

14.1.5 Methodology for Evaluation of Impacts on Setting

49 The Xi'an Declaration on the Conservation of the Setting of Heritage Structures, Sites and Areas, (ICOMOS, 2005) defines setting in the following way:

50 *'The setting of a heritage structure, site or area is defined as the immediate and extended environment that is part of, or contributes to, its significance and distinctive character.'*

51 *Beyond the physical and visual aspects, the setting includes interaction with the natural environment; past or present social or spiritual practices, customs, traditional knowledge, use or activities and other forms of intangible cultural heritage aspects that created and form the space as well as the current and dynamic cultural, social and economic context.'*

52 The methodology employed in this appraisal used a matrix as a guide to evaluate the significance of impacts on the setting of an archaeological, architectural or cultural heritage sites. The matrix ensures a consistent approach that takes into account a sites 'Sensitivity to Impacts on Setting' and the 'Magnitude of the Impact' that the site is likely to experience as a guide to evaluating the 'Significance of the Impact'.

14.1.5.1 Evaluation of Sites Sensitivity to Impacts on Setting

53 The evaluation of sensitivity is made irrespective of what the magnitude of the impact may be, or what the consultant feels the final significance of the impact may be, however, it is vital that the type of development is taken into account. Overhead lines have a form that is linear and upstanding in the landscape and therefore they have an influence over a wide geographic area.

54 Evaluation of a site's 'Sensitivity to Impacts on Setting' is based upon the following criteria:

- degree of legislative protection;
- preservation / above ground expression;
- group value, including spatial and historic relationships between cultural heritage sites;
- documentary / historical / artistic references;
- amenity value (accessibility, published material such as maps / leaflets / guides, parking, visitor information etc.);
- viewer incidents (how many and what type people would be affected i.e. visitors to the site, walkers along mapped routes who's focus is on the landscape, travellers / commuters along nearby road / rail links etc.);

- landscape setting;
- other developments that have already impacted on the setting of the site; and
- views or vistas from the site and to the site from the surrounding landscape.

55 Based on the above criteria the sensitivity of a site to impacts on setting was classified as being very high, high, moderate, low or none i.e. no sensitivity.

56 The Sensitivity of a Site to Impacts on its setting is a function of many criteria, not least of which is the status a site holds in the psyche of the people. This can be largely intangible and therefore there is leeway allowed for in the evaluation of a site's sensitivity and also evaluation of the Significance of the Impact in the final Matrix to allow for a degree of professional judgement.

14.1.5.2 Evaluation of the Magnitude of the Impact

57 The evaluation of the 'Magnitude of the Impact' that the proposed development will have on a site is an indication of the scale of the effect that the proposed development will have irrespective of the sensitivity of the site.

58 The effects of a development such as this on the setting of sites are largely visual, but the magnitude of the impact is more than just a function of the distance that a site is located from the line route, the following factors are also taken into account:

- topography, relating to the proposed route line and the site in question;
- screening;
- the scale of the development;
- approach and leaving angles of the route line in relation to the site;
- cumulative impact of other development in the vicinity; and
- views and vistas both to and from the site.

59 Using the above criteria the Magnitude of the Impact is evaluated as being major, substantial, modest, minor or none.

14.1.5.3 Matrix

60 The results of the above evaluation of a site's 'Sensitivity to Impacts on Setting' and the 'Magnitude of the Impact' are used in the following matrix to guide the evaluation of the