Botley West Solar Farm

The Applicant's Response to the OHA's Response to the Rule 17 Letter re Chapter 8 LVIA [PD-009]

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Glossary

Term	Meaning
The Applicant	SolarFive Ltd
The Project	The Botley West Solar Farm
The Site or Order Limits	The area of land encompassing the Project development and shown on Location Plan [**AS-024**].

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
CDC	Cherwell District Council
DCO	Development Consent Order
DESNZ	Department of Energy Security and Net Zero
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement
NETS	National Electricity Transmission System
NGET	National Grid Electricity Transmission plc
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
NTS	Non-Technical Summary
OCC	Oxfordshire County Council
PA 2008	The Planning Act 2008
PINS	The Planning Inspectorate
PV	Photovoltaic
PVDP	Photovolt Development Partners GmbH
SPV	Special Purpose Vehicle
VWHDC	Vale of White Horse District Council
WODC	West Oxfordshire District Council

Units

Unit	Description
ha	Hectares
km	Kilometres
m	Metres
MWe	Megawatt electrical

1 The Applicant's Response to the OHA's Response to the ExA's Rule 17 Letter

1.1.1 The ExA's Rule 17 Letter (Request for Further Information) [**PD-009**] was submitted on the 17th June 2025 and requested further information from the Applicant (Issue 1: Further Review of ES Chapter 8) and, from the Local Authorities, on Clarification of Position (Issue 2).

1.1.2 The Applicant responded to Issue 1 in The Applicant's Response to the ExA's Rule 17 Letter [**REP2-029**]. Similarly, the OHAs' responded on Issue 2 [**REP2-049**].

1.1.3 The Applicant has reviewed the OHA response [**REP2-049**] and provides further commentary below.

1.2 LVIA Assessment Methodology

1.2.1 As set out in paragraphs 1.1.2 to 1.1.12 of the Applicant's Response to Rule 17 Letter (17th June 2025) on ES LVIA Chapter 8 [**REP2-029**] the LVIA methodology is based on industry best practice.

1.2.2 RPS' assessment methodology was recently tested at the Mona Offshore Wind Farm (Mona) DCO Examination. Slightly different points were raised under the onshore (LVIA) and the offshore (SLVIA) methodology during the Examination. The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) significance matrix was raised under the SLVIA and so the ExA's consideration of RPS' SLVIA methodology on Mona is relevant to the Botley West Solar Farm Project and is included below.

1.2.3 The statutory consultee's concerns, Applicant's response and ExA's consideration on the Mona project are set out below.

Mona Offshore Wind Farm: ExA's Report to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNEZ) on the Mona Offshore Wind Farm (16th April 2025)

1.2.4 The Mona project was a Welsh offshore wind project, those documents referred to in the Examining Authorities Report that refer only to Welsh projects and offshore wind generation policy/ guidance have been removed from paragraphs 1.2.5 to 1.2.13 below.

RPS' LVIA Methodology

Statutory consultees position

1.2.5 The statutory consultees expressed a number of concerns regarding the LVIA and SLVIA methodology, including:

- The particular use and definitions of the split assessment and significance categories by the Applicant (such as an effect being 'minor to moderate' or 'not significant to significant'), which they believed deviated from the EIA assessment methodology used in other chapters, were not in line with best practice, and led to a lack of clarity in the reporting of the significance of effects
- The threshold for effects being significant or not significant not being clear and being set too low, leading to the underreporting of effects.

Applicant's response

1.2.6 The Applicant responded to these concerns by setting out its position that:

- EIA guidance (The state of environmental impact assessment in the UK, IEMA 2011) states that *"there is no regulatory requirement to apply the same methodological approach to significance evaluation across an EIA"*
- according to Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition, 2013 (GLVIA3) published by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA), the assessment of significance should be undertaken through the application of professional judgement and not solely the use of matrices
- the use of split categories when judging the significance of effects was not unusual for SLVIA or LVIA and reflects GLVIA3 guidance.

ExA's consideration

1.2.7 *"Whilst the ExA notes the concerns of the Councils and CMCC and considers that the Applicant's initial explanation of its LVIA methodology relating to significance of effects should have been more transparent, the ExA considers that the Applicant has adequately justified its approach to the methodology. The ExA accepts the Applicant's explanations relating to the use of its split assessment categories and significance thresholds, and that these reflect relevant guidance around LVIA…."* (ExA's Report to the SoS for DESNEZ on the Mona Offshore Wind Farm, paragraph 4.1.26).

1.2.8 *"Based upon the above considerations, the ExA has no substantiative concerns regarding the Applicant's assessment methodology and is satisfied that the approach and assessment are in line with the provisions set out in Section 5.10 of NPS EN-1 and Section 2.8 of NPS EN-3"* (ExA's Report to the SoS for DESNEZ on the Mona Offshore Wind Farm, paragraph 4.1.28).

Significance of Effects Table in RPS' SLVIA Methodology

Statutory consultees position

1.2.9 NRW and the councils raised a point on the RPS assessment criteria and definitions, including the significance of effects matrix (within the SLVIA section of the ExA's Report to the SoS):

- The use of the 'very high' category of sensitivity within the assessment matrix, which NRW believed would reduce the number of scenarios where an effect could be significant within the assessment
- The threshold in the assessment for very high sensitivity receptors being set too high and therefore leading to the underestimation of the value and sensitivity of receptors, meaning that the effects on receptors which would ordinarily be considered to be significant had not been assessed as such.

Applicant's position

1.2.10 The Applicant responded to these concerns by setting out its position that:

- The matrix used to evaluate the significance of effect has been adapted from the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA104 (Highways England et al. 2020) and that the categories used in the assessment matrix follow the DMRB guidance.

ExA's consideration

1.2.11 *"Taking into consideration the representations from NRW (A) and the Applicant, the ExA considers that the Applicant has adequately justified its approach to the SLVIA, and the methodology used within*" (ExA's Report to the SoS for DESNEZ on the Mona Offshore Wind Farm, paragraph 5.1.31).

1.2.12 *"Considering all aspects of the SLVIA methodology raised during the Examination, and in respect of the provisions of NPS EN-3, paragraphs 2.8.207 to 2.8.212, the ExA therefore*

considers that the Applicant's assessment meets these provisions, and that throughout the Examination, the Applicant has adequately justified its consideration of the guidance set out within these provisions…" (ExA's Report to the SoS for DESNEZ on the Mona Offshore Wind Farm, paragraph 5.1.34).

1.2.13 *"Based on the above considerations, the ExA is thus satisfied with the Applicant's SLVIA methodology*" (ExA's Report to the SoS for DESNEZ on the Mona Offshore Wind Farm, paragraph 5.1.35).

Botley West Solar Farm – Assessment of Magnitude of Impact

1.2.14 The assessment methodology used within the Botley West Environmental Statement (ES) is based on the DMRB (National Highways, Standards for Highways) as set out in paragraph 4.2.9 of Chapter 4: Approach to Environmental assessment [**APP-041**]. The two relevant documents published as part of the National Highways Standards are LA104 – Environmental assessment and monitoring (revision 1) (August 2020) and LA107 – Landscape and visual effects (revision 2) (February 2020).

1.2.15 The definitions for the magnitude of landscape impact/change are set out at Table 3.24 of LA107. The definitions for the degree of impact experienced by visual receptors are set out in Table 3.41 of LA107.

1.2.16 LA107 Table 3.24 sets out both adverse and beneficial impacts on the landscape (referred to in the DMRB as effects/change).

1.2.17 Note: for the DMRB major, moderate, minor and negligible categories of magnitude of effect, the RPS terminology is high, medium, low and negligible magnitude of impacts, which is the same as that used in the other West Botley Solar Farm Project chapters. The chapters differentiate the magnitude of impact terminology from the significance of effect terminology, ensuring it is clear to the reader.

DMRB LA107, Table 3.24: Magnitude and nature of effect on the landscape and typical descriptions

Magnitude of effect (change)		Typical descriptions
Major	Adverse	Total loss or large scale damage to existing landscape character or distinctive features or elements, and/or addition of new uncharacteristic , conspicuous features or elements (i.e. road infrastructure).
	Beneficial	Large scale improvement of landscape character to features and elements; and/or addition of new distinctive features or elements, or removal of conspicuous road infrastructure elements.
Moderate	Adverse	Partial loss or noticeable damage to existing landscape character or distinctive features or elements; and/or addition of new uncharacteristic, noticeable features or elements (i.e. road infrastructure).
	Beneficial	Partial or noticeable improvement of landscape character of one (maybe more) key existing features and elements: and/or the addition of new characteristic features.
Minor	Adverse	Slight loss or damage to existing landscape character of one (maybe more) key features and elements and/or addition of new uncharacteristic features and elements.
	Beneficial	Slight improvement of landscape character by the restoration of one (maybe more) key existing features and elements; and/or the addition of new characteristic features.
Negligible	Adverse	Very minor loss, damage or alteration to existing landscape character of one or more features and elements.

Magnitude of effect (change)	Typical descriptions
Beneficial	Very minor noteable improvement of character by the restoration of one or more existing features and elements.
No change	No noticeable alteration or improvement, temporary or permanent, of landscape character of existing features and elements.

1.2.18 The landscape mitigation proposed as part of the project, as set out in paragraphs 1.1.27 and 1.1.35 of the Applicant's Response to Rule 17 Letter (17th June 2025) on ES LVIA Chapter 8 [**REP2-029**] would enhance the key characteristics in line with the management guidelines of the host landscape character areas. The impact of the introduction of the uncharacteristic features should be weighed against the restoration/ introduction of beneficial landscape elements.

1.2.19 DMRB LA 107, Table 3.43 sets out the typical descriptors for the magnitude of impact experienced by visual receptors. Note: DMRB refers to this as magnitude (change) of effect, rather than magnitude of impact.

DMRB LA107, Table 3.43: Magnitude (change) of visual effect and typical descriptions

Magnitude (change) of visual effect	Typical descriptions
Major	The project or part of it, would become the dominant feature or focal point of the view.
Moderate	The project, or part of it would form a noticeable feature or element of the view which is readily apparent to the receptor.
Minor	The project, or part of it, would be perceptible, but not alter the overall balance of features and elements that comprise the existing view.
Negligible	Only a very small part of the project work or activity would be discernible, or being at such a distance it would form a barely noticeable feature or element of the view.
No change	No part of the project work or activity would be discernible.

1.2.20 Applicant's position – The definitions of magnitude of impact within Table 8.11 of Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Assessment [**APP-045**] are not dissimilar to those in the DMRB, see Table 8, of APP-045, below.

Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Table 8.11: Impact magnitude criteria

Magnitude of impact Typical Descriptors	Landscape Resource	Visual Resource
High	Total loss or addition or/very substantial loss or addition of key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of dominant, uncharacteristic elements with the attributes of the receiving landscape.	Complete or very substantial change in view, dominant involving complete or very substantial obstruction of existing view or complete change in character and composition of baseline, e.g., through removal of key elements.
Medium	Partial loss or addition of or moderate alteration to one or more key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that may be prominent but may not necessarily be substantially uncharacteristic with the attributes of the receiving landscape.	Moderate change in view: which may involve partial obstruction of existing view or partial change in character and composition of baseline, i.e. pre-development view, through the introduction of new elements or removal of existing elements. Change may be prominent but would not substantially alter scale and character of the surroundings and the wider setting. Composition of the views would alter.

Magnitude of impact Typical Descriptors	Landscape Resource	Visual Resource
		View character may be partially changed through the introduction of features which, though uncharacteristic, may not necessarily be visually discordant.
Low	Minor loss or addition of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape.	Minor change in baseline, i.e. pre-development view, – change would be distinguishable from the surroundings whilst composition and character would be similar to the pre-change circumstances.
Negligible	Very minor loss or addition of or alteration to one or more key elements/features/patterns of the baseline i.e., pre-development landscape and/or introduction of elements that are not uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape approximating to a 'no-change' situation.	
No Change	No loss or alteration of characteristics, features or elements; no observable impact.	

1.2.21 The effect of the landscape mitigation, as shown on the Illustrative Masterplan, Rev 1 **[AS-020]** and the Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan, Rev 1 **[AS-022]**, proposed as part of the Project, enclosing some available views is acknowledged in paragraph 1.1.26 of the Applicant's Response to Rule 17 Letter (17th June 2025) on ES LVIA Chapter 8 [**REP2-029**]. The height of the proposed hedgerows are shown at 3.5 m in the visualisations. This need not be the case, as the height of the panels is 2.3 m. Where appropriate the hedgerows could be managed to a lower height, e.g. 2.5 m, which would retain long views, if required. Alternative methods of hedgerow establishment can be adopted. These are a matter for detailed design. In the meantime, provisions in relation to hedgerow planting can be found in the outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (oLEMP) [**REP2-019**]. Requirement 6 of the Draft DCO refers to the need for a final version of the LEMP to be submitted for approval '*substantially in accordance with the outline LEMP'*.

1.2.22 As noted in paragraph 1.1.44 of the Applicant's original response to the ExA's Rule 17 Letter [**REP2-029**] there is a tension within the host landscape character areas, between the introduction and/or restoration of beneficial landscape character elements, aspirations set out in the landscape character areas' management guidelines, and the visual impacts that would arise from those stated management ambitions. Tensions, raised by the OHAs, in regard to hedgerows and the potential for the proposed hedgerows to screen views,

"An additional point is that the effect of the mitigation itself (hedgerows etc) should also be considered as part of the judgments, as it is a change that would be brought about by the proposed development – blocking views etc. This will give rise to a permanent change to the landscape character and views." (REP-049, page 4 of 24).

1.2.23 Enhancing the landscape character, by following the management guidelines would result in an improvement of landscape character. A change in views, due to implementation of the landscape management guidelines, would occur, whether or not the Botley West Solar Project was being proposed.

Significance of Effect

1.2.24 In the OHAs' response to Issue to of the ExA's Rule 17 Letter, the OHAs provides an adapted version of Table 8.12: Assessment matrix of Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact

Assessment [**APP-045**]. Table 8.12 of APP-045 is based on the DMRB significance matrix, below, which is used by environmental topics within the Botley West Environmental Statement.

1.2.25 DMRB LA104 - Environmental assessment and monitoring, provides an overarching significance matrix, for use by all environmental topics, at Table 3.8.1. This is replicated below for convenience.

DMRB LA104, Table 3.8.1: Significance Matrix

		Magnitude of change				
Environmental value (sensitivity)	**Very high**	Neutral	Slight	Moderate or large	Large or very large	Very large
	High	Neutral	Slight	Slight or moderate	Moderate or large	Large or very large
	Medium	Neutral	Neutral or slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate or large
	Low	Neutral	Neutral or slight	Neutral or slight	Slight	Slight or moderate
	Negligible	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral or slight	Neutral or slight	Slight

1.2.26 The DMRB notes that significance of effects is judged on the effects that remain after the mitigation has taken place, i.e. the residual effects.

1.2.27 The Botley West Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment significance of effects matrix is based on this DMRB matrix, albeit adapted to reflect GLVIA3 terminology. Also, 'No Change' column has also been removed, as LVIA assessment concentrates on potential significant effects.

1.2.28 The OHAs' alternative significance of effects matrix, deviates from the widely used standard DMRB matrix, e.g. in the judgement of Moderate effects.

1.2.29 The Applicant's Position – The use of the National Highways Standard significance of effects matrix (DMRB LA104, Table 3.8.1) adapted to reflect LVIA terminology (Table 8.12 of **APP-045**) is appropriate for the Botley West Solar Farm project.

Determining the Significance of Moderate Effects

1.2.30 As set out in paragraphs 1.1.5 and 1.1.9 of the Applicant's Response to Rule 17 Letter (17th June 2025) on ES LVIA Chapter 8 [**REP2-029**] the EIA Regulations and GLVIA3 do not set rules as to what is significant and what is not a significant effect.

1.2.31 On what is a significant landscape effect and what is not a significant landscape effect GLVIA3 notes, at paragraph 5.56, that *"there are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect, and there cannot be a standard approach, since circumstances vary with the location and landscape context and the type of proposal."* GLVIA3, paragraph 5.56, Figure 5.10 Scale of significance, shows a gradation from more significant to less significant, giving examples of what might constitute a greater or lesser degree of significance, it does not attach significance to a judgement of effect. Within the same paragraph GLVIA3 notes that *"where assessments of significance place landscape effects between these extremes (more significant and less significant) judgements must be made about whether or not they are significant, with full explanations of why these conclusions have been reached."*

1.2.32 The guidance within GLVIA3 on attributing significance to visual effects follows the same as that for landscape character, for example, at paragraph 6.42 *"Significance of effects is not absolute and can only be defined in relation to each development and its specific location."* Also, at paragraph 6.44, which replicates the text at paragraph 5.56, that there are no hard and fast rules about what makes a significant effect.

1.2.33 Paragraph 1.1.10 of [**REP2-029**], refers to Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note-2024-01: Notes and Clarifications of Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition (GLVIA3) (Landscape Institute, August 2024) (LITGN-2024-01) provides guidance on 'Moderate' significance of effects at 3(5) *"…moderate effects may or may not be significant and justification would be needed in the methodology or receptor assessment as to whether a moderate effect is significant or not."* This is a matter of professional judgement.

1.2.34 The Applicant acknowledges the OHAs' concerns on the proportion of effects judged to be moderate. In the light of the guidance within LITGN-2024-01 and further to those effects reconsidered in the Applicant's Response to Rule 17 Letter (17th June 2025) on ES LVIA Chapter 8 (REP2-029) the Applicant has undertaken a review of the effects of the existing project layout, judged to be moderate, on the additional viewpoints raised by the OHAs in their response to Issue 2 of the ExA's Rule 17 Letter [**REP2-049**] as reported in paragraph 1.1.13 of REP2-029, see section 1.3, below. However, as also reported in the same paragraph, it is anticipated that some of these effects will no longer be experienced by landscape and visual resources and receptors, due to the proposed changes set out in the Applicant's Change 2 Notification [**REP2-045**], details of which will be discussed with the OHAs.

1.2.35 Applicant's position – The Applicant has followed the LITGN-2024-01 guidance on the significance of moderate effects, that is moderate effects can be significant or not significant. The Applicant has reviewed those judgements made and has provided supporting text to explain the reviewed and (where applicable) revised judgements made.

1.3 Visual Receptors

Visual Receptor Groups

1.3.1 Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [**APP-045**] paragraphs 8.9.21 to 8.9.41 identify the effects on visual receptor groups during the construction phase. Paragraphs 8.9.118 to 8.9.141 of APP-045 identify the effects on visual receptor groups during the operation and maintenance phase of the Project. These groups include receptors on the public rights of way and surrounding road network. Please refer to the Applicant's response to paragraphs 7.3.43 to 7.3.45 of the Joint LIR **[REP2-026]** submitted at Deadline 2.

1.3.2 The degree to which local settlements are covered by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) is reported in paragraph 8.6.39 of APP-045. Representative viewpoints from publicly accessible locations adjacent to residential areas, e.g. see the Applicant's response to the Vale of the White Horse request in Table 8.5: Summary of scoping responses, of APP-045. As set out in the Applicant's Responses to Written Representations Submitted at Deadline 1 [**REP-027**] (for example REP1-062) all representative viewpoints were agreed with the LPAs. Parish Councils' viewpoint suggestions were also visited, e.g. Eynsham, Church Hanborough, Wooton and Cumnor Parish Councils' suggestions and selected or discounted due to potential visibility/lack of visibility (see Applicant's response to these suggested viewpoints in Table 8.5 of **APP-045**).

1.3.3 Occupiers of residential properties were taken forward to the assessment stage (see Table 8.18: Key receptors taken forward to assessment, of **APP-045**). Table 8.17: Description of views from representative viewpoints, of **APP-045** notes where visual receptors include residential receptors, e.g. at representative viewpoint 46, however, most of the viewpoints are from PRoW, as requested by, and agreed with, the LPAs.

1.3.4 The matter of assessment of private views is considered within paragraphs 8.6.78 to 8.6.80 of the LVIA [**APP-045**]. An a RVAA was not requested. Where residents raised specific concerns regarding individual properties or this was raised internally, e.g. Goose Eye Farm and Purwell Farm, mitigation measures were proposed to address concerns, as set out in the Applicant's Responses to Written Representations Submitted at Deadline 1 [**REP-027**] (for example **REP1-062**).

1.4 Review of the Effects at Representative Viewpoints Raised in the ExA's Rule 17 Letter and the OHAs' Response to the ExA's Rule 17 Letter

1.4.1 The representative viewpoints, agreed with the LPAs are as they are named - representative views along certain routes. It is acknowledged that the assessment of the effects on PRoWs does not include detailed section by section descriptions of the change in views along each PRoW or road. This was raised in the OHAs' response to the ExA's Rule 17 Letter [**REP-049**] in relation to viewpoints 45, 46, 47 and 54. However, the 55 viewpoints provide a good range of evidence of the different effects on the PRoW within the study area, at varying geographical locations, distances and elevations, as well as different contexts, to enable professional judgement to be exercised in the assessment of effects along the wider networks.

1.4.2 Tables 1, 2 and 3, below provide a review of the representative viewpoints to address concerns raised by West Oxfordshire District Council (representative viewpoints 5b, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 32, 38, 40, 41) and the OHAs (representative viewpoints 48, 49, 50, 51, 53) in terms of the assessed magnitude of impact. In the case of seven viewpoints, year 1 winter operational effects have subsequently been judged to be slightly higher than those assessed in the LVIA. Those changes are in the red text within the tables below. Where changes have been made this has been the result of an internal review of the original assessment, as set in the LVIA **[APP-045]** and with reference to specific Representative Viewpoints as set out in the OHAs response to the Rule 17 letter [EP-049]. Where the significance of effect has been altered this is because of changes to the magnitude of impact from individual Representative Viewpoints. Further detail can be found in Tables 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 below.

1.4.3 The low height of the proposed solar panels (2.3 m) means that distance and intervening vegetation are the primary factors affecting the magnitude of impact. The development can be screened by hedgerow planting, and as distance from the Project increases, so the development becomes less distinguishable, being absorbed by large-scale fields and the undulations of the underlying landform, which helps to accommodate the development.

Table 1.1: Review of Magnitude of Impact of Representative Viewpoints 5b, 23, 24, 25 and 26

Magnitude of impact factor	Viewpoint 5b: View looking east from footpath 416/5/20	Viewpoint 23: View looking northeast from footpath 238/2/20, near Pinsley Wood	Viewpoint 24 - View looking east from footpath 238/5/20 near Church Hanborough	Viewpoint 25: View looking south from footpath 238/5/20	Viewpoint 26 – View looking north from footpath 238/5/20
Sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity
Size and scale					
The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development	Approx 180 degrees of the view would be occupied by the development. The existing landscape elements, such as trees/woodland, remain visible in their entirety, providing scale reference.	The existing open view will be lost, and approximately 110 degrees of the view will be occupied by the development. The existing landscape elements, such as the distant forested landform trees/woodland, remain visible in their entirety, providing scale reference.	Approx 30 degrees of the view would be occupied by the development.	Although the closest panels would form the immediate skyline, the eye is drawn to the distant landform, which forms a prominent focal point in the view and the skyline above the proposed development.	Approx 180 degrees of the view would be occupied by the development.
The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture	The underlying landform is a large-scale agricultural field. The view is over the site due to the ground falling eastwards, towards the A4260. The distant vegetation forms the skyline, appearing above the solar panels. Thus, the skyline of the view would remain unchanged.	The underlying landform is a large-scale agricultural field. The distant forested landform forms the skyline above the solar panels, across the visible panorama. The electricity poles in the foreground appear to be the most prominent structures.	The existing hedgerow blocks views from the footpath.	The distant forested landform (Wytham Hill) and surrounding woodland form the skyline above the solar panels. Therefore, the panels on the lower slope and on more distant fields are less prominent.	The tree line on the ridge to the south of Church Hanborough would remain visible above the panels Although there would be places where they break the skyline due to the nature of the rising land to the north of the view.
The nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms	Within a short section crossing the field	Within a short section crossing the field	Within a short section along the field boundary	Within a short section along the field boundary	Within a short section along the field boundary

Magnitude of impact factor	Viewpoint 5b: View looking east from footpath 416/5/20	Viewpoint 23: View looking northeast from footpath 238/2/20, near Pinsley Wood	Viewpoint 24 - View looking east from footpath 238/5/20 near Church Hanborough	Viewpoint 25: View looking south from footpath 238/5/20	Viewpoint 26 – View looking north from footpath 238/5/20
of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses					
Geographical extent					
The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor	Both sides of the view for users of the footpath	One side of the view from the footpath.	One side of the view from the footpath	One side of the view from the footpath.	One side of the view from the footpath.
The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development	Within the site boundary	Next to the site boundary	Within the site boundary	Within the site boundary	Within the site boundary
The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible	Panels would be seen from the proximity across the field, up to a distance of approximately 640 m.	Panels would be seen from the proximity to distant fields 1.3 km away.	The development would replace the precent view of open fields.	Panels would be seen from immediate proximity to distant fields up to 1.7 km away.	Panels would be seen from the proximity across the field
Duration and Reversibility					
Duration of effects during construction	Short term temporary	Short term temporary	Short term temporary	Short term temporary	Short term temporary
Duration of effects during operation Y1 up to Y15	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary
Residual effects at Year 15 with established mitigation planting	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term

Magnitude of impact factor	Viewpoint 5b: View looking east from footpath 416/5/20	Viewpoint 23: View looking northeast from footpath 238/2/20, near Pinsley Wood	Viewpoint 24 - View looking east from footpath 238/5/20 near Church Hanborough	Viewpoint 25: View looking south from footpath 238/5/20	Viewpoint 26 – View looking north from footpath 238/5/20
Reversibility of effects	Fully reversible	Fully reversible	Fully reversible	Fully reversible	Fully reversible
Magnitude of impact assessed					
Level of effects during construction (temporary, short-term adverse effects)	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate**, significant effect Considered significant as the works would be visible across the large field at a short distance.	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate**, significant effect Considered significant as the works would be visible across the large field at a short distance.	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate**, not significant effect Works would not be carried out concurrently across all visible fields.	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate** significant effect	Medium-high magnitude **Major/moderate significant** effect The magnitude increased from medium as the works would occasionally affect the skyline and would be visible across the large field at a short distance.
Level of effects during operation Y1 up to Y15,	**Medium-high** magnitude **Moderate/ Major** significant effect Magnitude is increased as the development would be visible across the large field at a short distance.	**Medium-high** magnitude **Moderate/ Major** significant effect Magnitude is increased as the development would be visible across the large field at a short distance.	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate, not** significant effect Due to the transient oblique nature of the small angle of the view being changed	**Medium-high** magnitude **Moderate/Major** significant effect Magnitude is increased as the development would be visible across the fields up to 1.7 km away.	**High** magnitude **Moderate/Major** significant effect The magnitude increased as the development would affect the immediate skyline.
Level of effects at Year 15 with established mitigation planting.	**Medium** magnitude, Moderate, not significant effect. The proposed planting would break up the scale of the development.	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate** significant effect Due to the loss of the open aspect of the view.	**Medium** magnitude **Minor/moderate** not significant effect Due to the road already being lined by a hedgerow.	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate** not significant effect. The main focus of the view, formed by the distant landform, would be retained.	**Medium** magnitude Minor/Moderate not significant effect due to proposed hedgerow vegetation along PRoW partially screening available views nearest the viewpoint

Table 1.2: Review of Magnitude of Impact of Representative Viewpoints 27, 32, 38, 40 and 41

Magnitude of impact factor	Viewpoint 27 – View looking north from footpath 238/5/20, near City Farm	Viewpoint 32 - View looking northwest from footpath 124/5/10, near Begbroke	Viewpoint 38 View looking west from footpath 152/6/10 near Purwell Farm	Viewpoint 40 - View looking northwest from footpath 152/6/10, near Cassington	Viewpoint 41 - View looking west from Yarnton Road, Cassington
Sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity	Medium sensitivity
Size and scale					
The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view occupied by the proposed development	The closest panels at a distance of 190m would be distinguishable in filtered views. The panels on the slope at a distance of 500m would be clearly visible alongside two grey transformers. However, the occupied angle of the view would only be 30 degrees.	Approx 180 degrees of the view would be occupied by the development. Due to the underlying flat topography, the solar panels would form the proximity skyline. The existing trees along the field boundary, at a distance of approximately 260 m, would appear above the intervening solar panels, providing a scale reference.	Approx 180 degrees of the view would be occupied by the development. The existing landscape elements, such as underlying landform, trees/woodland, remain visible in their entirety, providing scale reference.	Approx 90 degrees of the view would be occupied by the development. The existing landscape elements, such as, trees, hedgerows remain visible almost in their entirety, providing scale reference.	Approx 180 degrees of the view would be occupied by the development.
The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture	The panels would appear on the landform, which forms a focal point of the view.	The underlying landform is a large-scale agricultural field. In views to the west, the distant forested landform would form the skyline above the solar panels.	The underlying landform is a large-scale agricultural field. The view is over the site due to the ground falling to the northwest, towards the Lower Road. The distant vegetated landform forms the skyline, appearing above the solar panels. Thus, the skyline of the view would remain unchanged.	The distant landform with a woodland block on top of it forms the skyline above the solar panels, visible across the panorama. The foreground vegetation related to the field boundaries retains its prominence.	Solar panels would form the immediate skyline.
The nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses	Within a short section crossing the field	Within a short section along the field boundary	Within a short section crossing the field	Within a short section crossing the field	Within a short section next to the road

Magnitude of impact factor	Viewpoint 27 – View looking north from footpath 238/5/20, near City Farm	Viewpoint 32 - View looking northwest from footpath 124/5/10, near Begbroke	Viewpoint 38 View looking west from footpath 152/6/10 near Purwell Farm	Viewpoint 40 - View looking northwest from footpath 152/6/10, near Cassington	Viewpoint 41 - View looking west from Yarnton Road, Cassington
Geographical extent					
The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor	Narrow angle within a wide-scale landscape	Both sides of the view for users of the footpath	Both sides of the view for users of the footpath	One side of the view from the footpath.	Oblique, transient view for users of the road
The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development	187m	Next to the site boundary	Within the site boundary	148 m from the site boundary	10 m from the site boundary
The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible	Main visibility of solar panels on a slope at a distance of 500m	Panels would be seen from the proximity across the field up to 260m away	Panels would be seen from the proximity across the fields, up to a distance of approximately 1.6km.	Panels would be seen from the proximity across the field up to 150m away and on a slope at a distance of 430m	The development would replace the view of open fields.
Duration and Reversibility					
Duration of effects during construction	Short term temporary	Short term temporary	Short term temporary	Short term temporary	Short term temporary
Duration of effects during operation Y1 up to Y15	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary
Residual effects at Year 15 with established mitigation planting	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term
Reversibility of effects	Fully reversible	Fully reversible	Fully reversible	Fully reversible	Fully reversible
Magnitude of impact assessed					
Level of effects during construction (temporary, short-term adverse effects)	**Low** magnitude **Minor**, not significant effect	**Low** magnitude Minor, not significant effect	Low to Medium magnitude **Minor to Moderate**, not significant effect Works would not be carried out concurrently across all visible fields.	Low magnitude Minor, not significant effect	**Medium** magnitude **Minor to moderate,** not significant effect Works would not be carried out concurrently across all visible fields.

Magnitude of impact factor	Viewpoint 27 – View looking north from footpath 238/5/20, near City Farm	Viewpoint 32 - View looking northwest from footpath 124/5/10, near Begbroke	Viewpoint 38 View looking west from footpath 152/6/10 near Purwell Farm	Viewpoint 40 - View looking northwest from footpath 152/6/10, near Cassington	Viewpoint 41 - View looking west from Yarnton Road, Cassington
Level of effects during operation Y1 up to Y15,	**Low** magnitude **Minor**, not significant effect Mainly due to the distance from the viewpoint and the skyline would not change.	**High** magnitude **Major,** significant effect Magnitude is increased as the development would be visible across the large field at a short distance.	**Medium-high** magnitude **Moderate/ Major** significant effect Magnitude is increased as the development would be visible across the fields up to 1.6 km away.	Low magnitude Minor, not significant effects Mainly due to the development being set back from the viewpoint and the skyline would not change.	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate,** significant effect Due to the transient oblique view from the road
Level of effects at Year 15 with established mitigation planting.	**Low** magnitude **Minor** adverse, not significant effect The panels would not change the skyline.	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate,** significant effect Due to the loss of the open aspect of the view.	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate** not significant effect. The main focus of the view, formed by the distant landform, would be retained.	**Negligible** magnitude **Minor** not significant effect The panels would not change the skyline.	**Low** magnitude **Minor** not significant effect Due to the road already being lined by a hedgerow

Table 1.3: Review of Magnitude of Impact of Representative Viewpoints 48, 49, 50, 51 and 53

Magnitude of impact factor	Viewpoint 48: View looking south from footpath 184/15/30, Oxford Green Belt Way	Viewpoint 49: View looking southwest from footpath 184/22/20	Viewpoint 50: View looking southeast from footpath 184/50/20, Oxford Green Belt Way adjacent Farmoor Reservoir	Viewpoint 51: View looking northeast from footpath 184/29/10 near Upper Whitley Farm	Viewpoint 53: View looking north from footpath 184/15/30, Oxford Green Belt Way
Sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity	High sensitivity
Size and scale					
The scale of the change in the view with respect to the loss or addition of features in the view and changes in its composition, including the proportion of the view	Approx 90 degrees of the view would be occupied by the development. The existing hedgerow blocks the view of the proposed solar panels, which would be	Approx 90 degrees of the view would be occupied by the development. The panels would be set back approximately 70 m from the viewpoint and therefore	The proposed substation would be located on a lower slope of the landform, to the northwest of Cumnor. The landform with woodland copses forms the skyline in	The proposed substation, approximately 560m to the north, would be screened by intervening vegetation. The solar panels would be screened by intervening	The elevated viewpoint offers wide, long-distance views across the Farmoor Reservoir and beyond. Wytham Hill forms the skyline at 2.3 km to the

Magnitude of impact factor	Viewpoint 48: View looking south from footpath 184/15/30, Oxford Green Belt Way	Viewpoint 49: View looking southwest from footpath 184/22/20	Viewpoint 50: View looking southeast from footpath 184/50/20, Oxford Green Belt Way adjacent Farmoor Reservoir	Viewpoint 51: View looking northeast from footpath 184/29/10 near Upper Whitley Farm	Viewpoint 53: View looking north from footpath 184/15/30, Oxford Green Belt Way
occupied by the proposed development	placed in the field on the other side of the hedgerow.	would not affect the immediate skyline.	the view. Existing electricity pylons are the most dominant features, penetrating the skyline.	woodland and other vegetation. Even the closest panels, approx. 73m to the north and northeast, would be screened by the intervening vegetation.	north. Within this large scale landscape the proposed solar panels would cover lower fields in the middle ground of the view. The panels surround the existing electricity pylons. The upper part of the proposed substation would be discernible above the intervening hedgerow in winter views.
The degree of contrast or integration of any new features or changes in the landscape with the existing or remaining landscape elements and characteristics in terms of form, scale and mass, line, height, colour and texture	The ground rises southwards, where the woodland block forms the skyline, and which would remain dominant above the proposed development. Additionally, the foreground vegetation related to the field boundaries retains its prominence.	The ground rises southwards towards Cumnor. The Denman's Copse, alongside the other woodland blocks, forms the skyline and would remain dominant above the proposed development. The transmission line crosses the middle ground of the view. The high pylons dominate the skyline above the distant landform.	The existing vegetation would soften the appearance of the proposed substation and break up its bulk. The building would be almost on a level with the existing landform, which forms the skyline.	The distant landform of Wytham Hill and associated woodland form the skyline at a distance of 3.3 km to the north. The closest electricity pylon at 420m is a prominent feature above the skyline. The foreground vegetation related to the field boundaries retains its prominence.	The eye is drawn over and above the proposed development towards the Farmoor Reservoir and beyond
The nature of the view of the proposed development, in terms of the relative amount of time over which it will be experienced and whether views will be full, partial or glimpses	Within a short section along the field boundary	Within a short section along the field boundary	Within a short section crossing the field	Within a short section crossing the field	Within a short section crossing the field

Magnitude of impact factor	Viewpoint 48: View looking south from footpath 184/15/30, Oxford Green Belt Way	Viewpoint 49: View looking southwest from footpath 184/22/20	Viewpoint 50: View looking southeast from footpath 184/50/20, Oxford Green Belt Way adjacent Farmoor Reservoir	Viewpoint 51: View looking northeast from footpath 184/29/10 near Upper Whitley Farm	Viewpoint 53: View looking north from footpath 184/15/30, Oxford Green Belt Way
Geographical extent					
The angle of view in relation to the main activity of the receptor	One side of the view from the footpath	One side of the view from the footpath	One side of the view from the footpath	No visibility expected.	One side of the view from the footpath
The distance of the viewpoint from the proposed development	Within the site boundary	Within the site boundary	Approx 130 m from the proposed substation	730 m from the solar panels	160 m from the solar panels and 900 m from the substation
The extent of the area over which the changes would be visible	The development would replace the present view of open fields.	The development would be broken up by the buffer zone of the OHL and existing vegetation. Panels on the slope would be discernible at a distance of 450 m.	Although the field of view occupied by the proposed substation would be no more than 20 degrees, it would extend the existing electricity infrastructure in the area.	No visibility expected.	The low-lying development would be a subsidiary element in this view.
Duration and Reversibility					
Duration of effects during construction	Short term temporary	Short term temporary	Short term temporary	Short term temporary	Short term temporary
Duration of effects during operation Y1 up to Y15	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary	Long-term temporary
Residual effects at Year 15 with established mitigation planting	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term	Long-term
Reversibility of effects	Fully reversible	Fully reversible	Fully reversible	Fully reversible	Fully reversible
Magnitude of impact assessed					
Level of effects during construction (temporary, short-term adverse effects)	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate,** significant effect	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate,** not significant effect	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate,** significant effect	Negligible magnitude Negligible, not significant effect	**Medium** magnitude **Minor to moderate,** not significant effect

Magnitude of impact factor	Viewpoint 48: View looking south from footpath 184/15/30, Oxford Green Belt Way	Viewpoint 49: View looking southwest from footpath 184/22/20	Viewpoint 50: View looking southeast from footpath 184/50/20, Oxford Green Belt Way adjacent Farmoor Reservoir	Viewpoint 51: View looking northeast from footpath 184/29/10 near Upper Whitley Farm	Viewpoint 53: View looking north from footpath 184/15/30, Oxford Green Belt Way
	Considered significant as the works would affect the immediate skyline. Works would not be carried out concurrently across all visible fields.		Considered significant as the works and large machinery would be seen in the proximity.	The magnitude was reduced due to the review of the viewpoint location against the master plan. Due to the intervening distance and vegetation, the proposed development would be well screened.	Works would not be carried out concurrently across all visible fields.
Level of effects during operation Y1 up to Y15,	**High** magnitude **Major** significant effect Magnitude increased due to the view becoming enclosed by solar panels, which form the proximity skyline	**Medium** magnitude **Moderate** not significant effect. The main focus of the view, formed by the distant landform, would be retained. Pylons will remain dominant features.	**High** magnitude **Major** significant effect Mainly due to the bulk of the development at a short distance. The field of view occupied by the development would be small.	Negligible magnitude Negligible, not significant effect In addition, new planting/ areas for enhancement are proposed 90 m from the viewpoint	**Low** magnitude **Moderate,** not significant effect Mainly due to the vast scale of the landscape within which the proposed development would appear as a subsidiary element.
Level of effects at Year 15 with established mitigation planting.	**Medium-high** magnitude **Moderate/major** significant effect Magnitude reduced due to the growth of the existing vegetation	**Low** magnitude **Minor** not significant effect	**Medium-high** magnitude **Major/moderate** significant effect. Magnitude reduced due to the growth of the existing vegetation	Negligible magnitude Negligible, not significant effect	**Low-negligible** magnitude **Minor** not significant effect As summer vegetation and a low crop in the intervening field could screen the proposed development

1.5 References

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