



Botley West Solar Farm

DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND –
Historic England

EN01047/APP/11.7/4

22 July~~04 June~~ 2025

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Statement of Common
Ground - Historic
England
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Approval for issue

Jon Alsop

~~4 June 2025~~ 22 July 2025

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Prepared by:

RPS
101 Park Drive,
Milton Park, Abingdon,
Oxfordshire, OX14 4RY
United Kingdom

Prepared for:

Photovolt Development Partners GmbH,
on behalf of SolarFive Ltd.

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Appendices

Appendix A Record of Relevant Correspondence

SIGNATURES

This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared and agreed by SolarFive Ltd and Historic England.

HISTORIC ENGLAND

[Signature]

[Name]

[Title]

[Organisation]

[Date]

PDVP on behalf of SolarFive

[Signature]

[Name]

[Title]

[Organisation]

[Date]

1 Introduction

1.1 DCO Reference

1.1.1 EN010147/APP/11.7/4

1.2 Date of Examination

1.2.1 May 2025 - November 2025

1.3 Proposed Development

1.3.1 The Applicant is seeking development consent for Botley West Solar Farm (the 'Project'), which in summary will comprise the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a photovoltaic ('PV') solar farm and associated infrastructure with a total capacity exceeding 50 megawatts ('MW'), in parts of ~~w~~West Oxfordshire, Cherwell and Vale of White Horse districts. The Project will export electricity for connection to the National Grid at Botley West.

1.3.2 The Project is classed as a 'nationally significant infrastructure project' ('NSIP') for the purposes of the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) and requires an application for a DCO. The application for development consent is being submitted to the planning inspectorate ('PINS'), with the decision on whether to grant a DCO to be made by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (the 'Secretary of State'), as required under the PA 2008.

1.3.3 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to support the DCO application made to the Secretary of State under section 37 of the PA 2008 for the proposed Project. The Application has been submitted by SolarFive Ltd (the Applicant).

1.3.4 A Location Plan can be found in the Examination Library at **[AS-024]** and a full description of the Project can be found at ES Chapter 6 - Project Description **[APP-043]**.

1.4 Statement Overview

1.4.1 This Statement of Common Ground ('SoCG') is a working draft document. It comprises a record of discussions and where required, consultation ~~held~~ with the relevant SoCG organisation to date as appropriate, and is designed to evolve and represent the ongoing nature of these discussions throughout the Examination period.

1.4.2 This SoCG has been prepared between (1) the Applicant and (2) Historic England (jointly referred to as the Parties).

1.4.3 Historic England is more formally known as the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England. They are the government's statutory adviser on all matters relating to the historic environment, including world heritage. It is their duty under the provisions of the National Heritage Act 1983 (as amended) to secure the preservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Historic England also has a role in advising Government in relation to World Heritage Sites and implementation of the 1972 UNESCO

Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (the 1972 Convention).

1.4.21.4.4 An overarching Statement of Commonality [EN010147/APP/11.6] has been submitted alongside this document and should be referred to in conjunction with this SoCG.

1.4.5 The Examining Authority has requested that the SoCGs include the following matters as set out in the Rule 6 letter [PD-006] as relevant:

- Methodology for environmental assessments:
- Data collection methods:
- Baseline data:
- Data/statistical analysis, approach to modelling and presentation of results:
- Expert judgements, assumptions and worst case scenario:
- Assessment of alternatives:
- Design development:
- Identification and sensitivity of relevant features and receptors:
- Construction and operational effects:
- Embedded and additional mitigation:
- Cumulative effects and mitigation; and
- Relevant wording in the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO).

1.4.6 This was an indicative list of the suggested contents of SoCGs. This SoCG will pick up those matters that have been the subject of discussion between the Parties and are as recorded below.

1.4.3 For the avoidance of doubt, this refers to the historic environment topic and those aspects which Historic England has focused on in its submission. These are the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site, the Blenheim Palace Registered Park and Garden, the Sansom's Platt scheduled monument and the churches of St Peter and St Paul at Church Hanborough, St Peter at Cassington and St Michael at Begbroke. For all other aspects covered in the historic environment topic, Historic England would refer to the submissions made by the Local Planning Authorities. ~~SoCG comprises contributions from the following environmental topic disciplines:~~

1.4.41.4.7 ~~Historic Environment~~

1.4.51.4.8 This statement addresses the following areas of common ground in relation to the Applicant Project Team's engagement with Historic England to date:

- a. Relevant submission documents and plans
- b. Record of relevant correspondence to date
- c. Matters that are agreed
- d. Matters yet to be agreed
- e. Matters that are not agreed

1.5 Historic England

1.5.1 [Historic England to insert text setting out their status and remit]

2 Relevant Submissions Documents and Plans

2.1.1 A list of DCO documents and plans of relevance ~~in discussions to engagement~~ with Historic England is identified in the table below for ease of reference. ~~Additional documents will need to be added as the examination proceeds.~~

Table 2.1: Draft DCO submission documents and plans record pursuant to Historic England discussions – Historic Environment

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/6.2	ES Non-Technical Summary	APP-037	November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.3	ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Historic Environment	CR1-003	Rev 1/March 2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1: Historic environment desk-based assessment	APP-131	November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.2: Assessment of airborne remote sensing and satellite imagery for archaeology	APP-132	November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.3: Geophysical survey report, Parts 1-8	APP-133 – APP-140	November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4: Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site – Heritage Impact Assessment	APP-141	November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment	APP-142 REP2-014	Rev 1/July 2025 November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Figures 2.1a – 2.4c – Illustrative Masterplan	AS-020	Rev 1/March 2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Figures 8.248 - 8.371 - Photomontages (Winter and Summer)	APP-072 – APP-080	November 2024
<u>EN10147/APP/7.6.5</u>	<u>Outline Written Scheme of Investigation</u>	<u>REP2-021</u>	<u>Rev 2/July 2025</u>
<u>EN10147/APP/12.7</u>	<u>Additional Photomontages for Historic Environment Assessment</u>	<u>REP2-030 – REP2-033</u>	<u>July 2025</u>

3 Record of Relevant Correspondence

3.1.1 The Project has been the subject of pre-application engagement with Historic England ~~and both parties continue to engage throughout and beyond the up to the~~ submission of the DCO application for the Project.

3.1.2 **Appendix A** identifies the ~~discussions and~~ correspondence and engagement ~~that has taken place that have taken place~~ between the Applicant's project team and Historic England ~~to date~~.

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4 Matters That Are Agreed

Table 4.1: Record of Matters of Specific Agreement to Date – Historic Environment

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Historic England Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
4.1.1					

5 Matters Yet to be Agreed

Table 5.1: Record of Matters yet to be Agreed to Date – Historic Environment

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Historic England Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
5.1.1	ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Historic environment [CR1-003]	The scope of the assessment.		The scope of ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Historic environment [CR1-003] has been developed with reference to comments received following submission of the Scoping Report and the PEIR, and is acceptable.	Under discussion
5.1.2	ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Historic environment [CR1-003] and ES Appendix 7.1: Historic environment desk-based assessment [APP-131]	Technical guidance.		The suite of technical guidance adhered to is acceptable.	Under discussion
5.1.3	ES Appendix 7.1: Historic environment desk-based assessment [APP-131] and ES Appendix 7.2: Assessment of airborne remote sensing and satellite imagery for archaeology [APP-132]	Baseline data collection.		The desk-based methodology for the establishment of the historic environment baseline is acceptable.	Under discussion
5.1.4	ES Appendix 7.3: Geophysical Survey Report [APP-133 – APP-140]	Geophysical surveys.		The application of the geophysical surveys within the Project Site is acceptable.	Under discussion
5.1.5	ES Appendix 7.1: Historic environment desk-based	Designated heritage assets.		The identification of designated heritage assets within the defined study area is acceptable.	Under discussion

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Historic England Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
	assessment [APP-131]				
5.1.6	ES Chapter 7: Historic environment [CR1-003]	Assessment methodology.		The methodology used for the assessment of likely impacts and effects is acceptable.	Under discussion
5.1.7	ES Chapter 7: Historic environment [CR1-003]	Cumulative effects assessment.		The methodology used for the Cumulative Effects Assessment.	Under discussion
5.1.8	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment, Rev 1 [REP2-014]	Impacts and effects on designated heritage assets.		The classification of the likely magnitude of impacts on designated heritage assets is acceptable, other than in respect of the specific assets identified below.	Under discussion
5.1.9	ES Chapter 7: Historic environment [CR1-003]	The level of harm to the significance of designated heritage assets.		All harm to the significance of designated heritage assets is less than substantial, therefore the correct policy test is the one set out in paragraph 5.9.32 of NPS EN-1.	Under discussion
5.1.10	Draft DCO	Discharge of Requirements.		CDC/VWHDC/WODC should be the Relevant Authorities for the discharging of Requirements, as set out in the draft DCO.	Under discussion
5.1.11	Additional Photomontages for Historic Environment Assessment [REP2-030 – REP2-033]	The visibility of the proposed development from within the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site.		No part of the Project would be visible from any location within the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site.	Under discussion
5.1.12	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment, Rev 1 [REP2-014]	The likely magnitude of impact (of the Project) on the significance of the Grade I Registered Park and Garden at Blenheim Palace.	Historic England consider that the likely magnitude of impact is greater than negligible, with the consequent harm to the significance of the Registered Park and Garden being less than substantial and 'modest in degree'	The Applicant has assessed the likely magnitude of impact as negligible adverse, leading to a long-term, reversible minor adverse effect.	Under Discussion
5.1.13	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment, Rev 1 [REP2-014]	The likely magnitude of impact (of the Project) on the significance of the Scheduled Monument at Sansom's Platt.	Historic England consider that the likely magnitude of impact is greater than negligible, with the consequent harm to the significance of the Grade I listed church being less than substantial and 'modest in degree'.	The Applicant has assessed the likely magnitude of impact as negligible adverse, leading to a long-term, reversible minor adverse effect.	Under Discussion

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Historic England Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
5.1.14	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment, Rev 1 [REP2-014]	The likely magnitude of impact (of the Project) on the significance of the Grade I listed Church of St Peter and St Paul at Church Hanborough.	Historic England consider that the likely magnitude of impact is greater than negligible, with the consequent harm to the significance of the Grade I listed church being less than substantial and 'modest in degree'.	The Applicant has assessed the likely magnitude of impact as negligible adverse, leading to a long-term, reversible minor adverse effect.	Under Discussion
5.1.15	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment, Rev 1 [REP2-014]	The likely magnitude of impact (of the Project) on the significance of the Grade I listed Church of St Peter at Cassington.	Historic England consider that the likely magnitude of impact is greater than negligible, with the consequent harm to the significance of the Grade I listed church being less than substantial and 'modest in degree'.	The Applicant has assessed the likely magnitude of impact as negligible adverse, leading to a long-term, reversible minor adverse effect.	Under Discussion
5.1.16	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment, Rev 1 [REP2-014]	The likely magnitude of impact (of the Project) on the significance of the Grade II* listed Church of St Michael at Begbroke.	Historic England consider that the likely magnitude of impact is greater than negligible, with the consequent harm to the significance of the Grade II* listed church being less than substantial and 'modest in degree'.	The Applicant has assessed the likely magnitude of impact as negligible adverse, leading to a long-term, reversible minor adverse effect.	Under Discussion

6 Matters That Are Not Agreed

Table 6.1: Record of Matters that are Not Agreed – Historic Environment

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Historic England Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status

Appendix A

Record of Relevant Correspondence and Engagement

Date	Record of Relevant Correspondence and Engagement	Topics Discussed
<u>December 2022</u>	<u>Letter from Historic England in response to request for pre- applicant advice</u>	<u>Various</u>
<u>July 2023</u>	<u>Historic England input into Scoping Opinion</u>	<u>Various</u>
<u>January 2024</u>	<u>Meeting</u>	<u>The content and format of the Preliminary Heritage Impact Assessment</u>
<u>February 2024</u>	<u>Historic England response to PEIR</u>	<u>Various</u>
<u>July 2024</u>	<u>Meeting</u>	<u>The content and format of the updated Heritage Impact Assessment.</u>
<u>August 2024</u>	<u>Letter from Historic England</u>	<u>Further advice regarding the content and format of the updated Heritage Impact Assessment</u>
<u>September 2024</u>	<u>E-mail correspondence</u>	<u>Agreement of viewpoints for additional visualisations to assist the assessment of likely impacts and effects on heritage assets.</u>
<u>November 2024</u>	<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Visit to the Blenheim Palace WHS and the Project Site by the Historic England Advisory Committee (HEAC).</u>
<u>13 December 2024</u>	<u>Planning Inspectorate letter accepting examination</u>	<u>n/a</u>