

Botley West Solar Farm

Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA)

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1 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA)

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document provides a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) of the Environmental Statement prepared for the development of Botley West Solar Farm (referred to hereafter as 'the Project').
- 1.1.2 This assessment identifies potential effects attributed to the Proposed Development on residential visual amenity through the completion of **Steps 1** to **3** of the Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA). The assessment aims to identify properties with the greatest magnitude of change, to determine whether any properties require further assessment and are to be taken forward to **Step 4** of the RVAA.
- 1.1.3 The methodology section below provides further details of the RVAA process.

1.2 Background

- 1.2.1 The purpose of the Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) is to identify potential effects of the Development on residential visual amenity of such nature and / or magnitude that it potentially affects "living conditions" or residential visual amenity. This is referred as the residential visual amenity threshold. RVAA requires assessors to reach a conclusion on whether the effect of the development on visual amenity and / or views from the property reaches the threshold.
- 1.2.2 Residential amenity is a planning matter that involves a wide number of effects (such as noise) and benefits, of which residential visual amenity is just one component. The RVAA is limited to the consideration of visual effects on residential amenity and the methodology accords with the advice in GLVIA3 and the Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 02/19: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment.
- 1.2.3 Planning law contains a widely understood principle that the outlook or view from a private property is a private interest and not therefore protected by the UK planning system. However, the planning system also recognises situations where the effects on residential visual amenity are considered as a matter of public interest. This matter has been examined at a number of public inquiries in Wales (as well as in Scotland and England) where the key determining issue was not the identification of significant effects on views, but whether the proposed turbines would have an overbearing effect and/or result in unsatisfactory living conditions, leading to a property being regarded, objectively, as an unattractive (as opposed to a less attractive) place in which to live.
- 1.2.4 "The planning system is designed to protect the public rather than private interests, but both interests may coincide where, for example, visual intrusion is of such magnitude as to render a property an unattractive place in which to live. This is because it is not in the public interest to create such living conditions where they did not exist before. Thus I do not consider that simply





being able to see a turbine or turbines from a particular window or part of the garden of a house is sufficient reason to find the visual impact unacceptable (even though a particular occupier might find it objectionable)." (TGN 2/19 paragraph A1.14).

1.2.5 The RVAA consequently provides a detailed assessment of the most affected residential properties by the Project. This allows the assessor and the determining authority to make a judgement as to whether the residents at these properties and communities would be likely to sustain unsatisfactory living conditions which it would not be in the public interest to create. Reviews of decisions demonstrate that significant visual effects or changes to the views available from residential properties and their curtilage are not the decisive consideration, rather it is the residential amenity and, with regard to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), visual amenity that is determinate. In any event RVAA can be considered supplementary to LVIA following on from, and informed by, the latter's findings and conclusions. It is, however, important to note that the assessment of residential visual amenity is separate and distinct from the LVIA. RVAA focuses on private visual amenity at individual properties whilst LVIA focusses on public amenity and views. TGN2/19 makes it clear that 'combined effects on a number of residents', by means of 'aggregating properties within a settlement' is a matter of LVIA and not of RVAA.

Preliminary appraisal of buffers

- 1.2.6 During the evolution of the design and layout of the Project, the Applicant (initially comprising Mr C Lecointe and Ms Jane Betts (CMLI)), using their combined planning and landscape experience of over 70 years) decided that it would be necessary to include buffer zones between residential properties and the solar arrays. They took this view in order to protect amenity from a planning perspective and from a visual amenity perspective.
- 1.2.7 There is no 'rule' as to what such a buffer should be; instead, it is ultimately a matter for professional judgement. They applied this judgement.
- 1.2.8 That initial judgement eventually settled on a distance of a minimum of 25m from the curtilage of residential properties. They took the view that if a property had a view of the arrays, that distance was a good starting point to mitigate any unacceptable adverse effects.
- 1.2.9 As a default, therefore that buffer distance was adopted by the Project.
- 1.2.10 Importantly that 'starting point' continued to be tested and refined, mostly through the addition of additional planting within the buffer, in order to avoid or offset what might be judged to be unacceptable landscape and visual effects.
- 1.2.11 During this process it was decided the increase the buffer distance around Purwell Farm, to remove panel of the slopes to the west of that property, and to introduce woodland planting and hedgerows, which combined, achieved the protection of the amenity of that property. The landscaping solution incorporated in this area was also designed to avoid or minimise views across the Evenlode valley in this general area.





1.2.12 As evidence of this approach, the enclosed document produced by PVDP, set out a record of how such buffers would look like of some potentially affected properties (see Appendix B).

1.3 Assessment Methodology

- 1.3.1 The RVAA is based on the process of four 'steps' as set up in the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note 2/19 as follows:
 - Step One: Definition of study area and scope of the assessment informed by the description of the proposed development, defining the
 study area extent and scope of the assessment with respect to the
 properties to be included.
 - Step Two: Evaluation of baseline visual amenity at properties to be included having regard to the landscape and visual context and the development proposed.
 - <u>Step Three: Assessment of likely change</u> to visual amenity of included properties in accordance with GLVIA3 set of principles.
 - <u>Step Four: Further assessment of predicted change</u> to visual amenity of properties to be included forming a judgement with respect to the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold.
- 1.3.2 This is the process by which informed professional judgement is engaged to reach a conclusion regarding the residential visual amenity threshold (RVAT).
- 1.3.3 The following section sets out the methodology and the factors considered in more detail.

Step One: Definition of study area and scope of assessment

- 1.3.4 Step One of the assessment comprised a desk study of address data, OS mapping, aerial imagery utilising Google Earth Pro and the production of a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs) to identify residential properties which are inside the viewshed (ZTV) within the 1 km study area.
- 1.3.5 Figure 1.1 to 1.66: 'Residential Properties and Zone of Theoretical Visibility' shows a total of 330 residential properties on the ZTV overlay within a 50 to 250m buffer of built elements of the Project.

Step Two: Evaluation of baseline visual amenity at properties

- 1.3.6 Step 2 involved evaluation of the baseline visual conditions at the properties within the ZTV.
- 1.3.7 In considering baseline visual amenity, the following were examined:
 - The nature and extent of the available existing views (including main/principal and secondary/ peripheral views) from the property and its garden/ domestic curtilage, including the proximity and relationship of the property to surrounding landform, landcover and visual foci; and
 - Views experienced when approaching or departing from the property via its driveway and/or access roads, if applicable.





- 1.3.8 OS maps, aerial imagery and Google Streetview and field survey were used to record information such as:
 - The location of the residential elements of each property,
 - The type of the property and its use (detached, semidetached, terraced property, single or two storey etc, plus details of grounds and any outbuildings);
 - Layout and orientation of the gardens and property curtilage;
 - Access location, and likely views from private or shared driveways or access tracks; and
 - Potential screening provided by local variations in topography, the built environment and vegetation/tree cover within the surrounding landscape.

Step Three: Assessment of likely change to visual amenity of included properties in accordance with GLVIA3 set of principles

- 1.3.9 Step Three assesses the magnitude and significance of likely visual effect at the included properties and identifies any properties requiring further assessment to identify the likelihood of these effects to approach the RVAA threshold.
- 1.3.10 A judgement on the magnitude of visual change which would be experienced has been made with reference to the following factors:
 - Distance of property from the proposed development and the visibility of development in views from the property;
 - The elevation of the property relative to the proposed development and angle of view, proportion of the view occupied by the Project;
 - The extent of development visible, and its position within views from the property e.g. whether in key views from the property, secondary views, gardens and/ or private drives and whether subject to any screening or filtering;
 - The viewing experiences in different directions: the availability of other views from the property, including those that would not be affected by the Project.
- 1.3.11 The magnitude of visual impact (change) is set out in table 1 below and is derived from the LVIA methodology as set out in ES Chapter 8 (table 8.9).

Table 1: Magnitude of Impact upon Views and Visual Amenity

Magnitude of impact	Visual change description
High	Complete or very substantial change in view(s) – the Project appears as a dominant or focal element in prime views from the property occupying a considerably wide angle, in close-proximity view(s), resulting in a substantial change to prime views from the property's amenity area(s).
Medium	Moderate change in view(s) – The Project appears as a noticeable or even prominent feature, occupying a moderate angle of the





Magnitude of impact	Visual change description available view. The Project would not substantially alter the prime
	views from the property.
Low	Minor change in baseline view(s) — The project is distinguishable or occupying a small angle of available view(s) or visible to some extent, not in prime views, overall resulting in a small change.
Negligible	Very slight change in baseline view(s) – the Project is slightly distinguishable from the surroundings or appears as a distant and subsidiary element.
No change	No visibility of the Project from the property and its surrounding curtilage, amenity and utility areas.

Step Four: Assessment of predicted change to visual amenity of properties to be included forming a judgement with respect to the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold.

- 1.3.12 The Step Four Assessment considers the likelihood of whether significant effects identified in the assessment would be 'overbearing' or 'overwhelming' and whether, in terms of the wider public interest, the visual effects would result in unsatisfactory living conditions, leading to properties being regarded, objectively, as an unattractive (as opposed to a less attractive) place in which to live.
- 1.3.13 A property experiencing significant visual effects will not necessarily experience effects on residential visual amenity which are judged to breach the residential visual amenity threshold. For the purposes of this assessment such impacts are considered to occur when solar panels are present in such number, size and proximity that they represent an unpleasantly overwhelming and unavoidable presence in main views from a house or garden.
- 1.3.14 For example, the development would form a dominant element in close proximity to the majority of key locations, thereby representing a pervasive impact on the quality and character of views out from the property/ group of properties, and on the visual amenity of the /properties as a whole. Such impacts could be considered to be **oppressive**, **overbearing or overwhelming**.
- 1.3.15 The Residential Visual Amenity Threshold is judged by considering whether the development, for example:
 - blocks the only available view from a property; or
 - is overwhelming views in all directions; or
 - is unpleasantly encroaching/ overly intrusive; or
 - is inescapably dominant from the property
- 1.3.16 Very Large impacts may also occur where the proposed development would cause encirclement or the completion of the encirclement of a property or group of properties by similarly visually dominant developments, thereby making cumulative effects truly pervasive oppressive, overly intrusive or overbearing.





- 1.3.17 For this assessment the most significantly affected properties were visited in order to identify and describe in detail the extent of external and internal areas of the property affected by views of the development.
- 1.3.18 Specific terms used to describe the impact of the Development on the visual amenity of a property are listed below and a definition provided:
 - **Overbearing**: Tending to overwhelm. Of such scale and dominance relative to the residential environment and views that the development can be said to be represent a significant detractor from views and the character of the environment of the property.
 - **Overwhelming**: Impacts are of such scale and dominance relative to the residential environment and that the development can be said to be 'overpowering and' or oppressive'. Such effects are pervasive and largely unavoidable in main views and main/ principal locations in the property.
 - **Oppressive**: Effects may be considered intolerable or of such an extent that they result in a sense of ill-ease and discomfort.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

- 1.3.19 Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) studies (refer to Figures 1.1 to 1.66) have been produced and used as a tool to inform the professional judgements made in this assessment.
- 1.3.20 The ZTV studies has been modelled on the maximum development parameters available. Viewshed analysis was run in ArcGIS Pro for the main substation, secondary substations, PCS and panels separately. The viewer was modelled at a height of 2m. Structures are modelled at heights of 2.3m for solar panels, 11m for main substation, 6m for secondary substations, and 3.5m for PCS.
- 1.3.21 In order to provide a more realistic indication of the potential visibility, in contrast to a bare ground ZTV which would only take into account landform only, more precise data was acquired and processed.
- 1.3.22 The ZTV was run using the ArcGIS Pro Viewshed tool. This takes a Digital Surface Model (DSM) as input and identifies where a set of origin points representing built structures will be visible. The DSM divides the study area into grid cells and assigns an elevation to each grid cell. The elevation represents a measurement of the elevation of ground or land cover, such as vegetation and buildings.
- 1.3.23 A DSM is constructed from available data to model land cover at an appropriate level of detail for the assessment being undertaken. Data was available from the Environment Agency (EA) National Lidar Programme (NLP). The EA NLP data was sourced as a 1m first return model which gives an optimal approximation of vegetation.
- 1.3.24 A limitation of the LIDAR DSM models is that power lines appear in the model which would show as obstructing views in the ZTV. Where this was the case, the model was replaced with the EA DSM model to correct this issue rather than using first return.





- 1.3.25 A limitation of viewshed analysis on surface models is that the output will include visibility from rooftops or the canopy of vegetation. To filter out this effect visibility from those locations was masked out. A dataset was developed using lidar to identify land cover taller than 50cm. This was validated and some artifacts removed where vegetation was incorrectly detected. This dataset was then used to remove those areas of vegetation and buildings from the ZTV.
- 1.3.26 The effects of earth curvature and light refraction are considered. ZTV calculation does not use mathematically approximate methods. ZTV is not calculated beyond 500m from modelled structures.
- 1.3.27 The ZTVs exercise is only meaningful if the limitations of the ZTV production have been considered. The main factor to the magnitude of change/impact, is the effect of distance and the field of view occupied by the Proposed Development, this however cannot be modelled in the ZTV and as a result, the extent of actual visibility experienced on the ground would be considerably less than is suggested by the ZTV pattern.
- 1.3.28 While the produced ZTVs provide a good indication from where visibility of the Proposed Development might be experienced, it should be noted that just a fraction of the modelled structure used in the ZTV generation may give rise to the burst of fragmented, speckled colour pattern indicating visibility. Therefore, the ZTV could at the same time indicate visibility of the whole development or only a fraction of it. Therefore, it should be borne in mind that even such a precise data-based ZTV still represents a theoretical model of the potential visibility of the Proposed Development. As a result, the extent of actual visibility experienced on the ground will be less than suggested by the ZTV study.
- 1.3.29 It should be noted that the produced ZTVs do not take into account the proposed mitigation planting.
- 1.3.30 In addition, the datasheets have been provided in Appendix A, showing the list of properties, based on the address data within a 250 m radius of the development. The table indicates if the property falls within the ZTV and in relation to what type of development i.e. solar panels or substations. The ZTV columns in the table are based on the unmasked ZTV so would show visibility from treetops and roofline.

1.4 RVAA Findings – Steps 1 to 3

- 1.4.1 Based on the field survey verifications, it was concluded that the potential visibility of the Project would primarily be concentrated in the immediate vicinity of the site, from the residential properties.
- 1.4.2 The following main settlements fall outside of the ZTV, as shown in Figures 1.1 to 1.66:
 - Wootton 830m to the west of the northern part of the Site;
 - Woodstock 350 m to the southwest of the solar panels in the northern part of the Site and abutting the cable corridor on its eastern boundary;
 - Begbroke 210m to the east of the centre section of the Site;
 - Yarton 650m to the east of the centre section of the Site:





- Eynsham abutting the cable corridor on its eastern boundary;
- Farmoor abutting the cable corridor on its northeastern boundary;
- Chawley 240m to the east of the southern section of the Site;
- Cumnor 430m to the south of the southern section of the Site;
- 1.4.3 It is judged that for those visual receptors located outside of the ZTV there would be little to no visibility of the Project, and that effects would be **Negligible** at most.
- 1.4.4 The properties which abut with the cable corridor are considered in the assessment of construction effects.
- 1.4.5 The following settlements, or parts of them, fall within the ZTV, as shown in Figures 1.1 to 1.66 and have therefore been considered further in the assessment:
 - Bladon 85m to the southwest of the centre section of the Site at Heath Lane;
 - Cassington 50 m south of the centre section of the Site at Barrow Court;
 - Church Hanborough 110m to the northwest of the centre section of the Site; Due to the distance and intervening vegetation, it is unlikely there would be visibility of the Project.
- 1.4.6 There are several scattered farms/ residential properties around the area, which fall within the ZTV, and as listed in Table 2.

Table 2: Individual Residential receptors

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Receptor	Distance / Description
Upper Dornford Cottage	The house is approximately 55m to the north of the solar panels, at the northernmost part of the Project.
	The property is well contained by existing vegetation, restricting views to the wider landscape. The southern boundary of the property appears lease dense and there are views available to a small part of the Project site.
	Included in the assessment.
Lower Dornford Farm, Lower Dornford Cottage and Dornford Cottage	The houses are approximately 190m to the west of the solar panels within the northern part of the Project Site. Included in the assessment.
	moduce in the assessment.
Dornford Grove	The house is approximately 65m to the west of the solar panels, within the northern section of the Project.
	Property is well contained by existing vegetation with a more open aspect to the north from the rear of the property.
	Included in the assessment.
Old Man Leys Cottage (Mulberry Cottage)	The house is 250m to the east of the solar panels within the northern section of the Project Site.
	Due to the distance and intervening farm buildings, the property is not considered further in the assessment.





Receptor	Distance / Description
Hordley Farm / Hordley Barns and Hordley House	This group of properties are approximately 140 to 150m west and 70 to 130m to the northwest of the solar panels within the norther section of the Project.
	Intervening buildings, among the group, would screen possible views to the Project from many of them. Along with intervening vegetation.
	Due to the distance and intervening farm buildings, the property is not considered further in the assessment.
Hordley Cottages	The Cottages are 35m to the west and 80m to the north of the solar panels within the northern section of the site, next to the B4027. Included in the assessment.
Sansom's Farm and Sansom's Cottage	The house is 170m to the south and 220m to the north east of the solar panels within the northern section of the Project Site, next to the B4027.
	The main aspect of the property is orientated towards the south east. Due to the distance and surrounding vegetation, the property is not considered further in the assessment.
Upper Weaveley Farm	The house is 250m to the northeast of the solar panels within the northern section of the Project Site.
	Due to the distance and surrounding vegetation, the property is not considered further in the assessment.
Old Weaveley Farm	Abutting the cable corridor on its western boundary, 460m to the northeast of the solar panels within the northern section of the Project Site.
	Included in the assessment.
Weaveley Farm	The house is 85m to the east and 65m to the north of the solar panels in the northern section of the Project Site.
	The main orientation of the property is to the west towards agricultural fields, which would be covered by solar panels. Included in the assessment.
Shipton Slade Farm, Shipton Slade Barn, Amhurst Cottage, Reeves Cottage and Guinea	A complex of residential properties within the curtilage of Shipton Slade Farm. Approximately 40m to the southeast of the solar panels, at the nearest point, within the northern section of the Project Site.
Fowl Cottages	The main orientation of Shipton Slade Farm is north and south, with substantial existing vegetation to the north.
	The main orientation of Shipton Slade Barn is east, away from the Project, with intervening built form and vegetation to the west preventing views.
	The main orientation of Guinea Fowl, Amhurst and Reeves Cottages is inwards to internal courtyards. With only rear / side elevations facing the Project Site.
	Not included within assessment due to orientation of primary views, intervening built form and existing vegetation.
Properties next to Upper Campsfield Road	Abutting with the cable corridor, which overlaps with the A4095, which extends between the northern and central sections of the Project Site.
Properties along Wolsey Court, inc. Campsfield Farm Cottages	Properties are approximately 120m from built elements within the central section of the Project Site.





Receptor	Distance / Description
	Campsfield Farm Cottages have side elevation aspects towards the Project, with upper and lower storey windows. The main aspect of other properties within Wolsey Court is internal.
	The ZTV indicates that only a very small fraction of the Project would be visible, seen above the busy Woodstock Road and other intervening vegetation and built form further screening possible views.
	Properties not considered further within the assessment.
Rose Cottage	The house is approximately 80m to the northeast of the solar panels and secondary substation, at its' nearest point.
	The main orientation of the property is southwest.
	The property has a large wall to its front, at the roadside, with only small upper storey widows with views above it. Substantial intervening vegetation and landform would prevent views to the majority of the Project.
	Due to the distance to the main elements of the Project, surrounding vegetation and property boundary, the property is not considered further in the assessment.
Mill Farm	The house is 190m to the north of the solar panels in the centre section of the Project Site.
	Due to the distance and surrounding vegetation, the property is not considered further in the assessment.
City Farm/Bungalow	The house is 260m to the south west of the solar panels in the centre section of the site and 600m to the north west of the Project Substation.
	Due to the distance and surrounding vegetation, the property is not considered further in the assessment.
Heath Lane, Bladon	These properties are located to approximately 95m to the west of the soar panels in the central section of the Project, at the nearest point.
	Approximately four bungalows are located at the far eastern extents of heath lane and houses are located to the west of these – number 63. Oblique views to the east are filtered by tall vegetation.
	Vegetation located to the west of the farm track screens oblique views to the northeast obtained from rear elevations of the bungalows and houses located to the north of Heath Lane.
	Included in the assessment as part of the overall assessment for $\$ settlement of Bladon.
The Studio, Bladon	The property is approximately 400m to the west of the solar panels within the central section of the Project Site.
	Evergreen vegetation located along boundary.
	Oblique views obtained to the northeast from front elevations beyond boundary walls. Vegetation located along the front and side boundary of the Studio largely contains views to the northeast.
	Not included in the assessment.
Village End, Begbroke	Property is approximately 205m to the east of the solar panels in the central section of the Project, at its' nearest point.
	Open views to the west from the front elevation of Village End. Views to the north also from the front elevation of this property are partially screened by the hedgerow to the north of the Public Right of Way. Vegetation located along the rear gardens of three properties located to





Receptor	Distance / Description
	the west of Spring Hill Road filters views to the north from the rear elevations of these properties.
	Due to the distance and surrounding vegetation, the property is not considered further in the assessment.
Burleigh Lodge	This bungalow is approximately 113m to the north of the solar panels within the central section of the Project, at its' nearest point.
	Conservatory and two rear windows – south facing. Mature boundary vegetation largely contains property.
	A mature garden hedge largely screens views to the south from the rear elevation of this bungalow.
	Not included in the assessment.
Burleigh Farm	The house is 45m to the west of the solar panels in the centre section of the Project Site, otherwise surrounded by the Project, although more distantly.
	Vegetation located in the front garden filters views to the east from the front elevation of this property. Barns located to the west of this property screen views to the west from the rear elevation of this property.
	Included in the assessment.
Batimer, Burleigh Road	The bungalow is approximately 46m to the west of the solar panels within the central section of the Project. There only panels to the east of this property at this distance with all other sides of the property free of panels.
	Vegetation located along the boundary to this property and the adjacent hedgerow located to the west of the Burleigh Road filters views from the front elevation of this bungalow. Resulting in only glimpsed views to a very small part of the Project.
	Not included in the assessment.
Eynsham Road, Cassington	This row of properties, located at the southwestern edge of Cassington, are approximately 135m to the southeast of the solar panels at the nearest point.
	Vegetation and outbuildings located to the rear of these properties filters / screen views to the north from rear elevations. Existing vegetation further to the north further filter views.
	Not included in the assessment.
Barrow Court, Cassington	These two storey properties, located at the eastern edge of Cassington, are approximately 65m to the south of the solar panels at the nearest point from the rear of the properties.
	Vegetation located to the rear of the properties filters views to the north from rear elevations. With some more open views available.
	Included in the assessment.
Williams Court, Cassington	These two storey properties, located within the centre of Cassington near to PRoW 152/6/10, are approximately 120m to the southeast of the solar panels, at the nearest point. The main northerly aspect from the rear of these properties is a greater distance from the Project (approximately 245m to the southeast).
	Rear open views obtained to the north and west from rear elevations beyond garden fences.
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Receptor	Distance / Description	
College Farm	The house is 50m to the west of the solar panels in the centre section of the Project Site. It appears that views of the solar panels, 100m to the north and 80m to the south of the house, would be screened by the vegetation which surrounds the property.	
	Included in the assessment.	
Goose Eye Farm	The house is 30m to the south and 70m to the east of the solar panels in the centre section of the Project Site.	
	Included in the assessment.	
Owls Leat/ Willow Cottage	The house is 55m to the south west, 45 m to the east, and 55m to the north of the solar panels in the centre section of the site. Views to the west are screened by roadside vegetation and to the north by farm buildings.	
	Included in the assessment.	
New Barn Cottage	The house is 60m to the south of the solar panels in the centre section of the site at its closest, otherwise surrounded by the Project, although more distantly.	
	Views to the south from the side elevation are filtered by garden trees and a low garden fence and views to the east from the side elevation are screened by a maintained garden hedge and filtered by garden trees.	
	Included in the assessment.	
PurwellFarm	The house is 35m to the north east of the solar panels in the southern section of the Project Site at its closest and 300m from the NGET Substation.	
	Included in the assessment.	
Lake View and Heiderbech, Cumnor	These properties are approximately 240m to the south of the solar panels in the southern section of the Project, at the nearest point.	
	Both properties have some mature trees to the north which would filter views. With limited views to the northeast from Lake View. However, there are largely open elevated views to the north from these properties. Albeit restricted by mature vegetation, particularly Heiderbech.	
	Included in the assessment.	
Jumper's Farm	The house is 60m to the east of the solar panels within the southern part of the Project Site.	
	Property is surrounded by mature vegetation and the Willow Park development to the south. There are glimpsed views to the west to a very small part of the Project Site. With limited or no views to the south, north or east.	
	Due to the large area of intervening vegetation, including trees and hedgerows, the property is not considered further in the assessment.	
Denman's Farm	The house is located 55m to the east of the solar panels in the southern section of the project Site, at its closest, otherwise surrounded by the Project, although more distantly.	
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Construction Phase

Construction Impacts of the Proposed Substations and Solar Panels

- 1.4.7 The residual effects arising as a result of the construction of the proposed Substations and Solar Panels are assessed as being of the same magnitude and not higher on all visual receptors as those arising due to their operation and maintenance, however the residual effects arising as a result of the construction are assessed as being temporary, occurring during the length of the construction phase, and differing in nature from the operational effects mainly due to the influence of the various construction machinery, earthworks, construction compound(s), that will not be present or result in effects during the operational phase.
- 1.4.8 Therefore, the effects attributable to the construction stage of the proposed Substations and Solar Panels are not assessed further.

Construction Impacts of the 275kV Cable Route

Residential receptors

Sensitivity

1.4.9 The sensitivity of visual receptors (people) from/on settlements and recreational routes has been considered as High.

Magnitude of impact

- 1.4.10 The Cable Corridor would occupy a long tract connecting the Project Substations. The construction phase for the Cables includes the installation of temporary fencing, areas of construction compounds (up to 3 compounds, see section above), site clearance (with minimal vegetation removal), access tracks (where required), temporary haul roads, excavation of open cut trenches and stockpiling of soil. The construction phase of the Cable Corridor could take up to 24 months.
- 1.4.11 Due to the nature of the development, the construction activities within the Cable Corridor will only cause disruption during the temporary construction phase. Once operational, the cable will buried underground, the ground surface will be restored and only inspection covers will be visible at the link boxes.
- 1.4.12 Construction activities associated with the Cable Corridor would introduce movement of large machinery (trenchers) which will attract attention to the works, which are otherwise close to ground level, with low-rise activities.
- 1.4.13 Table 3 provides an assessment of the magnitude of change upon the properties within, and next to the application boundary, and takes account of their location in relation to the corridor alignment. The distances of the properties from the indicative alignment are between 30 m and 330 m. However, these are the closest properties to the Cable Corridor, which would likely have potential to experience significant effects during construction. Due





to the low -lying nature of the construction works, the rest of the properties within the Study Area would be less affected.

Table 3: Residential receptors

Table 3.	IV62	idential receptors		
Receptor		Appraisal (main orientation of the property, screening provided by vegetation/ topography)	Magnitude of impact and Significance of effect	
Woodstock		500m abutting with the cable corridor on its eastern boundary. Works along Shipton Road would be screened by roadside vegetation, which would be retained.	Negligible magnitude Negligible effect, not significant, temporary, reversible	
Eynsham		800m abutting with the cable corridor on its eastern boundary. Works along the B4449 would be screened by roadside vegetation, which would be retained.	Negligible magnitude Negligible effect, not significant, temporary, reversible	
Farmoor		630m abutting with the cable corridor on its north eastern boundary. Works along the B4044/ Oxford Road would be visible at a short distance.	High magnitude impact, resulting in Major effect, which is significant, temporary, reversible	
Upper Weaveley Farm		Abutting with the cable corridor on its western boundary. Works along Banbury Road would be visible at a short distance.	High magnitude impact, resulting in Major effect, which is significant, temporary, reversible	
Properties next to Upper Campsfield Road		300m abutting with the cable corridor, which overlaps with the A4095. Overall, the roadside vegetation provides sufficient screening for the works. A few houses would have views of the works. All properties have ample, well-screened outdoor spaces.	Medium-low magnitude impact, resulting in Moderate effect, which is not significant, temporary, reversible	
1.4.14	In summary, the Cable Corridor works would affect a relatively small number of residential properties. These would mainly be properties, which lie next to the Application Boundary, and which are likely to experience effects up to high magnitude of change.		be properties, which lie next to	
1.4.15	The closest properties (as in Table 1) would potentially experience medium to high magnitude of change resulting in temporary Major or Moderate and significant adverse effects.			
Operational Phase Visual Effects				
1.4.16	1.4.16 The assessment of operational phase visual effects considers both with (Year 1) and summer (Year 15) scenarios.		al effects considers both winter	
Settlements and Residential receptors				
1.4.17 Residential visual receptors within the ZTV are shown on Figure 1.1 to 1.6		e shown on Figure 1.1 to 1.66.		





Sensitivity

1.4.18 People in settlements and scattered residential properties have been considered as high-sensitivity receptors to the type of development proposed.

Magnitude of change

- 1.4.19 Table 4 provides descriptions of the potential magnitude of change upon the properties within, and on, the Application Boundary in the proximity of the proposed Substations and Solar Panels, plus some settlements. Distances are measured from the houses to the Project. It should be noted that the assessment related to the orientation of these properties, which correlates to the main views from the properties, is based largely on field survey observations and Google aerial views.
- 1.4.20 Each property has been considered in its own context, taking account of its landscape setting, orientation of main facade, location of its curtilage area, position of its windows in relation to the project, as well as other factors, such as the nature of views (direct, indirect, restricted or open), and the importance of these views in respect of the visual amenity of the property.
- 1.4.21 Mitigation measures adopted as part of the Project are shown in Illustrative Masterplan Figure 2.1a to 2.4d [CR2-026] and Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Layer Plan [CR2-043].

Table 4: Residential receptors

Receptor	Distance / Description	Year 1	Year 15
		Magnitude/ Level of Effects	Magnitude/ Residual Effects
Upper Dornford Cottage	Upper Dornford Cottage s approximately 55m to the northeast of the sola panels in the northernmost part of the Project site. The main aspect of this property is east to west, away from the Project, with intervening vegetation limiting available views to the wider landscape. Where more open views are available, these are generally away from the Project to the east and west from front and rear elevations. On the southern (side) elevation there are potentially more open views available to a very small par of the Project, where perimeter vegetation appears to be thinnest. Where available, views of the Project would be to a very small part of the overall northern section. New woodland planting to the northernmost point of the Project, near to this property, would over time further screen available views.	Medium-Low Moderate not significant	Negligible-Low Negligible/Minor not significant
Lower Dornford Farm	The property is approximately 190m to the west of the solar panels at its nearest point. The main aspect of the property is internally, with views available east towards the Project, across an open field. There are scattered trees within the field which would partially screen available views.	Low-negligible Moderate/Minor not significant	Low-negligible Moderate/Minor not significant





Receptor	Distance / Description	Year 1	Year 15
		Magnitude/ Level of Effects	Magnitude/ Residual Effects
	Intervening vegetation and landform in the local area is such that available views to solar panels from this property would be to a small part of it, though views would be generally open, particularly prior to mitigation taking effect, i.e. winter Year 1.		
	Hedgerow and tree planting along the Projects western boundary at this location, once established, would further minimise effects upon this property.		
Dornford Grove	Although relatively close to the solar panels within the norther section of the Project, approximately 65m to the west, the vegetation to the perimeter of the property, along with the main aspect of views being away from it, would limit the effect of the Project upon this property. There would be oblique rear elevation views and eastern elevation views available to a small part of the overall Project.	Low-negligible Minor not significant	Negligible Negligible not significant
	Hedgerow and tree planting along the Projects western boundary at this location, once established, would further minimise effects upon this property.		
Bladon	The closest property, Green Acres (number 73 Heath Lane), is approximately 98m to the southwest of the solar panels of the centre section of the Site at Heath Lane. Potential views of the solar panels would be limited to the rear garden and side elevation of his property, along with from small upper storey windows from front elevations, of a few properties on Heath Lane (numbers 60 and 62). Views would be limited due to the intervening vegetation and at an oblique angle along the public right of way (PRoW 132/3/10) as it enters the Project site off Heath Lane.	Low-negligible Moderate/Minor not significant	Negligible Negligible not significant
	In 15 Years the reinforced hedgerow which binds the solar panels will have established, screening any views.		
	The majority of residential properties within Bladon have an inward facing aspect, with only rear gardens facing the Project. In addition, a mature woodland to the east of Bladon at the rear of Bladon Pits, along with other areas of mature vegetation would prevent views of the Project. Including from individual properties such as The Studio located on the edge of Bladon adjacent to PRoW 132/2/10.		
Hordley Cottages	Located to the southeast of Wootton. The house is 35m to the west and 80m to the north of the solar panels within the northern section of the site, next to the B4027.	Minor	Low Minor not significant
	The roadside hedgerow would screen views at ground level of the Project. Views would only be expected from first floor windows across the 1.5km fields covered by solar panels to the east.	not significant	
	Views to the south would be partially filtered and screened by the existing vegetation, particularly from		





Receptor	Distance / Description	Year 1	Year 15
		Magnitude/ Level of Effects	Magnitude/ Residual Effects
	ground floor windows. More open views would be available from upper storey windows to a small part of the Project. With oblique views to the western parts of the Project beyond the B4027.		
Weaveley Farm	The house is 85m to the east and 65m to the north of the solar panels of the northern section of the Project Site.	Medium Moderate	Low Minor
	The main orientation and curtilage area of the house is to the west towards agricultural fields, which would be covered by solar panels up to 220m. The existing vegetation would screen views of the solar panels to the south.	significant	not significant
	In 15 Years the proposed mitigation hedgerow would be established, screening views of the solar panels to the east. However, views from first-floor windows would remain.		
Cassington	Approximately a dozen of the properties which are the closest to the solar panels in the centre section of the Site from the rear of properties at Barrow Court. Also from the rear upper floor windows of a small number of properties at the western end of Cassington, William Court, near to PRoW 152/6/10 at a distance of approximately 120m to the solar panels at the nearest point. Solar panels would be at their closest to the rear gardens of the properties along Barrow Court, at a distance of approximately 60m. The gardens' perimeters are lined by dense vegetation. Therefore, views would only be expected from first floor windows across the 1.7km fields covered by solar panels.	Medium-Low Moderate not significant	Low Minor not significant
	Much like Bladon, the predominant aspect of remaining properties within Cassington is inwards towards the village. With intervening vegetation to the northern edge screening views from the rear of properties.		
Barrow Court, Cassington	Properties along Barrow Court, numbers 1 to 8, are located approximately 60m to the southeast of the Project, at the nearest point. There is existing garden vegetation to the rear of these properties, in most case, with some rear elevations being having more open views.	Medium Moderate significant	Low Minor not significant
	Existing rear garden vegetation would filter available views from the rear elevations of these properties.		
	More open views available would be in proximity to the properties and therefore be a noticeable feature within views. Although these views would be from upper storey windows and not necessarily from the primary living spaces within the properties.		
	Over time, proposed mitigation planting to the southern edge of the Project in this location and in the field margin up to the properties, including hedgerow planting and small blocks of woodland, would further screen available views from these properties.		





Receptor	Distance / Description	Year 1	Year 15
		Magnitude/ Level of Effects	Magnitude/ Residual Effects
Williams Court, Cassington	Numbers 4 to 8 Williams Court Have generally open rear elevation views to the north. A fence to the rear gardens of these properties would screen available views from the lower floor, with the more open views available from the upper floors.	Medium-Low Moderate not significant	Low Minor not significant
	Of the remaining properties on Williams Court, available views would become increasingly oblique as the road curves around to form the development to which the properties are aligned.		
	Solar panels, within the central section of the Project, are approximately 120m to the north, at the nearest point, from those properties with the most open views.		
	Existing vegetation within the field to the south of the Project would filter available views. As it matures, proposed vegetation including hedgerow reinforcement and trees along this boundary, would further screen views.		
	Only a small part of the overall Project would be visible form these properties.		
Burleigh Farm	The house is 40m to the west of the solar panels in the centre section of the Project Site. Roadside hedgerow would provide a partial screening effect. The perimeter of the property, which faces towards the road, is well vegetated. Views of the solar panels would be available mainly from the front garden, particularly during winter months.	Medium-Low Moderate not significant	Low Minor not significant
	Solar panels at a distance of 195m to the north would be screened by the intervening vegetation and by farm buildings 150m to the west and 85m to the south.		
College Farm	The house is 50m to the west of the solar panels in the centre section of the Project Site. It appears that views of the solar panels would be partially screened by the hedgerow and trees along the eastern perimeter of the property. Views of the solar panels 100m to the north and 80m to the south of the house would be screened by the vegetation which surrounds the property. There would be more distant views, from upper floors to solar panels on rising ground to the east on the Evenlode Valley sides.	Medium Moderate significant	Medium-Low Moderate not significant
Goose Eye Farm	The house is 30m to the south and 70m to the east of the solar panels in the centre section of the Project Site. The existing hedgerow and trees would screen views to the west. Based on Google Streetview it appears that the house faces towards the solar panels to the north, where the perimeter vegetation is missing. Solar panels would appear in the proximity next to the property's perimeter. Solar panels would be seen more distantly at a distance of 320m on the west facing slope of the landform, which forms the eastern side of the River Glyme. Solar Panels to	Medium-high Moderate significant	Low Moderate/minor Not significant





Receptor	Distance / Description	Year 1	Year 15
		Magnitude/ Level of Effects	Magnitude/ Residual Effects
	the west and south-west would be screened by field boundary vegetation. The main aspect of the property is to the south with open and untouched views across the River Evenlode valley floor. It is noted that views available from upper floor widows within the property, looking north, are from non-habitable rooms, as this follows the line of a corridor.		
	In Year 15, the views would be screened or softened by the proposed hedgerows and tree planting along the northern perimeter of the property and also along the Project boundaries to the southwest and east of the property.		
New Barn Farm	The house is 55m to the south west, 45 m to the east, and 55m to the north of the solar panels in the centre section of the site. Views to the west are screened by roadside vegetation and to the north by farm buildings. The solar panels would be seen immediately to the south from the front garden and from the first floor windows. Solar panels would appear in the proximity next to the property's perimeter. Solar panels would be seen more distantly at a distance of 500m on the west facing slope of the landform, which forms the eastern side of the River Glyme. In Year 15, the views would be screened by the proposed	Medium-high Major/Moderate significant	Medium Moderate Not significant
Purwell Farm	hedgerows and tree planting along the southern and also along its eastern perimeter to a certain extent. The farm occupies an elevated location on a shallow landform. At its closest the house is 60m to the south of the centre section of the site. Views to the north are screened by a woodland belt. Views of solar panels to the south at a distance of 230m are screened by farm buildings, as are views of the solar panels at a distance of 220m to the west. Solar panels to the east would be seen	Medium Moderate significant	Low Moderate/minor not significant
	at a distance of 110m. These views would be screened or softened by proposed hedgerows and tree planting in Year 15.		
Jumper's Farm	The house is 35m to the north east of the solar panels in the southern section of the Project Site at its closest and 300m from the NGET Substation. The western perimeter of the property screens any potential views of the development. The house faces directly towards the area which has been allocated for new planting. Therefore, no views of the Project are expected, including from first floor windows.	Low-negligible Minor not significant	Low-negligible Minor not significant
	Also, the curtilage of the house is surrounded by dense vegetation, and views to the east would be retained.		





Receptor	Distance / Description	Year 1	Year 15	
		Magnitude/ Level of Effects	Magnitude/ Residual Effects	
Lake View and Heiderbech, Cumnor	These large properties are located on rising ground approximately 240m to the south of the solar panels in the southern section of the Project, at the nearest point. There is mature existing tree planting and other vegetation surrounding them. Though there are parts of the properties' northern boundaries which are more open, allowing generally open views north towards the Projects southern section. With the land falling away from these properties, the Project southern section would be below the eyeline of views available from them. With views to Farmoor Reservoir and higher ground to the north remaining the predominant feature within views. The small part of the Project visible would not form a prominent feature in the view.	Low Minor not significant	Low Minor not significant	
Denman's Farm	The house is located, at its closest, 55m to the east of the solar panels in the southern section of the project Site, otherwise it is surrounded by the Project, although more distantly. Views to the east at a distance of 160m from the solar panels and south east at a distance of 180m are screened by farm buildings. In views to the north the house faces towards the fields, which would be covered by solar panels at distances of 90m up to 300m. The landform of Wytham Hill is a prominent skyline feature to the north. Solar panels would be seen at a distance of 150m on the rising ground to the south. Also, the solar panels would be discernible to the west through the hedgerow. Solar panels would appear in the context of the existing electricity pylons, thereby intensifying industrial features in views to the north west and west. In Year 15, the views would be screened by the proposed hedgerows and tree planting along the southern perimeter of the property and also along its western perimeter to a certain extent.	Medium Moderate significant	Low Minor not significant	
1.4.22	In summary, the Project, which stretches over a distance of 17 km, would affect a relatively small number of residential properties. These would mainly be the properties which lie next to, or in the proximity of, the Application Boundary.			
1.4.23	Based on the assessment findings, none of these properties have been considered for Residential Visual Amenity Assessment. Effects on private residential amenity are a separate matter and only require assessment when a development is likely to meet the threshold of effects becoming 'overwhelming' or 'overbearing', which is not the case in respect of this Project.			
1.5	Conclusions			

1.5.1 Based on the assessment and professional judgement, it is considered that there are no residential properties that are to be considered for Step 4 of the RVAA. It is considered that the effects resulting from the Project would fall



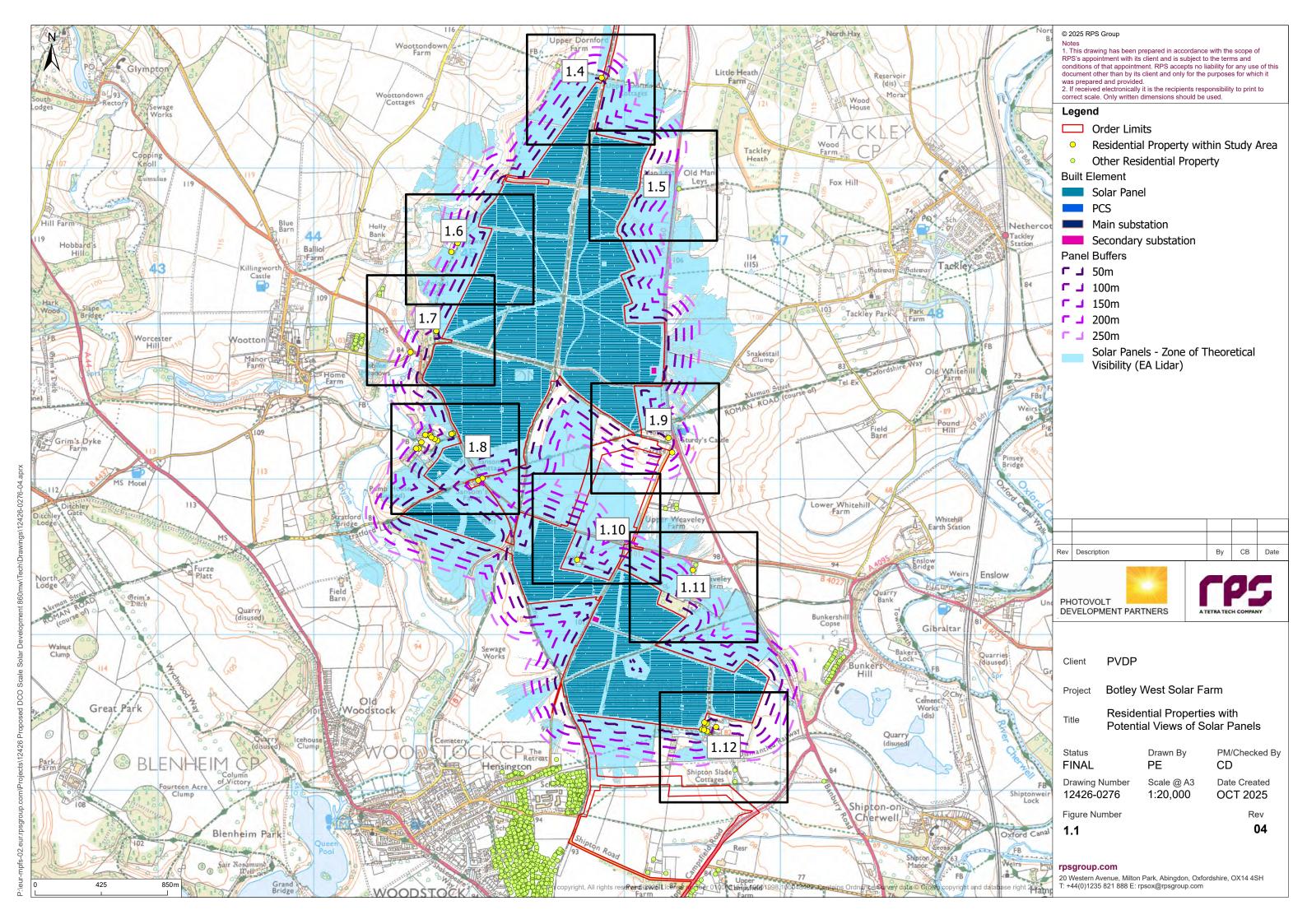


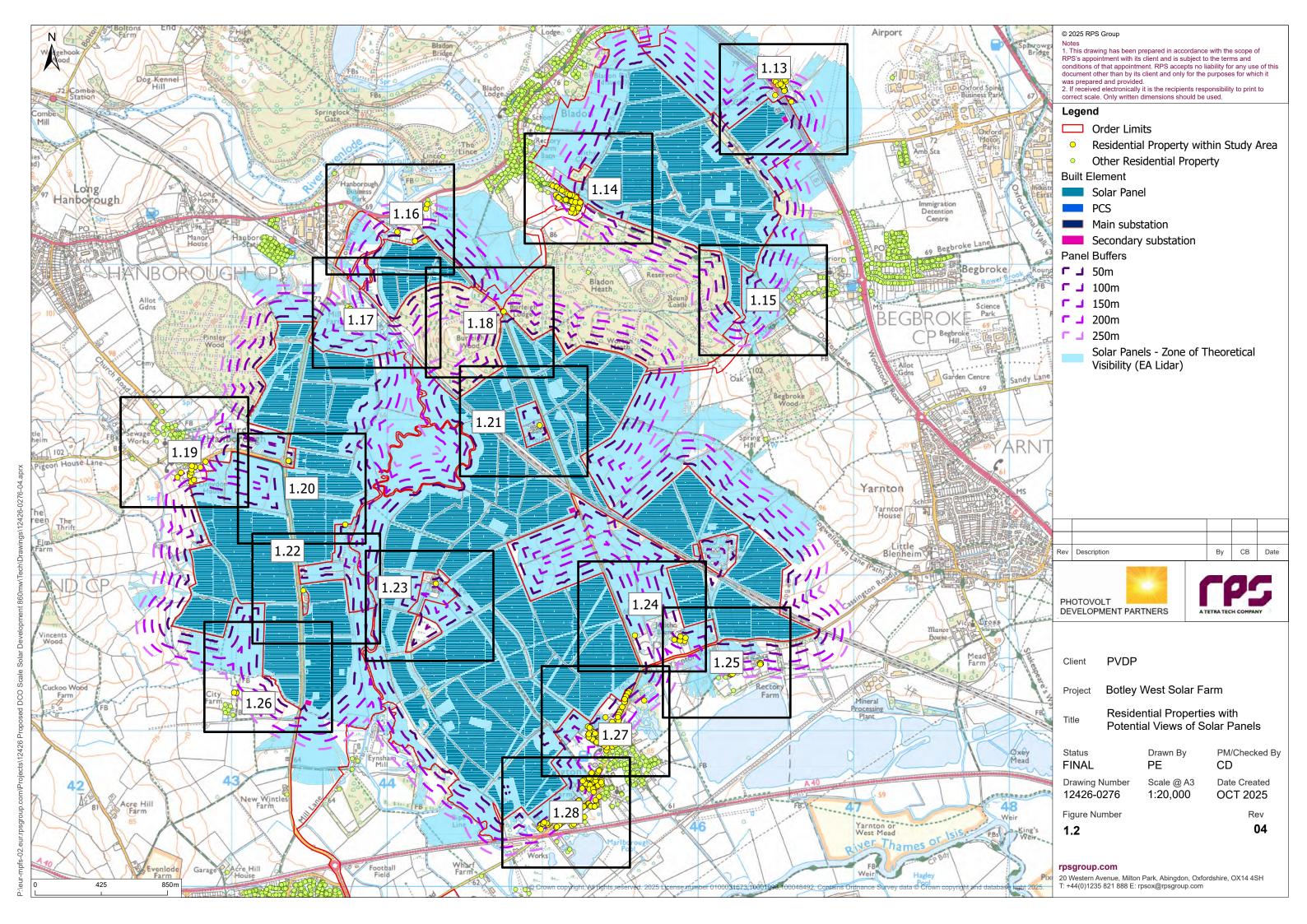
below the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold referred to in LI TGN 02/2019 as visual effects "of such nature and / or magnitude that it potentially affects 'living conditions' or Residential Amenity" (Paragraph 2.1). The guidance note further indicates that "It is not uncommon for significant adverse effects on views and visual amenity to be experienced by people at their place of residence as a result of introducing a new development into the landscape. In itself this does not necessarily cause particular planning concern".

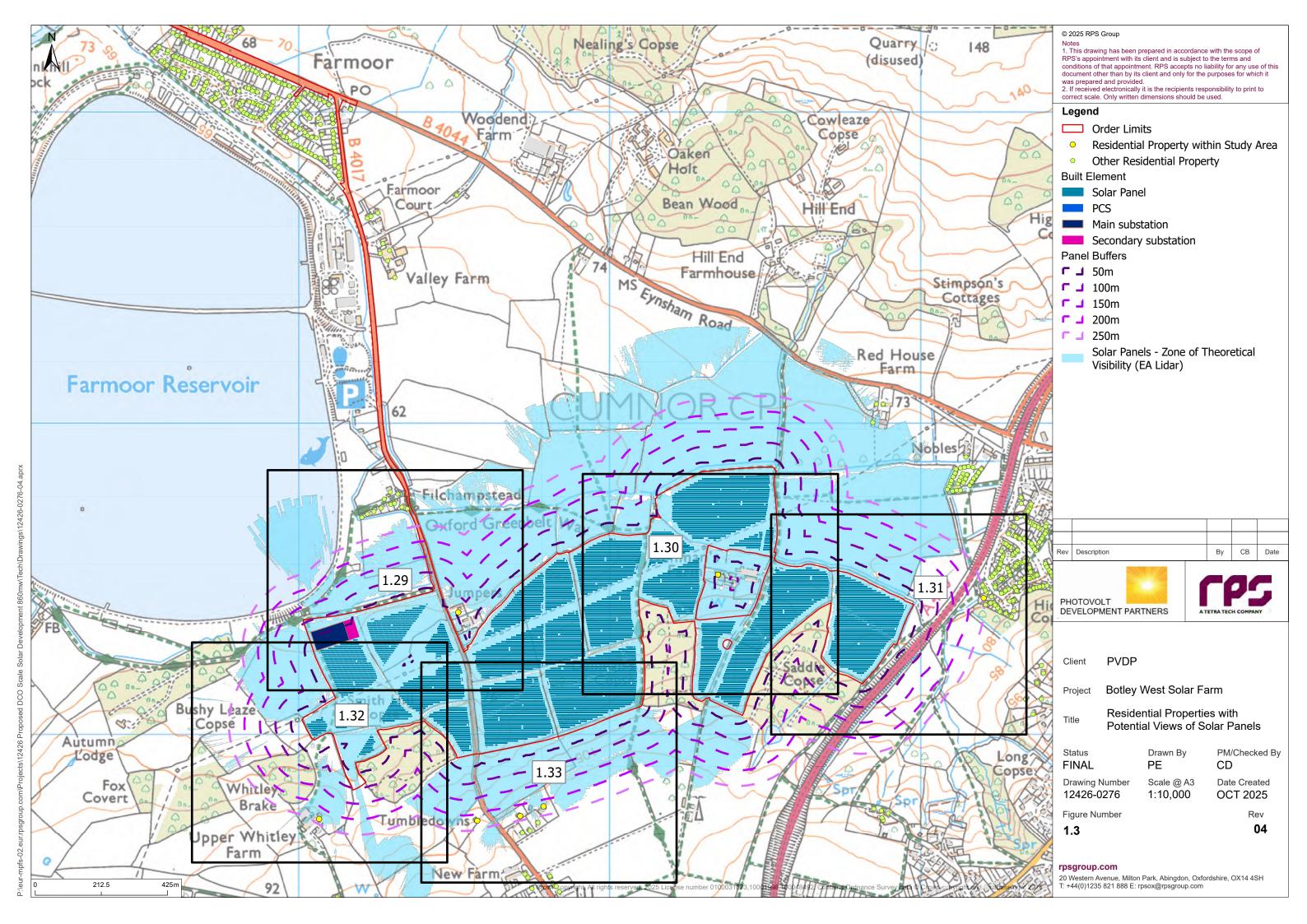


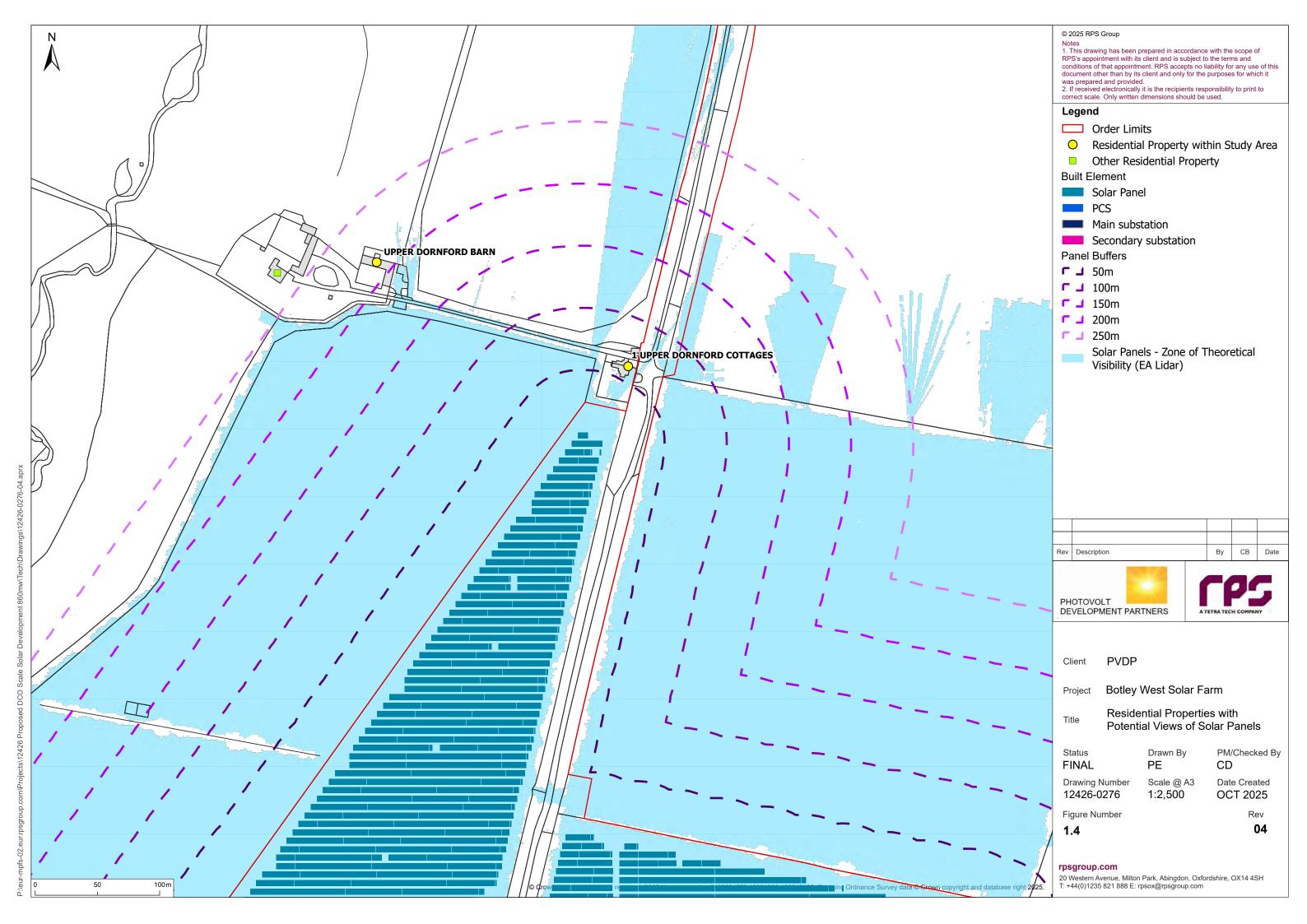


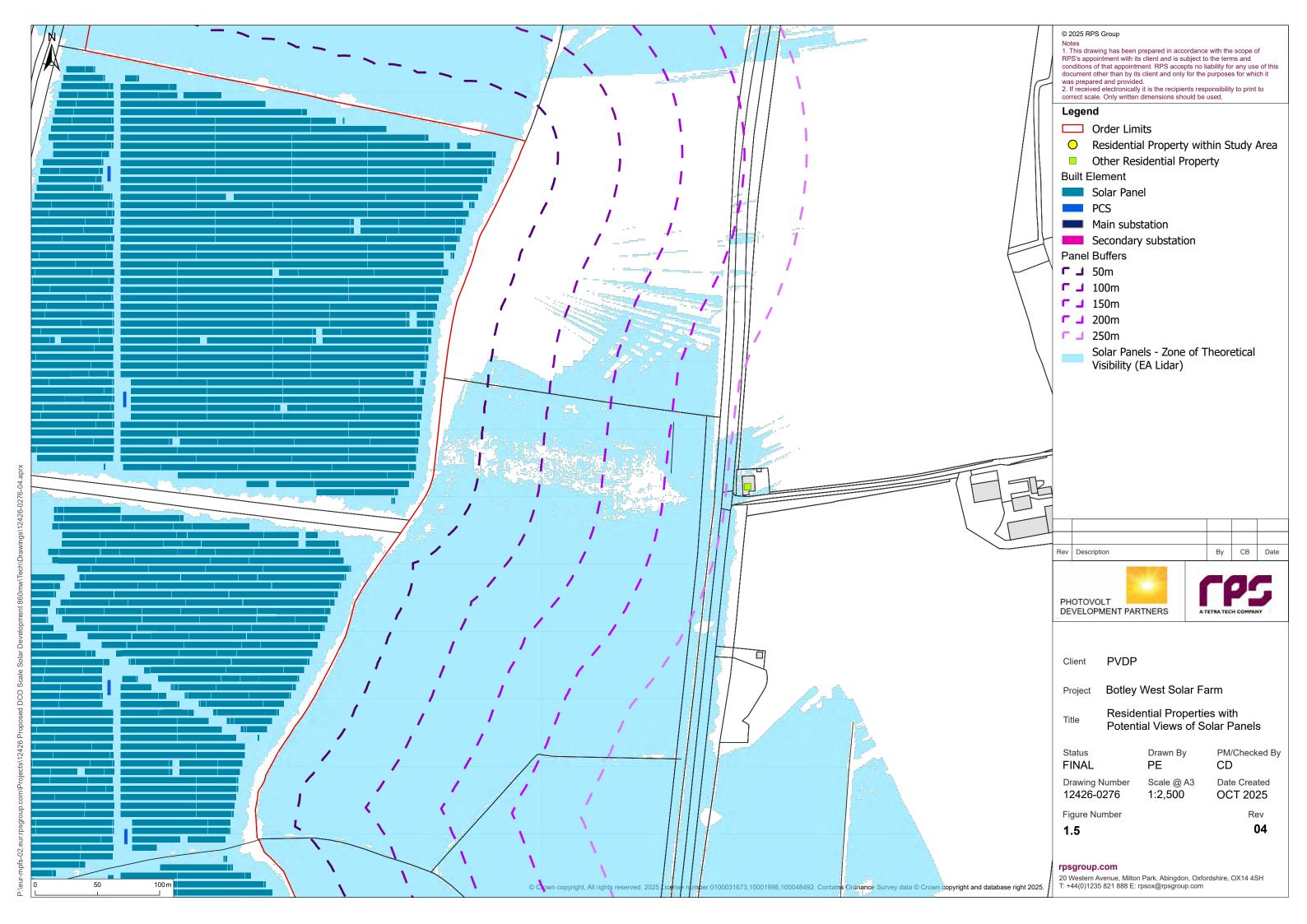
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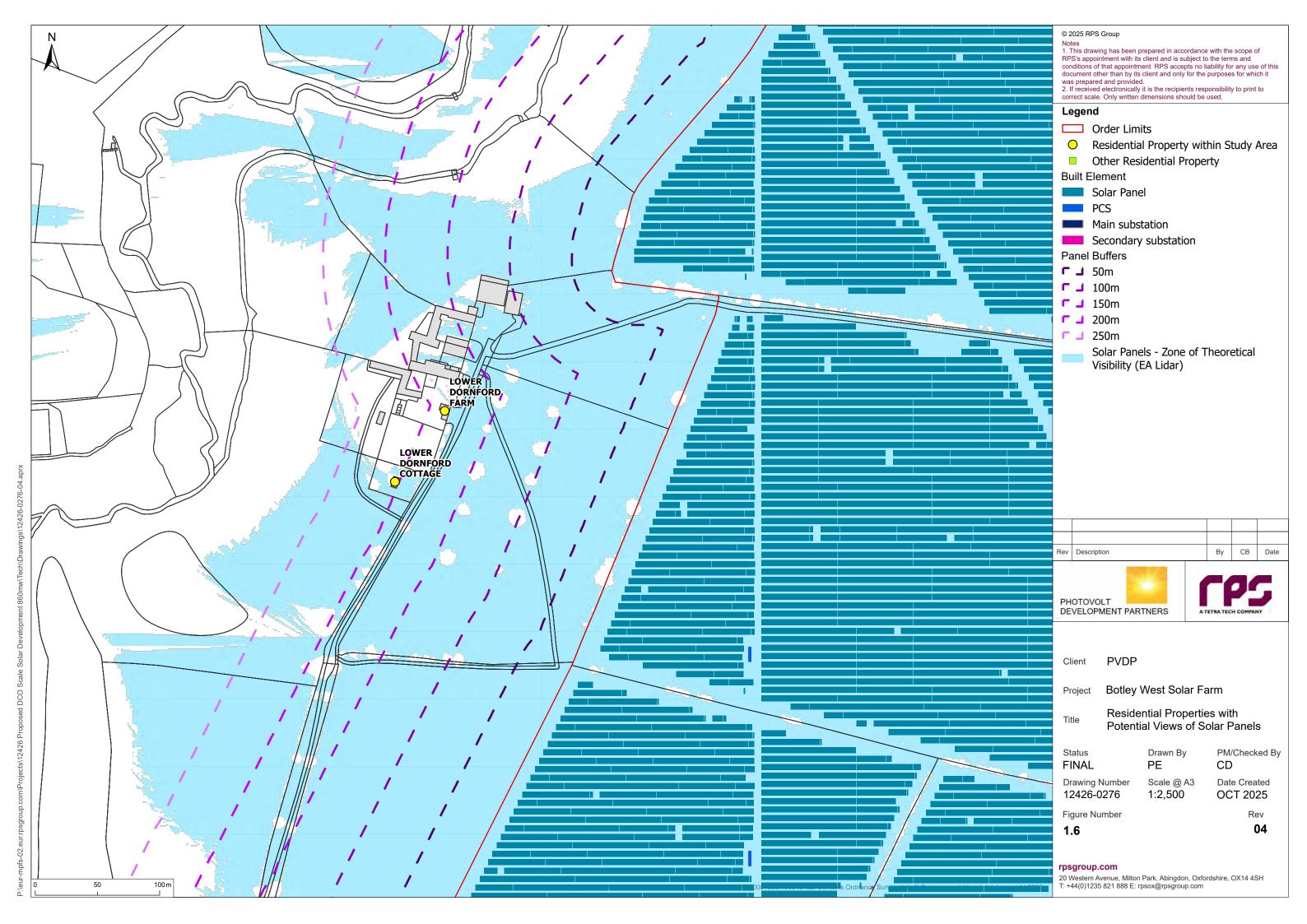


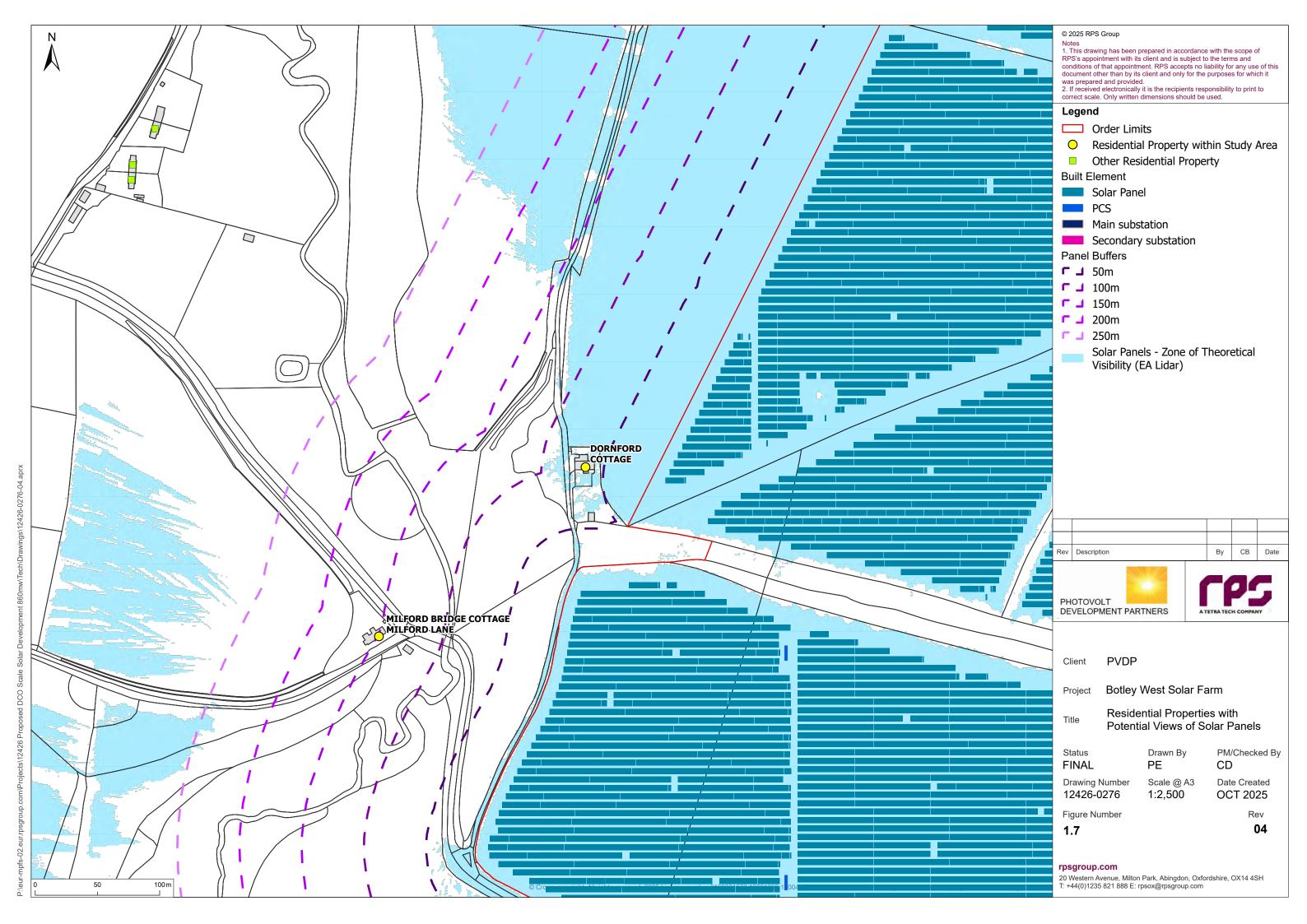


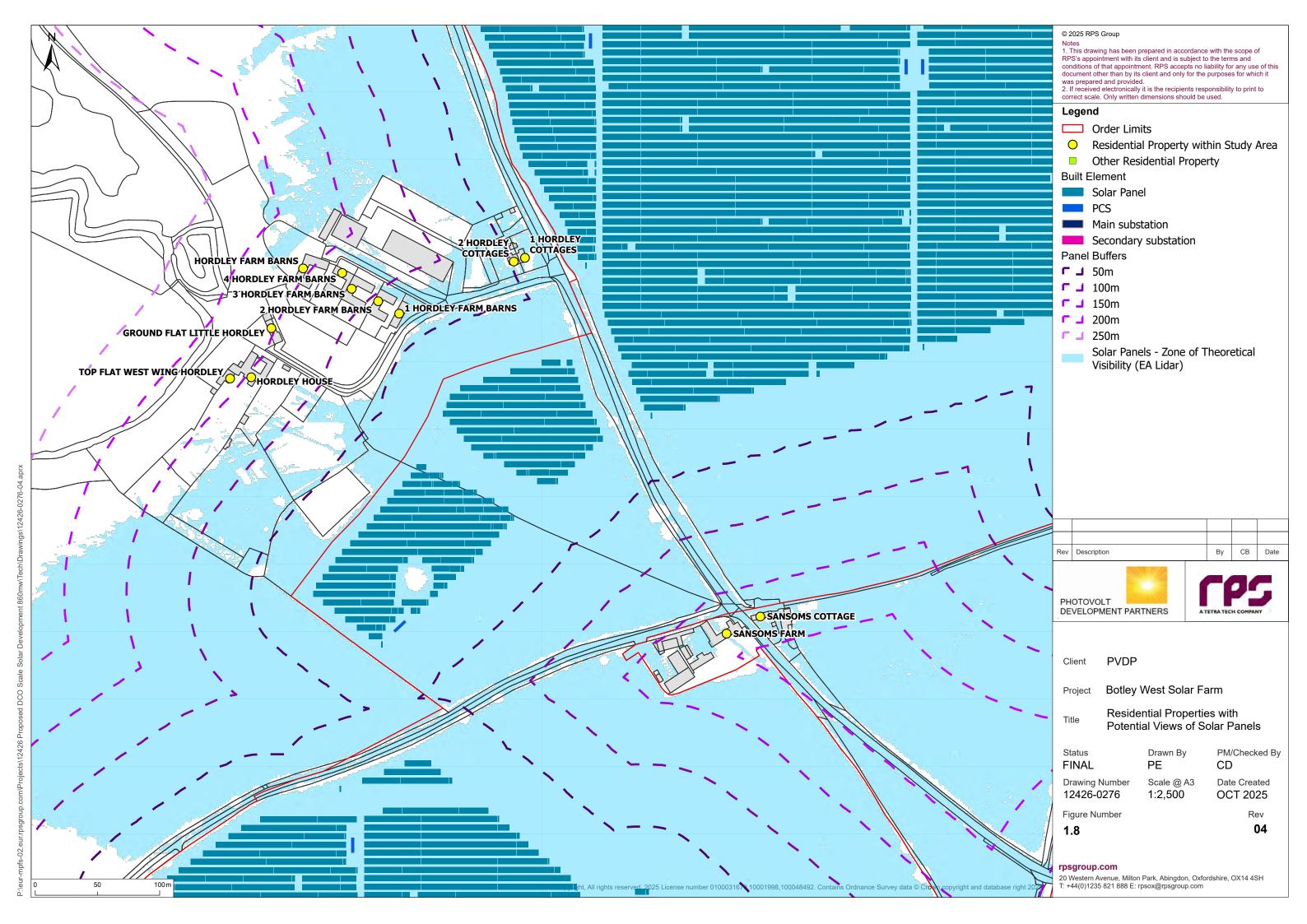


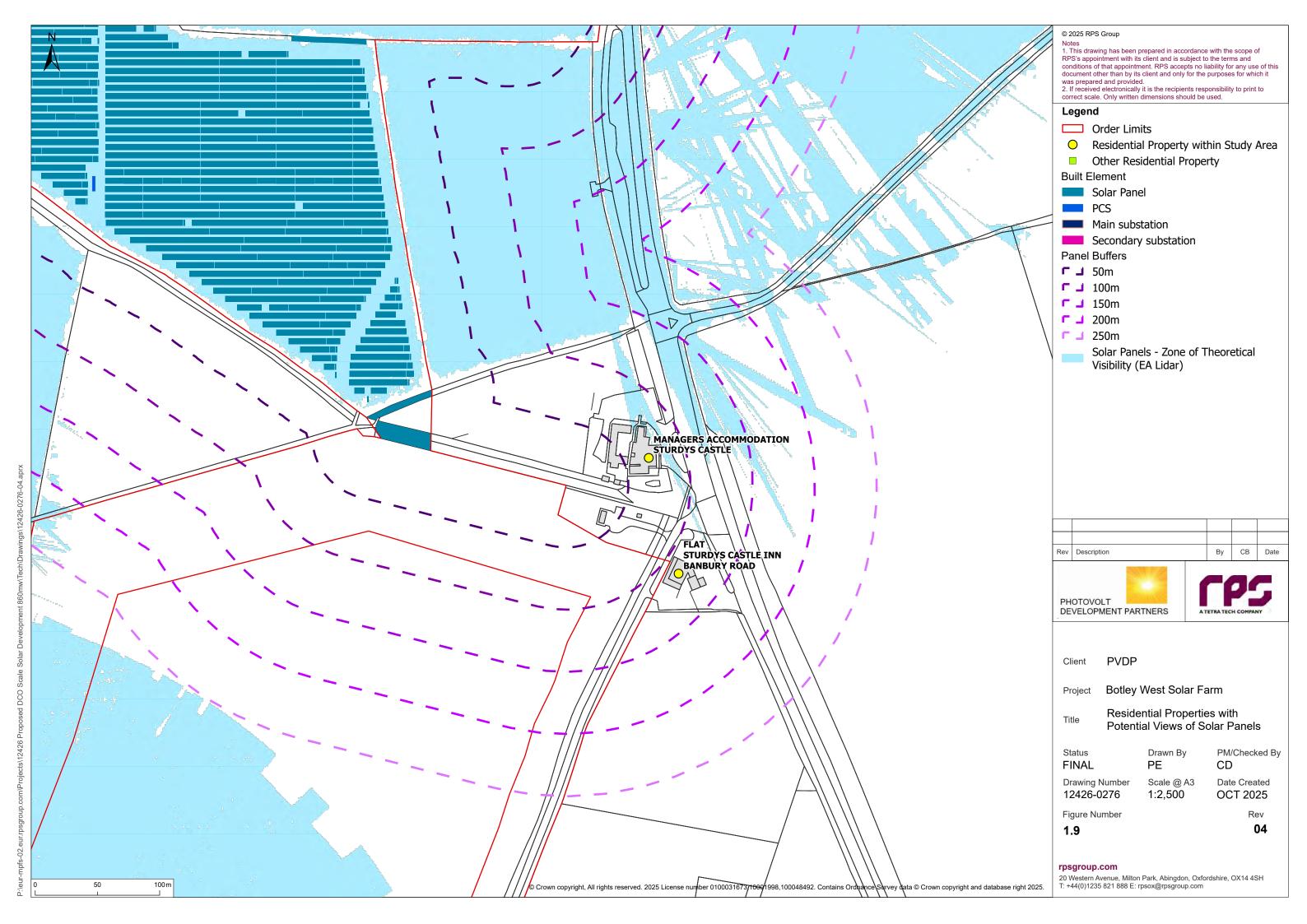


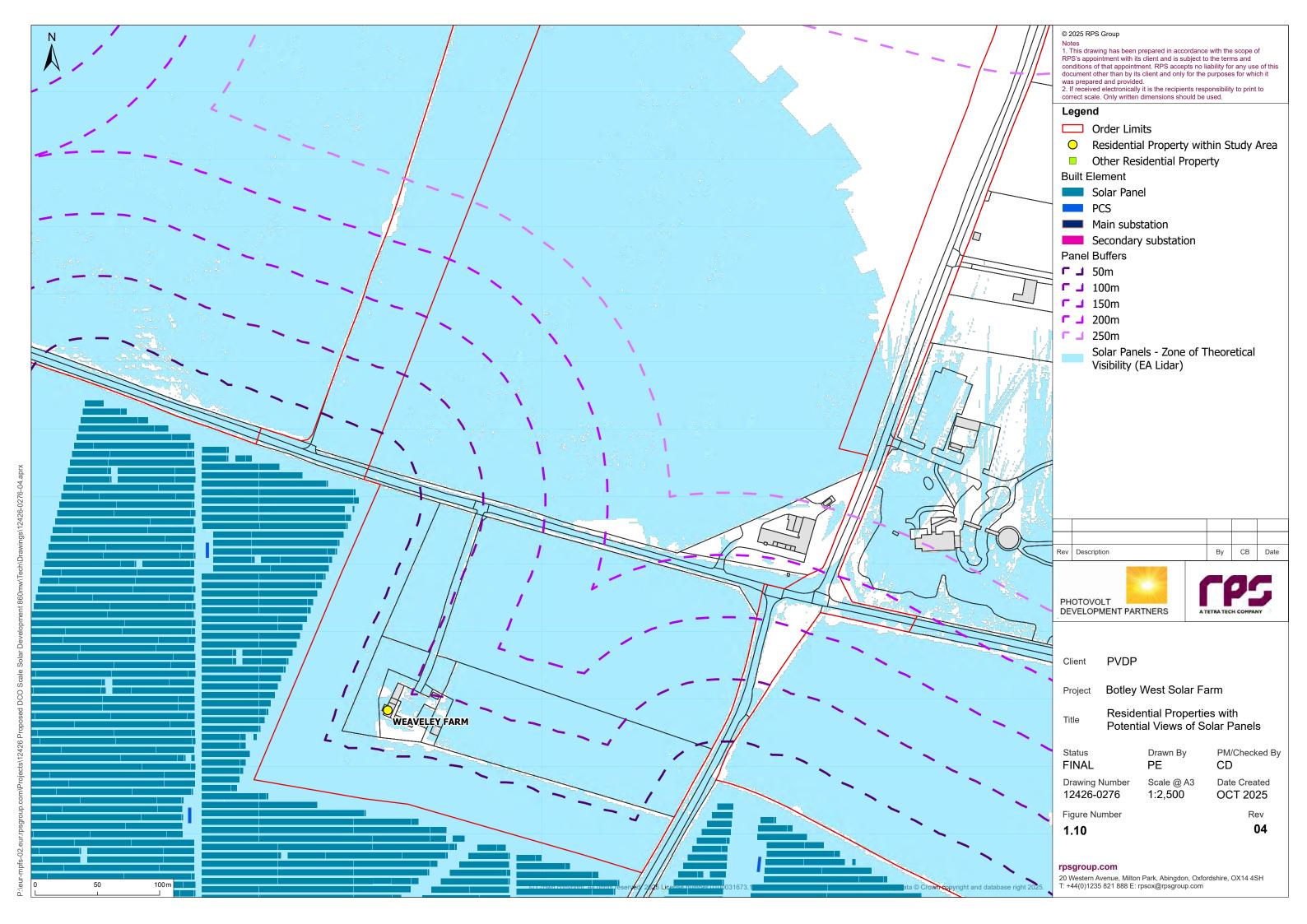


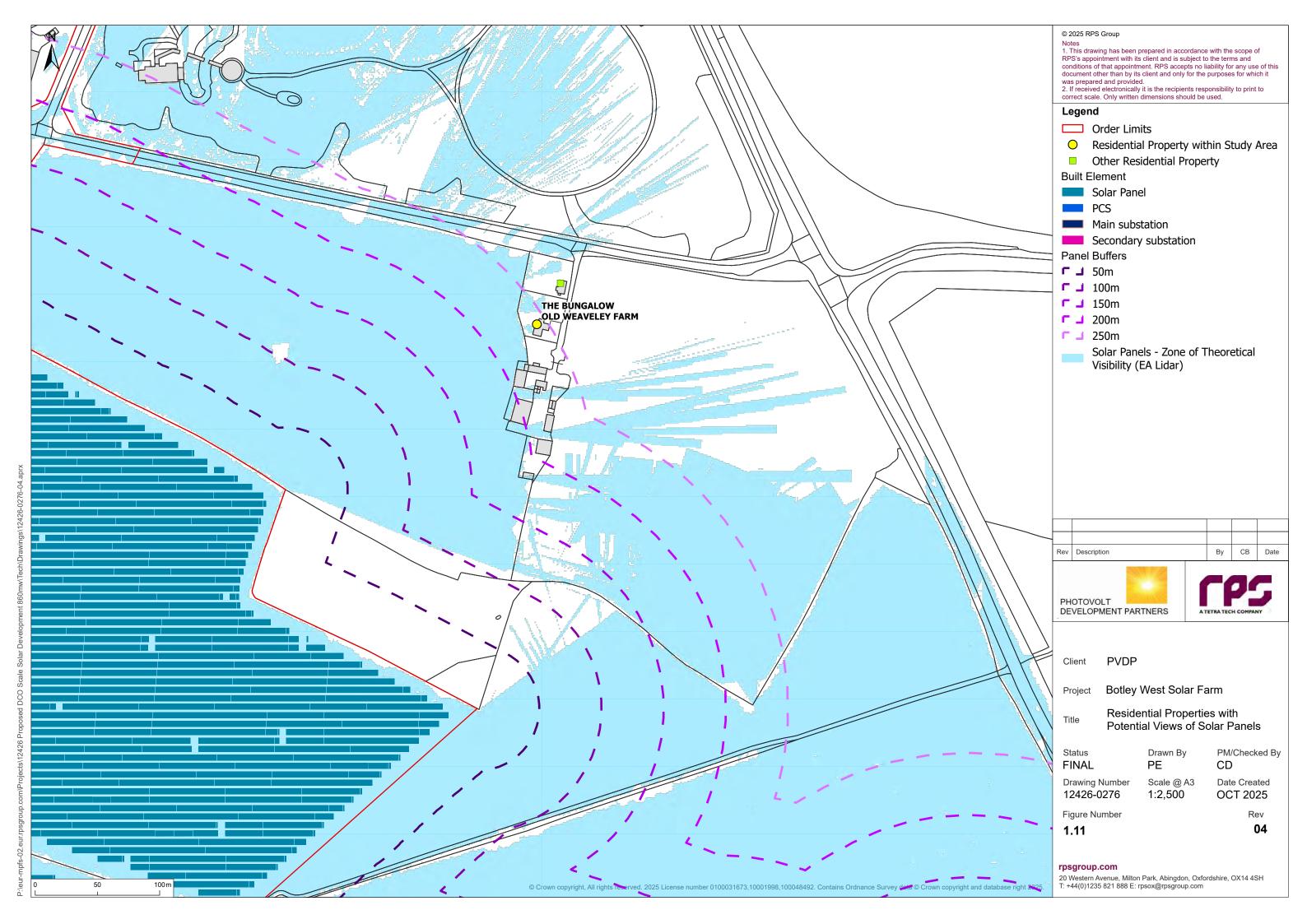


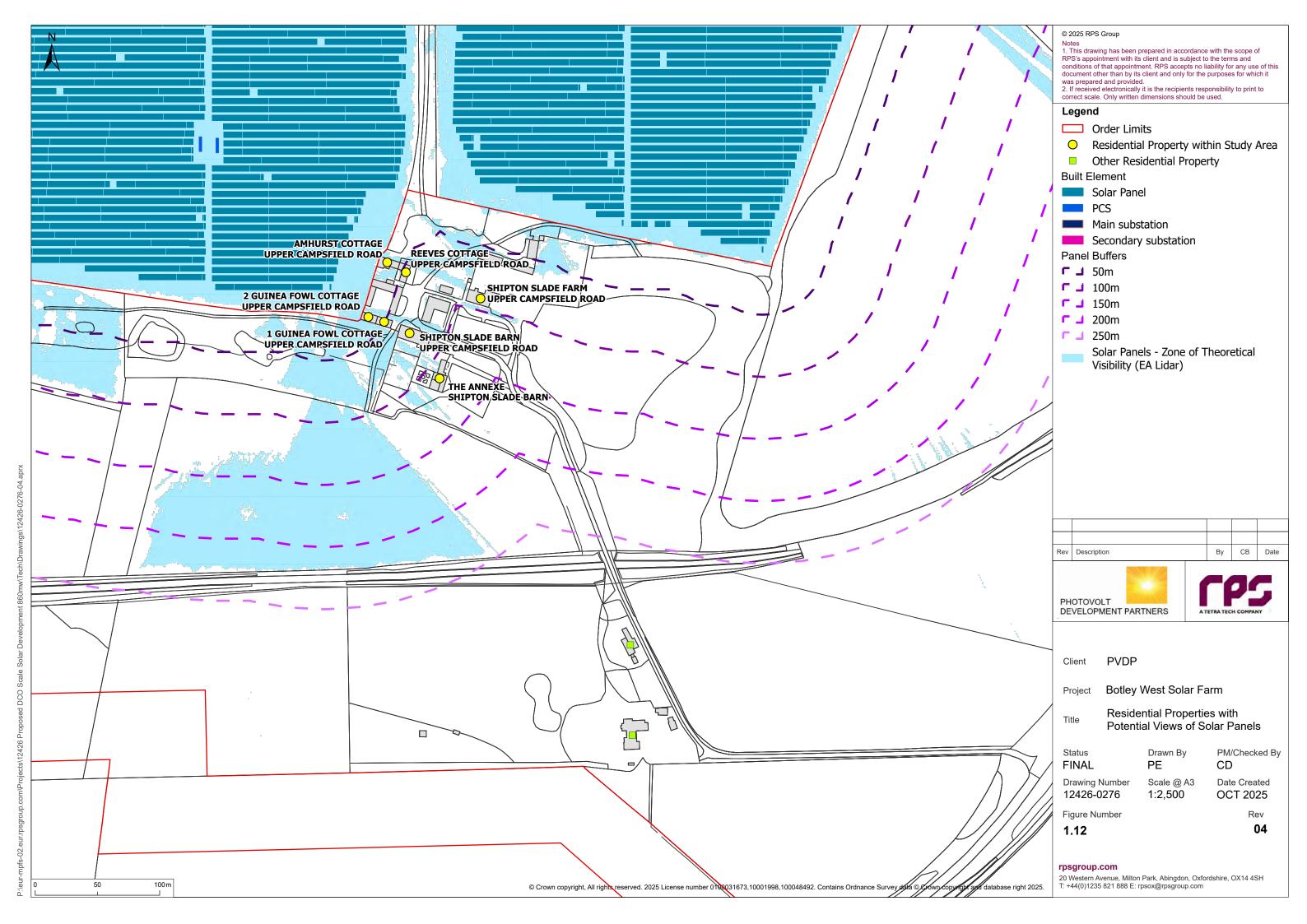


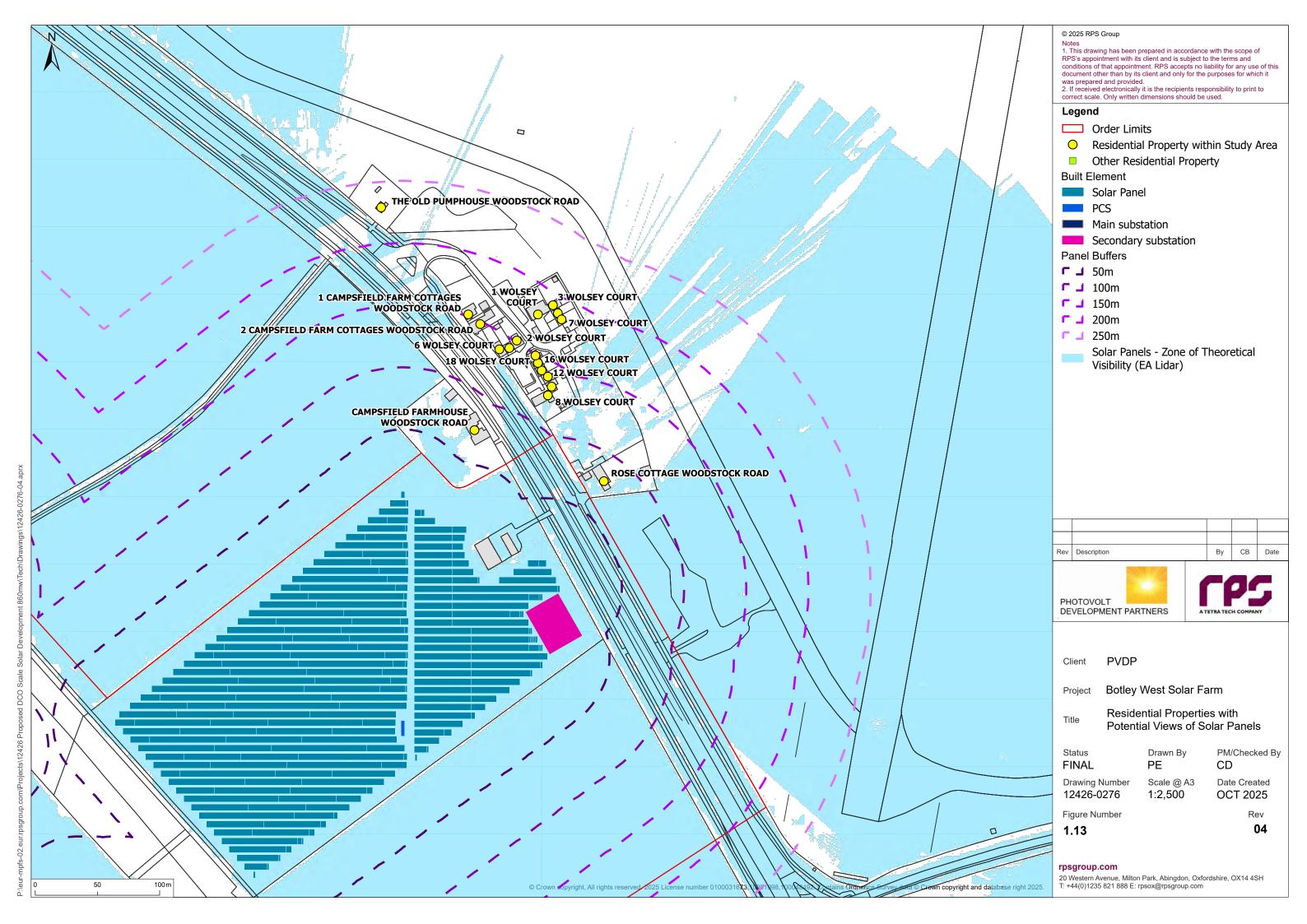


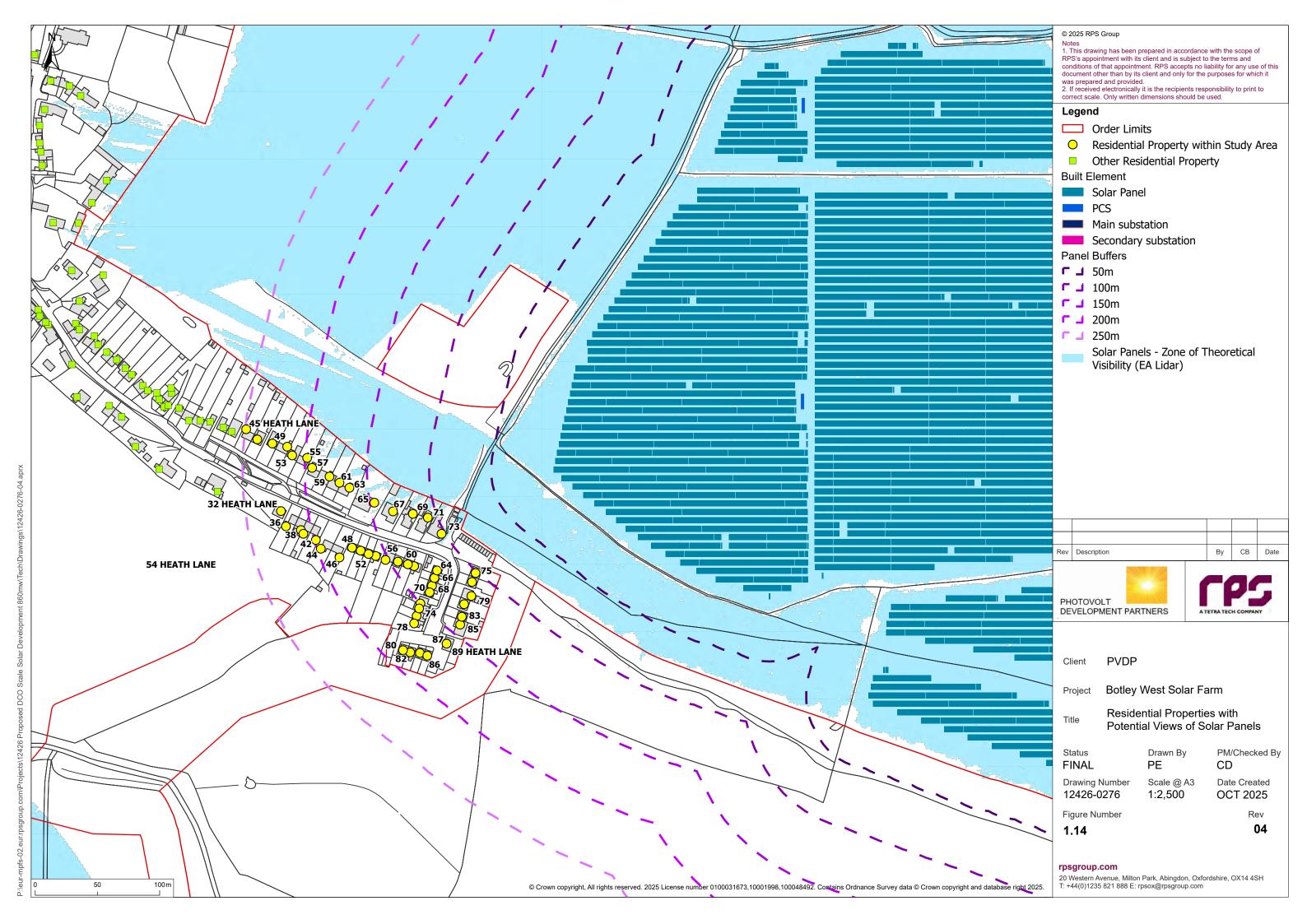


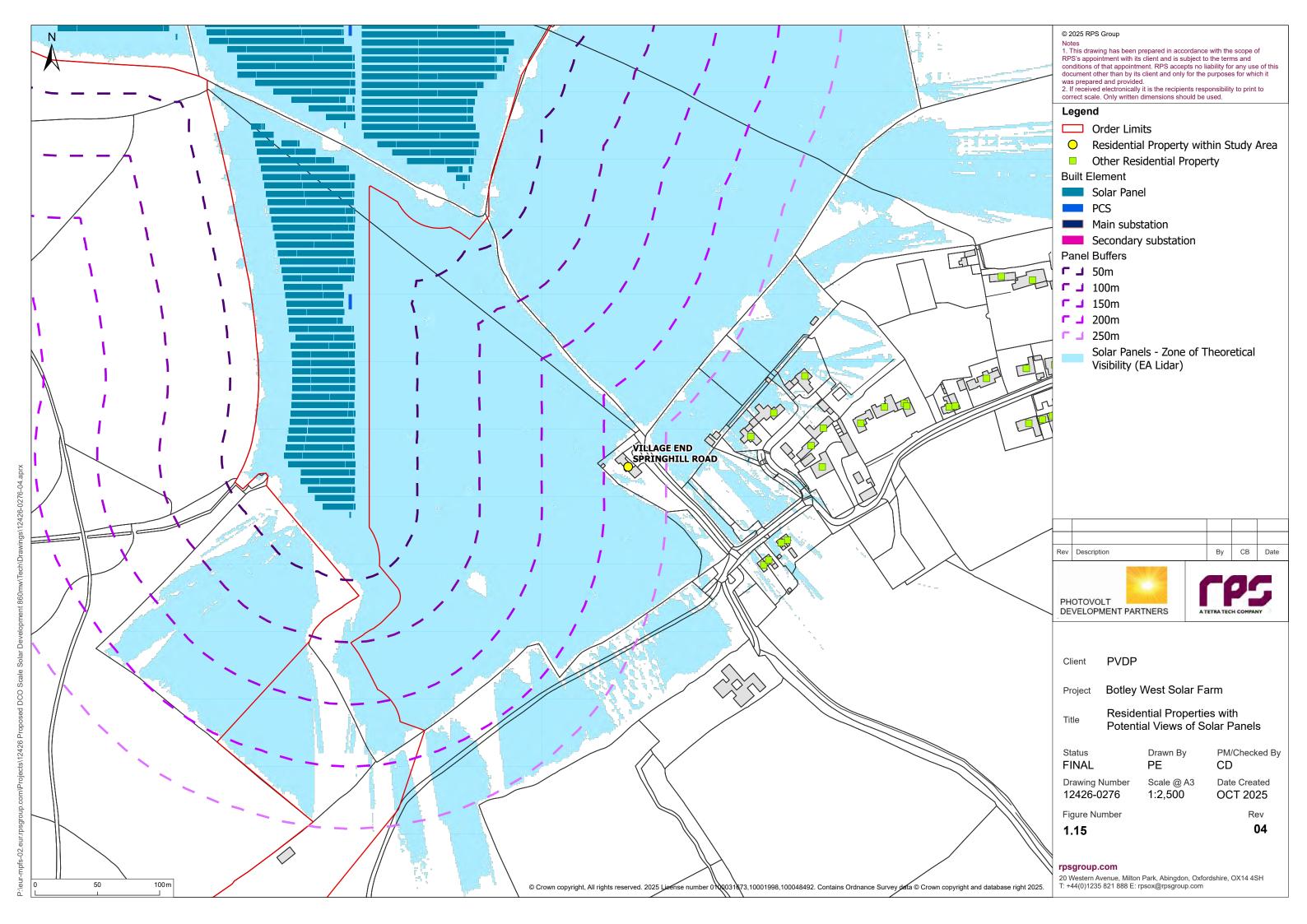


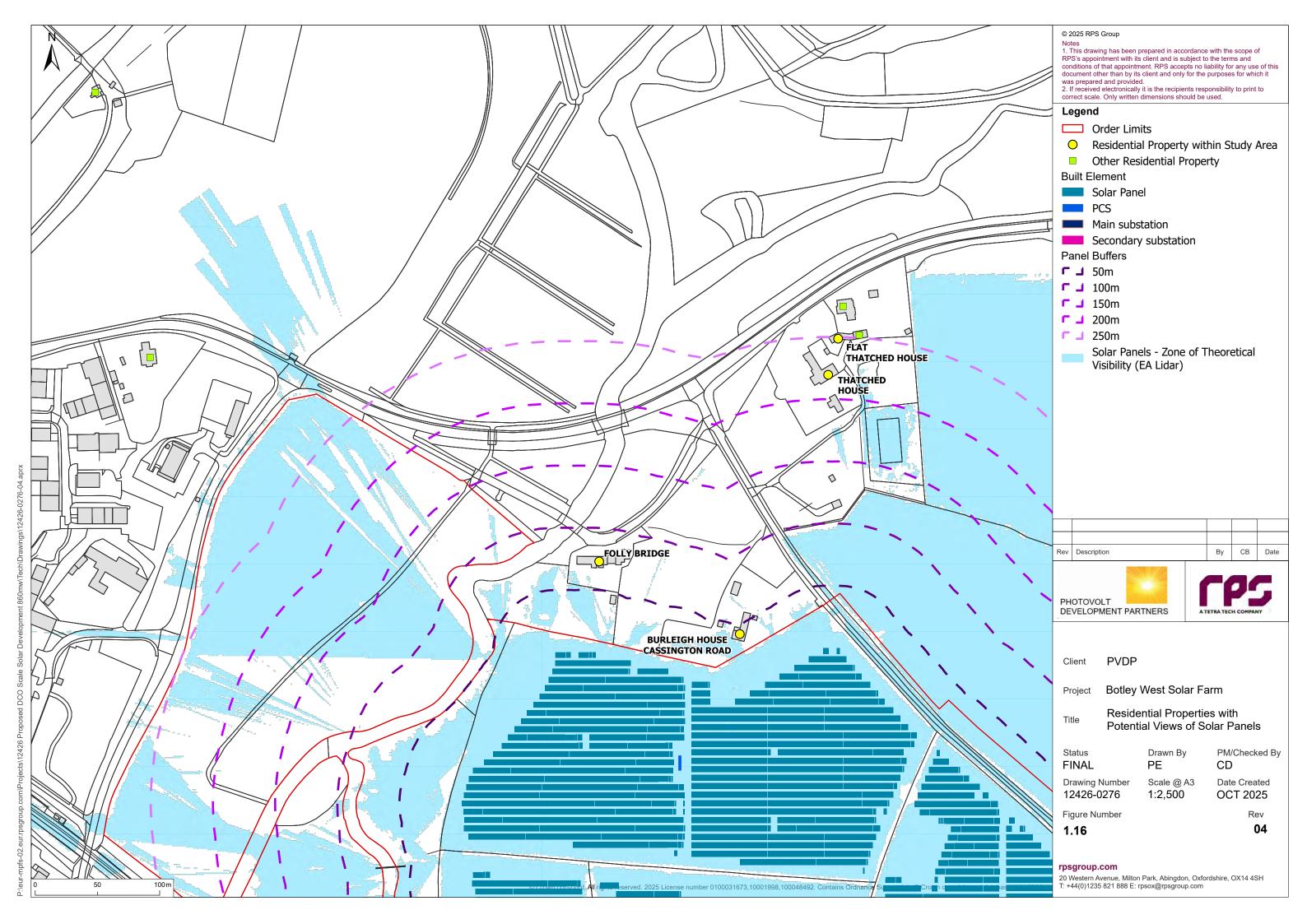


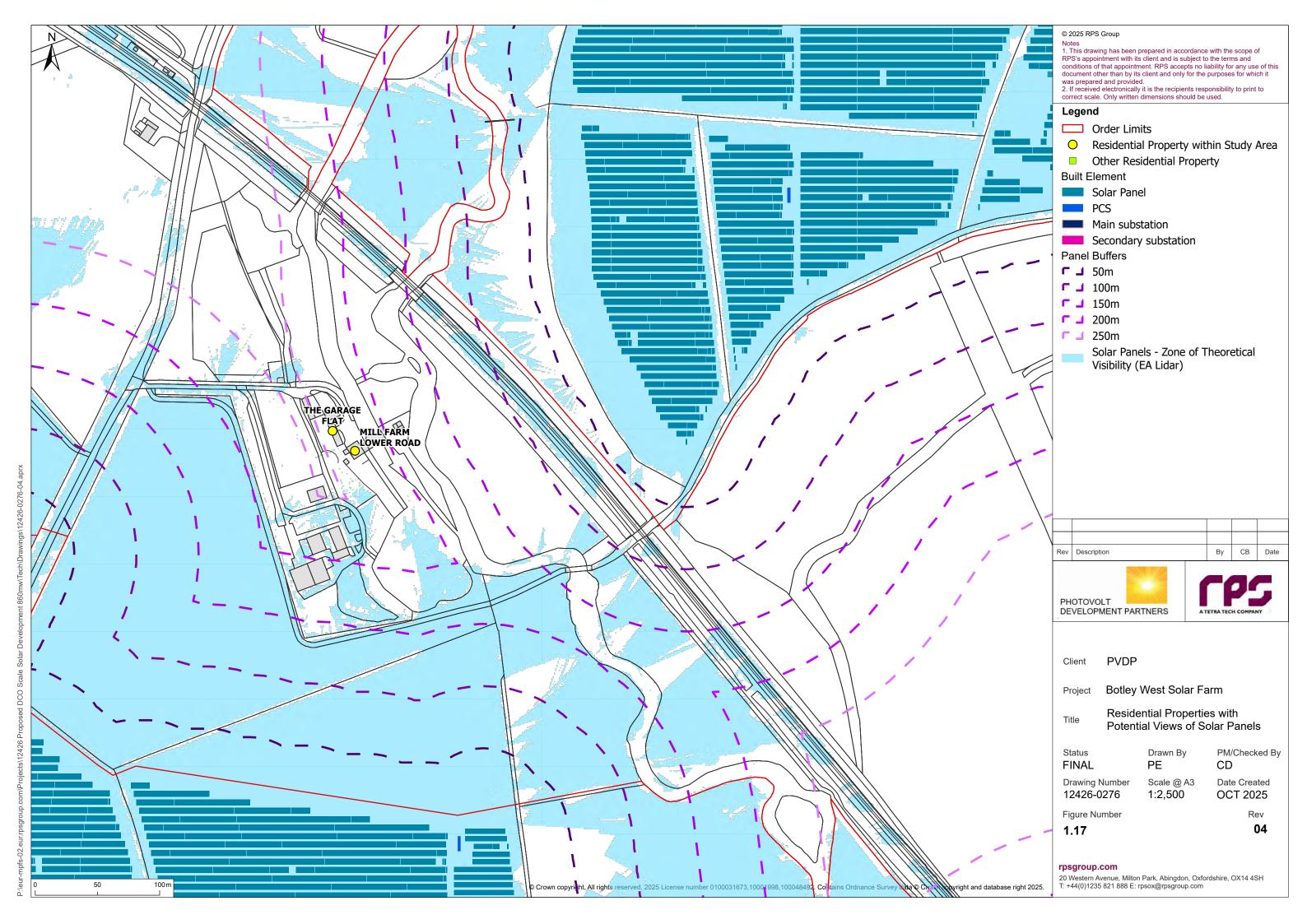


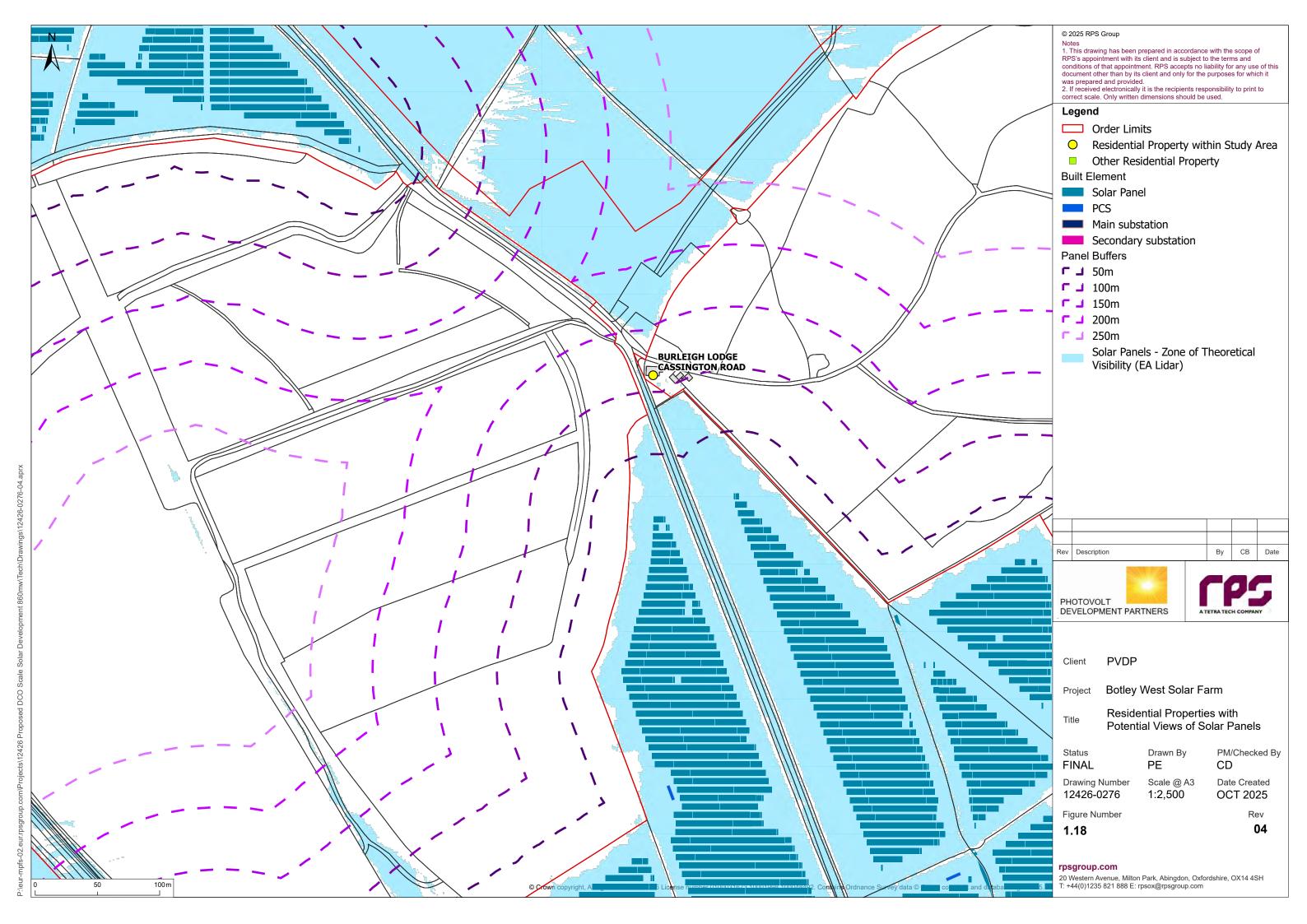


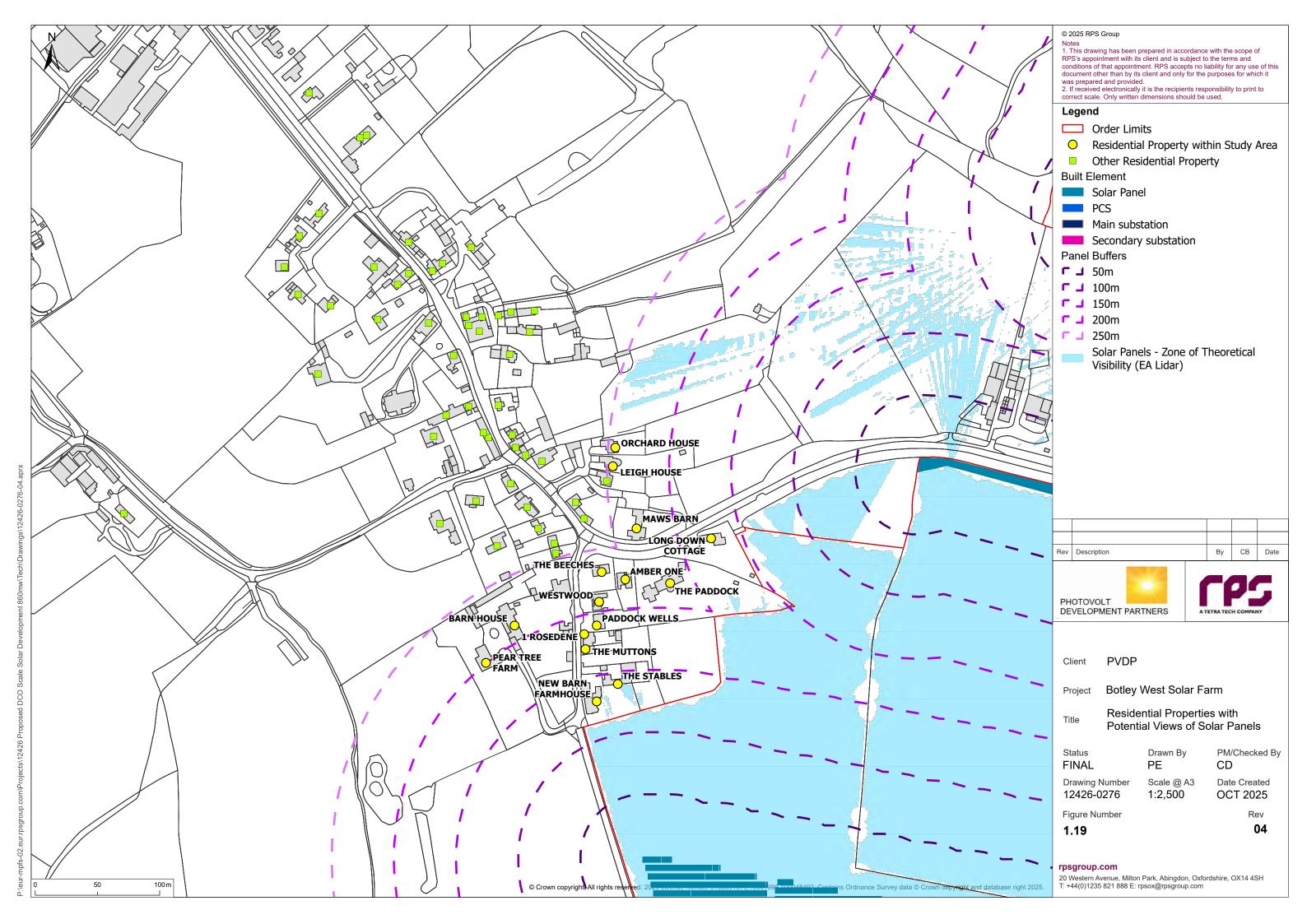


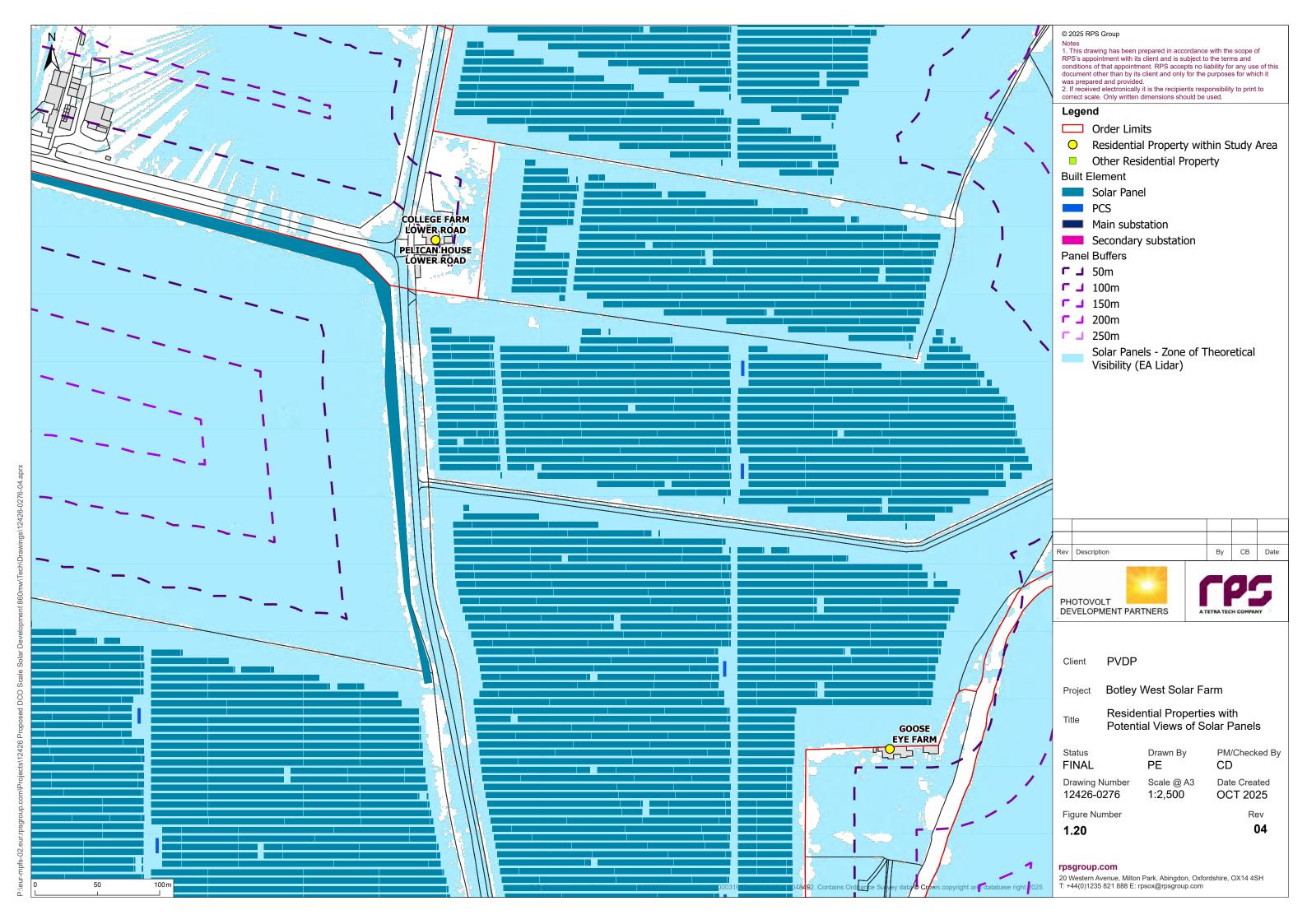


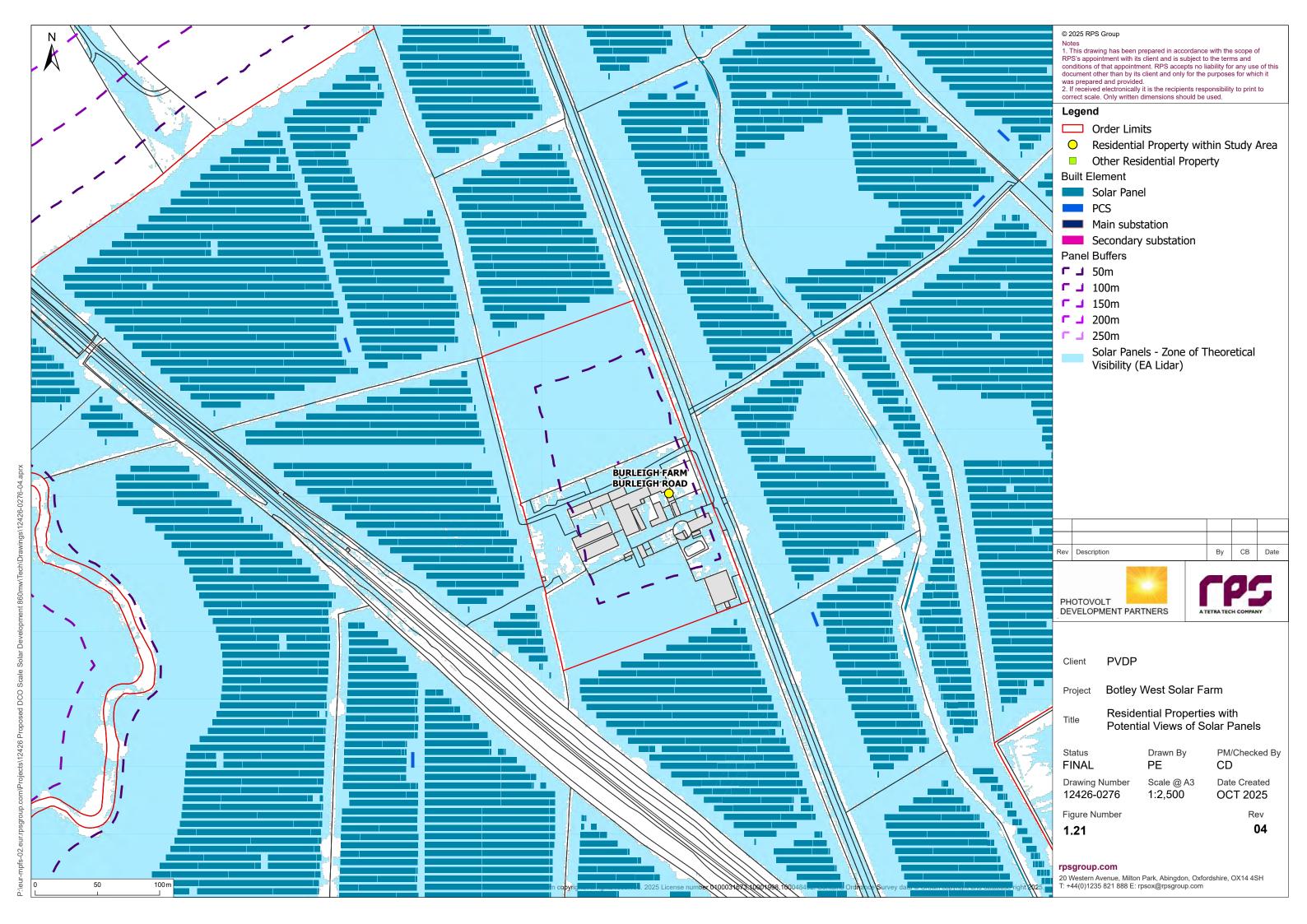


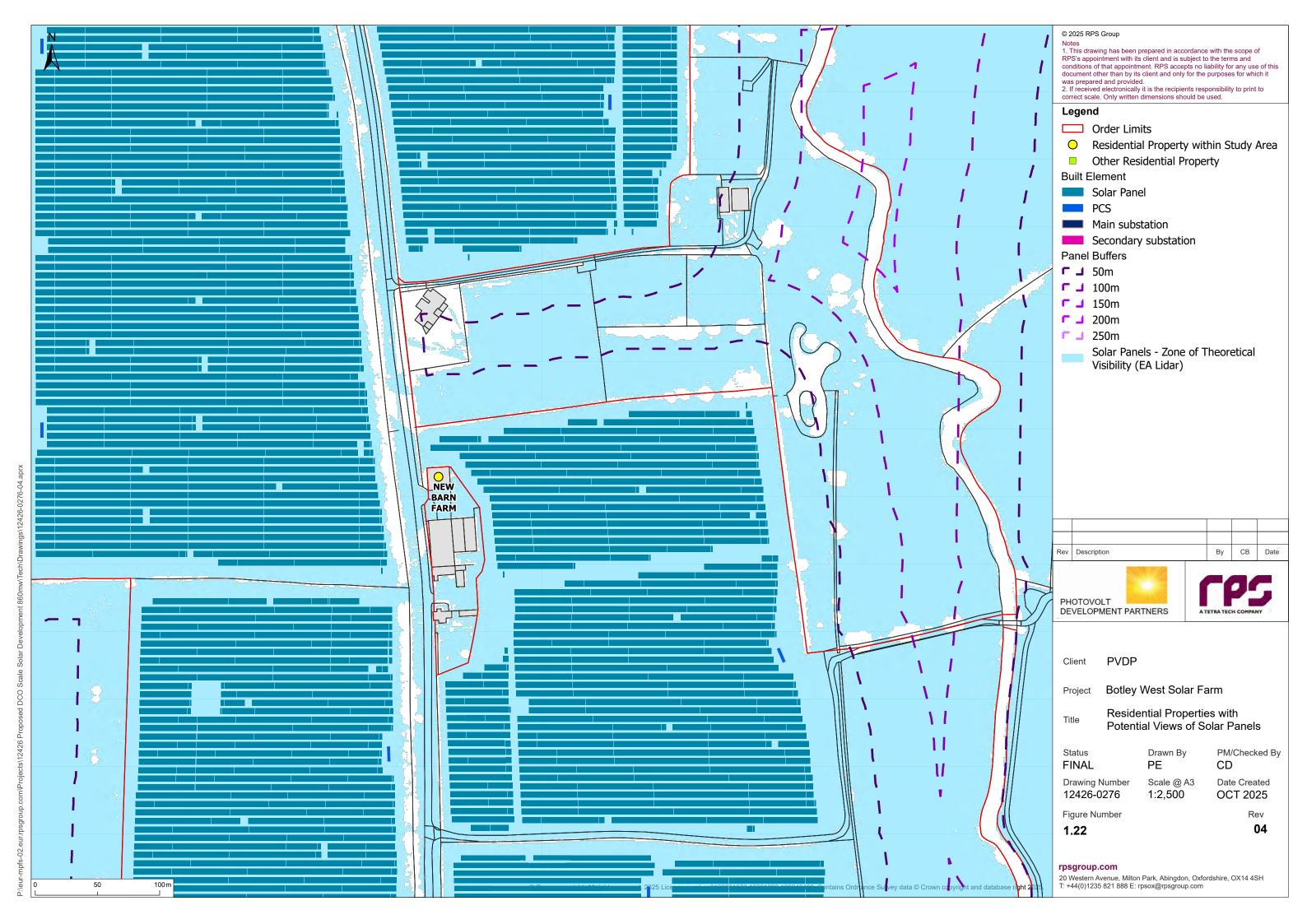


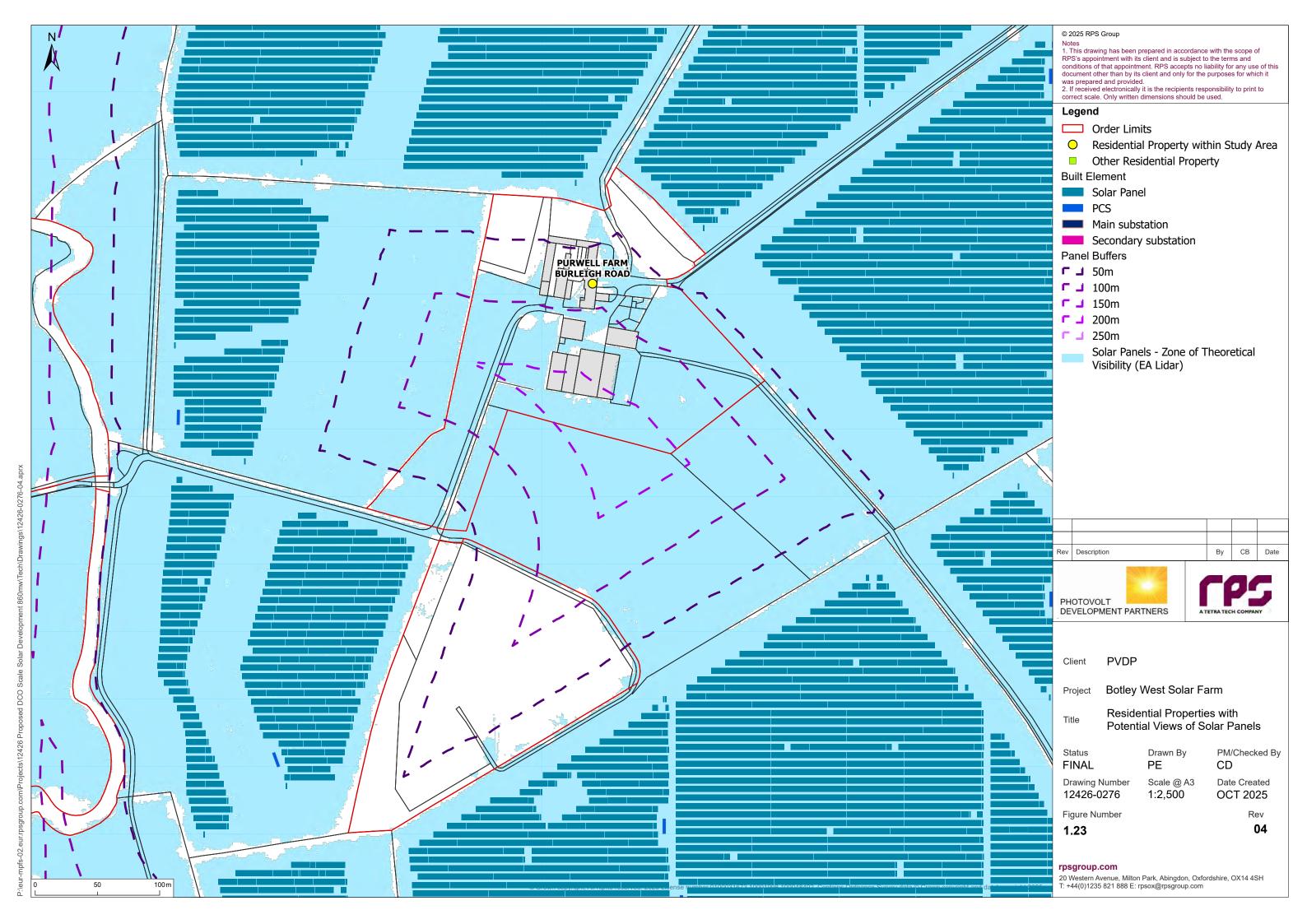


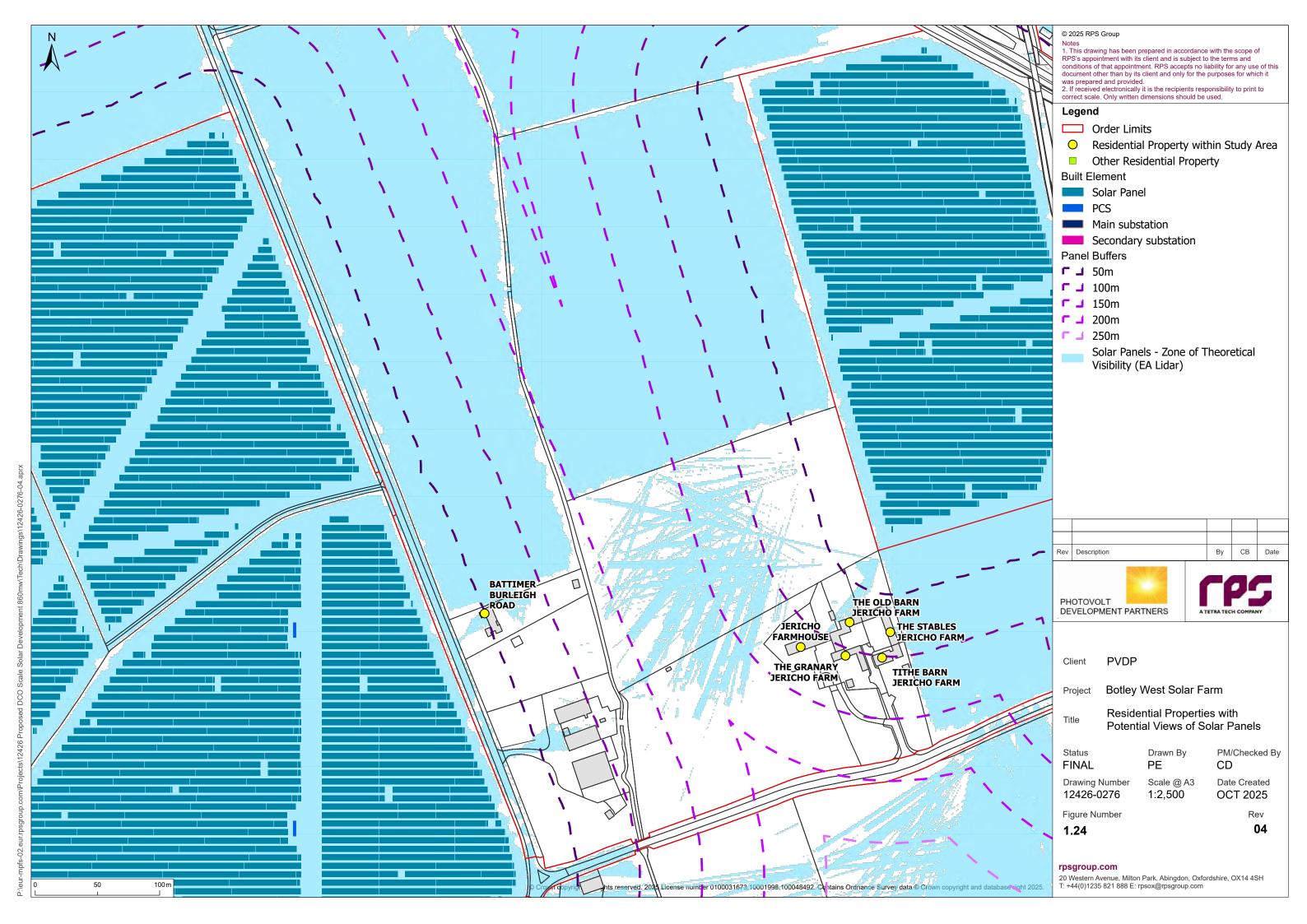


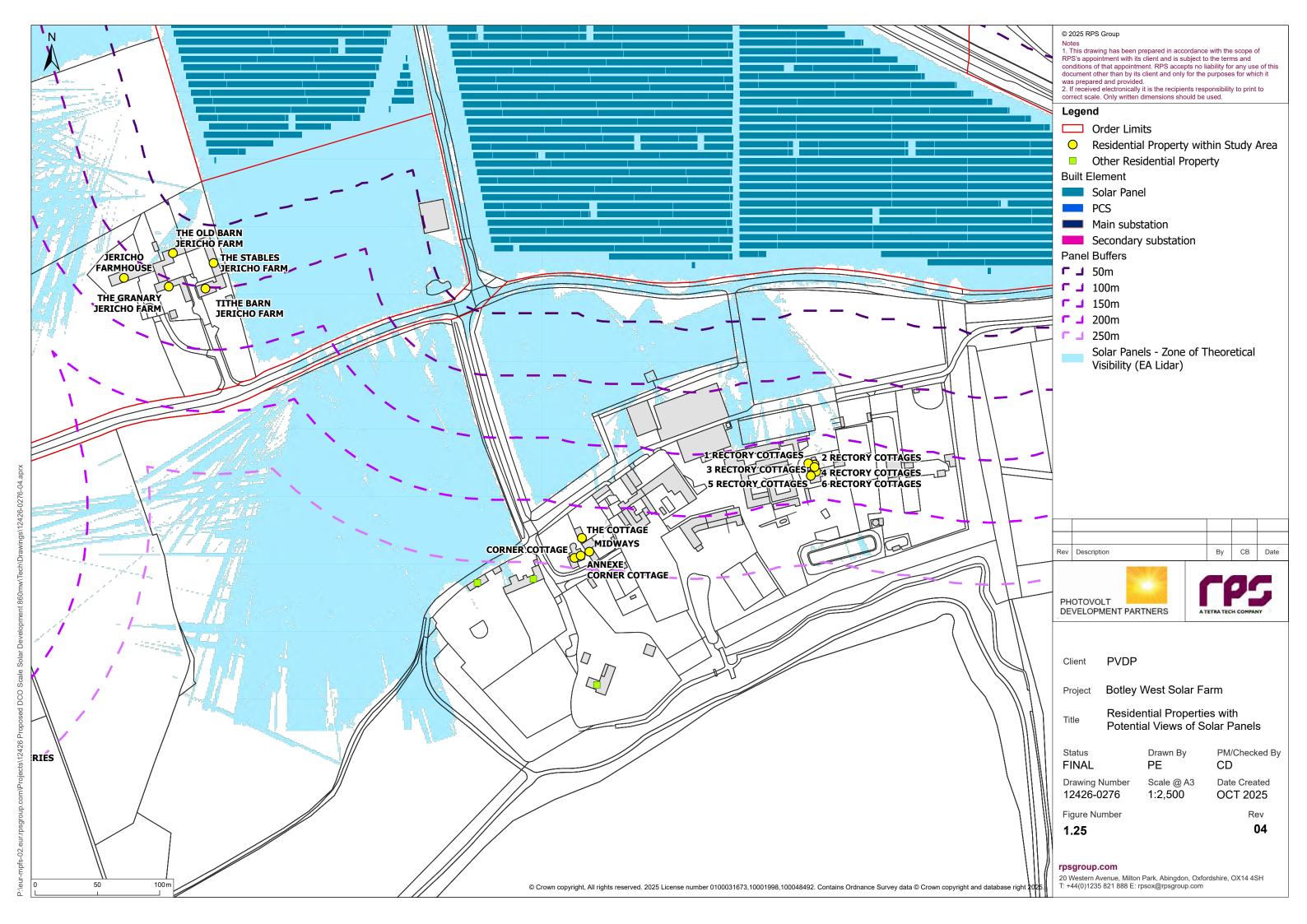


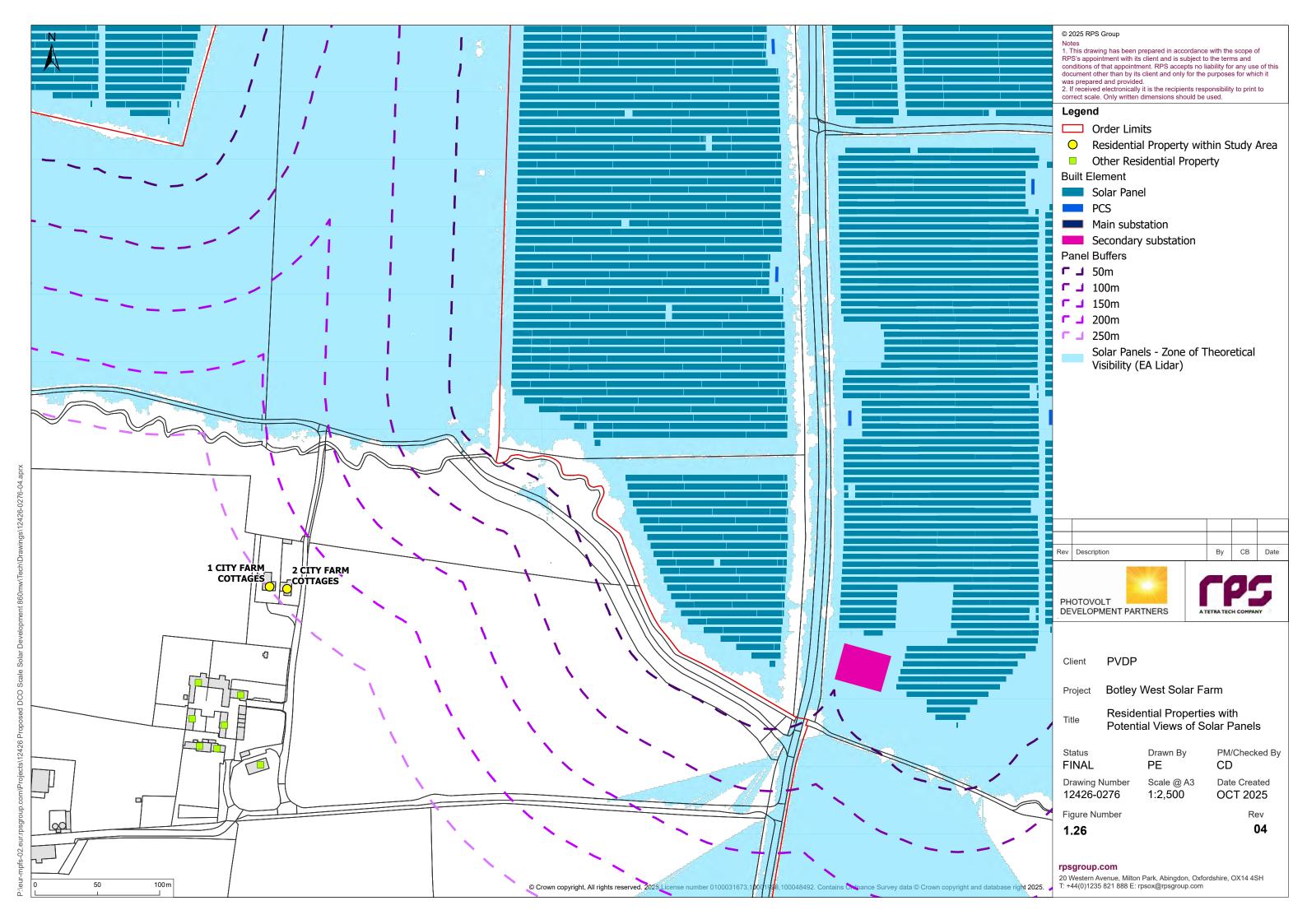


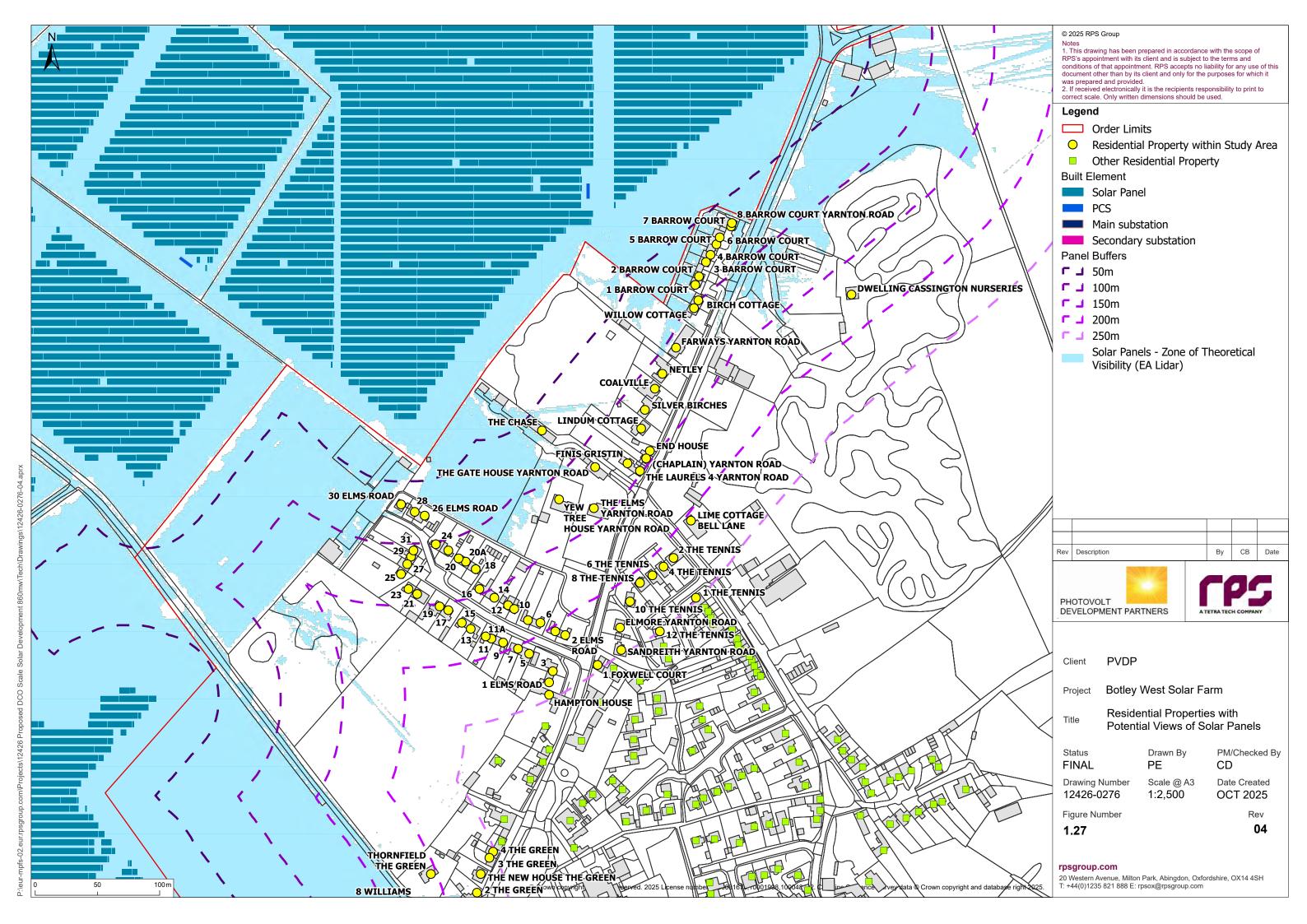


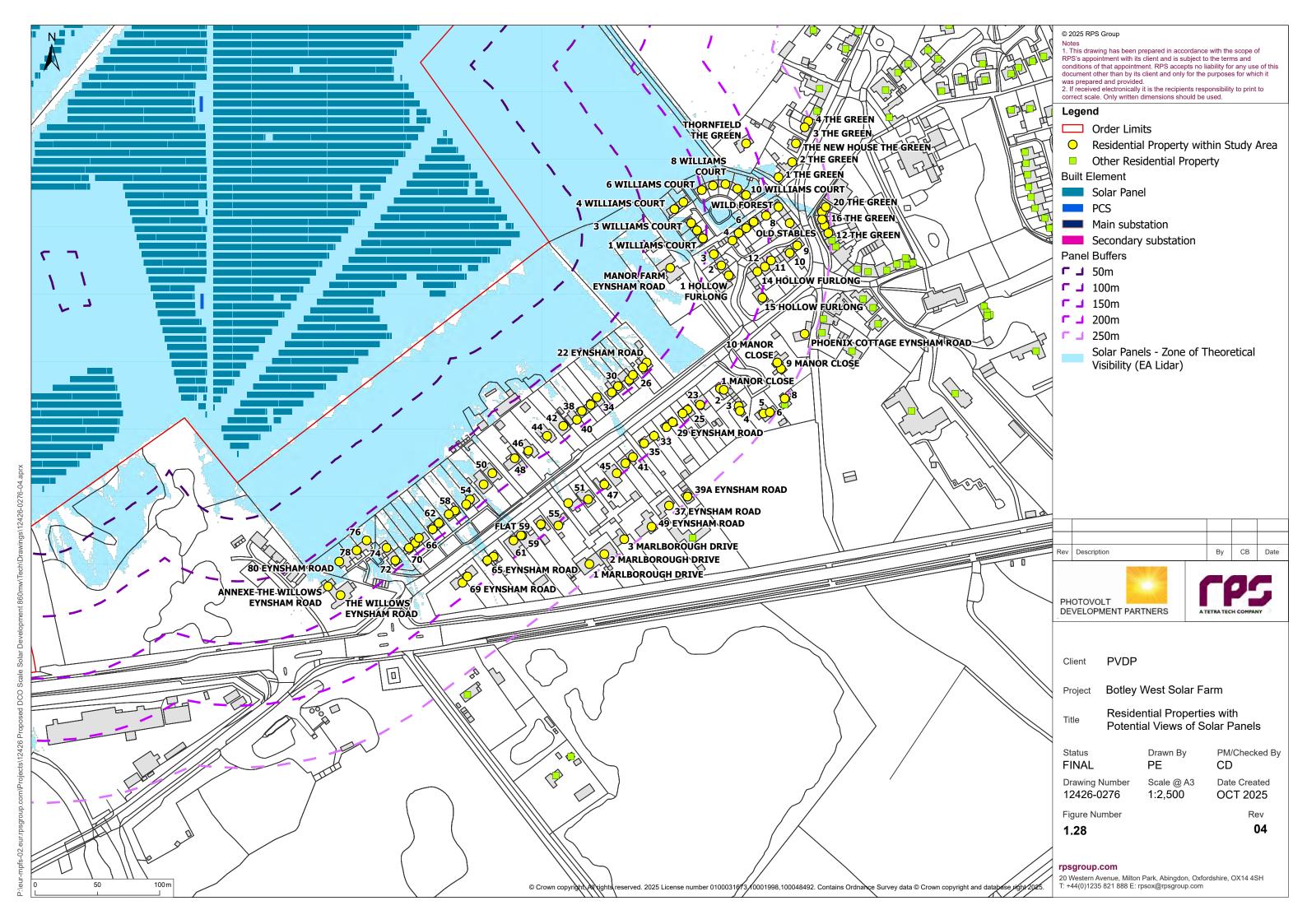


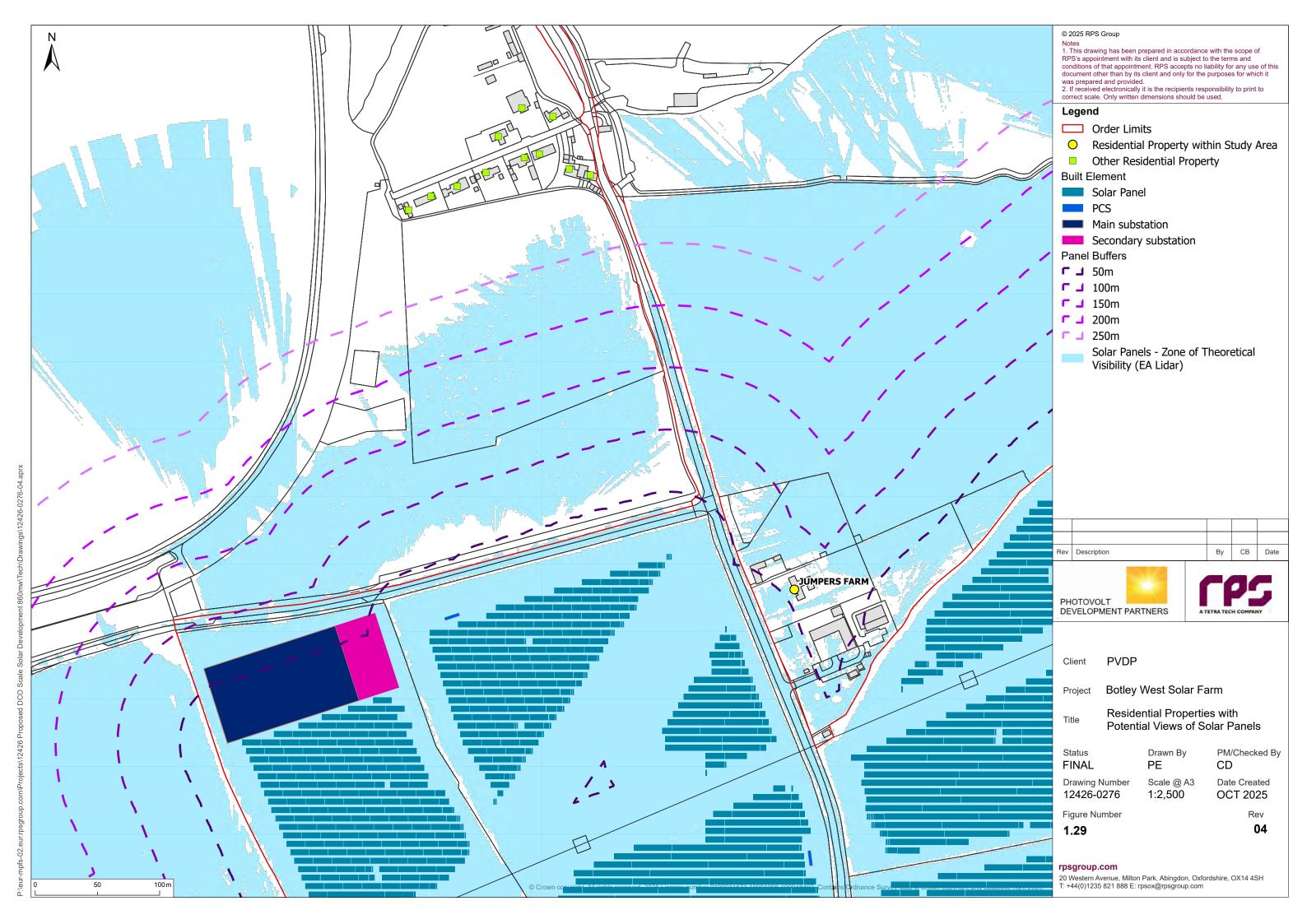


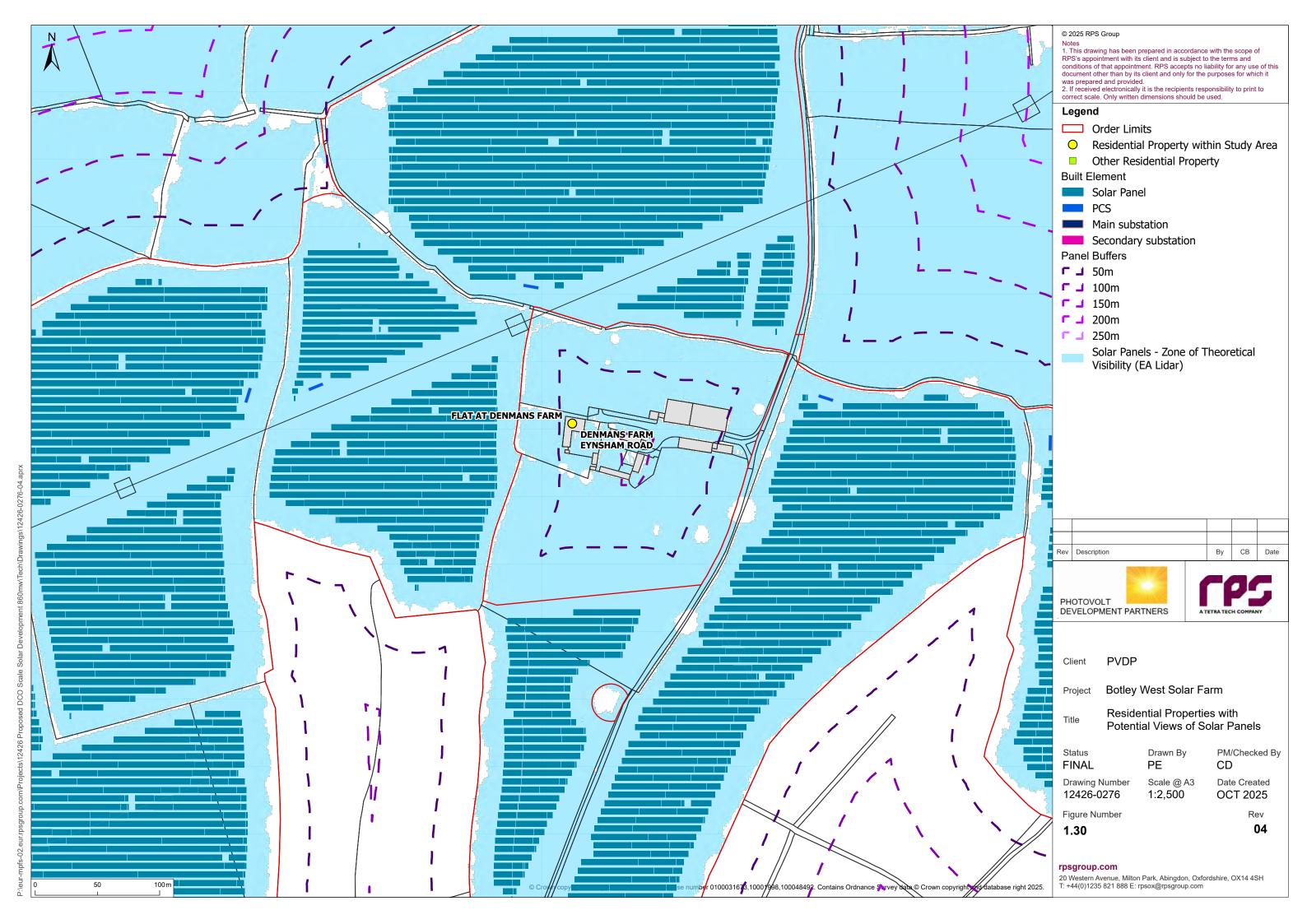


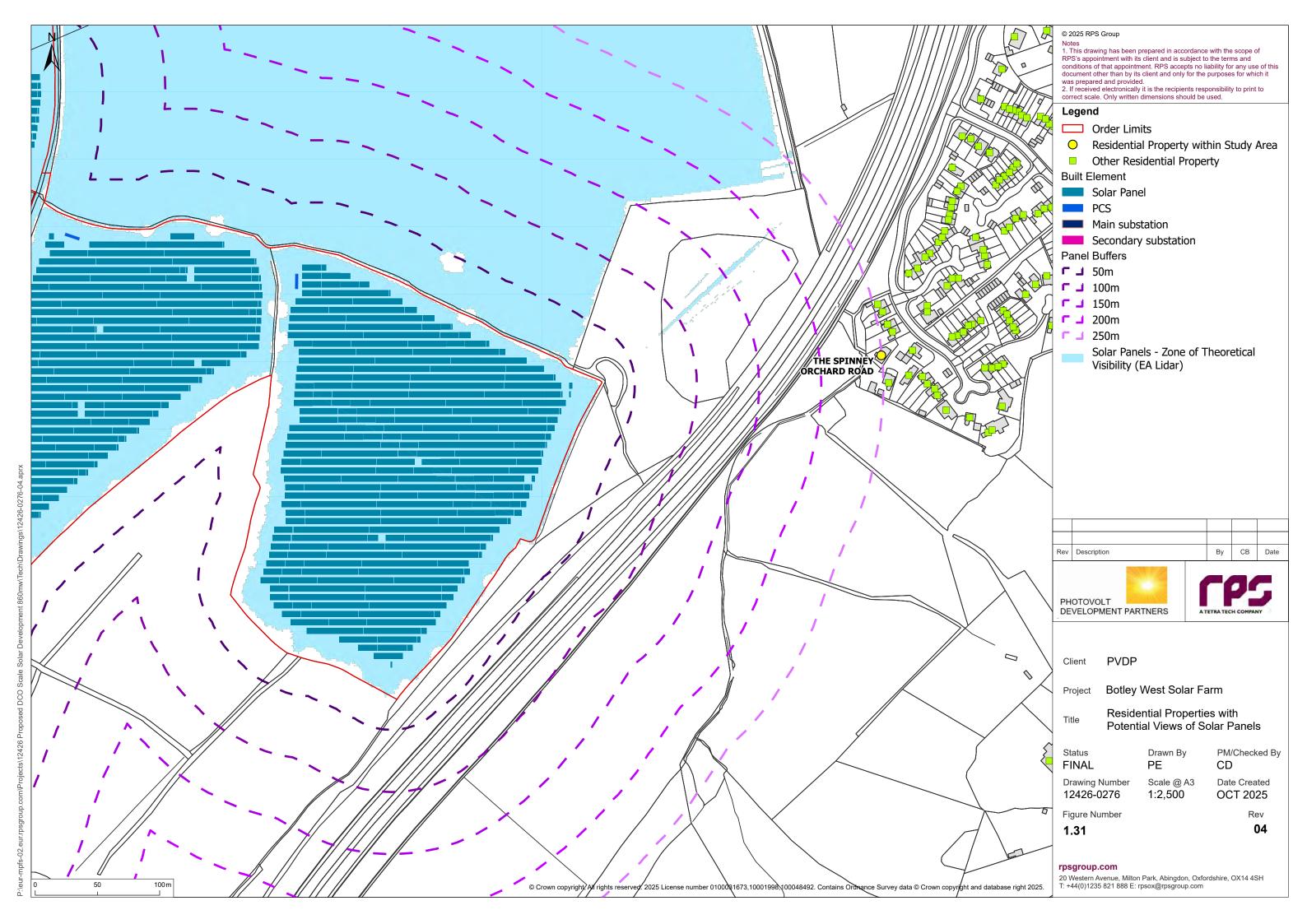


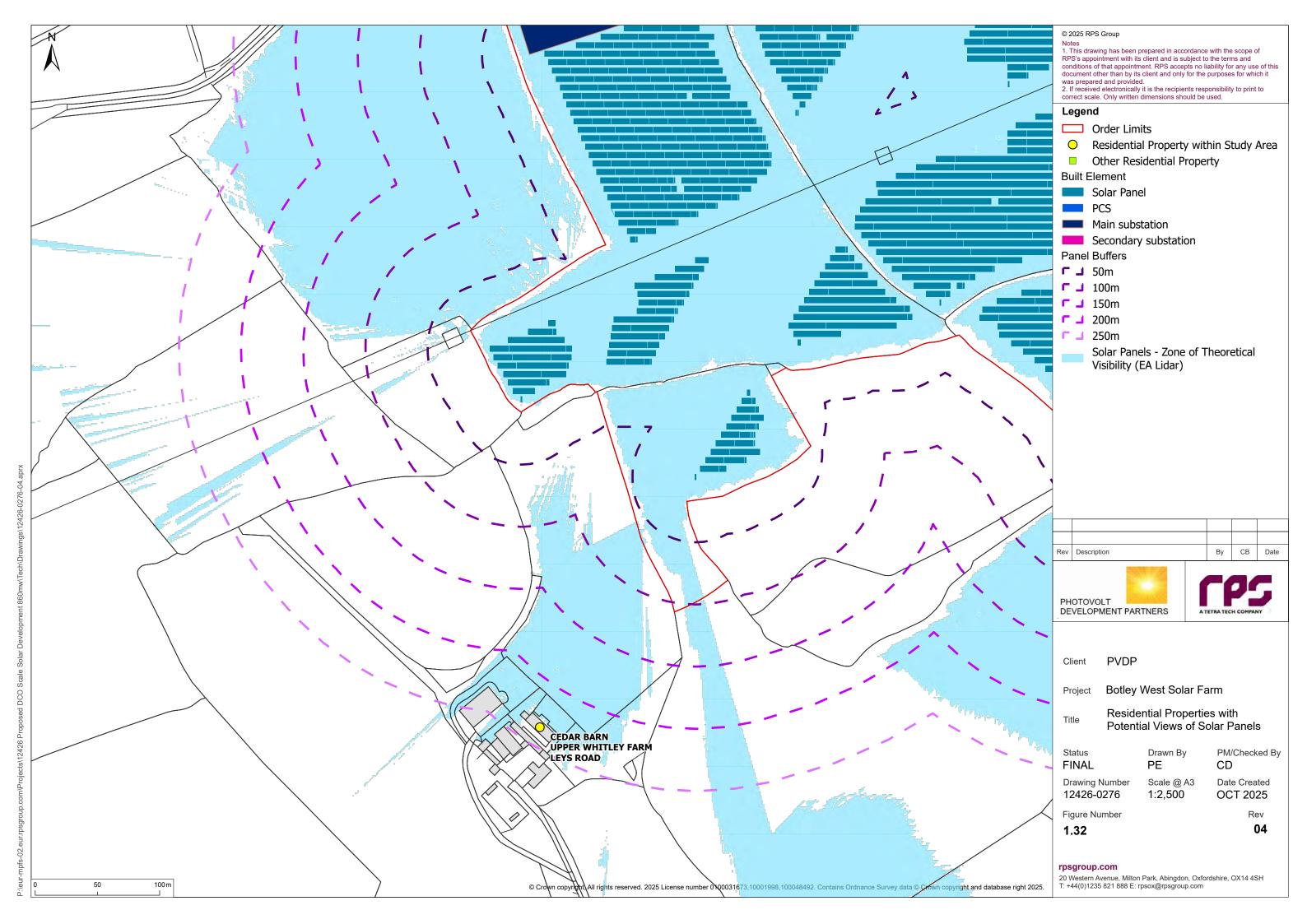


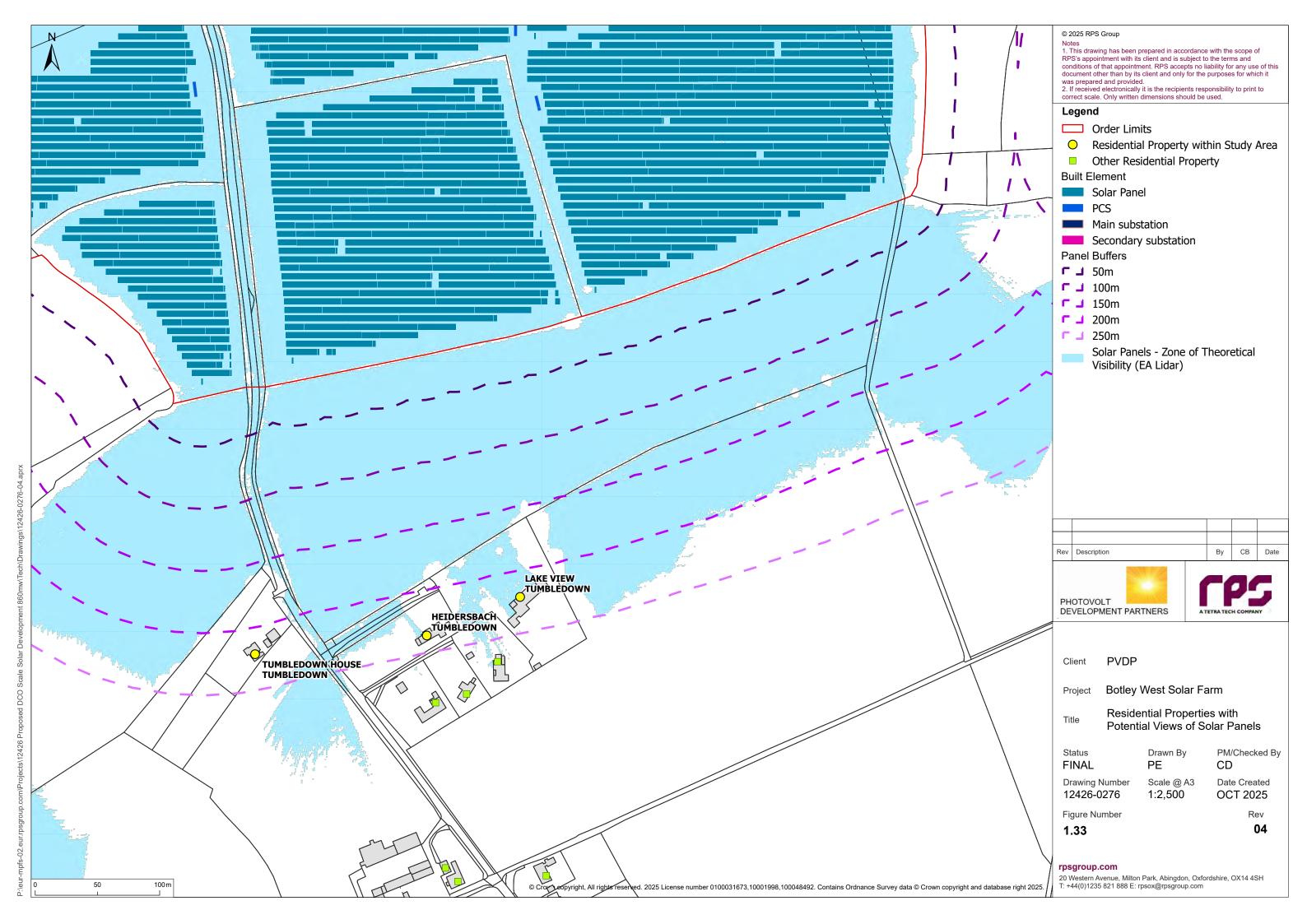


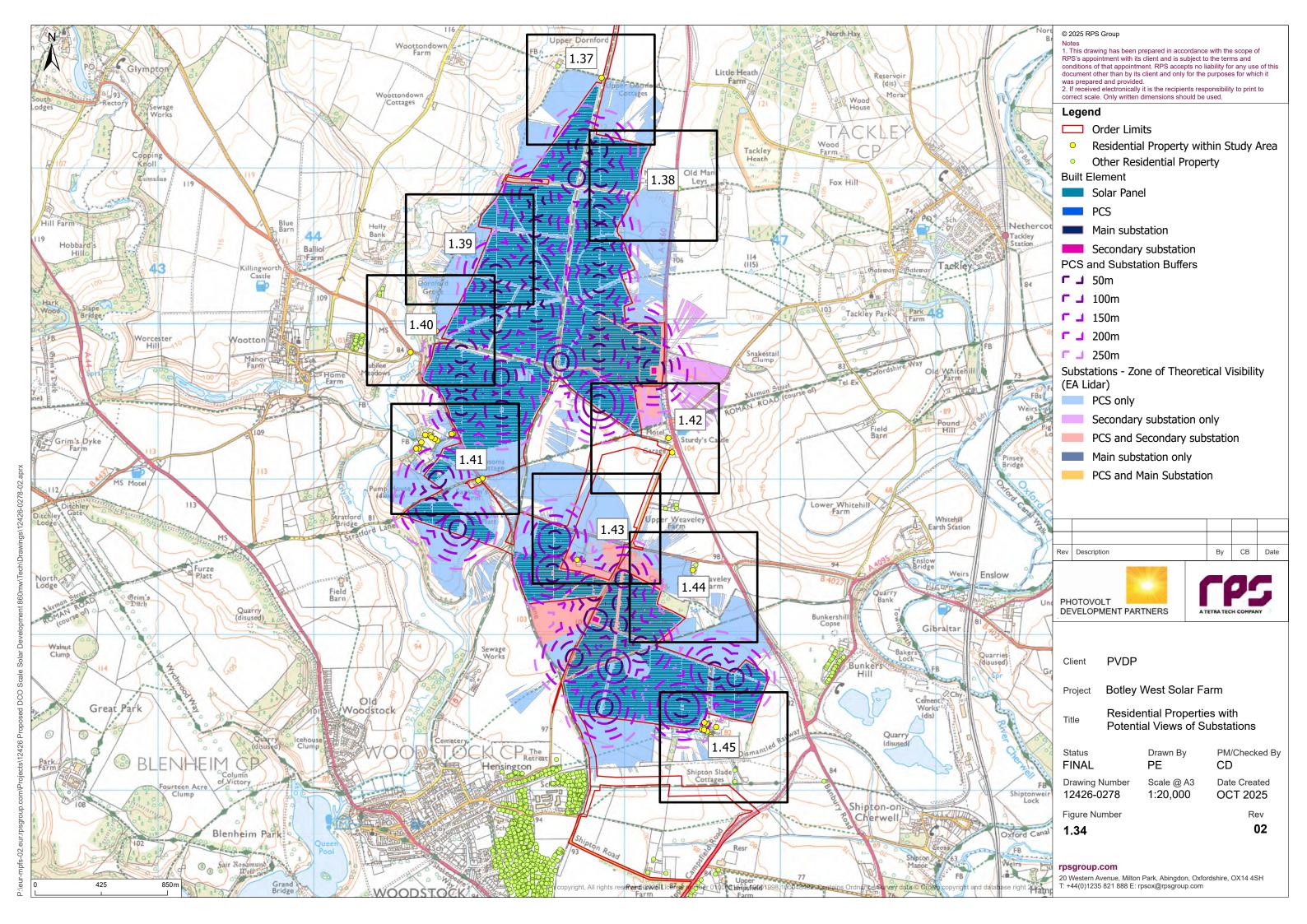


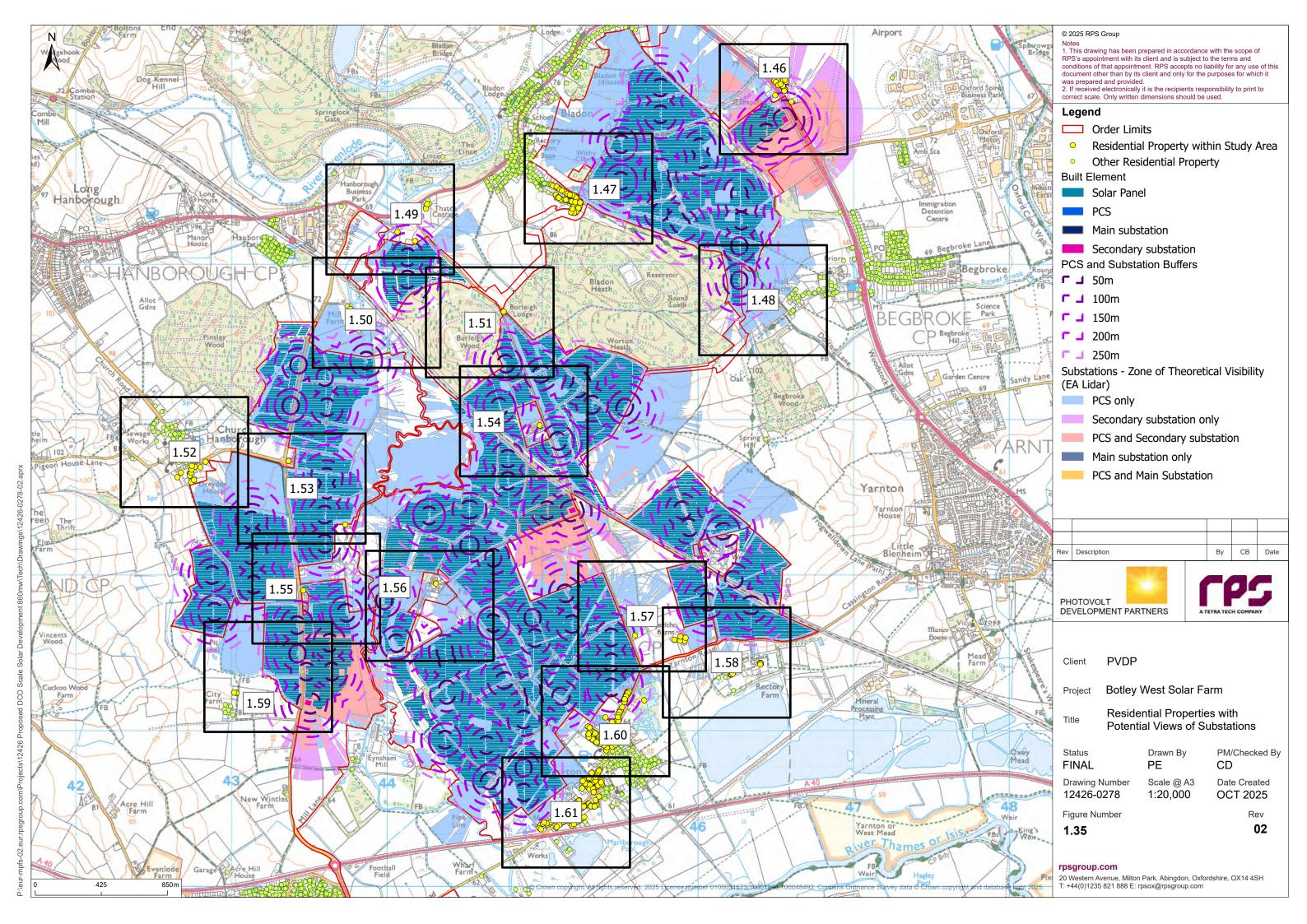


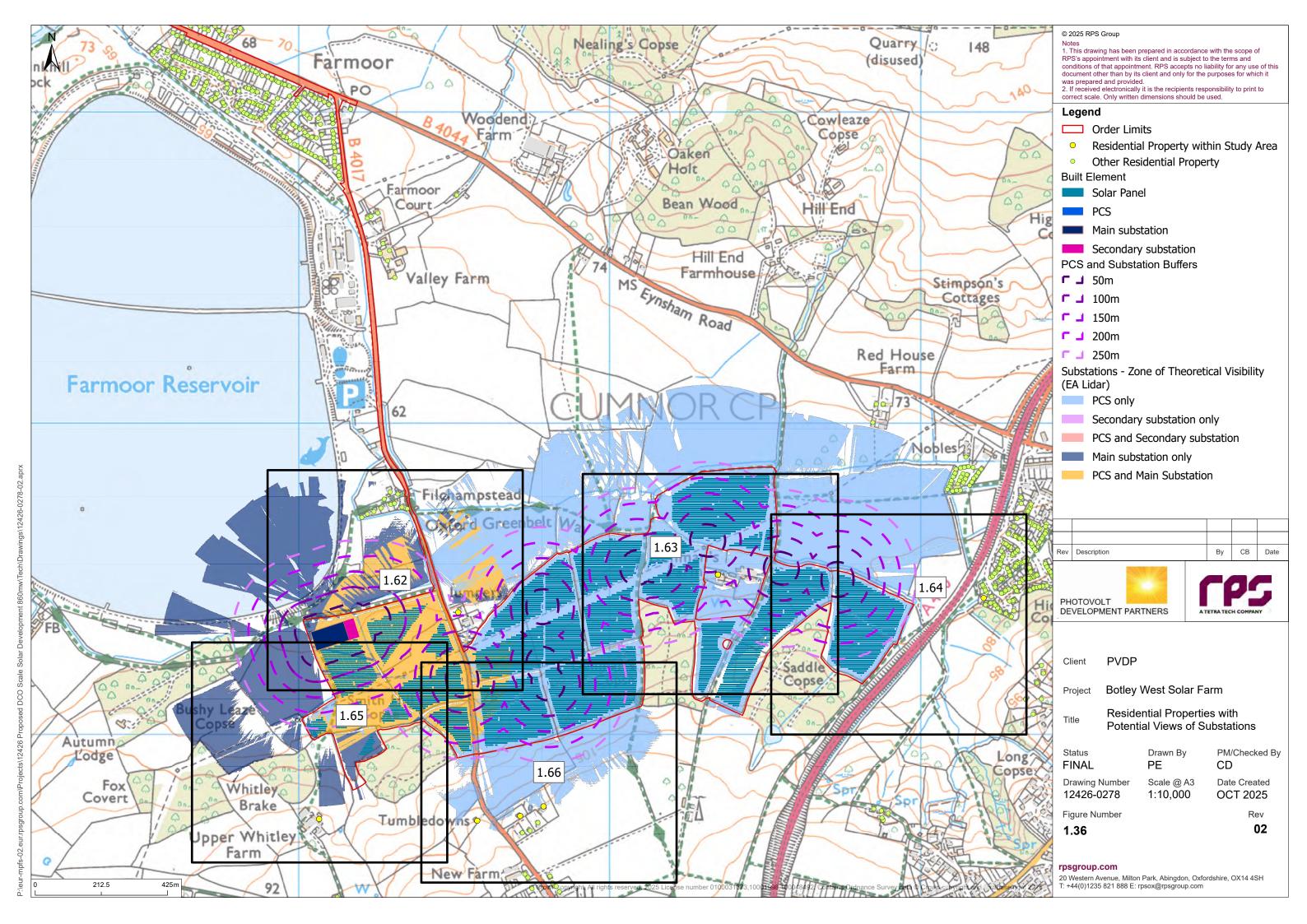


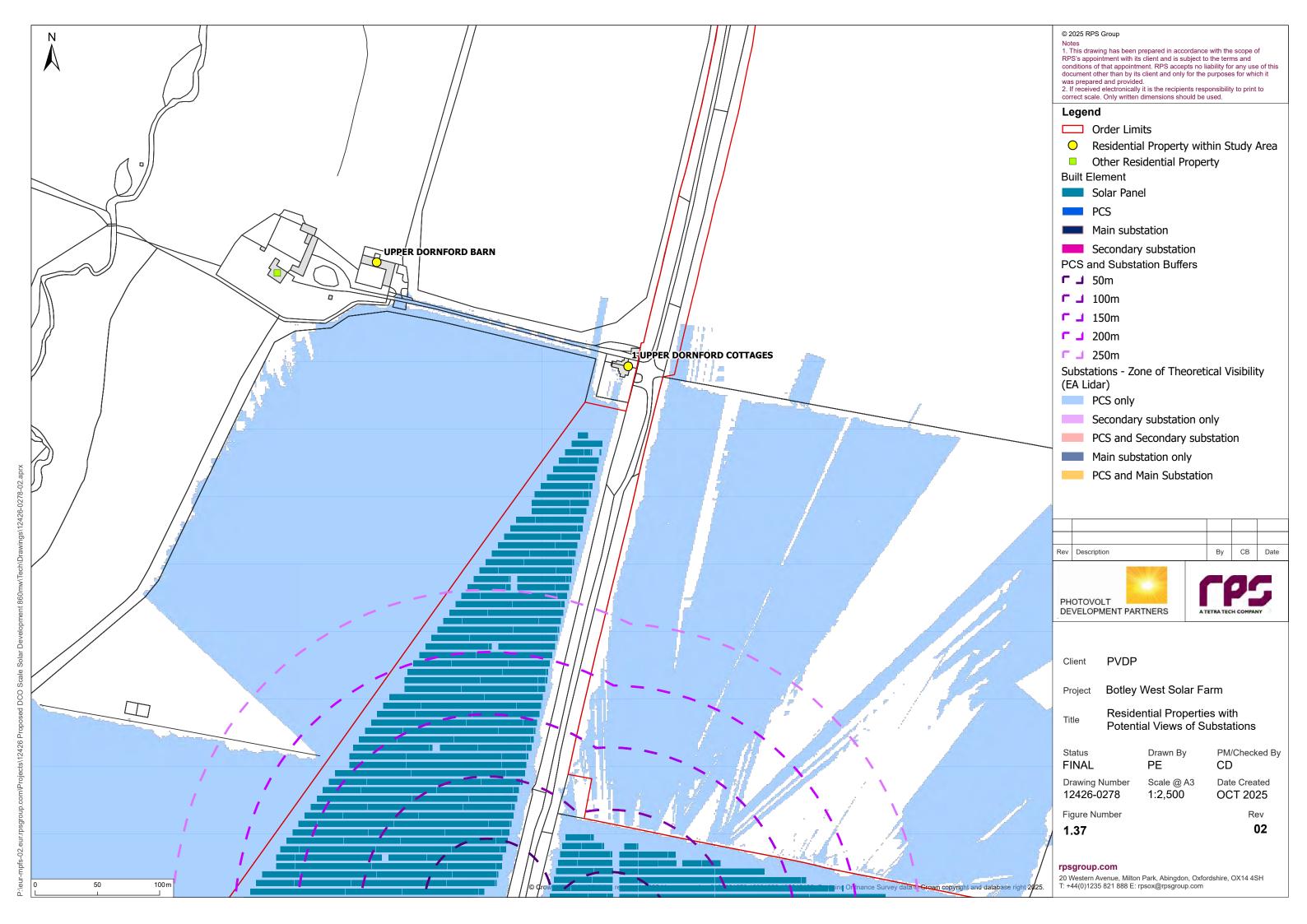


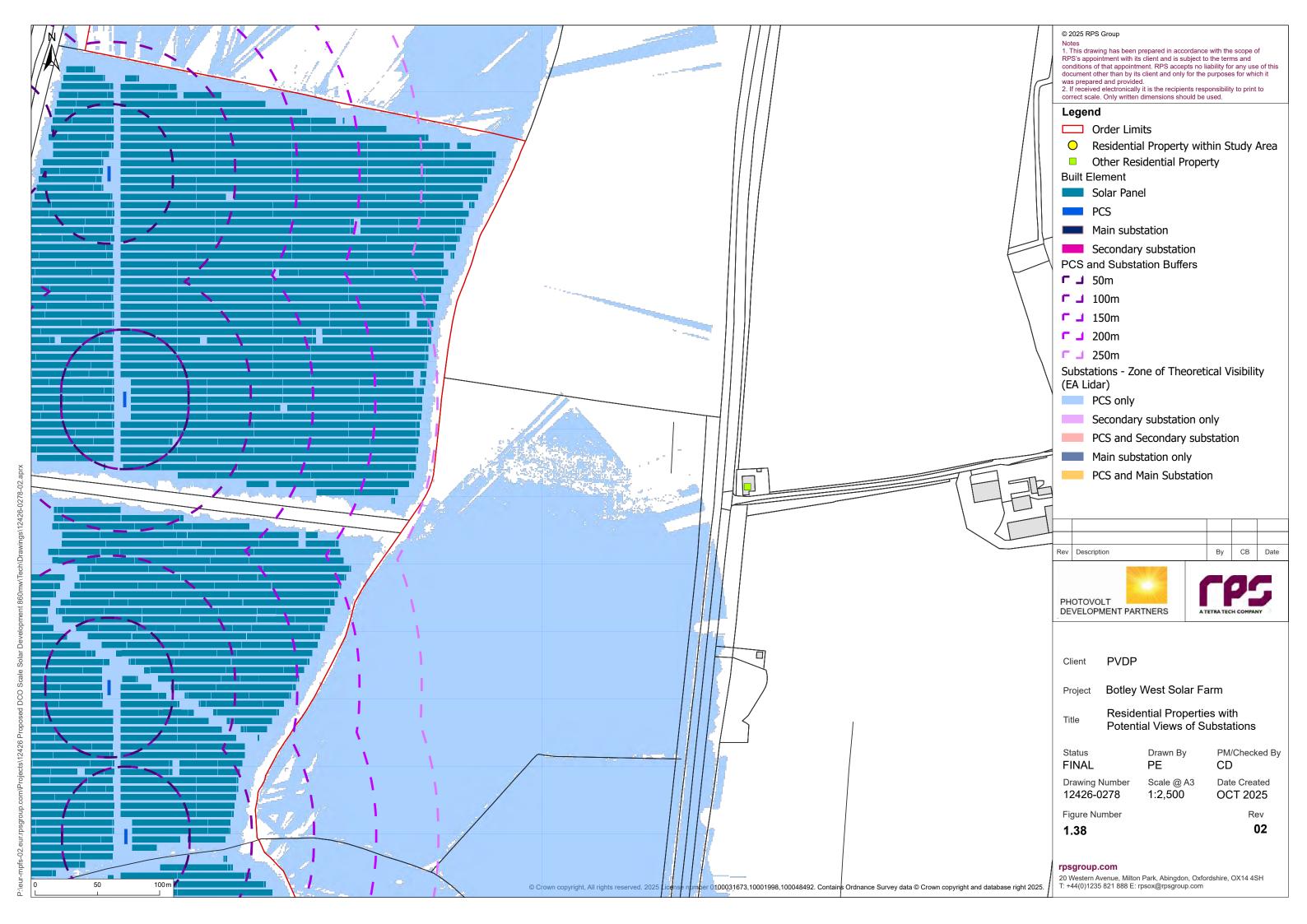


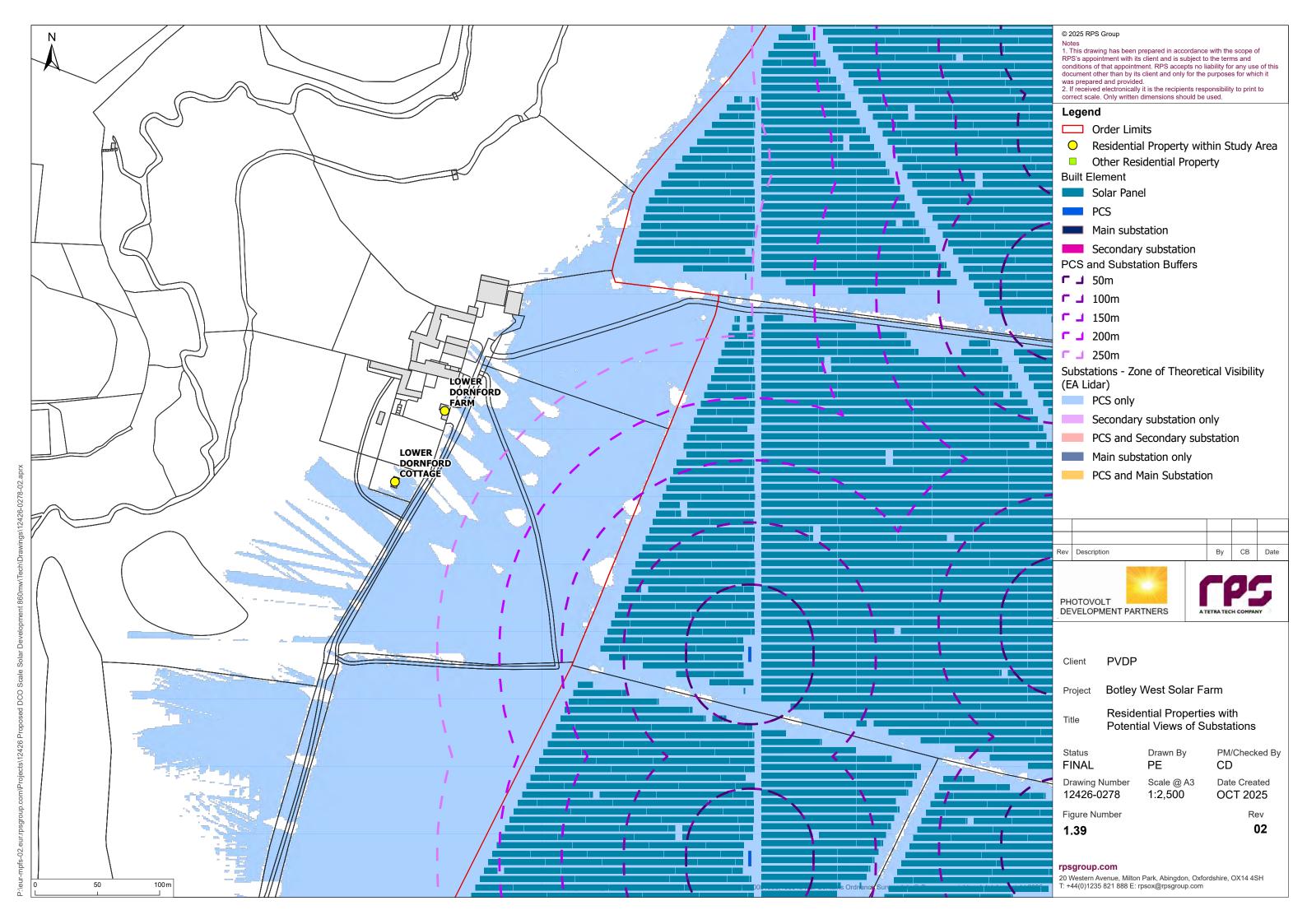


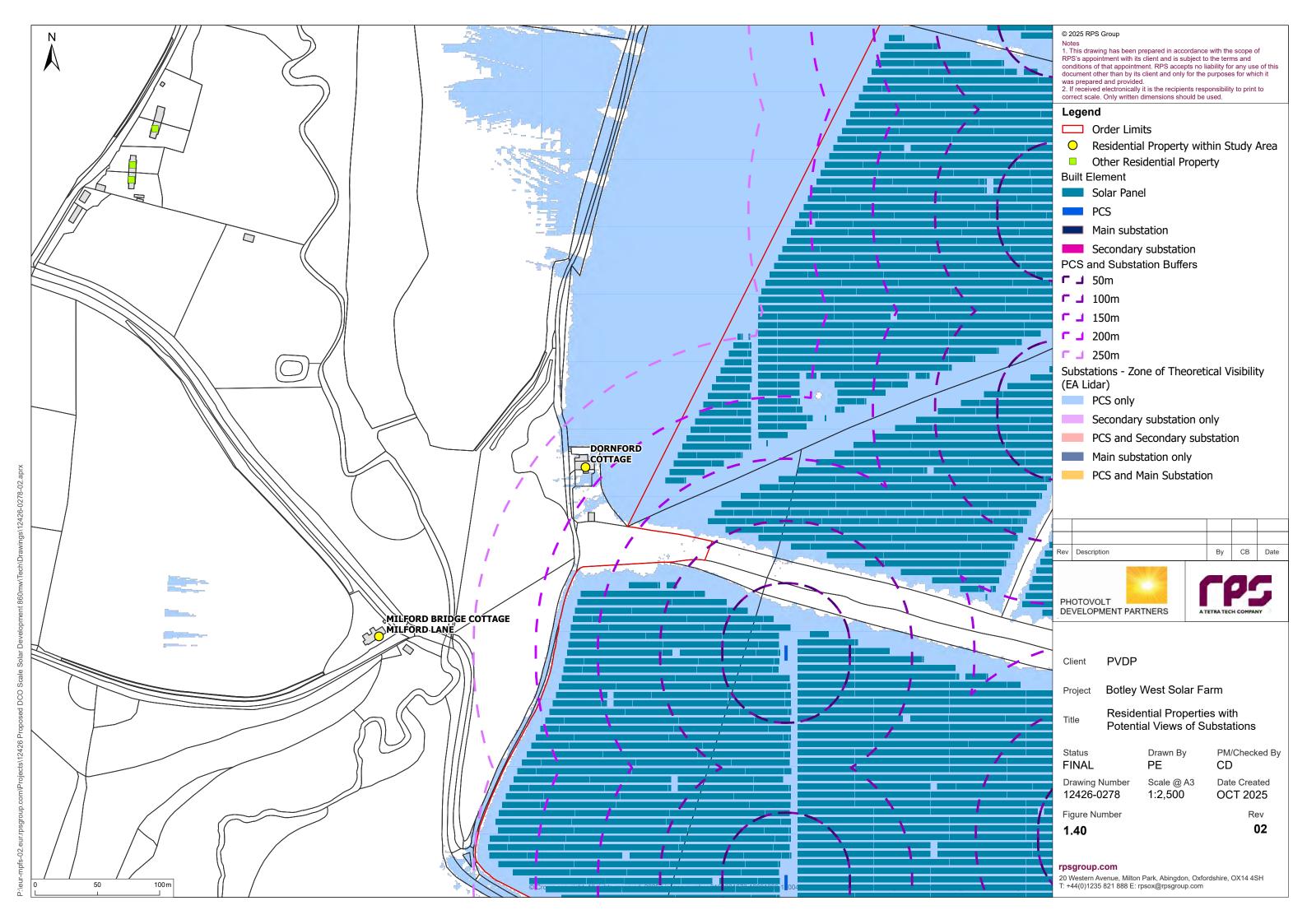


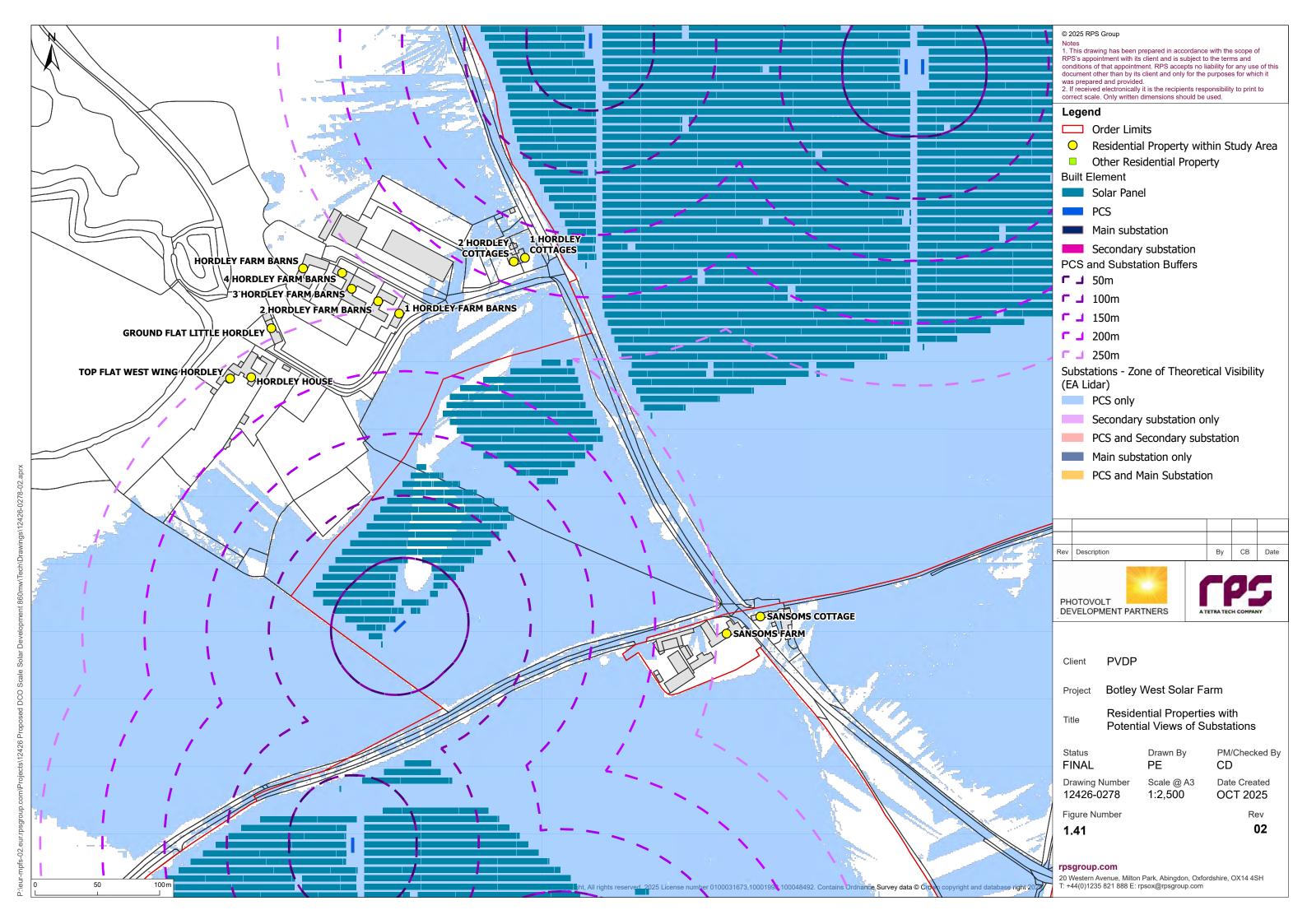


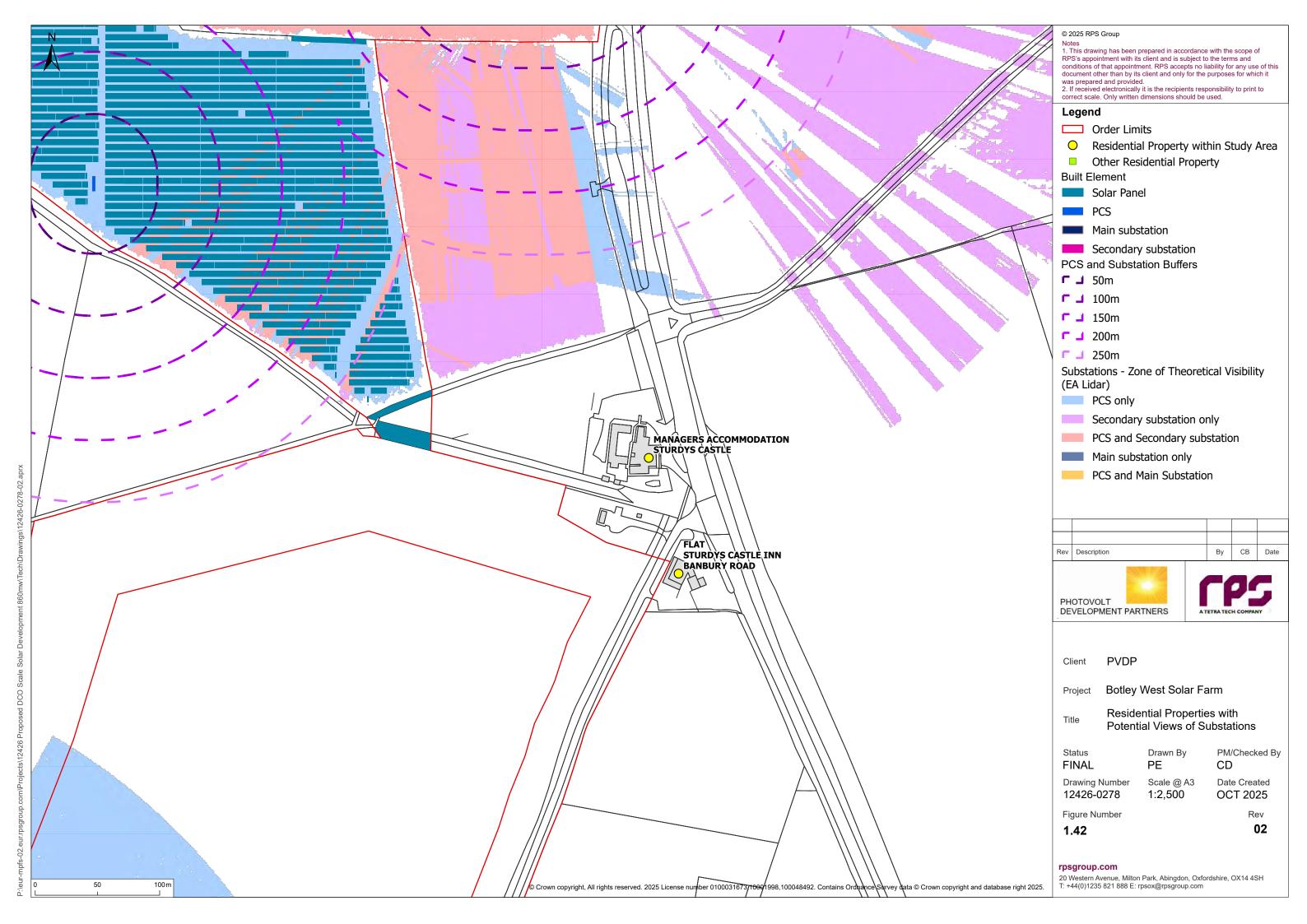


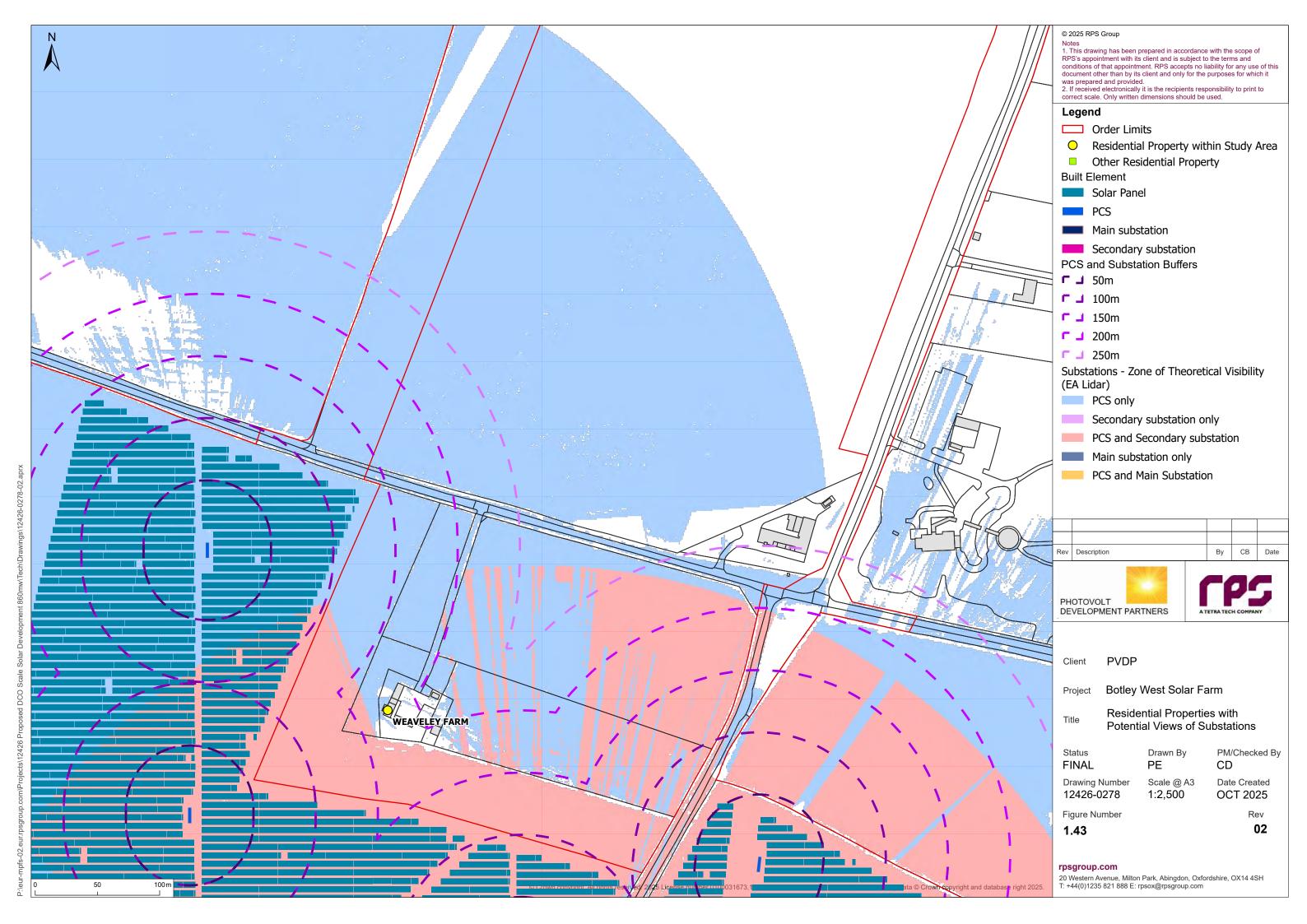


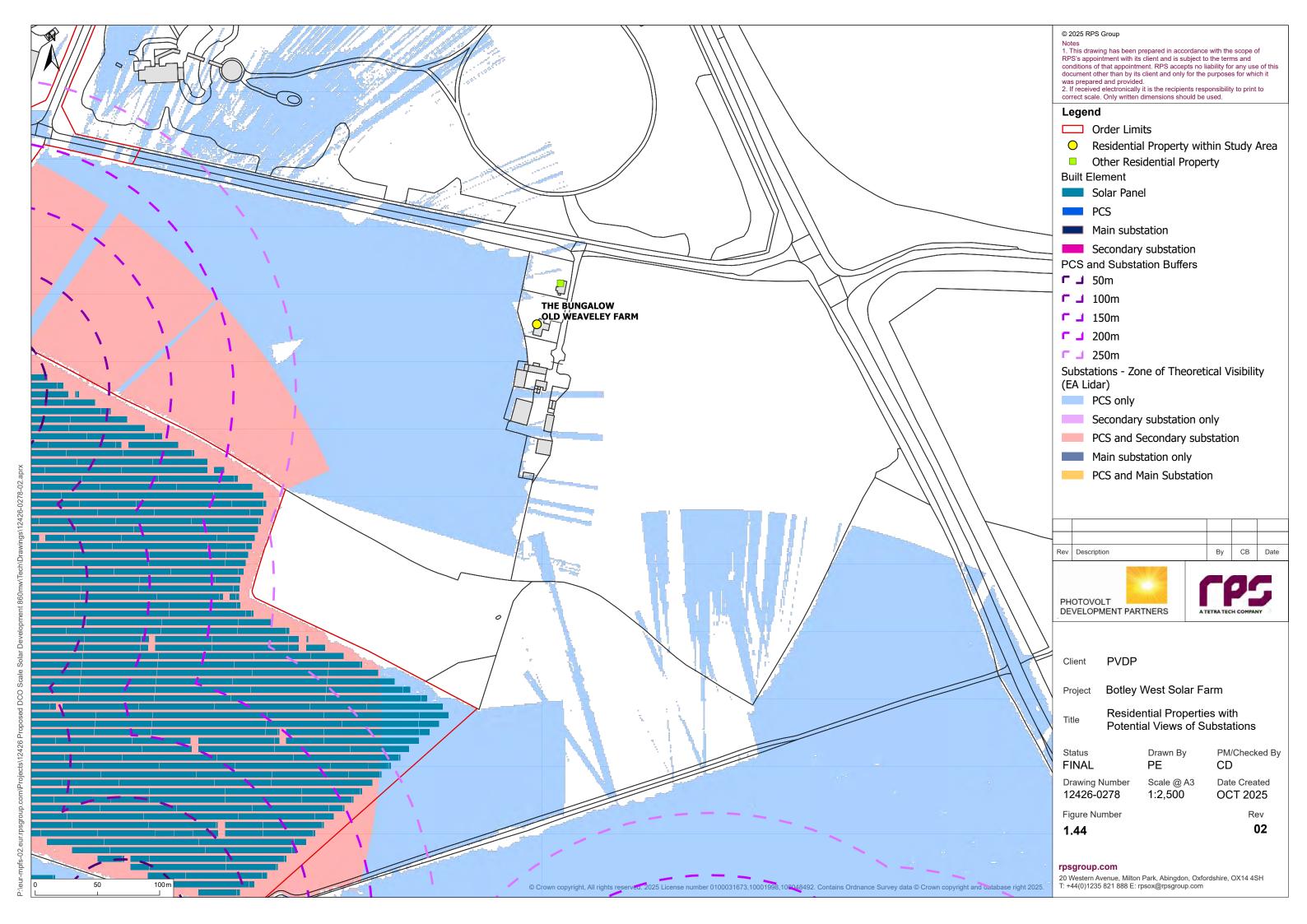


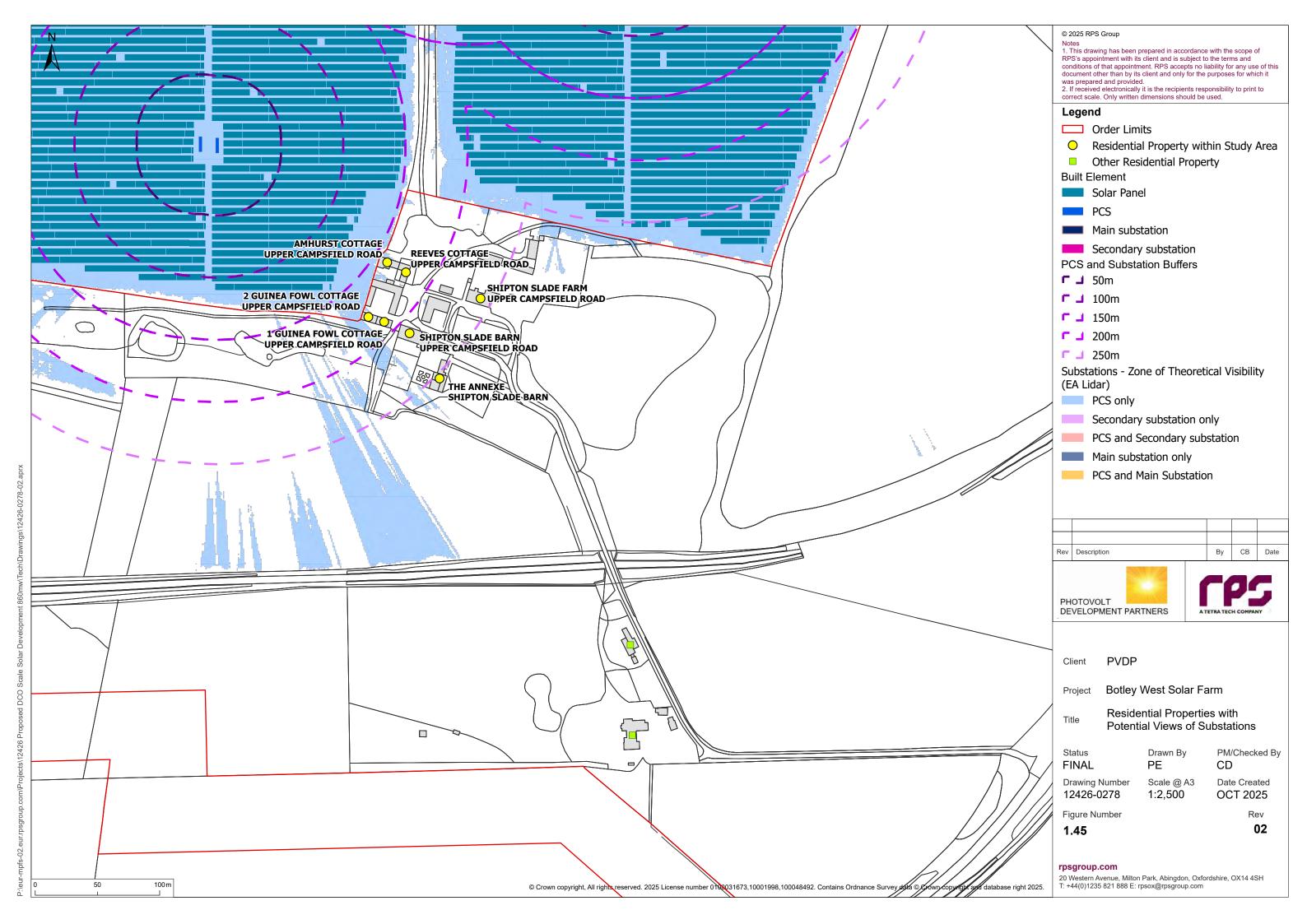


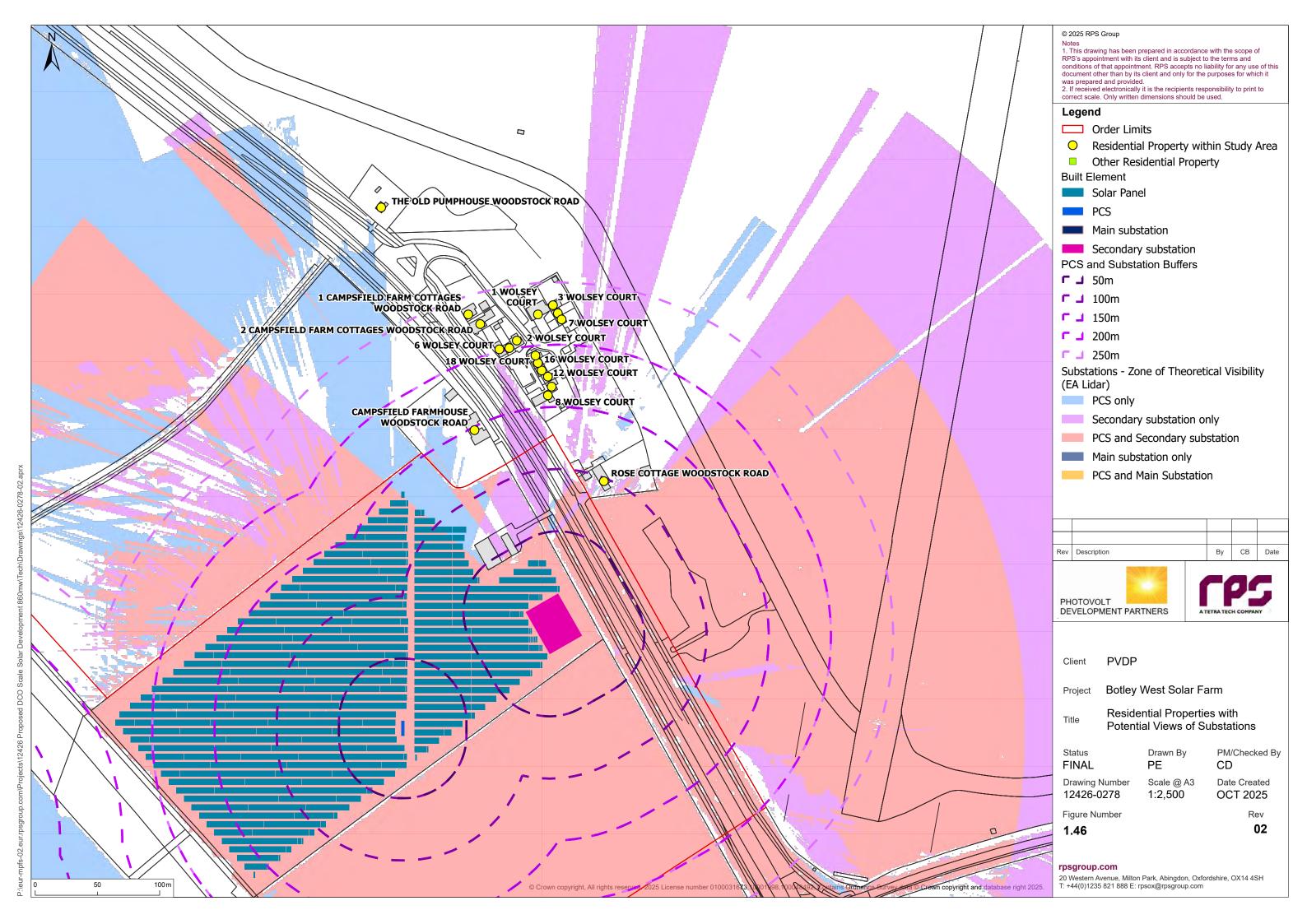


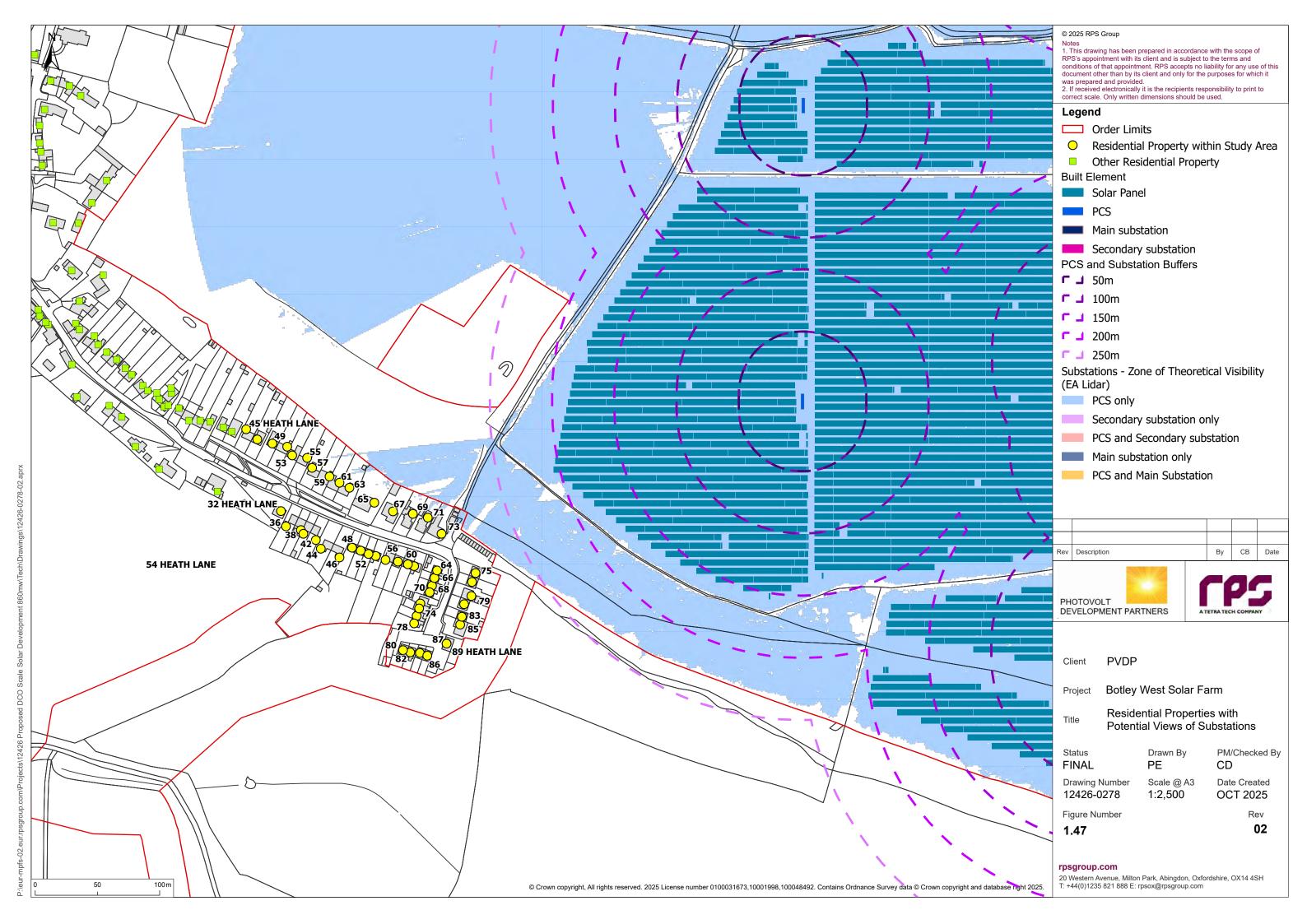


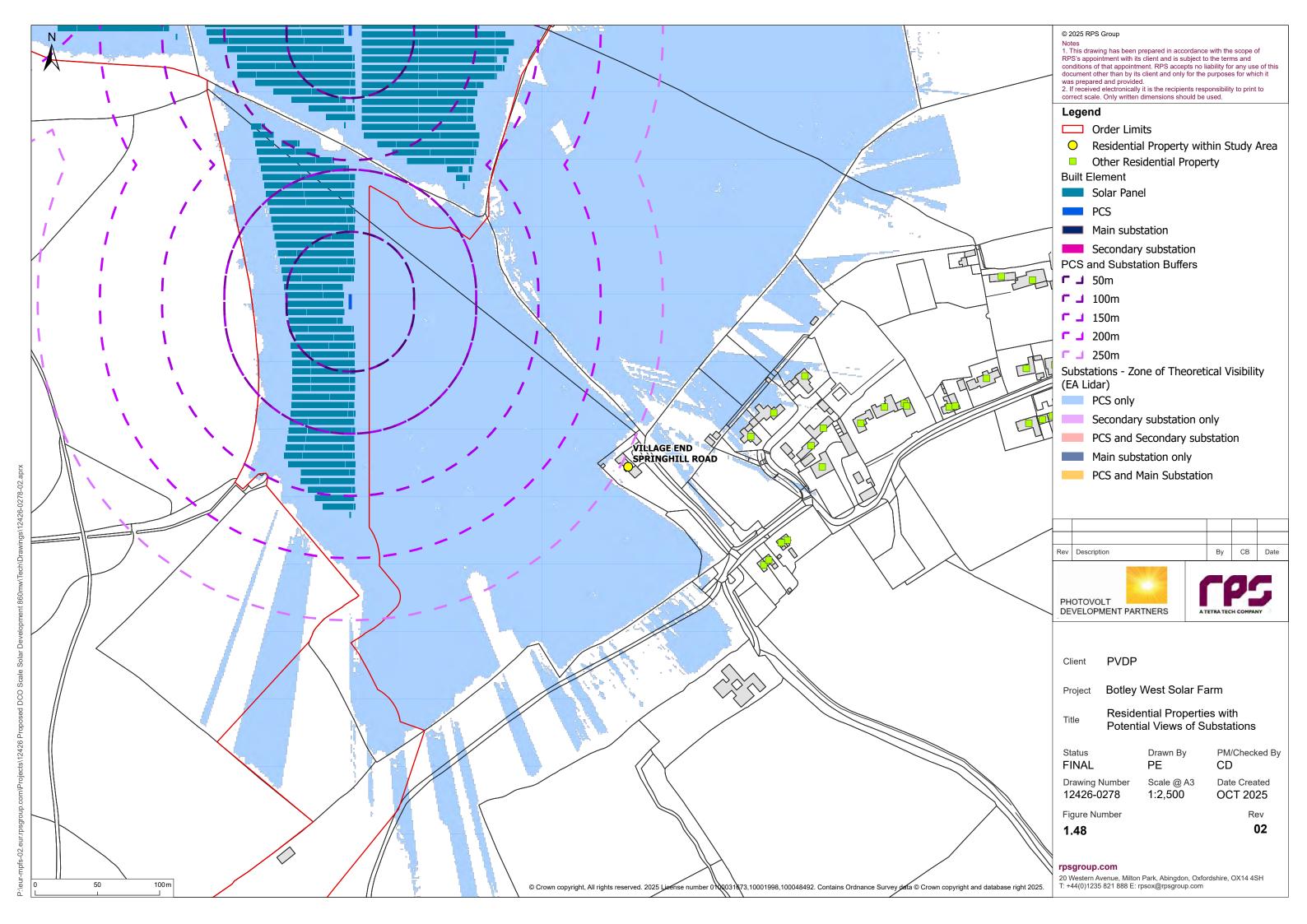


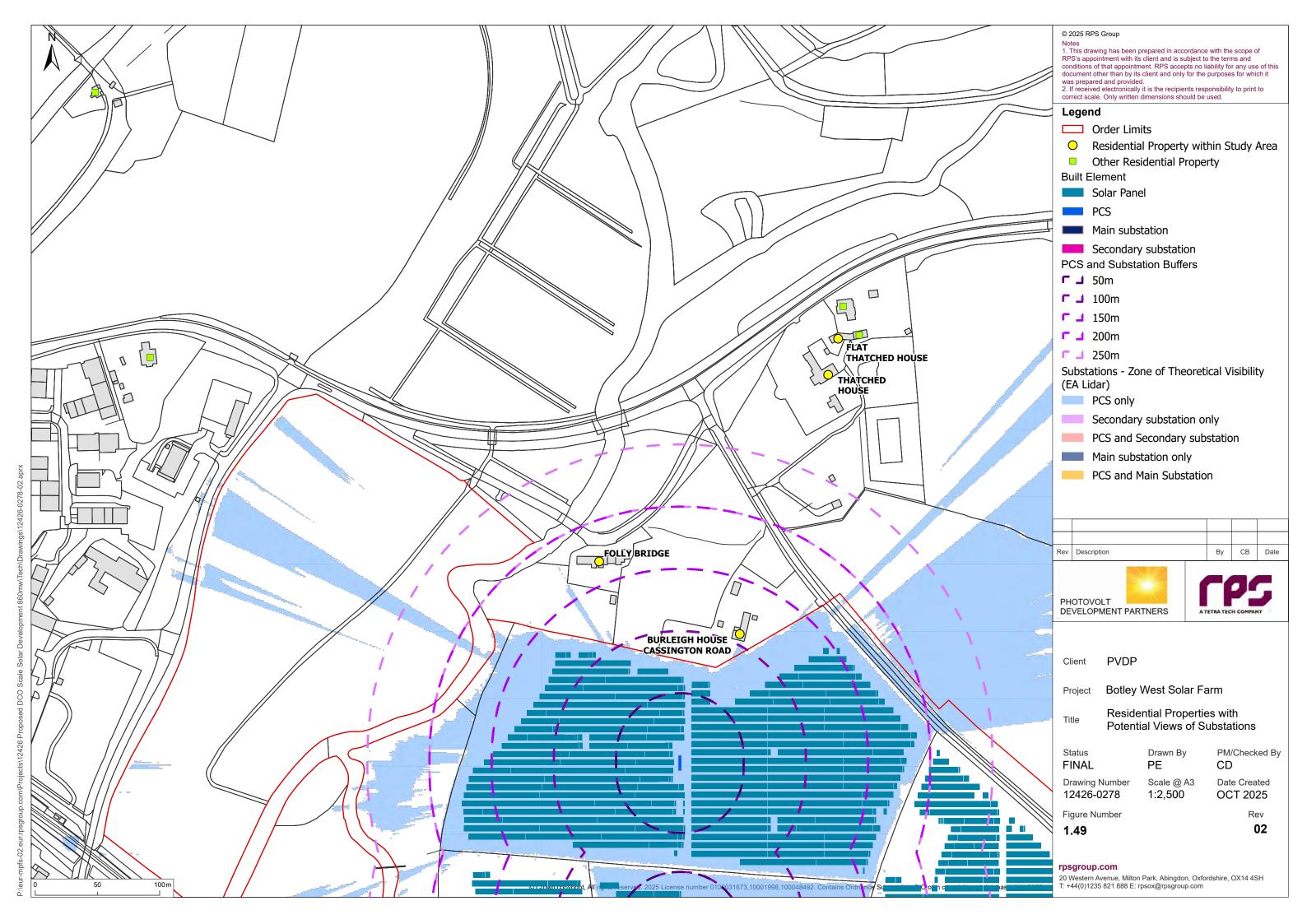


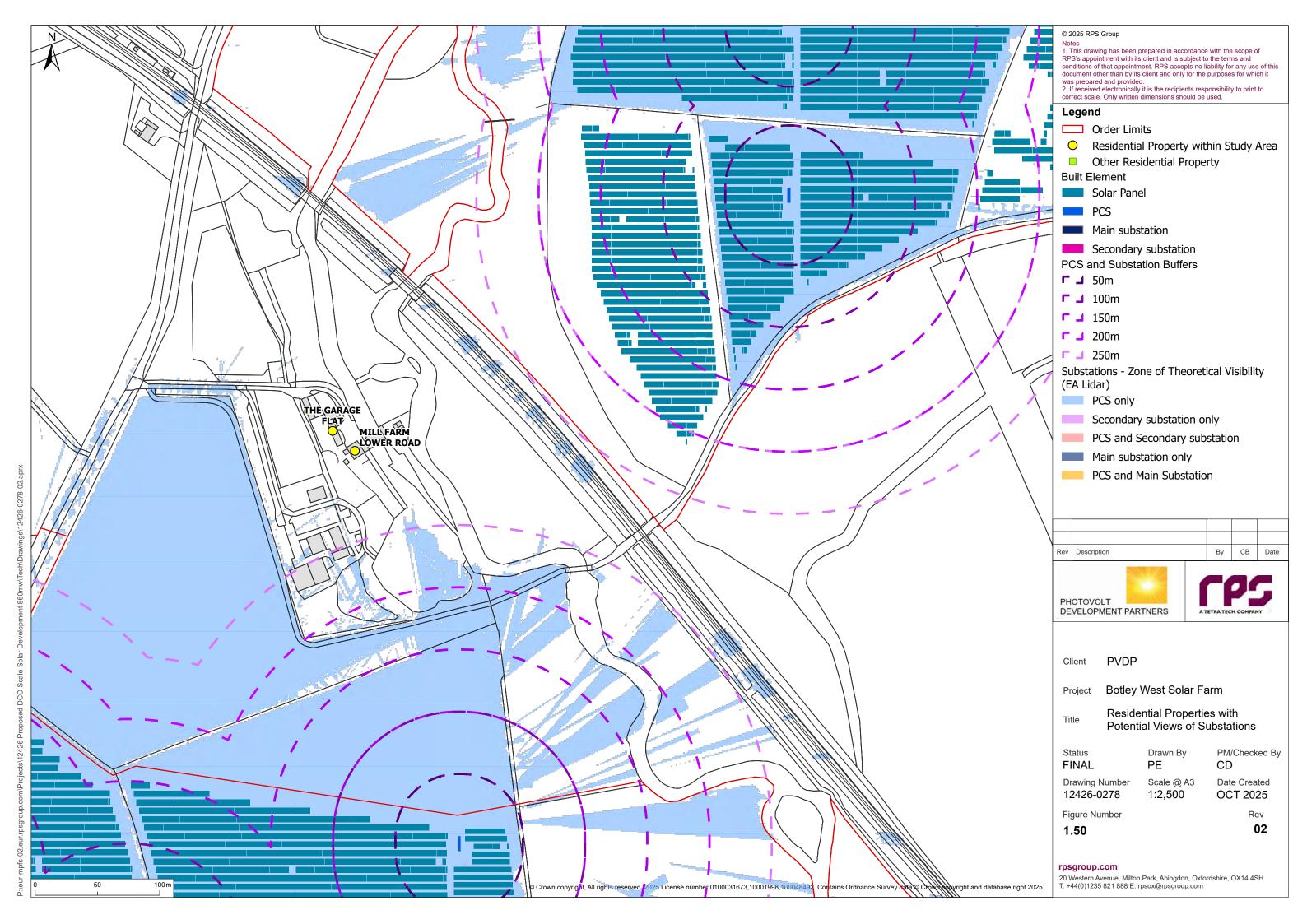


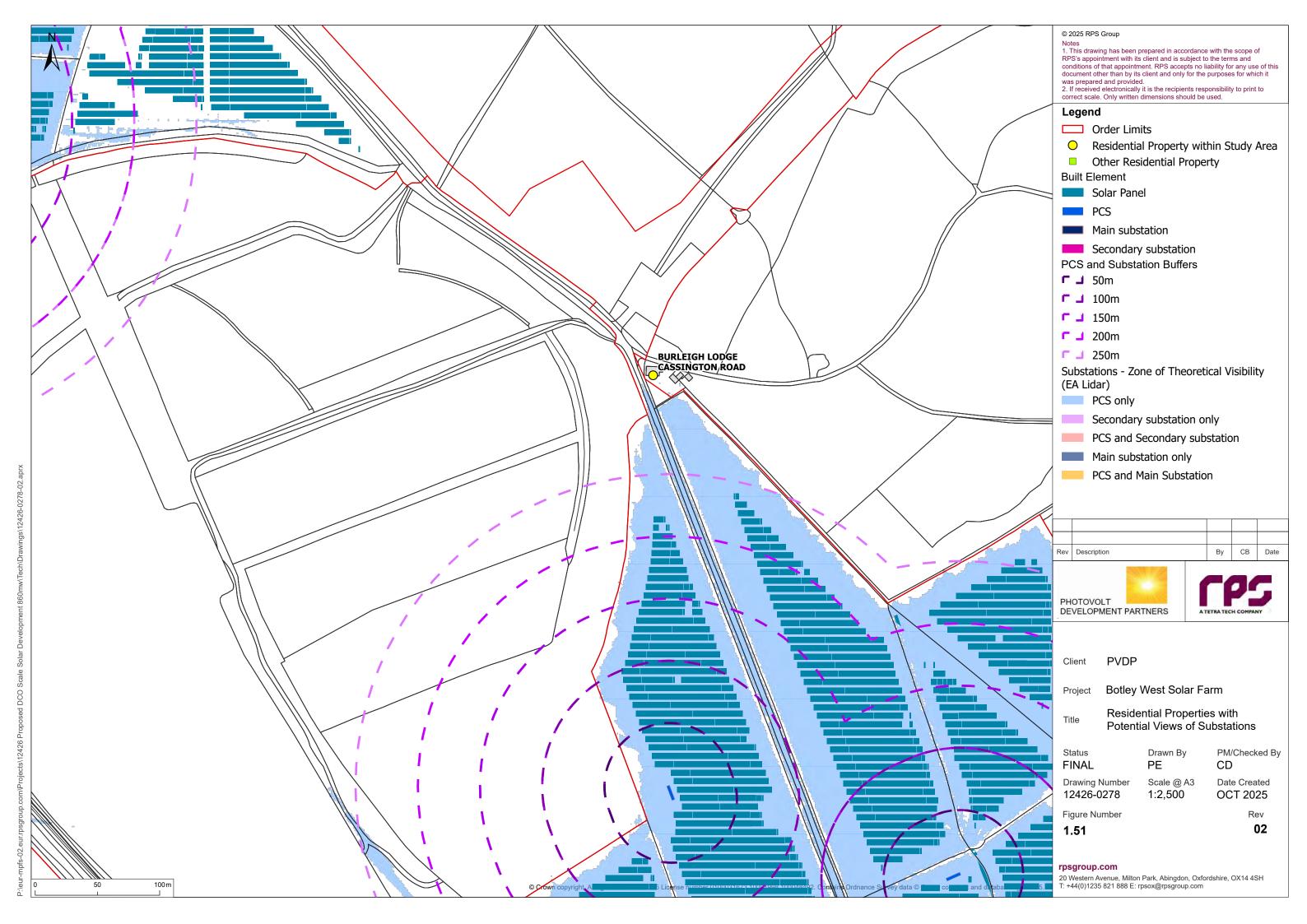


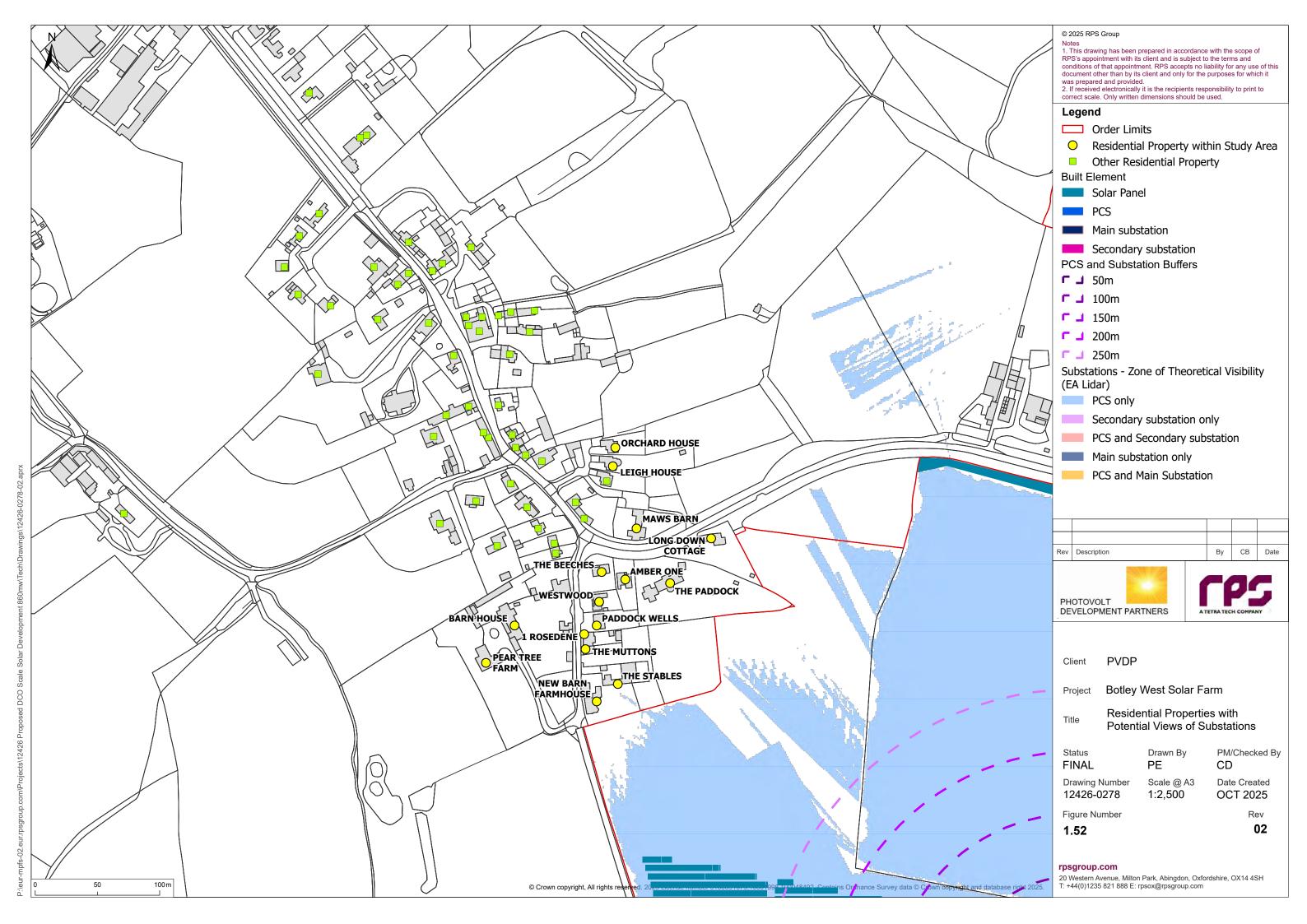


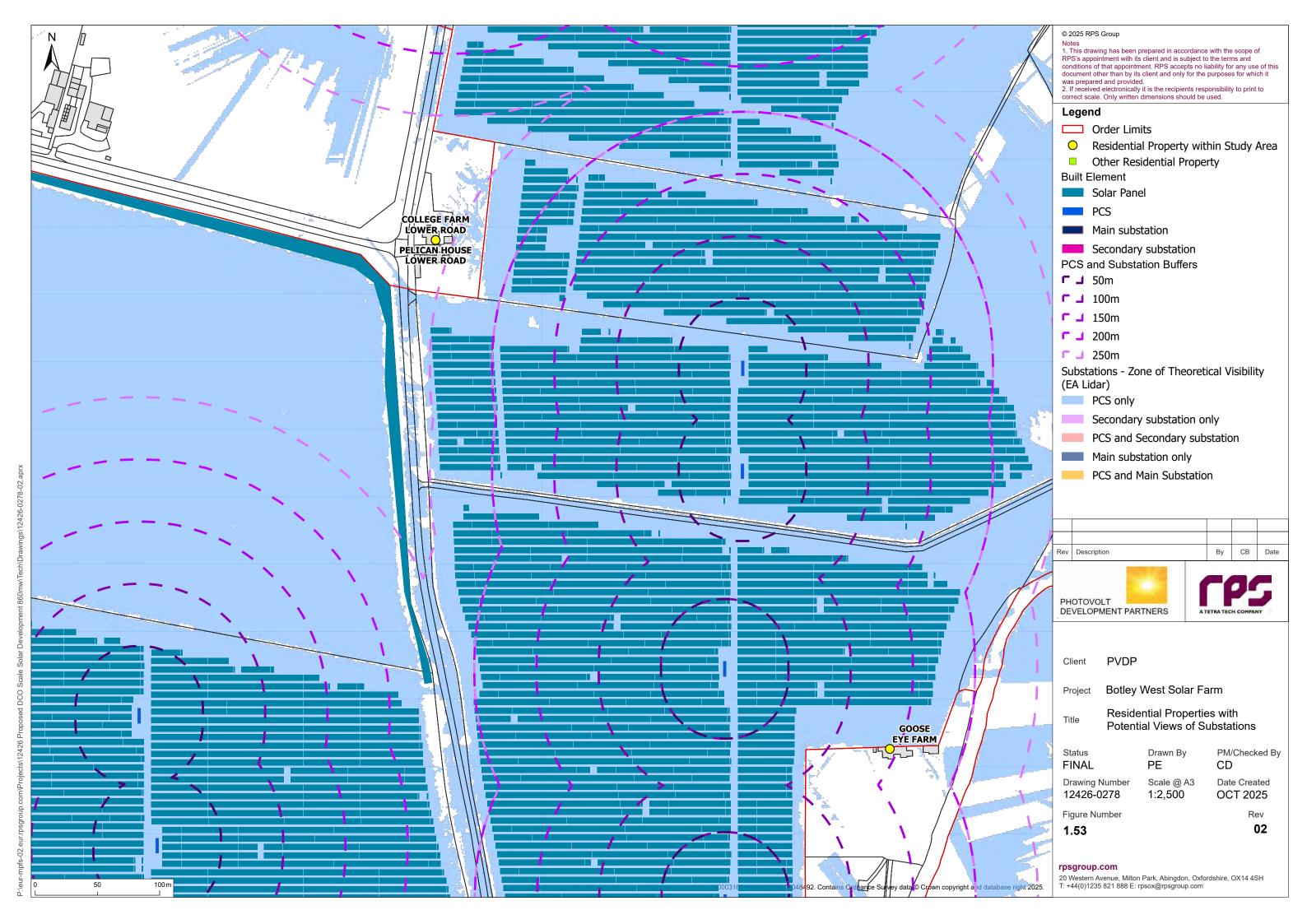


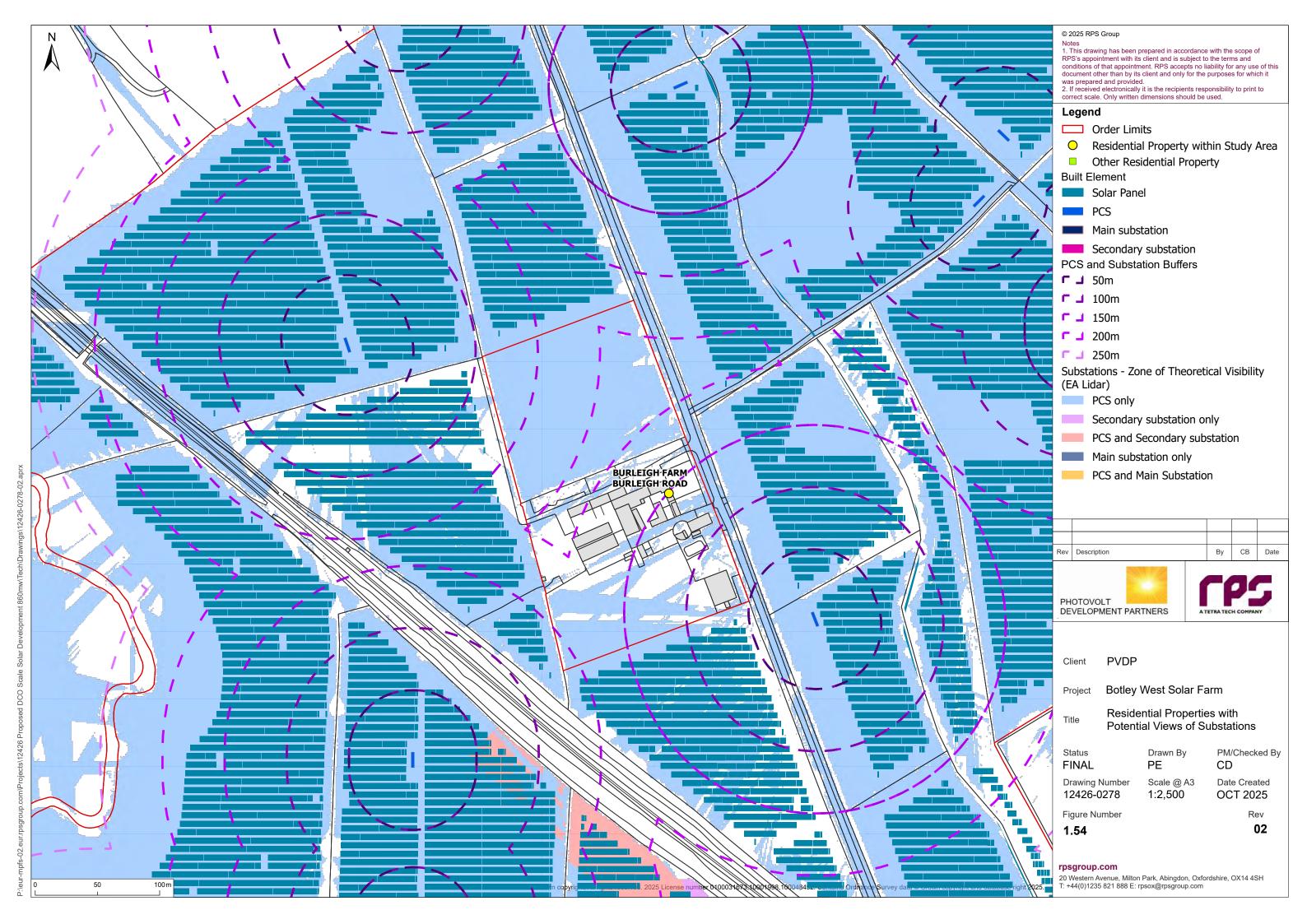


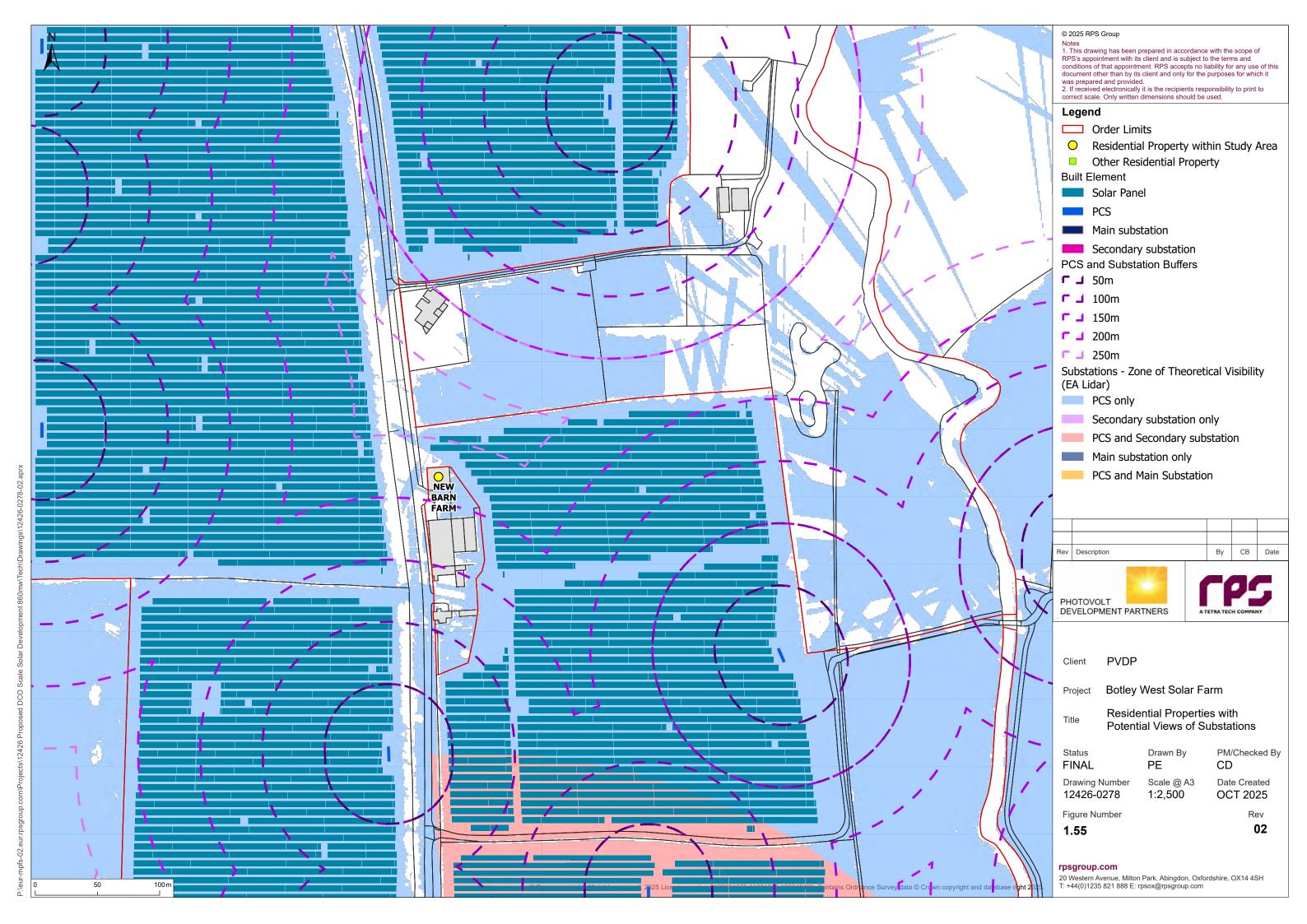


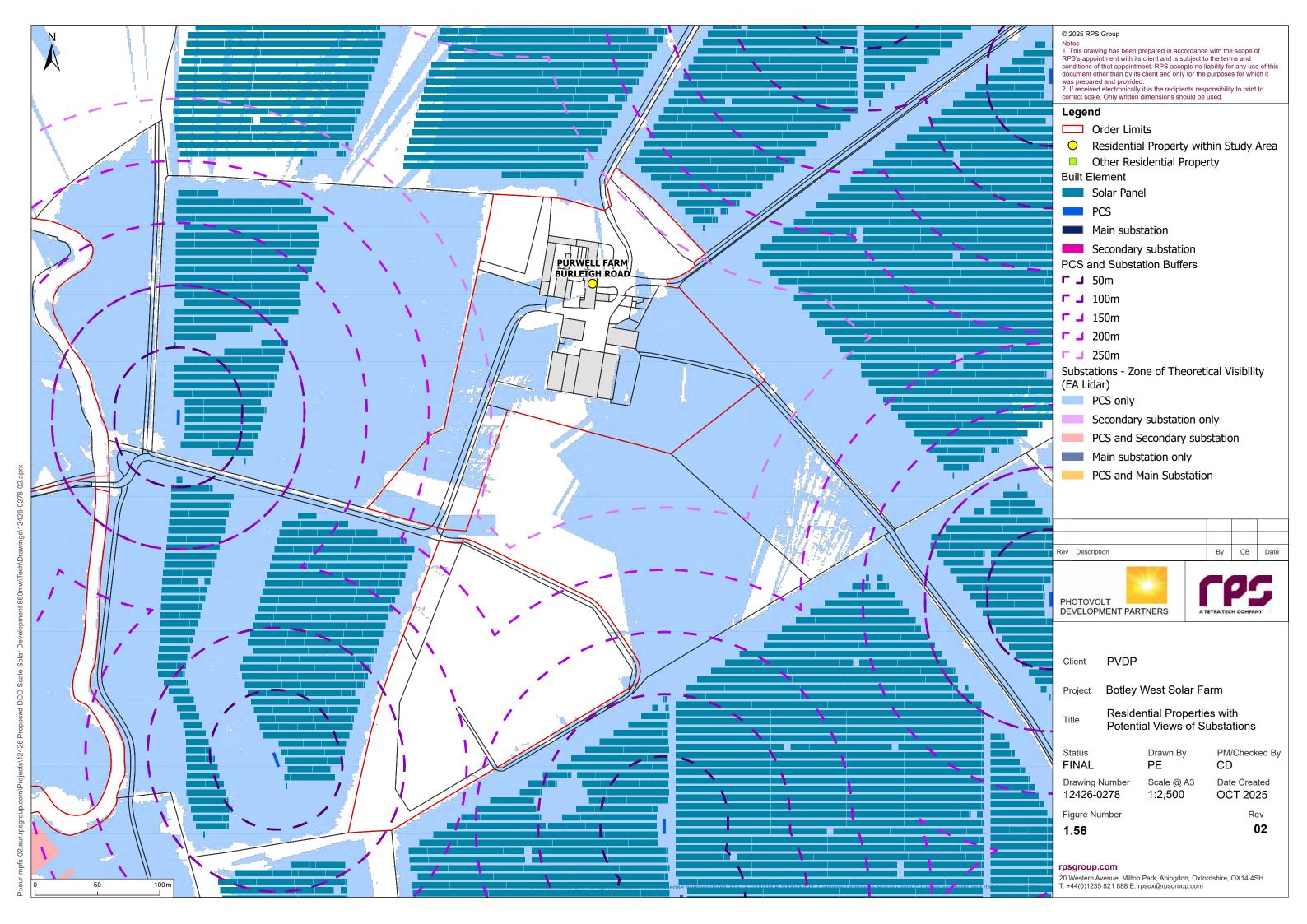


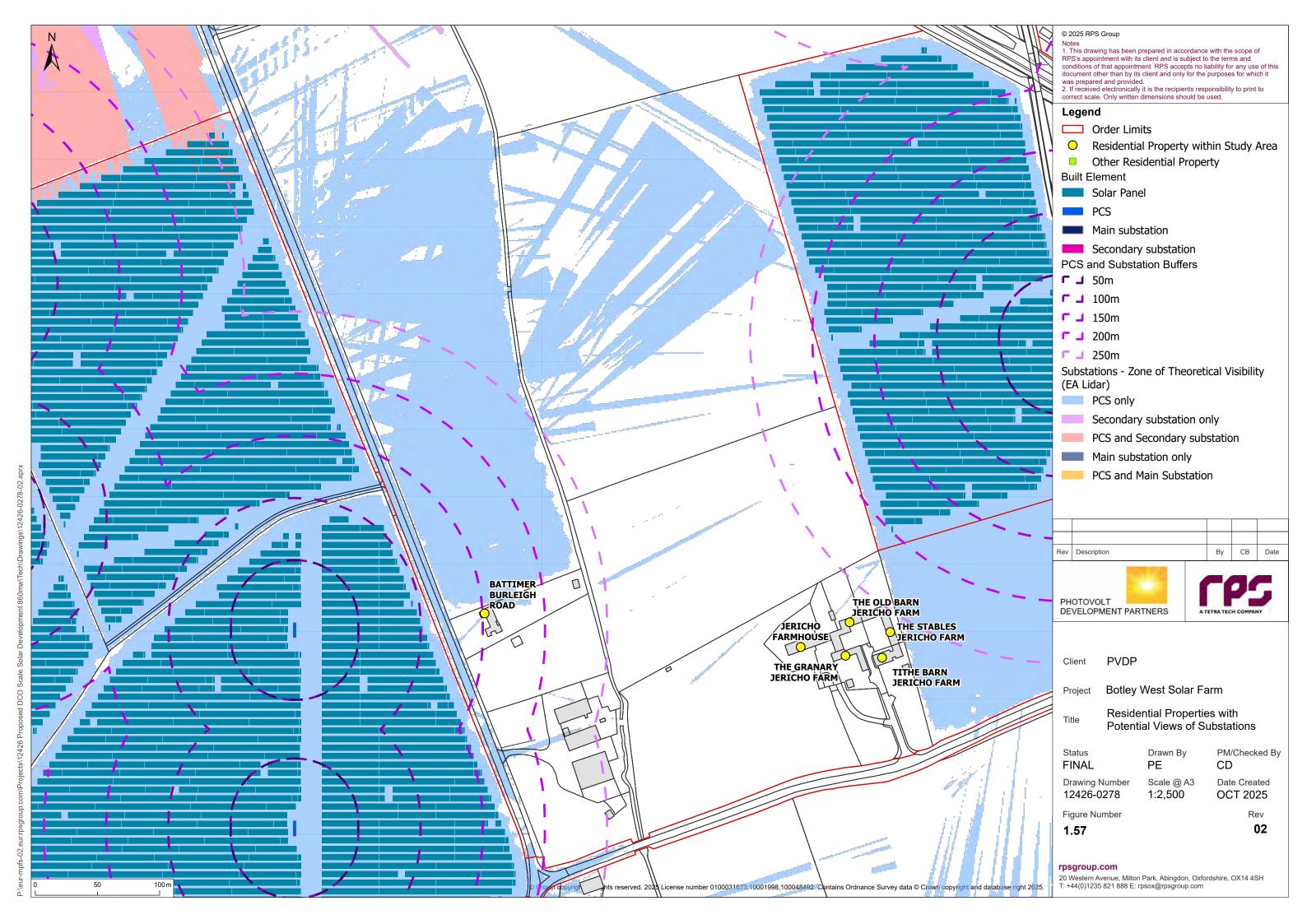


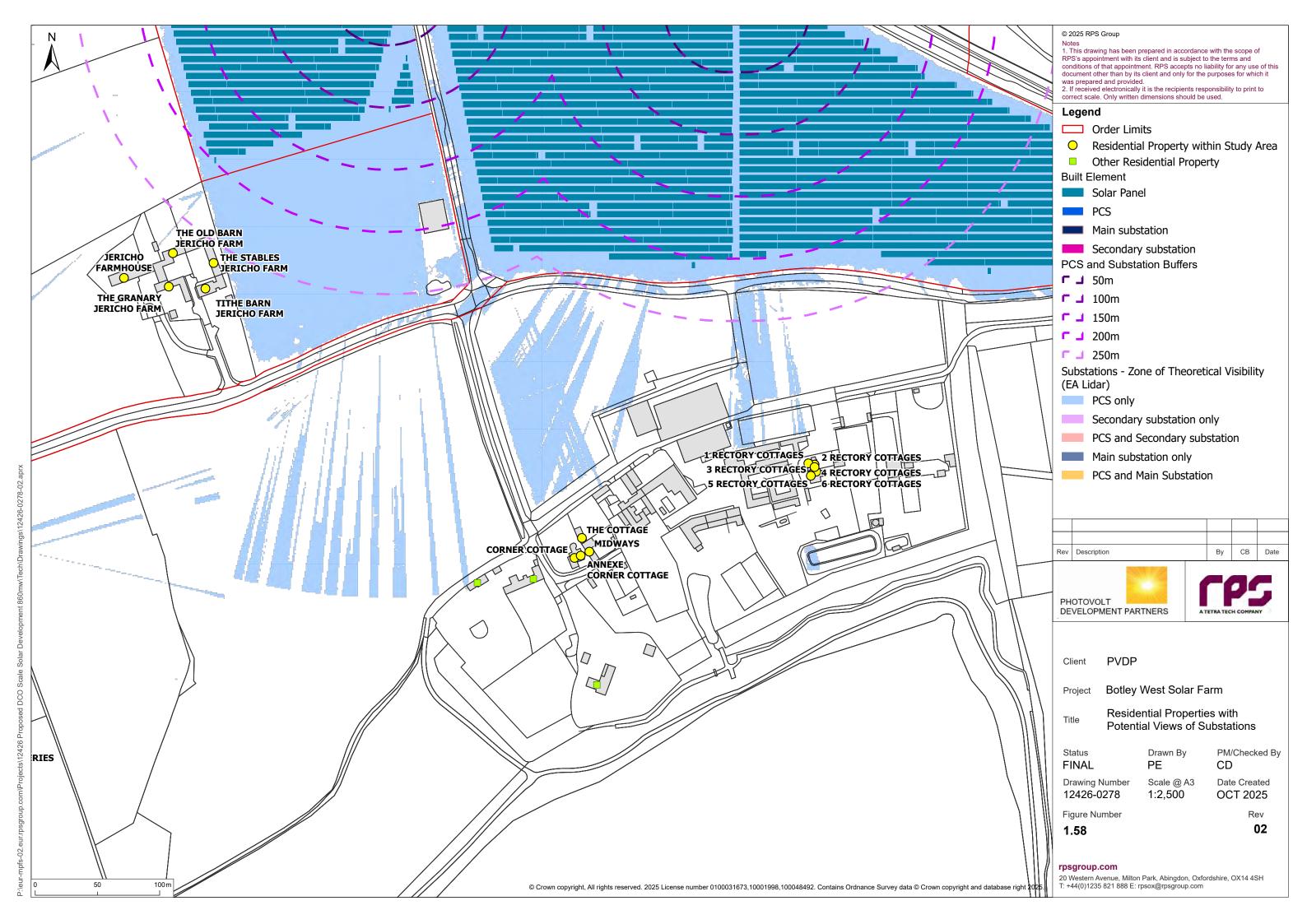


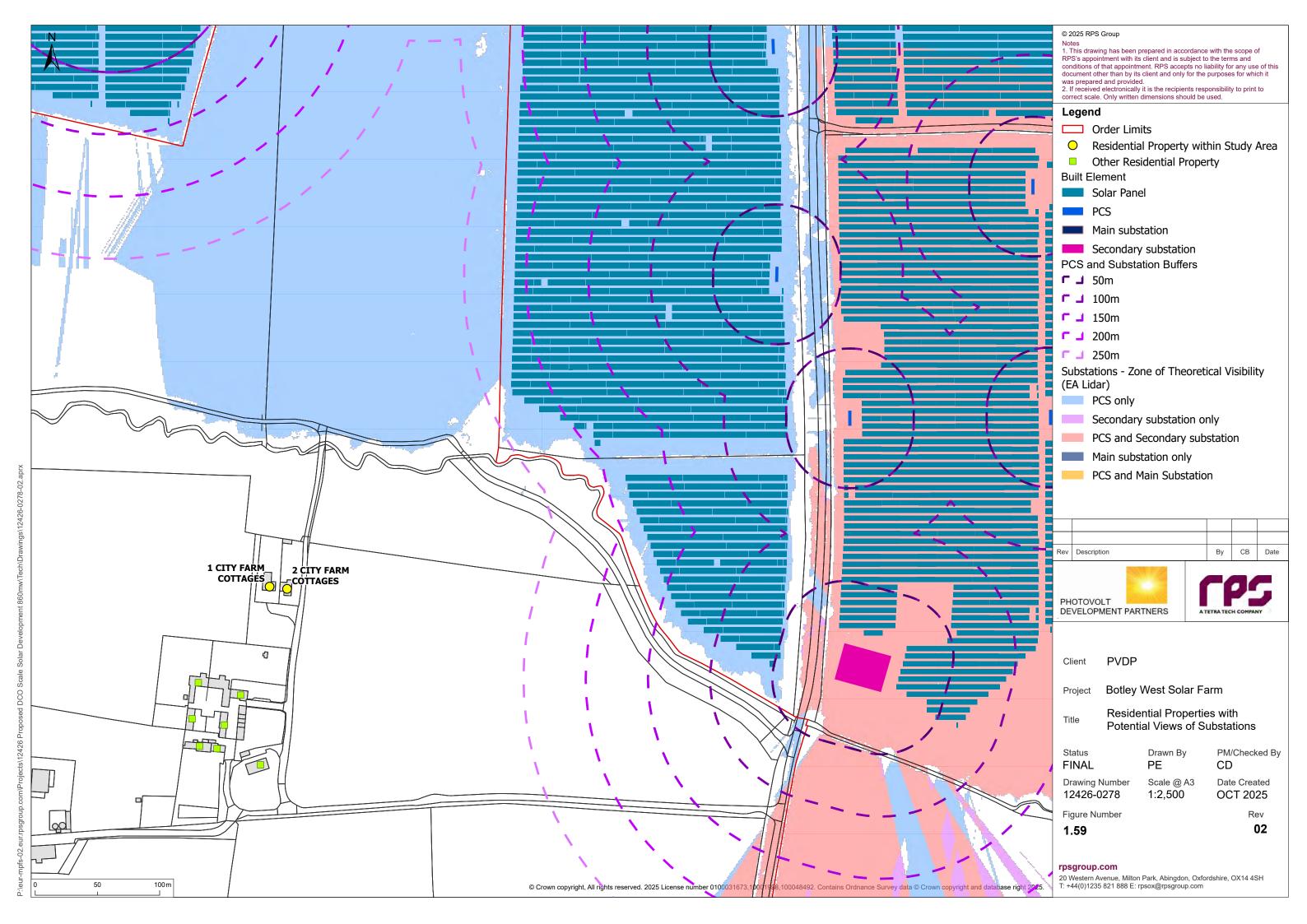


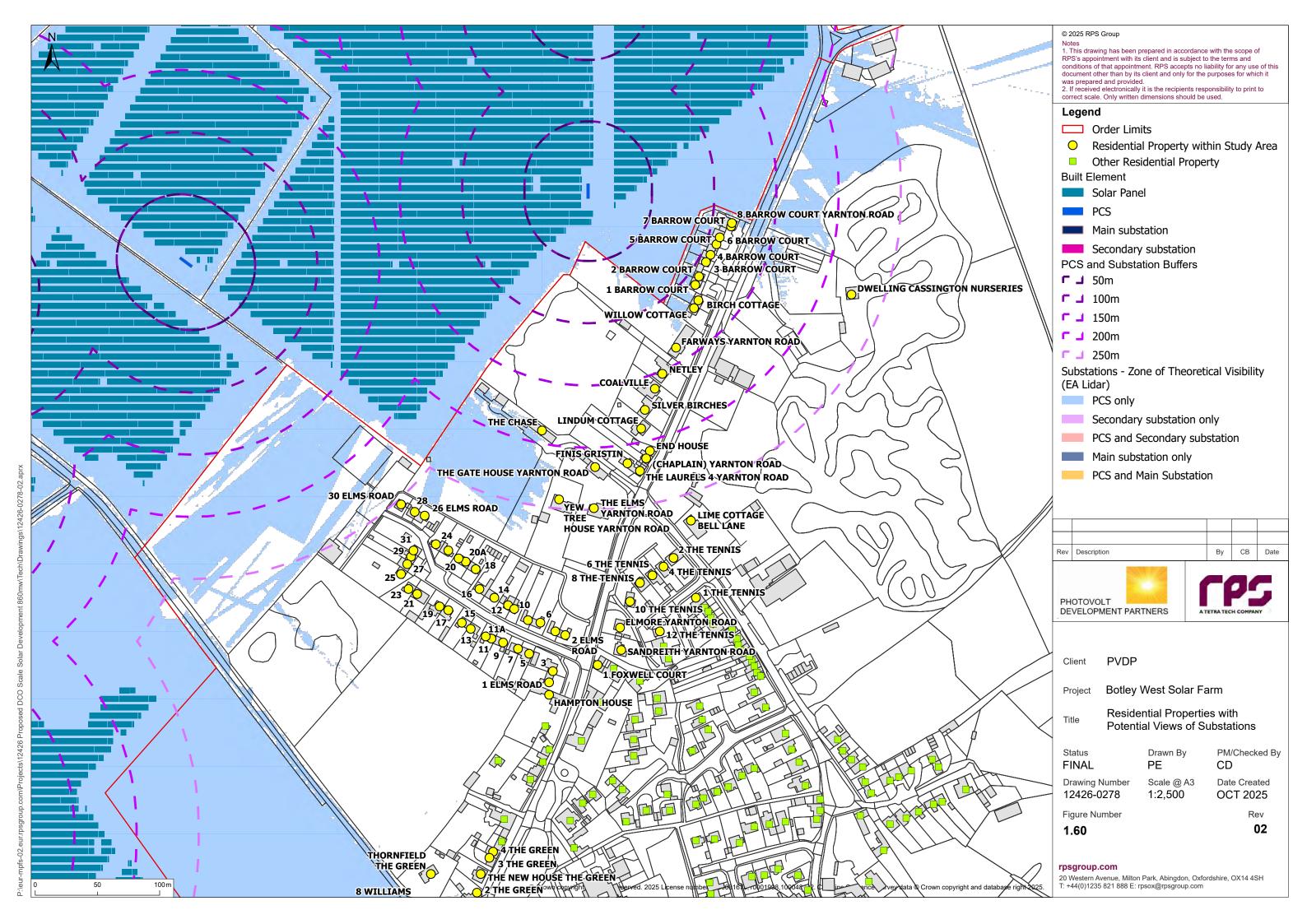


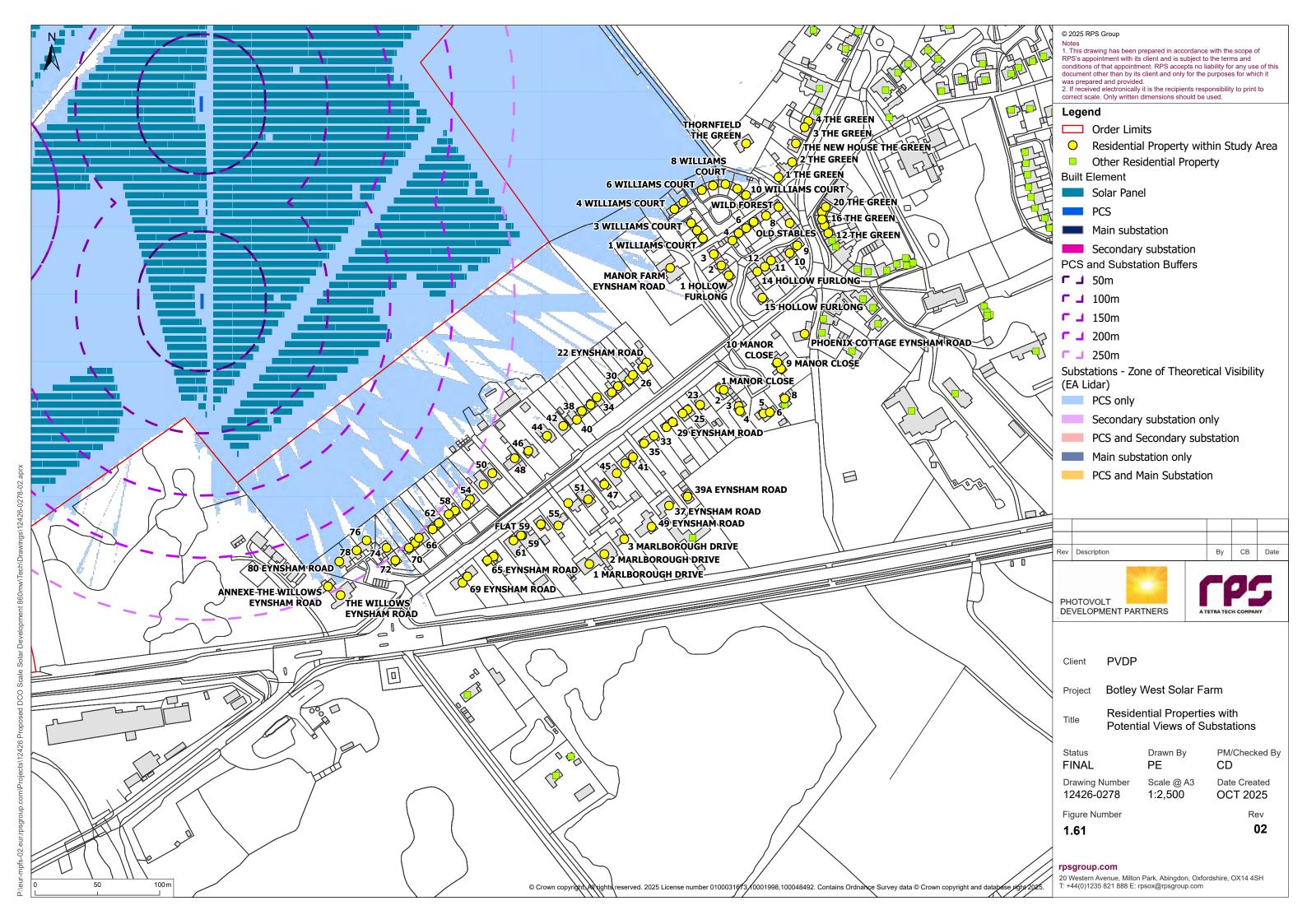


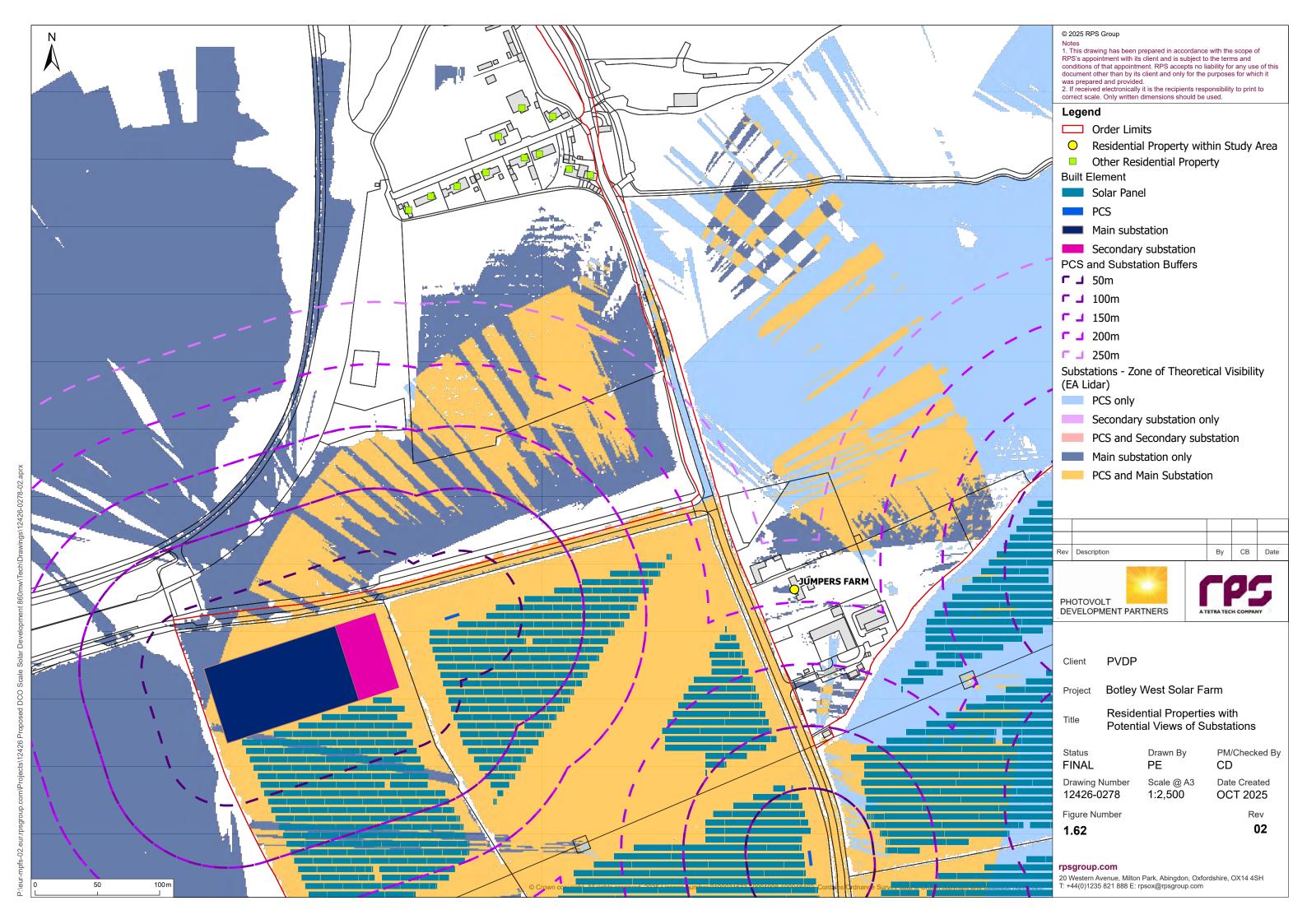


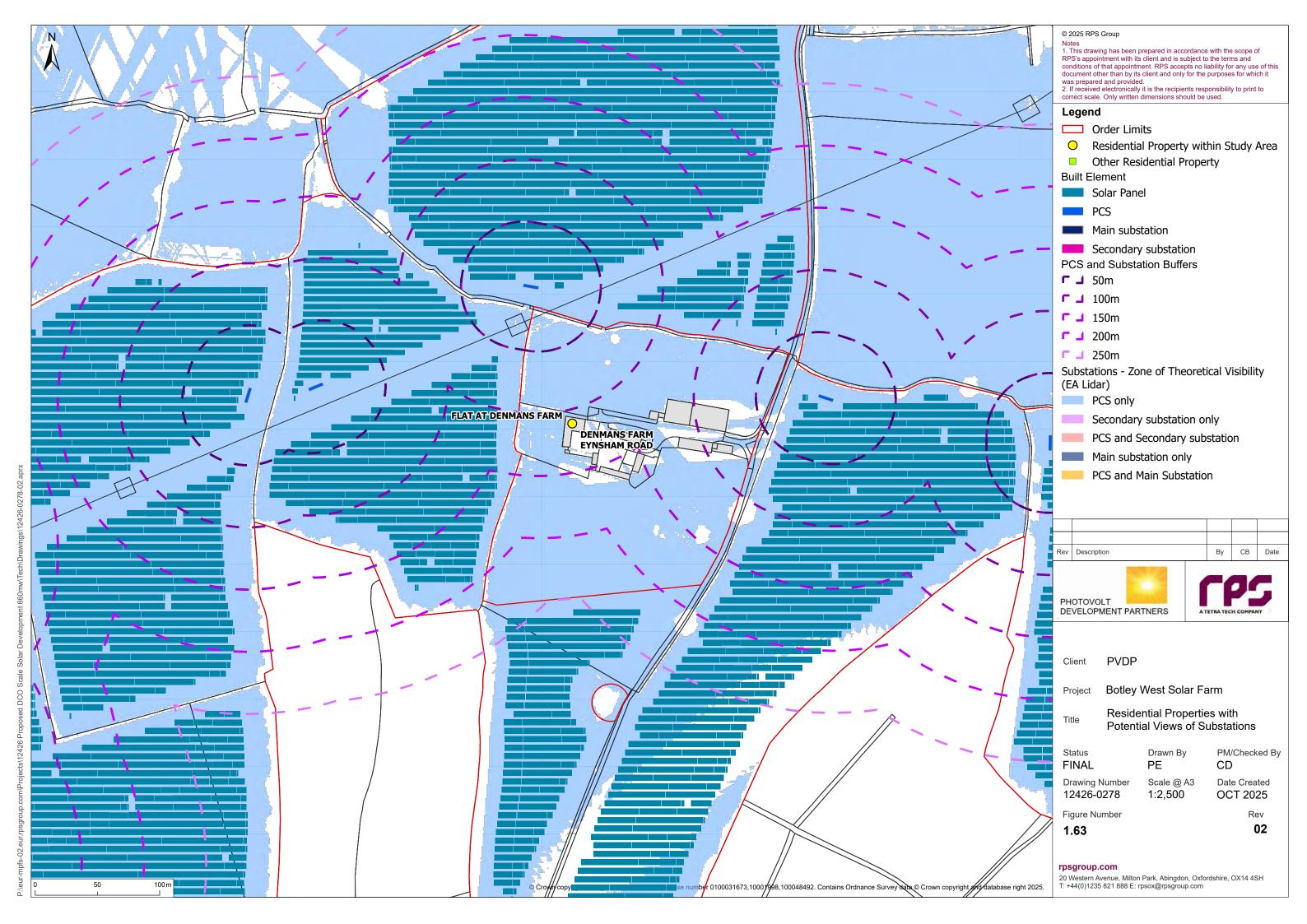


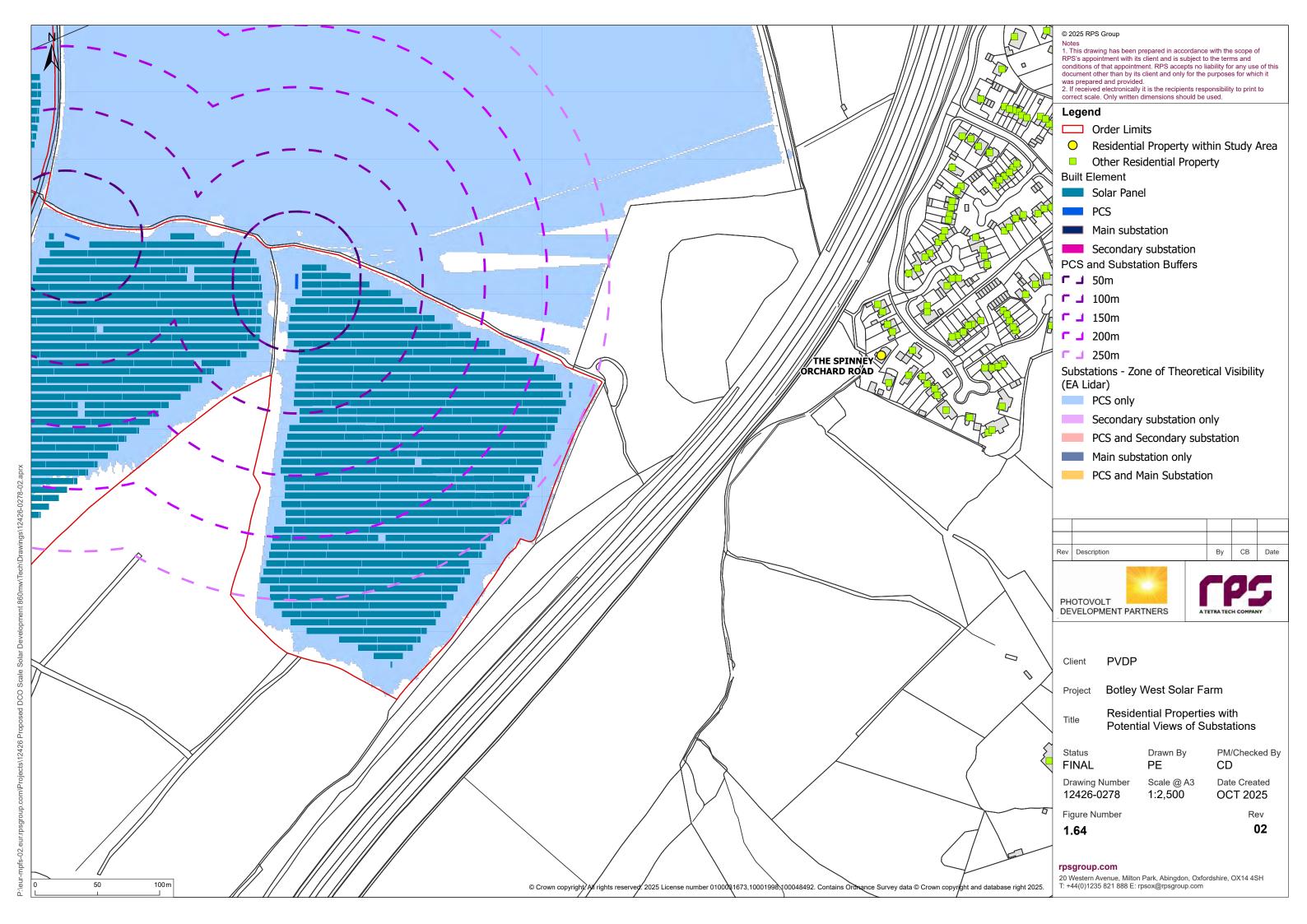


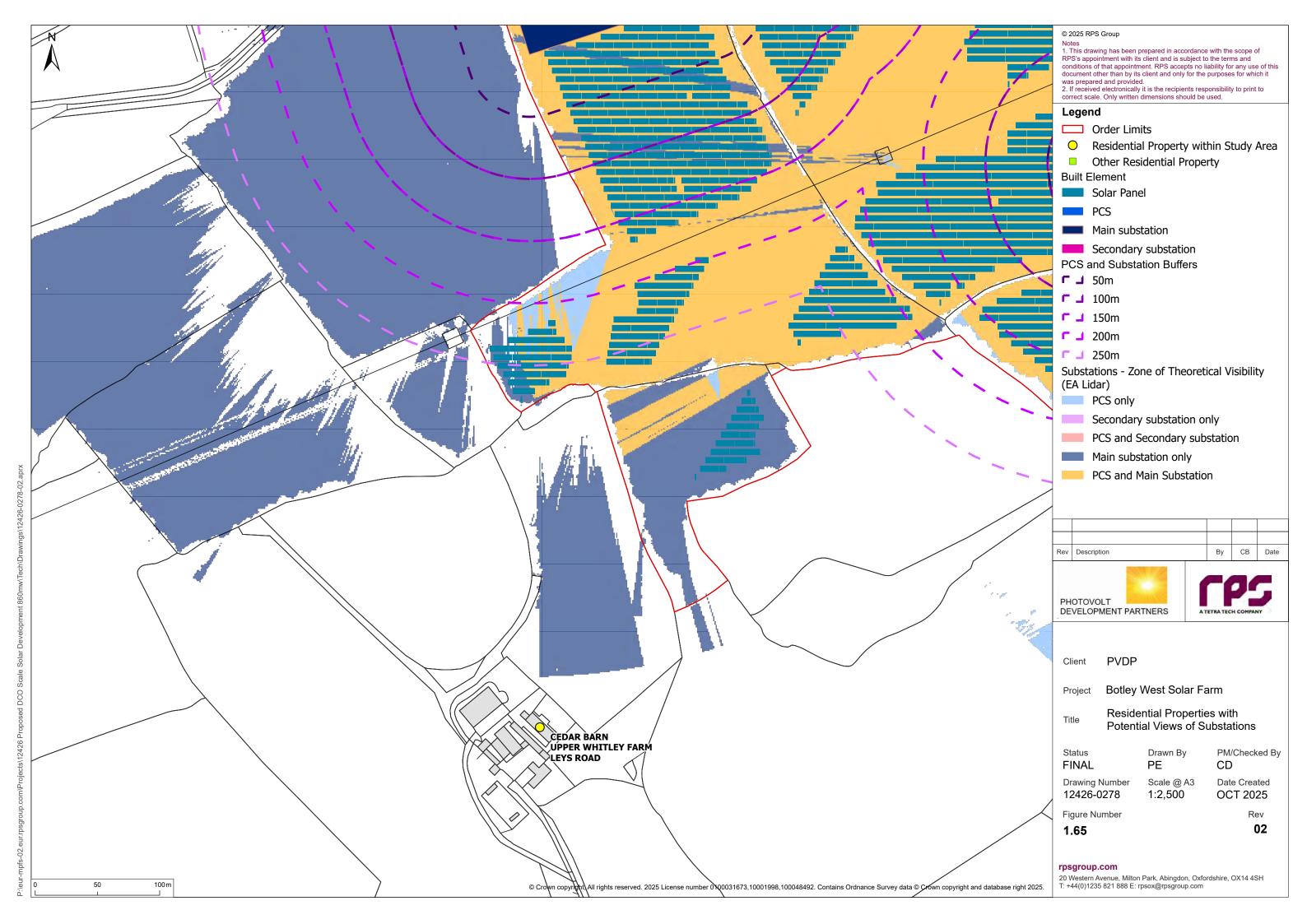


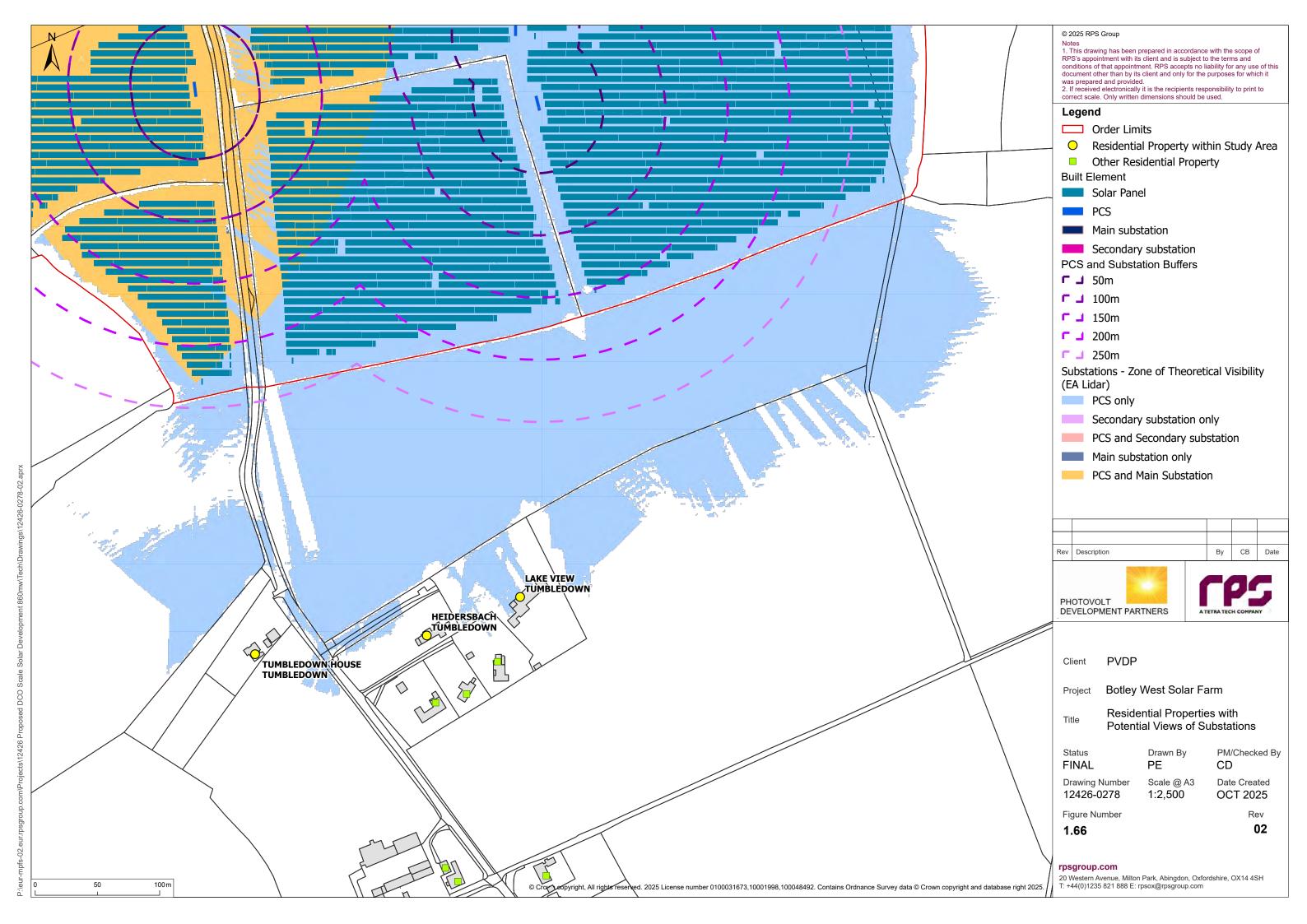
















Site photography



Comments

Vegetation and outbuildings located to the rear of these properties filters views to the north from rear elevations.







Site photography



Comments

Rear open views obtained to the north and east from rear elevations beyond garden fences.









Site photography



Comments

Vegetation located to the rear of properties filters views to the west from rear elevations.









Site photography







Comments

Vegetation located along the boundary to this property and the adjacent hedgerow located to the west of the Burleigh Road filters views from the front elevation of this bungalow.





Botley West Solar Farm
Date of photographs: 14/10/2025

P4 - Battimer, Burleigh Road



Site photography

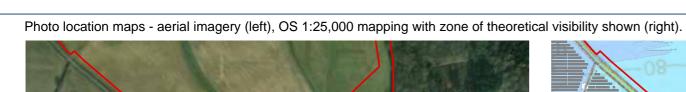


Comments

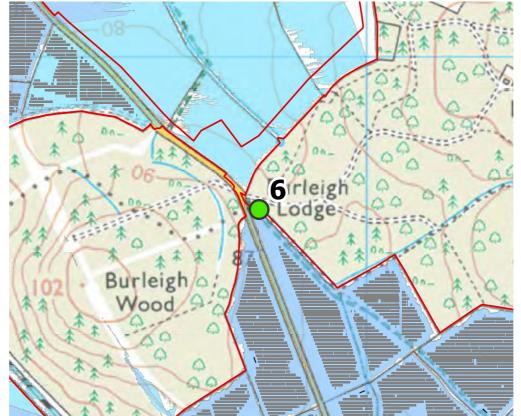
Vegetation located in the front garden filters views to the east from the front elevation of this property. Barns located to the west of this property screen views to the west from the rear elevation of this property.







6



Site photography





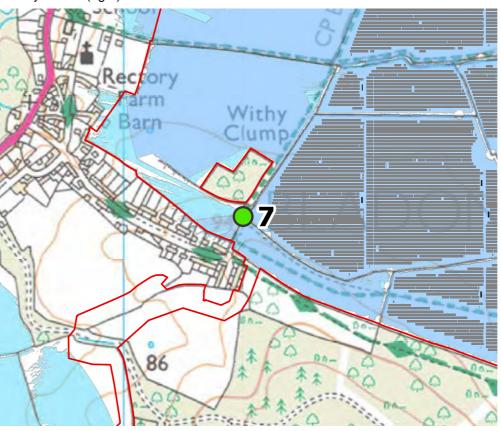
Comments

A mature garden hedge largely screens views to the south from the rear elevation of this bungalow.









Site photography





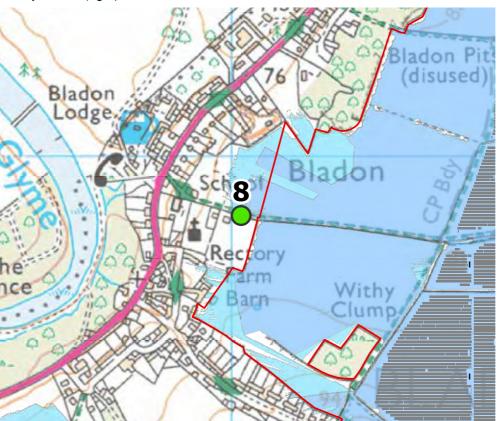
Comments

Vegetation located to the west of the farm track screens oblique views to the northeast obtained from rear elevations of the bungalows and houses located to the north of Heath Lane.









Site photography











Comments

Oblique views obtained to the northeast from front elevations beyond boundary walls. Vegetation located along the front and side boundary of the Studio largely contains views to the northeast.



