

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT – General Guidance

This is requested for certain types of development that, because of their scale and nature, have the potential to fundamentally alter the inherent character of the rural landscape.

Published literature

The work should be undertaken by a landscape professional (preferably registered with the Landscape Institute, LI, or Institute of Environmental Management, IEMA), and should take into account the following best practice guidelines and recommendations:

- Landscape Character Assessment. Guidance for England and Wales: Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage (2002).
- Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity, published jointly by the Countryside Agency and Scottish Natural Heritage.
- Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Second Edition: LI and IEMA (revised 2002).
- Visual Assessment of Windfarms Best Practice: Scottish Natural Heritage.
- Herefordshire Council's Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance, as updated in 2009.

Zone of theoretical visibility

Up to 15km radius should be used to determine the Zone of Theoretical Visibility for the application, with a more detailed assessment of the area within 5km and 2.5km of the site (or as otherwise agreed depending on site conditions). Visual receptors to be considered will include dwellings, public rights of way (roads and footpaths), public open space, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens, scheduled ancient monuments and local cultural features, amongst other site specific locations. The sensitivity and the magnitude of impact should be defined at each location. Key viewpoints should be identified and photomontages should be produced from these locations.

Other information

- Potential impacts on the historic or cultural landscape.
- Consideration of alternative sites.
- Consideration of cumulative impact of similar developments in the surrounding area.
- Assessment of associated infrastructure.
- Assessment of construction and decommissioning phases, as well as the operational phase.

It will likely be beneficial for Herefordshire Council to review a description of the proposed methodology, the zone of theoretical visual influence and key viewpoints from the consultant prior to the work being carried out.