



Botley West Solar Farm

Position Statement between the Applicant and OHA

PINS Ref: EN010147/APP/21.5

July 2026

Botley West Solar Farm: Landscape and Visual Position Statement

Purpose

This Position Statement has been prepared by SolarFive Limited (the “Applicant”) and reviewed by Cherwell District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council, together referred to as the Oxfordshire Host Authorities (the “OHA”).

The purpose of this Position Statement is to provide the Secretary of State (“SoS”) with a clear summary of:

- the engagement that has taken place between the Applicant and the OHA in relation to landscape and visual matters since the Request for Information dated 14 April 2026, as updated on 20 April 2026 and 28 April 2026;
- the additional information submitted to the SoS on 16 July 2026;
- the matters agreed between the Applicant and the OHA relating to landscape and visual considerations, together with a summary of the parties’ final positions where agreement has not been reached.

Summary of landscape and visual engagement

The following timeline provides an agreed overview of engagement between the Applicant and the OHA since 14 April 2026.

1. 14 May 2026: Meeting 1.
 - Discussion of the landscape and visual information submitted into the Examination Library, the OHA’s position on the approach to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, the design response to landscape and visual matters, and the Applicant’s intended approach to providing updated information.
2. 09 June 2026: Correspondence
 - The OHA wrote to the Applicant and provided them with the submission they provided to the SoS as well as a summary of key concerns relating to the proposed Requirement 15
3. 12 June 2026: Correspondence.
 - The Applicant wrote to the OHA summarising the proposed approach and meeting schedule following the submissions made to the SoS on 9 June 2026. The proposed approach focused on the implementation of Requirement 15.
4. 16 June 2026: Meeting 2.
 - Discussion focused on the implementation of Requirement 15, the suitability of the proposed 100–250 m buffer, and the implementation of

design changes made in specific response to landscape character considerations.

5. 23 June 2026: Correspondence.

- A marked-up version of the masterplan, embedding changes proposed by the Applicant intended to better respond to landscape and visual considerations, was shared by the Applicant for preliminary review.

6. 24 June 2026: Correspondence.

- Updated drafting of Requirement 15 was shared with the OHA.

7. 24 June 2026: Meeting 3.

- Discussion focused on the wording of Requirement 15 and a review of each proposed change intended to minimise visual effects from residential dwellings.

8. 3 July 2026: Correspondence.

- The Applicant sent an updated masterplan to the OHA for further review, formalising changes that had been previously discussed.

9. 6 July 2026: Correspondence.

- An extract of the emerging outline Residential Visual Amenity Plan was shared by the Applicant to brief the OHA on the approach to securing offsets from residential dwellings.

10. 7 July 2026: Meeting 4.

- The Applicant presented to the OHA the final proposed approach to:
 - the wording of Requirement 15;
 - the procedure for discharging Requirement 15;
 - the proposed addendum to the Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan; and
 - the final masterplan.

11. 9 July 2026: Correspondence.

- Draft submission documents were shared by the Applicant with the OHA.

12. 14 July 2026: Correspondence.

- The draft Position Statement was shared by the Applicant with the OHA for review and comment.

13. 14 July 2026: Correspondence

- The applicant provided the OHA with a Draft DCO containing amendments to Requirement 15 and Schedule 16

The Applicant and the OHA agree that the summary of engagement set out above is accurate.

Landscape and visual documents shared by the Applicant with the OHA

The Applicant and the OHA confirm that the following landscape and visual documents were shared for review in advance of submission to the SoS on 16 July 2026:

- 9 July: Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan Supplement- Design Response to Local Character: July 2026- DRAFT
- 9 July: Residential Visual Amenity-Design Evolution Assessment: July 2026- DRAFT; and
- 9 July: Masterplan Development and Rationale: July 2026.
- 14 July: Draft Development Consent Order (tracked) Rev 11

The Applicant made minor refinements to the documents shared prior to submission to the SoS on 16 July, including updating the title of the 'Residential Visual Amenity Design Evolution Assessment' to be the 'Outline Residential Visual Amenity Plan'.

Matters agreed between the parties

The Applicant and the OHA agree that engagement has taken place on the landscape and visual matters identified above; that the documents listed in this Position Statement were shared with the OHA in advance of submission; and that the documents submitted on 16 July 2026 represent the Applicant's final landscape and visual response for consideration by the SoS.

The Applicant and the OHA agree that the design secured via Requirement 15 is a betterment, in respect of landscape and visual matters, to that proposed at the end of examination.

Summary of the Applicant's final position

The Applicant's final position on landscape and visual matters is as follows:

- The wording of Requirement 15 has been refined through discussion with the OHA to secure the updated layout for Works No. 1, Works No. 2 and Works No. 3. Work No. 5(d), Work No. 6(c), Work No. 6(d), Work No. 8(g) and any further ancillary or related development under sub-paragraphs (a) (works for the provision of fencing and security measures such as CCTV, columns, lighting, communication boxes, lightning protection masts and weather stations), (d) (bunds, embankments, trenching and swales;) or (h) (surface water drainage systems, storm water attenuation systems including storage basins, oil water separators, including channelling and culverting and works to existing drainage systems) (the "Relevant Works").
- An updated masterplan has been prepared which responds directly to the landscape character exhibited across the Order Limits and to residential visual amenity. The changes were informed by desktop review and fieldwork and are intended to avoid and minimise landscape and visual effects. The changes and supporting rationale are set out in the documents listed above.
- The updated masterplan is provided within the outline Residential Visual Amenity Plan and secures control over the extent of the Relevant Works through

Requirement 15, which confirms that the Authorised Development must be carried out substantially in accordance with the plan provided.

- Discussions have taken place regarding the provision of a Planning Performance Agreement to resource the OHA in relation to the discharge of Requirement 15.
- Schedule 16 of the draft Development Consent Order (as submitted by the Applicant alongside this Position Statement) has been updated to extend the timeframe for discharging all requirements to 12 weeks.
- The extent of works secured through the Outline Residential Visual Amenity Plan represents a betterment compared with the extent of works proposed at the close of the Examination because it:
 - (a) restricts the extent of land to be occupied by the Relevant Works, thereby reducing the spatial footprint of above-ground infrastructure proposed as part of the Authorised Development;
 - (b) reflects and is directly influenced by updated landscape and visual considerations, including the technical note on visual effects on visual receptors contained in the Outline Residential Visual Amenity Plan and the refined characterisation of landscape character contained in the Addendum to the Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan; and
 - (c) gives greater effect to the mitigation hierarchy referenced in paragraphs 5.10.6, 5.10.19 and 5.10.22 of NPS EN-1 by avoiding and reducing at source adverse landscape and visual effects.

Summary of the OHA's final position

- The OHA retain concerns around the drafting of Requirement 15. The details of these concerns are contained with the OHA's submissions to the SoS. These concerns relate to both the effectiveness of the requirement and challenges with the implementation of the requirement. The proposed amendments to Schedule 16 of the dDCO are welcomed but would not go far enough to overcome the OHA's concerns on the discharge of the requirement.
- Whilst the OHA consider the scheme proposed in the 'Master Plan Development and Rationale' document is a betterment from the scheme proposed at the end of the examination, this scheme falls short of addressing the concerns raised by the OHA throughout the examination. In **[REP6-118]** the OHA outlined the reductions in the scheme that the Host Authorities consider would reduce the landscape and visual impacts below a significant level of impact. The revised scheme proposed by the applicant falls short of the reductions required by the OHA as outline in **[REP6-118]** and as such this matter remains unresolved.

- The OHA also note that the revised scheme proposed by the applicant has not been assessed by a revised Environmental Impact Assessment.
- The comments made throughout the examination in relation to the assessment methodology of the applicant's LVIA have yet to be satisfactorily addressed.
- If the SoS is of a mind to accept the proposed revisions, the OHA believe there should be an opportunity for all interested parties to review the submission and comment as these revisions constitute a significant amendment to the design of the scheme.

Submission to the Secretary of State

The parties agree that this Position Statement may be submitted by the Applicant and/or the OHA to the SoS for consideration in determining the application for the Development Consent Order.