



Botley West Solar Farm

STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND –
Cherwell District Council

EN010147/APP/11.7/1

12 November 2025

NPI-12426
Statement of
Common Ground -
Cherwell District
Council
Rev2
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Approval for issue

Jon Alsop

12 November 2025

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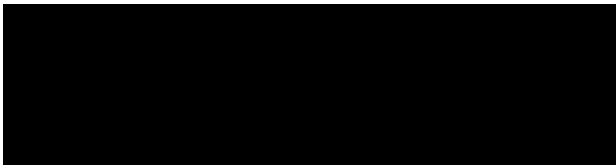
This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared and agreed by SolarFive Ltd and Cherwell District Council.

Cherwell District Council



Suzanne Taylor
Principal Planning Officer
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12 November 2025

SolarFive Ltd



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12th November 2025

1 Introduction

1.1 DCO Reference

1.1.1 EN010147/APP/11.7/1

1.2 Date of Examination

1.2.1 May 2025 – November 2025

1.3 Statement Overview

1.3.1 This Statement of Common Ground ('SoCG') comprises a record of consultation held with the relevant SoCG organisation to date as appropriate, and is designed to evolve, representing the ongoing nature of these discussions throughout the Examination period.

1.3.2 This SoCG has been prepared between (1) the Applicant and (2) Cherwell District Council (jointly referred to as the Parties).

1.3.3 An overarching Statement of Commonality **[EN01047/APP/11.6]** has been submitted alongside this document and should be referred to in conjunction with this SoCG.

1.3.4 The Examining Authority has requested that the SoCGs include the following matters as set out in the Rule 6 Letter **[PD-006]**:

- 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)

1.3.5 For the avoidance of doubt, this SoCG comprises contributions from the following environmental topic disciplines:

- Ecology
- Historic Environment
- Agricultural Land Use & Public Rights of Way

-
- Landscape and Visual Resources
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Planning Policy

1.3.6 This statement addresses the following areas of common ground in relation to the Applicant Project Team's engagement with Cherwell District Council 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

1.3.7 As referenced above, c, d, and e (sections 7), summarises issues that are 'agreed', 'yet to be agreed' or are 'not agreed'. 'Not agreed' indicates a final position where the parties have agreed to disagree. 'Agreed' indicates that an issue has been resolved.

1.4 Proposed Development

1.4.1 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 west Oxfordshire, Cherwell and Vale of White Horse districts. The Project will export electricity for connection to the National Grid at Botley West.

1.4.2 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 Development Consent Order (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.

1.4.3 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to accompany 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).

1.4.4 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]**.

2 Development Consent Order

2.1.1 It is agreed that Cherwell District Council will act as a relevant planning authority in relation to the discharging of requirements of the DCO applicable to its administrative area and LPA boundary. Where the expertise of the Local Highway Authority and / or Local Lead Flood Authority is required then

Oxfordshire County Council will either be the discharging authority or subject to consultation during the approval process.

3 Planning Policy Context

- 3.1.1 It is agreed that the following energy national policy statements (NPS) are applicable to the proposed development:
- NPS EN-1 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy;
 - NPS EN-3 Renewable Energy Infrastructures; and
 - NPS EN-5 Electricity Networks Infrastructure.
- 3.1.2 It is accepted by the parties that, from the planning authority's perspective, assessment of the proposed development against these statements is solely a matter for the Examining Authority and no further assessment on the degree of compliance is made by them in this statement. The Applicant's assessment of compliance with relevant NPS's is, however, set out in its Planning Supporting Statement (REP1-012). It is agreed that, for Cherwell District, the development plan applicable to the development proposal comprises:
- Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031, adopted 20 July 2015; and
 - Retained Saved Policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996, adopted 06 November 1996'

4 Relevant Submissions Documents and Plans

- 4.1.1 A list of DCO documents and plans of relevance to engagement with Cherwell District Council is identified in the tables below for ease of reference.

Table 4.1: Draft DCO submission documents and plans record pursuant to Cherwell District Council discussions – Ecology

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/2.2	Streets, Access and Rights of Way Plans	CR2-004	Rev2/September 2025
EN010147/APP/2.6	Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites - Features of Nature Conservation Plan	APP-009	November 2024
EN010147/APP/2.8	Habitats of Protected Species Plan	APP-010	November 2024
EN010147/APP/2.9	Statutory and Non-Statutory Features of Historic Environment Plan	APP-012	November 2024
EN010147/APP/2.10	Hedgerow Removal Plans	CR2-007	February 2025
EN010147/APP/3.1	Draft Development Consent Order	TBC	Rev9/ November 2025
EN010147/APP/6.2	ES Volume 0, Non-Technical Summary	APP-037	P0/ November 2024

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/6.3	ES Volume 1, Chapter 9 Ecology and Nature Conservation	REP4-010	Rev3/ August 2025
EN010147/APP/6.4	ES Volume 2, Figure 9.1 Statutory Designated Sites	APP-086	November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	ES Volume 2, Figure 9.2 Non-Statutory Designated Sites	APP-087	November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	ES Volume 2, Figure 9.3 a b & c Phase 1 Habitat Map	APP-088	November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.1 Desk Study	APP-150	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.2 Phase 1 Habitat Survey Report	APP-151	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.3 Hedgerow Survey Report	APP-152	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.4 Bat Survey Report	REP5-039	Rev 1/September 2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.5 Great Crested Newt (GCN) Survey Report	APP-154	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.6 Invertebrate Survey Report	APP-155	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.7 Reptile Survey Report	APP-156	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.8 Badger Survey Report [CONFIDENTIAL]	APP-157	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.9 Breeding Bird Survey Report	APP-158	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.10 Wintering Bird Survey Report	APP-159	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.11 Dormouse Survey Report	APP-160	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.12 Arable Weeds Survey Report	APP-161	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.13 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment	REP6-019	Rev2/September 2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.14 Habitats Regulations Assessment Report	REP6-022	Rev1/October 2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.15 Veterans Tree Survey Report	APP-164	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.16 Section 42 Consultation Responses	APP-165	P0/ November 2024
EN010147/APP/15.6	Bat Technical Note	REP6-044	Rev 1/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.3.3	Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan	CR2-043	Rev3/ September2025

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/7.6.1	Outline Code of Construction Practice – Part 1	REP6-028	Rev 5/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.1	Outline Code of Construction Practice – Part 2	REP6-030	Rev 5/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.2	Outline Operational Management Plan	REP6-032	Rev 5/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan	REP6-034	Rev 6/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.4	Outline Decommissioning Plan	REP6-036	Rev 2/October 2025

Table 4.2: Draft DCO submission documents and plans record pursuant to Cherwell District Council 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	CR2-019	Rev 3/September 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	CR2-036	Rev1/September 2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment	CR2-038	Rev 3/ September 2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Figures 2.1a – 2.4c – Illustrative Masterplan	CR2-026	Rev 2/September2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES Figures 8.248 - 8.371 - Photomontages (Winter and Summer)	CR2-032	Rev2/September 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.5	Outline Written Scheme of Investigation	CR2-053	Rev 3/September 2025
EN010147/APP/12.7	Additional Photomontages for Historic Environment Assessment	CR2-059	Rev 1/ September 2025

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/17.11	Archaeological Evaluation Report by Cotswold Archaeology – Parts 1 to 8	REP6-055 to REP6-062	October 2025
EN010147/APP/17.12	Archaeological Evaluation Report by Wessex Archaeology	REP6-063	October 2025

Table 4.3: Draft DCO submission documents and plans record pursuant to Cherwell District Council discussions – Agricultural Land Use & Public Rights of Way

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/6.2	ES Non-Technical Summary	APP-037	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.3	ES Chapter 17 - Agricultural Land Use and Public Rights of Way	APP-054	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	ES - Figures 17.1, 17.2 and 17.6	APP-108, APP-109 and APP-113	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	ES - Figures 17.3, 17.4 and 17.5	CR2-033, CR2-034, and CR2-035	Rev 1/September 2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	ES - Appendix 17.1 ALC and Soil Survey Report	APP-223	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/7.6.1	Outline Code of Construction Practice - Part 1 Annex B: Outline Public Rights of Way Management Strategy and Annex C Outline Soil Management Plan	REP6-028	Rev5/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.2	Outline Operational Management Plan	REP6-032	Rev5/October 2025

Table 4.4: Draft DCO submission documents and plans record pursuant to Cherwell District Council discussions – Landscape and Visual Resources

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/6.2	ES Non-Technical Summary	APP-037	Rev0/November 2024

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/6.3	6.3 - ES Chapter 8 – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	REP6-012	Rev4/October 2025
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.128 to 8.243: Representative Viewpoint Photographs (Summer)	CR2-032	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.12 to 8.127: Representative Viewpoint Photographs (Winter)	REP5-028	Rev1/September 2025
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.1-8.3 Site Location	APP-067	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.244: National Character Areas	APP-068	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.245: Regional Landscape Character	APP-069	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.246: Local Landscape Character Areas	APP-070	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.247: District Landscape Character Areas (including ZTV)	APP-071	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.248 to 8.371: Photomontages (Winter and Summer)	CR2-032	Rev2/September 2025
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.4-8.6: Landscape Resources Plan	APP-081	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/ APP/6.4	Figure 8.7: ZTV and Representative Viewpoints (Whole Project Overview)	APP-082	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.8: ZTV Section Overlaps (Whole Project Overview)	APP-083	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.8a: ZTV Bare Earth	APP-084	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	Figure 8.9-8.11: Representative Viewpoint	APP-085	Rev0/November 2024

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
	and Photomontage Locations		
EN010147/APP/6.5	Appendix 8.1: Landscape Character	APP-143	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	Appendix 8.2: Landscape Value	APP-144	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	Appendix 8.3: Strategic Arboricultural Impact Assessment & Method Statement	APP-145 to APP148	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	Appendix 8.4: Photomontage Methodology	APP-149	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.3	Figure 2.1a to 2.4d: Illustrative Masterplan	CR2-026	Rev2/September 2025
EN010147/APP/7.3.3	Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan	CR2-043	Rev3/September 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan	REP6-034	Rev 6/October 2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	PRoW and Route Assessment	REP5-037	September 2025
EN010147/APP/6.5	Representative Viewpoints	REP5-038	September 2025
EN010147/APP/17.13	RVAA Part 1 and Part 2	REP6-064 & REP6-065	October 2025

Table 4.5: Draft DCO submission documents and plans record pursuant to Cherwell District Council discussions – Noise and Vibration

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/6.3	6.3 - ES Chapter 13 - Noise and Vibration	PDB-010	Rev1/May 2025
EN010147/APP/6.4	6.4 ES - Figure 13.1 - Construction Phase Noise Study Area	APP-103	Rev0/November 2024

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/6.4	6.4 ES - Figure 13.2 - Construction Phase Vibration Study Area	APP-104	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.4	6.4 ES - Figure 13.3 - Operational Phase Noise Study Area	APP-105	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	6.5 ES - Appendix 13.1 Baseline Sound Survey	APP-211	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	6.5 ES - Appendix 13.2 Construction Phase Noise and Vibration	APP-212	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/6.5	6.5 ES - Appendix 13.3 Operational Phase Noise	APP-213	Rev0/November 2024
EN010147/APP/7.6.1	7.6.1 - Outline Code of Construction Practice - Part 1	REP6-028	Rev5/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.1	7.6.1 - Outline Code of Construction Practice - Part 2	REP6-030	Rev5/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.2	7.6.2 - Outline Operational Management Plan (Rev1)	REP6-032	Rev5/November 2025

Table 4.6: Draft DCO submission documents and plans record pursuant to Cherwell District Council discussions – Planning Policy

Document/Plan Ref.	Title	Examination Library reference	Rev./Dated
EN010147/APP/7.1	7.1 Planning Supporting Statement inc. Green Belt Case	REP1-012	Rev1/ June 2025

5 Record of Relevant Correspondence

- 5.1.1 The Project has been the subject of pre-application engagement with Cherwell District Council, and both parties continue to engage throughout and beyond the submission of the DCO application for the Project.
- 5.1.2 **Appendix A** identifies the discussions and correspondence that have taken place between the Applicant's project team and Cherwell District Council to date.

6 Summary of main issues agreed/not agreed

6.1.1 Common ground has not been possible to resolve in relation to the following elements (or sections within these):

- Landscape impact
- LVIA methodology
- Cultural heritage (built assets)
- Biodiversity assessment

6.1.2 The following outline management plans submitted at Deadline 6 are agreed.

EN010147/APP/6.5	6.5 Environmental Statement Appendix 15.2 Outline Skills, Supply Chain & Employment Plan	REP6-026	Rev3/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.1	7.6.1 - Outline Code of Construction Practice - Part 2	REP6-030	Rev5/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.2	7.6.2 - Outline Operational Management Plan	REP6-032	Rev5/November 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.4	Outline Decommissioning Plan	REP6-036	Rev 2/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.7	7.7 Outline Layout and Design Principles	REP6-038	Rev5/October 2025

6.1.3 The following outline management plans submitted at Deadline 6 are not agreed.

EN010147/APP/7.6.1	7.6.1 - Outline Code of Construction Practice - Part 1	REP6-028	Rev5/October 2025
EN010147/APP/7.6.3	Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan	REP6-034	Rev 6/October 2025

7 Areas of Discussion between the Parties

Table 7.1: Areas of Discussion between the Parties – Ecology

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
4.1.1	6.3 Environmental Statement Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation (Rev 3) [REP4-010]	Survey methodology	Other than where noted below, survey scope and methodology agreed.	Other than where noted below, survey scope and methodology agreed.	Agreed.
4.1.2	6.3 Environmental Statement Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation (Rev 3) [REP4-010]	Assessment approach, scope and methodology.	Other than where noted below, assessment approach, scope and methodology agreed.	Other than where noted below, assessment approach, scope and methodology agreed.	Agreed.
4.1.3	7.6.3 Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (Rev 6) [REP6-034]	Birds	The sites support a large assemblage of breeding and wintering birds many of which are red list, Priority or protected species. Whilst the CDC's Ecologist understands from the text that areas of archaeological importance would be managed as grassland to benefit species associated with farmland, they could not tell the extent of this area and whether it would offer sufficient opportunity to offset the loss of habitat to these birds and other farmland species such as Brown hare. The timing of cutting of grassland should not include April if the intention is to provide skylark nesting habitat.	The locations of areas of archaeological interest are displayed in the Illustrative Masterplan [CR2-026] . They cover an area of circa 36ha and will offer a permanent resource of grassland managed for both wintering and breeding birds. Section 8.7 of the Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (OLEMP) [REP6-034] sets out the mitigation measures with respect to breeding bird (including skylark) with respect to grass cutting, specifying (8.7.3) that such cutting would take place in autumn to allow birds to finish breeding. Skylark plots are proposed to provide skylark with additional foraging opportunities throughout their breeding season in order to increase fecundity. The provision of Skylark plots at a ratio of two plots provided for each potential lost territory is an accepted and widely used mitigation strategy for	Not Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
			<p>The purpose of the proposed skylark plots (11.6 of oLEMP) seems unclear. They do not fit in with the description and management for AB4 of the Countryside stewardship and management as stated. Skylark plots are known to be successful in supporting skylark numbers when provided in areas with an open aspect - which a field of solar arrays would not really provide. Leaving areas unsown within the grassland around the arrays is unlikely to perform the same function as undrilled areas in winter crops (which ensure there are areas which are not too dense or high for skylarks to access). Skylark will nest and forage in grassland if the sward is not too high although this is unlikely in an array field.</p> <p>The Council requests that evidence of the efficacy of leaving 5mx5m bare plots in solar array fields, in mitigating for losses to farmland birds, is included in the justification.</p>	<p>developments that will result in the loss of Skylark territories. Skylark plots also benefit other farmland bird species.</p> <p>November 2025 update: The Applicant's position with respect to skylark mitigation is set out in Annex 6 Skylark Technical Note of the Applicant's Response to ExQ2s [REP4-037] and expanded upon within the Applicant's response to the ExA's schedule of changes to the dDCO [REP6-051]. As set out within the Applicant's Response to The ExA's Schedule of Changes to the DCO [REP6-051], providing areas of suitable grassland for skylark within the project site area is the approach that has been adopted and accepted for all NSIP-scale solar development that has been consented that the Applicant is aware of, none of which have required any off-site mitigation provision but which have similar impacts to the Project. As such, the Applicant considers the provision of grassland within the Project site to be suitable mitigation, in line with how other consented solar NSIPs have addressed this issue.</p>	
4.1.4	6.3 Environmental Statement Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation (Rev 2) [REP4-010]	Bats	An assemblage of bats of National importance, including two Annex II species utilise the woodlands and intervening habitats adjacent to, within and across the site for roosting (including maternity), foraging	Further survey work and data gathering was completed in 2024 and is the subject of on-going discussion with Natural England. Data will be provided to the Examination as a separate bat technical note soon as analysis is complete. This will include:	Not Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
			<p>and commuting. There is currently only brief information on how these bats could be impacted. There is no assessment of whether the scale of the proposals, with large areas of solar arrays, could have a discouraging impact on the movement and foraging of these bat species. The Council requests that more information on this aspect be required to provide certainty that these species would not be negatively affected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional static detector recording (including in-field data); • Full details of radio tracked bats (overnight tracking to generate home ranges, biophysical details, roost characterisation, flight line usage etc.); and • Full details of trapping/radio tracking to be completed in May 2025. <p>It is intended that these data, combined with that submitted in with the application (ES Appendix 9.4 Bat Survey Report [REP5-039]) will be used to determine the extent of the 'appropriate buffers' for bats that the Project has committed to implementing (ES Appendix 6.1 Project Mitigation Measures and Commitments Schedule [REP4-014] Commitment 9.20). Discussions between the Applicant and Natural England with respect to the use of these data for this commitment are on-going</p> <p>November 2025 update: A detailed Bat Technical Note [REP6-044] and updated ES Appendix 9.4 Bat Survey Report [REP5-039] have been submitted to the Examination and agreed with Natural England. The oLEMP [REP6-034] has been updated to ensure that the measures with respect to bat avoidance measures (i.e. buffers of key flight lines) are secured. It has been further updated at Deadline 7 to account for requests by the OHA with respect to the figures showing the locations of the Tier A bat buffers.</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
4.1.5	6.3 Environmental Statement Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation (Rev 2) [REP4-010]	Ancient Woodlands	The mitigation measures state a minimum of a 15m buffer will be retained to ancient woodland areas in line with NE guidance however it should be noted that The Woodland Trust recommends a 50m buffer (Planning for ancient woodland: planners manual for ancient woodland and veteran trees, July 2019) unless otherwise justified. To reduce the chance of edge effects on woodlands a larger buffer should be considered wherever possible.	<p>The minimum 15 m buffer to ancient woodland will be implemented in accordance with government guidance (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-ancient-trees-and-veteran-trees-advice-for-making-planning-decisions). It should be noted that this is the minimum distance to be adopted; in many locations the buffer to ancient woodland would be considerably larger.</p> <p>November 2025 update: As set out in the oLEMP [REP6-034], all ancient woodland around the Project site are included in the Tier A bat buffers and, as such, will have at least a 25m buffer surrounding them. This is considerably larger than the 15m minimum recommended by the government as set out above.</p>	Not Agreed.
4.1.6	6.5 ES - Appendix 9.13 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Rev 2 [REP6-019]	Biodiversity Net Gain	A biodiversity metric in full has not yet been submitted. This would be a very large document and so the Council do not object to a summary however a full metric (perhaps split by area) should be submitted to LPAs at some stage so it can be appropriately assessed. If there are ditches on site then watercourse units should be calculated. CDC's Ecologist would also propose that the river corridor is included within the calculations of watercourse	<p>The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (DEFRA, 2024) is completed and appended to Appendix 9.13 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Rev 2 [REP6-019]. In consultation with Natural England, the watercourse section of the metric will be assessed and completed for all watercourse associated units on the project site.</p> <p>November 2025 update: ES Appendix 9.13 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment was updated at Deadline 6 [REP6-019] to incorporate the watercourse module of the BNG assessment and to provide the supporting surveys. The assessment showed that the Project would achieve at least 20% watercourse BNG.</p>	Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
			units due to its proximity to the site. November 2025 updates: It is noted that the applicant has updated Requirement 7 at D6 to include water course units. This is welcomed		

Table 7.2: Areas of Discussion between the Parties – Historic Environment

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
4.2.1	ES Chapter 7: Historic environment [CR2-019]	Assessment approach, scope and methodology.	Other than where noted below, assessment approach, scope and methodology agreed.	Other than where noted below, assessment approach, scope and methodology agreed.	Agreed.
4.2.2	ES Appendix 7.3: Geophysical Survey Report [APP-133 – APP-140]	Methodology for geophysical surveys.	The application of the geophysical survey methodology within the Project Site is acceptable.	The application of the geophysical survey methodology within the Project Site is acceptable.	Agreed.
4.2.3	ES Chapter 7: Historic environment [CR2-019]	Mitigation of potential impacts on buried archaeological remains.	The proposed methodologies for the mitigation of potential impacts on buried archaeological remains are acceptable.	The proposed methodologies for the mitigation of potential impacts on buried archaeological remains are acceptable.	Agreed.
4.2.4	Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (Rev 3) [CR2-053]	The proposed programme of further archaeological work.	The proposed programme of further archaeological work is acceptable.	The proposed programme of further archaeological work is acceptable.	Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
4.2.5	ES Chapter 7: Historic environment [CR2-019]	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.	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.	Agreed.
4.2.6	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment (Rev 3) [CR2-038]	The assessment of likely impacts and effects arising from changes within the settings of heritage assets.	<p>The northern part of the proposal area is located between Woodstock and the A4260 and sits within the wider landscape setting of Hampton Gay, Shipton on Cherwell, and Thrupp Conservation Areas.</p> <p>There are three Grade II listed structures and buildings on the west side on the edge of Shipton on Cherwell closest to the development site, these include: The Manor and attached outbuildings, Kitchen Garden Walls, and the Church of the Holy Cross. These haven't been specifically considered in the ES, possibly because they are outside of the 2 km zone, however it is considered that the historic landscape and therefore the wider setting of these heritage assets could potentially be affected.</p>	<p>The 2 km study area for the assessment of impacts arising from changes within the settings of heritage assets was established through consultation with relevant stakeholders, commencing with the Scoping stage of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).</p> <p>As set out in paragraph 1.3.1 of ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment [CR2-038], designated heritage assets beyond 2 km were considered if they fell within the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) for the proposed development and had designed views towards the proposed development or a particular iconic status that could be affected by the proposed development.</p> <p>None of the Grade II listed buildings on the edge of Shipton on Cherwell which are mentioned by the Council have designed views towards the proposed</p>	Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p>development or a particular iconic status that could be affected by the proposed development, hence they have not been considered within the detailed assessment presented in ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment [CR2-038].</p> <p>The Applicant agrees that the wider settings of the Grade II listed buildings on the edge of Shipton on Cherwell which are mentioned by the Council could be affected by the proposed development, but at a distance of more than 2 km the contribution that the setting makes to the heritage significance of the listed buildings would be very limited and therefore the magnitude of impact and the level of effect would be no greater than negligible.</p>	
4.2.7	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment (Rev 3) [CR2-038CR2-038]	The assessment of likely impacts and effects on the Begbroke Conservation Area.	The development area appears to come up to the boundary of the Begbroke Conservation Area and surround it on two sides. The setting of this Conservation Area will be altered and there is potential for some harm to the significance of the Conservation Area through development within	The location of the proposed development in relation to the Begbroke Conservation Area is indicated on Figure 1.9 in ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment (Rev 3) [CR2-038]. This shows that, following the changes to the design as a result of the acceptance of the Applicant's Change Request 2 Report, the proposed	Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
			<p>its setting. This is identified in the ES.</p> <p>Because of the small size of Begbroke Conservation Area, the listed buildings of The Old Rectory (Grade II), St Michaels Church (Grade II*) and St Phillips Priory (Grade II) (located within the Conservation Area) and Hall Farmhouse (Grade II) (located outside of the Conservation Area) will potentially be affected by the development within their setting. The ES only identifies the Conservation Area and St Michaels Church as being impacted.</p>	<p>development is clearly separated from the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The detailed assessment of the likely impact on the Conservation Area is presented in paragraphs 1.9.157 – 1.9.163 of ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment (Rev 3) [CR2-038]. The assessment concludes that there would be a 'negligible adverse' impact on the Conservation Area as a result of the change within its setting, resulting in a long-term, reversible 'negligible adverse' effect, which is not significant in EIA terms.</p> <p>The detailed assessment of the likely impact on the Grade II* listed Church of St Michael at Begbroke is presented in paragraphs 1.9.55 – 1.9.61 of ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment (Rev 3) [CR2-038]. The assessment concludes that there would be a 'negligible adverse' impact on the Grade II* listed church as a result of the change within its setting, resulting in a long-term, reversible 'minor adverse' effect, which is not significant in EIA terms.</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p>The detailed assessment of the likely impact on the Grade II listed Hall Farmhouse at Begbroke is set out in paragraphs 1.9.95 - 1.9.101 of ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment (Rev 3) [CR2-038]. The assessment concludes that the proposed development would not cause any impact on this heritage asset as a result of the change within its setting.</p> <p>Other designated heritage assets within and adjacent to the Begbroke Conservation Area were scoped out of the detailed assessment on the basis that the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) developed for the assessment and subsequent site visits indicated that there was no intervisibility between the asset and the proposed development. The Applicant acknowledges that it is possible for the setting of heritage assets to be affected even when there is no intervisibility, but visibility is usually the most important. This is noted in paragraph 10 of the 2017 Historic England guidance document The Setting of Heritage Assets which states '<i>The contribution of setting to the</i></p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p><i>significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset¹. Whilst it is possible for the significance of a heritage asset to be harmed by change within its setting despite a complete lack of intervisibility, this is rare and the outcome in terms of impact and effect is very unlikely to be significant. Given that the purpose of the Environmental Impact Assessment is to identify likely significant effects (rather than all effects), a proportionate approach is necessary.</i></p>	
4.2.8	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment (Rev 1) [CR2-038]	The assessment of likely impacts and effects on heritage assets at Yarnton.	Although the village of Yarnton is not a Conservation Area, the complex of buildings which includes Yarnton Manor (Grade II*) and the Church of St Bartholomew (Grade I) which sit outside of the village of Yarnton, are considered susceptible to harm through development within their wider setting. This is largely due to their location within the historic landscape.	The Grade I listed Church of Bartholomew at Yarnton, the Grade II Registered Park and Garden at Yarnton Manor and the Grade II* listed Yarnton Manor were all scoped out of the detailed assessment on the basis that the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) developed for the assessment and subsequent site visits indicated that there was no intervisibility	Not Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				between the assets and the proposed development.	
4.2.9	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment (Rev 3) [CR2-038]	The assessment of likely impacts and effects on non-designated heritage assets.	Few non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs) are identified in the ES, however the Kidlington Conservation Area Appraisal does identify the significant non-listed buildings within the Conservation Area. These are included on CDC's draft list of local heritage assets. It is suggested that even if buildings are not formally included on a local list they can still be identified as non-designated heritage assets and therefore should be considered when assessing the impact on built heritage.	The location of the proposed development in relation to the Kidlington Conservation Areas is indicated on Figure 3b in ES Appendix 7.1: Historic environment desk-based assessment [APP-131] . This shows that the Conservation Area known as The Rookery is just within the defined 2 km settings study area, whilst the Kidlington High Street Conservation Area is partially within the defined 2 km settings study area. As set out in paragraph 1.5.27 of ES Appendix 7.1: Historic environment desk-based assessment [APP-131] , both of these Conservation Areas are located wholly within the developed urban area of Kidlington and are not discussed further in any part of the assessment on the basis that the proposal site does not form part of their setting. The same would apply to any non-designated heritage asset located within these Conservation Areas.	Agreed.

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4.2.10	ES Appendix 7.5: Settings Assessment (Rev 3) [CR2-038]	The assessment of likely impacts and effects on heritage assets as a result of change within their setting.	Although only a comparatively small amount of the development site is located within Cherwell District the overall size of the solar installation will unavoidably change the wider landscape in this area and therefore the potential impact on significance of the individual heritage assets due to development within their setting as a result of the overall proposal should not be disregarded.	The Applicant considers that the likely impacts and effects on heritage assets within Cherwell District has been undertaken in a thorough and comprehensive manner, and in accordance with all relevant guidance.	Not Agreed.
4.2.11	ES Appendix 7.4: Heritage Impact Assessment – Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site (Rev 1) [CR2-036]	The assessment of likely impacts and effects on the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site.	In accordance with Paragraph B.267 of the CLP (i.e. the importance of taking <i>“into account heritage assets located outside of the District such as Blenheim Palace, a World Heritage Site”</i>) CDC would want the impacts of the development upon Blenheim Palace to be thoroughly examined.	<p>The Applicant’s assessment of likely impacts and effects in respect of the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site is presented in the Heritage Impact Assessment (ES Appendix 7.4 (Rev 1) [CR2-036]). This assessment was undertaken in accordance with the 2022 guidance from UNESCO for the assessment of impacts on World Heritage Sites (<i>Guidance and Toolkit for Impact Assessment in a World Heritage Context</i>), and the preparation of the report was carried out within an iterative process in consultation with Historic England.</p> <p>The Heritage Impact Assessment identified a likely ‘minor negative’ impact on one attribute (Attribute</p>	Not Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p>7) which contributes towards the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the Blenheim Palace WHS. The overall assessment of likely impacts and effects on the historic environment is presented within ES Chapter 7: Historic environment [CR2-019]. The likely impact on the Blenheim Palace WHS is set out at 7.9.52 – 7.9.56 of that chapter. The magnitude of impact on the heritage significance of the WHS has been assessed as 'no change' despite the 'minor negative' impact on a single attribute of the OUV as identified in the Heritage Impact Assessment (ES Appendix 7.4 [APP-141]). The Applicant notes the Deadline 6 response from Historic England [REP6-092]. Historic England conclude that, following the acceptance of the changes set out in the Applicant's Change Request 2 Notification, any changes to the use of land resulting from the placement of solar pv panels would not harm the contribution that this land makes to the attributes that convey the OUV of the WHS.</p> <p>The Applicant also notes that in their Relevant Representation [RR-0413], ICOMOS-UK state that</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p><i>'the proposed Botley West Solar Farm would not have a direct impact on the OUV of Blenheim Palace and Park WHS or its setting as identified by the map 'Character of Setting of WHS' on page 50 of Appendix III of the Management Plan'. ICOMOS-UK is the UK National Committee of ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), which has a special role as the official adviser to UNESCO on cultural World Heritage Sites. ICOMOS-UK plays a leading role in implementing the World Heritage Convention 1972 within the UK and promoting best practice in the management of UK World Heritage Sites. The maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the UK World Heritage Sites and their settings is one of their key objectives.</i></p>	

Table 7.3: Areas of Discussion between the Parties – Agricultural Land Use & Public Rights of Way

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
4.3.1	ES Chapter 17: Agricultural land use and Public Rights of Way [APP-054] .	Concerns about the placement of solar panels on high-quality agricultural land, suggesting that areas of Grades 2 and 3a in Cherwell and West Oxfordshire should be reconsidered for removal, and emphasizes the need for a Soil Management Plan to ensure land restoration post-decommissioning, while noting the significant impact on the experience of using the PRoW within the site.	<p>Agricultural land use (RR-0164-026): The ES chapter on Agricultural Land Use and PRoW is based upon an Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey carried out on behalf of the applicants. The ALC survey does not breakdown the areas by district, but it is clear from looking at the maps in Figure 17.3, 'Surveyed ALC Grades' that, proportionally, more of the site within the Cherwell District comprises land of the higher quality Grades 2 and 3a than the other districts.</p> <p>Looking at the illustrative masterplans CDC would question why the location of panels has been amended to omit areas of archaeological interest and to allow for sky lark plots but not to preserve areas found to be of the higher quality agricultural grades. This has not been addressed in the Planning Statement and there would appear to be justification for removing panels from certain parts of the site which are of Grade 2 and 3a quality. Within Cherwell the area to the north-west of The Priory in Begbroke and the field to the south of London Oxford Airport</p>	<p>The ALC and soil surveys (Table 2 of ES - Appendix 17.1 [APP-223]) determined that 38.35% of the whole Project site comprises Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, and 3a), while 61.65% is subgrade 3b or non-agricultural land. The Applicants have sought to avoid impacts on BMV land by siting permanent infrastructure away from these areas (ES Chapter 5 [APP-042]) The assessment of the significance of effects of the Project on ALC identifies that only 5.5ha of BMV land would be permanently lost during construction, which is not significant in EIA terms (ES Chapter 17 [APP-054], paragraph 17.9.6).</p> <p>In terms of the distribution of grades, according to the provisional mapping of ALC grades within Oxfordshire, the county comprises approximately 20.9% Grades 1 and 2 land, 58.5% of Grade 3 land (which includes both Subgrades 3a and 3b) and 20.1% Grade 4 land (Table 17.14 of ES Chapter 17 [APP-054]). If only one third of</p>	Not Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
			<p>(east of A44) should be considered for removal. There are also notable areas of Grade 2 within West Oxfordshire District to the south and east of Church Hanborough and to the north and north-west of Cassington which are of Grade 2 quality which should also be reconsidered.</p> <p>The proposed mitigation measures and requirement for the provision of a Soil Management Plan are welcomed to preserve agricultural land quality and ensure that land is restored after decommissioning to its existing quality and condition for arable use. It should therefore provide details of how the land will be reinstated to its former condition at the end of the use, also providing information about the 'reversibility' of the development, and how quickly the land could be returned to food production (arable and grazing) once the solar farm has come to the end of its life.</p> <p>The harm caused by the loss of BMV land for food production needs to be weighed in the planning balance.</p> <p>The experience of using the PRoW within and close to the application site will be substantially and</p>	<p>the provisionally mapped comprised Subgrade 3a land, this would provide an estimate of an average of 40.4% Grades 1,2 and 3a in Oxfordshire. The detailed ALC survey results for the Project site (Table 17.17 of ES Chapter 17) identify that only 7.4% of the land comprises Grades 1 and 2 land, with approximately 29% Subgrade 3a land. In comparison to the pattern of land quality that might be expected in the wider county, therefore, the distribution of land quality grades within the Project site comprises a typical, if not slightly lower average percentage of the best and most versatile land.</p> <p>As identified by Cherwell District Council Temporary impacts on agricultural land quality and soils during construction of the construction compounds, solar PV array, cable corridors and access tracks will be managed through the Soil Management Plan, ensuring soil quality is maintained (ES Chapter 17 [APP-054], paragraph 17.9.8)</p> <p>In response to the question of how quickly the land could be returned to food production (arable and grazing) once the</p>	

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			<p>detrimentally impacted. Currently, most PRow within the application site provide access to tranquil, rural, undeveloped land that allows open views between existing settlements. Whilst the proposed development would retain all the existing PRow in terms of accessibility, the experience of using them would be significantly different. Users will find themselves either within enclosed hedge lined corridors or looking across large expanses of solar panels, security fencing and secondary substations.</p> <p>Harmful impacts upon the experience of users of the PRow (enjoyment of rural setting and open rural views) cannot be fully mitigated with set backs and hedge planting and therefore this needs to be weighed in the planning balance.</p>	<p>solar farm has come to the end of its life, the Applicant proposes to retain agricultural land use under solar arrays, between converter stations and substations, and in undeveloped areas, using conservation grazing by sheep and small-scale horticultural production (ES Chapter 6 [APP-043], paragraph 6.1.4).</p> <p>The implementation of the Soil Management Plan would enable the soil quality of the land to be maintained through the decommissioning process and any decisions about changes to the pattern of land management beyond the proposed operational agricultural use would be a matter for the owners and farming enterprises occupying the land to determine at that time.</p> <p>In addition, in the OHA written submission of OFH3 [REP6-115] CDC welcomes the removal of panels from the parcels to the south of London-Oxford Airport. The removal of panels from these areas overcomes our objection regarding the coalescence of Kidlington and Begbroke and the loss of some areas of Grade 2 BMV agricultural land.</p>	

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				In total the areas of BMV land now been removed from the Order Limits through Change Request 2, include 10.48ha of Grade 2 land and 38.81ha of Subgrade 3a land.	

Table 7.4: Areas of Discussion between the Parties – Landscape and Visual Resources

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
4.4.1a	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	LVIA Methodology	It is agreed that these documents form the industry standard guidance used to inform scope and methodology used in LVIA. *Note that representatives from Cherwell District Council did not attend this meeting, but all the other OHAs were represented, as well as a representative from LUC.	The key (industry standard) guidance documents used to inform scope and methodology used by landscape professionals in Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) are the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third Edition (LI and IEMA, 2013) GLVIA3 and Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Notes, including Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p>2024-01: Notes and Clarifications of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment: Third edition (GLVIA3) (LI TGN2024-01), was agreed at a meeting with the OHAs dated 10th June 2025. This was further clarified at the meeting with the OHAs held on 16th October 2025*.</p> <p>*The Applicant notes that representatives from Cherwell District Council did not attend this meeting, but all other OHAs were represented, as well as a representative from LUC, LUC appears to be the landscape consultancy representing/providing advice to the OHAs.</p>	
4.4.1b	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	LVIA Methodology	Whilst it is agreed that these documents form the industry standard guidance used to inform scope and methodology used in LVIA CDC remains concerned that the applicant has not used these documents	The Applicant believes that the DMRB template, used in the ES by other topics (as a preferred approach to ES chapters – promoted by the OHAs) modified to accommodate the LI guidance, as the Landscape Institute	Not agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
			<p>in preparing their LVIA, relying on the use of Design 'Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA104 and LA107 instead.</p> <p>Whilst the OHA agree that GLVIA3, as clarified in LI TGN 2024 01, is the accepted best practice guidance, this does not translate to agreement of the applicant's methodology. In paragraph 1.2.29 of The applicant's response to the OHA's response to the Rule 17 Letter [REP3-066] the applicant stated '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.'</p>	requires is appropriate for the assessment of solar farms.	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
			<p>The Council remains concerned about the use of and how the applicant has applied the Design 'Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA104 and LA107 for a solar development. Basing the assessment methodology and tables on the DMRB LA107 but not reflecting the level of significance as covered in LA104. Page 15 of the Design 'Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) LA104 (Highways England et al. 2020) guidance NOTE 3 'Significant effects typically comprise residual effects that are within the moderate, large or very large categories.</p>		
4.4.1c	[045REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	LVIA Methodology	The OHAs agree that this is what the text of GLVIA3 states.	GLVIA3 recommends that an LVIA <i>"This edition concentrates on principles and process. It does not provide a detailed or formulaic 'recipe' that can be followed in every situation – it remains the responsibility of the</i>	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p><i>professional to ensure that the approach and methodology adopted are appropriate to the task in hand. The aim has been to make the advice specific enough to meet the needs of UK practitioners but also to avoid too much detail about specific legislation which will make it of less value elsewhere.”</i> (preface to GLVIA3, Roman numeral page x).</p> <p>On determining significance GLVIA3 explains that “<i>The Regulations require that a final judgement is made about whether or not each effect is likely to be significant. There are no hard and fast rules about what effects should be deemed ‘significant’ but LVIA’s should always distinguish clearly between what are considered to be the significant and non-significant effects. Some practitioners use the phrase ‘not significant in</i></p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p><i>EIA terms' to describe those effects considered to fall below a 'threshold' of significance but this can potentially confuse since the phrase has no specific meaning in relation to the EIA Regulations (IEMA, 2011b: 61 (GLVIA3, paragraph 3.32).</i></p> <p><i>Paragraph 3.33 explains that "It is not essential to establish a series of thresholds for different levels of significance of landscape and visual effects, provided that it is made clear whether or not they are considered significant. The final overall judgement of the likely significance of the predicted landscape and visual effects is, however, often summarised in a series of categories of significance reflecting combinations of sensitivity and magnitude. These tend to vary from project to project but they should be appropriate to the nature, size and location</i></p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<i>of the proposed development and should as far as possible be consistent across the different topic areas in the EIA.</i> "GLVIA3 recommends that an LVIA "concentrates on principles and process" and "does not provide a detailed or formulaic recipe" to assess effects, it being the "responsibility of the professional to ensure that the approach and methodology are appropriate to the task in hand" (preface to GLVIA3, Roman numeral page x).	
4.4.1d	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	LVIA Methodology	<p>Whilst the OHA agree that the quote is taken from 3(5):LI TGN2024-01, the OHA did not agree anything at the meeting 16th October 2025.</p> <p>It should be noted that 3(5):LI TGN2024-01 also states.</p> <p><i>"Make sure the methodology clearly states the basis on</i></p>	<p>It was agreed at the meeting with the OHAs on the 16th October 2025 that at issue 3(5) of LI TGN 2024-01 it states <i>"As indicated at GLVIA paragraph 3.33, it is not necessary to establish thresholds for levels of significance, provided that it is made clear whether effects are significant are, or are not, significant. However, typically, effects</i></p>	<p>Text of LI TGN 2024-01, issue 3(5) - Agreed</p> <p>Applicant's methodology - Not Agreed</p>

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
			<i>which effects are judged as 'significant', and check that judgements are consistent with this (see GLVIA3 paragraph 3.23.).</i> Para 3.23 refers to the significant effects in EIA Directive and UK Regulations.	<i>falling below the middle of the range of overall effects are assessed as not significant. For example, if using a scale of minor/ moderate/ major, then major effects will be significant and minor effects will not be significant. In this example, 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."</i>	
4.4.1e	[APP-045REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	LVIA Methodology	It is agreed by the OHAs that the EIA Regulations do not set out methodologies, thresholds or state what effects should be considered significant or not	It is agreed that the EIA Regulations do not set out methodologies, thresholds or state what effects should be considered significant or not	Agreed
4.4.1f	[APP-045REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	LVIA Methodology	The OHA agree that GLVIA3 and subsequent technical notes is the accepted best practice guidance. The reference in para.3.32 discusses	It is agreed that the IEMA document 'The state of environmental impact assessment in the UK' (Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 2011) (IEMA	Not agreed

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			<p>significant thresholds and refers to page 61 of IEEMA 2011 in this context. GLVIA3 is from 2013 and is, together with subsequent guidance notes, the accepted guidance that should be used.</p> <p>However, it should be noted that the IEMA document at page 61 also states <i>'Problems arise in practice when the ES fails to either: justify the use of different methods to evaluate significance between topic chapters, or present the significance of effects related to a particular environmental issue'</i> and <i>'As such, there is a clear need to ensure that all the findings set out in the ES are evaluated in terms of their significance; ideally this would be in a format that allows them to be readily compared with the EIA's other findings.'</i></p>	<p>2011) explains that there is no legal requirement to follow a set approach – in fact it is common for certain topics not to follow a set approach.</p> <p>LVIA is not a scientific discipline – it deals with perceptual qualities and relies on professional judgement.</p> <p>IEMA 2011 notes that <i>"In reporting the EIA's findings, ESs often set out a generic methodology at the start of the document indicating that significance has been assessed using a standard matrix style approach, with magnitude on one axis and receptor sensitivity on the other" ... "Despite this, it remains relatively common for one or more ES chapters to use an alternative approach. This is not a legal concern, as there is no regulatory requirement to apply the same methodological approach to significance evaluation across an EIA In some cases significance may be</i></p>	

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			<p>As such whilst the IEMA 2011 document does indeed include the quote provided by the applicant, section 6.3 when read as a whole promotes a consistent approach to assessments of significance throughout the ES. The document specifically identifies that the downside of not doing so is that consenting authorities do not feel like they have sufficient information on a development's likely environmental effect.</p> <p>As such, whilst the Council agree that the IEMA 2011 documents outlines there is no <i>legal</i> requirement to follow a set approach within an ES, when read in the full context of the document supports a consistent approach amongst ES chapters to aid consenting authorities.</p>	<p><i>linked to whether the predicted effect passes a quantified threshold established in a relevant standard.” (IEMA 2011, page 60, section 6.3).</i></p> <p>On consistency of significance, “<i>IEMA’s Guidelines on EIA indicate:</i></p> <p><i>‘There is often not a single, definitive, correct answer as to whether an impact is significant or not. Significance is influenced by the values of the individual, how the changes to the environment affect them and whether they have a stake in the project or not’</i></p> <p><i>The evaluation of significance in EIA is often subjective. In order to provide justifiable results, EIA practitioners gather evidence to inform and explain the evaluation of the individual effect. Effective EIA practice ensures that the methods used can be readily understood by those reading the ES. EIA does</i></p>	

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			CDC do not consider the methodology used for the Mona offshore wind farm, Morgan offshore wind farm and Gatwick Genesis are comparable to this NSIP solar development.	<p><i>not tend to discuss significance in absolute terms. Instead, the assessment's findings are regularly set out as different levels of significance (e.g. major, moderate, minor, etc).</i></p> <p><i>This approach is considered good practice; whilst recognising the inherent subjectivity of the assessment, it attempts to aid communication of the scale of the impact by introducing a classification. This approach also allows the practitioner to identify and discuss effects that some groups may consider significant, whilst others would not. For example, a negative landscape effect described as being of 'minor significance' might be considered to indicate that a majority of people would not consider the effect to be significant; however, a smaller group, perhaps within the local community, may disagree and consider the effect to</i></p>	

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				<p><i>be significant. It also allows for the comparison of impacts across seemingly incomparable topics by providing a consistent basis for the assessment's terminology."</i> (Section 6.3, page 60).</p> <p>On determining the significance thresholds of effects IEMA 2011 notes that "... <i>the EIA regulations do not set out terms for evaluating whether the assessment's findings are significant or not</i>" (IEMA 2011, page 61, section 6.3).</p> <p>REP2-029 notes that the IEMA 2011 document above is referred to in GLVIA3, paragraph 3.32 and has not been superseded, and the points made in it remain relevant.</p> <p>The Applicant's position is that it has justified the methodology used in the LVIA throughout the Examination. It is a</p>	

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				methodology that has not been challenged at (most recently) three consented DCOs, Mona offshore wind farm, Morgan offshore wind farm and Gatwick Genesis.	
4.4.1g	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	LVIA Methodology	<p>The applicant bases their assessment methodology and tables on Design Manual for Roads and Bridges LA107 but does not reflect levels of significance as covered by LA104, i.e that Significant effects typically comprise residual effects that are within the moderate, large or very large categories. It is noted that the applicant has been guided by the latest Landscape Institute guidance LI TGN 2024-01, and has judged moderate effects to be significant and not significant.</p> <p>LI TGN 2024-01 issue 9(3) <i>'The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) is a</i></p>	<p>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].</p> <p>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).</p> <p>The DMRB notes that significance of effects is judged on the effects that</p>	Not agreed.

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			<p>standard (not just guidance) relating to the design, assessment and operation of motorway and all-purpose trunk roads in the United Kingdom. Part LA 107 Landscape and visual effects contains the requirements for assessing and reporting the landscape and visual effects of highway projects. GLVIA3 should be used for all other project types.</p> <p>CDC consider that as the applicant uses LA107 it should have used the guidance in full, including the significance levels of LA104.</p>	<p>remain after the mitigation has taken place, i.e. the residual effects.</p> <p>The Botley West Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment significance of effects matrix is based on the DMRB matrix used in other chapters of the ES, albeit adapted to reflect more recent GLVIA3 guidance (the DMRB matrix and guidance has been superseded by LI TGN 2024-01 issue 3(5), which states that moderate effects can be significant or not significant. this is reflected in paragraph 8.3.1 of the text of Rev 4 of Chapter 8 [REP6-012]. Also, the 'No Change' column has also been removed, as LVIA assessment concentrates on potential significant effects.</p> <p>The Applicant's Position – DMRB LA107 is the base methodology used within the ES, by the other disciplines, which has not</p>	

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				<p>been questioned by their corresponding specialists either within the OHAs or by other statutory consultees.</p> <p>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.</p>	
4.4.2a	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	Assignment of significance	OHA agree that the latest revision of the LVIA [REP6-012] includes in table 8.22 additional information to viewpoints on whether <i>moderate effects</i> are considered significant or not significant. However, this information has not been added to the rest of the table to provide that information for landscape and PRow receptors. There also still appears to be some inconsistency between table 8.22 and related	<p>The latest version of Chapter 8 (Rev 4) [REP6-012] includes the updates of the Applicant's Rule 17 Response [REP2-029] Which reconsidered the significance of effects, providing a detailed explanation within each resource/receptor as to why some Moderate effects are now considered significant and some remain as not significant.</p> <p>The Applicant firmly disagrees that their LVIA is deficient on 'quality' as</p>	Not Agreed

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			<p>appendices, which have not been corrected</p> <p>OHA's do not consider that the subsequent changes to the LVIA during the examination have addressed these issues raised in the OHA's LIR [REP1-072].</p> <p>Although additional paragraphs, sections and additional appendices have been added to the LVIA since submission, these do not satisfactory address concerns about how the site has been assessed, the quality of the LVIA and how it has informed the selection and iterative approach to the design of the site area, in order to reduce effects.</p> <p>There have been very limited changes in the assessment outcomes, and the OHA are still concerned that the LVIA seriously underplays the scale of the effects of the development on landscape character</p>	<p>the LPA allege, as it was undertaken by experienced, competent professionals. The Applicant accept that there is disagreement between the parties with how the LVIA methodology was applied and their assessment of effects (as those aspects depend upon opinion), but that should not be interpreted as in any way deficient or not in accordance with best practice.</p>	

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			<p>and views, especially with regard to the expected Magnitude of impact, and therefore the significance of the effect.</p> <p>It should also be noted that the assessment of the same receptors differs between different sections of the LVIA and appendices.</p> <p>OHA don't consider the assignment of significance to be satisfactorily addressed</p>		
4.4.2b	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment	Assignment of significance	<p>The OHA raised a number of issues with the methodology including the significant threshold in their Joint LIR [REP1-072] and CDC do not consider that the subsequent changes to the LVIA during the examination have sufficiently addressed these issues.</p> <p>OHA believe that the LVIA [REP6-012] has in many cases underplayed the level of</p>	<p>The Applicant's current position remains as follows:</p> <p>The LVIA follows Landscape Institute and IEMA guidance. The assessment within Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [REP6-012] uses the methodology set out at sections 8.4 and 8.5 of the submitted LVIA [REP6-012]. The methodology and its application is clear and</p>	Not agreed.

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			<p>significance for a number of Representative Viewpoints and on the local landscape character.</p> <p>Although additional paragraphs, sections and additional appendices have been added to the LVIA since submission, these do not satisfactory address OHA's concerns about how the site has been assessed, the quality of the LVIA and how it has informed the selection and iterative approach to the design of the site area, in order to reduce effects.</p> <p>There have been very limited changes in the assessment outcomes, and the OHA are still concerned that the LVIA seriously underplays the scale of the effects of the development on landscape character and views, especially with regard to the expected Magnitude of</p>	transparent, as required by GLVIA3 (e.g. at paragraph 2.24).	

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			<p>impact, and therefore the significance of the effect.</p> <p>These issues were raised in the OHA Joint Local Impact Report [REP1-072]. While the amended LVIA [CR2-022] has added paras 8.5.17 and 8.5.19 to address the duration and reversibility of effects, they still don't provide clarity or justification on how these aspects have been considered and weighed in the assessment. The LVIA methodology is also still not clear how 'size', 'scale' and 'geographical extent', which also inform the Magnitude judgement within the impact assessment</p>		
4.4.3	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.	Suitability of representative viewpoint selection and photomontages	CDC were initially contacted by the applicant on 19 October 2022 to seek our opinion on the viewpoint selection within the ZTV and particularly those	<p>The Applicant's current position remains as follows:</p> <p>The candidate representative viewpoints were presented on a ZTV</p>	Position on representative viewpoints in Cherwell - Agreed

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			<p>locations that were within Cherwell. It was stated the precise location of representative viewpoints would be verified during site investigation and <i>“at this stage I seek any comments you may have regarding the viewpoints or confirmation that the extent of coverage is sufficient to inform the assessment.”</i></p> <p>CDC responded to request viewpoint locations from the PRoW in Yarnton and Shipton-on Cherwell parishes. The applicant was advised that it was particularly important to include views from Shakespeare Way (where the wider views of the proposed application site are experienced, towards Freeland, etc) and to include viewpoints on PRoW leading from</p>	<p>at Scoping. The viewpoints were consulted with CDC in October 2022, Subsequent emails to and from Suzanne Taylor up to and including 24.05.2023 suggesting further viewpoints. These are detailed in Table 8.5 of LVIA [REP6-012].</p> <p>Of the 55 Representative Viewpoints, 33 were selected for photomontages [APP-072 to APP-080]. These were agreed with the local planning authorities and considered appropriate and proportionate to the Project and illustrate the Project at winter Year 1 and summer Year 15, in accordance with the LVIA methodology and best practice guidance [APP-149]. It would have not been appropriate to have illustrated photomontages from all Representative Viewpoints, as there were a number with limited or no views of the Project. However, all viewpoints are included within the</p>	<p>Position on photomontages – Not agreed.</p> <p>Position on aerial viewpoints - Agreed</p>

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			<p>Springs Hill Road, Begbroke. A marked up GIS plan was provided by CDC.</p> <p>On 11 April 2023 the applicants provided a spreadsheet of the additional viewpoints suggested by the Oxfordshire Host Authorities (OHAs) setting out whether or not these had been accepted and providing reasoning where viewpoints had not been accepted. CDC responded on 17 May 2023 observing that our viewpoints had been discounted and reiterating that 5 additional viewpoints (looking east from A44 and looking north and west from footpaths in Begbroke) should be included. It was also indicated that visualisations may be needed for these viewpoints. In a response on 18 May</p>	<p>assessment of effects in the submitted LVIA [REP6-012].</p> <p>Aerial viewpoints</p> <p>At no point were aerial viewpoints suggested, either by the Applicant or by the OHAs. GLVIA3 only mentions aerial imagery twice, in the context computer-generated 3D models (paragraphs 8.28 and 8.29). Moreover, GLVIA3 explains that such <i>models “do not necessarily represent the way that people would experience the change [in view] and so can be misleading in an assessment context”</i> (GLVIA3, paragraph 8.29). This is especially true of people within vehicles including aircraft, travelling at speed on the approach to, or taking off from airports.</p> <p>The transient nature of potential views available from the air and the enclosed nature of the aircraft would reduce the sensitivity of the visual</p>	

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			<p>2023 the applicant agreed to add the viewpoint looking east from A44 and to add 2 further representative viewpoints to the north and east of Begbroke. The 3 additional viewpoints were agreed by CDC in an email dated 24 May 2023 and confirmed by the applicant in an email dated 25 May 2023.</p> <p>In terms of methodology CDC provided commentary to the Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion request received 15 June 2023. The response was submitted on 12 July 2023 and raised a number of queries about the methodology including the matters to be 'scoped out'. It was recommended that 6.36 of the GLVIA 3, Technical Guidance Note 02/21 was considered regarding if residents should be</p>	<p>receptor to such a degree that there is no potential for significant effects. Land-based dynamic receptors are considered at paragraphs 8.6.44 to 8.6.65 of the LVIA [REP6-012].</p> <p>The Applicant notes CDC's concerns on the methodology. This is considered in the sections on methodology, above.</p>	

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			<p>included as visual receptors. It was also recommended that the ES provided an explanation of Significance of effects for highest sensitivity receptors which took account of the multiple boundaries and AOLs.</p> <p>Aerial viewpoints At no point were aerial viewpoints suggested, by the OHAs.</p>		
4.4.4a	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.	Mitigation	<p>OHAs and other RRs have questioned the suitability of mitigation proposals.</p> <p>The OHA's concerns around mitigation are outlined in Section 7.3 as well as Appendix 1 of the LIR [REP1-072].</p> <p>The OHA's concerns around mitigation are best summarised in the Councils' response to ExQ2.9.4 [REP4-074] (page 35). OHA remain</p>	<p>The Applicant's current position remains as follows:</p> <p>Project impacts will be minimised by a comprehensive designed in mitigation scheme. As shown on the Illustrative Masterplan [CR2-026] and the Landscape, Ecology and Amenities Plan CR2-043]. Existing public rights of way would have managed hedgerows and trees to the north and south, where appropriate, which over time would limit</p>	Adequacy/ suitability of mitigation proposals - Not agreed

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			<p>of the view that the LVIA approach does not follow the EIA mitigation hierarchy of avoid, reduce, mitigate, compensate.</p> <p>The OHA's have indicated what they would consider to be acceptable landscape mitigation in the form of their omissions maps as updated at D6 [REP6-118].</p>	<p>available views to the solar arrays.</p> <p>The Project's main elements, the solar panels, would be low in height, at a maximum of 2.3m, and follow the natural contours of the landscape. This would help to reduce the effects upon the undulating landform of the Evenlode Valley and local area within which the Project is located.</p> <p>Regarding residual landscape and visual effects - the solar farm is a Critical National Priority (CNP) infrastructure project. NPS EN-1 explains that <i>"infrastructure to achieve our energy objectives national security, economic, commercial, and net zero benefits, will in general outweigh any other residual impacts not capable of being addressed by application of the mitigation"</i> (NPS EN-1, paragraph 3.3.63). The NPS explains further</p>	

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				that with “projects which qualify as CNP Infrastructure, it is likely that the need case will outweigh the residual effects in all but the most exceptional cases. This presumption, however, does not apply to residual impacts which present an unacceptable risk to, or interference with, human health and public safety, defence, irreplaceable habitats or unacceptable risk to the achievement of net zero” (NPS EN-1, paragraph 4.1.7). The residual landscape and visual effects, after the proposed mitigation do not present an unacceptable risk to the matters listed.	
4.4.4b	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.	Mitigation/Design Review Panel	It is agreed by the OHAs that a meeting/ review by an independent Design Review Panel post-Examination (a suggestion proposed by the ExA) would not be of assistance to developing the project.	It is agreed with the OHAs that a meeting/ review by a Design Review Panel post-Examination (a suggestion proposed by the ExA at ExAQ1.1.12) would not be of assistance to developing the project	Agreed.

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4.4.4c	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.	Mitigation		<p>OHA comment on the applicant's offer in CDC's D7 submissions. While the proposed removal of areas by the applicant is welcomed, these do not go far enough to deliver a scheme that minimises landscape and visual impacts to a more acceptable level.</p> <p>CDC has indicated what they would consider to be acceptable landscape mitigation in the form of the omissions maps as updated at D6 [REP6-118]</p>	<p>The Applicant's position remains that the design process that took place before submission was an iterative one, one example of this is the PVDP Buffer Zone Analysis, Appendix B of REP6-065. The panels have been located less sensitive landscape areas as explained in [REP6-052]. The mitigation hierarchy has also been addressed by the Applicant throughout the Examination in various responses, e.g at the Applicant's Response to the Rule 17 Letter [REP2-029].</p> <p>Throughout the Examination concerns were raised by the OHAs and Interested Parties regarding potential adverse effects. The Applicant has listened to those concerns and has submitted a set of 'Without Prejudice LVIA Offer' plans in Appendix 2 of The Applicant's</p>	Not agreed

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				response to the Rule 17 Letter REP6-052 in response to ExA's Points 9 and 10. While not acceding to all of the OHAs' requests for areas of panel removal, due to their requests not complying with National Policy and making the project unviable, these plans go some way to removing panels from more sensitive areas. These plans also show increased mitigation, particularly along the Evenlode Valley, which shows the introduction of areas of wet woodland.	
4.4.5	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.	Representative Viewpoints	Whilst CDC agreed representative viewpoints for Cherwell district the OHA's position is outlined in section 7.3 as well as Appendix 1 of the LIR [REP1-072] . OHA does not consider that the subsequent changes to the LVIA during the examination have addressed these issues.	The candidate representative viewpoints were presented on a ZTV at Scoping. The viewpoints were consulted on with CDC in October 2022, Subsequent emails to and from Suzanne Taylor up to and including 24.05.2023 suggesting further viewpoints. These are detailed in Table 8.5 of LVIA [REP6-012]. The Representative	Candidate viewpoints – CDC did not object to the representative viewpoints chosen – Agreed

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			<p>This issue is also addressed in [REP4-041] (page 6-9). The OHA did not agree the viewpoints with the applicant and does not consider that they provide an accurate assessment of the impacts on many PRow.</p>	<p>Viewpoints, are as they are named – i.e. they are representative of available views along certain routes and within the local landscape. Where these are based on a route a summary for the whole route is included in the description of effects, e.g. for Representative Viewpoint 1, an assessment of the effects experienced by people using the whole route during the operational phase is given in paragraph 8.9.144 of Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [REP6-012]. It should be considered that the viewpoint assessment (Appendix 8.7 of the LVIA ES Chapter) [REP5-038] deals with static viewpoint locations, a single point taken along a route, whereas PRow's assessment (Appendix 8.6 of the LVIA ES Chapter) [REP5-037] examines the potentially affected users of PRow</p>	

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				<p>(visual receptors), illustrated by Viewpoint(s).</p> <p>It is acknowledged that the assessment of the effects on PRowWs does not include detailed section by section descriptions of the change in views along each PRow or road. 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.</p> <p>Most of the Representative Viewpoints, which have been agreed with the stakeholders, are located on PRowWs. The numbers of people using the public rights of way network within the 5 m study area varies, as does the distance, context and</p>	

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				<p>visual characteristics of the view. It is not known how people use different sections of the Public Rights of Way, in which direction and when. Where no firm data are available a relative judgement is sufficient, as proposed in GLVIA3, Therefore, the position has been adopted of individuals using a public rights of way walking towards or through the Project, looking directly at the Project, even if wider views are available. Regarding valency, the position has been taken of that of a person who objects to the presence of the Project. Emphasis was placed on the nature and activity of the visual receptor, such as recreational receptors, e.g., users of PRoWs have been cautiously considered to be of high sensitivity.</p> <p>The linear nature of the PRoWs determines that views from the route</p>	

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				differ, are transient, the visible scale of the Proposed Development varies, all of which will be experienced within a short period of time, even during the operational phase.	
4.4.6	[REP6-012] Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.	Local Plan evidence base	<p>The OHAs agreed, at the meeting held on 16th October 2025, that the following documents formed part of the evidence base for the West Oxfordshire District Council and the South Oxfordshire and the Vale of the White Horse District Council local plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Energy Assessment and Strategy for West Oxfordshire (LDA, 2016) South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Renewable Energy Study Landscape Sensitivity 	<p>The OHAs agreed at the meeting held on 16th October 2025, that the following documents formed part of the evidence base for the West Oxfordshire District and South Oxfordshire and the Vale of the White Horse District Councils local plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Energy Assessment and Strategy for West Oxfordshire (LDA, 2016) South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Renewable Energy Study Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (LUC, 2024). 	<p>These studies formed part of the respective evidence bases for WODC and VWHDC local plan – Agreed</p> <p>These studies support the Applicant's choice of areas of lower susceptibility/higher suitability for development – Not agreed</p>

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			<p>Assessment (LUC, 2024).</p> <p>It is not clear how these have informed the LVIA or the applicant's judgements since the LVIA assessment findings have changed little since the DCO application was made, and the studies have not been mentioned prior to revision 4 of the LVIA [REP6-012].</p>	<p>These studies have informed the Applicant's choice of areas in which to locate the Project, i.e. areas of lower susceptibility to/ higher suitability for, solar farm development.</p>	
4.4.7	<p>The Applicant's Response to ExA Q2.1.4 [Annex 3 to REP4-037]</p>	<p>Regarding The Special Qualities of the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL)</p>	<p>The OHAs agreed at the meeting held on the 16th October 2025 that this is what the Cotswold National Landscape Board in its Response to Examining Authority's First Written Questions [REP2-068] states and that, at the request of the ExA, the Applicant undertook a study to assess the effects on the Cotswolds National Landscape [Annex 3 of REP4-037] which confirmed what the Cotswold National Landscape Board had</p>	<p>The OHAs agreed at the meeting held on the 16th October 2025 that the Cotswold National Landscape Board in its Response to Examining Authority's First Written Questions [REP2-068] states:</p> <p><i>"Having reviewed the applicant's DCO submission and visited the site and surrounding area, the Board concluded in our response dated 24 February 2025 that the proposed solar farm would have, at worst, a</i></p>	<p>Agreed.</p>

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			<p>stated in its REP2-068 and what the Applicant had reported within Chapter 8 – that the Project would have no significant effects upon the 14 Special Qualities of the Cotswolds National Landscape, and that the proposed landscape proposals may provide enhancements to furthering the purposes of the National Landscape:</p>	<p><i>temporary negligible to minor adverse significance of effect at all stages of the project (i.e. construction, operation and decommissioning) on the landscape character and special qualities of the CNL and a temporary negligible adverse effect on views to and from the CNL. Our response dated 24 February 2025 provides further details on the relationship between the site and the CNL and, in particular, an assessment of the potential effects of the development on views from within, and back towards, the CNL.</i></p> <p><i>“The Board also considers that the ‘new planting/areas for enhancement’ on land between the solar PV arrays and the CNL have the potential to provide landscape enhancements which could be considered to contribute to furthering the purpose of CNL designation and</i></p>	

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				<p><i>should be secured as part of the Development Consent Order should, without prejudice, the Secretary of State be minded to grant such an order. As such the Board considers that the impacts of the proposal would not represent an impediment in respect of relevant authorities' adequate discharge of the s.85 CROW Act duty."</i></p> <p>Nevertheless, the ExA requested the Applicant to undertake a study to assess the effects on the Cotswolds National which the Applicant did [Annex 3 of REP4-037] which confirmed what the Cotswold National Landscape Board had stated in its REP2-068 and what the Applicant had reported within Chapter 8 – that the Project would have no significant effects upon the 14 Special Qualities of the Cotswolds National Landscape, and that the</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				proposed landscape proposals may provide enhancements to furthering the purposes of the National Landscape.	
4.4.8	Documents secured by Requirements	<p>The OHAs agree that the documents secured in the requirements are set out in the Project Mitigation Measures and Commitments Schedule [REP4-014].</p> <p>At the meeting on the 16th of October 2025 the applicant was advised that detailed design documents would need to be substantially in accordance with the outline control documents and the Councils do not agree with the mitigation proposed in the outline control documents, nor the methodology used to assess the adequacy of the mitigation. Several documents are not agreed, as listed at 6.1.3.</p>	<p>The documents secured in the requirements are set out in the Project Mitigation Measures and Commitments Schedule [REP4-014].</p> <p>Specifically in relation to Requirements 5, 6 and 8 and Schedule 16 of the draft DCO, the Applicant provides the following information:</p> <p>Requirement 5 covers detailed design. The detail design of the development that must be submitted to the relevant planning authority pre-commencement pursuant to Requirement 5 of the DCO must 'accord with the outline layout and design principles'. This ensures that the final design must be within those parameters that are now clearly secured. This gives certainty as the</p>	<p>Documents secured in the requirements are set out in the Project Mitigation Measures and Commitments Schedule [REP4-014]. However, several documents remain to be agreed as listed in 6.1.3 - Not Agreed</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p>scope of the design parameters within which the final development will be brought.</p> <p>Requirement 6 covers the oLEMP/LEMP. It secures that no part of the authorised development may commence until a written landscape and ecology management plan has been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority. This retains control for the relevant planning authority by ensuring that it has a right of approval over the final landscape and ecological mitigation to be given. The requirement secures that the final plan 'must be substantially in accordance with the outline plan' to give certainty to the Applicant that approval will be achieved whilst giving certainty to the relevant planning authority as to the measures that are to be proposed at detailed design.</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p>Requirement 8 covers fencing and other means of enclosure. provides that no part of the authorised development may commence until written details of all proposed temporary and permanent fences, walls or other means of enclosure have been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority. This ensures that to the extent there is any flexibility in respect of fencing (etc.) which is not captured in the Outline Layout & Design Principles (on the basis that not all design detail is known at this stage), the relevant planning authority retains a right of approval which will apply at the time of discharge of requirements. This ensures that there is the necessary control on that flexibility, secured within the DCO.</p> <p>Schedule 16 of the draft DCO states that to the</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p>extent there is a disagreement or uncertainty at detailed design stage, Schedule 16 of the draft DCO sets out the process that will apply in discharging the requirements. This allows the Council to request further information (see paragraph 3 of Schedule 16) to ensure that any approval is appropriately informed, whilst offering the Applicant a route of appeal (see paragraph 4) in the event that approval is denied. This ensures certainty as to the delivery of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project in the event that the Council disagrees with the mitigation that effectively the SoS would have considered to be appropriate.</p> <p>The Applicant notes the concerns of CDC regarding adequacy of mitigation and this is addressed in the rows above.</p>	

Table 7.5: Areas of Discussion between the Parties – Noise and Vibration

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
4.5.1	6.3 - ES Chapter 13 - Noise and Vibration [PDB-010]	Assessment approach, scope and methodology	The scope and methodology utilised for the noise and vibration assessment has been agreed.	This was confirmed and agreed during a virtual meeting on the 16 th July 2025.	Agreed.
4.5.2	6.3 - ES Chapter 13 - Noise and Vibration [PDB-010]	Baseline noise survey methodology	The scope and methodology utilised for the baseline noise survey has been agreed.	This was confirmed and agreed during a virtual meeting on the 16 th July 2025.	Agreed.
4.5.3	6.3 - ES Chapter 13 - Noise and Vibration [PDB-010]	Assessment Findings	The findings of the assessment have been discussed and are agreed.	This was confirmed and agreed during a virtual meeting on the 16 th July 2025.	Agreed.
4.5.4	Botley West Outline Operational Management Plan (Clean) (Rev 5) [REP6-032] Table 3.1	Operational noise will be limited to a rating level which is up to 4dB greater than the background sound level at the nearest receptor. This operational noise criterion will be secured as a requirement of the DCO and agreed with the relevant stakeholders.	Development should be designed to achieve a rating level of 5dB (LAeq) below the typical background (LA90) level at the nearest noise sensitive location. Where this can't be achieved, the various noise control measures considered as part of the assessment should be fully explained (i.e. relocation of noise sources, use of quieter equipment, enclosures, screening, restriction of the hours of operation) and the achievable noise level should be identified.	BS4142:2014+A1:2019 <i>Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound</i> (BS4142) assessment criteria states that 'A difference of around +5 dB is likely to be an indication of an adverse impact, depending on the context.' It is therefore reasonable to state that an adverse effect is avoided where operational phase noise is up to 4dB	Not agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				greater than the background sound level. Paragraph 198 of NPPF states that significant adverse effects should be avoided. Technical guidance and National Policy support the view that an adverse effect is avoided where noise from the development is up to 4dB above the background sound level.	
4.5.5	Botley West Outline Code of Construction Practice (Clean) (Rev 5) - Part 1 [REP6-028] 1.8.2	<p>Core working hours for the construction of the project will be 07:00 – 19:00 hours Monday to Saturday.</p> <p>Up to one hour before and after core working hours for mobilisation (“mobilisation period”).</p>	This is outside the hours we recommend (07:30 – 18:00 Mon-Fri & 08:00 – 13:00 Sat, nothing on Sun or BHs) and should be amended accordingly.	In response to Action Point No. 20 arising at Issue Specific Hearing 2, the Applicant confirmed that a reduction in working hours from 07:00-19:00 to 07:00-13:00 on Saturdays would result in an additional 9.45 weeks added to the Construction Programme [REP6-047]. The revised requested, as set out in REP6-119, for the programme to be 07:30-18:00 on Monday to Friday and	Not agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				<p>07:30-12:00 on Saturday would result in an additional 27.37 weeks to the Construction programme.</p> <p>The Applicant cannot agree to the revised request as this would have a substantial additional impact on the construction programme and risk efficient delivery of the critical national priority infrastructure. Whilst the scope of the environmental assessment has been carried out on a reasonable worst-case basis (07:00 to 19:00 Monday to Saturday), a substantial increase of 27.37 weeks to the programme may alter the impacts to be expected if the works are to be experienced over a longer duration.</p>	

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
				Therefore, to ensure certainty of delivery in accordance with the connection agreement and for consistency with the scope of the environmental assessment, the Applicant cannot accept the revised programme of working hours in [REP6-047].	

Table 7.6: Areas of Discussion between the Parties – Planning Policy

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
4.6.1	Planning Supporting Statement [REP1-012]	<p>Application of Planning Policy to Decision Making for NSIP's:</p> <p>Section 104 of the Act contains the most pertinent policy outlining the decision-making process for NSIPs and providing guidance on how the Secretary of State (SoS) should approach their decisions. In this respect, Section 104 (3) provides that the SoS must decide applications for development consent in accordance with any National Policy Statement (NPS) except to the extent that the SoS is satisfied that one or more of the following exceptions apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that deciding the application in accordance with any relevant national policy statement would 	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
		<p>lead to the United Kingdom being in breach of any of its international obligations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that deciding the application in accordance with any relevant national policy statement would lead to the Secretary of State being in breach of any duty imposed on the Secretary of State by or under enactment; That deciding the application in accordance with any relevant national policy statement would be unlawful by virtue of any enactment; and That the Secretary of State is satisfied that the adverse impact of the proposed development outweighs its benefits. <p>A such, it is agreed that the following NPSs make up the relevant primary policy, against which the SoS must make their decision and to the extent that Section 104 allows, the following national, regional and local policy may also be relevant.</p>			
4.6.2	Planning Supporting Statement [REP1-012]	<p>Overview:</p> <p>The statutory framework for preparing, examining and determining application for DCOs for NSIPs is provided by the Act. As discussed in section 2, the Act sets out the consenting system for all NSIPs, including those in the energy sector, and provides the legislative context that has guided the below considerations.</p> <p>The relevant NPSs to which the SoS must have regard in accordance with Section 104 (2) and 104 (3) of the Act are considered to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Policy Statement for Energy (NPS EN-1), National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (NPS EN-3) and National 	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
		<p>Planning Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (NPS EN-5).</p> <p>Other policies of relevance identified below include: National Planning Policy Framework NPPF and the Local Development Plan documents for the host authorities West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, the Vale of Horse District Council and Oxford City Council.</p> <p>Appendices B to E attached detail national and local planning policy against which the project will be judged. These appendices are described as 'Compliance Tables', and details the applicants position in respect of degree on compliance with these policy statements well as the host authorities position with respect to compliance. Together they represent matters agreed and not agreed.</p>			
4.6.3	Planning Supporting Statement [REP1-012]	<p>Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) and 'saved' policies of Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (Adopted)</p> <p>The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) was formally adopted in July 2015 and contains strategic policies for developing the use of land. A Regulation 10A review of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) was conducted in February 2023 and showed that nearly all policies were generally consistent with government policy and/or local circumstances, with the exception of Policy BSC1: District-Wide Housing Distribution.</p> <p>The 'saved' policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 also remain part of the statutory Development Plan alongside the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) Partial Review – Oxford's Unmet Housing Need, which was formally adopted as part of the statutory</p>	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed.

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
		<p>Development Plan in September 2020. The Partial Review provides the strategic planning framework and sets out strategic site allocations to provide Cherwell District's share of the unmet housing needs of Oxford to 2031.</p> <p>The fields on the eastern fringes of the Northern and Central Sites are located within the administrative area of CDC.</p> <p>Strategic Objective 11, Ensuring Sustainable Development seeks "to incorporate the principles of sustainable development in mitigating and adapting to climate change impacts including increasing local resource efficiency (particularly water efficiency), minimising carbon emissions, promoting decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy where appropriate and ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased."</p> <p>Relevant policies are presented below in appendices from Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) and 'saved' policies from Cherwell Local Plan 1996.</p>			
4.6.4	Planning Supporting Statement [REP1-012]	<p>Cherwell Local Plan (emerging)</p> <p>CDC are producing a new Local Plan, the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040, to meet Cherwell's needs, protect its environment and secure sustainable development. It is understood that adoption of the new Local Plan is anticipated for June 2026, which will replace the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2021 (Part 1) and the 'saved' policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996. As it is currently at an early stage, currently</p>	<p>Updated emerging Local Plan timescales to reflect adoption now anticipated for June 2026.</p> <p>If reorganisation takes place in relation to current consultation proposals for Oxfordshire Authorities to become a Unitary Authority/ Authorities, it is not likely to be prior to 2028 and the existing Plan will continue to</p>	Noted	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
		<p>there are no policies for consideration in relation to the proposed development.</p> <p>Whilst at an early stage and subject to change, and therefore only attracting very limited weight in the planning process, the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 Regulation 18 consultation contained three themes, the first of them being “Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change and Ensuring Sustainable Development.” This theme is seen throughout the consultation document, with the Vision of the Cherwell Local Plan Review also stating that: “The Cherwell Local Plan Review will ensure that by 2040: (inter alia) We achieve our climate action targets. Our energy production will be sustainable and new developments are built to high energy efficient standards.” The Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 is likely to advance through the plan-making process during the DCO application timeframe; therefore, the weight to be given to the Local Plan Review 2040 may increase in accordance with Paragraph 48 of the NPPF as the review reaches more advance stages.</p>	<p>apply until a new Plan is adopted by the new Authority.</p>		
4.6.5	Planning Supporting Statement [REP1-012]	<p>Cherwell Neighbourhood Plans (made)</p> <p>There are no ‘made’ neighbourhood plans in CDC which will be affected by the Project at the time of writing.</p>	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed
4.6.6	Planning Supporting Statement [REP1-012]	<p>Cherwell Neighbourhood Plans (emerging)</p> <p>It is noted that a Neighbourhood Plan Areas has been designated for the Parish of Shipton on Cherwell and Thrupp. The two most southern fields of the Northern Site fall within the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area. At the time of writing, it is</p>	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed

Ref	Relevant Application Document	Summary of Description of Matter	Cherwell District Council Current Position	Applicant Current Position	Status
		not known that any further progress has been made in regard to the Neighbourhood Plan, with the latest update provided via the Parish Council's website on 30th March 2020, highlighting the delay on work on the Neighbourhood Plan, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.			
4.6.7	Planning Supporting Statement [REP1-012]	Development Plan and other policies: Please see Appendix B.	See Appendix B	See Appendix B	See Appendix B

Appendix A

Record of Relevant Correspondence

Date	Form of Correspondence	Topics Discussed	Outcomes
Ecology			
3/05/2023	Meeting	Overview of ongoing surveys, designated sites and Biodiversity Net Gain.	Nil.
3/12/2024	Meeting	Letter's of no impediment to be sought with Natural England for relevant species.	Agreed.
1/08/2024	Meeting	CDC unavailable.	-
19/09/2024	Meeting	Set out project update including ongoing design and progress update, Statement of Common Ground, key survey results, Biodiversity Net Gain, ecology strategy and next steps.	Nil.
11/07/25	Meeting	Minutes to be agreed by areas covered included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of all bat survey work including that from May 2025 and activity data analysed to date. • Overview of Change Request 2 submitted at D2. • Proposed 25m buffer locations on key bat flightlines plus discussion on location and extent of other buffers. • Provision of bat technical note including contents. • Scope of potential air quality assessment in respect of Oxford Meadows SAC. • Discussion on Local Impact Report Responses. • Discussion on proposed skylark mitigation. • Discussion on nightingale enhancements to OLEMP. • Discussion on monitoring programs and approval process. 	Nil.
Historic Environment			

Date	Form of Correspondence	Topics Discussed	Outcomes
July 2023	CDC input into Scoping Opinion	Various	n/a
February 2024	CDC response to PEIR	Various	n/a
February 2025	CDC response to DCO submission	Various	n/a
Agricultural Land Use & Public Rights of Way			
November 2024	Online meeting via Microsoft Teams	Meeting with Planning Officer from CDC and PRow Officers from OCC to discuss the proposed management of PRow within the Project site, including temporary and permanent diversions.	Responses received during the meeting were used to inform the assessment reported in ES Chapter 17 - Agricultural Land Use and Public Rights of Way [APP-054] and measures included in the Outline PRow Management Strategy, which forms Annex B of the Outline Code of Construction Practice - Part 1 [APP-232] .
Landscape and Visual Resources			
October / November 2022	Correspondences (by email) with all local authorities regarding the selection of Representative Viewpoints.	A detailed log was kept of the responses and any requested for additional/alternative viewpoints. Any changes were incorporated into the PEIR and subsequent ES chapter.	Progressed.
January 2023	Email to CDC officers to clarify the Landscape Character Assessment documents/studies for the district		CDC responded with a list of the relevant character assessment documents/studies for the District.
April and May 2023	A spreadsheet was provided to CDC of the additional viewpoints suggested by the Oxfordshire Host Authorities (OHAs) setting out whether or not these had been accepted and providing reasoning where viewpoints had not been accepted		Of 5 additional viewpoints recommended by CDC (looking east from A44 and looking north and west from footpaths in Begbroke) the applicant agreed to add the viewpoint looking east from A44 and to add 2 further representative viewpoints to the north and east of Begbroke. The 3 additional viewpoints were agreed by CDC in an email dated 24 May 2023 and confirmed by the applicant in an email dated 25 May 2023.
June 2023	Submission of Scoping Report,	Comments received from the Scoping report are detailed	Ongoing discussions about RVAA and the way in which

Date	Form of Correspondence	Topics Discussed	Outcomes
	including LVIA section outlining approach to the assessment, including methodology.	within the LVIA [APP-045] Table 8.5, with details of how they have been addressed.	the significance of effects have been assigned.
February 2024	CDC's S42 response	Visual descriptions in the PEIR omitted visual analysis for operational phase effects on PRoW. Lack of detail about landscape mitigation for secondary substations. Visualisations must include secondary substations, power converters and security fencing.	Visualisations were amended to include secondary substations, PCs and security fencing.
September 2024	Meeting with local authority landscape officers to discuss LVIA specific matters.	OHAs feedback on issues raised in Scoping and PEIR, which OHAs did not think had been adequately addressed, included concerns about viewpoints, the way viewpoints were presented, little detail provided in the Photomontage Methodology, and that ZTV has only been supplied for the solar panels and not for the built form. Also, concerns about the supplied Assessment Methodology (including proposed levels of Moderate or less not being considered significant and how effects should not be looked in isolation such as along a footpath route) and the levels of effects being reported in comparison to the definition of Moderate in the Table 8.21: of the Definitions of Significance of Effects Matrix. Outcome of meeting actioned as part of the ES.	Ongoing discussions
10 th June 2025	Online meeting with local authority landscape officers to discuss LVIA specific matters	Topics of specific discussion were focused around the OHAs Joint Local Impact Report submitted at Deadline 1. With a particular focus on the LVIA methodology and application of significance of effect.	A detailed response to the OHAs Joint LIR (and appended LUC report) would be responded to at Deadline 2. Agreement was reached on the LVIA methodology used but discussion is ongoing as to the application of the methodology and how significance of effects have been determined.
16 th October 2025	Online meeting with local authority	Topics of specific discussion were focused around the wording of the SoCG(s), issues arising from	SoCG(s) have ben updated in response to discussions

Date	Form of Correspondence	Topics Discussed	Outcomes
	landscape officers to discuss LVIA specific matters	ISH2 and continued discussions on the LVIA methodology and application of significance of effect. CDC understand that the minutes of this meeting have not been agreed by the attendees	had. Minutes of the meeting completed and issued.
Noise and Vibration			
April 2023	Email	Consultation was sought via email to agree upon the proposed baseline sound survey and noise impact	Cherwell District Council advised acceptability of the proposed approach.
July 2024	Email	Continuing input was sought from Environmental Protection on the N&V assessment as the the project was advanced to the submission stage. An N&V assessment was not provided for comment at this time.	No Response Received
04 October 2024	Email	SoCG on Noise and Vibration	
16th Jul 2025	Virtual Meeting	Noise and vibration assessment methodology, baseline methodology & derivation of data, & assessment findings	Agreed and confirmed
Planning Policy			
	Email	Local Planning Policy	See Appendix B

Appendix B

Cherwell District Council Policy Compliance Table

Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) relevant planning policies and relevant 'saved' policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (As submitted November 2024)

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1)				
Policy PSD1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	When considering development proposals the Council will take a proactive approach to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council will always work proactively with applicants to jointly find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (or other part of the statutory Development Plan) will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.	Solar farms are generally considered to be sustainable forms of development. They produce renewable energy, help cut down harmful GHG emissions, will help generate employment and significantly enhance the landscape and biodiversity of the area. The Project should benefit from the presumption in favour this policy provides.	A conflict was identified in the Joint LIR [REP1-072] due to the loss of Grade 2 and 3a BMV Agricultural Land; an adverse impact which needs to be weighed against the benefits of the scheme. Following the removal of proposed areas of panels from the areas to the north of Begbroke and south of London-Oxford Airport in Change Request 2 the project is considered to comply with this policy. However, the development is not considered to have satisfactorily addressed the adverse impacts on landscape, ecology, heritage, or PRoW and these harms need to be weighed against the benefits of the scheme.	Compliance Agreed
Policy SLE4 - Improved Transport and Connections	The Council will support the implementation of the proposals in the	The Project accords with this policy.	No conflict identified.	Compliance Agreed

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
	Movement Strategies and the Local Transport Plan to deliver key connections, to support modal shift and to support more sustainable locations for employment and housing growth.			
Policy ESD 1 – Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change	Measures will be taken to mitigate the impact of development within the District on climate change AND developments will incorporate suitable adaptation measures to ensure they are more resilient to climate change impact.	<p>Climate Change effects are set out within Chapter 14 of the ES. Significant beneficial effects from the Botley West Solar Farm are predicted.</p> <p>The Applicant considers the Project complies with the NPPF and represents a unique opportunity to contribute at scale to the resolution of the Climate Change Emergency declared by the host authorities.</p> <p>The Botley West solar farm has been designed with enhanced resilience measures that reflect the latest industry standards and lessons learned from earlier sites, including Porth Wen Solar Farm in the UK, which experienced structural damage during severe wind events, as well as comparable sites in Germany that have faced similar storm-related issues. An analysis of these cases was undertaken to identify structural vulnerabilities and to incorporate targeted improvements into our design.</p> <p>In addition to meeting BS EN 1991 1 4 and the most recent IEC (International</p>	Conflict identified – The applicant has failed to demonstrate that the development incorporates suitable adaption measures to ensure it is resilient to climate change impacts.	Compliance Not Agreed.

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
		<p>Electrotechnical Commission) and MCS (Microgeneration Certification Scheme) requirements, covering international technical standards for solar equipment and UK quality standards for installation and performance, these have been refined since around 2020 to better address wind uplift and mounting system performance. The design adopts the improved engineering practices now reflected in UK guidance.</p> <p>Material durability has also been prioritised, with structural components selected for resistance to fatigue and deformation under repeated high wind loads, ensuring long-term stability of the installation.</p> <p>Recent updates such as IEC 62808 (2020, Wind Load Testing of Solar Mounting Systems) and MCS 012 Issue 3.0 (2021, UK Mounting Requirements) introduced stricter testing and anchoring criteria than those applied when earlier solar farms were constructed.</p>		
Policy ESD 2 - Energy Hierarchy and Allowable Solutions	In seeking to achieve carbon emissions reductions, we will promote an 'energy hierarchy' as follows: Reducing energy use, in particular by the use of sustainable design and	The Project accords with this policy.	No conflict identified.	Compliance Agreed

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
	construction measures Supplying energy efficiently and giving priority to decentralised energy supply Making use of renewable energy Making use of allowable solutions.			
Policy ESD 3 - Sustainable Construction	New developments should seek to use resources more efficiently. Policy ESD3 of CLP requires new development to reduce energy use through sustainable construction methods.	The Applicant considers that it has complied with Policy ESD-3 and has proposed an approach for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The Applicant has submitted an Outline GHG Reduction Strategy (APP-216) which sets out how whole life carbon emissions will be managed and reduced during the detailed design stage and throughout the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases, to ensure that best practice is followed. The Outline GHG Reduction Strategy is intended to be a live and evolving document. The Applicants, alongside the appointed contractors, will use the information in this Outline GHG Reduction Strategy to prepare the Final GHG Reduction Strategy.	Conflict identified – The applicant has failed to demonstrate how the embodied carbon of the panels, the transportation of the panels from their place of manufacture to the site and construction traffic will be managed to minimise the environmental impact of the development.	Compliance Not Agreed
Policy ESD 5 – Renewable Energy	The Council supports renewable and low carbon energy provision wherever any adverse impacts can be addressed satisfactorily. The potential local environmental, economic and community benefits of renewable energy schemes will be a	The Applicant considers the Project complies with Policy ESD 5 and represents a unique opportunity to secure critical national infrastructure in the form of renewable solar energy. It is also able to contribute at scale to the resolution of the Climate Change Emergency	Conflicts were identified in the Joint LIR [REP1-072] as the development would have adverse impacts on the following: Landscape and biodiversity, visual impacts on local landscapes, the historic	Compliance Not Agreed

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
	material consideration in determining planning applications. Potential adverse impacts listed in the policy are: Landscape and biodiversity including designations, protected habitats and species, and Conservation Target Areas; Visual impacts on local landscapes; The historic environment including designated and non designated assets and their settings; The Green Belt, particularly visual impacts on openness; Aviation activities; Highways and access issues; and Residential Amenity.	declared by the authority. Detailed analysis has been undertaken of relevant effects upon the environment, and adverse have been avoided or minimised as a result of the application of the mitigation hierarchy. The Project complies with Policy ESD 5	environment, the Green Belt, Aviation activities, and Highways and access (Public Rights of Way). Following the removal of proposed areas of panels from the north of Begbroke and south of London-Oxford Airport in Change Request 2 the project has adequately dealt with harmful impacts on green belt in Cherwell and may have overcome harmful impacts to aviation activities (to be confirmed by the airport operator). However, the development is not considered to have satisfactorily addressed the detrimental impacts on landscape, ecology, heritage, or PRoW in conflict with ESD5 and these harms need to be weighed against the benefits of the scheme.	
Policy ESD 6 - Sustainable Flood Risk Management	The Council will manage and reduce flood risk in the District through using a sequential approach to development; locating vulnerable developments in areas at lower risk of flooding. Development proposals will be	The Project accords with this policy.	No conflict identified	Compliance Agreed

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
	assessed according to the sequential approach and where necessary the exceptions test as set out in the NPPF and NPPG. Development will only be permitted in areas of flood risk when there are no reasonably available sites in areas of lower flood risk and the benefits of the development outweigh the risks from flooding.			
Policy ESD 7 – Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)	All development will be required to use sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for the management of surface water run-off. Where site specific Flood Risk Assessments are required in association with development proposals, they should be used to determine how SuDS can be used on particular sites and to design appropriate systems.	The Project accords with this policy.	No conflict identified	Compliance Agreed
Policy ESD 8 - Water Resources	Water Resources of the CLP seeks to maintain water quality, ensure adequate water resources and promote sustainable water use.	The Project accords with this policy.	No conflict identified	Compliance Agreed
Policy ESD 10 – Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity and the Natural Environment	Protection and enhancement of natural resources will be sought together with net gain. Damage or loss will not be permitted unless the benefits clearly outweigh the harm.	The Project presents a unique opportunity for the planning authority to secure significant BNG. This will be achieved by retaining an agricultural use beneath the solar arrays and on other undeveloped land, and by managing it in a way to deliver significant BNG. Details are set out within the oLEMP and	Conflict identified – the applicant has failed to fully assess the extent of the detrimental impacts of the development upon ecology and habitats (e.g. no surveys of riparian mammals) and therefore to show	Compliance Not Agreed

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
		BNG Report - Volume 3 Appendix 9.13 (CR2-040) The Project complies with Policy ESD 10.	how impacts can be adequately mitigated in conflict with Policy ESD10	
Policy ESD 12 – Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	High priority will be given to the protection and enhancement of the Cotswolds AONB and the Council will seek to protect the AONB and its setting from potentially damaging and inappropriate development.	The Project site does not fall within or adjacent to the Cotswold AONB (national landscape). The low height of the Project and distance from the national landscape will not give rise to issues of setting, The Project therefore complies with Policy ESD 12. The Applicant provided a specific response on the Cotswold National Landscape at Deadline 4 [REP4-037] , Annex 3 which concluded that there would be no significant adverse impact upon the special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB (National Landscape).	Possible conflict identified? Further consideration of impact upon AONB and Cotswold National Landscape was requested by OHA in the Joint LIR [REP1-076]	Compliance Agreed
Policy ESD 13 – Local Landscape Protection and Enhancement	Development will be expected to respect and enhance the local landscape character, securing appropriate mitigation where damage to local landscape character cannot be avoided. Proposals will not be permitted where they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause undue visual intrusion into the open countryside • Cause undue harm to important natural landscape features and topography • Be inconsistent with local character 	Chapter 8 of the ES considers effects upon the landscape. The Project will affect landscape character as it introduces a form of development that is not currently common in the landscape. Limited adverse effects cannot be avoided, but these effects have been minimised by following key layout and design principles. The Layout and Design Principles document (REP4-032) provides for buffers between existing settlements and the solar arrays, buffers to protect trees hedgerows and woodland. These measures, together with the significant new	Conflict Identified – the development would have detrimental impacts upon landscape character and due to the shortcomings of the applicant's LVIA it is uncertain whether the development design and proposed mitigation are appropriate. Hedge planting to screen panels is not necessarily appropriate in all parts of the site.	Compliance Not Agreed

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on areas judged to have a high level of tranquillity Harm the setting of settlements, buildings, structures or other landmark features, or Harm the historic value of the landscape. 	<p>landscaping proposed, assist is reducing adverse visual effects and effect upon landscape character.</p> <p>The details of where hedgerows should and should not be planted can be agreed through submission of detailed layout, provided the overall conclusion of significance levels reported in the ES are not changed.</p> <p>One decommissioned, the project will leave an important and significant landscape legacy, resulting in a significant enhancement of the area.</p> <p>On balance the Project is considered to comply with Policy ESD 13.</p> <p>Heritage effects are described in Chapter 7 [CR2-019]. No significant adverse effects are predicted. In planning policy terms there is no conflict.</p>		
Policy ESD 14 – Oxford Green Belt	Seeks to ensure that the Oxford Green Belt boundaries within Cherwell District will be maintained, in order to: Preserve the special character and landscape setting of Oxford; Check the growth of Oxford and prevent ribbon development and urban sprawl; Prevent the coalescence of settlements; Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; Assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	<p>The VSC case which supports the project being allowed in this location for a temporary period is set out in the PSS (REP1-012). On balance the Project is supported by a VSC that outweighs harm to the Green Belt, and any other harm.</p> <p>Paragraph 4.2.7 on NPS EN-1 states that the Secretary of State will take as a starting point that CNP Infrastructure will meet the VSC case.</p>	A conflict was identified in the Joint LIR [REP1-072] as the development was harmful to the purposes of the Green Belt. Following the removal of proposed areas of panels to the north of Begbroke and south of London-Oxford Airport in Change Request 2 it is considered that the harm to the purposes of the Green Belt within Cherwell	Compliance Agreed

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
	Development proposals within the Green Belt will be assessed in accordance with government guidance contained in the NPPF and NPPG.		does not outweigh the benefits of the development and therefore the project would not conflict with this policy.	
Policy ESD 15 – The Character of the Built and Historic Environment	<p>Successful design is founded upon an understanding and respect for an area's unique built, natural and cultural context. New development will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. All new development will be required to meet high design standards. Where development is in the vicinity of any of the District's distinctive natural or historic assets, delivering high quality design that complements the asset will be essential.</p> <p>Amongst other things, developments should contribute positively to an area's character and identity by creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness and respecting local topography and landscape features, including skylines, valley floors, significant trees, historic boundaries, landmarks, features or views, in particular within designated landscapes, within the Cherwell Valley and within conservation</p>	<p>The Applicant has worked closely with Historic England to avoid or minimise any harm to the OUV of the WHS and would refer Cherwell DC to Historic England's submission at Deadline 6 on this matter [REP6-092]. The Applicant would also refer the OHA to the position of ICOMOS-UK as set out in their Relevant Representation [RR-0413]. ICOMOS-UK is the UK National Committee of ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), which has a special role as the official adviser to UNESCO on cultural World Heritage Sites. ICOMOS-UK plays a leading role in implementing the World Heritage Convention 1972 within the UK and promoting best practice in the management of UK World Heritage Sites. The maintenance of the OUV of the UK World Heritage Sites and their settings is one of their key objectives. ICOMOS-UK state that <i>'the proposed Botley West solar farm would not have a direct impact on the OUV of Blenheim Palace and Park WHS or its setting as identified by the map 'Character of Setting of WHS' on page</i></p>	<p>A conflict was identified in the Joint LIR [REP01-072] as the development would be detrimental to the settings of listed buildings and Begbroke Conservation Area and to the setting of Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site (WHS). Whilst the removal of panels from the north of Begbroke set out in Change Request 2 have overcome concerns about the harmful impacts on the settings of Begbroke Conservation Area and listed buildings in Begbroke it is not considered that the removal of panels detailed in Change Request 2 is adequate in order to preserve the WHS. Therefore, a conflict with this policy still exists.</p>	Compliance Not agreed

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
	areas and their setting. Proposals should sustain and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets. Paragraph B.267 in the introductory text to this policy highlights the importance of taking “into account heritage assets located outside of the District such as Blenheim Place, a World Heritage Site”.	<i>50 of Appendix III of the Management Plan’</i> (emphasis added).		
Policy ESD 17 – Green Infrastructure	The Green Infrastructure network will be maintained and enhanced via a number of measures, including ensuring the Green Infrastructure network considerations are integral to the planning of new development.	The Project will not only provide overall protection to the existing landscape features but also a substantial enhancement to Green infrastructure in the area, supported by long term management - see oLEMP (CR2-051). There is no substantiated claim that there are any ‘shortcomings’ in the Applicants LVIA. Guidance was followed correctly. There is simply a difference of professional opinion as to how effects have been judged.	Conflict Identified – the development would have detrimental impacts upon landscape character and due to the shortcomings of the applicant’s LVIA it is uncertain whether the development adequately maintains and enhances the GI network.	Compliance Not Agreed.
‘Saved’ policies of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996				
C15 - Prevention of Coalescence of Settlements	Seeks to restrict development on areas of open land between settlements to prevent their coalescence.	The Applicant agrees with the LPA position i.e. the Project would not conflict with this policy.	A conflict was identified in the Joint LIR [REP1-072] as the development would have resulted in the coalescence of Kidlington and Begbroke Following the removal of the proposed area of panels from the south of London-Oxford Airport in Change Request	Compliance Agreed

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
			2 it is considered that the separation of the two settlements would be preserved and therefore the project would not conflict with this policy.	
Policy C25 – Development affecting the site or setting of a schedule ancient monument	In considering proposals for development which would affect the site or setting of a scheduled ancient monument, other nationally important archaeological sites and monuments of special local importance, the council will have regard to the desirability of maintaining its overall historic character, including its protection, enhancement and preservation where appropriate.	The assessment of the likely impacts and effects on heritage assets is set out in Chapter 7 and Appendix 7.5 of the ES. No significant effects are predicted. The proposed development would not harm the significance of any Scheduled Monuments within the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site as a result of the change within their setting. In planning policy terms there is no conflict with Policy C25.	Conflict Identified – the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the development would not be detrimental to the setting of Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the World Heritage Site.	Compliance Not Agreed
Policy C33 - Protection of important gaps of undeveloped land	Protection of Important Gaps of Undeveloped Land saved from CLP 1996 seeks to retain undeveloped gaps important in preserving character of settlements or maintaining settings of listed buildings or preserving views/features of recognised amenity/historical value.	The Applicant agrees with the LPA position i.e. the Project would not conflict with this policy.	A conflict was identified in the Joint LIR [REP1-072] as the development would have resulted in the loss of an undeveloped parcel of land which would result in the coalescence of Kidlington and Begbroke. Following the removal of the proposed area of panels from the south of London-Oxford Airport in Change Request 2 the	Compliance Agreed

Policy	Description	Applicant Comment	Local Authority Comment	Status
			undeveloped gap would be retained and the separation of the two settlements would be preserved. Therefore the project would not conflict with this policy.	