleys; and
- Iconic cultural identity.

[26] NLCA 37 - https://naturalresources.wales/media/682625/nlca37-south-wales-valleys-description-1.pdf

6.6.15. The NLCA covers an extensive area, and in order to provide a proportionate assessment with the scale of the change proposed, landscape character will be defined at a local level, using Bridgend County Landscape Character Areas, Neath Port Talbot Character areas and LANDMAP Visual and Sensory Aspect Areas, for the remainder of this assessment.

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

Introduction

6.6.16. There are three Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within Bridgend as identified within the Landscape Character Assessment for Bridgend County Borough July 2013[27] which coincide with the ZTV and LVIA Study Area as shown in **Figure 6.3** as follows:

- LCA 1 – Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry;
- LCA 2 – Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes; and
- LCA 3 – Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry.

6.6.17. Only a small area of LCA 2 lies within the Study Area. The Project would not directly impact this LCA and ZTV coverage is limited. This LCA has therefore been scoped out of the assessment.

6.6.18. There are also 12 LCAs within Neath Port Talbot as identified within Neath Port Talbot Landmap Landscape Assessment December 2004[28] which coincide with the ZTV and LVIA Study Area as follows:

- LCA 3 – Margam Country Park;
- LCA 4 – Coedhirwaun;
- LCA 5 - Coedhirwaun Scarp and open scarp tops;
- LCA 7 – Mynydd Margam;
- LCA 8 - Goytre Valley;
- LCA 9 – Cefn Cethin;
- LCA 10 - Mynydd Bycham;
- LCA 11 – Cwm Afan and Cwm Pelenna;
- LCA 12 – Mynydd Penhydd;
- LCA 13 – Foel Trawsnant;
- LCA 14 – Foel Fawr; and
- LCA 18 - Mynydd Resolfen, Craig-y-Llyn & Mynydd Ynyscorrwg.

6.6.19. LCA 3 and 10 lie completely outwith the ZTV and so have been scoped out of the assessment. LCA's 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14 and 18 have minimal to low ZTV coverage with some areas lying within

[27] Local Landscape Character Areas Bridgend - https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/1149/bridgend-landscape-character-assessment.pdf
[28] Neath Port Talbot LandMap Landscape Assessment https://media.npt.gov.uk/media/ponjgtte/spg_landmap_landscape_assessment_2004.pdf?v=20241209172433

forested areas reducing the visibility towards the Project, therefore these have also been scoped out of the assessment.

6.6.20. The following LCAs have been taken forward into the assessment and are described in **Appendix 6B**:

- LCA 1 – Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry;
- LCA 3 – Llynfi Valley Floor and Lower Slopes;
- LCA 7 – Mynydd Margam; and
- LCA 13 – Foel Trawsnant.

LANDMAP

Introduction

6.6.21. LANDMAP is an all-Wales landscape resource, designed to record and evaluate landscape characteristics, qualities and influences in a nationally consistent data set. There are five datasets that make up LANDMAP, which in turn are divided into aspect areas. The five datasets are referred to as Geological Landscape, Landscape Habitats, Visual & Sensory, Historic Landscape and Cultural Landscape. Collectively the five spatial datasets combined define the landscape character of an area.

6.6.22. While the approach is meant to enable a consistent approach to defining landscape character, not all datasets contain the same level of information. The Visual & Sensory Aspect Areas (VSAA)[29] will be used as a baseline for this assessment, having the most relevance to the LVIA and the greatest level of detail. Where there are other important aspects that contribute to the overall landscape character, such as historic and cultural assets, these will be referred to in the baseline text.

6.6.23. The VSAA that are located in the study area are shown on **Figure 6.4.**

6.6.24. The following VSAA's within the study area have been scoped out as they lie outwith the ZTV:

- Mynydd Emorch and Mynydd Bycham (NPTVS139);
- Margam Country Park (NPTVS403);
- Cwm Dyffryn (NPTVS916); and
- Margam Opencast (NPTVS001).

6.6.25. The following VSAA's within the study area have been scoped out due to a minimal ZTV coverage or are areas that lie within forested areas and therefore would have limited views towards the Project:

- Upland settlements (NPTVS215);
- Mynydd Penhydd (NPTVS366);
- Cefn Cethin (NPTVS448);

[29] NRW LANDMAP - https://smnr-nrw.hub.arcgis.com/apps/c7770d2881394c899123bae210afe370/explore

- Foel Fawr (NPTVS465);
- Coedhirwaun (NPTVS543);
- Mynydd y Gelli (NPTVS547);
- Margam Scarp (NPTVS811);
- Mynydd Bromil & Scarp tops (NPTVS897);
- Cwm Afan and Cwm Pelenna farmed sides (NPTVS920);
- Cwm Afan and Cwm Pelenna (NPTVS936);
- Mynydd Nant y bar / Mynydd Blaenafan (NPTVS962);
- Garw and Caerau Forest (CYNONVS813); and
- Llynfi valley (CYNONVS884).

6.6.26. The VSAAs carried through to the assessment are as follows and described in **Appendix 6B**:

- Mynydd baedan (CYNONVS473);
- Foel Trawsnant (NPTVS358);
- Mynydd Margam (NPTVS927);
- Maesteg (CYNONVS351);
- Conifer to west of study area (CYNONVS731); and
- Garth hill (CYNONVS811).

6.7 BASELINE OF VISUAL RECEPTORS

6.7.1. Visual receptors are "*the different groups of people who may experience views of the development*" (GLVIA3, para 6.3). Whilst it is the people living, working, passing through or enjoying recreational activities in the area who actually see the view and enjoy the visual amenity, it is the places they may occupy that are mapped and described as the 'receptors' of the views. In order to identify those receptors who may be affected, ZTV studies, baseline desk study and field-based observations have been carried out.

6.7.2. The key visual receptors who are likely to experience views of the Project within the Study Area have been identified as follows:

- Residential receptors – including scattered individual properties and settlements;
- Recreational receptors – people using the network of PRoWs, open access land, users of National Cycle Routes and visitors to outdoor recreation/tourist areas; and
- Transport receptors – people travelling through the area on major and minor roads.

6.7.3. The following representative viewpoint locations have been considered when establishing the effect of the Project upon the visual amenity of the receiving environment. The viewpoints represent the main visual receptor groups found within the study area based on ZTV modelling.

6.7.4. For the purposes of this assessment a total of seven viewpoints were taken, at varying distances and directions from the Site. The viewpoints are all representative of one or more receptor types, as well as being illustrative of restricted views in some instances. The seven viewpoints identified are outlined below described in **Appendix 6C:**

- Viewpoint 1 – Footpath MAE/15/2;
- Viewpoint 2 – Bridleway MAE/77/6;

- Viewpoint 3 – Footpath MAE/50/2;
- Viewpoint 4 – Cistercian Way Long Distance footpath/ Bridleway LDM/17/1;
- Viewpoint 5 – Footpath LDM/12/1;
- Viewpoint 6 – Minor Road, Llangynwyd; and
- Viewpoint 7 – Junction of A4063 and Brynheulog Road and National Cycle Route 885.

6.7.5. The visual baseline and assessment is to be read in conjunction with **Figure 6.2** which shows the viewpoint locations and PRoWs including National Cycle Network, long distance routes, footpaths, bridleways and byways.

6.7.6. Open access land, Historic Parks and Gardens, Country Parks are shown on **Figure 6.5.** The Historic Parks and Garden/ Country Park are outwith the ZTV and are therefore scoped out of the assessment.

6.8 FUTURE BASELINE

6.8.1. The Project will integrate the consented Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm with the current national network via a 66kV connection. It will remain active for the duration of the wind farm's operation; for the purposes of the assessment, it is assumed to be up to 30 years. However, it is noted the duration of the proposed overhead line and underground cable could extend beyond 30 years, dependant on potential future uses. The approximate time periods associated with the Project, and whether they are predominantly long-term or short-term are listed as follows:

- Construction: up to 9 months, broken down into the following activities:
  - Six months for trenching and laying the ducts ;
  - One month cable pull through and jointing works; and
  - Two months for erecting overhead line poles.
- Operation: up to 30 years (long-term).

6.8.2. Following the operational phase, the connection (underground and overground) will be left in situ as it has the potential to become integrated into the DNOs wider distribution network. This would also avoid further disruption to the surrounding environment.

6.8.3. The LVIA considers that during this period of 30 years, the predicted future baseline and evolution of landscape and visual receptors is unlikely to change significantly under the current regime of landscape and forestry management and maintenance. However, land management, and consequently landscape character, is dependent on a number of economic and environmental factors including the future effects of climate change and human adaptation which are difficult to predict at a local level and not a matter for this assessment. It is however likely that mitigation and adaptation in response to changing climate and biodiversity pressures will continue to have an influence on this area in the form of increased renewable energy and other environmental changes which are likely to alter the landscape baseline as follows:

- Change resulting from an increased reliance on renewable energy, including wind farm development; and

- Change to current levels of forestry and woodland, which may increase.

6.9 EMBEDDED MITIGATION

6.9.1. The Project has been developed through an iterative design process which considered balanced environmental, technical and economic factors. Minimising the number of potential visual receptors and reducing landscape effects by avoiding the requirement to create corridors through forested areas where possible, ensuring the Project is generally backdropped by existing forestry and/ or elevated topography and following the existing topography reflecting the guidance provided in the Holford Rules (found at https://www.nationalgrid.com/sites/default/files/documents/13795-The%20Holford%20Rules.pdf).

LIKELY CONSTRUCTION PHASE EFFECTS

6.9.2. The construction of the Project would include the following aspects which may have an effect on landscape features, the character of the landscape and on visual amenity, associated with the construction of the Project:

- Presence and movement of construction machinery and vehicles;
- Creation of temporary compound;
- Pole foundations; and
- Minor tree removal for the construction of the UGC just to the southwest of Pen-y-lan residential property to the northwest of Kings Terrace.

CONSTRUCTION MITIGATION

Design Solutions and Assumptions

6.9.3. The presence of construction machinery and compound within the landscape will be temporary in nature and any ground disturbance as a result will be reinstated to its previous state at the end of construction. The tree removal is minor and therefore would not result in a loss of substantial landscape features.

6.9.4. The UGC will be placed within ducts and take approximately six months to complete. The works have been assumed to take place between 07:00 to 19:00 hours on weekdays and 07:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays. In exceptions, there may be a requirement for a 7-day work week.

6.9.5. The construction of the OHL sections will take approximately 2 months. This will require HGV's to transport the poles; see Chapter 7: Traffic and Transport for further details.

Mitigation During Construction

6.9.6. The mitigation of effects on the landscape and visual resource during construction are those integral to the construction process under the 'Considerate Contractors' process that is now routinely followed, such as tidy site management to reduce visual clutter associated with the works, and use of construction lighting in accordance with best practice to minimise lighting intrusion to surrounding sensitive receptors.

6.9.7. Construction works will also be undertaken in line with the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) (**Appendix 4A**) which includes measures to mitigate negative landscape and visual effects during construction such as the restriction of construction traffic to designated routes, to avoid damage to the road corridor such as the creation of wheel ruts and ensure these are cleared-up and reinstated.

6.9.8. The temporary construction compound (see **Figure 1.1**) will be used for the construction of the proposed northern and southern OHL. Poles will be stored at the compound; on the day of installation, poles will be transported to the works area and laydown within the Site boundary.

LIKELY OPERATIONAL PHASE EFFECTS

6.9.9. The main potential for operational effects of the Project on landscape and visual receptors would be created by the following aspects:

- Presence of an OHL route. The height of the wooden poles will be between 11-15m above ground level; and
- Potential for localised tree pruning/cutting to retain clearance distances.

Design Solutions and Assumptions

6.9.10. Landscape and visual mitigation of the Project is embedded in the route selection process which gives substantial weight to potential effects on landscape character, landscape designations and visual amenity.

6.9.11. In the normal course of operation there is no requirement to inspect UGCs, although they are regularly tested at the joint bays.

6.9.12. Overhead line conductors and insulators have a design life of approximately 40 years. Faults on an OHL are infrequent. When they do occur, the vehicles used are likely to be similar to those needed for the construction of the line. Fault repair is quick and relatively straightforward.

Operation Phase Mitigation

6.9.13. No specific mitigation measures have been identified due to the limited potential for landscape and visual effects arising from the Project, and the nature of the landscape where screening planting would not be appropriate. The implementation of a CEMP would ensure that best practice standards are used during the construction and reinstatement periods which would assist in minimising landscape and visual effects.

Decommissioning

6.9.14. Following the operational phase, the connection (underground and overground) will be left in situ as it has the potential to become integrated into the DNOs wider distribution network. This would also avoid further disruption to the surrounding environment.

6.10 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

6.10.1. This section gives a brief overview of the methodology used within this LVIA. It is to be read in conjunction with the detailed methodology provided in **Appendix 6A.**

6.10.2. This LVIA presents the assessment of impacts associated with the Project and their likely effects upon the landscape and visual amenity.

LANDSCAPE

6.10.3. Landscape assessment considers the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource in its own right.

6.10.4. The character of the landscape derives from a combination of physical factors, natural processes and human intervention. Landscape effects are a combination of the physical changes to the fabric of the landscape arising from the Project and perceptual changes – the way these physical changes alter how the landscape is perceived.

6.10.5. The landscape assessment considers the effect of the Project on the landscape, including effects on significant individual elements of the landscape, and effects on characteristic combinations or patterns of elements and how these are perceived to affect its character and quality.

VISUAL AMENITY

6.10.6. Visual assessment is concerned with the views that are available to people who may be affected by the Project, and their perception and responses to changes in these views.

6.10.7. Visual effects arise from changes in the composition and character of views available in the area affected. The assessment considers the likely change that would be experienced, including the effects both on specific views and on general visual amenity – the pleasantness of the view or outlook – that the people affected enjoy.

6.10.8. For the purposes of assessment, whilst it is the people living, working, passing through or enjoying recreational activities in the area who actually see the views and enjoy the visual amenity, it is the places they may occupy that are mapped and described as the visual receptors.

ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

6.10.9. The level of landscape and visual effects are evaluated through the combination of sensitivity and magnitude of change. The sensitivity is derived from combining the value of the receptor with its susceptibility to the type of change proposed. The magnitude of change is derived from combining the size or scale of change, the duration and the reversibility of the effect.

6.10.10. The combination of Sensitivity and Magnitude is then evaluated to determine the overall level of effect significance. The combination of sensitivity and magnitude and resulting levels of effect are illustrated in **Table 6-7** below.

Table 6-7 - Evaluation of Landscape and Visual Effects

Magnitude of Change	Landscape and Visual Sensitivity		
	High	Medium	Low
High	Major	Major to Moderate	Moderate to Minor

Magnitude of Change	Landscape and Visual Sensitivity		
	High	Medium	Low
Medium	Major to Moderate	Moderate	Minor
Low	Moderate to Minor	Minor	Minor
Negligible	Minor to Negligible	Minor to Negligible	Negligible
Zero	None / No View		

6.11 ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

6.11.1. Landscape Effects are defined by the Landscape Institute in GLVIA 3, paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 as follows:

- *"An assessment of landscape effects deals with the effects of change and development on landscape as a resource. The concern ... is with how the proposal will affect the elements that make up the landscape, the aesthetic and perceptual aspects of the landscape and its distinctive character. ... The area of landscape that should be covered in assessing landscape effects should include the site itself and the full extent of the wider landscape around it which the Project may influence in a significant manner."*

6.11.2. These effects are assessed by considering the landscape sensitivity (value and susceptibility) against the magnitude of change. The type of effect can also be described as temporary or permanent, direct or indirect, cumulative and positive, neutral, or negative.

6.11.3. The residual landscape effects, assessed here, are those effects remaining after all of the proposed design mitigation has been taken into account. An assessment of the cumulative landscape effects, taking account of other relevant operational and consented development and any relevant current applications has been undertaken as detailed in **Appendix 6D and 6E** and summarised in **Table 6-14** and **6-15.**

6.11.4. In considering the effects of the Project (magnitude of change) on landscape character and visual receptors, the following scenarios will be assessed:

- Construction Phase – during the construction period, assuming a maximum perceived change situation (i.e., when construction activity is at its peak), noting how long that period is likely to last; and
- Operational Phase (Winter Year 1)

6.11.5. Decommissioning effects would reflect those arising as a result of construction but may happen at different times or not at all in the case of the UGC. An assessment of the decommissioning effects has been scoped out.

LOCAL CHARACTER AREAS

6.11.6. The sensitivity for LCAs is included within **Appendix 6B** and summarised in the in **Table 6-8** below:

Table 6-8 - Effects on Local Landscape Character

Character Area	Sensitivity
LCA 1: Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry	High-Medium Sensitivity
LCA 3: Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry	Medium Sensitivity
LCA 7: Mynydd Margam	Medium Sensitivity
LCA 13: Foel Trawsnant	Medium Sensitivity

6.11.7. The assessment of effects on LCAs are set out in **Appendix 6D** and are summarised in **Table 6-9** below:

Table 6-9 - Assessment of effects on Local Landscape Character Areas Summary Table

Local Character Area	Magnitude during Construction	Magnitude during Operation	Level of Effect during Construction	Level of Effect during Operation
LCA 1: Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry	Medium	Medium	**Moderate and Significant** (northern and southern OHLs).	**Moderate and Significant** (northern and southern OHLs).
LCA 3: Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry	Low (northern OHL) – Negligible (southern OHL).	Low (northern OHL) and Low-Negligible (southern OHL).	Minor (northern OHL) to Minor to Negligible (southern OHL) and not significant	Minor and not significant (northern OHL) and Minor - Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)
LCA 7: Mynydd Margam	Low-Negligible	Negligible	Minor – Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	Minor to Negligible and not significant
LCA 13: Foel Trawsnant	Medium	Medium	Moderate and not significant	Moderate and not significant

LANDMAP VISUAL AND SENSORY AREAS

6.11.8. The sensitivity for LANDMAP VSAA are included within **Appendix 6B** and summarised in the in **Table 6-10** below:

Table 6-10 - Sensitivity of LANDMAP VSAA Summary Table

Reference	LANDMAP VSAA	Sensitivity
18	CYNONVS473 – Mynydd baedan	High-Medium Sensitivity
3	NPTVS358 – Foel Trawsnant	Medium Sensitivity
14	NPTVS927 – Mynydd Margam	Medium-Low Sensitivity
17	CYNONVS351 – Maesteg	Low - Medium Sensitivity
19	CYNONVS731 – Conifer to west of study area	Medium – Low Sensitivity
20	CYNONVS811 – Garth Hill	Medium Sensitivity

6.11.9. The assessment of effects on LANDMAP VSAAs are set out in **Appendix 6D** and are summarised in **Table 6-11** below:

Table 6-11 - Assessment of effects on LANDMAP VSAA Summary Table

Reference	LANDMAP VSAA	Magnitude during Construction	Magnitude during Operation	Level of Effect during Construction	Level of Effect during Operation
18	CYNONVS473 – Mynydd baedan	Medium (northern and southern OHLs).	Medium (northern and southern OHLs).	**Moderate and Significant** (northern and southern OHLs).	**Moderate and Significant** (northern and southern OHLs).
3	NPTVS358 – Foel Trawsnant	Medium (northern OHL)	Medium (northern OHL)	Moderate and not significant	Moderate and not significant
14	NPTVS927 – Mynydd Margam	Low-Negligible (southern OHL)	Negligible (southern OHL)	Minor – Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	Minor to Negligible and not significant

17	CYNONVS351 – Maesteg	Medium-Low (UGC).	Zero	Moderate to Minor and not significant	Zero
19	CYNONVS731 – Conifer to west of study area	Low	Negligible	Minor and not significant	Minor to Negligible - Negligible and not significant
20	CYNONVS811 – Garth Hill	Low (northern OHL) – Negligible (southern OHL).	Low (northern OHL) and Low-Negligible (southern OHL).	Minor (northern OHL) to Minor to Negligible (southern OHL) and not significant	Minor and not significant (northern OHL**)** and Minor to Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)

6.12 ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL VISUAL EFFECTS

6.12.1. Visual effects are assessed by considering the sensitivity of the receptor (people in the landscape) and the magnitude of change that would affect the view or overall visual amenity. They are defined by the Landscape Institute in GLVIA 3, paragraphs 6.2 as follows:

- *"An assessment of visual effects deals with the effects of change and development on the views available to people and their visual amenity. The concern here is with assessing how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by changes in the content and character of views as a result of the change or loss of existing elements of the landscape and/or introduction of new elements."*

6.12.2. In determining the level of effect, the sensitivity to change and magnitude of effect are combined and assessed to give a final judgement on the overall level of the effects on visual receptors. The results of this assessment are set out in **Appendix 6C** and summarised in **Table 6-12** below:

Table 6-12 - Sensitivity of Viewpoint/ Visual receptors Summary Table

Viewpoint	Sensitivity of receptors
Viewpoint 1 – Footpath MAE/15/2	High-Medium sensitivity. (Footpath users)
Viewpoint 2 – Bridleway MAE/77/6	High-Medium sensitivity (Views experienced by visitors of the Keepers of the Colliery landmark and users of the footpath/ bridleway)

Viewpoint 3 – Footpath MAE/50/2	High – Medium sensitivity (users of the footpath and nearby residents)
Viewpoint 4 – Cistercian Way Long Distance footpath/ Bridleway LDM/17/1	High-medium sensitivity (users of the Long-distance footpath and Bridleway)
Viewpoint 5 – Junction of Minor Road and Footpath LDM/12/1	High-Medium sensitivity (Residents/ Users of the footpath) and Medium (Road users)
Viewpoint 6 - Minor road, Llangynwyd	High sensitivity (Residents) and Medium (Road users).
Viewpoint 7 - Junction of A4063 and Brynheulog Road and National Cycle Route 885	High-Medium sensitivity (Residents), Medium-Low (NCR and Recreational users) and Low (Road users).

6.12.3. The assessment of effects on the Viewpoints and visual receptors are described in **Appendix 6E** and summarised in **Table 6-13** below:

Table 6-13 - Assessment of effects on Viewpoint/ Visual receptors Summary Table

Viewpoint	Magnitude during Construction	Magnitude during Operation	Level of Effect during construction	Level of Effect during operation
Viewpoint 1 – Footpath MAE/15/2	Medium (northern OHL).	Medium (northern OHL).	**Major to Moderate and Significant** (northern OHL)	**Major to Moderate and Significant** (northern OHL)
Viewpoint 2 – Bridleway MAE/77/6	Low (northern OHL) – Negligible (southern OHL).	Medium-Low (northern OHL) and Low-Negligible (southern OHL).	Moderate to Minor – Minor and not significant (northern OHL), Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	Moderate and not significant (northern OHL) and Moderate to Minor - Minor – Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL).
Viewpoint 3 – Footpath MAE/50/2	Medium (southern OHL).	Medium (southern OHL).	**Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant** (southern OHL)	**Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant** (southern OHL)
Viewpoint 4 – Cistercian Way Long Distance footpath/	Medium (southern OHL).	Medium (southern OHL).	**Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant** (southern OHL)	**Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant** (southern OHL)

Bridleway LDM/17/1				
Viewpoint 5 – Junction of Minor Road and Footpath LDM/12/1	Medium-Low (southern OHL).	Medium-Low (southern OHL).	Moderate and not significant (southern OHL)	Moderate and not significant (southern OHL)
Viewpoint 6 - Minor road, Llangynwyd	Negligible (southern OHL).	Low – Negligible (southern OHL).	Minor to Negligible and not significant (Residents and Road users) – southern OHL	Minor (Residents) and Minor-Minor to Negligible (Road users) and not significant – southern OHL
Viewpoint 7 - Junction of A4063 and Brynheulog Road and National Cycle Route 885	Low – Negligible (northern OHL).	Low (northern OHL).	Minor (Residents), Minor – Minor to Negligible (NCR and Recreational Users) and Minor – Negligible and not significant (Road users) (northern OHL)	Moderate to Minor – Minor (Residents), Minor (NCR, Recreational Users and road users) (northern OHL)

6.13 SUMMARY OF LANDSCAPE, VISUAL AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

6.13.1. A summary of the landscape and visual effects are provided in **Tables 6-14 and Table 6-15** respectively.

6.13.2. The information set out in the tables lists the main receptors included in this assessment and provides a summary of the landscape and visual effects of the Project as well as the cumulative effects as follows:

- Receptor Name;
- Sensitivity: The sensitivity of the receptor is recorded ranging from high, medium, low and negligible (or intermediatory values) in accordance with the methodology in **Appendix 6A**.
- LVIA Assessment ('Stand-alone' of Primary Effect):
  - Magnitude: The magnitude of change for the Project is recorded, ranging from high, medium, low and negligible (or intermediatory values) in accordance with the methodology; and
  - Level of Effect: The level of effect resulting from the Project is recorded (taking account of the sensitivity and magnitude in accordance with the methodology). Those levels of effect shown in bold relate to significant effects in accordance with the relevant EIA Regulations.
- Cumulative Assessment (CLVIA):

- Magnitude (Consented Development): The magnitude of change, taking account relevant consented development recorded ranging from high, medium, low and negligible (or intermediatory values) in accordance with the methodology;
- Additional Level of Effect: Adding the Project to the baseline of consented development;
- Consented Cumulative Level of Effect: The level of effect, taking account of the other consented development and the Project, is recorded (taking account of the sensitivity and magnitude in accordance with the methodology). Those levels of effect shown in bold relate to significant effects in accordance with the relevant EIA Regulations and the development contributing most to the cumulative effects is recorded in brackets;
- Magnitude (Application Development): The magnitude of change, taking account relevant consented development recorded ranging from high, medium, low and negligible (or intermediatory values) in accordance with the methodology;
- Additional Level of Effect: Adding the Project to the application development; and
- Application Cumulative Level of Effect: The level of effect, taking account of the consented, application developments and the Project, is recorded (taking account of the sensitivity and magnitude in accordance with the methodology). Those levels of effect shown in bold relate to significant effects in accordance with the relevant EIA Regulations and the wind farm contributing most to the cumulative effects is recorded in brackets.

Table 6-14 - Summary Effects Table for Landscape Receptors

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
Local Landscape Character Areas									
LCA 1: Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and Forestry	High-Medium	Construction and Operation Medium (northern and southern OHLs).	Construction and Operation **Moderate and Significant** (northern and southern OHLs).	High-Medium	**Moderate and Significant** (northern and southern OHLs).	**Major to Moderate and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm)	High	**Moderate and Significant** (northern and southern OHLs).	**Major and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant and Y Bryn Windfarms)

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
LCA 3: Llynfi & Garw Uplands and Forestry	Medium	Construction Low (northern OHL) – Negligible (southern OHL). Operation Low (northern OHL) and Low-Negligible (southern OHL).	Construction Minor (northern OHL) to Minor to Negligible (southern OHL) and not significant Operation Minor and not significant (northern OHL) and Minor - Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	High - Medium	Minor and not significant (northern OHL) and Minor - Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	**Major to Moderate and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm)	High	Minor and not significant (northern OHL) and Minor - Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	**Major and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant and Y Bryn Windfarms)

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
LCA 7: Mynydd Margam	Medium	Construction Low-Negligible (southern OHL) Operation Negligible. (southern OHL)	Construction Minor – Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL) Operation Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	Low-Negligible	Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	Minor to Negligible and not significant (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm)	High-Medium	Minor to Negligible and not Significant (southern OHL)	**Major to Moderate and Significant** (Y Bryn Windfarm)

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
LCA 13: Foel Trawsnant	Medium	Construction Medium (northern OHL) Operation Medium. (northern OHL)	Construction Moderate and not significant (northern OHL) Operation Moderate and not significant (northern OHL)	High	Moderate and not significant (northern OHL)	**Major and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm)	High-Medium	Moderate and not significant (northern OHL)	**Major and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant and Y Bryn Windfarms)
LANDMAP VSAA									

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
CYNONVS473 – Mynydd baedan	High - Medium	Construction and Operation Medium (northern and southern OHLs).	Construction and Operation **Moderate and Significant** (northern and southern OHLs).	High-Medium	**Moderate and Significant** (northern and southern OHLs).	**Major to Moderate and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm)	High	**Moderate and Significant** (northern and southern OHLs).	**Major and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant and Y Bryn Windfarms)
NPTVS358 – Foel Trawsnant	Medium	Construction and Operation Medium (northern OHL)	Construction and Operation Moderate and not significant (northern OHL)	High	Moderate and not significant (northern OHL)	**Major and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm)	High-Medium	Moderate and not significant (northern OHL)	**Major and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant and Y Bryn Windfarms)

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
NPTVS927 – Mynydd Margam	Medium	Construction Low-Negligible (southern OHL) Operation Negligible (southern OHL)	Construction Minor – Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL) Operation Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	Low-Negligible	Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	Minor to Negligible and not significant (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm)	High-Medium	Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	**Major to Moderate and Significant** (Y Bryn Windfarm)
CYNONVS351 – Maesteg	Low - Medium	Construction Medium-Low (UGC). Operation Zero	Construction Moderate to Minor and not significant (UGC) Operation Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero	Zero

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
CYNONVS731 – Conifer to west of study area	Medium - Low	Construction Low (northern & southern OHL) Operation Negligible (northern & southern OHL)	Construction Minor and not significant (northern & southern OHL) Operation Minor to Negligible - Negligible and not significant (northern & southern OHL)	Medium-Low	Minor to Negligible - Negligible and not significant (northern & southern OHL)	Moderate to Minor and not significant (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm)	Medium	Minor to Negligible - Negligible and not significant (northern & southern OHL)	Moderate to Minor and not significant (Foel Trawsnant and Y Bryn Windfarm)

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
CYNONVS811 – Garth Hill	Medium	Construction Low (northern OHL) – Negligible (southern OHL). Operation Low (northern OHL) and Low-Negligible (southern OHL).	Construction Minor (northern OHL) to Minor to Negligible (southern OHL) and not significant Operation Minor and not significant (northern OHL) and Minor to Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	High-Medium	Minor and not significant (northern OHL) and Minor to Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	**Major to Moderate and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm)	High	Minor and not significant (northern OHL) and Minor to Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL)	**Major and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant and Y Bryn Windfarms)

Table 6-15 - Summary Effects Table for Visual Receptors

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
Viewpoint 1 – Footpath MAE/15/2	High-Medium Sensitivity (Footpath users)	Construction and Operation Medium (northern OHL).	Construction and Operation **Major to Moderate and Significant** (northern OHL**)**	High	**Major to Moderate and Significant** (northern OHL)	**Major – Major to Moderate and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant)	High	**Major to Moderate and Significant** (northern OHL)	**Major – Major to Moderate and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant and Y Bryn Windfarm)

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
Viewpoint 2 – Bridleway MAE/77/6	High-Medium Sensitivity (Views experienced by visitors of the Keepers of the Colliery landmark and users of the footpath/ bridleway)	Construction Low (northern OHL) – Negligible (southern OHL). Operation Medium-Low (northern OHL) and Low-Negligible (southern OHL).	Construction Moderate to Minor – Minor and not significant (northern OHL), Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL) Operation Moderate and not significant (northern OHL) and Moderate to Minor - Minor – Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL).	High-Medium	Moderate and not significant (northern OHL) and Moderate to Minor - Minor – Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL).	**Major – Major to Moderate and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm)	High	Moderate and not significant (northern OHL) and Moderate to Minor - Minor – Minor to Negligible and not significant (southern OHL).	**Major – Major to Moderate and Significant** (Foel Trawsnant and Y Bryn Windfarm)

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
Viewpoint 3 – Footpath MAE/50/2	High – Medium Sensitivity (users of the footpath and nearby residents)	Construction and Operation Medium (southern OHL).	Construction and Operation **Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant (southern OHL)**	Zero	Zero	Zero	Medium	**Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant (southern OHL)**	**Major to Moderate - Moderate and Significant** (Y Bryn Windfarm)
Viewpoint 4 – Cistercian Way Long Distance footpath/ Bridleway LDM/17/1	High-medium. (users of the Long-distance footpath and Bridleway)	Construction and Operation Medium (southern OHL).	Construction and Operation **Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant** (southern OHL)	Medium-Low	**Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant** (southern OHL)	**Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant** (P)	High-medium	**Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant** (southern OHL)	– **Major to Moderate - Moderate and Significant** (Y Bryn Windfarm)

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
Viewpoint 5 – Junction of Minor Road and Footpath LDM/12/1	High-Medium (Residents/ Users of the footpath) and Medium (Road users)	Construction and Operation Medium-Low (southern OHL).	Construction and Operation Moderate and not significant (southern OHL)	Medium-Low	Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant (southern OHL)	Moderate – Moderate and Not Significant (P and Foel Trawsnant Wind Farm	High-medium	Major to Moderate – Moderate and Significant (southern OHL)	**Major to Moderate - Moderate and Significant** (Y Bryn Wind Farm)

Receptor	Primary Assessment: LVIA: Project only			Assessment: CLVIA: Project (P) and other Development					
	Sensitivity	**Magnitude (Standalone)**	**Level of Effect (Standalone)**	**Magnitude** (Consented)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Consented: Combined Level of Effect**	**Magnitude** (Applications)	**Additional Level of Effect**	**Application Combined Level of Effect**
Viewpoint 6 - Minor road, Llangynwyd	High (Residents) and Medium (Road users).	Construction Negligible (southern OHL). Operation Low – Negligible (southern OHL).	Construction Minor to Negligible and not significant (Residents and Road users) – southern OHL Operation Minor (Residents) and Minor-Minor to Negligible (Road users) and not significant – southern OHL	Zero	Zero	Zero	Low	Minor (Residents) and Minor-Minor to Negligible (Road users) and not significant – (southern OHL)	Moderate to Minor - Minor and not significant (Y Bryn Windfarm)

Viewpoint 7- Junction of A4063 and Brynheulog Road and National Cycle Route 885	High-Medium (Residents), Medium-Low (NCR and Recreational users) and Low (Road users).	Construction Low – Negligible (northern OHL). Operation Low (northern OHL).	Construction Minor (Residents), Minor – Minor to Negligible (NCR and Recreational Users) and Minor – Negligible and not significant (Road users) (northern OHL) Operation Moderate to Minor – Minor (Residents), Minor (NCR, Recreational Users and road users) (northern OHL)	Medium	Moderate to Minor – Minor (Residents), Minor (NCR, Recreational Users and road users)	**Major to Moderate and Significant (Residents)** (Foel Trawsnant Windfarm) and Moderate to Minor (NCR, Recreational Users) Minor (Road Users) and not significant	High-medium	Moderate to Minor – Minor (Residents), Minor (NCR, Recreational Users and road users)	**Major – Major to Moderate and Significant (Foel Trawsnant and Y Bryn Windfarm) (Residents), Moderate and Significant** (NCR, Recreational Users) and Moderate to Minor-Minor (Road users) and not significant

6.14 CONCLUSIONS OF SIGNIFICANCE EVALUATION

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

6.14.1. The Project is considered to have a **Moderate and Significant level of effect** at construction and operation stages on LCA 1: Llangynwyd Rolling Uplands and on LANDMAP Visual and Sensory Aspect Area CYNONVS473 Mynydd Baedan (which in part cover the same geographic area) as a result of the UGC (construction phase only) and both the northern and southern OHLs. This LCA and VSAA have a High-Medium Sensitivity. The northern OHL lies within the Foel y Dyfrryn SLA and the southern OHL lies within the Western Uplands SLA. The character area attributes are a strongly rural and tranquil landscape with some panoramic views to more distant hillsides. The construction phase would introduce vehicle movement and construction machinery which would impact the tranquillity. There would also be some direct impacts including a small area of tree removal for the UGC.

6.14.2. The operational phase would result in both the proposed northern and southern OHLs being noticeable in the landscape which in the absence of existing overhead line powerlines, would significantly affect the landscape character to the north and south of the settlement of Maesteg, extending over a small – medium geographic extent. Within the character area the OHLs would be perceived in conjunction with existing pylon lines, telecommunications masts and the settlement of Maesteg and in this context the Project would be less noticeable, and significant effects would be avoided.

VISUAL SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

6.14.3. The Project is considered to have a **Major to Moderate and Significant level of effect** at both construction and operation phases on users of Footpath MAE/15/2 (represented by Viewpoint 1) as a result of the proposed northern OHL. During the construction phase there would be visibility of construction machinery, vehicle movements and the compound area. The footpath, which forms part of a wider local network, passes beneath the proposed northern OHL route and therefore would require a temporary diversion during construction along with several other footpaths/ bridleway in the area. The movement, visual intrusion and noise of construction activity and any diversions along main roads shall have a temporary adverse effect on users of the footpath. At operation there would be near distant views of the northern OHL. From the eastern section of the footpath the northern OHL would be seen in context with the settlement of Maesteg in the valley below whilst from other sections of the footpath the OHL would be visible against hillsides with few manmade features.

6.14.4. The Project is considered to have a **Major to Moderate - Moderate and Significant level of effect** at both construction and operation phases on users of Footpath MAE/50/2 and nearby residents (represented by Viewpoint 3) and users Cistercian Way Long Distance footpath/ Bridleway LDM/17/1 (represented by Viewpoint 4) as a result of the proposed southern OHL. During the construction phase there would be visibility of construction machinery, vehicle movements and lay down areas and therefore there would be a temporary adverse effect on the views experienced and the sense of local tranquillity.

6.14.5. At operation, residents particularly Cae Emi Farm and Lluest-wen, along with users of the footpaths/ bridleways would experience noticeable views of the proposed southern OHL over a wide horizontal

field of view. Where viewed in conjunction with existing overhead powerlines and telecommunications masts, the Project would be less noticeable and significant effects but would be at the lower end of significance and be no greater than moderate adverse.

6.15 REFERENCES

Baseline information on the landscape context including topography, drainage, settlement pattern, land use, tree cover, promoted recreational routes, transport network and infrastructure.

Google Earth Pro - Provides baseline information and Street View images on the landscape context including drainage, settlement pattern, land use, tree cover, transport network and infrastructure.

Landscape Institute and IEMA, 2013, Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition

NRW - Natural Resource Wales, (2021). National Character Areas NLCA. Available online at: https://naturalresources.wales/evidence-and-data/maps/nlca/?lang=en [Accessed 30/01/2025]. High-level baseline information on landscape character which sets the context for local LANDMAP data.

NRW - Baseline information on landscape character in Wales, recorded and evaluated in a nationally consistent data set. Natural Resources Wales. (2024). Using LANDMAP in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments GN46. (Online). Available at https://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/guidance-and-advice/business-sectors/planning-and-development/evidence-to-inform-development-planning/using-landmap-in-landscape-and-visual-impact-assessments-gn46/?lang=en

Natural Resource Wales, (2021). Open Access - Open Country. Available online at: https://datamap.gov.wales/maps/new#/ [Accessed 30/01/2025].

Bridgend County Borough Council - LUC, (2013). Landscape Character Assessment for Bridgend County Borough. Available online at: https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/1149/bridgend-landscape-character-assessment.pdf [Accessed 30/01/2025].

Bridgend County Borough Council, (No Date). Web Mapping. Available online at: https://maps.bridgend.gov.uk/webmap9/Map.aspx?MapName=OSWMTSBasemap [Accessed 30/01/2025].

Bridgend County Borough Council Local Development Plan - https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building-control/replacement-local-development-plan/adopted-bridgend-replacement-local-development-plan-2018-2033/

Neath Port Talbot LandMap Landscape Assessment https://media.npt.gov.uk/media/ponjgtte/spg_landmap_landscape_assessment_2004.pdf?v=20241209172433

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council - Local Plan https://www.npt.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/adopted-ldp-2011-2026/

Sustrans, (2021). National Cycle Network Map. Available online at: http://www.sustrans.org.uk/ncn/map [Accessed 30/01/2025].

Ordnance Survey (2024) MAPSHOP. Scale 1:50,000 mapping

NGED (2025) The Holford Rules. Available at: https://www.nationalgrid.com/sites/default/files/documents/13795-The%20Holford%20Rules.pdf

7 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

7.1 INTRODUCTION

7.1.1. This chapter of the ES sets out the assessment of likely significant traffic and transport effects of the Project. The chapter sets out a summary of relevant policy and baseline information for the traffic and transport study area, identifies highways receptors and presents an assessment of effects and identifies mitigation measures to minimise the impact of the Project on highways receptors.

7.1.2. This chapter is accompanied by two appendices as follows:

- **Appendix 7A** – Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP); and
- **Appendix 7B** – Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan (PRoWMP).

7.1.3. This chapter should be read in conjunction with the project description provided within **Chapter 4: Description of the Project**.

7.2 LIMITATIONS OF THIS ASSESSMENT

7.2.1. To ensure transparency within the EIA process, the following limitations and assumptions have been identified relating to the traffic and transport assessment.

7.2.2. Detailed information regarding the Project design is not currently known, such as the locations of specific Project access points and the locations of materials suppliers. Therefore, the traffic and transport assessment is based on reasonable assumptions and currently known information. As the Project design and programming develops and further information becomes available through the appointment of contractors, the Outline CTMP and Outline PRoWMP will be updated into 'full' versions which will be consulted upon and agreed with the relevant local highway authorities (LHAs) to ensure that appropriate mitigation is in place to minimise the impacts of construction traffic and facilitate safe and efficient movements.

7.2.3. As set out in detail within **Section 7.6**, this traffic and transport assessment has been based on Department for Transport (DfT) average annual daily flow (AADF) data[30] from count point locations on the local road network (LRN) within the traffic and transport study area. Ideally, manual count data from 2019 or from 2023 (post COVID pandemic in the UK and its associated travel restrictions) would be used as reasonably recent and accurate data. However, only one road to be assessed has 2019 manual count data (Neath Road (B4282)), other LRN roads have older and/or estimated traffic data. For the assessment within this ES chapter the available DfT count data for LRN roads has been utilised for the latest available data (excluding data between 2020 and 2022 as this period does not reflect 'normal' travel conditions due to the COVID pandemic UK travel restrictions). This is a limitation on the robustness of the traffic and transport baseline traffic flow data and therefore, it is

[30] Department for Transport, (2025). Road traffic statistics. Available online at: https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/#6/55.254/-6.053/basemap-regions-countpoints [Accessed February 2025]