

Visual Appraisal

**In relation to the construction and operation of a
gas fuelled Capacity Mechanism embedded
generation plant to support the National Grid. A
resubmission of previously approved application
(APP/21/00809)**

**On land at Hermitage Park, Harts Farm Way,
Havant**

On behalf of Forsa Energy Gas Holdings Ltd

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Prepared by

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1 Introduction

- 1 This document has been prepared to illustrate the potential visual effects arising from the Proposed Development on land at Hermitage Park, Harts Farm Way, Havant for the construction and operation of a gas fuelled Capacity Mechanism embedded generation plant to support the National Grid. A resubmission of previously approved application (APP/21/00809).
- 2 The closest publicly accessible point is Harts Farm Way to the south. The surrounding area is industrial in character and therefore the proposal is considered to be in keeping with this with the siting of the various units considered to be acceptable and complemented by the proposed landscaping. The fencing would be high however this is due to security and acoustic reasons. There are no residential properties within close proximity of the site. The report is to be read in conjunction with the panoramic images of the existing views contained in Appendix E2 and E3 submitted alongside this report.
- 3 The Proposed Development Site has an area of approximately 0.33 hectares and is outlined in red on the accompanying Location Plan at Appendix A.
- 4 The purpose of the Proposed Development will be to contribute to a national programme to fulfil demand for energy during peak electricity periods known as Balancing Services Mechanism. This Proposed Development will also provide local energy security as, unlike national energy generation, it will feed electricity into the local electricity network at the point of requirement thereby ensuring that the lights stay on for local residents and businesses.
- 5 The Proposed Development would be for the installation of 5no. x 4.5MW generators housed in a purpose-built structure with ancillary equipment, including a 33kV transformer compound, gas kiosk, switchroom, DNO kiosk and welfare cabin. All equipment would be sited on individual concrete slabs and the Site made suitable for servicing by commercial vehicles as shown in Appendix B: Site Layout Plan. An access road would be provided on site off Hermitage Park and entering the site from an existing gateway.

2 Methodology

2.1 Relevant guidance

- 6 This appraisal has been undertaken in accordance with best practice as outlined in the following publications:
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (GLVIA3) – Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2013.
 - An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment October 2014 Christine Tudor, Natural England.
 - Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations- Landscape Institute Technical Advice Note 02/21 – 2021.
 - Landscape Character Assessment - Guidance for England and Scotland – Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage 2002.
 - The Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment - Institute for Environmental Management and Assessment 2004.
 - Visual Representation of Development Proposals - Landscape Institute Technical Advice Note 06/19 – 2019.

2.2 Methodology

- 7 The methodology used for this assessment is based on the guidance listed above.
- 8 A desktop review of published data, such as landscape character assessments, OS maps and landscape planning policies, has been carried out. This identified potential landscape and visual receptors that could be affected by the Proposed Development. Field survey visit was carried out on the 22 February 2022 to confirm the findings of the desktop review. Photographs taken at approximately 1.5m height, with a with a Canon EOS RP camera and Canon 50mm fixed lens, except where stated otherwise. Please note photographic viewpoints are shown at Appendix A submitted under separate cover.
- 9 The structure of the report is as follows:
- i. In Section 2 the proposals for the development are set out, including the proposed mitigation planting proposals.
 - ii. In Section 3 the proposed methodology is set out.
 - iii. In Sections 4, the potential landscape and visual effects are assessed in detail (construction and operational phases) using the landscape and visual receptors identified in Section 3, by considering the interaction between them and the proposals for the development.
 - iv. Finally in Section 5, conclusions are drawn.

2.3 Assessment of significance

- 10 In this report, in accordance with the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines, 3rd edition (2013) the significance of effects is ascertained by cross-referencing the sensitivity of the baseline landscape or visual receptor and the magnitude of change as a result of the development. Whilst the methodology is

designed to be robust and transparent, professional judgement must be applied to determine the significance of each effect.

- 11 Please see Appendix A which sets out the criteria used to aid determination of landscape or visual effect. Only where the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment forms part of an Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA"), will the term 'significant' be used.

2.4 Limitations of the assessment

- 12 This assessment is based on views from publicly accessible locations. Where impact to private views is noted, it has been estimated.
- 13 The viewpoints identified in this assessment are illustrative and represent the potential impact of the development from a range of receptors e.g. dwellings, commercial properties, rights of way, roads etc. This report does not necessarily identify all locations from where the site is potentially visible.
- 14 It is important to note that this assessment was carried out in late winter, and 'in leaf' vegetation would considerably contribute to the enclosure of the development for approximately seven months of the year between April and November.

3 Planning Context

3.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023)

- 15 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023) sets out a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development. The framework outlines three mutually dependent dimensions or roles for the planning system:
 - Economic - building a strong economy and supporting growth
 - Social - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities and creating a well-designed built environment
 - Environmental - protecting and enhancing our natural, built, and historic environment
- 16 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. Planning applications should consider:
 - a) 'the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness' (NPPF 2023:para 196).
- 17 Achieving well-designed places' policy decisions should ensure developments:
 - a) 'will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
 - f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience (NPPF 2023: para 135).
- 18 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. 'Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
 - a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate (NPPF 2023: para 180).

3.2 Local Plan Policy

- 19 The Local Authority covering land at Hermitage Park, Harts Farm Way, Havant is Havant Borough Council; with the site itself falling within land allocated for employment use.
- 20 With regards the proposed use of the Application Site it is noted that once constructed, the site will be unmanned for the majority of time, and vehicle movements, unlike a typical commercial use, will be limited to weekly visits from a Field Service Engineer. As such, secondary visual effects such as activity within the Site and vehicular movements accessing the Site via the local road network are unlikely to be of any significance.
- 21 Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) March 2011, Policy CS16 states that planning permission will be granted for development that is designed to a high standard, which helps to create places where people want to live, work and relax.
- 22 The Proposed Development Site is located the Harts Farm Way industrial area which is identified as Policy BD9 in the Adopted Allocations Plan. It is a brownfield site which benefits from planning consent for energy generation (APP/21/00809).
- 23 The officer concluded in the previous application that the surrounding area is industrial in character and therefore the proposal is considered to be in keeping with this with the siting of the various units considered to be acceptable and complemented by the proposed landscaping. The fencing would be high however this is due to security and acoustic reasons. There are no residential properties within close proximity of the site.

4 Landscape and Visual Context

- 24 The site is located in an area dominated by industrial structures and in close proximity to the M3 motorway. The site is allocated within the Local Plan for employment use.
- 25 This assessment is therefore limited to the use of GLVIA3 assessment matrices to inform an opinion on the landscape and visual impact magnitude.

4.1 Photographs

- 26 Photographic outputs are shown in Appendices E2 and E3 of this report. These are presented as Type 1 visualisations as the proximity to industrial buildings means that views of the proposed development site would be limited to medium to long distance glimpses and when adjacent to the site itself on Harts Farm Way.
- 27 Visualisation 1 is taken from Harts Farm Way opposite to the entrance to the Havant Household Waste Recycling Centre. The visualisation shows (shaded in blue) the main structure of the concrete generator enclosure. There would be 5no. stacks extending above the enclosure by an additional 7.5m. These would be relatively slim with a diameter of 0.8m. It is at a distance of approximately 35m to the site boundary. It is taken to the south west of the Proposed Development Site looking north east. The Proposed Development Site would not be visible further along Harts Farm Way either to the south west due to intervening vegetation or to the north east due to the adjacent industrial structures.
- 28 Visualisation 2 is taken from Brockhampton Road where it crosses the M3. This was chosen as it represents a view from a local high point. In this case the proposed Development is shown as a shaded blue box and includes the main structure and the stacks. It is at an approximate distance of 310m to the Proposed Site Boundary. It is taken looking in a southerly direction. The view reflects the general industrial nature of the location.

4.2 Assessment

- 29 The Proposed Development Site is not located within or near to a national or local landscape designation and is not deemed to be of local value. The landscape value is therefore deemed to be of **Low** value. Given the relatively limited visibility of the Proposed Development it would be a discreet location of the development being surrounded on all sides by similar industrial structures it is considered that a minor change such as the Proposed Development can be accommodated without significant impact on the wider landscape. The landscape susceptibility of the landscape is deemed to be of a **Low** value as there are no landscape designations and the landscape is already devalued through existing modern industrial features. Based on the GLVIA guidelines the sensitivity of the landscape in and around the Proposed Development is deemed to be of **Very Low** value in that it will result in a very minor, localised, loss of or alteration to one or more key elements / features / characteristics identified in the baseline study.
- 30 It is considered that the Proposed Development would constitute a minor component of the wider view, which might be missed by the casual observer or receptor. It is therefore concluded that the magnitude of landscape change would be **Negligible**.

- 31 Using the GLVIA3 matrix for combining landscape sensitivity and magnitude of change it is concluded that the degree of landscape effect is **Negligible**.
- 32 The Proposed Development site is located with no visibility from residential receptors or from local Public Rights of Way. It should be noted that these are occasional glimpses from the local pedestrian footpaths. Furthermore, views are already influenced by the presence of existing modern industrial buildings. On this basis it is concluded that the visual value would be **Very Low**.
- 33 There are no Public Rights of Way or residential receptors and visual impact would be limited to local employees and road users. The susceptibility of visual receptors is therefore deemed to be **Low**.
- 34 Using the GLVIA3 matrix for combining value and susceptibility it is concluded that the visual sensitivity is **Very Low**.
- 35 Initially the Proposed Development would constitute a minor component of the wider view which might be missed by the casual observer particularly when seen in the context of the existing vista. It is therefore concluded that the magnitude of visual change would be initially **Low** but within a short space of time reduce to **Negligible**.
- 36 Using the GLVIA3 matrix for combining landscape sensitivity and magnitude of change it is concluded that the degree of visual effect would be **Negligible**.

5 Summary

- 37 In conclusion, the Proposed Development is located within an existing modern industrial landscape which is dominated by modern, man-made features including warehouses and factories.
- 38 Given the existing landscape, it is likely that the Proposed Development would become a negligible feature in the landscape when viewed in the existing context.
- 39 It is therefore concluded that landscape and visual effect should not be a reason for the refusal of this planning application.

Appendix A: LVIA Assessment Criteria

Source: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Guidelines, 3rd edition (2013)

Table 1: Guidelines for Landscape Value Determination			
Value	Typical Criteria	Typical Scale	Typical Examples
Exceptional	High Importance (or Quality) and Rarity. No or very limited potential for substitution.	International, National	World Heritage Site, National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
High	High Importance (or Quality) and Rarity. Limited potential for substitution.	National, Regional, Local	National / regional designations such as National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) in very good condition, or high local importance in combination with medium importance designations
Medium	Medium Importance (or Quality) and Rarity. Limited potential for substitution.	Regional, Local	Regional or local designations incorporated into development plans or undesignated but value perhaps expressed through non-official publications or demonstrable use.
Low	Low Importance (or Quality) and Rarity	Local	Areas identified as having some redeeming features and possibly identified for improvement.
Negligible	Low Importance (or Quality) and Rarity	Local	Areas identified for recovery

Table 2: Guidelines for Visual Value Determination		
Value	Typical Criteria	Typical Examples
Exceptional	High Importance (or Quality) and Rarity. No or very limited potential for substitution.	Key vistas across landscapes and heritage views published or otherwise noted with national importance, for example views of and from St Michaels Mount or between Tors on the Moors
High	High Importance (or Quality) and Rarity. Limited potential for substitution.	County / regional level views or those in a local context involving nationally designated assets, for example of local churches or from assets in AGLV areas Residential views from designated assets / areas National scenic routes
Medium	Medium Importance (or Quality) and Rarity. Limited potential for substitution.	Residential views of good quality, those from local trails and from local vantage points not included in the higher categories Local scenic routes
Low	Low Importance (or Quality) and Rarity	Views and visual amenity already affected by other elements of devaluing character and those fore-shortened by other elements, for example views over a business park or industrial estate
Negligible	Low Importance (or Quality) and Rarity	Views with seriously compromised visual amenity, such as dumps, dilapidated landscape

Table 3 Guidelines to determine Susceptibility of Potential Landscape Receptors	
Susceptibility	Criteria Guidance
High	Only minor changes can be accommodated without impact on value and / or loss of character or no more than moderate changes can be compensated by replacement or substitution, for example: Value may be expressed as a national designated area or may be an element that is rare or in pristine condition. Intact historic landscapes with great time depth and no or very limited modern intrusions. Valuable, but damaged landscapes, where further change would result in complete loss of their integrity and quality (in this scenario high sensitivity is based on the assumption that any further change would result in unacceptable long-term damage to a resource, which makes it highly sensitive to further change, although its condition at the point of assessment may not be favourable). The landscape receptor to be assessed has a small area, where the proposal would affect much or all of that area.
Medium	Minor to moderate changes can be accommodated without impact on value and / or loss of character or moderate changes can be reduced or eliminated by replacement or substitution, for example: Value may be expressed through a regional or local designation or element that is in good condition and occurs relatively frequently within the landscape context. Good quality landscapes with preserved integrity, but modern influences apparent. The landscape receptor to be assessed has a medium sized area significantly exceeding that of the proposal area so that any change would not affect the whole landscape receptor.
Low	Moderate to substantial changes can be accommodated without impact on value and / or loss of character or substantial changes can be reduced by replacement or substitution, for example: There is no value defined through designations or clear local use or definition and the receptor does not display specifically valuable properties within the context of the wider landscape area. The landscape receptor is devalued already through character changes etc and restoration is not an option. Proposals would contribute to improvements of the receptor. The receptor is of such a large area that a change would only affect a minor part of that area without any consequence for the remainder of the receptor area and it is not a nationally or regionally designated area. The receptor has plenty of capacity to accommodate change, for example plenty of key elements and features are present so that the loss of a minor percentage would not be significant and can be replaced or visual characteristics can be successfully retained and improved.

Table 4 Guidelines to determine Susceptibility of Potential Visual Receptors by Type	
Susceptibility	Guideline Visual Receptor Types
High ↓	Visitors to nationally designated areas of public and private open space where landscape appreciation is a primary function of their use or where landscape and visual quality is integral to the designation's value e.g. AONBs, Heritage Coasts, National Parks, etc
	Users of PRoW - national trails and long distance trails with direct views of the development for long sections of path or from highly sensitive locations.
	Residential communities and private properties with direct views of the development from apparent key living areas.
	Visitors to designated areas of historical national or regional importance such as SAMs and Historic Parks and Gardens where setting is recognised as integral to the area's / feature's importance
Medium ↓	Visitors to locally designated areas of public and private open space where landscape appreciation is a primary function of their use or where landscape and visual quality is integral to the designation's value e.g. AGLVs, AGHVs, Country Parks etc.
	Users of areas of public and private recreational space where landscape is not a primary function of use i.e. sports grounds, golf courses etc.
	Users of PRoW – national trails, local trails and local footpaths with partial or glimpsed views from sections of the path or direct views from short sections of the path
	Residential communities and private properties with partial or glimpsed views of the development from apparent key living areas, and / or views from other areas in the house, and / or with direct views from external and access areas.
	Visitors to designated areas of historical local importance such as Conservation Areas of AGHVs where setting is recognised as integral to the area's / feature's importance
Low ↓	Users of PRoW associated with highways or local routes the primary function of which is access between two points or users of paths with partial or glimpsed views from short sections of the path.
	Residential communities and private properties with no views from key living areas and / or limited views from external and access areas.
	Employees
	Road users

Table 5 Guideline Matrix for Combining Value and Susceptibility into a Sensitivity Judgement (<i>in italics</i>)				
		Susceptibility		
		High	Medium	Low
Value	Exceptional	<i>Very high</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium / high</i>
	High	<i>High</i>	<i>Medium / high</i>	<i>Medium</i>
	Medium	<i>Medium / high</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>
	Low	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Very low</i>
	Negligible	<i>Low</i>	<i>Very low</i>	<i>Very low</i>

Table 6 Guideline Criteria for determining Landscape and Visual Impact Magnitudes		
Magnitude of Change –landscape		Magnitude of Change –Visual
Total loss of or major alteration to key elements / features / characteristics identified in the baseline study	HIGH ↓	Proposals form a significant and immediately apparent part of the view with often long-term and irreversible changes to its overall character. Often associated with close distance or direct and open views.
Partial loss of or alteration to one or more key elements / features / characteristics identified in the baseline study	MEDIUM ↓	Proposals form a visible and recognisable new element within the overall view which are readily noticed by the observer or receptor. Often associated with middle distance or partial views and often possible to mitigate.
Minor loss of or alteration to one or more key elements / features / characteristics identified in the baseline study	LOW ↓	Proposals constitute a minor component of the wider view, which might be missed by the casual observer or receptor. Often associated with long-distance or glimpsed views or can be short-term, reversible effects.
Very minor, localised, loss of or alteration to one or more key elements / features / characteristics identified in the baseline study	NEGLIGIBLE ↓	Proposals constitute such a minor component of the view as to only be visible when deliberately sought out and not casually perceptible, or are severely restricted so that proposals can be barely perceived. Can be associated with any distance from site, usually middle to long.
No loss or alteration to one or more key elements / features / characteristics of the baseline (pre-development landscape) and / or no introduction of new elements / features / characteristics	NO CHANGE NB: this level is normally scoped out in the baseline and not carried forward to the assessment	No part of the development, or work or activity associated with it, is discernible or they are at such a distance that they are scarcely appreciated

Table 7 Guideline Matrix to determine Degree of Effect (<i>in italics</i>)				
		Sensitivity		
		High	Medium	Low
Magnitude	High	<i>Substantial</i>	<i>Moderate/Substantial</i>	<i>Moderate</i>
	Medium	<i>Moderate/Substantial</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Slight</i>
	Low	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>Slight</i>	<i>Negligible</i>
	Negligible	<i>Slight</i>	<i>Negligible</i>	<i>Negligible</i>

Appendix B: Methods for Visualisations

Introduction

- 40 The photomontage methodology conforms to the latest Landscape Institute (LI) Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals (December 2019) for photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment. This document outlines the process by which all photomontage images have been produced.

Data Collection

- 41 The viewpoints for photomontage have been carefully selected. Consideration to safety and legal access is also given when electing the viewpoint positions for the photomontages. The team conducting the site-work consists of both a photographer and a surveyor who will be responsible for the entire process from image capture to final photomontage. When collecting visual data, relevant control points within the photo are surveyed to a high level of accuracy to ensure that the proposed development accurately correlates to the photo.

Equipment

- 42 Relevant camera settings such as focal point are also noted in the document. These settings are selected in accordance with the LI guidance, and are set for the conditions at the time of the photo. When appropriate, surveying equipment is used to establish the position of the photo.

Image Processing

- 43 Each panoramic image is produced by the stitching together of a number of individual photographs using industry standard software. The images are then individually checked to ensure both that the original photographic quality is maintained and that the resulting image is clear and realistically stitched together. An overlap of 30% is applied for each image.

Photomontage

- 44 Industry standard image-handling software is used to produce the final photomontage image. The stitched image is the base for the photomontage viewpoint, with additional images captured from the survey or previous surveys introduced where relevant. As per the LI Advice Note, the photomontage composition process includes the digital manipulation of these images. Final images are saved as .jpg format.

Presentation

- 45 Industry standard drafting software is used to produce the final deliverable drawing. Both existing and proposed images are shown at the same size and scale, with all required details displayed in the title block of the drawing.

Appendix C: Type 1 Annotated Viewpoints