



EAST PARK ENERGY

East Park Energy

EN010141

Applicant Responses to Relevant Representations

Host Authorities, Statutory Environmental Bodies, and
Other Interested Parties

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Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and
Procedure) Regulations 2009: Regulation 5(2)(q)

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Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed
Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This document sets out the responses of BSSL Cambsbed 1 Limited ('the Applicant') to the Relevant Representations (RR) submitted in relation to the Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the East Park Energy project ('the Scheme').
- 1.1.2 The application for the Scheme was received by the Planning Inspectorate on 3rd October 2025 and was then accepted for examination on 30th October 2025. The period for registering as an Interested Party to submit a RR ran from 26th November 2025 to 14th January 2025. The RRs received were published on the Planning Inspectorate website on 29th January 2026.

1.2 Purpose of this Document

- 1.2.1 The purpose of this document is to provide the Applicant's responses to relevant representations.
- 1.2.2 This document provides the Applicant's specific responses to matters raised by the three host local planning authorities (the 'Host Authorities'), the statutory environmental bodies, and other selected interested parties. The Applicant has additionally prepared thematic responses to matters raised by interested parties within a separate submission **Applicant Responses to Relevant Representations – Thematic Responses [EN010141/DR/8.9]**.
- 1.2.3 In preparing this document, the Applicant has only responded to substantive points, in particular where the Applicant considers matters set out in the application have been misunderstood/misinterpreted, or the consultee has requested clarification, additional information or has raised a point of disagreement.
- 1.2.4 The Applicant has responded to all relevant paragraphs raised by the local planning authorities (LPAs) and statutory environmental bodies. For the other

selected organisations and interested parties, the Applicant has more selectively responded to issues raised where clarification is sought or points of disagreement raised; otherwise, the Applicant has prepared responses structured around different recurring themes raised through submitted RRs.

- 1.2.5 The matters raised by all Parish Councils are addressed through the themed responses in the **Applicant Responses to Relevant Representations - Themed Responses [EN010141/DR/8.9]**. The Applicant notes that many of the points raised by Parish Councils are additionally covered by the existing responses in this response document.

1.3 Document Structure

- 1.3.1 This response document is structured as follows:

- Section 2.0 – Responses to Host Authorities
- Section 3.0 – Responses to Statutory Environmental Bodies
- Section 4.0 – Responses to Statutory Undertakers
- Section 5.0 – Responses to Other Interested Parties

- 1.3.2 The documents submitted with the DCO Application are referenced using the reference number assigned by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) i.e. **[APP-XXX]**. The Applicant has referred to a series of updated documents, in particular, the suite of management plans contained in Volume 7 (Other Documents) of the application. Where application documents have been updated as a result of the RR the response sets out that the document is “[as updated alongside this submission]”.

1.4 Note about National Policy Statements

- 1.4.1 Section 1.6 of the 2026 NPS EN-1 confirms that for schemes accepted for examination before the final publication of the approved 2025 amendments, the 2024 suite of NPSs should have effect. East Park Energy was accepted for examination in October 2025 prior to the final publication of the 2025 amendments. The 2024 NPSs therefore have effect for decision making.

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- 1.4.2 All references to the NPSs in this document made by the Applicant are to the 2024 NPSs unless stated otherwise.
- 1.4.3 The Applicant has prepared a separate **Note on updated National Policy Statements EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5 [PDA-018]**.

2.0 RESPONSES TO HOST AUTHORITIES

2.1 Response to Bedford Borough Council

Table 1: Response to Bedford Borough Council Relevant Representation (RR-111)

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
BBC-RR-01	3.2	The Scheme	In the Applicant's EIA Scoping Report (October 2023/ V.01) (para1.1.2) they state 'Capacity: the precise generating capacity and storage capacity will be subject to detailed design'. This flexibility would accord with PINs Advice Note 9 and is therefore in principle acceptable to the Council [EN-3 stresses the need to ensure that the significant effects of a Proposed Development have been properly assessed - Applicants need to ensure that the criteria in para1.4 of Advice Note 9 are achieved - this seems to have been acknowledged by the Applicant in para3.2.5 and para3.2.6 of the Scoping Report] (Ref. Applicant's EIA Scoping Report). The Council notes that at the early stages of such an Application the principle of flexibility (i.e. the 'Rochdale Envelope') is acceptable but that as the Scheme is developed resolution on such matters should be attained by the Applicant which is then reflected in the Environmental Statement's assessment.	The Applicant notes that BBC's comment is in relation to the approach taken by the Applicant at the EIA Scoping stage, which set the expectation that the Applicant provide greater detail and clarity on the Scheme and the basis of assessment as part of the Environmental Statement. In response, the Applicant has provided a description of the Scheme in ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] along with the design parameters which are secured by the Design Parameters and Principles Statement [APP-153] and the basis on which the design parameters have been assessed to establish a 'worst-case' (e.g. Table 2-1 [APP-038]). The principle of applying for a DCO based on design parameters and an associated Works Plan [APP-009] to ensure flexibility for post-consent detailed design is well-established and supported by the Planning Inspectorate's <i>Advice Note 9: Rochdale Envelope</i>.
BBC-RR-02	3.3	The Scheme	In the Applicant's EIA Scoping Report para1.6.6 they continue 'A DCO, if granted, has the effect of providing consent for development, in addition to a range of other consents and authorisations, where specified, as well as removing the need for some consents (such as	The Applicant notes that BBC's comment is in relation to the approach taken by the Applicant at the EIA Scoping stage, and raised concerns that the 'associated development' being applied for was at the time unclear.

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			planning permission). Section 115 of the Planning Act 2008 also states that a DCO can include consent for 'associated development', which is development that is not an NSIP in its own right, but is associated with the NSIP applied for. This may be development that supports the construction, operation or decommissioning of the NSIP; which helps to address the impacts of the NSIP; or is of a type normally brought forward with the NSIP'. This suggests that the Applicant could secure DCO consent that confers planning permission(s) for 'associated development' that currently has not yet been fully resolved and/or assessed by the Applicant nor discussed and resolved with the Host Authorities – this raises significant concern (Ref. Applicant's EIA Scoping Report).	The Applicant has subsequently refined and set out the detail of what is being applied for, with the 'authorised development' defined in Schedule 1 of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The Authorised Development comprises the principal development or associated development within the meaning of section 115(2) of the Planning Act 2008. The scope of "further associated development" is expressly constrained. The Explanatory Memorandum [AS-010] explains (at paragraph 5.1.4, and again at paragraph 10.1.4) that Schedule 1 of the draft DCO [AS-008] includes a list of further associated development that may be undertaken, but only insofar as it does not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects from those assessed in the ES. The draft DCO [AS-008] includes safeguards that prevent the 'scope creep' suggested by BBC's comment. For example, Article 7 (limits of deviation) only allows works to be carried out outside the limits of deviation where it is demonstrated to the Secretary of State's satisfaction, and following consultation with the local planning authority(s), that the deviation would not give rise to materially new or materially different environmental effects compared to those in the ES. The Approach taken by the Applicant to defining the scope of the development is well precedented in other made DCOs.
BBC-RR-03	3.4	The Scheme	In the Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion (dated 8 December 2023) ID2.1.3 it is noted that 'The Inspectorate expects that at the point an application is made, the description of the Proposed Development	The Applicant notes that BBC's comment is in relation to the approach taken by the Applicant at the EIA Scoping stage, and requested a clear basis of

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			will be sufficiently detailed to include the design, size, capacity, technology, and locations of the different elements of the Proposed Development or where details are not yet known, will set out the assumptions applied to the assessment in relation to these aspects. This should include the footprint and heights of the structures (relevant to existing ground levels), as well as land-use requirements for all elements and phases of the development. The description should be supported (as necessary) by figures, cross-sections, and drawings which should be clearly and appropriately referenced. Where flexibility is sought, the ES should clearly set out and justify the maximum design parameters that would apply for each option assessed and how these have been used to inform an adequate assessment in the ES' (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID2.1.3). It is considered by the Council that various elements set-out above remain either unresolved or have yet to be tabled for discussion to attain in-principle agreement.	assessment for the various components of the Scheme. The Applicant considers that this has been provided through ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038], which sets out the Rochdale Envelope approach and the design parameters used to assess a reasonable worst case, supported by figures and indicative drawings in ES Volume 3 as listed at paragraph 2.1.6. Paragraphs 2.4.9 to 2.4.10 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] explain that the submitted figures illustrate a reasonable worst-case layout by maximising the development footprint based on the parameters assessed, and that the technical chapters address how design variations within those parameters could alter the magnitude of effects. The key characteristics of the Scheme are described by Work Package, with assessed parameters for design, size, capacity, technology and location set out clearly in the tables through ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038]. Design parameters are secured through the Design Parameters and Principles Statement [APP-153], which explains that the ES has assessed reasonable maximum parameters and worst-case scenarios.
BBC-RR-04	3.5	The Scheme	Aspect 1.1 Development: to address the aspect of 'Scheme description for planning consent' the Council has reviewed inter alia [APP-001], [APP-002], [APP-016], [APP-017], [APP-031] and [APP-037] to attain clarity as to the full scope of works being applied for; namely:	The 'Principal Development' is the nationally significant infrastructure project which requires development consent, namely the generating station with a gross electrical output capacity of over 50MW. This is described in Schedule 1, paragraph 3 of the draft DCO [AS-008] as Work No. 1 (a ground mounted solar photovoltaic generating station comprising solar PV

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			a) [APP-017] 'Principal Development': 'The development to which the Application relates and which requires a DCO as described in Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the draft Order'. It is noted that the draft DCO Schedule 1 sets out 'Authorised Development' but does not separate between 'Principal Development' and Associated Development'. b) [APP-017] 'Associated Development': 'Defined under Section 115(2)(a) of the 2008 Act as development which is associated with the development for which development consent is required and that has a direct relationship with it. Associated Development should either support the construction or operation of the Principal Development or help address its impacts. It should not be an aim in itself but should be subordinate to the Principal Development'. The Council seeks clarity as to the works been applied for under each of these terms.	modules and mounting structures, inverters, transformers, switchgears and electrical and communication cables). Schedule 1, paragraph 3 of the draft DCO [AS-008] then expressly identifies the 'associated development' authorised by the Order as including the remaining Work Nos. (and sub-works) which support the construction, operation and decommissioning of the generating station and/or address its impacts, including the battery energy storage system (Work No. 2), the on-site substation (Work No. 3), the grid connection to Eaton Socon (Work No. 4) and works at the Eaton Socon Substation (Work No. 5), together with internal cabling and ancillary infrastructure (Work No. 6), the operations and maintenance area (Work No. 6A), drainage lagoon (Work No. 6B), temporary construction and decommissioning compounds (Work No. 7), green infrastructure (Work No. 8), access works (Work No. 9 and Work No. 9A) and the agrisolar research area (Work No. 10). In addition, Schedule 1 includes a list of 'further associated development' which may only be undertaken within the Order limits insofar as it does not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects to those assessed in the ES.
BBC-RR-05	3.6	The Scheme	[APP-037] Environmental Statement (ES) Vol.1 Chp.1 para 1.2 the Applicant defines the Scheme to 'comprises a new ground-mounted solar photovoltaic energy generating station and an associated on-site battery energy storage system (BESS) on land to the north-west of St Neots. The Scheme also includes the associated infrastructure for connection to the national	The Applicant notes BBC's concern that the brief description of the Scheme in ES Vol 1 Chapter 1 Introduction [APP-037] does not, of itself, identify individual components as 'principal' or 'associated' development. Chapter 1 is a high-level introduction which introduces the Scheme and directs the reader to ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] for the

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			grid at the Eaton Socon National Grid Substation... generation and export of 400 megawatts (MW) of renewable electricity, as well as the storage of 100 MW of electricity in the BESS*. Further, the Applicant state: a) para1.2.4 'a more detailed description of the 'Scheme' is set out in [APP-038] ES Vol.2 Chp.2'; and, b) para1.3.3 'The Order Limits also cover land outside of East Park Sites A to D which will be required for access, cabling [cable corridor], and the grid connection to the Eaton Socon Substation'. The Council's reading of [APP-037] does not clarify which components of the Scheme are 'Principal Development', which are 'Associated Development', and how the Order Limits and Work Packages relate to the former two terms. It is suggested that such clarification is critical to any drafting of the [APP-016] DCO Agreement. (*[APP-031] Planning Statement: a) para1.2.2: the Applicant acknowledges that the precise generating capacity and storage capacity will be subject to detailed design but goes on to confirm that they have a grid connection agreement with National Grid for a 400 MW export and 100 MW import. It is therefore assumed that the figures stated is the maximum for purposes of the Environmental Statement and DCO Application.	detailed description and the basis of assessment. The Applicant has responded above (ref. BBC-RR-04) to clarify the meaning of Principal Development or Associated Development. In relation to capacity, ES Vol 1 Chapter 1 [APP-037] confirms that the 400MW export and 100MW storage reflect the Applicant's grid connection agreement, with final capacities to be confirmed through detailed design within the assessed parameters.

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			b) p4.5.2: the Applicant references Advice Note 9 in that it provides guidance regarding the degree of flexibility that may be considered appropriate within a DCO Application under The Planning Act 2008. The Applicant acknowledges that the Advice Note notes that there may be aspects of the Scheme that are not yet fixed prior to the DCO being granted, and therefore, it may be necessary for the EIA to assess likely worst-case variations to ensure that all reasonably foreseeable likely environmental effects of the Scheme are assessed. In-principle, the Council accepts this approach, subject to matters raised against this aspect).	
BBC-RR-06	3.7	The Scheme	It is the position of the Council that the aspect of the description of Scheme, as raised by the Council in their Scoping response, their PEIR response, and their reference to the scheme as set-out/ defined by the Applicant in their Section 48 notification requires clarification. It is consequently suggested that the Applicant has not discharged their requirement of this issue in accordance with EIA Regulations (2017) Schedule 4(1)(b).	The Applicant has responded to BBC's queries in relation to the description of the Scheme above, with reference to responses BBC-RR-01 to BBC-RR-05, and trusts that this resolves BBC's outstanding concerns on what is being applied for through the DCO. In addition to the above matters, the Applicant considers that the Scheme description provided in ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] provides a more than adequate description of the Scheme components in order to establish the likely significant environmental effects, and that consequently the requirement at Schedule 4(1)(b) of the Infrastructure Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 is met.

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
BBC-RR-07	3.8	The Scheme	<u>Aspect 1.2</u> [APP-038] ES Vol.1 Chp2 Work Packages: while para2.1.3 sets out a very similar description of the Scheme to that found in ES Chp1, namely, the: <i>‘Scheme comprises a new ground-mounted solar photovoltaic energy generating station with a total capacity exceeding 50 megawatts (MW) and an associated on-site battery energy storage system (BESS) and 400 kV substation on land to the north-west of St Neots. The Scheme would allow for the generation and export of 400 MW of electricity to the National Grid from the solar photovoltaic energy generating station, and would be capable of exporting and importing up to 100 MW via the BESS’</i>, the extent of the ‘Work Packages’ as set out in para2.4.6 suggests a far greater level of construction activity and imposition/ effect on the recipient landscape context than the current planning description implies and consequently does not give a comprehensive understanding as to the full extent of ES assessment required and consent requested. By way of example, consent is sought for temporary compound, an operations and maintenance area, and an ‘agrisolar’ – these are not supported ‘by figures, cross-sections, and drawings’ to give an overall scale/ massing comprehension of what is proposed. In light of the powers sought by the Applicant, the Works Packages relating to scope and clarification of technical detail(s) requires discussion at Examination.	Paragraph 2.1.3 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] provides a brief overview of the Scheme’s principal elements and grid connection capacity. The same chapter then explains at paragraph 2.4.6 that the draft DCO [AS-008] divides the Scheme into a series of ‘Work Packages’ (Work Nos.) which are referred to throughout the ES, and lists Work Nos. 1 to 10 (including Work No. 6A operations and maintenance area, Work No. 7 temporary construction and decommissioning compounds, and Work No. 10 agrisolar research area). The Applicant does not agree that these elements are unsupported by figures and drawings. Paragraph 2.1.6 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 [APP-038] identifies the supporting figures for Chapter 2, including the Illustrative Environmental Masterplan (Figure 2-1 [APP-121]), Indicative Engineering Drawings (Figure 2-2 [APP-122]) and the Indicative Construction Access and Compounds plans (Figure 2-5 [APP-125]). The ES provides component-specific indicative drawings and assessed parameters. For example: - the storage, operations and maintenance building is supported by an indicative drawing (Figure 2-2u [APP-122]) and assessed design parameters at paragraphs 2.4.138 to 2.4.139 [APP-038]; - temporary construction and decommissioning compounds are described at paragraphs 2.4.149 to 2.4.152 [APP-038], with location assumptions tied to Figure 2-5 [APP-125];

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
				the agrisolar research area is described at paragraphs 2.4.169 to 2.4.172 [APP-038], with the location shown on Figure 2-1k [APP-121]. Paragraph 2.4.9 [APP-038] confirms that the Illustrative Environmental Masterplan presents a reasonable worst-case layout which maximises the development footprint within the assessed parameters, and paragraph 2.4.10 explains that the technical chapters address how variations within those parameters could change the magnitude of effects.
BBC-RR-08	3.9	The Scheme	<u>Aspect 1.3</u> While 'Work Packages' are defined in [APP-038], they are referred to as 'Works Plan' in [APP-017] and 'Works' in [APP-016]: it is suggested that this needs consistence in defining the Scheme.	The Applicant notes the point regarding terminology. The 'Work Packages' or 'Works' are used interchangeably, with 'Works' being a simpler plural that relates more directly to 'Work' which is the legally operative term in the draft DCO [AS-008]. The 'Works Plan' illustrates where each of the 'Works' can occur, providing the limits of deviation for the different Scheme components as secured by the draft DCO [AS-008].
BBC-RR-09	3.10	Draft DCO	<u>Aspect 1.4</u> It is noted that the Applicant seeks powers with the 'Order limits'[App-009; Plans], 'means the limits shown on the land and crown land plans within which the authorised development may be carried out and land acquired or used' [Part 1, APP-016]. However, the Applicant also seeks powers adjacent to the Order limits <i>'in terms of the limits of the provision and how far "adjacent" extends from the Order limits within the meaning of Article 3(2), it is noted that article 20 (authority to survey and investigate the land) grants the Applicant the power to enter not only onto land within the Order limits, but also onto other land "which</i>	The power the Applicant seeks to obtain consent for in Article 20 of the draft DCO [AS-008] follows the drafting in a model provision which derives from a specific power granted under both Section 53 of the Planning Act 2008 and Section 172 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. Both these sections provide that entry to land for surveys can take place under with the approval of the relevant Secretary of State. These statutory powers allow project promoters to enter land to conduct necessary surveys and investigations without the landowner's consent. The statutory provisions from which they derive do not limit

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			<i>may be affected by the authorised development". The extent of 'adjacent' land would therefore need to be judged on a case-by-case basis and in practice would be to the extent necessary for the construction and operation of the authorised development' [para 9.3.4, APP-017]. The Applicant suggests that 'the Order Limits along the Grid Connection have typically been set at 25m wide. The construction working width when laying the cable will typically be up to 12m wide which allows for the width of the trench, a temporary access track, and material stockpiling. There is therefore flexibility retained within the Order Limits to allow for the alignment of the cable to divert slightly should any unexpected constraints be found along the route' It is suggested that the term 'Adjacent Land' is defined with some indicative extent/width dimension within the [APP-016] DCO Agreement to confine powers requested.</i>	the geographical scope where such powers can apply to land and simply state that it is exercisable in respect of land which is "subject of the proposal or to <i>other land</i>" [emphasis added]. The provisions need to be interpreted in the context of the purpose for which they are provided, i.e. in respect of land that will either be acquired compulsorily or land that may be affected by the Scheme. There is, therefore, no need to define the term "adjacent land" in any way beyond the natural meaning and that for which the power exists and the Applicant maintains its position, set out in paragraph 9.3.4 of the Explanatory Memorandum [APP-017] that this will need to be judged on a case-by-case basis. For this reason, the Applicant does not believe it is necessary to define the term "adjacent land".
BBC-RR-10	3.11	Draft DCO	<u>Aspect 1.5</u> Definition of 'Temporary': as stated by the Applicant [APP-037] para1.2.3 <i>'Subject to the Scheme securing Development Consent in Winter 2026/27 it is anticipated that works would start on site in early 2028 and be completed by mid-to late 2030 (although initial energisation of the Scheme is likely to commence prior to 2030). The Scheme comprises a temporary development with an operational phase of 40-years; decommissioning activities would therefore likely commence in 2070, 40 years after commissioning'.</i> In [APP-017] and in the [APP-016] Draft Development Consent Order it is noted that in Part 1 Interpretation the exact definition of the words 'temporary' and 'permanent' are not defined. This requires clarity in	The Applicant does not consider that the exact definition of the terms "temporary" and "permanent" needs to be added the draft DCO [AS-008]. Whilst the Applicant notes the Council's concerns in respect of ensuring that the duration or permanency of the different works forming the authorised development, the Applicant notes that this is secured in the DCO by way of requirement and also committed in the documents proposed to be certified with the draft DCO. The Applicant has set out the actions to be taken at the decommissioning phase at Section 2.7 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 [APP-038], and provided additional clarity on the retention of landscaping or permissive paths

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			reading all submitted material in assessing which works are: a) a) Of a limited temporary - construction phase - duration (e.g. road access works [Part 2 Street Works, App-016]); b) Which commitments by the Applicant are temporary for the duration of the Scheme (e.g. creation and/or improvements to PRowS; constructed culverts; etc.) after which they will be scrubbed-out/ revert to the landowner, some may be retained; and, c) Which works are permanent (e.g. landscape and habitat creation, Public Highway road works;) which will revert to the landowner and or local authority to maintain. Only on this basis can the harm, mitigation, and/or benefits be assessed accordingly (By example, if the proposed improvements to PRow which facilitates 'access to the countryside' are temporary works for the duration of the Scheme, then they should be afforded minor weight in their benefit in assessing the Application). It is consequently suggested that this aspect requires discussion at Examination.	with reference to response BBC-RR-32 of this document.
BBC-RR-11	3.12	Legislation	<u>Aspect 1.6</u> NSIP regime: (EN-1 , para2.10.51) the Applicant identifies that the generating capacity of the Scheme exceeds 50 MW (AC) and therefore the Scheme is classified as a NSIP as set out under Section 14(1)(a) and Section 15(1) and 15(2) of the Planning Act 2008. Reference should also be made to Section 15(3). This is a mechanism for updating the definition of what qualifies as a NSIP, ensuring the	The Applicant does not agree with the Council's suggestion. Sections 14(1) and 15(2) of the Planning Act 2008 have been referred to by the Applicant at paragraph 3.1.1 of the Explanatory Memorandum [APP-017]. In relation to Section 15(1), this is an introductory section setting out in more detail which type of generating stations will be considered nationally

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			DCO regime stays relevant for major developments (i.e. future-proofing).	significant infrastructure projects falling by reference to the more detailed provisions within Section 15: <i>“15(1) The construction or extension of a generating station is within section 14(1)(a) only if the generating station is or (when constructed or extended) is expected to be within subsection (2), (2A), (3), (3A) or (3B)”</i>. In relation to Section 15(3), the Applicant notes that this is not relevant in respect of the Scheme, given that this relates to offshore generating stations of over 100 megawatts, which will not be required at any point of the operational life of the Scheme: <i>“15(3) A generating station is within this subsection if—</i> <i>(a) it is an offshore generating station, and</i> <i>(b) its capacity is more than 100 megawatts.”</i> The Applicant is satisfied that the relevant sections of the Planning Act 2008 have been cited in the Explanatory Memorandum.
BBC-RR-12	3.13	Planning Policy	<u>Matter 1</u> Local planning policy: [APP-032] Policy compliance document para 7.1.1, Table 6, Section 6 - the Applicant makes the statement that the purpose of Policy 3S <i>‘is not to necessarily to control the type of development proposed by the Scheme’</i> is not agreed. The Examination’s attention is drawn to the wording of the policy that states <i>‘all new development’</i> and also criterion (viii) which is as much applicable to solar farms as to other forms of development.	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant does acknowledge within the ‘statement of compliance’ for Policy 3S in the Policy Compliance Document [APP-032] that development should safeguard the intrinsic character of the countryside, as per criterion (viii).
BBC-RR-13	3.14	EIA	<u>Matter 2</u> Operational (replacement) Phase: for completeness it is suggested that the Operational Phase should address the requirement for the	The Applicant’s Environmental Statement assesses the impacts and effects from the operational phase of the Scheme.

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			replacement of infrastructure (e.g. solar panels and BESS batteries etc; and related haulage routes and vis-splays onto the Public Highway) during the lifetime of the proposed Scheme and that any 'severity'/ significant effect identified and then mitigated in the Construction Phase should then also be applicable to the Operational Phase. This should then be drawn through in to related address (Ref. PEIR Reports, 2024). It is suggested that this matter has not been fully addressed by the Applicant	Table 2-35 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] sets out assumptions on the operational lifespan for key components, including solar panels and battery storage units. Paragraph 2.6.6 notes that replacement would be periodic through the lifetime of the Scheme and would not involve the intensity of the initial construction phase, however paragraph 2.6.3 explains that, where significant replacement campaigns are required then there is the potential for more staff and specialist equipment to be required. Paragraph 2.4.8 of the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [APP-157] confirms that routine inspections and assessments will be undertaken to determine the condition and performance of solar panels, associated equipment, and battery storage units, and that equipment reaching the end of its functional lifespan or showing reduced performance will be scheduled for replacement. Paragraph 2.4.9 then explains that large scale replacement activities will not form part of routine operation and that potential impacts, including to highways, will be limited and can be controlled predominantly through the measures in the oOEMP. Paragraph 2.4.10 of the oOEMP provides that, before any replacement activity involving more than 20% of the solar panels, a notification must be submitted to the relevant LPA for approval, setting out management measures that are consistent with the principles of the approved construction phase management plans, but proportionate to the scale of the proposed replacement activity.

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BBC-RR-14	3.15	EIA	Matter 3 Operational Phase (Landscape works): para2.4.149 <i>'An Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) has been prepared which covers the Construction, Operational and Decommissioning Phases'</i>. In light of the potential for significant works that may be required circa every 20-years at the replacement of the solar arrays and BESS batteries (Ref. [APP-038] Table 2-35), it is suggested that when this occurs, the oLEMP is reviewed in terms of any harm occurring to the landscape/ habitat and that the Applicant is required to produce a mitigation and planting/ habitat strategy etc. to address such harm; i.e. the LEMP should remain 'live' for the duration of the Scheme (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024) (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID2.1.9). As above, it is suggested that this matter has not been fully addressed by the Applicant	The outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159] has been prepared to cover the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Scheme. It is a control document to be certified as part of the DCO and secured via Requirement 4. The final LEMP must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oLEMP prior to commencing development and approved by the relevant LPA. The Applicant notes that any replacement works during the operational phase would utilise access tracks implemented during the construction phase to reach either the solar array areas, or the BESS facility. As a result there would be no impact to any planting and no vegetation clearance would be expected. The oLEMP [APP-159] already establishes a 'live' review and adaptive management framework for the operational phase. Paragraphs 8.1.2 to 8.1.5 provide that the final LEMP will be kept under review and revised as necessary, with the Landscape Manager able to propose changes including re-planting, and with formal reviews held annually during the first five operational years and then at a maximum of five-yearly intervals, supported by an Ecological Clerk of Works and a suitably qualified arboriculturist, with reporting to LPAs. Finally, any significant periodic replacement activity is also controlled through the operational management framework. The oOEMP [APP-157] requires that, if any replacement activity involves more than 20% of the solar panels, a notification must be submitted to the relevant LPA for approval, setting out management

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				measures consistent with the principles of the approved construction plans but proportionate to the scale of activity.
BBC-RR-15	3.16	EIA	<u>Matter 4</u> Manufacture, decommissioning and recycling: with respect to both the operational (replacement and maintenance) phase and decommissioning phase regarding the recycling of materials / waste, the Applicant should have some acknowledgement / reference to the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013....Whilst these matters are not strictly a planning matter (rather one of compliance with other legislation), a more detailed assessment of the operational and decommissioning phases regarding the recycling of materials / waste is required by the EIA Regulations in terms of an assessment of long-term, transboundary effect. In this regard, the Applicant is referred to Schedule 4(5) of the EIA Regulations (Ref. PEIR Reports, 2024). The Council expresses a significant concern that currently the majority of disused solar panels, BESS batteries, etc. are exported to 'land fill farms' outside the UK with no oversight or responsibilities attached to the Applicant. In terms of circular sustainability, this approach is not acceptable and needs a firm commitment by the Applicant of address.	Paragraph 3.1.8 of the outline Waste Management Plan (oWMP) [APP-164] explains that the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations 2013 require separate collection of WEEE (including solar PV panels and associated apparatus) and transfer to authorised treatment facilities for recycling or recovery, and also describes the producer take-back obligations intended to ensure proper treatment and recycling where possible. Paragraphs 6.2.8 to 6.2.11, and paragraph 6.3.7 [APP-164] confirm that electrical equipment arising during operation and decommissioning will be managed in accordance with the WEEE Regulations 2013 and diverted to authorised WEEE collection and recycling routes, and sets out the approach to specialist recycling and manufacturer take-back for solar panels and battery storage units. In EIA terms, ES Volume 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052] identifies waste streams arising from operation and provides estimated arisings and anticipated 'fate' by reference to the waste hierarchy and implementation of the oWMP [APP-164]. Paragraph 16.3.41 [APP-052] recognises that specialist capacity for PV panel and battery waste is developing, but notes that the recycling industry is expected to respond over time. In relation to oversight, the controls in the oWMP [APP-164] require that waste is removed by registered carriers to appropriately licensed facilities, with Waste

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				Transfer Notes or Consignment Notes recording the destination facility and permit details. The oWMP further requires a waste register recording waste movements, destinations and whether waste is recycled, recovered or landfilled. These requirements provide an audit trail for waste destinations and treatment routes throughout operation and decommissioning.
BBC-RR-16	4.2	Alternatives	With regards to site selection, it is noted that the Applicant has worked closely with the Council's Archaeology Officer in identifying and preparing a mitigation strategy for the found Scheduled Monument, including the Applicant removing the solar arrays identified for this area. It is suggested that this has been a positive outcome regarding the design evolution of the Scheme.	The Applicant notes this comment.
BBC-RR-17	4.3	BESS	<u>Matter 5</u> Pollution and risk: [APP-034] Design Approach Document para 4.3.27 to 4.3.32 - there is no detailed discussion regarding the design approach to the prevention and mitigation of lithium-ion battery fires through robust engineering, including Battery Management Systems (BMS) for monitoring, thermal management, adequate ventilation, fire suppression (like water mist), fire-resistant materials, spatial separation, and early detection systems (smoke / CO detectors) to manage risks like thermal runaway, while complying with strict health / safety regulations (e.g., NFPA 855, UL 9540) and ensuring clear access for emergency responders. Further, there is no discussion regarding decommissioning management options of waste materials generated by the Scheme which may have informed the Scheme's approach. Such a review/	Paragraphs 4.3.27 to 4.3.32 of the Design Approach Document [APP-034] explain that, at the outset of the design process, an AC-coupled (centralised) BESS solution was selected so that the BESS can be focused in a single compound and specific control measures can be put in place to manage the facility in the event of an incident such as a fire, rather than distributing equipment across the Site. The detailed design of the BESS will be undertaken post-consent in accordance with the Design Parameters and Principles Statement [APP-153] and the outline Battery Safety Management Plan (oBSMP) [APP-162]. The oBSMP [APP-162] commits to procurement and design in accordance with recognised standards

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			assessment should then inform inter alia the Environmental Statement, the [APP-162] outline Battery Safety Management Plan, and any specific protocols and safety measures for the management and operation of the BESS facility informing the DCO's Schedule of Requirements. It is suggested that this requires some response from the Applicant.	including NFPA 855 and UL 9540/UL 9540A, including large scale fire testing and consequence modelling to establish minimum separation distances and demonstrate loss will be safely limited to one enclosure. The oBSMP specifies that battery module safety features will include (as applicable) liquid cooling and active thermal management, venting and gas channels, and thermal or multi-sensor monitoring devices (paragraph 2.2.11, [APP-162]), with battery cells/modules certified and tested to relevant UL standards (paragraphs 2.2.12 to 2.2.13, [APP-162]) . For monitoring and control, the oBSMP identifies the minimum safety functions expected from the Battery Management System (BMS), including high cell temperature and thermal runaway trips (paragraph 3.2.3, [APP-162]) and confirms that BMS controls will incorporate NFPA 855 monitoring features (paragraph 3.2.4, [APP-162]). In relation to firefighting measures and responder access, paragraph 4.1.5 of the oBSMP [APP-162] sets out the approach to suppression and ventilation arrangements, including that any water-based suppression or thermal runaway propagation prevention systems must be capable of operating effectively in conjunction with gas exhaust/ventilation systems to minimise deflagration risk. The oBSMP also secures clear emergency access design, including a 6m access-route width around the BESS area and two separate fire service access points so that responders do not have to drive through a smoke or gas plume (paragraphs 4.2.3 to 4.2.4, [APP-162]), with the emergency plan to be developed in consultation with

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				Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service (paragraph 4.4.1, [APP-162]). On decommissioning and waste, the approach is addressed through the oWMP [APP-164] and the outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) [APP-158]. The oDEMP confirms (Table 5.12, [APP-158]) that end-of-life waste from solar panels and BESS will be managed through refurbishment, repurposing or recycling where feasible, with periodic review of emerging recycling technologies. The oBSMP (paragraph 4.4.3, [APP-162]) also anticipates post-incident recovery planning including removal and disposal of damaged equipment, and confirms safe decommissioning of the BESS will be addressed in the final DEMP (paragraph 5.1.11, [APP-162]).
BBC-RR-18	6.1	Order Limits	<u>Matter 6</u> Site boundary: It is noted that the Scheme's Red Line boundary is INCLUSIVE of several Public Highways (roads). The Council questions whether this is the correct approach as the single Red Line boundary does not reflect the complexity of more detailed individual Site's 1 to 14's boundary screening conditions that will need to be addressed to mitigate harm (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023). The crossing of the Public Highway remains evident in the DCO Application regarding Sites 3, 5, 6, 9 and 10. The Council notes that the Applicant has proposed hedgerow, woodland belt, and grassland planting adjacent to all Public Highways which would address the concern raised. However, the Council would still like a stated commitment to minimum width of screen	The Applicant notes that the landscape proposals from ES Vol 3 Figure 2-1: Illustrative Environmental Masterplan [APP-121] are secured by the Illustrative Landscape Proposals at Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159]. The oLEMP is a control document that will be certified as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO). Requirement 4 in Schedule 2 of the draft DCO [AS-008] requires that a final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), in substantial accordance with the oLEMP, is prepared and approved by the relevant LPAs prior to commencement of construction. The final LEMP will implement the landscape proposals, which must therefore be in substantial accordance with the Illustrative Landscape Proposals at Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159].

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			planting proposed to all Scheme/ Site boundaries ([APP-121] is not of a scale that this can be read). This would aid future site-based approval and enforcement if required. This would then accord with the Applicant's stated Scheme buffer and utility easements widths, as set out in [APP-159] para3.4.1.	The Applicant considers this approach gives sufficient oversight and 'sign-off' of the landscape proposals to the LPAs prior to construction.
BBC-RR-19	6.2	Landscape and Visual	<u>Landscape and Visual - Zone of Theoretical Visibility:</u> 'The ZTV is based on the 'Indicative Solar and Associated Infrastructure' zoning shown on the Applicant's Figures 3-2a to 3-2c. The initial ZTV has been modelled based on a height of 3m to reflect the maximum height above ground of the solar arrays across the Site. The Council notes that as part of this Application, the Applicant has stated associated buildings and infrastructure heights as follows - storage buildings at 4.5m (para3.3.23), switchgear 8m (para3.3.16), and transformers 12m; also ref. Fig. 7-5 & 7-6. These associated buildings and infrastructure heights need to be assessed in the LVIA (Ref. Scoping Reports, 2023). In [APP-038] Tables 2.1 to 2.33 the Applicant confirms the following maximum heights: solar PV module 3m; auxiliary transformer 3m; palisade and substation fencing 3m; centralized inverters, solar and battery transformers 3.15m; Control building 4m; CCTV 4m; BESS 4.4m; water storage tanks 4.5m; substation control and maintenance building 6m; Agrisolar PV panels 6.6m; and, electrical equipment 13.6m. In [APP-070] para2.2.2(2)(3) the Applicant confirms that the ZTV has addressed the height of the highest structures proposed. This resolves this Scoping matter.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes agreement from the Council that the matter is resolved.

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BBC-RR-20	6.3	Landscape and Visual	<u>Viewpoints LVIA</u>: the Council noted that <i>'rather it is the people that would be experiencing the view from it. Receptor groups within the study area that are likely to experience views of the Scheme include: ...ii) Users of public rights of way, and other routes/ land with public access....'</i> It is unclear how the <i>'sequential visual effects'</i> (Applicant para7.6.3iv) along Public Right of Ways (Applicant Fig. 14-2) has been provisionally assessed in Fig. 7-7 Viewpoint Locations. The Council would, apart from what is already presented, require a more localised LVIA with regards to both PRowWs and heritage assets (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023). In [APP-129] Figure 5-4a the Applicant has set out the LVIA viewpoint locations which illustrates that views from PRowWs (Footpaths, Bridleways and Byways) have been undertaken/ addressed. This resolves this Scoping matter.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes agreement from the Council that this matter is resolved.
BBC-RR-21	6.4	Landscape and Visual	Matter 7 Landscape establishment (Months 2 to 30): 'Establishment of soft landscaping in areas of habitat mitigation'. The Council are not supportive of this proposed extensive period to undertake soft landscape and habitat works (with reference to the Applicant's Illustrative Environmental Masterplan). The Council would seek a Condition that the soft landscaping works are implemented within the first year of construction, to then enable a two-year establishment and replacement review with potential remediation strategy, prior to construction moving off site. Further, strong penalties should be put in place in any consent given, should the Applicant not instate the	The Applicant recognises and supports the Council's objective of securing early delivery of landscape mitigation and confirms that planting will be undertaken as early as practicable within each phase of construction. However, it is not feasible to implement all soft landscaping and habitat works within the first year of a 30-month construction programme. The Scheme will be delivered across multiple sites (A–D and cable corridors) and construction will progress in phases. Planting must logically follow construction within each parcel to avoid damage to new plants and to coordinate with soil handling, drainage and access works. ES Vol 1 Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual (LVIA) [APP-041] assumes mitigation planting will be implemented during construction and in place by the

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			soft landscape and habitat works as then consented (Ref. PEIR Reports, 2024). In [APP-159] Outline LEMP Chp 6.4 ‘Establishment Period (years 1 to 5)’ the Applicant states that <i>‘existing trees and woodlands would be surveyed in operational year 1’, ‘existing hedgerows will be brought into a rotational cutting’</i> (no year stated), and Chp 6.5 that native species woodland, woodland belt planting, individual tree planting, and grassland would occur within the ‘establishment period (years 1 to 5)’. In [APP-038] this is broadly defined as Work Package 8; in para 2.5.4(v)(m) (Construction Programme) it is stated that the establishment of soft landscape works in areas of habitat would occur in months 2 to 30. There are various concerns arising; namely: a) The terms ‘establishment period’ and ‘operational year’ are currently not defined (say in [APP-016] DCO) and require clarity. b) The Council would like to see these start points defined in relation to [APP-017] Interpretation – “commence” means to carry out any material operation (as defined in section 155 of the 2008 Act) forming part of the authorised development other than the site preparation works (except where stated to the contrary), and “commencement”, “commenced” and “commencing” are to be construed accordingly’. c) The Council would like to see the implementation of landscape and habitat works phased at the start of construction works within each Site, and defined	opening year (Year 0), with effectiveness increasing through establishment to Year 10. There is therefore no deferral of mitigation to operation. The quantum of planting is substantial (c.19ha woodland, 17.4km hedgerow and 375 trees). Hedgerow planting alone, typically at c.5 plants per linear metre in double rows, equates to approximately 87,000 individual plants. Woodland planting would add tens of thousands more transplants, meaning the Scheme involves well in excess of 100,000 individual plants overall. Planting is undertaken within the dormant season (November–February). Given the scale of planting, phased construction sequencing, ground conditions and supply chain constraints (including the need for advance contract growing), delivery within a single planting season is not realistic and would materially increase establishment risk. Implementation across at least two planting seasons within the 30-month programme represents a proportionate and robust approach. The outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159] is secured by Requirement and a final LEMP must be approved prior to commencement. The final LEMP will provide for a five-year establishment period, monitoring and replacement planting. To provide clarity, the Applicant confirms that the five-year establishment period will commence from the date of planting within each relevant phase, rather than being tied solely to the operational year. Landscaping will be implemented as early as practicable within each construction phase and completed prior to operation, with establishment

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			accordingly, rather than an open statement of months 2 to 30. This is to ensure that mitigation landscape screening is undertaken as soon as practically possible, and allows for the establishment period to be initiated at the very onset of construction works.	and remedial measures secured through the approved LEMP. In respect of the issues raised in relation to the draft DCO [AS-008], the Applicant's position is as follows: There is no need to define the terms "establishment period" and/or "operational year" within the draft DCO as the extent of these periods is set out in the oLEMP [APP-159], which is a document certified by the DCO. The oLEMP (paragraph 6.5.2) identifies the establishment period as the first five years of the development. Operational year refers to each and every year the Scheme is in operation. Including these definitions within the draft DCO would be redundant and will not reinforce in any way the Applicant's commitment to obtain approval of final LEMP for each phase of the authorised development and from implementing such LEMP as approved and maintained throughout the operation of the Scheme. Requirement 4 of the draft DCO [AS-008] secures that a final LEMP in substantial accordance with the oLEMP is agreed with the local planning authority prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development. It is, therefore, the Applicant's position that including the definitions suggested by the Council are not necessary on the basis that they would not provide additional clarification to the commitment to obtain approval on the LEMP for each phase or to implement and maintain the works set out in the LEMP as approved.

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BBC-RR-22	6.5	Landscape and Visual	<u>Matter 8</u> Vegetation clearance: for completeness it is assumed that woodlands, trees, and/or hedgerows that are cleared will be replaced on a like-for-like basis and addressed within the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). Vegetation to be removed to facilitate access and/or visibility splays will be replaced on a similar basis to mitigate the long-term fragmentation of the countryside hedgerows currently framing fields and the public highway (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). With regards to the DCO Application, the Council requires a commitment from the Applicant that any hedgerow, trees and habitat planting that may require removal during any replacement works is reinstated with immediate effect (within the next available planting season) after the replacement works are undertaken and that an '<i>establishment period</i>' of five-years is then enacted from that date.	The Applicant confirms that vegetation clearance will be minimised and limited to that necessary to facilitate construction activities, including temporary or permanent access between fields where this cannot reasonably be avoided. The Scheme delivers a substantial net increase in planting overall (including approximately 17.4 km of native species hedgerow), such that any localised losses required to enable construction would not result in long-term fragmentation of the landscape. Where hedgerow or other planting is removed to facilitate construction, reinstatement will be secured through the approved landscape proposals and the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159], including monitoring and replacement provisions. For the operational phase, the Applicant notes that any replacement works would utilise the access tracks implemented during the construction phase to reach the solar array areas and/or the BESS facility. As a result, there would be no impact to any planting and no vegetation clearance would be expected. The oLEMP [APP-159] provides an adaptive management framework during operation, including review and (where necessary) re-planting, with reporting arrangements to the local planning authorities.
BBC-RR-23	6.6	Landscape and Visual	<u>Matter 9</u> Employment: '<i>three Full-time-employment (FTE) roles working in land management including landscape maintenance and agriculture</i>'. The Council note their support to the Applicant's commitment to appointing this workforce to manage the landscape and habitat for the duration of the Scheme but would like to see these roles set out specifically as part of	The Applicant welcomes the Council's support for the commitment to operational land management roles. As set out at paragraph 4.1.6 of the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159], the Applicant currently intends that the three land management roles will be permanent positions directly employed by the Scheme (subject to review). The

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			both the CEMP and the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). It is noted that in the [APP-159] para4.1.2 the roles of a ‘<i>specialist landscape and ecological contract</i>’, Environmental Manager, Environmental Clerk of Works, and Ecological Clerk of Works are set out but it is unclear if these roles are FTE on-site roles. This requires clarification and to be set out in the [APP-016] DCO Agreement.	Applicant currently intends roles to be permanent positions directly employed by the Scheme (subject to review), with the option for a multi-year maintenance contract. The roles referenced within the oLEMP [APP-159], such as for example the Landscape and Ecological Works Contractor, Environmental Manager, Environmental Clerk of Works and Ecological Clerk of Works, are functional roles required to implement and oversee environmental management and monitoring. Their input will be proportionate to the phase and scale of works, with certain roles being present as required during construction, and specialist contractor support and professional oversight continuing into operation as necessary to deliver the oLEMP [APP-159] objectives.
BBC-RR-24	6.8	Landscape and Visual	<u>Matter 10</u> LVIA: Landscape and Landscape Visual Impact Assessment matters are considered within Chapter 5 of the Environmental Statement (ES) [APP-041] and supporting figures and appendices. The Scheme has the potential to transform the local landscape by altering the character and by virtue of the scale of the proposals; there will be significant residual landscape character and visual impacts that cannot be mitigated. Effects will primarily be derived from the introduction of construction (albeit temporary and reversible) and solar PV panels over a large area, rather than by modification of landform, field patterns or loss of characteristic elements such as hedgerows or woodland, which will be retained. The main landscape receptors are Bedford LCA 1B: Riseley Clay and Farmland and Huntingdonshire LCA: Southern Wolds. Significant effects are assessed in construction	The Applicant notes the Council’s request for clarification regarding the treatment of operational replacement activities within the LVIA. Replacement of equipment is an inherent component of the operational phase and is expressly described as such in Section 2.6 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 [APP-038] and the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [APP-157], which confirms that operational activities include routine maintenance and replacement of equipment, and that on occasions significant replacement campaigns may be required (for example, large-scale replacement of solar PV array areas, or multiple transformer or battery storage units). The Applicant does not agree that operational replacement activities should be assumed to have the same landscape and visual effects as the construction phase of the Scheme. ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 [APP-041]

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			and operation Year 1 for LCA 1B: Riseley Clay and Farmland and for Huntingdonshire LCA: Southern Wolds in construction but not operation. No significant landscape effects are assessed for Year 10 or beyond. This does not, however, address any effect arising from any operational (replacement) phase works which should be read as potentially having the same effect as the construction phase albeit that the landscape may have matured at this stage. The Council seeks clarification from the Applicant as to how they will address this matter within the overall LVIA study.	operational assessment is based on the presence of the installed Scheme in situ, and the key drivers of landscape character and visual effects in operation derive from the introduction of the Scheme, rather than from short-duration maintenance activity. Where replacement activity is required, it would be periodic and not a routine operational occurrence, and the oOEMP confirms that impacts from replacement activities would be limited and would be controlled predominantly through the measures within the operational environmental management framework. In terms of control and enforceability, the DCO framework already secures the preparation, approval and implementation of a final Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) in substantial accordance with the oOEMP [APP-157]. The oOEMP further provides that, prior to replacement activities involving replacement of more than 20% of the solar panels, a notification must be submitted to the relevant local planning authority for approval, setting out management measures consistent with the approved construction-phase management plan principles (CEMP, CTMP, PRowMP and OEMP), but commensurate with the scale of the proposed activity. This mechanism provides a proportionate and enforceable means of managing any temporary effects which might arise during larger-scale replacement campaigns, without reopening the LVIA's significance conclusions for an operational 'with development' scenario. In addition, the oOEMP [APP-157] confirms that vegetation and landscape management during

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				operation is to be delivered in line with the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159] , and that the final LEMP will be approved by the local authorities and the Scheme must be operated in accordance with it, secured via a Requirement in Schedule 2 of the draft DCO [AS-008] . This provides the mechanism by which landscape mitigation and screening effectiveness is maintained through the operational lifetime of the Scheme, including during maintenance activity. The Explanatory Memorandum also confirms that site clearance controls are linked to the LEMP requirements, reinforcing the overall approach to protecting landscape features through the Requirements framework.
BBC-RR-25	6.9	Landscape and Visual	<u>Visual receptors</u> : the Scheme has been identified in the LVIA as resulting in a significant change to a variety of visual receptors, with significant residual visual effects identified for residential locations at Year 1 (reducing to non-significant by Year 10) and from PRow in the immediate vicinity of the solar panels and more distant open and elevated views from higher land (some remaining significant at Year 10). There will be sequential changes in views and adverse visual impact for users of PROWs. This includes the different users of the network, such as equestrians and cyclists as well as walkers. No significant visual effects have been identified on residential receptors located directly within the villages located within the study area.	The Applicant notes this comment.
BBC-RR-26	6.10	Landscape and Visual	A Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) for the Scheme has been produced and considers the construction, operational and decommissioning stages	The Applicant notes this comment.

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			of the Scheme. The RVAA concludes that the Scheme would not result in an overbearing effect on residential visual amenity. Effects would remain below the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold during construction, operation, and decommissioning, and no dwelling would experience a reduction in outlook or visual amenity as to identify it as significant long-term harm.	
BBC-RR-27	6.11	Landscape and Visual	The Scheme would be introduced into the same LCA as the majority of the High Wood Solar Farm and would result in cumulative change in landscape character in this part of the Southern Wolds LCA, which is already influenced by a solar farm south of the Scheme, (and which largely would be surrounded by the proposed High Wood Solar Farm) and Little Staughton Airfield Solar Farm, which is located 1.4km south-west of the Scheme at its closest point.	The Applicant notes this comment.
BBC-RR-28	6.12	Landscape and Visual	For Bedford Borough Council LCA 1B: Riseley Clay and Farmland effects at Y10 are assessed as minor and non-significant. Given the primary source of landscape change is the introduction of the PV panels, the effect of mitigation by Year 10 is overstated and although the Scheme may be better integrated/mitigated it is still a large area of increased industrialisation in the long term, which constitutes a significant effect on LCA1B. At Year 10 the LVIA indicates there will be a Moderate Adverse level of effect on the landscape character of LCA 1B, under the LVIA methodology this could be significant or non-significant, the former being more appropriate.	The Applicant notes Bedford Borough Council's view but respectfully disagrees that the Year 10 effect on Bedford Borough Council LCA 1B should be reported as significant. ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-1 LVIA Assessment Methodology [APP-069] adopts a 'sequential combination' approach, combining susceptibility and value to determine sensitivity, and combining scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility to determine magnitude. Sensitivity and magnitude are then combined, using professional judgement, to identify the overall level of effect and whether that effect is significant or not significant. The methodology recognises that intermediate levels of effect (including 'Moderate to Major') may be used where appropriate. In applying this methodology, ES

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				Vol 1 Chapter 5 [APP-041] does not identify any effects described as 'Moderate Adverse' as significant, with significant effects reported where the assessed level of effect is 'Moderate to Major Adverse' (or higher). In relation to LCA 1B, the detailed assessment in ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-3 [APP-071] explains why the operational effects would reduce over time. The Scheme would introduce a relatively low-level solar array (maximum 3m AGL) within large-scale arable fields, largely on lower ground, following contours and avoiding change to underlying topography, and it does not alter the existing field pattern as it remains contained within existing fields and does not cross field boundaries. The assessment also records that hedgerow loss would be very minor and limited to facilitating access, with no tree removal required, and that associated infrastructure is relatively subtle in character in the context of the wider array. At Year 10, ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-3 [APP-071] concludes that mitigation planting would have established such that the Scheme would assimilate further within LCA 1B, with linear planting on field boundaries reducing wider visibility and enhancing an existing characteristic of the LCA, aligned with the LCA's landscape strategy focus on hedgerows and hedgerow and field trees while retaining key views (including to church spires). On that basis, the assessment concludes that the scale and magnitude reduce to Low to Medium and the resulting effect at Year 10 is Moderate Adverse and Not Significant.

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				The Applicant further notes that Bedford Borough Council has already recognised that the landscape proposals are tailored, well considered, retain the legibility and character of the landscape and would reduce visual effects where possible, particularly at sensitive edges and along connecting routes (refer to BBC-RR-31 of this document).
BBC-RR-29	6.13	Landscape and Visual	Effects on visual receptors are broadly accepted as appropriate, noting that there is a heavy reliance on the landscape mitigation to screen the solar panels but any effects of obstructed or truncated views are not referenced and will adversely change the experience of users of PRow. Similar to the comments for landscape character, it is noted that wherever there is a moderate effect on visual amenity this is taken to be non-significant, noting the methodology indicates it could and in some cases should be a significant effect.	The Applicant notes the Council's comment and welcomes the acknowledgement that the assessment of effects on visual receptors is broadly accepted as appropriate. ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 LVIA [APP-041] considers effects on users of the PRow network, including where views are changed in proximity to the Scheme, and the embedded mitigation is part of the assessed operational scenario, once at a reasonable level of maturity by Year 10. The detailed viewpoint assessments in ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-4 [APP-072] acknowledge that mitigation planting would alter the experience of the view, from the baseline situation. In addition, ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-4 [APP-072] explains that for PRow users on footpaths directly adjacent to the southern extent of Site B (Viewpoints 32, 33, 35, 36 and 37), effects are significant at Year 0 (and for some viewpoints at Year 10) due to proximity, but effects reduce to not significant at Year 10 for Viewpoints 32, 35 and 37 due to the establishment of the mitigation planting, with the view nonetheless remaining altered from the baseline situation as the planting implemented at Year 0 would remain. However, in the round, and as the Council has recognised, the landscape proposals are tailored and

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				well-considered, and seek to reduce visual effects where possible, particularly at sensitive edges and along connecting routes. In respect of the Council's point regarding 'moderate' effects and significance, the Applicant refers to its previous response to the equivalent point raised on landscape character (reference BBC-RR-28), noting that the LVIA methodology confirms that 'moderate' effects may be significant or not significant depending on the specific circumstances and the exercise of professional judgement.
BBC-RR-30	6.14	Landscape and Visual	The overall conclusion is that there is some slight under-representation of significant effects but not sufficient as to raise a matter of objection.	The Applicant notes the Council's overall conclusion. The Applicant refers to its responses to BBC-RR-28 and BBC-RR-29 in relation to the application of the LVIA methodology and the exercise of professional judgement when determining level and significance of effect. As set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-1 [APP-069], the LVIA adopts a 'sequential combination' approach, combining sensitivity and magnitude to reach a judgement on level and significance of effect.
BBC-RR-31	6.15	Landscape and Visual	[APP-121] Figure 2-1: Illustrative Environmental Masterplan shows the proposed landscape and visual mitigation for the Scheme. The landscape proposals are tailored to the location and required functions of each part of the Scheme, noting that these change across the Site. The design is well considered and retains the legibility and character of the landscape and reduces the visual effects, where possible, especially for visual receptors, at the edges of settlements, and along routes connecting settlements.	The Applicant welcomes Bedford Borough Council's positive comments on the landscape proposals and notes the Council's acknowledgement that the design is well considered, tailored to the differing functions across the Site, retains the legibility and character of the landscape, and seeks to reduce visual effects where possible, particularly at sensitive edges and along connecting routes.

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BBC-RR-32	6.16	Landscape and Visual	<u>Matter 11</u> Legacy: while the Council broadly agrees with the [APP-009] Design Principle 7: 'The Scheme will seek opportunities to leave a positive legacy through the delivery of multiple social and environmental benefits' this requires confirmation that at the decommissioning phase the landscape, habitat, and PRoW enhancements are to be retained when handed back to the landowner (as suggested in [APP-159] Chp 7.0). If this were not to be the case, then these enhancements should not be afforded full weight in terms of planning benefits. It is suggested that this matter is discussed at Examination.	The Applicant notes that the land will predominantly be leased for the operational phase and, following decommissioning, will be returned to the landowners in accordance with the relevant commercial agreements. For that reason, the Applicant cannot provide an absolute commitment that all enhancements will be retained in perpetuity once the land has been handed back to landowners. Notwithstanding the above, paragraphs 7.1.2 and 7.1.3 of the oLEMP [APP-159] confirm that proposed native species woodland and woodland belt planting, proposed native species hedgerow planting, and proposed native species individual tree planting would be retained at decommissioning and handed back to landowners as mature landscape features. Paragraphs 7.1.4 to 7.1.6 [APP-159] set out that other elements (including proposed grazing pasture or neutral grassland and species-diverse grassland, and ecological enhancement features) would remain on site at decommissioning but their future retention would be at the discretion of the landowners once the land is handed back. In relation to PRoW, the permissive paths would be provided for the lifetime of the Scheme, but would again be at the discretion of landowners as to whether they are retained post-decommissioning. The Applicant has identified environmental enhancements and improved access as Scheme benefits within Section 5 of the Planning Statement [APP-031], in line with NPS EN-1's (EN-1, para. 4.1.5) direction that decision-making should weigh adverse

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				impacts against benefits including 'environmental enhancements' and 'any long-term or wider benefits'. The Planning Statement [APP-031] makes clear that these benefits are assessed as being delivered for the duration of the Scheme's operational lifespan. In particular, it records at paragraph 8.3.34 that the operational ecology benefits "would be realised for the duration of the Scheme's operational lifespan (40 years)". The planning balance presented by the Applicant is therefore not contingent on permanent retention beyond decommissioning. Once the Scheme is decommissioned and removed, the Scheme-related effects which the mitigation and enhancements are designed to address will no longer arise; the planning weight therefore reflects the fact that both the harms and the associated mitigation and enhancement framework are tied to the operational lifetime, and that it would not be the actions of the Applicant or the Scheme to remove such enhancements following decommissioning.
BBC-RR-33	7.1	Glint and Glare	Matter 12 Airfields: the Council raised two concerns in their Scoping Report (2023) regarding this aspect, namely, the requirement to assess the wider impacts of energy projects (e.g. solar farms) on Thurleigh Airfield (Bedford Aerodrome) and Little Staughton Airfield, as set out in Local Plan Policy 57(ix) Aviation, (xi) Glint & Glare, and (xiii) Aviation; and, in relation to the Airfield Safeguarding Zones set through regulatory oversight by the Civil Aviation Authority. It is noted that both airfields are still designated as operating airfields. In the Applicants [APP-074] ES Glint and Glare Assessment Vol2 Part 1 Table 5 '<i>aerodromes within</i>	ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-6 Glint and Glare Assessment [as updated alongside this submission] has been updated to include both Bedford Aerodrome and Little Staughton Airfield. The assessment has highlighted that all impacts upon the airfields fall in line with FAA guidance and are acceptable and not significant when accounting for types of aircraft, the time of impact, operating hours, likely landing directions due to wind, google earth imagery, daily glare duration periods, ground elevation profile, and pilot mitigation strategies.

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			30km' of the Scheme, both airfields above are not identified which is suggested as a significant oversight. It is suggested that this is addressed at Examination	
BBC-RR-34	7.3, 7.4	Glint and Glare	<u>Solar reflection:</u> solar reflections are possible at 112 of the 174 residential receptors assessed within the 1km study area (it is not possible to read the report in a way to easily understand which of these receptors are Bedfordshire based receptors). In reviewing the actual visibility of the receptors, glint and glare impacts remain High at four receptors, Low at one receptor and reduce to None for 169 receptors. Once mitigation measures as proposed are taken into consideration the impacts of all residential receptors are reduced to None. Therefore, overall impacts on residential receptors are considered to be None. Mitigation measures proposed in the report need to be implemented to ensure residual impacts are achieved and therefore glint and glare is not an issue in the operational phase. However, beyond the above statement, the Council notes that they do not have the necessary professional and/or technical discipline relating specifically to solar farms applications to respond on this aspect in any greater detail. On this basis, the Council will not be raising any objection regarding this Glint and Glare aspect at Examination.	The Applicant notes this comment. The mitigation measures set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-6 Glint and Glare Assessment [APP-074] are secured by Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159].
BBC-RR-35	8.1	Archaeology	<u>Archaeology:</u> the assessment of the archaeological potential of the Site is still at an early stage. The archaeological evaluation work should be completed ahead of the DCO submission. The results of the archaeological evaluation should be used to inform a detailed archaeological mitigation strategy for the	The Applicant welcomes the Council's acknowledgement that this matter (raised at statutory consultation) has been addressed in the application. The Applicant notes that the oAMS [APP-166] highlights that further stages of archaeological

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			Scheme that will ideally be agreed with the relevant Host Authority ahead of the submission of the DCO. Dependent on the results of the evaluation the illustrative masterplan provided will also require updating to reflect necessary design changes. Further information is also required regarding potential impacts at the decommissioning stage of the development (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). This PEIR matter has been addressed in the DCO Application	evaluation work should be completed with paragraphs 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 [APP-166] <i>‘the archaeological brief jointly issued by CHET and BBHET required two phases of archaeological investigation prior to construction. Therefore, following the granting of the DCO, a second phase of trial trenching will be undertaken...the general aim of these investigations... is to more accurately establish the potential for the presence/absence of archaeologically significant remains allowing the mitigation measures set out in Section 6.0 to be applied appropriately’.</i> Paragraph 5.4.2 [APP-166] highlights that ‘a WSI for this additional trial trenching will be developed in line with a new brief prepared by CHET and BBHET’. The Applicant is committed to further archaeological research and investigation prior to construction of the Scheme, in order to finalise the archaeological mitigation measures to be embedded into the detailed design of the Scheme (including decommissioning) and is committed to ensuring the final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy is updated in consultation with BBHET at each stage of investigation. A final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
BBC-RR-36	8.2	Cultural Heritage	<u>Cultural Heritage</u>: in summary, the Council disagree with the findings of the PEIR in relation to the impact on All Saints Church, and whether or not a ‘significant	The Applicant acknowledges that the council disagreed with the findings of the PEIR in relation to the impact on All Saints Church. The impact upon the church is

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			impact' is likely to arise. The Council would wish to see the Environmental Statement explore potential ways of mitigating this impact. The Council note that the Settings Assessment Table has been provided without context and should be supported with the preamble as provided in the Scoping Report. Though the table and the chosen methodology is effective in terms of identifying significant effects, there is concern that in a number of cases a degree of less than substantial harm may arise to a number of listed buildings where a neutral impact has been recorded (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). This PEIR matter has been addressed in the DCO Application.	discussed in more detail in the response reference BBC-RR-39 below. The Applicant notes and welcomes that the council agrees that the other matters raised in this comment (provision of settings assessment table and assessment of neutral impacts) have been addressed in the application.
BBC-RR-37	8.4	Cultural Heritage	<u>Heritage impact:</u> the Scheme (associated with East Park Sites A and B) would affect the significance of a number of heritage assets located within Bedford Borough, particularly those located within or close to Pertenhall, Keysoe and Little Staughton. Chapter 6 of the ES [APP042], which is informed by the 'Settings Impact Assessment' [APP-083], summarises the likely significant effects on designated heritage assets located within a 3km radius of the Site. The methodology for the assessment is set out in Chapter 6.4 of [APP-042], including the matrices that inform the 'significance of effect' summary table (Table 6.8, p.109) – generally the methodology outlined is considered acceptable.	The Applicant notes and welcomes that the Council agrees that the methodology set out in Section 6.4 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042] including the matrices that inform the ' <i>significance of effect</i> ' summary table (Table 6.8, p.109) is considered acceptable.
BBC-RR-38	8.5	Cultural Heritage	<u>Adverse impact:</u> [APP-042] Para6.8.54 predicts a minor or 'not significant' temporary adverse effect on the significance of Assets 19, 24, 27, 28, 40, 41, 48, 129, 134, 136, 148, 149, 154, and 755 during the circa 30-month construction phase. The Council agrees with	The Applicant notes and welcomes that the Council is in agreement with the assessment of minor or ' <i>not significant</i> ' temporary adverse effects (during the construction phase) upon Assets 19, 19, 24, 27, 28, 40, 41, 48, 129, 134, 136, 148, 149, 154, and 755 as is

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			this observation. During the 40-year operational phase (read to include replacement works), a minor or 'not significant' adverse effect is predicted in paragraph 6.8.62 for Assets 19, 27, 28, 38, 40, 41, 48, 129, 134, 136, 148, 149, 154, 160, 332, and 755. Aside from the 'Church of All Saints' (Asset 38, see below), this assessment is also agreed with – whilst there is some disagreement with how the 'relative sensitivity' has been applied for some assets in [APP-084], this has not led to 'significant effects' being missed. Particular consideration has been given to the likely impact on the significance of 'Church of St Peter' in Pertenhall (Asset 48) – the spire of the Grade I listed Church is a feature above the surrounding tree canopy in views from the site. However, due to topographical factors (the Church is set on low ground), the presence of intervening planting (much of it protected by TPOs) and the proposed buffer provided by grassland adjacent to Footpaths 10 and 11 to the west, it is considered that the Scheme will result in a minor level of less than substantial harm to its significance and it is therefore agreed that the effect would not be 'significant' in EIA terms.	summarised in paragraph 6.8.56 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042]. The Applicant notes and welcomes that the council is in agreement with the assessment of minor or '<i>not significant</i>' operational phase effects upon Assets 19, 27, 28, 38, 40, 41, 48, 129, 134, 136, 148, 149, 154, 160, 332, and 755, as is summarised in paragraph 6.8.62 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042]. The Applicant acknowledges that the Council disagrees with the findings of the assessment in relation to the impact on All Saints Church (Asset 38). The impact upon the church is discussed in more detail in response reference BBC-RR-39 below. The Applicant acknowledges the Council's comments that although there is some disagreement with how relative sensitivity has been applied for some assets it is welcomed that they do not believe any other '<i>significant effects</i>' have been missed. The Applicant notes and welcomes that the Council is in agreement with the assessment of minor or '<i>not significant</i>' effects upon the significance of '<i>Church of St Peter</i>' in Pertenhall (Asset 48).
BBC-RR-39	8.6	Cultural Heritage	<u>Matter 13</u> All Saints Church: the Council's singular area of disagreement on setting impacts relates to the likely effect on Asset 38, the Grade I listed 'All Saints Church' in Little Staughton; namely: a) It is agreed with the first bullet point of para6.8.56 in [APP-042] and p.74 of [APP-083] that the construction phase will result in a 'moderate effect' on its significance, which would amount to a 'significant effect' in EIA	The Applicant acknowledges that the assessment of impacts upon All Saints Church (Asset 38), as set out on pages 74 to 77 in ES Vol 2 Appendix 6-4: Settings Impact Assessment [APP-083], is the singular area of disagreement with the Council in relation to settings impacts. a) The Applicant welcomes that the Council agrees with the construction phase assessment of a moderate effect upon the church, which would amount to

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			terms, albeit temporary. However, the ninth bullet point of para6.8.62 of [APP-042] concludes that the operational phase of the development (read to include replacement works), would result in a minor adverse effect, which is 'not significant' in EIA terms. b) The Council's comments at the PEIR stage regarding All Saints Church can be found at pp.35-7 of [APP-028]. Setting makes an important contribution to the asset's significance, and the introduction of large numbers of solar panels within the Scheme Site B as indicated in [APP-121] would seriously erode the asset's historic rural setting towards the north and northwest. In particular, the panels shown located within the two fields south of New Farm c.850m to the north of the Church will have an impact both on views of the spire from within the churchyard as well as views out from the churchyard north of the nave (only partly reflected in Viewpoint 52, [APP-138]). The wider proposed Scheme would also feature on the approach to the asset along Church Lane and from the southern points of Footpaths 1 and 5 in close proximity to the Church (see Viewpoint 51 [APP-138]); as well as from the historic footpath running east towards 'The Old Manor House, Cretingsbury' SM (Viewpoint 54 [APP-139]). Additionally, the Scheme would form part of one's experience of the Church from its wider setting to the north and northwest, including from Footpath 1 south of New Farm	temporary significant effect in EIA terms, as summarised in paragraph 6.8.56 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042]. b) The Applicant acknowledges that the Council disagrees with the operational phase assessment of a minor effect upon the church, which would not be significant in EIA terms, as summarised in paragraph 6.8.62 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042]. The Applicant notes the Council comment regarding the important contribution that setting makes to the asset's significance, and has acknowledged the importance of this by assigning the asset as having a high relative sensitivity to changes to its setting during the assessment as shown on page 74 of ES Vol 2 Appendix 6-4: Settings Impact Assessment [APP-083]. The Applicant acknowledges that the Council believe that the solar panels within Scheme Site B would result in a serious erosion of the asset's historic rural setting to the north and northwest highlighting that the panels shown to the north of New Farm would appear in both views of the spire from within the churchyard and from the churchyard north of the nave. The Applicant has acknowledged that views of solar development within the easternmost parts of Site B parts will be possible from within parts of the churchyard, as set out on page 76 in ES Vol 2 Appendix 6-4: Settings Impact Assessment [APP-083] which would affect the church's historic rural setting to the northwest. The Applicant would highlight, however, that in views from the church and churchyard the rest of the asset's

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			both within and outside the Site. Whilst the panels would not “[compete] with it as a landmark feature” (para6.8.62 of [APP-042]) in views of the asset, they would alter the landscape within which All Saints Church sits as the most significant, prominent feature. Given the change in levels, proposed planting within the Scheme would have little mitigating effect in views out from the ridge. Furthermore, the partial reliance on the retention of mature planting around the churchyard in the setting assessment (p. 76 of [APP-083]) seems short-sighted given the lifespan of the Scheme and the potential for a variety of scenarios which may affect existing, unprotected planting; which does not in any case currently fully screen views out towards Sites A and B, especially in winter months. c) Factoring in the lack of a direct impact on the asset or a ‘blocking’ effect on existing key views, the Scheme would result in ‘less than substantial’ harm to the significance of the asset, likely around the mid-point of that range (low to high). Noting its Grade I listed status, and the lack of further mitigation measures proposed by the Applicant, this would amount to a ‘significant effect’ in EIA terms. This likely effect, alongside the ‘not significant’ effects identified within the [APP-042] Environmental Statement, should be weighed against the public benefits of the Scheme in accordance with paragraphs 5.9.32 and 5.9.36 of EN-1.	historic rural surroundings (i.e. not to the immediate north and northwest) would be unaffected by the development during the operational phase due to the design utilising the existing screening provided by topography, mature vegetation and existing buildings within Little Staughton. The Applicant also notes the Council’s position in relation to the visibility of the solar panels within the eastern part of Site B from footpaths in close proximity to the church and the Council’s assessment that they would alter the landscape within which All Saints Church sits as the most significant, prominent feature. The Applicant provided further information in relation to views from surrounding public rights of way within paragraphs 5.6.27 to 5.6.41 of the Design Approach Document [APP-034] which demonstrates the design approach to mitigating setting impacts upon the church. The Applicant notes that in views from the footpath that runs north/south towards the church it was highlighted that from distant positions any visibility of the church is obscured by adjacent mature hedgerows, with the southernmost parts of the footpath affording a clearer view towards the church that, by design, would not include any solar infrastructure as set out on page 76 in ES Vol 2 Appendix 6-4: Settings Impact Assessment [APP-083]. The Applicant also acknowledges that views taken from the public footpath to the east of the church would include views of the solar development in the eastern part of Site B as set out on page 76 in ES Vol 2 Appendix 6-4: Settings Impact Assessment [APP-083]. The Applicant considers this view, from east of

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			It is suggested that this matter is discussed at Examination.	the church and containing a backdropped view of the elements of the Scheme in the northern part of Site B (with very limited glimpse of elements within Site A) to represent the largest and worst case change to any views within which All Saints Church sits as the most significant, prominent feature and would reiterate that in this view the <i>'solar development would change the character of some of the lower lying, currently arable, landscape to the northwest of the Church'</i> but that this does not compete with the prominence of All Saints church as the most significant feature. The Applicant agrees with the Council's comments that the proposed planting within the Scheme would have little mitigating effect in views out from the ridge due to the difference in elevation. The Applicant notes the Council's comments on the <i>'over reliance'</i> on the mature planting around the churchyard in the setting assessment (as set out on page 76 of [APP-083]). The Applicant considers that the current mature planting surrounding the churchyard creates a demarcation of a space within which the intimate setting of the churchyard can be appreciated, as well as enhancing the experience of the church as a sanctuary and place of memorial and reflection. This existing vegetation is, therefore, considered to be currently making a positive contribution to the significance of the Church and, therefore, any future removal would constitute a negative impact. The Applicant notes the Council's comments that views of Site A are not currently fully screened from the Church of All Saints but would highlight that there would be extremely limited visibility of any elements of

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				the Scheme within Site A, as is illustrated in VPs 51 and 54. The Applicant would also note that it is not just the mature vegetation lining the churchyard providing screening, but also the nearby topographic ridge, buildings and vegetation within Little Staughton that provide screening in westward views from the churchyard. These factors would also provide full screening of most of the areas within the southern parts of Sites A and B. The Applicant notes that the disagreement outlined above with regard to the assessment of impacts upon the setting of the Church of All Saints are based upon a differing professional opinion in relation to the contribution that views from the church and churchyard make to its overall cultural significance. The visibility of parts of the Scheme (largely limited to solar development within the eastern part of Site B) in these views is not disputed by the Applicant. The Applicant has assessed that the greatest contribution that the church's setting makes to its cultural significance is related to its legibility in the landscape as a highly visible landmark feature (which was a key factor in its siting to allow for distant visibility), with outward views from it making a lesser contribution. The church itself is set towards the northeastern end of its churchyard which is bordered on all sides by a hedgerow (with a break along the northern edge) with mature trees to the northwest and northeast. The demarcation of this space allows for an appreciation of the intimate setting of the churchyard which would have been primarily established to create an area within which the architectural detailing and

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				materials of the church and funerary monuments can be appreciated, as well as enhancing the experience of the church as a sanctuary and place of memorial and reflection. The Applicant considers that views outwards from the churchyard, therefore, make a lesser contribution to the church's overall cultural significance. The Applicant stands by the assessment of a Low impact during the operational phase upon the setting of the church, as is defined in the assessment methodology as <i>'Alterations to the asset's baseline setting, which do not affect the ability to understand, appreciate or experience the contribution that setting makes to the asset's overall significance. The key characteristics of the setting are not eroded'</i> as set out in Table 6.7 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042]. The Applicant would highlight that a medium impact (which would result in a significant effect in EIA terms) is defined in the methodology as an <i>'Alteration of an asset's baseline setting that effects the ability to understand, appreciate and experience the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the asset to a degree but whereby the cultural significance of the monument in its current setting remains legible'</i> as set out in Table 6.7 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042]. The Applicant does not believe that the key characteristics of the church's setting (which are considered to be its prominent position along the ridgeline and its consequent visibility from the surrounding areas) would be eroded or that the ability to understand, appreciate or experience the

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				contribution that setting makes to the church's overall significance has been affected. c) The Applicant would also highlight that despite the difference in professional opinion above, the Council's position in relation to the assessment of '<i>less than substantial harm</i>' is very similar to the Applicant's. Where the Council have suggested that the Scheme would result in '<i>less than substantial harm</i>' at the mid-point of that range the Applicant has assessed that the Scheme would result in '<i>less than substantial harm</i>' at the '<i>low to mid end of the scale</i>' as set out in paragraph 6.8.63 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042]. The Applicant acknowledges the Council's comment that the likely effects upon heritage assets (both significant and non-significant) will require to be weighed against the public benefits of the Scheme in accordance with paragraphs 5.9.32 and 5.9.36 of NPS EN-1.
BBC-RR-40	8.7	Archaeology	<u>Matter 14</u> Mitigation measures: [APP-042] Chp. 6 Section 6.6 details the results of the archaeological evaluation undertaken prior to submission. Interim reports on Sites A and B within Bedford Borough are included in the technical appendices but were not provided in advance of submission and therefore have not been subject to detailed review for errors at the time of writing [APP-087 and APP-088]. Aside from not providing adequate time to review the interim evaluation reports, the Council is satisfied that the Applicant has carried out the first stage of the evaluation in accordance with the approved strategies. Further to this, the Council is in agreement that the	The Applicant is committed to further archaeological research and investigation prior to construction of the Scheme, in order to establish the archaeological mitigation measures to be embedded into the detailed design of the Scheme (including decommissioning) and is committed to ensuring the final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy is updated in consultation with BBHET at each stage of investigation. Results of all archaeological investigations associated with the Scheme will consider addressing research aims drawn from the East of England Regional Research Framework.

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			archaeological remains revealed to date are of no more than regional significance and do not represent an overriding constraint on the Scheme. However, the identified remains do hold significant potential to address research aims drawn from the East of England Regional Research Framework and therefore suitable mitigation measures will need to be agreed prior to development proceeding.	The final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS [APP-166] prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008] . The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
BBC-RR-41	8.8	Archaeology	<u>Matter 15</u> Evaluation trenching: the Council notes that the evaluation trenching undertaken to date represents only the first phase of trenching. A significant amount of additional trenching will be required in order to fully understand the archaeological potential of the Site and agree appropriate mitigation measures. The Council is of the opinion that [APP-042] Chp. 6 Section 6.6 is overly confident in assessing the potential of these areas prior to this trenching taking place. This consequently requires further discussion	The Applicant notes the Council's comments that the evaluation trenching undertaken to date only represents the first phase of trenching and would highlight that the oAMS [APP-166] notes that further stages of archaeological evaluation work will be completed, with paragraphs 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 [APP-166] stating that: <i>the archaeological brief jointly issued by CHET and BBHET required two phases of archaeological investigation prior to construction. Therefore, following the granting of the DCO, a second phase of trial trenching will be undertaken...the general aim of these investigations... is to more accurately establish the potential for the presence/absence of archaeologically significant remains allowing the mitigation measures set out in Section 6.0 to be applied appropriately.</i> The Applicant is committed to further archaeological research and investigation prior to construction of the Scheme, which in the first instance would involve the second phase of trial trenching which, as outlined in paragraph 5.3.1 of the oAMS [APP-166] 'would be undertaken in line with archaeological brief jointly issued by CHET and BBHET'.

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				The Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Council's opinion that there has been over confidence in the assessment of archaeological potential with Section 6.6 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042] and would highlight that paragraphs 6.6.14 and 6.6.25 acknowledge that there <i>'is a Low potential for archaeological remains of any date in the areas without recorded anomalies or archaeological features'</i> within Sites A or B but notes <i>'that the potential for remains cannot be entirely discounted'</i>. Paragraph 6.6.29 [APP-042] acknowledges that within the Cable Corridor - Site B to Site C <i>'further investigation, in the form of trial trenching, may further revise this assessment of potential'</i>. A final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
BBC-RR-42	8.9	Archaeology	<u>Matter 16</u> [APP-166] Outline Mitigation Strategy: the Council were consulted on a draft version of an Outline Mitigation Strategy and provided feedback with recommendations for amendments. In review, these recommendations have not been fully addressed in the submitted document [APP-166]. Section 6.1.4 contains Table 1 detailing the proposed mitigation measures for areas of archaeological significance identified by the trenching completed to date - the vast majority of these measures relies on the utilisation of No Dig solutions. Further detailed discussions will need to take place to	The Applicant notes the Council's comments that further detailed discussions will be required with regard to the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy [APP-166] and are committed to working in consultation with BBHET as to the detailed design of the Scheme and implementing alternative mitigation measures where No Dig solutions are not feasible. It is understood that the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy [APP-166] will require multiple

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			assess the impacts of the proposals together with the depth of overburden identified within the trenching. It is not uncommon for No Dig solutions to actually involve some excavation (for example on sloping sites that require terracing for the concrete feet) that will potentially impact on buried remains, particularly if the covering overburden is shallow. Alternative mitigation measures comprising excavation ahead of development or exclusion from panel coverage may need to be explored.	reviews alongside the Scheme design dependant on the results of further archaeological works. A final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008] . The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
BBC-RR-43	8.10	Archaeology	<u>Matter 17</u> [APP-166] Outline Mitigation Strategy 2: the Council has concerns that sections 7.4 and 7.5, setting out measures for the operational (read to include replacement works) and decommissioning phases, contains too little detail. The Applicant provides no detail as to the measures that would be taken in the event that significant maintenance becomes necessary that could require additional groundworks or/and protection works. Additionally, no provision is provided for Council's archaeological presence on site (even minimal) during potential disturbance at the decommissioning phase. Whilst direct impacts to archaeology at this stage are 'not expected' (Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan [APP-158]), it would be good practice to have measures in place in the event that they occur	The Applicant has updated paragraphs 7.4.2, 7.5.2 and 7.5.3 [APP-166] of the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (oAMS) [as updated alongside this submission] to include details of the measures that would be in place in the event that significant maintenance works become necessary during the operational phase and provision for the Council's archaeological presence on Site, when required, during both the operational and decommissioning phases. A final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008] . The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
BBC-RR-44	8.11	Archaeology	<u>Matter 18</u> Ladder Settlement (Asset 275): the [APP-167] Outline Heritage Enhancement Strategy is broadly satisfactory. However, the Council has	The Applicant welcomes the Council's comments that the outline Heritage Enhancement Strategy (oHES) [APP-167] is broadly satisfactory and acknowledges

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			concerns over section 4.4 as it is unclear whether the further intrusive investigation proposed (para4.4.2) is to be undertaken separately or is part of the proposed mitigation excavation in the area of woodland planting for this asset. This requires clarification from the Applicant.	that there is some confusion over section 4.4 in relation to the Ladder Settlement (Asset 275). The Applicant has updated paragraph 4.4.2 of the outline Heritage Enhancement Strategy [as updated alongside this submission] to clarify that the proposed intrusive investigation (involving public participation) would be undertaken separate to the mitigation proposed in the area of woodland planting (AAC-B-5b). As stated in paragraph 4.4.2 [APP-167] <i>'the scope of any such investigation would be discussed and agreed through a written scheme of investigation (WSI) with Bedford Borough Historic Environment Team (BBHET) prior to commencement'</i>. A final Heritage Enhancement Strategy (HES) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oHES prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The final HES must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
BBC-RR-45	8.12	Draft DCO	<u>Matter 19</u> Archaeology requirement (No. 15): the [APP-016] draft DCO Schedule 2 contains a proposed requirement for archaeology. As written this requirement does not reflect the multiple stages of work that will be required if the DCO is granted. These include further archaeological trial trench evaluation and associated reporting, and an updated scheme wide Archaeological Mitigation Strategy to take account of the results of the additional trenching. Further to this there will then be mitigation fieldwork and post-excavation reporting and publication.	The mechanism set out in requirement 15 of the draft DCO [AS-008] ensures that the detail in relation to the multiple stages of works are agreed with key stakeholders, such as the local planning authority in consultation with the county archaeologist as well as Historic England and that works are delivered in an agreed and appropriate manner. The first part of requirement 15 (paragraphs 1, 2 and 3) deal with the archaeological works programme of archaeological investigation and how archaeological

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			Currently as tabled, the Council do not support the draft DCO regarding the Archaeology aspect; this requires discussion at Examination	written scheme of investigation (“WSI”) will be carried out. The second part of this requirement (paragraphs 4 and 5) deal with the archaeological mitigation strategy (“AMS”). Requirement 15(4) provides no phase of the authorised development and no part of the site preparation works for that phase may commence until an AMS for that phase has been submitted and approved by the local planning authority in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England. An outline AMS is proposed to be certified with the DCO. As drafted, this requirement provides for multiple opportunities for key stakeholders to engage with the Applicant in defining the extent of works and multiple stages that may be necessary to mitigate any impacts to archaeological assets. On that basis, the Applicant does not believe that as drafted this requirement is not reflective of that and the Applicant is satisfied that the requirement provides sufficient mitigation.
BBC-RR-46	8.13	Archaeology	Conclusion: the Council would welcome further engagement with the Applicant in order to address the Council's concerns, in particular those relating to the Outline Mitigation Strategy [APP-166] and the proposed archaeological mitigation measures. The Council is of the opinion that it would be useful to build more flexibility into the proposed mitigation measures in order to allow alternative options should a ‘No Dig’ solution be unachievable. Further discussion on the	The Applicant notes this comment and provided responses to these points in the rows above.

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			wording of proposed DCO Requirement 15 relating to Archaeology would be welcomed.	
BBC-RR-47	9.1	Hedgerows	<u>Field boundary hedgerows</u> : the Site's field boundary hedgerows and ditch networks has been identified by the Applicant as having significant biodiversity value. The Council would like to see a) specific address and evaluation of the cumulative value of habitat corridors (i.e. field boundary hedgerows) with the proviso of a minimum width corridor as mentioned elsewhere; and, b) how these are to be retained, mitigated, and enhanced within any Outline CEMP (para8.5.13) and Outline LEMP. Further, the Application will need to address adjacencies of existing and proposed solar farms and how maturing screen landscapes and habitat corridors to their site may impact shadow patterns on these adjacent solar farms; and visa versa (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023). It is suggested that these Scoping matters have been addressed in the DCO submitted material	The Applicant notes that BBC are satisfied the application documents address these matters. The Applicant recognises that the field boundary hedgerows are important linear habitats which contribute to habitat connectivity across the Site and in the wider landscape. An assessment of impact to hedgerows is provided in ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 Ecology and Nature Conservation [APP-043] as well as ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 Arboricultural Impact Assessment [APP-056]. In terms of retention, mitigation and enhancement controls, these matters are secured through both the oCEMP [APP-155] and the oLEMP [APP-159]. The Applicant is satisfied that the offsets provided between solar arrays and any existing and proposed vegetation are sufficient to ensure there will no adverse commercial impact on the efficiency of the Scheme.
BBC-RR-48	9.2	Legislation	<u>Matter 20</u> Hedgerow Regulations (1997) and Inclosure Act (1845): the Applicant does not appear to give consideration to (treed) hedgerows that potentially form an integral part of a field system pre-dating the Inclosure Acts. The same matter arises regarding Ancient Woodlands, veteran and other irreplaceable habitats located within 2km of the entire site boundary including associated buffer zones (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023) (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.2.4).	The Inclosure Act 1845 has been largely repealed and replaced in its majority by the Commons Act 2006. Both these acts focused on the protection and procedure relating to common land. The Applicant confirms that there is no common land within the order limits and, there is therefore, no need to disapply the Inclosure Act 1845 within the draft DCO. The Applicant notes Schedule 3 of the draft DCO [AS-008] where disapplication of local Inclosure Acts,

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			While the Applicant makes reference to the Hedgerow Regulations [APP-017] there is no mention of the Inclosure Act; further in [APP-016] Interpretation: these is no reference to the Regulations and Act which should be included. In light of various existing hedgerows that may need removal to suit access road visibility splays, this requires both in principle and detailed resolution to address the Regulations.	different from the Inclosure Act 1845 and relating only to local legislation, is sought to the extent these may impact on the construction or operation of the Scheme.
BBC-RR-49	9.3	The Scheme	<u>Habitat</u>: Applicant's PIER Vol 3 Figures 2-1b to 2-1g 'Work No. 8 – works to create, enhance and maintain green infrastructure': a) The Council suggest that these Figures are indicative in terms of intent regarding landscaping works, but that they remain open to discussion with the Host Authorities; b) While the Applicant has introduced landscape buffers/ corridors to boundary areas it is unclear if these are of sufficient width to form meaningful screening to the development. As a minimum it is suggested that eight metres widths should be agreed and annotated on the Figures accordingly (It is noted in the body of the reports dimensions are suggested, but Plan annotations would aid clarification); c) The Council express concern that the retained landscape to the various river corridors appear either non-existent, or exceptionally narrow, and that these should be protected, say at a minimum of eight metres from watercourse centerline;	The Applicant notes BBC's comment that ES Vol 3 Figure 2-1 Illustrative Environmental Masterplan [APP-121] addresses most of the matters raised here. Nonetheless, the Applicant has the following comments for clarity: a) ES Vol 3 Figure 2-1: Illustrative Environmental Masterplan [APP-121] shows the proposed landscape and visual mitigation for the Scheme. The same plan is included as the Illustrative Landscape Proposals at Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159]. The oLEMP is a control document that will be certified as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO). Requirement 4 in Schedule 2 of the draft DCO [AS-008] requires that a final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), in substantial accordance with the oLEMP, is prepared and approved by the relevant LPAs prior to commencement of construction. The final LEMP will implement the landscape proposals, which must therefore be in substantial accordance with the Illustrative Landscape Proposals at Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159].

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			d) The Figures do not identify protected woodlands and hedgerows making it difficult to read if these too will be afforded a margin of landscape protection; and, as currently presented, the Council are not supportive of these Figures 2-1b to 2-1g. The Council are supportive of the Illustrative Environmental Masterplan (1of14) subject to the above clarification (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). It is suggested that the [APP-212] Illustrative Environmental Masterplan has addressed most of the matters raised and that matters outstanding are addressed in this response within other matters.	b) The Applicant notes this comment but has not, generally, introduced annotations on the plans to indicate the width of the applied buffers. The buffers are set out (and secured by) paragraph 3.4.1 of the oLEMP [APP-159]. c) The Applicant notes this comment, but suggests it may be a matter of the scale of presentation of the drawings. The figures show a minimum 10m buffer between solar fencelines and the watercourses, which is secured in paragraph 3.4.1 of the oLEMP [APP-159], which the Applicant notes is greater than the requested 8m buffer. d) The figures do, illustratively, indicate the location of retained woodland and hedgerows. ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 Arboricultural Impact Assessment [APP-056] provides the location and protection measures for trees, woodland and hedgerows. The Applicant understands this to be a legacy comment which has now been resolved. as per BBC's statement that <i>"It is suggested that the Illustrative Environmental Masterplan has addressed most of the matters raised and that matters outstanding are addressed in this response within other matters."</i>
BBC-RR-50	9.4	The Scheme	Matter 21 Cable corridor: para3.4.4 '...the construction corridor for the grid connection is expected to be up to 25m wide'. For clarity, this dimension should be denoted on the Illustrative Environmental Masterplan(s) to understand potential harm (width) to the existing landscape along this corridor (Ref. PEIR	As set out at paragraph 2.4.98 in ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038], the Order Limits along the 400kV grid connection have "typically been set at 25m wide". This reflects the maximum width of land within which the alignment may be routed, and provides flexibility to make minor diversions should unexpected constraints be encountered. It is also noted that the typical construction working width to lay the cable

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			Report, 2024) (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.2.17). In [APP-038] para2.4.98 the Applicant indicates that the cable corridor within the Order Limits will be set at 25m but that the assumption on length of hedgerow removal will be limited to 6m. The Council requires assurances that any hedgerow removal will be limited to 6m, albeit that the corridor width may be 25m	would be "up to 12m wide", to accommodate the trench, temporary access and material stockpiling. On hedgerows, the Applicant can confirm that the ES assumptions are that any required hedgerow removal would be limited to discrete 6m sections at identified locations (with a total of 84m across the Scheme), as set out at paragraphs 2.5.34 to 2.5.35 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038]. This is reflected in the draft DCO [AS-008], which specifies the sections of hedgerow to be removed in Schedule 12. It should also be noted that Article 41(5) of the draft DCO [AS-008] requires the prior consent of the relevant highway authority for any removal within the publicly maintainable highway.
BBC-RR-51	9.5	Access	<u>Matter 22</u> Visibility splays: Applicant PEIR para7.8.6 and 7.8.21 <i>'Hedgerow habitats will be almost entirely retained and protected with buffer zones of at least 6m, with the exception of small-scale removal/ widening required to permit Site access at ten locations and totaling 54m with no individual length of removal greater than 6m. Post-construction, seven crossing points, totaling 37m, will be reinstated. Implementation of the landscape design is discussed in relation to operational impacts'</i>. This matter should be read against the Highway Officer's comments regarding visibility splays at access points; and, concern stated elsewhere regarding the construction of temporary access routes and cable corridor widths across the Site and their effect on existing hedgerows and their related habitats. It is suggested that the harm/ effect could be larger than originally stated. If this is the case, then any mitigation measures need to be re-visited.	The Applicant identifies 'works to facilitate access' as Work No. 9 and 'visibility splays outside the public highway' as Work No. 9A. ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] sets out at paragraphs 2.4.162 and 2.4.163 that Work No. 9 extends across the full extent of the public highway required for visibility splays for all existing, proposed and temporary access points, and that it is not currently anticipated that any vegetation will need to be removed to facilitate visibility splays; however, if required, existing verges and vegetation within or adjacent to visibility splays will be managed to maintain visibility. Where visibility splays fall outside the public highway these are marked as Work No. 9A. ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] sets out there are two such locations (SA16 and SA19), and that at each of these

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			Consequently, the statements in para7.8.8, para7.8.9 etal 'Minor hedgerow removal' may need review and are currently not supported (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). There is a general concern that at a detailed level the access points off the public highway into the Site do not show the full extent of existing/ historic hedgerows to be removed to enable the required visibility splay. This would create both habitat harm and open the Site to more external views creating setting harm. This requires discussion at Examination.	access points there is no existing vegetation within the private land that obstructs views. The hedgerow removals are identified in Table 2-34 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038], which sets out that up to 84 metres of hedgerow would need to be removed to facilitate construction, with 42 metres reinstated at the end of the construction phase. As set out above, this is reflected in the draft DCO [AS-008], which specifies the sections of hedgerow to be removed in Schedule 12. It should also be noted that Article 41(5) of the draft DCO [AS-008] requires the prior consent of the relevant highway authority for any removal within the publicly maintainable highway. Accordingly, the DCO does not provide an open-ended ability to remove additional hedgerow length for visibility splay provision beyond that which is scheduled and assessed. The Applicant trusts this gives clarity to BBC, and addresses the suggestion that the "<i>minor hedgerow removal</i>" statements are not supported. The outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) [APP-156] explains at paragraph 5.3.3 that where an existing field gate or farm track access has no existing visibility splay, a visibility splay would be provided by coppicing vegetation to below 1 metre. In addition, coppicing or pushing back of hedgerows may be required depending on site specific issues (in particular at temporary access SA14), although access locations have been selected so that required visibility is achievable with minimal requirement for hedgerow management (paragraph 5.4.1, [APP-156]).

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				The Applicant considers that the extent of hedgerow interaction required to deliver access and visibility is identified and assessed in the ES; that the visibility splay requirements and their land take are illustrated within the Transport Assessment [APP-101] annexes; and that the draft DCO [AS-008] provides the legal means to control hedgerow removal.
BBC-RR-52	9.8	Ecology	[APP-043] Environmental Statement - Vol 1 Chapter 7 Ecology and Nature Conservation and accompanying appendices [APP-091 to APP-097] provide details of a broad suite of ecological surveys and investigations undertaken by the Applicant to inform the Environmental Statement. These are supported by the Ecology and Nature Conservation Figures [APP-145] and the Ecology and Nature Conservation Figures – Confidential [APP-146].	The Applicant notes this comment.
BBC-RR-53	9.10	Ecology	The additional information that has been incorporated into the assessment since statutory consultation is welcomed, including the 2025 bird survey data and additional rationale for the scoping out of Grafham Water SSSI. Based on the updated information the Council is content that the Scheme is unlikely to result in significant effects on statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes the Council's agreement.
BBC-RR-54	9.11	Ecology	<u>Matter 23</u> County Wildlife Site: the Scheme will involve works adjacent to / in proximity to three non-statutory sites, Huntingdon Wood County Wildlife Site (CWS) (designated for its ancient woodland, an irreplaceable resource), High Wood County Wildlife Site (CWS) (also designated for its ancient woodland, an irreplaceable resource, and the support it provides to diverse	The effects of the Scheme on non-statutory designated sites, including County Wildlife Site are assessed in ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 Ecology and Nature Conservation [APP-043] which concludes no residual significant adverse effects on any ecological receptor. No hydrological impacts are expected to Huntingdon Wood CWS.

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			invertebrate and amphibian populations) and Kangaroo Meadows CWS (designated for neutral grassland communities). While no direct loss of habitat within these sites is expected, the Council is concerned that there is currently insufficient information to verify the Applicant's conclusion that these sites will not be adversely impacted during construction. Further information is required to assess the potential for hydrological impacts through trenching in close proximity to Huntingdon Wood CWS and potential impacts of the use of an existing culvert for construction access. Regarding High Wood further information is required to demonstrate that traditional practices (such as coppicing) undertaken to maintain the high wildlife value of the CWS will not be adversely impacted upon during construction. At Kangaroo Meadows CWS clarification is required on the potential for adverse effects on existing grassland through shading by proposed mitigation woodland planting once mature.	High wood is located over 100m beyond the Order Limits, and as such management activities would not be expected to be affected by the Scheme. As shown on ES Vol 3 Figure 2-1 Illustrative Environmental Masterplan [APP-121], no woodland is proposed adjacent to Kangaroo Meadows County Wildlife Site, which lies north of Great Staughton Road and west of Little Staughton Road and is shown on ES Vol 3 Figure 7-2 [APP-145]. Only existing vegetation is retained here. Woodland planting is located north-west of the Kangaroo (not designated as a County Wildlife Site) to reinforce existing tree belts.
BBC-RR-55	9.12	Ecology	The Council welcome that the design and assessment have evolved to take account of previous consultation feedback on ecological issues. However, the Council remain concerned that the assessment for certain species groups is based on incomplete survey information (e.g. spot check surveys only for water vole/otter and some areas inaccessible for bird and newt survey). It is not always clear within the assessment how these shortfalls in data have been considered and their impact on the final assessment conclusions; this concern is set out below.	The Applicant notes this response with specific comments regarding survey and assessment for ecological receptors (ground nesting birds, roosting bats and trees, hazel dormouse, water vole and otter, and great crested newt) provided below with reference to BBC-RR-56 to BBC-RR-60.

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
BBC-RR-56	9.13	Ecology	Matter 24 Skylark mitigation: the Council is concerned that without suitable mitigation and compensation provision the Scheme has potential to result in a significant adverse effect on ground nesting birds, in particular skylarks (125 territories recorded within the Site). The ES [APP-043] sets out at para7.8.112 the intention to create large areas of open grassland 'to be of benefit for skylark and lapwing and to encourage nesting attempts within these areas'. The oLEMP [APP-159] currently provides insufficient detail to demonstrate that the proposed measures will be sufficient. It is recommended that a detailed farmland birds mitigation strategy (covering both breeding and non-breeding birds) is produced to include (but not be limited to): - details of proposed habitat losses and gains (overall area and territory numbers); - measures to be employed to protect ground nesting birds during construction and operational phases; - consideration of the phasing of both impacts and proposed mitigation/compensation provision; and, - how the proposed management regime will ensure that habitats are managed in a suitable manner to ensure they remain suitable for use by skylark and other ground nesting birds. These details are required to assess the appropriateness of the measures proposed and determine if further off-site compensation is required. The Applicant is referred to the RSPB 'Farming for	The Applicant has prepared an Outline Farmland Bird Mitigation Strategy (oFBMS) which forms an appendix to the oLEMP [as updated alongside this submission]. Table 5.3 of the oCEMP [APP-155] provides general measures to prevent damage to birds nests, measures to prevent disturbance to Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedule 1 bird species and general measures for the protection of wildlife. The oLEMP [APP-159] includes measures to protect birds during habitat management operations, including: - Pre-construction surveys for nesting birds (5.2.9) - Toolbox talk for site operatives (5.2.10) - Bird protection measures in construction including vegetation removal outside of bird breeding season (5.2.14), pre-construction checks for vegetation works within this period (5.2.15) and buffer zones around any nests found (5.2.16) - No cutting or trimming of woodland during bird breeding season (6.5.16) - No cutting or trimming of existing or new hedgerows during bird breeding season (6.4.6 and 6.5.16) - Cutting of grassland to adopt a systematic approach (working from centre towards boundaries) to allow fauna to escape (6.5.49) - Grassland to be managed to provide habitat for ground nesting birds (6.5.51)

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			Wildlife: Skylark Plots' (nd) regarding accepted guidance of size of area to be set aside.	
BBC-RR-57	9.14	Ecology	<u>Matter 25</u> Roosting bats and trees: the Council is concerned that trees within and adjacent to the Site have not been surveyed to identify their potential to support roosting bats. The Applicant has stated at para7.7.20 of the ES [APP-043] that 'trees present within the Site would be retained and protected during construction', however the Council consider that as a minimum the location of PRF-I and PRF-M trees should be established in order that it can be demonstrated within the CEMP or oLEMP that suitable protection buffers can be incorporated into the design for all relevant trees. The minimum 6m hedgerow buffer outlined in the ES would be insufficient to prevent disturbance where roosts are confirmed or have the potential to be present.	As outlined in Figure 6.1 of Collins (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologist, no detailed Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) survey is required where impacts on trees can be avoided. Tree protection measures are set out within ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [APP-056] . As such, it is not considered proportionate or useful to undertake a detailed GLTA of all trees within the Site. Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statements have been included within the oCEMP (as updated alongside this submission) .
BBC-RR-58	9.15	Ecology	<u>Matter 26</u> Hazel dormouse: the Council note that while the presence of hazel dormouse is unlikely, in the absence of a survey it is not possible to fully rule out its presence. The small scale of potential hedgerow impacts is acknowledged; however, further detail should be provided on how any residual risks of impacts on hazel dormouse will be avoided (e.g. through the application of a precautionary method of works incorporating sensitive timing and working methods).	The Applicant agrees that hazel dormouse are unlikely to be present. Construction impacts are small scale and localised, comprising works at 14 locations and totalling 84m with no individual length of removal greater than 6m. Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statements have been included within the oCEMP (as updated alongside this submission) .
BBC-RR-59	9.16	Ecology	<u>Matter 27</u> Water vole and otter: a single combined survey visit for water vole and otter has been undertaken for each proposed watercourse crossing	The Applicant welcomes that the council is content pre-construction checks and positive management of ditches are sufficient to mitigate impacts on water vole.

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			point during June 2025. This survey appears to have consisted of spot checks of crossing point location rather a more comprehensive survey of suitable habitat within/adjoining the Site. The Council are concerned that for water vole in particular the presence of dense vegetation may have obscured field signs leading to under recording, and due to the restricted survey undertaken areas identified for 'enhancement' have not been subject to baseline surveys. However, the Council is content that the proposed pre-construction checks detailed in Section 5 of the oLEMP [APP-159] alongside the commitment to positive management of retained ditches provided in para6.4.8 to 6.4.13 of the oLEMP are likely sufficient to demonstrate potential impacts can be mitigated if they are found to be present. However, further clarification is required on enhancement proposals including proposals for baseline surveys of areas identified for enhancement to check their existing water vole status.	As stated within ES Vol 2 Appendix 7-6 Otter and Water Vole Survey Report [APP-096], surveys were undertaken on land up to 100m from crossing points, which is in accordance with the survey design set out in the water vole mitigation handbook for 'works with permanent impacts affecting 15-50m of watercourse' which is in line with impacts from culverting. As stated in section 2.3.2 [APP-096], surveys were undertaken by surveying the ditch from the toe of the bank ,with spot checks only undertaken where access was limited. All surveys (full inspection or spot checks) are considered sufficient to identify the presence or likely absence of water vole. It is not considered proportionate to survey for presence of water vole at all retained ditches to be enhanced. If present the species will benefit from such enhancements, which would also provide opportunities for the species to move into these areas if not already present. Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statements have been included within the oCEMP (as updated alongside this submission).
BBC-RR-60	9.17	Ecology	<u>Matter 28</u> Great crested newt: it is noted that the 2025 surveys have confirmed the presence of great crested newt within the Site at waterbody references P14 and P25. The great crested newt survey report [APP-095] identifies P46 as adjacent to the Site but does not include details of this waterbody. Confirmation is required what (if any) survey has been undertaken at P46. The ES acknowledges that a Natural England license will be required to cover the proposed works,	It can be confirmed that no survey was undertaken at P46 due to lack of available access. ES Vol 2 Appendix 7-5 Great Crested Newt Presence or Absence Survey Report [as updated alongside this submission] has been updated to include reference to this waterbody. The Applicant has submitted a draft licence application to Natural England in February 2026 to gain a 'letter of

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			however currently no letter of impediment has been obtained from Natural England.	no impediment'. The Applicant will submit this letter into the examination once received.
BBC-RR-61	9.18	Ecology	Matter 29 Cross reference on commitments: the Council welcome the proposed biodiversity mitigation / compensation set out in the ecology chapter [APP-043], however, some have not been adequately incorporated into other submission documents (e.g. environmental masterplan, engineering drawing, management plans, DCO commitments, etc.) and therefore, delivery cannot be assumed; by example: a) References to incorporation of sensitive lighting design need to be better reflected in the content of the oLEMP and CEMP to ensure adverse effects on adjoining habitats such as Huntingdon Wood CWS, High Wood CWS, and other ancient woodland are avoided. [APP-031] Planning Statement para4.7.19 (cross-referenced with [APP-038], para2.5.24 - 2.5.27 and [APP-155] para4.1.26 – 4.1.29): the Applicant's approach that appropriate artificial lighting will be controlled / managed (in part) to ensure that impacts on ecological receptors, nearby residents and amenity users of the Site are minimised is welcomed. The Applicant's attention is drawn to NPS EN-3 (para2.10.46 to 2.10.48) which states that lighting relating to security measures should be fully assessed by the Applicant. It is recommended that the submission of and approval of specific lighting measures form a	The oCEMP [APP-155] sets out mitigation measures with respect to lighting at paragraphs 4.1.26 to 4.1.29, and in Table 5.3. The oLEMP [APP-159] sets out mitigation measures with respect to lighting in Section 5.2. The Applicant considers these measures adequately control lighting, with detail to be provided in the final versions of those documents. The oLEMP [APP-159] covers management of habitats throughout the lifetime of the Scheme, which is 40 years. Biodiversity net gain requires significant on-site gains to be secured for 30 years, and as such the Scheme goes above and beyond minimum requirements. The minimum time period required for biodiversity net gain has been met and the calculation outputs are considered valid. Biodiversity net gain objectives, including the habitat type, overall condition and condition criteria targeted are outlined in Table 1 of the oLEMP [APP-159].

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			requirement within the DCO's Schedule of Requirements. b) Similarly, the Council welcome the inclusion of the expected biodiversity net gain metric outputs as commitment C12 of the Commitments Register [APP-154]. However, the Council are concerned that these commitments are not currently reflected in the oLEMP, and currently the calculation undertaken is high-level only. The Council request that commitments are clearly stated in the oLEMP to ensure clarity on targets post construction. c) The Council note that the final biodiversity net gain outcomes will be dependent on created habitats being maintained and suitably managed. Given the temporary nature of the Scheme, and that ongoing management of created habitats after demobilisation are not currently secured, the Council consider the current BNG calculation outputs (and linked beneficial effects) may therefore overstate the likely final scheme outcome. It is suggested that this needs comprehensive review, including how these commitments are then secured in the DCO Agreement	
BBC-RR-62	9.19	Ecology	<u>Matter 30</u> Planting selection: the proposed woodland planting and that plants of local provenance are to be utilised is welcomed. The Council requests that the final woodland, hedgerow, and river course planting stock list (species list) should be discussed with the local planning authorities. Species should be chosen	The Applicant welcomes the Council's support for the principle of woodland planting and the use of locally sourced planting stock. The oLEMP [APP-159] provides the framework for the detailed planting specification to be finalised post-

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			that are characteristic of the local landscape and resilient to climate change. Opportunities should be taken to incorporate locally important species, include native black poplar and Huntingdonshire elm (resilient to Dutch elm disease). Further, an understory of grasses, wildflower meadows, and bulb species add to habitat diversity and ecological resistance would be encouraged	consent, including woodland, hedgerow and grassland seed mixes. The Council's request to incorporate locally important species is noted. The indicative planting specifications in the oLEMP [APP-159] already include black poplar and elm (and specifies that locally suitable cultivars with high resistance to Dutch elm disease are to be used). The oLEMP states that woodland and hedgerow species mixes will be tailored to the prevalent conditions of the proposed location, including the use of more riparian mixtures alongside watercourses and the selection of shallow rooting species in proximity to utility easements. As secured by Requirement 4 the draft DCO [AS-008], no phase of the authorised development may commence until a detailed LEMP, in substantial accordance with the oLEMP, has been submitted to and approved by the relevant local planning authority. This approval mechanism provides the formal route through which the final woodland, hedgerow and associated planting schedules and seed mixes will be agreed with the relevant local planning authority.
BBC-RR-63	9.20	Ecology	<u>Matter 31</u> Decommissioned planting: it is the Council's understanding that the powers requested under the DCO will not seek to remove any of the habitats created or established by the Scheme on the Site. However, following decommissioning (i.e. the removal of the physical infrastructure) all habitats would be returned to landowners, and at this point habitats could potentially be removed subject to the relevant legislative and policy requirements at the time being adhered to. The Council seeks agreement from the	The Applicant can confirm that the Council's understanding of the landowner position is correct, as set out in our response above, reference BBC-RR-32. It is not in the Applicant's power to agree to the areas of species-diverse grassland being retained following the decommissioning of the Scheme.

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			Applicant that areas of species-diverse grassland to be created under the Scheme will be retained and their long-term management secured to ensure the beneficial effects identified in the ES are permanent.	
BBC-RR-64	9.21	Ecology	<u>Matter 32</u> Landscape widths: the Council note that the minimum six metre buffer between the fenceline of the solar farm and the surround hedgerows specified in [APP-159] oLEMP Section 3.4.1 is low, in particular for hedgerows containing standard trees. The Council would wish to see that these minimum buffers are extended, and greater consideration is given to varying the overall extent of panels at the margins of the site to provide larger buffer zones that will enhance their value for a range of species.	The Applicant notes that the 6m buffer which is secured by the oLEMP [APP-159] is only a minimum, and that greater buffers could be included at the detailed design stage in relation to tree or woodland habitats. The Applicant has prepared ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 Arboricultural Impact Assessment [APP-056] which confirms that the 6m buffer is suitable to avoid tree and hedgerow loss across the Scheme.
BBC-RR-65	9.22	Ecology	<u>Matter 33</u> Grassland establishment: the Council have concerns regarding the method identified for establishment of species diverse grassland in the areas identified within the illustrative Environmental Masterplan [APP-121] and the oLEMP [APP-159]. These areas are largely currently in arable use and therefore likely to have high nutrient levels. Current proposals do not initially incorporate methods to reduce soil fertility (e.g. soil inversion) or promote diversity (e.g. sowing of yellow rattle). If there is a need to rely on frequent early cutting of the sward to reduce nutrient levels, this may be in conflict with the proposed use of the same areas to provide habitat for ground nesting birds.	The Applicant acknowledges the Council's concern that establishment of species-diverse grassland on land in arable use can be constrained by high soil nutrients. However, the Applicant's position is that the approach set out in the oLEMP [APP-159] provides a recognised approach for creating and maintaining species diverse grasslands on productive land, without introducing unnecessary soil disturbance. The example of more intrusive fertility-reduction methods (e.g. soil inversion) are not proposed because they introduce greater soil disturbance and would need to be considered carefully alongside wider soil protection and site constraints. The Applicant has instead amended the oLEMP [as updated alongside this submission] at paragraph 5.3.35 to clarify that seed mixes will be dependent on soil sampling to determine the most appropriate establishment method on a parcel-by-parcel basis, and at paragraph 5.3.40 to

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				confirm that Yellow Rattle will explicitly be used as a means to promote sward diversity. The oLEMP [APP-159] adopts a monitoring and adaptive management approach, with regular reviews over the establishment period and subsequently to assess the success of grassland establishment, and to identify remedial measures if required. Potential measures are set out in Section 8.3 of the oLEMP [APP-159]. The general approach set out in the oLEMP [APP-159] is that grasslands will be managed so that no cutting is undertaken between March and August inclusive (paragraph 6.5.51), with any winter regrowth cut no later than February (paragraph 6.5.52), thus avoiding conflict with the bird nesting season unless otherwise agreed with an ecological clerk of works.
BBC-RR-66	9.23	Ecology	<u>Matter 34</u> Veteran trees: the embedded mitigation measures for veteran trees and trees with veteran features outlines in the oCEMP [APP-155] are welcomed. The Council request that for consistency, reference to these measures is also referenced within the oLEMP [APP-159].	The Applicant notes that the oLEMP [APP-159] already includes equivalent commitments for the protection of trees and vegetation (inclusive of veteran trees) during the construction phase at paragraph 5.2.7, and therefore has not amended the oLEMP in this regard. In addition, the Applicant notes that both the oCEMP [APP-155] and the oLEMP [APP-159] are control documents requiring approval by the relevant LPA prior to construction, such that any and all measures from either document must be complied with.
BBC-RR-67	9.24	Ecology	<u>Matter 35</u> Monitoring strategy: the frequency of monitoring set out within Section 8.0 of the oLEMP is welcomed, but the Council note that the existing monitoring proposals appear largely aimed at	Habitats act as a proxy for other biodiversity and as such where habitats are meeting targets it can reasonably be expected that the stated benefits for other species would also be achieved. The Applicant is

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			assessing progress towards the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) targets. Given that the Site is utilised by a range of protected and/or notable species, including a significant ground nesting bird population, a more holistic monitoring strategy including bird surveys is necessary. This should include the consideration of species and wider ecosystem characteristics. Adherence to the standard approach to monitoring biodiversity promoted in Solar Energy UK guidance is strongly recommended	not proposing any specific species monitoring beyond the existing monitoring set out in the oLEMP [APP-159] .
BBC-RR-68	9.26	Biodiversity Net Gain	<u>Matter 36</u> 40-year landscape management: 'operational lifespan of up to 40-years'; and, (para7.5.29) '<i>LEMP...landscape mitigation and ecological mitigation...and would also set out how this would be managed by the Applicant over the lifespan of the Scheme</i>': the Council would like to understand how the Applicant assesses and address the management and maintenance of the existing mature and a new maturing landscape habitat over the operational lifespan of the project (circa 40-years). This represents a significant financial and staffing commitment which is currently not evidenced (Ref. Scoping Reports, 2023). While the Council is in-principle supportive of the Applicant's [APP-157] outline Operational Environmental Management Plan, [APP-159] outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, and [APP-161] outline Soil Management Plan, these require more detailed resolution, specifically how they are to be staffed and implemented over the 40-year operational phase.	The Applicant has been mindful of the potential maintenance requirements of the Scheme from the outset and has identified a specific Operations and Maintenance Area in East Park Site D that will include a dedicated building for storing maintenance equipment, including for landscape and habitat management. The Applicant has also set out the anticipated staffing for the operational phase. Paragraph 4.1.5 of the oLEMP [APP-159] states that, during operation, the Applicant expects 20 full time equivalent (FTE) roles overall, including three FTE roles working in land management including landscape maintenance and agriculture. The operational delivery of the LEMP would include appointment of a suitably qualified Landscape Manager, supported by environmental and ecological clerk of works functions as required. It further states that the Applicant currently intends the land management roles to be permanent positions directly employed by the Scheme (subject to review), with the option for a multi-year maintenance contract.

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				As per section 9 of the oLEMP [APP-159] , the final LEMP will provide the detailed delivery mechanism, including named roles, an organogram and contact directory, monitoring and reporting procedures, document control, communications, training and toolbox talks, and procedures for environmental emergencies.
BBC-RR-69	9.27a	Biodiversity Net Gain	The BNG assessment has been undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and is informed by an illustrative design and outline management proposals. As such, the reported biodiversity gains represent a high-level assessment and are subject to refinement as the Scheme design is progressed. In recognition of this, the Applicant has set specific project commitments that are lower than the headline gains indicated by the illustrative metric outputs. However, the extent to which measures proposed to mitigate significant effects are clearly distinguished from those intended to deliver BNG remains a matter for further examination.	The Applicant acknowledges that the assessment has been based on an illustrative design, albeit an illustrative design that is secured by Appendix A Illustrative Landscape Proposals of the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159] (which the Scheme must be developed in substantial accordance with). Out of caution and to avoid any future compliance issue, the Applicant has elected to claim and commit to a slightly lower BNG (as set out in Section 7.8 of the Planning Statement [APP-031]) to allow future flexibility if required at the design stage. Distinction between mitigation and biodiversity net gain delivery are addressed in BBC-RR-70.
BBC-RR-70	9.27b	Biodiversity Net Gain	All BNG matters raised by the Planning Inspectorate in its Scoping Opinion are considered to have been addressed in the ES with the exception that the Council requested a clear differentiation between measures proposed to mitigate significant effects and measures proposed to support BNG.	The Biodiversity Net Gain Report [as updated alongside this submission] will be updated to reflect this comment.
BBC-RR-71	9.27c	Biodiversity Net Gain	The Applicant is not currently subject to a mandatory requirement to deliver 10% BNG, as statutory BNG does not yet apply to Development Consent Order schemes. However, it is acknowledged that mandatory	The Applicant notes this comment.

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			BNG for NSIPs is anticipated from May 2026 and that national policy and industry practice are increasingly moving towards the delivery of measurable biodiversity enhancements in advance of statutory requirements.	
BBC-RR-72	9.27d	Biodiversity Net Gain	The Applicant has committed to delivering 70% net gain in area-based habitat units, 30% net gain in hedgerow units, and 5% net gain in watercourse units, as set out within the submitted BNG Report. These commitments provide transparency regarding the level of biodiversity enhancement proposed; however, it is noted that the figures are derived from high-level calculations based on outline design assumptions and do not, at this stage, represent secured or fully defined outcomes. It is noted that the current commitment made in BNG Report [APP-168] does not detail that this commitment will be secured on-site. The presumption based on the BNG report is that it will be possible to achieve this level of commitment on-site, however confirmation is sought.	The Applicant confirms that BNG delivery is presumed to be delivered within the Order limits through the proposed landscape design.
BBC-RR-73	9.27e	Biodiversity Net Gain	The Council note that expectations in relation to BNG vary across the administrative areas affected by the Scheme. In particular, Cambridgeshire County Council has articulated aspirations for higher levels of BNG through strategic policy and consultation responses, reflecting wider regional ambitions for nature recovery, while Bedford Borough Council and Huntingdonshire District Council similarly seek measurable net gains for biodiversity through local plan policy. The Examination will provide the appropriate forum to consider how the Applicant's proposed BNG commitments align with these differing local expectations and emerging national guidance.	The Applicant notes this comment.

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BBC-RR-74	9.27f	Biodiversity Net Gain	With regard to methodology, the BNG Report describes the use of UK Habitat Classification and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition criteria to inform baseline assessments. While this approach is appropriate in principle, further clarity would be beneficial on how baseline condition judgements have been applied consistently across extensive habitat areas, particularly where professional judgement has been relied upon. At this stage, no detailed habitat condition information has been provided	As stated within the limitations (paragraph 2.3.11) of the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [APP-168] habitat parcels have been aggregated. As such it was not possible to present condition data within the user comments section of the Metric.
BBC-RR-75	9.27g	Biodiversity Net Gain	The Council support the Applicant's robust and transparent application of the biodiversity trading rules, which is considered appropriate at this stage.	The Applicant notes this comment.
BBC-RR-76	9.27h	Biodiversity Net Gain	The Scheme comprises a large-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic development, and further clarification would be beneficial on how under-panel habitats are classified, managed, and condition-scored within the BNG assessment over the operational lifetime of the Scheme, and the extent to which these areas contribute to the reported biodiversity gains.	As stated within Table 3 of the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [APP-168] land within the solar fenceline, including under panels has been classified as modified grassland in moderate condition. This is in line with established convention for solar farms both within Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire, and also other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects. Examples of precedent developments are provided as follows: 1 Rookery Solar Farm (Huntingdonshire 24/00883/FUL) 2 Lowfield Farm solar (Bedford Borough 24/00858/MAF) Provided 'other neutral grassland' under panels 3 Tilbridge Solar (PINS Ref: EN010142) Provided Modified grassland under panels. From the three above applications it is evident that there is precedent for creation of modified grassland

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				(or higher) under panels. Modified grassland within solar areas would be managed through a mowing or grazing regime as appropriate. The applicant is aware the Habitat classification system (2023) states solar panels should be classified as developed land, however while this may be appropriate for habitat mapping, this is not considered applicable to biodiversity net gain. The metric is intended as a proxy for wider biodiversity, based on habitats. It is well established that the land under solar panels will be vegetated and provide biodiversity benefits, and is not comparable to, for example, a hard standing car park. A recent blog post by BSG ecology¹ has clarified this in detail, including support from Natural England. The report states that when clarification was sought from Natural England their response was <i><u>"UKHab solar panel habitat type does not apply to the metric, instead users should record the habitat found beneath the solar panels"</u></i>.
BBC-RR-77	9.27i	Biodiversity Net Gain	The Council note that delivery of the proposed BNG outcomes is reliant on outline management measures, with limited detail currently provided on how habitats will be secured, managed, and monitored over the lifetime of the Scheme. While it is indicated that further detail will be secured through a Requirement attached to the draft DCO, additional clarity will be required through the Examination process to ensure that the proposed BNG commitments are capable of being delivered and maintained in practice.	Requirement 4 of the draft DCO [AS-008] prevents any phase of the authorised development from commencing until a landscape and ecological management plan (LEMP) for that phase, in <u>substantial accordance with</u> the submitted oLEMP [APP-159] , has been submitted to and approved by the relevant local planning authority. This provides the mechanism by which the necessary detailed prescriptions are secured and then enforceable for the operational lifetime of the Scheme.

¹ <https://bsg-ecology.com/how-should-habitats-below-solar-panels-be-classified-within-the-statutory-biodiversity-metric/>

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				Section 8 of the oLEMP [APP-159] sets out how habitats will be monitored, with Section 8.2 referring specifically to BNG. Paragraph 8.2.4 of the oLEMP [APP-159] states that “<i>Details regarding the monitoring criteria and specific methods to be used for each habitat type will be outlined in a Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Monitoring and Management Plan, to be prepared as part of the final LEMP.</i>”
BBC-RR-78	9.27j	Biodiversity Net Gain	In addition, limited detail is provided regarding how habitats of biodiversity value established during the operational phase would be treated at decommissioning. Given the proposed operational lifetime of up to 40-years, further clarification will be required to ensure that biodiversity gains are not inadvertently lost at that stage.	The Applicant has provided a response on this matter with reference to response BBC-RR-32.
BBC-RR-79	10.1	Flood Risk and Drainage	<u>Matter 38</u> Culverts: (Applicant’s PEIR) ‘<i>the access tracks will be required to cross a number of watercourses and drainage ditches...will be culverted/ crossed</i>’. It is suggested that this matter is addressed as a detailed design matter and may require consent from the LLFA. The matter could be addressed by way of a pre-commencement condition. It would be a requirement that all culverts are removed at the Decommissioning Phase and the watercourse topography and vegetation reinstated (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024) (Ref. Planning Inspector’s Scoping Opinion ID2.1.8). Issues remaining: While [APP-038] ES Chp2 The Scheme Tables 2.21 set out how watercourses are to be crossed, predominately through proposed open span crossing	Tables 2-25 and 2-27 within ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] list respectively, the access track crossings that will be permanent and those that will be temporary. Cable crossings not associated with track crossings, are otherwise by horizontal drilling or trenching. Only one new permanent crossing is to utilise a culvert (C52). Instances of use of culverts for track crossings are otherwise only temporary arrangements, therefore the risk of coincidence with extreme storm events is significantly less. Hydraulic calculations will be provided post-consent for all watercourse structures.

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			or use of existing culverts, it is unclear if this approach is only to be adopted during the construction phase, rather than all phases. This requires some clarification.+ a) [APP-100] an initial watercourse crossing assessment has been provided; while the content of the initial assessment is acceptable, concern remains regarding the potential use of culverts and associated effect on stormwater flow/ management. It is suggested that the Applicant provide greater clarity and details which could be agreed postconsent to address this matter. b) The Applicant has suggested that hydraulic calculations for watercourse crossings will be provided during detailed design at post consent – in principle this is acceptable.	
BBC-RR-80	10.2	Flood Risk and Drainage	<u>DCO Informative 1</u> Consent: any structures within the banks of watercourses such as culverts and/or open span crossings to allow access over will require Ordinary Watercourse Consent from the LLFA.	The Applicant notes the council's comment and confirms that any additional consents or licences required for the implementation of the authorised development which are not secured within the draft DCO are set out in the Other Consents and Licences Statement [APP-033] providing further clarity on the Applicant's intentions. Unlike planning permissions granted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 regime, there is no need to provide informatives within the statutory instrument that is the development consent order. Clarification and justification for the provisions included within the draft DCO are set out in the Explanatory Memorandum [APP-017].

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BBC-RR-81	10.4	Flood Risk and Drainage	<u>Outline Battery Safety Management Plan</u> (oBSMP) [APP-162]: the Council suggests that the outline Plan as submitted addresses matters raised by the Council in their Scoping and PEIR responses. The Plan contains further controls to mitigate for potential impacts arising from the BESS – in an emergency situation where polluted water may run-off from the facility it is proposed that this can be safely contained and treated, rather than risking pollution of groundwater or local watercourses – broadly, these proposals are acceptable.	The Applicant notes this comment.
BBC-RR-82	10.5	Flood Risk and Drainage	<u>Matter 39</u> Infiltration Testing: it is acceptable that final/ further infiltration testing as proposed by the Applicant is to be completed as part of any detailed design resolution, which could be agreed post-consent. It is noted that the assessment assumes that no infiltration is possible – this may be the likely outcome in which case other mitigations measures will need to be reviewed by the Applicant.	The outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [APP-165] shows how surface water can be managed for the design storm event, exclusively by the attenuated discharge to surface water. Should low infiltration be confirmed by testing, the current solution is therefore adequate, without the need for additional mitigations.
BBC-RR-83	10.6	Flood Risk and Drainage	<u>Matter 40</u> Catchment runoff rates: [APP-098] it is suggested by the Applicant that the runoff rates/ha provided can be applied to the whole site, or individual parcels of land as required by the calculation(s) – this would be acceptable. It is noted that no cross-catchment flows have been designed/ allowed for which may require consideration.	No land reprofiling or creation of new drainage networks are proposed as part of the scheme which would change the existing topographic catchments. Therefore, we do not believe cross-catchment flows need to be considered as part of the assessment.
BBC-RR-84	10.7	Flood Risk and Drainage	<u>Matter 41</u> Solar Panel drainage and potential for erosion from runoff: the maintenance regime of the grassland under the solar panels has been described in detail within [APP-165] outline Surface Water Management Plan and [APP-159] outline Landscape	The collective plan area of all support posts combined, is a very small proportion of the overall site area. This quantum is hydrologically negligible and should not result in a material increase in runoff volume or peak discharge when compared to the existing greenfield

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			and Ecological Management Plan – the maintenance regime is acceptable. The support posts for the solar panels take up a surface area that becomes impermeable. Individually that area is negligible but collectively with thousands of support posts this area becomes more significant. This impermeable area should be assessed when designing SuDS features such as swales, storage ponds etc. for each area of solar panels. It is suggested that filter drains / swales are provided for every five or six rows of solar panels to help address these impermeable areas at source and to minimise overland flows especially on sloping ground.	condition. The vegetation groundcover is considered to be far more influential on runoff rates and volumes from the area and the potential for improvement of this, to increase roughness and promote infiltration, is considered to more than offset any negligible impacts from panel supports. This is as opposed to the landcover currently found across the site, which will seasonally include significant areas of fallow (bare soil) and furrowed land.
BBC-RR-85	10.8	Flood Risk and Drainage	Maintenance of SuDS and watercourses: the [APP-165] outline Surface Water Management Plan includes a maintenance plan for all SuDS feature types – this is acceptable.	The Applicant notes this comment.
BBC-RR-86	10.9	Draft DCO	<u>Matter 42</u> Watercourse consenting: the [APP-016] draft DCO suggests granting power to carry out such works, subject to the protective provisions for Bedford Borough Council and Cambridgeshire County Council as the two lead local flood authorities contained within the draft DCO - in principle this approach is found accepted but it is suggested required discussion at Examination.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes any further discussion during examination.
BBC-RR-87	10.10	Flood Risk and Drainage	<u>Matter 43</u> Surface water drainage: detailed drainage plans are to be confirmed at the detailed design stage post-consent – this is acceptable. [APP-165] oSWMP sets the principles by which surface water will be managed across the Scheme. Discussion is required	The Applicant notes this comment.

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			at Examination as to deliverables, programme, and consenting regimes.	
BBC-RR-88	10.12	Flood Risk and Drainage	In summary, the Council's main concerns are potential use of culverts across water-courses, the managing of overland flow and channelised flow, and what suitable SuDS measures will be installed to the perimeter of each area of solar arrays to mitigate any flood harm to neighbouring properties/ land. While it is considered that most of these matters can be addressed and resolved at technical detailed design stage, potentially post consent, the Council would want these matters raised at Examination.	Responses to these subjects have been made to BBC-RR-79 and BBC-RR-84.
BBC-RR-89	11.1	Traffic and Transport	<u>Matter 44</u> Public Highways: for completeness, it is noted that the proposed cable route (Illustrative Environmental Masterplan Key Plan, Ref. Figure 2-2a; dated Sept 2024) crosses several public highways and consequently the Applicant will need to attain the necessary consent, including agreeing to s106/ s278 etal and other financial contributions prior to construction. These should be negotiated with the relevant local planning authorities, specifically noting that this will be a cross-boundary Application (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). This matters remains relevant and it is suggested that discussions should remain on-going.	It is the Applicant's position that the draft DCO [AS-008] includes a number of powers that will allow it to carry out works within the public highway, such as Article 10 (Street works), Article 12 (Power to alter layout, etc. of streets) and Article 14 (Access to Works). As these works will be authorised by the DCO it will not be necessary for the Applicant to enter a separate agreement under section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 before carrying out the works. In most cases, the proposed works are explicitly authorised by the draft DCO, being shown on the Street Works, Rights of Way and Access Plan [APP-010] and described in the relevant Schedule of the draft DCO. These works will be governed by the measures set out in the draft DCO and the relevant management plans, which are considered to provide sufficient protection to the local highway authority

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				without the need for additional protective provisions or separate agreement. In some cases, the Applicant may carry out additional works but only with the consent of the relevant authority. For example, in the case of Article 12 (Power to alter layout, etc. of streets) this is the relevant street authority and under Article 14 (Access to Works) this is the local planning authority. In other instances, this is secured by way of a requirement set out in Schedule 2 of the draft DCO. Requirement 3 (Detailed design approval) provides that for each phase of the authorised development, details of the layout, scale, proposed finished ground levels, fencing, external appearance, and vehicular accesses must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before the commencement of that phase. As such, the detailed design of the Scheme will be subject to the approval of the local planning authority. Requirement 5 (Construction environmental management plan) provides that no phase of the authorised development may commence until a construction environmental management plan ("CEMP") for that phase has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. The CEMP submitted be in substantial accordance with the oCEMP [APP-155] to the extent applicable to that phase. The oCEMP includes at Table 5.5 details of measures to remedy damage to the highway caused by construction traffic, including pre-construction and post-construction surveys.

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				Requirement 11 (Public rights of way) provides that no phase of the authorised development may commence and no decommissioning may be undertaken until a public rights of way management plan (“PROWMP”) has been submitted and approved by the local planning authority in consultation with the relevant highway authority. The PROWMP submitted must be in substantial accordance with the outline PROWMP to the extent applicable to that phase. For this reason, it is the Applicant’s position that no additional consents or legal agreements are required upon the DCO being granted to enable the implementation of the Scheme.
BBC-RR-90	11.2	Waste	<u>Matter 45</u> underground infrastructure contamination: It is noted that the Council is not supportive of leaving underground ducting and cables in-situ at the decommissioning phase. The ducting and cables contain plastics and metals which are toxic and with gradual breakdown have the potential to leach into the surrounding ground and groundwater causing contamination. The Applicant should be obligated to return the Site, Cable Corridor, and possible servitudes within the Public Highways used by the Scheme, free of such known contamination. It is noted that this approach would be supported by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013 regarding long-term harm (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). This approach remains the stated Council’s position and requires address.	As set out at paragraph 2.7.1 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038], the Applicant’s position is that <u>all cabling</u> will be removed at the end of the decommissioning phase and recycled or disposed of in accordance with good practice and market conditions at the time. Any infrastructure that is more than 1m below ground level, such as <u>cable conduit and casing</u>, would typically be left in situ to reduce the environmental impact of excavation. Whilst buried cabling and ducting is made of metals and polymers, the idea that it will gradually break down and meaningfully leach ‘toxic’ substances into soil/groundwater is considered by the Applicant to be overstated. The ducting/conduit used is typically HDPE (or similar polyethylenes) used specifically because it is chemically resistant in soils.

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				The cabling can be easily removed without significant excavation by 'pulling through' the conduits to extract. The cabling has valuable metals that warrant its removal from the ground, with some manufacturers including PVC sheaths that can include additives which over the very long term could cause minor breakdown or leaching. The Applicant therefore considers it appropriate to remove the cabling from the ground. The Applicant notes the requirements of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013 which are reflected in the oWMP [APP-164]. The Applicant also notes the Environment Agency's Relevant Representation, reference EA008 in Table 6 of this document, where the EA do not raise objection to the Applicant's approach to decommissioning buried infrastructure, instead noting: "<i>We accept this is current standard practice, but allowance should be made for removal of all elements of the scheme if that is best practice at the time. While legislation should always be followed, works in addition to this may be required to ensure the best environmental outcomes.</i>" In response to the EA's comments, the Applicant has updated the oDEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to take into account of contemporary best practice and regulatory guidance at the point of decommissioning, whilst assessing the environmental implications of removing versus retaining sub-surface infrastructure. The Applicant has also updated the oDEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to clarify that the cable jointing chambers associated with the grid connection will be removed from the ground during the decommissioning phase.

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BBC-RR-91	11.3a	Traffic and Transport	Condition surveys: surveys will be required prior to the construction phase (and potentially the replacement phase), and the decommissioning phase commencing, to assess any related damage to the Public Highway approach roads and an agreement put in place to remediate any damage caused by the Scheme subsequently. Restoration of temporary access points should be subject to a pre-development condition as to be agreed with and authorised by the Council (Ref. PEIR Reports, 2024).	The Applicant notes this comment. A commitment to undertaking pre- and post-construction condition surveys and the restoration of temporary access points has been included within the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission). A commitment to the restoration of temporary construction accesses is included within Section 5.3 of the oCTMP.
BBC-RR-92	11.3b	Traffic and Transport	Traffic Regulation Measures Plan: a temporary weight restriction suspension is proposed on the B645 between the junction with the A1 and the main site access (SA16). The current restriction is '18t Except for Loading'. The proposed suspension is consistent with the HGV routing strategy and is considered reasonable. It is noted that there are no structural weight restrictions on the Public Highways within Bedford Borough Council's jurisdiction in the area of the Scheme, all restrictions are environmental (to keep HGVs out of communities). The Council could temporarily remove these environmental weight restrictions to allow access to the Site for the period of construction, however, the above surveys, construction management plan, and agreements would be required. This would need agreement by the various Host Authorities.	The Applicant acknowledges this comment. However, it should be noted that the Relevant Representation from CCC (reference CCC-RR-42 in Table 3 of this document) has set out that they would not support the temporary removal of the weight restriction and have confirmed that it would not be necessary as the current restriction allows for access to a property or development. The proposed temporary lifting of the weight restriction has therefore been removed from the Traffic Regulation Measures Plan (as updated alongside this submission). No signed weight restrictions – structural or environmental – have been identified along the extent of the highway network within BBC that would be used during the construction phase.
BBC-RR-93	11.4	Traffic and Transport	<u>Matter 47</u> General: it is noted that, while most of the highways matters have been set out by the Applicant, these are not necessarily concluded. For example, there may need to be further discussion on the details of the visibility splays at the numerous site access	The Applicant acknowledges this comment and will continue to liaise with BBC's Highways Officers throughout the detailed design resolution.

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			points, temporary signage and traffic signals, etc., but it is assuming that the Applicant will be picked up such matters in further conversations with the Council's Authority's Highway Officers (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). This matter remains pertinent but could be addressed during detailed design resolution.	
BBC-RR-94	11.5	Traffic and Transport	<u>Matter 48</u> Travel Plan: it is noted that there appears to be limited information regarding staff travel (Travel Plan) other than broad assumption that some people would car-share to Site, and that minibuses between sites may be provided. The Council suggest that this is insufficient information (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). The [APP-156] outline Construction Traffic Management Plan para4.5.3 makes reference to a Construction Staff Travel Plan - this will require considerable greater detail and intent to address the requirements of policy to enable modal shift and reduce carbon footprint. It is noted that no Travel Plan Monitoring Fee for say the construction phase is suggested; this should be included within the [APP-016] DCO Agreement.	The Applicant acknowledges this comment. An outline Construction Workers Travel Plan has been prepared as an appendix to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission) .
BBC-RR-95	11.6	Traffic and Transport	<u>Matter 49</u> Construction Activity: it is noted that the various sites may be under construction over a similar period and this would suggest that there may be on-site, off-site travel, and construction movement between the sites which appears not to have been addressed by the Applicant (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024) (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID2.1.9). While the Applicant has suggested various on-site haul roads between sites, a detailed traffic movement	The distribution of construction traffic along the public highway network between the various Site areas is illustrated within Figures 14, 15 and 16 of ES Vol 2 Appendix 9-2 Traffic Flow Diagrams [APP-102]. The assessment of impacts resulting from this forecast level of traffic generation is set out within Section 9.8 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 9 Traffic and Transport [APP-045] and Section 6.0 of ES Vol 2 Appendix 9-1 Transport Assessment (the TA) [APP-101].

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			discussion regarding impacts is required to conclude matters.	The trip generation forecasts include for the proposed provision of an internal minibus shuttle service to transport construction staff from the main construction compound to the wider areas of the Site, as described within Section 4.4 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (APP-156) .
BBC-RR-96	11.9	Traffic and Transport	<u>Matter 50</u> Visibility splays: one of the comments made by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) at Statutory Consultation related to the visibility splays at accesses SA14 and SA15. It was noted that Observed vehicle speeds are indicated at 41.4 mph 85%ile speeds and that, as this is above the Manual for Streets (MfS) threshold of 37mph, this would require to be derived from Design Manual Roads and Bridges (DMRB) not Manual for Streets criterion. It further noted that correct visibility splays would need to be 109m not the indicated 69m. The available splays were therefore requested to be increased in these locations and to supply locations of speed surveys and data. The Applicant's response to this was <i>'The site accesses will be situated within a section of Moor Road featuring several sharp bends. As such, it is likely that vehicle speeds in the vicinity of the accesses will be significantly lower than the observed speeds used in the visibility calculations. Accesses SA14 and SA15 would also only be used during the construction and decommissioning phases. Use of these accesses would therefore be relatively infrequent. It is therefore considered that interpolating from MfS visibility distances in this case is appropriate'</i>. The use of MfS to determine suitable visibility splays in these locations is not considered appropriate and there	The Applicant would note that accesses SA18 and SA20 are existing junctions. Accesses SA17 and SA19 would be temporary accesses created for the purpose of facilitating the construction of the cable connection to the Eaton Socon Substation. Accesses SA17, SA18, SA19 and SA20 would only be used during construction of the cable connection and the total number of daily vehicle movements using these junctions would be very low (approximately 14 two-way movement per day maximum). Within the Traffic Regulation Measures Plan (as updated alongside this submission) (Sheets 13 and 14) it has been proposed that temporary traffic management and speed restrictions will be implemented along Duloe Lane and Bushmead Road at these crossing points to control vehicle speeds. The identified visibility splays calculated in accordance with MfS are therefore considered to be appropriate based on the temporary nature of these works. The same proposed controls will also be implemented at accesses SA14 and SA15 on Moor Road within CCC's jurisdiction.

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			are concerns that this creates road safety issues with insufficient visibility provided at these accesses. The construction and decommissioning phases have been scoped into the assessment and therefore the effects cannot be dismissed on the basis that use is 'relatively infrequent'. Whilst noting that accesses SA14 and SA15 lie within Cambridgeshire, there are similar issues at accesses SA17, SA18, SA19 and SA20 (within Bedfordshire) where MfS has been used to determine visibility splays. In these locations DMRB should be used to determine visibility splays.	
BBC-RR-97	11.10	Traffic and Transport	<u>Matter 51</u> Highway modeling links: for the highway assessment, only links have been assessed; no junction counts were conducted, and no junction assessments were carried out. Justification has been provided by the Applicant '<i>Section 5.5 of ES Vol 2 Appendix 9-1: Transport Assessment [EN010141/DR/6.2] identifies that the Scheme would not generate more than thirty two-way movements during peak hours, which is the threshold at which junction assessments are required as identified in Cambridgeshire County Council's Transport Assessment Requirements</i>'. Therefore, the Applicant has not included any junction capacity assessments on the basis that construction traffic in the network AM and PM peaks (8am-9am and 5pm-6pm) is below the trigger of thirty two-way trips. However, in the hours of staff arrivals and departures (7am-8am and 6pm-7pm respectively) the combined baseline plus construction traffic flows exceed the network peak flows by significantly more than thirty	The Applicant would note that there are only two junctions within the study area that fall within the jurisdiction of BBC (Great Staughton Road / Spring Hill and Great Staughton Road / Little Staughton Road / Green End). The baseline traffic count data used in the assessment indicated that the peak hour flows along Great Staughton Road, Spring Hill and Green End were extremely low (generally fewer than 100 two-way movements along each road in each highway peak hour). As such, it was not considered that these junctions suffered from existing capacity constraints that would require specific investigation within the TA [APP-101]. Furthermore, the number of construction traffic movements through these junctions during highway peak hours would be minimal. As described within Section 4.4 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission), an internal minibuss fleet will be deployed

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			two-way trips and therefore an assessment of impacts at key junctions should be undertaken.	to shuttle construction staff from the main construction compound to the wider areas of the Site. Compliance with the oCTMP is secured via Requirement 8 of the draft DCO. The Applicant would also note that the Relevant Representation from CCC (reference CCC-RR-44 in Table 3 of this document) acknowledges that: <i>“There are no significant concerns in respect of the volume of traffic during the construction period as the staff movements will be during the AM and PM peak shoulders and not the peak hours”</i>. On this basis, it is not considered that any further detailed assessment of junction capacity on the local highway network during the highway peak hours is required. However, additional analysis of the A1 / B645 junction in St Neots has been undertaken at the request of National Highways (reference NH-RR-02 in Table 7 of this document) to provide further detail on the likely impact on the A1 during the construction phase.
BBC-RR-98	11.11	Traffic and Transport	<u>Automatic Traffic Count</u> : the results from the Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) surveys have been presented in Table 9.8. It is noted that both 2022 and 2024 survey data has been used to determine the baseline traffic flows for the assessment. Whilst a consistent set of traffic survey data would be preferred the baseline data is considered to be acceptable.	The Applicant notes and acknowledges that BBC are satisfied that the traffic count data within the TA [APP-101] is acceptable.
BBC-RR-99	11.12	Traffic and Transport	<u>The Personal Injury Accident</u> (PIA) data was obtained for the most recently available five-year period and analysis was provided on the severity of collisions to inform the road safety assessment. This aspect of the	The Applicant notes and acknowledges that BBC are satisfied that the appraisal of accident data within the TA [APP-101] has followed a robust methodology.

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			assessment is considered to have been carried out correctly.	
BBC-RR-100	11.13	Traffic and Transport	<u>Transport Assessment</u> : the assessment of likely impacts and effects in the construction phase has been reviewed. Staff numbers are provided for the full 30-month construction period (average of 496 staff) and for the peak months 7-24 (average of 705 staff), with a maximum of 854 staff in month 12. The average daily construction trip generation has been calculated for three scenarios: Period of Maximum HGVs (Month 2); Period of Maximum Staff (Month 12); and Average across the whole construction period (30 months), which is considered a robust assessment methodology.	The Applicant notes and acknowledges that BBC are satisfied that the appraisal of trip generation within the TA [APP-101] has followed a robust methodology.
BBC-RR-101	11.14	Traffic and Transport	The justification for assigning a Low sensitivity to all assessed highway links has been provided and the % increases in total traffic and HGVs have been reported to assess the magnitude of impact and overall significance of effects. For the magnitude of impact, justification has also been provided on the assignments for each assessment criteria. The Council are satisfied that a robust assessment methodology has been used to assess the impact of construction traffic on the highway and PRow network.	The Applicant notes and acknowledges that BBC are satisfied that the appraisal within ES Vol 1 Chapter 9 Traffic and Transport [APP-045] has followed a robust methodology.
BBC-RR-102	11.15	Traffic and Transport	<u>Matter 52</u> Minibus service: [APP-101] Transport Assessment includes an estimate of construction staff traffic based on an assumption of an average vehicle occupancy of two people. Section 5.4.4 states that the Applicant will <i>'explore the provision of staff minibuses where appropriate during peak periods of construction</i>	The Applicant notes this comment. An outline Construction Workers Travel Plan has been prepared as an appendix to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission) . This includes a proposed mechanism for monitoring staff traffic and vehicle occupancy and

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			<i>activity', to provide staff transport to 'nearby transport hubs, town centres and/or local accommodation'. Monitoring staff traffic and vehicle occupancy should be included in the CTMP/ Travel Plan and a clear commitment provided to implement the minibus service if occupancy is below that assumed for the assessment. This commitment should be written into the [APP-016] DCO Agreement.</i>	includes a commitment to provide minibus transport to the main Site compound during peak construction periods. This document will form part of the overall Construction Traffic Management Plan which is secured via Requirement 8 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .
BBC-RR-103	11.16	Traffic and Transport	<u>Matter 53</u> Vehicle tracking: vehicle tracking for each of the proposed site accesses is included in Annex C of the Transport Assessment. However, in many locations the vehicle tracking runs outside the proposed access and therefore does not provide evidence that the access points are safe and feasible. The Applicant should resubmit with further detail showing fully dimensioned plans of each access along with tracking showing two-way (simultaneous) movements of the largest vehicles which will use them. The visibility splay drawings should also be updated to be consistent with any changes to the accesses.	The Applicant notes this comment. Outline junction design drawings, including junction dimensions and updated vehicle tracking and visibility splays have been provided, as an appendix to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission] .
BBC-RR-104	11.17	Traffic and Transport	<u>Matter 54</u> DCO boundary: Figure C5 in Annex C includes tracking for the Great Staughton Road/ Little Staughton Road junction and indicates that mitigation is required in the form of widening that falls outside the DCO boundary and within third-party land. This needs review by the Applicant.	The Applicant would note that there is a minor discrepancy in the position of the Order limits on the plan included within Annex C of the TA [APP-101] . The Order limits do encompass the full extent of the proposed works, as illustrated on Sheet 6 of the statutory Location, Order Limits and Grid Coordinate Plan [APP-007] , and the updated outline junction design drawings are provided as an appendix to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission] .

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BBC-RR-105	11.18	Traffic and Transport	<u>Matter 55</u> Stage 1 Road Safety Audits (RSAs): a RSA for each site access have not been provided. Stage 1/2 RSAs detailed design resolution should be undertaken prior to the conclusion of the Examination as this may highlight additional matters not yet addressed.	The Applicant notes this comment. The exact nature of the RSAs required will be discussed with the LHA. The Applicant would be happy to obtain Stage 1 RSAs of the indicative site access drawings as included in Appendix C of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission) . However, Stage 2 RSAs would only be undertaken at the detailed design stage, which would be post-determination. Detailed access designs will be submitted for approval by the relevant local authority as secured by Requirement 3 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .
BBC-RR-106	11.19	Draft DCO	<u>Matter 56</u> DCO Agreement (Highways): the DCO should include provision for the Council as highway authority to approve the design and standard of construction of any works within the public highway, and clauses affording protection to the highway authority by including rights to carry out inspections and to certify that altered highways (including PRowS) have been constructed to a standard acceptable to the highway authority.	As set out in response to reference BBC-RR-89, the Applicant considers that the draft DCO [AS-008] and the relevant management plans provide the appropriate mechanism for approval of any works within the public highway.
BBC-RR-107	12.1	Public Rights of Way	LVIA corridors: the Council's concern is that PRowS are important public routes which need to be assessed as ' <i>sequential visual effects</i> ' corridors (Applicant's Scoping para7.6.3iv), rather than addressed as a single viewpoint within a LVIA study. This approach should be recognised at the onset of the Application (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023). It is suggested that the DCO Application has recognised this Scoping matter and assessed accordingly.	The Applicant notes the Council's comment regarding the approach to PRow assessment and welcomes the Council's acknowledgement that it is suggested that the DCO Application has recognised this Scoping matter and assessed accordingly.

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BBC-RR-108	12.2	Public Rights of Way	Matter 57 Technical specification: Applicant - <i>'to be set within wide green corridors'</i>. The Council is concerned that this is not imperially defined and would like to see the proviso of a minimum PRow corridor width set at 8m for footpaths and 9m for bridleways (PRow form important habitat and landscape corridors, rather than as narrow pathways, hence the matter of width); and, the Council seeks clarification how these are to be retained, managed, and enhanced within any Outline CEMP and Outline LEMP, including funding of such for the duration of the Scheme (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023). In [APP-045] Traffic and Transport para9.7.17 the Applicant states that <i>'at all times, the definitive PRow width would be retained as a minimum width for any temporary PRow diversion'</i>; and, in [APP-160] outline PRow Management Plan para6.4.2 <i>'...Pertenhall 26 bridleway ...comprises a width of approximately 4.5-5m along the impacted section of the PRow, along with a grass verge that varies between 1 and 3m wide, and as such there is generally sufficient width for PRow users to safely pass vehicles approaching...'</i>; para 7.1.3 <i>'The definitive widths of public rights of way...'</i>; para7.1.4 <i>'Where public rights of way are within areas identified as grassland... a strip of grassland will be cut to a minimum width of 2m, or in accordance with the definitive width of the public right of way, whichever is wider'</i>; para7.1.6 <i>'The final route, surfacing material, permitted user groups and widths of proposed permissive paths will be defined in the full PRow Management Plan'</i>. In turning to the PRow Management Plan, PRow corridor and pathway widths	The Scheme's design establishes a minimum offset of 10m from the centreline of the definitive PRow alignment to any solar fenceline, regardless of whether the PRow is a footpath or bridleway. The Applicant notes this exceeds the request from the Council for these to be 8m or 9m wide corridors. This buffer is secured at paragraph 3.4.1 of the oLEMP [APP-159], and by the limits of deviation of the Works Plan [APP-009]. In terms of the widths of routes, the definitive width of each PRow will be maintained as set out at paragraph 7.1.3 of the outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan (oPROWMP) [APP-160], and at paragraphs 6.4.14 and 6.4.15 of the oLEMP [APP-159]. Where PRow pass through areas managed as grassland, the outline LEMP commits to cutting a strip to a minimum width of 2m, or the definitive width if wider, and maintaining that strip so grass does not exceed 150mm during the summer months, to support clear wayfinding and use. The approach is secured with approval from the local highway authority through DCO requirements which require the relevant management plans to be approved and implemented. Requirement 4 of the draft DCO [AS-008] requires a LEMP for each phase to be submitted and approved; Requirement 11 requires a PRow management plan (in substantial accordance with the outline PRow Management Plan) to be submitted and approved (in consultation with the relevant highway authority) for any PRow sections shown to be temporarily stopped up or diverted, and then implemented as approved.

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			remain undefined. The Council notes that this remains a significant matter from Stage 1 of this DCO Application that requires discussion at Examination.	
BBC-RR-109	12.3	Traffic and Transport	Matter 58 Scheme activity: Applicant - ' <i>During the operational phase (and read replacement phase) it is anticipated that there will be around 10-16 staff on-site at any one time, primarily undertaking maintenance tasks</i> '. No information is provided in the Applicant's Scoping Report regarding the construction compounds and movement of possible vehicle staff between them and the location of the solar arrays, BESS, landscape maintenance, etc. during both construction, maintenance, and the decommissioning stages and the potential impact on the existing and proposed PRoW network and related public safety (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023). This matter remains unconcluded and requires to be addressed.	Outline information regarding the anticipated traffic movements during the operational phase is provided within Section 2.6 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038]. There would be no construction compounds within the Site during the operational phase. Vehicle movements between the various Site areas would use the public highway. There would be approximately 20 full time equivalent (FTE) roles based on-site during operation, of which approximately 12 would be working on site maintenance, with 3 working on land management. Maintenance access to the Site on a regular basis (outside of major replacement campaigns) would be by small van or four-wheel drive vehicle. The number of daily vehicle movements during the operational phase would be minimal. The internal Site access tracks will be designed to be sufficiently wide to allow Site traffic to safely pass PRoW users along those sections where the access track follows the route of a PRoW.
BBC-RR-110	12.4a	Public Rights of Way	Public access: there must be no adverse effect on public enjoyment as a result of the Scheme, and therefore any possible loss of use and visual amenity on any of the PRoW routes must be fully considered. The Council has a statutory duty in respect of PRoWs to ensure that members of the public are not inconvenienced in their access and use of PROW. Where works are required within/ across PRoW, for	The Scheme has been designed on the basis that PRoW should be retained and remain attractive and safe to use. The Design Approach Document [APP-034] explains that where PRoW pass through the Scheme, the Applicant proposes 'green lanes' within wide green corridors, intended to protect recreational experience while also delivering ecological connectivity. The design approach has also been to

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			example where construction access or cable routes utilise or cross PRowWs, the Applicant will need to seek prior notice to the commencement of development to be submitted to and approved by the Council. Further, during the construction phase, and possibly the operational phase – replacement, temporary closures may be required that affected PRowWs (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024).	provide wide set-backs to maintain the openness of key views from PRowW, whilst using planting to screen oblique views of the solar development. In relation to the Council's request for prior notice and approval arrangements where works are required within or across PRowW, Requirement 11 of the draft DCO [AS-008] provides that no phase may commence until a PRowW management plan, for any sections shown to be temporarily stopped up or diverted, has been submitted to and approved by the relevant local planning authority in consultation with the relevant highway authority, and that the plan must then be implemented as approved. The final PRowW management plan(s) must be in substantial accordance with the outline PRowWMP [APP-160] submitted with the application.
BBC-RR-111	12.4b	Draft DCO	While [APP-016] DCO Agreement Clause 13(2) deals with works and consents required regarding 'constructed altered or diverted' footpaths or bridleways, this does not address the complexity of [APP-010] Street Works, Rights of Way and Access Plan which indicates: a) 'Temporary prohibition or restriction of use of public right of way' ('temporary stopping'); b) 'Proposed managed crossing point'; c) 'Permanent use of motor vehicles over public rights of way'; d) 'Extent of temporary public right of way management measures';	The detail of the works to be undertaken as set out in the Street Works, Rights of Way and Access Plan [as updated alongside this submission] should be read in conjunction with Articles 13, 14, 15 and 16 of the draft DCO [AS-008] in their entirety. These articles are supported by the relevant schedules of the draft DCO [AS-008] .

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			e) 'Alteration of streets – permanent'; and, f) 'Alteration of streets – temporary'. g) This should also be understood in terms of DCO Schedule 4 'cable works'. These matters should be viewed as significant as they effect the public's statutory rights in using PRowWs and Bridleways. This matter remains unconcluded and requires to be addressed.	
BBC-RR-112	12.5	Public Rights of Way	Access: in principle the Council is NOT supportive of using the PRow Footpaths in the construction phase, and possibly in the operational (replacement) phase, for construction and maintenance vehicle access. This approach raises significant use, pedestrian safety, and horse-riding usage issues. While the Applicant has set out measures (Ref [APP-160]), in all cases this favours vehicle movement at the inconvenience of the footpath and bridleway user. Further, no mitigation measures have been proposed should such vehicle activity damage the existing hedgerows and tree planting framing various PRow. The approach as set out in this regard in [APP-010] Street Works, Rights of Way and Access Plan, [APP-160] PRow Management Plan Chp.6, and [APP-016] DCO Agreement is not supported.	The Scheme has been progressed on the basis that the use of PRow for construction access is minimised wherever practicable, but where the interface cannot be avoided it is controlled through a safety-led hierarchy of measures set out in the outline PRow Management Plan [APP-160], including keeping routes open where it is safe to do so, managed short closures, and (where necessary) temporary full closures with diversion routes. In response to the concern that the current approach prioritises vehicle movements over PRow users, the outline PRow Management Plan [APP-160] includes measures that are expressly intended to segregate users from construction traffic where PRow are proposed to be used as access routes. By way of example, for Pertenhall 29 it is proposed a temporary PRow diversion immediately adjacent to the existing alignment with temporary fencing to segregate users from construction vehicles. For bridleways, the outline PRow Management Plan [APP-160] provides for equestrian-specific warnings, including signage requiring drivers to stop when horses are passing. The management plan further commits to safety fencing

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				along PRow where they are contiguous with construction areas unless an existing defensible barrier is present. The oCEMP [APP-155] sets out that existing trees and hedgerows will be protected during construction in accordance with BS 5837:2012.
BBC-RR-113	12.6	Public Rights of Way	Access maintenance: details of maintenance management for hedgerows and additional landscape planting along buffer routes and green lane corridors should be included in the PRow management plan (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024) (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.8.1.6). In [APP-160] outline PRow Management Plan the Applicant does not set out how the PRowS are to be maintained for active pedestrian and bridle usage if they are to be used for construction activity. At all times a usable surface should be maintained for pedestrian and bridle usage. This should include maintaining adjacent planting verges/ hedgerows. This matter is not addressed in the DCO Application.	The Applicant has amended the oPROWMP to introduce a new sub-section on surfacing and reinstatement of PRow at paragraphs 5.1.6 to 5.1.8 of the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission]. This requires the Applicant to provide detailed surfacing details of each PRow alongside the final PRow Management Plan. Requirement 11 of the draft DCO [AS-008] provides that a final PRow Management Plan must be approved by the local planning authority in consultation with the relevant highway authority prior to any phase of the authorised development commencing. This provides further assurance to the Council as to the final sign-off for any changes to PRow. The oLEMP [APP-159] includes management measures for planting and vegetation adjacent to PRow corridors. It includes measures directly relevant to keeping PRow corridors usable, including maintaining definitive PRow widths. Monitoring and the ability to adjust management prescriptions is also set out within the oLEMP, including review provisions and reporting to the local planning authorities.

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BBC-RR-114	12.7	Public Rights of Way	<u>Matter 62</u> PRow corridors approval: details of enhancement, reinstatement, and new routes, not limited to the restoration of paths to an acceptable condition and including hedgerow planting if applicable, must be submitted to and approved by the Council. Details should be provided regarding the proposed permissive paths, which should be multi-use routes suitable for walkers, cyclists and equestrians. Routes should improve connectivity and provide recreational enhancement for users. Hard and soft technical specification are required (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). In [APP-160] outline PRow Management para7.1.6 it states that <i>'new permissive pathways ... final route, surfacing material, permitted user groups and widths of proposed permissive paths will be defined in the full PRow Management Plan'</i>. The Council would require that this is resolved and any technical requirements are incorporated into the DCO Agreement.	The Applicant has amended the oLEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to provide additional detail of the proposed permissive paths, at paragraphs 5.3.41 to 5.3.43 and Table 2 of the oLEMP. The final route, surfacing material and widths of proposed permissive paths will be defined in the final LEMP. This gives the Council the technical approval they require, as a final LEMP must be submitted to the Council for approval in accordance with Requirement 4 of the draft DCO [AS-008] prior to commencement of any phase of the development.
BBC-RR-115	12.9	Public Rights of Way	<u>Matter 63</u> PRow Network: [APP-160] the Outline PRow Management Plan refers to the creation of (new) permissive bridleways and improvements to the existing routes, however no detailed route plans, specifications, or proposals have been provided (a requirement as requested in both the Scoping and PEIR response – see above). The Council therefore requires the Applicant to submit supporting material in order for the Council to assess the mitigation of harm and assess proposed enhancement that collectively address the impact of the Scheme on the PRow network. At a detailed level,	The permissive access proposed to be delivered by the Scheme is now more clearly set out in Table 2 of the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission]. The Applicant has reviewed these requests from BBC and has discussed these with the affected landowners, noting the Applicant must get agreement from landowners as for the majority of the Scheme the Applicant is not utilising compulsory acquisition powers. The Applicant's position is that whilst these requests would constitute potential further enhancements the Scheme could deliver, they are not essential mitigation necessary to deliver the Scheme.

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			the Council would request that the Scheme (provisional, subject to further discussion): a) Create a surfaced link from Footpath (FP) 8A Staploe to FP A9 Wyboston including all necessary structures to provide cycling/walking access to Alpha Park Eaton Socon; b) Create a surfaced link from FP 8A Staploe to FP 24 Staploe to provide cycling/walking access to connect communities to Eaton Socon; c) Create a surfaced link to FP 8A Staploe including all necessary structures to provide cycling/walking access to Bushmead Road to connect communities to Eaton Socon; d) Create a surfaced link to FP24 and FP 8A Staploe including all necessary structures to provide cycling/walking access to Bushmead Road Staploe to connect communities to Eaton Socon; e) Create a surfaced link from BW 31 and BW 44 Staploe to BW 43 Staploe including all necessary structures to provide access to the Kimbolton Road, High Street Hail Weston; f) FP 16 is a cross-field route – it would bring benefit to the landowner to move the route to field edge; g) Upgrade to width and surfacing of routes FP36, part of FP13, part of FP47 Bolnhurst and Keysoe and FP 8 Little Staughton to provide cycling/walking routes to improve and	The Applicant's response to the requests is set out below: a) This proposed route is outside of land that is in the Applicant's control. b) This proposed route is on land that is outside of the Applicant's control. c) This proposed route is on land that is outside of the Applicant's control. d) This proposed route is on land that is outside of the Applicant's control. e) This proposed route is on land that is outside of the Applicant's control. f) This proposed route is on land that is outside of the Applicant's control. g) The Applicant has continued to engage with landowners on this matter and can confirm that agreement has been reached to provide permissive equestrian access between the B660 and Green End, Little Staughton. This is identified in Table 2 of the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [as updated alongside this submission] as Permissive Path 1 and shown on the

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			increase accessibility to the countryside and connect villages; h) Alternatively divert part of FP47 and FP8 which are extant tracks; i) Create of a surfaced cycling/walking route from Little Staughton Road C5 to FP 1 Little Staughton to road known as C11 Green End to improve and increase accessibility to the countryside and connect villages; j) Upgrade to width and surfacing of FP3 and FP4 Little Staughton to provide cycling/walking routes to connect villages; k) Provide an alternative route across the brook for part of FP11 and FP 2D Pertenhall to connect to FP 2B Pertenhall, including all necessary structures; l) Provide an extinguishment order for part of FP 2E; m) If the permanent vehicle use of PROWs as proposed is approved, provide separate routes for cycling/walking adjacent to the public rights of ways affected – inter alia BW26 & FP29 Pertenhall, BW 37 Bolnhurst and Keysoe, and FP4 Little Staughton; n) Create a surfaced footpath connection from FP29 to Green End Pertenhall; and, o) Create multi-user routes around Scheme Site B.	Illustrative Landscape Proposals drawing at Appendix A of the oLEMP. h) The Applicant is not proposing to divert this route. i) The Applicant is consulting with the landowner but is not currently proposing to provide this permissive access. j) The Applicant is not proposing to amend the width or surfacing of this route, which partly lies outside of the Order limits. k) This proposed route is on land that is outside of the Applicant's control. l) The requested extinguishment order is for a PROW outside of the Order limits. The Applicant is not able to stop up this PROW. m) The Applicant's proposed approach to managing traffic along these PROW during the construction phase is set out in the outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission]. n) The Applicant notes that this suggested route is an existing surfaced track. The Applicant understands this route is not currently formally designated on the

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			Note that the Council are preparing plans to illustrate the above proposals which will be submitted to the Examination for discussion. It is noted that the above PRow network proposals would address the requirements of the Council's Local Plan Policy 91 (Access to the countryside), AD36 (Pedestrian Routes), and AD39 (Cycling), the Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2025-2030 (adopted), and NPPF (2024) para96 and 105.	definitive map and is consulting with the landowner but is not currently proposing to amend the definitive map in this location. o) The Applicant is not proposing to provide further multi-user routes around the perimeter of Site B.
BBC-RR-116	12.10	Public Rights of Way	<u>Matter 64 PRow general requirements:</u> any proposals submitted by the Applicant, in accordance with planning policy requirements, would need to demonstrate that the Scheme: a) Creates locally agreed enhance and/or additional PRow to provide links and increased opportunities for public enjoyment (pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders); b) Creates strategy routes and additional links for cycling/walking to enhance connectivity between parishes and across Local Authority boundaries to access national cycle routes to promote active and sustainable travel and upgrade of identified Footpaths to provide links; c) Creates spacious provision/ width corridors to existing PRow within the Scheme to improve feelings of wellbeing for the community and users; d) Creates mitigation/ enhancement landscaping strategy/plans to promote and provide	The Applicant notes these requirements for existing PRow and for the creation of permissive paths. The detailed specifications sought (including route alignments, widths, surfacing, signage and waymarking, and the programme and arrangements for ongoing maintenance and vegetation management) will be provided through the final PRow Management Plan and the final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) submitted for approval in accordance with Requirements 11 and 4 (respectively) of the draft DCO [AS-008].

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			interaction for cycling/walking with nature to improve the sense of wellbeing; e) Where a PRoW is to be enclosed between fences, walls or hedges, extra land will have to be set aside for the PRoW, to enable access for maintenance of the routes, to ensure that any boundary vegetation remains clear of the PRoW; f) Where the boundary treatment is a hedge, line of bushes or trees the vegetation will grow into the space around it during the growing season and has the potential to obstruct the PRoW. Acute changes of direction in an enclosed PRoW should be avoided so that no intimidating blind spots are created: i. A detailed plan of ongoing maintenance programmes for the surfacing, side growth and seasonal vegetation clearances to prevent encroachment of the PRoW. ii. Adequate width provision for users - Footpaths at 4m and green Bridleways at 8m to mitigate the enclosed nature of routes and to avoid vegetation growth into the line of the PRoW during the growing season. g) Enhanced surfacing for routes within the Scheme - crossfall or a cambered profile should be provided on all PRoW and cycling/walking routes to assist with drainage. The degree of crossfall or slope should be in the range of 2% to 2.5% depending on the	

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			users of the facility and whether it has a sealed or unsealed surface; h) Demonstrates design compliance with local and national guidance; namely: i. BS8300-1:2018 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment Part 1: External environment — Code of practice. ii. LTN 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design. iii. British Horse Society – advice on width, area and height on routes used with horses. iv. Plans must detail widths, surfacing material, and soft landscaping to the PRow corridor. v. Information boards and positioning of detailed waymarking. Details regarding legal status designations for realignment and/or upgrades to existing routes; namely: i. Details regarding legal status designations for realignment and/or upgrades to existing routes; namely: i. Details of additionally created cycling/walking routes and nature of their designation (permitted/ designated PRowS); ii. Detailed timescales for the length of proposed closures and reinstatement works on affected routes;	

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			iii. Detailed timescales to be provided for permissive routes and the legal status attributed to routes; iv. The Council will require the Applicant to enter into and sign appropriate legal agreements for all affected routes; v. Details of the legal status of routes, during and post restoration; and, vi. Timescales for restoration	
BBC-RR-117	12.11	Public Rights of Way	<u>Matter 65</u> Permissive paths: it is accepted that the creation of permissive paths will create additional opportunities for recreational access. However, it is considered that this will only be a temporary benefit as following decommissioning any permissive paths could/would be removed and the land returned to the landowner ([APP-031] para3.6.3 and 4.9.3 refer). The level of benefit should therefore be clarified by the Applicant.	The Applicant acknowledges that permissive access rights are not as beneficial as permanent access rights, and accordingly considers the matter should only be afforded limited positive weight in the planning balance (as per Table 3 of the Planning Statement [APP-031]).
BBC-RR-118	12.12	Public Rights of Way	<u>Matter 66</u> DCO Agreement: the Council has reviewed [App-016] DCO Schedule 4 (Street and PRoW Works), Schedule 6 Part 1 (Temp restriction streets and PRoW) and Part 2 (Permanent use of vehicle on PRoW), and, Schedule 7 Part 1 (Permanent Access) and Part 2 (Temp Access) and note that significant clarification and supporting material, as set out above, is required. As currently submitted, the [APP-016] Draft DCO with reference to PRoW matters is NOT supported.	The Applicant has provided responses to these matters in the rows above, and has made amendments to the outline PRoW Management Plan and oLEMP in response to BBC's comments. The Applicant is therefore confident that these matters can be resolved to the satisfaction of the Council, and will continue to consult with BBC on a Statement of Common Ground.

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BBC-RR-119	13.1	Noise and Vibration	<u>Matter 67</u> Decommissioning phase: the Council noted that traffic noise and plant and machinery impacts were scoped in for the construction and operational phases, and consequently these impacts should also be included in the decommissioning phase (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023) (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.6.1, ID3.6.3). The Council suggest that [App-046] ES Noise and Vibration should either have addressed the operational (replacement) phase as a phase requiring assessment, or stated that similar consideration and mitigation measures should be put in place during this phase as proposed in the construction phase. This is not recognised by the Applicant.	In relation to decommissioning, ES Vol 1 Chapter 10 Noise and Vibration [APP-046] sets out that, when decommissioning occurs, it is reasonable to assume that similar techniques and mitigation measures would be used as construction, and that the construction phase assessment remains a reasonable proxy for decommissioning, with effects expected to be equivalent or less than construction, with mitigation provided through the outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) [APP-158]. Paragraph 1.3.1 of the oDEMP [APP-158] identifies that the final DEMP will sit alongside specific decommissioning phase management plans including a Decommissioning Traffic Management Plan and a Decommissioning Noise Management Plan. The measures to manage decommissioning noise at noise sensitive receptors are set out in Table 5.6 of the oDEMP [APP-158]. In relation to the Council's point on operational noise from replacements, mitigation measures are set out in Table 5.6 of the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [APP-157] that would apply throughout the operational phase, including for any replacements. Furthermore, Paragraph 2.4.10 of the oOEMP [APP-157] provides that, before any replacement activity involving more than 20% of the solar panels, a notification must be submitted to the relevant LPA for approval, setting out management measures that are consistent with the principles of the approved construction phase management plans, but

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				proportionate to the scale of the proposed replacement activity.
BBC-RR-120	13.2	Noise and Vibration	<u>Matter 68</u> Noise monitoring locations: additional detail was requested to aid assessment (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024); <i>'Efforts should be made to agree the position of the noise monitoring locations with the Local Planning Authorities'</i> (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.6.8).	As set out at paragraphs 10.3.4 to 10.3.6 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 10 Noise and Vibration [APP-046] , under the terms of an agreement between BBC, HDC and CCC, the Councils have a memorandum of understanding that the Environmental Protection Officer (EPO) at HDC could act on behalf of each Council as a 'single voice' with regards the East Park Energy project. A meeting was held in March 2024 where the proposed baseline sound monitoring and methodology and noise sensitive receptor positions were agreed with the HDC EPO on behalf of the three authorities.
BBC-RR-121	13.4	Noise and Vibration	<u>Matter 69</u> [APP-155] Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan: in para4.1.2 the Applicant states that construction works applicable to all phases would generally be limited to 08.00 to 18.00hrs Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00hrs Saturday, with no construction work on Sundays or Bank Holidays. While the Council is in agreement with the proposed hours it is noted that this is a Building Regulations matter under the Control of Pollution Act (1974) and not a planning matter and such reference should be removed as a planning matter.	The Applicant notes this comment, however retains the commitment to the construction working hours set out in the oCEMP [APP-155] .
BBC-RR-122	13.5	Noise and Vibration	<u>Matter 70</u> [APP-157] Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan: in Table 5.5 impact of noise arising from operation at noise sensitive receptors (NSR) the Council note that where complaints are received these should be investigated	The Applicant has amended Table 5.6 of the oOEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to reflect BBC's comment.

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			in accordance with the latest version of BS 4142. Noting the expected life of 40-years of the Scheme, this Standard may be replaced and/or altered and so the mitigation as identified and arising should reference 'the BS or as amended' or 'of BS 4142 or equivalent standard'.	
BBC-RR-123	13.6	Noise and Vibration	<u>Matter 71</u> Standards and Regulations: the matter above regarding all Standards etc. should be read across the entire DCO Application.	The Applicant has reviewed the management plans to be secured by the draft DCO [AS-008] and made updates as required to include " <i>(or any subsequent equivalent standard)</i> " for any standards referenced to apply to the operational and decommissioning phases.
BBC-RR-124	13.7	Noise and Vibration	<u>Matter 72</u> [APP-157] Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan: Table 5.6 Impact of noise arising from maintenance and repair activities at noise sensitive receptors (NSR). This suggests that BS5228-1:2009+A1:2014 may be applied for impact of noise arising from maintenance and repair activities. The scope of this standard applies to construction sites. If applied to ongoing normal operations this guidance is not correctly applied. In the event this part of the management plan is applicable to normal ongoing operations it should be implemented and measured against the most relevant standard, e.g. BS4142. In the event this applies solely to construction related activities we agree with the standard being applied.	The Applicant notes that BS 4142 will be used to measure and monitor noise for normal ongoing operations, as per the first row of Table 5.6 of the oOEMP [APP-157] . The reference to BS5228-1:2009+A1:2014 is in reference to any maintenance and repair activities that would be comparable to work undertaken during the construction phase, such as large scale replacements.
BBC-RR-125	13.8	Noise and Vibration	<u>In review</u> : according to BS4142: 2014+A1:2019, the rating level relative to the assessment baseline noise would indicate a negligible to slight adverse impact magnitude at all receptors. The operational noise impacts from the Scheme are therefore considered to	The Applicant notes this comment.

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			represent a neutral to minor level of effect in terms of EIA and therefore would not be significant.	
BBC-RR-126	13.9	Noise and Vibration	The Applicant's submitted material has been reviewed and subject to the resolution of the matters above, the Environmental Statement regarding this aspect is found acceptable. The Council has no further comment to make at this time.	The Applicant notes this comment, and welcomes BBC's agreement with the conclusions of the assessment.
BBC-RR-127	14.1	BESS	BESS Fire: Notwithstanding the comment made by the Applicant regarding '<i>very low potential for significant environmental effect on air quality to occur in the operational phase</i>' it is specifically noted that, while BESS fires are rare, should they occur they can have a significant effect on the public health of the surrounding community in terms of release of toxic fumes into the air for a prolonged period of time; and, that if contaminated firewater is not managed on-site this could affect receiving water courses and groundwater to the long-term detriment of the environmental. It is therefore noted that this low probability/ significant effect should be addressed in the Applicant's submission (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024) (also refer to the Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.10.5 Cumulative effects – operation and decommissioning). It is noted that the Applicant has addressed this PEIR matter in part in [APP-162] Outline Battery Safety Management Plan. However, some matters remain which are raised below.	The Applicant has assessed the risk of BESS fires within Section 16.4 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052]. That assessment is supported by atmospheric dispersion modelling (presented in Appendix A of the oBSMP [APP-162]) to consider potential effects on human health from a BESS fire and concludes that, having regard to the distance to the nearest locations of human exposure and the anticipated short-term nature of such an incident, there would be no significant air quality effects from a BESS fire incident. In relation to firewater and the protection of watercourses and groundwater, paragraph 16.4.15 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052] explains that, consistent with NFCC guidance, the BESS compound would be designed with an impermeable surface so that any run-off can be directed to a retention basin, and that in the event of a fire an automatic sluice would be operated to isolate the basin and prevent run-off leaving the Site so that it can be collected and treated appropriately. This approach is reflected in the draft DCO [AS-008] description of Work No. 6B, which includes a surface

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				water retention basin together with an isolation valve and control systems. The outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [APP-165] provides further detail on this containment strategy, confirming that the impermeable BESS and substation compound would direct run-off to the retention lagoon, and that an actuated sluice gate integrated with the BESS fire detection system is proposed to isolate the lagoon and prevent contaminated run-off leaving the Site, enabling contaminated run-off to be contained for appropriate collection and treatment. Paragraph 4.5.7 of the oBSMP [APP-162] sets out how this is to be managed in an incident scenario. It confirms as a safety objective that firewater run-off is to be contained and tested before release, or, if necessary, removed by tanker and treated offsite.
BBC-RR-128	14.3	Air Quality	<u>Matter 73</u> [APP-047] Air Quality: it is acknowledged that due to the nature of the Scheme no emissions that may impact local air quality are anticipated from the on-site infrastructure. Further assessment of air quality impacts during the operational phase were therefore scoped out of the Environmental Statement. On this basis, the Council considers that the [APP-155] Outline CEMP includes appropriate dust management and monitoring measures to be employed as based on the recommendations of the IAQM guidance. It is concluded that if the DCO is granted, the Outline CEMP will be developed into a final Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) once a contractor is appointed. Further, the Applicant states that a final Construction Dust Management Plan	The Applicant notes this comment, and welcomes agreement with BBC on this matter.

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			(CDMP) will be prepared as part of, or to accompany, the final CEMP, in line with guidance on dust mitigation. This CEMP will include the implementation of Best Practice Measures to control and manage dust emissions as recommended in the IAQM guidance on dust from construction. On the basis that the CEMP and CDMP will be submitted to the Council's Environmental Health Officer for approval prior to construction, this matter is acceptable.	
BBC-RR-129	14.4	Air Quality	<u>Matter 74</u> Dust mitigation: [APP-157] oOEMP Table 5.7 - impact of dust arising from activities on the site, and movement of vehicles within and outside the site: the Council seek further clarification of mitigation measures, include timetabling of earthworks that avoid activities taking place during dry months (i.e. mitigations measures regarding reduced water use or the use of non-potable water to control dust or the use of water suppression may need to be restricted or tightly controlled). Local contextual understanding notes that local geology may indicate the presence of Northampton sand resulting in very fine material being re/suspended which could be carried off-site and effect local amenity. Where earthworks are very limited the impact may be negligible, but the Council seeks a strategy for dust disamenity control to address this concern.	The oOEMP [APP-157] relates to measures to be employed during the operational phase. As noted above the Scheme is unlikely to result in significant air quality effects as the operational components of the Scheme do not generate dust emissions. As best practice however the oOEMP [APP-157] includes standard measures to mitigate the potential for any dust generation from vehicle movements and other activities that may be undertaken on site during the operational phase. The Applicant notes that Table 5.7 of the oOEMP [APP-157] confirms that operational dust would be managed through IAQM-derived best practice, including (where appropriate) suppression using non-potable water, wet cleaning methods, maintenance of access routes and a 20mph internal speed limit. Matters in relation to earthworks and internal haulage during the construction phase are dealt with in the oCEMP [APP-155]. The Applicant agrees that the principal potential for dust disamenity would arise during construction earthworks and trackout, and this is addressed through the outline Construction Dust Management and

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				Monitoring Plan (oCDMMP) within Appendix A of the oCEMP [APP-155]. The oCDMMP sets out both preventative measures (including minimising exposed areas, rapid stabilisation of earthworks and trackout controls) and an overriding requirement that any activity causing visible dust emissions towards sensitive boundaries will be modified, reduced or suspended until effective remedial action is in place or conditions moderate. Daily visual inspections are proposed, with careful consideration during continuous dry and windy periods, and provides for escalation (including cessation of activities) if dust is observed towards or beyond the site boundary. Quantitative dust monitoring is also secured, including baseline monitoring for at least three months (capturing at least three summer months, April to September), followed by monthly reporting to the LPA and a 12-month review of the monitoring regime.
BBC-RR-130	15.1	Ground Conditions	Matter 75 Pollution leaching: with regards to onsite maintenance and management of chemicals and leaching into the soil and/or groundwater (e.g. chemical spills/cleaning materials to PV units; <i>'Pollutant-receptor-linkages and the siting of compounds and any fuels will need to be kept well away from the banks of any stream and other watercourses'</i>), the Applicant had proposed that (para9.5.26) <i>'... the impact of chemical pollution during the operational stage is proposed to be scoped out'</i>. The Council expressed significant concern regarding the possibility of soil and groundwater pollution arising during the 40-year operational stage, and suggested	The Applicant disagrees that the Environmental Incident Management and Pollution Prevention Plan (EIMP) should be submitted in outline at Examination and maintains submission is in tandem with the final OEMP post DCO consent. This is because planned soil disturbance will be minimal during operation. No point sources of contamination (such as tanks, chemical stores and such like) were recorded across the scheme area during the walkover or detailed historical review. The siting of the BESS, the control compound and East Park electrical substation are within areas that are away from the locations of the former ponds and from

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			that the matter should be assessed (including the need to include any mitigation measures as part of a CEMP) (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023). While it is acknowledged that the Inspector '<i>considers that the presence of chemicals and soil disturbance during operation, including maintenance procedures, is unlikely to give rise to significant effects... The ES should explain why the operation of the Proposed Development would not give rise to routine emissions of chemicals (i.e. that panels are effectively inert) or sediment and how emergency releases would be managed within an Operation Environment Management Plan and/ or Soil Management Plan and Battery Safety Management Plan</i>'. (Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.3.2; further ID3.4.4, ID3.4.5 regarding operational and decommissioning phases). In [APP-048] Ground Conditions para12.7.3 the above issue/ risk has been identified and is drawn through to the [APP-157, 158] Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan Table 5.8. However, the Applicant's references that this will be addressed in an 'Environmental Incident Management and Pollution Prevention Plan' which has not been submitted as part of the DCO Application. This raises some concern and should in submitted in outline at Examination. Address of this matter therefore remains a material consideration.	alluvial or other organic materials. A suitable development stand-off will be applied to the abandoned oil pipeline. The presence and usage of fuels and chemicals during operation, including maintenance procedures, is unlikely to give rise to significant effects. Section 12.7.2 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-052] and Table 5.8 of the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [APP-157] states how routine emissions and potential sources of pollution will be suitably mitigated during the operation of the development and how surface water drainage strategy will ensure drainage measures prevent erosion and protect soil structure. Contaminants being encountered through ground disturbance during the operation will therefore not give rise to significant effects.
BBC-RR-131	15.2	BESS	<u>BESS facility Major Accidents or Disasters</u> (Applicant Scoping para18.3.11): '<i>The battery units have the potential to generate heat and therefore there is a risk of a fire developing</i>'. The Council noted that the BESS	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes confirmation from BBC that this issue has been addressed.

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			is a battery unit and consequently there would need to be an assessment in the case of fire and then associated possible ground and soil contamination/ hazardous pollution (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023) (Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.4.3). It is suggested that this concern and Scoping matter has been addressed by the Applicant in [APP-162] Outline Battery Safety Management Plan	The Applicant has also provided response to a similar comment above with reference to BBC-RR-127.
BBC-RR-132	15.3	BESS	<u>Matter 76 BESS Firewater</u>: it is noted that the management and removal of contaminated firewater needs specific address in any Operational Environmental Management Plan including an emergency strategy should such firewater breach into river catchment areas and/or leach into ground water or soils (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024) (Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.4.3, ID3.12.2). It is suggested that this concern and Scoping matter has been addressed in part by the Applicant in [APP-162] Outline Battery Safety Management Plan. However, the matter of breach needs address. Secondly, the Applicant states in para4.5.6 that the capacity of the surface water drainage system to contain firewater runoff has been calculated to '<i>accommodate a reasonable worst-case scenario</i>'. However no volumetric calculations that are then evidenced in firewater/ stormwater ponds layout/design/ capacity have been evidenced to confirm this matter. The Council view this as a significant potential environmental risk.	The headroom capacity within the surface water system above the firewater volume is calculated as 1448m³, which is larger than the volume associated with the 30-year + Climate change return period storm event. The risk of exceedance of the system, i.e. coincidence of a fire event with a greater than 30-year + CC storm, is negligible and in the view of the Applicant, the risk of breach does not therefore merit further assessment.

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BBC-RR-133	15.4	BESS	<i>NFCC Guidance</i> : National Fire Chiefs Council's 'Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage Systems planning – Guidance for Fire and Rescue Services' (November 2022; Version 1) is not adopted planning policy and carries no weight in determination. In light of a nearly total lack of planning policy with regards to BESS fire safety management, it is suggested that the strategy/ approach raised in the Guidance is adopted within any strategy that they propose (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). It is noted that this document is referenced in the [APP-162] Outline Battery Safety Management Plan which addresses this PEIR matter.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes confirmation from BBC that this issue has been addressed. The oBSMP [APP-162] has been prepared with regard to the NFCC guidance.
BBC-RR-134	15.5	BESS	<u>Matter 77</u> Insurances: while not a direct planning matter, BESS fire risk, and related insurance, should be stated as solely the responsibility of the Applicant/ Promotor for the duration of the Scheme including the decommissioning stage (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024).	The Applicant notes this comment, and acknowledges that responsibility for fire risk and any insurance for the BESS is the responsibility of the Site Operator.
BBC-RR-135	15.6	Waste	<u>Matter 78</u> Waste: (Applicant Scoping para18.4.9) the materials used within both the BESS battery units, PV panels and cabling have not been stated and therefore, to err on caution, the Council would need to understand the life-cycle management of and possible long-term contamination/ waste disposal of these materials; and, (Applicant Scoping para18.4.6) ' <i>In relation to [replacement and] decommissioning, waste arisings will be generated from the removal of PV panels, PV mounting structures, cabling, electrical equipment, fencing and foundations</i> ', and similarly in relation to the BESS battery facility. The Council would like to see detailed aspects related to waste management of the total Scheme scoped in (Ref.	The Applicant acknowledges that, over a 40-year operational lifetime, some components will require replacement and that, on occasions, this could comprise significant replacement campaigns (for example, large-scale replacement of solar PV array areas, or multiple transformers or battery storage units). This is expressly recognised at paragraph 2.6.3 and Table 2-35 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] . Table 2-35 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] sets out assumptions on the operational lifespan for key components, including solar panels and battery storage units. Paragraph 2.6.6 notes that replacement would be periodic through the lifetime of the Scheme

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			Scoping Report, 2023) (Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.12.3, ID3.12.5). [APP-038] The Scheme – the Applicant states that there would be a need to replace components that fail or reach the end of their lifespan over the operational lifetime of the project. Table 2-35 identifies anticipated timescales for each component. The Applicant states that <i>'the replacement of components would be periodic throughout the lifetime of the scheme and would not involve the intensity of construction at the outset of the project'</i>. However, para2.6.3 references the potential for significant replacement campaigns including large-scale replacement of solar PV array areas, or multiple transformer or battery storage units. In these instances, more staff and specialist equipment (cranes and low loaders) would be required. This matter has, however, not been fully resolved and / or assessed by the Applicant nor discussed and resolved with the Council – this matter raises significant concern It is suggested that the potential harm and severity of harm resulting from the materials used in the Scheme in terms of life-cycle recycling and carbon footprint, also with the potential to export such waste to land-fill, needs to be more comprehensively addressed within the Environmental Statement than currently stated by the Applicant. It is suggested that the Council's position would be supported by the reading of the High Court Ruling R (Finch) v Surrey County Council and others [2024] UKSC20, 20 June 2024 regarding assessing 'downstream' impacts and effect. It is suggested by the Council that this forms a significant matter for Examination.	and would not involve the intensity of the initial construction phase, however paragraph 2.6.3 explains that, where 'significant replacement campaigns' are required then there is the potential for more staff and specialist equipment to be required. Paragraph 2.4.8 of the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [APP-157] confirms that routine inspections and assessments will be undertaken to determine the condition and performance of solar panels, solar balance of plant and battery storage units, and that equipment reaching the end of its functional lifespan or showing reduced performance will be scheduled for replacement. Paragraph 2.4.9 then explains that large scale replacement activities will not form part of routine operation and that potential impacts, including to highways, will be limited and can be controlled predominantly through the measures in the oOEMP. Paragraph 2.4.10 of the oOEMP provides that, before any replacement activity involving more than 20% of the solar panels, a notification must be submitted to the relevant LPA for approval, setting out management measures that are consistent with the principles of the approved construction phase management plans, but proportionate to the scale of the proposed replacement activity. Section 16.3 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052] provides a waste assessment that covers the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Scheme and identifies the likely waste streams arising as well as whether they could give rise to significant

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				environmental effects. This includes for potential replacements during the operational phase. The oWMP [APP-164] provides estimated decommissioning waste arisings and assumed fates, including high levels of recycling for PV modules, mounting structures, transformers and battery units. Waste arising from operational maintenance and replacements is also addressed in the oWMP [APP-164] and oOEMP [APP-157], including commitments that any solar panels requiring replacement will be sent to specialist PV recycling facilities and that BESS will be refurbished, repurposed or recycled where feasible, with corresponding decommissioning commitments set out in the oDEMP [APP-158]. Lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions have been assessed in ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Climate Change [APP-051] and ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [APP-116]. The scope of the greenhouse gas assessment includes embodied emissions from raw material extraction and manufacturing, transport of equipment and materials, and operational emissions including energy consumption, material and waste generation from ongoing site maintenance. As per paragraph 2.2.9 of ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 [APP-116], the lifecycle and replacement of equipment has been factored into the greenhouse gas assessment. The Applicant therefore considers that significant replacement campaigns have been assessed as part of the ES with controls in place through the framework of environmental management plans, and that lifecycle recycling, waste management and carbon considerations are also assessed in the ES with

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				controls in place similarly through the framework of environmental management plans. In relation to 'Finch', the Applicant has provided a statement on the potential indirect effects of the Scheme at Section 4.4 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 4 EIA Methodology [APP-040] . The Applicant is satisfied that the potentially significant indirect effects of the Scheme have been assessed through the ES.
BBC-RR-136	15.8	Ground Conditions	<u>Matter 79</u> Watching brief: the Council is in broad agreement with the conclusions and recommendations of [APP-048] Ground Condition report, however, it is recommended that a watching brief be put in place. This would review and monitor any unexpected contamination originating from the Scheme or the migration of contamination from neighbouring sites, to be dealt with in an appropriate way. Should any ground and water contamination be encountered/ arise during the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the Scheme then works should be temporarily suspended, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and a Contamination Remediation Scheme should be submitted to (as soon as practically possible) and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The Contamination Remediation Scheme shall detail all measures required to render this contamination harmless and all approved measures shall subsequently be fully implemented prior to re-engagement of the Scheme or parts of the Scheme as agreed.	The Applicant welcomes the Council's broad agreement with the conclusions and recommendations of ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] . Section 4.1.19 of the oCEMP [APP-155] states: "A watching brief shall be maintained and documented for unexpected land contamination in accordance with an agreed Unexpected Contamination Protocol which will be prepared as part of, or to accompany the final CEMP. Should any unforeseen gross or widespread contamination be encountered then works will stop in the identifiable bounds of the affected area and an appropriately qualified contaminated land specialist would be contacted immediately. The specialist will attend the site, examine the potential contaminative materials (including taking samples where required or the material or soil), and provide advice as to required actions (if any). Records will be kept of this investigation, and these will be communicated to the relevant LPA." Section 1.3.3 of the oOEMP [APP-157] states: "Environmental Incident Management and Pollution Prevention Plan (EIMP): This plan will provide a structured response framework for fuel or chemical

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				<i>spills, unexpected contamination events, and pollution control measures to prevent impacts on watercourses and groundwater. This is considered appropriate for the operational phase where excavation is not expected.</i> Table 5.8 of the oDEMP [APP-158] states: “A watching brief will be maintained by an Environmental Clerk of Works (ECoW) for unexpected contamination.”
BBC-RR-137	15.9	Draft DCO	<u>DCO Informative 2</u> (Identifying Potentially Contaminated Material): it is suggested that the following informative is included within the DCO, namely – ‘materials or conditions that may be encountered by the Scheme and which could indicate the presence of contamination include, but are not limited to soils that are malodorous (for example a fuel odour or solventtype odour), discoloured soils, soils containing man-made objects (for example paint cans, oil/chemical drums, vehicle or machinery parts etc., or fragments of asbestos or potentially asbestos containing materials), and, any other material that are encountered that causes doubt, or which are significantly different, then the safety and secure disposal of such materials with respect to land contamination lies solely with the Applicant/ Promoter. The above informative would be considered to be in line with paragraphs 187 (e) & (f) and 196 and 197 of the NPPF 2024. Guidance on how to assess and manage the risks from land contamination can be found here https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landcontamination-risk-management-lcrm’.	The Applicant notes this comment but it is not appropriate to include informatives within the draft DCO [AS-008]. The Applicant considers that this matter is covered by the requirement within the oCEMP [APP-155] to prepare an Unexpected Contamination Protocol as part of the final CEMP.

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BBC-RR-138	16.1	Land and Soils	<u>Matter 80</u> Soils: the Council is not in agreement with the Applicant's statements regarding the approach to protecting the quality (productivity) of agricultural soil. Soil represents a living habitat that require annual soil augmentation to remain an active ecosystems. Soil kept in partial shade and with no or limited cultivation or augmentation over a 40-years period has the potential to irreversibly harm the live-ability and productivity of that soil. The Council would want to see considerable assessment, statement, and a long-term maintenance methodology regarding this matter to support the Applicant's approach that this is temporary and that the soils can be brought back into productive agricultural use (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023) (Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.11.1-2, ID3.11.5). While the Applicant recognises the matter of soil health, NPS EN5 requires the Applicant to 'guarantee' bringing the soil back to its baseline ALC (with ref. NPS EN5 para2.0.25 <i>'to mitigate the potential detrimental effects of undergrounding works on any relevant agricultural land and soils, particularly regarding Best and Most Versatile land. Such a commitment must guarantee appropriate handling of soil, backfilling, and return of the land to the baseline Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)'</i>. The Applicant has submitted no such strategy. The Applicant will need to table a Soil Management Plan to ensure that the land is brought back to arable use (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). The Council notes the intent of the Applicant to set up [APP-038] Works No. 10 'Agrisolar research area' in partnership with Rothamsted Research. This initiative	The Applicant notes that BBC's comments were firstly provided at the EIA Scoping stage, and then at statutory consultation in relation to the PEIR, both of which preceded the preparation of ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-049] and the outline Soil Management Plan (oSMP) [APP-161]. The Applicant considers that these documents address the matters raised by BBC. The Applicant welcomes the Council's strong support for the 'Agrisolar Research Area' proposed within East Park Site D.

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			is strongly supported. However, how this is enacted needs some consideration in the DCO Agreement and address in the [APP-161] Outline Soil Management Plan to address the matter above.	
BBC-RR-139	16.4	Land and Soils	<u>Matter 81</u> Soil data: the Applicant's responses to Natural England's scoping opinion had outlined how continuation of data collection would be conducted. A subsequent change by the Applicant to the approach adopted a less intensive method than was originally proposed, which for the most part equated to one survey point/two hectares. However, where impacts were anticipated to be greater (BESS, on-site sub-station and compounds, and cable corridors) the standard methodology of one sample per hectare was adopted. It is indicated that the revised methodology followed further discussion with Natural England. It is not apparent whether the discussions with Natural England extended to the absence of data for an area of land (ungraded) amounting to 5.4 % of the Site. Access to this land was not available. The response to the absence of data, for the purpose of the EIA, is to assume a worst-case outcome by assuming the land to be Grade 2. Whilst this enables assessment of project worst-case project effects, the absence of data hinders development of a detailed soil management plan (proposed post consent and to be substantially in accordance with the outline soil management plan). It is suggested that for completeness of this aspect, the missing data should also be available for restoration of land, upon decommissioning, to its original condition.	The agricultural land survey approach, including the sampling density, is set out in ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-049], supported by ES Vol 2 Appendix 13-1 Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources [APP-115]. ES Chapter 13 explains at paragraph 13.4.6 [APP-049] that sampling was undertaken at a density of one survey point per two hectares across most of the Site and at one survey point per hectare in areas of potentially greater impact, including the BESS, on-site substation, construction compounds and cable corridors. As set out in paragraph 13.3.5 [APP-049], following statutory consultation, the Applicant undertook further consultation with Natural England on the scope of the ALC survey, and explains the rationale for adopting a proportionate approach to survey density at paragraphs 13.5.1 to 13.5.2 [APP-049]. The Applicant agrees with BBC that the approach taken in classifying 'ungraded' agricultural land enables an assessment of the worst-case project effects. The Applicant also acknowledges that whilst the approach taken to classifying soils is appropriate for planning and EIA purposes, the absence of data could hinder the final detailed soil management strategy. The Applicant has therefore updated paragraph 8.1.4 of the oSMP [as updated alongside this submission] to

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				commit to undertaking further detailed soil surveys of the Order limits prior to the construction phase. The oDEMP [APP-158] requires that a Decommissioning Soil Management Plan be developed prior to decommissioning to account for prevailing site conditions in accordance with the principles set out in the oSMP [APP-161].
BBC-RR-140	16.5	Land and Soils	<u>Matter 82</u> Biomass/ agricultural production: a permanent change of land use in the form of landscaping and habitats, referenced as substantially in accordance with the [APP-159] Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, includes approximately 19ha of native species woodland and 17.4km of native hedgerows. Table 13.12 acknowledges that the creation of the habitats, which should be considered permanent in respect of areas of woody vegetation, will have adverse impacts from the loss of biomass production (from agricultural land) but potential benefits to soil resources. These permanent effects (yet to be confirmed as such by the Applicant) are not addressed in the presentation of residual effects, including an absence from the summary Table 13.5. The conclusion that the scheme would result in a permanent adverse impact to approximately 5.86ha does not incorporate the effects of habitat creation. It is suggested that this is reviewed accordingly (subject to concluding the intent of 'permanent').	In relation to whether or not the Applicant is proposing that the areas of proposed woody vegetation are permanent, paragraphs 7.1.2 and 7.1.3 of the oLEMP [APP-159] confirm that proposed native species woodland and woodland belt planting, proposed native species hedgerow planting, and proposed native species individual tree planting would be retained at decommissioning and handed back to landowners as mature landscape features. Paragraphs 7.1.4 to 7.1.6 [APP-159] set out that other elements (including proposed grazing pasture or neutral grassland and species-diverse grassland, and ecological enhancement features) would remain on site at decommissioning and their future retention would also be at the discretion of the landowners once the land is handed back. The Applicant notes the Council's point with regard classifying areas of woody vegetation as 'permanent adverse impact' but does not agree that these areas should be treated as 'permanent' and consequently irreversible adverse land use change for the purposes of the assessment. The Applicant's treatment of the proposed woody vegetation in the assessment is arguably no different to the areas of proposed grassland in the sense that the soil functions would not

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				be permanently adversely affected, and the impacts are reversible in that the land could support agricultural or biomass production again in future should the habitats be removed. The methodology used in ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-049] to assess magnitude of impact distinguishes between effects that are permanent and irreversible versus those that are temporary and reversible. In this context, native woodland and hedgerows are not irreversible; they can be removed and the land can be reinstated (with soils remaining unsealed and capable of restoration) if required at decommissioning. In the above context, it is important to distinguish between the permanent adverse footprint (e.g. access tracks and hardstanding), and areas subject to land management change during operation. ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-049] is clear that the quantified permanent adverse impact to BMV land relates to the Scheme's permanent built elements, and that the remainder can be reverted, with soil resource benefits. The Applicant notes that woodland/hedgerow creation is strongly aligned with current Government direction on multi-functional land use and increasing woodland cover. Defra's Land Use Framework consultation and accompanying material explicitly promote nature and climate outcomes and encourage multi-functional land uses. The Applicant's position is that woody planting should be treated as a long-term (but reversible) land

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				management change, but not “permanent and irreversible” land take for the land and soils receptor. Should the LPA disagree and consider the proposed woody planting to be a permanent and irreversible adverse impact unless the Applicant commits within the application to remove it (such that it can categorically be defined as temporary in the assessment), then the decommissioning end state is something the Applicant may need to revisit to avoid such adverse impact. However, the Applicant fundamentally disagrees that this is an adverse impact to land, and that classifying woodland creation in this way is inconsistent with the recognition of the wider ecosystem and natural capital benefits that woodland brings. The Applicant stands by the conclusions of ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-046].
BBC-RR-141	16.6	Land and Soils	<u>Matter 83</u> Assessment of residual effects: this is summarised by receptor, namely the agricultural land classification (ALC) grade and soil type and mineral reserves. This does not differentiate between the effects of various design elements that resulted in different sampling intensities of land and soil. In this survey approach it was recognition that the potential effects of some parts of the Scheme were elevated relative to others. It was anticipated that this differentiation would be reflected in section 13.10 presenting residual effects. Further breakdown of how the receptor is impacted by various components of the Scheme would be expected, particularly to justify the stated low magnitude of impact. The absence of detail	The Applicant notes that Section 13.20 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-046] presents residual effects by receptor (as a summary in Table 13.15). The component-level breakdown for each work type against each ALC grading (sought by this comment) are already addressed through Tables 13.13 and 13.14 and the accompanying narrative at paragraphs 13.8.6 to 13.8.11. Table 13.14 breaks down permanent adverse impacts by Scheme component (Work Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6) and by ALC grade, including Grade 2 and ungraded land. Paragraph 13.8.8 explains that the total permanent adverse impact to Grade 2 and ungraded

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			has the potential to obscure the extent of effects to Grade 2 and ungraded (potential Grade 2) land. Similarly, the low magnitude effect to Subgrade 3a land yields a minor (not significant) adverse effect but further detail on the extent of land use change was anticipated to justify this conclusion. Magnitude has not incorporated land use change for the creation of permanent woody habitat.	land is 1.54 hectares, which is assessed as a low magnitude impact, resulting in a Moderate Adverse effect (significant in EIA terms). Paragraph 13.8.11 further confirms that the ungraded land is assumed to be Grade 2 for the purposes of the assessment, and that the permanent adverse impact to ungraded land is 0.14 hectares (within the overall 1.54 hectares). In respect of grade 3a land, Table 13.14 identifies the total area subject to permanent adverse impact as 4.32 hectares, and paragraph 13.8.9 confirms that this equates to a low magnitude impact and a Minor Adverse effect (not significant in EIA terms). The principal sources of that permanent impact to grade 3a land are transparent in Table 13.14, which attributes 3.79 hectares of Subgrade 3a impact to Work No. 6 (including permanent access tracks and ancillary infrastructure), with smaller contributions from other Work Nos. The Applicant has responded in the row above, reference BBC-RR-140, in relation to the creation of woody habitats.
BBC-RR-142	16.7	Land and Soils	<u>Matter 84</u> Beneficial effect: the potential beneficial effect to soil resources during the operational phase, as the land would not be cultivated and permanent vegetation cover maintained, are acknowledged. The application of magnitude and sensitivity criteria to the assessment to present a significant beneficial effect is likely to be overstated, with the beneficial effect felt by the Council to be minor and not significant as stated by the Applicant.	The Applicant welcomes the Council's acknowledgement that the Scheme will have a beneficial effect on soil resources during the operational phase. The assessment of beneficial effects on soil resources has been undertaken based on the methodology set out in Section 13.4 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-049].

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				During operation, substantial areas of the Order limits would move from intensive arable cultivation to long-term vegetated cover (grazing pasture/neutral grassland and other habitats), managed through the oLEMP [APP-159], oOEMP [APP-157] and oSMP [APP-161]. This land management change is expected to improve soil structure and functioning, support increases in soil organic carbon, and reduce runoff and siltation compared to periods of bare ground in arable rotations. Under the assessment methodology, a 'high' beneficial magnitude applies where there is potential for improvement in one or more soil functions/volumes due to restoration over an area greater than 20 ha. Given the Scheme's scale and the extent of land transitioning to grassland/vegetated cover, the 'high' magnitude judgement is considered proportionate. When combined with the conclusion that the principal soil types are generally of medium sensitivity, the result is a moderate beneficial effect. The Applicant therefore stands by the assessment. The Applicant has however set out in paragraph 8.3.45 of the Planning Statement [APP-031] that in their view this beneficial effect should only be afforded limited positive weight in the planning balance, which would appear to be consistent with the Council's view on this matter.
BBC-RR-143	16.8	Land and Soils	<u>In review</u> : notwithstanding concerns over missing data and more detailed analysis of how Scheme components result in adverse effects, the overall conclusions broadly meet professional judgement regarding the significance of residual effects. However,	The Applicant welcomes the Council's position that the overall conclusions of ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-049] broadly meet professional judgement, and there are no significant disagreements with the assessment made.

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			the significant benefit to the soil resource from resting the land from arable agriculture is considered overstated.	The Applicant has responded to the concerns raised in the rows above, references BBC-RR-139 to BBC-RR-142. It is the Applicant's position as set out at paragraph 8.3.45 of the Planning Statement [APP-031] that the very limited permanent loss of best and most versatile land as a result of the Scheme should be afforded limited negative weight in the planning balance whilst limited positive weight should be afforded to the condition of soils following the operational phase.
BBC-RR-144	16.9	Land and Soils	The Applicant has submitted an Outline Soil Management Plan [APP-161] which would be developed into a detailed Soil Management Plan post-consent. The use of embedded mitigation in preparation of a soil management plan (including records of soil movements and storage) is recognised. Additional missing information on soils and ALC grade is required for completion of a pre-construction detailed soil management plan. The statement that further mitigation, beyond the good practice measures of the soil management plan, is not practicable is acknowledged.	The Applicant notes this comment and the unintentional omission of further pre-commencement agricultural land classification and soil resource surveys in the outline Soil Management Plan (oSMP) [APP-161]. The Applicant has updated the oSMP [as updated alongside this submission] to state under paragraph 8.1.4 that: <i>"Further agricultural land classification and soil resource surveys will be undertaken post-consent and prior to commencement of construction to inform the detailed Soil Management Plan. This will include surveying any land currently identified as 'Ungraded' due to access limitations, and undertaking additional survey work across the remainder of the Order limits to achieve an observation density of approximately one survey point per hectare. The results of these surveys will be used to validate ALC grading and to refine the detailed SMP measures for stripping, segregation, storage and reinstatement of soils."</i>

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BBC-RR-145	17.1	Socio Economics	<u>Matter 85</u> Review: the Council notes the Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.7.1-7- 'The Applicant proposes to scope out an assessment of socioeconomics, land use and tourism from the ES on the basis that the most notable effects would be temporary and only occur during the construction and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development. The Inspectorate considers that whilst the construction and decommissioning phases may be relatively short, the potential for significant effects remains and the impacts should be appropriately assessed in the ES. The Scoping Report provides limited information to justify scoping out an entire assessment of socio-economic, land use and tourism effect particularly with regards to construction and decommissioning. The Inspectorate cannot agree to scope out an assessment of socio-economics, land use and tourism at this stage. The ES should provide an assessment of this aspect, with the matters to be scoped into the assessment as discussed below' (i.e. table 3.7 Socio-economics, land use and tourism). It is suggested that various matters identified still remain outstanding	The Applicant notes this comment and has responded to the various matters in the rows below.
BBC-RR-146	17.4	Socio Economics	Socio-economics, Land-use and Tourism matters are considered within Chapter 14 of the ES [APP-050]. The Scheme has the potential to impact the economy, and land-use and tourism receptors through land-take arising from construction activities and for operation of the Scheme; worker requirements during all phases; changes in access to facilities during construction and decommissioning; and, when any of these impacts act in-combination with those from other developments.	The Applicant notes this comment.

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			Effects will principally arise from employment and related impacts during construction and decommissioning phases and on journeys both for recreation and accessing services and facilities.	
BBC-RR-147	17.5a	Socio Economics	<u>Matter 86</u> Local employment benefit: the Scheme has been assessed by the Applicant as resulting in a significant moderate beneficial effect on the economy at the local level and a not significant minor beneficial effect at a regional level during the construction and decommissioning phases. The Applicant assesses economic impacts in relation to 30-minute and 90-minute drive times from the Site as set out in para14.4.6. However, which effects constitute a local and which constitute a regional level of impact for the purpose of the assessment is not explained. Estimated employment creation is presented for a 90-minute drive time only, with no further breakdown provided to confirm the scale of employment creation within a 30-minutes' drive time, which would, from the Council's perspective, constitute local impact. For a moderate beneficial effect in terms of local economic to be realised as concluded in para14.12.1, appropriate provision must be made in the DCO to deliver employment and skills benefits/opportunities locally.	The assessment of employment effects in ES Vol 1 Chapter 14 [APP-050] is based on functional economic areas, consistent with national infrastructure assessment principles and relevant guidance. For this reason, "local" is defined as the area within a 90-minute drive-time Travel-to-Work Area (TTWA) - a realistic reflection of the labour catchment for a project of this nature and scale. "Regional" refers to the East of England standard region, and "national" to the UK. As noted in paragraph 14.4.6 [APP-050], a 30-minute drive-time area was also examined to consider whether there were meaningful socio-demographic or economic differences that would require separate analysis. However, both zones were found to consist of small and medium-sized settlements in a broadly rural context, with no distinct socio-economic divergence warranting a different treatment with the 30-minute zone included for illustrative purposes. While spatially fixed receptors including land and local business and community assets have been assessed at the district level, employment effects are driven by a mobile workforce and a dispersed supply chain. Disaggregating employment impacts by administrative boundary would risk introducing artificial precision not supported by evidence. The adopted approach is proportionate, policy-aligned, and appropriate for the national significance of the Scheme.

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BBC-RR-148	17.5b	Socio Economics	The [APP-163] Outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan (oSSCEP) sets out the Applicant's strategy to maximise local employment, skills development and supply chain opportunities. This lacks specific detail with regards to existing local skills gaps and current levels of provision, and on specific initiatives which are tailored to addressing local employment issues and need. Detail of these should be provided in the document along with informed measures and outputs for delivering appropriate local employment and skills benefits/opportunities. A route map for developing the oSSCEP further should be provided, including setting out when stakeholder engagement is needed and how it will take place.	The Applicant notes that the outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan (oSSCEP) [APP-163] has been submitted at outline stage to establish the overarching framework and commitments for maximising local employment, skills development and supply chain opportunities. ES Vol 1 Chapter 14 Socio[APP-050] provides details relating to the local economy, labour market and employment baseline conditions, which have informed the oSSCEP. Requirement 19 of the draft DCO [AS-008] secures the submission of a final Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan (SSCEP), following consultation with the relevant local planning authorities, prior to commencement of construction. The detailed SSCEP will include further analysis of local skills gaps and provision, identification of tailored initiatives, measurable outputs, and a clear programme for stakeholder engagement, thereby providing the route map sought by Bedford Borough Council.
BBC-RR-149	17.6	Socio Economics	<u>Matter 87</u> Tourism: the Scheme has been identified as resulting in negligible effects on tourism during all phases. This includes in respect of impacts on users of Public Rights of Way and Bridleways. Mitigation measures in the [APP-160] Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan are referred to which would limit impacts. Para14.4.19 states that effects on PRoW are considered in relation to recreational and tourism use. However, no assessment of impacts on journey length and duration by residents for recreation activity has been presented, only impacts on tourism-related PRoW use. The Council consider that an assessment	An assessment of impacts on non-motorised users of highways and PRoW is provided in ES Vol 1 Chapter 9 Traffic and Transport [APP-045]. The Applicant notes that there would be no permanent closures of PRoW during the operational phase, with all PRoW retained.

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			of impacts on all users of PRowWs should be provided to confirm that no significant effects would arise.	
BBC-RR-150	17.7	Socio Economics	<u>Matters 88</u> Local impact(s): impact on local services have been addressed in respect of effects on the visitor accommodation sector from potential use of these facilities by construction workers. Effects on other services have not been identified in the ES. The Council consider there to be potential for effects in terms of severance of access to facilities, subject to the completion and findings of junction counts and assessments requested in the Highways aspect of this representation. The Council consider there to be the potential for impacts on healthcare services, and request that the Applicant provides information if no impacts are expected justifying why this will be the case, with reference to any mitigation measures as appropriate. This is particularly important in light of the absence of a Health chapter in the ES or Health Impact Assessment, which the Council would also like to have seen in the Application to demonstrate that their residents health and wellbeing would not be adversely impacted by the Scheme during all phases of development.	Paragraph 14.6.32 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 14 [APP-050] identifies that there are no relevant primary care facilities within the proximity of the Order Limits to be considered. The impacts of the Scheme on human health are considered in the application, at Section 16.2 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 [APP-052] .
BBC-RR-151	17.8	Socio Economics	<u>Matter 89</u> assessment: there are some apparent errors and/or inconsistencies in application of the assessment methodology by the Applicant for some subject matters. These will be set out by the Council in more detail in their Local Impact Report.	The Applicant notes this comment.

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BBC-RR-152	18.1	Climate Change	<u>Matter 90</u> Full life-cycle carbon footprint: the Council note that the Applicant's Scoping Report does not address where the infrastructure elements/ 'kit-of-parts' are to be manufactured (para13.5.2 'global suppliers') and decommissioned. The Council would suggest that the full life-cycle carbon footprint has to be assessed, including the manufacturing of components made internationally/ sub-regionally and shipped/ railed as freight into/ across the UK (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023) (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.9.5, ID3.9.8). It is suggested that this statement is supported by the reading of the High Court Ruling R (Finch) v Surrey County Council and others [2024] UKSC20, 20 June 2024 regarding assessing 'total' impacts and effect, as similarly noted above. The Council suggests that some address is tabled by the Applicant in terms of <u>total effect</u>.	Paragraph 13.5.2 from ES Vol 2 Appendix 4-1 EIA Scoping Report [APP-064] is in respect to the scope of the Socio Economics assessment. Table 15.4 from ES Vol 2 Appendix 4-1 EIA Scoping Report [APP-064] summarises the scope of the climate change assessments (both the Climate Change Resilience Assessment and the Greenhouse Gas Assessment) which clearly shows upstream and downstream emissions associated with the infrastructure elements/ 'kit-of-parts' were scoped into the GHG Assessment from the scoping stage, aligning with the High Court ruling in R (Finch) v Surrey County Council [2022]. The scope of the GHG assessment was expanded following the ES Vol 2 Appendix 4-2 EIA Scoping Opinion [APP-065] and the final scope of the GHG Assessment is presented in Table 15.8 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Climate Change [APP-051] and calculated in Table 16 in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 Greenhouse Gas Emission Assessment [APP-116]. The GHG Assessment clearly shows upstream and downstream emissions associated with the infrastructure elements/ 'kit-of-parts'. Therefore, the GHG Assessment aligns with the High Court ruling in R (Finch) v Surrey County Council [2022].
BBC-RR-153	18.2	Climate Change	<u>Matter 91</u> Scoping: The Applicant's Table 15.4 (Climate Change) Summary of matters proposed matters to be scoped in/out. In the Council's review: a) The Council's reading of Table 15.4 suggests that once all infrastructure elements have been installed/ constructed there will be no	Table 15.4 from ES Vol 2 Appendix 4-1 EIA Scoping Report [APP-064] summarises the scope of the climate change assessments (both the Climate Change Resilience Assessment and the Greenhouse Gas Assessment) which proposed to scope out

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			further need to replace these elements and hence Topics 9 (Raw materials) to 13 and 19 (on-site maintenance) have been scoped out. Over the intended operational phase of 40-years these assumptions need to be questioned in light of continually changing technologies, etc. While the Applicant states that effects may be negligible, this is currently not known. Consequently, all topics hereby noted relating to operation (management and maintenance) should be scoped in (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023) (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.9.5). b) (para14.5.9) Travel of workers: there will be '10-16 staff on-site at any one time', 'visitor trips per week', and (para14.5.10) trips associated with staff on-site movement and maintenance. The Council would wish to see this accounted for, however negligible, as currently the full extent of this activity could be more extensive in regard to the matters above (Ref. Scoping Report, 2023) (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID3.9.7, It is suggested that the full extent of the operational phase, specifically relating to replacement activity, requires assessment and address by the Applicant.	maintenance activities during operation and travel of workers during all phases. The scope of the GHG assessment was expanded following the ES Vol 2 Appendix 4-2 EIA Scoping Opinion [APP-065] and the final scope of the GHG Assessment is presented in Table 15.8 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Climate Change [APP-051] and calculated in Table 16 in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 Greenhouse Gas Emission Assessment [APP-116] which includes 'Energy consumption, material and waste generation from ongoing Site maintenance' during operation and travel of workers during all phases. Therefore, it is considered that the full extent of the operational phase, including replacement activity, has been addressed by the Applicant.
BBC-RR-154	18.7	Climate Change	<u>Matter 92</u> Approach: the Council welcomes the approach taken by the Applicant in carrying out the GHG Assessment and recognises that this is broadly aligned with the guidance issued by the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) in February 2022. In relation to the GHG Assessment,	a) The Applicant understands that the receptor for the GHG assessment is the global climate. b) The Applicant understands that the replacement frequency of components can affect the embodied

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			the Council make the following observations, noting that none of them materially affect the overall outcome of the assessment: a) The assessment should explicitly recognise that the receptor for the GHG assessment is the global climate. This is implied but not stated. b) The replacement frequency of components such as battery modules has the potential to affect the embodied emissions during the operational phase of the Scheme, and the impact of shorter life expectancies than those assumed should be considered. c) The consumption of imported grid electricity during the operational phase has not been considered; the emissions impact is likely to be negligible in the overall context of the Scheme's whole life GHG impact, but it should be included for completeness. d) The possibility of peat being discovered during the construction phase is acknowledged, but there is insufficient detail on the approach that the Applicant would take in this eventuality. The presence of peat within the site has the potential to substantially increase the GHG impact from land use change, so it is important that there is more clarity around any future peat management methodology. e) The use of the BESS in a grid balancing capacity has the potential to make further GHG impacts through the displacement of fast response, gas fired peaking plant. Any savings	emissions during the operational phase of the Scheme. Table 14 in ES Vol 2 Appendix 15-1 Greenhouse Gas Emission Assessment [APP-116] summarises the assumed life expectancy of the equipment with the battery modules having a life expectancy of 20 years (i.e. one replacement over the lifetime of the Scheme). This is considered conservative and broadly in line with other GHG assessments. If the life expectancy of the modules was reduced to 10 years (i.e. three replacements over the lifetime of the Scheme) to consider a worst-case scenario, the lifetime GHG intensity would increase from 41.7 gCO₂e/kWh to 42.9 gCO₂e/kWh. Therefore, the conclusions of the assessment would remain unchanged. c) The Scheme will not import electricity from the grid for the purpose of operating the Scheme. Instead, the Scheme will consume some of the electricity generated during the operational phase but emphasises that it would be very limited. Therefore, the effect of this on the GHG assessment will be minimal and would not change the conclusion of the assessment. d) The Applicant understands that the presence of peat within the site has the potential to substantially increase the GHG impact from land use change, but only if this peat disturbed and the carbon sink this provides is removed. The Applicant has undertaken soil surveys across the vast majority of the Site (as set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 13-1 [APP-115]) and has no reason to believe that peat would be present at any location within the Site.

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			so achieved would generally fall outside the scope of the core GHG assessment, but a discussion of the potential benefits would be useful. f) The use of existing, unabated CCGT generating capacity as a counterfactual scenario is noted and broadly accepted, but PINS has been unwilling to accept the counterfactual use of CCGTs in previous planning decisions and the Beneficial evaluation of significance is contingent on this approach. The impact on the evaluation of significance in the event of PINS not agreeing with this approach should be more fully considered. g) The Beneficial evaluation of significance means that embedded GHG mitigation measures have not been considered necessary; the Council would note that suitable GHG mitigation measures across all phases of the Scheme should always be considered and secured by the DCO if found practicable. It is suggested that the above issues require a response from the Applicant.	As per paragraph 8.6.12 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 8 Hydrology and Flood Risk [APP-044], online mapping indicates no peat is present at the site. In addition, the Natural England Peat Map does not indicate a likelihood of peat being present anywhere near the Site. In relation to future peat management should it be encountered unexpectedly, the Applicant has updated the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to commit to the preparation of a Peat Management Plan should peat be encountered on site following any further ground investigations. e) The Applicant intends to use the BESS in a grid balancing capacity but at this stage, the output capacity and length of time is unknown. When the BESS is being used for grid balancing, the electricity would be displacing fast response, gas fired peaking plants which are typically engines or open cycle gas turbines. This would be an additional benefit of the Scheme not accounted for within the GHG Assessment. This does not change the conclusion of the assessment. f) The assessment fully considers the implications of various displacement factors in calculating the displaced emissions, as outlined in Table 15.15 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Climate Change [APP-051]. Furthermore, the consideration of different comparators has been explicitly integrated into the analysis and detailed within the 'Summary of the GHG Assessment' section, specifically in paragraph 15.8.29

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				of ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Climate Change [APP-051]. As such, even in the event that the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) does not accept the use of existing, unabated CCGT generating capacity as the counterfactual scenario, the beneficial evaluation of significance remains robust, and the conclusion of the assessment is not affected. g) Firstly, as noted above in response to section f), the beneficial evaluation of significance remains valid. 'Embedded mitigation' measures are those which the Scheme will need to comply with and were identified in section 15.7 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Climate Change [APP-051]. The assessment of significance was determined accounting for these. As the assessment concluded that the impact of the Scheme on climate change would be a "beneficial effect which is significant", no additional mitigation is deemed necessary to further reduce impacts. However, for completeness 'additional mitigation' measures were identified in Paragraph 15.9.2 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Climate Change [APP-051].
BBC-RR-155	18.8	Climate Change	<u>Matter 93</u> Historic climate data: the Council welcome the methodology applied to the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) and note that it is consistent with guidance issued by ISEP. However, in reference to the CCRA, an inconsistent use of historic climate data is apparent. The current baseline uses data for Bedford for the period 1991-2020 while the future baseline uses data for the same location from 1981-2010. This inconsistency is unlikely to compromise the overall outcome of the CCRA, but should be addressed.	The Applicant acknowledges the noted inconsistency in the presentation of the historic climate data within the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA). Upon review, the Applicant confirms that this inconsistency is an error in reporting. The 1991-2020 dataset has been consistently used to calculate both the current and future climate baselines, in line with the methodology and guidance issued by ISEP.

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
BBC-RR-156	18.9	Climate Change	The Council welcome the approach taken in relation to the In-Combination Climate Change Impacts (ICCI) assessment, and do not have any comments to make in relation to it.	The Applicant has noted this comment. No further actions required at present.
BBC-RR-157	19.1	Climate Change	<u>Matter 94</u> Energy and sustainability (Carbon/ energy efficiency): the Council notes that they do not have the necessary technical discipline relating specifically to solar farms to respond on this aspect. On this basis, the Council will not be looking at submitting Relevant Representations to the Examination on this matter. However, the Applicant should have reference to the Council's Carbon Reduction Delivery Strategy 2020-2030 Version 2 (December 2024). The Application further fails to reference the Council's Carbon Reduction Delivery Action Plan 2024 – 2026 and the associated Carbon Reduction Delivery Action Plan Update FY 2023/24 – 2024/25.	The Applicant acknowledges that reference should have been made to the following documents within ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Climate Change [APP-051]: - Carbon Reduction Delivery Strategy 2020-2030 Version 2 (December 2024); - Carbon Reduction Delivery Action Plan 2024 – 2026; and - Carbon Reduction Delivery Action Plan Update FY 2023/24 – 2024/25 Upon review of these documents, the Applicant confirms that they do not alter the conclusions of the assessment. These reports outline the Council's commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 through the implementation of sustainable, low-carbon initiatives across council operations and the wider community. Solar power directly supports these objectives by providing a clean and sustainable energy source, while battery storage aligns with efforts to integrate renewables by addressing intermittency and promoting efficient energy use.
BBC-RR-158	19.2	Waste	<u>Recycling and waste management</u> : the Council has reviewed the [APP-164] Outline Waste Management Plan and do not believe that there are matters relating that they wish to raise at the Examination.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes agreement with the Council on the scope of the outline Waste Management Plan [APP-164] .

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BBC-RR-159	19.3	Minerals	<u>Matter 95</u> Minerals and Waste: The Council has been in contact with the Minerals and Waste team at Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), which is a shared service with the Council and provides technical advice regarding aspects relating to the safeguarding of minerals extraction sites. Much of the land around Pertenhall is designated as a mineral safeguarding area (MSA) with likely deposits of river valley/ glacial sand and gravel; the following issues arise: a) Local and national policies seek to prevent the sterilisation of such resources by development. Should the Scheme be permitted within a MSA, then policy would seek the full extraction of such minerals within the mineral safeguarding area prior to development of the Scheme. This raises a significant matter that will require discussion at Examination. b) The Applicant's attention is drawn to the following planning policy: i. Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic Sites and Policies (January 2014) Policies MSP11 and MSP12 and the Development Framework's Technical advice note regarding mineral safeguarding areas which should be read as a material consideration. A map illustrating the affected areas can be furnished at Examination;	The Applicant acknowledges the Scheme is sited partly across mineral safeguarding areas (MSAs) and has prepared a Minerals Safeguarding Report at Appendix B of the Planning Statement [APP-031]. MSAs in relation to the Order limits are shown on ES Vol 3 Figure 13-5 [APP-150]. The Applicant's position is that the Scheme does not give rise to permanent sterilisation of safeguarded mineral resources and therefore does not trigger a requirement for full extraction ahead of development in the way suggested in the Council's comment. The Scheme is temporary and reversible, with an operational period of 40 years followed by decommissioning, with the land capable of being worked for minerals post-decommissioning if required. Article 35 of the draft DCO [AS-008] incorporates the 'mineral code' (Parts 2 and 3 of Schedule 2 to the Acquisition of Land Act 1981). The effect of this provision is that the Applicant is prevented from acquiring the rights to any mines and minerals underneath the acquired land, unless expressly purchased, and provides mine owners with the ability to work the mines and extract minerals, subject to restrictions. The Applicant notes that there are similar MSAs within the Cambridgeshire area, and that Huntingdonshire District Council (whilst not the mineral authority) consider the Applicant's judgement that minerals would not be sterilised to be adequately developed, and that they support the Applicant's conclusion (para. 14.8, [RR-494]).

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			ii. Minerals and Waste Strategic Policy MWSP 1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development; iii. Minerals and Waste Strategic Policy MWSP 3 - The Determination of planning applications; and; iv. Minerals and Waste Strategic Policy MSP 6 – Mineral Extraction outside Allocated Sites.	
BBC-RR-160	19.4	Decomm.	Matter 96 Decommissioning phase: the Applicant's PEIR and the Council's response notes: a) para2.4.60 <i>'The internal roads to the BESS would be constructed of tarmac, concrete or similar to allow for heavier vehicles during construction and decommissioning, and safe access for fire services in emergency situations'</i>. It would be a requirement that all routes, hardstanding areas, para2.4.87/96-98 Cable joining chambers, para2.4.133 Retention basin, Work No. 9 (access), and all concrete foundation/ works are removed at the decommissioning phase (to prevent long-term leaching, contamination, and in the interest of public safety regarding sunken chambers) (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024). b) para2.7.1 any infrastructure that is more than one metre below ground level, such as cable conduit and casing, would be left in situ (Ref. PEIR Report, 2024) (Ref. Planning Inspector's Scoping Opinion ID2.1.10, ID2.2.1).	a) The Applicant has responded to this point with reference to BBC-RR-90 in this table, above. b) The Applicant has responded to this point with reference to BBC-RR-32 in this table, above.

Our Ref.	BBC Ref.	Theme	BBC Comments	Applicant Response
			In review of [APP-031] Decommissioning Phase, the Council notes: a) para4.9.2 <i>'Sub-surface infrastructure deeper than 1 m, such as cable conduits, will generally remain in place to minimise environmental impact'</i> – as noted elsewhere in this response, this approach is NOT acceptable to the Council. b) Para4.9.3 <i>'however, as the land would be handed back to the landowners on completion of decommissioning the longer-term retention of the landscaping improvement works cannot be guaranteed'</i>. The Council requires both clarification on this matter (i.e. the permanent status of enhancements made to existing PRow and any commitment to permissive routes), and, notes that these matters should not be afforded full weight in terms of planning benefit(s) as set out by the Applicant until such time as their long-term status is confirmed.	
BBC-RR-161	19.5	Utilities	<u>Matter 97</u> Oil pipeline: [APP-031] Planning Statement para3.2.15 – the Application does not make reference to the disused oil pipeline present within the landscape that might potentially impact upon Sites A and B and will need to be addressed (para4.7.23 and ES Vol 3 Figure 2-3: Indicative Crossings Plan [EN010141/DR/6.3] refers). The Applicant will need to demonstrate that discussions have been held with the infrastructure owner and that the ES demonstrates an approach to potential residual risk.	The Applicant does explicitly address the decommissioned oil pipeline, which is noted at paragraph 4.7.23 of the Planning Statement [APP-031], and shown on ES Vol 3 Figure 2-3 Indicative Crossings Plan [APP-123]. The Applicant notes that the linework for the 'Former Oil Pipeline' on Figures 2-3b and 2-3c [APP-123] is faint and only more visible when zooming in on the PDF. The Applicant has therefore updated ES Vol 3 Figure 2-3 Indicative Crossings Plan [as updated alongside this submission] to improve the clarity of the figure.

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				The former oil pipeline is also described at paragraph 2.5.45 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038], and assessed in ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048]. Paragraphs 2.5.45 [APP-038] and 12.7.2 [APP-048] identify mitigation measures to protect the pipeline during construction, however the Applicant acknowledges these are not currently reflected in the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [APP-156] and has therefore updated the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to include control measures for the former oil pipeline. The Applicant has provided a letter at Appendix A of this document as evidence that the former oil pipeline has been decommissioned.
BBC-RR-162	19.6	Community Benefit Fund	<u>Community Benefit Fund</u>: [APP-031] Planning Statement para5.5.3, the statement by the Applicant that the proposed Community Benefit Fund, whilst providing local benefits cannot and should not be taken into account within the planning balance, is supported by the Council. Such funds are legally non-material to the planning decision and are not a means of mitigating the Scheme's environmental or social impacts. It is noted that both the Applicant and Council have engaged or initiated discussions with the Parish Councils and local community to begin to draft a list of project/funding requests. This will be tabled as draft during the Examination for discussion.	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant is committed to providing the community benefit fund, but is not intending to publish a draft list of project / funding requests as part of the Examination (as suggested by the Council).

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			For completeness, the Applicant's offer of (para 5.5.1) <i>'....a Community Benefit Fund of £400 per MW per year. This is expected to amount to approximately £6.4 million, over the 40-year life of the solar farm'</i> is noted.	
BBC-RR-163	20.1	BESS	Matter 98 BESS firewater storage site: in the Council's PEIR response, the Council raises the matter of NFCC Guidance regarding that consideration should be given within the site design to the management of water run-off such that in an emergency situation where polluted water may run-off from the facility this could be safely contained and treated, rather than risking pollution of groundwater or local watercourses. It was further noted that the management and removal of contaminated firewater would need specific address within any Operational Environmental Management Plan including an emergency strategy should such firewater breach into river catchment areas and/or leach into ground water or soils. In this regard [APP009; Dwg. 010] the Application has identified sites for Work No. 2 (BESS facility) and No. 6b (drainage lagoon); the Council would want the following addressed: As annotated, Work No.6b should not be coloured Work No. 1 nor cross-hatched as Work No. 6 to ensure that this site is secured solely for the duration of the Scheme for the 'drainage lagoon' (which we read as fire water storage area/ NFCC 'bundled lagoon'). a) The Application does not indicate a minimum size of the Work No. 6b site (hectares). While there is limited guidance in this regard, the NFCC state that <i>'Any calculations for sufficient water supply for an appropriate suppression system... Water run-off and potential impact</i>	a) The maximum extent of Work No 6b is shown on Sheet 10 of the Works Plan [APP-009]. The Applicant has set this maximum extent informed by hydraulic modelling as reported in the outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [APP-165], with an outline drainage plan for the retention basin that would form Work No 6b shown on Figure 3 of the oSWMP. These calculations were based on reasonable worst-case assumptions and include for the storage of all water from the two water storage tanks associated with the BESS if they were to both be discharged simultaneously. The Applicant has deliberately overlapped Work No 1 with Work No 6b such that if the final retention basin is smaller than currently shown, panels could be introduced in the area to increase generation capacity. The Applicant would not build solar panels over the retention basin, or in a way that affected safe maintenance access to the basin. The Local Planning Authority would have approval of the final detailed design through the relevant post-consent approvals in accordance with Requirements 3, 10 and 14 of the draft DCO [AS-008]. b) The layout of the retention basin shown on ES Vol 3 Figure 2-1k Illustrative Environmental Masterplan [APP-121] is indicative only, reflecting the outline design shown on Figure 3 of the oSWMP [APP-165].

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			<i>on the environment, along with mitigation measures, should be considered and detailed in the Emergency Response Plan</i>. i.e. the full volume of water required in any fire suppression should be contained on site to limit harm of such firewater. [APP-162] The outline Battery Safety Management Plan para4.5.6 gives a commitment to the <i>'drainage design will provide sufficient capacity to contain either the full firefighting volume in combination...'</i> but no actual site area is stated. This is a material consideration as the site area required, plus management access around the lagoon, may be far larger than the area currently indicated. Suggest that a dashed area, free of Work No.1 (solar panels), is indicated surrounding the current site area to accommodate any design resolution of this matter. b) [APP-121] ES Illustrative Environmental Masterplan Fig. 2-1k indicates an even smaller retention basin than suggested in [APP-009; Dwg. 010] Work No. 6b, which well illustrates that this matter requires resolution. c) The Applicant notes that the BESS facility will largely be un-manned. Should the lagoon contain standing water at depth, then the Applicant will need to evidence measures regarding water safety	Whilst this reflects a realistic representation of the anticipated footprint of the retention basin, it could be smaller or larger than illustrated, so long as the basin does not exceed the footprint of Work No 6b as shown on Sheet 10 of the Works Plan [APP-009], and is of a minimum capacity to meet the drainage requirements for the BESS and Substation area (including fire water retention), as approved by the relevant Local Planning Authority. The detailed design of the retention basin would be finalised through the relevant post-consent approvals in accordance with Requirements 3, 10 and 14 of the draft DCO [AS-008]. c) The Applicant notes this comment. The retention basin will be designed safely in accordance with the Applicant's wider responsibilities, e.g. duties under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015. As above, the detailed design of the retention basin would be finalised through the relevant post-consent approvals in accordance with Requirements 3, 10 and 14 of the draft DCO [AS-008].
BBC-RR-164	20.2	BESS	Matter 99 Issue for consideration within the OBSMP: a) Para's 1.1.3, 1.1.4 and 1.5.3: it is suggested that any oBSMP should mention also having	The Applicant welcomes BBC's agreement with the outline Battery Safety Management Plan (oBSMP) [APP-162] subject to the clarity on the matters raised

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			due consideration and reference to Environmental Legislation and Planning Policy regarding mitigation of harm, guidance, and good practice. b) Para's 1.2.1 et al: as a courtesy, the Council would want the Applicant to consult with Bedford Fire & Rescue as they act in a supporting emergency role with Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Service. Could the Applicant confirm if any such discussions/ liaison has been undertaken? c) The Council note that part of the BESS fire strategy is to use para2.4.6(6) (also para4.1.4, 4.3.1) '<i>fire hydrants and/or static water tanks for firefighting dependent on available water supply</i>'. It is strongly recommended that the Applicant evidence that there is sufficient water capacity and pressure within the current infrastructure as it is generally accepted that both these issues present intermittent problems in the local area d) In general, Chp 4 Firefighting, which addresses numerous matters regarding BESS fires and the management of firewater, matters originally raised by the Council in their Scoping and PEIR Response, is comprehensive and address matters as raised. e) For clarity, the Council would suggest that the Applicant is consistent in defining the 'drainage lagoon' across their submitted material as per the NFCC' term of 'bunded lagoon'	here. The Applicant has addressed these points in turn below. a) In terms of environmental legislation and regulatory compliance, the oBSMP [APP-162] does not attempt to set out a definitive list of applicable legislation and policy at this outline stage. Instead, it requires that the final BSMP includes a statement on "overall compliance of the system with applicable legislation" (paragraph 5.1.9, [APP-162]). b) Requirement 10 of the draft DCO [AS-008] states that the final BSMP will be approved by the local planning authority (which for the BESS would be Huntingdonshire District Council) in consultation with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service. The Applicant considers this approach to be appropriate as the BESS facility is within the Cambridgeshire area. c) The Scheme includes two separate static water tanks that would not be dependent on a water main, or mains water pressure. The water capacity of each tank would be no less than 228,000 litres in capacity, capable of delivering 1,900 litres per minute. This is in excess of NFCC guidance. d) The Applicant welcomes BBC's agreement on this matter.

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			Conclusion para6.1.1. 'This outline Battery Safety Management Plan (oBSMP) has demonstrated in a systematic way the mitigation of the safety risks posed by the BESS that forms part of the Scheme'. Subject to the matters raised, as read, the Council would support this statement.	e) The Applicant notes this comment, but considers the function and control measures of the drainage lagoon are appropriately secured through the draft DCO [AS-008] .
BBC-RR-165	20.3, 20.4	Draft DCO	<u>Matter 100</u> Draft DCO: as noted within this response, the Council is currently NOT supportive of the [APP-016] Draft Development Consent Order - this requires clarification, detailed resolution of matters, and understanding of agreed powers. <u>Matter 101</u> In relation to the above position, the Council make a similar statement regarding the [APP-017] Explanatory Memorandum.	The Applicant notes this comment and has provided updates to the draft DCO [as updated alongside this submission] and the Explanatory Memorandum [as updated alongside this submission] that respond to a number of the points raised in BBC's submission. The Applicant will continue to work with BBC to agree the wording of the draft DCO prior to the end of examination.
BBC-RR-166	21.1	Cumulative Effects	<u>Matter 102</u> Extant planning consent: the [APP-031] Planning Statement (para3.3.3 and Appendix A) state that ' <i>there are no pending or extant planning consents across the Order Limits that are affected by the Scheme</i> '. The Council do not agree with this statement. The following three consents should be referred to, considered, and listed in Appendix A. They are referred to in [APP-032] (Statement of Compliance) against the requirements of EN3 - point para2.10.141 refers: a) 22/01828/MAF – Land South of Bushmead Road, Staploe - Installation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) et al; b) 22/01998/MAF – Land North of Bassmead Manor and Home Wood, Staploe - Solar Farm and associated development; and,	The Applicant notes this comment. All three of these other developments have been assessed as part of the cumulative effects assessment undertaken in ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 Cumulative and In Combination Effects [APP-053] . The references these other developments used in ES Chapter 17 are as follows: a) Ref. 28 b) Ref. 4 c) Ref. 23 The above developments are shown on ES Vol 3 Figure 4-2 [APP-128] . In relation to these other development's inclusion within Appendix A of the Planning Statement [APP-031] , the Applicant has the following comments: a) The Applicant acknowledges that the overlap between the Scheme and this development is not

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			c) 24/00858/MAF – Land to the North and South of Bushmead Road, Staploe and West of Eaton Socon - Installation of a solar array of up to 49.9MW AC and other associated works.	included within Appendix A of the Planning Statement [APP-031] . The overlap of the ‘red line’ between these two developments is narrow and relates only to National Grid’s access track into the Eaton Socon Substation, which the Applicant would only ultimately be using for access in the same way as the other development. The Scheme would therefore not affect the operative part of the other development. b) This is included by reference 22/01813/FUL in HDC, which is the specific permission that intersects with the Order limits, noting that the permission for this site within the BBC area is not intersected by the Scheme. c) The Applicant does not believe that the application area for this planning permission overlaps with the Scheme.
BBC-RR-167	21.2	Cumulative Effects	[APP-053] Cumulative and in Combination Effects - para7.3.2 reference should be made to Table 17.2 otherwise the chapter is considered to be accepted as read subject to issues raised when cross-referencing with technical input.	The Applicant notes this comment. The Council is correct that paragraph 17.3.2 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 Cumulative and In-Combination Effects [APP-053] should refer to table 17.2, instead of table 17.3.
BBC-RR-168	22.1e	Design	[APP-038] The Scheme – Design Principle 7 ‘ <i>The Scheme will seek opportunities to leave a positive legacy through the delivery of multiple social and environmental benefits</i> ’ – in light of the fact that the Application is temporary, this Design Principle should acknowledge such and set-out what mitigation and enhancement measures identified are to be made permanent and hence form a ‘positive legacy’. This should then be weighed accordingly.	The Applicant has responded to a similar point raised above at reference BBC-RR-32. The Applicant notes that the Scheme benefits and ‘positive legacy’ are broader than the physical landscaping that will be retained at decommissioning, and include those delivered through a greater understanding of the historic environment, educational benefits, and research proposed as part of the Agrisolar Research Area. The Scheme benefits are set out in Section 5 of the Planning Statement [APP-031] .

2.2 Response to Huntingdonshire District Council

Table 2: Response to Huntingdonshire District Council Relevant Representation (RR-494)

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
HDC-RR-01	4.1, 4.2	Emerging Local Plan	In October 2025, the Council issued its Preferred Options consultation on the emerging Local Plan. Paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies, and their degree of consistency with policies in the National Planning Policy Framework. At the time of writing, the emerging Local Plan remains at an early stage, meaning that little, if any, weight can currently be attributed to the Preferred Options document. This position may evolve as responses to the consultation are received, collated, and published. Later stages in the DCO process may mean that greater weight is given to emerging policies.	The Applicant is aware of the early work on Huntingdonshire District Council's emerging Local Plan, including the consultation that commenced in October 2025 following submission of the DCO application. The Applicant notes HDC's comment that little, if any, weight can currently be attributed to the Preferred Options document. The Applicant will continue to engage with HDC as the emerging local plan progresses. Should the plan progress over the course of the examination then the Applicant will provide an update to the Examining Authority.
HDC-RR-02	7.8, 7.9, 7.10	Landscape and Visual Impact	For Bedford LCA 1B: Riseley Clay and Farmland effects at Y10 are assessed as minor and nonsignificant. Given the primary source of landscape change is the introduction of the PV panels, the effect of mitigation by Year 10 is overstated and although the scheme may be better integrated/mitigated it is still a large area of increased industrialisation in the long term, which constitutes a significant effect on LCA1B. At Year 10 the ES LVIA indicates there will be a Moderate Adverse level of effect on the landscape character of LCA 1B, under the LVIA methodology this	The Applicant notes the Council's comments, and welcomes the acknowledgement that effects on visual receptors are broadly accepted as appropriate. The Applicant respectfully disagrees that the operational Year 10 effect on Bedford Borough Council LCA 1B (Riseley Clay Farmland) should be reported as significant. ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-1 [APP-069] adopts a 'sequential combination' approach, combining susceptibility and value to determine sensitivity, and combining scale, geographical extent, duration and reversibility to determine magnitude; sensitivity and

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			could be significant or non-significant, the former being more appropriate. Effects on visual receptors are broadly accepted as appropriate, noting that there is a heavy reliance on the mitigation to screen the solar panels but any effects of obstructed or truncated views are not referenced and will adversely change the experience of users of PRow. Similar to the comments for landscape character, it is noted that wherever there is a moderate effect on visual amenity this is taken to be non-significant, noting the methodology indicates it could and in some cases should be a significant effect. The overall conclusion is that there is some slight under-representation of significant effects.	magnitude are then combined, using professional judgement, to determine the level and significance of effect, with intermediate levels of effect (including 'Moderate to Major') used where appropriate. On that basis, the Environmental Statement reports the residual operational effect on LCA 1B at Year 10 as 'Moderate Adverse (Not Significant)', and the Applicant maintains that conclusion. In respect of the Council's suggestion of a slight under-representation of significant effects, the Applicant respectfully disagrees. The LVIA has applied the methodology set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-1 [APP-069], combining sensitivity and magnitude through a sequential combination approach and professional judgement to determine both the level and significance of effect. The Applicant therefore maintains the significance conclusions as reported in the Environmental Statement, including that effects described as 'Moderate Adverse' have been assessed as not significant within this LVIA. Further, the Council's point regarding 'obstructed or truncated' views is not accepted. Where applicable, the viewpoint assessments in ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-4 [APP-072] expressly acknowledge that mitigation planting can alter the experience of a view from the baseline situation, including because the planting implemented at Year 0 would be evident at Year 10, following ten years of growth, and the view would therefore remain altered.
HDC-RR-03	7.11, 7.12, 7.13	Landscape and Visual Impact	The non-significant effect on Huntingdonshire LCA: Southern Wolds in operation is contrary to what might be expected given the PV panels would occupy a	The Applicant notes Huntingdonshire District Council's comments but respectfully disagrees that the non-

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			central and high percentage of the LCA, at least in relation to the extent of the LCA south of Grafham Water. Some justification is provided in that there are industrialising influences present in the LCA, however this seems to be given too much weight, along with mitigation, in what is, as described in the LVIA, a rural landscape. Comments regarding visual amenity as per BCC para 7.8 above. The overall conclusion is that there is an under-representation of significant effects.	significant operational effect on Huntingdonshire LCA: Southern Wolds is under-represented. ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-3 [APP-071] summarises that the level of effect during operation on Southern Wolds LCA is Moderate Adverse (Not Significant), reducing to Minor to Moderate Adverse (Not Significant) at Year 10 as mitigation planting establishes and the Scheme assimilates further within the LCA. Linear belts of planting beside the Scheme, specifically on field boundaries, would limit visibility within the wider landscape by Year 10, and enhance an existing characteristic of the Southern Wolds LCA. The detailed assessment in ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-3 [APP-071] explains the sensitivity judgement for the Southern Wolds LCA, including the absence of landscape designation, its large-scale gently undulating arable character (which is described as being of lower susceptibility to change), the presence of modern influences within the baseline, and the landscape strategy emphasis on high quality landscaping to soften and integrate development and protect rural long-distance views. The Applicant therefore maintains the LVIA conclusions as reported.
HDC-RR-04	7.14	Landscape and Visual Impact	It is accepted that based on The Glint and Glare study extract in paras. 5.8.73 to 5.8.76 of the ES LVIA that due to the existing screening and / or proposed screening in the landscape, glint and glare impacts would be acceptable unless revised, new or additional information is received.	The Applicant notes the Council's comment and welcomes the acknowledgement that due to existing and/or proposed landscape screening, glint and glare impacts would be acceptable and no additional mitigation is required beyond the embedded landscape proposals.

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HDC-RR-05	7.15, 7.16, 7.17	Landscape and Visual Impact	ES Vol 3 Figure 2-1: Illustrative Environmental Masterplan [APP-121] shows the proposed landscape and visual mitigation for the Scheme. The landscape proposals are tailored to the location and required functions of each part of the Scheme, noting that these change across the DCO site. The design is well considered and retains the legibility and character of the landscape and reduces the visual effects, where possible, especially for visual receptors, at the edges of settlements, and along routes connecting settlements. Most importantly, as set out in Design Principle 7: The Scheme as drawn on the landscape Illustrative Environmental Masterplan will leave a positive legacy through the delivery of strengthening and supplementing the landscape character within the Order Limits post operation. The means of securing these benefits are as yet unclear.	The Applicant welcomes the acknowledgement from HDC that the design of the Scheme is well-considered, retains the legibility and character of the landscape, and where possible reduces the visual effects. The Applicant also welcomes the acknowledgement from HDC that the Scheme would leave a positive legacy through the delivery of strengthening and supplementing the landscape character within the Order limits. With regard to how ES Vol 3 Figure 2-1 Illustrative Environmental Masterplan [APP-121] is secured, the same plan is included as the Illustrative Landscape Proposals at Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159]. The oLEMP is a control document that will be certified as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO). Requirement 4 in Schedule 2 of the draft DCO [AS-008] requires that a final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), in substantial accordance with the oLEMP, is prepared and approved by the relevant LPAs prior to commencement of construction. The final LEMP will implement the landscape proposals, which must therefore be in substantial accordance with the Illustrative Landscape Proposals at Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159]. With regard to how the positive legacy of the Scheme are secured, the Applicant has provided responses earlier in this document at BBC-RR-32 and BBC-RR-168.
HDC-RR-06	8.2, 8.3	Arboriculture	The Arboricultural Impact Assessment is considered robust and identifies numerous valuable trees, including veterans, across the landscape. The	The Applicant welcomes HDC's comment that ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 Arboricultural Impact Assessment [APP-056] is considered robust.

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			anticipated impact on these trees is assessed as minimal. A small number of trees are in direct conflict with the proposals; therefore, equipment should be located outside the falling distance of trees to avoid future pressure for removal and to mitigate shading effects from canopies.	In relation to the protection of trees, the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [APP-156] and outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159] secure mitigation for trees, hedgerows and woodland.
HDC-RR-07	9.5	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	The proposed belts of planting will also help screen those arrays closest to the village but there will still be some visual impact in views where the topography elevates the arrays over the proposed screening and existing vegetation. Taken as a whole, the impact of the solar farm on the significance of Great Staughton heritage assets is likely to be less than substantial.	The Applicant notes and welcomes that the council is in agreement with the assessment of <i>'less than substantial harm'</i> (minor effects) on the Great Staughton heritage assets. We note that these <i>'Great Staughton heritage assets'</i> aren't defined in the Council's comment, but expect that they are related to the Great Staughton Conservation Area (Asset 164) as well as upon the settings of the grade I listed Church of St Andrew (Asset 534) and the grade II listed the Manor (Asset 526) and its associated gatepiers (Listing Number 1214656) and non-designated parkland (Asset 648) as is summarised in paragraph 6.8.62 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042].
HDC-RR-08	9.6	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	The additional assessments of Kimbolton Conservation Area and its associated heritage assets confirm the ZTV illustration showing limited intervisibility between the solar arrays and the built form. This is primarily because Kimbolton sits at a lower elevation within the landscape. The impact of the solar farm on these heritage assets is therefore likely to be minor. As described below, the impact of the solar farm on the significance of Warren House remains unclear and further work is required.	The Applicant notes and welcomes that the council is in agreement with the assessment of minor effects on heritage assets within Kimbolton. We note that the specific assets relating to the <i>'Kimbolton Conservation Area and its associated heritage assets'</i> aren't defined in the Council's comment, but expect that they are related to the grade I listed Kimbolton School (Asset 795) and associated gatehouse (Asset 796) and the Church of St Andrew

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				(Asset 799) as is summarised in paragraph 6.8.62 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042] .
HDC-RR-09	9.7, 9.8, 9.9	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	With reference to Asset No.984 – Warren House – Grade II* listed building, at page 40 the Plates / LVIA viewpoints references are incorrectly labelled as ES Volume 1; the Viewpoints are in ES Volume 3. The Viewpoints in Environmental Statement Volume 3 – Figures; Chapter 5 Figures – Landscape and Visual are not labelled with a determining suffix contrary to the references given in ES Vol 2, Appendix 6-4: Settings Impact Assessment [APP-083]. The assessment incorrectly identifies Warren House as being built as a ‘vista building’. Research indicates that it was initially built as a warrener’s lodge, other examples of which were constructed to offer views across the estate rather than simply to feature within views from the house and its grounds. The buildings significance therefore also derives from its association with the wider views of the estate within the Kym valley that are afforded by its elevated outlook. The impact of the solar farm on views from Warren House are therefore relevant and should be included in an additional viewpoint from the building. The current assessment based on views from the opposite side of the valley is inadequate to identify the level of harm to the significance of this highly graded heritage asset. HDC considers it essential that this matter is addressed to ensure a robust assessment of heritage impacts. We therefore invite the applicant to engage with the LPA at the earliest opportunity to agree an appropriate additional viewpoint from Warren House.	The Applicant has checked and updated the referencing of LVIA viewpoints within ES Vol 2, Appendix 6-4: Settings Impact Assessment [APP-083] [as updated alongside this submission]. The applicant notes the Council comment that Warren House has been incorrectly identified as a vista building but would highlight that Warren House is described in its Listing Description as being ‘<i>built as a ‘vista’ building in late C18 facing Kimbolton Park</i>’ (https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1211750). The Applicant notes the Council’s comment that as a warrener’s lodge it would have been constructed to afford views across the estate within the Kym Valley and not simply ‘<i>feature within views from the house and its grounds</i>’. Despite the discrepancy above the Applicant has considered Warren House to have sensitivity in changes to views afforded from its elevated position and had assessed that the building had a Medium relative sensitivity to changes in its setting as is set out on pages 40-41 of ES Vol 2 Appendix 6-4: Settings Impact Assessment [APP-083]. The Applicant notes that the Council has made no comment in relation to the assessment of relative sensitivity. The Applicant notes the statement that views of the solar farm are ‘<i>therefore relevant</i>’, which implies that these have not been considered within the assessment. A settings assessment visit to the vicinity of Warren House was conducted which ‘<i>confirmed that</i>

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				<i>distant glimpses of the Scheme may be possible with the ridgeline visible to the south (in the backdrop of its views of the park), but that these glimpses would be obscured by nearby and distant vegetation</i>’ which, given the notable distance and screening, has been assessed as resulting in a Low impact upon the setting of the asset, as set out on pages 40-41 of ES Vol 2 Appendix 6-4: Settings Impact Assessment [APP-083]. The Applicant stands by the assessment of a Low impact during the operational phase upon the setting of the Warren House, as is defined in the assessment methodology as <i>‘Alterations to the asset’s baseline setting, which do not affect the ability to understand, appreciate or experience the contribution that setting makes to the asset’s overall significance. The key characteristics of the setting are not eroded’</i> as set out in Table 6.7 of Chapter 6 of the ES [APP-042]. Due to the distance and limited visibility of the Scheme (assessed as being limited to glimpses of elements of the solar development in Sites A and B, at a distance of over 3km and obscured by nearby and distant vegetation) the Applicant does not believe that the key characteristics of the Warren House’s setting would be eroded or that the ability to understand, appreciate or experience the contribution that setting makes to the house’s overall significance would be affected. The Applicant therefore maintains the setting assessment conclusions as reported. The Applicant notes that a request for a visualisation from Warren House was not raised during the statutory consultation. The Applicant does not agree that a

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				visualisation is necessary to inform the assessment of effects from this asset, and that an understanding of the impact and whether a likely significant effect would occur can be gained without as visualisation.
HDC-RR-10	10.7	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The additional information that has been incorporated into the assessment since statutory consultation is welcomed, including 2025 bird survey data and additional rationale for the scoping out of Grafham Water SSSI. Based on the updated information the Host Authorities are content that the Scheme is unlikely to result in significant effects on statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-53 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-11	10.8	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Scheme will involve works adjacent to two non-statutory sites, Huntingdon Wood County Wildlife Site (CWS) (designated for its ancient woodland, an irreplaceable resource), and Kangaroo Meadows CWS (designated for neutral grassland communities). While no direct loss of habitat within these sites is expected, the Host Authorities are concerned that there is currently insufficient information to verify the applicant's conclusion that these sites will not be adversely impacted during construction. Further information is required to assess the potential for hydrological impacts through trenching in close proximity to Huntingdon Wood CWS, potential impacts of construction lighting, and potential impacts of the use of an existing culvert for construction access. At Kangaroo Meadows CWS clarification is required on the potential for adverse effects on existing grassland	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-54 in Table 1.

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			through shading by proposed mitigation woodland planting once mature.	
HDC-RR-12	10.9	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities welcome that the design and assessment have evolved to take account of previous consultation feedback on ecological issues. However, we remain concerned that the assessment for certain species groups is based on incomplete survey information (e.g. spot check surveys only for water vole/otter and some areas inaccessible for bird and newt survey). It is not always clear within the assessment how these shortfalls in data have been considered and their impact on the final assessment conclusions.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-55 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-13	10.10, 10.11	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities are concerned that without suitable mitigation and compensation provision the Scheme has potential to result in a significant adverse effect on ground nesting birds, in particular skylarks (125 territories recorded within the Site). The ES [APP-043] sets out at paragraph 7.8.112 the intention to create large areas of open grassland 'to be of benefit for skylark and lapwing and to encourage nesting attempts within these areas'. The oLEMP [APP-159] currently provides insufficient detail to demonstrate that the proposed measures will be sufficient. It is recommended that a detailed farmland birds mitigation strategy (covering both breeding and non-breeding birds) is produced to include (but not be limited to): • details of proposed habitat losses and gains (overall area and territory numbers);	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-56 in Table 1.

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			- measures to be employed to protect ground nesting birds during construction and operational phases; - consideration of the phasing of both impacts and proposed mitigation/compensation provision; and - how the proposed management regime will ensure that habitats are managed in a suitable manner to ensure they remain suitable for use by skylark and other ground nesting birds. These details are required to assess the appropriateness of the measures proposed and determine if further off-site compensation is required.	
HDC-RR-14	10.12	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities are concerned that trees within and adjacent to the Site have not been surveyed to identify their potential to support roosting bats. The applicant has stated at paragraph 7.7.20 of the ES [APP-043] that 'trees present within the Site would be retained and protected during construction', however we consider that as a minimum the location of PRF-I and PRF-M trees should be established in order that it can be demonstrated within the CEMP or oLEMP that suitable protection buffers can be incorporated into the design for all relevant trees. The minimum 6m hedgerow buffer outlined in the ES would be insufficient to prevent disturbance where roosts are confirmed or have the potential to be present.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-57 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-15	10.13	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities note that while the presence of hazel dormouse is unlikely, in the absence of survey it is not possible to fully rule out its presence. The small scale of potential hedgerow impacts is acknowledged; however further detail should be provided on how any	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-58 in Table 1.

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			residual risks of impacts on hazel dormouse will be avoided (e.g. through the application of a precautionary method of works incorporating sensitive timing and working methods).	
HDC-RR-16	10.14	Ecology and Nature Conservation	A single combined survey visit for water vole and otter has been undertaken for each proposed watercourse crossing point during June 2025. This survey appears to have consisted of spot checks of crossing point location rather a more comprehensive survey of suitable habitat within/adjoining the Site. The Host Authorities are concerned that for water vole in particular the presence of dense vegetation may have obscured field signs leading to under recording, and due to the restricted survey undertaken areas identified for 'enhancement' have not been subject to baseline surveys. The Host Authorities are content that the proposed pre-construction checks detailed in Section 5 of the oLEMP [APP-159] alongside the commitment to positive management of retained ditches provided in paragraphs 6.4.8 to 6.4.13 of the oLEMP are likely sufficient to demonstrate potential impacts can be mitigated if they are found to be present. However, further clarification is required on enhancement proposals including proposals for baseline surveys of areas identified for enhancement to check their existing water vole status.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-59 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-17	10.15	Ecology and Nature Conservation	It is noted that 2025 surveys have confirmed the presence of great crested newt within the Site at waterbody references P14 and P25. The great crested newt survey report [APP-095] identifies P46 as adjacent to the Site but does not include details of this waterbody. Confirmation is required what (if any)	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-60 in Table 1.

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			survey has been undertaken at P46. The ES acknowledges that a Natural England licence will be required to cover the proposed works, however currently no letter of impediment has been obtained from Natural England.	
HDC-RR-18	10.16	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities welcome the proposed biodiversity mitigation / compensation set out in the ecology chapter [APP-043], however, some have not been adequately incorporated into other submission documents (e.g. environmental masterplan, engineering drawing and management plans) and therefore, delivery cannot be assumed. For example, references to incorporation of sensitive lighting design need to be better reflected in the content of the oLEMP and CEMP to ensure adverse effects on adjoining habitats such as Huntingdon Wood CWS and ancient woodland are avoided.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-61 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-19	10.17	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The proposed woodland planting and that plants of local provenance are to be utilized is welcomed. The proposed woodland planting stock list should be further discussed with local authorities. Species should be chosen that are characteristic of the local landscape and resilient to climate change. Opportunities should be taken to incorporate locally important species, include native black poplar and Huntingdonshire elm (resilient to Dutch elm disease).	The Applicant welcomes the Council's support for the principle of woodland planting and the use of locally sourced planting stock. The oLEMP [APP-159] provides the framework for the detailed planting specification to be finalised post-consent, including woodland, hedgerow and grassland seed mixes. The Council's request to incorporate locally important species is noted. The indicative planting specifications in the oLEMP [AS-008] already include black poplar and elm (and specifies that locally suitable cultivars with high resistance to Dutch elm disease are to be used). The oLEMP states that woodland and hedgerow species mixes will be tailored to the prevalent

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				conditions of the proposed location, including the use of more riparian mixtures alongside watercourses and the selection of shallow rooting species in proximity to utility easements. As secured by Requirement 4 the draft DCO [AS-008], no phase of the authorised development may commence until a detailed LEMP, in substantial accordance with the oLEMP, has been submitted to and approved by the relevant local planning authority. This approval mechanism provides the formal route through which the final woodland, hedgerow and associated planting schedules and seed mixes will be agreed with the relevant local planning authority.
HDC-RR-20	10.18	Ecology and Nature Conservation	It is the Host Authorities' understanding that the powers requested under the DCO will not seek to remove any of the habitats created or established at the Site. However, following decommissioning (i.e. the removal of the physical infrastructure) all habitats would be returned to landowners, and at this point habitats could potentially be removed subject to the relevant legislative and policy requirements at the time being adhered to. The Council seeks agreement from the applicant that areas of species-diverse grassland to be created under the Scheme will be retained and their long-term management secured to ensure the beneficial effects identified in the ES are permanent.	The Applicant can confirm that the Council's understanding of the landowner position is correct, as set out in our response in Table 1 above, reference BBC-RR-32. It is not in the Applicant's power to agree to the areas of species-diverse grassland being retained following the decommissioning of the Scheme.
HDC-RR-21	10.19	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities welcome the inclusion of the expected biodiversity net gain metric outputs as commitment C12 of the Commitments Register [APP-154]. However, are concerned that these commitments are not currently reflected in the oLEMP, and currently the calculation undertaken is high level only. We	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-61 in Table 1.

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			request commitments are clearly stated in the oLEMP to ensure clarity on targets post construction. We also note that the final biodiversity net gain outcomes will be dependent on created habitats being maintained and suitably managed. Given the temporary nature of the development, and that the ongoing management of created habitats after demobilisation are not currently secured, we consider the current BNG calculation outputs (and linked beneficial effects) may therefore overstate the likely final scheme outcome.	
HDC-RR-22	10.20	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities note that the minimum 6m buffer between the fenceline of the solar farm and the surround hedgerows specified in Section 3.4 of the oLEMP is low, in particular for hedgerows containing standard trees. We request that these minimum buffers are extended, and greater consideration is given to varying the overall extent of panels at the margins of the site to provide larger buffer zones that will enhance their value for a range of species.	The Applicant notes that the 6m buffer which is secured by the oLEMP [APP-159] is only a minimum, and that greater buffers could be included at the detailed design stage in relation to tree or woodland habitats. The Applicant has prepared ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 Arboricultural Impact Assessment [APP-056] which confirms that the 6m buffer is suitable to avoid tree and hedgerow loss across the Scheme.
HDC-RR-23	10.21	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities have concerns regarding the method identified for establishment of species diverse grassland in the areas identified within the illustrative Environmental Masterplan [APP-121] and the oLEMP [APP-159]. These areas are largely currently in arable use and therefore likely to have high nutrient levels. Current proposals do not initially incorporate methods to reduce soil fertility (e.g. soil inversion) or promote diversity (e.g. sowing of yellow rattle). If there is a need to rely on frequent early cutting of the sward to reduce nutrient levels, this may be in conflict with the proposed use of the same areas to provide habitat for ground nesting birds.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-65 in Table 1.

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HDC-RR-24	10.22	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The embedded mitigation measures for veteran trees and trees with veteran features outlines in the oCEMP [APP-155] are welcomed. We request that for consistency, reference to these measures is also included within the oLEMP [APP-159].	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-66 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-25	10.23	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The frequency of monitoring set out within Section 8.0 of the OLEMP is welcomed, but we note that the existing monitoring proposals appear largely aimed at assessing progress towards the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) targets. Given that the Site is utilised by a range of protected and/or notable species, including a significant ground nesting bird population, a more holistic monitoring strategy including bird surveys is necessary. This should include the consideration of species and wider ecosystem characteristics. Adherence to the standard approach to monitoring biodiversity promoted in Solar Energy UK guidance is strongly recommended.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-67 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-26	10.25	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The BNG assessment has been undertaken using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and is informed by an illustrative design and outline management proposals. As such, the reported biodiversity gains represent a high-level assessment and are subject to refinement as the Scheme design is progressed. In recognition of this, the Applicant has set specific project commitments that are lower than the headline gains indicated by the illustrative metric outputs. However, the extent to which measures proposed to mitigate significant effects are clearly distinguished from those intended to deliver BNG remains a matter for further examination.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-69 in Table 1.

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HDC-RR-27	10.26	Ecology and Nature Conservation	All BNG matters raised by the Planning Inspectorate in its Scoping Opinion are considered to have been addressed in the ES with the exception of the following with the Host Authorities comments on this provided in this representation: • Clear differentiation between measures proposed to mitigate significant effects and measures proposed to support BNG.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-71.
HDC-RR-28	10.27	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Applicant is not currently subject to a mandatory requirement to deliver 10% BNG, as statutory BNG does not yet apply to Development Consent Order schemes. However, it is acknowledged that mandatory BNG for NSIPs is anticipated from May 2026 and that national policy and industry practice are increasingly moving towards the delivery of measurable biodiversity enhancements in advance of statutory requirements.	The Applicant acknowledges the Scheme is not subject to mandatory BNG.
HDC-RR-29	10.28	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Applicant does note Bedford Borough Council's requirement within its Local Plan 2030 to achieve a net increase in biodiversity and the Draft 2040 Local Plan, Policy DM 7 to secure a minimum of 10% BNG.	The Applicant notes adopted and emerging local policy in relation to BNG.
HDC-RR-30	10.29	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Applicant has committed to delivering 70% net gain in area-based habitat units, 30% net gain in hedgerow units, and 5% net gain in watercourse units, as set out within the submitted BNG Report. These commitments provide transparency regarding the level of biodiversity enhancement proposed; however, it is noted that the figures are derived from high-level calculations based on outline design assumptions and do not, at this stage, represent secured or fully defined outcomes. It is noted that the current commitment made in BNG Report [APP-168] does not detail that	The Applicant acknowledges that the assessment has been based on an illustrative design, albeit an illustrative design that is secured by Appendix A Illustrative Landscape Proposals of the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159] (which the Scheme must be developed in substantial accordance with). Out of caution and to avoid any future compliance issue, the Applicant has elected to claim and commit to a slightly lower BNG (as set out in Section 7.8 of the

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			this commitment will be secured onsite. The presumption based on the BNG report is that it will be possible to achieve this level of commitment onsite, however confirmation should be sought.	Planning Statement [APP-031]) to allow future flexibility if required at the design stage. The Applicant will endeavour at the detailed design stage to meet or even exceed the higher BNG totals as assessed in the BNG Report [APP-168], particularly with regard to watercourse units. The Applicant has updated the oLEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to commit to providing the biodiversity net gain which is set out in paragraph 7.8.12 of the Planning Statement [APP-031].
HDC-RR-31	10.30	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities note that expectations in relation to BNG vary across the administrative areas affected by the Scheme. In particular, Cambridgeshire County Council has articulated aspirations for higher levels of BNG through strategic policy and consultation responses, reflecting wider regional ambitions for nature recovery, while Bedford Borough Council and Huntingdonshire District Council similarly seek measurable net gains for biodiversity through local plan policy. The Examination will provide the appropriate forum to consider how the Applicant's proposed BNG commitments align with these differing local expectations and emerging national guidance.	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant has committed to a substantially higher BNG in area-based habitats and hedgerow habitats than is expected by local policy. In relation to watercourse units the committed BNG is less than 10% for the reasons set out at paragraph 7.8.8 of the Planning Statement [APP-031].
HDC-RR-32	10.31	Ecology and Nature Conservation	With regard to methodology, the BNG Report describes the use of UK Habitat Classification and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric condition criteria to inform baseline assessments. While this approach is appropriate in principle, further clarity would be beneficial on how baseline condition judgements have been applied consistently across extensive habitat areas, particularly where professional judgement has	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-74 in Table 1.

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
			been relied upon. At this stage, no detailed habitat condition information has been provided.	
HDC-RR-33	10.32	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities support the Applicant's robust and transparent application of the biodiversity trading rules, which is considered appropriate at this stage.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-75 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-34	10.33	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Scheme comprises a large-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic development, and further clarification would be beneficial on how under-panel habitats are classified, managed and condition-scored within the BNG assessment over the operational lifetime of the Scheme, and the extent to which these areas contribute to the reported biodiversity gains.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-76 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-35	10.34	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The Host Authorities note that delivery of the proposed BNG outcomes is reliant on outline management measures, with limited detail currently provided on how habitats will be secured, managed and monitored over the lifetime of the Scheme. While it is indicated that further detail will be secured through a Requirement attached to the draft DCO, additional clarity will be required through the Examination process to ensure that the proposed BNG commitments are capable of being delivered and maintained in practice.	Requirement 4 of the draft DCO [AS-008] prevents any phase of the authorised development from commencing until a landscape and ecological management plan (LEMP) for that phase, in <u>substantial accordance with</u> the submitted oLEMP [APP-159], has been submitted to and approved by the relevant local planning authority. This provides the mechanism by which the necessary detailed prescriptions are secured and then enforceable for the operational lifetime of the Scheme. Section 8 of the oLEMP [APP-159] sets out how habitats will be monitored, with Section 8.2 referring specifically to BNG. Paragraph 8.2.4 of the oLEMP [APP-159] states that <i>"Details regarding the monitoring criteria and specific methods to be used for each habitat type will be outlined in a Biodiversity Net Gain Habitat Monitoring</i>

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
				<i>and Management Plan, to be prepared as part of the final LEMP."</i>
HDC-RR-36	10.35	Ecology and Nature Conservation	In addition, limited detail is provided regarding how habitats of biodiversity value established during the operational phase would be treated at decommissioning. Given the proposed operational lifetime of up to 40 years, further clarification will be required to ensure that biodiversity gains are not inadvertently lost at that stage.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-78 in Table 1
HDC-RR-37	11.2	Flood Risk, Drainage and Surface Water	It is noted that small areas of the site within the Order Limits are located within Flood Zones 2 and 3, however all critical infrastructure (excluding watercourse crossings) have been sequentially located in areas at the lowest possible risk of fluvial flooding (Flood Zone 1). Where solar arrays are to be located within areas at risk of flooding, it is proposed to install these such that the underside of the panels would be above the maximum predicted flood levels, with only supporting legs of the mounting tables within the flood extent. Comments on the acceptability of this approach, and the proposed watercourse crossings are deferred to the Environment Agency.	The Applicant notes this comment. The EA has provided comment on these matters, and the Applicant has responded with reference to EA014 and EA015 in Table 6 of this document.
HDC-RR-38	12.2	Amenity	Following a detailed review, the methodology and baseline data are considered acceptable, and proposed limits set out are agreed. The following management plans have been reviewed and should be secured as requirements of the DCO: Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [APP-155]	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes agreement with HDC on noise and vibration matters. A final CEMP in substantial accordance with the oCEMP [APP-155] is secured by Requirement 5 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
			- Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan [APP-157] - Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan [APP-158]	A final OEMP in substantial accordance with the oOEMP [APP-157] is secured by Requirement 9 of the draft DCO [AS-008]. A final DEMP in substantial accordance with the oDEMP [APP-158] is secured by Requirement 18 of the draft DCO [AS-008].
HDC-RR-39	12.3	Amenity	The assessment is considered acceptable and agreed. Dust would be controlled through the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [APP-155] and the associated Dust Management Plan. In a worst-case scenario, construction dust could pose a medium risk of adverse impacts if unmitigated; however, the proposed mitigation measures would reduce this risk to negligible. Regarding air pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide, it is agreed that potential effects on human health from construction vehicle emissions are not significant. The Considerate Contractor Scheme would be implemented, and it is agreed that its overall significance in relation to air quality effects is not significant.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes agreement with HDC on the assessment of air quality impacts and effects.
HDC-RR-40	12.4	Amenity	The assessment is considered acceptable and agreed in respect of waste. The outline Waste Management Plan [APP-164] has been reviewed and should be secured as requirement of the DCO. Further comments on waste are deferred to CCC as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes agreement with HDC on the assessment of waste. A final Waste Management Plan in substantial accordance with the oWMP [APP-164] is secured by Requirement 6 of the draft DCO [AS-008].
HDC-RR-41	13.2	Ground Conditions	It is agreed that intrusive ground investigations would only be required where ground disturbance is proposed. Particular attention should be given to the locations of former buildings, infilled ponds and the former oil pipeline. The CEMP should set out the	The Applicant notes this comment. The mitigation measures for ground conditions are set out in Table 5.8 of the oCEMP [APP-155].

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
			necessary procedures. The outline Soil Management Plan [APP-161] has been reviewed and should be secured as a requirement of the DCO.	A final Soil Management Plan in substantial accordance with the oSMP [APP-161] is secured by Requirement 7 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .
HDC-RR-42	14.6	Land and Soils	Responses to Natural England's scoping opinion had outlined how continuation of data collection would be conducted. A subsequent change to the approach adopts a less intensive method than was originally proposed, which for the most part equated to one survey point per 2 ha. However, where impacts were anticipated to be greater (BESS, on-site sub-station and compounds and cable corridors) the standard methodology of 1 sample per hectare was adopted. It is indicated that the revised methodology followed further discussion with Natural England.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-139 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-43	14.7	Land and Soils	It is not apparent whether the discussions with Natural England extended to the absence of data for an area of land (ungraded) amounting to 5.4 % of the site. Access to this land was not available. The response to the absence of data, for the purpose of the EIA, is to assume a worst-case outcome by assuming the land to be Grade 2. Whilst this enables assessment of project worst-case project effects, the absence of data hinders development of a detailed soil management plan (proposed post consent and to be substantially in accordance with the outline soil management plan). The missing data should also be available for restoration of land, upon decommissioning, to its original condition.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-139 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-44	14.8	Land and Soils	Discussion recognising that mineral resources would not be sterilised by the scheme is adequately developed and that conclusion is supported.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes agreement with HDC on this matter.

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
HDC-RR-45	14.9	Land and Soils	A permanent change of land use in the form of landscaping and habitats, referenced as substantially in accordance with the illustrative outline landscape and ecological management plan, includes approximately 19 ha of native species woodland and 17.4 km of native hedgerows. Table 13.12 acknowledges that the creation of the habitats, which should be considered permanent in respect of areas of woody vegetation, will have adverse impacts from the loss of biomass production (from agricultural land) but potential benefits to soil resources. These permanent effects are not addressed in the presentation of residual effects, including an absence from the summary Table 13.5. The conclusion that the scheme would result in a permanent adverse impact to approximately 5.86 ha does not incorporate the effects of habitat creation.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-140 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-46	14.10	Land and Soils	Assessment of residual effects is summarised by receptor, namely the agricultural land classification (ALC) grade and soil type and mineral reserves. This does not differentiate between the effects of various design elements that resulted in different sampling intensities of land and soil. In this survey approach was recognition that the potential effects of some parts of the scheme were elevated relative to others. It was anticipated that this differentiation would be reflected in section 13.10 presenting residual effects. Further breakdown of how the receptor is impacted by various components of the scheme would be expected, particularly to justify the stated low magnitude of impact. The absence of detail has the potential to obscure the extent of effects to Grade 2 and ungraded	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-141 in Table 1.

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
			(potential Grade 2) land. Similarly, the low magnitude effect to Subgrade 3a land yields a minor (not significant) adverse effect but further detail on the extent of land use change was anticipated to justify this conclusion. Magnitude has not incorporated land use change for the creation of permanent woody habitat.	
HDC-RR-47	14.11	Land and Soils	The beneficial effects to soil resources during the operational phase, as the land would not be cultivated and permanent vegetation cover maintained, are acknowledged. The application of magnitude and sensitivity criteria to the assessment to present a significant beneficial effect is likely to be overstated, with the beneficial effect felt by the Host Authorities to be minor and not significant.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-142 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-48	14.12	Land and Soils	Notwithstanding concerns over missing data and more detailed analysis of how scheme components result in adverse effects, the overall conclusions broadly meet professional judgement regarding the significance of residual effects. However, the significant benefit to the soil resource from resting the land from arable agriculture is considered overstated.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-143 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-49	14.13	Land and Soils	The use of embedded mitigation in preparation of a soil management plan (including records of soil movements and storage) is recognised. Additional missing information on soils and ALC grade is required for completion of a pre-construction detailed soil management plan. The statement that further mitigation, beyond the good practice measures of the soil management plan, is not practicable is acknowledged.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-144 in Table 1.

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
HDC-RR-50	15.4	Socio Economics	Socio-economics, Land-use and Tourism matters are considered within Chapter 14 of the ES [APP-050]. The development has the potential to impact the economy, and land-use and tourism receptors through; land-take arising from construction activities and for operation of the project; worker requirements during all phases; changes in access to facilities during construction and decommissioning, and; when any of these impacts act in-combination with those from other developments. Effects will principally arise from employment and related impacts during construction and decommissioning and on journeys both for recreation and accessing services and facilities.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-145 in Table 1.
HDC-RR-51	15.5	Socio Economics	All Socio-economics, Land-use and Tourism matters raised by the Planning Inspectorate in its Scoping Opinion are considered to have been addressed in the ES with the exception of the following with the Host Authorities comments on this provided in this representation: a) ID 3.7.3 Effects on local services	The Applicant notes this comment and has addressed this point in our response to HDC-RR-55 below.
HDC-RR-52	15.6	Socio Economics	The development has been assessed by the Applicant as resulting in a significant moderate beneficial effect on the economy at the local level and a not significant minor beneficial effect at a regional level during construction and decommissioning. The Applicant assesses economic impacts in relation to 30-minute and 90-minute drive times from the Site as explained at Paragraph 14.4.6. However, which constitutes a local and a regional level of impact for the purpose of the assessment is not explained. Estimated employment creation is presented for a 90 minute drive	The assessment of employment effects in ES Vol 1 Chapter 14 [APP-050] is based on functional economic areas, consistent with national infrastructure assessment principles and relevant guidance. For this reason, “local” is defined as the area within a 90-minute drive-time Travel-to-Work Area (TTWA) - a realistic reflection of the labour catchment for a project of this nature and scale. “Regional” refers to the East of England standard region, and “national” to the UK. As noted in paragraph 14.4.6 [APP-050] , a 30-minute drive-time area was also examined to consider

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
			time only, with no further breakdown provided to confirm the scale of employment creation within a 30 minutes' drive time, which would, from the Host Authorities perspective, constitute local impact. For a significant moderate beneficial local economic effect to be realised as concluded in Chapter 14 of the ES, appropriate provision must be made in the DCO to deliver employment and skills benefits/opportunities locally.	whether there were meaningful socio-demographic or economic differences that would require separate analysis. However, both zones were found to consist of small and medium-sized settlements in a broadly rural context, with no distinct socio-economic divergence warranting a different treatment with the 30-minute zone included for illustrative purposes. While spatially fixed receptors including land and local business and community assets have been assessed at the district level, employment effects are driven by a mobile workforce and a dispersed supply chain. Disaggregating employment impacts by administrative boundary would risk introducing artificial precision not supported by evidence. The adopted approach is proportionate, policy-aligned, and appropriate for the national significance of the Scheme. The Applicant has prepared an outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan (oSSCEP) [APP-163] which sets the framework for delivering employment and skills benefits locally.
HDC-RR-53	15.7	Socio Economics	An outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan (oSSCEP) [APP-163] sets out the Applicant's strategy to maximise local employment, skills development and supply chain opportunities. This lacks specific detail with regards to existing local skills gaps and current levels of provision, and on specific initiatives which are tailored to addressing local employment issues and need. Detail of these should be provided in the document along with informed measures and outputs for delivering appropriate local employment and skills benefits/opportunities. A route map for developing the oSSCEP further should also be provided, including	The Applicant notes that the outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan (oSSCEP) [APP-163] has been submitted at outline stage to establish the overarching framework and commitments for maximising local employment, skills development and supply chain opportunities. ES Vol 1 Chapter 14 [APP-050] provides details relating to the local economy, labour market and employment baseline conditions, which have informed the oSSCEP.

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
			setting out when stakeholder engagement is needed and how it will take place.	Requirement 19 of the draft DCO [AS-008] secures the submission of a Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan (SSCEP), following consultation with the relevant local planning authorities, prior to commencement of construction. The detailed SSCEP will include further analysis of local skills gaps and provision, identification of tailored initiatives, measurable outputs, and a clear programme for stakeholder engagement, thereby providing the route map sought by the Council.
HDC-RR-54	15.8	Socio Economics	The development has been identified as resulting in negligible effects on tourism during all phases. This includes in respect of impacts on users of Public Rights of Way. Mitigation measures in the outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [APP-160] are referred to which would limit impacts. Paragraph 14.4.19 states that effects on PRow are considered in relation to recreational and tourism use. However, no assessment of impacts on journey length and duration by residents for recreation has been presented, only impacts on tourism-related PRow use. The Host Authorities consider that an assessment of impacts on all users of PRow should be provided to confirm that no significant effects would arise. HDC reserves the right to make further comment on the potential effect on tourism of the proposed development, subject to additional data gathering.	The Applicant notes that access and connectivity impacts are assessed under ES Vol 1 Chapter 9 Traffic and Transport [APP-045] , and that the ES does not rely solely on a tourism-related assessment of PRow users.
HDC-RR-55	15.9	Socio Economics	Impacts on local services have been addressed in respect of effects on the visitor accommodation sector from potential use of these facilities by construction workers. Effects on other services have not been identified in the ES. The Host Authorities consider	Paragraph 14.6.32 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 14 [APP-050] identifies that there are no relevant primary care facilities within the proximity of the Order limits to be considered.

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
			there to be potential for effects in terms of severance of access to facilities, subject to the completion and findings of junction counts and assessments requested in Section 9 of this representation. The Host Authorities consider there to be the potential for impacts on healthcare services, and request that the Applicant provides information if no impacts are expected justifying why this will be the case, with reference to any mitigation measures as appropriate. This is particularly important in light of the absence of a Health chapter in the ES or Health Impact Assessment, which the Host Authorities would also like to have seen in the Application to demonstrate that their residents health and wellbeing would not be adversely impacted by the Scheme during all phases of development.	ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 [APP-052] includes at Section 16.2 an assessment of the potential impacts of the Scheme on human health. The Applicant notes that the assessment in ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 [APP-052] has been reviewed by Cambridgeshire County Council, with their comments and the Applicant's responses set out with reference to CCC-RR-71 to CCC-RR-85 in Table 3 of this document.
HDC-RR-56	15.10	Socio Economics	There are some apparent errors and/or inconsistencies in application of the assessment methodology by the Applicant for some aspects. These will be explained in more detail in the Local Impact Report.	The Applicant notes this comment.
HDC-RR-57	16.6 (i)	Climate Change	The assessment should explicitly recognise that the receptor for the GHG assessment is the global climate. This is implied but not stated.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to Point a) in BBC-RR-154.
HDC-RR-58	16.6 (ii)	Climate Change	The replacement frequency of components such as battery modules has the potential to affect the embodied emissions during the operational phase of the Proposed Development, and the impact of shorter life expectancies than those assumed should be considered.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to Point b) in BBC-RR-154.

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
HDC-RR-59	16.6 (iii)	Climate Change	The consumption of imported grid electricity during the operational phase has not been considered; the emissions impact is likely to be negligible in the overall context of the Scheme's whole life GHG impact, but it should be included for completeness.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to Point c) in BBC-RR-154.
HDC-RR-60	16.6 (iv)	Climate Change	The possibility of peat being discovered during the construction phase is acknowledged, but there is insufficient detail on the approach that the Applicant would take in this eventuality. The presence of peat within the site has the potential to substantially increase the GHG impact from land use change, so it is important that there is more clarity around any future peat management methodology.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to Point d) in BBC-RR-154.
HDC-RR-61	16.6 (v)	Climate Change	The use of the BESS in a grid balancing capacity has the potential to make further GHG impacts through the displacement of fast response, gas fired peaking plant. Any savings so achieved would generally fall outside the scope of the core GHG assessment, but a discussion of the potential benefits would be useful. The December 2025 update to the National Policy Statement for nuclear energy generation (EN-7) should be taken into account in this respect.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to Point e) in BBC-RR-154.
HDC-RR-62	16.6 (vi)	Climate Change	The use of existing, unabated CCGT generating capacity as a counterfactual scenario is noted and broadly accepted, but PINS has been unwilling to accept the counterfactual use of CCGTs in previous planning decisions and the Beneficial evaluation of significance is contingent on this approach. The impact on the evaluation of significance in the event of PINS not agreeing with this approach should be more fully considered.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to Point f) in BBC-RR-154.

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
HDC-RR-63	16.6 (vii)	Climate Change	The Beneficial evaluation of significance means that embedded GHG mitigation measures have not been considered necessary; the Host Authorities would note that suitable GHG mitigation measures across all phases of the Scheme should always be considered and secured by the DCO if found practicable.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to Point g) in BBC-RR-154.
HDC-RR-64	16.8	Climate Change	In reference to the CCRA, an inconsistent use of historic climate data is apparent. The current baseline uses data for Bedford for the period 1991-2020 while the future baseline uses data for the same location from 1981-2010. This inconsistency is unlikely to compromise the overall outcome of the CCRA, but it should be addressed.	The Applicant has previously addressed this comment with reference to BBC-RR-155.
HDC-RR-65	17.2	Cumulative Effects	The long and short list of 'Other Developments' is supported, however the status of High Wood Solar (HDC ref. 22/01813/FUL; BBC ref. 22/01998/MAF) should be updated on the Short List [APP-068] to reflect that a decision has been issued.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes agreement from HDC on the scope of 'other developments' assessed in ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 Cumulative and In-Combination Effects [APP-053] . The Applicant notes that a decision on the High Wood Solar development has been issued, however this would not affect the assessment or conclusions made in ES Chapter 17 [APP-053] .
HDC-RR-66	17.3	Cumulative Effects	Cumulative and in-combination effects are a key consideration given that there are a number of existing and approved solar developments and a BESS scheme in the surrounding area (falling within both HDC's and BBC's administrative boundaries). This Scheme, High Wood Solar Farm, and the existing Staughton Airfield Solar Farm would increase the concentration of solar development in this part of the	As noted in HDCs comment, the Applicant has assessed the cumulative impact of the various operational, consented and emerging solar developments on the Southern Wolds LCA in ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 Cumulative and In-Combination Effects [APP-053] .

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
			Southern Wolds LCA, which is acknowledged in the Applicant's ES.	
HDC-RR-67	17.4	Cumulative Effects	High Wood Solar Farm (HDC ref. 22/01813/FUL; BBC ref. 22/01998/MAF) is immediately adjacent to Site D (southern boundary of Site D abuts High Wood's northern boundary), and Site C lies ~0.7 km north-west of High Wood at its nearest point. High Wood is the primary cumulative scheme considered across all topic areas in the ES due to its proximity and potential overlap for all phases (construction, operational and decommissioning) which is supported.	The Applicant notes this comment.
HDC-RR-68	18.1	Draft DCO	HDC will provide detailed comments on the draft DCO [APP-016] in due course. The key issues for focus will include the scope of the authorised development, the schedule and drafting of requirements. HDC expect their views on the drafting and approvals process for DCO requirements to be given significant weight in their role of ensuring that the impacts upon our local environment and communities are minimised, and as an approving and enforcement authority. HDC will also provide further detailed comments on the submitted Outline Management Plans [APP-155 to APP-167] where appropriate.	The Applicant notes this comment.
HDC-RR-69	18.2	Draft DCO	It is noted that the Applicant is committing to delivering 70% net gain in area-based habitat units, 30% net gain in hedgerow units and 5% in watercourse units, a proportion of which will fall within HDC's administrative boundary. The Council has recently introduced fee charging for BNG monitoring on planning applications. It will therefore seek to ensure that an appropriate fee	The Applicant notes this comment but as the Scheme is not subject to mandatory BNG, does not consider that a Section 106 agreement is appropriate. The Applicant will continue to engage with the host authorities regarding a post-consent planning performance agreement or other funding mechanism to support the host authorities in engaging with the

Our Ref.	HDC Ref.	Theme	HDC Comments	Applicant Response
			is set for monitoring BNG, ecology and landscape mitigation works in respect of the project should the responsibility for this duty fall upon HDC. We expect that as this will involve a financial element a Section 106 Agreement will be required.	'steering group' set out at paragraph 8.1.4 of the oLEMP [APP-159] .
HDC-RR-70	18.3	Draft DCO	Financial provisions to ensure the funding and delivery of the strengthened and supplemented landscape character post-operation as per Design Principle 7 and as shown on the landscape Illustrative Environmental Masterplan will be required within the Section 106 agreement, potentially to include a bond or other insurance-backed funding guarantee.	The Applicant has set out a response in relation to the retention of the proposed planting at decommissioning with reference to BBC-RR-32 in Table 1. Following decommissioning, the responsibility for any planting will be returned to the landowners. The Applicant does not consider a Section 106 agreement, bond, or other insurance-backed funding guarantee to be necessary or appropriate for the post-decommissioning phase once the land is returned to landowners.
HDC-RR-71	19.1, 19.2	Community Benefits	Although Community Benefits are not a material planning consideration, HDC and other host authorities intend to work with affected parishes on a suitable mechanism for collecting and implementing a community benefit fund as a means by which to secure benefits if the project receives consent. The amount currently being offered by the applicant (£400 per MW per year) is noted. Negotiations on a community benefit are expected to continue alongside the planning process and will be supplemental to any section 106 agreement required to mitigate the adverse impacts of development.	The Applicant is committed to providing a Community Benefit Fund. The Applicant will continue to engage with the host authorities about the most appropriate mechanism to secure this.

2.2.1 Response to Cambridgeshire County Council

Table 3: Response to Cambridgeshire County Council Relevant Representation (RR-150)

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
CCC-RR-01	3.1	Landscape and Visual	The Proposed Development will have a significant adverse impact on the landscape and visually amenity. Whilst Huntingdonshire District Council will be commenting on this in detail, Cambridgeshire County Council's comments under Public Rights of Way (PROW) (see paragraph 7.38 of this Relevant Representation) address the impact to non-motorised users using the local PROW network.	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant also notes that CCC defer matters of landscape and visual impact to Huntingdonshire District Council's detailed review, whilst impacts on non-motorised users of the local PROW network are addressed by the Applicant with reference to response CCC-RR-58 in this document.
CCC-RR-02	4.2	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	The temporary access road proposed to cross the scheduled monument in Site C is a concern. The council notes that it will consist of track matting laid on top of 100mm type 1 aggregate within a geogrid overlying textile, with drainage runs within the sub-base; Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy Appendix B, [APP-042], para 6.8.49. The closest trench (T4) excavated (in Phase 0) within the Roman town showed that there was circa 250mm of overburden protecting the archaeology. 100mm of aggregate is quite shallow, and there will be a considerable number of Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) movements (as indicated in [APP-042] para 2.5.20) along this road during construction, and many more thousands of other staff movements, presumably by vehicle. The council requests further details and assurance from the applicant to demonstrate that nationally significant archaeological remains at this kind of depth will be preserved via this strategy, given the level of vehicular movement proposed. The council	The Applicant acknowledges the council's concern regarding the temporary access track proposed to cross the scheduled monument in Site C. The Applicant has developed the outline method statement set out at paragraphs 7.3.32 to 7.3.41 of the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (oAMS) [APP-166] in a conservative manner based on engineering advice, approaches taken by other projects, and best practice guidance such as the 'Mitigation of Construction Impact on Archaeological Remains' (English Heritage, 2004). The Applicant consulted on the temporary access track method statement set out in the oAMS with Historic England in early August 2025. The Applicant understands from discussions with Historic England that their internal Scientific Adviser was consulted who raised no significant concerns regarding the proposed methodology, but noted that at the post-consent detailed design stage: <i>"We recommend that selection</i>

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
			needs information from the applicant in terms of the engineering rationale for this proposed method, and whether it has been used successfully on other developments, as well as whether the aggregate is proposed to be rolled/compressed. Until further assurance can be provided, the council will remain concerned about a proposed temporary access road over the scheduled monument in site C.	<i>of the exact alignment of the route is additionally supported by the archaeological analysis to demonstrate that the route does not overlie any particularly vulnerable archaeological deposits (which have been identified so far). Final location of the temporary track will have to be agreed with Historic England."</i> To ensure that Historic England and the CCC archaeologist have 'sign-off' over the final location and design of the temporary access track, the draft DCO [AS-008] includes Requirement 15(4) that prevents commencement of any phase (and site preparation works for that phase) until an archaeological mitigation strategy is approved in consultation with Historic England and the county archaeologist. This provides the mechanism through which the Applicant can supply the further engineering detail requested by the council and have it formally approved. In response to CCC's comment that the access track will utilise 100mm of aggregate, the Applicant notes that the oAMS [APP-166] previously stated that the depth would be up to 150mm, but has updated the oAMS [as updated alongside this submission] to provide further flexibility around this point such that the depth could be greater than 150mm, if recommended in the final geotechnical design (as covered below) and as approved pursuant to Requirement 15(4). Paragraph 7.3.35 of the oAMS [APP-166] provides that the temporary access track would comprise a 6m wide permeable geotextile mat, a shallow geogrid containing Type 1 aggregate to form a temporary sub-base, and interlocking heavy duty plastic matting (for

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
				example IsoTrack H) forming a continuous 5m wide road-like running surface designed to spread wheel loads and minimise the potential for compaction of the underlying soils. The purpose of the heavy-duty matting lying on top of the Type 1 aggregate is to distribute the load from any vehicles evenly through the sub-base, avoiding rutting or concentrated compaction through the aggregate below. The Applicant acknowledges CCC's query in relation to whether the aggregate is to be rolled/compressed, and has updated the oAMS [as updated alongside this submission] to confirm that the aggregate will be levelled and lightly compacted or 'seated' only to the extent required to provide a stable bedding for the matting system and to ensure the geogrid functions as intended, rather than being compacted using heavy or vibratory rollers. The Applicant notes that the oAMS also provides further controls to manage the risk of vehicle movements, including at paragraph 7.3.36 [APP-166] provision of drainage measures within the temporary sub-base to avoid increased run-off, waterlogging and erosion; at paragraph 7.3.37 [APP-166] Heras fencing and banksmen to prevent straying and to avoid turning and passing within the scheduled area; and, at paragraph 7.3.38 [APP-166] a speed limit and weekly inspections with provision to add additional protective measures should any rutting or instability be observed. With regard the depth of archaeology and the overburden above the potential archaeological horizon, the Applicant notes that the precise alignment of the

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				temporary access road will be chosen following further archaeological investigation to minimise impact on any particularly vulnerable archaeological deposits. If the depth of overburden is as low as 250mm (noting it is unlikely to be less given the history of ploughing across the land) then the total depth of overburden comprising existing soil and then the geo-grid laid aggregates would be approximately 400mm, with the matting system on top. ES Vol 2 Appendix 13-1 Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources [APP-115] includes soil samples at observation points 108, 109 and 110 in the area where the temporary access track will be laid. The soil data supports a ground model of cohesive, low permeability clay soils (including a clay topsoil horizon of approximately 0.28–0.37m thickness) that are potentially moisture sensitive, with wetness limitation present but not at the most severe classes. This suggests that some compression of the near-surface clay topsoil is plausible, but on reasonable geotechnical assumptions it is likely to be in the order of a few millimetres, but could be up to 20mm if the clay soils are particularly soft. In either case, the compression is in the top 50mm of the soil overburden and not extending down to 250mm below ground. Restoration of these soils post-construction is set out at paragraph 7.3.9 of the oAMS [APP-166]. Similar temporary access solutions using trackway mats and load-spreading systems have been applied in the UK within scheduled monument contexts and have been supported at the detailed design stage by geotechnical

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				assessment to demonstrate minimal compression effects. With these measures, and with the final detailed method statement to be confirmed through consultation with Historic England and CHET as set out at Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008], the Applicant considers that the proposed temporary access track can be delivered in a manner that preserves the nationally significant archaeological remains of the Scheduled Monument in situ.
CCC-RR-03	4.3	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	The Council notes that the cable route, which will be directionally drilled under the scheduled monument in Site C, will be at a depth of 10m. Can the applicant confirm that the highest point of below ground disturbance will be 10m Below Ground Level?	The Applicant has updated paragraph 7.3.26 of the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (oAMS) [as updated alongside this submission] to confirm that the HDD bore will be drilled at no less than 10m below ground level. A final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
CCC-RR-04	4.4	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	Within Sites C and D, the applicant has provided geophysical survey and trial trenching reports (APP-042 appendix 6-5, 6-8 and 6-9). The trial trenching report for Site C is excellent and provides considerable detail. The Site D report is interim in nature, but lacking in detail even for an interim report, with no specialist input to date the finds from the site. This makes the assessment of effects within Table 6.14 in the ES	The Applicant notes and welcomes the councils comment that the Site C report is excellent and provides considerable detail. The Applicant can confirm that the Final Report for Site D will be provided by end of April 2026, prior to the end of the examination period. This will include all

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			relatively poorly informed. The council requests that, as a minimum, the pottery report is made available to view before the end of the Examination stage.	specialist assessments and provide the same level of detail as previously provided for Site C.
CCC-RR-05	4.5	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	Mitigation of the effects of the scheme on identified archaeological remains has been proposed. This comprises 12 Areas of Archaeological Constraint (AACs) within Sites C and D. The council acknowledges that the size/scale of the AACs proposed in Areas C and D is broadly appropriate. The applicant proposes mainly to preserve remains in situ via the use of prefabricated concrete blocks set on the topsoil, with cabling entirely above ground (APP-038 para 2.4.18; Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan Table 5.2). As per the council's comments on the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), this method is not, in our view, suitable on some areas of particularly complex archaeological remains, due to potential for compression damage. The council is satisfied, however, the majority of AACs proposed for a 'no dig' solution contain archaeological remains that will survive minor compression and that are only of a moderate significance, where the approach should be appropriate.	The Applicant notes and welcomes that the Council acknowledges the 12 Areas of Archaeological Constraint (AACs) within Sites C and D as being '<i>broadly appropriate</i>'. The Applicant acknowledges that in the Council's view the proposed no dig solution (use of prefabricated blocks with cabling entirely above ground) may not be suitable on some areas of particularly complex archaeological remains. The Applicant welcomes the councils comment that they are satisfied that the majority of proposed AACs contain archaeological remains that would only suffer minor compression and are of moderate significance, and that, therefore, the proposed no dig solution should be appropriate. It is understood that the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy [APP-166] will require multiple reviews alongside the Scheme design dependant on the results of further archaeological works. A final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS [APP-166] prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.

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CCC-RR-06	4.6	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	Two cremation burials, most likely related to the Roman town, were uncovered in T803 in the Site C trial trenching. Further remains in T804 and T808 might indicate the presence of at least one burial enclosure in this area. This is covered by AAC-C-4 (preservation in situ) and AAC-C-5 (archaeological excavation – strip, map and sample). The council requests details of where the projected extent of any burials might be in this area, and if uncertain, requests that the applicant addresses how certainty would be improved. It may be that the second phase of trial trenching will need to include trenches in this area. A degree of flexibility should then be built into the mitigation strategy for AAC-C-4 in particular, pending the results of any trenching, as concrete blocks may not be appropriate in an area of Roman burial.	The Applicant notes the Council's comments that the evaluation trenching undertaken to date only represents the first phase of trenching and would highlight that the oAMS [APP-166] notes that further stages of archaeological evaluation work should be completed, with paragraphs 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 [APP-166] stating that: <i>the archaeological brief jointly issued by CHET and BBHET required two phases of archaeological investigation prior to construction. Therefore, following the granting of the DCO, a second phase of trial trenching will be undertaken...the general aim of these investigations... is to more accurately establish the potential for the presence/absence of archaeologically significant remains allowing the mitigation measures set out in Section 6.0 to be applied appropriately.</i> The Applicant is committed to further archaeological research and investigation prior to construction of the Scheme, which in the first instance would involve the second phase of trial trenching which, as outlined in paragraph 5.3.1 of the oAMS [APP-166] 'would be undertaken in line with archaeological brief jointly issued by CHET and BBHET'. This second phase of trenching will be utilised in the area of AAC-C-4 and AAC-C-5 to further clarify the extent of the cremation burials in this area. The Applicant acknowledges the Council's comment that the utilisation of concrete blocks may not be appropriate in areas containing cremation burials. It is understood that the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy [APP-166] will require multiple

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				reviews alongside the Scheme design dependant on the results of further archaeological works. A final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS [APP-166] prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
CCC-RR-07	4.7	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	Archaeological monitoring is proposed as a potential mitigation measure for cable routes in the Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (OAMS) ([APP-166], para 6.2.4). This can only ever follow appropriate intrusive evaluation via trial trenching, and we are likely to find it an inappropriate mitigation method in any but low areas of archaeological potential/complexity.	The Applicant acknowledges the Council's comments that archaeological monitoring may not be an appropriate strategy along the cable routes and that intrusive trial trench evaluation will be required in the first instance within these areas. The Applicant notes that the evaluation trenching undertaken to date only represents the first phase of trenching and would highlight that the oAMS [APP-166] notes that further stages of archaeological evaluation work should be completed, with paragraphs 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 [APP-166] stating that: <i>the archaeological brief jointly issued by CHET and BBHET required two phases of archaeological investigation prior to construction. Therefore, following the granting of the DCO, a second phase of trial trenching will be undertaken...the general aim of these investigations... is to more accurately establish the potential for the presence/absence of archaeologically significant remains allowing the mitigation measures set out in Section 6.0 to be applied appropriately.</i> The Applicant is committed to further archaeological research and investigation prior to construction of the Scheme, which in the first instance would involve the

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				second phase of trial trenching which, as outlined in paragraph 5.3.1 of the oAMS [APP-166] <i>'would be undertaken in line with archaeological brief jointly issued by CHET and BBHET'</i>. This second phase of trenching will be utilised to evaluate the potential of the cable routes prior to the Archaeological Mitigation Strategy being finalised. It is understood that the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy [APP-166] will require multiple reviews alongside the Scheme design dependant on the results of further archaeological works. A final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS [APP-166] prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
CCC-RR-08	4.8	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	The council supports the undertaking that the OAMS covers the lifetime of the scheme, including decommissioning, and that its implementation will be overseen by an Archaeological Clerk of Works.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes agreement with CCC on this matter.
CCC-RR-09	4.9	Cultural Heritage and Archaeology	Historic Environment enhancement measures are proposed in Chapter 6 of the ES and the Outline Heritage Enhancement Strategy, and the council supports the measures proposed. The council welcomes proposals to fund further work into archaeological assets within the Order Limits. The council believes that it is imperative that the results from Phase 0 of the trial trenching (within the Roman	The Applicant notes and welcomes that the Council supports the Historic Environment enhancement measures proposed within ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042] and the outline Heritage Enhancement Strategy [APP-167]. The Applicant is committed to ensuring the results of archaeological investigations across the Scheme (including the results of the first phases of trial

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			town) are published in an appropriate way, to provide public and research benefit.	trenching) are disseminated appropriately to provide public and research benefit.
CCC-RR-10	5.1	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The proposed scheme will retain all woodland and the majority of hedgerows in Cambridgeshire (only 24m hedgerow will be lost). It will also result in additional woodland, hedgerow, species-rich grassland and enhancement of watercourses. The council are pleased to see that the design has evolved to take into account the council's previous consultation feedback, which has helped to minimise impact on biodiversity. However, confirmation that other notable habitats (such as grassland with pyramidal orchids) will be retained and incorporated into the landscape design is yet to be agreed.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes the acknowledgement from CCC that the design has evolved to take on their feedback, which has helped to minimise the impact on biodiversity. In relation to the retention and incorporation of other notable habitats across the Site within the landscape design, the Applicant has incorporated minimum 6m buffers around field margins, and 10m to watercourses, which provide the most likely locations for pyramidal orchids (or other notable habitats) to exist within the Order limits. The outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159] confirms that pre-construction surveys will be undertaken to update the ecological baseline including for arable flora. The Applicant considers that the mechanism for agreeing the approach to protecting and retaining sensitive habitats is through the final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP). Requirement 4 of the draft DCO [AS-008] provides that no phase of the authorised development may commence until a LEMP for that phase, in substantial accordance with the oLEMP [APP-159], has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority. Requirement 4(3) further requires approval of a LEMP covering site preparation works before any site clearance is commenced. The final LEMP approval process is therefore the appropriate route for the Council to agree how any notable retained habitats within the Order

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				limits are reflected within the detailed landscape design and subsequent management. The outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [APP-155] sets out in Table 5.3 that “<i>Sensitive habitats and sites (e.g. designated sites for nature conservation and ancient woodland) will be clearly signed to avoid accidental incursion. Fencing would be erected to demarcate the working area in order to protect sensitive ecological or hydrological features during all elements of the construction stages of the project.</i>”
CCC-RR-11	5.2	Ecology and Nature Conservation	Chapter 7 of the Environment Statement [APP-043] identifies a variety of ecological receptors that will / will not be impacted by the proposed scheme. However, the council are concerned that the assessment is based on incomplete ecological survey work (including habitat / flora, bat, water vole, great crested newt, wintering birds) and it is not always possible to determine ecological baseline for Cambridgeshire. The impact of some aspects of the scheme are difficult to understand due to lack of clarity and contradictions on the drawings / documents or missing information. Some potential impact pathways for ecological receptors have not been identified or sufficiently considered, including those for Huntingdon Woods Ancient Woodland / County Wildlife Site, watercourses and protected species (e.g. lighting and water pollution).	The ecological survey effort completed is considered proportionate to the predicted impacts and in line with best practice guidance. Design buffers have been incorporated to safeguard the majority of habitats with suitability for otter and water vole. Targeted water vole and otter surveys have been completed at sites of potential impact. Further, suitable protection measures are included within the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] including pre-construction surveys of suitable aquatic and terrestrial habitats. All ponds within the Site have been subject to survey during 2025. Access was not available to third party land outside of the Site. Great crested newt were identified in some ponds, and a draft license application has been submitted to Natural England. Additional reasonable avoidance measures have been included within the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to safeguard amphibians.

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				Impact on bats have been minimised through avoidance of suitable habitat features. Outline reasonable avoidance measures have been added to the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to safeguard bats. Wintering bird surveys have been completed covering November 2021 to March 2022 and also November 2023 to March 2024. While October was not surveyed, it is considered that adequate baseline information has been gathered to assess the importance of the Site to wintering birds given the absence of any internationally important designated site for nature conservation with non-breeding bird qualifying features. The oCEMP [APP-155] includes measures to reduce light spill (4.1.26 to 4.1.29 and Table 5.3) and pollution prevention measures. It is not expected that Huntingdonshire Wood would be subject to any hydrological impacts.
CCC-RR-12	5.3	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The council welcomes the proposed biodiversity mitigation / compensation set out in the ecology chapter [APP-043], however, delivery cannot be assumed because some of the mitigation has not been adequately incorporated into other submission documents (e.g. environmental masterplan, engineering drawing and management plans) and insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that protected species licence(s) can be obtained (e.g. letter of no impediment and/or district level licencing for great crested newt).	The Applicant acknowledges that CCC welcome the proposed mitigation measures set out in ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 [APP-043]. The mitigation measures are delivered through the framework of environmental management plans supporting the application, including the oCEMP [APP-155] and oLEMP [APP-159]. The Applicant has submitted a draft licence application to Natural England in February 2026 to gain a 'letter of no impediment'. The Applicant will submit this letter into the examination once received.

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CCC-RR-13	5.4	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The council is particularly concerned that the scheme will have an adverse impact on ground nesting birds of open countryside, including skylarks (population of county importance) and lapwing, by removing nesting habitat. Insufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate the scheme can fully compensate the number of territories that will be lost. Further details are required to demonstrate there will be no net loss. Off-site compensation will be needed to address any shortfalls.	An outline Farmland bird Mitigation Strategy (oFBMS) has been prepared as an appendix to the oLEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to provide further information in relation to proposed mitigation in relation to farmland birds, including ground nesting species.
CCC-RR-14	5.5	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The scheme suggests net gains in biodiversity value (biodiversity net gain - BNG) will be delivered. This is not an accurate assessment given the incomplete baseline surveys (access was not possible for some cable connections as stated in Appendix 7-1 Ecological Baseline Report, [APP-091], Paragraph 2.3.5), lack of habitat condition assessments, exclusion of some post-development habitats from landscape and ecological management plan (such as enhancement to watercourses) and does not adequately reflect the temporary nature of this scheme. Furthermore, the council is concerned that the scheme will only deliver “no net loss” for watercourse BNG units, rather than significant net gains (minimum 10% BNG).	The Applicant disagrees with this comment. The biodiversity net gain calculations have been undertaken following best practice. Where access was not possible assumptions have been made based on aerial imagery and professional judgement. Condition assessments have been undertaken across all surveyed habitats. As specified within the Biodiversity Net Gain Metric spreadsheet Tab C-3 User Comments provided as Appendix A to the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [APP-168] enhancements to the tributary of the river Kym (within Site C) will be delivered through a reduction in riparian encroachment from Major/Major due to agricultural practices on land within 10m of the watercourse to No encroachment/ No encroachment due to proposed landscaping including species diverse grassland and native species woodland. This is in accordance with Table 13 of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide. The oLEMP [APP-159] covers management of habitats throughout the lifetime of the Scheme. Biodiversity net gain requires significant on-site gains

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				to be secured for 30 years, and as such the Scheme goes above and beyond minimum requirements. The minimum time period required for biodiversity net gain has been met and the calculation outputs are considered valid.
CCC-RR-15	5.6	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The council is also unclear how delivery and monitoring of the proposed BNG will be secured, given the BNG targets have not been included within the Draft Development Consent Order [AS-008] schedule of requirements. This is not consistent with recent NSIP Development Consent Orders, which have specified delivery of BNG within the wording of requirements (e.g. Landscape and Ecological Management Plan requirement).	BNG for this Scheme is not mandatory. The Applicant has amended the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159] to provide the commitment to achieving biodiversity net gains. Requirement 4 of the draft DCO [AS-008] secures that a final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan in substantial accordance with the oLEMP is agreed with the LPA prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development. The Applicant is committed to providing biodiversity net gains, and considers this approach adequately secures the Applicant's proposed BNG, and that a separate additional Requirement in the draft DCO is not necessary.
CCC-RR-16	5.7	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The council welcomes the submission of the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [APP-159] however, this plan does not adequately cover all post-development habitats (e.g. watercourse enhancement to River Kym tributary) and some opportunities to maximise biodiversity value have been missed. The council is also concerned that the quality of habitats to be created on intensive agricultural land within the time period of the proposed scheme (maximum 40 years) is unrealistic and may conflict with bespoke management requirements for biodiversity compensation (ground nesting birds) and/or archaeology (e.g. scheduled monument). The council also seeks further discussions about the	As specified within the Biodiversity Net Gain Metric spreadsheet Tab C-3 User Comments provided as Appendix A to the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [APP-168] enhancements to the tributary of the river Kym (within Site C) will be delivered through a reduction in riparian encroachment from Major/Major due to agricultural practices on land within 10m of the watercourse to No encroachment/ No encroachment due to proposed landscaping including species diverse grassland and native species woodland. This is in accordance with Table 13 of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide. A precautionary approach to achieving habitat condition has been taken with no habitat assigned

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			proposed planting etc. to ensure it is appropriate to Cambridgeshire and the council.	greater than 'moderate' condition. The oLEMP [APP-159] specifies how this would be achieved, including estimated time to target condition presented in Table 1. It is relevant that the 40 year management period exceeds the 30 year requirement of Biodiversity Net Gain.
CCC-RR-17	5.8	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The council welcomes the establishment of a Steering Group to oversee the implementation of the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan during the operational phase, with the council identified as a potential member. The council would require funding to be able to commit to active participation in the steering group.	The Applicant will continue to engage with the host authorities regarding a post-consent planning performance agreement or other funding mechanism to support the host authorities in engaging with the 'steering group' set out at paragraph 8.1.4 of the oLEMP [APP-159] .
CCC-RR-18	5.9	Ecology and Nature Conservation	The council welcomes confirmation that habitats will be retained during the decommissioning phase. We recognise that the applicant cannot commit to retaining all landscape / ecology features into the long-term, due to handing the land back to the landowner. However, we are disappointed that a strategy is not going to be put in place to help support the landowners and identify opportunities to secure long-term management of all biodiversity-rich habitats beyond the decommissioning phase, particularly the species-rich grassland that will be created as biodiversity compensation (ground nesting birds). The council also suggests a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment is completed for the decommissioning phase based on the assumption of works anticipated for the decommissioning phase.	The Applicant has previously addressed a similar comment with regard the decommissioning end state with reference to BBC-RR-32 in Table 1. It is not in the Applicant's power to agree to the areas of species-diverse grassland being retained following the decommissioning of the Scheme. The Applicant has prepared a BNG Report [APP-168] which provides the BNG assessment for the Scheme, whilst noting that BNG is not a mandatory requirement for NSIPs.

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CCC-RR-19	6.1	Hydrology and Flood Risk	The council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), notes the additional information submitted, including the watercourse crossings review document. The council continues to support the general principles of the drainage strategy and incorporation of swales and basins. These proposals promote biodiversity and include consideration for access for maintenance, which is supported by the LLFA. The council also notes the consideration for water quality aspects and surface water management during construction.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes the Council's support for the general principles of the drainage strategy.
CCC-RR-20	6.2	Hydrology and Flood Risk	However, whilst the approach is supported in principle, the information remains at a very high level, and insufficient information has been provided at this stage to demonstrate that the proposals will not increase flood risk elsewhere. Several key aspects of the council's previous comments are yet to be addressed, particularly with regard to hydraulic calculations and drainage layouts.	As for the response reference CCC-RR-21 below, provision of detailed calculations will be provided during the detailed design stage.
CCC-RR-21	6.3	Hydrology and Flood Risk	Until the following matters are addressed, the LLFA is unable to confirm that the proposals are acceptable with respect to surface water drainage and flood risk. Outstanding information to be shared is listed below. • Hydraulic calculations including the 100%, 3.3% and 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) storms. Flood Estimation Handbook (FEH) 2022 rainfall data required and suitable climate change for the 3.3% and 1% AEP*. • Drainage layout plans for each catchment. • Demonstration of pollution risk areas and how water is managed during all stages for each catchment.	An outline drainage layout has been provided for the substation and BESS compound, which is the only catchment serviced by any formal drainage provisions. It is stated in the outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [APP-165] that assuming good land management, catchments containing panelled areas (and no other significant development) will have a negligible impact on surface water run-off. This approach was agreed as acceptable with CCC, therefore runoff rates within these catchments are assumed to remain at the greenfield rates, which have been provided in the oSWMP.

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			Flow rates for each individual catchment *It should be noted that where the updated Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) maps provided by the Environment Agency (EA) only refer to climate change for the 2050s Epoch, the surface water drainage strategy must include the appropriate upper-end climate change allowances (based on the lifetime of the development) for the 3.3% and 1% AEP storm events within the hydraulic calculations.	Water quality and pollution risks have been considered based upon the Simple Index Approach and it has been demonstrated that SuDS features are able to appropriately treat the pollutant risk factors. Pluvial modelling is being carried out for the Site and run using the 2070s epoch upper-end climate change allowance of 40% for the 3.3% and 1.0% AEP event. The drainage strategy will be updated to include the upper-end climate change allowance for the 2070s epoch.
CCC-RR-22	6.4	Hydrology and Flood Risk	The Watercourse Crossings document demonstrates that culverting will be avoided where possible, which is supported by the LLFA. Opting for clear span bridges does not require ordinary watercourse consent.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes the LLFA's support for the approach to watercourse crossings.
CCC-RR-23	6.5	Hydrology and Flood Risk	The council requests the following re-wording of the Protective Provisions (APP-016 – Draft DCO EN010141.DR/3.1), with regard to drainage, with strikethrough indicating requested removal, and additions indicated by bold text: Schedule 13- Protective Provisions, Part 3 Paragraph 18 “specified work” means so much of any work or operation authorised by this Order as is in, on, under, over or within ~~the watercourse~~ 46 metres of a drainage work or is otherwise likely to. Paragraph 19. 3b is deemed to have been refused ~~given~~ if it is neither given nor refused within 2 months of the submission of the plans for approval...	Please find the Applicant's comments in relation to each of the proposed amendments below. Proposed amendment to the definition of “specified work” (Paragraph 18 of Part 3 to Schedule 13) The Applicant is content with the principle of this proposed amendment and will update the draft DCO [AS-008] accordingly at the next available deadline. Proposed amendment to paragraph 19(3)(b) of Part 3 to Schedule 13 The Applicant does not consider that this proposed amendment is appropriate. As drafted, the draft DCO [AS-008] requires that the Applicant submits plans to the drainage authority before construction of any

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				specified works. If further particulars are required these may be requested by the drainage authority within 28 days of submission of the plans. In the event that the drainage authority fails to respond (or refuses the application but does not provide a statement of grounds of refusal) within two months of submission of the plans, or the submission of further particulars if requested then the application will be deemed to have been granted. The Applicant considers that a two-month period from the date of submission of the plans (with additional allowance if further particulars are required) is appropriate. The deemed consent provision is considered necessary to remove the possibility for delay and provide certainty that the Authorised Development can be delivered by the Applicant in a timely fashion. As an NSIP, the Authorised Development should not be at risk of being held up due to a failure to respond to an application for consent. It is always open for the drainage authority to refuse the plans, subject to provision of a statement of the grounds of refusal, if reasonable to do so. A similar two-month deemed consent provision can be found in a number of recent solar DCOs, including but not limited to the Oaklands Farm Solar Park Order 2025 (see Part 7 of Schedule 10) and the Byers Gill Solar Order 2025 (see Part 3 of Schedule 11). It is also noted that a similar provision of deemed consent was included in the Sunnica Energy Farm Order 2024 (see Part 8 of Schedule 12), albeit with a more restrictive 28 day period. As such the Applicant's proposed drafting is considered to be appropriate.

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CCC-RR-24	7.1	Traffic and Transport	The council, in its role as Local Highway Authority (LHA), seeks that all works within the adopted public highway are agreed with the applicant. As with other developments, the use of Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 ensures appropriate approval and monitoring of works on the Highway. Cambridgeshire County Council's preferred approach is to encompass Section 278 as part of Protective Provisions for the LHA. This requirement will necessitate the DCO to be amended to include Protective Provisions for the LHA.	For the reasons set out below, it is the Applicant's position that it is not necessary for the draft DCO [AS-008] to include protective provisions for the benefit of the local highway authorities given the protections that are currently secured within the draft DCO [AS-008] and the relevant management plans. The Applicant recognises that the draft DCO includes a number of powers that will allow it to carry out works within the public highway, such as Article 10 (Street works), Article 12 (Power to alter layout, etc. of streets) and Article 14 (Access to Works). As these works will be authorised by the DCO it will not be necessary for the Applicant to enter a separate agreement under section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 before carrying out the works. In most cases, the proposed works are explicitly authorised by the draft DCO, being shown on the Street Works, Rights of Way and Access Plan [APP-010] and described in the relevant Schedule of the draft DCO. These works will be governed by the measures set out in the draft DCO and the relevant management plans, which are considered to provide sufficient protection to the local highway authority without the need for additional protective provisions or separate agreement. In some cases, the Applicant may carry out additional works but only with the consent of the relevant authority. For example, in the case of Article 12 (Power to alter layout, etc. of streets) this is the

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
				relevant street authority and under Article 14 (Access to Works) this is the local planning authority. It is considered that this requirement to obtain consent affords sufficient protection to the local highway authority without the need for additional protective provisions. By way of example, the main protections secured by the draft DCO are as follows: • Article 11 (Application of the 1991 Act) – This article applies the provisions of Part 3 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (“NRSA 1991”) to works that would qualify as major highway works. Additionally, the article ensures that the exercise of Article 10 (Street works) and Article 15 ((temporary stopping up of streets and public rights of way) are subject to the provisions of the NRSA 1991 specified in Article 11(4). • Article 13 (Construction and maintenance of altered streets) – This article ensures that alterations to streets must be completed to the reasonable satisfaction of the relevant highway authority, among other measures. • Article 16 (Agreements with street authorities) – This article allows the Applicant to enter into agreements with the street authority in relation to various matters, including the carrying out of works in a street under Article 10(1) (Street Works) or Article 14 (Access to works).

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
				• Requirement 3 (Detailed design approval) – This requirement provides that for each phase of the authorised development, details of the layout, scale, proposed finished ground levels, fencing, external appearance, and vehicular accesses must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before the commencement of that phase. As such, the detailed design of the Scheme will be subject to the approval of the local planning authority. • Requirement 5 (Construction environmental management plan) – This requirement provides that no phase of the authorised development may commence until a construction environmental management plan (“CEMP”) for that phase has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in consultation with the Environment Agency. The CEMP submitted must be in substantial accordance with the outline CEMP [APP-155] to the extent applicable to that phase. The oCEMP [APP-155] includes at Table 5.5 details of measures to remedy damage to the highway caused by construction traffic, including pre-construction and post-construction surveys. • Requirement 8 (Construction traffic management plan) – This requirement provides that no phase of the authorised development may commence until a construction traffic management plan

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
				("CTMP") for that phase has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in consultation with the Environment Agency. The CTMP submitted must be in substantial accordance with the outline CTMP [APP-156] to the extent applicable to that phase, which includes a number of measures relating to local highways. Section 5 of the oCTMP [APP-156] set outs details of the proposed construction access strategy, including situations where the design of accesses will be agreed with the local highway authority post-consent]. • Requirement 11 (Public rights of way) – This requirement provides that no phase of the authorised development may commence and no decommissioning may be undertaken until a public rights of way management plan ("PROWMP") has been submitted and approved by the local planning authority in consultation with the relevant highway authority. The PROWMP submitted must be in substantial accordance with the oPROWMP [APP-160] to the extent applicable to that phase.
CCC-RR-25	7.2	Traffic and Transport	This will require the applicant to enter into appropriate agreements, with either a bond or cash deposit, pay the LHA's inspection fees, and any legal fees resulting from the works. Such measures will provide a suitable level of protection for the LHA (and ultimately the	As set out in CCC-RR-24, the Applicant considers that the draft DCO [AS-008] and the relevant management plans provide sufficient protection to the local highway authorities without the need for additional protective provisions.

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
			residents of Cambridgeshire) in the event of any difficulties being encountered in the future.	
CCC-RR-26	7.3, 7.4	Traffic and Transport	The LHA already has two forms of S.278 Agreement: i) The Formal Agreement. This is used when any land needs to be dedicated as adopted public highway (using Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980), when a formal Road Safety Audit is required and when the estimated value of the works is above £75,000. ii) The Short Form Agreement. This is used for minor works under the value of £75,000. Given the current rate of inflation and nature of the works the Highway Authority would accept an increase in this figure to £100,000 for non-complex works where the risk of complication is low. An increase in the threshold for Short Form Agreements to £100,000 would be at the discretion of the LHA. The LHA has precedent forms of both agreements and if their structure could be agreed as part of the DCO, this will significantly increase the speed at which the agreements can be issued and reduce the need for legal input from both sides.	As set out in CCC-RR-24, the Applicant considers that the draft DCO [AS-008] and the relevant management plans provide sufficient protection to the local highway authorities without the need for additional protective provisions. If a section 278 agreement were to be required in respect of any works, the Applicant would liaise with the local highway authority at the relevant time regarding this.
CCC-RR-27	7.5	Traffic and Transport	Protective provision is to also include (although not limited to, and subject to detailed comments on the DCO being provided): • compensation to the LHA for possible damage to the highway network as a result of extraordinary levels of traffic – this could be particularly relevant during construction phases.	As set out in CCC-RR-24, the Applicant considers that the draft DCO [AS-008] and the relevant management plans provide sufficient protection to the local highway authorities without the need for additional protective provisions. In respect of damage to the highway network, the oCEMP [APP-155] already contains details of measures to remedy damage to the highway caused by construction traffic, including pre-construction and

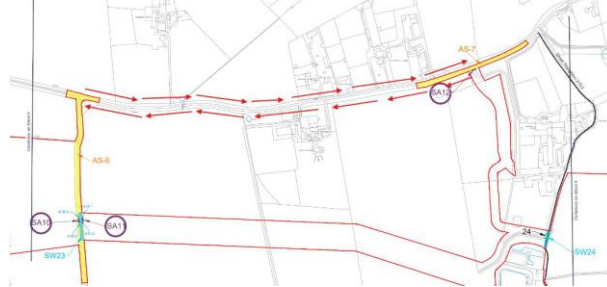
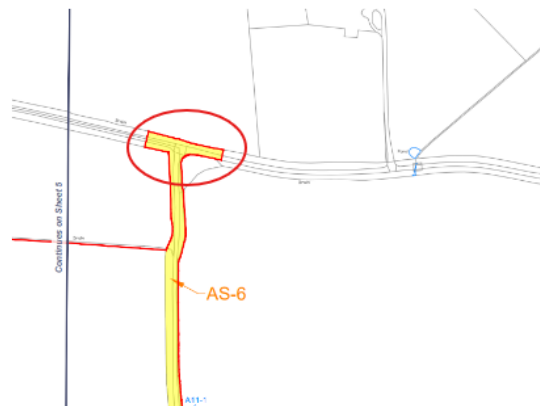
Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
			• The timeline for certification and provisional certification including a site inspection. The council requests a minimum of 21 days is allowed for. • The protective provisions should encompass any works that affect PROW.	post-construction surveys (see Table 5.5). The oCEMP is secured by Requirement 5 of the draft DCO [AS-008]. In respect of the certification of works, the Applicant will liaise with the local highway authority in respect of any certification requirements at the relevant time. It is noted that Article 13 of the draft DCO (construction and maintenance of altered streets) contains measures that are relevant to the adoption of such works. In respect of PROW, it is unclear what the local highway authority would expect to be covered here. However, the Applicant notes that Requirement 11 secures the submission, approval and implementation of a PROWMP that must be in substantial accordance with the oPROWMP [APP-160].
CCC-RR-28	7.6, 7.7, 7.8	Traffic and Transport	The schedule should clearly state which streets are public highways and which are not, and to which highway authority. The applicant should be required to agree the timing and nature of its works with the LHA prior to commencement and submit Permits via Department for Transport (DfT) Street Manager in advance of any works on the public highway and / or any temporary closures or traffic management to enable the LHA to co-ordinate the network. It would be helpful for this article to be explicitly linked to the protective provisions.	The Applicant has updated Schedule 4 (streets subject to street works) of the draft DCO [as updated alongside this submission] to provide further information on the relevant highway authority for each street. The Applicant can also confirm that every street listed in Schedule 4 is a public highway. In respect of CCC's other comments, the Applicant considers that the draft DCO [AS-008] and the relevant management plans provide sufficient protection to the local highway authorities without the need for additional protective provisions. In terms of notice of the works, the Applicant notes that where traffic management measures are required for the works, as authorised under Article 17 of the draft DCO (traffic regulation measures), the Applicant will be subject to notice requirements. These requirements

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
				include giving at least 4 weeks written notice to the chief officer of police and the traffic authority (except in the case of emergency) under Article 17(5)(a). The Applicant also notes that Article 11 (application of the 1991 Act) applies the NRSWA 1991 to certain works carried out in relation to highways which consist of or include a carriageway, which would require the Applicant to give advanced notice of certain street works to the street authority. In respect of the nature of the works, the Applicant notes that its proposed works are explicitly authorised by the draft DCO, being shown on the Street Works, Rights of Way and Access Plan [APP-010] and described in the relevant Schedules of the draft DCO. For any additional works the Applicant will require the consent of the relevant authority, as detailed in CCC-RR-24 above.
CCC-RR-29	7.9	Traffic and Transport	SA 12 Zantra access meets visibility requirements based on speed surveys, but the raw data has not been submitted as was requested by the council previously.	The Applicant shared the raw survey data (which is a spreadsheet format) with CCC for review on 11 th March 2026.
CCC-RR-30	7.10	Traffic and Transport	SA14 & 15 Moor Road Crossing visibility splays have been calculated based on observed 85 th percentile traffic speeds of 41.4mph. As this is above the threshold of 37mph, the Manual for Streets (MFS) is the wrong criteria for calculating the safe sight stopping distance, and the applicant should instead use the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) which requires splays of 109m. Raw data has not been submitted as requested previously.	The Applicant would note that accesses SA14 and SA15 would be temporary accesses which would only be used during the construction and decommissioning phases. As has been previously clarified in email correspondence with CCC Highways (dated 19.06.2025) following the statutory consultation period, the speed survey was obtained from an Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) site located at the northern end of Moor Road, close to the junction with the B645. This is

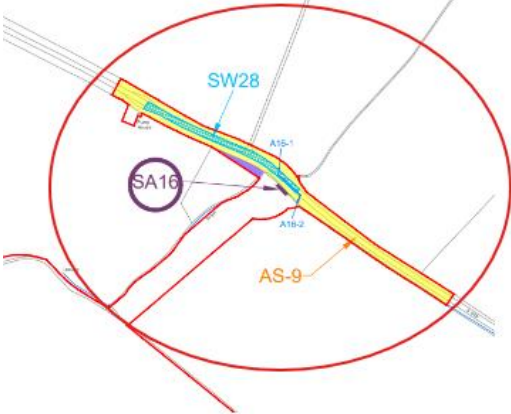
Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
				illustrated in Annex E of ES Vol 2 Appendix 9-1 Transport Assessment (the TA) [APP-101]. The Applicant has shared the raw survey data (which is a spreadsheet format) with CCC for review on 11th March 2026.. The straight alignment of the carriageway in this location lends itself to higher average speeds than would be expected in the vicinity of accesses SA14 and SA15, which are situated within a section of Moor Road featuring several sharp bends. It was therefore considered that interpolating the required visibility based on MfS standards was appropriate in this case. Furthermore, due to the alignment of Moor Road in this location, it is not possible to achieve the necessary visibility splays to DMRB standards. However, within the Traffic Regulation Measures Plan [APP-011] (Sheets 8 and 9) it has been proposed that temporary traffic management and speed restrictions will be implemented on Moor Road at this crossing point to control vehicle speeds. The identified visibility splays calculated in accordance with MfS are therefore considered to be appropriate based on the temporary nature of these works.
CCC-RR-31	7.11	Traffic and Transport	The Draft Development Consent Order [APP-016], schedule 8, Traffic regulation measures, and temporary traffic signals, under reference TTM 10, are to be used at this access to facilitate crossing and presumably reduce vehicle speeds. This needs to be assessed and agreed with the council's Street Works Department.	The Applicant notes this requirement. The exact detail of the proposed traffic regulation measures and traffic management will be discussed and agreed with CCC's Street Works Department in advance of construction commencing, as set out in Section 5.5 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission] , as secured via Requirement 8 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .

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CCC-RR-32	7.12	Traffic and Transport	Within schedule 8, Moor Road in the vicinity of the crossing point is subject to a temporary traffic regulation order speed limit of 30mph. This needs to be assessed and agreed with the council's Street Works Department.	The Applicant notes this requirement. The exact detail of the proposed traffic regulation measures and traffic management will be discussed and agreed with CCC's Street Works Department in advance of construction commencing, as set out in Section 5.5 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission] , as secured via Requirement 8 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .
CCC-RR-33	7.13	Traffic and Transport	SA13 Moor Road operational access. This is an existing access and the movements indicated are minimal, however the access is unmade and granular in nature and this access will need to be upgraded in accordance with the council's specification. The council is willing to work with the applicant to develop the design to an acceptable standard.	The Applicant notes this requirement. A suitable detailed design for this access will be discussed and agreed with CCC in accordance with Requirements 3 and 8 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .
CCC-RR-34	7.14	Traffic and Transport	SA16 Main site access as per access SA14 &15, this is indicated within schedule 8 under reference TTM11 as being under temporary signal control. This needs to be assessed and agreed with the council's Street Works Department.	The Applicant would note that the requirement to provide temporary traffic signals at this location during the construction phase was requested by CCC Highways during the scoping stage. The exact detail of the proposed traffic management will be discussed and agreed with CCC's Street Works Department in advance of construction commencing, as set out in Section 5.5 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission] , as secured via Requirement 8 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .
CCC-RR-35	7.15	Traffic and Transport	Swept path drawings for all accesses have been indicated within the transport assessment. However, they are not detailed enough and need to be resubmitted with further detail showing fully dimensioned plans of each access including all	Updated outline site access junction layout plans, including relevant dimensions and vehicle tracking, have been provided as an appendix to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [as updated

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			relevant dimensions, widths and radii, along with tracking showing two-way (simultaneous) movements of the largest vehicles which will use them. This has been requested by the council's technical officers previously.	alongside this submission . This is secured via Requirement 8 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .
CCC-RR-36	7.16	Traffic and Transport	Within document [APP-010], EN010141/DR/2.4 Street works, Rights of Way and Access Plan, P01, 3149-2.4-007 reference AS -7 for access SA12 indicates alteration of streets (permanent). The council's technical officers have been unable to locate any information within the documents to explain these proposed works. The council requests that the applicant provides further details so that the council's officers can review and assess accordingly. 	As set out within Schedule 5 Part 1 of the Draft DCO [AS-008] , the proposed street works at this location are related to the provision of the permanent means of access into the Site at this location. This relates to works necessary to maintain visibility splays. The applicant would note that it is not proposed to make a new access in this location, and it is not anticipated that there would be any requirement for any physical works within the carriageway on Great Staughton Road at this location.
CCC-RR-37	7.17	Traffic and Transport	The Council's technical officers have previously requested tracking movement from the access along the highway to ensure the highway is of sufficient nature to cater for the two-way movements of construction vehicles. This request is still outstanding.	Updated vehicle tracking illustrating two-way HGV movements along Great Staughton Road has been provided as Appendix C to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission) .

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				The Applicant is in consultation with CCC on this matter.
CCC-RR-38	7.18	Traffic and Transport	Within document [APP-010], EN010141/DR/2.4 Street works, Rights of Way and Access Plan P01, 3149-2.4-007, reference AS -6 for access indicates alteration of streets (permanent) - this forms a small section within the council's jurisdiction. The council's technical officers have been unable to find any information within the documents indicating what these works are. The council requests that the applicant submits these proposed works for assessment. 	As set out within Schedule 5 Part 1 of the Draft DCO [AS-008], the proposed street works at this location are related to the provision of the permanent means of access into the Site at this location. This includes for the necessary widening of Spring Hill to facilitate two-way movement of HGVs. An updated outline layout plan illustrating the proposed works along Spring Hill, including relevant dimensions and vehicle tracking, has been provided as Figure 7 in Appendix C of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission). A suitable detailed design for these works will be discussed and agreed with CCC post consent.

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CCC-RR-39	7.19	Traffic and Transport	The Council's technical officers have previously requested tracking movement from the access along the highway to ensure the highway is of sufficient nature to cater for the two-way movements of construction vehicles. The council notes in appendix C of the Transport Assessment (Fig C5) that the extent of carriageway widening required to facilitate two-way HGV movement (indicated in light blue) extends beyond the order limit. The Council would like clarification and a fully dimensioned plan for this junction (see above paragraph 7.17 requesting similar for each access and junction.)	The Applicant would note that there is a minor discrepancy in the position of the Order limits on the plan included within Annex C of the TA [APP-101] . The Order limits do encompass the full extent of the proposed works, as illustrated on Sheet 6 of the statutory Location, Order Limits and Grid Coordinate Plan [APP-007] , and the updated outline junction design drawings as provided as an appendix to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission) .
CCC-RR-40	7.20	Traffic and Transport	TTM 8 indicates part time traffic signals on the junction. This needs to be assessed and agreed with the council's Street Works Department.	The Applicant notes this requirement. The exact detail of the proposed traffic management will be discussed and agreed with CCC's Street Works Department in advance of construction commencing, as set out in Section 5.5 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission) , as secured via Requirement 8 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .
CCC-RR-41	7.21	Traffic and Transport	Within document [APP-010], EN010141/DR/2.4 Street works, Rights of Way and Access Plan P01, 3149-2.4-010 reference AS 9 also indicates alteration of streets (permanent). The council's technical officers have been unable to find any information within the documents indicating what these works are. The council requests that the applicant submits these proposed works for assessment. There are also references A16-1 and A16-2 which the council has been unable to locate.	As set out within Schedule 5 Part 1 of the draft DCO [AS-008] , the proposed street works at this location are related to the provision of the permanent means of access into the Site at this location, which includes for the provision of the necessary visibility splays. The points A16-1 and A16-2 indicate the exact position of the proposed access, as set out within Schedule 7 Part 1 of the draft DCO [AS-008] .

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CCC-RR-42	7.22	Traffic and Transport	Temporary weight restriction suspension would not be required as a weight restriction allows access to a property or development for access. In temporarily removing this weight restriction, it would open the area to non-construction related heavy vehicles allowing them to use the surrounding roads which the council would not support.	The Applicant notes this comment. The proposed temporary suspension of the weight restriction has been removed from the Traffic Regulation Measures Plan [as updated alongside this submission] .
CCC-RR-43	7.23	Traffic and Transport	The temporary haulage route to the South of Zantra (SA-12) If confirmed that the internal route to SA-11 is possible, then the Zantra access (SA-12) and egress should be removed.	The Applicant notes this comment.
CCC-RR-44	7.24	Traffic and Transport	There are no significant concerns in respect of the volume of traffic during the construction period as the staff movements will be during the AM and PM peak shoulders and not the peak hours. However, there does not appear to be a routing management plan for the general Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) traffic with	The HGV routing strategy is set out within Section 5.0 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission) .

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			the exception of Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs) which are dealt with in the Transport Assessment Chapter.	
CCC-RR-45	7.25	Traffic and Transport	The council's Transport Assessment Team will require a routing plan for HGVs which must deal with: • Routes to and from the site for all vehicle particularly HGVs • How the routing plan with be enforced i.e. monitoring, geofencing etc. • How breaches will be dealt with. • A plan of public engagement and communication throughout the construction process.	The HGV routing strategy is set out within Section 5.0 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission). Measures to ensure monitoring and compliance with the HGV routing strategy are set out in section 9.0 of the oCTMP.
CCC-RR-46	7.26	Traffic and Transport	It is noted that any vehicles travelling southbound on the A1 to access the B645 would pass northbound along part of the Old Great North Road which is a residential area. Whilst this road may well have sufficient capacity to cater for HGVs it is requested that the routing plan should direct HGVs southwards to the Wyboston junction and then northwards to the A645 junction to avoid the residential area.	The Applicant notes this request. The relevant amendment to the HGV routing strategy has been updated at Section 5.0 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission).
CCC-RR-47	7.27	Traffic and Transport	The staff occupancy is proposed to be 2 persons per car. Whilst we welcome the target, it is challenging. The council would like to see more detail as to the measures to reach this and further measures to implement if 2 persons per car is not met.	The Applicant acknowledges this comment. An outline Construction Workers Travel Plan has been prepared as an appendix to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission].
CCC-RR-48	7.28	Traffic and Transport	Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan (OPROWMP) [APP-160], 7.0 Management of PROW - During the Operational Phase the document only refers (7.1.6) to new permissive pathways being created in site B, which is within Bedford Borough.	The Applicant notes that new permissive access is proposed in Site C within Cambridgeshire. This has been clarified in Table 2 of Section 5.3 of the oLEMP [as updated alongside this submission].

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			There is no reference in the OPROWMP for any permissive pathways in Cambridgeshire. It is the council's expectation that new permissive pathways will be provided within Cambridgeshire.	The Applicant is proposing a circular permissive footpath within the fields in the north of Site C as shown on Figure 3 at Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159]. As set out in paragraph 4.5.6 of the outline Heritage Enhancement Strategy [APP-166], this permissive path would not be surfaced such that it is in keeping with the existing character or public rights of way, and to avoid any excavation or direct impact to archaeological remains. The intention is for the permissive paths to form a short 'heritage trail' beginning and ending at the bridge crossing of the River Kym, with multiple interpretation panels along the route.
CCC-RR-49	7.29	Traffic and Transport	There are no other proposals to improve or enhance Public Rights of Way (PROW) aside from the general statement under works No.8. There needs to be a firm commitment to provide wider benefits to PROW users and public access to the countryside. The council requests that the applicant proposes new permissive paths to connect communities and connect existing PROW networks including enabling a wider network of routes for cyclists and equestrians. The council's ambitions of this are: • Improved east-west connectivity to enable access from rural communities to St Neots and the National Cycle Network at or near to Hail Weston. • North-South connectivity to Grafham Water. • Improvements to pre-existing PROW infrastructure	The Applicant is restricted on where new permissive access or PROWs can be provided by the land agreements and extent of the Order limits. In this regard, the Applicant has not identified any opportunities to improve east-west connectivity to St Neots, or north-south connectivity to Grafham Water.

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CCC-RR-50	7.30	Traffic and Transport	The provision of permissive or permanent public access mitigations needs to be adequately specified in the DCO documents to enable host authorities to assess whether they constitute appropriate mitigation. The current documentation merely mentions new permissive accesses and improvements to some current PROW. The nature and route of any new access need to be explained to enable them to be properly scrutinised.	The Applicant has shown the locations of the proposed permissive paths on the Illustrative Landscape Proposals at Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159]. The oLEMP is a control document that will be certified as part of the DCO. Requirement 4 in Schedule 2 of the draft DCO [AS-008] requires that a final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), in substantial accordance with the oLEMP, is prepared and approved by the relevant LPAs prior to commencement of construction. The final LEMP will implement the permissive paths, which must be in substantial accordance with the Illustrative Landscape Proposals at Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159].
CCC-RR-51	7.31	Traffic and Transport	To benefit Great Staughton residents, the Council requests that a new circular permissive bridleway around the edge of the proposed grassland area on the Northeastern side of site D, is created. Information boards could explain the scheduled monument. Pre-existing PROW which connects to the permissive access site should be included or upgraded to ensure that connecting routes are of a high quality and are open to all users.	The Applicant notes this comment and assumes that reference to Site D is intended to be Site C where the proposed grassland area aligns with the scheduled monument. The Applicant is proposing a circular permissive footpath within the fields in the north of Site C as shown on Figure 3 at Appendix A of the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159]. As set out in paragraph 4.5.6 of the outline Heritage Enhancement Strategy [APP-166], this permissive path would not be surfaced such that it is in keeping with the existing character or public rights of way, and to avoid any excavation or direct impact to archaeological remains. The intention is for the permissive paths to form a short 'heritage trail' beginning and ending at the bridge crossing of the

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				River Kym, with multiple interpretation panels along the route.
CCC-RR-52	7.32	Traffic and Transport	Within Cambridgeshire there is one Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) application to record a bridleway which crosses the application boundary. Without prejudice, the council requests that a 7-metre-wide corridor is kept available along the line of the DMMO application route through the proposed development, to ensure that access can be easily facilitated in future, should the DMMO be confirmed.	The Applicant is aware of one DMMO application that intersects the Site (Case Number M206 - LH) to create a bridleway. The Applicant would not object to the creation of a public right of way along this route. The Applicant notes that along the relevant eastern edge of Site D, the alignment of the potential DMMO along the existing access track would sit outside of the Order limits. The DMMO would not be impeded by the Scheme and would pass adjacent to the proposed woodland belt planting along that edge.
CCC-RR-53	7.33	Traffic and Transport	Draft DCO [APP-016] under Schedule 6, Part 2 authorises permanent use of motor vehicles on public rights of way. In Cambridgeshire, the PROW affected are Hail Weston 112/7 bridleway and Hail Weston 112/8 bridleways. The OPROWMP, Table 1, states that they would be used as a construction access road. The council requests that the applicant seeks alternatives to using PROW for permanent vehicular access. Should that be unavoidable, there needs to be safe provision for Non-Motorised Users (NMU), and the applicant will be responsible for maintenance liabilities arising from vehicular use. The applicant should also be aware of the council's requirements in relation to altering the surface of a Public Right of Way. (This Policy was approved on 7 March 2023 and sits within the Highway Operational Standards 2025 – 2035 at Appendix T.	The Applicant would note that outline descriptions of the proposed mitigation measures relating to the use of Hail Weston Bridleway 112/7 and Footpath 112/8 during the construction phase are set out within Sections 6.17 and 6.18, respectively, of the outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan (oPROWMP) [APP-160]. The Applicant has amended the oPROWMP to introduce a new sub-section on surfacing and reinstatement of PROW at paragraphs 5.1.6 to 5.1.8 of the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission]. This requires the Applicant to provide detailed surfacing details of each PROW alongside the final PROW Management Plan.

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
			(https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/Highway-Operational-Standards.pdf).	
CCC-RR-54	7.34	Traffic and Transport	Draft DCO [APP-016] Schedule 7 – Access to works states that Hail Weston 112/7 bridleway and Hail Weston 112/8 bridleways will be used for access. This is not referenced in the OPROWMP, and there are no statements in the document about how the use of PROW for motor vehicle access during the Operation Phase of the development will be safely provided. The council requests that the applicant seeks alternatives to using PROW for access. Should that be unavoidable, there needs to be safe provision for NMU and the applicant will be responsible for maintenance liabilities arising from vehicular use. The affected PROW should be subject to pre-construction condition surveys, and should be reinstated following completion of construction works (either to their pre-existing condition or to another condition as agreed with the council).	The Applicant would note that during the operational phase, Site traffic would be minimal. Where the access tracks are indicated to follow the line of a PROW, the track would be constructed to a suitable standard to accommodate motor vehicle access, noting CCC's requirement relating to altering the surface of PROWs. Where access tracks run along the line of PROWs, these would be constructed to a sufficient width to provide clearance to allow Site traffic to safely pass PROW users.
CCC-RR-55	7.35	Traffic and Transport	Draft DCO [APP-016] Schedule 9 section 1(b) the rights listed include: "install, use, support, protect, inspect, alter, remove, replace, refurbish, reconstruct, retain, renew, improve and maintain security fencing, gates, boundary treatment, public rights of way and any other ancillary apparatus and any other works as necessary". The council requests that the DCO does not provide the applicant with powers to alter, remove, replace, existing public rights of way other than those specifically defined in the schedules and rights of way and access plans. The council requests that the	Any temporary stopping up, diversion or restriction is controlled by Article 15 of the draft DCO [AS-008] for any PRoW not specifically listed in the schedules, can only be exercised with the street authority's consent (with reasonable conditions). In this way, the Applicant cannot just proceed with unspecified changes to PRoW.

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
			reference which allows unspecified changes to public rights of way are removed.	
CCC-RR-56	7.36	Traffic and Transport	Where construction access or cable routes utilise or cross PROW, then prior to the commencement of development, a dilapidations survey shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the council as the Local Highway Authority. It is required to restore those PROW to an acceptable condition after completion. Any changes of surface either temporary or permanent and reinstatement condition must be agreed with the council.	The Applicant notes CCC's requirement for pre-construction condition surveys of affected PROW routes. A commitment to undertaking these has been included within the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission]. The Applicant has amended the oPROWMP to introduce a new sub-section on surfacing and reinstatement of PROW at paragraphs 5.1.6 to 5.1.8 of the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission]. This requires the Applicant to provide detailed surfacing details of each PROW alongside the final PROW Management Plan.
CCC-RR-57	7.37	Traffic and Transport	Where temporary diversions of PROW are required, the council requires assurance that they will be of an equal or better standard of width and surface, compared to the route that they are replacing. Temporary diversions should not add unreasonably to the length of user journeys and should only be deployed for the periods for which they are absolutely necessary. Any required temporary closure and/or diversion of PROW should be agreed with the council in advance of PROW-related works commencing. These should be detailed in a full PROW Management Plan to be authorised by the council, including details of the anticipated duration of closure, length of diversion, works to restore the original PROW, and advance warning notices and community engagement.	The Applicant notes this comment. As described in Section 6.0 of the outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission], where possible temporary PROW diversions will be laid adjacent to the existing PROW alignment to minimise any additional length of user journeys. The final PROWMP will set out details of the anticipated duration of closure, length of diversion, works to restore the original PROW, and advance warning notices and community engagement.

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
CCC-RR-58	7.38	Traffic and Transport	In Chapter 5 of the Environmental Statement [APP-041] the report identifies that even after ten years of operation of the development and despite tree planting becoming established, there will still be significant visual impacts on several PROW adjoining or crossing the site, this will diminish the public's enjoyment of the rural environment and affect the amenity of PROW for users. The council requires that the scheme proactively delivers PROW or public access improvements in line with the council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), to compensate for the loss of visual amenity on these PROW. Any enhancements should consider the council's ambitions to improve NMU connectivity from rural communities to St Neots, the National Cycle Network (NCN), and to Grafham Water.	The Applicant notes that new permissive access is proposed in Site C within Cambridgeshire. The Applicant is proposing a circular permissive footpath within the fields in the north of Site C as shown on Figure 3 at Appendix A of the oLEMP [APP-159]. As set out in paragraph 4.5.6 of the outline Heritage Enhancement Strategy [APP-166], this permissive path would not be surfaced such that it is in keeping with the existing character or public rights of way, and to avoid any excavation or direct impact to archaeological remains. The intention is for the permissive paths to form a short 'heritage trail' beginning and ending at the bridge crossing of the River Kym, with multiple interpretation panels along the route. The Applicant is restricted on where new permissive access or PROWs can be provided by the land agreements and extent of the Order limits. In this regard, the Applicant has not identified any opportunities to improve east-west connectivity to St Neots, or north-south connectivity to Grafham Water.
CCC-RR-59	8.1	Noise and Vibration	Huntingdonshire District Council will be commenting on Noise and Vibration in detail. As it relates to public rights of way equestrian users it is requested that any inverter buildings near public rights of way be constructed to minimise transfer of sound so that horses are not unsettled by any noise that this equipment may cause.	The Applicant notes with reference to HDC-RR-38 in Table 2 that HDC consider (with regard the noise assessment) the methodology and baseline data are considered acceptable, and proposed limits set out are agreed. An assessment of noise impacts on public rights of way users is included within Section 10.8 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 10 Noise and Vibration [APP-046], including at paragraph 10.8.54 for the operational phase which confirms no significant effects.

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
CCC-RR-60	9.4	Land and Soils	The applicant needs to evidence the economic impact associated with the agricultural industry and the scheme's impact on agricultural production in the area. The loss of land capable of food production is less well documented by the applicant and should be assessed.	The economic baseline associated with the agricultural industry has been considered within ES Vol 1 Chapter 14 Socio-Economics [APP-050]. Using DEFRA Farming Statistics the ES estimates that the existing 773 ha of arable land (relating to the total area of the Order limits) supports nine jobs (eight within the study area) and that these would be lost as a result of the Scheme, as set out in paragraph 14.8.32 [APP-050]. The impacts and effects of the Scheme on agricultural land and soils are set out in ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-049]. In terms of theoretical agricultural production, Table 13.3 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-049] sets out the agricultural land taken out of arable use which totals 694.8 ha. The Site is predominantly in use as arable farmland, including cereal crops as well as non-cereal crops such as Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) groundcover mixes. On this basis, wheat has been used below as an example crop as a reasonable way to express the scale of foregone arable output, noting that actual farm rotations will vary year to year. The 5 year average wheat yield across the East of England region has been 8.0 tonnes per hectare, with a high of 8.4 t/ha in 2023, and a low of 7.1 t/ha in 2025

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				during this 5 year period². The national average is lower at 7.8 t/ha. Taking the 694.8 ha of agricultural land removed from arable production by the Scheme, and assuming this land was used in its entirety to grow wheat with a yield of 8.0 t/ha, then the annual lost agricultural production would be 5,558.4 tonnes of wheat. The 5 year average wheat production across the East of England region has been 3,424,710 tonnes per year. The national 5 year average is 12,862,161 tonnes per year. In this context, the loss of agricultural production at the Site would equate to a loss of 0.16% of total production in the East of England, or a loss of 0.043% of the national total. The Applicant notes this is a very marginal number, even when based on a simplified calculation that makes conservative estimates based on a single crop. If crop rotation was allowed for in the above estimate, the Scheme's percentage reduction against regional and national wheat production would reduce proportionately, balanced by reductions in production of other crops against regional and national averages. The Applicant's position is that the Scheme would not significantly affect agricultural production. This aligns with the Government's position set out in the UK Solar Roadmap (June 2025) which notes that Government does not believe increased solar deployment poses a

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/cereal-and-oilseed-rape-production>

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				threat to food security, and that “<i>the biggest risk to food security and the natural environment is the climate and nature crisis</i>”. More widely, the Applicant notes the impact of solar on agricultural production against other land use changes, such as the Government’s SFI initiative. The most recent SFI data published in October 2025³ notes at Table 2 that SFI actions which take land out of agricultural production result in the temporary loss of 340,000 hectares of land. Government notes that “<i>in extremis, almost all of this land could be brought back into production within one growing season</i>”. This is comparable to solar, where “in extremis”, land could be quickly reverted to agricultural production. If all new solar capacity modelled in the ‘high end’ policy scenario of the UK Solar Roadmap were to be ground mounted it would occupy no more than 0.6% of the UK’s utilised agricultural land by 2030, equating to 100,800 hectares. The Applicant notes this is less than a third of the land currently taken out of production for the SFI initiative, which is but one example environmental stewardship scheme currently being delivered by UK policy. The Applicant considers the Scheme would not pose a significant risk to UK food security. The Applicant’s position as set out in paragraphs 7.15.29 to 7.15.30, and Table 2 of the Planning Statement [APP-031], and also at paragraph 8.3.46 of the Planning

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sustainable-farming-incentive-action-uptake-data-october-2025/sustainable-farming-incentive-action-uptake-data-october-2025>

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
				Statement, is that the issue should be given limited negative weight in the planning balance.
CCC-RR-61	10.1	Socio Economics	The area proposed for the project is rural in nature with limited employment opportunities. There are also limited transport options into, out of, and within the scheme area. Therefore, potential themes for the proposed legacy fund may include improving transport, access to green open space, local employment, and local access to green energy. Whilst the applicant identifies job creation during construction and operation phases, the council would like to see clear apprenticeship and skills acquisition opportunities for local people included in the Outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan [APP-163].	The Applicant has committed to providing a legacy fund to support community benefits local to the Scheme. The Applicant will engage with relevant stakeholders and establish a suitable governance and delivery model to provide for the distribution of funding as decided by the community. The outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan (oSSCEP) [APP-163] establishes the framework for maximising local employment, training and supply chain benefits from the Proposed Development. Further detail on specific apprenticeship initiatives, skills programmes and engagement with local education and training providers will be developed within the Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (SSCEP) to be prepared in accordance with Requirement 19 of the draft DCO [AS-008]. This requirement secures the preparation of a SSCEP, following consultation with the relevant local authorities, prior to commencement of construction, ensuring that locally focused skills and training opportunities are fully embedded in project delivery.
CCC-RR-62	10.2	Socio Economics	The applicant is advised to liaise with the Community Safety Partnerships relevant to the project area including Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership and Bedford Borough Community Safety Partnership to mitigate unintended consequences of the project on local communities.	The Applicant notes this comment.

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
CCC-RR-63	10.3, 10.4, 10.5	Socio Economics	The East Park Energy Consultation Report [APP-023] states in paragraph 6.7.17 that the applicant has yet to confirm which model will be used for the East Park Energy Legacy Fund but that they intend to increase the fund to a total £6.4million. This equates to £400/MW/Year. From the council's Communities Service perspective, any increase in the overall value of the fund is welcomed insofar as it increases the possibilities for community benefits. Offering the largest possible funding pot will provide increased opportunities for new community spaces and facilities. In comparing community benefit funds from energy producing projects, it is noted there is a large range. Scottish Government's Good Practice Principles for Community Benefits from Onshore Renewable Energy Developments suggests a level of £5,000/MW/Year. For large scale solar schemes, it is noted a number of local authorities in England advocate for community benefit funds to be based on £500/MW/year. The council notes that the applicant has consulted with the community about the model for the legacy fund, presenting three options for consideration: option A being a lump sum of £2million at the start of the project, option B being a lump sum of £1million at the start of the project with £75k per year of operation, and option C being £150k per year of operation with no lump sum. It is noted there was low levels of support for each of the three options (presented at 6.4.29 of the Consultation Report [APP-023]) and the council would suggest that this is indicative of overall ill-feeling towards the East Park Energy scheme rather than the	The Consultation Report [APP-023] explains that the Applicant has committed to increasing the total fund value to £400/MW/year and to working with local stakeholders to determine the most appropriate delivery model. The Applicant also notes the Council's comparison with other schemes and benchmarks, and welcomes the Council's acknowledgement that the proposed fund would provide meaningful opportunities for community benefit. The Applicant will engage with relevant stakeholders and establish a suitable governance and delivery model to provide for the distribution of funding as decided by the community.

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			community not wanting to secure a legacy fund at all, should the application be approved.	
CCC-RR-64	10.6	Socio Economics	The council request that Cambridgeshire County Council's Communities Service be engaged in the development of the proposed legacy fund, including: • the scope of the fund (type of projects that may be funded and their geographical location), • eligibility criteria for applicants, and • governance in terms of managing and administering the scheme, to support the communities most affected by East Park Energy.	The Applicant notes Cambridgeshire County Council's request and will engage with its Communities Service on the suggested matters when developing the proposed legacy fund.
CCC-RR-65	10.7	Socio Economics	The council proposes a working forum/steering group including representation from the other host authorities and believe this to be best practice. The forum would enable and empower communities to access the fund (through active promotion across the fund's geographical area) in addition to establishing the model and governance for the fund.	The Applicant notes this comment and is committed to working with such a working forum/steering group in relation to the legacy fund governance.
CCC-RR-66	10.8	Socio Economics	Whilst the procurement of material and supply of infrastructure is not detailed in the application, the council expects provenance in the purchase of materials used on site in order to be in full compliance with the Modern Slavery Act.	Ethical procurement is a key principle proposed in the outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan [APP-163] . The Applicant remains committed to ensuring that procurement for the Scheme will adhere to these policies and relevant legal requirements under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, and to reflecting any further detail in the Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan to be prepared in consultation with the relevant authorities.

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
CCC-RR-67	11.1	Climate Change	The council welcomes the embedded mitigation and enhancement measures identified that are incorporated into the project, and agree it is appropriate to consider these as implemented for the purposes of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Assessment (paragraphs 15.7 and 15.9.2). However, assurance that these measures do get implemented will be required. The council also acknowledges and welcomes the response to our previous comments regarding the statement that “no additional mitigation is required”, and we understand that this will be moderated with additional measures, to be developed during the detailed design phase.	Embedded mitigation measures identified in paragraph 15.7 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Climate Change [APP-051] have been incorporated into the outline construction, operational and decommissioning environmental management plans (oCEMP [APP-155], oOEMP [APP-157], and oDEMP [APP-158]). The management plans are secured by the DCO so compliance with them is a legal requirement, and non-compliance would be enforceable by the Local Planning Authorities. The additional mitigation measures in paragraph 15.9.2 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 15 Climate Change [APP-051] are in relation to reducing upstream embodied emissions and on-site construction emissions. These additional mitigation measures are also within Section 5 of the oCEMP [APP-155]5.
CCC-RR-68	11.2	Climate Change	The council welcomes the alternate comparator using current grid mix alongside displaced baseload gas fired Combined-Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT). Paragraph 15.8.19 highlights a significant range of offset benefit, and it is unclear which the applicant is presenting. The council strongly suggests the range rather than either figure individually is used going forward – this aids in transparency whilst acknowledging the limitations and challenges of each of the methodologies used.	The Applicant has noted this comment. No further actions required at present.
CCC-RR-69	11.3	Climate Change	The council welcomes the recognition of the potential of peat on site. (Paragraph 15.8.27). However, it is unclear from the statement what the intended approach will be should peat be identified. Halting the scheme “until a suitably qualified ecologist has inspected the Site” is welcomed, but the council would	The Applicant has undertaken soil surveys across the vast majority of the Site (as set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 13-1 [APP-115]) and has no reason to believe that peat would be present at any location within the Site.

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			like to understand what would happen next – for example, what is the ecologist inspecting for and what might be expected to change as a result. While this may have uncertainties, this should be incorporated into any Carbon Management Plan when developed, ideally including re-calculation of the scheme's carbon benefit.	As per paragraph 8.6.12 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 8 Hydrology and Flood Risk [APP-044] , online mapping indicates no peat is present at the site. In addition, the Natural England Peat Map does not indicate a likelihood of peat being present anywhere near the Site. In relation to future peat management should it be encountered unexpectedly, the Applicant has updated the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to commit to the preparation of a Peat Management Plan should peat be encountered on site following any further ground investigations.
CCC-RR-70	11.4	Climate Change	Climate Resilience (Paragraph 15.9.1) – the council agrees with the statement that “no additional mitigation is required” at this time. However, this should be kept under review through the lifespan of the project, should climate risks emerge or become more acute than is currently modelled.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes agreement with CCC on the scope of mitigation for climate resilience.
CCC-RR-71	12.1	Other Environmental Topics	The council acknowledges that the Scoping Opinion issued by the Planning Inspectorate (ES Vol 2 Appendix 4-2 [APP-065]) confirmed the assessment of likely significant effects in relation to human health did not require a standalone chapter within the ES. The council welcomes the assessment of the project's impacts on the established 'wider determinants of health' found in [APP-052] (6.1 Environmental Statement - Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics). The council would reiterate its preference for best practice usage of Health Impact Assessments for all proposed solar farms and all NSIP schemes. The comments below relate to [APP-052] Environmental	The Applicant notes this comment. Whilst a standalone Health Impact Assessment was scoped out of the ES, the Applicant has provided an assessment on the wider determinants of health within Section 16.2 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052] .

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
			Statement - Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics.	
CCC-RR-72	12.2, 12.3	Other Environmental Topics	Table 16.1 – PEIR consultation responses with respect to human health. This table implies mental health effects have been addressed in table 16.3 only. No specific form of Mental Health Assessment appears to be in place beyond that due to the agreed scoping. Again, the council still prefer to adhere to best practice approaches of a mental health assessment within or standalone to a Health Impact Assessment. The council welcomes the • Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) which has been prepared and is submitted as ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-7 ([APP-052]). • ES Vol 1 Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects ([APP-052]) The council welcomes Table 16.3 which reviews the Wider Determinants of Health of the scheme (as per the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Scoping Guidance). The table identifies the pathways that could exist between the Scheme and people, and how the health of people may be affected.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes support from CCC on the approach taken within Table 16.3 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052]. Mental wellbeing has been considered as part of the assessment within Section 16.2 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052], which considers potential impacts on both physical health and mental wellbeing. The purpose of Table 16.3 [APP-052] is to provide a consolidated assessment summary which identifies the potential pathways between the Scheme and people (including pathways relevant to mental wellbeing), signposts where those matters are assessed and mitigated within the topic chapters, and records the mitigation response and likely significance of health effects. The Applicant has considered potential mental health pathways (including stress, anxiety and worry) within the assessment, and has also ensured that the underlying determinants which may influence mental wellbeing are assessed and mitigated through the relevant topic chapters and control documents. Table 16.3 [APP-052] concludes that, while direct significant health effects are not anticipated, perceptions of construction-related disturbance may give rise to worry, stress or anxiety for those closest to activity, and identifies that good communications and proportionate complaints handling are part of the measures to avoid significant effects.

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
CCC-RR-73	12.4	Other Environmental Topics	Open space leisure and play states no health pathway. The council's Public Health Team would support the opportunity to deliver green corridors with Public Right of Way's (PROW) between scheme zones. These may be beneficial additions to visual amenity and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) thereby enhancing overall health benefits and adhering to Design Principle 2: The Scheme will be sensitive to landscape and views, and how people perceive the landscape and Design Principle 6 The Scheme will be sensitive to local amenity and human health both cited and broken down in detail in ES Chapter 5: Landscape and Visual [APP-041].	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant acknowledges that the Council supports the opportunity to deliver green corridors with the PROW. The Applicant notes there is no disagreement on this matter, but for clarity the Applicant notes the conclusion that no specific health pathway has been identified to this wider determinant of health reflects the conclusion that the Scheme does not result in the loss of, or restriction to, formal open space, leisure or play facilities. The assessment of such recreation-related health pathways is instead captured through the 'physical activity' determinant in Table 16.3 [APP-052] (which addresses availability and accessibility of Public Rights of Way (PROW) and how any temporary closures or diversions would be managed).
CCC-RR-74	12.5	Other Environmental Topics	Community Safety states no health pathway. The Council would consider that the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated management should be classified in this pathway. However, the Council note that paragraph 16.4.13 [APP-052] does discuss the fire risk and 16.4.14 [APP-052] notes the Outline Battery Safety Management Plan (OBSMP) ([APP-162]). The OBSMP and ultimately BSMP are critical in ensuring appropriate mitigations in the event of a failure, environmental risks (leakage and emissions) and relevant emergency response. BESS failure and fire pose a risk to human health and therefore community safety.	The Applicant does not disagree that, were a BESS fire to occur, it could have the potential to affect human health without effective mitigation. However, a BESS fire is not an effect anticipated to arise during the normal operation of the Scheme. It is an unlikely event risk which is properly considered under the separate assessment of Major Accidents and Disasters (Section 16.4 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052]). The Applicant considers that where Table 16.3 [APP-052] records that no health pathway has been identified for 'community safety', this remains appropriate because the assessment in Table 16.3 is intended to capture pathways that may reasonably occur through the Scheme's construction and normal operation, and how those pathways influence health.

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CCC-RR-75	12.6	Other Environmental Topics	Community identity, culture, resilience and influence noted as no health pathway. The council welcomes the applicant's commitment to setting up a Community Liaison Group at the outset of construction noted in table 16.1 response [APP-052]. It is essential to safeguard against potential health inequalities and keep all stakeholders ongoingly accountable to approved standards of practice.	The Applicant notes this comment.
CCC-RR-76	12.7	Other Environmental Topics	Under the consideration of Community Resilience, the council notes that cumulative impacts have been identified as addressed between 16.2 ES Vol 1 Chapter 16: Other Environmental Topics [APP-052] and in the in ES Vol 1 Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [APP-053].	The Applicant notes this comment.
CCC-RR-77	12.8	Other Environmental Topics	The council supports the proposed planting that will be introduced to mitigate for visual effects in the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (OLEMP) [APP-159].	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes the Council's support for the proposed planting to mitigate for visual effects, as set out in the oLEMP [APP-159] .
CCC-RR-78	12.9	Other Environmental Topics	The council also supports the best practice controls (dust suppression, noise barriers, restricted working hours, etc.) to minimise nuisance at source as identified in the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (OOEMP) [APP-157].	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes the Council's support for the mitigation measures to minimise nuisance at source, as set out in the oOEMP [APP-157] .
CCC-RR-79	12.10	Other Environmental Topics	Health inequalities are affected by land use projects in both the short and long term. The food landscape we are living in locally has the potential to have reduced accessibility, quality and security. Circa 768ha of farmable land is repurposed for the lifecycle of the development – however agrivoltaics (and regenerative agricultural practices) would improve that and set a	The Applicant welcomes the Council's comment on this matter.

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			precedent in the county for biosolar developments on high quality farmland, when said land has to be utilised due to other constraints. Agrivoltaic practices are growing, please note neighbouring Essex's guidance Site Selection and Agri-Environmental Practices Essex Design Guide. The Council welcomes, as set out in Environmental Statement Vol 1 Chapter 2: The Scheme [APP-038]) that the applicant has partnered with Rothamsted Research (an agricultural research college) to deliver an 'Agrisolar Research Area' within East Park Site D to further understanding of how agriculture and solar development can co-exist on commercial solar installations.	
CCC-RR-80	12.11	Other Environmental Topics	The council notes that the applicant has sought to avoid the use of high-quality agricultural land, including that which is classified as 'best and most versatile', where possible when developing their proposals. However, there are various constraints, including the general high quality of farmland in the area, the need to remain within 15km of their agreed connection point at Eaton Socon substation, and the topography/nature of some land within their search area, which means that their proposals do still involve building solar infrastructure on some high-quality farmland.	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant is in agreement with the constraints set out by CCC, as set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 3-1 Site Identification Report [APP-058] .
CCC-RR-81	12.12	Other Environmental Topics	Beyond food insecurity, converting agricultural land to non-food land uses can exacerbate health inequalities through economic marginalisation, psychosocial stress, loss of community cohesion, environmental injustice, and unequal distribution of the benefits of green transitions. With regard to this, solar energy development will reduce carbon emissions and provide clean energy.	The Applicant notes this comment.

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CCC-RR-82	12.13	Other Environmental Topics	In terms of health impact the council acknowledges that impacts from dust and vehicle emissions primarily in the construction phase have been addressed by best practice mitigation methods and detailed in the OCEMP [APP-155].	The Applicant notes this comment.
CCC-RR-83	12.14	Other Environmental Topics	In table 16.3 [APP-052] a note or link back to the management process of potential leachate following a fire of the BESS would be useful, with regards to water run-off as noted in paragraph 16.4.15 [APP-052].	In relation to firewater and the protection of watercourses and groundwater, paragraph 16.4.15 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052] explains that, consistent with NFCC guidance, the BESS compound would be designed with an impermeable surface so that any run-off can be directed to a retention basin, and that in the event of a fire an automatic sluice would be operated to isolate the basin and prevent run-off leaving the Site so that it can be collected and treated appropriately. This approach is reflected in the draft DCO [AS-008] description of Work No. 6B, which includes a surface water retention basin together with an isolation valve and control systems. The outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [APP-165] provides further detail on this containment strategy, confirming that the impermeable BESS and substation compound would direct run-off to the retention lagoon, and that an actuated sluice gate integrated with the BESS fire detection system is proposed to isolate the lagoon and prevent contaminated run-off leaving the Site, enabling contaminated run-off to be contained for appropriate collection and treatment. Paragraph 4.5.7 of the oBSMP [APP-162] sets out how this is to be managed in an incident scenario. It confirms as a safety objective that firewater run-off is to be contained and

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				tested before release, or, if necessary, removed by tanker and treated offsite.
CCC-RR-84	12.15, 12.16, 12.17	Other Environmental Topics	The council acknowledges in [APP-052], paragraph 16.5.1 the grid connections between the East Park substation and the Eaton Socon Substation are rated at 400 kV and therefore in accordance with the Department of Energy and Climate Change Power Lines: Demonstrating compliance with Electromagnetic Fields (EMFs) public exposure guidelines, A Voluntary Code of Practice 201228 have the potential to cause adverse impacts as a result of EMFs. The council welcomes 16.5.3 compliance with International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) guidance exposure limits, which is 360 microteslas (µT), which is regarded as protective of human health. The council also notes that cabling is buried underground removing the electric field exposure and as stated in 16.5.6 that the maximum magnetic field exposure is considerably lower than the UK exposure limit.	The Applicant notes this comment.
CCC-RR-85	12.18	Other Environmental Topics	Beyond the determinants cited in table 16.3, two further considerations to include: • Efficiencies - National Policy Statement EN-1 places significant weight on the need for the efficient use of land and for adverse impacts of energy infrastructure to be avoided, mitigated or minimised where reasonably practicable. In parallel, EN-3 (Renewable Energy Infrastructure) emphasises that the scale of renewable energy development should be	<u>Efficiencies</u> In terms of the proposed land take, the Applicant's design work has been undertaken with reference to the typical land use guidance in NPS EN-3. Paragraph 5.6.4 of the Design Approach Document [APP-034] sets out that the land identified for the solar generating station (Work No. 1) covers approximately 446 hectares (1,102 acres), which equates to approximately 2.75 acres per MW for a 400 MW

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
			proportionate to its generating capacity and that applicants should demonstrate that land take has been minimised wherever possible. In this context, the council would like clarification that the proposed solar farm does reflect best-available or near best-available panel efficiencies. Given the rapid pace of technological advancement in solar photovoltaics, this could result in a development that is more land-intensive than necessary, locking in sub-optimal efficiency for the operational lifetime of the project. While such an approach may remain commercially acceptable to the applicant, it has implications for the effective use of land, for local communities, and potential follow-on health effects, as these are large areas that are required to achieve a given level of output. There is also the consideration of maintenance and possible upgrading of hardware such as panels over the lifecycle of the development and ensuring that those remain efficient too. • Accountability and enforcement - It is essential to safeguard against potential health inequalities and keep all stakeholders ongoingly accountable to approved standards of practice.	Scheme. This is consistent with the guidelines at paragraph 2.10.17 of NPS EN-3 which notes a typical solar farm requires between 2 to 4 acres for each MW of output. The Applicant has yet to commit to a specific panel technology within the application and is instead maintaining flexibility as set out at paragraph 2.3.2 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038]. The Applicant can confirm that the indicative design assessed has been based on utilising 690 watt solar panels, as per paragraph 5.6.5 of the Design Approach Document [APP-034]. If higher generation capacity and efficiency panels become available and are commercially viable, the Applicant has ensured that there is flexibility within the draft DCO [AS-008] to install them as part of the Scheme. The EIA has also been undertaken on a reasonable 'worst case' basis in relation to panel density. By way of example, the ES assumes the minimum pitch of 7.5m between rows as this produces the densest scheme with the highest number of panels (Table 2-1 [APP-038]). This means the land use and associated effects have been assessed on a conservative basis, and the final detailed design can adopt more efficient modules without creating a more land intensive scheme than has been assessed. This approach is supported by footnote 92 of NPS EN-3. <u>Accountability and Enforcement</u> The Applicant agrees that ongoing accountability is important. The Scheme is structured so that the detailed design, construction, operation and decommissioning are controlled through DCO

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
				Requirements and certified control documents, with approval and oversight by the relevant planning authority and, where applicable, other relevant bodies. For construction, operation and decommissioning, the monitoring, compliance and corrective action framework is set out in the relevant outline management plans (which are required to be converted into final plans before the relevant phases). By way of example, Section 7 of the oCEMP [APP-155] requires monitoring, inspection and auditing to ensure compliance, with logging and records available for inspection on request by the relevant LPA. It also includes a structured approach to logging and reviewing complaints.
CCC-RR-86	13.1	Cumulative Effects	The council considers the cumulative visual impact of this scheme in conjunction with existing and planned solar schemes in the local area, particularly near to site D to be a key concern. Whilst landscape and visual is a matter for Huntingdonshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council highlights the importance of this topic. We therefore refer to Huntingdonshire's Relevant Representation that questions the conclusion by the applicant of there being a non-significant effect on Huntingdonshire Local Character Area (LCA).	The Applicant notes Cambridgeshire County Council's comment regarding cumulative visual effects, and notes that landscape and visual matters are principally addressed through Huntingdonshire District Council's detailed review. The Applicant refers to its responses to HDC-RR-02 and HDC-RR-03 which address the LVIA conclusions for the relevant LCAs and the approach taken to determining significance.
CCC-RR-87	14.2	Draft DCO	Schedule 2, Requirements, there is repeated reference made to 'the local planning authority'. However, in most instances there will be two local planning authorities, as the project crosses administrative boundaries. Furthermore, in Cambridgeshire there is a	The Applicant is conscious that the Authorised Development crosses administrative boundaries and has defined the term "local planning authority" within article 2(1) of the draft DCO accordingly. The term

Our Ref.	CCC Ref.	Theme	CCC Comments	Applicant Response
			two-tier system with Cambridgeshire County Council and Huntingdonshire District Council both acting as host authorities for the project. For the purposes of clarity, each requirement that currently states, ‘the local planning authority’, should make clear the authority or authorities to receive and approve submissions. The council acknowledges that Local Government Reorganisation would lead to a single tier structure. Notwithstanding this, the matter of cross border would remain (between Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire), and so clarity is needed regarding which authority each requirement applies to.	“local planning authority” in Schedule 2, and throughout the draft DCO, should be read as: <i>“[...] the local planning authority (as defined in section 336 of the [Town and Country Planning Act 1990]) for the area to which the provision relates”.</i> The Applicant considers that this approach is appropriate as it allows the relevant local planning authority to be identified at the relevant time by reference to section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This approach is consistent with that taken in The Oaklands Farm Solar Park Order 2025, which relates to a site lying within both South Derbyshire District Council and Derbyshire County Council administrative areas. It is considered that if the Applicant were to identify the relevant local planning authority by name in each case as CCC suggest, this would unnecessarily complicate the draft DCO. Moreover, as noted in CCC’s representation there is the potential for local government reorganisation, which would mean that the draft DCO would also need to account for a situation where the role of the local planning authority passes to a successor organisation. Based on the above, the Applicant’s intention is to retain its existing drafting within the draft DCO.

3.0 RESPONSES TO STATUTORY ENVIRONMENTAL BODIES

3.1 Response to Historic England

Table 4: Response to Historic England Relevant Representation (RR-491)

Ref.	HE Theme	HE Comments	Applicant Response
HE-RR-01	The Proposal	We can confirm that the applicant has undertaken extensive pre-application archaeological evaluations to confirm base line information. This is to be commended. The investigations undertaken so far covered majority of the Order limits; however, certain areas have not been fully evaluated, which we acknowledge.	Historic England's position regarding trial trenching is noted and welcomed by the Applicant. The proposals for archaeological investigations that are yet to be undertaken are set out in Section 5.0 of the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (oAMS) (APP 166) and comprise additional non-intrusive survey and further phases of evaluation trial trenching, targeted at areas that were not accessible or not fully sampled prior to submission of the DCO. As set out in the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (oAMS) (APP 166) the additional (second phase) evaluation trial trenching exercise is to be undertaken in areas where geophysical survey has been completed but has not been sampled or not sampled fully during the pre-application period. These areas include the cable corridors between East Park Site B to C and East Park Site C to D, the Grid Connection Route, two fields in Site B (sub-areas B25 and B29), and one field in Site D (sub-area D02). The overall aim is to establish more accurately the presence or absence of archaeologically significant remains so that the mitigation measures can be applied appropriately, with the number and locations of trenches to be agreed in consultation with the relevant historic environment teams.

Ref.	HE Theme	HE Comments	Applicant Response
HE-RR-02	General Comments	It was agreed during the scoping and PEIR process that detailed assessment of the impact of the proposal upon the historic environment would be required, and that the effects of the scheme could potentially be significant.	The Applicant notes this comment. A comprehensive assessment has been carried out to establish whether the Scheme has the potential to give rise to significant environmental effects on the historic environment. This is assessed in ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042] .
HE-RR-03	General Comments	In order to provide an effective mitigation strategy, all heritage assets, including designated and non-designated assets and other known archaeological sites within the Order limits, need to be fully assessed. This is so that the significance and value can be determined and assigned. Mitigation would need to be appropriate and proportionate to the asset's significance.	The Applicant notes this comment and highlights that an assessment of all heritage assets (including non-designated assets, designated assets and known archaeological sites) is reported in ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042] alongside its supporting appendices [APP-080] to [APP-090]. The proposed mitigation strategy is outlined in section 6.9 of Chapter 6 of the ES [APP-042] with more detail contained within the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy [APP-166]. The Applicant is committed to further archaeological research and investigation prior to construction of the Scheme, which in the first instance would involve the second phase of trial trenching which, as outlined in paragraph 5.3.1 of the outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy [APP-166] 'would be undertaken in line with archaeological brief jointly issued by CHET and BBHET'. It is understood that the oAMS [APP-166] will require multiple reviews alongside the Scheme design dependant on the results of further archaeological works. A final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO

Ref.	HE Theme	HE Comments	Applicant Response
			[AS-008] . The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
HE-RR-04	General Comments	Heritage sensitivity is acknowledged in the Environmental Statement (ES) which also confirms the proposal will impact upon a wide range of heritage receptors both designated and undesignated. The baseline and assessment are clearly set out in the Desk Based Assessment and Cultural Heritage and Archaeology chapter of the ES. The ES also identifies likely significant effects.	The Applicant notes and welcomes the comments that heritage sensitivity has been acknowledged within the ES, that the baseline and assessment are clearly set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 6-2 Desk Based Assessment [APP-081] and ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 [APP-042] .
HE-RR-05	General Comments	Based on the available information the applicant has provided an appropriate assessment of the location, type and significance of designated and undesignated heritage assets. Heritage receptors have therefore been considered in the design of the scheme, and a robust approach to mitigation has been proposed.	The Applicant notes and welcomes the comment that heritage receptors have been considered in the design of the scheme and that a robust approach to mitigation has been proposed.
HE-RR-06	Impacts	The scheduled monument has been retained within Order Limits and certain construction works are proposed within its boundaries. Sites C and D also form a part of its wider setting. The project does however also include important enhancement measures aimed at ensuring long-term preservation of the designated site and improvements to its management. We will therefore provide further comment upon the impact of the proposed project on the significance of this scheduled monument.	The Applicant notes this comment.
HE-RR-07	Impacts	We will also comment upon the impact of the project upon the significance of the following scheduled monuments: 'Roman site, Rushey Farm' (NHLE 1006866); 'Two bowl barrows 900m and 1000m east of Old Manor Farm'	The Applicant notes this comment.

Ref.	HE Theme	HE Comments	Applicant Response
		(NHLE 1020486); 'The Old Manor House, Cretingsbury: a motte castle and moated manor house' (NHLE 1009590).	
HE-RR-08	Impacts	As certain areas within Order limits have not been fully assessed through archaeological evaluation, there is still potential that previously unknown archaeological sites which are of equivalent value to a designated heritage asset could be identified. The DCO would need to contain provisions for further evaluation prior to commencement of the development, revision of assessment of impact, and proportionate mitigation as necessary. We will provide further comments on this matter in our written representation.	The draft DCO [AS-008] includes specific pre-commencement controls that provide for further archaeological evaluation and for mitigation to be agreed (and implemented) in a proportionate way, based upon the evaluation findings. The main mechanism in this regard is Requirement 15 (Archaeology) in Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the draft DCO [AS-008]. Requirement 15(1) provides that no phase of the authorised development, and no part of the site preparation works for that phase, can commence until an archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for that phase has been submitted to and approved by the relevant local planning authority in consultation with the county archaeologist . This is the provision through which further archaeological evaluation and investigation prior to commencement is secured. Requirement 15(3) then requires that the archaeological works carried out under the approved WSI must include post-excavation analysis, reporting, publication and archiving. In parallel, Requirement 15(4) provides that no phase (and no part of the site preparation works for that phase) may commence until an archaeological mitigation strategy for that phase has been approved. This must be in substantial accordance with the outline archaeological mitigation strategy and approved in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England. Requirement

Ref.	HE Theme	HE Comments	Applicant Response
			15(5) then requires that the mitigation strategy must be implemented as approved . Thus, the main provisions Historic England have identified in their representation are already provided for in Requirement 15 of the draft DCO [AS-008].
HE-RR-09	Impacts	Regarding historic built environment our main concerns relate to the impact upon the setting of the following heritage assets: Church of St Mary the Virgin, Keysoe (listed grade I), Church of All Saints, Little Staughton (listed grade I), Great Staughton Conservation Area.	The Applicant notes this comment and has provided further response to this in response to comment HE-RR-10 below.
HE-RR-10	Impacts	We note that the applicant recognises the importance of these heritage assets and the potential for the proposed development to impact upon their significance. We also welcome provision of an updated landscape and visual assessment and further analysis in the ES. However, we observe that the analysis of the setting of the churches seems to concentrate mainly on views towards the spires and omits any meaningful analysis of views from the church and churchyards. We will comment on the listed buildings and conservation area in greater detail in our formal written representation in due course.	The Applicant welcomes the comment that the importance of the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Keysoe (listed grade I), Church of All Saints, Little Staughton (listed grade I) and Great Staughton Conservation Area has been recognised within the assessment. The Applicant respectfully disagrees with HE's suggestion that there has been no meaningful analysis of views from the churches and churchyards. The Applicant highlights that the setting assessment (ES Vol 2 Appendix 6-4: Settings Impact Assessment [APP-083]) was completed with reference to observations made during site visits to these churches and churchyards and with reference to supporting visualisations which highlight the likely visibility of the Scheme in views taken from them. The Applicant will provide further detailed response to the formal written representation once received.
HE-RR-11	Impacts	Historic England recognises that as a result of this project there are going to be changes to the setting of designated heritage assets. In some cases, these changes would result in a significant effect. The implementation of the	The Applicant notes this comment.

Ref.	HE Theme	HE Comments	Applicant Response
		proposed mitigation would reduce the level of impact and therefore heritage harm, however residual effects are likely to remain. We are keen to ensure that adequate mitigation to reduce impacts is appropriately secured in the DCO and accompanying documents, so magnitude of impacts to the designated heritage assets is minimised. Further advice will therefore be offered through our Written Representation in relation to the designated heritage assets affected by the scheme, and on the proposed mitigation and enhancements measures.	
HE-RR-12	Impacts	We are also aware the development will result in a range of potentially significant impacts on a number of non-designated heritage assets and archaeological sites. We will not be commenting on this matter in detail and will defer to the LPA and their expert and specialist advisors.	The Applicant notes that HE will not be commenting on this matter.
HE-RR-13	Draft DCO	We understand that it is intention of the applicant to include in the DCO the provision for undertaking works within the scheduled monument known as 'Roman Small Town south of Great Staughton', which would ordinarily require Scheduled Monuments Consent under Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (Document 5.5 Other Consents and Licences Statement [APP-033]). This provision is however not contained in the draft DCO at the moment. We will seek further reassurances and a commitment from the applicant to ensure that appropriate wording addressing the matter is in place. We would also want to ensure that Historic England are specifically included as consultees in this part of the process.	It is correct that the Applicant intends to carry out works in proximity to the scheduled monument known as 'Roman Small Town south of Great Staughton'. However, the Applicant's position is that it is not necessary for the draft DCO to provide for the grant of scheduled monument consent under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. The Applicant notes that section 33(1)(f) of the Planning Act 2008 states that: <i>“(1) To the extent that development consent is required for development, none of the following is required to be obtained for the development or given in relation to it—</i> <i>[...]</i>

Ref.	HE Theme	HE Comments	Applicant Response
			<i>(f) to the extent that the development relates to land in England, consent under section 2(3) or 3 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979” [...].</i> As such, it is the Applicant's position that it is not necessary to obtain a separate consent under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, or to provide for the grant of such consent within the draft DCO itself. If Historic England have any residual concerns around this point the Applicant would be willing to discuss them.
HE-RR-14	Draft DCO	Additionally, in the event of the project being consented, we would want to ensure that there is adequate mitigation and enhancement, and that this is appropriately secured through the consent order. We will therefore be providing comments and recommendations on the DCO wording, specifically Requirement 15 – Archaeology, and Requirement 16 – Heritage Enhancement. We will also comment on an Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and Outline Heritage Enhancement Strategy documents in our written representation.	The Applicant notes this comment.
HE-RR-15	Specialist Science Advice	Although the applicant has provided a good overall level of documentation for the DCO application, some information is in interim form and other material remains outstanding. This information mainly relates to geophysical surveys and archaeological trial trenching.	The Applicant will review Historic England's comments and suggested changes upon receipt of their Written Representation. Whilst it is acknowledged that some information is in interim form, it is the Applicants case that sufficient assessment work and mitigation strategies have been undertaken / prepared to:

Ref.	HE Theme	HE Comments	Applicant Response
		We will be providing more details comments on this part of the DCO, as well as the Outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy and the approach to mitigation	• reach conclusions on the Scheme's potential to give rise to significant environmental effects on buried archaeology; • to identify where such significant effects are likely; and • to develop a coherent archaeological mitigation strategy.

3.2 Response to Natural England

Table 5: Response to Natural England Relevant Representation (AS-023)

Ref.	NE Theme	NE Comments	Applicant Response
NE-RR-01	Internationally designated sites	Natural England would encourage the project to use a more precautionary buffer zone of at least 10m. Currently, it is set at 6m, as shown in chapter 7, 7.8.98. These buffer zones should ensure they are along prominent bat flight paths. Natural England welcome discussion with the applicant surrounding potential bat mitigation.	The Applicant notes this comment but intends to retain the existing proposed minimum buffer of 6m to hedgerows, which is considered by the Applicant to provide an adequate buffer and a minimum 12m wildlife corridor along any hedgerow. The inclusion of the 6m buffer would result in no significant adverse effects to bats, and the Applicant notes Natural England's agreement that the Scheme will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of internationally designated sites.
NE-RR-02	Nationally designated sites	While Natural England agree with the conclusion of the assessment of impacts to SSSIs, we encourage the applicant to give the same weight of importance and thus management and mitigation to non statutory designated sites, as they would statutory designated sites.	The Applicant notes this comment, however considers up to County value is appropriate importance for non-statutory designated sites receptors.
NE-RR-03	Protected species	It is understood that the applicant will be seeking our advice relating to potential Great Crested Newts. Natural England has not received submission of for draft protected species licence applications review.	The Applicant has submitted a draft licence application to Natural England in February 2026 to gain a 'letter of no impediment'. The Applicant will submit this letter into the examination once received.
NE-RR-04	Other valuable and sensitive habitats and species, landscapes and access routes	You should consider the impacts of the proposed development on any local wildlife or geodiversity site, in line with paragraphs 5.4.34 and 5.4.36 of the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-1). Natural England does not hold locally specific information on local sites and recommends further information is obtained from appropriate bodies such as the local	The Applicant notes Natural England's comments. ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 Ecology and Nature Conservation [APP-043] has been informed by a desk study including local biological record centre data and considers impacts on priority habitats and species.

Ref.	NE Theme	NE Comments	Applicant Response
		environmental records centre, wildlife trust, geoconservation groups or recording societies. Those habitats and species which are of particular importance for nature conservation are included as 'priority habitats and species' in the England Biodiversity List published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.	
NE-RR-05	Biodiversity net gain	We welcome the commitment to delivering BNG on this project and recognise that the BNG gain for both habitats and hedgerows are ambitious. While we recognise the shortfall in BNG for watercourse may be due to metric and or assessment, Natural England have no advice to make on this matter. We recommend that the target increase in BNG of 10% across all biodiversity unit types is secured by a suitably worded requirement in the DCO.	The Applicant welcomes Natural England's acknowledgement of the Scheme's ambitious proposals for biodiversity net gain. BNG for this Scheme is not mandatory. The Applicant has amended the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159] to provide the commitment to achieving biodiversity net gains. Requirement 4 of the draft DCO [AS-008] secures that a final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan in substantial accordance with the oLEMP is agreed with the LPA prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development. The Applicant is committed to providing biodiversity net gains, and considers this approach adequately secures the Applicant's proposed BNG, and that a separate additional Requirement in the draft DCO is not necessary. It is noted that Natural England does not intend to comment further on this matter.
NE-RR-06	Nationally designated landscapes	The proposed development is not located within, or within the setting of any nationally designated landscapes. As a result, Natural England has no specific comments to make on the landscape implications of the development. The examining authority should have regard for the landscape character of the area; we welcome reference to Natural England's National Character Areas and other Local	The Applicant notes Natural England's comments, including that the Scheme is not within, or within the setting of, any nationally designated landscape, and welcomes Natural England's confirmation that it therefore has no specific landscape comments. The Applicant also notes Natural England's emphasis on landscape character

Ref.	NE Theme	NE Comments	Applicant Response
		Landscape Character Assessments within ES Chapter 5. We would also like to stress the importance of cumulative landscape impacts from the development.	and cumulative effects, which is fully addressed in ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 [APP-041] .
NE-RR-07	Soils and best and most versatile agricultural land	It is welcomed that a more detailed ALC survey has been undertaken across the main Site. Chapter 13 (Land and Soils) states that soil profiles were taken at a density of one per 2 hectares across more of the site. Where land is provisionally mapped as ALC Grade 4 or 5 and supported by evidence of a homogeneous soil type across the site (for example, a uniform clay soil), survey density may be reduced to one observation per 2 hectares in line with best practice. However, where land is provisionally mapped as ALC Grade 3, survey intensity should be sufficient to enable robust differentiation between Subgrade 3a (Best and Most Versatile land) and Subgrade 3b, typically requiring a minimum density of one observation per hectare or greater where variability is identified. In all cases, survey intensity should be increased as necessary to accurately define BMV boundaries and to characterise the full range of soil types and limitations present. Where a detailed ALC survey is not proposed across the full site, it is expected that the consultant provides clear and well-evidenced justification demonstrating that the proposed survey coverage is adequate to support reliable land quality classification and subgrade determination in accordance with the Defra Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites.	The agricultural land survey approach, including the sampling density, is set out in ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 Land and Soils [APP-049], supported by ES Vol 2 Appendix 13-1 Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources [APP-115]. ES Chapter 13 explains at paragraph 13.4.6 [APP-049] that sampling was undertaken at a density of one survey point per two hectares across most of the Site and at one survey point per hectare in areas of potentially greater impact, including the BESS, on-site substation, construction compounds and cable corridors. As set out in paragraph 13.3.5 [APP-049], following statutory consultation, the Applicant undertook further consultation with Natural England on the scope of the ALC survey, and explains the rationale for adopting a proportionate approach to survey density at paragraphs 13.5.1 to 13.5.2 [APP-049]. The Applicant considers that whilst the approach taken to classifying soils is robust and appropriate for planning and EIA purposes, further survey data would be required post-consent to inform a final detailed soil management strategy. The Applicant has updated the oSMP [as updated alongside this submission] to state under paragraph 8.1.4 that: <i>“Further agricultural land classification and soil resource surveys will be undertaken post-consent and prior to commencement of construction to inform the detailed Soil Management Plan. This will include surveying any land currently identified as ‘Ungraded’ due to access limitations, and undertaking additional survey work across the remainder of the Order</i>

Ref.	NE Theme	NE Comments	Applicant Response
			<i>limits to achieve an observation density of approximately one survey point per hectare. The results of these surveys will be used to validate ALC grading and to refine the detailed SMP measures for stripping, segregation, storage and reinstatement of soils."</i>
NE-RR-08	Ancient woodland and ancient/veteran trees	Natural England advise that impacts on ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees should be considered in line with paragraph 180 of the NPPF. Natural England and the Forestry Commission have also produced standing advice for planning authorities in relation to ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees.	The Applicant has assessed the impacts of the Scheme on ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees within ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 Arboricultural Impact Assessment [APP-056]. The potential environmental effects of the scheme on these features are provided within ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 Ecology and Nature Conservation [APP-043]. In terms of ancient woodland, the Arboricultural Assessment [APP-056] and ES Chapter 7 [APP-043] confirm that there are no ancient woodland parcels within the Order limits, ancient woodland is only present adjacent to the Order Limits (Huntingdon Wood ancient woodland and CWS). However, the assessment does establish that there are 18 veteran trees and a further five trees with veteran features within the Order limits. ES Chapter 7 [APP-43] confirms that the Scheme has been designed such that ancient and irreplaceable tree habitat (including ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) would not be affected and that no trees would need to be removed to facilitate its development. Measures to ensure this are also proposed within the oCEMP [APP-155] to ensure the protection of trees during the construction phase. ES Chapter 7 [APP-43] concludes that there would be no significant residual adverse effects on ancient woodland

Ref.	NE Theme	NE Comments	Applicant Response
			during either the construction, operation or decommissioning phases of the Scheme.
NE-RR-09	Connecting people with nature	We recognise the oLEMP's commitment to provide and maintain new permissive walking routes as well as the consideration of impacts to open space, leisure and play in section 3.4 [EN010141/DR/7.7]. We look forward to further working with the applicant to input into access provision, connecting people with nature, and designing access provision to minimise impacts to biodiversity.	The Applicant notes this comment.
NE-RR-10	Draft DCO	DCO Requirement 7: Natural England request to be consulted on the soil management plan prior to authorised development.	The Applicant has amended Requirement 7(1) of the draft DCO [AS-008] to confirm that Natural England must be consulted on the final Soil Management Plan prior to approval by the relevant LPA.

3.3 Response to Environment Agency

Table 6: Response to Environment Agency Relevant Representation (RR-367)

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
EA001	Draft Development Consent Order [APP-016] <i>Schedule 2 Requirement 9</i>	Issue: The Environment Agency is not mentioned as a named consultee for the draft Requirement 9 Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP).	The Applicant is content for the Environment Agency to be consulted on the final Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) before it is approved by the local planning authority. The Applicant has amended Requirement 9 of the draft DCO [as updated alongside this submission] to include the Environment Agency as a consultee.
		Impact: Impacts may not be appropriately managed through the operation phase	
		Solution: The Environment Agency should be listed as a named consultee on the discharge of Requirement 9.	
EA002	Draft Development Consent Order [APP-016] <i>Schedule 2 Requirement 10</i>	Issue: The Environment Agency is not mentioned as a named consultee for the draft Requirement 10 Battery Safety Management Plan (BSMP).	The Applicant is content for the Environment Agency to be consulted on the final Battery Safety Management Plan (BSMP) before it is approved by the local planning authority. The Applicant has amended Requirement 10 of the draft DCO [as updated alongside this submission] to include the Environment Agency as a consultee.
		Impact: Potential impacts to controlled waters.	
		Solution: The Environment Agency should be listed as a named consultee on the of Requirement 10, so that we can ensure that potential risks to controlled waters are mitigated.	
EA003	Draft Development Consent Order [APP-016] <i>Schedule 2 Requirement 14</i>	Issue: The Environment Agency is not mentioned as a named consultee for the draft Requirement 14, the Surface Water Management plan (SWMP).	The Applicant is content for the Environment Agency to be consulted on the final Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) before it is approved by the local planning authority. The Applicant has amended Requirement 14 of the draft DCO [as updated alongside this submission] to include the Environment Agency as a consultee.
		Impact: Potential impacts to controlled waters.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Solution: The Environment Agency should be listed as a named consultee on Requirement 14, so that we can ensure that potential risks to controlled waters are mitigated.	submission] to include the Environment Agency as a consultee.
EA004	Draft Development Consent Order [APP-016] <i>Protective Provisions</i>	Issue: Environment Agency protective provisions have been included within the Draft DCO.	The Applicant would require a Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP) to cover cable trenching works on the approach to Crossing C01 of the Pertenhall Brook, which is a Main River. The Applicant is seeking to disapply Regulation 12 (requirement for environmental permit) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 in respect of a flood risk activity only. This is included in Article 8(1) of the draft DCO. The Applicant requires the consent of the Environment Agency to disapply this provision and protective provisions in favour of the Environment Agency have been included in Part 4 of Schedule 13 to the draft DCO. Any consent given by the Environment Agency will be subject to the obligations included in these protective provisions. The Applicant is awaiting comments from the Environment Agency on the proposed protective provisions included at Part 4 of Schedule 13 to the draft DCO.
		Impact: Non-compliance with legislation.	
		Solution: Detailed information is required to determine if the applicant would like to proceed with the disapplication of legislation or apply for of Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAPs).	
		Additional Comments: The Environmental Permitting Regulations include exempt activities which do not require a full Flood Risk Activity Permit. These include an exemption for ' <i>service crossings attached to the outside of existing structures over a main river (FRA4)</i> '. If this exemption is to be applied, the applicant would need to confirm the proposed activity complies with the conditions set out online	
EA005	ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038]	Issue: We request to understand if there are Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substance (PFAS) in the manufacturing materials or in any anti-reflective coating applied to the solar panels.	Solar PV Modules The Applicant has not yet gone through a procurement process for the solar panels or any anti-reflective coating either 'built-in' or applied to the solar panels. The Applicant will include
		Impact: PFAS are 'forever chemicals' that will negatively affect water quality.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Solution: Check with panel manufacturers if the materials used have any PFAS risk. Make a commitment to use materials that are PFAS free. If panels containing PFAS are used, consideration must be given in the Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) and outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP). Additional Comments: PFAS and Solar PV Modules Solar PV Modules are described as “photovoltaic cells beneath a layer of toughened glass” and using “anti-reflective coating”. In our PEIR response we asked for clarification in Chapter 2 if the anti-reflective coating of panels would be PFAS-free Some anti-reflective coatings contain PFAS or other “forever chemicals” which can have a negative impact on the environment. Risk from PFAS can be increased during washing to keep them clean, for maximum efficiency of energy generation. If the PFAS coating is damaged there is a risk of persistent chemicals entering the natural environment during heavy rainfall, washing, maintenance, and removal. The oEMP should also incorporate measures to minimise the risk of panel coatings becoming damaged via ‘thermal shock’ such as if cleaned whilst at a high temperature due to prolonged exposure to sunlight. We have a strong preference toward coatings which are free from PFAS to prevent contamination of the controlled water environment. PFAS and Drilling Activities The applicant should ensure that any bentonite used for trenchless drilling, or elsewhere in the scheme, has not been treated with chemicals containing PFAS. Fuel, oils and other chemicals, such as	PFAS risk as a selection criterion during the procurement process and will seek to avoid PFAS-use in solar panels where practicable. The EA note that the oOEMP should incorporate measures to minimise risk of panel coatings becoming damaged during cleaning, including as a result of ‘thermal shock’. The Applicant notes that control measures for the cleaning of solar panels are set out at paragraphs 2.4.11 to 2.4.14 of the oOEMP [APP-157] and include that a soft-rotating brush will be used, and that no chemical agents will be used for panel cleaning. Paragraph 2.4.14 [APP-157] sets out that panel cleaning will typically take place at night or when the panels are cool, reducing the risk of damage to the panels. The Applicant will confirm the precise panels to be used at the detailed design stage pursuant to Requirement 3 of the draft DCO [AS-008]. Drilling Activities The Applicant is not aware of specific examples of bentonite (for trenchless drilling works) containing PFAS. The Applicant has amended Table 5.8 in each the oCEMP, oOEMP, oDEMP [each as updated alongside this submission] to ensure PFAS is avoided wherever reasonably practicable.

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		cleaning agents and decontaminants, should be PFAS-free wherever possible.	
EA006	ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] <i>Para. 2.4.81 & 2.4.148</i>	Issue: Welfare facilities will be provided within the East Park Substation Control Building (2.4.81) but 2.4.148 states that “There will be no requirement for a connection to the public sewer”.	The Applicant acknowledges the EA’s comment and has amended paragraph 4.1.24 of the oDEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to include an explicit statement consistent with paragraph 4.1.25 of the oCEMP [APP-155]. The outline Waste Management Plan [APP-164] confirms that waste carriers and receiving facilities (including their licensing details) will be recorded in the final Waste Management Plan, and that all off-site waste movements will be logged in a register maintained by the Environmental Manager during each phase of the Scheme.
		Impact: Potential risk to groundwater receptors	
		Solution: We request further information on foul sewer connections within the scheme to show that groundwater will not be put at risk of pollution.	
		Additional Comments: Section 4.1.24 in the oDEMP appears to be missing the sentence “<i>The toilet and welfare facilities will store foul/wastewater will then be collected/emptied by specialist licenced contractors.</i>” We note that it has been confirmed that foul water will be tankered away to an appropriate disposal facility by a licensed waste disposal contractor during all phases of the development. We support this, and we would like to remind the applicant that road transport to an offsite disposal facility is required to remove foul water, then there should be regard for this within the waste management procedures. If these procedures are already contained within other documents, they should be referenced.	
EA007	ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] <i>Table 2-31</i>	Issue: Table 2-31 states that “The construction and decommissioning compounds will have a base of heavy-duty matting which would be removed following completion of the construction and decommissioning phases”. It is not clear whether the matting will be impermeable.	The Applicant confirms that the storage of fuels, oils, chemicals and other potentially polluting liquids during construction will be confined to specifically designed storage areas within the temporary construction compounds (or other controlled locations), and will be provided with an impermeable base and appropriate
		Impact: Potential pollution of groundwater beneath construction and decommissioning compounds.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Solution: Confirm that impermeable areas will be created for the storage of all chemicals, fuels etc during construction and decommissioning. If the 'Heavy-duty matting' areas are not Impermeable, then we request the addition of the appropriate mitigation measures to ensure groundwater and surface waterbodies are not polluted. Additional Comments: Section 2.4.109 of Chapter 2 states that temporary construction access and laydown areas will utilise interlocking heavy duty plastic matting overlaid on a geomembrane, it is unclear if this is intended to be impermeable. If you could provide details that all temporary construction compounds will be lined, or if only certain sections of them where designated activities take place.	secondary containment (for example bunding and/or drip trays), with access controls and weather protection as appropriate.
EA008	ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] <i>Para. 2.7.1</i> oDEMP [APP-158] <i>Para 2.4.5</i>	Issue: Decommissioning of cabling infrastructure.	The Applicant notes this comment and has amended Section 2.4 of the oDEMP [as updated alongside this submission] in accordance with the EA's suggestion to take into account contemporary best practice and regulatory guidance at the point of decommissioning, whilst assessing the environmental implications of removing versus retaining sub-surface infrastructure.
		Impact: Potential risk of contamination to controlled waters from cabling left in situ.	
		Solution: Provide a commitment that best practice guidance at the time of decommissioning will be followed. The commitment should specify that an assessment will be completed at the time of decommissioning to ensure the lowest impact option will be completed.	
		Additional Comments: Main report 2.7.1: at decommissioning "Any infrastructure that is more than 1m below ground level, such as cable conduit and casing, would be left in situ." Appendix 2-5 oDEMP 2.4.5: "unless legislation at the time requires otherwise".	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		We accept this is current standard practice, but allowance should be made for removal of all elements of the scheme if that is best practice at the time. While legislation should always be followed, works in addition to this may be required to ensure the best environmental outcomes. ES Ch.2 – 2.7.1: “All solar PV modules, mounting poles, cabling, inverters, transformers, BESS equipment, the East Park Substation, and fencing would be removed from the Site and recycled or disposed of in accordance with good practice and market conditions at that time. Any infrastructure that is more than 1m below ground level, such as cable conduit and casing, would typically be left in situ to reduce the environmental impact of excavation.”	
EA009	ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] <i>Para. 2.4.169</i>	Issue: The applicant has partnered with a research company “ <i>to undertake scientific research on co-locating agricultural production with solar generation</i> ”.	The Applicant acknowledges the EA’s comment regarding potential future sources of contamination to the groundwater environment from agricultural activities and herbicides. The Applicant has updated the oOEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to include a new subsection in Section 4.0 that provides controls on ‘Management of Agricultural Inputs and Protection of Groundwater’.
		Impact: Agricultural production may introduce new contaminants, for example, pesticides and herbicides, to the groundwater environment if not appropriately managed.	
		Solution: Update the OEMP to consider these potential sources of contamination in future assessments.	
EA010	ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 Ecology [APP-043] <i>Para. 7.8.74</i>	Issue: Insufficient otter surveys.	The outline Construction Ecological Management Plan (oCEMP) [as updated alongside this submission] includes for a pre-construction survey to identify otter holts. Should otter holts be identified and it be considered that otter are likely to be disturbed by works then a licence would be sought from Natural England which would require appropriate mitigation to be provided.
		Impact: Potential for disturbance of a protected species listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).	
		Solution: The document referenced: 6.2 Environmental Statement - Vol 2 Appendix 2-3 Site Preparation Works P01 [APP-057], We recommend under the topic Ecology and Nature Conservation to include a general walkover of the watercourse assessment. This will	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		identify suitable habitat for otter on site and confirm the presence/absence of otter holts and resting places. Additional Comments: As outlined in the Otter and Water Vole report, otter surveys have been completed at the location of each watercourse crossing and 100m up and downstream. Within Chapter 7 Section 7.8.74, the Applicant highlights the requirement to obtain a European Protected Species (EPS) Mitigation Licence prior to the onset of the works within 100m of any resting place identified during the pre-construction surveys. There is a potential that otter holts or resting places may be located outside of the area immediately surrounding the watercourse crossings but still within 100m of the proposed works. If a holt or resting place is identified appropriate mitigation should be applied such as the extension of buffer zones or obtaining a EPS Mitigation Licence.	
EA011	ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 Ecology [APP-043] oCEMP [APP-155]	Issue: Clarity on 10m buffer around watercourses.	The Applicant has updated Table 5.3 and 5.4 of the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] as well as paragraph 3.4.1 of the oLEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to clarify that the 10m buffer is from the bank top of all watercourses.
		Impact: Encroachment into the riparian zone.	
		Solution: Clarify and confirm the 10m buffer around watercourses is from bank top.	
		Additional Comments: Table 5.4 of the oCEMP says there will be a "minimum buffer distance of 10m from watercourses ... with the exception of access tracks, cable crossings and drainage ditches." We also seek clarification of what buffer distances are being proposed from drainage ditches.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
EA012	ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] ES Vol 1 Chapter 8 Hydrology and Flood Risk [APP-044] <i>Table 8.3</i>	Issue: We do not have confidence that a sustainable and reliable water supply has been identified, to meet demands during construction which have yet to be quantified or evaluated properly.	The Applicant is proposing to tanker water to site from a commercial or licenced source during construction for uses such as dust suppression, earthworks, concrete mixing, wheel washing, etc. Rainwater harvesting will also be used where practicable. Separately, the Applicant is in the process of securing a piped connection to the public water network with Anglian Water for the more limited water requirements in the operational phase. This is intended to supply operational needs such as welfare within substation buildings and fire fighting. It is not intended to supply construction water needs from Anglian Water and therefore the Applicant does not intend to complete a Water Resource Assessment at this time.
		Impact: Not having access to water for purposes which include: • Dust suppression • Wheel wash • HDD bentonite drilling fluids Will prevent the commencement of construction if it is not adequately considered and planned for.	
		Solution: A basic water supply strategy (or Water resources assessment) should identify all water demands and include an options appraisal of sources of supply available to the project.	
		Additional Comments: We seek confidence that the applicant is aware of the water scarcity in this region and the practical implications this poses upon scheme. For demands of >20m3 (for combined water demands), Anglian Water Supply has adopted a "Non-Domestic Water Requests Policy" for which it asks of applicants who require non-domestic water supply to complete a Water Resource Assessment (WRA) to understand water demands, water efficiency measures and to effectively forecast water supply requirements. This should be submitted with the application. This WRA would provide both Anglian Water with the confidence to plan for growth effectively and the Environment Agency with the confidence that alternative sources have been evaluated fully. This can demonstrate that water resourcing problems can be solved early if potential restrictions affect the scheme. This assessment should include information which describes all of the consumptive uses of water anticipated during the construction phase of the project and should attempt to quantify the volumes of	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		water required for each. This does not have to be accurate and can be estimated at this stage. The water uses the EA has identified in the various chapters of the ES to date are listed above. The strategy should also include a review of the Abstraction licensing strategy for the catchment. Finally, the assessment should provide a brief options appraisal of the sources of supply which are available to the project. For example: • AWS supply • Rainwater harvesting • 3rd party Tankering • SW Abstraction • GW Abstraction • Licence trades This will subsequently identify any potential restrictions or constraints the project may need to overcome during detailed design or construction permitting programming. Table 8.3 - 3.3.9 address PINS comments: “The ES should provide details relating to the water supply and demand requirements during the construction and operational phases of the proposed development” It states that demand requirements are set out in the oCEMP. This is not incorporated. Therefore, we would like to see this section due to the impacts on water supply from this development.	
EA013	ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-1 FRA [APP-098] Section 3.5	Issue: Climate change impacts on flood risk have not been appropriately assessed within the submitted FRA.	Please see responses for EA014 and EA015 made below.
		Impact: The assessment of flood risk to the development could be inaccurate and underestimated.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Solution: A sensitivity test for the credible maximum scenario, this would be the 'upper' climate change allowance for fluvial flows (95th percentile) and should be completed. Additional Comments: The Flood Risk Assessment describes climate change impacts at the site with reference to Environment Agency Risk of Flooding from Rivers and the Sea (RoFRS) mapping. This does not include suitable climate change allowances for the proposed development. RoFRS mapping shows the 'central' climate change allowance. Development is confirmed to be classed as essential infrastructure. For fluvial flood risk the 'higher central' climate change allowance should be used (70th percentile). The design lifetime of the development should also inform the climate change assessment. Section 2.3.3 confirms the scheme will be operational for 40 years between 2030 and 2070, with decommissioning of the site from 2070. Climate change impacts for the 2080s epoch should be considered.	
EA014	ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-1 FRA [APP-098] Para. 3.3.6	Issue: The applicant appears to rely on the 0.1% (1 in 1000) AEP flood extent as a proxy for the design event. This would constitute the 1 in 100 year plus higher central climate change for the 2080's epoch and an upper allowance for climate change as the credible maximum scenario. Impact: The assessment of flood risk to the development could be inaccurate and underestimated. Solution: Please confirm the 0.1% (1 in 1000) annual exceedance probability event is a reasonable or conservative proxy for the design flood event and credible maximum scenario flood events. Additional Comments: The design flood event for the development would be the 1% (1 in 100) annual exceedance	The Applicant has undertaken additional pluvial hydraulic modelling for the Scheme, applying climate change allowances for the 2080s epoch. It was agreed at a meeting with the EA that pluvial modelling can be taken as representative of the flooding mechanisms from the minor watercourses through the Site. The Applicant has shared the hydraulic modelling report with the EA for review and is awaiting confirmation they are satisfied with the results.

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		probability (AEP) scenario plus higher central climate change for the 2080's epoch. This scenario represents an increase in peak flow of 30%. Additionally, as the development is classed as Nationally Significant Infrastructure, the sensitivity of the development to a Credible Maximum scenario flood should also be considered. In this case this would involve considering flood risk for the 1% (1 in 100) AEP plus upper climate change scenario. This scenario reflects an increase in peak flow of 58%. The applicant has used the 0.1% (1 in 1000) AEP event from the Lower Ouse River Kym catchment model and Lower Great Ouse models to determine that there are no areas of above ground infrastructure within fluvial flood risk areas. Whilst this might be reasonable, it is not clear whether the 0.1% AEP is a reasonable proxy for the design flood event and credible maximum scenario. The applicant should provide evidence that it is reasonable to use the 0.1% AEP scenario to assess flood risk to the development.	
EA015	ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-1 FRA [APP-098] <i>Para 4.3.2 and Table 2</i>	Issue: There are solar panels in areas of potential unmapped fluvial flood risk and the proposed freeboard in some of these locations is less than 300mm.	The Applicant has undertaken additional pluvial hydraulic modelling for the Scheme, applying climate change allowances for the 2080s epoch. It was agreed at a meeting with the EA that pluvial modelling can be taken as representative of the flooding mechanisms from the minor watercourses through the Site. The Applicant has shared the hydraulic modelling report with the EA for review and is awaiting confirmation they are satisfied with the results.
		Impact: Flood risk to Solar PV panels could be underestimated which could lead to some panels not operating during times of flooding.	
		Solution: Please review the freeboard allowances for solar panels and provide evidence that the Risk of Flooding from Surface water mapping is a representative or conservative proxy for the fluvial design flood event and credible maximum scenarios. Additionally, please confirm any volume lost from solar panel support frames that fall within areas of fluvial flood risk.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Additional Comments: There are areas of solar panels which fall within the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) mapping, particularly within East Park B at grid references 510650, 264075 and 508900, 263335. The flood risk in these areas potentially appears to be fluvial in nature and associated with Ordinary Watercourses rather than surface water ponding. The applicant should confirm whether the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water mapping has been reviewed to determine its suitability for representing fluvial flood risk. This is important because the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water dataset only included a central allowance for climate change for the 2050s epoch. As the development is classed as Essential Infrastructure, climate change for fluvial sources of flood risk should be based on the Higher Central allowance. Given the lifetime of the development of 40 years and the anticipated decommissioning start date of 2070, the 2080s epoch time horizon should be used. Additionally, it is noted that only 200mm of freeboard is proposed above the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water flood level for the solar panels. As a general principle we recommend 600mm as a starting point for freeboard which can be reduced where there is higher confidence in the modelling and reduced uncertainty. A 200mm allowance may not be sufficient to account for modelling uncertainty and local hydraulic effects. On this basis, we ask the applicant revisits the consideration of freeboard or demonstrates that the estimated flood levels from the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water mapping are conservative. Particularly in areas where they are reflecting fluvial rather than surface water flood risk.	The hydraulic modelling has produced detailed flood level mapping which has been used to identify locations where panels the bottom edge of panels would need to be greater than the current 800mm minimum secured in Table 1 of the Design Parameters and Principles Statement [APP-153]. The Applicant has confirmed with the EA that the minimum freeboard will be increased from 200mm to 300mm. A small number of panels will require raising above the minimum 800mm height to provide a 300mm freeboard above the maximum modelled flood level. The Applicant has updated Table 1 of the Design Parameters and Principles Statement [as updated alongside this submission] to secure this mitigation. It should be noted that raising the minimum height of the bottom edge of the panels in these areas <u>would not require</u> the maximum height of the top edge of the panels to increase above 3m in these areas.
EA016		Issue: Groundwater receptors sensitivities are not consistent.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
	ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-1 FRA [APP-098] <i>Table 8.7 and Table 8.11</i>	Impact: Inconsistencies in sensitivities could lead to inadequate assessments and mitigation measures being proposed. Solution: Ensure consistency of sensitivities for groundwater receptors. Additional Comments: In Table 8.7 principal aquifers are categorised as being Very High, High and Medium sensitivity while secondary aquifers are assigned Low. The sensitivities are not consistent with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA 113 Table 3.70 – which although not directly relevant to solar farms we consider it provides a reasonable baseline for large or linear projects. DMRB LA 104 is used (albeit with notable modifications) for Significance Criteria (Table 8.9 /Section 8.4.13). In Chapter 12, Table 12.6, all secondary aquifers are defined as medium sensitivity. We agree with this. Tables 8.9 and 12.9 cover the same subject matter but are inconsistent with when compared. Although they are different topics, the inconsistencies make it difficult to carry out a comparable assessment for each topic.	Table 8.7 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 8 Hydrology and Flood Risk [as updated alongside this submission] has been updated to reflect the medium sensitivity classification for secondary aquifers to align with Table 12.6 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] . Subsequent Tables 8.11, 8.12, and 8.13 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 8 Hydrology and Flood Risk [as updated alongside this submission] have been updated to reflect this change. This does not alter the conclusions of the assessment.
EA017	ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-1 FRA [APP-098] <i>Para. 8.6.25 to 8.6.27</i>	Issue: Concerns raised at PEIR regarding the hydrogeological model have not been addressed. Impact: Assessment of impacts and effects on groundwater may be incorrect. Residual risks may remain. Solution: Review the mapping and update the hydrogeological model. Any subsequent discussions based on these descriptions need to be amended. Additional Comments: Section 8.6.25 could be deleted as it is misleading and confuses the discussion given in 8.6.26 and 8.6.27.	The Applicant has updated paragraphs 8.6.25 to 8.6.28 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 8 Hydrology and Flood Risk [as updated alongside this submission] to address this comment.

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		Section 8.6.27 puts secondary (undifferentiated) in the same discussion as unproductive, we disagree with this. They are closer to secondary A, as they are still aquifers with some resource potential. None of the superficial aquifers are “unproductive” – this statement is incorrect. It is only unproductive at surface where the site is immediately underlain by bedrock.	
EA018	ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-1 FRA [APP-098] <i>Para. 8.6.32, Table 8.12 and Table 8.13</i>	Issue: Evidence is omitted that demonstrates that Private Water Supply (PWS) will not be impacted by the development.	The PWS's confirmed by Bedford Borough Council were assessed for potential impacts from the development. The Site is within the River Kym valley, while the PWS locations are on the opposite side of a prominent topographic ridge. This creates a hydrological divide where surface runoff and shallow groundwater from the Site are directed toward the River Kym, while the PWS are served by a different sub-catchment. The Applicant is not proposing any groundwater abstractions.
		Impact: Potential for adverse impacts to existing private water supplies.	
		Solution: Further justification is needed to demonstrate there is no hydraulic link between the PWS and the development.	
		Additional Comments: PWS information has been gathered from the local authority and 3 were identified within the search radius. In Tables 8.12 and 8.13 the applicant states that PWS are “not hydraulically connected to the site.”. No evidence has been provided to confirm this. Details of construction compound locations and water abstraction requirements are not confirmed. Operational abstractions are not confirmed. The applicant cannot know that they will not require water from the same aquifer or water body as, or within hydraulic connectivity to, an existing abstraction. The ‘Environment Agency’s approach to groundwater protection’ (February 2018 Version 1.2) states in Position N5, that The Environment Agency will only authorise abstractions if it can be shown that: • there will be no derogation of existing protected rights	

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		• there will be no unacceptable detriment to any groundwater-dependent environmental features such as rivers, lakes or wetlands • the abstractions can be managed so that they will not cause pollution • there will be no environmentally significant upward trends of pollutants through the intrusion of saline or polluted waters due to abstraction	
EA019	ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-1 FRA [APP-098] <i>Para. 8.7.12</i>	Issue: Water quality monitoring schedule is not adequate.	The outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [APP-155], outline Operational Environmental Management Plan [APP-157], and outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan [APP-158] commit to the preparation of a detailed water quality monitoring plan as part of the final approved version of each document. The EA are listed as consultees prior to the approval of each of the above documents against each relevant Requirement in Schedule 2 of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The Applicant therefore considers the EA has appropriate oversight to review, comment and approve water quality monitoring plans post-consent once precise construction methodologies and phasing are known. The Applicant is not proposing to provide detailed versions of these documents at this stage.
		Impact: If a monitoring plan is not suitably designed then it may not be able to detect relevant trends, if any, on water quality during the construction and operation phases.	
		Solution: Provide more details regarding the water quality schedule monitoring in Table 5.4 of oCEMP and oEMP.	
		Additional Comments: Section 8.7.12 states “A programme of surface water quality monitoring would be undertaken before and during the construction phase to provide assurance as to the absence of water quality impacts.” However further details of a water quality monitoring plan are requested, and monitoring should go into first few months of operation too. The monitoring plan should reflect locational variation in the site. For example, monitoring upstream and downstream of any proposed water discharges or water crossings. With regard to frequency, the monitoring plan should include enough monitoring samples to detect any variation as a result of seasons or weather conditions. We recommend a frequency of at least once per month, which should start at least six months prior to construction. During construction, we suggest the frequency of sampling should increase, i.e. every two weeks during the first three months of construction, and during any earthworks or concrete	

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		work. Monitoring should continue all throughout construction, and for six months after construction too. Site walkovers, visual inspections, measurements taken with probes and water sample collections should all be included. Any water samples should be sent to a UKAS (United Kingdom Accreditation Service) approved laboratory. The results of laboratory analysis of water samples should be tabulated, recorded, and be provided to the Environment Agency if requested, or sent automatically in the event of a pollution incident.	
EA020	ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] <i>Table 2-5</i> ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] <i>Para. 12.8.22</i>	Issue: The maximum BESS foundation depth given in Chapter 12 exceeds the maximum given in Chapter 2. The description in Chapter 2 was given as a worst case, and Chapter 12 should use this information.	The Applicant notes that the maximum parameters for foundations as set out in ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] are correct. The Applicant acknowledges the assessment in ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] refers at paragraph 12.8.22 to a maximum depth of 0.5m below ground level, which is greater than the 0.4m secured in the Design Parameters and Principles Statement [APP-153] ; however, the assessment of 0.5m is correct in relation to the internal access roads of the BESS (as per Table 2-12 of [APP-038]) which would extend up to 0.5m below ground level in the BESS area. It is likely this which caused the inconsistency. The Applicant can confirm that the conclusions of the assessment with regard likely impacts and effects are correct.
		Impact: Technical Error.	
		Solution: Ensure maximum conditions are consistent across all chapters in future reports.	
		Additional Comments: ES Ch.2 - Table 2-5 “The foundations of the battery storage units would be concrete to a maximum depth of 0.4m below ground level. It is assumed the maximum dimensions are applied.” ES Ch.12 – 12.8.22: “ <i>foundation types will extend into the ground of a maximum depth of 0.5mbgl.</i> ”	

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EA021	ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] <i>Para. 12.8.14 & 12.8.15</i>	Issue: Incorrect sensitivity used for superficial geology.	This has been amended within paragraphs 12.8.14 and 12.8.15 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions as updated alongside this submission . The correct sensitivity is already detailed in Tables 12.14 and 12.15 within ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] .
		Impact: Technical Error.	
		Solution: Review the ground model and update the relevant discussions in any future documents.	
		Additional Comments: In Table 12.6, all secondary aquifers are identified as medium sensitivity. In Table 12.12 the applicant identifies that all superficial deposits are secondary aquifers. In 12.8.14 and 12.8.15, the applicant states that glacial till is low sensitivity and classed as unproductive aquifer. Glacial till is not mentioned anywhere else in this document, including in the hydrogeological model. This description and classification is therefore unsupported.	
EA022	ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] <i>Para. 12.8.22</i>	Issue: The Applicant proposes to rule out a piling risk assessment prior to determining groundwater conditions.	The Applicant has updated Table 5.8 of the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to include the requirement for a piling risk assessment prior to construction.
		Impact: Potential risk to shallow groundwater (if present) due to piling.	
		Solution: Update the OCEMP and Section 12.8.22 to consider the need for a piling risk assessment after groundwater conditions and piled foundation designs are better understood.	
		Additional Comments: While significant contamination is not anticipated, the presence of shallow groundwater may also mean a piling risk assessment is required.	
EA023	ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground	Issue: Assess the risks to PWS.	

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	Conditions [APP-048] <i>Para. 12.8.33</i>	Impact: Potential for adverse impacts to existing PWS.	Paragraph 12.4.2 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] states: <i>The study area is the Site plus 50m beyond the Site boundary. For consideration of landfills. This is the Site plus the area within 500m of the Site boundary.</i> It is clarified in para 12.8.33 [APP-048] that there are no PWS within the Site nor within 50m radius of the Site. It is noted that within paragraph 8.6.5 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 8 Hydrology and Flood Risk [APP-048] that impacts upon water quality are considered on a catchment basis and within Tables 8.12 and 8.13, PWS have been discounted as are not considered to be hydraulically connected to the Site. Table 12.14 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [as updated alongside this submission] has been updated to reflect only construction phase receptor sensitivity.
		Solution: Ensure risks to private water supplies are assessed for each phase of the works and include PWS receptors in tables 12.14, 12.15, 12.16 and 12.17.	
		Additional Comments: Section 12.8.33 states: “there are no groundwater abstractions for drinking water within the surrounding area”. This contradicts Chapter 12, 8.6.32: “[Bedford Council confirmed] three properties with a PWS [private water supply] within the given search radius of the Site.” See also our comment relating to ES Chapter 8 – Table 8.12 and Table 8.13. Table 12.14 appears to apply to construction, operation and decommissioning, while tables 12.15 and 12.16 apply only to operation and decommissioning respectively. We disagree that groundwater is not identified as a receptor for the operational phase in Table 12.14 and are pleased to see it included in Table 12.15 and the subsequent discussion.	
EA024	ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] <i>Para. 12.9.3 & 12.9.7</i>	Issue: The applicant proposes to undertake no monitoring of groundwater or surface water prior to or during construction. Groundwater monitoring is a fundamental part of any ground investigation, as set out in the EA’s LCRM guidance and BS 5930:2015+A1:2020 Code of practice for ground investigations.	The Applicant has updated Table 5.8 of the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission] to include reference to a groundwater monitoring programme.
		Impact: Shallow groundwater, if present may affect foundation options, the requirement for dewatering, or act as a pathway for migration of contamination.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Solution: Update section 12.9.3 to include groundwater monitoring to be completed if shallow groundwater is identified in the ground investigation. The groundwater monitoring should be completed in line with LCRM and BS guidance. Additional Comments: In Table 12.4 the applicant confirms the geotechnical investigation will include information on groundwater strikes / groundwater ingress. This is not adequately expressed in Section 12.9.3. Longer term monitoring might be necessary to adequately inform the hydrogeological model. If shallow groundwater is encountered during the proposed ground investigation it might be necessary to undertake a period of monitoring to better understand its distribution and potential to affect the development in short and longer timescales (in accordance with BS 5930 and LCRM). The applicant should also refer to BS 10175:2011+A2:2017 Investigation of potentially contaminated sites – Code of practice when setting objectives for and designing the scope of the investigation.	
EA025	ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] <i>Para. 12.8.30</i>	Issue: Hardscaping design.	This has been clarified within paragraph 12.8.30 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [as updated alongside this submission] .
		Impact: Minor discrepancy with potential to cause confusion.	
		Solution: Provide clarity about where hardscaping cover will and will not be used.	
		Additional Comments: This section describes “Hardscaping cover (as concrete or compacted gravel) across the operational areas of the Site ... to reduce infiltration of rainwater through the ground”. It is not clear if this relates to the whole site.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		It is anticipated the applicant means the substation, BESS etc rather than the whole site, including beneath solar arrays.	
EA026	ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] <i>Para. 12.7.1 & Table 12-3</i>	Issue: Unexpected Contamination Protocol (UCP).	This has now been included within paragraph 12.7.3 of the ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [as updated alongside this submission] .
		Impact: Technical Error.	
		Solution: Update section 12.7.1 to refer to the presence of a UCP in the oOEMP.	
		Additional Comments: A UCP has been included in the oCEMP. Table 12-3 states the UCP will be included in the oOEMP but it is absent from the scope of that document listed in section 12.7.1. The UCP is however mentioned within the oCEMP, oOEMP & oDEMP	
EA027	ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] <i>Para. 2.5.6</i>	Issue: Appendix 2-3 has no mitigation measures specified under the ground conditions topic and could impact controlled waters.	The Applicant has updated Table 1 of ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-3 Site Preparation Works [as updated alongside this submission] to include mitigation measures in respect of ground conditions.
	ES Vol 1 Chapter 12 Ground Conditions [APP-048] <i>Para. 12.9.3</i>	Impact: There is the potential that site preparation works, undertaken as Preliminary Works, could impact controlled waters, if suitable controls are not included in the DCO.	
		Solution: Update Appendix 2-3 to include mitigations for ground conditions. Site investigation works should be done in accordance with industry guidance (including LCRM, BS 5930:2015+A1:2020 Code of practice for ground investigations and BS 10175:2011+A2:2017).	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Additional Comments: ES Ch.2 – 2.5.6 “The site preparation works would include ... environmental surveys, geotechnical surveys ...and other investigations required in advance of construction” ES Ch.12 - 12.9.3 “intrusive investigations targeted only within areas of proposed ground disturbance to inform the current ground conditions and contamination status prior to the commencement of construction activities within those areas.” Appendix 2-3 does not propose any mitigation measures for Ground Conditions for the Site Preparation Works.	
EA028	oLEMP [APP-159] <i>Para. 3.5.5</i> BNG Report [APP-168]	Issue: Ditch creation hasn't been included within the BNG report.	The biodiversity metric user guide advises ditches should only be included if they hold water for >4 months a year. It is not known if ditches would meet this criteria and as such have been discounted from the metric following a precautionary approach. Should created ditches and swales be included, this would increase the net gains of watercourse units for the Scheme.
		Impact: Ditch creation could increase the BNG uplift in watercourse units which is currently under the 10% requirement.	
		Solution: If ditches are being created on site, these should be included within the BNG metric.	
		Additional Comments: Section 3.5.5 of the OLEMP details that new ditches and swales will be required as part of the Surface Water Management Plan, this will increase watercourse habitat across the Order Limits.	
EA029	oLEMP [APP-159] <i>Para. 3.5.5</i> BNG Report [APP-168]	Issue: The scheme does not achieve a 10% uplift in Biodiversity Net Gain watercourse units.	Statutory biodiversity net gain is not mandatory for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, however the Scheme has voluntarily demonstrated an uplift in biodiversity units as measured by the statutory biodiversity metric. As discussed in relation to EA028 above, a precautionary approach has been taken and the
		Impact: Environmental enhancement target will not be achieved.	
		Solution: Recommend the applicant includes further measures to improve and enhance watercourses to achieve a 10% uplift in watercourse units.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Additional Comments: While we acknowledge the reasoning given in section 5.1.4 of the Biodiversity Net Gain Report for not being able to achieve 10% due to low water levels and frequent drying of ditches being outside of the Applicants control. The scale of the project requires further measures to be implemented on the watercourses classified as other rivers and streams e.g. the Duloe Brook, Pertenhall Brook, tributary of Pertenhall Brook and tributary of river Kym. Some of the rivers and their tributaries (e.g. River Kym and Pertenhall Brook) are re-profiled and classified as 'heavily modified', the project could improve the WFD classification of these watercourses. To achieve 10% uplift on-site consideration should be given to: • ditch creation • floodplain reconnection • re-meandering works • increasing the in-channel habitat diversity • improving channel morphology • removing barriers • other enhancements These actions may also count towards improving the WFD conditions of the watercourse(s).	overall ditch network within the Site will be enhanced.
EA030	ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 Ecology [APP-155] <i>Para. 7.8.59</i>	Issue: The measures outlined in Chapter 7 section 7.8.59 and 7.8.60 have not been included within the oCEMP. Impact: Potential for great crested newts to be negatively impacted by the proposed works and for the works not to comply with great crested newt legislation.	A Letter of No Impediment has been sought from Natural England through a draft licence application. All works potentially affecting Great Crested Newt would be covered under the

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Solution: The oCEMP should be updated to include the measures outlined in section 7.8.59 and 7.8.60 of Chapter 7: Ecology and Nature Conservation. Additional Comments: Within Chapter 7 section 7.8.59, the Applicant outlines that “Due to the risk to individual great crested newt, the oCEMP includes the requirement to obtain a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence prior to onset of works within 250m of any with known or assumed great crested newt presence pond.” Section 7.8.60 also lists other pre-construction requirements which will be included in the oCEMP such as pre-construction surveys, species protection plans and RAMs in order to safeguard amphibians.	licence and the Scheme required to comply with the issued licence. The requirement for a great crested newt licence is outlined in paragraph 5.2.19 of the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [APP-159].
EA031	ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] oCEMP [APP-155]	Issue: There are currently no mitigations in place for concrete in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP).	The ES recognises the specific risk of pollution from concrete during construction within ES Vol 1 Chapter 8 Hydrology and Flood Risk [APP-044] with mitigation secured through the outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [APP-165]. Paragraph 3.1.4. of the oSWMP [APP-165] identifies ‘Oils, Hydrocarbons, Concrete and Other Chemicals’ as a construction pollution hazard and sets out measures for controlling spillage risks, including at paragraph 4.1.26 that concrete batching and any onsite washout would occur in designated areas which would be lined to prevent infiltration of high alkaline flow and covered to minimise rainwater ingress. Notwithstanding these existing commitments, the Applicant has updated the oCEMP [as
		Impact: Concrete can be a risk to water quality as it is a known source of hazardous substances, particularly during the curing phase.	
		Solution: Update the oCEMP to ensure that risks of pollution as a result of concrete are adequately managed.	
		Additional Comments: Chapter 2 includes transformers will have "concrete strip footing foundation" (Table 2-4), the Battery Storage Units, Battery Transformers, Auxiliary Transformer and BESS Control Building will have concrete foundations (Tables 2-5 to 2-8), the water storage tanks “will sit on a reinforced concrete base” (Table 2-9), it is assumed the BESS compound would have “a concrete surface finish across its full extent” (Table 2-11), and the cable jointing chambers will be constructed of concrete (section 2.4.106).	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Further details which could be included in the CEMP: • Identify all areas where concrete works are proposed • Specify whether any of these will be cast in situ or precast and delivered • For in situ concrete pours, suggest timing, weather conditions, and runoff control. (These construction works should be minimised during heavy precipitation events and carried out during dry months where practicable.) • Describe containment measures for concrete washout (e.g. lined washout pits, bunded areas)	updated alongside this submission] to include a 'Concrete and Cement-Based Materials' sub-section within Section 4 to ensure that the pollution risks from concrete are managed, as requested by the Environment Agency. The final CEMP to secure the detail on these matters will be provided in accordance with Requirement 5 of the draft DCO [AS-008].
EA032	oSWMP [APP-165] <i>Para. 4.1.26</i>	Issue: Section 4.1.26 of the oSWMP states that 'all fuel and chemicals would be stored within appropriately specified containers needs to be bunded and covered', however further mitigation measures are required.	The Applicant has updated the oSWMP [as updated alongside this submission] and the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to include the additional mitigation measures requested by the EA.
		Impact: If refuelling and storage of fuels, oils and chemicals is not suitably managed then there is an increased risk of pollutants entering the water environment and decreasing the water quality.	
		Solution: Update the oCEMP and oSWMP to include further mitigation measures outlined in the additional comments section below.	
		Additional Comments: Mitigation measures should include: • Ensure that all refuelling areas and storage areas for fuel, oil and chemicals are at least 10m away from the top of bank from watercourses. • All storage for fuel, oil and chemicals should be covered, where possible to prevent accumulation of rainwater. Where coverage is not adequate in heavy rainfall, the bunds may benefit from a valve to release any accumulated rainwater.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Where fuel and oil are stored in these bunded areas on impermeable surfaces, an oil separator (interceptor), or other device to remove oil from water, may need to be installed. The CEMP should include the same details as the WFD Assessment, such as bunded areas will have a minimum capacity of 110% of the capacity of the containers.	
EA033	oSWMP [APP-165] <i>Para. 4.1.26</i>	Issue: It is unclear how wash water will be contained and then disposed of.	The oSWMP states at paragraph 4.1.26: 'that washout would occur in designated areas, which would be lined to prevent infiltration of high alkaline content flow and would be covered to minimise the ingress of rainwater to the containment areas' Accordingly, there is commitment to containment of wash water preventing any leaching to groundwater. The Applicant has updated the oSWMP [as updated alongside this submission] and the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to include the additional mitigation measures requested by the EA.
		Impact: If wash water is not managed correctly, it can enter surface watercourses and decrease water quality due to any contamination and sediment that may be present.	
		Solution: We recommend further mitigation measures are added to the oSWMP and the oCEMP to explain how vehicle and concrete wash out will be managed. If vehicle cleaning includes wheel washing this should also be made clear.	
		Additional Comments: Section 4.1.26 discusses "Vehicles, plant machinery and equipment would be cleaned at designated washout areas located conveniently" and also that "Concrete batching and any onsite washout would occur in designated areas". Mitigation measures associated with vehicle wash out and wheel washing facilities could include: - For concrete batching section says that areas would be "lined to prevent infiltration", but all washout activities should be undertaken within a designated impermeable lined area. - Washout waster should not be allowed to discharge into a watercourse or infiltrate to groundwater. Details about where the water will be contained and how it will be removed from site must be included in the SWMP and CEMP.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		- Any SuDS incorporated around wheel washing facilities should provide sufficient treatment for suspended solids, metals and hydrocarbons. - The site of these washdown and wheel washing facilities should be a minimum of 10m from top of bank of watercourses. - If road transport is required to remove wash water to an offsite disposal facility, then there should be regard for this within the waste management procedures.	
EA034	oSMP [APP-161] <i>Para. 5.2.2</i>	Issue: Section 5.2.2 should refer to the need to follow the UCP.	Section 6.3 of the outline Soil Management Plan (oSMP) [APP-161] applies to all phases of the Scheme and notes that an unexpected contamination protocol will be followed for any earthworks. The requirement to provide an unexpected contamination protocol is secured for the operational phase (to which paragraph 5.2.2 of the oSMP refers) by the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan [APP-157] . The Applicant has therefore not updated paragraph 5.2.2 of the oSMP.
		Impact: Contaminated material could be excavated and redeposited if the process for managing unexpected contamination is not followed.	
		Solution: Update oSMP section 5.2.2 to refer to the UCP.	
		Additional Comments: Section 5.2.2 states that “If underground cables need to be accessed for repair, the excavation and backfilling will follow the same segregation and handling rules set out above for construction (and any removed soil will be stored and reinstated).” Whilst the oSMP does refer to the UCP that will be agreed prior to construction.	
EA035	ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] oBSMP [APP-162]	Issue: It is currently unclear how batteries will be removed, stored at the end of life, or after a fire-event, and how the impermeably lined areas will be thoroughly cleaned after a fire-event.	The Applicant makes the following comments and clarifications: ‘Pass through’ in normal operation refers to the retention basin allowing rainwater to drain to a nearby watercourse, with isolation occurring on fire detection via an automatic sluice. - Following a fire event, if retained water is contaminated it will be removed from site by
		Impact: Firewater and other chemicals from BESS pose an unacceptable risk to the water environment receptors and will deteriorate water quality unless it is contained and removed sufficiently.	
		Solution: We request the retention basin be impermeably lined to prevent infiltration.	

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Further details of post-incident recovery, isolation valves and maintenance should be updated in the oBSMP. Additional Comments: Section 2.4.71 of Chapter 2 and section 4.5.5 of the BSMP state the BESS would be on an impermeable surface, which we agree with. However, it says that rainwater can “pass through” the retention basins in normal conditions and it is unclear what this means. Section 1.4.3 of the BSMP suggested that the disposal method of the firewater was yet to be confirmed, further details about the testing and disposal are required. Section 4.3.7 of the BSMP includes “automatically self-actuating valves at the outfalls”, but further measures are required to manage the isolation of firewater. <u>Regular maintenance</u> The BSMP and OEMP should include measures for battery removal during regular maintenance to prevent risk of contamination before they are taken off-site. Table 2-35 of Chapter 2 suggests that the batteries have a lifespan of 20 years so will need replacing at least once during the lifetime of the site. Chemical and fuel spillages section of Table 5.4 in OEMP should refer to battery removal plan. Section 3.2.12 of the oBSMP discusses routine maintenance of BESS however we request to see specific details of the suggested frequency of maintenance to be included in the BSMP and OEMP to ensure that the valves are in good condition and can close in adequate time in the event of a fire. Table 6 of oSWMP says "Check sluice and other mechanical devices Annually" however we recommend more frequently so you can be sure it can automatically close when needed.	tanker for treatment at an appropriate off-site facility. If testing confirms the retained water is suitable for discharge, it may be released to the local drainage network under controlled conditions in consultation with the relevant regulators and necessary permits. - The proposed drainage system would be a closed system once outfall valves are closed, and therefore all firewater would be retained on site. Regular Maintenance - Where batteries would be replaced they would still be expected to be safe and contained, not leaking chemicals. - The Applicant has amended Table 6 of the oSWMP [as updated alongside this submission] to confirm that the sluice / valve for the drainage lagoon will be inspected quarterly. Outfall Valves - As set out at paragraph 4.5.5 of the oBSMP [APP-162], the valves will be activated by the BESS fire alarm system. Any valve or sluice such as this would have a manual override facility to close it in the unlikely event that it does not operate automatically. Consistent Language

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		<u>Outfall valves</u> The trigger of the valve automatically closing should be clarified, for example is it the activation of the fire suppression system. If the valves will be designed to close upon any oil detections or a threshold turbidity level, this should also be included. There will need to be a manual option of closing, in the event of a signal or power failure, to prevent unintended discharge of firewater. Details of these should be added into the BSMP. <u>Consistent language</u> Section 6.5.6 of the oSWMP says the BESS and substation surface water run-off will be directed towards an adjacent detention lagoon, whereas as other documents call this a “retention basin”. Please clarify if these are the same feature, and we strongly encourage use of consistent language. Furthermore, oSWMP says there will be “a sluice gate” with “automatic closure” to isolate the lagoon. Again, it is unclear if this is the same feature as the “self-actuating valves”, please clarify. <u>Firewater disposal</u> In the event of a fire at the BESS, it is our preference for developers to opt for using tankers to remove any contaminated water offsite. If the treatment and discharge of firewater is being considered, then we remind the developer that they would need to apply for a permit and the water quality would need to be tested. Given the timeframe to determine environmental permits we encourage applicants to engage with us on permit requirements at the earliest possible stage if discharging is being considered.	- The Applicant can confirm that these are the same features. Firewater Disposal and Testing - Following a fire event, if retained water is contaminated it will be removed from site by tanker for treatment at an appropriate off-site facility. If testing confirms the retained water is suitable for discharge, it may be released to the local drainage network under controlled conditions in consultation with the relevant regulators and necessary permits. Post Incident and Battery Removal - If a fire was to occur at the BESS facility then it would be classified as an ‘emergency’ situation. The measures set out in the framework of environmental management plans would collectively mitigate the potential impacts of such an event, but the site operator would also be required to alert and consult with regulators as to next steps. As set out at paragraphs 4.1.37 to 4.1.40 of the oOEMP [APP-157], emergency planning will be developed in consultation with regulators including the EA. A post-incident recovery plan will be developed as part of the Emergency Response Plan required under the oBSMP and will address the potential for reignition, de-energising the system, and the removal and disposal of

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		Guidance in relation to discharging and permits is available here: Discharges to surface water and groundwater: environmental permits - GOV.UK <u>Firewater testing</u> Testing is important to provide information around the quality of water that has been contained after a fire and will ascertain if it contains any contaminants and what level of risk to the water environment the contained firewater has. We expect that samples would be taken, when safe to do, which would be sent to an EA approved laboratory. The water samples should be checked against the list of surface water specific substances in the surface water pollution risk assessment guide. <u>Post-incident and battery removal</u> Post-incident recovery plan must be developed further to include details of how batteries will be removed and stored to prevent risk of contamination. This should include storing removed batteries in a suitably lined, bunded and/or covered area. We expect the disposal of batteries to be included within the waste management plans. Additionally, the post-incident plan must clearly explain how the impermeably lined areas will be thoroughly cleaned after a fire-event to prevent secondary contamination when valves are re-opened for normal operation. <u>Typo</u> 1.4.2 is believed to be a typo, "A summary of the anticipated BESS failure safety provisions are as follows" should be numbered 1.4.4.	damaged batteries and equipment, as set out at paragraph 2.6.13 and paragraph 4.4.3 of the oBSMP [APP-162]. The post-incident recovery plan will also set out how the impermeably lined areas and contained drainage infrastructure will be inspected and cleaned following any fire event, and how any washings or residues will be captured and managed appropriately, prior to any isolation valves being re-opened for normal operation, in consultation with the Environment Agency.

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
EA036	ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-2 WFD Assessment [APP-099]	Issue: The WFD assessment does not reference all available management plans.	The WFD assessment considers the mitigation measures set out in the framework of environmental management plans. These management plans are secured by Requirements of the draft DCO [AS-008] and therefore the mitigation within them must be delivered. The WFD assessment should be read alongside the framework of environmental management plans.
		Impact: If relevant management plans are not referenced in the WFDa, we cannot be confident in the conclusion of no adverse effects.	
		Solution: Table 2-5 should reference the mitigations measures outlined in the oEMP, oDEMP and oBSMP.	
		Additional Comments: Table 2-5 of the WFD Assessment says, "The residual effects of potentially reduced water quality are assessed as having no adverse impact on the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oCEMP". However, we believe mitigation measures should also mention oEMP, oDEMP and oBSMP too. To be confident in no adverse impacts it should be committed to no firewater discharge, and to remove offsite via a tanker.	
EA-C1 ⁴	-	Horizontal Directional Drilling We welcome the inclusion of the Bentonite breakout plan in the oCEMP/ oSWMP. We would welcome the inclusion of the bentonite breakout plan being highlighted in the Water Framework Directive Assessment. At construction stage we would like further mitigation measures for example buffers away from watercourses at entry and exit points that should also be imbedded within the CEMP.	The framework of environmental management plans are secured by Requirements of the draft DCO [AS-008] and therefore the mitigation within them must be delivered. The WFD assessment should be read alongside the framework of environmental management plans. The Applicant has updated Table 5.4 of the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to clarify that HDD launch and reception pits will be a minimum of 10m from watercourses.

⁴ Applicant has defined the 'EA-C#' issue IDs.

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
EA-C2	-	Chapter 8: Hydrology and Flood Risk Section 8.2.16 mentions the CIRIA Environmental Good Practice on Site and Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites, but other CIRIA guidance is not included in the references. If guidance documents are not referred to, useful understanding may be missed. Refer to CIRIA's The SuDS Manual (C753) and Guidance on the construction of SuDS (C768).	The Applicant notes this comment. Guidance documents are referenced in the outline Surface Water Management Plan [APP-165] .
EA-C3	-	Outline Environmental Management Plan Section 4.1.44 discusses how the SWMP details measures for management of fire water runoff in the event of a fire at the BESS, however we believe this section of the OEMP should also mention BSMP.	A final BSMP in substantial accordance with the oBSMP [APP-162] is secured by Requirement 10 of the draft DCO [AS-008] . The final BSMP must be provided prior to construction of the BESS, and therefore the required mitigation is adequately secured.
EA-C4	-	OBSMP Table 8.13 discusses the Operational Phase Impact Assessment, mitigation says "Implementation via the SWMP" however we believe there should be reference to BSMP too.	A final BSMP in substantial accordance with the oBSMP [APP-162] is secured by Requirement 10 of the draft DCO [AS-008] . The final BSMP must be provided prior to construction of the BESS, and therefore the required mitigation is adequately secured.
EA-C5	-	Chapter 16: Other Environmental Topics This document integrates waste management effectively into construction controls, referencing the outline Waste Management Plan (oWMP) for detailed procedures. It aligns well with EA priorities under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016. We make the following recommendations:	The Applicant notes this comment from the EA, which appears to be made in relation to ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052] , but is repeated below (our ref. EA-C6) in relation to the oCEMP [APP-155] . The Applicant has therefore provided a single response in the row below (our ref. EA-C6).

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		• Add explicit reference to EA pre-commencement advice for HDD-related wastes (e.g., bentonite as controlled waste), including recycling verification. • For earthworks, specify how surplus aggregates will be tested for compliance with CL:AIRE Definition of Waste CoP before reuse/off-site transfer, to avoid unintended permitting needs. This framework is EA-compliant for construction; finalize WMP to include contractor training logs.	
EA-C6	-	oCEMP This document integrates waste management effectively into construction controls, referencing the oWMP for detailed procedures. It aligns well with EA priorities under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016. We make the following recommendations: • Add explicit reference to EA pre-commencement advice for HDD-related wastes (e.g., bentonite as controlled waste), including recycling verification. • For earthworks, specify how surplus aggregates will be tested for compliance with CL:AIRE Definition of Waste CoP before reuse/off-site transfer, to avoid unintended permitting needs. This framework is EA-compliant for construction; finalize WMP to include contractor training logs.	The Applicant welcomes the EA's confirmation that the waste management framework within the construction controls is effective and aligns with EA priorities under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.
EA-C7	-	oOEMP The oOEMP addresses operational waste succinctly, focusing on low-volume arisings from maintenance, with strong ties to the WMP. It supports sustainable operations under EA waste duty of care principles. We make the following recommendations:	The Applicant welcomes the EA's confirmation that the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) provides an appropriate framework for managing operational waste, and that it supports the waste duty of care principles.

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		- Operational battery replacements (BESS) could generate hazardous WEEE; specify take-back schemes or EA-permitted recyclers per WEEE Regulations 2013, with annual reporting thresholds. - Table 5.12's "prevention/reuse/recycling" is high-level; detail in final WMP how ~700t cabling waste (from ES) will achieve 95% recycling, including tracking metrics. - No mention of circular economy incentives (e.g., producer responsibility); recommend linking to supplier agreements for end-of-life panels. Suitable for EA review; low risk of permitting triggers during operation.	In relation to operational battery replacements and the potential for hazardous WEEE and waste batteries, the oWMP [APP-164] already commits that any waste solar PV modules or other electrical equipment replaced during operation will be managed in accordance with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013, including routing to authorised WEEE collection and recycling routes consistent with producer responsibility requirements. The oBSMP [APP-162] sets out at paragraphs 3.2.15 to 3.2.18 that end-of-life disposal obligations will be addressed through procurement, including manufacturer obligations under the Waste Batteries and Accumulators Regulations 2009 and contractual provision of a recycling service and take-back arrangements. In relation to the operational cabling waste estimate and the recycling rate, Table 5.12 of the oOEMP [APP-157] requires the volume of operational waste streams to be estimated and monitored and for a register of waste loads to be maintained. In relation to circular economy incentives and producer responsibility, paragraph 3.1.8 of the oWMP [APP-164] notes that the WEEE Regulations 2013 place obligations on equipment producers to finance or facilitate take-back and proper treatment of end-of-life devices, including solar photovoltaic panels and associated apparatus. Paragraphs 6.2.9 to 6.2.10 of the oWMP [APP-164] also anticipates

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
			that take-back and specialist recycling routes will be used for panels and batteries.
EA-C8	-	oDEMP This ODEMP handles decommissioning wastes comprehensively, emphasizing recovery of valuable materials (e.g., PV modules, cabling), consistent with EA's resource efficiency goals. We make the following recommendations: • Decommissioning estimates (~26,400t concrete) assume 90% recovery; specify testing protocols (e.g., for contaminants) per CL:AIRE CoP to confirm non-waste status for reuse. • Future-proof for tech advances (e.g., panel recycling rates >95% by 2040s); include adaptive review clause in final WMP. • For in-situ foundations (<1m depth), clarify verification process to avoid reclassification as waste under permitting exemptions. EA would view this positively for circular decommissioning; ensure final plan includes waste audit templates.	The Applicant welcomes the EA's confirmation that the oDEMP [APP-158] provides a comprehensive approach to decommissioning wastes and promotes recovery of valuable materials, consistent with the Environment Agency's resource efficiency objectives.
EA-C9	-	oWMP As the core waste document, this oWMP is well-structured and directly addresses EA regulatory expectations, providing a blueprint for the final WMP required by the DCO. We make the following recommendations: • Hazardous streams (e.g., negligible paints/oils) need pre-defined quarterly reporting if >500kg; integrate EA quarterly returns process.	The Applicant welcomes the EA's confirmation that the oWMP [APP-164] is well-structured and directly addresses EA regulatory expectations.

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		- Operational/decommissioning tables assume high recycling (e.g., 100% for structures); add risk assessment for market capacity shortfalls, with alternatives like energy recovery. - Site inductions are noted; expand to include fly-tipping prevention training and links to EA incident reporting.	
EA-C10	-	Waste on site Excavated materials that are recovered via a treatment operation can be re-used on-site under the CL:AIRE Definition of Waste: Development Industry Code of Practice. This voluntary Code of Practice provides a framework for determining whether excavated material arising from site during remediation or land development works are waste. Developers should ensure that all contaminated materials are adequately characterised both chemically and physically, and that the permitting status of any proposed on-site operations are clear. If in doubt, the Environment Agency should be contacted for advice at an early stage to avoid any delays. The Environment Agency recommends that developers should refer to: Position statement on the Definition of Waste: Development Industry Code of Practice	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant intends to use the CL:AIRE Definition of Waste: Development Industry Code of Practice (DoWCoP) framework to support the reuse of suitable excavated materials on-site, including through a Materials Management Plan (MMP) prepared at detailed design stage and reviewed and endorsed by a Qualified Person, as described in paragraph 3.2.2 and paragraphs 6.4.1 to 6.4.2 of the oSMP [APP-161]. The Applicant agrees that early engagement with the Environment Agency is important; Requirement 7 of the draft DCO [AS-008] requires that the soil management plan for each phase is submitted to and approved by the relevant local planning authority in consultation with the Environment Agency.
EA-C11	-	Waste to be taken off site Contaminated soil that is, or must be disposed of, is waste. Therefore, its handling, transport, treatment and disposal is subject to waste management legislation, which includes: - Duty of Care Regulations 1991 - Hazardous Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2005	The Applicant notes the Environment Agency's comment and confirms that any contaminated soil that is, or must be, disposed of off-site will be managed as waste in accordance with applicable waste management legislation, as set out in paragraph 3.1.1 of the oWMP [APP-164].

Issue ID	Doc. Reference(s)	EA Comments	Applicant Response
		• Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 • The Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 Developers should ensure that all contaminated materials are adequately characterised both chemically and physically in line with British Standards BS EN 14899:2005 'Characterisation of Waste - Sampling of Waste Materials - Framework for the Preparation and Application of a Sampling Plan' and that the permitting status of any proposed treatment or disposal activity is clear. If in doubt, the Environment Agency should be contacted for advice at an early stage to avoid any delays. If the total quantity of waste material to be produced at or taken off site is hazardous waste and is 500kg or greater in any 12-month period, the developer will need to register with us as a hazardous waste producer.	

3.4 Response to National Highways

Table 7: Response to National Highways Relevant Representation (RR-904)

Our Ref.	NH Ref.	NH Theme	NH Comments	Applicant Response
NH-RR-01	4.1.1	Environmental Statement	National Highways has reviewed the Traffic and Transport report (Volume 1 Chapter 9), Transport Assessment (Volume 2 Appendix 9-1, APP-101), Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP, APP-155) and Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP, APP-166), which covers the effects of the scheme during construction and operation. The approach and assumptions described are generally acceptable to National Highways.	The Applicant notes this comment.
NH-RR-02	4.2.1, 4.2.2	Traffic and Transport	National Highways requires junction impact assessments to be undertaken on junctions experiencing an increase of 30 additional trips during the peak periods. It is noted that the peak daily construction traffic figures (Tables 5.3 through 5.5 in Transport Assessment (Volume 2 Appendix 9-1, APP-101)) are in excess of this. 429 workforce vehicles are shown in table 5.4 to be forecast to access the site, albeit outside of the traditional peak periods. No trip distribution has been presented so it is unclear whether there could be an impact on the SRN. NH therefore requests that the Applicant provides additional explanation concerning the expected impact on the A1 Junction with the B645 during the peak hours to confirm if further assessment (modelling) is required. It is also noted that significant impact occurs just outside the peak hours which could see a shift in the peak hours. The level of impact would ordinarily	The Applicant notes this comment. Additional traffic count data of the A1 / B645 junction has been undertaken to provide the additional analysis requested by National Highways. The Applicant has prepared a Technical Note on Impact on B645 / A1 St Neots Junction [EN010141/DR/8.23] setting out the impact on the A1 / B645 junction, which has been submitted at Deadline 1.

Our Ref.	NH Ref.	NH Theme	NH Comments	Applicant Response
			warrant further analysis of junction performance due to the significant volume of trips presented.	
NH-RR-03	4.3.1, 4.3.2	Construction Management	Section 2.4 of the OCEMP (APP-155) states that the construction of the proposed development is expected to take approximately 30 months, with construction anticipated to commence in early 2028 and be completed in by end of 2030. It is assumed that HGV movements would be distributed across the 12-hour period between 7am and 7pm, therefore outside the traditional peak hours. Whilst this could be achievable with timed deliveries, National Highways requires a monitoring regime and measures to ensure that this can be accommodated and enforced if persistent breaches occur. This is stated as to be provided in “the final CEMP”. However, NH requests that further detail concerning the monitoring regime are provided in the OCEMP, consistent with other consented DCOs.	The Applicant would note that the proposed Delivery Management System is described in outline within Section 6.1 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [as updated alongside this submission]. The proposed monitoring regime, communications strategy and enforcement measures are described in outline in Section 9.0 of the oCTMP.
NH-RR-04	4.3.4	Construction Management	Between month 7 of the construction period and month 24, a significant period of approximately 18 months, approximately 700 workers are expected to travel to the site. NH welcomes the deployment of measures to “encourage” car sharing to the site and notes the Applicant is assuming a car/van occupancy of 2. It is noted that this is a high car share assumption and that a figure of 1.4 has been commonly used as the basis for travel planning on several recent consented and live DCOs for energy projects in rural locations. A car share assumption of 1.4 would result in a significant increase in the number	This comment is noted. An outline Construction Workers Travel Plan has been prepared which sets out measures aimed at achieving the assumed car/van occupancy of 2.0. Nevertheless, the additional analysis has been undertaken and presented in the Technical Note on Impact on B645-A1 St Neots Junction [EN010141/DR/8.23], to sensitivity test the potential impacts resulting from the forecast traffic generation associated with a lower car share assumption.

Our Ref.	NH Ref.	NH Theme	NH Comments	Applicant Response
			of vehicles accessing the site, predominantly via the A1 junction with the B645.	
NH-RR-05	4.3.5		NH welcomes the consideration of sustainable travel in the OCTMP and the intention to produce a Construction Travel Plan. It is recognised that both lift sharing and a collection/drop off service are appropriate measures to be included in such a plan. However, NH does not consider that sufficient detail has been provided at this stage and would expect to see a more detailed outline Construction Workforce Travel Plan as part of the DCO application, in common with other submitted and consented DCOs. Specifically, NH requests that more detail is provided in respect of control measures and enforcement, particularly regarding timescales for corrective measures to be implemented. Further, the CTMP refers to the involvement of local highway authorities but should also be explicit in NH's role in ensuring that the CTMP is not breached and that safety at the junction between the A1 and B645 is not compromised with, for example, queuing back onto the mainline.	The applicant acknowledges this comment. An outline Construction Workers Travel Plan has been prepared as an appendix to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission) for submission at Deadline 1. Reference to NH's role has also been included within the updated oCTMP.
NH-RR-06	4.3.6	Construction Management	Notwithstanding the need to agree a final construction workforce travel plan with the appointed contractor and with a better understanding of the workforce characteristics, NH requires additional assurance through a more detailed outline plan as part of the consented DCO that staff will not simply be encouraged to use sustainable modes but that such measures will be actively enforced and that sufficient remedies are available should the target not be achieved.	As noted in the above response, an outline Construction Workers Travel Plan has been prepared as an appendix to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission) .

Our Ref.	NH Ref.	NH Theme	NH Comments	Applicant Response
NH-RR-07	4.3.7	Construction Management	It is noted that Requirement 5 into the DCO states that the final Traffic Management Plan for each stage of construction will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority “in consultation with the relevant highway authority”. NH request that this is amended to “in consultation with the relevant highway authority or authorities”, reflecting NH’s status as the highway authority for the SRN and for circumstances where NH will need to be consulted as we’ll as the local highway authority.	The Applicant does not consider that National Highways should be a consultee in relation to the construction environmental management plan (CEMP) under Requirement 5 of the draft DCO, and assumes this is a typo that should refer to Requirement 8. The Applicant is content for National Highways to be consulted on the final construction traffic management plan (CTMP) under Requirement 8 of the draft DCO. The Applicant will amend Requirement 8 in the next revision of the draft DCO to reflect this.
NH-RR-08	4.3.8, 4.3.9	Construction Management	It is stated in Appendix A of the OCTMP (APP-156) that Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AIL) would be required during the construction of the on-site substation and BESS. These are anticipated to be routed via the A1. Please note that National Highways follows a government Water Preferred Policy, which means we would expect the loads to arrive via the nearest suitable port of entry. It is noted that the AIL route strategy for the proposed scheme has been agreed in principle with NH’s AIL team. To obtain approval for AIL movements, NH must be contacted 8–10 weeks prior to the planned movement, at which point the haulier should initiate contact. During this period, route suitability will be reassessed in coordination with all relevant structure owners and highway authorities. An application must then be submitted to NH, and if approved, the permit will be valid for six months. The Applicant should note that there remains a legal obligation to notify us of the exact date and time of each movement at least 5 days in advance.	The detailed AIL route assessment included in Appendix A of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (APP-156) does include correspondence from NH confirming agreement of the approved route to the Site from the nearest suitable port of entry. All AIL movements will be undertaken in accordance with the required notice periods and permitting schedules.

Our Ref.	NH Ref.	NH Theme	NH Comments	Applicant Response
NH-RR-09	4.4.1	Decomm.	It is noted that Requirement 18 (point 4) of the DCO refers to the Decommissioning Traffic Plan and states that this will be agreed with the relevant local planning authorities. NH requests that this is amended to include NH as the highway authority responsible for the safe operation of the SRN.	The Applicant is content for National Highways to be consulted on the final decommissioning traffic management plan before it is approved by the local planning authority. The Applicant will amend Requirement 18 in the next revision of the draft DCO to reflect this.

3.5 Response to Forestry Commission

Table 8: Response to Forestry Commission Relevant Representation (RR-385)

Our Ref.	FC Theme	FC Comments	Applicant Response
FC-RR-01	Arboriculture	It is unclear what effect the project would have on Huntingdon Wood as it has been scoped out of the Environmental Statement on the basis that works will only be undertaken outside of the 15m buffer zone. Use of the minimum buffer does not automatically indicate that there will be no potential effect on the woodland from the development. It is unclear whether the cable will be installed in the vicinity of the woodland by open trench or HDD. Potential effects on the woodland need to be fully assessed, considered and minimized. It is our opinion that a 30m buffer would provide a suitable mitigation for any potential affects to the ancient woodland, assuming that other protection measures including dust minimization, directional lighting to avoid illuminating the woodland, use of construction exclusion zones and pollution control measures are utilized.	Whilst Huntingdon Wood was scoped out of the ES, it has nevertheless been assessed in the application documents as a non-statutory designated site (Huntingdon Wood County Wildlife Site) and as ancient woodland located directly adjacent to the Order Limits (along the grid connection between Site D and the Eaton Socon Substation). The Applicant considers there is sufficient information within the submitted application documents to determine that a 30m buffer is not necessary. In 2022 Natural England and the Forestry Commission (FC) published their Guidance on the assessment of planning applications where there are ancient woodland, ancient trees, or veteran trees on or near a proposed development site⁵. It confirms that it is a material planning consideration for LPAs in the determination of planning applications and should be taken into account when making planning decisions that affect ancient woodland, ancient trees or veteran trees. The Guidance indicates that in making planning decisions the relevant authorities should assess the direct and indirect effects of development on ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees during the construction and operation of the proposed development.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions>

Our Ref.	FC Theme	FC Comments	Applicant Response
			With specific regard to the creation of buffer zones the Guidance confirms that the size and type of buffer zone should vary depending upon the: • scale and type of development and its effect on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees • character of the surrounding area (larger buffer zones are more likely to be needed if the surrounding area is less densely wooded, close to residential areas or steeply sloped) The Guidance makes the following recommendations regarding the scale of Buffer Zones: <i>“For ancient woodlands, the proposal should have a buffer zone of at least 15 metres from the boundary of the woodland to avoid root damage (known as the root protection area). Where assessment shows other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, the proposal is likely to need a larger buffer zone.</i> <i>For ancient or veteran trees (including those on the woodland boundary), the buffer zone should be at least 15 times larger than the diameter of the tree. The buffer zone should be 5 metres from the edge of the tree’s canopy if that area is larger than 15 times the tree’s diameter. This will create a minimum root protection area.”</i> The Guidance forms the key reference point as to whether the 30m buffer suggested by the FC is justified in the context of the Scheme. This is considered further below. Scale, Nature and Duration of the Works / Character of the Area The extent of the Scheme proposed near to Huntingdon Wood is limited to the laying of a below ground cable linking the solar panels and BESS to the National Grid Substation.

Our Ref.	FC Theme	FC Comments	Applicant Response
			As set out in ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038] the works required within this part of the site would only comprise either trenching or directional drilling (under an existing watercourse that runs to the north of Huntingdon Wood), prior to cable installation and restoration. The works would be limited in both their extent (digging of trenches, installation of cable and backfilling of soil) and duration, as the laying of cable would be undertaken sequentially with works carried out in the vicinity of the ancient woodland limited in duration. The character of the area in which the cable is to be installed is flat, rural and intensive farming activity is currently carried out on all sides, extending to the edge of the Wood. This activity includes ploughing of the land and the spraying of fertilisers and pesticides. Mitigation Measures Aside from the use of the 15m minimum buffer set out in the FC's standing guidance, the potential effects of the Scheme on adjoining ancient woodland would also be mitigated by a series of measures promoted through the oCEMP [APP-155] and the oDEMP [APP-158]. This includes measures to control / prevent dust, lighting, noise and other pollution prevention measures including pollution of waterways / ground. These measures would be in addition to implementation of the planned minimum 15m buffer and finer detail would be the subject of formal agreement with the relevant LPA's during the discharge of DCO Requirements. Assessment of Potential Impacts

Our Ref.	FC Theme	FC Comments	Applicant Response
			Huntingdon Woods CWS has been considered as an ecological receptor in the ES and the potential impacts on ancient woodland from the Scheme in terms of root protection and canopy spread, have also been assessed in the Arboriculture Assessment. In terms of environmental effects, the ES draws the following conclusions (based upon the aforementioned mitigation measures being in place): • ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 [APP-043] and ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 Arboricultural Assessment [APP-056] both conclude that the works in the vicinity of Huntingdon Wood would be located beyond distances at which impacts to trees or root protection zones could occur. • Huntingdon Wood is not a habitat type expected to be strongly influenced by hydrological conditions (that is, it is not a groundwater dependent terrestrial ecosystem) and that construction works near Huntingdon Wood would not influence the local hydrological regime • The air quality assessment ES Vol 1 Chapter 11 [APP-047] concludes that there is a low risk of impacts on the Wood from dust soiling and construction traffic movements. On the same matter ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 [APP-043] concludes that construction is unlikely to have any discernible effect on Huntingdon Wood CWS and expressly concludes that there will be no direct or indirect impacts on Huntingdon Wood CWS, resulting in negligible effects which are not significant Layout and Design Considerations In addition to the mitigation measures outlined above, the Scheme design has also been formulated to minimise its effect on Huntingdon Wood, this includes proposals to use

Our Ref.	FC Theme	FC Comments	Applicant Response
			existing access tracks during the construction phase and existing crossings of waterbodies in the vicinity of the wood. Taking into account the scale, duration, nature of the Scheme proposals, the existing character and use of the land, the inherent design and mitigation measures proposed in connection with the Scheme, and the conclusions of the ES, it is the Applicant's position that there is sufficient evidence to support the application of the 15m buffer and that there is no 'extra justification' for it to be extended to 30m.
FC-RR-02	Arboriculture	While the application states that trees will largely be retained, there are no details on how conflicts between the identified veteran trees and the boundary fence are to be resolved. Due to the irreplaceable nature of ancient and veteran trees, most temporary effects will result in irreplaceable damage. Any effect from the incursion into RPA's of veteran trees may not become immediately apparent and will need to be extensively monitored, even after construction.	ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 Arboricultural Assessment [APP-056] and ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 [APP-043] have not identified any "conflicts" or potential conflicts between the identified veteran trees and the proposed boundary/perimeter fencing. Moreover, the position of perimeter fencing during both the construction and operational phase would be controlled via specific management plans which include provision for avoidance measures (buffers and avoidance of RPAs / canopy spread). ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 Arboricultural Assessment [APP-056] has identified 18 veteran trees and five trees with veteran features within the Order limits and concludes that there will be "no impact" to those trees, with all woodland and trees retained and protected in accordance with BS 5837. Those trees and the ancient woodland sitting outside but adjacent to the order limits would be protected by the embedded avoidance measures set out in the oCEMP [APP-155] and oLEMP [APP-159]. Tree Protection Plans are also provided within the ES Vol 2 Appendix 2-2 Arboricultural Assessment [APP-056]. Taken together,

Our Ref.	FC Theme	FC Comments	Applicant Response
			these measures form the basis on which the ES concludes that the veteran trees and ancient woodland will be retained and protected.
FC-RR-03	Arboriculture	Several areas of woodland and tree belt planting are planned, totalling 19 ha of woodland plus an additional 375 trees. While screening is clearly the primary consideration, these have also been considered in a way that will improve habitat connectivity between the existing woodland on site and throughout the wider site. There is however no tree planting planned in the vicinity of the ancient woodland which could have increased the buffer zone for the woodland and improved connectivity in that area of the site.	The Applicant welcomes acknowledgement of the significant new tree planting that would be delivered by the Scheme and the role it would play in terms of habitat connectivity between existing woodland within the Order Limits. There are clear and practical reasons why similar woodland planting is not proposed in the vicinity of the Ancient Woodland. 1. Most of the tree planting is proposed to mitigate medium- and longer-term visual effects. The only scheme element proposed near to the ancient woodland is the route of the planned below ground cable corridor connecting the scheme to the National Grid Sub-station which requires no screening . The land would be reinstated after the cables are installed 2. The Applicant has no agreement with the landowner for the planting of trees outside the Order Limits. On that basis, there is no possibility of agreeing planting in the buffer between the order limits and the Woodland.
FC-RR-04	Arboriculture	It is stated that most trees planted will be native varieties. With a changing climate, a wide species selection will be beneficial, mixed woodland is usually of maximum benefit for habitat provision. Use of the Forestry Commission Ecological Site Classification Tool (ESC) can assist with selection of tree species that are ecologically suited to particular sites, this	The oLEMP [APP-159] includes a requirement for all woodland planting to be mixed woodland as suggested in the FC's response. The final detail of the woodland mix would need to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority through the discharge of DCO Requirements.

Our Ref.	FC Theme	FC Comments	Applicant Response
		includes climate change predictions to allow for future suitability and woodland resilience.	
FC-RR-05	Arboriculture	As this project will include a large area of fencing, it has the scope to exclude a large amount of farmland from the deer range in the area. This is likely to increase herbivore browsing and grazing to other areas in close proximity to the site. Impacts are likely to increase in surrounding woodlands, including ancient woodlands and the wider landscape, where hedgerows and stewardship schemes may be impacted upon. Large scale fencing will change how deer move through the landscape, which may also increase the numbers of deer crossing local roads and therefore may increase the numbers of deer vehicle collisions in the area. If culls occur prior to development, the risks should reduce.	The Applicant is not aware of any evidence that the fencing proposed in connection with the Scheme would result in the effects suggested by the FC or that there is merit in culling the local deer population to facilitate the development. Importantly, the Scheme would include a series of wildlife corridors which would allow the transit of deer or any other animals through the development.

4.0 RESPONSES TO STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS

4.1 Response to National Grid Electricity Transmission

Table 9: Response to National Grid Electricity Transmission Relevant Representation (RR-903)

Our Ref.	NGET Theme	NGET Comments	Applicant Response
NGET-RR-01	Utilities	The Applicant is seeking temporary and permanent rights over a number of plots containing NGET assets and rights for its 400 kV overhead line routes (including plots 11-6, 11-7, 12-1, 12-2 and 13-3). NGET also notes that its operational land at Eaton Socon substation (plots from 14-8 to 14-20) has been included within the Order Limits for the purposes of Work No. 4 (works to connect into the substation) and Work No. 5 (works to create a new generation bay) and this land is subject to the compulsory acquisition of permanent rights. NGET's principal access to the Eaton Socon substation is also via the access road off Bushmead Road to the north, which falls within the Order Limits and is subject to Works No. 9 at the point at which the private road meets the public highway.	The Applicant notes NGET's comment in relation to the compulsory acquisition sought over the plots listed in the Book of Reference for land which they have an interest. The Applicant remains engaged with NGET on the scheme and negotiations remain ongoing with regard to protective provisions, the latest position can be seen within the Land and Rights Negotiation Tracker [PDA-013] .
NGET-RR-02	Utilities	NGET will therefore require appropriate protection for retained or proposed infrastructure, including compliance with relevant standards for works proposed within close proximity of its apparatus or proposed apparatus. NGET's rights of access to inspect, maintain, renew and repair such apparatus must be maintained at all times and access to inspect and maintain such apparatus must not be restricted. Further, where the Applicant intends to acquire land or rights, or interfere with any of NGET's	The Applicant acknowledges these comments. The Applicant has been provided with NGET's preferred form of protective provisions and negotiations are ongoing. The Applicant will continue to work with NGET to reach agreement on these so that agreed bespoke protective provisions can be included in the draft DCO.

Our Ref.	NGET Theme	NGET Comments	Applicant Response
		interests in land or NGET's apparatus, NGET will require appropriate protection. Further discussion and agreement with the Applicant is required in relation to the impact on its apparatus and rights.	
NGET-RR-03	Utilities	The proposed Order Limits overlap with land required for the following future NGET infrastructure which are required for future generation connections (subject to obtaining the necessary consents and land rights): • The extension of the existing Eaton Socon 400 kV Substation The substation is currently full and will require expansion rebuild or provision of a new substation to facilitate future connections (including the Project). The expansion is driven by the need to facilitate multiple renewable energy projects and to address system resilience issues. The scope of the expansion, rebuild or provision of a new substation of East Socon Substation is as yet unknown and will be determined by the outcome of NESO's Connection Reforms process. Connections Reform is a project being run by National Energy System Operator (NESO), formally National Grid Energy System Operator, to change the way connection application to the transmission system are handled. This process will inform which projects will connect into the substation and from this NGET can determine what works are required to the substation to facilitate the connections. This will involve an expansion to the existing site and may require a complete rebuild and introduction of new types of infrastructure. A design for this work cannot be produced until the Connections Reforms process is complete. It is noted that the Applicant has sought wide Order Limits, presumably to	The Applicant notes this comment and that the precise point of connection with the Eaton Socon Substation is dependent on the outcome of NESO's Connection Reforms process. The Applicant can confirm that the Scheme received a 'Gate 2' offer with a connection date of October 2028, with an October 2030 backstop. The Applicant confirms that the wide extent of the Order limits across National Grid's land is to ensure flexibility for a connection with the Eaton Socon Substation, once a final detailed point of connection is provided by NGET. The Applicant has been provided with NGET's preferred form of protective provisions and negotiations are ongoing. The Applicant will continue to work with NGET to reach agreement on these so that agreed bespoke protective provisions can be included in the draft DCO.

Our Ref.	NGET Theme	NGET Comments	Applicant Response
		ensure that its Project can align with whatever design NGET settles on. It is, however, unknown at this stage where and how the Project would connect within the Order Limits. Given the uncertainty as to the scope and timescales of the East Socon Substation Project, NGET needs complete control over the undertaking of any works within this area, as well as the location of any cables and infrastructure. This would be secured through the NGET Protective Provisions.	
NGET-RR-04	Draft DCO	NGET requires robust Protective Provisions to be included within the draft Development Consent Order (the "Order") for the Project. These provisions must ensure that all NGET assets, both existing and any anticipated future assets, are adequately protected and that all works comply with relevant safety standards. There is clear precedent for the protection of future assets within DCOs, including the Protective Provisions secured by NGET in the Awel Y Mor and Mona DCO and those agreed with the undertaker in relation to the Outer Dowsing Offshore Wind DCO, which is awaiting the Secretary of State's decision. NGET is liaising with the Applicant in relation to such Protective Provisions. NGET requires ongoing engagement from the Applicant to agree how the Project works will protect NGET's proposed assets and facilitate all future access, land, and other rights necessary for NGET to deliver its statutory functions. NGET will continue to liaise with the Applicant in this regard with a view to concluding matters as soon as possible during the DCO Examination and will keep the	The Applicant acknowledges these comments. The Applicant has been provided with NGET's preferred form of protective provisions and negotiations are ongoing. The Applicant will continue to work with NGET to reach agreement on these so that agreed bespoke protective provisions can be included in the draft DCO.

Our Ref.	NGET Theme	NGET Comments	Applicant Response
		Examining Authority updated in relation to these discussions.	
NGET-RR-05	Draft DCO	Where the Applicant seeks powers of compulsory acquisition over NGET land, or land in which NGET holds rights or apparatus, the Protective Provisions must require the Applicant to obtain NGET's prior written consent to the exercise of such powers. This protection is critical not only for existing assets but also for land and rights required for NGET's future infrastructure to ensure NGET is not impeded in the delivery of its statutory functions.	The Applicant acknowledges these comments. The Applicant has been provided with NGET's preferred form of protective provisions and negotiations are ongoing. The Applicant will continue to work with NGET to reach agreement on these so that agreed bespoke protective provisions can be included in the draft DCO.

4.2 Response to National Gas Transmission Relevant Representation

Table 10: Response to National Gas Transmission Relevant Representation (RR-902)

Our Ref.	NGT Theme	NGT Comments	Applicant Response
NGT-RR-01	Draft DCO	The above listed Feeder Mains and their associated apparatus, form an essential part of the gas National Transmission System (NTS). National Gas therefore requires protective provisions to be included within the draft Order to ensure that the apparatus and associated land interests are adequately protected and to ensure compliance with relevant safety standards. National Gas is liaising with the Applicant in relation to such protective provisions. For the avoidance of doubt, National Gas' standard form of protective provisions (which have been provided to the Promoter) have been commercially assessed and deemed necessary in their entirety in order to protect its assets. Unless and until National Gas is satisfied that adequate protections have been secured by way of agreed protective provisions, National Gas must object to the Order.	Protective provisions for the protection of National Gas have been included in Part 5 of Schedule 13 to the draft DCO. The Applicant has been provided with National Gas' preferred form of protective provisions and negotiations are ongoing. The Applicant will continue to work with National Gas to reach agreement on these so that agreed bespoke protective provisions can be included in the draft DCO. The Applicant anticipates that both parties will be able to agree the protective provisions before the end of the Examination.

4.3 Response to Eastern Power Networks plc

Table 11: Response to Eastern Power Networks plc Relevant Representation (RR-328)

Our Ref.	EPN Theme	EPN Comments	Applicant Response
EPN-RR-01	Site selection & alternatives	Eastern Power Networks plc objects to the making and confirmation of the Order unless at the cost of the acquiring authority there are first provided to it on no less favourable tenure suitable alternative sites and suitable alternative rights in, on, over or under land in substitution to those to be acquired and/or temporarily used under the above Order and in, on over or under which there are first installed and commissioned Electric Lines and Electrical Plant in substitution for those in the land to be acquired and/or temporarily used under the above Order, before that land is acquired and/or temporarily used so that my client can carry out its statutory functions and contractual obligations no less efficiently than previously. Please treat this letter as an objection by Eastern Power Networks plc to the relocation and/or extinguishment of rights and apparatus mentioned above because their relocation will be detrimental to the carrying on of its undertaking. No alternative land, rights and apparatus for those proposed to be acquired under the above Order are in place. The above objection(s) will be deemed to be withdrawn upon signature of an appropriate deed of Undertaking by an authorised signatory of the Acquiring Authority.	The Applicant is not proposing to demolish, relocate or remove any of Eastern Power Networks' apparatus or electrical plant as part of the Scheme. The Applicant and Eastern Power Networks remain in ongoing discussions to reach an agreement so that Eastern Power Networks can withdraw its objection to the application. The Applicant anticipates that agreement will be reached before the end of the Examination. Any interaction between the Scheme and Eastern Power Networks apparatus will also be subject to the protective provisions contained in Part 1 of Schedule 13 to the draft DCO [AS-008].

4.4 Response to RWE Generation UK plc

Table 12: Response to RWE Generation UK Plc Relevant Representation (RR-1116)

Our Ref.	RWE Theme	RWE Comments	Applicant Response
RWE-RR-01	Draft DCO	RWE is an Interested Party to the proposed East Park Energy DCO by virtue of its retained operational interest of the 400kv cable connection between Little Barford Power Station and Eaton Socon sub station. RWE have long standing existing rights through the land immediately surrounding the sub station (located in the south west of the proposed DCO plot). It is imperative that suitable protective provisions are introduced into the proposed DCO to enable RWE to continue using its operational site, now and in the future, in an unfettered manner. In summary, RWE are generally supportive of the the East Park Energy scheme provided this does not affect existing rights or impact ongoing operation of the Power Station asset.	The Applicant wishes to highlight that as an electricity statutory undertaker RWE will be protected by the protective provisions at Part 1 of Schedule 13 to the draft DCO [AS-008]. These protective provisions mean that the Applicant will be unable to acquire apparatus owned by RWE without agreement. They also impose requirements on the removal of apparatus, protection of retained apparatus, the construction of alternative apparatus and the payment of reasonable expenses in relation to such works. Provision is also made for the payment of reasonable compensation for damage caused to apparatus or the interruption of supply caused by works to remove apparatus or construct alternative apparatus. Whilst it is considered that these protective provisions are sufficient to protect RWE's assets, if RWE have any residual concern the Applicant would encourage RWE to contact the Applicant directly to discuss this. The Applicant is willing to discuss the possibility of a commercial agreement with RWE to manage the interactions between the projects.

4.5 Response to Anglian Water Services Ltd

Table 13: Response to Anglian Water Services Ltd. Relevant Representation (RR-069)

Our Ref.	AWS Theme	AWS Comments	Applicant Response
AWS-RR-01	Draft DCO	A copy of AWS's template Bespoke Protective Provisions (BPPs) has been supplied. AWS would welcome further discussions regarding these as they have not been included in the dDCO 'Schedule 13 Article 46 Protective Provisions Part 1 For The Protection Of Electricity, Gas, Water And Sewerage Undertakers' (application documents AS-008 and APP-016). The Explanatory Memorandum to the dDCO (application documents AS-010 and APP-017) refers to on-going discussions taking place with statutory undertakers to progress an agreed form of BPPs. AWS is, therefore, obliged at this stage to object to the inclusion of the "standard" set of protective provisions for the benefit of statutory undertakers contained in the dDCO. AWS considers these to fall short of providing it with the necessary protections. Further reasons for BPPs are set out in more detail below.	The Applicant has been provided with AWS' preferred form of protective provisions and negotiations are ongoing. The Applicant will continue to work with AWS to reach agreement on these so that bespoke protective provisions can be included in the draft DCO. The Applicant anticipates that both parties will be able to agree the protective provisions before the end of the Examination.
AWS-RR-02	Statement of Common Ground	The submission of an agreed Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) would be beneficial. If no connections or interfaces with our assets are identified or specific arrangements are needed to be put in place, then it would be helpful to log this in an SOCG.	The Applicant notes this comment.
AWS-RR-03		Book of Reference (application documents AS-013 and APP-021); Works Plans (application document APP-009) and Land and Rights Negotiation Tracker (application	The Applicant notes AWS comment in relation to the Book of Reference which identified parties (individuals and

Our Ref.	AWS Theme	AWS Comments	Applicant Response
		document APP-022) AWS's review of the Book of Reference and associated documents has identified some anomalies which require further discussion and clarification regards plots 10-15; 10-16; 13-4; 13-6; and 13-7. These documents will need to be updated subsequently to accurately reflect the position on these plots.	organisations) with an interest in land subject to compulsory acquisition. The Applicant remains engaged with AWS in regard to protective provisions and will look to clarify these anomalies through those discussions and update the necessary documents throughout the examination period.
AWS-RR-04	The Scheme	Chapter 2: The Scheme (application document APP-038) under Section 2.4.42 states there are several utilities that cross the site. A standard easement of 4.5 metres for AWS's pipeline assets has been applied to the illustrative layout plan for the scheme and accounted for on ES Vol 3 Figure 2-1: Illustrative Environmental Masterplan. This does not take account of any different size or type of pipelines. Where there are interfaces with our assets, we will require the BPPs for AWS to be included in the dDCO and would ask that the following indicative stand-off distances are applied (as indicated in our template supplied). (a) 4 metres where the diameter of the pipe is less than 250 millimetres; (b) 5 metres where the diameter of the pipe is between 250 and 400 millimetres, and (c) a distance to be agreed on a case-by-case basis and before the submission of the Plan under sub-paragraph (1) is submitted where the diameter of the pipe exceeds 400 millimetres.	The Applicant is consulting with Anglian Water on this matter and is undertaking a 'clash detection' exercise with their internal team. The Applicant will continue to consult with Anglian Water on this matter, and the outcomes of the exercise will ultimately feed into the detailed design and the stand-off distances requested will be adhered to.
AWS-RR-05	The Scheme	Tables 2-18 and 2-21 within Chapter 2, sets out the current assumption as to the location of different crossings required. The tables set out the type of feature being crossed, the type of crossing to be utilised, and the scheme component crossing the feature. These identify 6	The Applicant is consulting with Anglian Water on this matter and is undertaking a 'clash detection' exercise with their internal team.

Our Ref.	AWS Theme	AWS Comments	Applicant Response
		no. AWS utility locations which would be affected under references C45b, C44, C45a, C50b and C51. AWS has sought to engage with the Applicant to carry out a clash detection and technical assurance review of the Project to confirm, for example, any sensitive plant, open cut locations, access works, diversions any above ground plant and shared access locations. Given the substantial number of other AWS projects being delivered in this Asset Management Period AMP8 (2025-2030), there is a strong advantage to having upfront discussions with AWS in relation to our asset interfaces with the Project. We strongly recommend that this assessment be undertaken at the earliest opportunity. This ensures clarity, reduces risk, and supports the timely and efficient delivery of the Project. We would not agree that a review of utilities plans is used to inform plans for proposed works prior to construction, as also indicated in the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) (application document APP-155). Further discussion is required between AWS and the Applicant to confirm these aspects, for example, trenchless crossings and horizontal drilling, ducting, open cut locations, access works, likely diversions, any above ground plant, and shared access locations. These matters should be addressed in supporting documents and will need to be amended accordingly as these matters are agreed.	
AWS-RR-06		Information has been provided to the Applicant regarding the process for making requests for water supply for both domestic and non-domestic purposes. For the purposes of the DCO application a further update should be given to	The Applicant is proposing to tanker water to site from a commercial or licenced source during construction for uses such as dust suppression, earthworks, concrete mixing, wheel washing, etc. Rainwater harvesting will also be used where practicable.

Our Ref.	AWS Theme	AWS Comments	Applicant Response
		conclude on the water supply and demand requirements and how these will be sourced for the project.	Separately, the Applicant is in the process of securing a piped connection to the public water network with Anglian Water for the more limited water requirements in the operational phase. This is intended to supply operational needs such as welfare within substation buildings and fire fighting. It is not intended to supply construction water needs from Anglian Water and therefore the Applicant does not intend to complete a Water Resource Assessment at this time.
AWS-RR-07	Flood Risk and Drainage	AWS wishes to state that it should not be implied or is agreed that any wastewater collected by any licensed waste carrier will be received at one of its sites for processing. If the Applicant confirms that it does not require the use of the public sewer network to manage foul water drainage systems and (if any) surface water flows, there would then be no need for the dDCO to include any provisions providing for a general right to connect to any of AWS's wastewater assets which is currently included under Part 4 Supplemental Powers 18 Discharge of Water. If this provision is kept in the dDCO then we should be added as a formal consultee under Schedule 2 Part 1 Requirements. It is noted that there is only a requirement under this for details of surface water management to be approved rather than a more general drainage strategy. Therefore, our preference would be for the supplemental power discharge of water to be removed from the dDCO. See further comment below regarding Schedule 2 Part 1 Requirement 14 of the dDCO.	It is unclear what is being requested with regards to AWS being added as a "formal consultee under Schedule 2 Part 1 Requirements". However, the Applicant will continue to work with AWS to reach agreement on bespoke protective provisions for the protection of AWS to be included in the draft DCO. Article 18 (Discharge of water) has been included in the draft DCO to give powers to the Applicant to discharge water into any watercourse, public sewer or drain in the unlikely event that this is required to carry out or maintain the Scheme. As noted in the Explanatory Memorandum, this is a model provision and is well preceded in various other DCOs including the Byers Gill Solar Order 2025, the Oaklands Farm Solar Park Order 2025 and the Longfield Solar Farm Order 2023. Article 18(3) of the draft DCO confirms that before the Applicant can discharge water into any watercourse, public sewer or drain, then the consent of the person to whom it belongs will be required.
AWS-RR-08	Flood Risk and Drainage	Potential embedded design measures should include Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to be utilised at permanent above ground installations to manage rainfall	The outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [APP-165] demonstrates how SuDS will be utilised to

Our Ref.	AWS Theme	AWS Comments	Applicant Response
		run-off and achieve sufficient attenuation to avoid increases in flood risk, and compensation flood storage at temporary site compounds to manage flood risk at these locations. AWS will not accommodate any surface water run-off into a foul sewer, and only to a combined sewer in exceptional circumstances. Our preference would be for surface water run-off from above ground permanent buildings and impermeable surfacing to be managed by SuDS with any outfall to a watercourse, in accordance with the drainage hierarchy.	manage surface water runoff, without any need to discharge to either surface water or foul sewers.
AWS-RR-09	Flood Risk and Drainage	The Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (application documents AS-018 and APP-098) and Outline Surface Water Management Plan (application document APP-165) should consider any increased risk of surface water and groundwater flood risks arising from the scheme that could exacerbate sewer flooding risks due to infiltration/ingress to our networks. The likelihood of more extreme weather events leading to higher-than-average rainfall and cumulative impacts of storm events, as recently experienced during Winter 2023/24, mean that infrastructure becomes increasingly vulnerable to flood risk. The Project should aim to minimise any flood risks as far as possible by designing in measures to limit increased flood risks to utilities infrastructure. Flooding from other sources should include reference to AWS infrastructure and further detail provided regarding potential temporary effects on flood risk from third party infrastructure works during construction of the Project should be provided in the FRA, given the interfaces between the Project and AWS assets. These interfaces will	The potential for increased flood risk and surface water runoff from the development have been duly assessed within these documents ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-1 Flood Risk Assessment [AS-018] and outline Surface Water Management Plan [APP-165], including assessment of future climate change scenarios. Because of the rural setting of the Site and the placement of vulnerable infrastructure (i.e. substation and BESS compound) a significant distance away from existing roads or urban areas, flood risk from AWS infrastructure is not considered to be a substantial risk to the development.

Our Ref.	AWS Theme	AWS Comments	Applicant Response
		also be managed through the BPPs and agreed construction practices.	
AWS-RR-10	Flood Risk and Drainage	Notwithstanding the lead roles of the Lead Local Flood Authority, the Environment Agency and the Internal Drainage Boards, AWS would welcome clarification on how resultant impacts on the local drainage/ sewerage network will be designed as part of the detailed scheme. The Applicant should confirm to AWS that it does not require the use of the public sewer network to manage additional surface water flows. If no connection is intended to be made, there would then be no need for the dDCO Order under Requirement 10 at Schedule 2 (application document APP-016) to include any provisions providing for a general right to connect to any of AWS's assets.	The Applicant can confirm that no use will be made of the AWS sewer network in the management of surface water flows. Requirement 10 of Schedule 2 to the draft DCO [AS-008] refers to a battery safety management plan and it is not clear how this relates to the use of the public sewer network.
AWS-RR-11	Draft DCO	AWS should be included under dDCO for any discharge of requirements in relation to surface water discharge under Schedule 2 Part 1 Requirement 14 of the dDCO surface water management plan in addition to the relevant lead local flood authority.	The Applicant does not consider that AWS should be added as a consultee in relation to the final surface water management plan as there is no intention to discharge water into the public sewer network. In the unlikely event that the Applicant will need to discharge into the public sewer network, Article 18(3) of the draft DCO requires the consent of AWS before any water is discharged into a public sewer or drain owned by AWS. If relevant, AWS will be able to impose any reasonable conditions.
AWS-RR-12	The Scheme	Outline management plan documents: Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (application document APP-155) Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (application document APP-156)	The Applicant notes this comment and will continue to consult with AWS on protective provisions.

Our Ref.	AWS Theme	AWS Comments	Applicant Response
		Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (application document APP-157) Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (application document APP-158) WS notes the submission of the above framework documents. AWS would welcome specific reference on how the interfaces with utility assets such as for sewers and water supply within the Order Limits will be managed through the construction of haul roads, bellmouths etc. These documents should include steps to remove the risk of damage to AWS assets from plant and machinery (compaction and vibration during the construction phase) including any haul and access roads and crossings.	
AWS-RR-13	Access	AWS would seek to ensure that 24 hours /7-day access to our assets is not compromised.	The Applicant notes this comment and will continue to consult with AWS on protective provisions.
AWS-RR-14	Consultation and engagement	Whilst BPPs should address those interfaces with our assets, we would welcome further discussion with the Applicant regarding such matters and their inclusion in the finalised documents.	The Applicant notes this comment and will continue to consult with AWS on protective provisions.
AWS-RR-15	Consultation and engagement	AWS reserves its position on the need to be included as a consultee to these detailed management plans in the discharge of requirements within the dDCO relating to these. Specifically, Requirements 5; 8; 9; and 18.	The Applicant notes this comment.

5.0 RESPONSES TO OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

5.1 Response to Bedford Local Access Forum

Table 14: Bedford Local Access Forum Relevant Representation (RR-1252)

Our Ref.	BLAF Theme	BLAF Comments	Applicant Response
BLAF-RR-01	Traffic, transport and access	One of the diverted routes is the bridleway (Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37) from just south of Manor Farm, Pertenhall to the western perimeter of the development site. The proposed diversion is immediately alongside the bridleway track, on adjacent fields. In our view, this diversion does not provide adequate separation of users and construction traffic given: • There will be significant traffic along the track to the construction compound towards the west end of the bridleway. • The noise and vibration from the installation of the arrays alongside the bridleway • The cable laying along 1,340m between SW2-1 and SW2-2 (on sheets 1 and 2 of the street works plan) Further there is no proposal to divert Pertenhall BW26 (which leads through Manor Farm to Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37, forming a continuous bridleway route) despite the fact that the road is narrow in places with insufficient room for users and traffic to pass safely, with a deep ditch alongside. All 1,428 artics and tippers for Site A (plus additional worker transport etc) will access the site via this section of track. The BHS has proposed an alternative diversion which would provide better separation, and the LAF supports	The Applicant considers the measures proposed within the oPROWMP [APP-160] to adequately ensure safety of PRoW users, whilst providing a proportionate approach. Nonetheless, the Applicant has reviewed the oPROWMP and sought to strengthen protections for equestrian users along both Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37 and Pertenhall BW26. The Applicant's amendments are set out at paragraphs 6.4.5, 6.4.6, and 6.8.5 of the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission]. The purpose of these amendments is to provide clearer 'right of way' for equestrian users of Pertenhall BW26, and to ensure greater precaution from traffic using both bridleways when equestrian users are present. The Applicant notes that construction traffic in Site A from the B660 would be split between traffic passing north along Pertenhall BW26 to the construction compound in the north of Site A, and traffic passing south along Bolnhurst and Keysoe BW37 to the two construction compounds in the south of Site A. As set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 9-2 Traffic Flow Diagrams, [APP-102], during the peak of HGV movements, there would be an average of 5 (one-way) HGVs per day, which as above would be split between BW26 and BW37. This is a very limited number of HGV movements, and the control measures set out in the

Our Ref.	BLAF Theme	BLAF Comments	Applicant Response
		this proposal, whilst recognising that the route is outside the development red line though owned by the same landowner. In our view the PROWMP will need to provide a sensible alternative route for the whole bridleway, such as has been suggested by the BHS, to be acceptable to the local Council. Otherwise, there is a serious risk that this bridleway (both sections) may need to be closed on safety grounds during construction which would not be acceptable to users or the LAF and would be contrary to the developer's stated intentions.	oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission] are adequate to ensure safety of PROW users, whilst not having to resort to temporary PROW closures. In relation to the impacts from noise and vibration nearby to bridleways, in addition to the amendments described above to the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission], the Applicant has updated Table 5.6 of the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to provide additional control measures when works are happening in proximity to bridleways.
BLAF-RR-02	Traffic, transport and access	The second diverted route is Pertenhall FP29 and, although this diversion is acceptable, we have concerns about safety on the narrower linking track from the road to the start of the footpath but consider that appropriate traffic controls can be put in place to manage this. The arrangements for the other shorter diversions to allow for cable laying across the PROW appear acceptable.	The Applicant notes this comment.
BLAF-RR-03	Construction	In the oPROWMP, it is stated that construction operations would generally be limited to 08.00 to 18.00hrs Monday to Friday and 08:00 to 13:00hrs Saturday, with no construction work on Sundays or Bank Holidays. And it is frequently stated that there will be free use of PROWs out of construction hours. However, the Order includes in Schedule 2, Part 1, Clause 17 the possibility that work may take place outside the core working hours in emergencies and for works which do not cause noise that is audible at the boundary of the Order limits and do not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects compared to those identified in the environmental statement. Since the audibility test applies only at the	The Applicant notes that Requirement 17(2)(b) of the draft DCO [AS-008] is a high bar, in that any work undertaken in accordance with this must produce no audible noise at the Site boundary. Consequently, such works would result be expected to result in very little noise within the Site. The Applicant envisages Requirement 17(2)(b) to be of use in line with the examples given in paragraph 4.1.3 of the oCEMP [APP-155] which states: "<i>There may be instances where operations are required outside the above times e.g. delivery of abnormal loads, fit out of internal equipment within the substations, other quiet non-intrusive works such as electrical testing, commissioning and inspection. In such instances, it would be necessary to agree on a modification to the working hours with the</i>

Our Ref.	BLAF Theme	BLAF Comments	Applicant Response
		boundary, it is quite possible that work could be undertaken that would expose users of PROWs to noise outside the core working hours. This is not acceptable and the exception should be removed or amended to also include audibility from any PROW.	<i>relevant LPA</i> ". Such works would not be expected to adversely impact the amenity of PROW users outside of the formal construction hours. Accordingly, the Applicant considers that Requirement 17, as drafted, provides an appropriate balance between securing construction hour controls (and protecting amenity at the Order limits) while allowing limited flexibility for emergencies and genuinely non-intrusive activities.
BLAF-RR-04	Public rights of way	We acknowledge that the application does not involve the permanent loss of any public rights of way. However, we consider that the enjoyment of most of them will be seriously adversely affected, primarily due to the loss of views on a permanent basis. This impact is not limited to the life of the development as hedgerows and trees will not be removed on decommissioning. Further, the assessment of this impact presented in the documentation fails to properly address this as the landscape and visual figures presented do not fully convey the experience of walking, cycling or riding in this area.	ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 Landscape and Visual [APP-041] includes an assessment of visual impact on public rights of way users within and around the Site. The assessment has been undertaken in line with best practice guidance set out in the <i>Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition</i> , and is supported by visualisations prepared in accordance with the Landscape Institute's <i>Technical Guidance Note 06/19: Visual Representation of Development Proposals</i> .
BLAF-RR-05	Public rights of way	For example, a user of the B&K BW37 and Pertenhall BW26 would travel over 2km along this route, starting from Viewpoint (VP)9 and passing VP12 and VP14 along the way to Manor Farm. The assessments presented in EN010141-000125-6.2 ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-4 Effects at Viewpoints P01 fail to recognise this, saying for each VP that it will typically be experienced for a 'relatively short duration of view'. A user of this route will have extended experience of the impact of the development, combined with that of the existing solar arrays, which will be visible for the whole of the time that it takes them to cover 2km,	The viewpoint assessments ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-4 [APP-072] assess visual change from representative locations along the route, rather than describing the entire sequential experience of travelling along multiple connected PROWs. The reference to a 'relatively short duration of view' reflects the transient nature of views at any given location, where the composition changes as receptors move, rather than implying that effects are limited across the wider route network. The LVIA does not rely solely on individual viewpoint assessments to understand effects on PROW users. Effects on users of public rights of way are assessed at

Our Ref.	BLAF Theme	BLAF Comments	Applicant Response
		about 20 minutes at a moderate walking pace, and indeed thereafter, depending on which route they take. We also challenge the assessment that the sensitivity of the users is only medium to high and that the screening proposed will, by year 10, reduce the effect to not significant. On this route, the proposed tree planting will have a permanent adverse effect in that it will obstruct the views to the north. We are also sceptical that trees will grow to the extent presented in the montages for VP12. We draw your attention to VP14 winter view presented as Figure 5-18(a) – this screening was planted 10 years ago and can be seen to be largely ineffective. Whilst we cite this bridleway as an example, similar considerations apply along the length of most of the PROWs crossing the development, for example the footpaths that cross at VP33. We also note the montages have been prepared for only a small handful of viewpoints (12 of 53 in Beds around Sites A and B).	the receptor level within ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-5 [APP-073], which draws on the representative viewpoints and considers the experience of receptors along routes. This is reflected in ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 [APP-041], which clearly acknowledges that receptors in closest proximity to the Scheme, including users of PROWs, would experience residual significant effects at Year 10 (paragraphs 5.8.60 and 5.12.11–5.12.15 [APP-041]). Accordingly, the ES recognises that users of routes, such as BW37 and BW26, may experience notable visual effects over sections of their journey. The viewpoint assessments should therefore be read as being illustrative of specific locations along these routes, while the overall conclusions of the LVIA capture the extent and significance of effects on PROW users more broadly. The assessment of visual receptor sensitivity has been undertaken in accordance with the methodology set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-1 [APP-069] and applied consistently within the viewpoint assessments presented in ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-4 [APP-072]. This includes consideration of both susceptibility to visual change and the value of the view, with value factors informing the overall sensitivity. With regards reported Year 10 effects, the assessment of effects on Viewpoints 9, 12 and 14 acknowledges that mitigation planting would alter aspects of the existing view. However, this is reflected in the residual assessments presented in ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-4 [APP-072], where effects at Year 10 remain Moderate Adverse at Viewpoints 9 and 12, and Minor to Moderate Adverse at Viewpoint 14, indicating that a degree of adverse change persists. The proposed planting is intended to filter and partially screen views of the solar array, which would be

Our Ref.	BLAF Theme	BLAF Comments	Applicant Response
			relatively low in height, and to integrate the Scheme within the existing field pattern. This is balanced with the retention of open views in other directions, notably to the south and east at Viewpoints 9 and 12, while at Viewpoint 14 the Scheme is more contained and set back within the landscape. The assessment of mitigation planting at Year 10 is based on growth assumptions set out within the LVIA methodology (paragraph 5.4.15 [APP-041]). These assumptions reflect typical establishment periods and are informed by the experience of the competent expert, including previous DCO and public inquiry work, and provide reasonable estimates of growth rates. Whilst it is recognised that growth is subject to variables such as ground conditions, climate and species, the approach adopted provides a proportionate and robust basis for assessment. In addition, the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) secures the implementation, establishment and ongoing management of planting, ensuring that mitigation is delivered and maintained in the long term. The Applicant considers the number of photomontages to be proportionate and appropriate to understand the visual effects of the Scheme from a range of locations, including the scale and appearance of the development and the influence of mitigation. ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 [APP-041] includes an assessment of effects from all viewpoints. The selection of viewpoints for visualisation has been undertaken in accordance with the <i>Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition</i> (GLVIA3), which recognises that it is not necessary to provide visualisations from all viewpoints, and that a representative range should be used (paragraph 8.16 of

Our Ref.	BLAF Theme	BLAF Comments	Applicant Response
			GLVIA3). The Applicant's photomontages therefore illustrate a comprehensive and proportionate selection of locations, including those likely to experience notable visual effects, and when viewed alongside ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 [APP-041] and ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-4 [APP-072] , the images contribute to the Applicant's robust assessment of visual effects.
BLAF-RR-06	Public rights of way	We would encourage the Inspector to visit the site and walk some of the PROWs to experience this for himself and would draw his attention particularly the bridleway discussed above and to VP33 at the 'crossroad' junction of two footpaths within Site B.	The Applicant notes this comment. Visualisations from VP33 are contained within the application across ES Vol 3 Figure 5-37a to 5-37x [APP-135] .
BLAF-RR-07	Public rights of way	The provision of a 10m wide buffer or corridor for all PROWs is welcomed but the sense of being in a corridor will remain and should be avoided wherever possible. The masterplan indicates that 'corridor' widths can be widened in some areas by setting back the screening hedging closer to the fencing around the arrays rather than so close to the PROW. This would appear to be possible for: • A significant length of B&K FP13 (ref masterplan sheet 4) • B&K FP47 to the west of B&K FP13 (ref masterplan sheet 4) • Little Staughton FP1 through the development (ref masterplan sheet 5) • Short section of LS FP3 that is in a corridor (ref masterplan sheet 6) • Two sections of LS FP4 that are in a corridor (ref masterplan sheet 6) This would introduce more variety into the experience of walking or riding within the site so that it is not one of	The Applicant notes this comment but considers that the Scheme design presents the right balance between mitigating the visual impact of the Scheme, whilst retaining public access.

Our Ref.	BLAF Theme	BLAF Comments	Applicant Response
		being in a tunnel of hedges which can be intimidating and monotonous, not the more enjoyable experience that rights of way users are seeking.	
BLAF-RR-08	Public rights of way	All PROW surfaces damaged during construction must be reinstated and any change of the nature of surfaces must be agreed with the ROW team at the Council. This should be included in the PROWMP.	The draft DCO [AS-008] secures the Council's oversight of any works affecting public rights of way through Articles 13 and 15. The Applicant has amended the oPROWMP to introduce a new sub-section on surfacing and reinstatement of PROW at paragraphs 5.1.6 to 5.1.8 of the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission]. This requires the Applicant to provide detailed surfacing details of each PROW alongside the final PROW Management Plan. Requirement 11 of the draft DCO [AS-008] provides that a final PROW Management Plan must be approved by the local planning authority in consultation with the relevant highway authority prior to any phase of the authorised development commencing. This provides further assurance to the Council as to the final sign-off for any changes to PROW.
BLAF-RR-09	Public rights of way	It is stated in the oPROWMP that the PROWs across areas of grassland will be mown 2m wide on a regular basis – this is welcomed but the photomontages show footpaths in grass apparently on a different surface. Eg VP33 which is at the junction of B&K FP47 and B&K FP13 (ES Vol 3 Chapter 5 Landscape and Visual Figures P01 - Part 7 of 14.) Further the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan states at 6.5.47 that the species diverse grassland will not be cut during the summer which is a contradiction. These PROWs should be maintained as grassland with an appropriately short height throughout the term of the development and this	The Applicant can confirm that PROWs across areas of grassland will be mown on a regular basis as set out at paragraph 7.1.4 of the oPROWMP [APP-160]. Paragraph 6.5.47 of the oLEMP [APP-159] is in relation to management of species-diverse grassland more broadly, the management of PROWs through areas of grassland including species-diverse grassland is set out at paragraph 6.3.13 of the oLEMP [APP-159], and this reflects the wording of paragraph 7.1.4 of the oPROWMP [APP-160].

Our Ref.	BLAF Theme	BLAF Comments	Applicant Response
		should be incorporated in both the oPROWMP and oLEMP.	
BLAF-RR-10	Public rights of way	The LAF welcomes the additional short footpaths proposed in the Little Staughton area but considers them insufficient compensation for the overall adverse impact on the PROW within the site and surrounding area. Further, it notes that the oPROWMP seeks to allow the developer to remove them if they are deemed to lead to antisocial behaviour. This seems a curious restriction and should in any case only happen with the agreement of the Council. But the proposals to improve access have not changed since the previous consultation and we are disappointed that our (and others') request to seek opportunities for the developers and landowners to provide some benefit to local residents has been ignored.	The Applicant has amended paragraph 7.2.3 of the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission] to clarify (as underlined) that “<i>Should the permissive routes result in antisocial behaviour which negatively impacts users of the Site, wildlife or security of the Proposed Development then the permissive paths may be removed, following consultation with the Local Planning Authority.</i>” The Applicant has sought to further improve access across the Site since the previous consultation, and has included additional permissive access within Site C as part of the application. The Applicant has continued to engage with landowners on access rights and can now confirm that agreement has been reached to provide additional permissive access for equestrian users within Site B, as set out in the row below (reference BLAF-RR-11).
BLAF-RR-11	Public rights of way	The additional routes that we would like to see are: - In Site A, a connection around the part of the western perimeter of the site to connect B&K FP32 to Pertenhall FP2. This would compensate to some extent for the loss of open views within the development by providing one with open views to one side as well as creating better network connectivity; - In site A, the short section of track joining the highway in Green End to Pertenhall FP29 should be dedicated as a footpath. There are grounds for it being recorded as such through a modification	The Applicant has responded to each of these requests in turn below: - A potential permissive connection in this location is constrained by the need to provide an additional crossing of the Pertenhall Brook and has therefore not been pursued. - The Applicant notes that this suggested route is an existing surfaced track. The Applicant understands this route is not currently formally designated on the definitive map and is consulting with the landowner but is not currently proposing to amend the definitive map in this location.

Our Ref.	BLAF Theme	BLAF Comments	Applicant Response
		order, but an agreement would be quicker and involve less officer time; • In Site B, a bridleway connection between Green End, Little Staughton, and the B660 in Brook End, Keysoe to complete an almost entirely off-road circuit – as proposed by the BHS; • In Site B, a connection around the perimeter of the site to connect B&K FP36 to B&K FP13. This would compensate to some extent for the loss of open views within the development by providing one with open views to one side and indeed in one section open to both sides. It would also create additional circular routes; • In Site B, a connection around the perimeter of the site to connect Little Staughton FP26 to B&K FP47. This would compensate to some extent for the loss of open views within the development by providing one with open views to one side and also improve network connectivity for walkers in a popular dog-walking area; • In Site B, a connection from the eastern end of Little Staughton FP8 across to Little Staughton FP1 via the access track and along the perimeter of the site (or indeed other routes may be possible). This would provide improved connectivity for local walkers and avoid the road section to reach the northern end of the southern section of LS FP1 and LS FP5, nearly 1km.	• The Applicant has continued to engage with landowners on this matter and can confirm that agreement has been reached to provide permissive equestrian access between the B660 and Green End, Little Staughton. This is identified in Table 2 of the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [as updated alongside this submission] as Permissive Path 1 and shown on the Illustrative Landscape Proposals drawing at Appendix A of the oLEMP. • The Applicant notes there is already access between Bolnhurst and Keysoe Footpath 36 and Bolnhurst and Keysoe Footpath 13. The Applicant is not proposing an alternative permissive route in this location. • The Applicant disagrees that this potential permissive access route would compensate for the loss of open views, due to the existing mature hedgerows that lie along site boundaries in this area. The Applicant is not proposing a permissive route in this location. • The Applicant is consulting with the landowner but is not currently proposing to provide this permissive access.
BLAF-RR-12	Public rights of way	These routes should all be dedicated PROWs as the adverse impacts that they offset in terms of views will be permanent since the hedging and tree planting, quite rightly, will not be removed on decommissioning.	The Applicant has discussed this matter with the affected landowners and has reached agreement for additional access to be provided on a permissive basis for the operational phase of the Scheme, and not as dedicated permanent PROWs.

Our Ref.	BLAF Theme	BLAF Comments	Applicant Response
		We do not regard permissive routes as acceptable but if the Inspector does, then they remain in place throughout the operation and until the site returns, as promised, to agricultural use.	The Applicant acknowledges this is not as beneficial as permanent access rights, and accordingly considers the matter should only be afforded limited positive weight in the planning balance (as per Table 3 of the Planning Statement [APP-031]).
BLAF-RR-13	Landscape and visual amenity	We identified that there are some larger areas of 'green infrastructure' within Sites A and B and suggested that they created some excellent opportunities to provide open access areas to the general public. This opportunity does not appear to have been taken up. We would like to see at least one area of grassland identified as an area for public access, for families to enjoy a picnic or a kick-about. We appreciate that this would require a period for the swathe to become established but in due course such an area would be a valuable contribution to the community and provide a further (to quote the ROWIP) cherished means of escaping the hectic pace of modern life, ... connecting individuals with nature and can help foster physical and mental well-being.	The Applicant considered this matter alongside landowners but at this time is not looking to created open access areas akin to parkland. This would result in additional public liability issues, potential increased risk of nuisance, and would conflict with some of the ecological objectives of the Scheme.

5.2 Response to British Horse Society – Bedfordshire

Table 15: British Horse Society – Bedfordshire Relevant Representation (RR-1253)

Our Ref.	BHSB Theme	BHSB Comments	Applicant Response
BHSB-RR-01	Public rights of way	The first however, is all within Site B and within the ownership of the farmers benefitting from this proposed development. Further, the connection has in the past been provided to some local riders on a permissive/toll basis. We are most disappointed that this connection has not been provided within the development scheme and request that the Inspector, should he/she be minded to recommend this development to the Secretary of State, requires the developers to provide this link. A map can be provided (though I understand that it cannot be attached to this submission). It is a connection from the start of Little Staughton FP8 (or indeed anywhere along Green End) to the B660 in Brook End at Bolnhurst & Keysoe FP36/FP112. The precise route is not of great importance – the obvious route would be via the footpaths that make already that connection although previously a route using some of the farm tracks that will be access routes for the development has been used. The key is to make this connection, which would save 3.6km of road work for riders. Local riders will be adversely affected by this development, particularly during construction but also in perpetuity, due to disruption during construction and the impact on visual amenity – particularly the loss of impressive views on Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37. The provision of such a network link would go some way to offsetting this adverse impact.	The Applicant set out in Appendix 5-3 of the Consultation Report [APP-028] that: “<i>The Applicant has explored the potential to provide the bridleway connection. However, agreement has not been secured and therefore this route cannot be delivered, but the Applicant will continue to negotiate and will provide if possible.</i>” The Applicant has continued to engage with landowners on this matter and can confirm that agreement has been reached to provide permissive equestrian access between the B660 and Green End, Little Staughton. This is identified in Table 2 of the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [as updated alongside this submission] as Permissive Path 1 and shown on the Illustrative Landscape Proposals drawing at Appendix A of the oLEMP.

Our Ref.	BHSB Theme	BHSB Comments	Applicant Response
BHSB-RR-02	Landscape and visual amenity	We note that the impact on the views from the existing bridleways, particularly Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37 has been somewhat dismissed as 'not significant' by year 10. This assessment clearly fails to acknowledge the importance of the current views from the ridge that forms much of this bridleway. It is a high point in the area and riders, who it should be remembered are at a higher height than walkers, enjoy an exhilarating view in all directions and can observe the many church spires and villages visible from this vantage point. This amazing sense of openness and views of the local countryside will be entirely lost to the north and west and seriously impacted to the south and east. This adverse impact will be apparent along the whole length of the bridleway, particularly if travelling north east.	ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 [APP-041] includes a comprehensive assessment of visual effects across the study area, including on public rights of way. Section 5.12 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 [APP-041] (paragraphs 5.12.11–5.12.15) states that users of a relatively high number of rights of way would experience significant visual effects at Year 0, reflecting the density of the PRoW network within the Study Area. At Year 10, the number of significant effects would reduce following the establishment of mitigation, however residual change in the openness of views would remain, as would some significant long-term visual effects. In relation to Bridleway 37 specifically, views from this route have been assessed within ES Vol 2 Appendix 5-4 [APP-072] at Viewpoints 9, 12 and 14, which are located on, or directly adjacent to, the bridleway. The assessments at Viewpoints 9 and 12 identify Moderate to Major Adverse effects at Year 0, reducing to Moderate Adverse effects at Year 10. This reflects the establishment of mitigation planting, including a woodland belt to the north of the bridleway, which would integrate the Scheme into the view, particularly during summer months. Whilst a change to the view would remain, this would principally comprise the introduction of planting which would filter views across the field to the west. Visualisations of the Scheme from Viewpoint 12 [APP-131] , during both summer and winter months, illustrate that open and expansive views to the east would be retained, including features such as the spire at the Church of All Saints, Little Staughton.
BHSB-RR-03	Public rights of way	Pertenhall BW26 will be used by all of the traffic accessing Site A (1,428 artics and tippers plus staff vehicles). It is also narrow in places and has a deep ditch to the northern side. No diversion is proposed – it is suggested that horses and vehicles can share the route, under the supervision of	The Applicant considers the measures proposed within the oPROWMP [APP-160] to adequately ensure safety of PRoW users, whilst providing a proportionate approach. Nonetheless, the Applicant has reviewed the oPROWMP and sought to strengthen protections for equestrian users

Our Ref.	BHSB Theme	BHSB Comments	Applicant Response
		a banksman, but there is at least one pinch point where this will not be feasible. Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37 is to be diverted but only onto a route immediately adjacent to the access track which does not provide sufficient separation to ensure the safety of riders, given • There will be significant traffic along the track to the construction compound towards the west end of the bridleway. • The noise and vibration from the installation of the arrays alongside the bridleway • The cable laying along 1,340m between SW2-1 and SW2-2 (on sheets 1 and 2 of the street works plan) The Society would prefer that the bridleways are not used for access at all, but given the access from the B660, the construction immediately adjacent and the cable laying, it would seem that this is probably not feasible or effective. Therefore, our advice is to provide an alternative route for equestrians that ensures their safety, which as already stated the current proposals do not. An alternative would be to provide a diversion on the northern side of the hedge alongside Pertenhall BW26 around Manor Farm and then along a track through the existing solar farm and onto headlands to the south of the fields alongside the development to rejoin the bridleway at the far western end of Site A. A map can be provided. This route would keep horses and riders away from activity and noise. We acknowledge that this route is outside the red line of the development boundary but it is within the ownership of the farmers benefitting from this proposed development.	along both Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37 and Pertenhall BW26. The Applicant's amendments are set out at paragraphs 6.4.5, 6.4.6, and 6.8.5 of the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission]. The purpose of these amendments is to provide clearer 'right of way' for equestrian users of Pertenhall BW26, and to ensure greater precaution from traffic using both bridleways when equestrian users are present. The Applicant notes that construction traffic in Site A from the B660 would be split between traffic passing north along Pertenhall BW26 to the construction compound in the north of Site A, and traffic passing south along Bolnhurst and Keysoe BW37 to the two construction compounds in the south of Site A. As set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 9-2 Traffic Flow Diagrams, [APP-102], during the peak of HGV movements, there would be an average of 5 (one-way) HGVs per day, which as above would be split between BW26 and BW37. This is a very limited number of HGV movements, and the control measures set out in the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission] are adequate to ensure safety of PRoW users, whilst not having to resort to temporary PRoW closures. In relation to the impacts from noise and vibration nearby to bridleways, in addition to the amendments described above to the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission], the Applicant has updated Table 5.6 of the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to provide additional control measures when works are happening in proximity to bridleways.

Our Ref.	BHSB Theme	BHSB Comments	Applicant Response
BHSB-RR-04	Public rights of way	In addition to the issues with this bridleway, the arrangements for Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW40 where it crosses BW37 need to be carefully reviewed. It seems to the Society that there will be a need for a banksman at that point whenever there is traffic on BW37, works going on the adjacent arrays or cabling being installed along BW37.	The Applicant has amended the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission] to include for a banksman at the intersection between Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW40 and Bolnhurst & Keysoe BW37.
BHSB-RR-05	Construction	This property in Little Staughton is surrounded by Site B. It operates a commercial livery yard and has a number of competition horses in its stables and paddocks and trained in its ménage. The paddocks are immediately adjacent to the farm track along which Little Staughton FP8 runs. Although it is noted that the construction access track will be to the north of the footpath, construction lorries and pile-driving for the installation of panels will be within about 30m of the paddocks. In the previous consultation the Society recommended a separation of a minimum of 100m from the property to avoid adverse impacts, including injury, on the horses resident at Lodge Farm. This advice appears to have been ignored.	The Applicant has amended Table 5.6 of the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to include additional mitigation measures in relation to construction activities within 100m of a horse paddock or equestrian land use.
BHSB-RR-06	Traffic, transport and access	The use of such roads should be minimised. For example, the use of the road between Great Staughton and Pertenhall could be significantly reduced by creating a temporary access track along the cable corridor between Site C and B rather than via the narrow highway. Access to the relatively few panels to the north of this road, around Kangaroo, could be effected with less impact on the highway by travelling through the site instead with just a short crossing rather than using the Green End highway and sections of the Great Staughton Road.	The Applicant considers the construction access strategy set out in the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [APP-156] to be appropriate. The construction access strategy has been designed to avoid vehicles using the public highway as far as practicable, with temporary access roads constructed across fields to connect the various areas of the Site, and with a particular focus on avoiding the need to pass through villages.

Our Ref.	BHSB Theme	BHSB Comments	Applicant Response
BHSB-RR-07	Traffic, transport and access	It should also be recognised that every effort needs to be made to ensure that the construction traffic uses only the approved routes so that other roads remain open and safe, or at least no more dangerous, for riders and horse. Past experience would suggest that we can expect construction traffic on many more of the local roads than those identified in the developer's documentation.	The Applicant notes this comment. The HGV routing strategy is set out within Section 5.0 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [APP-156], which is secured under Requirement 8 of the draft DCO. This clearly identifies that HGVs will route directly to the Site from the A1 via the B645 Kimbolton Road, which is of a suitable standard to accommodate two-way HGV movements. It is proposed to construct a network of internal haul roads to allow HGV movements around the Site, to avoid the need to route HGVs along unsuitable roads or through centres of population. The proposed monitoring regime, communications strategy and enforcement measures are described in Section 9.0 of the oCTMP [APP-156].

5.3 Response to British Horse Society – Cambridgeshire

Table 16: British Horse Society – Cambridgeshire Relevant Representation (RR-143)

Our Ref.	BHSC Theme	BHSC Comments	Applicant Response
BHSC-RR-01	Public rights of way	Cambridgeshire County Council requires that a Change of Surface Application Form is submitted where the project impacts on a public right of way. This form needs to be submitted and approved prior to any planning application.	The draft DCO [AS-008] secures the Council's oversight of any works affecting public rights of way through Articles 13 and 15.
BHSC-RR-02	Public rights of way	It is noted that the development proposes to cross / run alongside / for the bridleway to be used as a haul road along, Bridleway 112/27 Hail Weston. An application to change the surface of the RoW : A Change of Surface Application will be required to be completed for this section and approval obtained.	The Applicant has amended the oPROWMP to introduce a new sub-section on surfacing and reinstatement of PRow at paragraphs 5.1.6 to 5.1.8 of the oPROWMP [as updated alongside this submission] . This requires the Applicant to provide detailed surfacing details of each PRow alongside the final PRow Management Plan.
BHSC-RR-03	Public rights of way	Damage to a good natural resilient surface is commonly a negative impact of a development because it may not be possible to reinstate the surface, and yet another grass track is lost. This can be avoided by careful planning, and using horizontal directional drilling to minimise damage rather than direct burial, which increases damage, even though the cost may be higher for drilling. Damage from vehicles engaged in the cable-laying can also be minimised by using temporary protective tracks on which the vehicles run, but which are removed to leave minimal impact on the surface. If any of the cabling routes cross or run along the public rights of way, the cable routing and its impact on bridleways and byways is often missed and the damage to surfaces can be very disadvantageous to equestrians, especially where not reinstated or where replaced by a sealed surface.	Requirement 11 of the draft DCO [AS-008] provides that a final PRow Management Plan must be approved by the local planning authority in consultation with the relevant highway authority prior to any phase of the authorised development commencing. This provides further assurance to the Council as to the final sign-off for any changes to PRow.

Our Ref.	BHSC Theme	BHSC Comments	Applicant Response
		No surface should be created unsuitable for equestrians where vehicles are likely to compromise the amenity and safety of riders and their horses.	
BHSC-RR-04	Public rights of way	There is no acknowledgement in your documentation regarding the two DMMO's (Definitive Map Modification Orders) which will be impacted by the project. These routes are marked in orange on the following on the Cambridgeshire Definitive Map. The two routes are DMMO M206 LH and M207 LH. These applications should be determined during the lifetime of this solar farm installation and could even have been determined before commencement of works. The applicant should be aware that if the applications are approved during the lifetime of this project, it could result in part of the development being required to be removed.	The Applicant is aware of one DMMO application that intersects the Site (Case Number M206 - LH) to create a bridleway. The Applicant would not object to the creation of a public right of way along this route. The Applicant notes that along the relevant eastern edge of Site D, the alignment of the potential DMMO along the existing access track would sit outside of the Order limits. The DMMO would not be impeded by the Scheme and would pass adjacent to the proposed woodland belt planting along that edge.

5.4 Response to Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service

Table 17: Response to Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service Relevant Representation (RR-513)

Our Ref.	BFRS Comments	Applicant Response
BFRS-RR-01	The fire service we would like to comment on access and egress and providing adequate water for firefighting purposes.	The BFRS comments are noted. However, it must be recognised that both matters the BFRS wish to comment further upon are already addressed within the application documents. They are also the subject of a signed / agreed SoCG with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service [PDA-019] (the fire and safety jurisdiction covering the location of the proposed BESS development). Emergency access route plans will be included within an Emergency Response Plan prepared post-consent. The Emergency Response Plan would include a site plan showing, among other matters, site access points and internal roads and the firefighting facilities (including water tanks and hydrants) together with water supply locations and capacity.

5.5 Response to Ben Obese Jecty MP

Table 18: Response to Ben Obese Jecty MP Relevant Representation (RR-117)

Our Ref.	Theme	BOJ Comments	Applicant Response
BOJ-RR-01	Policy	While I support the ambition to expand renewable energy generation in principle, I must stress that National Policy Statements EN-1 and EN-3 are explicit: national need does not grant a mandate for unacceptable local impacts, inappropriate site selection, or conflicts with other vital national policy objectives.	The Applicant recognises that the National Policy Statements require the decision-maker to consider both the benefits and the adverse effects of a proposal, and that national need does not remove the requirement to avoid, reduce and mitigate harm where possible. In developing the Scheme, the Applicant has applied the mitigation hierarchy from the outset. This is set out within topic-specific ES chapters, and summarised for each sub-section within Section 7 of the Planning Statement [APP-031]. NPS EN-1 (paragraphs 3.2.6 to 3.2.8⁶) establishes the national need and sets out that substantial weight should be given to that need. This national need position is addressed in Section 8 of the Planning Statement [APP-031] in a way that recognises it is a matter of weight within the overall planning balance, rather than a mandate for unacceptable local impacts. On site selection, ES Vol 1 Chapter 3 Alternatives and Design Evolution [APP-039], ES Vol 2 Appendix 3-1 Site Identification Report [APP-058] and the other supporting appendices to ES Chapter 3 explain that the Applicant has taken a methodical approach to site selection, based on technical, environmental and commercial viability factors consistent with national policy.

⁶ November 2023 versions, designated January 2024.

Our Ref.	Theme	BOJ Comments	Applicant Response
BOJ-RR-02	Soils and agriculture	Huntingdon is a predominantly rural constituency with a deep-seated reliance on its high-quality soil and agricultural heritage. The Proposed Development seeks to occupy approximately 1,900 acres of farmland. Crucially, it is understood that roughly 74% of this land is classified as Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (Grades 2 and 3a). I submit that this proposal fails to meet the strict requirements set out in the government's own policy framework:	The Applicant notes it is important to distinguish between the overall 'Order limits' and the land that would be taken up by the solar farm itself. The Order limits comprise the land required for the construction, operation and maintenance of the Scheme (including land required for both permanent and temporary purposes) and extend to approximately 773 hectares, which the Applicant acknowledges is approximately 1,900 acres. The Order limits include land for the solar farm in addition to (but not limited to) land for access, cabling corridors, green infrastructure and habitat creation, temporary construction requirements and the grid connection corridor. As set out at paragraph 5.6.4 of the Design Approach Document [APP-034], the extent of land for the solar energy generating station (Work No. 1) on the Works Plan covers approximately 446 hectares (equivalent to 1,102 acres). Paragraph 5.6.4 [APP-034] goes on to state that with reference to paragraph 2.10.17 of NPS EN-3, a typical solar farm requires between 2 to 4 acres per MW of output and that the Scheme's land use equates to approximately 2.75 acres per MW for a 400 MW output, which is consistent with the guidelines in NPS EN-3. The proportion of the Site which is BMV land is slightly overstated, with Table 13.8 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 [APP-049] confirming that 66.4% of the Site is known to be BMV land, with a further 5.4% as yet ungraded. However, the Applicant acknowledges that a large proportion of the Site is BMV land.
BOJ-RR-03	Soils and agriculture	Failure to prioritise poorer quality land: Under the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) at 2.10.29, the policy states: "Where the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary, poorer quality land should be preferred to higher quality	NPS EN-3 expects applicants, where possible, to utilise previously developed or brownfield land and, where the use of agricultural land is necessary, to prefer poorer quality land and avoid BMV land where possible. Paragraph 2.10.29 of NPS EN-3 also makes clear that land

Our Ref.	Theme	BOJ Comments	Applicant Response
		land avoiding the use of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land where possible." The developer has failed to demonstrate that the use of such a vast area of BMV land is "necessary" when alternative brownfield or lower-grade sites remain unexhausted.	type should not be a predominating factor in determining site suitability. These matters must be considered alongside other relevant siting considerations. ES Vol 2 Appendix 3-1 Site Identification Report [APP-058] explains the approach taken to site selection and that, following the guidance in NPS EN-3, the Applicant firstly identified and ruled out possible brownfield or previously developed land, before establishing that agricultural land is required to deliver the Scheme. Once it was established that agricultural land was required, a desk-based review of published agricultural land classification datasets was undertaken to seek a site of lesser agricultural quality where possible, whilst considering various factors that affect site selection.
BOJ-RR-04	Soils and agriculture	Inadequate consideration of impacts: Furthermore, EN-3 at 2.10.30 states: "Whilst the development of ground mounted solar arrays is not prohibited on Best and Most Versatile agricultural land, or sites designated for their natural beauty, or recognised for ecological or archaeological importance, the impacts of such are expected to be considered." In this instance, the impact is the permanent loss of productive capacity for a 40-year period. Sacrificing high-quality food-producing land for a low-yield energy return undermines national food security and ignores the cumulative impact on the local agricultural economy.	The Applicant considers that these matters have been fully addressed through the site selection work set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 3-1 Site Identification Report [APP-058] and ES Vol 2 Appendix 3-2 Land Identification Report [APP-059]. The Applicant's position is that the Scheme would not significantly affect food security, or agricultural production. This aligns with the Government's position set out in the UK Solar Roadmap (June 2025) which notes that Government does not believe increased solar deployment poses a threat to food security, and that "<i>the biggest risk to food security and the natural environment is the climate and nature crisis</i>". The Applicant has provided a separate response in relation to food security and the local agricultural economy at reference CCC-RR-60 in Table 3.

Our Ref.	Theme	BOJ Comments	Applicant Response
BOJ-RR-05	Cumulative effects	The scale of this project is excessive. The site spans approximately several miles from Swineshead (Bedfordshire) to Hail Weston (Huntingdonshire). Under NPS EN-1, cumulative impacts must be assessed. When combined with existing and consented schemes in the immediate vicinity, the Proposed Development would form part of a solar corridor approaching 2,800 acres. This results in the progressive industrialisation of a rural landscape, fundamentally altering land use, character, and community experience. For the residents of Hail Weston and Great Staughton, this represents the total encirclement of rural settlements by industrial infrastructure.	In accordance with NPS EN-1, cumulative impacts have been assessed within ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 [APP-053]. The Applicant identified (in consultation with the local planning authorities) other consented and proposed solar and BESS developments in the public domain. The assessment of cumulative inter-project effects concludes that there would be no significant adverse cumulative effects as a result of the Scheme in combination with any cumulative scheme. The residual effects of the Scheme would not be changed as a result of any of the cumulative schemes. The Scheme in combination with other cumulative solar developments (as shown on ES Vol 3 Figure 4-2 [APP-128]) would not result in the total encirclement of Hail Weston or Great Staughton.
BOJ-RR-06	Traffic, transport and access	Traffic Volume: The project is projected to involve tens of thousands of HGV movements on narrow B and C roads surrounding Great Staughton and Hail Weston. These lanes were never designed for this volume or weight of industrial traffic.	The HGV routing strategy is set out within Section 5.0 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission), which is secured under Requirement 8 of the draft DCO. This clearly identifies that HGVs will route directly to the Site from the A1 via the B645 Kimbolton Road, which is of a suitable standard to accommodate two-way HGV movements. It is proposed to construct a network of internal haul roads to allow HGV movements around the Site, to avoid the need to route HGVs along unsuitable roads or through centres of population. The proposed monitoring regime, communications strategy and enforcement measures are described in Section 9.0 of the oCTMP.
BOJ-RR-07	Traffic, transport and access	Lessons from Cleve Hill Solar Park: Evidence from the Cleve Hill Solar Park (the first solar NSIP) demonstrates that construction impacts are routinely underestimated. At	The Applicant cannot comment on the approach taken by another developer / contractor on another project, and any perceived shortcomings in enforcement. The decision on

Our Ref.	Theme	BOJ Comments	Applicant Response
		Cleve Hill, despite approved Construction Transport Management Plans, narrow rural roads were subjected to sustained heavy HGV traffic, often in convoys.	the East Park Energy application must be made on the evidence for this Scheme and the controls secured in the draft DCO [AS-008] .
BOJ-RR-08	Noise and vibration	Damage to Infrastructure: At Cleve Hill, road surfaces, verges, and village greens were damaged, and noise, dust, and vibration impacts were prolonged. These impacts occurred despite DCO controls, demonstrating that reliance on management plans does not guarantee protection for rural communities like mine.	Schedule 2 (Requirements) of the draft DCO [AS-008] secures the mitigation and other measures identified in the Environmental Statement and the wider application documents. Failure to comply with the terms of a made DCO is a breach of the Order, and is enforceable through the statutory regime, including criminal liability for breach of the terms of an order granting development consent (as per Section 161 of the Planning Act 2008). In such circumstances, the local planning authority can seek an injunction to restrain such activities (as per Section 171 of the Planning Act 2008). The application's outline management plan framework commits to monitoring and reporting to demonstrate compliance and to ensure corrective action is taken where necessary, and to logging, reviewing and acting on complaints, with corrective actions recorded. The Applicant considers the approach and legal framework for enforcement on this Scheme to be robust. The approach taken by another developer on another project should not be a material consideration for the determination of this application.
BOJ-RR-09	Soils and agriculture	Soil Compaction and Flooding: The movement of heavy machinery over 30 months will lead to severe soil compaction. Furthermore, the "gutter effect"—where rain runs off the panels rather than being absorbed evenly—will increase surface water runoff. This raises significant flood risks for the catchment areas of the River Kym, which are already sensitive to flooding.	The outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [APP-155] has outlined the measures to be implemented during the construction of the Proposed Development to mitigate the impact of heavy machinery. More specifically, Table 5.9 of the oCEMP [APP-155] details how movement of plant and vehicles around the Site will be carefully controlled, including the use of low-pressure tyres to distribute weight (and thus prevent soil

Our Ref.	Theme	BOJ Comments	Applicant Response
			compaction). Further measures are detailed in the outline Soil Management Plan [APP-161]. Measures guarding against the risk of increased surface water runoff from solar panels have been described in the outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [APP-165]. The oSWMP [APP-165] sets out a requirement for monitoring of the ground around and under panels for areas of bare soil that may increase flood risk. Additionally, the oSWMP sets out that vegetation beneath and around the solar panel arrays will be restored and maintained under the existing hydrological regime ensuring that a grass/vegetative cover is sustained under the panels to keep runoff characteristics close to pre-development conditions.
BOJ-RR-10	Ecology and biodiversity	Biodiversity Net Gain: The promised biodiversity net gain is questionable. The installation of industrial security fencing creates barriers that disrupt local wildlife corridors and sever Public Rights of Way, effectively sterilising the land for larger mammals.	The Applicant considers the conclusions reached in the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [APP-168] to be robust, with the report showing how the Defra Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been utilised to show both baseline biodiversity units and predicted increases. Measures to increase biodiversity have also been outlined in the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-159]. The oLEMP [APP-159] sets out that mammal gaps will be provided within solar fencelines to allow small mammals to move around the Site. The fencing will be inspected twice annually for the lifetime of the Proposed Development, including checking the mammal gates to ensure they are clear and suitable for purpose. During the operational phase, all existing public rights of way (PRoW) will be maintained on their current alignment, with no diversions or stopping-up of routes.

5.6 Response to Canal and River Trust

Table 19: Response to Canal and River Trust Relevant Representation (RR-152)

Our Ref.	Theme	CRT Comments	Applicant Response
CRT-RR-01	Consultation and engagement	The site area is not within close proximity to our network. The Trust can therefore confirm that we have no comments to make on the proposals. However, we do recommend that any waterways, including any restoration projects, that may be affected by the proposals are identified and considered in consultation with the relevant owners/navigation authorities.	The Applicant notes this response and confirmation from the CRT that they have no comments on the Scheme.

5.7 Response to EAGLeS

Table 20: Response to EAGLeS Relevant Representation (RR-326)

Our Ref.	EAGLeS Comments	Applicant Response
EAGLES-RR-01	There have already been several fires in this country resulting from the BESS energy storage systems, it is a significant concern to us that fire safety including wildfires, is considered further.	The Applicant has prepared an outline Battery Safety Management Plan [APP-162] which sets out measures that will be adopted to mitigate for the risk from fires.
EAGLES-RR-02	The 3 year construction process will negatively impact wildlife in the area. As your surveys indicate, we have many protected species in range including Turtle Doves (breeding), Sky lark and Grey Partridge, along with a colony of Hazel Dormice. Whilst Sky Lark and Grey Partridges have been recognised and counted, there has been limited specific provision to allow for the growth of biodiversity, and no mention or awareness of breeding Turtle Doves and Hazel Dormice in East Park's plans. We offered this knowledge in October 2024.	The Applicant has prepared an assessment of the likely significant effects on ecological resources and receptors in ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 [APP-043] .
EAGLES-RR-03	Some of our members have visited several other Solar Installations, and found that almost all planned hedging across these sites has not materialised or been maintained. At best there are a small number of plastic guards with dead whips, at worst – nothing has been done to replace the lost habitat for birds and small animals. There is little in East Park Energy's plan and ethos to give us confidence that this would be any different for our area. In other words if a contract were awarded we have concerns that whilst plans are in place, implementation would be unmeasured and accountability would end.	The Applicant notes the group's concerns, but is committed to providing the required implementation and management of new landscaping and habitats as set out in the oLEMP [APP-159] . In terms of accountability and enforcement, Schedule 2 (Requirements) of the draft DCO [AS-008] secures the mitigation and other measures identified in the Environmental Statement and the wider application documents. Failure to comply with the terms of a made DCO is a breach of the Order, and is enforceable through the statutory regime, including criminal liability for breach of the terms of an order granting development consent (as per Section 161 of the Planning Act 2008). In such circumstances, the local planning authority can seek an injunction to restrain such activities (as per Section 171 of the Planning Act 2008).

Our Ref.	EAGLeS Comments	Applicant Response
		The application's outline management plan framework commits to monitoring and reporting to demonstrate compliance and to ensure corrective action is taken where necessary, and to logging, reviewing and acting on complaints, with corrective actions recorded. The Applicant considers the approach and legal framework for enforcement on this Scheme to be robust. The approach taken by another developer on another project should not be a material consideration for the determination of this application.
EAGLES-RR-04	We submitted a detailed consultation response on October 25th, 2024, containing numerous specific questions about project impacts, safety measures, and environmental protections. To date, we have received no direct response to these questions, which raises serious concerns about meaningful community engagement and process transparency. Extensive wildlife surveys were conducted by East Park with no reference to the cumulative knowledge of the EAGLeS group. In other words a formulaic corporate exercise rather than a community collaboration. Whilst we acknowledge that farming practices are often a long way from PFAS and pollution free, we believe that there is some risk during the construction period of water courses and streams being adversely affected by pollutants and forever chemicals from the component materials used to create the Solar Installation, which may have a detrimental effect on the health of residents in the area as well as wildlife.	The Applicant notes the feedback submitted by EAGLeS as part of the statutory consultation process, which it reviewed and considered following this consultation. Given the breadth and volume of feedback received to the statutory consultation, it was not the Applicant's policy to provide individual responses to consultation feedback received. Instead, the Applicant accounted for and responded to all feedback received, including that of EAGLeS, via Chapter 6 of the Consultation Report [APP-023] and Appendix 5.2 of the Consultation Report Appendices [APP-028]. In relation to PFAS, the Applicant has amended Table 5.8 in each the oCEMP, oOEMP, oDEMP [each as updated alongside this submission] to ensure PFAS is avoided wherever reasonably practicable.
EAGLES-RR-05	We are extremely concerned about the decision to place the Solar Arrays so close to several local homes and rural businesses. It is, we gather, clear that more land than was needed was offered for this installation, and the selection could have kept the panels away from homes.	The Applicant's approach to land identification is set out in ES Vol 2 Appendix 3-2 [APP-059], and the design process is summarised in the Design Approach Document [APP-034].

Our Ref.	EAGLeS Comments	Applicant Response
EAGLES-RR-06	By choice, Little Staughton is a 'dark sky' village with no street lighting. We have concerns that, for security reasons, unacceptable lighting would be introduced. This will detract from the village environment and would have a detrimental effect on nighttime wildlife, particularly nocturnal vertebrates and invertebrates.	The Applicant notes the importance attached by Little Staughton to maintaining a dark night-time environment. During construction, artificial lighting would be task-focused, used only where necessary for health and safety, and designed to minimise sky glow, glare and light spillage, as set out in the oCEMP [APP-155]. During operation, no part of the Scheme will be continuously lit, as this is not required for its operation. Any operational lighting is anticipated to be limited to that required at the East Park Substation for security and health and safety, and this will be designed and sited to minimise impacts on human and ecological receptors.
EAGLES-RR-07	During the construction process, significant and constant noise will have a huge impact on many local residents as well as wildlife. Furthermore, once the construction has been completed, there are concerns of a constant background noise from the inverters – having an impact. East Park hasn't yet confirmed where the inverters will be.	The Applicant has undertaken a noise assessment as set out in ES Vol 1 Chapter 10 Noise and Vibration [APP-046] which concludes there would be no significant adverse effects. Mitigation measures for noise are set out in the oCEMP, with specific reference to Table 5.6 of the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission]. The inverters are shown illustratively on ES Vol 2 Figure 2-1 [APP-121]; the final positioning of the inverters must accord with the noise assessment as per Table 5.6 of the oOEMP [APP-157].
EAGLES-RR-08	The plan for this scheme is that the panels will serve a 40 year period. The lifespan of the panels is no more than 20, and technologically, their lifespan is likely to be much much less, necessitating a complete replacement and significant further upheaval long before the 40 year period is up. We are concerned that once they have outlived their useful lifespan, the panels will be left in place, and their removal not properly addressed. The possibility of panels leaking harmful chemicals into our watercourses and soil once they are no-longer useful is of great concern.	The Applicant has acknowledged that there will be a need to replace the solar panels throughout the lifetime of the development, as set out in Section 2.6 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 The Scheme [APP-038]. Replacements are assessed within the ES, and specific control and mitigation measures are set out in the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [APP-157]. The outline Waste Management Plan (oWMP) [APP-164] sets out that during operation and decommissioning, panels and associated electrical equipment would be removed and handled

Our Ref.	EAGLeS Comments	Applicant Response
		as Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) in accordance with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013.
EAGLES-RR-09	(Redacted) recounted a specific project underway on the use of Agricultural land – what are the outcomes of this? (He said he would let us have these).	The Applicant notes that at the time of the statutory consultation, further agricultural land classification surveys were being scheduled for the Site, and therefore it is assumed that this comment is in relation to those additional surveys. The further agricultural land classification and soil resources survey that has been completed since statutory consultation is reported in ES Vol 2 Appendix 13-1 [APP-115] .
EAGLES-RR-10	What plans do you have for monitoring water courses and local streams during the construction and over the next 40 years?	The Applicant will monitor watercourses during the construction stage as per the outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [APP-165] , with a detailed plan for monitoring to be set out in a final Surface Water Management Plan to be approved by the Local Planning Authority before any phase of the development commences. The requirement for water quality monitoring is also set out in the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [APP-155] and the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [APP-157] .
EAGLES-RR-11	Confirmation of non-toxic chemical use for panel cleaning p17 Appendix 7.05	The Applicant has amended paragraph 2.4.14 of the oOEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to provide this additional commitment.
EAGLES-RR-12	Confirmation of no onsite construction worker accommodation.	The Applicant can confirm there will be no on-site construction worker accommodation.
EAGLES-RR-13	Specific plans for protected species including red list birds	ES Vol 3 Chapter 7 Ecology and Nature Conservation Figures [APP-145] includes figures, including for breeding birds (Figure 7-4) which identifies bird species by red or amber list status.

Our Ref.	EAGLeS Comments	Applicant Response
EAGLES-RR-14	Hazel Dormouse colony protection measures	Reasonable Avoidance Measures Method Statements (RAMs) for hazel dormouse are now included within the outline Construction Ecological Management Plan (oCEMP) [as updated alongside this submission] .
EAGLES-RR-15	Addition of ponds for wildlife (at least two 100m ² scrapes in the landscaped area to the west of Little Staughton requested)	The Applicant does not believe that scrapes are suitable in this area because of the topography, or because of the underlying utilities. Wildlife ponds or scrapes are therefore not proposed.
EAGLES-RR-16	Increase in wildflower mix from 20% to 40% flower seed. The offer of 20% with the balance as fucus sp is meagre	The Applicant has considered the request to increase the wildflower component of the proposed species-diverse grassland seed mix from 20% to 40%, but does not propose to make this change. The indicative species list in the oLEMP [APP-159] for species-diverse grassland includes a range of wildflower species (e.g. birdsfoot trefoil, knapweed, cowslip, oxeye daisy and yellow rattle) alongside grasses (including fescues), rather than being limited to a single grass type. The final detailed seed mixes (including final proportions where tailoring is appropriate) will be confirmed through the final LEMP, which must be in substantial accordance with the oLEMP [APP-159] and approved by the relevant local planning authority.
EAGLES-RR-17	Since the whole premise of the solar installation is to reduce the Country's carbon footprint – provision of 1000 trees for landscaped areas in Little Staughton, predominantly in the 25 acres, (appropriate native trees) is a logical expectation.	The Applicant acknowledges the request for additional trees in the area west of Little Staughton, but must be mindful of what is required to mitigate adverse impacts, and the condition of the land when it is returned to landowners following decommissioning of the Scheme. The Applicant design approach north and west of Little Staughton has been undertaken on this basis.
EAGLES-RR-18	Specific agrovoltaic initiatives under discussion beyond lamb grazing wrt Rothamsted.	As set out at paragraphs 6.5.33 to 6.5.41 of the oLEMP [APP-159], sheep grazing is the preferred grassland management approach for the solar array areas. The Applicant and Rothamsted Research are discussing a broader programme of agrisolar initiatives focused on research.

Our Ref.	EAGLeS Comments	Applicant Response
		The Scheme includes a proposed 'agrisolar research area' in Site D proximate to the storage, operations and maintenance building; this area provides additional design flexibility to support research into alternative panel arrangements, including different heights and densities, and different configurations. The research is intended to consider agrisolar productivity, soil quality over time, microclimates, wildflowers, pests and diseases, and invertebrates.
EAGLES-RR-19	Hedgerow management protocols (objection to routine flailing and a consistent height). Hedges to be left to grow until unacceptable shade is produced	The oLEMP [APP-159] does not propose annual flailing of all hedgerows. For retained hedgerows, paragraph 6.4.3 [APP-159] confirms a rotational cutting regime, with one third cut each year, and paragraph 6.4.4 confirms that hedgerows will be cut on different sides each year and not all hedgerows will be cut in the same year, to provide a varied structure for wildlife. Where cutting is required, paragraph 6.4.5 [APP-159] states it would be undertaken by tractor with flail between December and February, with hedgerows maintained to a minimum height of 2.5 m, and no cutting during the breeding bird season.
EAGLES-RR-20	Confirmation of organic fertilizer use only	The application does not commit to using organic fertiliser only. Where fertiliser is proposed, it is limited and targeted. The oLEMP [APP-159] sets out at paragraphs 6.5.9 and 6.5.31 that standard or light standard trees will receive a slow-release fertiliser application at the end of each growing season for the first five years after planting.
EAGLES-RR-21	Confirmation of prohibition of herbicides, pesticides, and fungicides (Please confirm Brockwell's statement that they will not use pesticides). Please specify the compounds to be used.	The Scheme will not use pesticides or fungicides. The Applicant has updated paragraph 6.3.8 of the oLEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to make this commitment clear. The application documents do not specify individual herbicide compounds at this outline stage. If any herbicide treatment is required, the detailed approach would be set out through the final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, which is required to be approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of works.

Our Ref.	EAGLeS Comments	Applicant Response
EAGLES-RR-22	Confirmation that biodegradable tree guards would be used	The Applicant has updated paragraphs 5.3.9, 5.3.16 and 5.3.24 of the oLEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to clarify that biodegradable tree guards must be used.
EAGLES-RR-23	To catalyze habitat creation, screening and biodiversity improvement, confirmation that 5 year old trees not 1 or 2 year old whips would be used in creating new hedges.	New hedgerows are specified to be planted in a double staggered row at 5 plants per linear metre (with a minimum of five native species per 30m length), using bare-root transplants at 40cm to 100cm in height and of at least 1+1 stock, planted during the dormant season. As such, the proposals do not specify the use of 5-year-old trees for new hedgerow planting. The final planting specification and detailed design for all hedgerows across the Scheme will be set out in the final LEMP, which must be in substantial accordance with the oLEMP [APP-159] .
EAGLES-RR-24	We request that the four landscape ecological maintenance staff during the operational phase are accountable to the Community Liaison group	The Applicant does not propose that operational landscape and ecological maintenance staff are accountable to the Community Liaison Group (CLG) in a management or reporting sense. Oversight and monitoring of the final LEMP's aims and objectives will be provided through the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan Steering Group, with invited representation from the host authorities and the Wildlife Trust, as set out in Section 4.2 of the oLEMP [APP-159] . The CLG nevertheless provides a clear route for community issues to be raised. The CLG will be formed prior to construction and continue through operation, with its purpose being to update interested community members and to allow local residents or groups such as EAGLeS to raise issues.
EAGLES-RR-25	We request a place on the landscape and ecological management steering group	The establishment of the landscape and ecological management steering group is set out in Section 4.2 of the oLEMP [APP-159] and includes for the Applicant, the Local Authorities, and the Wildlife Trust. The steering group is intended to focus on

Our Ref.	EAGLeS Comments	Applicant Response
		accountability and enforcement with the local authority, and will not be open to community groups. However, the Applicant acknowledges the value that community groups can bring, and therefore also sets out at Section 4.2 of the oLEMP [APP-159] that a Community Liaison Group (CLG) will be formed; membership of the CLG would be open to EAGLeS as a relevant local community group.
EAGLES-RR-26	Confirmation of a place for EAGLeS on the Community Liaison group	Membership of the CLG would be open to EAGLeS as a relevant local community group.
EAGLES-RR-27	Consideration of direct funding from any Community fund for EAGLeS	The Applicant is committed to providing a Community Benefit Fund. The Applicant will continue to engage with the host authorities about the most appropriate mechanism to secure this. The Applicant will engage with relevant stakeholders and establish a suitable governance and delivery model to provide for the distribution of funding as decided by the community.
EAGLES-RR-28	Terms of Reference for Community Liaison Group (when available)	The Applicant is committed to forming the Community Liaison Group, as set out in the framework of environmental management plans. The terms of reference for this group will be agreed with the local planning authorities post-consent.
EAGLES-RR-29	Formal biodiversity monitoring at years 5, 10, and 15	The Applicant can confirm that the monitoring framework set out in Section 8.1 of the oLEMP [APP-159] provides for formal ecological and biodiversity monitoring at the end of operational years 5 and 10, and at the end of every fifth year thereafter, which includes year 15, with reports to be made available to the local planning authorities.
EAGLES-RR-30	Personal commitments from senior East Park leadership for accountability	The Applicant is committed to delivering the requirements proposed under the Development Consent Order, which are legally enforceable.

5.8 Response to East of England Ambulance Service

Table 21: Response to East of England Ambulance Service Relevant Representation (AS-025)

Our Ref.	EEAST Comments	Applicant Response
EEAST-RR-02	EEAST notes a peak of 30 one-way daily movements: - average of 8 one-way movements per day across the 30-month construction phase 248 one-way staff movements across the 30-month construction phase with 427 one-way movements at the peak in Month 12. This level of increased traffic will significantly impact on EEAST's operational resources, capacity and efficiency. EEAST is mandated to meet national response times (1 minute can make a difference to a patients' life or long-term health outcomes). Mitigation is sought by agreeing a Statement of Common Ground with BSSL Cambsbed 1 Limited to ensure effective transport management through advanced notification of: - ALLs routes, movement timeline - Road closures and diversions. - Enabling works of main compound, access at sites A-D - Construction of BESS These mitigation measures will enable our operations teams to ensure knowledge is cascaded to our Emergency Operations Centres and onwards to ambulance crews.	The Applicant respectfully disagrees that the Scheme will significantly impact on EEAST's operational resources, capacity and efficiency. ES Vol 1 Chapter 9 Traffic and Transport [APP-045] includes an assessment of impacts on driver delay, which concludes the Scheme would have a <u>negligible</u> impact on driver delay along the sections of public highway affected by the Scheme. Whilst the Applicant is mindful of the significance of response times to an ambulance service, there is no reason to believe that the construction traffic associated with the Scheme would present any significantly greater impact on response times than the existing situation. The Applicant is committed to preparing an Emergency Response Plan as part of the final Construction Environmental Management Plan. The Applicant has updated the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to state that the Emergency Response Plan should be shared with the East of England Ambulance Service prior to construction.
EEAST-RR-03	HSE's construction statistics and publications for Great Britain indicate that work related incidents, involving serious injury and fatalities, are statistically significantly higher for the construction industry as compared to the 'all industry' rate. EEAST acknowledges work on solar farms is generally seen as likely to be low risk (is working from height/underground is not usually required).	The Applicant notes this comment.

Our Ref.	EEAST Comments	Applicant Response
	EEAST's activity data indicates adults of working age are likely to have 0.11 incidents per annum compared to our all-age incident rate of 0.23 incidents per person per annum.	
EEAST-RR-04	EEAST notes the intention is to recruit local workers where possible. However, if workers are not recruited in the six counties covered by EEAST (Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk), EEAST would request additional funding is provided to account for this additional activity. Therefore, the expected volume of workers from outside of EEAST's catchment area is required with mitigation at £155 per worker per annum. This figure is based on the usual calculation EEAST uses for population growth for housing developments at £340 per 2.2 persons per dwelling. EEAST would seek agreement as part of the SoCG to agree an expected additional activity figure for the duration of the construction period and for the amount to be paid as a single figure in advance of construction.	For the operational phase, the intention would be to use a local workforce. However, until such time as the Applicant appoints a Principal Contractor to undertake the works, it is not possible to confirm the precise origin of the workforce during the construction phase. The Applicant considers that because of the temporary nature of the construction phase and that construction of solar farms is considered "low risk", the Scheme is not likely to increase demand on EEAST's services to the extent that a financial contribution is required. The Applicant will consult with the East of England Ambulance Service on this matter.
EEAST-RR-05	In the event of a construction phase accident or incident, appropriate procedures need to be put in place for emergency access, on-site triage, medical assessment and patient identification, stabilisation and transfer to an appropriate healthcare setting.	The Applicant is committed to preparing an Emergency Response Plan as part of the final Construction Environmental Management Plan. The Applicant has updated the oCEMP [as updated alongside this submission] to state that the Emergency Response Plan should be shared with the East of England Ambulance Service prior to construction.

5.9 Response to Eaton Socon Power Limited

Table 22: Response to Eaton Socon Power Limited Relevant Representation (RR-329)

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
ESPL-RR-01	1.6	Engagement	ESPL must record its sincere disappointment with the level of engagement from the Applicant. Since acquiring the ESPL Project in July 2025, ESPL has sought to engage with the Applicant in order to identify a suitable co-existence solution that avoided the inclusion of its land interests within the Order land. This included sending a detailed letter to the Applicant's agent in August 2025 explaining the nature of its land and development interests, the steps that were required in order to safeguard those interests and which invited further correspondence with the Applicant to address its concerns before the DCO application was submitted. The Applicant has singularly failed to carry out any meaningful consultation with ESPL either before or since receipt of that correspondence.	The Applicant disagrees with the suggestion that its level of engagement to date has been poor. A high-level summary of the Applicant's engagement to date with ESPL is set out below. A more detailed chronology of the Applicant's engagement with ESPL to date can be found at Appendix B of this document. Details of the Applicant's engagement with the landowners of the land subject to ESPL's interests can also be found at Appendix C and Appendix D of this document. The Applicant notes that ESPL did not acquire an option agreement over the land that overlaps with the Scheme until 30 July 2024, by which time the Applicant had already issued two land interest questionnaires ('LIQ') to ESPL and the relevant landowners and a statutory undertaker LIQ to both ESPL and National Grid Electricity Transmission plc ('NGET'). The LIQs demonstrate the Applicant's attempts to engage with the relevant landowners and assist with identifying land interests that would not necessarily be identifiable on Land Registry title documents. As part of its statutory consultation, the Applicant issued a notice required under section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 to ESPL in September 2024 (a year before the DCO application for the Scheme was made). A site notice was also placed close to the

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
				entrance of the main access track to the Eaton Socon substation. In July 2025 the ESPL project was acquired by AGR Power Limited. The Applicant understands that a lease of the ESPL Project's main site, which lies outside of the Scheme's Order Limits, was granted on 21 August 2025 but has not been registered against the relevant Land Registry titles yet. On 8 August 2025 the Applicant issued a confirmation request to ESPL, a short-form LIQ designed to confirm if the information the Applicant holds is still correct or has changed. ESPL responded to this confirmation request by way of a letter dated 22 August 2025, which included a summary of ESPL's interests and the overlap between these interests and the Scheme. It also included a request to remove any overlapping land from the scope of the DCO. In response, the Applicant responded on 29 September 2025 to clarify that the extent of the overlap was not as wide as described in ESPL's letter and would be limited to the proposed cable easement and access easement to connect into National Grid's substation. The letter explained how the Applicant had taken all reasonable steps to engage with the relevant parties during each round of consultation. It also proposed next steps for managing the design of the respective connections to Eaton Socon substation, including an offer to progress heads of terms for a cooperation agreement with ESPL if appropriate. The Applicant is yet to receive a formal response to this letter.

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
				On 7 January 2026 representatives for the Applicant and ESPL met to discuss the contents of the Applicant's letter dated 29 September 2025, and the offer of a cooperation agreement was re-iterated. On 29 January 2026 ESPL's relevant representation (dated 14 January 2026) was made available on the PINS website. On 9 February 2026 the Applicant sent a further email to ESPL, including a request that ESPL formally respond to its letter dated 29 September 2025. As demonstrated, the Applicant has sought to engage with ESPL on a number of occasions both voluntarily and in line with its statutory obligations under the Planning Act 2008, the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and the Infrastructure Planning (Compulsory Acquisition) Regulations 2010. As stated above, the Applicant is willing to progress heads of terms for a cooperation agreement with ESPL. It is expected that this agreement could govern the interaction between the projects and resolve the concerns ESPL has expressed in their relevant representation. The offer to explore a cooperation agreement stands and the Applicant will continue to engage with ESPL to attempt to resolve their concerns.
ESPL-RR-02	3.6	Draft DCO	Taken together, pursuant to Article 23 of the DCO the Applicant is proposing the permanent acquisition of new rights (or the imposition of restrictive covenants) over land in which ESPL has an interest. In addition,	<u>Summary of the Applicant's position</u> The powers sought under Articles 23, 24, 27, 30 and 31 of the draft DCO [AS-008] are essential to ensure that the Scheme, as a nationally significant

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
			the Applicant is seeking powers to extinguish or suspend all private rights over that land pursuant to Article 24 of the DCO, override easements and other rights pursuant to Article 27, as well as additional rights to temporarily use the land during construction or for maintenance purposes pursuant to Articles 30 and 31 of the DCO respectively.	infrastructure project, can be fully delivered without the risk of ransom or delay that would arise from a need to negotiate and obtain all of the required land rights voluntarily. The powers sought are consistent with those contained in other recently granted solar DCOs, as described in the Explanatory Memorandum [AS-010]. As set out in more detail below, the potential overlap with ESPL's land interests occurs in land within the vicinity of the National Grid Eaton Socon substation but outside of the ESPL main project site. This is illustrated on the plan included at Appendix E to this document. It is over this land that the draft DCO seeks to provide the Applicant with the power to, if necessary, compulsorily acquire rights to connect the Scheme into the National Grid substation. The extent of the rights sought by the Applicant has primarily been driven by the uncertainty around the Applicant's point of connection caused by planned upgrades to the National Grid substation, with the size and final design of the substation being currently unknown. Importantly, ESPL's land interests will not be automatically extinguished (or suspended) if the Applicant exercises the powers of compulsorily acquisition in the draft DCO. Instead, ESPL's interests would only be extinguished (or suspended) if the rights would be inconsistent with one another. It is expected that the Scheme is capable of co-existing with the ESPL Project without issue, as is common for other DCO projects involving underground cables. The Applicant's position is the same regarding the rights sought over the access road to the National

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
				Grid substation where it is expected that rights of access can co-exist between the multiple parties that will need to use the road to access the substation. <u>Powers sought under the draft DCO</u> As set out above, the Applicant wishes to highlight that existing interests or restrictive covenants over land will not be extinguished (or suspended in the case of temporary possession) automatically if the compulsory acquisition provisions included within the draft DCO are exercised. Instead, the interference with these interests and restrictive covenants will be limited to situations where there would be an inconsistency with the exercise of the right or compliance with the restrictive covenant, or inconsistency with the purpose for which temporary possession is taken (as appropriate). In light of this the Applicant acknowledges that: • Article 23 of the draft DCO would allow the Applicant to acquire new rights or impose restrictive covenants over the land described in Schedule 9 of the draft DCO for the purposes described in that Schedule; • Articles 30 and 31 of the draft DCO would (respectively) also allow the Applicant to take temporary possession of land for the construction and maintenance of the Authorised Development, subject to the limitations and time limits specified in those Articles; • Article 24(2) of the draft DCO will allow private rights over land to be extinguished where their continuance would be inconsistent with the

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
				exercise of the right or compliance with the restrictive covenant acquired or imposed (as appropriate) under Article 23; - Article 24(3) of the draft DCO will allow private rights and restrictive covenants to be suspended insofar as their continuance would be inconsistent with the purpose for which temporary possession is taken, for as long as the undertaker remains in lawful possession of the land; and - Article 27 of the draft DCO will allow activities authorised by the DCO to be carried out notwithstanding that it would involve an interference with an interest or right in land, or a breach of a restriction on the use of land. The Applicant wishes to highlight that the draft DCO contains provisions requiring the Applicant to pay compensation to those affected by the exercise of these powers of compulsory acquisition. <u>Overlap with ESPL's interests</u> Based on ESPL's response to the Applicant's request for information letters the Applicant has listed ESPL as having an interest over parts of plots 14-8, 14-9, 14-11, 14-12 and 14-14 in the Book of Reference [AS-013], although the Applicant notes that this interest is not shown in publicly available records at the Land Registry. With the exception of plot 14-8 the freehold owner of these plots is NGET.

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
				Under Article 23 of the draft DCO the Applicant is seeking to acquire “cable rights” over plots 14-8, 14-9, 14-11 and 14-12, and “cable rights” and “substation connection rights” over plot 14-14. These rights are described in further detail in Schedule 9 of the draft DCO. The Applicant will also have the power to take temporary possession of this land under Articles 30 and 31 of the draft DCO. As noted above, it is expected that in practice the rights sought under the draft DCO can co-exist with the ESPL’s existing interests, in which case ESPL’s interests will not be extinguished (or suspended) by the DCO. In terms of the cable routes, it is expected that any overlap with ESPL’s land interests will be resolved at the point of connection. While the precise location of this has not yet been defined by NGET due to the planned substation upgrades it is anticipated that no cable crossings will be required, and if they are the Applicant is willing to engage with ESPL on an engineering solution. The Applicant notes that there are a number of other projects connecting into the upgraded substation and the interaction between these projects will need to be managed by NGET under its statutory duties. In terms of the access road to the south of Bushmead Road, which is described as being intended for use as a BESS compound access track on the “Overlap Land Plan” at Appendix 5 of ESPL’s relevant representation [RR-329], it is noted that this is the main access into the substation and will need to be used by multiple parties. It is expected that the rights sought by the Applicant will not be inconsistent with

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
				this and ESPL cannot reasonably expect to be the sole user of this access. In terms of the extent of land that is subject to the powers of compulsory acquisition, the Statement of Reasons [APP-019] explains that the Applicant and NGET are working together to identify the exact point of connection, which has not yet been confirmed by NGET. The Applicant is therefore seeking to acquire new rights compulsorily in relation to land surrounding and within National Grid's substation to ensure the deliverability of the Scheme. The Applicant notes that NGET's relevant representation [RR-903] confirms that in respect of the expansion, rebuild or provision of a new substation "<i>A design for this work cannot be produced until the Connections Reforms process is complete. It is noted that the Applicant has sought wide Order Limits, presumably to ensure that its Project can align with whatever design NGET settles on. It is, however, unknown at this stage where and how the Project would connect within the Order Limits.</i>" Consequently, the current flexibility sought by the DCO is essential and would not result in a fatal interference with the ESPL Project. Once the point of connection has been confirmed, the Applicant will limit the exercise of compulsory acquisition powers to the plots required to ensure it achieves its point of connection.
ESPL-RR-03	4.1-4.2	Draft DCO	The ESPL Project is not viable unless it can connect to the grid and necessary access rights to the site can be maintained. It follows that the acquisition of new rights in the Overlap Land, including the	As noted above in response to ESPL-RR-01, the Applicant has sought to engage with ESPL to agree heads of terms for a cooperation agreement that

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
			potential extinguishment, suspension or overriding of AGR's interests, and exercise of the related powers under the DCO for works to deliver the grid connection from the East Park Project to the Eaton Socon Substation, risk sterilising the entirety of the ESPL Project. Furthermore, ESPL fully expects to have constructed and commenced operation of the ESPL Project by the time that the East Park Project (if found to be acceptable) is granted development consent, and well in advance (potentially several years) before the works to construct the grid connection for the East Park Project would begin. If the compulsory acquisition powers as currently requested by the Applicant were to be granted for the East Park Project, and in the absence of robust protections for the benefit of ESPL, the implications for ESPL and the related cost-exposure for the Applicant in compensating ESPL would be severe.	could address ESPL's concerns regarding the interaction between the projects. The Applicant notes that the extent of the Overlap Land is minimal when compared to the total extent of the plots that the Applicant is seeking rights over and is a natural occurrence given the circumstances of two schemes looking to connect into a viable substation. Based on the plans provided by ESPL the overlap will cover only the access track to the National Grid Eaton Socon substation (plot 14-9), which the Applicant will need to use to access the substation, and ESPL's cable easement (plot 14-12), which is required to provide the Applicant with flexibility to connect into substation. This is illustrated on the plan at Appendix E of this document. As stated above in relation to ESPL-RR-02 it is not expected that the exercise of the powers sought in the draft DCO will result in the extinguishment (or suspension) of ESPLs interests.
ESPL-RR-03	4.14.1	Utilities	There is a significant risk that proximity of adjacent cable infrastructure causes losses in the technical efficiency of the ESPL grid connection cables including installing a high-voltage cable in close proximity to any ESPL high voltage cables can significantly affect the electrical and thermal performance of the original installation. The nearby cable can induce additional electromagnetic fields, leading to increased induced voltages and currents in the existing cable, which may cause interference, higher losses, and potential insulation stress. Thermal effects are also critical: the added heat from the new cable can raise the operating temperature of	The Applicant notes this comment and has committed to engaging with owners of existing utilities at the relevant time. This engagement will directly feed into the detailed design of the scheme ensuring that appropriate offset distances and mitigation measures are observed and incorporated into the design of the scheme. The Applicant welcomes a collaborative and productive approach to this to ensure that stakeholders are not negatively affected.

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
			the existing one, reducing its current-carrying capacity and accelerating insulation aging. Together, these effects can compromise reliability, shorten service life, and require derating or additional mitigation measures such as increased spacing, shielding, or improved cooling. The de-rating of the cables will also effect the maximum generation set point which will result in significant loss of revenue to ESPL.	
ESPL-RR-04	4.14.2	Traffic, transport and access	The proximity of construction works for the East Park Project risks causing severe traffic disruption with the potential to interrupt access and egress arrangements from the ESPL site and in turn delay construction and / or maintenance works associated with the ESPL Project.	The Applicant notes this comment. The potential cumulative impacts associated with the construction phase of the Scheme overlapping with that of the ESPL project has been appraised within Section 9.11 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 9: Traffic and Transport [APP-045] . This identified that there would be limited overlap between the proposed construction traffic access routes for the two developments, other than for a short period during construction of the cable connection for the Scheme. Nevertheless, the Applicant would be willing to develop a Joint Construction Traffic Management Plan with ESPL, if deemed necessary by the Local Highway Authorities.
ESPL-RR-05	4.14.3	Utilities	The proximity of construction works for the East Park Project including the works to install and maintain adjacent cable infrastructure could also risk damage to the infrastructure for the ESPL Project through factors such as ground borne vibration.	Construction impacts such as vibration will be managed via the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).
ESPL-RR-06	5.2	Draft DCO	If the land is not required, it should not be in the DCO. Accordingly an amended version of the DCO should be submitted with the relevant plot numbers	Due to the uncertainty around the Scheme's point of connection to the National Grid Eaton Socon substation and its final design and scale, as

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
			(as listed in the table above) deleted in Schedule 9. The Applicant must also take steps to revise related documents including the Land Plans and Work Plans, in order to omit the Overlap Land. ESPL's interests should also be deleted from the Book of Reference.	described in relation to ESPL-RR-02 above, the Applicant requires the flexibility to acquire rights over plots 14-8, 14-9, 14-11, 14-12 and 14-14 if necessary. As such the Applicant cannot agree to remove these plots from the scope of the draft DCO at this stage and this follows an approach agreed with NGET. Once the point of connection has been confirmed, the Applicant will limit the exercise of compulsory acquisition powers to the plots required to achieve its point of connection. As noted above, it is unrealistic for ESPL to expect to be the sole beneficiary of rights to connect to a NGET substation to the exclusion of other interests. The case for the compelling case and need for flexibility is set out in further detail in the Applicant's Statement of Reasons [APP-019] and the approach taken by the Applicant has been previously agreed with NGET, the freehold owner of all of the relevant plots with the exception of plot 14-8.
ESPL-RR-07	5.4	Draft DCO	In the event that the land is retained within the draft DCO, that must be subject to a legally binding commitment that no rights to exercise powers of compulsory acquisition may be exercised over plots in which ESPL has an interest without ESPL's approval. That is imperative to safeguarding the ESPL Project.	As noted above in response to ESPL-RR-01, the Applicant has sought to engage with ESPL to agree heads of terms for a cooperation agreement that could address ESPL's concerns regarding the interaction between the projects.
ESPL-RR-08	5.5	Draft DCO	In addition, it is imperative that the Applicant provides the following protections: That all works details in relation to the grid corridor for the East Park Project are submitted to and	Considering the limited overlap between the projects, which is largely on land owned by NGET, it would be unreasonable and disproportionate to include protective provisions in the draft DCO requiring the Applicant to obtain ESPL's approval for all works relating to the grid connection corridor for the

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
			approved by ESPL in order to ensure that the ESPL Project is fully protected; The works details must include details of the nature and location of all works related to the grid connection and provide for adequate offset distances from the ESPL access routes and grid connection corridor in order to safeguard ESPL infrastructure from any physical damage or loss of efficiency; That the programme for the carrying out of the approved works details for the grid corridor for the East Park Project are submitted to and agreed with ESPL in order to avoid disruption to the construction and operation of the ESPL Project; That all construction or operational traffic management arrangements within the vicinity of the ESPL Project must be submitted to and approved by ESPL; That in the event of any damage to ESPL's infrastructure, or any interruption in any service provided, the Applicant must: (a) bear and pay the cost reasonably incurred by ESPL in making good such damage or restoring the supply; and (b) indemnify ESPL for all expenses, loss, damages, penalty or costs incurred by ESPL, by reason or in consequence of any such damage or interruption (including for the avoidance of doubt any indirect or consequential loss or loss of profits); Before carrying out any works in the grid connection corridor, the Applicant (or any contractor carrying out such works on its behalf) must put in place a policy of	Scheme. If such a provision was added it would have the potential to grant ESPL effective control over the cable route for the Scheme, which would be inappropriate given that there are numerous other projects that will need to connect into the Eaton Socon substation. It would also be inappropriate given the current uncertainty around the substation upgrades and exact point of connection. In terms of ESPL's other requests, as noted above in response to ESPL-RR-01, the Applicant has sought to engage with ESPL to agree heads of terms for a cooperation agreement that could address ESPL's concerns regarding the interaction between the projects. The Applicant is yet to receive confirmation or acknowledgement from ESPL on whether they are willing to explore this option. Additionally, ESPL are not understood to be a statutory undertaker and the Applicant is therefore of the view that it is not necessary to include bespoke protective provisions within the draft DCO when a private agreement will suffice.

Our Ref.	ESPL Ref.	ESPL Theme	ESPC Comments	Applicant Response
			insurance for a level of cover (and subject to such other terms) as is agreed in writing with ESPL; The Applicant must pay all reasonable fees, costs, charges and expenses incurred by ESPL in relation to it carrying out its functions under any of the aforementioned protections, including the reasonable costs incurred by ESPL in engaging and retaining such external experts, consultants and contractors.	

5.10 Response to Great Staughton Parish Charities

Table 23: Response to Great Staughton Parish Charities Relevant Representation (RR-451)

Our Ref.	GSPC Comments	Applicant Response
GSPC-RR-01	access during construction: we note the plans that construction traffic should not pass the Gt Staughton school or church, but are concerned that, especially if this is not strictly enforced, there could be disruption and risk for children travelling to attend the school and church. 2)we are concerned about the proposed blockage of one of the access routes in to our Town field, and proposed use of the adjacent verge during construction	The Applicant has set out proposed monitoring and enforcement measures for construction traffic within Section 9 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [APP-156] .
GSPC-RR-02	we are concerned about the general impact on the landscape and blighting of the setting of the Town field which currently has a very fine view to Little Staughton church.	The Applicant has assessed views from around Little Staughton, and has visited the Town field. The Scheme would not adversely affect views from the Town field towards Little Staughton church.
GSPC-RR-03	East park have not engaged with the Gt Staughton parish charities on any issues (eg choice of land for the project or use of verges) prior to the submission of the application	The Applicant held a statutory consultation in late 2024 that included a public consultation event at Great Staughton Village Hall. The Applicant has not identified any land proposed to be used by the Scheme (such as verges) that has land interests with the Great Staughton Parish Charities.

5.11 Response to Kimbolton School

Table 24: Response to Kimbolton School Relevant Representation (RR-723)

Our Ref.	KS Comments	Applicant Response
KS-RR-01	The proposed 400MW solar development – covering around c.1,900 acres between Hail Weston and Swineshead – is expected to generate very substantial construction traffic over a three-year build period: approximately 7,000 HGV movements and around 40,000 smaller goods or workforce journeys. These movements are likely to affect the B645, B660 and B661 corridors, which are key routes for Kimbolton's school buses and for parents travelling to both the Senior and Junior Schools. The developer's Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) does not currently include specific safeguards for local schools or communities using these roads. Although it acknowledges that construction peaks will coincide with morning and afternoon commuting periods, the CTMP contains no time-of-day restrictions, mapped exclusion zones, or evidence of consultation with Cambridgeshire County Council's Education Transport Service or local bus operators. There are specific measures that we, as a school, would like to request, to help to safeguard pupil safety, community amenity, and the reliability of school transport during the construction phase. Without such provisions, prolonged congestion or safety concerns along the B645/B660/B661 routes could also influence parents' future school-choice decisions, as ease of access is a key consideration for many families.	The Applicant notes this comment. It should also be noted that the robustness of the highways assessment undertaken to appraise the potential impact on the local highway has been accepted by both Cambridgeshire County Council and Bedford Borough Council. An HGV routing strategy is set out within Section 5.0 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission), which is secured under Requirement 8 of the draft DCO. This clearly identifies that HGVs will route directly to the main Site access from the A1 via the B645 Kimbolton Road, which is of a suitable standard to accommodate two-way HGV movements. It is proposed to construct a network of internal haul roads to allow HGV movements around the Site, to avoid the need to route HGVs along unsuitable roads or through centres of population, including along the B645, B660 and B661 in the vicinity of Kimbolton. The proposed monitoring regime, communications strategy and enforcement measures are described in Section 9.0 of the oCTMP.

5.12 Response to Little Staughton Airfield Solar Limited

Table 25: Response to Little Staughton Airfield Solar Limited Relevant Representation (RR-763)

Our Ref.	LSAS Comments	Applicant Response
LSAS-RR-01	We acknowledge the national importance of renewable energy infrastructure and do not object in principle to the delivery of nationally significant energy projects. However, support in principle does not negate the requirement for the Proposed Development to: - Avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on existing consented infrastructure; - Protect the lawful operation of adjacent assets; and - Ensure that impacts are appropriately mitigated and managed, with full indemnification by the NSIP promoter for any adverse impacts	The Applicant notes LSAS' support in principle for nationally significant renewable energy infrastructure. The Applicant has prepared a framework of environmental management plans to mitigate impacts during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Scheme, and through the measures proposed considers there would be no adverse environmental impact on LSAS' assets. The Applicant does not agree that it is required to provide "full indemnification" for any adverse impacts arising from the Scheme as a matter of law. The Planning Act 2008 and supporting legislation establish a limited statutory framework governing when compensation is payable by an undertaker under a development consent order. Under this framework, compensation arises only in a limited number of clearly defined circumstances, such as where compulsory acquisition or temporary possession powers are exercised by the undertaker. This framework is reflected and built upon in the draft DCO [AS--008], which requires compensation to be provided in other situations, such as under Article 15(5) where a person suffers loss due to the suspension of a private right of way. However, the DCO regime does not impose a requirement for undertakers to provide open-ended indemnities for impacts to third-party developments, which would be disproportionate and unreasonable.
LSAS-RR-02	Our operational solar asset is subject to baseline ecological conditions established at the time of planning consent, including habitats, species presence, and biodiversity enhancement	The Applicant notes LSAS' comments but does not consider that it would be appropriate or proportionate to undertake the additional ecological and wildlife surveys requested. This is because while the DCO regime requires that the Applicant identifies, assesses

Our Ref.	LSAS Comments	Applicant Response
	measures that must be maintained to ensure continued compliance with our LPA approval. We require: Comprehensive baseline ecological and wildlife surveys covering all receptors with potential connectivity to our site, including but not limited to: - Protected species; - Habitats and buffer zones; - Hydrology and soil structure; - Dust, noise, vibration, and light spill pathways. Explicit confirmation that construction activities associated with the Proposed Development will not undermine or alter baseline conditions relied upon by our LPA for ongoing compliance. A clear mechanism to ensure that any deterioration in ecological performance or monitoring outcomes, attributable directly or indirectly to the Proposed Development, is: - Identified promptly; - Remedied in full; and - Funded entirely by the NSIP promoter and/or its EPC contractor.	and avoids or mitigates the likely significant effects of the Scheme, it is not required to re-establish or guarantee baseline conditions associated with third-party developments or planning consents. The Applicant has undertaken a robust assessment of all likely significant effects arising from the Scheme. As an operational site the Little Staughton Airfield Solar has already been accounted for within the EIA baseline for the Scheme that forms part of the various environmental assessments. The Applicant has prepared a framework of environmental management plans to mitigate impacts during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Scheme, and through the measures proposed considers there would be no adverse environmental impact on LSAS' assets. Additionally, it is not considered appropriate to require the Applicant to take responsibility for the monitoring or remediation of the ecological conditions of a third-party development. As noted in relation to LSAS-RR-01 the Applicant's obligations to compensate third parties is clearly defined and should not extend to a requirement to fund the open-ended mechanism described.
LSAS-RR-03	Our asset operates under strict, enforceable LEMP obligations, requiring year-on-year compliance and reporting. The proximity, scale, and intensity of the Proposed Development—particularly during the execution and construction phase—presents a material risk to: - Habitat integrity; - Species displacement; - Soil compaction and drainage; - Long-term landscape screening effectiveness.	The Scheme does not directly impact the operational land of the LSAS project, including its landscape and ecological mitigation. The Applicant does not consider that the Scheme would impact on the habitat integrity within the LSAS site, displacement of species, soil compaction and drainage within their site, or the effectiveness and maintenance of their long-term landscape screening. The Applicant has prepared a framework of environmental management plans to mitigate impacts during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Scheme, and through the measures proposed considers there would be no adverse environmental impact on LSAS' assets. In relation to LSAS' list of requirements, the Applicant disagrees that it would be

Our Ref.	LSAS Comments	Applicant Response
	We therefore require: Recognition within the Development Consent Order (DCO) framework that LEMP non-compliance caused by third-party construction activity is not acceptable. A binding requirement that: Any LEMP breaches or increased management burden resulting from the Proposed Development are absorbed, managed, and paid for by the NSIP promoter; and Remedial actions are agreed in advance with us as the affected asset owner.	appropriate to include a provision in the draft DCO to recognise <i>“that LEMP non-compliance caused by third-party construction activity is not acceptable”</i> as this goes beyond the Applicant’s statutory obligations. It is also unclear what “recognition” would mean in the context of the draft DCO, as a document intended to form the basis of a statutory instrument. In terms of the latter two requirements, as noted in relation to LSAS-RR-01 the Applicant’s obligations to compensate third parties is clearly defined and should not extend to a requirement to fund the “LEMP breaches” or “increased management burden” described.
LSAS-RR-04	The Proposed Development is extensive in scale and appears to abut directly against our operational solar farm boundary. Heavy construction activities introduce risks including: Physical damage to fencing, cabling, drainage, and security infrastructure; Increased dust deposition affecting panel performance; Noise and vibration impacts; Health and safety risks to personnel. We require: A Construction Interface Management Plan addressing: Boundary protection; Construction exclusion zones; Vibration and dust controls;	The Applicant recognises the need to manage construction activities responsibly in proximity to operational assets. Construction effects will be managed through the appropriate management plans, including the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which must be in substantial accordance with the outline CEMP [APP-155]. This contains controls on dust, noise, vibration, site security, and incident response and is secured by a requirement in the draft DCO [AS-008]. Non-compliance with the CEMP will be enforceable by the relevant planning authority. The Applicant would welcome further discussion with LSAS regarding the interface between the Scheme and their development prior to the construction phase. However, the Applicant does not consider it to be necessary to implement a legally enforceable obligation that would effectively give priority to LSAS’ development over the Scheme, which is a nationally significant infrastructure project of critical national priority.

Our Ref.	LSAS Comments	Applicant Response
	Incident response protocols. A legally enforceable obligation that no construction activity interferes with our normal operations and maintenance (O&M) activities, including: - Access for plant, personnel, and emergency response; - Planned and reactive maintenance; - Environmental monitoring and inspections.	
LSAS-RR-05	We note that: Access to our existing solar asset appears to intersect or conflict with: - The proposed 400kV cable route associated with the new development; and/or - Newly proposed access routes serving the NSIP site. These conflicts raise significant concerns regarding safe, uninterrupted access to our operational asset. We require: - A detailed access strategy demonstrating: - How existing lawful access rights will be preserved at all times; - How conflicts with cable installation, haul routes, or traffic management will be avoided. - Confirmation that no temporary or permanent obstruction to our access will occur without: - Prior written agreement; and - Full compensation for any disruption or operational impact.	The Applicant would welcome further discussion with LSAS regarding the interface between the Scheme and the access to their development prior to the construction phase. As noted in relation to LSAS-RR-01 the Applicant's obligations to compensate third parties is clearly defined. The Applicant does not expect to restrict access either temporarily or permanently to the LSAS' asset. However, in this respect the Applicant notes that Article 15(5) can require compensation to be provided in circumstances where a person suffers loss due to the suspension of a private right of way, which is in line with established practice.

Our Ref.	LSAS Comments	Applicant Response
LSAS-RR-06	It is essential that the DCO framework clearly establishes that: Any adverse impact on our asset—whether environmental, operational, or financial—arising from the Proposed Development is: - The responsibility of the NSIP promoter; and - Not transferred to existing asset owners. This includes, but is not limited to: - Additional environmental mitigation; - Increased monitoring and reporting; - Remedial ecological works; - Operational downtime or performance degradation.	The Applicant does not agree that it is required to provide compensation for all adverse impacts arising from the Scheme as a matter of law. As noted in relation to LSAS-RR-01 the Applicant's obligations to compensate third parties is clearly defined and should not be extended to cover the wide set of circumstances described.

5.13 Response to Network Rail

Table 26: Response to Network Rail Relevant Representation (RR-913)

Our Ref.	NR Comments	Applicant Response
NR-RR-01	Whilst the Scheme does not include any land owned by Network Rail within the Order limits, the Promoter proposes as part of the Scheme to carry out works in close proximity to the Railway. On this basis Network Rail wishes to object to the making of the Order on the ground that the proposed works might interfere with the safe and efficient operation of the Railway. Further, Network Rail is investigating and continuing to review the Promoter's plans, draft Order and application documents to assess any potential indirect impacts of the scheme on the Railway and Railway assets, including but not limited to any potential impacts of construction traffic on level crossings, railway bridges, as well as glint and glare impacts on operational railway. In order for Network Rail to be in a position to withdraw its objection Network Rail will require adequate protective provisions to be included within the Order (and for the avoidance of doubt Network Rail require these Protective Provisions to be in the form set out at Appendix 1 to this Relevant Representation) and an agreement with the Promoter to ensure that the new rights sought are exercised in regulated manner to prevent adverse impacts to the Railway.	The Applicant has reached out to Network Rail but has not received a response. The Order limits do not include land owned by Network Rail, and neither does any operational railway land appear to be proximate to the Order limits, with the closest railway on the east side of St Neots (circa 2.5km from the Order limits at its closest point). The Applicant's construction and operational access strategy utilises the strategic highway network to reach the A1 / B645 junction, from which traffic would be directed west towards the Site, not crossing any Network Rail land or assets. The Applicant can therefore see no potential impact on Network Rail's assets. On the basis that the Applicant sees no way that Network Rail are impacted by the East Park Energy project, the Applicant is not proposing any Protective Provisions for the benefit of Network Rail and will continue to seek a confirmation from Network Rail on the adequacy of their relevant representation.

5.14 Response to Nextpower SPV 16 Ltd

Table 27: Response to NEXTPOWER SPV 16 LIMITED Relevant Representation (RR-915)

Our Ref.	NP Comments	Applicant Response
NP-RR-01	We recognise the national importance of infrastructure projects delivered through the NSIP regime and do not object in principle to renewable energy development. However, it is essential that the Proposed Development does not: - Compromise the implementation of existing lawful planning consents; - Alter baseline conditions relied upon by consented schemes; or - Introduce constraints or costs that were not anticipated at the time our consent was granted.	The Applicant notes NP's support in principle for nationally significant renewable energy infrastructure. The Applicant has prepared a framework of environmental management plans to mitigate impacts during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Scheme, and through the measures proposed considers there would be no adverse environmental impact on NP's assets. The Applicant does not agree that it is required to provide "full indemnification" for any adverse impacts arising from the Scheme as a matter of law. The Planning Act 2008 and supporting legislation establish a limited statutory framework governing when compensation is payable by an undertaker under a development consent order. Under this framework, compensation arises only in a limited number of clearly defined circumstances, such as where compulsory acquisition or temporary possession powers are exercised by the undertaker. This framework is reflected and built upon in the draft DCO [AS--008], which requires compensation to be provided in other situations, such as under Article 15(5) where a person suffers loss due to the suspension of a private right of way. However, the DCO regime does not impose a requirement for undertakers to provide open-ended indemnities for impacts to third-party developments, which would be disproportionate and unreasonable.
NP-RR-02	Our planning consent was granted based on defined baseline studies, including environmental, ecological, hydrological, landscape, and transport assessments. We are concerned that the scale and proximity of the Proposed Development—particularly	The Applicant notes NP's comments but does not consider that it would be appropriate or proportionate to undertake the additional ecological and wildlife surveys requested. This is because while the DCO regime requires that the Applicant identifies, assesses

Our Ref.	NP Comments	Applicant Response
	during the construction phase—could materially alter these baseline conditions prior to our own construction commencing. We therefore request: Confirmation that the NSIP proposals will not adversely alter baseline conditions that underpin our consent, including: Ecology and habitat connectivity; Soil condition and compaction; Drainage and surface water behaviour; Noise, dust, and vibration environments. A requirement that any baseline change attributable to the NSIP project is: Fully assessed; Mitigated in advance; and Does not prejudice our ability to lawfully construct and operate our consented development.	and avoids or mitigates the likely significant effects of the Scheme, it is not required to re-establish or guarantee baseline conditions associated with third-party developments or planning consents. The Applicant has undertaken a robust assessment of all likely significant effects arising from the Scheme. This includes an assessment of cumulative effects with the High Wood Solar project. The Applicant has prepared a framework of environmental management plans to mitigate impacts during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Scheme, and through the measures proposed considers there would be no adverse environmental impact on NP's assets. Additionally, it is not considered appropriate to require the Applicant to take responsibility for the monitoring or remediation of the ecological conditions of a third-party development. As noted in relation to NP-RR-01 the Applicant's obligations to compensate third parties is clearly defined and should not extend to a requirement to fund the open-ended mechanism described.
NP-RR-03	Our consented development includes ecological mitigation and enhancement measures, secured through planning conditions and an approved Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), which assume a defined pre-construction baseline. We are concerned that construction activities associated with the Proposed Development could: Displace species into or out of our site; Degrade habitats prior to commencement of our works; or Increase future mitigation and management requirements. We therefore require:	The Scheme does not directly impact the operational land of the NP project, including its landscape and ecological mitigation. The Applicant has prepared a framework of environmental management plans to mitigate impacts during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Scheme, and through the measures proposed considers there would be no adverse environmental impact on NP's assets. It is also unclear what "recognition" would mean in the context of the draft DCO, as a document intended to form the basis of a statutory instrument. In terms of the latter two requirements, as noted in relation to NP-RR-

Our Ref.	NP Comments	Applicant Response
	- Clear recognition that any additional ecological mitigation or management burden arising as a result of the Proposed Development must: - Not fall to us as the consented asset owner; and - Be fully funded and managed by the NSIP promoter.	01 the Applicant's obligations to compensate third parties is clearly defined.
NP-RR-04	Although our development has not yet commenced construction, the consented layout includes defined: - Red line boundaries; - Construction access routes; - Temporary construction compounds; and - Phasing assumptions. The proximity of the Proposed Development raises concerns regarding: - Encroachment into consented land; - Constraints on construction sequencing; - Safety and logistics conflicts during overlapping construction periods. We request: - A Construction Interface Strategy demonstrating how both schemes can coexist without prejudicing the delivery of our consented project.	The Applicant recognises the need to manage construction activities responsibly in proximity to operational assets. Construction effects will be managed through the appropriate management plans, including the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), which must be in substantial accordance with the outline CEMP [APP-155]. This contains controls on dust, noise, vibration, site security, and incident response and is secured by a requirement in the draft DCO [AS-008]. Non-compliance with the CEMP will be enforceable by the relevant planning authority. The Applicant would welcome further discussion with NP regarding the interface between the Scheme and their development prior to the construction phase. However, the Applicant does not consider it to be necessary to implement a legally enforceable obligation that would effectively give priority to NP's development over the Scheme, which is a nationally significant infrastructure project of critical national priority.

Our Ref.	NP Comments	Applicant Response
	Binding provisions to ensure that our future construction activities are not constrained, delayed, or rendered more costly as a result of the NSIP project.	
NP-RR-05	We note potential conflicts between: Our consented access arrangements; and The proposed access routes and/or 400kV cable corridor associated with the NSIP development. We require assurance that: Our consented access rights will be preserved in full; No temporary or permanent obstruction will occur without agreement; and Any redesign, diversion, or additional works required to maintain access are delivered and funded by the NSIP promoter.	The Applicant would welcome further discussion with NP regarding the interface between the Scheme and the access to their development prior to the construction phase. As noted in relation to NP-RR-01 the Applicant's obligations to compensate third parties is clearly defined. The Applicant does not expect to restrict access either temporarily or permanently to the NP's asset. However, in this respect the Applicant notes that Article 15(5) can require compensation to be provided in circumstances where a person suffers loss due to the suspension of a private right of way, which is in line with established practice.
NP-RR-06	It is critical that the NSIP framework ensures that: Existing consented developments are not exposed to unanticipated costs; Programme delays caused by the NSIP project are avoided or compensated; and The risk of planning non-implementation is not increased as a result of third-party development. We therefore request that the Development Consent Order and associated requirements clearly establish that: Any impact on the viability or deliverability of our consented scheme is the responsibility of the NSIP promoter; and	The Applicant does not agree that it is required to provide compensation for all adverse impacts arising from the Scheme as a matter of law. As noted in relation to NP-RR-01 the Applicant's obligations to compensate third parties is clearly defined and should not be extended to cover the wide set of circumstances described.

Our Ref.	NP Comments	Applicant Response
	Appropriate mitigation, compensation, and dispute resolution mechanisms are secured.	

5.15 Response to Richard Fuller MP

Table 28: Response to Richard Fuller MP Relevant Representation (RR-1058)

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
RF-RR-01	Bedfordshire is experiencing above-average housing growth and is also the focus of five Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, particularly affecting North Bedfordshire: • A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Road Scheme (Tier 1) • East West Rail (Tier 2) • Universal Studios Theme Park (Tier 1) • Tempsford New Town (Tier 3) • Luton Airport Expansion (Tier 1) Despite the scale and relevance of these infrastructure projects, the applicant's Environmental Statement only includes the A428 Black Cat scheme and East West Rail within its cumulative assessment. The remaining three major projects are omitted entirely, which is a significant deficiency given their potential to contribute to cumulative impacts.	A comprehensive assessment of cumulative effects has been carried out by the Applicant which follows all relevant guidance on Cumulative and In-combination Effects Assessment, including the Planning Inspectorate's Guidance Note on the subject. This is clearly set out in ES Vol 1 Chapter 4 [APP-040] and supported by ES Vol 3 Figures 4-1 and 4-2 [APP-128]. The methodology adopted in the assessment of cumulative effects, including the Zone of Influence (ZOI) and the projects considered in the long listing and shortlisting process were all agreed with the host authorities (BBC, HDC and CCC) during both the informal and statutory consultation phases, as evidenced in ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 [APP-053]. The Applicant is satisfied that the methodology, ZOI and cumulative site identification process is acceptable and robust. The Applicant's position regarding each of the schemes referenced in RF-RR-01 is as follows: A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Road Scheme The latest information on the National Highways website regarding the construction programme for the Black Cat roundabout to Caxton Gibbet scheme⁷ is that the new road will be open to traffic in Spring 2027. This is around the same time a decision is expected from the Secretary of State on the East Park Energy DCO. Thus, it is entirely reasonable to confirm that there will be no cumulative effects during the construction phase for both developments, they will not coincide
RF-RR-02	Furthermore, the assessment of EWR is inadequate. The applicant limits consideration to two areas: transport and traffic during construction and socio-economic effects. More critically, the applicant incorrectly classifies EWR as Tier 3, citing the absence of a scoping report, and quoting PINS advice that Tier 3 schemes can be assessed qualitatively and at "high level" to justify its assessment. This is factually inaccurate. EWR's scoping report was submitted in January 2025, which places it within Tier 2. The error indicates a failure to take into account readily available information,	

⁷ <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/our-roads/a428-black-cat-to-caxton-gibbet/your-guide-to-construction/>

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
	which materially undermines the adequacy of the cumulative impact assessment.	with each other. Notwithstanding this, an assessment of the potential cumulative effects between the new road and the Scheme is provided within ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 [APP-053] .
RF-RR-03	The applicant's assessment assumes that construction of East West Rail is "unlikely" to overlap with the construction phase of the Proposed Development and concludes that no "detailed cumulative assessment is required." A similar conclusion is made for the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet scheme, on the basis that construction is expected to be complete before work on the proposed development begins. Cumulative effects, however, do not depend solely on overlaps of construction phases. They also arise from permanent land use change, landscape and visual change and increased industrialisation of rural areas resulting in a loss of rural character.	For a number of environmental topics, it has not been necessary to carry out an assessment on the basis that there is no potential for interaction between the two development schemes and thus no likelihood of significant effects occurring. Cumulative assessment has been provided in the context of Ecology and Nature Conservation, Traffic and Transportation, Noise and Vibration and Socio-Economic Land Use and Tourism. They conclude that there would be no significant cumulative effects with the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet Road Scheme. East West Rail
RF-RR-04	A New Town at Tempsford has been recommended by the Government's New Towns Taskforce with the view that it could be a settlement of a minimum of 40,000 homes. The boundaries for this potential new town have not been released, but a 40,000 home new town would be of a scale to be in the proximity to the Proposed Development. It is thought that at 40,000 homes the proposed New Town would extend from Tempsford to St Neots including land east and west of the A1 and Great Northern Rail Line and likely adjacent to the boundary of the Proposed Development. There have been calls for an even larger New Town at Tempsford that would double its size. It does not seem wise to proceed with this Proposed Development in isolation of planning for any proposed New Town. A decision on whether or not a New Town will be built at Tempsford should be made by the government in the first half of this year. This announcement should also provide the first determination of the boundaries of Tempsford New Town and its scale. Should a New Town at Tempsford be approved by the government, the applicant should be required to consult with, and	It is acknowledged by the Applicant that the East West Rail Scheme should have been identified as a Tier 2 scheme for the purposes of the assessment. Whilst a more formal update will be provided as part of an updated cumulative effects assessment, it is important to note at this stage that there is nothing within the Scoping Report prepared on behalf of EWR or indeed the subsequent Scoping Opinion issued by the Planning Inspectorate that would alter the conclusions that had already been drawn about the potential for cumulative effects between EWR and the Scheme which, as set out in ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 [APP-053] , are very limited. If anything, the Scoping Report, Scoping Opinion and the latest information regarding the construction programme reaffirm a number of the conclusions drawn within the cumulative assessment: • The section of EWR between Bedford and Tempsford is Phase 3 of the development. Construction of Phase 3 is not expected to commence until 2030, which would be after the construction has ceased for the East Park Energy project

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
RF-RR-05	obtain development approval from, any Tempsford New Town Development Authority.	- Even if construction were to overlap there are mitigation measures proposed in both applications that would avoid the potential for significant cumulative effects and there is very little interaction between the identified ZOI for each development. - There is no potential for significant cumulative landscape and visual effects due to the separation distance and lack of intervisibility of the two Schemes. Universal Studios Theme Park The nearest part of the Universal Studio development to the Order Limits for the Scheme is 17km away. This sits some 7km outside the ZOI that was set and agreed with all relevant consultees as being the area around the Scheme where potential cumulative effects could occur. Consequently, there should be no potential for cumulative effects between the Scheme and Universal Studios. This is further supported by the fact that the Scheme is not within the ZOI that was set for the Universal Studios Development in their application. The developments also propose to use different sections of the highway network during construction, operation and decommissioning. In this regard, it is important to note that during Statutory Consultation a similar conclusion was drawn following BBC's request for the Applicant to consider the cumulative effects of the Scheme with the Green Hill Solar DCO (EN010170) which is located 16km from the nearest Order Limit. Tempsford New Town The Government has confirmed its intention to bring forward a series of new towns, including the possibility of a New Town in Tempsford. As there is currently no certainty whether the Tempsford New Town will ultimately come forward, it cannot be considered a firm commitment that should be the subject of cumulative assessment. Luton Airport Expansion
	When combined with existing and consented schemes in North Bedfordshire such as Odell Glebe Solar Farm, Glebe Farm Solar Energy Park and Cobholden Solar Farm in Staploe, the Proposed Development would mean that over 4000 acres of countryside in North Bedfordshire would be covered by glass solar panels. The cumulative effect is the progressive industrialisation of a rural landscape, fundamentally altering land use, character and community experience.	

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
		Luton Airport is over 30km from the Order Limits for the East Park Energy project. It is more than 3x the ZOI set for the assessment of cumulative effects for the Scheme. It was excluded from the Cumulative Effects Assessment for the Universal Studio's development for the same reason (it was circa 23km from that development). Solar Developments Regarding RF-RR-05, the cumulative landscape and visual assessment provided by the Applicant in ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 [APP-053] is guided by the principles set out in <i>Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition</i> (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2013) (GLVIA3) and the <i>Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition</i> (Landscape Institute, 2024), which emphasise that LVIA should be proportionate to the scale of the development. In particular, paragraph 7.20 of GLVIA3 states that the definition of a study area “...<i>must be reasonable and proportional in order to keep the task manageable and ensure that the focus is on cumulative landscape effects that are likely to be significant.</i>” The ES landscape and visual cumulative assessment has therefore taken this approach and focused on schemes that fall within the defined cumulative study area and which could interact with the Scheme such that there is potential for cumulative landscape and visual effects when experienced within the same landscape character context or from the same viewpoints. With regards to the solar developments referred to, Cobholden Solar Farm in Staploe was identified and assessed within the ES cumulative assessment as Scheme 23 (ES Chapter 17 APP-053). Glebe Farm Solar Energy Park and Odell Glebe Solar Farm are existing solar developments located approximately 9 km and 10 km respectively west of the East Park Order Limits boundary and are

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
		therefore at distances where they would not be experienced in combination with the Scheme within either the same landscape context or from the same viewpoints. In addition, references to the overall acreage of solar development across North Bedfordshire (and indeed the other national infrastructure projects proposed in the wider area) represent land use change across the region, rather than an indicator of cumulative landscape and visual effects arising from the Scheme. In summary, it is the Applicants position that there are no significant deficiencies within the assessment of cumulative and in-combination effects, and the conclusions of ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 [APP-053] remain valid.
RF-RR-06	The application fails to demonstrate that: • Lower-grade land has been prioritised • The use of BMV land is unavoidable • The scale of agricultural land-take is proportionate to the benefits claimed	For solar, the technology specific site selection policy in EN-3 states that “<i>land type should not be the predominant factor in site selection</i>”, but applicants should, where possible, use brownfield or previously developed land. Where agricultural land is necessary, poorer quality land should be preferred, and best and most versatile land should be avoided, where possible. The Applicant’s approach as reported in ES Vol 2 Site Identification Report [APP-058] followed such a sequential approach. It first defined a 15km Area of Search based on the need to be close enough to the Eaton Socon point of connection to keep the grid connection technically and commercially viable. Then, in accordance with EN-3’s preference for non-agricultural and previously developed land, the Applicant reviewed brownfield land registers and potential previously developed land within that search area. It was concluded that no brownfield or previously developed land parcels met the minimum land requirement for a 400 MW scheme, either alone or in practicable clusters, meaning agricultural land was necessary to deliver the project.

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
		Having established that agricultural land was necessary, the Applicant then applied the next step in the mitigation hierarchy by targeting areas more likely to be of lower agricultural quality, reviewing Natural England's provisional Agricultural Land Classification to try to avoid land of a higher environmental value, i.e. to avoid best and most versatile land. Three broad search zones were identified, targeted primarily towards areas likely to be of lower agricultural quality once spatial planning constraints were excluded. Figure 6 of ES Vol 2 Site Identification Report [APP-058] demonstrates clearly the extent of provisional Grade 2 agricultural land within the 15km Area of Search. The Applicant then balanced agricultural considerations against other EN-3 site selection factors, including the grid connection, topography, proximity to dwellings, and accessibility, and recommended taking forward Search Zone B, primarily because it offered the most straightforward grid connection and therefore was likely to avoid and reduce environmental impacts overall. This balancing exercise is set out in detail in Sections 6 and 7 of ES Vol 2 Site Identification Report [APP-058]. Following identification of a broad search zone, a second stage of site selection was undertaken, which is reported in the ES Vol 2 Appendix 3-2 Land Identification Report [APP-059]. This comprised a review of the land within the Search Zone where landowners expressed an interest in the Scheme, in order to establish constraints to development and refine the overall landholding to be taken forward. The culmination of this work was the identification of the Site, where a sequential approach has been followed to try and steer the development towards an area more likely to be of lesser agricultural value, recognising the constraint of the high general agricultural land quality in the wider area around this particular substation.

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
		Table 13.9 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 [APP-049] sets out the distribution of grades in Bedford Borough and Huntingdonshire District, based on the Provisional ALC data, and Table 13.10 compares the proportions of each grade at the site against the wider Borough and District area. It shows that the site would use no Grade 1 land (which is 10% less than the wider area) and 15% proportionally less Grade 2 land. Conversely, the site would use 31% proportionally more Grade 3 land. Table 13.10 therefore shows that the site is located in an area that is of comparatively lower agricultural quality than found in the wider Borough and District area. As set out at paragraph 5.6.4 of the Design Approach Document [APP-034], the extent of land for the solar energy generating station (Work No. 1) on the Works Plan covers approximately 446 hectares. Paragraph 5.6.4 [APP-034] goes on to state that with reference to paragraph 2.10.17 of NPS EN-3, a typical solar farm requires between 2 to 4 acres per MW of output and that the Scheme's land use equates to approximately 2.75 acres per MW for a 400 MW output, which is consistent with the guidelines in NPS EN-3. The Applicant therefore considers the Scheme has used agricultural land efficiently. The need for and benefits of the Scheme are well established in Sections 2 and 5 of the Planning Statement [APP-031], particularly the Critical National Priority status of the development, and it is considered that the substantial positive weight that should be afforded to the Scheme clearly outweighs the limited negative weight that should be given to the harm to agricultural land and soils. This is consistent with recent Secretary of State decisions on other solar NSIPs that have resulted in the temporary and permanent loss of BMV land.
RF-RR-07	Unlike other solar energy projects in North Bedfordshire that incorporate measures to integrate with their surroundings, this scheme fails to blend into the landscape or respect rural character.	Landscape integration has been a core design consideration for the Scheme, going back to the work undertaken as part of the land

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
	Instead, it constitutes an industrial-scale energy complex imposed on open countryside. The mitigation measures proposed are insufficient in both scale and effectiveness. Planting intended to ‘screen’ the development is unreliable; it often fails, and even where successful, requires many years to mature, during which time the development would remain fully exposed. Crucially, the site’s topography makes effective screening near impossible. Many of the fields proposed for panel arrays slope away from key viewpoints, meaning vegetation would sit lower than the development behind it. Large parts of the site lie on sloping and elevated terrain, preventing planting from concealing the extensive mass of glass, metal, and associated infrastructure. As a result, the proposed planting would not screen the development at maturity, let alone in the short or medium term.	collation stage reported in ES Vol 2 Appendix 3-2: Land Identification Report [APP-059]. At a site scale, the Scheme is set back from areas of higher ground to avoid breaking skylines and to retain views across the wider landscape, and Public Rights of Way are accommodated with wide ‘green lanes’ and planting arranged to maintain intermittent long views rather than enclosing all footpaths. The design approach is reported in the Design Approach Document [APP-034] and supported by annotations on ES Vol 3 Figure 2-1 Illustrative Environmental Masterplan [APP-121]. The oLEMP [APP-159] adopts a monitoring and adaptive management approach, with regular reviews over the establishment period and subsequently to assess the success of planting establishment, and to identify remedial measures if required. Potential measures are set out in Section 8.3 of the oLEMP [APP-159]. The Applicant acknowledges that the Scheme would not be screened in its entirety as a result of the characteristics of the local landscape and this is reflected in the conclusions of ES Vol 1 Chapter 5 Landscape and Visual [APP-041]. The Applicant note’s comments received in both Bedford Borough Council and Huntingdonshire District Council’s relevant representations that “<i>The landscape proposals are tailored to the location and required functions of each part of the Scheme, noting that these change across the DCO site. The design is well considered and retains the legibility and character of the landscape and reduces the visual effects, where possible, especially for visual receptors, at the edges of settlements, and along routes connecting settlements.</i>”
RF-RR-08	When I first met with Brockwell Energy in May 2024, it was confirmed that the acquisition of East Park Energy by Brockwell marked its first foray into solar energy. It has no operational solar	Brockwell Energy is a multi-technology independent power producer specialising in renewable energy infrastructure which, since 2017, has originated and built-out more than £1bn of assets in

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
	farms and no prior experience in developing solar farm projects. This lack of relevant expertise raises significant concerns about their ability to deliver a complex renewable energy scheme such as the Proposed Development. Inexperienced developers may underestimate challenges related to such a project which could lead to delays, cost overruns, or even project failure. Given the scale and sensitivity of this development, Brockwell's absence of a proven track record in solar energy project delivery and operation should be considered a material risk. Additionally, there is a real possibility that, like the original developer, RNA Energy, which sold the project to Brockwell early in the project's lifecycle, Brockwell may choose to sell the project on rather than complete it, particularly if unforeseen technical or financial challenges arise. This creates further uncertainty about who will ultimately be responsible for delivering and operating the scheme, and whether future owners will have the necessary expertise or resources to meet long-term obligations. Ultimately, the risk of project failure will directly impact local residents, the surrounding community, and the land itself. If the project stalls or changes hands repeatedly, the area could be left with an unfinished or poorly managed development, causing long-term disruption and harm to the local environment.	the UK and has a pipeline of more than 3.5 GW across onshore wind, solar energy and battery storage currently in development. Brockwell Energy acquired RNA Energy, as opposed to RNA Energy selling the specific East Park Energy project to Brockwell. The Applicant notes that failure to comply with the terms of a made DCO is a breach of the Order, and is enforceable through the statutory regime, including criminal liability for breach of the terms of an order granting development consent (as per Section 161 of the Planning Act 2008).
RF-RR-09	The investment profile for the Proposed Development is long lasting and is highly dependent on long term contract arrangements ultimately underwritten by the government. In the past 12 months there has been a significant change in the political consensus on renewable projects with at least one national political party indicating that their policies would remove subsidies thus making many schemes financially unviable. The next General Election must be held by June 2029 at the latest. The risk for this development is that construction could fall during an election cycle. If this is the case and the policy changes above occur, the project could lose its long-term revenue agreements.	The Applicant and Scheme would be subject to the requirements of the Development Consent Order irrespective of the government at the time. The Funding Statement [APP-020] sets out the commercial funding arrangements for the Scheme.

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
	This would create a serious risk of the development becoming a stranded asset, partially constructed or abandoned, leaving incomplete infrastructure and causing lasting harm to the landscape of North Bedfordshire, as well as disruption to the local environment and community. The Proposed Development should be required to provide financial projections that account for any potential removal of renewable subsidies and how they intend to maintain financial viability in that scenario.	
RF-RR-10	Under EN-1 paragraphs 4.12 and 4.13, safety risks must be properly assessed and mitigation shown to be deliverable. Significant concerns remain regarding: • Fire and explosion risk • Emergency response capability in rural areas • Transparency of emergency planning	The Applicant has prepared an outline Battery Safety Management Plan (oBSMP) [APP-162] that addresses these matters. Requirement 10 of the draft DCO [AS-008] requires that a final BSMP in substantial accordance with the outline document is approved by the local planning authority prior to commencement of work on the BESS. The Applicant consulted with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service during the pre-application phase, including in relation to the oBSMP. The Applicant has submitted a final Statement of Common Ground with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service [PDA-019] with all matters agreed.
RF-RR-11	Independent analysis by Professor Day demonstrates a solar-plus-BESS financial model often used in large-scale ground-mounted solar projects like the Proposed Development. The model is based on co-locating battery storage systems with solar arrays primarily to enable energy arbitrage and grid services rather than solely to minimise curtailment. This approach can increase the levelised cost of solar energy to £130/MWh, around 75% higher than current Contracts for Difference strike prices and significantly more than offshore wind. These findings raise questions about claims that solar energy plants, like the Proposed Development, will deliver 'cheap,' 'affordable,' or 'low-cost' electricity and meet policy requirements for affordable renewable energy.	The need for the Scheme in the national energy and policy context is set out in Section 2 of the Planning Statement [APP-031]. Large-scale renewable energy projects help reduce overall electricity costs by increasing low-marginal-cost generation, which places downward pressure on wholesale market prices. As set out in the Funding Statement [APP-020], the Scheme will proceed on a fully commercial basis with investment decisions taken having regard to actual project-specific costs and market conditions.

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
RF-RR-12	Given the adverse impact the development would have on the area, the East Park Energy application does not convincingly demonstrate that reasonable alternatives have been considered including that: • Brownfield or previously developed land options have been systematically explored • Rooftop and embedded solar have been meaningfully assessed • Lower-quality agricultural land has been prioritised • The scale of development has been reduced to minimise harm	The Applicant has prepared a response to similar comments with reference to RF-RR-06 above.
RF-RR-13	Under Chapter 2 of the Planning Act 2008, applicants must not only consult but have regard to responses received. Despite extensive community feedback during the October 2024 statutory consultation, the application shows no material change to: • Site selection or scale • Land-take from BMV farmland • Construction duration or routing • Cumulative impact mitigation	The Applicant consulted through the pre-application phase in accordance with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008, and had regard to responses received as set out in the Consultation Report [APP-023] and its supporting appendices. The design process followed by the Applicant, and how consultation informed that process, is summarised in the Design Approach Document [APP-034] .
RF-RR-14	EN-1 requires decision-makers to assess real, deliverable benefits, not headline metrics. A critical distinction must be drawn between • Installed (nominal peak) capacity, and • Actual average energy delivered to the grid	The Applicant notes this comment. ‘Capacity factor’ is a metric used to relate the installed capacity of an energy project to the energy it generates in a year. The capacity factor of grid-scale solar energy generation in the UK is well understood and the need for the Scheme in the national energy and policy context is outlined in the Planning Statement [APP-031] .
RF-RR-15	The graph submitted with this representation under Annex B (average monthly power versus nominal peak output for a 400MW capacity solar scheme, using 2024 data) demonstrates that: • Nominal peak output is never achieved in practice	Similar to capacity factor, the distribution of solar generation throughout the year is well understood and the need for the Scheme in the national energy and policy context is outlined in the Planning Statement [APP-031] .

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
	- Average output remains a very small fraction of peak capacity - Output is lowest in autumn and winter, when demand is high	As set out in Appendix 2 of the Government's Solar Roadmap 2025: <i>"Solar is very effective in the UK as solar panels can operate efficiently even without direct sunlight. Whilst they are most effective on clear, sunny days, recent technological advancements mean they perform well on cloudy days too. Annually, solar power generation is extremely reliable as the number of daylight hours can be predicted."</i>
RF-RR-16	Independent modelling by Professor Tony Day, with whom I have met alongside other MPs in Parliament, shows that UK solar capacity factors average only 9.5–11%, with particularly poor winter performance, and that increasing grid-scale solar capacity leads to diminishing returns and rising summer curtailment.	The capacity factor and distribution of solar energy generation in the UK is well understood and the need for the Scheme in the national energy and policy context is outlined in the Planning Statement [APP-031]. Government has considered the lower capacity factors achieved by solar in preparing its Clean Power 2030 Action Plan.
RF-RR-17	The application relies heavily on installed capacity to justify extensive land take and harm. However: - Actual energy contribution is modest - Seasonal mismatch limits usefulness at times of system need - Additional capacity increasingly results in curtailment rather than usable generation	The need for solar energy generation is set out in NPS EN-1 and NPS EN-3. As set out at paragraph 5.6.4 of the Design Approach Document [APP-034], with reference to paragraph 2.10.17 of NPS EN-3, a typical solar farm requires between 2 to 4 acres per MW of output and that the Scheme's land use equates to approximately 2.75 acres per MW for a 400 MW output, which is consistent with the guidelines in NPS EN-3. The Applicant has set out the approach to 'overplanting' and maximising efficiency whilst minimising curtailment at paragraphs of 5.6.5 and 5.6.6 of the Design Approach Document [APP-034]. This approach is supported by footnote 92 of NPS EN-3.
RF-RR-18	Under EN-1, where adverse impacts are substantial and long-term, decision-makers must be satisfied that benefits are real, proportionate and necessary. In this case: Harms are concentrated, permanent and locally borne	The Applicant recognises that all development delivers benefits of one form or another (otherwise development would simply not happen), and all development gives rise to harm to one degree or another (an inevitable consequence of change), but at its core the planning balance is about comparing the benefits that a proposed

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
	- Benefits are limited by climate, seasonality and system constraints - Embedded and rooftop solar alternatives can deliver similar energy benefits with far lower environmental and social cost	development would deliver against the harm that it would cause. The Applicant has set out its consideration of the planning balance for this application in Section 8 of the Planning Statement [APP-031].
RF-RR-19	Despite approved Construction Transport Management Plans: - Narrow rural roads were subjected to sustained heavy HGV traffic, often in convoys - Traffic volumes and behavioural impacts exceeded expectations - Road surfaces, verges, village greens and private property were damaged - Noise, dust and vibration impacts were prolonged and cumulative These impacts occurred despite DCO controls, demonstrating that reliance on management plans does not guarantee protection for rural communities. This evidence is directly relevant to East Park Energy, which proposes: - A longer construction period (approximately 30 months) - A significantly larger site area - Use of rural road networks of comparable or greater vulnerability EN-1 requires that mitigation measures be both effective and deliverable. At Cleve Hill: - Construction methods were altered during the build (including piling techniques) materially increasing noise and disturbance - Local authorities lacked the resources or willingness to proactively enforce DCO conditions	The Applicant cannot comment on the approach taken by another developer / contractor on another project, and any perceived shortcomings in enforcement. The decision on the East Park Energy application must be made on the evidence for this Scheme and the controls secured in the draft DCO [AS-008]. Schedule 2 (Requirements) of the draft DCO [AS-008] secures the mitigation and other measures identified in the Environmental Statement and the wider application documents. Failure to comply with the terms of a made DCO is a breach of the Order, and is enforceable through the statutory regime, including criminal liability for breach of the terms of an order granting development consent (as per Section 161 of the Planning Act 2008). In such circumstances, the local planning authority can seek an injunction to restrain such activities (as per Section 171 of the Planning Act 2008). The application's outline management plan framework commits to monitoring and reporting to demonstrate compliance and to ensure corrective action is taken where necessary, and to logging, reviewing and acting on complaints, with corrective actions recorded. The Applicant considers the approach and legal framework for enforcement on this Scheme to be robust. The approach taken by another developer on another project should not be a material consideration for the determination of this application.

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
	- Residents were effectively forced into informal monitoring and enforcement roles This demonstrates a clear risk that mitigation measures proposed for East Park Energy may fail in practice, particularly given the scale of the project and the rural enforcement context. At Cleve Hill: - Construction occurred six days per week - Working hours extended from early morning to evening - Noise, drilling, reversing alarms and traffic movements were continuous over many months While described as “temporary”, the intensity and duration of impacts resulted in significant loss of amenity, stress and reduced quality of life for residents. For East Park Energy, with its greater scale and longer construction programme, similar or greater impacts should be anticipated. Despite approved drainage strategies at Cleve Hill: - Drainage infrastructure was damaged during construction - Watercourses were inadequately maintained - Localised flooding occurred These issues arose during construction and persisted beyond it, highlighting the risk of unintended consequences on agricultural land and neighbouring properties at East Park Energy. At Cleve Hill: - Battery energy storage development was progressed separately from the original solar consent - Community concerns regarding fire and explosion risk were not meaningfully addressed	

Our Ref.	RF Comments	Applicant Response
	- Emergency response planning lacked transparency and community involvement Given that East Park Energy proposes a substantial BESS component, this precedent raises serious concerns regarding: - Safety governance - Emergency preparedness - The adequacy of mitigation and oversight The Cleve Hill experience demonstrates that: - Construction impacts compound over time - Multiple phases and associated infrastructure extend disruption - Small rural communities are particularly vulnerable to cumulative harm This evidence is directly applicable to East Park Energy, which forms part of a wider cluster of solar developments, increasing the likelihood of prolonged and overlapping impacts Early assurances given to the Cleve Hill community did not translate into on-the-ground outcomes during construction. As a result: - Community trust was eroded - Conflict increased - The perception of a lack of accountability intensified impacts This reinforces the importance of giving weight to consultation failures identified in the East Park Energy application.	

5.16 Response to Stop East Park Energy

Table 29: Response to Stop East Park Energy Relevant Representation (RR-1219)

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
SEPE-RR-01	The proposal involves the long-term industrialisation of extensive areas of high-grade agricultural land. SEPE is concerned that the Applicant has failed to apply a transparent and lawful sequential site-selection process or to demonstrate necessity, as required by EN-1, EN-3 and the NPPF. The scale, duration and cumulative nature of agricultural land loss raise issues of national food security, soil function and long-term land stewardship.	For solar, the technology specific site selection policy in EN-3 states that “<i>land type should not be the predominant factor in site selection</i>”, but applicants should, where possible, use brownfield or previously developed land. Where agricultural land is necessary, poorer quality land should be preferred, and best and most versatile land should be avoided, where possible. The Applicant’s approach as reported in ES Vol 2 Site Identification Report [APP-058] followed such a sequential approach. It first defined a 15km Area of Search based on the need to be close enough to the Eaton Socon point of connection to keep the grid connection technically and commercially viable. Then, in accordance with EN-3’s preference for non-agricultural and previously developed land, the Applicant reviewed brownfield land registers and potential previously developed land within that search area. It was concluded that no brownfield or previously developed land parcels met the minimum land requirement for a 400 MW scheme, either alone or in practicable clusters, meaning agricultural land was necessary to deliver the project. Having established that agricultural land was necessary, the Applicant then applied the next step in the mitigation hierarchy by targeting areas more likely to be of lower agricultural quality, reviewing Natural England’s provisional Agricultural Land Classification to try to avoid land of a higher environmental value, i.e. to avoid best and most versatile land. Three broad search zones were identified, targeted primarily towards areas likely to be of lower agricultural quality once spatial planning constraints were excluded. Figure 6 of ES Vol 2 Site Identification Report [APP-058] demonstrates clearly the extent of

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
		provisional Grade 2 agricultural land within the 15km Area of Search. The Applicant then balanced agricultural considerations against other EN-3 site selection factors, including the grid connection, topography, proximity to dwellings, and accessibility, and recommended taking forward Search Zone B, primarily because it offered the most straightforward grid connection and therefore was likely to avoid and reduce environmental impacts overall. This balancing exercise is set out in detail in Sections 6 and 7 of ES Vol 2 Site Identification Report [APP-058]. Following identification of a broad search zone, a second stage of site selection was undertaken, which is reported in the ES Vol 2 Appendix 3-2 Land Identification Report [APP-059]. This comprised a review of the land within the Search Zone where landowners expressed an interest in the Scheme, in order to establish constraints to development and refine the overall landholding to be taken forward. The culmination of this work was the identification of the Site, where a sequential approach has been followed to try and steer the development towards an area more likely to be of lesser agricultural value, recognising the constraint of the high general agricultural land quality in the wider area around this particular substation. Table 13.9 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 13 [APP-049] sets out the distribution of grades in Bedford Borough and Huntingdonshire District, based on the Provisional ALC data, and Table 13.10 compares the proportions of each grade at the site against the wider Borough and District area. It shows that the site would use no Grade 1 land (which is 10% less than the wider area) and 15% proportionally less Grade 2 land. Conversely, the site would use 31% proportionally more Grade 3 land. Table 13.10 therefore shows that the site is located in an area that is of comparatively lower agricultural quality than found in the wider Borough and District area.

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
		As set out at paragraph 5.6.4 of the Design Approach Document [APP-034], the extent of land for the solar energy generating station (Work No. 1) on the Works Plan covers approximately 446 hectares. Paragraph 5.6.4 [APP-034] goes on to state that with reference to paragraph 2.10.17 of NPS EN-3, a typical solar farm requires between 2 to 4 acres per MW of output and that the Scheme's land use equates to approximately 2.75 acres per MW for a 400 MW output, which is consistent with the guidelines in NPS EN-3. The Applicant therefore considers the Scheme has used agricultural land efficiently. The need for and benefits of the Scheme are well established in Sections 2 and 5 of the Planning Statement [APP-031], particularly the Critical National Priority status of the development, and it is considered that the substantial positive weight that should be afforded to the Scheme clearly outweighs the limited negative weight that should be given to the harm to agricultural land and soils. This is consistent with recent Secretary of State decisions on other solar NSIPs that have resulted in the temporary and permanent loss of BMV land. The Applicant's position is that the Scheme would not significantly affect food security, or agricultural production. This aligns with the Government's position set out in the UK Solar Roadmap (June 2025) which notes that Government does not believe increased solar deployment poses a threat to food security, and that "<i>the biggest risk to food security and the natural environment is the climate and nature crisis</i>".
SEPE-RR-02	SEPE is concerned that reasonable alternatives, including lower-grade agricultural land, brownfield land, rooftop and commercial-estate capacity, and alternative configurations within viable grid-connection distance have not been properly assessed. The absence of a lawful alternatives analysis has implications for	The Applicant has responded above at reference SEPE-RR-02 in relation to the approach to site selection. The reasonable alternatives considered by the Applicant are also set out in ES Vol 1 Chapter 3 Alternatives and Design Evolution [APP-039] . The

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
	compliance with national policy and for the adequacy of the Environmental Statement under the EIA Regulations.	Applicant considers the alternatives exercise undertaken to be lawful and in accordance with national policy requirements.
SEPE-RR-03	The co-located Battery Energy Storage System introduces foreseeable major-accident, fire, pollution and public-safety risks for which no quantified risk assessment has been provided at examination stage. SEPE is concerned that the Environmental Statement relies on high-level assurances and defers critical analysis, including thermal-runaway scenarios, plume dispersion, fire-water contamination pathways and emergency access, to post-consent stages. Given the proximity of homes, Public Rights of Way, agricultural land and strategic buried infrastructure, SEPE considers that the absence of quantified, site-specific risk evidence prevents the Examining Authority from lawfully assessing vulnerability to major accidents or disasters, as required by the EIA Regulations and EN-1. The justification for locating such infrastructure in this rural setting has not been demonstrated.	The Applicant has provided an assessment of major accidents and disasters within Section 16.4 of ES Vol 1 Chapter 16 Other Environmental Topics [APP-052]. In relation to the BESS, the Applicant has prepared an outline Battery Safety Management Plan (oBSMP) [APP-162] that includes measures which will be adopted at the detailed design stage post-consent to manage fire risk. Appendix A of the oBSMP provides an assessment of BESS Fire Emissions Modelling which concludes that in the unlikely event of an incident, there would be no significant air quality effects. A final BSMP is secured by Requirement 10 of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The final BSMP must be in substantial accordance with the oBSMP [APP-162] and approved by the local planning authority in consultation with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service prior to commencement. The Applicant has submitted a final Statement of Common Ground with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service [PDA-019] with all matters agreed, including in relation to access.
SEPE-RR-04	The scale, linear extent and multi-site configuration of the proposed development give rise to significant concerns regarding landscape character, tranquillity, visual amenity, noise, lighting and the experience and safety of Public Rights of Way users. SEPE is particularly concerned that the Environmental Statement underestimates the effect of sustained, corridor-based development on rural character and recreational amenity across multiple parishes. SEPE considers that the assessment does not adequately address the cumulative and experiential impacts on PRoWs, including repeated enclosure, loss of openness, fencing effects, lighting intrusion and interaction with construction traffic. Mitigation	The Applicant has provided a robust assessment of the environmental effects of the Scheme in the submitted Environmental Statement; existing solar developments are captured in the environmental baseline for these assessments. In relation to cumulative impacts, ES Vol 1 Chapter 17 Cumulative and In Combination Effects [APP-053] provides an assessment of the Scheme in combination with other emerging developments.

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
	relies heavily on future planting and outline measures without enforceable delivery mechanisms or evidence of effectiveness, preventing the Examining Authority from determining whether impacts can be acceptably mitigated over the lifetime of the scheme.	
SEPE-RR-05	The proposed development gives rise to substantial and prolonged construction traffic impacts across a network of rural, constrained roads and villages that are not designed to accommodate sustained heavy goods vehicle (HGV) movements. SEPE is concerned about the adequacy of the Applicant's assessment of traffic routing, road capacity, safety and community impacts, including: – the suitability of local roads serving affected villages to accommodate high volumes of HGVs over a multi-year construction period; – the absence of effective safeguards for school bus routes, pedestrian movements, cycling, and daily commuting, particularly during peak hours; – the potential for traffic displacement and 'rat-running' through villages and along secondary routes, including knock-on impacts to the B645, B660 and connecting corridors to the A14 and A1; and – the reliance on outline or post-consent traffic management measures without enforceable routing controls, monitoring, or sanctions. SEPE contends that the Environmental Statement does not provide sufficient, robust or enforceable evidence to demonstrate that construction and operational traffic impacts can be safely accommodated without unacceptable harm to highway safety, residential amenity, or the functioning of local communities, contrary to EN-1, the EIA Regulations and established NSIP practice.	The Applicant notes this comment. It should also be noted that the robustness of the highways assessment undertaken to appraise the potential impact on the local highway has been accepted by both Cambridgeshire County Council and Bedford Borough Council. An HGV routing strategy is set out within Section 5.0 of the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (as updated alongside this submission), which is secured under Requirement 8 of the draft DCO. This clearly identifies that HGVs will route directly to the Site from the A1 via the B645 Kimbolton Road, which is of a suitable standard to accommodate two-way HGV movements. It is proposed to construct a network of internal haul roads to allow HGV movements around the Site, to avoid the need to route HGVs along unsuitable roads or through centres of population. The proposed monitoring regime, communications strategy and enforcement measures are described in Section 9.0 of the oCTMP.
SEPE-RR-06	SEPE has concerns regarding the completeness and reliability of the ecological baseline, the assessment of species impacts, habitat fragmentation and cumulative effects across a large, linear development footprint. In particular, SEPE is concerned that the Environmental Statement does not apply a precautionary, pathway-based assessment of ecological risk consistent with Natural	The Applicant has prepared a robust assessment of the likely significant effects on ecology and nature conservation, reported in ES Vol 1 Chapter 7 Ecology and Nature Conservation [APP-043] . In accordance with the EIA Regulations, the purpose of the assessment is to identify likely significant effects, and not every possible impact that could occur. The Applicant has used

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
	England's Evidence Review NEER012, which identifies uncertainty and potential ecological-trap effects associated with large-scale solar arrays, including impacts on insects, bats, birds and riparian species. SEPE considers that the reliance on qualitative judgements, limited seasonal survey data, and future mitigation through outline or post-consent management plans prevents the Examining Authority from assessing likely significant ecological effects with the degree of certainty required by the EIA Regulations. The absence of robust cumulative assessment and enforceable biodiversity safeguards raises concerns regarding legal adequacy and long-term ecological resilience.	professional judgement to determine species where likely significant effects would not occur with reasonable mitigation measures embedded into the Scheme. The Applicant has included reasonable avoidance measures and other ecological mitigation within the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [APP-155] and the outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [APP-159]. The measures in the oCEMP and oLEMP are both secured by Requirements of the draft DCO [AS-008] and therefore legally enforceable by the local planning authorities.
SEPE-RR-07	SEPE notes the deferral of archaeological evaluation and significance assessment to post-consent stages, including reliance on future Written Schemes of Investigation. This raises concerns regarding compliance with the EIA Regulations and the statutory duties relating to heritage assets and their settings.	The Applicant has prepared a robust assessment of the likely significant effects on the historic environment, reported in ES Vol 1 Chapter 6 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology [APP-042]. The Applicant has prepared an outline Archaeological Mitigation Strategy [APP-166] which sets out further stages of archaeological evaluation work should be completed with paragraphs 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 [APP-166] <i>'the archaeological brief jointly issued by CHET and BBHET required two phases of archaeological investigation prior to construction. Therefore, following the granting of the DCO, a second phase of trial trenching will be undertaken...the general aim of these investigations... is to more accurately establish the potential for the presence/absence of archaeologically significant remains allowing the mitigation measures set out in Section 6.0 to be applied appropriately'</i>. Paragraph 5.4.2 [APP-166] highlights that <i>'a WSI for this additional trial trenching will be developed in line with a new brief prepared by CHET and BBHET'</i>. The Applicant is committed to further archaeological research and investigation prior to construction of the Scheme, in order to finalise the archaeological mitigation measures to be embedded into the detailed design of the Scheme (including decommissioning) and is committed to ensuring the final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy is

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
		updated in consultation with the county archaeologists at each stage of investigation. A final Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS) must be prepared in substantial accordance with the oAMS prior to commencement of any phase of the authorised development, as per Requirement 15(4) of the draft DCO [AS-008]. The final AMS must be approved by the relevant LPA in consultation with the county archaeologist and Historic England.
SEPE-RR-08	SEPE is concerned that the Draft DCO does not secure, with sufficient clarity or enforceability, the mitigation relied upon in the Environmental Statement. Across multiple topic areas including soils, hydrology, traffic, noise, lighting, Public Rights of Way protection, decommissioning, BESS safety and financial security, key controls are deferred to outline strategies, post-consent approvals or contractor discretion. SEPE considers that this approach prevents the Examining Authority from being satisfied that impacts can be effectively controlled, monitored or enforced, and undermines the legal certainty required for a Development Consent Order. The reliance on future approvals mirrors deficiencies identified in other NSIPs and raises material concerns regarding deliverability and compliance over the operational life of the scheme.	The draft DCO [AS-008] submitted by the Applicant with this application for a development consent order for the Scheme is a statutory instrument and, as such, was drafted following The National Archives Statutory Instrument Practice⁸⁸ and the Planning Inspectorate Guidance “<i>Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects - Advice Note Fifteen: drafting Development Consent Orders</i>”. The mechanisms included in the draft DCO to secure compliance with all committed environmental mitigation, and other requirements ensuring the appropriate delivery of the Scheme, follow the Model Provisions⁹ and a significant number of consented DCOs have been followed and taken as precedents. The mechanism proposed by the Applicant to ensure that all mitigation measures committed to be delivered as part of the Scheme in the Environmental Statement as secured, is a standard mechanism already tested for most consented DCO. The draft DCO secures proposed environmental mitigation through a combination of statutory requirements, enforceable controls or requirements, and certified documents, all of which have legal effect once the draft DCO is made.

⁸⁸ [f0051073-si-practice-5th-edition.pdf](#)

⁹ *Infrastructure Planning (Model Provisions) (England and Wales) Order 2009*

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
		In relation to <u>statutory requirements</u>, whilst a development consent order operates as the main consenting document, the Applicant must ensure that all consents that cannot be secured under the draft DCO (due to the scope provided by the Planning Act 2008) are, nevertheless, secured and complied with separately. A list of all consents and licences the Applicant seeks to obtain prior to the implementation of the Scheme are listed in the Other Consents and Licences Statement [APP-033]. Table 1 of this document lists all environmental, and other consents and licences, required which the Applicant must secure. In relation to <u>controls or requirements</u>, the draft DCO secures the delivery of all committed environmental mitigation by way of requirements. These requirements are set out in Schedule 2 of the draft DCO and are legally binding. Section 161 of the Planning Act 2008 makes it a criminal offence not to comply or to breach the terms of an order granting development consent. The requirements proposed by the Applicant are very well precedented in other development consent orders. In general terms, the requirements set out that various management plans, certified in outline form within the order, are agreed with the relevant statutory body responsible for specific issues (i.e. relevant local planning authorities, Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England, etc.) prior to the authorised development being implemented and that the authorised development is carried out in accordance with these management plans. This does not defer the control or commitment to a later stage, given that the outline form of these management plans is agreed prior to the order being made. It is the final form of these management plans that has to be submitted and agreed with key stakeholders prior to implementation. The reason for this two-stage mechanism is to ensure that the final version of these management plans captures any changes to the environment baseline and/or any

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
		additional measures that may arise between the order being made and implementation of the authorised development. Finally, the Applicant proposes to <u>certify</u> a suite of documents within the draft DCO. This is Article 39 and Schedule 15 of the draft DCO, meaning they form part of the consent and must be complied with. The Applicant has ensured that all documents where commitments are made in terms of environmental mitigation measures have been listed. These include the full Environmental Statement as well as outline management plans, outline strategies, drawings and plans. This translates in full certainty of what the Applicant is committed to deliver and how the Applicant proposes to mitigate any impacts the implementation of the authorised development may carry with. The Applicant is satisfied that the mechanism by which the draft DCO secures the delivery of environmental mitigation measures is appropriate, follows well established precedents and meets statutory requirements as well as government guidance. This forms part of a long-standing practice in respect of development consent orders and has been accepted by the Secretary of State in its role as decision-maker.
SEPE-RR-09	SEPE questions whether the Applicant has demonstrated a compelling case in the public interest for compulsory acquisition and long-term control of land, particularly where the use of high-grade agricultural land has not been shown to be necessary.	The Applicant would like to refer to the case set out in the Statement of Reasons [APP-019]. In addition to this, the Applicant has submitted updated land documentation at Procedural Deadline A reflecting the result of voluntary negotiations with affected landowners and how the extent of land over which the Applicant seeks compulsory acquisition powers has reduced significantly since the application for this DCO was made. The Scheme is of Critical National Priority infrastructure under NPS EN-1, for which there the urgent need for the delivery of this type of infrastructure is expected to outweigh most residual adverse effects. There is subsequently an established national need for the Scheme. In addition to meeting national need for renewable energy,

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
		the Scheme would provide further benefits which contribute to the compelling case in the public interest, such as the benefits set out in detail in the Statement of Reasons as well as, and principally, in the Planning Statement [APP-031]. It is clear from the updated land documents submitted at Procedural Deadline A, which follows and reflect the positive outcome on voluntary negotiations with affected landowners, that the Applicant has limited seeking compulsory acquisition powers only to parts of internal cable route, cable route into National Grid's substation and the substation area. The Applicant is in regular conversations with National Grid in respect of powers sought for land within their substation, needed to connect the Scheme to the grid. Given that National Grid have not been able to confirm the exact point of connection to the Eaton Socon Substation, the Applicant reserves a degree of flexibility in terms of the Scheme design and the necessary rights required for the purpose of accommodating alternative points of connect within the substation area. The Applicant has sought to avoid developing high-grade agricultural land. However, in some instances this has been unavoidable. For example, some of the land within National Grid's substation is potentially high grade agricultural and given the need to connect to National Grid's substation it is not possible to avoid this.
SEPE-RR-10	SEPE shares the concerns expressed by stakeholders regarding the adequacy of pre-application consultation, changes to the scheme post-consultation, and the ability of affected communities to engage meaningfully on the basis of complete and intelligible information.	The Applicant disagrees with SEPE's comments regarding the adequacy of the pre-application process, through which it sought to meaningfully engage with communities regarding plans for the Scheme in line with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 and associated legislation. Prior to submitting a development consent order application for the Scheme, the Applicant prepared and submitted an Adequacy of

Our Ref.	SEPE Comments	Applicant Response
		Consultation milestone statement to the Planning Inspectorate. This document provided details of the consultation taken during the pre-application stage, along with how the approaches set out in the Statement of Community Consultation were met and an overview of how consultation feedback was informing the design of the Scheme. The Design Approach Document [APP-034] sets out how community feedback has informed aspects of the Scheme design.
SEPE-RR-11	SEPE considers that the Applicant relies heavily on generic national “need” statements without demonstrating that this specific scheme is necessary, efficient or proportionate when weighed against its environmental, agricultural and community impacts.	The need for the Scheme is set out in Section 2.0 of the Planning Statement [APP-031]. NPS EN-1 paragraph 3.2.8 states that “<i>The Secretary of State is not required to consider separately the specific contribution of any individual project to satisfying the need established in this NPS.</i>” The Applicant has undertaken its own planning balance exercise in Section 8 of the Planning Statement.
SEPE-RR-12	SEPE is concerned about the absence of enforceable mechanisms for community protection, monitoring, compliance and long-term accountability. Without prejudice to its primary case, SEPE also considers that any voluntary community benefit arrangements should be transparent, generation-linked and future-proofed if consent were contemplated.	The Applicant notes that the Development Consent Order requirements would be legally enforceable and there are a variety of mechanisms for monitoring and protection set out in the Scheme.

5.17 Response to UK Health Security Agency

Table 30: Response to UK Health Security Agency Relevant Representation (RR-1279)

Our Ref.	UKHSA Comments	Applicant Response
UKHSA-RR-01	However, following our review of the Environmental Statement (ES), it is noted that the BESS Fire Emission Modelling and associated risk assessment are based on preliminary emission rates of air pollutants (e.g., 1 g/m ² /s). The applicant should ensure that the parameters used in the modelling reflect likely worst-case emission rates for real-world fire scenarios and confirm that any scaled-up emission rates do not exceed the criteria established in the risk assessment. We would expect details of emission rates from a BESS unit fire to be contained within the Battery Safety Management Plan or associated documentation.	The BESS Fire Emissions Modelling is set out in Appendix A to the outline Battery Safety Management Plan [APP-162] . It can be confirmed that the nominal value of 1 g/m ² /s was used only as a normalising placeholder to derive pollutant-specific scaling ratios from measured concentrations as set out in para. 2.3.15. The back-calculated emission rates as set out in Table 4 were then used in the detailed modelling to inform the assessment.

APPENDIX A: FORMER OIL PIPELINE

Our Ref: SK/BE/NB/0220 (3)

Your Ref:

09 Jun 2016

REDUNDANT PIPELINES – LAND
POWERS DEFENCE ACT 1958
THE ESTATES OFFICE
NORMAN COURT
ASHBY DE LA ZOUCH
LEICESTERSHIRE
LE65 2UZ

Telephone 0845 4370379

Email LPDA@fishergerman.co.uk

www.fishergerman.co.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

**GOVERNMENT PIPELINES AND STORAGE SYSTEM
ABANDONMENT OF THE SANDY TO KELMARSH PIPELINE**

As you will be aware, we are the land agents that manage the Government Pipelines and Storage System network. Our client, The Oil and Pipelines Agency has abandoned the pipeline which runs through the land in which we understand you own and/or occupy. Please find enclosed the formal abandonment certificate that is hereby served on you in respect of the land shown on the plan. The certificate should be kept with your property's deeds.

We write to confirm that our client hereby abandons their rights in respect of the land concerned. All restrictions on development within 10 feet of the pipeline are now lifted and the charge held against the property at the Local Land Charges Register will be removed.

With regard to the status of the pipeline, we can confirm that it has been cleared of product, air filled and capped, however, there may still be some traces of residual product left in the pipe.

If you wish to remove the pipeline from your land you may do so at your cost, however, we would strongly recommend using specialist approved contractors, a list of which can be provided on request.

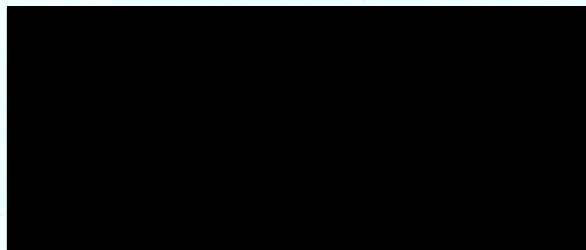
We trust that this letter provides you sufficient clarification, however please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any queries.

Yours faithfully

FISHER GERMAN LLP
enc – Abandonment Certificate
Plan

GOVERNMENT OIL PIPELINE

1. The Secretary of State for Defence hereby gives notice of abandonment and release of all easements, rights, licences or interests connected to the Government Oil Pipeline ("the Interests") that the Secretary of State for Defence may have acquired in respect of the land defined in paragraph 2 below, whether acquired by prescription or otherwise, with effect from the date of this notice. The Secretary of State for Defence has:
 - (a) a fixed intention never, at any time in the future, to assert the Interests or to attempt to transmit such an Interest to someone else; and
 - (b) a firm intention that neither the Secretary of State for Defence nor any successors will make use of any such Interest in the future.
2. The land to which this notice applies is the enclosure(s) numbered 72, 62, 51, 38, 39, 76, 75, 51 on Ordnance Survey map, scale 1:2500 Sheet No TL1063, TL0963, TL0863 (1901 edition).
3. The section of the Government Oil Pipeline (and works accessory thereto) to which this notice refers is shown on the plan annexed hereto and is indicated thereon by a green line and the words "MOD Abandoned Pipeline".

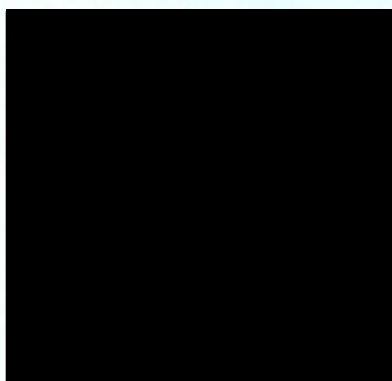


Dated 09/06/2016

R W McClure BA (Hons) MRICS
Defence Infrastructure Organisation
RAF Wyton
Authorised by the Secretary of State for Defence

File Ref: SK/BE/NB/0220 (3)

To:



Notes:

1. This notice should be kept with the Title Deeds of the land affected.
-



OVERVIEW WINDOW



Legend
MOD Abandoned Pipeline
Land of Interest

Site centre coordinates:
509,103 - 263,751

FILE REF:

SK/BE/NB/0220 (3)

SCALE: 1:12,500 @ A4

DATE: 07/04/2016

Client:



Defence
Infrastructure
Organisation

TITLE:

LOCATION PLAN EXTRACT
OF PIPELINE S/K

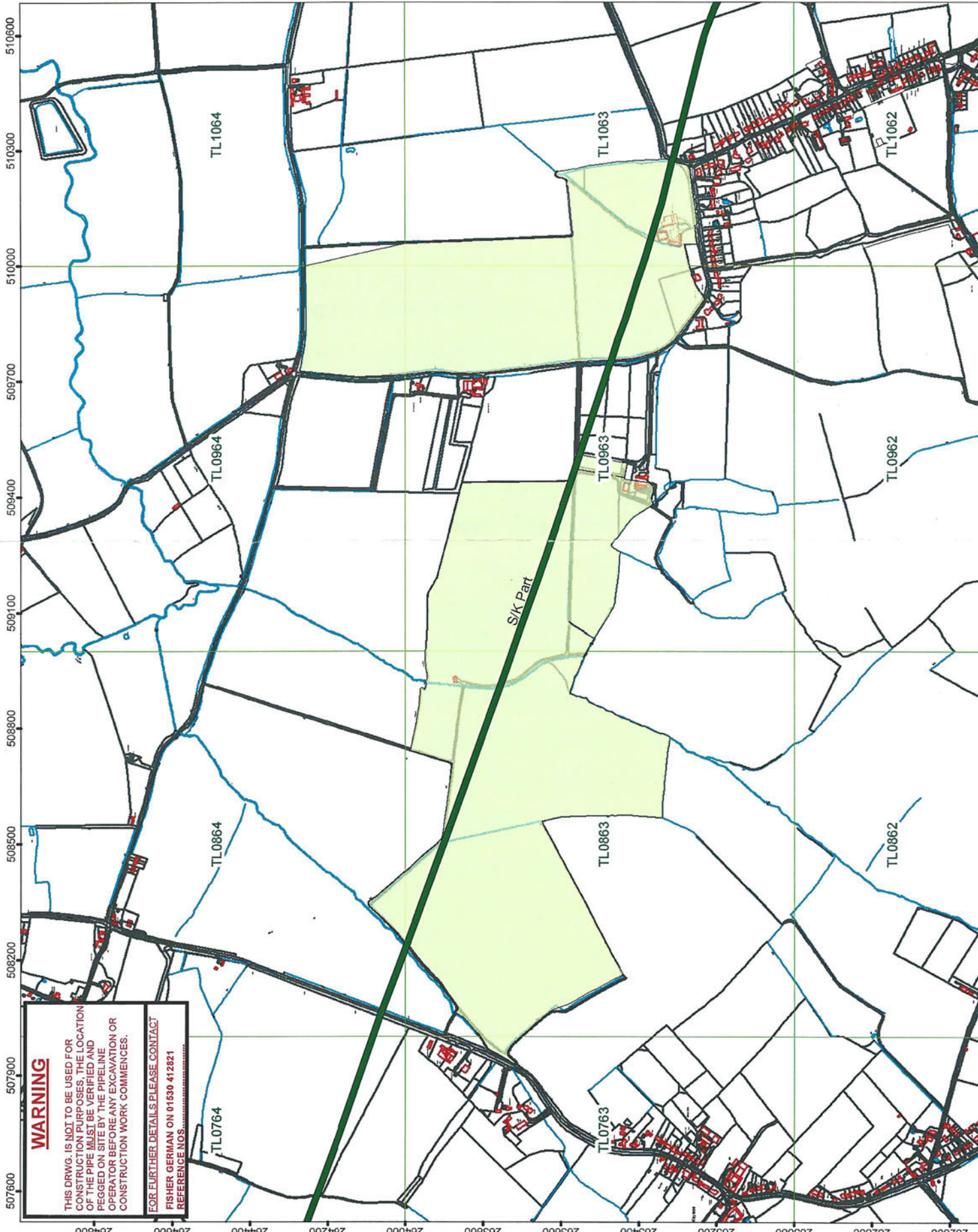
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Norman Court, Abbey de la Touche,
Leicester, LE65 2UL
Telephone: 01530 412821
Fax: 01530 413896



WARNING

THIS DRWG. IS NOT TO BE USED FOR
CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES. THE LOCATION
OF THE PIPE MUST BE VERIFIED AND
PEGGED ON SITE BY THE PIPELINE
OPERATOR BEFORE ANY EXCAVATION OR
CONSTRUCTION WORK COMMENCES.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT

FISHER GERMAN ON 01530 412821
REFERENCE NOS.

APPENDIX B: ENGAGEMENT WITH EPSL

Date	Engagement	Outgoing / Incoming	Summary
29/05/2024	Land Interest Questionnaire	Outgoing	Land interest questionnaire asking questions about landownership
18/06/2024	Statutory Undertaker Land Interest Questionnaire	Outgoing	A precautionary letter asking questions about their interest in land as a statutory undertaker
02/07/2024	Undeliverable – Land Interest Questionnaire	Incoming	Return of land interest questionnaire as undeliverable due to incorrect address/out of date address linked to the Land Registry title documents
02/07/2024	Land Interest Questionnaire request (updated address)	Outgoing	Land interest questionnaire asking questions about landownership
<i>30/07/2024 – ESPL granted 2x option agreements (one for cable easement and one for access easement (varied on 13/06/2025))</i>			
20/09/2024	Section 42 Notice	Outgoing	Section 42 notice issued – invitation to statutory consultation
24/09/2024 – 29 October 2024	Site Notice	N/A	Site notice in place and monitored at entrance to substation access track
<i>July 2025 – ESPL project acquired by AGR Power Limited</i>			

08/08/2025	Confirmation Request	Outgoing	A shorter version of the land interest questionnaire designed to confirm if the information the Applicant holds is still correct or has changed.
<i>21/08/2025 - ESPL granted lease of main site.</i>			
22/08/2025	Confirmation Response	Incoming	Letter responding to the questionnaire confirming interest and raising objection to the Scheme.
29/09/2025	Letter in response to ESPL	Outgoing	Applicant issues letter to ESPL (via their legal representatives at Eversheds Sutherlands (international) LLP) responding to points raised in letter dated 22/08/2025.
27/11/2025	Section 56 Notification	Outgoing	Section 56 notice issued – confirmation the project has been accepted by the planning inspectorate.
07/01/2026	Virtual meeting held between Applicant and ESPL	N/A	Representatives for the Applicant and ESPL met to discuss the contents of the Applicant's letter dated 29 September 2025, and the offer of a cooperation agreement was re-iterated.
29/01/2026	Relevant representation	Incoming	Relevant representation dated 14/01/2026 made available on PINS website.
09/02/2026	Email to ESPL	Outgoing	Applicant issues further email to ESPL to request response to letter of 29/09/2025,

			comments on cooperation agreement, and offer of further meeting.

APPENDIX C: ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FREEHOLDS OF THE LAND WHERE ESPL HAS A PLOT INTEREST

Plot 14-8, Andrew William Brightman (Freeholder)

Date	Engagement	Outgoing / Incoming	Summary
29/05/2024	Land Interest Questionnaire	Outgoing	Land interest questionnaire asking questions about landownership
11/07/2024	Land Interest Questionnaire Chaser	Outgoing	A reminder letter that we have not received a response to the land interest questionnaire
20/09/2024	Section 42 Notice	Outgoing	Section 42 notice issued – invitation to statutory consultation
29/10/2024	Section 42 Notice Response	Incoming	Incoming response from the affected person(s) agent providing the feedback they gave to statutory consultation
08/08/2025	Confirmation Request	Outgoing	A shorter version of the land interest questionnaire designed to confirm if the information the Applicant holds is still correct or has changed.

27/11/2025	Section 56 Notification	Outgoing	Section 56 notice issued – confirmation the project has been accepted by the planning inspectorate.
<i>Please note as per the land rights tracker [PDA-014], the applicant remains engaged with the freeholder and Heads of Terms have been agreed, Option agreement negotiations are ongoing</i>			

APPENDIX D: ENGAGEMENT WITH THE FREEHOLDER OF THE LAND WHERE ESPL HAS A PLOT INTEREST

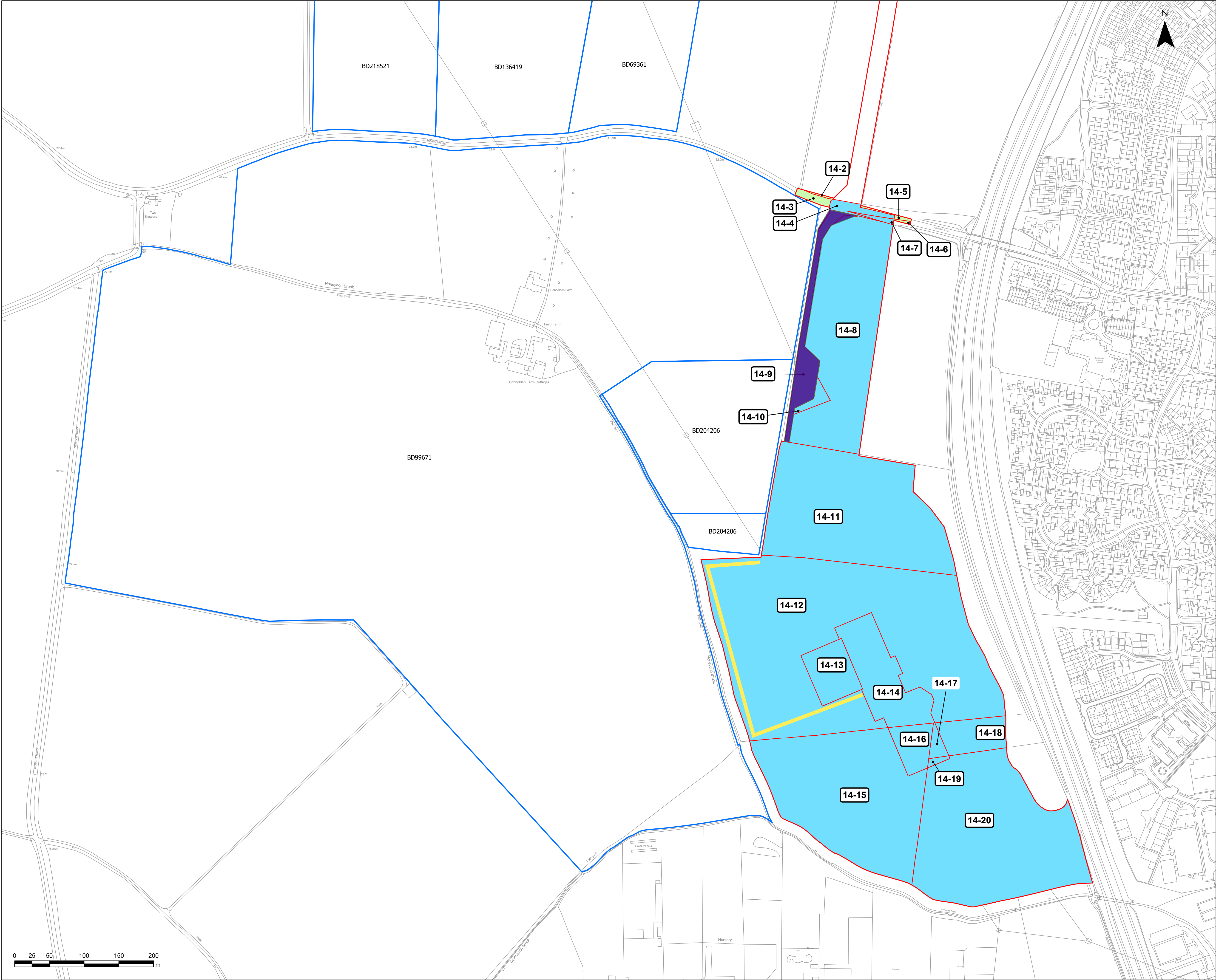
Plot 14-9, 14-11, 14-12 and 14-14 National Grid Electricity Transmission plc (“NGET”) (Freeholder)

Date	Engagement	Outgoing / Incoming	Summary
29/05/2024	Land Interest Questionnaire	Outgoing	Land interest questionnaire asking questions about landownership
18/06/2024	Statutory Undertaker Land Interest Questionnaire	Outgoing	A precautionary letter asking questions about their interest in land as a statutory undertaker
11/07/2024	Land Interest Questionnaire Chaser	Outgoing	A reminder letter that we have not received a response to the land interest questionnaire
20/09/2024	Section 42 Notice	Outgoing	Section 42 notice issued – invitation to statutory consultation
08/07/2025	Land Interest Questionnaire Follow up (phone call)	Outgoing	Outgoing phone call to chase the land interest questionnaire as no response was provided
08/07/2025	Land Interest Questionnaire Follow up (email)	Outgoing	Outgoing email to chase the land interest questionnaire as no response was provided

08/07/2025	Land Interest Questionnaire Follow up (email) – Response	Incoming	Generic response stating the information has been passed to the relevant team who will be in touch
14/07/2025	Land Interest Questionnaire Follow up (email) – Response	Incoming	Incoming request to re-issue the land interest questionnaire
16/07/2025	Land Interest Questionnaire and Statutory undertaker letter Re-issue	Outgoing	Re-issuing of the land interest questionnaire and statutory undertaker letter
16/07/2025	Land Interest Questionnaire – Response	Incoming	Advised where the land interest questionnaire needs to be issued and confirmed what assets are owned by NGET and NGED
21/07/2025	Land Interest Questionnaire – Response	Incoming	Response to the land interest questionnaire confirming ownership of land, the apparatus and any additional information and provides us with points of contact
21/07/2025	Statutory undertaker letter - Response	Incoming	Response to the statutory undertaker letter providing confirmation of assets
08/08/2025	Confirmation Request	Outgoing	A shorter version of the land interest questionnaire designed to confirm if the information the Applicant holds is still correct or has changed.
22/08/2025	Confirmation Response	Incoming	Letter responding to the questionnaire confirming interest within the scheme.

27/11/2025	Section 56 Notification	Outgoing	Section 56 notice issued – confirmation the project has been accepted by the planning inspectorate.
<i>Please note as per the land rights tracker [PDA-014], the applicant remains engaged with the freeholder about this land and the connection into Eaton Socon Substation, the latest position can be seen on the land rights tracker.</i>			

APPENDIX E: EAST PARK ENERGY AND EATON SOCON POWER LIMITED INTERACTION PLAN



Project

EAST PARK ENERGY PROJECT

Client

EAST PARK ENERGY PROJECT

Consultant

WSP Ltd
70 Chancery Lane
London
WC2A 1AF
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Notes

1. ALL DIMENSIONS IN METERS UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE.
2. DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING USE ONLY FIGURED DIMENSIONS.
3. THE PROPOSED WORKS SHOWN ARE ILLUSTRATIVE ONLY AND WILL BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS PART OF DETAILED DESIGN DEVELOPMENT. ANY CHANGES WILL BE LIMITED TO BEING WITHIN THE ORDER LIMITS AND ANY OTHER CONSTRAINTS INCLUDED IN THE DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER.
4. THESE LAND PLANS SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH OTHER PLANS AND DOCUMENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER IN PARTICULAR THE BOOK OF REFERENCE (EN010142/APP/4.3) AND THE STATEMENT OF REASONS (EN010142/APP/4.1).

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ISSUE/REVISION

00	4/1/2026	AGR RR RESPONSE
I/R	DATE	DESCRIPTION

- Key
- Referencing Limits
 - Acquisition of Rights
 - Temporary Use
 - Eaton Socon Power Limited Landownership HMLR Boundary
 - Overlapping use - Access Track (Plot 14-9)
 - Overlapping use - Easement area (Plot 14-12)

Scale

Original Size (A1) 1:2,500 @ A1

Purpose of Issue

AGR RR Response

Project Number

N/A

Reference Number

N/A

Sheet Title

RR Response

Sheet Number

Scale: 1:2,500

Rev: 01