

Rosefield Solar Farm

Applicant's Response to Deadline 3 Submissions

EN010158/APP/8.22
Revision 01
Deadline 4
June 2026
Rosefield Energyfarm Limited

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)
Planning Act 2008
Infrastructure Planning
(Applications: Prescribed Forms
and Procedure) Regulations 2009



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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1.1. This document provides, as appropriate, the Applicant's responses to the submissions received at Deadline 3 in respect of the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.2. This document does not look to replicate the positions previously iterated by the Applicant, and so the Applicant has instead signposted towards the following documents, where relevant:
- **Response to Section 89 (3) Document [EN010158/APP/8.2] [[AS-035](#)];**
 - **Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [[PDA-006](#)];**
 - **Applicant's Response to Buckinghamshire Council's Local Impact Report [EN010158/APP/8.11] [[REP2-085](#)];**
 - **Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [[REP2-086](#)];**
 - **Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [[REP2-087](#)]**
 - **Applicant's Response to Other Deadline 1 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.14] [[REP2-088](#)]; and**
 - **Applicant's Response to Other Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [[REP3-051](#)].**
- 1.1.3. Where topics have previously been raised at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (held on 20-21 May 2026), a summary of the Applicant's position can be found in:
- **Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [[REP3-049](#)].**
- 1.1.4. Where topics have previously been raised at Issue Specific Hearing 2 (held on 22 May 2026), a summary of the Applicant's position can be found in:
- **Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) [EN010158/APP/8.17] [[REP3-050](#)].**
- 1.1.5. The Applicant wishes to note that **Buckinghamshire Council's Responses to Examining Authority's first written questions (ExQ1) [[REP2-090](#)]** which was submitted at Deadline 2 and accidentally omitted

by the Applicant in **Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [APP/8.18 [REP3-051]** has been responded to within this document.

1.2. Structure and Approach

1.2.1. This document is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** reviews the submissions made by Interested Parties at Deadline 3 and whether the Applicant is responding to the submissions, or otherwise, and the reason(s) in either case (and, for fullness, includes **Buckinghamshire Council's Responses to Examining Authority's first written questions (ExQ1) [REP2-090]**); and
- **Section 3** provides the Applicant's responses, if applicable, to the submissions made by Interested Parties at Deadline 3 and **Buckinghamshire Council's Responses to Examining Authority's first written questions (ExQ1) [REP2-090]**.

1.2.2. Each table within this document provides a consolidated 'summary positions' of each Interested Party's submission that the Applicant considers to require response, in accordance with the Applicant's position provided for in **Section 2** of this document.

2. Scope of this Report

2.1. Applicant's Position on Providing Responses

- 2.1.1. This Section expands on the structure of this document (as detailed in **Section 1.2**) by confirming whether or not this document provides a response to the submissions made by Interested Parties and, if not, the reason(s) why the Applicant is not responding.
- 2.1.2. In splitting the submissions into the sections below, the Applicant has sought to group submissions made by the Interested Party.

Party and Examination Reference	Responded to in this Document?	Reason
Buckinghamshire Council (Responses to Examining Authority's first written questions (ExQ1)) [REP2-090]	Yes	Omitted by the Applicant in Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [REP3-051] and the Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.
Buckinghamshire Council (Comments on any further information received (comments on any further information requested by the ExA and received by deadline 2)) [REP3-053]	Yes	The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.
Buckinghamshire Council (Comments on responses to Examining Authority's first written questions (ExQ1)) [REP3-054]	Yes	The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.
Buckinghamshire Council (Responses to comments on local impact reports (LIRs)) [REP3-055]	Yes	The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.
Buckinghamshire Council (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions – ISH1 Post Hearing Note) [REP3-056]	Yes	The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.
Buckinghamshire Council (Written summaries of	Yes	The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.

oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions – ISH2 Post Hearing Note) [REP3-057]

Claydons Solar Action Group (Responses to comments on written representations (WRs)) [REP3-062]

Yes

The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.

Claydons Solar Action Group (Suggested ASI / USI Locations) [REP3-063]

No

The submission provides suggested Accompanied Site Inspection/ Unaccompanied Site Inspection for the inspection which has since passed.

Claydons Solar Action Group (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions – Landscape Note) [REP3-064]

Yes

The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.

Claydons Solar Action Group (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions – Note of ecology comments to ISH1) [REP3-065]

Yes

The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.

Claydons Solar Action Group (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions – Note of submissions at issue specific hearing 1 (ISH1)) [REP3-066]

Yes

The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.

Dr Chris Jordan (Responses to comments on written representations (WRs)) [REP3-068]

Yes

The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.

East Claydon Parish Council (Any specific responses to points

Yes

The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.

raised in oral submissions at the hearings) [REP3-058]

Environment Agency (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions) [REP3-059]	No	The Applicant does not consider there to be any remaining points within the submission that warrant a response to, due to the Applicant's revisions to documents at Deadline 3 which the Party note to have resolved those points mentioned.
John Philip Claridge (Any specific responses to points raised in oral submissions at the hearings) [REP3-069]	Yes	The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.
Ministry of Defence (Comments on any further information received (comments on any further information requested by the ExA and received by deadline 2)) [REP3-060]	No	There is nothing within the submission to which the Applicant wishes to respond to.
Natural England (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions) [REP3-061]	Yes	The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.
Preston Farms Limited (Ltd) and TCS Biosciences Ltd (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions) [REP3-067]	Yes	The Applicant wishes to respond to points made in this submission.

3. Applicant's Responses

Table 3.1: Buckinghamshire Council (Responses to Examining Authority's first written questions (ExQ1)) [\[REP2-090\]](#)

Ref.	Page Reference, Question to, and Question	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.1.1	Page 2, Q1.1.6	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council considers the NPSs properly reflect the Solar Roadmap in the way described in Part 7, and that a decision properly in line with the NPSs (along with all other relevant planning considerations) will accord with the Roadmap. It is unlikely that an independent focus is required on the Roadmap, beyond recognising how it is reflected in national policy.	The Applicant notes this comment and agrees that the decision needs to be taken properly in line with the NPSs for Energy. Section 3.10 of the Statement of Need [EN010158/APP/5.6] [APP-036] summarises key points arising from the Solar Roadmap, concluding that the Solar Roadmap makes clear that new large-scale solar schemes are urgently needed in the UK, both before and after 2030. The roadmap signposts policy and process streamlining opportunities to support such schemes, as well as seeking an additional increase in operational capacity through an acceleration of rooftop installations. Appendix 4 (Policy Compliance Assessment Tables) to the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5] provides an exhaustive assessment of the Proposed Development against national policy.
3.1.2	Page 2, Q1.5.6	Comment noting that there are no outstanding requests for amendments regarding air quality mitigation or monitoring within the outline CEMP(Tracked) (Rev 2) [REP1-079] or outline OEMP (Tracked) (Rev 2) [REP1-081]. Buckinghamshire Council note in their Local Impact Report (LIR) [REP1-112], decommissioning is anticipated to take place approximately 40 years after commissioning, a timescale in which it is not feasible to predict the air quality conditions or the specific mitigation measures as outlined in the outline DEMP (Tracked) (Rev 2) [REP1-083]. Therefore, Buckinghamshire Council suggest a new air quality assessment is undertaken immediately prior to decommissioning. Clarity is also sought on operational traffic movements and the enforceability of staff minibus arrangements to ensure that traffic related air quality impacts remain within the parameters assessed. This has also been asked of the Applicant and may result in the requirement for additional air quality mitigation. Buckinghamshire Council acknowledge that the above management plans have been updated to confirm that the Applicant will liaise with TCS Biosciences and Preston Farms during the preparation of the detailed CEMP, OEMP, and DEMP. Buckinghamshire Council welcomes the Applicant's updates which identify specific measures	Mitigation measures have already been incorporated into the Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (Outline DEMP) [EN010158/APP/7.4.5]. The Applicant will undertake an update to the dust risk assessment portion of the air quality assessment prior to the decommissioning phase, which will be incorporated into the detailed Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan in line with guidance and legislation at the time of decommissioning to mitigate air quality and dust impacts. A detailed Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan will be produced prior to decommissioning as secured in the Draft Development Consent Order (DCO) [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]. This will be submitted to and approved by the Relevant Planning Authority prior to the decommissioning phase. The Outline DEMP [EN010158/APP/7.4.5] has been updated at Deadline 4 to include a commitment to undertake a revised dust risk assessment at the time of decommissioning. Staff mode shares during construction are detailed in ES Volume 4, Appendix 15.1: Transport Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] and will be enforced through the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (Outline CTMP) [EN010158/APP/7.5.4]. As such, the mode share and use of staff buses is guaranteed by law as set out in the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]. The level of operational traffic is set out in ES Volume 4, Appendix 15.1: Transport Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] in Section 4.2, which states: "During the operational phase, up to 24 LGV trips per day, on average, are predicted to cater for cleaning of panels and general Site maintenance."

Ref.	Page Reference, Question to, and Question	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		to include within each document which are intended to address the sensitivities of nearby businesses. Buckinghamshire Council notes, however, that it will be for local businesses to raise any specific concerns that they may have about these updates and how they will operate to avoid and mitigate harms to their business, and Buckinghamshire Council will consider any submissions to the Examination in considering this issue further.	
3.1.3	Page 3, Q1.7.1	<u>Arboricultural impacts – Survey data: methodology and accuracy</u> Comment that Buckinghamshire Council notes the Applicant's explanation that the arboricultural baseline was informed by both ground and drone-derived survey data, and that the Drone survey is said to have been supported by high-density ground control points and to provide survey-grade positional accuracy. Buckinghamshire Council's concern is not resolved by those statements alone. The AIA itself confirms that inspection was restricted in numerous areas because trees were located in hedgerows or on ditch edges, which restricted views and the ability to measure stem dimensions, while also confirming that trees were plotted using aerial drone survey topographical base mapping. Further clarity is still required to demonstrate that: - all stem measurements, categorisations and condition assessments were undertaken through direct ground-based inspection in accordance with BS 5837:2012; - aerial data was used for positional plotting only, rather than to fill gaps in arboricultural attribute data; - any access constraints did not materially affect measurement accuracy, categorisation, crown spread plotting, or the identification of constraints; and - any conflicts or gaps between the two datasets were resolved in a way that does not affect RPAs, stand-off distances, fencing alignment or	The Applicant notes the Council's comments regarding survey methodology, data accuracy, and the classification of woodland features. However, it is not agreed that there is uncertainty within the arboricultural baseline that would materially affect the assessment of impacts or the design of mitigation measures. Clarifications are bulleted below in line with Q1.7.1: - All stem measurements, BS 5837:2012 category assessments, age class assessments and condition assessments were undertaken by a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant during site-based surveys applying Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) principles. Arboricultural attributes were derived from direct observation and professional judgement in accordance with BS 5837:2012 and were not derived from aerial survey data. - Aerial drone survey data was used solely as a topographical base mapping resource to support the spatial plotting of arboricultural features across the Site. Species identification, dimensions, condition assessments, crown spread measurements, age classifications and BS 5837 categories were obtained through ground-based survey. Aerial data was not used to infer or supplement arboricultural attribute data where field observations were unavailable. - Whilst some trees were located within hedgerows or ditches, these constraints did not materially affect the survey outcomes. Measurements were taken from the most appropriate accessible locations using standard arboricultural survey techniques and professional judgement. Crown spreads were assessed on site and recorded in accordance with BS 5837:2012. The Applicant is satisfied that any access constraints did not materially influence categorisation, constraint identification, Root Protection Area calculations or the conclusions of the assessment. - All arboricultural features were ground-truthed, ensuring no reliance on aerial data alone. Where discrepancies arose between the drone-derived mapping and site observations, these were resolved in favour of the ground survey data. Any gaps in information were addressed through site verification and professional interpretation, ensuring a complete and coherent dataset. Consequently, no conflicts between datasets materially affected Root Protection Areas, stand-off distances, indicative fencing alignments or design decisions in arboriculturally sensitive locations. - The term woodland was used within the assessment to describe tree-dominated habitats exhibiting continuous or near-continuous canopy cover, woodland structure and function, and sufficient scale to operate as woodland rather than scattered trees or linear features. Tree group descriptions and classifications are provided within Annex A of ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.13: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] [REP2-044], for example G70 – woodland belt, G71–G72 – woodland, G79 – woodland and G86 – woodland, and so on. These

Ref.	Page Reference, Question to, and Question	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		layout decisions in arboriculturally sensitive locations. Further comment that Buckinghamshire Council requires greater clarity on: • which recorded features are properly functioning woodland parcels; • how those have been distinguished from ordinary tree groups; • and how the assessment and buffer strategy have been adapted to reflect woodland as an integrated system rather than a collection of individual trees. Ecology Comment noting Buckinghamshire Council agree further surveys are not required as the outline CEMP [REP1-078] and outline LEMP [REP1-086] have addressed these matters. Buckinghamshire Council note that the additional information provided in the Bat Technical Study [REP1-105] does not address Buckinghamshire Council's concerns that solar farms may be displacing bats for reasons which are not yet understood. The placement of panels in these fields therefore could make them unsuitable for bats to forage, even if livestock are present. Further comment noting that the issue of only one detector being placed in the open fields has been overlooked when conclusions have been drawn, and Buckinghamshire Council therefore do not consider that this study is suitable to inform decision making. Comment noting that the proposed buffers for hedgerows and woodland are being incorrectly measured from the centre point of each hedgerow.	examples demonstrate that groups have been consistently identified and described within the AIA in accordance with standard arboricultural practice. • Trees have been recorded as individuals (prefix T) or as groups (prefix G) within the survey data tables in line with the BS 5837:2012 definition of a group as: "trees that form cohesive arboricultural features either aerodynamically (e.g. shelter), visually (e.g. avenues or screens) or culturally including for biodiversity (e.g. woodlands, parkland or wood pasture)". Woodland features were therefore assigned a group prefix where appropriate, whilst their woodland characteristics were clearly described within the survey schedules. Classification was informed by canopy continuity, spatial extent, woodland structure, landscape function and professional judgement. The term woodland has been applied more broadly within the tree data table to describe tree-dominated habitats with a continuous or near-continuous canopy, typically of a larger scale (generally exceeding approximately 5,000m² and 20m in width), and exhibiting characteristics distinct from linear or fragmented tree features such as hedgerows or belts. • The assessment has considered woodland features as integrated landscape and ecological systems rather than simply collections of individual trees. In addition to the assessment of individual tree constraints where relevant, the design process utilised the National Forest Inventory (2021) dataset and site survey information to identify woodland extents and inform stand-off distances. Enhanced offsets have been applied to Ancient Woodland, and the assessment has considered woodland edge effects, connectivity, long-term management requirements and the protection of woodland function as a whole. The resulting buffer strategy therefore reflects both individual tree constraints and the wider characteristics and sensitivities of woodland features. The Applicant is pleased that Buckinghamshire Council agree further surveys are not required, but the purpose of the paired detector exercise in the Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105] was not designed to address concerns that solar farms may be displacing bats. It was requested by Natural England that the difference in activity between open fields and boundary features was tested, and that is all that was tested. The aims and limitations of the study are clearly set out, and it cannot be said to have failed in something it did not set out to do; nor is this study critical to the decision needing to be made. The potential displacement of bats from solar farms is noted, but there are no longitudinal (i.e. before/after) studies of effects on well-designed, well-managed, established solar farms and findings from short-term studies are mixed, with some showing benefits. That notwithstanding, the potential for displacement effects has been accommodated within the mitigation to ensure both that i) commuting bats can commute across the wider landscape and ii) they can access sufficient retained/replacement grassland of better quality and extent than that to be lost, as detailed in ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] and secured via the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Outline CEMP) [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5]. The Applicant is proposing 95ha of grassland creation (more than twice what is being lost) as alternate grassland foraging habitat for bats and ground-nesting birds as mitigation for the permanent pasture being lost within Fields B3, B6, B7 and B8. This grassland is better distributed compared to the existing,

Ref.	Page Reference, Question to, and Question	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		The Applicant has stated the reason for this is to provide consistency across the Site. While this could be acceptable for 'standard width' hedgerows (e.g. 3m width stated by Natural England), there are several existing hedgerows in the Site that have widths in excess of 3m stated by Natural England. Examples of these include the corridors around fields B7, B8 & B10 which comprise important links to existing woodlands: Sheephouse Wood, Decoy Pond Wood and Shrubs Wood. The hedgerow linking these woodlands exceeds 16m in width in many sections. Taking the central point of hedges this wide to calculate the buffer is not considered proportionate or acceptable. Further comment that Infrastructure within Fields B6, B7, B8, B10, B11 between Shrubs Wood and Sheephouse Wood SSSI, and Fields D28 and D29 between Finemere SSSI and Runts Wood has the greatest potential to result in significant impacts on Bechstein's bat by severing / impacting known existing foraging and commuting routes. The impact could be avoided by the removal of panels and infrastructure from these locations. Buckinghamshire Council require details of the proposed bat monitoring scheme to ensure adequate levels of assessments are implemented to fully inform on the species of concern, Bechstein's Bat.	both across the landscape and in relation to the known locations of Bechstein's bat maternity roosts (see Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105 Appendix I PDF p208]). It bears repeating that, whilst Natural England and others have expressed concerns about the fields between Shrubs Wood, Decoypond Wood and Sheephouse Wood, the three breeding colonies that comprise the single population of Bechstein's bats are centred on three different woodlands: Finemere Wood SSSI, Grendon and Doddershall Woods SSSI and Ham Home-cum-Ham Green Woods SSSI (as stated in Natural England's Commissioned Report 558 "The Bernwood population of Bechstein's Bats", see Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105] PDF p170). There will, of course, be other, as-yet unidentified maternity roosts (each survey is a snapshot), but the pattern seen to date has been compiled from multiple radio-tracking surveys over many years. However, the Applicant is still in dialogue with Natural England over Fields B3, B6, B7 and B8 (which Natural England considers to be important for future resilience) and is confident that an agreement can be reached that would address the points made in their representation. The Applicant notes that the additional fields referenced by Buckinghamshire Council are not a subject of concern of Natural England and are not part of the discussions currently in progress. Regarding hedgerow buffer measurement: a response has previously been provided within the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006] RR-203 page 202 and the hedgerow buffer measurement is secured within the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6]. The spatial extent of development as set out in the DCO Application has similarly been based on offsets from the centreline of the hedgerows. This is considered to be the most consistent data source available across the Site and practicable on the ground. This approach was similarly taken for both Byers Gill and Springwell consented solar DCOs. Regarding their size, the approach taken to date has been to increase buffer widths in areas where the corridors are considered to be more sensitive. As stated within Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006], RR-203 page 210, buffers from hedgerows linking Shrubs Wood, Sheephouse Wood and Decoypond Wood (B3/B7, B6/B7, B7/B8, B7/B10, B10/B11, B10/B9 and B8/B9) have been increased from 10m to 15m in recognition of the importance of protecting the commuting corridors between these woodland. The Applicant is willing to review the size of buffers in particular locations as part of the evolving bespoke approach, and has requested that Natural England make location-specific recommendations. In taking into account trees located within hedgerows, the buffers have also accommodated the root protection zones of those trees. Regarding monitoring: the Applicant has submitted additional detail in relation to the bat monitoring strategy in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] at Deadline 4 and will seek to engage further with Natural England and Buckinghamshire Council.
3.1.4	Page 8, Q1.7.7	Comment noting that Bechstein's bat are a Key Species identified within the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The Site is within a Target Area for Species Recovery; Grendon Greatmoor. Where the target is to 'Expand SSSI areas and manage areas linking	The Applicant does not agree that the Proposed Development will have a significant effect on Bechstein's bats and will therefore be at odds with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Please see the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] Q1.7.6 and Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23] Q2.5.7 to Q2.5.9.

Ref.	Page Reference, Question to, and Question	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		primary sites for biodiversity; particularly bats, old trees, various neutral grasslands and damper areas. See also Shortlist Species/assemblage measures Duke of Burgundy Fritillary butterfly, Blackthorn Butterflies and Moths'. Buckinghamshire Council would consider a scheme which had a significant impact on Bechstein's bats to be at conflict with the aims of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes.	
3.1.5	Page 8, Q1.7.10	Comment noting that Natural England recommends that as the value of the area for Bechstein's bats has already been demonstrated to be high, everything possible should be done to avoid any impact, which includes not placing panels or other infrastructure in Fields B6, B7 and B8. Buckinghamshire Council agree with Natural England that trapping and radio tracking surveys are themselves highly invasive and that it is not desirable to increase the pressure on this vulnerable population of Bechstein's bats, and that there is the potential for the Bechstein's bats present to be adversely affected by the Proposed Development. Buckinghamshire Council disagree in relation to the degree of reliance on older data when designing specific avoidance and mitigation measures, and instead recommend that a more precautionary approach is adopted which recognises that further areas of this landscape may also now, or in the near future, be providing roosting sites or core sustenance zones due to the recent disturbance of the bats caused by HS2.	The Applicant is pleased that Buckinghamshire Council recognise that separate invasive radio-tracking surveys are not desirable. The assessment is not 'reliant on older data', but on a comprehensive suite of monitoring surveys over many years (and currently scheduled to extend until at least 2039). It was recognised by HS2 that construction disruption <i>could</i> cause shifts in the distribution of bat species, and a comprehensive monitoring programme is in place to test this. However, such effects have not been demonstrated to date. The latest available radio-tracking data (the most relevant in relation to Bechstein's bat) is from 2022, but that year includes the commencement of major disruption from HS2. If a shift in behaviour has subsequently arisen as a result of construction disruption (yet to be identified*), it would likely be away from the construction site and not alongside it. Sheephouse Wood and Decoypond Wood are adjacent to the HS2 construction site. That said, in recognition of the difficulties/limitations in demonstrating such effects, and in recognition that the effects of HS2 construction are temporary (albeit over many years), the mitigation strategy for the Proposed Development seeks to provide strengthened commuting corridors and enhanced foraging opportunities across the wider landscape, providing more resilience in the longer term. Table 7.5 within the ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] indicates how the mitigation hierarchy has been applied. *As an additional point, annual data from a related species of bat, Natterer's bat, from Finemere Wood (including data as recent as 2025) shows no shift away from the construction corridor and that population is thriving, with colony sizes increasing, and breeding success high (from a historic low point that occurred prior to HS2).
3.1.6	Page 9, Q1.7.24	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council believe they should be consulted on and approve the details of the monitoring strategy for bats as well as agree the need for, and details of, any adaptive mitigation measures in the longer term where monitoring indicates that they are necessary. This is required to have confidence that the monitoring will	The Applicant has submitted additional detail in relation to the bat monitoring strategy which will form part of the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] submitted at Deadline 4. The Applicant will seek to engage further with Natural England and Buckinghamshire Council in relation to the proposed strategy. The strategy has been secured within the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] as set out in Requirement 7 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7].

Ref.	Page Reference, Question to, and Question	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		be undertaken, that mitigation will be put in place where deemed necessary and provide a mechanism by which enforcement of non-compliance could be achieved.	
3.1.7	Page 10, Q1.7.5	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council has reviewed the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and agrees that the baseline habitats have been correctly identified. Buckinghamshire Council also agree that the post-development habitats as shown on the post development habitat plan are realistic and supported by the oLEMP. Buckinghamshire Council note that there are some differences between the methodology used by the Applicant and the methodology set out within the biodiversity metric user guide. These are set out below: - Trading Rules: The Applicant has entered the arable field margins into the metric as other neutral grassland to avoid needing to meet trading rules. The metric trading rules require that habitats are replaced on a like-for-like or better basis, therefore Rule 1 of the Biodiversity Metric has not been met. - Recording Individual Trees: The Applicant has not followed the methodology set out within the biodiversity metric user guide for recording individual trees, by including newly planted trees within the post-development calculation when the guidance states that new trees planted as part of a new hedgerow creation or enhancement should not be counted as individual trees. - Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS): The LNRS should now be referred to when assigning strategic significance within the biodiversity metric. - Creation in advance: The Applicant has used the 'creation in advance' function within the metric for some of the woodland blocks and new hedgerows. Buckinghamshire Council require evidence that these habitats will be created a	The Applicant is pleased to note that Buckinghamshire Council accepts that the baseline habitats are correct and that the post development plan is realistic and supported by the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5]. With regards the specific comments raised: - Trading rules and arable margins: A common issue encountered when undertaking development which involves enhancing arable fields to more biodiverse grassland is that Trading Rule 1 of the DEFRA metric is not met where 'Arable Field Margins' are present around the fields. If you are replacing arable fields with solar panels with Other Neutral Grassland (ONG) underneath, you are 'losing' the Arable Field Margins in the view of the metric, since these margins are no longer bordering arable fields and therefore the arable <i>context</i> is lost. As ONG is part of the 'Grassland' broad habitat type (not Cropland) and both ONG and Arable Field Margins are deemed to be of medium distinctiveness, replacing Arable Field Margins with other neutral grassland does not conform to Trading Rule 1. Therefore, it is not possible for a development scheme that involves the loss of arable fields which support grass margins (arable margins and replace them with ONG) to meet the BNG trading rules even if the margins themselves are retained, unless a habitat of higher distinctiveness can be created or enhanced to offset the loss of arable field margin units that would occur. Therefore, the approach the Applicant proposes to take for the Proposed Development is as follows, with amendments to the metric and ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.17: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] submitted at Deadline 4: - The Applicant has mapped arable margins in the baseline, as arable margins rather than other neutral grassland (due to assertion from CSAG that the margins have been mis-classified), see point A above. - The Applicant has shown other neutral grassland with associated enhancement in the post-development scenario. - Fields D34 and D36, the proposed mitigation areas, were recorded as other neutral grassland in moderate condition within the baseline. These fields will be targeted to enhance the current other neutral grassland in moderate condition to lowland meadow in moderate condition. Lowland meadow is very high distinctiveness habitat as opposed to arable field margins, which is a medium distinctiveness habitat. Therefore, based on the revised assessment, the number of biodiversity units that would be delivered from lowland meadow habitat would be sufficient to offset the loss of arable field margin units, and would satisfy all trading rules. - Regarding individual trees:

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		year ahead of construction as proposed. The oLEMP doesn't make any firm commitment to planting a year ahead of construction. Feasibility of creating species rich grassland: No soil samples have been undertaken to inform whether species rich grassland could be achieved within the Site. Soil stripping to remove nutrients is expensive and other techniques can take many years before the soils are suitable. Without evidence that the existing conditions are suitable for the creation of species rich grassland it should be assumed that only 'poor' condition could be reached. Buckinghamshire Council do not agree with the use of an alternative methodology to that set out within the statutory biodiversity metric user guide and therefore do not agree that the calculations are accurate. Buckinghamshire Council may be able to comment further once it has seen the metric in Excel format.	Within the Defra statutory metric any individual trees within hedgerows that are directly affected by development (e.g. felling) are regarded as individual trees, falling under the <i>area</i> habitat category rather than <i>linear hedgerow</i> habitat category. The BNG Metric User Guide does not state anywhere that tree planting within hedgerows is not allowed. It does however state that trees planted within hedgerows "as part of hedgerow creation or enhancement" should not be counted as 'Individual trees', but as part of the hedgerow. Therefore, if replacement trees are planted within the existing hedgerows this would not deal with the loss of area-based habitat for these individual trees being lost, which would trigger a trading rule error, as the metric rules state that individual hedgerow trees have to be replaced by the same habitat type or habitat of a higher distinctiveness. The worst-case scenario that has been used to undertake the BNG assessment for the Proposed Development indicates that up to 23 individual hedgerow trees may require removal and this requires approximately 460 replacement planted trees to deliver the required net gain. The Applicant has currently stated within the BNG assessment that these replacement trees will be planted within existing hedgerows as this is where the trees are being lost from and reflects the importance of the hedgerow tree resource for foraging bats. The Applicant has been careful to ensure that no linear hedgerow habitat gain is recorded by the planting of these trees and has not double-counted the biodiversity value of these trees. However, the Applicant's proposed approach in response to comments is to update ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.17: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] which was submitted at Deadline 4 as follows: - Replacement tree planting for the loss of individual hedgerow trees will physically take place within existing retained hedgerows, as this is where the trees are being lost from and the tree resource within hedgerows is important for wildlife such as foraging bats. - But no area-based habitat gain will be recorded against linear hedgerow habitat so there is no double counting or trading between habitat area and hedgerow types (area/linear hedgerows). - The loss of area-based habitat individual trees (medium distinctiveness) will be compensated for by the creation of lowland meadow (very high distinctiveness) within part of the grassland areas set aside as mitigation (Fields D34 and D36). - In this way no metric rules are breached, the trading rules are maintained, and the physical loss of hedgerow trees is addressed. - Feasibility of creating species-rich grassland: The Applicant notes that this comment does not agree with the Council's stated opinion that they accept that the baseline habitats are correct and that the post development plan is realistic and supported by the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5]. Notwithstanding this, as outlined in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] the Applicant believes it has been pragmatic with regards the type of habitat that can be created. It is acknowledged that high nutrients may be a constraint to the creation of lowland meadow (see point above). However, the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] already commits to soil nutrient testing pre-construction, so the fields with the lowest phosphate levels will be targeted and the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] also

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			commits to a period of nutrient stripping, if required, as part of the habitat implementation phase. Therefore, this limitation is acknowledged and addressed. Finally, with the changes outlined above there have been no deviations from the Defra Metric and the Applicant has been fully transparent. The Applicant has provided the Council with the metric spreadsheet and revised ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.17: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] at Deadline 4. • LNRS Strategy: The updated ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.17: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] which was submitted at Deadline 4 has used the published LNRS strategy to determine strategic significance. The Applicant considers this matter is now closed. • Creation in advance: The Applicant has used the 'creation in advance' function within the metric for some of the woodland blocks and new hedgerows and the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] was updated at Deadline 4 to confirm the commitment to planting a year ahead of construction.
3.1.8	Page 12, Q1.10.2	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council understand this should follow best practice and does not need to be secured through a firm commitment. The Applicant's overarching aim is to minimise the impact of the development on the archaeological resource and to preserve and record archaeological features as appropriate proportionally to the significance of the heritage assets (DAMS 3.1.1). As such non-intrusive foundations do not need to be secured as a firm commitment as they are one approach, as other measures may be following best practice as included in the updated DAMS and the solar farm good practice guide. Buckinghamshire Council understand that 'where allowed' in dAMS [REP1-094] paragraph 5.1.1 relates to where large infrastructure cannot be moved following consent then the archaeology could not be preserved. Significant archaeology can be found when not expected even though appropriate evaluation has been undertaken. Where this cannot be achieved then it is excavated. The current wording of the DAMS is considered appropriate at this stage and will be updated as appropriate. Buckinghamshire Council considers section 3.1, and para 1.1.4 and 4.1.3 particularly useful in this regard.	The Applicant welcomes the agreement with Buckinghamshire Council that the method of preservation does not need to be secured at this time and that the Draft Archaeological Management Strategy [EN010158/APP/7.10.2] [REP1-094] is appropriate. The agreement of the Draft Archaeological Management Strategy [EN010158/APP/7.10.2] [REP1-094] is set out within the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4] submitted at Deadline 4.

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3.1.9	Page 12, Q1.10.3	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council agree with the scope of the assessment in relation to which receptors require assessment. The meeting where the Applicant agreed to assess the listed buildings in conservation areas individually took place on 12 August 2025. This is addressed in the Statement of Common Ground that is in the process of being issued. Buckinghamshire Council does not agree with the analysis of the contribution of the receptors' setting to their significance in a number of instances. Further comment noting that the RR (paragraph 80) relates to the reasons mentioned by the Applicant in their assessment as to why Buckinghamshire Council requested the inclusion of certain listed buildings in conservation areas, which was incorrect. The issue relating to the need to distinguish between different designations and individual heritage assets it is set out in that paragraph and relates both to policy requirements and differing aspects of the contribution of setting to significance for different heritage assets.	The Applicant welcomes the agreement of the scope of the assessment. The Applicant acknowledges that the reason for including the listed buildings within conservation areas separately to the conservation area was incorrectly reported within Table 9.1 of ES Chapter 9, this error has been corrected within ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] submitted at Deadline 4. This correction does not alter the outcome of the assessment as these assets were already assessed separately, on the reason for inclusion has been amended.
3.1.10	Page 12, Q1.10.12	Comment noting that during the preparation of the ES, Buckinghamshire Council advised the Applicant's Historic Environment specialist that East Claydon was being considered as a potential conservation area and that it was of a similar age and level of significance to Botolph Claydon Conservation Area, who agreed that it was similar and would be treated as an area with the same level of significance in the assessment. The assessment is of "East Claydon Village (group of listed and non-listed buildings)", and it is ascribed the same medium significance as the other nearest conservation areas. Its character, appearance and special interest and the nature of the contribution of its setting to its significance is not described in detail. This is also the case with other conservation areas. The Applicant's assessment assesses impacts on the setting of the 'group' in the same way as for other conservation areas. Buckinghamshire Council therefore feel that there are shortcomings in the conservation area assessments, which do not define the contribution of setting to significance in sufficient detail.	Further detail on the character, appearance and special interest of East Claydon village (as a candidate conservation area) has been added to Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] submitted at Deadline 4. The character and appearance of the Conservation Areas is provided within Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] (Middle Claydon Conservation Area at section 2.32 and Botolph Claydon Conservation Area at section 2.33). The Applicant considers that the relationship between East Claydon and Botolph Claydon would be minimally affected by the Proposed Development and that the prominence of East Claydon in views from the east and south east would only be affected from areas within and immediately adjacent to the Order Limits as reported within Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3].

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		Further comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council identify the prominence of the village, its church and the fringing trees form a landmark for a considerable distance, in views from the east and south east as well as its relationship with Botolph Claydon as contributory elements to its setting.	
3.1.11	Page 13, Q1.10.13	Comment noting the extent of setback from the listed building was not determined in consultation with Buckinghamshire Council's Historic Environment specialist. Buckinghamshire Council considers the impact of the solar PV arrays on the setting of Pond Farmhouse to be severe (leading to Buckinghamshire Council's view that there is impact at the upper end of the scale of less than substantial harm – see LIR para 4.5.6 and 4.5.56) and setting arrays further from the listed building would be welcomed. Excessive screening to the east of the Farmhouse (Field B4 is to the west) may also cause harm, as the farmhouse's role as a satellite farm of Claydon House and the relationship of Pond Farmhouse to the wider Claydon House estate would be partly severed and made less legible.	As noted within the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049] , the setback from Pond Farmhouse has taken account of a combination of factors including heritage significance, residential amenity and the generating capacity of the site. The Applicant acknowledges that the presence of the Solar PV development within the setting of Pond Farmhouse will result in a significant effect (as is reported within ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]). The Applicant considers that the harm to the significance of Pond Farmhouse lies within the middle of the scale of less than substantial. The proposed screening to the east of Pond Farmhouse is acknowledged to contribute to this effect but has been included at the request of National Trust in order to minimise the effect on the approaches to (and therefore setting of) Claydon House. The effect on Claydon House and Claydon Park is acknowledged within Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] to include the presence of Solar PV development within the historic estate holding (which includes Pond Farmhouse) and the effects on Claydon House have been agreed with Historic England and National Trust as being at the lower end of less than substantial, this agreement is set out within the Statement of Common Ground with Historic England [EN010158/APP/5.16.3] and Draft Statement of Common Ground with National Trust [EN010158/APP/5.17.2] [REP2-020] .
3.1.12	Page 13, Q1.10.14	Comment noting that the updated Draft Archaeological Management Strategy addresses Buckinghamshire Council's and Historic England's concerns and follows the good practice guide.	The Applicant welcomes this agreement which is set out within the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4] .
3.1.13	Page 13, Q1.11.2	Comment noting that the methodology is acceptable, however the Highways Authority does recommend that in locations where there are significant constraints on the network thresholds that percentage increases are not always appropriate, and in these instances any impact should be assessed. Based on the present information it is not expected that any additional locations are requiring additional assessment. The LIR has identified locations where greater information in the assessment has been requested and is required. Further comment that the ExA should consider the progress of the Oxfordshire Rail Freight Interchange DCO application at Ardley and its potential for	The Applicant notes the comments and that the assessment of the junction of Station Road/A41 has been provided to Buckinghamshire Council for review, noting that sufficient junction capacity exists at this location. The junction modelling is included in the latest version of ES Volume 4, Appendix 15.1: Transport Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] submitted at Deadline 4. The Applicant acknowledges Buckinghamshire Council's note on the Oxfordshire Rail Freight Interchange DCO and will keep it under review. If sufficient information becomes available to sufficiently assess the cumulative impact, the Applicant will include it within the update to ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037] at a future deadline.

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		cumulative impacts. At present it is considered that the scheme is not developed sufficiently to assess the cumulative impacts.	
3.1.14	Page 14, Q1.11.30	Comment noting Buckinghamshire Council's concerns primarily arises from the way in which cumulative effects are discounted on the basis that other existing or approved developments are assumed to be fully mitigated, with residual effects treated as not significant before any combined assessment is undertaken (for example paragraphs 17.7.18 and entries within Tables 17.11–17.13). This places reliance on anticipated mitigation outcomes for individual schemes, rather than robustly testing whether the combined presence of multiple developments gives rise to cumulative harm and thus assessing the reasonable worst case. It should be noted; part of Buckinghamshire Council's disagreement is about how the Applicant has exercised judgment more generally in measuring the magnitude of cumulative effects. Further comment that there are specific topic-based concerns that arise in respect of the Proposed Development, one example is the detailed comments on cumulative arboricultural effects from para 4.3.151, or the consideration of cumulative landscape effects from para 4.4.70.	The Applicant notes the Council's concern regarding the treatment of cumulative effects and the reliance on mitigation secured through other schemes. The approach adopted by the Applicant in ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037] is consistent with standard EIA practice and in line with the PINS Advice on Cumulative Effects, and reflects a proportionate assessment based on available information. For schemes that are consented or sufficiently advanced, it is reasonable to assume that mitigation measures required through their respective consents would be implemented and that any residual effects would be reduced to a level deemed acceptable through the decision making process. On this basis, the Applicant has adopted a precautionary but proportionate approach by taking account of the likely residual effects of these schemes, rather than assuming unmitigated impacts which would represent an unrealistic worst-case scenario and risk overestimating cumulative effects. For schemes that are not yet consented or do not have publicly available Environmental Statements, there is insufficient environmental information available to undertake a detailed or robust cumulative assessment. In these instances, it would not be appropriate for the Applicant to speculate on the nature, magnitude, or spatial extent of potential impacts, nor on the mitigation that may be secured through design or planning conditions. The Applicant has therefore applied proportionate professional judgement, using available data and established assumptions to avoid introducing unnecessary uncertainty or overly conservative scenarios that would not represent a realistic worst case. It is recognised that cumulative assessment inherently involves a degree of professional judgement, particularly where information is incomplete. The methodology applied seeks to balance this uncertainty with a reasonable and defensible approach, ensuring that the assessment remains robust and reasonable, and that conclusions are not materially skewed by either under- or over-estimation of cumulative effects. See the Applicant's Response to Buckinghamshire Council's Local Impact Report [EN010158/APP/8.11] [REP2-085] in relation to cumulative arboricultural effects (Ref. 3.34, 3.79 3.84, and 3.86) and cumulative landscape effects (Ref. 8.18 and 8.19). As a summary, the Applicant does not agree that the cumulative effect of impacts from the Proposed Development and other relevant developments would result in a gradual erosion of arboricultural value across the Site as set out within ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.13: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] [REP2-044]. In regards to cumulative landscape effects, the Applicant has assessed the inter-project cumulative effects, including sequential (kinetic) effects, with other relevant developments. As presented in ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037] and ES Volume 4, Appendix 17.2: Landscape and Visual Inter-project Cumulative Effect Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] [REP2-057], cumulative effects have been considered in terms of the additional effects of the Proposed Development and also the combined effects of all cumulative schemes together.
3.1.15	Page 14, Q1.11.31	Comment that the Applicant has not provided sufficient project design detail to inform the direct and	Information regarding the existing baseline land use, including specifics on agricultural production and crop rotations, will be included within a separate document at Deadline 5. The design of the Proposed

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		cumulative impact assessment for ALC and soils. The ES is based on the removal of 647.05 ha of agricultural land over 40 years without providing any limits or understanding of how much direct soil disruption will occur or how much agricultural production, if appropriate, will continue over the operational period. These are relevant factors in the ES assessment for soil and ALC and it is recommended that they be provided. Further comment noting that the cumulative assessment does not give weight to non-BMV land in spite of it likely supporting the majority of agriculture in Buckinghamshire and does not consider the loss of soil resources. The current assessment also discusses the quality of agricultural land rather than the quantity affected. Commenting noting that the necessary detail on cumulative effects on non-BMV land and soil ecosystem services is unlikely to result in the identification of a significant cumulative effect, but the outcome would be more than the negligible effect reported. Furthermore, the additional detail would establish the necessary baseline to inform both required mitigation and best practice options to protect soils and the ALC services they provide.	Development allows for some agricultural use, with a managed grassland and potential grazing on the land beneath the Solar PV modules during operation. The Grid Connection areas will be returned to the landowners following construction, which will be available for agricultural use where applicable. The extent of direct soil disturbance would be limited to construction working areas, cabling routes and large electrical infrastructure such as the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated compounds. Furthermore, the Outline Soil Management Plan (Outline SMP) [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069] establishes a framework through which to control soil handling, trafficking and reinstatement, ensuring that soils are protected and that areas affected during construction are restored in accordance with good practice. Given the worst-case scenario approach to the direct and cumulative impact assessments, the Applicant considers that the level of detail provided is sufficient to inform the assessment of likely significant effects, and proportionate to the current stage of the Proposed Development. The Applicant notes the Council's comment regarding the focus on BMV land and land quality rather than quantity within ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037]. This approach reflects national planning policy, which places particular emphasis on the protection of BMV land. The Applicant also recognises that non-BMV land forms an important component of the wider agricultural land resource and contributes to agricultural production and soil-based ecosystem functions. The assessment does not seek to imply that non-BMV land is of no value, but rather reflects the policy-led weighting given to land quality in determining the significance of effects. Furthermore, the Applicant notes that undertaking a reliable cumulative assessment of total agricultural land affected within the wider area is inherently challenging, as provisional ALC mapping does not define agricultural land areas to a suitable level of accuracy.
3.1.16	Page 15, Q1.11.33	Comment noting that the updated oOEMP provides a framework for the monitoring and control of operational noise produced by the proposed development. Buckinghamshire Council consider that express provisions should manage the distinct issue of cumulative noise effect (and how the Applicant will go about engaging with other noise-emitting developments). Further comment that Buckinghamshire Council notes, however, that such provisions are unlikely to address the concerns that the Council has about the residual noise effects of the proposed development and current uncertainty about those effects on sensitive receptors.	An assessment of cumulative noise effects is included within ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037], which concluded that there would be no significant adverse inter-project cumulative effects on noise, post-mitigation. The procedure to be followed in the event of a noise complaint being received as set out in Outline Operational Environmental Management plan (Outline OEMP) [EN010158/APP/7.3.5] has been amended at Deadline 4 to include consultation with other developments, where appropriate. The concerns raised about operational phase noise levels generated by the Proposed Development and the effect on sensitive receptors have been discussed at the ISH1 Hearing and within the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049], with further commentary provided elsewhere within this document (Ref. 3.4.56 and 3.5.24).

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3.1.17	Page 15, Q1.12.6	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council finds such an approach acceptable within appropriate limits, and that they will engage with the Applicant in respect of such DCO provisions. Buckinghamshire Council consider that any duty on it should not obviate obligations on the Applicant to consult with relevant bodies where appropriate, and this should be recorded in the DCO. Buckinghamshire Council has previously raised concerns about Schedule 16, and, if such requirements are to be included in the DCO which require Buckinghamshire Council to consult other parties, this must be taken into account in that Schedule. As indicated in the LIR, discussions are yet to occur in relation to Schedule 16, and Buckinghamshire Council would welcome the opportunity to have those with the Applicant.	The Applicant shared proposed amendments to the text of Schedule 16 (Procedure for discharge of requirements) with Buckinghamshire Council on 15 June 2026. The Applicant received comments from the Council on 16 June 2026 and incorporated these changes into the updated Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] submitted at Deadline 4. The Council indicated that it had no further substantive points on this issue at this stage. The Applicant notes, in any case, that Schedule 16 does not obviate the need to consult with relevant bodies. Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] describes where the relevant planning authority must consult with other relevant bodies where appropriate, which allows the relevant planning authority to remain in control of the process for discharging all of the DCO requirements, which is standard practice in DCOs. Schedule 16 provides a framework in which the requirements are discharged. As the relevant planning authority is the lead authority for discharging DCO requirements, Schedule 16 sets out a framework, including timescales, in which communications between the Applicant, the relevant planning authority and any consultee that the relevant planning authority must consult with are made. For example, paragraph 3(7) of Schedule 16 sets out the steps in which the process for when a relevant consultee must be consulted. The Council is free to consult any other bodies that it wishes when discharging requirements, which is outside of the scope of Schedule 16, however it is only those listed in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] that it must consult with.
3.1.18	Page 15, Q1.12.9	Comment noting the following modifications to be made to Article 16(2): • (2) Such an agreement may, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (15)- ○ (a) make provision for the street authority to carry out any function under this Order which relates to the street in question; ○ (b) specify a reasonable time for the completion of the works; and/or ○ (c) contain such terms as to payment and other matters as the parties consider appropriate, including such matters as may be included in agreements made pursuant to section 278 or section 38 of the 1980 Act. • (3) The undertaker will not commence Works 9 (or associated development works (j), insofar as they fall within the scope of Article 11) to the extent that they involve works to a highway,	With regards to the addition of “<i>including such matters as may be included in agreements made pursuant to section 278 or section 38 of the 1980 Act</i>” – the Applicant considers that this amendment is not required because it is already addressed in the updated Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] submitted at Deadline 4 (see updated drafting at paragraph 3.5.10). With regards to the proposed addition of Article 16(3), the Applicant notes there are two cross-referencing errors, which makes it difficult to comment on the exact phrasing of the whole paragraph. The Applicant understands where it states “paragraph (15)” it should read “Article 16”. The Applicant is unclear what the reference to Article 11(10) should refer to as the last paragraph in Article 11 is Article 11(3). Regardless of this, the Applicant opposes the addition of the Article 16(3) as approval by the relevant planning authority is sufficiently covered by the existing controls in the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]. Work No. 9 is a permitted preliminary work, as defined in Article 2, the requirements of the Draft DCO (Schedule 2) impose conditions on it, which means Work No. 9 cannot be carried out until certain Requirements for that phase are discharged by the relevant planning authority. These requirements are: • Landscape and ecological management plan – Requirement 7(4); • Fencing and other means of enclosure – Requirement 8(3); • Archaeology – Requirement 10(3); • Construction and environmental management plan – Requirement 11(4);

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		prior to entering into an agreement pursuant to paragraph (15) which provides details of the specification of the works which will reasonably satisfy the highway authority for the purpose of Article 11(10), and related provisions in relation to the maintenance and adoption of such works pursuant to that article.	- Construction traffic management plan – Requirement 13(4). Note in particular with regards to the proposed Article 16(3) that paragraph (1) of Requirement 13 requires this plan to be approved in consultation with the local highway authority and National Highways; and - Rights of way and access strategy – Requirement 16(8). Additionally, the Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] details road improvement works that the Applicant will undertake, in sections 3.4 and 3.5. The Applicant will “<i>undertake road improvements works on the existing road network.</i>” (paragraph 3.5.1.) and the detailed construction traffic management plan(s) will include details of approvals when the Applicant undertakes road improvement works (paragraph 3.5.10): <i>“The Applicant will reimburse the highway authorities for the technical approval process at the time the applications are made, in line with costs for similar Section 278 or Section 184 applications made under the Highways Act 1980. The detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan(s) will detail the exact process for these technical approvals.”</i>
3.1.19	Page 16, Q1.12.10	Comment noting that while Buckinghamshire Council will comment on the replies provided by the Applicant on the Articles of the DCO, at this stage Buckinghamshire Council considers that the ExA’s suggested amendments to the definition of ‘maintain’ would be appropriate to ensure that such effects outside those assessed in the ES do not eventuate.	The Applicant refers to its corresponding response in the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] which explains that an amendment to the definition of “maintain” to be necessary on the basis that the scope of the authorised development is controlled through Schedule 1 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] , the relevant management plans and the process for discharge of Requirements.
3.1.20	Page 17, Q1.12.12	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council notes these comments which accord with its own concerns prefaced in Table 5-1 of its LIR.	The Applicant has provided a response on items in Table 5-1 of Buckinghamshire Council's LIR [REP1-112] in rows 14.25-14.40 of the Applicant's Response to Buckinghamshire Council's Local Impact Report [EN010158/APP/8.11] [REP2-085] .
3.1.21	Page 17, Q1.12.14	Comment noting that assuming that the concerns that Buckinghamshire Council raise about noise in its LIR are satisfactorily resolved, Buckinghamshire Council consider article 7 appropriate.	The Applicant notes that Buckinghamshire Council considers Article 7 appropriate. The Applicant has responded to Buckinghamshire Council on responses regarding noise in the Applicant's Response to Buckinghamshire Council's Local Impact Report [EN010158/APP/8.11] [REP2-085] and the Applicant refers to its corresponding response in the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] .
3.1.22	Page 17, Q1.12.17	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council suggest the following wording: Where any power under this article ceases to be used in respect of a street or public right of way, the undertaker shall return that street or public right of way to its original condition at the earliest opportunity, unless agreed otherwise with the relevant planning authority.	The Applicant acknowledges Buckinghamshire Council's concern but considers the current suite of control documents, secured by Schedule 13 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] and related Requirements, adequately addresses the repair, reinstatement and management of streets and public rights of way. The Applicant has made commitments to repair the condition of streets in the Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] including in: section 3.4: Road Reconstruction (Snake Lane/Fiddlers Field) which also has regard to when it is appropriate to undertake the works (outside of Summer school holidays so as to not impact Hogshaw Farm and Wildlife Park).

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			- section 3.5: Physical Works which includes provision for road improvement works on the existing network. - section 4.7: Wear & Tear Agreement: in which a legal agreement with Buckinghamshire Council is suggested to cover the cost of abnormal wear and tear on the road network between the A41 and the Site access junctions. This will be agreed with Buckinghamshire Council following the granting of the Development Consent Order. The wear and tear agreement will address concerns about possible damage to the public road, verges and structures. It will be based upon condition surveys of the road to ensure that the condition of the road does not deteriorate solely as a result of the construction works. These measures are secured by Requirement 13 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] which states that no part of the authorised development may commence until a construction traffic management plan for that part (which is substantially in accordance with the Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4]) has been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority in consultation with the local highway authority and National Highways. Further, the Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy (Outline RoWAS) [EN010158/APP/7.8.5] [CR1-026] details the principles, management and inspection requirements as well as the extent and nature of any closure, diversion and/or improvement to the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network and permissive footpaths. There are measures which will be secured in the detailed Rights of Way and Access Strategy - which is to be prepared substantially in accordance with the Outline RoWAS [EN010158/APP/7.8.5] [CR1-026] per Requirement 16 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] – including: - Installation inspections of any temporary diversions will be undertaken on a regular basis by the Principal Contractor during construction; - Carrying out of any required remedial works to ensure that diversions remain in good condition during the construction period. This will include temporary fencing, signage and surface condition to ensure it always remains safe and accessible; - Contact details will be provided on signage placed around the construction site so that people have a direct route to report any concerns relating to PRoW and permissive path management directly with the project team; - Temporarily diverted PRoW will be reinstated to their original route and to at least their original condition following track and cable trench construction activities.
3.1.23	Page 17, Q1.12.19	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council consider such a requirement should be included, as is typical for making such orders.	The Applicant refers to its corresponding response in the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] . The Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] was updated at Deadline 2 to include a requirement for a site notice at Article 17(6).
3.1.24	Page 17, Q1.12.24	Comment noting agreement that Article 40(4) appears to contain an error and should refer to Requirement 7 rather than Requirement 8. Buckinghamshire Council considers that Article 40 remains broadly drafted, given that wording around the felling or lopping of	The Applicant amended 'Requirement 8' to 'Requirement 7' in the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] at Deadline 2 (see the Schedule of Changes to the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/8.1.6]). The Applicant refers to section 4.6.14 of the Explanatory Memorandum [EN010158/APP/3.2.4] [CR1-010]. That section explains the purpose of Article 40, including to remove those hedgerows specified in Schedule 12 (Hedgerows to be removed) to the maximum extents shown on the Vegetation Removal

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		trees within the Order Limits to facilitate construction vehicles and the removal of hedgerows identified in Schedule 12, and that the exercise of such powers depends on the underlying arboricultural baseline and protection strategy being sufficiently robust to ensure that important trees and hedgerows are properly identified and safeguarded. Buckinghamshire Council remains concerned that: - the arboricultural baseline is not yet demonstrated to be sufficiently robust in all areas; - woodland classification and buffer derivation remain uncertain in places; - there is still no Outline AMS demonstrating how impacts would be avoided in practice; and - some works, including vegetation removal and highway-related preliminary works, may arise at an early stage, increasing the importance of clear pre-works protection and method principles. Further comment noting that it would be preferable to Buckinghamshire Council for the tree and hedgerow works to be more clearly linked to identified features, assessed impacts, and approved arboricultural protection/method documents rather than relying solely on a broad “reasonable belief” test.	Parameters (which is Appendix 3 of the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5]). The Vegetation Removal Parameters display: - the existing vegetation (trees and hedgerows); - the trees and hedgerows to be removed; - the important hedgerows to be removed; - the vegetation to be clipped within visibility splays; - the hedgerows to be replanted above the cable corridors; and - the hedgerows to be replanted outside visibility splays for junction and highways works. These are shown over the Order Limits. The Applicant considers that the Vegetation Removal Parameters are therefore already linked to identified features and assessed impacts, as the features are displayed on the plans of the Vegetation Removal Parameters). It is also linked to approved arboricultural protection/method documents as the Vegetation Removal Parameters are contained in Appendix 3 of the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] which is itself an arboricultural protection/method document. The applicant addresses Buckinghamshire Council remaining concerns in line with the bulleted points: - The applicant refers to Ref 3.1.3 in this document. The arboricultural baseline is based on a BS 5837:2012-compliant ground survey undertaken by a suitably qualified arboricultural consultant and supported by drone-derived topographical data used for positional plotting only. All arboricultural features were ground-truthed and any discrepancies between datasets were resolved in favour of site observations. The Applicant therefore considers the arboricultural baseline to be robust and proportionate to the current stage of design. - The applicant refers to Ref 3.1.3 in this document. The Applicant does not agree that there is material uncertainty regarding woodland classification or buffer derivation. Woodland features were classified in accordance with BS 5837:2012 and described within the survey schedules, with woodland characteristics clearly identified where relevant. Buffer distances were informed by site-specific survey information, National Forest Inventory data, relevant standing advice, and the sensitivity of the features concerned. - The Applicant points to response Ref. 3.2.10 in regards to an outline AMS. - The Applicant agrees that appropriate protection measures are required prior to any works commencing. The Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] secures the implementation of tree protection fencing and other arboricultural safeguards before site mobilisation and construction activities begin. In addition, the Applicant has agreed to provide further detail within the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] at Deadline 4. Please Ref 3.2.10 of this document. The Applicant acknowledges the Council’s preference for tree and hedgerow works to be clearly linked to identified features, assessed impacts and approved arboricultural documents. However, the Applicant considers that the application already provides a clear framework for doing so. The ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.13: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] [REP2-044], identifies the trees, hedgerows and woodland features affected by the Proposed Development and assesses the likely impacts arising from the works. The Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5], Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6], Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] and the requirement for a

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			detailed Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) provide the mechanism through which protection measures and working methods will be secured and implemented.
3.1.25	Page 18, Q1.12.25	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council agrees that powers affecting TPO trees should not be included on a purely precautionary basis where the trees likely to be affected have not been specifically identified. Article 41 would allow the undertaker to fell, lop or cut back the roots of any tree subject to a TPO made after the submission period identified in the draft article, provided the undertaker reasonably believes this is necessary to prevent obstruction or interference with the construction, maintenance, operation or decommissioning of the authorised development. It would also disapply the normal replacement duty and treat the power as a deemed consent under the relevant TPO. Further comment noting that the concern remains that Article 41 is framed as a general precautionary override applying to any future TPO tree within or overhanging the Order Limits, rather than being tied to specifically identified trees likely to be affected. In Buckinghamshire Council's view, where the Applicant maintains that the arboricultural baseline is robust and tree impacts are known, there should be greater precision as to the trees or circumstances genuinely requiring such a power. Buckinghamshire Council considers that Article 41 should be tightened so that it is more clearly evidenced, proportionate and limited in scope, rather than operating as a broad precautionary override in relation to any future TPO tree that may later come to be protected within or overhanging the Order Limits.	The Applicant refers to its corresponding response in the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087]. By way of further information, the Applicant notes that the Proposed Development has been designed to retain the vast majority of trees, hedgerows and woodland features, with efforts made throughout the design process to avoid impacts where practicable. Although no TPOs are currently present within the Order Limits there are a number of trees and groups across the Site that are of sufficient quality and amenity value that they could potentially warrant TPO protection in the future. However, TPO designation should not be based solely on tree quality; Government guidance indicates that there should also be a reasonable degree of threat to the trees' retention or condition. It is a realistic possibility that these trees and groups of trees within the site could become subject to a TPO at some point in the future. Given the long lifespan of the Proposed Development (including operation and decommissioning), the Applicant considers it is essential to retain powers to carry out works to trees that are subject to a TPO made after 26 September 2025. It would be used as a last resort, to ensure the Proposed Development can meet its obligations and deliver urgently needed renewable energy. The Applicant reiterates that Article 41 (as drafted) has precedent in, for example, the Springwell Solar Farm Order 2026 and the East Yorkshire Solar Farm Order 2025. Further, ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.13: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-099] includes a full tree survey together with a robust assessment of the likely impacts to trees arising as a result of the Proposed Development, allowing the Examining Authority to give full consideration to the characteristics of any affected trees. Accordingly, the Applicant considers that Article 41 is appropriate, proportionate and necessary to facilitate the delivery and operation of the Proposed Development.
3.1.26	Page 18, Q1.12.36	Comment noting that the Applicant has not provided any information on the permitted preliminary works, or how extensive those works are to be. As such, Buckinghamshire Council has concerns about achieving such controls. Buckinghamshire Council will consider the Applicant's reply on this issue. Further comment on the consultation of the CTMP with National Highways, noting that the highways authority considers that the impacts of construction	The Applicant has proposed wording to clarify matters and is awaiting a response from Buckinghamshire Council. The proposed use of traffic signal controls is only suggested to enable to construction of road works and junction formation as detailed in the Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] and as confirmed in the amended Article 17 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] submitted at Deadline 4. The amendment to the Draft DCO has been agreed between the Applicant and Buckinghamshire Council. Following the completion of these works, the signals will be removed immediately. The Applicant agrees with the second comment relating to the negligible impact on the Strategic Road Network (SRN).

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		traffic will be dispersed and negligible by the time that it reaches the SRN, and therefore if the CTMP is in accordance with the Framework Travel Plan that further consultation is unlikely to be necessary.	
3.1.27	Page 19, Q1.12.44	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council is in the process of arranging engagement with the Applicant in relation to the procedure for discharging requirements contained in Schedule 16 of the draft DCO. On that basis it proposes to provide an update at Deadline 3. This will also allow parallel discussion of the points raised in Q1.12.6 above.	The Applicant has amended Schedule 16 (Procedure for discharge of requirements) of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] submitted at Deadline 4 following engagement with Buckinghamshire Council. The updated wording is agreed between the parties to introduce more flexibility in timescales and clarifications around process.
3.1.28	Page 19, Q1.12.46	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council would be satisfied to accept applications for discharge of requirements by email, however this would need to be subject to an agreed established procedure with the Applicant.	The Applicant notes that Buckinghamshire Council is satisfied to accept applications for the discharge of requirements by email. The Applicant would be happy to engage in discussions with Buckinghamshire Council about an appropriate procedure.
3.1.29	Page 19, Q1.13.1	Air Quality – Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council agrees with the conclusion set out in Section 3.3 of the Health Effects Report, but given the extended timescale to decommissioning, Buckinghamshire Council considers that a new air quality assessment should be undertaken immediately prior to decommissioning to inform the final Dust Management Plan. Further comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council seeks clarification on the assessment criteria applied to reaching the conclusion that potential effects from road traffic exhaust emissions during operation would not be significant for human receptors and that adverse effects on human health would be limited, querying why the screening criteria set out in the Environmental Protection UK (EPUK) and Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) guidance Land Use Planning and Development Control: Planning for Air Quality have not been referenced or considered. Comment noting that while Buckinghamshire Council supports the overall structure and alignment of the Health Effects Report with ISEP best practice, further	Mitigation measures have already been incorporated into the Outline DEMP [EN010158/APP/7.4.5]. The Applicant will undertake an update to the dust risk assessment portion of the air quality assessment prior to the decommissioning phase, which will be incorporated into the detailed Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan in line with guidance and legislation at the time of decommissioning to mitigate air quality and dust impacts. A detailed Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan will be produced prior to decommissioning as secured in the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]. This will be submitted to and approved by the Relevant Planning Authority prior to the decommissioning phase. The Outline DEMP [EN010158/APP/7.4.5] has been updated at Deadline 4 to include a commitment to undertake a revised Dust Risk Assessment at the time of decommissioning. The screening criteria set out in the Environmental Protection UK (EPUK) and Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) guidance Land Use Planning and Development Control: Planning for Air Quality have been referenced and considered as per 6.8.12 and 6.8.13 of the ES Volume 2, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010158/APP/6.2.2] which state: 'It is anticipated that there would be four two-way Light Duty Vehicle trips per day during the operation (including maintenance) phase (refer to ES Volume 2, Chapter 15: Transport and Access [EN010158/APP/6.2] [APP-058] for further details).' 'The Proposed Development is not expected to generate traffic exceeding Environmental Protection UK and Institute of Air Quality Management guidance [Ref. 6-20] and Design Manual for Roads and Bridges LA 105 Air Quality [Ref. 6-23] screening criteria (refer to Table 6.12) once operational. Therefore, it is considered that further assessment of the operation (including maintenance) phase traffic emissions is not required. The increased road traffic emissions resulting from the Proposed Development are

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		clarity is required on how guidance has been applied, improved prominence within the ES, and consistency of reporting across documents. Comment noting that, although no significant residual effects are identified for regulated physical health pathways, the Council considers that important health and wellbeing impacts remain (particularly relating to landscape, PRoW, and vulnerable sub-populations) and that further place-based assessment, clearer reporting, and targeted mitigation are required.	expected to have a negligible impact on air quality, and nearby human receptors and designated sites during the operation (including maintenance) phase.' Matters raised in Buckinghamshire Council's response to Q1.13.1 duplicate positions raised in other submissions at Deadline 2, and have been responded to within Table 4.1 of the Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [REP3-051] – specifically items 4.1.1 to 4.1.7.
3.1.30	Page 24, Q1.14.5	Comment noting that Paragraph 4.10.21 of the LIR states that <i>"The OEMP must clearly secure operational phase controls including firewater containment, spill pathways, emergency response procedures, and management of hazardous substances."</i> The updates to the outline OEMP and reference to the outline Battery Safety Management Plan provided at Deadline 1 have now included those aspects that we were seeking to be included. These were to ensure that the risk of contamination of the shallow groundwater around the BESS would be low and would be appropriately mitigated if it did occur in suitable emergency responses. Further comment noting that on air quality, the Strategic Environmental Protection team did not raise this matter directly, and therefore no specific additional mitigation measures were identified by the team for inclusion within the outline OEMP. Further comment noting the inclusion of measures which address, in part, the concerns set out in paragraph 4.10.21 of Buckinghamshire Council's Local Impact Report. In addition, a comparison of the mitigation measures within the outline DEMP and outline OEMP has identified one measure included in the outline DEMP that does not currently appear in the outline OEMP, namely the BESS site protection for firewater segregation will remain in place until the BESS units are removed so that the risk is managed throughout the decommissioning phase.	The Applicant notes the position of Buckinghamshire Council and welcomes agreement that the updates to the Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5] provided include the aspects that were seeking to be included. The Applicant also welcomes agreement that the Outline DEMP [EN010158/APP/7.4.5] has been updated to include the additional firewater segregation management throughout the decommissioning phase.

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3.1.31	Page 25, Q1.14.7	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council agrees with the Applicant's conclusions regarding likely effects on the GWDTE from contamination given the Applicant's statement that additional mitigation would be implemented, including adhering to procedures that are secured by the Outline CEMP, which comprise the completion of additional site investigation works and remediation where contamination is identified, the safe storage and use of fuel and hazardous materials/substances; the managing of spillages and leaks, and procedures for the discovery of unexpected contamination.	Comment noted.
3.1.32	Page 25, Q1.15.4	Comment noting that the Draft Development Consent Order [REP1-008] and Design Commitments [REP1020], sets out the requirement for the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) to be submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority and that no part of the authorised development may commence until this has been approved. It is important to note that where permitted preliminary works are identified within the DCO then these would also require the LEMP to be approved prior to commencement of these works to ensure that appropriate management and establishment criteria have been set out to ensure that these works will establish successfully and be maintained accordingly to ensure they continue to mature in line with the requirements set out in the LEMP. The LEMP together with the environmental design information presented within the LVIA are subject to our landscape and visual concerns being addressed.	Requirement 7(1) of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] states that <i>"No part of the authorised development may commence until a written landscape and ecological management plan has been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority for that part, in consultation with the Environment Agency and Natural England"</i>. With regards to permitted preliminary works, Article 7(4) describes how the LEMP for that part of the authorised development must be approved under Article 7(1) before the following permitted preliminary works are commenced: • (h) site clearance (including vegetation removal, demolition of existing structures or buildings); • (i) Work No. 9 (works to facilitate access to Work Nos. 1 to 8 and 10); • (k) early establishment of ecological mitigation including for badgers; and • (l) advanced planting.
3.1.33	Page 26, Q1.15.9	Comment noting that it would be appropriate for the hedgerow management prescription requirements within Table A4.1 of the OLEMP to include 'Year 4 and Year 5 onwards (annually)' as this would properly aim to ensure that sufficient management requirements are identified to allow hedgerows to achieve the desired establishment rate at year 10.	Table A4.1 of the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] already includes reference to the maintenance of existing and proposed hedgerows at target height of 3-3.5m, depending on specific screening requirements, with a width of at least 1.5m at 1.5m above ground level at Year 4 and Year 5 onwards (annually). However, these two timescales had been omitted from the line on monitoring and management to ensure successful establishment. The Applicant has amended the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] at Deadline 4 to include these two time periods in Table A4.1.
3.1.34	Page 26, Q1.15.10	Comment noting that the introduction of additional hedgerow and/or tree planting within the vicinity of the	The assessment of the effects of the BESS and the associated acoustic screen is based on a worst-case, maximum parameters model in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual

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		BESS would increase the amount of mitigation vegetation but would not on its own sufficiently reduce the impact that arises from the introduction of the BESS fencing. The proposed fencing would still introduce an element that would be out of character despite the introduction of additional hedgerow and/or tree planting.	[EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. The requirement for additional mitigation planting will be determined at the detailed design stage. The introduction of new hedgerow and/or tree planting is likely to be sufficient to reduce the scale of effects as a result of the fencing experienced along the PRoW to the immediate west of the BESS. However, the wider experience of footpath users between Botolph Claydon and Runts Wood is determined primarily by visibility of the BESS and wider Solar PV development and this will remain unchanged as a significant effect on the landscape character. The assessment of effects of the BESS and associated acoustic screen is also based on a worst-case, maximum parameters model in ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. The effect on the heritage significance of Botolph Claydon Conservation Area, East Claydon village and the listed buildings within them is determined primarily by the change in the character of the surroundings and the obstruction of views as a result of the Proposed Development. The proposed mitigation planting would not alter the effects on heritage significance which are assessed as at most slight and not significant.
3.1.35	Page 26, Q1.15.11	Comment noting the following in the document: Defining the Special Qualities of Local Landscape Designations in the Aylesbury Vale District Report, was prepared to enhance Buckinghamshire Council's landscape evidence base and to inform the Local Plan by defining the landscapes special character and qualities. The following key criteria's have been highlighted as being relevant to the study area and provide context to the qualities of the area: • Distinctiveness: Distinctive band of low, generally open limestone hills, ridges and plateau to the north of Aylesbury Vale. Strong character and sense of place as a result of the coherent character of the landform, consistent land use of agricultural fields (pastoral and arable) and the scattering of attractive villages. • Perceptual character: Strong sense of rural tranquillity, openness and sense of the dominance of landscape. The dominance of landscape and sense of openness – particularly on the plateau in the east of the area, provides opportunities to appreciate the landscape from roads and public rights of way. Frequent attractive views of the undulating hills from the many vantage points. Views to the Vale of Aylesbury to the south from vantage points and many of the villages perched on the ridge– e.g. Quainton Hill, Wingrave, Aston Abbotts – with the	The assessment of the effects on the Special Qualities of the Area of Attractive Landscape (AAL) is provided in sections 10.10.147-10.10.159 and 10.10.467-10.10.482 in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. The specific mitigation measures are stated in the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014], consideration of the Area of Attractive Landscape (AAL) has been an important consideration in the design of the Proposed Development. Project Principle 6.2 specifically refers to respecting the Special Qualities of the AAL designation.

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		landscape providing an attractive setting to villages. Wheat fields provide attractive tones of yellowy-orangey colour in summer that glints in the sunshine. • Landscape and scenic quality: High scenic quality of the undulating hills and ridges from within the area and within views from outside the area (e.g. Middle Claydon Conservation Area; refer to other relevant Conservation Area Appraisals for specific views)... Some very old and characterful historic buildings – e.g. in Aston Abbots, Whitchurch and Oving. Picturesque villages present a smaller scale, and the landscape is usually visible from vantage points within them (e.g. from Wingrave). Church towers are local landmarks. Mature trees and hedgerows nestle buildings and structures into the landscape. • Natural character: Ancient woodlands, with a particular concentration in the west of the area – many of which are also SSSI/ LWS. • Cultural character: Strong sense of history – remaining ancient woodland in the west of the area that was once part of the medieval hunting forest of Bernwood, irregular and assart fields; Large number of Scheduled Monuments, concentrated within the medieval villages; Large number of Conservation Areas – ..., containing characterful listed buildings, many of them timber framed; Earthworks of well preserved ridge and furrow e.g. North Marston, and at Quainton Hill are amongst the finest surviving examples to be found in England. Function: Good network of public rights of way including long distance trails – e.g. the Bernwood Jubilee Way, North Buckinghamshire Way, Outer Aylesbury Ring, Matthew's Way.	
3.1.36	Page 27, Q1.15.13	Comment noting that these visualisations do not have any additional implications on the respective position in relation to the LVIA, these are purely annotated existing summer photography.	The Applicant acknowledges Buckinghamshire Council's agreement that the summer visualisations do not require additional commentary in the LVIA.

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3.1.37	Page 28, Q1.16.14	Comment noting that the updated documents provide greater detail and confidence in respect of regular monitoring, both proactively and reactively in the event of complaints being received. However, the detail of mitigation is still lacking and therefore Buckinghamshire Council's uncertainty on this matter remains.	For all phases of the Proposed Development, a range of mitigation measures have been identified that can be implemented in order to achieve the acoustic criteria set out in ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. At this stage, it is appropriate to identify potential construction and decommissioning phase mitigation measures that can be adopted to control noise and vibration levels so that significant adverse effects do not occur, however, the mitigation measures should not be fixed, so that the most effective solution can be adopted on a case-by-case basis as part of the Detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan(s). The mitigation strategy set out in the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and Outline DEMP [EN010158/APP/7.4.5] are in line with the level of detail provided in other NSIPs of this scale/type. The mitigation strategy that has been adopted to achieve the operational phase acoustic criteria is set out in the Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5]. At the detailed design stage, the mitigation strategy would be refined by the Applicant, with the finalised approach subject to review by Buckinghamshire Council, as stipulated by Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]. This aligns with other NSIPs of this scale/type.
3.1.38	Page 28, Q1.17.1	Comment noting that, in principle, Buckinghamshire Council considers that effects on Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Biosciences potentially meets the test in para 4.2.15 of NPS EN-1. Buckinghamshire Council state that they are not in a position to verify the scientific and supply chain evidence itself. As matters stand it is clear that the evidence raises important questions about the supply chain for medications for UK public health services, and it is important that the issue be considered carefully and on a precautionary basis. Further comment that Buckinghamshire Council notes that [REP1-133] includes suggestions for ways in which the Proposed Development might be amended such that 'interference' may not be unacceptable and that the business may continue to operate, employing suitable biosecurity risk controls. What these involve and how effective they would be are really a matter for the businesses. These matters should be explored fully, given the existing proposals for mitigation do not appear to address the matters identified. Buckinghamshire Council considers that, at this stage, it is important that these effects are properly	The Applicant does not agree that any effect of the Proposed Development on Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd is capable of meeting the refusal criteria as set out in Paragraph 4.2.15 of NPS EN-1. This is because the policy makes clear that <i>"Where residual non-HRA or non-MCZ impacts remain after the mitigation hierarchy has been applied, these residual impacts are unlikely to outweigh the urgent need for this type of infrastructure. Therefore, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely that consent will be refused on the basis of these residual impacts. The exception to this presumption of consent are residual impacts onshore and offshore which present an unacceptable risk to, or unacceptable interference with, human health and public safety, defence, irreplaceable habitats or unacceptable risk to the achievement of net zero"</i> (our emphasis). The exceptions test in Paragraph 4.2.15 of NPS EN-1 makes clear that, for residual impacts to justify the refusal of consent, the impact(s) in the Proposed Development's case must result in an 'unacceptable risk' or give rise to 'unacceptable interference' with human health and public safety. As quoted in response to Ref. 5.5.6 of Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [REP3-051], the Applicant noted that the question of the importance of sustainable national supply of donor animal blood supply for use across the NHS was raised in a parliamentary debate on 28 April 2026¹. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health and Social Care stated that: • <i>The Department recognises that animal blood-enriched agar is a critical component in microbiological diagnostics, and we recognise the importance of a sustainable and secure supply of such materials.</i> • <i>There are a number of suppliers on NHS Supply Chain's current framework which offer donor animal blood supply for diagnostic use which support a level of resilience across England. To date there has been no issues with supply.</i>

¹ [Blood Agar: 28 Apr 2026: Hansard Written Answers - TheyWorkForYou](#)

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		assessed. In this regard, Buckinghamshire Council response to Q1.13.1 highlights that the Health Effects Report [REP1-056] does not provide satisfactory assessment of sensitive geographic sub-populations as receptors. This cites Preston Farms/TCS Biosciences as a relevant human health receptor for which further assessment is considered necessary, leading to targeted mitigation, underpinned by appropriate evidence. The completion of this assessment will provide the opportunity for the Applicant to engage fully with the mitigation hierarchy, including avoidance. When this assessment becomes available Buckinghamshire Council will comment on it.	• <i>Where challenges in the supply of key products arise, these would be escalated to the Department's National Supply Disruption Response, which works collaboratively with suppliers, manufacturers, and system partners to understand the nature of the disruption and to support appropriate mitigations.</i> The approach taken in the Health Effects Report (Annex A to ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6]) is compliant with the IEMA (now ISEP) guidance on developing assessments for health and wellbeing effects. This includes a proportionate approach to identifying and considering the sensitivity of geographically defined higher exposure sub populations in the context of population scale effects on public health. In terms of the specific receptor identified (Preston Farms Ltd/TCS Biosciences Ltd) – as set out within Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] – specifically Appendix 1: Response to the Written Representation received from TCS Biosciences Ltd and Preston Farms – bespoke and responsive mitigation that will be flexible based on business requirements at the time has been developed through engagement with the receptor to acknowledge the individual characteristics and sensitivities of the operation, including bespoke approaches to management of noise, traffic, biosecurity and access for grazing animals. This mitigation is secured within the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5]. While it is recognised that employment and employees are local health receptors, TCS Biosciences Ltd as a business is not directly a health receptor for assessment. The assessment draws on of ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4] to consider the potential for employment and employees to be affected by any change in viability of businesses as a result of the Proposed development, and despite the high sensitivity of receptors, does not identify the potential for significant effects on this determinant of health. The Applicant recognises that TCS Biosciences Ltd supplies the NHS. It is not clear the extent to which TCS Bioscience Ltd.'s viability is predicated on this supply chain relationship, but it is acknowledged that TCS Biosciences Ltd has a variety of other clients and a commercial business model that is not solely reliant on the NHS as a customer. In any case, the Applicant does not consider that there is a risk that, as a direct result of the Proposed Development: a) TCS Biosciences Ltd would be rendered unviable and therefore unable to continue to supply the NHS; or b) That the NHS would experience major effects on its operating model such that the diagnostics arm would be unviable – this is demonstrated through comments in the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049] which refers to the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Health and Social Care, Mr Zubir Ahmed's, comments in Parliament in which it was stated that "There are a number of suppliers on NHS Supply Chain's current framework which offer donor animal blood supply for diagnostic use which support a level of resilience across England." The Applicant has submitted a Preliminary Biosecurity Statement [EN010158/APP/8.28] at Deadline 4 which proposes a range of measures to minimise and avoid biosecurity risks during construction and operation, including access and induction procedures, the use of a defined access tracks which can be fenced and gated, a disinfectant protocol and indemnity arrangements. The proposed biosecurity

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			procedures will be developed further prior to construction in a Biosecurity Method Statement to be appended to the Construction Environmental Management Plan once the detailed design and TCS Bioscience Ltd/Preston Farm's Ltd grazing regime for the construction period are known. Furthermore, the Applicant has offered temporary grazing fields in Parcel 2 while construction takes place in Parcel 3 in case the business would like to further minimise biosecurity and disturbance risks. As such, the Applicant has offered a range of mitigation measures that address any potential risks to the business and its role in the medical supply chain.
3.1.39	Page 29, Q1.19.4	Comment noting that specifically in circumstances where such a schedule is to be provided to the Council in any event, Buckinghamshire Council consider it appropriate that the schedule is subject to approval by it given the matters to be included therein.	Comment is noted by the Applicant. The traffic generation associated with the operational phase is set out in ES Volume 4, Appendix 15.1: Transport Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] and is of a level significantly below the peak of construction traffic. As such, the worst case traffic impact and its associated effects have already been assessed. No new traffic impacts are predicted. The Applicant is however happy to monitor traffic and advise Buckinghamshire Council of any change should these occur.
3.1.40	Page 29, Q1.19.12	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council does not believe that any further amendments are required to the oCTMP. However dependent on the Applicant's response Q1.19.12 the oCTMP may be required to be subject to a further review.	Minor changes to Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] are proposed following the ISH2 session and have been agreed and discussed with Buckinghamshire Council prior to issue at Deadline 4. These changes include the addition of made share targets and additional text on securities for road works.
3.1.41	Page 29, Q1.19.15	Comment noting that at present the agreement has not been submitted to the Highway Authorities knowledge. It would be expected to be modelled on similar agreements reached with HS2 Ltd and EWR Connection Stage 1. Further engagement is required with the Applicant to understand their proposals for the form of this legal agreement. Further comment that the Applicant should propose a first draft to base negotiations between Buckinghamshire Council and the Applicant on this. Buckinghamshire Council is concerned to ensure that it is secured in such a way as to allow expedient facilitation of works when required and minimal delays in ensuring funds are made available.	The Applicant will develop a Wear and Tear agreement with Buckinghamshire Council post-consent and prior to construction as is normally the case for infrastructure projects. It is not considered necessary or usual to develop such an agreement during the DCO examination.
3.1.42	Page 29, Q1.19.18	Comment noting that the results should be made available to Buckinghamshire Council as a supplement to the oCTMP.	The Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] was prepared at the same time as the Route Survey Report and is already included in ES Volume 4, Appendix 15.1: Transport Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2]. The Applicant considers that no further update is required as all AIL matters are provided in the ES Volume 4, Appendix 15.1: Transport Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2].

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3.1.43	Page 29, Q1.19.21	Comment first stating “yes”, then noting that for all standard public path order diversions under s119 Highways Act 1980 and s257 TCPA 1990 there is a requirement for any field boundary treatments (gates or gaps, according to the need for stock control under s147 Highways Act 1980), to comply with BS 5709 2018. The policy set out on p.15 of the Buckinghamshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2020-2030 states all new structures should conform to BS 5709 2018. Although not stated specifically, this would be extended to diversions as part of DCOs. Further comment noting there is a request for stiles and gates within the DCO boundary, currently not compliant with BS 5709 2018, to be replaced with gaps or gates as part of the applicant's package of access improvements (which includes a new permissive path network, for example). This is supported by statement on p 34 of the Buckinghamshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2020-2030.	Paragraph 7.3.2 of the Outline RoWAS [EN010158/APP/7.8.4] [REP3-036] was updated at Deadline 3 to include reference to BS 5709 2018 and consideration of replacement bridges and stiles to be compliant with it, as requested by Buckinghamshire Council, following a survey of the existing bridges and stiles at the detailed design stage.
3.1.44	Page 30, Q1.20.6	Comment noting that based on the submitted Flood Risk Assessment (Appendix 16.1 of the Environmental Statement [PDA-004]), Buckinghamshire Council is satisfied that sufficient information has been provided to demonstrate how flood risk to the development would be managed, including arrangements for safe access and egress and the management of residual risk over the lifetime of the Proposed Development.	The Applicant welcomes this agreement
3.1.45	Page 30, Q1.20.7	Comment noting that the proposed drainage system meets the minimum requirements as set out in the National Standards.	The Applicant welcomes this agreement
3.1.46	Page 30, Q1.20.14	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council does not object to the Applicant's application of the Sequential Test, nor to the conclusion that it has been satisfied. That position is limited to the manner in which the Sequential Test has been applied and does not amount to an endorsement of the Proposed Development as a whole.	The Applicant notes this comment and welcomes Buckinghamshire Council's position that the Applicant has, through Appendix 5 (Sequential and Exception Tests) to the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5] , satisfied the Sequential Test.

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3.1.47	Page 30, Q1.20.17	Comment noting no outstanding matters remain.	The Applicant welcomes this agreement

Table 3.2: Buckinghamshire Council (Comments on any further information received (comments on any further information requested by the ExA and received by deadline 2))
[REP3-053]

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3.2.1	Pages 3 and 4	Comment summarising the latest state of the SoCG between Buckinghamshire Council and the Applicant. In summary, - Air Quality: matter 1-3 is now agreed - Noise: matter 9-2 disagreement remains on real world impacts on some residential receptors - Noise: matter 9-5 is now agreed - Human Health: matter 10-2 is to be updated to note disagreement with the level of assessment undertaken in the Population Chapter. - Population and Human Health: comment noting Buckinghamshire Council's comments in the LIR have not yet been captured in the SoCG. - Cultural Heritage: comment noting that an assessment of Bernwood Farmhouse is yet to be undertaken, despite it not appearing in the Historic Environment Record. Further comment noting that an assessment of St Mary's church appears to have been omitted from the Deadline 2 draft	The Applicant welcomes Buckinghamshire Council's summarisation of the matters that have been agreed or remain under discussion at Deadline 2, as written into Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4]. The Applicant is continuing to engage with Buckinghamshire Council regularly to further positions of agreement in the Statement of Common Ground. An updated version of Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4] has been submitted at Deadline 4 to reflect these updates and the outcomes of recent engagement.
3.2.2	Pages 3 - 5	Comment noting that Botolph House has been incorrectly identified as Grade II listed when it is in fact Grade II*, although its high significance has been appropriately recognised in the assessment tables. Comment noting that Bernwood Farmhouse should be included in the assessment as a locally significant asset, and that there remains disagreement with the Applicant on the level of change for certain receptors due to differing interpretations of setting and the effectiveness of proposed screening mitigation. Examples are given: • Claydon House and park and the contribution of its wider setting including cumulative effects • All Saints Church • Pond Farmhouse	The Applicant has corrected the typographical error in ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] relating to the grading of Botolph House within the updated version submitted at Deadline 4. The Applicant has agreed through consultation with Buckinghamshire Council that detailed assessment of Bernwood Farm is not necessary as the effects on this non-designated heritage asset of low importance would not be significant. The position of the Applicant is that the harm to its significance would be within the middle of the range of less than substantial harm, whilst it is understood that Buckinghamshire Council consider that the harm would be greater but still less than substantial harm. The respective positions are set out within the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4] submitted at Deadline 4. The Applicant has considered the information provided by Buckinghamshire Council within their Deadline 3 submission and has incorporated this within Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] submitted at Deadline 4. However the Applicant respectfully maintains that the harm to significance is at the lower end of less than substantial for Claydon House, Claydon Park, All Saints Church, Rosehill Farmhouse and Blackmoorhill Farmhouse, St Mary's Church, East Claydon village, Botolph House and Botolph Claydon Conservation Area and within the middle of the scale of less than substantial harm for Pond

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		• Rosehill Farmhouse • Blackmoorhill Farmhouse (Winter's Tale) • St Mary's Church • Setting of East Claydon (as a village of the same level of significance as Botolph Claydon) • Botolph House • Botolph Claydon Conservation Area	Farmhouse. The Applicant and Buckinghamshire Council agree that the harm to the significance of these assets is less than substantial but disagree on the level of harm and in some cases the significance of effect which would result. The respective positions of the Applicant and Buckinghamshire Council are detailed within the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4] .
3.2.3	Pages 5 and 6	Comment noting that in Table 9.15 of the Cultural Heritage Chapter construction and decommissioning activities are mentioned but operation is not, although operation is assessed for individual heritage assets in paragraphs 9.10.55 to 9.10.108.	Operation (including maintenance) effects are included within Table 9.15 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] for all assets agreed to be considered for such effects at Scoping. For assets where the mitigation proposed differs for each phase, separate lines have been included for construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning, whilst for others a single line is included.
3.2.4	Page 6, Row 1	Comment noting that the Applicant ought to update the Soil Chapter to refer to update "ecosystem services" to "soil structure" throughout the Chapter. Further comment noting that the Applicant wrongly suggests the ALC grading assesses "Ecological habitat, soil biodiversity and platform", "Soil carbon", "Soil hydrology" and "Archaeology, cultural heritage, community benefits and geodiversity for landscape". Further comment noting that the Applicant may wish to reference other ES chapters that do address these ecosystem services.	ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] has been updated at Deadline 4 to refer to the receptor as 'soil structure' throughout. The Applicant acknowledges that the wording within ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] may give the impression that ALC system directly assesses factors such as ecological habitat, soil biodiversity, soil carbon, hydrology, cultural heritage and so forth. The ALC system is concerned with the potential of land to support agricultural use, based on the presence of physical limitations and site factors. While the aforementioned may be considered as factors that could limit ALC Grading if relevant, they are not directly assessed by the ALC itself. The wording has been changed in the Chapter to reflect this, and references added to other ES Chapters that address these more directly.
3.2.5	Page 6, Row 1	Comment welcoming the breakdown of ALC grades in Table 12.4 of the Soil Chapter but that this breakdown is unclear due to formatting errors.	ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] Table 12.4 has been updated at Deadline 4 to fix the formatting errors.
3.2.6	Pages 6 and 7	Comment noting that the Applicant has not updated the assessment of impacts on ALC Grade 2 land in line with the stated IEMA methodology in the Soils Chapter which indicates the magnitude should be classified as minor rather than negligible. Comment noting that this would result in a moderate adverse and therefore significant effect, and that the Applicant's reliance on the proportion of non-BMV land does not justify downplaying the assessed impact on Grade 2 land.	The assessment of impacts in ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] on ALC Grade 2 land has concluded that a negligible magnitude of impact is the correct classification. The extent of ALC Grade 2 land is limited (3.01ha), and there is no loss or reduction in soil function or soil volumes, as all Grade 2 land is either untouched, under a grass sward in the areas of Solar PV development, or hosting ecological mitigation/enhancement. Furthermore, given the small area of Grade 2 land, the timing of construction works will be managed carefully to consider weather conditions, soils will only be worked and trafficked on when they are suitably dry and below the plastic limit. All construction activities subject to committed mitigation in the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069]. A negligible magnitude of impact on a very high sensitivity receptor results in a slight adverse and not significant effect. The justification of negligible magnitude is not based on the proportion of non-BMV

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			land, but rather comes from a use of professional judgement that the small area of the receptor and land use does not justify a minor magnitude of effect.
3.2.7	Page 7, Row 2	Comment noting that the updated Population Chapter does not reference the updated Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy [EN010158/APP/7.8.3] throughout. Further noting that additional operational detail provided by TCS Biosciences raises concerns that the Applicant's Population Chapter assessment does not accurately reflect the business's sensitivity to change or fully address its potential impacts. Comment noting that this calls into question the accuracy of paragraph 14.8.30 and the conclusions on residual effects in paragraph 14.10.16 of the Population Chapter with any revisions likely to have consequential implications for the reporting set out in Table 14.25.	The Applicant has not updated the references to the Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy within ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4], noting that the most up to date references are captured within the Guide to the Application. The Applicant has acknowledged, reviewed and responded to additional operational detail provided to the examination by TCS Biosciences Ltd. The Applicant considers that its assessments accurately reflect the business's sensitivity to change. Throughout the pre-application and post-submission period, the Applicant has been engaging with TCS Biosciences Ltd to understand the operation of its business, its sensitivity and the importance of a bio-secure and controlled environment. As such, within ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4], TCS Biosciences Ltd is accorded the maximum level of sensitivity to change (i.e. Very High) in accordance with the appropriate guidance (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) 'LA 112 Population and Human Health') referenced in that chapter (and agreed within ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.1: EIA Scoping Report [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-079]). The magnitude of change afforded to TCS Biosciences Ltd in ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4] is minor – also in accordance with the Applicant's application of criteria set out in guidance (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) 'LA 112 Population and Human Health') - and in light of mitigation and compensation to be put in place to manage the scale of change. The criteria considers whether there is likely to be: - Loss, damage or change to attributes, quality or key characteristics or vulnerability (A <u>Moderate/Major</u> change would mean loss or severe damage e.g. direct total or partial acquisition and demolition compromising viability; a <u>Minor</u> change would be a discernible change in attributes, minor loss of or alteration to key characteristics – e.g. amendment to access or acquisition of land resulting in changes to operating conditions that do not compromise overall viability); and/or - Introduction of severance with adequate accessibility provision (a <u>Moderate/Major</u> change would require the introduction of complete or severe severance with limited/moderate accessibility provision; a <u>Minor</u> change provides adequate accessibility provision). As the Applicant considers that effects on TCS Biosciences Ltd are mitigated through the provision of land swaps with equal or better provision of land in terms of quality and access, and additional mitigation has been developed through engagement with affected parties and in-line with standards and guidance for the management of (e.g. air quality, noise, traffic/access) adverse effects – and is designed to be flexible and responsive - the assessment concludes that although the businesses affected are of high or very high sensitivity, that the magnitude of change would be minor resulting in a non-significant effect.
3.2.8	Pages 7 (Row 3) and 8	Comment noting that the updated Biodiversity Chapter's document reference have not been updated from the original submission of the Chapter.	The Applicant points to Paragraph 7.1.1 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] which notes both the reason for the document's update at Deadline 3 but also that the document's references have not been updated from the original submission and that references should be drawn from the Guide to the Application [EN010158/APP/1.2.10].

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3.2.9	Page 8, Row 2	In relation to 6.4.2 Environmental Statement Volume 4, Appendix 5.7: Indicative Construction, Operation and Decommissioning Waste (Tracked), Comment noting that the Council welcomes the updates but requests clarification that the stone waste assessment accounts for the removal of all temporary compounds during construction, if applicable. Comment noting that similar clarification is required for decommissioning to confirm inclusion of all temporary and permanent compounds, and that subject to this, Buckinghamshire Council will consider the matter resolved.	ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.7: Indicative Construction, Operation and Decommissioning Waste [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] has been updated at Deadline 4 to include a statement to confirm that the stone waste assessment accounts for the removal of all temporary compounds during construction. In addition, clarification has been included on removal of infrastructure (including compounds) at decommissioning.
3.2.10	Pages 8 (Row 3) - 10	Comment welcoming updates to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment with further comment noting that it would be helpful if G98 could remain clearly identified and safeguarded through the detailed design and protection process. Further comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council remain concerned with the updated Annex E to the Arboricultural Impact Assessment. Examples are provided and further comment is made noting that the submitted plans do not clearly demonstrate how protective fencing will avoid conflicts with retained root protection areas, suggesting that the tree protection strategy remains unresolved. Comment noting that in the absence of an Outline Arboricultural Method Statement, Buckinghamshire Council is being asked to rely on subsequent detailed design to address these conflicts, which is considered a significant outstanding concern.	The Applicant acknowledges the Council's concern regarding the relationship between indicative tree protection fencing and areas identified as having potential Root Protection Area (RPA) impacts. However, the Applicant does not agree that this demonstrates a deficiency in the protection strategy or indicates that arboricultural impacts have not been appropriately assessed. The plans are intended to identify potential interactions on a precautionary basis and to ensure that such locations are carried forward into the detailed design process. The presence of indicative fencing in proximity to potential RPA impacts does not imply that impacts will occur but rather identifies locations where detailed construction methodologies may be required to avoid or minimise effects. As discussed with Buckinghamshire Council, the Applicant has agreed to provide additional detail within the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] at this Deadline 4 to clarify the nature of any works that may be required within these areas and the associated mitigation measures that would be implemented to protect retained trees and RPAs. This will provide further clarity on how potential interactions within buffer areas will be managed. Accordingly, the Applicant considers that the assessment appropriately identifies potential constraints and interactions, whilst the combination of the secured requirement in Paragraph 1.1.13 and Table 3.2 of the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and by Requirement 11 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] for a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement, and ongoing design refinement, provides a robust mechanism to ensure retained trees, buffers and RPAs are protected in practice.
3.2.11	Page 10, Row 2	In relation to 6.4.2 Environmental Statement Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment (Tracked), comment noting that the updated assessment for St Mary's Church, East Claydon appropriately recognises views from the south east in addition to the north east, although this is only partially illustrated in Viewpoint 27. Comment noting that the contribution of setting to significance is likely greater than presented, given	Viewpoints 28 and 30 have also been considered in the assessment of St Mary's Church in Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] submitted at Deadline 4. Viewpoint 27 is acknowledged to only partially illustrate the views of St Mary's Church, it is intended to be representative of views from the southeast of East Claydon rather than to specifically illustrate views of the church. The Applicant respectfully disagrees with the conclusion of Buckinghamshire Council that views from the bridleway north of Hogshaw Hill Farm make a substantive contribution to the significance of St Mary's Church and maintain that the harm to its significance as a result of the Proposed Development is at the lower end of less than substantial as detailed within ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3].

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		more extensive and dramatic views from the south east as evidenced in Viewpoints 28 and 30, and along the bridleway north of Hogshaw Hill Farm.	
3.2.12	Pages 10 (Row 4) and 11	Comment noting that the Applicant has updated the Health and Wellbeing assessment to include clearer conclusions on the sensitivity of certain sub-populations, while positioning these changes as targeted refinements rather than a comprehensive reassessment of the methodology (which is acceptable). Comment noting that while the inclusion of supplementary stakeholder evidence (e.g. CSAG material on the 3W Health practice) is appropriate in principle and transparently caveated, Buckinghamshire Council emphasises the need for its proportionate use and robust triangulation with established datasets to ensure sound and reliable conclusions.	The Applicant agrees that the addition of information provided by stakeholders should be treated proportionately and in the context of wider public health information that helps to identify the characteristics of populations and sub-populations. As such, while the information provided by CSAG has been included by reference within ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6], it is appropriately framed as assertion provided by the stakeholder based on a sub-set of the population to help inform the potential prevalence and sensitivity of sub-populations. As the sub-populations and their sensitivity had already inherently been accounted for within the public datasets and community feedback reported in the ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6], the inclusion of this information did not alter the assessment of significance for health and wellbeing effects.
3.2.13	Page 11 and 12	Comment welcoming the increased awareness of how elderly groups may be more sensitive locally in 6.4.3 Environmental Statement Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement (Tracked) with further comment that the additions appear more narrative than assessment based. Further comment requesting clearer signposting of how these sensitivity considerations are carried through to the assessment of specific pathways and to any targeted mitigation, where relevant.	The Applicant considers that sensitivity considerations are already clearly carried through within the assessment of significance under each determinant of health. The assessment within ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] clearly sets out the approach to identifying pathways and determinants of health, and identifies how sub-population characteristics (in this case predominantly age) influence the sensitivity to change in health and wellbeing as a result of each determinant. The assessment considers how in each case mitigation has been developed that addresses the determinant of health – in most cases this applies equally to populations and sensitive sub-populations, as mitigation is developed to reduce the potential for significant adverse effects on all receptors (e.g. users of PRow, or residents at home). Principally, as set out in within ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] the more prevalent (older) sub-population is likely to be more sensitive to change as there is likely to be a higher propensity to dependence on local connections and access to healthcare, a higher degree of social isolation, a more home-based resident population, and higher rates of conditions including respiratory disease and multimorbidity. The mitigation in-place to address (for example) air quality, traffic/transport and noise inherently considers sensitivity to the health of vulnerable sub-populations within thresholds that determine the mitigation to be applied. Buckinghamshire Council agrees that for the regulated physical health pathways of air quality, noise and vibration, traffic and access, land contamination and operational safety, no significant residual adverse effects are predicted following mitigation, subject to the delivery of the proposed design measures, DCO requirements and management plans.

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			Notwithstanding this, there are determinants of health that are less regulated by standard health thresholds, are more subjective, and experienced individually – for example the influence of landscape and visual change on users of PRow and residential property – and these are the only potentially significant effect pathways / determinants of health reported within ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6]. However, such effects may not result in the need for differential types of ‘targeted’ mitigation per sensitive sub-population – mitigation includes embedded and bespoke mitigation per receptor (i.e. inhabited property, or walked routes) that includes planting, offsets and screening detailed in the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014] and Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5], and secured by the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6]. For clarity, direct reference to these geographically-specific, receptor-led mitigations have been included within an update to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] submitted at Deadline 4. In addition to this, the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] and Outline RoWAS [EN010158/APP/7.8.5] [CR1-026] secure important enhancement measures relevant to positive health pathways, including the provision of new permissive footpaths and increased accessibility, opportunities for recreation in the natural environment, and environmental improvements. To account for the ability for local affected residents to influence the specifics of mitigation that respond to their specific concerns, and therefore address potential health pathways, the Applicant has committed to consult with the Community Liaison Group (CLG) on relevant points of interest during the detailed design stage, prior to the submission and approval of the detailed design in accordance with Requirement 7 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]. This could include, for example, the location and content of interpretation boards and waymarking signage and the options for planting alongside PRow and permissive paths, as appropriate – this enables a community-led, effect and geographical receptor-based approach to be enacted to develop and direct mitigation to those locations for the people likely to be affected the most.
3.2.14	Pages 12 and 13	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council considers the Applicant has only partially addressed earlier concerns, with several substantive issues remaining unresolved, and therefore maintains its position that further iteration of the assessment is required.	The Applicant is content that the assessment provided within Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] is proportionate, in-line with ISEP guidance on assessment of health determinants at an appropriate scale. Notwithstanding this, the Applicant has provided some contextual amendments to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] submitted at Deadline 4. These amendments do not represent further, additional assessment, which the Applicant does not consider is necessary, but are intended to make more explicit the approach and findings of the assessment, and to clearly set out the approach to linking receptor identification to effects to bespoke mitigation. This does not change the assessment of significance concluded by Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6]. The Applicant does not consider that further amendments are required to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement

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			[EN010158/APP/6.4.6] and refers Buckinghamshire Council to the Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [REP3-051]
3.2.15	Page 13, Row 2	In relation to 6.4.3 Environmental Statement Volume 4, Appendix 10.6: LVIA Visualisations Claydon House, comment that while the photomontage is welcomed, it demonstrates that proposed planting is difficult to distinguish at the distances shown, limiting its ability to illustrate mitigation effectiveness. Comment noting that the visualisations raise concerns regarding potential impacts on long-distance views of the tower of All Saints Church, including whether its landmark role and contribution to setting and significance would be adversely affected	Increased hedgerow heights (beyond that proposed) within Parcel 1 in particular are not achievable due to the need to maintain the health of the elm hedgerows. The Applicant considers that the proposed poplar planting along Three Points Lane will, once fully established, help to filter views of the Proposed Development from Claydon House. The Applicant maintains that the residual effect is at the lower end of less than substantial harm. Historic England and National Trust agree with this conclusion as set out within the Draft Statement of Common Ground with National Trust [EN010158/APP/5.17.2] [REP2-020] and Statement of Common Ground with Historic England [EN010158/APP/5.16.3]. The Applicant has presented an assessment of All Saints Church within ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] and ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] including consideration of its (limited) role as a landmark in long-distance views and concludes that the harm to its significance is at the lower end of less than substantial and that the Proposed Development will result in a slight effect which is not significant.
3.2.16	Pages 13 (Row 3) and 14	In relation to 7.7.3 Outline Soil Management Plan (Tracked), comment noting that the Applicant presents contradictory conclusions on soil resilience, classifying soils as having medium resilience based on field capacity days while also describing them as slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged, and constrained by wetness. Comment noting that, in accordance with the Institute of Quarrying guidance, the Site's clay and heavy clay loam soils should be considered to have low resilience to structural damage, and that reliance on field capacity data risks overestimating soil handling suitability and underestimating compaction risks.	The Applicant does not consider the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069] to contain contradictory conclusions on soil resilience. The description of the soils as slowly permeable, seasonally waterlogged and constrained by wetness relates to the baseline soil characteristics and the principal agricultural limitation identified through the ALC survey. By contrast, the classification of the soils as having medium resilience relates specifically to their susceptibility to structural damage during handling under suitable conditions, in accordance with the methodology cited in the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069] for soils with fewer than 150 Field Capacity Days. The Applicant's position is therefore that the soils are wetness-limited in ALC terms, but can be managed as medium resilience soils for handling purposes. The Applicant acknowledges that, in accordance with the Institute of Quarrying (IoQ) guidance, clay and heavy clay loam soils have an inherently low resilience to structural damage when considered on the basis of textural class alone. However, the IoQ guidance also states that the resilience is significantly modified by the soil water regime (Soil Wetness Class) and the local climate. This is consistent with the IEMA (now ISEP) guidelines classifying the clay and heavy clay loam soils as medium resilience due to the field capacity days being fewer than 150. Furthermore, the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069] explicitly recognises compaction as the principal risk associated with the Proposed Development and sets out a comprehensive framework of control measures. Soil handling suitability is therefore not overestimated in the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069].
3.2.17	Pages 14 and 15	In relation to 7.8.3 Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy (RoWAS) (Tracked), Buckinghamshire Council welcome two updates to the Strategy.	Following further discussion with Buckinghamshire Council, the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] were updated at Deadline 3 to add design commitment F6 to prevent fencing of the proposed PRow diversion north of Pond Farm. As recorded in the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049] , this point

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		Comment noting that while the Applicant's proposed diversion improves east-west connectivity, Buckinghamshire Council's alternative routes are preferred as they better reflect desire lines, avoid sharp turns, and provide a more user-friendly alignment (examples given on Page 15).	has now been resolved with Buckinghamshire Council, is recorded in the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4] submitted at Deadline 4.

Table 3.3: Buckinghamshire Council (Comments on responses to Examining Authority's first written questions (ExQ1)) [\[REP3-054\]](#)

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.3.1	Page 3, Table Ref. Q1.4.7	Comment noting that the site selection objectives were not subject to consultation, which may have contributed to unaddressed flaws in the design, including issues relating to TCS Biosciences/Preston Farms and landscape effects. Comment noting that given the Proposed Development's scale exceeds the lower end of the originally considered 250–500MW range, greater emphasis should have been placed on avoidance within the mitigation hierarchy, as this remains a relevant and necessary consideration in the assessment.	The Applicant points to the response provided to Q1.4.7 in Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087]. As part of its statutory consultation, the Applicant published a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (see Consultation Report Appendices I-1 [EN010158/APP/5.2] [APP-028]) which included Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered. This provided a summary of the reasonable alternatives considered by the Applicant for the Proposed Development (up to the time of publication), including the initial selection of the Site and through the development of the design. This included commentary on factors which contributed to the selection of the Site and consultees were invited to provide comments on this. This approach is common in the development of solar NSIPs, and the Applicant disagrees with the assertion that this may have contributed to unaddressed flaws in the design. As part of the approach to EIA at the Site-level, an iterative approach has been adopted where significant environmental effects have been avoided where possible through design refinements and iterations, as a result of consultation and as detailed further within ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010158/APP/6.1] [APP-047] and the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014]. The Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014] sets out, in detail, the Applicant's actions (in accordance with consultation feedback received) and decisions to demonstrate compliance with design-related policy in NPS EN-1, NPS EN-3 and the Planning Inspectorate's Advice on Good Design. The Applicant notes the point being made by Buckinghamshire Council, whilst the Applicant was seeking land that could facilitate 250 – 500MW, the Applicant was awarded a 500MW grid connection that, therefore, the Applicant has sought to maximise at the site-level. Government's energy objectives are to ensure that the supply of energy always remains secure, reliable, affordable, and consistent with meeting the UK's legally binding target to cut GHG emissions to net zero by 2050 (NPS EN-1 (2023) Paragraph 2.3.3). Meeting these objectives requires new low-carbon infrastructure to come forward with pace and scale. Section 3.7 of the Statement of Need [EN010158/APP/5.6] [APP-036], explains that there is a limited number of available and timely connections for grid-scale developments. Therefore, maximising the utilisation of any such connection is consistent with the government's energy objectives. To underutilise an existing and available grid connection, which has been prioritised as part of NESO's Connections Reform process, is not consistent with achieving the government's objectives, and would increase the risk that government's objectives will not be met. This is because doing so would increase the burden on finding and delivering additional grid connections which may not be possible at the scale and timing required to achieve and sustain the Clean Power Mission. Therefore, as reported in Paragraph 3.7.15 of the Statement of Need [EN010158/APP/5.6] [APP-036] and through the design of the Proposed Development, the Applicant has sought to maximise use of the connection capacity which has been made available to it.
3.3.2	Page 5, Table Ref. Q1.4.9	Comment noting a preference for the use of poorer quality Grade 4 land as opposed to Grade 2 land,	The Applicant welcomes Buckinghamshire Council's comments which recognise that the majority of the Order Limits is non-BMV. The Applicant reconfirms that Order Limits is concluded to have a BMV take of 1.51% which, in the wider context of solar NSIPs, is exceptionally low.

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		though Buckinghamshire Council acknowledges that the majority of the Site is non-BMV. Further comment that the newly released Predictive ALC map (April 2026) suggests a revised and much smaller extent of Grade 4 land in the area which limits opportunities to avoid better quality land locally.	The Applicant also recognises Defra's newly released Predictive ALC mapping which suggests that there is a much smaller area of Grade 4 (non-BMV land) within the area. The Applicant notes that this furthers the suitability of the Site in avoiding better quality, BMV land.
3.3.3	Page 5, Table Ref. Q1.4.10	Comment noting that the Applicant relies on the cumulative effects assessment to demonstrate consideration of other developments, but this does not equate to actively seeking opportunities to reduce those effects through coordinated design. Comment noting that the Applicant has not demonstrated that consolidation principles (such as co-location or rationalisation of infrastructure to minimise land take and impacts during site selection) have been meaningfully explored.	The ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037] considers other developments within the 10km Zone of Influence from the Proposed Development that fall within the short list, including HS2, East West Rail, Grendon Prison, East Claydon Greener Grid Park, East Claydon BESS, Tuckey Farm, Fox Covert, Padbury Brook and Longbreach Solar Farm. The Applicant has engaged in discussions with East Claydon BESS, HS2, and reached out the East West Rail. The Applicant notes that each project has its own bespoke requirements and timelines for construction meaning that full consolidation of infrastructure is not feasible. However, the Applicant has committed to working with other developers to manage interactions and reduce any associated potential cumulative impacts, where practicable, as secured within the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5].
3.3.4	Page 6, Table Ref. Q1.7.2 and Page 19, Table Ref. Q1.7.3	Comment requesting to have sight of the Applicant's biodiversity metric.	The Applicant has provided an updated version of the Defra metric spreadsheet and ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.17: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] which was submitted at Deadline 4, with the current version of the metric spreadsheet already available.
3.3.5	Page 6, Table Ref. Q1.7.5	Comment noting that tree removal may require a protected species licence if bats are found to be roosting within affected trees, and that this remains uncertain at the current stage. Comment noting that bat monitoring (forming part of the proposed mitigation) would itself require licensing from Natural England, and that their input is advisable given existing concerns about additional monitoring of this population.	The Applicant believes it is unlikely that a licence with regards roosting bats would be required due to the fact that the vast majority of the roost resource (trees within and outside of woodlands) is unaffected. It is unlikely that one would be encountered within the small number of trees (approx. 16) that may require removal, several of which have no or limited suitability to support roosting bats. Given the known importance of the tree roost resource, the Applicant has worked to ensure that the design of the Proposed Development minimises potential tree loss. The predicted tree loss of three trees with potential to support maternity roosts is a worse-case scenario. Should an important tree roost be identified, such tree loss may be avoidable through micro-siting at construction stage (this would require balancing all relevant constraints, including those posed by other protected species, as detailed within Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5]). Note that Potential Roost Features (PRFs) are categorised as PRF-I (only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats) or PRF-M (suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony). However, this is a structural assessment that does not take into account location or context. Here, trees considered to pose a risk of supporting more important roosts on a structural basis only, i.e. those supporting PRF-M are all located to the north-east of Runts Wood. These are within the 3km CSZ of Bechstein's bats, but outside of their recorded home range (Natural England, 20242); the risk of finding a maternity roost of Bechstein's bats in a tree to be removed is therefore low.

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			The Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] secures a commitment to surveying trees to be removed before felling and, in the unlikely event that a roost is found, a licence would be sought from Natural England in the normal way. This approach has been accepted on other consented NSIPs, such as in the Springwell Solar Farm Order 2026 and the Byers Gill Solar Order 2025. It is not likely that the monitoring anticipated would require licensing, since no separate trapping/radio-tracking is proposed (or would be licensed, as per Natural England's response at Examination.
3.3.6	Page 7, Table Ref. Q1.7.7	Comment noting that ecological connectivity operates along a continuum and that fragmentation can occur through reduced use of habitats and commuting routes, rather than requiring complete barriers to movement. Comment noting that there is no definitive buffer width that guarantees connectivity, and that uncertainties surrounding bat behaviour, combined with potential barrier effects from security fencing and unknown drivers of displacement, mean the effectiveness of proposed mitigation cannot be assured.	The Applicant notes the comments but disagrees that security fencing, which will be a standard post and netting fence to deer-fence specifications 2.5m high, will cause a barrier to foraging bats as many species of bat including Bechstein's bat are capable of navigating complex woodland habitat and deer fencing would not offer a barrier to their movement. The Applicant considers that the buffers from hedgerows and trees are in fact bespoke, taking full account of the sensitivity of the location, and protecting the hedgerows and root protection zones of mature trees which are such a prominent feature of the landscape. In addition the buffers have been increased in number of locations specifically due to concerns raised by consultees. This has already been stated within Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006], RR-203 page 210; buffers from hedgerows linking Shrubs Wood, Sheephouse Wood and Decoypond Wood (B3/B7, B6/B7, B7/B8, B7/B10, B10/B11, B10/B9, B8/B9) have been increased from 10m to 15m and buffers along D29 and part of D28 between Finemere Wood and Runt's Wood have been increased to 30m in recognition of the importance of protecting the commuting corridors between these woodland. The Applicant's position regards buffer widths and likely effectiveness has been articulated on numerous occasions within Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] for example 3.1.26 page 12.
3.3.7	Pages 7 and 8, Table Ref. Q1.7.7	Comment noting that the baseline for this landscape is already heavily affected by cumulative impacts from HS2, the Greatmoor Energy from Waste facility, and East West Rail, with HS2 in particular severing commuting routes and removing ancient woodland, and that the full extent of these impacts remains uncertain due to ongoing monitoring. Comment noting that additional displacement and fragmentation arising from the Proposed Development (alongside existing pressures) could significantly affect an already vulnerable, genetically isolated Bechstein's bat population, particularly where increased energy demands on individuals may lead to population decline.	Net gain The potential vulnerability and displacement of the Bechstein's bat population has been considered with in the Assessment undertaken ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5]. The landscape has been altered through the construction of HS2, but that scheme includes five major green bridges (30m wide) as well as additional planting to address severance/fragmentation issues. Construction of these bridges is well advanced. Mitigation for the Proposed Development is provided for within the Bechstein's bat home range, and is more widely distributed within their home range but focussed more in relation to the known breeding colony* east of the HS2 railway line. [* The three breeding colonies that comprise the single population of Bechstein's bats are centred on three different woodlands: Finemere Wood SSSI, Grendon and Doddershall Woods SSSI and Ham Home-cum-Ham Green Woods SSSI (as stated in Natural England's Commissioned Report 558 "The Bernwood population of Bechstein's Bats" that was collated to support the proposed SSSI extension in Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105] PDF p170) the latter two colonies are west of the railway line.

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3.3.8	Pages 8 and 9, Table Ref. Q1.7.8	Comment noting that the Applicant has not clearly differentiated the definitions of significant impact vs significant harm in the specific context of the Bechstien's bat.	The Applicant points to the response provided to Q2.5.9 in Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23] .
3.3.9	Pages 8 and 9, Table Ref. Q1.7.8	Comment noting that panels in Fields B6 to B8 and B10 and B11 are proposed within an area of high functional value for commuting and foraging between key ancient woodlands, and that effective mitigation would be to retain and buffer this existing habitat rather than relocate provision elsewhere within the Core Sustenance Zone where connectivity is reduced. Comment noting that the proposed cattle-grazed grassland is incorrectly described as enhancement, as it constitutes compensation for habitat loss and therefore should not be relied upon as additional biodiversity benefit above mitigation requirements.	The comment is noted by the Applicant, but it should be noted that Fields B10 and B11 are arable fields and therefore not currently grazed by cattle. The Applicant has outlined its position in that it does not consider removal of Solar PV development from these fields is required. As detailed in ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] and secured via the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] the Applicant is proposing 95ha of grassland creation (more than twice what is being lost) as alternate grassland foraging habitat for bats and ground nesting birds as mitigation for the permanent pasture being lost within Fields B3, B6, B7 and B8 as well as other 'bat-friendly' features such as pond restoration, development of scrub, new woodland planting and so forth. In addition, Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105] Appendix I PDF p208, shows the distribution of known Bechstein's roosts. The known breeding roosts are concentrated to the south, notably to the west of HS2, away from the Proposed Development, and, importantly, in/around Finemere Wood, where new grazing land will be increased. However, the Applicant is still in dialogue with Natural England over Fields B3, B6, B7 and B8 (which Natural England considers to be important for future resilience) and is confident that an agreement can be reached that would address the points made in their representation. The Applicant notes that the additional fields referenced by Buckinghamshire Council are not a subject of concern of Natural England, and are not part of the discussions currently in progress.
3.3.10	Page 9, Table Ref. Q1.7.8	Comment noting that Government guidance on Biodiversity Net Gain makes clear that mitigation and compensation measures for protected species can only contribute to demonstrating no net loss, rather than contributing to the mandatory 10% net gain. Comment noting that it is unclear whether the Applicant has included the biodiversity value of mitigation and compensation areas within their net gain calculations above the no net loss baseline, and clarification is therefore required.	The Government guidance states that ' <i>at least 10% of the developer's biodiversity units must come from additional activities other than mitigation and compensation</i> '. While mitigation and compensation actions form part of the Proposed Developments BNG score, such as areas of grassland creation as mitigation for foraging bats and ground nesting birds, these fall below the no net loss threshold and additional activities, such as enhancement of grassland below the panels, make up greater than 10% of the units delivered by the Proposed Development. Therefore, the Applicant has adhered to Government guidance in this respect, and no further action is required.
3.3.11	Page 10, Table Ref. Q1.7.10	Comment noting that the Council accepts Natural England's advice that additional survey work may itself risk harm to the Bechstein's bat population due to its intrusive nature. Comment noting that the population is of national significance and, given ongoing uncertainty from cumulative impacts of other schemes and incomplete	Comment is noted and no future action is required. Comment is noted and the Applicant is of the position that a precautionary approach has been taken with regards to the assessment. No further action is proposed.

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		monitoring data, a precautionary approach to the baseline and assessment is warranted.	
3.3.12	Page 10, Table Ref. Q1.7.12	Comment noting that the Applicant's response to Q1.7.12 of ExA WQ1 fails to explain why the Proposed Development has not been able to be redesigned to prevent the proposed removal of three trees (as stated in the Biodiversity Chapter).	This refers to three trees that were assessed from the ground as PRF-M (having potential to support maternity roosts); the response given in Q1.7.12 of Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] explains why the risk of these trees supporting important roosts is low. That risk needs to be balanced against other design factors and other protected species constraints. In the unlikely event that a roost of higher conservation value is identified, the balance between different and potentially conflicting constraints would change with the layout revised to avoid removing the trees at detailed design stage. It is not appropriate to do so now for this very small number of low-risk trees which are within the 3km CSZ of Bechstein's bats, but outside of their recorded home range.
3.3.13	Pages 11 and 12, Table Ref. Q1.7.12	Comment noting that Bechstein's bats are not currently in favourable conservation status, and that the Applicant has not clearly defined a quantitative threshold for what would constitute significant harm in this context, despite distinguishing it from EIA significance. Comment noting that, given the population's national importance, genetic isolation, and existing pressures, any impact that undermines recovery toward favourable conservation status (particularly through loss and fragmentation of grazed habitat and unquantified relocation of foraging resources) should be considered significant, especially where mitigation departs from the avoidance hierarchy.	There is no accepted method for determining a quantitative threshold for what would constitute significant 'harm' though this has indeed been interpreted as a change in conservation status. Such a change would mean a reduction in range or in population size, either of which could result from a decrease in breeding success over time. The causes of such a change <i>could</i> indeed be development, but also land management and climate change, alone or in combination. The contribution of the proposed solar farm to such an impact on conservation status has been limited through mitigation that is designed to maintain or provide the elements that Bechstein's bats (and other bat species) would need to thrive. Areas which are known to support their roosts are being retained; foraging will be increased and improved; and connectivity to ensure bats can access all areas of their home range will be strengthened. Land management practices that are more sympathetic to enhancing resilience in the Bechstein's bat population can be secured in the long-term through the consenting process, and not left to market-driven agri-business choices.
3.3.14	Page 14, Table Ref. Q1.7.15 and Page 17, Table Ref. Q1.7.18	Comment requesting that, for ground nesting bird, the 95ha of land which is suitable for use is shown on a plan to avoid confusion with other mitigation areas.	The areas set aside as grassland creation (95ha) for ground nesting birds (but also wintering birds and foraging bats) correlate with the areas shown as 'indicative areas for potential cattle or sheep grazing (cattle grazing preferred)' in Appendix 5: Green and Blue Infrastructure Parameters - Buffer Widths in Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] .
3.3.15	Page 15, Table Ref. Q1.7.17	Comment requesting that the wording around low intensity grazing on grasslands is strengthened. Further comment noting a clause could be added for events beyond the Applicant's control (such as disease outbreaks) to draw distinction to those which could fall back on a lack of effort to find a grazier.	Grazing is the Applicant's preferred grassland management method, and it is very unlikely that a grazier would not be found as positive discussions have already been undertaken with tenants, with details to be confirmed prior to construction. Further information on grazing can be found in the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23] at Qu. 2.5.14 and 2.15.4, submitted at Deadline 4. However, it should be noted that increasing botanical diversity and hence invertebrate diversity is not reliant on grazing and therefore the overarching objective (of increasing invertebrate diversity) can still be delivered even if grazing is not possible.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			The Applicant considers that the approach to grazing detailed above and in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] is proportionate, appropriate and adequately secured without the amendments proposed by Buckinghamshire Council.
3.3.16	Page 18, Table Ref. Q1.7.20	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council considers the proposed security fencing may act as a barrier preventing bats from accessing the grassland between the panels and the fence, thereby reducing the effectiveness of that habitat. Comment noting that buffers should be measured from the edge of existing ecological features, rather than from their centre, to ensure meaningful protection is provided in line with Natural England's advice.	The Applicant refutes the suggestion that security fencing (post and wire netting to deer fence specification 2.5m high) would act as a barrier to foraging bats given that they would be able to detect and fly over such fencing. A response has previously been provided within the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006] and secured within the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6]. The spatial extent of development as set out in the DCO Application has similarly been based on offsets from the centreline of the hedgerows. This is considered to be the most consistent data source available across the Site. The Applicant believes that the approach of measuring the hedgerow from the centreline is the most reliable, and this approach has been accepted on a number of consented NSIPs including Springwell and Byers Gill. In addition, where trees are located within hedgerows, the buffers have accommodated the root protection zones, and the width of buffers has been extended in discrete locations due to concerns raised by consultees. The approach taken to date has been to increase buffer widths in areas where the corridors are considered to be more sensitive (including, but not limited to, the fields between Shrubs Wood, Decoypond Wood and Sheephouse Wood). The Applicant is willing to review the size of buffers in particular locations as part of the evolving bespoke approach to buffers, and has requested that Natural England make location-specific recommendations.
3.3.17	Page 18, Table Ref. Q1.7.23	Comment recommending that ecological monitoring is in place for the whole operation phase of the Proposed Development, and not only 30 years.	The Applicant has stated within the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] that monitoring of habitat management and species monitoring will be for the full 40-year operational life of the Proposed Development and that after 30 years, monitoring prescriptions will be reviewed to ensure they are all still relevant.
3.3.18	Page 19, Table Ref. Q1.7.1	Comment noting that the use of aerial/drone data supported by ground-based verification is welcomed, but further clarification is sought on how areas of restricted access or limited visibility were accounted for in the survey methodology. Comment noting that it would be beneficial to identify where such survey constraints occurred, which features were affected, and whether these align with sensitive arboricultural receptors, to ensure confidence that limitations do not affect the assessment of retained trees and key features.	The Applicant acknowledges that some trees were located within hedgerows, ditches and where direct access or visibility was more restricted. However, these constraints are commonplace on large rural sites and did not prevent the collection of the information required to undertake a BS 5837-compliant survey. Measurements were taken from the most appropriate accessible locations using standard arboricultural survey techniques and professional judgement. Crown spreads, dimensions, condition assessments and categorisations were derived from site observations rather than aerial interpretation. The methodology for access restrictions has been accounted for within Annex C of the 7.13: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] [REP2-044]. Where such constraints occurred, these have been detailed within Annex A of ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.13: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] [REP2-044], for example T867 clearly states 'Hedge and dense vegetation restrict views' within the general observations column. Sensitive receptors were specifically assessed and their constraints identified through site inspection. The Applicant is therefore satisfied that any survey limitations do not affect the assessment of retained trees, woodland features or other key arboricultural receptors.

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3.3.19	Page 20, Table Ref. Q1.7.2	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council's concern is not with terminology itself but with ensuring that features functioning as woodland systems are clearly identified and assessed to enable appropriate buffering and consideration of edge and indirect effects. Comment noting that greater clarity is sought from the Applicant on which surveyed features are treated as woodland parcels and how this has informed the assessment, whether through annotation, schedules, or plans.	The Applicant points to responses to Ref. 3.1.3 .
3.3.20	Page 20, Table Ref. Q1.10.1	Comment noting that the inclusion of interpretation boards within the oLEMP is welcomed, and that thematic interpretation relating to the wider landscape, heritage assets, and local history (particularly around Claydon House) would be beneficial. Further discussion with the Applicant on the approach to interpretation to explain the wider landscape of Claydon House and the most significant listed buildings/the history of the villages would be welcomed. Comment noting that the proposed financial contribution is assumed to have a mitigatory or compensatory purpose, potentially addressing impacts on the visitor experience and associated heritage asset management.	The Applicant has agreed with Buckinghamshire Council through ongoing consultation that the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] secured through Requirement 7 in the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] provides an appropriate mechanism to secure future agreement regarding the locations, content and ongoing maintenance of any interpretation boards. This agreement is set out within the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4]. The Applicant considers that the financial contribution to National Trust to assist them with improvements to the visitor experience and access is not required as mitigation for the Proposed Development and should be counted as a benefit of the Proposed Development.
3.3.21	Page 21, Table Ref. Q1.10.6	Comment noting that the proposed planting is welcomed in mitigating views from nearby listed properties, but that its current extent is insufficient to fully screen views from the rear of 23 Orchard Way and Quamby. Comment noting that the planting should be extended slightly further, particularly at the point where the north field boundary meets existing tree screens, to address the narrowness of the western screen and ensure more effective visual mitigation.	The woodland is intended to infill the gap between the existing woodland fingers on the northern edge of Field D3 (South) - it is a graphical representation of where the woodland will be located, rather than a design of the woodland block itself at this stage, which would be refined at the detailed design stage in the detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan.
3.3.22	Page 23, Table Ref. Q1.10.8	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council still considers that there would be harm at the upper end	The Applicant maintains that the harm to the significance of Pond Farmhouse is within the middle of the range of less than substantial harm.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		of the scale of less than substantial harm to Pond House	
3.3.23	Page 23, Table Ref. Q1.10.9	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council disagrees with the Applicant's assessment of a slight adverse effect on Grade I listed Claydon House, as this underestimates the contribution of setting to its significance. Comment noting that the setting includes wider relationships with the surrounding parkland, satellite farms, and approach character, which are not fully captured in the Applicant's assessment and support a greater level of impact.	The Applicant respectfully disagrees and considers that the harm to the significance of Claydon House has been adequately assessed and is at the lower end of less than substantial harm, as agreed with Historic England (Statement of Common Ground with Historic England [EN010158/APP/5.16.3]) and National Trust (Draft Statement of Common Ground with National Trust [EN010158/APP/5.17.2] [REP2-020]).
3.3.24	Pages 24 and 25, Table Ref Q1.10.10	Comment noting that [APP-106]'s identification of significance and the contribution of setting to significance has missed some important elements. Further comment noting that the Applicant's assessment does not adequately capture how the architecture, design intent, and orientation of heritage assets influence their significance and how they were intended to be experienced within the landscape. Comment noting that, in the case of Botolph House, the assessment underrepresents the importance of its historic visual prominence, designed views across the valley, and relationship to its wider setting, leading to an understatement of the potential impact of the Proposed Development.	The Applicant considers that the elements of significance highlighted by Buckinghamshire Council are not affected by the Proposed Development. Further detail is provided with the updated Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] submitted at Deadline 4.
3.3.25	Page 26, Table Ref. Q1.10.13	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council disagrees with the Applicant's assessment of Pond Farmhouse, considering that the Proposed Development would significantly compromise the setting of the heritage asset by severing its historic links with Claydon House and the wider landscape. Comment noting that additional screening would further isolate the asset from its historic land, altering the character of its setting and resulting in harm at the high end of less than substantial harm.	The Applicant acknowledges that screening around Pond Farmhouse contributes to the adverse effect on its significance, but considers the harm to be the middle of the scale of less than substantial rather than the upper end. The Applicant and Buckinghamshire Council agree that the effect would be significant but not the level of less than substantial harm (Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4]).
3.3.26	Page 27, Table Ref. Q1.11.1	Comment noting that a proportionate precautionary cumulative effects assessment approach should have	The Applicant agreed the cumulative short-list, and discussed the approach to assess the cumulative effects of the Proposed Development with the National Grid East Claydon Substation with

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		been applied, including identifying the nature and likely scale of development where detailed information is unavailable. Comment noting that a high-level qualitative assessment of potential cumulative effects should have been undertaken more widely, rather than being applied selectively as seen with the National Grid substation.	Buckinghamshire Council. A proportionate and robust cumulative effects assessment was undertaken in line with the PINS Cumulative Effects Assessment Advice note which identified the nature and scale of developments (ES Volume 4, Appendix 17.1: Long List of Other Approved and or Existing Developments [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] [REP1-072]). A cumulative effects assessment (ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037]) was undertaken that considered all schemes that met the criteria set out in the methodology within 10km of the Proposed Development. The assessment for the National Grid East Claydon Substation was set out separately from the other schemes as it did not meet the criteria set in the methodology however, the Applicant exercised professional judgement in that it should be assessed cumulatively due to the proximity and reliance on this development.
3.3.27	Page 27, Table Ref. Q1.11.4	Comment noting that while reference is made to the overarching HS2 Hybrid Bill, it is not clear how the specific effects of ID5 have been captured within the cumulative effects assessment. Comment noting that in the absence of this clarity, it cannot be assumed that localised cumulative effects have been properly considered.	All planning applications made under the HS2 hybrid bill were consolidated under a single ID 'HS2' which was then assessed. Only those planning applications that were made for the stretch of HS2 within 10km of the Proposed Development were considered, in line with the assessment methodology (ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037]), and therefore localised cumulative effects were properly considered.
3.3.28	Page 27, Table Ref. Q1.11.27	Comment requesting that, as part of Appendix 17.3: Cumulative Visualisations, the Applicant shares a visualisation that contains Littleton Manor Farm wind turbine	The Applicant notes that here is no existing photography that would enable a visualisation as requested by Buckinghamshire Council. As noted in the response to Q1.11.27 the original viewpoints selected to review effects on the North Buckinghamshire Way and the Midshires Way were not cognisant of the fact that Littleton Manor Farm would later be added as a cumulative scheme. These existing viewpoints are therefore not suitable to provide a basis for preparation of further visualisations to illustrate the effects of Littleton Manor Farm, as they are located to the north of Quainton Hill, which would largely screen any combined views. The Applicant considers that the most suitable location for a viewpoint would be to the North Buckinghamshire Way and The Midshires Way on the ridge line that extends from Quainton Hill towards the settlement of Quainton to the south west, which would likely incorporate combined successive views of the Proposed Development and Littleton Manor Farm wind turbine. The Applicant notes that, with regard to the number of cumulative visualisations, there was agreement with Buckinghamshire Council to prepare visualisations for just two views, viewpoint 28 (Granborough) and viewpoint 30 (Conduit Hill). The Applicant voluntarily prepared a third visualisation from viewpoint 23 (Sion Hill Farm) in order to illustrate potentially open views of cumulative development from the local PRow network. The Applicant proposes that a fourth view could be prepared in agreement with Buckinghamshire Council from a viewpoint along the North Buckinghamshire Way and The Midshires Way on Quainton Hill. This will be submitted into examination as soon as it is ready.
3.3.29	Page 28, Table Ref. Q1.13.3	Comment noting that while the Applicant has made updates to ES Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement, Buckinghamshire Council considers their comments to only be partially	The Applicant is content that the assessment provided within Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] is proportionate, in-line with ISEP guidance on assessment of health determinants and sensitivity of sub-populations at an appropriate scale.

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		addressed from previously identified concerns, particularly in relation to sub-population sensitivity. Comment noting that other substantive issues raised at Deadline 2 remain unresolved, and Buckinghamshire Council's position on those matters is unchanged and requires further response from the Applicant.	Notwithstanding this, the Applicant has provided some contextual amendments to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] which has been submitted at Deadline 4. These amendments do not represent further, additional assessment, which the Applicant does not consider necessary, but are intended to make more explicit the approach and findings of the assessment, and to clearly set out the approach to linking receptor identification to effects to bespoke mitigation. This does not change the assessment of significance concluded by Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6]. The Applicant does not consider that further amendments are required to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] and refers Buckinghamshire Council to the Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [REP3-051].
3.3.30	Page 29, Table Ref. Q1.13.4	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council agrees with the Applicant's approach of distinguishing population-level health assessment from individual receptors, and recognises the importance of considering differential sensitivity across sub-populations in line with guidance. Comment noting that while confidentiality around individual vulnerability is appropriate, the assessment would be strengthened by clearly demonstrating how assumptions about higher-sensitivity sub-populations are incorporated into conclusions, mitigation, and monitoring.	The Applicant is content that the assessment provided within Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] is proportionate and in-line with ISEP guidance on assessment of health determinants at an appropriate scale. Notwithstanding this, the Applicant has provided a response to residual issues raised by Buckinghamshire Council within its Response to Deadline 3 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.22], submitted at Deadline 4, and has provided some contextual amendments to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] also submitted at Deadline 4. These amendments do not represent further, additional assessment, which the Applicant does not consider is necessary, but are intended to make more explicit the approach and findings of the assessment, and to clearly set out the approach to linking receptor identification to effects to bespoke mitigation. This does not change the assessment of significance concluded by Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6]. The Applicant considers that is has been made clear in Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] how the identified and prevalent sensitive sub-populations may be more sensitive to change relating to the significant environmental effects identified, and this is inherently accounted for within the assessment of effects on health and wellbeing.
3.3.31	Page 30, Table Ref. Q1.13.5	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council considers the incorporation of CSAG material in ES Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement remains largely narrative and would benefit from clearer signposting demonstrating how this additional context informs pathway-specific	The Applicant considers that the addition of information provided by stakeholders (CSAG) should be treated proportionately and in the context of wider public health information that helps to identify the characteristics of populations and sub-populations. The information was added to provide more explicit reference to the prevalent sensitive sub-populations that ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] had already identified within the area and accounted for within the assessment.

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		conclusions, identification of higher-exposure groups, and any targeted mitigation or monitoring. Comment noting that while the Applicant has appropriately caveated the use of CSAG information as contextual, further iteration is required to transparently show how it influences sensitivity assumptions and resultant conclusions on significance for affected sub-populations.	As the sub-populations and their sensitivity had already inherently been accounted for within the public datasets and community feedback reported in the ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6], the inclusion of this information did not alter the assessment of significance for health and wellbeing effects. The assessment within ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] clearly sets out the approach to identifying pathways and determinants of health, and identifies how sub-population characteristics (in this case predominantly age) influence the sensitivity to change in health and wellbeing as a result of each determinant. The assessment considers how in each case mitigation has been developed that addresses the determinant of health – in most cases this applies equally to populations and sensitive sub-populations, as mitigation is developed to reduce the potential for significant adverse effects on all receptors (e.g. users of PRoW, or residents at home). Principally, as set out in within ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] the more prevalent (older) sub-population is likely to be more sensitive to change as there is likely to be a higher propensity to dependence on local connections and access to healthcare, a higher degree of social isolation, a more home-based resident population, and higher rates of conditions including respiratory disease and multimorbidity. The mitigation in-place to address (for example) air quality, traffic/transport and noise inherently considers sensitivity to the health of vulnerable sub-populations within thresholds that determine the mitigation to be applied. Buckinghamshire Council agrees that for the regulated physical health pathways of air quality, noise and vibration, traffic and access, land contamination and operational safety, no significant residual adverse effects are predicted following mitigation, subject to the delivery of the proposed design measures, DCO requirements and management plans. Notwithstanding this, there are determinants of health that are less regulated by standard health thresholds, are more subjective, and experience individually – for example the influence of landscape and visual change on users of PRoW and residential property – and these are the only potentially significant effect pathways / determinants of health reported within ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6]. However, such effects may not result in the need for differential types of ‘targeted’ mitigation per sensitive sub-population – mitigation includes embedded and bespoke mitigation per receptor (i.e. inhabited property, or walked routes) that includes planting, offsets and screening detailed in the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014] and Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5], and secured by the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6]. For clarity, direct reference to these geographically-specific, receptor-led mitigations have been included within an update to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] submitted at Deadline 4. In addition to this, the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] and Outline RoWAS [EN010158/APP/7.8.5] [CR1-026] secure important enhancement measures relevant to positive health pathways, including the provision of new permissive footpaths and increased accessibility, opportunities for recreation in the natural environment, and environmental improvements.

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			To account for the ability for local affected residents to influence the specifics of mitigation that respond to their specific concerns, and therefore address potential health pathways, the Applicant has committed to consult with the Community Liaison Group (CLG) on relevant points of interest during the detailed design stage, prior to the submission and approval of the detailed design in accordance with Requirement 7 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]. This could include, for example, the location and content of interpretation boards and waymarking signage and the options for planting alongside PRoW and permissive paths, as appropriate – this enables a community-led, effect and geographical receptor-based approach to be enacted to develop and direct mitigation to those locations for the people likely to be affected the most. The Applicant is content that the assessment provided within Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] is proportionate, in-line with ISEP guidance on assessment of health determinants at an appropriate scale. Notwithstanding this, the Applicant has provided some contextual amendments to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] which has been submitted at Deadline 4. These amendments do not represent further, additional assessment, which the Applicant does not consider is necessary, but are intended to make more explicit the approach and findings of the assessment, and to clearly set out the approach to linking receptor identification to effects to bespoke mitigation. This does not change the assessment of significance concluded by Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6]. The Applicant does not consider that further amendments are required to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] and refers Buckinghamshire Council to the Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [REP3-051].
3.3.32	Page 34, Table Ref. Q1.17.2	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council supports the Examining Authority's request for greater clarity on baseline conditions for the agricultural economy, and considers the Population Chapter's assessment approach insufficiently transparent, particularly where multiple businesses are grouped into single receptor categories with generalised assumptions. Comment noting that the lack of clearly presented underlying evidence and incomplete baseline information reduces confidence in the robustness of the assessment, and that further detailed and transparent reporting is required to demonstrate how conclusions for combined receptor groups have been reached.	Please refer to the Applicant's response to Q2.14.8 of the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions. The Applicant has undertaken an assessment of the effects on the agricultural economy, and agricultural and non-agricultural businesses by applying a single set of sensitivity, magnitude and significance criteria per assessment determined by guidance referenced in ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4], and in-line with the approach set out in ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.1: EIA Scoping Report [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-079]. The agricultural businesses and non-agricultural businesses affected are a combined receptor group, but the assessment clearly acknowledges the individual components of these groups in descriptions of the baseline set out in Section 14.5 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4] and ES Volume 3, Figure 14.6a-b: Businesses within the community study area [EN010158/APP/6.3] [APP-073]. It should be noted that the Applicant and TCS Biosciences Ltd had signed a Non-Disclosure Agreement which limited the amount of detailed information that could be submitted within ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4]. Further information about the specific operations of specific

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			businesses (for example Prestons Farms Ltd, TCS Biosciences Ltd and other landowners and tenant farms within the Order Limits) have been iteratively made available to the examination throughout the process, which weren't fully available to the Applicant at the point of submission. Notwithstanding this, the highest value of sensitivity ('Very High') has been afforded to TCS Biosciences Ltd and Preston Farms Ltd within the assessment, in order to account for the specific, highly sensitive and unique operations that occur at this site for the business. Indeed, all affected agricultural operations within the Order Limits are given 'Very High' sensitivity ratings, in accordance with the sensitivity criteria set out within Table 14.21 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4]. Where practicable, the Applicant has sought to adapt and design mitigation to address this iterative information about the operations of affected agricultural and non-agricultural businesses, which has been incorporated into subsequently amended and submitted responses and updated Management Plans, in order to give a fuller picture of the approach to understanding and addressing potential impacts.
3.3.33	Page 35, Table Ref. Q1.17.6 and Page 37, Table Ref. Q1.17.10	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council disagrees with the Applicant's conclusion in the Population Chapter that construction (or operation) effects on the tourism economy would be non-significant, particularly given concerns regarding the robustness of the underlying landscape, visual, and cultural heritage assessments that inform the magnitude of impact. Comment noting that the reasoning for a slight adverse residual effect is not clearly explained, and that the assessment fails to adequately link impacts on the tourism resource to accommodation demand, resulting in insufficient justification of the conclusions reached.	Effects on the value and volume of the tourist economy and its components are considered in ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4] in accordance with NPS EN-1. This includes an assessment of the potential for the change in the tourist/visitor economy at an economic scale, driven by changes to facilities and assets that contribute to the draw and experience of tourists in the local area, contributing to the value and volume of the wider tourist economy. This draws on effects reported across the ES, that may influence the tourist economy and its components including: • Visual effects, noise, vibration, air quality effects experienced by people; and • Where activities in the area could reduce accessibility or present physical obstructions to recreational and tourist facilities including accommodation, natural and cultural heritage, PRoW and tourist attractions. The scale and diversity of the wider tourist economy is broad, and its sensitivity is considered to be medium, in-line with the sensitivity criteria set out within Table 14.21 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4] as it has some capacity to absorb or respond to change and may result in some perceptible socio-economic loss or gain. There is no standard guidance for the sensitivity for the tourist economy, but the Applicant has taken into account relevant legislation, statutory designations or classifications, policy and published data and research for the tourist economy. Its conclusion is informed by the detail of the value, volume, components and diversity of the tourist / visitor economy set out in Section 14.2 and 14.5 in ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4]. The assessment draws on and is influenced by sensitivity criteria relating to individual components of the tourist economy likely to be affected, which may be more or less sensitive depending on the criteria applicable to each assessment, but considered in the context of effects on the tourist economy in-line with the policy requirements of NPS EN-1. Statistics that demonstrate the scale and diversity of the visitor economy in the relatively localised context of the Proposed Development include:

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			• There are a total of 169 visitor attractions within Buckinghamshire, with only 4 of these attractions falling within 'Winslow and Villages' and only 17 falling within 'Buckingham and Villages' (both areas that the Order Limits falls within). • Almost half of the visitor attractions within Buckinghamshire are historic houses, museums or art galleries, while the visitor attractions sector is also driven by a range of natural attractions including country parks and gardens (9%), farm and rare breed destinations (7%) and a range of both participant and spectator sports venues (20%) • When compared to other counties within the South East region, Buckinghamshire is recorded to have the second lowest number of trips per year and spend per year • There are 22,310 tourist jobs in Buckinghamshire • There are 1,464 restaurants, cafes or pubs within Buckinghamshire, with around 154 of these facilities (or 10%) falling within either 'Buckingham and Villages' or 'Winslow and Villages'. While change may be experienced by some receptors, this is limited geographically (to six groups of PRow (around a third of PRow in the Community Study Area) and one recreational receptor – Hogshaw Farm - experiencing significant visual effects) and managed by embedded and additional mitigation as far as reasonably practicable including new hedgerow planting, structural native woodland planting belts, offsets, lighting management, design commitments, and acoustic barriers. These measures are listed at Table 10.9 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] and secured by the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] and/or Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5]. In terms of the significant adverse visual effects referenced above – it is noted in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] that: a) This is a residual effect following mitigation. Embedded mitigation (referenced above) includes a 15m width belt of structural native woodland (early) planting along southern boundary of Fields D8, D9, D19 and D26 to soften and partially screen views of Solar PV modules, Satellite Collector Compound and BESS Hogshaw Farm. b) The effect would result in a 'large' scale of visual and landscape change during construction and in year 1 of operation, reducing to small (landscape) and medium/small (visual) by year 10 for viewpoint 19. For viewpoint 43 (pygmy goat enclosure – illustrating typical views from the attraction) this would be a medium scale of change at each phase (potentially large/medium during construction). c) During construction - Views of construction activity would be predominantly screened and filtered to the lower lying fields to the western boundary of the attraction, with more open views to the elevated ridge of land to the north west, primarily consisting of Fields D11, D14 and D15 as evidenced by Viewpoint 43. Views of construction activity to the north, in Fields D7 to D9, would largely be screened by intervening built form and vegetation to the northern edge of the attraction, albeit views from the car parks would potentially be more open. Construction activity to within Field D4 would also be increasingly visible to the more north western extents of the attraction as would potential views of activity to the Primary Construction Compounds in Fields D7 to D9. Overall, there would be a large/medium to medium scale of change across an intermediate extent of the wider visitor attraction

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			set out in ES Volume 3, Figure 10.9b: Solar PV Modules Parcel 1 – Detailed Screening [EN010158/APP/6.3] [APP-069] d) During operation - Although Fields D19 and D26 are located to the western boundary of the Hogshaw Farm and Wildlife Park the Proposed Development would be often screened and filtered in views to these lower lying fields by existing field boundary vegetation. More open views of the Proposed Development would be experienced above this vegetation towards the elevated ridge of land to the north west, primarily consisting of Fields D11, D14 and D15. Views of the Proposed Development, including the BESS, to the north, in Fields D7 to D9, would largely be screened by intervening built form and vegetation to the northern edge of the attraction, albeit views from the car parks would potentially be more open. The Proposed Development would also be increasingly visible to within Field D4 to the more north western extents of the attraction as would potential views of activity the BESS in Fields D8 and D9 and the and Satellite Collector Compound in Fields D17. New mitigation planting to the eastern edge of Parcel 2, in the form of new tree belts and hedgerows established to 3.5m, would provide some additional screening and filtering of views to the lower levels of the Proposed Development, reducing the scale of change to medium across views. Design measures are bespoke to the sensitivity of specific receptors, effects and locations across the Site – for example, while perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 10m from either side of existing PRow, the offset would be <u>at least 30m</u> from the Mid Shires Way and North Bucks Way within Fields E21/E22 and E23; and there would be specific measures such as a 15m width belt of structural native woodland (early) planting along western boundary of Fields E11, E20, E22 and E23 to soften and partially screen views of Solar PV modules, Main Collector Compound and Rosefield Substation from Botolph Claydon, Sion Hill Farm, Bernwood Jubilee Way, North Buckinghamshire Way/Midshires Way and PRow ECL/4/1. It is recognised that access to and enjoyment of the natural environment is one component of the tourist draw for the wider area – but as set out above, a range of attractions contribute more to the visitor economy. The experience of users of PRow on some routes within the wider area would be changed as a result of construction activity and the presence of the Proposed Development during the operational phase. However, the Environmental Statement confirms that this is limited to significant effects on visual amenity on a limited number of routes, with other environmental effects unlikely to be significant. Enhancements will be provided to the long-term accessibility of the area in order to promote and enhance access to the natural environment in areas that are not currently accessible to the community. This includes the creation of four new permissive paths totalling 3km. The routes would improve community connectivity between the existing public highway and community areas such as East Claydon, Middle Claydon and Botolph Claydon in the east and Calvert in the west. They would: • Increase the options for circular walks south from the village; • Allow access to Knowl Hill, which has not previously been publicly accessible, and elevated views towards Claydon House; • Allow users to experience the more open views retained from Bernwood Jubilee Way; and • Include a new public route accessible by horses across Parcel 2 which connects the existing PRow Bridleway (reference 'ECL/10/5') before tracking south west along the proposed internal access track

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			through Field D27 and along PRow Footpath (reference 'QUA/41/1') to join PRow Bridleway (reference 'QUA/40/2' and 'QUA/40/3') (approximate length 0.9 km, of which 0.3 km follows the alignment of PRow Footpath reference 'QUA/41/1'). Assessment of the potential for change to access and environmental amenity has been undertaken where there may be the potential to affect the viability of tourist-facing businesses as a result of significant changes. These effects are limited geographically and not significant, with the exception of a small number of significant residual adverse effects relating to landscape and visual amenity during the operational (including maintenance) phase.
3.3.34	Page 36, Table Ref. Q1.17.8	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council supports the need for greater clarity on the professional judgement applied in determining significance of effects in the Population Chapter and considers the current assessment insufficiently transparent (particularly where multiple agricultural businesses and landholdings are grouped into combined receptor categories). Comment noting that the approach does not adequately reflect individual circumstances and that further detailed assessment and reporting is required to clearly demonstrate how conclusions for combined receptor types have been reached.	This comment has been addressed in response to Ref. 3.3.32 above, and in response to Q2.14.8 within the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23].
3.3.35	Page 37, Table Ref. Q1.17.9	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council disagrees with the Applicant's categorisation of impact magnitude for agricultural businesses and landholdings in the Population Chapter, particularly in light of evidence presented at ISH1 indicating materially different stakeholder views on viability and effects. Comment noting that this divergence in understanding suggests the Applicant's assessment may understate impacts and requires further justification and alignment with stakeholder evidence.	This comment has been addressed in response to Ref. 3.3.32 above, and in response to Q2.14.8 within the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23].
3.3.36	Page 38, Table Ref. Q1.17.11	Comment noting that the Applicant has amended terminology but has not demonstrated how a 40-year operational timeframe has been meaningfully considered within the assessment, with no corresponding changes to impact magnitude or significance conclusions. Comment noting that further assessment is required to transparently set out how long-term effects	A full position regarding the Applicant's assessment of effects on the tourist economy is set out in Ref. 3.3.33 above. The duration of the operational phase has been considered as an aspect within the assessment of effects on the tourism economy. This is a long-term, temporary effect over the 40-year operational phase of the Proposed Development – this duration had already been considered within ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4].

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		(particularly on tourism linked to landscape, heritage, and recreation) have informed conclusions for combined receptor types.	The Applicant's assessment considers that access to the natural environment, recreational use of PRoW, cultural heritage and landscape quality are all aspects contributing towards the value and volume of the tourist economy in Buckinghamshire. In order to assess the potential for changes to these environmental aspects, the assessment within ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4] has reviewed the significance of operational phase effects on receptors relevant to these aspects, which inherently considers the duration of these effects, and has identified that significant effects are limited and localised, particularly in the context of the tourist economy which is broad, diverse and resilient. While change may be experienced by some individual components contributing towards the tourist economy, this is limited geographically (to six groups of PRoW (around a third of PRoW in the Community Study Area) and one recreational receptor – Hogshaw Farm - experiencing significant visual effects) and managed by embedded and additional mitigation as far as reasonably practicable including new hedgerow planting, structural native woodland planting belts, offsets, lighting management, design commitments, and acoustic barriers. These measures are listed at Table 10.9 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] and secured by the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] and/or Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5]. It is noted that during the operational phase: • There would be slight beneficial effects on community access (PRoW and Permissive Paths) and their users (WCH), through the creation of new permissive paths would also increase community accessibility and recreational opportunities in an area that is currently inaccessible. The routes would improve community connectivity between the existing public highway and community areas such as East Claydon, Middle Claydon and Botolph Claydon in the east and Calvert in the west; • Landscape mitigation (i.e. planting and hedgerows) will establish to reduce the magnitude of change for some landscape and visual receptors by year 10 of the operational phase.
3.3.37	Page 38, Table Ref. Q1.17.11	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council disagrees with the Applicant's interpretation of national policy, including the assertion that consideration of agricultural land for food production is no longer required, and recommends that this statement be removed from the Soils Chapter and the Planning Statement. Comment noting that claims regarding soil benefits under solar development are not sufficiently evidenced. and that further information is required on historical cropping outputs and their contribution to the food system to properly assess impacts. Further comment requesting a written review of the cropping outputs for land proposed for the development over the past 5 years be provided for	The assertion that consideration of agricultural land for food production is no longer required under national policy has been removed from ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. The assertion has also been removed from the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5] at Deadline 4 at Buckinghamshire Council's request. Information regarding the existing baseline land use, including specifics on agricultural production and crop rotations, will be included within a separate document at Deadline 5. With regards to soil benefits under solar development, while the cited research does indicate that there may be a reduction in photosynthesis, biomass accumulation and carbon accumulation in areas directly underneath solar PV modules, there will still be a large area of managed grassland between and around solar PV modules that will improve soil nutrient retention, carbon storage and water retention where photosynthesis is unimpeded.

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		along with a discussion on what markets these crops are supplied too.	
3.3.38	Page 40, Table Ref. Q1.18.5	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council disagrees with the Applicant's claim of soil benefits, highlighting evidence that microbial improvement, carbon storage, and water retention under solar PV are uncertain and may in fact be negatively affected, particularly where construction leads to long-term soil disturbance and compaction. Comment noting that further clarification is required from the Applicant on the extent to which agricultural grazing has been secured within the Proposed Development, including how this will be maintained in practice and whether it will meaningfully support soil condition and agricultural productivity over time.	With regards to soil benefits under solar development, while the cited research does indicate that there may be a reduction in photosynthesis, biomass accumulation and carbon accumulation in areas directly underneath Solar PV modules, there will still be a large area of managed grassland between and around Solar PV modules that will improve soil nutrient retention, carbon storage and water retention where photosynthesis is unimpeded. Grazing is the Applicant's preferred method of grassland management and initial discussions have taken place with local suppliers who could graze the Proposed Development. Final agreements will be secured following consent and prior to operation of the Proposed Development. Where implemented, grazing has the potential to support soil condition over time by maintaining vegetative cover, reducing the need for mechanical cutting, and limiting soil disturbance associated with intensive cultivation. This can contribute to the maintenance of soil structure and may support the recovery of soils following disturbance from construction activities. In addition, grazing can support nutrient cycling through the return of organic matter to the soil, helping to maintain soil fertility and biological activity over time. It should also be noted that the assessment of effects presented within ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] does not rely on the delivery of grazing as a mitigation measure. The protection of soil resources and maintenance of soil function is instead secured through the implementation of the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069], which controls soil handling, trafficking, and reinstatement during construction.
3.3.39	Page 40, Table Ref. Q1.18.6	Comment noting that climate change is likely to alter soil conditions over the lifetime of the Proposed Development, with wetter winters and drier summers increasing the risk of degradation processes such as erosion within the operational period. Comment noting that these risks should be explicitly considered in relation to land drainage and long-term land management, to ensure that soil function and agricultural use are not adversely affected over time.	Climate change projections, including changes in rainfall patterns and seasonal variability, have been considered in the embedded design and mitigation measures for the Proposed Development. In particular, the Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010158/APP/7.11.4] [REP3-040] incorporates the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to manage surface water runoff across the Site. These measures reduce the risk of localised erosion during periods of increased rainfall intensity, therefore supporting the soil stability, and reduce the potential for erosion under future climatic conditions. In addition, the Proposed Development would maintain a grassland cover across the majority of the Site during operation. This provides protection of the soil surface, reduces susceptibility to erosion during heavy rainfall events, and supports soil moisture retention during drier periods. The Applicant considers that the combination of drainage design, vegetation management, and soil protection measures provide an appropriate framework to protect soils against degradation processes within the operational period, and ensure that soil function and agricultural use are not adversely affected over time in line with climate change projections.
3.3.40	Page 41, Table Ref. Q1.18.9	Comment noting that Paragraph 12.8.13 the Soils Chapter states that <i>"for the purposes of this assessment, it has been assumed that Green Infrastructure has the potential to be permanent"</i>. Therefore, the assessment should be assuming that	The Applicant notes the Examining Authority's comments regarding the treatment of green and blue infrastructure within ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. The wording in Paragraph 12.8.13 has been changed for clarity: Green and blue infrastructure is assumed to be temporary, as following decommissioning, these areas would be handed back to the landowner. Furthermore, the soils affected by green and blue infrastructure would remain capable of reinstatement to their original

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		there is potential for BMV land to be permanently required for green and blue infrastructure.	condition following decommissioning, as secured through the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069] .
3.3.41	Page 41, Table Ref. Q1.18.10	Comment noting that the Applicant has not updated the Soil Chapter's assessment of impacts on ALC Grade 2 land in accordance with the agreed IEMA methodology, which indicates the magnitude should be classified as minor rather than negligible. Comment noting that this would result in a moderate adverse and therefore significant effect, and that the small proportion of Grade 2 land relative to the overall site does not justify diluting its assessment.	The assessment of impacts on ALC Grade 2 land within ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] has concluded that a negligible magnitude of impact is the correct classification. The criteria related to temporary developments is a minor magnitude of impact if the impact is a temporary, reversible loss of soil-related features, or a negligible magnitude of impact if 'no discernible loss or reduction or improvement of soil functions or soil volumes that restrict current or proposed land use'. The extent of ALC Grade 2 land is limited (3.01ha), and there is no loss or reduction in soil function or soil volumes, as all Grade 2 land is either untouched, under a grass sward in the areas of Solar PV development, or hosting ecological mitigation/enhancement. Furthermore, all construction will take place over a short period of time in summer when soils are least susceptible to damage, and construction activities are subject to committed mitigation in the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069]. A negligible magnitude of impact on a very high sensitivity receptor results in a slight adverse and not significant effect. The justification of negligible magnitude comes from a use of professional judgement that the small area of the receptor and land use does not justify a minor magnitude of effect.
3.3.42	Page 42, Table Ref. Q1.18.11	Comment requesting that the Applicant provide commentary on how the operation and maintenance practices for the solar PV modules will support sustainable agriculture.	During the operational phase, maintenance activities associated with the Solar PV modules are limited in frequency and do not involve significant ground disturbance. Access for maintenance is restricted to defined routes and would use appropriate plant, as detailed in the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069]. Furthermore, the Proposed Development would maintain a continuous vegetative cover across the majority of the Site throughout the operational period. This approach supports soil protection by reducing exposure to erosion, maintaining soil structure, and promoting infiltration. Because the soils will remain in-situ throughout operation, following decommissioning soils will be capable of supporting sustainable agricultural production. Following the completion of construction activities, all grid connection areas will be returned to the landowners for the continuation of agricultural production where applicable.
3.3.43	Page 43, Table Ref. Q1.19.15	Comment noting that while the oCTMP appropriately sets out its intended scope and objectives, a draft agreement template should be provided to give clarity on how these requirements will be secured in practice. Comment noting that discussions at the issue specific hearing suggest agreement may be reached by Deadline 4 on managing wear and tear from construction and decommissioning, and further detail is therefore expected on how this will be addressed.	The Applicant will develop a Wear and Tear agreement with Buckinghamshire Council post-consent and prior to construction as is normally the case for infrastructure projects. It is not considered necessary or usual to develop such an agreement during the DCO examination.

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3.3.44	Pages 43 and 44, Table Ref. Q1.19.23	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council welcomes the recording of minimum widths for diverted routes in line with the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, and considers the matter resolved subject to appropriate securing through the agreed mechanism. Comment noting that the proposed widths are generally compliant, with field boundary constraints appropriately addressed under BS 5709:2018, and that a minor correction is required to reference Fields D27 and D28 in relation to the permissive bridleway alignment.	The Applicant confirms that it has secured the minimum width (2m) for newly created footpaths in Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] to be submitted at Deadline 4. As per the submitted Notification of Proposed Change [EN010158/APP/8.15] [CR1-001] the proposed bridleway link would run parallel to PRow ECL/8/2 through Field D27, rather than along it.

Table 3.4: Buckinghamshire Council (Responses to comments on local impact reports (LIRs)) [\[REP3-055\]](#)

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3.4.1	Page 3, Ref 1.1	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council disagree with the Applicant's Response provided at Deadline 2 and maintain their position that the policy threshold for refusal is met. Further comment noting that the Applicant has failed to adequately engage with or resolve the harms identified in the LIR. Buckinghamshire Council further considers that key impacts, especially those arising from the layout and location of the BESS, are not capable of being addressed through mitigation alone, and therefore concludes that their weight has not been properly reflected in the overall planning balance concluding that its original LIR position remains unchanged.	The Applicant notes that Buckinghamshire maintains its position. The Applicant, however, disagrees with Buckinghamshire Council's position that the policy threshold for refusal is met and points to Section 10 of the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5] which notes that the combined nature of the benefits of the Proposed Development outweigh any residual effects and that the planning balance is firmly in favour of approval. The Applicant points to Ref. 3.2.1 of this document and the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4] which evidence that agreement is being reached with Buckinghamshire Council on matters that had previously been raised within Buckinghamshire Council's Local Impact Report [REP1-112]. The Applicant notes the comments on the BESS and points to the previously submitted Appendix 1 (Letter to Buckinghamshire Council on BESS Locations) which can be found in Applicant's Response to Buckinghamshire Council's Local Impact Report [EN010158/APP/8.11] [REP2-085]. This letter was provided to demonstrate how the Applicant has responded to one (i.e., the BESS' location) of the 'three key strands' informing Buckinghamshire Council's inability to support the Proposed Development. This letter set out the design rationale and amendments to the location of the BESS, as drawn from the DCO Application documents.
3.4.2	Page 4, Ref 2.1	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council maintains its position that the assessment of alternatives is not proportionate to the scale and potential impacts of the Proposed Development. The Council considers that the Applicant's site selection process focused narrowly on proximity to the grid connection and a defined Search Area has unduly constrained the range of alternatives considered.	The Applicant wholly disagrees with Buckinghamshire Council. As the Applicant has previously confirmed in Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] (see Ref. 1.1.2), the Search Area was based on the availability of a suitable grid connection at the National Grid East Claydon Substation, with sufficient capacity available to support a solar scheme of a viable size. A site closer to the substation was preferred on the basis that a shorter cable route has benefits in terms of ease and timeliness of the delivery of key infrastructure, minimising disruption to residents and businesses along the route, and minimising environmental disturbance and cost. The Applicant disagrees with the assertion that this approach materially constrains the consideration of alternatives. Instead, and as aforementioned, such an approach (which is standard across solar NSIPs) sought to minimise disruption to residents and businesses along the route, and minimise environmental disturbances and costs. The Applicant points to Paragraph 4.3.9 of NPS EN-1 which states "<i>As in any planning case, the relevance or otherwise to the decision making process of the existence (or alleged existence) of alternatives to the proposed development is, in the first instance, a matter of law. This NPS does not contain any general requirement to consider alternatives or to establish whether the proposed project represents the best option from a policy perspective. Although there are specific requirements in relation to compulsory acquisition and habitats sites, the NPS does not change requirements in relation to compulsory acquisition and habitats sites</i>" (our emphasis). The NPSs place no policy requirements on demonstrating that a proposed project is the best option locationally but, rather, that it is acceptable under the provisions of the relevant policies. Paragraph 4.3.24 of NPS EN-1 also, importantly notes that "<i>The Secretary of State should not refuse an application for development on one site simply because fewer adverse impacts would result from developing similar infrastructure on another suitable site, and should have regard as appropriate to the possibility that all suitable sites for energy infrastructure of the type proposed may be</i>

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			<i>needed for future proposals” (our emphasis). The consideration of reasonable alternatives has been explored in ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010158/APP/6.1] [APP-047].</i>
3.4.3	Page 4, Ref 2.2	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council considers the Applicant's site selection process to be unduly constrained by the availability of a grid connection and a single willing landowner, rather than representing a transparent, constraints-led assessment across the wider Search Area. The Council accepts that factors such as grid connection, land assembly and deliverability are material, but concludes that their influence has improperly limited the consideration of reasonable alternatives. Further comment noting that there is insufficient evidence of a consistent and comparative evaluation of alternative sites or configurations, and therefore a robust and proportionate assessment of alternatives has not been demonstrated.	The Applicant disagrees with Buckinghamshire Council's assertion that the assessment of alternatives appears to have been constrained by commercial and land availability matters. Appendix 1 (Site Selection Report) to the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5] and ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010158/APP/6.1] [APP-047] provide detail as to how the location and design of the Proposed Development is the result of a comprehensive site selection process that was environmentally, technically and planning-led to avoid and minimise the potential impacts of the Proposed Development. The Search Area was based on the availability of a suitable grid connection at the National Grid East Claydon Substation, with sufficient capacity available to support a solar scheme of a viable size. A site closer to the substation was preferred on the basis that a shorter cable route has benefits in terms of ease and timeliness of the delivery of key infrastructure, minimising disruption to residents and businesses along the route, and minimising environmental disturbance and cost. This exercise identified a single landowner, located directly adjacent to the National Grid East Claydon Substation land, who was agreeable in principle to leasing sufficient land for a solar development that optimised the grid connection. Once it was clear that the landowner of the Order Limits was amenable in principle to bringing forward a solar scheme on their land, which met the site selection criteria and offered a large landholding with opportunities for flexibility in precisely where solar and associated mitigation was located, the Applicant did not look further for alternative sites. The Applicant points back to Ref. 3.4.2 which outlines the policy requirements in the consideration of alternatives, which the Applicant has satisfied.
3.4.4	Page 6, Ref 2.3	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council maintains that topographical constraints have not been appropriately addressed through site selection. Buckinghamshire Council considers that this approach has resulted in development being located on more sensitive landforms, including elevated and visually prominent areas, thereby increasing landscape and visual harm. The Council maintains its position that the site selection process has resulted in development being advanced on landforms which give rise to greater landscape and visual impact than may reasonably have been achievable through a broader and more comparative assessment of alternatives.	The Applicant is in agreement that the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.2] [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014] predominantly relates to the design of the Proposed Development within the Order Limits, although it does refer to Appendix 1 (Site Selection Report) to the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5]. However, the points raised by the Applicant at Ref. 2.3 of the Applicant's Response to Buckinghamshire Council's Local Impact Report [EN010158/APP/8.11] [REP2-085] demonstrate the application of good design in relation to the topography within the Site. The Applicant points to Ref. 1.1.10 of Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] which explains how Sections 3 and 4 of Appendix 1 (Site Selection Report) to the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5] specifically reference 'irradiance and site topography' as an influencing factor in the Proposed Development's site selection process. The Applicant also points to Refs. 2.1 and 2.84 of Applicant's Response to Buckinghamshire Council's Local Impact Report [EN010158/APP/8.11] [REP2-085] which, in summary, notes that the general topography of the area surrounding the National Grid East Claydon Substation is gently undulating and that the level of undulation in land across the 10km Search Area is relatively consistent. The Applicant notes how the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014] has considered the topography of the Site and how this has influenced the design of the Proposed Development from the outset. This has included removal of proposed Solar PV development from land on top of Knowl Hill and from fields within Parcel 2 to reduce visibility within the AAL and from the wider

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			landscape. It is acknowledged in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] that the Proposed Development would result in significant adverse landscape and visual effects up to 0.5km to the east of Parcel 2. The Applicant therefore maintains that significant effects would be localised by means of good design.
3.4.5	Page 6, Ref 2.4	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council maintains the site selection process has not adequately considered cumulative effects. Buckinghamshire Council considers the Applicant has focused on mitigating impacts within the chosen site, rather than demonstrating a broader evaluation of cumulative effects, particularly related to the BESS.	The Applicant reiterates that, as reported in Appendix 1 (Site Selection Report) to the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5], there is no standard methodology for the site selection of solar farms. The site selection methodology for the Proposed Development has therefore been informed by the following relevant national and local policy documents and regulations: NPS EN-1 (2023), NPS EN-3 (2023), NPS EN-5 (2023), the NPPF, the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan 2013 – 2033, the NPPG and the EIA Regulations 2017. The Applicant notes Paragraph 2.10.26 of NPS EN-3, which states that applicants should consider the cumulative impacts of situating a solar farm in proximity to other energy generating stations and infrastructure. Firstly, the Applicant considers the Paragraph's intention in referencing 'infrastructure' relates to energy infrastructure which would also be making use of network connections. The Applicant was not aware of any cumulative developments in proximity to the network connection at the time of selecting the site. More widely, the Applicant confirms that it did not consider other cumulative developments in the site selection process however, an assessment of cumulative effects has been undertaken in ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037] that takes into account all relevant developments within 10km of the Proposed Development.
3.4.6	Page 7, Ref 2.5	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council maintains their position that the Site Selection Report provides limited analysis and does not evidence a proportionate application of the mitigation hierarchy at the site selection stage.	The Applicant points to responses to Refs. 3.4.2 and 3.4.5. In particular, the Applicant wishes to reconfirm that it did not consider cumulative developments in the site selection process. This is because the Applicant, is confident that the mitigation hierarchy has been successfully applied at the site level through the micro-siting of elements across the Order Limits. The Applicant also confirms that this application of the avoidance stage of the mitigation hierarchy can, and has been, successfully applied at the site level and does not, therefore, need to be applied at the site selection stage for which there is no standard methodology. The site level application of the mitigation hierarchy is made clear through Section 5 of the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014]. An assessment of cumulative effects has been undertaken in ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037] that takes into account all relevant developments within 10km of the Proposed Development.
3.4.7	Page 8, Ref 2.6	Comment noting that the evidence presented does not demonstrate a comparative assessment of alternatives and it is unclear how the DCO Application has identified and appraised alternative landholdings within the search area, environmental, social and economic effects and how the final site was selected, rather than by reference to availability and land control.	The Applicant refers Buckinghamshire Council to Ref. 3.4.2. In relation to Buckinghamshire Council's references to Paragraph 4.3.16 and 4.3.17 of NPS EN-1, the Applicant firstly points back to Paragraph 4.3.9 of NPS EN-1 which confirms that <i>"this NPS does not contain any general requirement to consider alternatives or to establish whether the proposed project represents the best option from a policy perspective. Although there are specific requirements in relation to compulsory acquisition and habitats sites"</i>. It must be stressed that it is only under the specific requirements that, from a policy perspective, alternatives are to be considered. Such scenarios are

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			prefaced through the 'in some circumstances' wording of Paragraph 4.3.16 of NPS EN-1 which leads on to Paragraph 4.3.17. The Applicant does not therefore agree with Buckinghamshire Council's assertions. In accordance with The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010158/APP/6.1] [APP-047] provides detailed assessments of the site selection process and the reasonable alternatives considered by the Applicant alongside the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014] .
3.4.8	Page 9, Ref 2.7	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council considers only limited weight can be given to the Applicant's alternatives assessment due to the absence of a clear and comparative evaluation of reasonable alternatives and how environmental effects informed site selection.	The Applicant would go further than Buckinghamshire Council in that the alternatives assessment should not carry any weight in the overall planning balance, though for a different reason than that given by Buckinghamshire Council. This is because, in accordance with Paragraph 4.3.24 of NPS EN-1, the Secretary of State " <i>should not refuse an application for development on one site simply because fewer adverse impacts would result from developing similar infrastructure on another suitable site, and should have regard as appropriate to the possibility that all suitable sites for energy infrastructure of the type proposed may be needed for future proposals</i> ". The Applicant also points to Refs. 3.4.2 and 3.4.3 .
3.4.9	Page 9, Ref 2.8	Comment welcoming the clarification that the topography across the overall Site is varied. The Council considers this has an influence on the effect of the proposal on the landscape and the extent to which the development can be effectively mitigated.	The Applicant notes Buckinghamshire Council's welcoming of the clarification. The Applicant points to Ref. 1.1.20 of Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] which explains how the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014] has considered the topography of the Site and how this has influenced the design of the Proposed Development from the outset. This has included removal of proposed Solar PV development from land on top of Knowl Hill and from fields within Parcel 2 to reduce visibility within the AAL and from the wider landscape. The Applicant has acknowledged in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] that the Proposed Development would result in significant adverse landscape and visual effects up to 0.5km to the east of Parcel 2. The Applicant therefore maintains that significant effects would be localised by means of good design
3.4.10	Page 9, Ref 2.9	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council maintains the position that the BESS would appear incongruous and would introduce a degree of visual prominence not comparable to the solar arrays.	Section 3: Design Parameters in the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] secures that the height of the BESS compound will be no greater than 6m AGL (post-earthworks where the FPL is to be 97m AOD in Field D8 and 98m AOD in Field D9). The same sub-section on the BESS design parameters secures that the height of the BESS units (inclusive of noise reduction kits and heating, ventilation and air conditioning system) will be no greater than 4.5m AGL (post-earthworks) and that the height of the Switch Room(s) will be no greater than 6m AGL (post-earthworks). As with all of the parameter areas set out under the Rochdale envelope approach, the full extent of the area shown as Work No.4 BESS would likely not be developed as such, with an indicative layout for the BESS shown on the Illustrative Layout Plans and Sections [EN010158/APP/2.6.4] [CR1-007] . The greater proportion of the BESS compound areas would be of the lower height, no greater than 4.5m. The massing and scale of the BESS, and its degree of visual prominence, would therefore not be as great as if the full area were filled with development up to 6m in height. The height difference to the adjacent Solar PV modules would also be less noticeable in relation to the lower BESS units.

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			The Applicant is unable, at this stage, to confirm the full final levels of the proposed earthworks but, as stated in paragraph 3.2.11 of ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010158/APP/6.1.4] , an indicative cut and fill assessment has been undertaken in order to strike as close to a cut and fill balance as practicable. An indicative cut and fill balance has been achieved across the Site and has served to inform the ES.
3.4.11	Page 10, Ref 2.10	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council maintains that the BESS is not appropriately located and would give rise to effects that cannot be adequately mitigated through design or planting.	The Applicant points to Ref. 3.4.10. The Applicant has acknowledged in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] that the BESS, as part of the Proposed Development, would result in significant adverse landscape and visual effects only up to 0.5km to the east of Parcel 2. The Applicant therefore maintains that significant effects would be localised in respect of the BESS by means of good design.
3.4.12	Page 10, Ref 2.11	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council disagree that noise effects would be negligible on the basis that users are transient and consider that adverse effects would be experienced. Further comment noting that the infrastructure would remain perceptible both visually and in terms of its noise impact, reinforcing the sense of an engineered environment.	The operational phase noise levels experienced by PRoW/permissive paths users will be subject to mitigation, through the adoption of low-noise emitting equipment and perimeter barriers, as secured by Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5]. The baseline ambient sound levels along PRoWs and permissive paths within the Order Limits will be influenced by a variety of sources, which may include, but not be limited to, birds, insects, livestock, wind-blown foliage, occasional aircrafts and road traffic. On the basis of the residual noise levels generated by the Proposed Development post-mitigation and the acoustic masking effects of existing sound sources, perceptible noise from the Proposed Development during operation would be localised, rather than widespread along the PRoW/permissive path network. As a result, no significant adverse effects would be experienced by the users. The Applicant points to the principles set out in Ref. 3.4.10 with regard to the visual perception of infrastructure. The Applicant has stated at Ref. 3.1.34 that, although additional mitigation planting at detailed design stage will likely be sufficient to reduce the scale of visual effects of the BESS and any associated acoustic barrier from the PRoW to its immediate environs, the wider visual experience will remain unchanged as a significant effect.
3.4.13	Page 11, Ref 2.12	Comment noting that it is accepted that there is no requirement to demonstrate that the Proposed Development represents the 'best' option; however, the policy framework does not displace the need for a proportionate and transparent site selection process which meaningfully engages with environmental and landscape constraints. In this case, the evidence does not demonstrate that land of lower sensitivity whether within or beyond the defined Search Area has been tested.	The Applicant points to Ref. 3.4.2. As Buckinghamshire Council recognise, the NPSs place no policy requirements on demonstrating that a proposed project is the best option locationally but, rather, that it is acceptable under the provisions of the relevant policies. In accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010158/APP/6.1] [APP-047] provides detailed assessments of the Site selection process and the reasonable alternatives considered by the Applicant. For each of the reasonable alternatives considered within ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010158/APP/6.1] [APP-047]. In particular, the Applicant sets out the alternative locations considered (i.e. the 10km search area) in Section 4.4: Alternative sites', while the size and scale of the development alternatives are set out across Section 4.4: Alternative sites and Section 4.7: Alternative layouts and design evolution. Further information is also provided in Appendix 1 of the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5].

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3.4.14	Page 12, Ref 3.1	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council agreed that surveys to inform final mitigation within the CEMP and oLEMP were sufficient to ensure updated surveys are undertaken to ensure no harm to species excluding bats.	The Applicant welcomes this comment and agreement.
3.4.15	Page 14, Ref 3.5	Comment noting that Bechstein Bats is not at favourable conservation status and that any impacts should therefore be treated as significant harm. Buckinghamshire Council considers that proposed mitigation is insufficient, particularly in relation to woodland buffers, hedgerow loss and commuting routes, and highlights gaps in assessment including access to water, cumulative effects, and displacement from noise and lighting. Further comment noting that there is a loss of grazed pasture used by foraging bats, with replacement habitat proposed but lacking assessment of how its location relates to known roosts. Additionally, the cumulative impact on bat populations remains uncertain, particularly given ongoing monitoring of effects from HS2.	It is agreed that Bechstein's bat is not at favourable conservation status at a UK level, but that does not mean that any harm should be treated as significant harm. Many species of wildlife and many developments would be affected by such a conflation, and that is clearly not the intention of NPS EN-1. Significant 'harm' here has been interpreted as a change in conservation status. Such a change would mean a reduction in range or in population size, either of which could result from a decrease in breeding success over time. The causes of such a change <i>could</i> indeed be development, but also land management and climate change, alone or in combination. The contribution of the proposed solar farm to such an impact on conservation status has been limited through mitigation that is designed to maintain or provide the elements that Bechstein's bats (and other bat species) would need to thrive. Areas which are known to support their roosts are being retained; foraging will be increased and improved within Fields B9, B19, C1, C2, C3, D27, D30-D37 ; and connectivity to ensure bats can access all areas of their home range will be strengthened through the provision of strengthened hedgerow network and associated buffers. It is incorrect to state that the location of replacement habitat does not take into account the location of known roosts; in fact, the reverse is true if important i.e. breeding roosts are considered. The Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105] (submitted Deadline 1) Appendix I PDF p208 which shows the distribution of known Bechstein's roosts. The known <i>breeding</i> roosts are concentrated to the south, notably to the west of HS2, away from Rosefield, and – importantly – in/around Finemere Wood, where grazing land will be increased and targeted. See Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] Appendix 6 - Grazing Analysis p130.
3.4.16	Page 15, Ref 3.10	Comment noting agreement on the approach taken to the assessment and mitigation of ground nesting birds following updates to the Outline LEMP and Outline CEMP.	The Applicants welcomes this comment and agreement.
3.4.17	Page 16, Ref 3.13	Comment noting that care should be taken not to confuse avoidance and mitigation measures to avoid impacts to existing features with opportunities for enhancement and natures recovery.	The Applicants notes this comment and avoidance, part of the mitigation hierarchy has been central to the assessment as outline in Table 7.6 of the ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] .
3.4.18	Page 19, Ref 3.20	Comment noting agreement that the survey followed appropriate standards, however, there are remaining concerns about the reliability of the baseline where access or visibility may have been constrained. Buckinghamshire Council therefore seek clarification	The Applicant points to response Ref. 3.3.18 . The Applicant notes Buckinghamshire Council's agreement that the survey was undertaken in accordance with appropriate standards. However, the Applicant does not agree that the identified access or visibility constraints give rise to material uncertainty within the arboricultural baseline. As previously stated, the areas where direct measurement was more challenging were generally limited to trees located within dense hedgerows, ditch corridors

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		on where these limitations occurred and whether affected features overlap with retained or sensitive elements, to ensure confidence in impact assessment and mitigation.	etc. The Applicant is satisfied that these localised constraints did not materially affect tree categorisation, condition assessment, crown spread plotting, Root Protection Area calculations, retention categories or the identification of arboricultural constraints. The Applicant also notes that sensitive receptors, including veteran trees, potential veteran trees, Ancient Woodland and key woodland edge features, were specifically identified and assessed. There is no evidence that any survey limitations have materially affected the assessment of these retained or sensitive features, nor the mitigation measures proposed to protect them.
3.4.19	Page 20, Ref 3.21	Comment noting that it would be helpful if features functioning as woodland systems could be more clearly and consistently identifiable in the assessment material, so that the treatment of woodland edge effects, buffer application and related construction and operational effects can be followed with greater confidence.	The Applicant points to responses in Ref. 3.1.3 . The Applicant acknowledges the Council's desire for woodland features to be readily identifiable within the assessment material. However, the Applicant considers that woodland features have been consistently identified and assessed throughout the Arboricultural Impact Assessment. As previously explained, woodland features were recorded in accordance with BS 5837:2012. The assessment has considered woodland features not only as collections of trees, but as functioning woodland systems. This is reflected in the application of woodland-specific buffers, consideration of woodland edge effects, and the use of National Forest Inventory data and site survey information to inform buffer distances and design development.
3.4.20	Page 21, Ref. 3.24	Comment noting that where construction activities, access works or infrastructure are shown in proximity to retained arboricultural features, or within areas intended to function as buffers or protection zones, it would still be helpful for the means by which those interactions are to be avoided or controlled to be more clearly apparent at outline stage.	The Applicant points to response Ref. 3.2.10 . As discussed with Buckinghamshire Council, the Applicant has agreed to provide additional detail within the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] at Deadline 4 to clarify the nature of any works that may be required within these areas and the associated mitigation measures that would be implemented to protect retained trees and RPAs. This will provide further clarity on how potential interactions within buffer areas will be managed. Accordingly, the Applicant considers that the assessment appropriately identifies potential constraints and interactions, whilst the combination of the secured requirement in Paragraph 1.1.13 and Table 3.2 of the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and by Requirement 11 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] for a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement, and ongoing design refinement, provides a robust mechanism to ensure retained trees, buffers and RPAs are protected in practice.
3.4.21	Page 25, Ref 3.29	Comment noting that controls to manage the indirect impacts on retained vegetation should continue to be clearly evidenced, particularly in sensitive locations.	The Applicant points to response Ref. 3.2.10 . The Applicant welcomes the Council's acknowledgement that the updated Arboricultural Impact Assessment provides helpful clarification. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment identifies both direct and indirect effects on a reasonable worst-case basis and incorporates avoidance measures through the iterative design process, including buffers, stand-offs and the retention of key arboricultural features. The practical implementation of these measures is secured through the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] , Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] , Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] and the requirement for a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement prior to construction.
3.4.22	Page 27, Ref 3.32	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council welcome the further clarification on the scope of the later AMS, however, they would prefer an Outline AMS to assist in providing them with confidence on the proposed mitigation can be delivered in practice.	The Applicant points to response Ref. 3.2.10 and 3.4.20 . The proposed mitigation will be detailed within the updates to the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] at Deadline 4.

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3.4.23	Page 29, Ref. 3.35	Comment noting that where the effectiveness of arboricultural mitigation depends on buffers, RPAs, and works in proximity to retained features, some additional outline-stage clarity would be helpful in showing how those principles are intended to operate in practice.	The Applicant points to response Ref. 3.2.10 . The Applicant agrees that it is important for the principles underpinning arboricultural mitigation to be clearly understood. The assessment and supporting documents already establish the key mitigation measures that will be applied, including the retention of Root Protection Areas where practicable, the use of buffers and stand-offs, tree protection fencing, no-construction zones, arboricultural supervision where required, and the preparation of a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement prior to construction. The Applicant considers that the outline-stage documentation appropriately defines these principles while retaining sufficient flexibility for detailed design.
3.4.24	Page 29, Ref. 3.56	Comment noting the preference for a clearly evidenced feature specific buffer strategy that is demonstrated on the value, sensitivity and long-term protection of affected features.	Comment is noted by the Applicant. The Applicant considers that the buffers from hedgerows and trees are bespoke taking full account of the sensitivity of the location and the protecting the hedgerows and root protection zones of mature trees which are such a prominent feature of the landscape, in addition the buffers have been increased in number of locations specifically due to concerns raised by consultees. Buffers from hedgerows linking Shrubs Wood, Sheephouse Wood and Decoypond Wood (B3/B7, B6/B7, B7/B8, B7/B10, B10/B11, B10/B9, B8/B9) have been increased from 10m to 15m and buffers along D29 and part of D28 between Finemere Wood and Runts Wood have been increased to 30m in recognition of the importance of protecting the commuting corridors between these woodland. The Applicant's position regards buffer widths and likely effectiveness has been articulated on numerous occasions within Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] for example 3.1.26 page 12. Please also see response to Ref. 3.1.3.
3.4.25	Page 31, Ref. 3.62	Comment noting that the concern extends beyond the quantity of vegetation loss to the retention of functional continuity of hedgerows and associated arboricultural features, concluding that the impacts of fragmentation remain relevant.	The Applicant has strived to ensure the vast majority of hedgerow loss has been avoided and where removal is unavoidable, for example the cable route the majority of this will be reinstated once construction works have ceased. Additional measures to protect and safeguard hedges to maintain functionality and maintain connectivity are detailed in the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] while management measures outlined in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] will ensure improvement in hedgerow condition over time contributing to a modest gain in hedgerow biodiversity units ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.17: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] .
3.4.26	Page 32 and 39, Ref. 3.63 and 3.78	Comment noting that the updated Outline LEMP provides helpful clarity, but considers that assumptions regarding long-term tree growth and compatibility with nearby infrastructure need to be more clearly evidenced.	The Applicant welcomes the Council's acknowledgement that the updated Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] provides a clearer framework for the long-term management of retained arboricultural features. The Applicant considers that the basis for concluding that future tree growth and crown expansion can be accommodated without conflict is clearly demonstrated through the design itself. The Proposed Development incorporates minimum offsets of 30m from Ancient Woodland, 20m from other woodland areas, and a further 5m separation between solar panels and the security fence. These stand-offs were established through the iterative design process, taking account of the location and extent of existing trees, hedgerows and woodland features, and provide sufficient space to accommodate future growth without creating operational pressure for routine pruning or removal. Furthermore, the majority of retained trees are associated with existing hedgerows, woodland edges and field boundaries that already exist within an actively managed agricultural landscape. The Proposed Development does not materially alter this relationship. As such, the Applicant does not consider that there is a realistic

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			pathway by which retained trees would be subject to incremental management intervention solely as a consequence of the Proposed Development. The updated Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5] and Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] further strengthen this position by securing a programme of periodic arboricultural inspections throughout the operational phase. This will enable the condition and development of retained trees, woodland edges and other sensitive features to be monitored over time and, where necessary, ensure that any management is undertaken in accordance with good arboricultural practice and BS 3998:2010 Tree Work – Recommendations. In addition, at the detailed design stage the combination of the secured requirement in Paragraph 1.1.13 and Table 3.2 of the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and by Requirement 11 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] for a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement, and ongoing design refinement, provides a robust mechanism to ensure retained trees, buffers and RPAs are protected in practice.
3.4.27	Page 33, Ref. 3.64	Comment noting that it remains important that trees of elevated sensitivity, including those associated with ancient woodland edge conditions and veteran characteristics, are supported by a clearly demonstrable protection and management approach where works occur in relative proximity.	The Applicant agrees that trees of elevated sensitivity, including veteran trees and trees associated with Ancient Woodland edge conditions, require an appropriately robust protection and management approach where works occur in relative proximity. This has been addressed through a combination of embedded design measures, precautionary stand-offs, and secured management controls. Where works are proposed in proximity to these sensitive features, detailed protection measures will be secured through the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5]. These measures will include, where necessary, tree protection fencing, defined exclusion zones, arboricultural supervision and appropriate working methods to safeguard retained features.
3.4.28	Page 34, Ref 3.65	Comment noting that it remains important that retained trees within hedgerow and woodland-edge structure are considered not only as individual features, but also in terms of their wider long-term function within the landscape and mitigation framework.	The Applicant agrees that retained trees within hedgerows and woodland-edge structures should be considered not only as individual arboricultural features, but also in terms of their wider contribution to landscape character, ecological connectivity and the long-term functioning of the green infrastructure network. The design of the Proposed Development is intended to ensure the long-term connectivity of landscape features, including retained trees within hedgerow and woodland-edge structure. This is explained within the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014] particularly in relation to Project Principles 5.1 Retain, wherever reasonably possible, existing landscape features such as hedgerows, trees, woodlands, ditches, ponds and watercourses with appropriate buffers from the Proposed Development; 5.2 Manage existing habitats identified through habitat surveys to increase their value for wildlife; 5.3 Create new habitats to support key species such as Bechstein's bats and black hairstreak butterfly; and 6.5 Retain existing vegetation wherever reasonably possible to maintain the fabric of the Site and aid assimilation of development into its context.
3.4.29	Page 35, Ref 3.67	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council's position on black poplar trees relies on correct implementation of protective fencing and management controls, and therefore emphasises the need for G98 to be clearly identified, safeguarded, and managed to ensure its long-term retention.	Comment noted. The Solar PV modules and boundary fencing would be realigned at the detailed design stage to ensure the two trees within the group will be unaffected by works. This is detailed in, and secured by, the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5].

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3.4.30	Page 35, Ref 3.68	Comment acknowledging the updated drainage material however, noting that without clearly defined buffers and detailed arboricultural methods, there remains uncertainty how works near retained features would avoid impacts on RPAs, buffer function, and runoff.	Following further engagement with Buckinghamshire Council, the Applicant has updated the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] at Deadline 4 to commit to methods of working during any drainage works, where the installation of the drainage is within a retained tree Root Protection Area (RPA) and cannot be avoided through detailed design. These include ensuring works are undertaken under the supervision of a suitably qualified arboriculturist and only permitting storage of materials, spoil or plant within RPA's where protection measures have been implemented in accordance with BC 5837:2012.
3.4.31	Page 38, Ref. 3.76	Comment noting that the plans identify areas of potential conflict with retained trees, indicating anticipated impacts at the outline stage. It considers that generic offsets do not adequately demonstrate how hedgerow trees and their RPAs will be accommodated in practice, and therefore seeks greater feature-specific clarity.	The Applicant points to response Ref. 3.2.10 and clarity will be detailed within updates to the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] at Deadline 4.
3.4.32	Page 41, Ref. 3.82	Comment requesting evidence on the engagement related to the use of the field edge alignment for wayfinding, suggestion that this is more likely achieved through effective signage.	Following a rights of way site meeting on 26 February 2025 with a Rights of Way Officer from Buckinghamshire Council, the written notes from the meeting exchanged between the Applicant and Buckinghamshire Council included reference to a preference for diverted routes in Parcel 1 following existing hedgerows for easier navigation by users. Waymarking would also form part of the strategy for diverted PRow, secured through the Outline RoWAS [EN010158/APP/7.8.4] [REP3-036] .
3.4.33	Page 44, Ref 4.1	Buckinghamshire Council notes that while visual impacts from Claydon House itself may be partly screened, the proposals would still affect the wider setting of the Grade I listed asset and its associated heritage features, including the church and surrounding estate landscape. It concludes that these impacts would harm important visual, spatial and associative relationships, resulting in harm towards the middle of the less than substantial scale.	The Applicant has considered the effects of changes in wider setting and concludes that the harm to Claydon House as a result of these changes will be at the lower end of less than substantial, a conclusion supported by Historic England (Statement of Common Ground with Historic England [EN010158/APP/5.16.3]) and National Trust (Draft Statement of Common Ground with National Trust [EN010158/APP/5.17.2]) [REP2-020] .
3.4.34	Page 45, Ref 4.2	Buckinghamshire Council considers that the Proposed Development would adversely affect the settings of nearby farmhouses by altering views and eroding their visual and spatial relationships within the landscape. It concludes that this would result in less than substantial harm, at the higher end for Pond Farmhouse and would also diminish its contribution to the significance of Claydon House through impacts on historic relationships and views.	The Applicant has considered the effects on the nearby farmhouses resulting from changes in their setting including their visual and spatial relationships in ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] and also concludes that there is less than substantial harm (though at the lower end for most and the middle of the scale for Pond Farmhouse). The contribution that these farmhouses make to the significance of Claydon House is also acknowledged within the assessment of the Grade I listed building as they form part of the wider historic estate holding.
3.4.35	Page 57, Ref 4.3	Comment that Buckinghamshire Council acknowledges that mitigation reduces direct	The Applicant agrees that the Proposed Development will result in changes to the character of the landscape and the contribution that this makes to the significance of the heritage assets will be

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		intervisibility, but considers that the presence of extensive solar arrays and infrastructure would still alter the character of the landscape and the settings of heritage assets, particularly when experienced in movement through the area. It concludes that these changes, including longer-distance views, would result in harm to the significance of affected heritage assets.	diminished, but concludes that the harm to significance will be within the lower range of less than substantial for the majority of assets and the middle of the scale of less than substantial harm for Pond Farmhouse (Grade II listed building) and Bernwood Farmhouse (non-designated heritage asset).
3.4.36	Page 48, Ref 4.6	Comment that Buckinghamshire Council agree that with impacts of other projects on Pond Farmhouse are unlikely to elevate that from the applicant's proposals above the high end of less than substantial harm. However, the approaches to the farm and its western setting have and are impacted by other projects, as are Rosehill Farmhouse and Blackmoorhill Farmhouse.	The Applicant welcomes agreement that the cumulative effect on Pond Farmhouse is not higher than the effect of the Proposed Development in isolation (being moderate significance and significant), but maintains that this harm is at the middle of the scale of less than substantial. Likewise, whilst the Applicant acknowledges that HS2 and to some degree East West Rail will alter the approaches to Pond Farmhouse, Rosehill Farmhouse and Blackmoorhill Farmhouse, the Applicant considers that no cumulative effect will occur as stated in ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037].
3.4.37	Page 50, Ref 4.11	Comment that Buckinghamshire Council considers that the scale, height, and form of the solar arrays and associated infrastructure would contrast with the historic agricultural and parkland character of the landscape. It concludes that, despite some mitigation and screening, the development would still be clearly perceptible as a solar farm, resulting in harm to the historic character and settings of heritage assets.	The Applicant concurs that the development would be perceptible as a solar farm and that this results in some harm to the significance of heritage assets through changes in their setting. The Applicant maintains that the harm is at the lower end of less than substantial for the majority of these assets and is not a significant effect in EIA terms (see ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]).
3.4.38	Page 50, Ref. 4.14	Exploration of the possibility of increased screening on the sides of the scheme facing away from Botolph Claydon to better screen longer views from the higher ground to east and south east would be welcomed by Buckinghamshire Council.	The planting within the area of the Site facing away from Botolph Claydon (the north of Parcel 2) can be further reviewed with Buckinghamshire Council at the detailed design stage, when the detailed layout of the Proposed Development is fully understood, as part of the detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, in accordance with the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5].
3.4.39	Page 51, Ref 4.15	Comment that the way in which especially buildings, their architecture and location were designed to interact with their surroundings historically, both functionally and aesthetically, is sometimes not addressed, leading to differences in interpretation of the impact/harm between Buckinghamshire Council and the Applicant.	The Applicant has given consideration to the way buildings were designed to interact with their surroundings historically, however guidance defines setting as "the surroundings in which an asset is experienced" and therefore the baseline for assessment is how the asset interacts with its surroundings at present. Whilst acknowledging that historic relationships are important, where they are no longer appreciated due to later changes within the setting (e.g. the tall hedgerow and roadside trees east of Botolph House reducing visibility of and from the house compared to its original setting) the contribution that these relationships make to significance is lowered.

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3.4.40	Page 51, Ref 4.17	The Council consider that some of the detailed assessments in Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] lack sufficient detail, especially in relation to the architecture of the heritage assets, their significance and how various aspects of their settings contribute to their significance.	The Applicant has provided further details within the update to Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] submitted at Deadline 4 but maintains that the harm to the significance of the assets is unaltered by this update.
3.4.41	Page 54, Ref 4.18	Comment that the heritage assets in the case of Claydon House and nearby listed buildings, its wider parkland and satellite farmhouses contribute to one another's setting and significance. Where there is group value shared by several heritage assets, the relevant elements of setting that contribute to significance should be assessed.	The contribution of group value to the significance of heritage assets has been considered within Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] for those assets which have group value with other assets.
3.4.42	Page 62, Ref. 4.34	Comment that the issue with the accuracy of the assessment to relate to the analysis of the contribution of the wider setting to the significance of Claydon House, its park (both within and outside the registered park and conservation area boundaries) and constituent heritage assets.	The assessment of Claydon House has been agreed with Historic England (Statement of Common Ground with Historic England [EN010158/APP/5.16.3]) and National Trust (Draft Statement of Common Ground with National Trust [EN010158/APP/5.17.2] [REP2-020]).
3.4.43	Page 62, Ref 4.35	Buckinghamshire Council acknowledges that planting would help break up the solar farm, but considers it would still cover a large area and remain visually prominent in the landscape. It concludes that this would intrude on the setting of Claydon House and disrupt its wider relationships.	The Applicant acknowledges that the Proposed Development will cover a large area and will be visually prominent in the landscape and will intrude on the setting of Claydon House. The effect on Claydon House and its wider relationships is considered to result in less than substantial harm at the lower end, which is agreed with Historic England (Statement of Common Ground with Historic England [EN010158/APP/5.16.3]) and National Trust (Draft Statement of Common Ground with National Trust [EN010158/APP/5.17.2] [REP2-020]).
3.4.44	Page 64, Ref 5.1	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council disagrees with the Applicant's cumulative effects assessment, particularly in relation to Bechstein's bats, and considers it understates the scale and significance of impacts on a nationally important population. Buckinghamshire Council highlights reliance on unproven mitigation, insufficient consideration of combined effects from multiple schemes, and underestimation of landscape and visual impacts, concluding that a precautionary approach on Bechstein Bat's indicates a clear risk of significant adverse effects at more than a local level.	Comment is noted however the Applicant does not agree that the cumulative assessment ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037] with regards Bechstein's bats is inadequate as potential cumulative residual effects for Bechstein's have been identified for certain projects. Please also see response to Ref. 3.3.37 (regarding HS2) and Ref. 3.4.15 (regarding scale of impacts, notably on conservation status).

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3.4.45	Page 65, Ref 5.3	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council considers the cumulative assessment understates the contribution of the BESS, particularly given its distinct industrial character within the landscape. Buckinghamshire Council concludes that, when experienced alongside other infrastructure, it reinforces perceptions of large-scale cumulative change and gives rise to impacts of at least district-level importance that are not appropriately weighted.	The Applicant points to Ref. 3.4.10 in terms of how the BESS would be perceived as part of the overall Proposed Development. The Applicant disagrees that the effects of the BESS, as part of the wider Proposed Development, have not been appropriately weighted in terms of cumulative change. It has been assessed in ES Volume 4, Appendix 17.3: Cumulative Visualisations [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-136] that the Proposed Development in combination with the cumulative schemes, would increase the extent of effects to regional landscape receptors as follows: • LCT 5: Shallow Valleys from minor adverse (not significant) to moderate/minor adverse (not significant). • LCT 9: Low Hills and Ridges from moderate/minor adverse (not significant) to moderate adverse (not significant). • Quainton-Wing Hills AAL from moderate/minor adverse (not significant) to moderate adverse (not significant). In addition, effects have been judged to increase for local landscape receptors as follows: • LCA 5.7: Hogshaw Claylands from moderate adverse (significant) to major/moderate adverse (significant). • LCA 9.2: Quainton Hill from moderate adverse (not significant) to moderate adverse (significant). The Applicant therefore concludes that all district and local scale landscape effects have been considered.
3.4.46	Page 65, Ref 5.8	Comment noting that the CTMP requires coordination with HS2.	The Statement of Common Ground with High Speed 2 Limited [EN010158/APP/5.19] [REP1-030] commits to this engagement.
3.4.47	Page 67 – Page 71 , Ref. 6.1, 6.2 and 6.4	Comment noting that the Council acknowledges that the Applicant has improved the clarity of its health assessment through additional material and updates, however, it is noted that these changes are largely descriptive. Buckinghamshire Council maintains its position that there is a need for: • Clearer signposting as to how sensitivity is carried through consistently into discrete receptor definition (place-based high-exposure receptors), significance judgements, and targeted mitigation/monitoring for the most affected groups • Clearer methodological signposting (including how the cited ISEP SIA in EIA guidance underpins social cohesion conclusions);	The Applicant has provided its position regarding signposting as to how sensitivity is carried through consistently into discrete receptor definition (place-based high-exposure receptors), significance judgements, and targeted mitigation/monitoring for the most affected groups under item 3.2.13 in this table. The ISEP (Social Impact Assessment in EIA) Guidance has been inherently applied within Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] – in respect of the approach to health and wellbeing effects, that guidance specifically refers back to other ISEP Guidance to be followed when considering effects on health and wellbeing, that is regularly referred to within the assessment. In specific reference to social cohesion, the Applicant considers that the referenced guidance does not set out methodology, baseline indicators or significance criteria for assessments on social cohesion, and as such considers the approach taken within Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] to be proportionate and relevant to all available guidance. The Applicant has provided its position regarding the approach to prominence of the assessment of health and wellbeing within the ES and Non-Technical Summary in response to the ExA's Written Question (Q2.10.1) – see Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23] (Table 4-10).

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		- Improved prominence and ES-wide reporting of health conclusions (including updating the Non-Technical Summary); - Further avoidance and targeted mitigation to address residual significant landscape/visual and PRoW-related wellbeing effects (including cumulative effects) through a robust place-based assessment of geographically higher-exposure receptors (including the specific receptors and communities previously identified by the Council)	The Applicant is content that the assessment provided within Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] is proportionate, in-line with ISEP guidance on assessment of health determinants at an appropriate scale. Notwithstanding this, the Applicant has provided some contextual amendments to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] which has been submitted at Deadline 4. These amendments do not represent further, additional assessment, which the Applicant does not consider is necessary, but are intended to make more explicit the approach and findings of the assessment, and to clearly set out the approach to linking receptor identification to effects to bespoke mitigation. This does not change the assessment of significance concluded by Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6]. The Applicant does not consider that further amendments are required to Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] and refers Buckinghamshire Council to the Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [REP3-051].
3.4.48	Page 69, Ref. 6.3	Buckinghamshire Council maintains its concerns that although the report references embedded and additional mitigation and draws on management plans and certified documents, the report should provide clearer assurance that the mitigation outcomes relied upon are accurately cross-referenced and secured at the level of specificity described, as this traceability issue is not resolved by a sensitivity-focused narrative update.	The Applicant is of the view that the mitigation referred to within and relied upon for the residual assessment of effects on health and wellbeing are fully assured and traceable. Buckinghamshire Council has raised this point on several occasions, but has not provided any examples of where it is considered that “Annex A appears to describe mitigation outcomes more specifically than the underpinning outline plans and certified documents”. The Applicant has undertaken a thorough review of all references to mitigation within Annex A (Health Effects Report) of ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6] and is assured that there is no discrepancy between the level of specificity described within that document and the outline plans and certified documents it references.
3.4.49	Page 75, Ref 7.4	Comment noting that acceptance of the assessment approach whereby in situations where contamination is found present, mitigation will be completed prior to construction works and risks will be resolved.	The Applicant welcomes this agreement.
3.4.50	Page 77, Ref 7.9	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council have reviewed the additional / amended information within the Outline Drainage Strategy and Outline Management Plans and is satisfied with the contents related to BESS contamination risk.	The Applicant welcomes this comment.
3.4.51	Page 80, Ref 8.2	Buckinghamshire Council accepts the methodological structure but considers that effects of moderate magnitude should result in at least moderate adverse and significant outcomes, creating a disconnect with	The Applicant welcomes the acceptance of the methodological structure but reiterates the position that when applying this methodology, there is no reason that levels of effect assessed as either moderate/slight or moderate magnitude cannot ultimately be judged as not significant. Table A10.3 as set out in ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.1: Rosefield LVIA Methodology and Assessment Criteria

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		the Applicant's conclusions. It also highlights that the use of a simplified three-point sensitivity scale contributes to an overall under-assessment of effects.	[EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-110] demonstrates that overall landscape and visual effects at these levels of magnitude can vary between Major/Moderate to Minor depending on the associated receptor sensitivity. The Applicant does not recognise the three-point sensitivity scale as simplified as it clearly sits within the expected three to maximum five-point scale as recommended in GLVIA3.
3.4.52	Page 81, Ref 8.3	Comment noting that even with the provision of proposed mitigation planting the scale and nature of the proposed scheme would still be at odds with the existing landscape character and would not result in moderate beneficial effects following 10 years of establishment.	As noted in GLVIA3 para. 3.5.7, a judgement as to whether effects should be categorised as adverse or beneficial is part of the overall LVIA process. The Applicant reiterates that the beneficial judgement is made solely with regard to the landscape fabric within the Order Limits (made up of the individual components of the landscape such as trees, hedgerows, field pattern and its landform) and does not relate to the introduction of the Proposed Development other than how it affects these elements. Hence, the Applicant's position is that the large increase in hedgerow and woodland planting, together with a minimal effect on the field patten and topography, would result in an overall beneficial nature of effect on landscape fabric. Conversely, all judgements with regard to changes to landscape character in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] are clearly described as adverse.
3.4.53	Page 84, Ref. 8.9	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council maintains its position that the LVIA underestimates cumulative landscape effects, particularly in relation to combined impacts on Landscape Character Areas. Buckinghamshire Council considers that the scale and extent of built development would introduce significant and incongruous change that is not sufficiently mitigated by existing landform or woodland. It therefore concludes that cumulative effects are likely to be more severe than assessed by the Applicant and remain of concern. Further comment noting that it would be potentially beneficial to have a discussion between Buckinghamshire Council and the Applicant to allowing opposing views to be discussed.	The Applicant points to the response at Ref. 3.4.45 . It is acknowledged that there would be additional landscape and visual effects within the cumulative assessment and that these would extend significant effects up to some 2km to the south east of the Order Limits to LCA Area 9.2: Quainton Hill for the duration of operation as set out in ES Volume 4, Appendix 17.2: Landscape and Visual Inter-project Cumulative Effect Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] [REP2-057] . It is apparent that a disagreement as to the extent of significant cumulative effects remains following a discussion between the Applicant and Buckinghamshire Council on 11 June 2026 (Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4]).
3.4.54	Page 85, Ref. 8.10	Comment noting that although it is accepted that a noise assessment has been undertaken, but that fails properly to reflect the magnitude and effect on PRoW users.	The operational phase noise levels experienced by PRoW/permissive paths users will be subject to mitigation, through the adoption of low-noise emitting equipment and perimeter barriers, as secured by Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5] . The baseline ambient sound levels along PRoWs and permissive paths within the Order Limits will be influenced by a variety of sources, which may include, but not be limited to, birds, insects, livestock, wind-blown foliage, occasional aircrafts and road traffic. On the basis of the residual noise levels generated by the Proposed Development post-mitigation and the acoustic masking effects of existing sound sources, perceptible noise from the Proposed Development during operation would be localised, rather than widespread along the PRoW/permissive path network. As a result, no significant adverse effects would be experienced by the users.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.4.55	Page 89, Ref. 8.17	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council accept the response with regards to setting out the structure of the methodology but would still expect that a receptor which receives either a moderate/minor or moderate magnitude of effect would still be assessed as at least moderate adverse and therefore significant residual effect (with additional mitigation). Therefore, resulting in a disconnect between the two positions.	The Applicant has addressed this point at Ref 3.4.51 above.
3.4.56	Page 91, Ref. 9.3	Buckinghamshire Council acknowledges that the proposed noise limits are met, but remains concerned that some receptors could still experience levels significantly above background at night in a very quiet rural setting. It concludes that, despite the worst-case assumptions used in the assessment, the character and context of the noise mean potential impacts remain a concern.	Noise generated by the Proposed Development has been mitigated and potential adverse impacts reduced to a minimum as stated in ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. This has been achieved through the introduction of mitigation measures (embedded and additional), which ensure that the lowest-observed-adverse-effect level (LOAEL) is not exceeded at surrounding residential receptors. By avoiding exceedances of the LOAEL threshold, this would constitute a situation whereby noise can be heard, but does not cause any change in behaviour, attitude or other physiological response. There may be a slight effect on the acoustic character of the area but not such that there is a change in the quality of life. The mitigation measures adopted in the operational phase assessment comprise of: - Maximising the separation distances between proposed noise emitting infrastructure and surrounding sensitive receptors. - Orientating noise emitting equipment to minimise off-site emissions. - Use of low-noise equipment. - Introduction of noise barriers around the BESS container areas, Central Inverters and Rosefield Substation. - Introduction of enclosures and/or barriers around the main transformers within the Rosefield Substation and Satellite Collector Compound. - Operational phase noise monitoring to demonstrate compliance. As noted in Section 13.13 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration [EN010158/APP/6.2.3], the operational phase assessment is based on all plant/equipment running at full duty during both daytime and night-time periods. This is likely to overestimate the noise emissions from the Site, as a reduced operating duty would be expected during periods of the night, when baseline sound levels are lowest, due to darkness and temperature fluctuations resulting in lower cooling demands; the level of noise reduction would be determined once plant/equipment specifications are defined during the detailed design stage. As a result, the difference between the rated noise levels and the typical background sound levels are expected to be lower than those presented. In all instances, the rating level is inclusive of penalties to account for the characteristics of the noise emissions. The mitigation measures adopted to achieve the operational noise rating levels set out in the Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5] would be subject to review at detailed design stage by Buckinghamshire Council, as stipulated by Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7].

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.4.57	Page 94, Ref. 10.3	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council maintains its position that there is a need for further assessment of Population effects to be undertaken and reported in a way that allows the reader to understand all factors that have led to the conclusions for a combined receptor type.	This comment has been addressed in response to Ref. 3.3.32 above, and in response to Q2.14.8 of the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions.
3.4.58	Page 99, Ref 11.1	Comment noting that the IEMA guide was published in 2022, not 2026. The Applicant states that they were unable to include IEMA guidance in ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.2], they have actually included it in Table 12.5 of Revision 1 and Table 12.6 of Revision 2 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.2]).	The guidance referred to in the Applicant's original response should have been the ISEP 'Soil Health and Environmental Assessment' guide, released in 2025, and not the IEMA (now ISEP) guide 'A New Perspective on Land and Soil In Environmental Impact Assessment', which was released in 2022. It is the 2025 ISEP guidance that has not been included in the assessment. Buckinghamshire Council is correct to point out that the 2022 IEMA guidance has been used throughout ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] .
3.4.59	Page 99, Ref 11.1	Comment noting that the updated the term "ecosystem services" to "soil structure" has not been updated throughout the document. The Applicant should correctly refer to the soil structure receptor that they are assessing.	ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] has been updated to refer to the receptor as 'soil structure' throughout.
3.4.60	Page 99 and 101, Ref 11.1 and 11.8	Comment noting that the Applicant notes that they have not specifically assessed "Ecological habitat, soil biodiversity and platform", "Soil carbon", "Soil hydrology" and "Archaeology, cultural heritage, community benefits and geodiversity for landscape" as these are accounted for within the ALC Grading. This is not the case and the Applicant may wish to reference other ES chapters.	The Applicant acknowledges that the wording within ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] may give the impression that ALC system directly assesses factors such as ecological habitat, soil biodiversity, soil carbon, hydrology, cultural heritage and so forth. The ALC system is concerned with the potential of land to support agricultural use, based on the presence of physical limitations and site factors. While the aforementioned may be considered as factors that could limit ALC Grading if relevant, they are not directly assessed by the ALC itself. The wording has been changed in the Chapter to reflect this, and references added to other ES Chapters that address these more directly.
3.4.61	Page 99, Ref 11.2	Comment welcoming the breakdown of ALC grades in Table 12.4. However, the breakdown is unclear due to an error in formatting and the areas do not align with the correct columns.	ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] Table 12.4 has been updated at Deadline 4 to fix the formatting errors.
3.4.62	Page 100, Ref 11.4	Comment requesting for the Applicant to follow Table 2 in the Institute of Quarrying Guidance in the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] to classify the soils as low resilience to handling as per Table 2. The heavy textures of the soils on site are further compounded by the fact that the soils on site have a weakly developed structure and are non-calcareous, making	The Applicant acknowledges that, in accordance with the Institute of Quarrying (IoQ) guidance, clay and heavy clay loam soils have an inherently low resilience to structural damage when considered on the basis of textural class alone. However, the Institute of Quarrying guidance also states that the resilience is significantly modified by the soil water regime (Soil Wetness Class) and the local climate. This is consistent with the IEMA guidelines classifying the clay and heavy clay loam soils as medium resilience due to the field capacity days being fewer than 150. Furthermore, the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069] explicitly recognises compaction as the principal risk associated with the Proposed Development and sets out a comprehensive framework

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		them more susceptible to compaction, as stated on page 16 of the Institute of Quarrying guidance.	of control measures. Soil handling suitability is therefore not overestimated in the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069]. The assessment therefore already applies the principles of the loQ guidance, as the classification of resilience as medium is in accordance with the loQ assertion to take climate into account.
3.4.63	Page 100, Ref 11.4	Comment noting that ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.2] acknowledges that the soils on the Site can be considered medium sensitivity due to field capacity days and texture as per the EIA method in the IEMA guidance. However, it is requested that the Applicant follows the Institute of Quarrying Guidance in the Outline SMP.	The Applicant maintains that the classification of the soils on the Site as medium sensitivity is appropriate for the soil handling procedures described in the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069]. The use of field capacity days in the IEMA guidance is particularly important as it provides an idea of the window of suitable working conditions. Furthermore, the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069] prescribes a precautionary approach to soil handling, whereby operations only take place under suitable ground and moisture conditions, with controls in place to prevent handling and trafficking while soils are wet and vulnerable to damage. The loQ guidance states that the resilience is significantly modified by the soil water regime (Soil Wetness Class) and the local climate. The assessment therefore already applies the principles of the loQ guidance, as the classification of resilience as medium is in accordance with the loQ assertion to take climate into account.
3.4.64	Page 101, 102, and 104 Ref 11.6, 11.9 and 11.15	Comment requesting for the Applicant to highlight the importance of treating the soils with care by applying the principles on page 16 of the Institute of Quarrying Guidance Good Practice Guide for Handling Soils in Mineral Workings in the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3]. As per Table 2, the clay and heavy clay loam textures of the soils on site are considered to have low resilience to structural damage and this is further compounded by the fact that the soils on site have a weakly developed structure, are non-calcareous and considered Wetness Class IV, making them more susceptible to compaction. It is important that the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] does not overestimate the resilience of the soils.	The Applicant maintains that the classification of the soils on the Site as medium sensitivity is appropriate for the soil handling procedures described in the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069]. The use of field capacity days in the IEMA guidance is particularly important as it provides an idea of the window of suitable working conditions. Furthermore, the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069] prescribes a precautionary approach to soil handling, whereby operations only take place under suitable ground and moisture conditions, with controls in place to prevent handling and trafficking while soils are wet and vulnerable to damage. The resilience of the soils is therefore not overestimated. 3.3.427 The loQ guidance states that the resilience is significantly modified by the soil water regime (Soil Wetness Class) and the local climate. The assessment therefore already applies the principles of the loQ guidance, as the classification of resilience as medium is in accordance with the loQ assertion to take climate into account.
3.4.65	Page 103, Ref 11.11	Buckinghamshire Council welcomes that the hard infrastructure such as the BESS has been sited on non-BMV land.	The Applicant welcomes this comment.
3.4.66	Page 111, Ref 14.15	Comment requesting that a statement on stone waste should be added into Appendix 5.7: Indicative Construction, Operation and Decommissioning Waste statement to clarify that for construction it accounts for all the temporary compounds being removed (if it	The Applicant has amended ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.7: Indicative Construction, Operation and Decommissioning Waste [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] at Deadline 4 to clarify that the figures included within this document consider the stone waste assumed to be required for the removal of the construction compounds at the end of the construction phase and removal of infrastructure at the end of the decommissioning phase.

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		does) and that in decommissioning it accounts for all temporary and permanent compounds (if it does). Once this is complete, Buckinghamshire Council consider this issue resolved.	
3.4.67	Page 112, Ref 14.16	Comment noting that the assumption that future landfill void capacity will remain comparable to current levels is flawed in the cumulative waste study; as an example, landfill capacity has reduced from 75,197,972 m3 in 2015 to 41,554,623 m3 in 2024.	The Applicant considers the study assumption, that future void capacity will remain comparable to current levels to be appropriate for the purposes of the technical note and is consistent with the approach undertaken for similar projects such as Springwell Solar Farm which has recently been granted development consent. Additionally, in accordance with Section 3 of the National Planning Policy for Waste. It is expected that the Waste Planning Authority will plan and allocate sufficient landfill capacity to meet future needs.
3.4.68	Page 113, Ref 14.20	Comment noting that indicative waste in Appendix 5.7 states it now includes 200kg per worker but not how many workers. Further comment noting that an overall Cardboard and Plastic volume is provided which presumably combines worker waste with packaging although this is not made clear. It is noted that workers will generate more than Cardboard and Plastic, such as food waste and septic tank waste and clarification is required on how this has been accounted for. A further comment notes that Photovoltaic Module Packaging Waste and String Inverter Packaging Waste gives a figure of packaging waste per unit but not how many units, therefore it is hard to establish how the overall 199 tonnes of Cardboard and Plastic waste have been reached.	The Applicant has amended ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.7: Indicative Construction, Operation and Decommissioning Waste [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] at Deadline 4 to clarify that the worker waste assumes the maximum of 600 construction staff as outlined in ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010158/APP/6.1.4] as a reasonable worst case. ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.7: Indicative Construction, Operation and Decommissioning Waste [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] has also been amended at Deadline 4 to clarify that the total cardboard and plastic waste volumes combines the anticipated worker waste and packaging in Table 1. Food waste and septic tank waste will be confirmed at the detailed design stage. The Applicant will engage with Buckinghamshire Council regarding the management food waste and septic tank waste once further detail is available. This is secured in the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5]. The Applicant has amended ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.7: Indicative Construction, Operation and Decommissioning Waste [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] at Deadline 4 to clarify the estimated number of photovoltaic modules and string inverters required during Construction. The number of modules and inverters are established from the reasonable worst-case.

Table 3.5: Buckinghamshire Council (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions – ISH1 Post Hearing Note) [REP3-056]

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.5.1	Page 2, Ref. 4 and 7	Comment noting whether the test that the SoS must apply when considering availability of a network connection (NPS EN-1 para 4.11.12) is met given that the PV generation will have Gate 2 Phase 2 prioritisation but that the BESS will have Gate 1 prioritisation as Gate 1 gives an uncertain connection date. It is ultimately up to the SoS to conclude whether the test is met.	The Applicant notes this comment and directs Buckinghamshire Council to Q2.2.2 in Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23] .
3.5.2	Page 3, Ref. 5, 6 and 8	Comment noting the Applicant's reliance on NPS EN1 para 3.2.6 prioritising projects for 2030 while remaining a robust pipeline beyond 2030 in relation to the BESS connection and how the BESS is not the subject of the Planning Act 2008 regime. Therefore, the need, and CNP presumption, must be seen in that context as it should be distinguished as to which infrastructure is directly the subject of the NSIP regime, and which is subject as a result of being associated development.	The Applicant confirms that it is proposing BESS as Associated Development to the main solar NSIP. However, it is important to note that NPS EN-1 (2023) (which applies to the Proposed Development) sets out the need for storage because of the benefits it brings to the energy system (see Paragraphs 3.3.5 and 3.3.6) and explains the role of electricity storage in Paragraphs 3.3.25 to 3.3.31. While the Applicant understands that standalone BESS sits outside of the NSIP regime, the NPSs also consider the possibility of co-located solar and storage schemes and NPS EN-3 (2023) expresses support for solar that is co-located with other functions, including storage, to maximise the efficiency of land use. (Paragraph 2.10.10). In Planning for New Energy Infrastructure (the government's consultation response to the new NPSs) available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69121170bda892e068aa6454/nps-revisions-2025-consultation-government-response.pdf the government explains that "<i>Clean Power 2030 is a milestone that reflects the scale of ambition required to meet our Net Zero 2050 target; it is not a fixed ceiling on technology deployment or project approvals</i>". It is the Applicant's view that this explanation applies to projects of all scales which require consent across all of the planning landscape, i.e. NSIPs and their associated development, and TCPA-consented schemes. This is consistent with the attributes of projects which can contribute to the Clean Power 2030 milestone. The government has clarified that its capacity ranges for solar are applicable to schemes of over 1MW in England and Wales. The threshold in Scotland is lower (Clean Power 2030 Action Plan, Connections Reform Annex (updated), p5 & Table 1, Footnote 10). Planning for New Energy Infrastructure therefore explains that the government has committed to "<i>ensure that language used across government publications does not inadvertently constrain ambitious deployment of clean energy technologies</i>" for example through the application of the Clean Power 2030 capacity ranges to the re-prioritisation of projects as part of Connections Reform, acting as a constraint on project approvals.
3.5.3	Page 3, Ref. 9 to 13	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council wish to see the underlying evidence that underpins the Applicant's letter on BESS siting to understand if proper compliance with the mitigation hierarchy was undertaken. Buckinghamshire Council believe that Fields E10 and E11 would be a better location for the	The Applicant provided further detail on the evidence underpinning the exclusion of Fields E10 and E11 from development as BESS in the Applicants Response to Action Point 7 from ISH1 [EN010158/APP/8.19] [REP3-052] .

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		BESS, noting the concerns the Applicant raised in relation to this location around noise, flood risk, and easement but requested further information. As the Council did not put E10 and E11 forward first, it is on the Applicant to properly set out that alternative.	
3.5.4	Page 6, Ref. 16 to 18	Comment relating to a policy concern around harm to the Bechstein's Bats. The Applicant relies on NPS EN-1 para 5.4.43 that harm to Bechstein's Bat should only attract significant weight against the Scheme in the planning balance. Buckinghamshire Council points to para 5.4.55 to state that it should be substantial weight against the Scheme in the planning balance and that such harm should lead to withholding the consent. The precautionary approach should be applied and the harm should be avoided by removing fields of PV in line with para 4.2.15 and the requirements of the CNPI presumption.	The Applicant points to the response provided to Q1.7.12 in Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] and the response provided to Q2.5.9 in Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23] .
3.5.5	Page 7, Ref. 19-21	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council aligns their position with Natural England and expresses concerns about the home range of bats and the established importance of this area to bats. Buckinghamshire Council request removal of the fields between the three ancient woodlands as well as B10 and B11, as a requirement of the mitigation hierarchy. Buckinghamshire Council believe that the Applicant's approach relies too heavily on later mitigation, monitoring and adaptive management.	The Applicant disagrees with both Natural England and Buckinghamshire Council that Solar PV panels should be removed from Fields B3, B6, B7 and B8 and also B10, B11, D28 and D29 with regards foraging bats. A full response to this question has already been provided within the Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] 1.1.5 page 5, 2.3.11 page 61) and in addition Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006], RR-203 page 209. However, the Applicant is still in dialogue with Natural England over fields B3, B6, B7 and B8 and are confident that an agreement can be reached. We would note that not all of these fields are currently grazed, and not all are requested to be excluded by Natural England. As detailed in ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] and secured via the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] the Applicant is proposing 95ha of grassland creation (more than twice what is being lost) as alternate grassland foraging habitat for bats and ground-nesting birds as mitigation for the permanent pasture being lost within fields B3, B6, B7, B8 and D29. In addition, Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105] Appendix I PDF p208 shows the distribution of known Bechstein's roosts. The known breeding roosts are concentrated to the south, notably to the west of HS2, away from Rosefield, and, importantly, in/around Finemere Wood, where new grazing land will be increased. The applicant believes that the mitigation as outlined in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] is adequate and follows the mitigation hierarchy. Monitoring is not being used as mitigation; monitoring will be undertaken against specific objectives to ensure that these are being met. Such monitoring will be used to determine if management regimes need to be amended to achieve the intended objectives; this is the underlying principle of all good monitoring. Further details with regards monitoring objectives will be provided within the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] which was submitted at Deadline 4.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.5.6	Page 7, Ref. 22-23	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council expect buffers for hedgerows to be measured from the edge of the feature as measuring from the centreline does not protect the feature itself, especially since the hedgerows are old, wide, non-uniform and contain large trees. Measuring from the centre-line would mean that the RPA's of large trees would not be protected.	A response has previously been provided within the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006] and secured within the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] . The spatial extent of the Proposed Development, as set out in the DCO Application, has similarly been based on offsets from the centreline of the hedgerows. This is considered to be the most consistent data source available across the Site. The buffers from hedgerows also accommodate the root protection zones of trees sited within the hedgerows.
3.5.7	Page 8, Ref. 26-30	Comment noting that areas had not been surveyed because of access and growth constraints. These areas should be identified on a plan to reduce baseline uncertainty and therefore reduce uncertainty on management of features such as around if buffers were appropriate during maintenance, mitigation and operation. To ensure confidence trees would be retained, maintained and protected, the Council requests an Arboriculture Method Statement and further information in the Outline LEMP.	The Applicant acknowledges the Council's comments regarding areas where survey access or visibility were more constrained however all areas have been surveyed on the ground. It is not agreed that these localised constraints give rise to material baseline uncertainty or affect confidence in the assessment of arboricultural impacts. As set out previously, all arboricultural features were subject to ground-based inspection and were subsequently ground-truthed against the drone-derived base mapping. Whilst some trees were located within dense hedgerows, ditch corridors where direct measurement were more challenging, sufficient information was available to undertake a BS 5837:2012-compliant assessment. These constraints did not materially affect tree categorisation, condition assessment, crown spread plotting, Root Protection Area calculations, retention recommendations or the identification of arboricultural constraints. In relation to the Arboricultural method statement pleased see response at Ref. 3.2.10 .
3.5.8	Page 9, Ref. 31	Comment noting that while Buckinghamshire Council generally accepts the Applicant's responses at Deadline 2, they note that it became apparent from submissions from CSAG that one of the fields may not be suitable and therefore, reserve the right to look at the fields.	The Applicant notes the comments made. Some of the fields to the north of Finemere wood are gently sloping, which is what the Applicant believes CSAG are referring to. However, these fields are not so steep as to prevent arable management and these fields already support low numbers of farmland birds including skylark, yellow hammer and linnet and the Applicant does not consider the topography of these fields to be a barrier to using them for mitigation, given that ground nesting species are already present, and that (with appropriate management) the carrying capacity can be increased. The mitigation measures detailed in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] need to be considered as a suite of measures collectively (not individually) and are designed to ensure that a viable population of farmland birds can be maintained in the long term. The Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006] (see RR-020, Page 288) provided evidence that solar schemes designed with biodiversity in mind can support a greater diversity of breeding birds than a typical arable and modified grassland landscape.
3.5.9	Page 9, Ref. 33-34	Comment noting a number of concerns about the BNG metric including arable field margins, individual trees, assumptions about advance creation of woodland and hedgerows, the reality of achieving species rich or other neutral grassland in good condition, and that further clarification is required on which units were derived from mitigation/compensation compared to additional enhancement.	A detailed response relating to these issues raised by Buckinghamshire Council has been provided above in this document in Ref 3.1.7 .

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		The Council also noted that the LNRS has now been published and should be used for strategic significance.	
3.5.10	Page 10, Ref. 36-37	Comment noting concerns about the Applicant's approach to classifying sensitivity which used a 3 point scale rather than a 5 point scale. The 3 point scale is a reason which led to an underscoring of likely effects with some effects classified as moderate adverse but not significant. The Council normally expects moderate adverse to be significant.	The Applicant has addressed this point at Ref. 3.4.51 above.
3.5.11	Page 11, Ref. 38-42	Comment noting that D28 and D29 are within the AAL and concern of impacts not only from a landscape perspective but an ecological and cumulative one as well. The Council believe that these fields should be removed from development as the development would be noticeable despite mitigation when traversing along PRow.	The Applicant reiterates the position that significant effects as a result of the Proposed Development in Fields D28 and D29 would only be experienced to a very local level as set out in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. Although there is some potential wider visibility of the these fields as demonstrated by the photomontage from Quainton Hill, Viewpoint 30 in ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.6: LVIA Visualisations [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-117], their contribution to the overall scale of change in these views would be negligible. A detailed response with regards ecological impacts in Fields D28 and D29 is given within the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006] (see RR026 pages 21-23) A full intra-project combined assessment of the Proposed Development has been carried out in ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037].
3.5.12	Page 12, Ref. 43-47	Comment noting the ambiguity of the word 'potential' in the Outline LEMP. Buckinghamshire Council also requests further mitigation to mitigation effects that they see as problematic as it is difficult to have confidence that all steps to resolve issues have been taken e.g. on BESS mitigation.	As outlined in the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049] under agenda item 5b, the Applicant considers that the word 'potential' confers that the final design of the Scheme has not been determined and therefore the final mitigation to be applied is not known until the final design is established. The measures set out in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] are a commitment to mitigate the Proposed Development and the final LEMP must demonstrate to the Local Authority that the mitigation is substantially in accordance with the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5]. The Applicant welcomes confirmation from Buckinghamshire Council that it is satisfied with the approach to establishment and ongoing maintenance of mitigation planting in the oLEMP. In relation to BESS mitigation, the Applicant's response to Q1.15.10 within the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] and at Ref. 7.3.3 of the Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] the Applicant sets out the mitigation measures already in place to break up views of the Proposed Development, and particularly the BESS, in views from the south east. These earlier responses also highlight that further detailed design is most appropriately dealt with at discharge of requirements stage, as it would depend on the detailed design of the Proposed Development and in particular the BESS.

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3.5.13	Page 13, Ref. 49-50	Comment noting Buckinghamshire Council's concerns about Annex D as they believe that the significance of assets had not been adequately explained or assessed in a number of instances or having regard to Historic England's GPA 3. The Council have provided an example in relation to Botolph House in its Deadline 3 submission.	The Applicant has provided more detail within Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] submitted at Deadline 4 but does not consider that the level of harm is altered by consideration of these other elements of significance.
3.5.14	Page 13, Ref. 51-52	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council does not change its position on harm to Claydon House due to the cumulation of elements and that Claydon House should be considered as a whole, including connection to the former estate, the parklands, the satellite farms, and the view from Knowl Hill. Buckinghamshire Council have not identified further mitigation.	The Applicant has considered Claydon House and the contribution of its setting to various elements of its significance as a whole, and has concluded that the harm to this significance as a whole will be at the lower end of less than substantial. This level of harm is agreed with Historic England (Statement of Common Ground with Historic England [EN010158/APP/5.16.3]) and National Trust (Draft Statement of Common Ground with National Trust [EN010158/APP/5.17.2] [REP2-020]).
3.5.15	Page 14, Ref. 53-56	Comment noting the importance of the approaches past Ponds Farmhouse and connecting to other assets therefore, surrounding it with development would cause top end of less than substantial harm. Buckinghamshire Council noted that the mitigation planting may be harmful and recommend further setback. The Council also comment that Appendix D does not address the architecture and the link with Claydon House.	The Applicant has considered the architecture of Pond Farmhouse and its links to Claydon House within Annex D of ES Volume 4, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment and Setting Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] submitted at Deadline 4. The Applicant acknowledges that the effect of surrounding Pond Farmhouse with Solar PV will cause harm to its significance that would equate to a moderate effect and that this would be significant. The Applicant however considers that this does not approach substantial harm and therefore judges the harm to be in the middle of the scale of less than substantial.
3.5.16	Page 15, Ref. 59	Comment requesting further detail of mode share in the Outline CTMP and how it will be secured.	The Applicant has included this in a revised Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] at Deadline 4 as agreed in post hearing discussions.
3.5.17	Page 15, Ref. 60	Comment noting concern on the wording around temporary traffic signals in the DCO.	The Applicant has proposed text changes to Buckinghamshire Council and is awaiting their response.
3.5.18	Page 16, Ref. 65	Comment requesting the minimum widths for newly created footpaths to be secured within the relevant DCO documents and a new column in the relevant table in the dDCO for the widths.	The Applicant confirms that it has secured the minimum width (2m) for newly created footpaths in Part 1 of Schedule 6 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] which was submitted at Deadline 4.
3.5.19	Page 17, Ref. 68	Comment noting that the Council considered that the test to the exception to CNP (section 4.2.15 of NPS EN-1) could in-principle be met by TCS/Preston Farms, but that more evidence was required for Council's consideration.	While the Applicant does not dispute that there are exceptions to the CNP presumption as set out in paragraph 4.2.15 of NPS EN-1, the Applicant maintains that the residual impacts on TCS Biosciences Ltd/Preston Farms Ltd do not present an 'unacceptable risk to, or unacceptable interference with, human health and public safety' (and therefore the test for an exception is not met). The Applicant refers to its

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			response to Q1.17.1 within the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087]. The Applicant, like Buckinghamshire Council, welcomes TCS Biosciences Ltd and Preston Farms Ltd to submit further information for consideration on how it considers the exceptions test is met.
3.5.20	Page 17, Ref. 69-71	Comment that Buckinghamshire Council had not done a specific assessment of TCS Biosciences/Preston Farms and did not see one from the Applicant however they consider it important that effects are properly assessed. Buckinghamshire Council have concerns that the underlying sensitivity is probably incorrect and therefore an underassessment of significance and absence of mitigation.	The Applicant has undertaken an assessment of significance on the viability of agricultural and non-agricultural businesses, in line with the proposed approach in the ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.1: EIA Scoping Report [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-079]. In-line with the approach to sensitivity set out in Table 14.21 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4], the sensitivity of non-agricultural receptors draws on guidance (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) 'LA 112 Population and Human Health') and is influenced by changes to environment or access such that significant effects may: a) affect viability (<u>Very High</u>); b) affect operating practices, with limited capacity to absorb or respond to change (<u>High</u>); c) affect operating practices but not to a significant degree due to capacity to absorb or respond to changes (<u>Medium</u>); or d) affect operating practices such that significant effects may influence operating practices to a slight or hardly perceptible degree (<u>Low</u>). As such, assessments are based on the factors that the business relies upon for its viability or operating model. In one case (TCS Biosciences Ltd), the potential for effects on viability are considered to meet the 'very high' criteria – the business is located partly within the Order Limits, so will experience changes in land and access, and interaction with project infrastructure directly, as well as immediate environmental effects. Its operating model is such that it relies upon access to and within land affected, and a strictly controlled environment. The magnitude of change for these non-agricultural receptors draws on guidance (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) 'LA 112 Population and Human Health') and is determined by criteria set out in Table 14.22 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4], which considers whether there is: a) Loss, damage or change to attributes, quality or key characteristics or vulnerability (A <u>Moderate/Major</u> change would mean loss or severe damage e.g. direct total or partial acquisition and demolition compromising viability; a <u>Minor</u> change would be a discernible change in attributes, minor loss of or alteration to key characteristics – e.g. amendment to access or acquisition of land resulting in changes to operating conditions that do not compromise overall viability); and/or b) Introduction of severance with adequate accessibility provision (a <u>Moderate/Major</u> change would require the introduction of complete or severe severance with limited/moderate accessibility provision; a <u>Minor</u> change provides adequate accessibility provision). In all cases, in the context of these criteria, at most a minor magnitude of change is anticipated on all non-agricultural business receptors including TCS Biosciences Ltd. This is in consideration of embedded and additional mitigation, including the provision of land swaps with what the Applicant and Claydon Estate consider equal or better provision of land in terms of quality and

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			access, and additional mitigation has been developed through engagement with affected parties and in-line with standards and guidance for the management of (e.g. air quality, noise, traffic/access). Bespoke mitigation is secured specific to TCS Biosciences Ltd, as set out in Appendix 1 to the Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086]. Following the application of these mitigations, the Applicant believes that there would remain discernible change in attributes and a minor loss of some key characteristics of these businesses including amendment to access or acquisition of land (which where acquired, would be replaced) resulting in changes to operating conditions that do not compromise overall viability.
3.5.21	Page 18, Ref. 72	Comment noting concerns about the timelines in Schedule 16 of the draft DCO.	The Applicant shared proposed amendments to the text of Schedule 16 (Procedure for discharge of requirements) with Buckinghamshire Council on 15 June 2026. The Applicant received comments from the Council on 16 June 2026 and incorporated these changes into the updated Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] submitted at Deadline 4. The Council indicated that it had no further substantive points on this issue at this stage.
3.5.22	Page 18, Ref. 73	Comment noting that although agreed the traffic route with the Applicant, Buckinghamshire Council has not assessed the particular sensitivities of TCS Biosciences and Preston Farms and therefore, the traffic route should not be taken to have resolved.	The Applicant notes the Council's comments relating to sensitivities regarding Preston Farms Ltd/ TCS Biosciences Ltd, however notes that Buckinghamshire Council has not raised any concerns relating to the general use of Granborough Road. Further information relating to the alternative route is provided in the Construction Access Review [EN010158/APP/8.26] being provided at Deadline 4.
3.5.23	Page 18, Ref. 74	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council has a general concern about the level of detail provided by the Applicant in the ES (relating to effects on TCS Biosciences) and a lack of transparency.	The Applicant recognises the concern raised by Buckinghamshire Council. The Applicant and TCS Biosciences Ltd had signed a Non-Disclosure Agreement which limited the amount of detailed information that could be submitted within ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4]. Notwithstanding this, the highest value of sensitivity ('Very High') has been afforded to TCS Biosciences Ltd and Preston Farms Ltd within the assessment, in order to account for the specific, highly sensitive and unique operations that occur at this site for the business. Further information about the specific operations of the business have been iteratively made available to the examination throughout the process, which weren't fully available to the Applicant at the point of submission. Where practicable, the Applicant has sought to adapt and design mitigation to address this iterative information about the operations of TCS Biosciences Ltd, which has been incorporated into subsequently amended and submitted responses and updated Management Plans, in order to give a fuller picture of the approach to understanding and addressing potential impacts.
3.5.24	Page 18, Ref. 76-77	Comment noting Buckinghamshire Council's residual concern regarding the difference between the absolute and relative noise increases caused by the Scheme. Despite the 35dB threshold being acceptable, the increase of 10dB plus, despite being within the acceptable range as per the relevant BS, was problematic given the rural and tranquil character	Noise generated by the Proposed Development has been mitigated and potential adverse impacts reduced to a minimum as detailed in ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] . This has been achieved through the introduction of mitigation measures (embedded and additional), which ensure that the lowest-observed-adverse-effect level (LOAEL) is not exceeded at surrounding residential receptors. By avoiding exceedances of the LOAEL threshold, this would constitute a situation whereby noise can be heard, but does not cause any change in behaviour,

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		of the area. The Council request further assurance in the Detailed OEMP.	attitude or other physiological response. There may be a slight effect on the acoustic character of the area but not such that there is a change in the quality of life. The mitigation measures adopted in the operational phase assessment comprise of: - Maximising the separation distances between proposed noise emitting infrastructure and surrounding sensitive receptors. - Orientating noise emitting equipment to minimise off-site emissions. - Use of low-noise equipment. - Introduction of noise barriers around the BESS container areas, Central Inverters and Rosefield Substation. - Introduction of enclosures and/or barriers around the main transformers within the Rosefield Substation and Satellite Collector Compound. - Operational phase noise monitoring to demonstrate compliance. As noted in Section 13.13 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration [EN010158/APP/6.2.3], the operational phase assessment is based on all plant/equipment running at full duty during both daytime and night-time periods. This is likely to overestimate the noise emissions from the Site, as a reduced operating duty would be expected during periods of the night, when baseline sound levels are lowest, due to darkness and temperature fluctuations resulting in lower cooling demands; the level of noise reduction would be determined once plant/equipment specifications are defined during the detailed design stage. As a result, the difference between the rated noise levels and the typical background sound levels are expected to be lower than those presented. In all instances, the rating level is inclusive of penalties to account for the characteristics of the noise emissions. The mitigation measures adopted to achieve the operational noise rating levels set out in the Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5] would be subject to review at detailed design stage by Buckinghamshire Council, as stipulated by Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7].
3.5.25	Page 19, Ref. 78-81	Comment noting that a user of the PRoW should not be classified as 'transient' when the user might be in the noise effect area for an extended period. Buckinghamshire Council noted that the WHO Guidance states <i>"existing quiet outdoor areas should be preserved and the ratio of intruding noise to natural background sound should be kept low"</i>. Buckinghamshire Council accepts that there is no quantitative assessment but a qualitative or hybrid assessment are acceptable.	Within paragraph 81 of Buckinghamshire Council post ISH1 note [REP3-056], reference is made to the WHO Guidelines for Community Noise, specifically the following requirement for outdoor areas in parkland and conservations areas: <i>"existing quiet outdoor areas should be preserved and the ratio of intruding noise to natural background sound should be kept low"</i>. Buckinghamshire Council advise that this requirement should be applied to the operational phase noise assessment for PRoW users. This is contested by the Applicant, on the basis that the PRoW do not constitute either parkland or conservation areas in their own right, nor are they located within any defined parkland or conservation areas. There are no quantitative assessment thresholds for the determination of adverse effects on PRoWs. Notwithstanding this, the resultant operational phase noise levels experienced by PRoW users will be subject to mitigation, through the adoption of low-noise emitting equipment and perimeter barriers, as secured by Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5].

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			The baseline ambient sound levels along PRowS and permissive paths within the Order Limits will be influenced by a variety of sources, which may include, but not be limited to, birds, insects, livestock, wind-blown foliage, road traffic and occasional aircrafts. On the basis of the residual noise levels generated by the Proposed Development post-mitigation and the acoustic masking effects of existing sound sources, perceptible noise from the Proposed Development during operation would be localised, rather than widespread along the PRow/permissive path network.

Table 3.6: Buckinghamshire Council (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions – ISH2 Post Hearing Note) [REP3-057]

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.6.1	Pages 2 and 3, Paras. 5 and 6	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council considers Article 9 may be sufficient to provide notice in relation to Article 8, subject to confirmation that all relevant uses of Article 8 are captured within its provisions. Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council wishes to explore this further with the Applicant, with an update to follow by Deadline 4 following discussion, notwithstanding the original action point timetable.	The Applicant notes the comment that Article 9 may be sufficient to provide notice. Article 9(1) confirms that the permit scheme set out in Article 9 applies to street works carried out under the powers conferred by Article 8 (street works) of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]. Accordingly, Buckinghamshire Council would be made notified of the relevant works upon permit application. The Applicant also refers to Article 8(3) of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] which states that <i>“Where the undertaker is not the street authority, the provisions of sections 54 (notice of certain works) to 106 (index of defined expressions) of the 1991 Act apply to any street works carried out under paragraph (1)”</i>. As noted in the Explanatory Memorandum EN010158/APP/3.2.4] [CR1-010] this addition of sections from the New Roads and Streets Act 1991 provides protection for the street authority in respect of street works carried out pursuant to Article 8(1). For example, Section 54 of the New Roads and Streets Act 1991 means that the Applicant must give advance notice of particular street works to the street authority and the Applicant must comply with requirements that have been prescribed by the street authority. The Applicant therefore considers its approach to providing notice in respect of powers under Article 8 is sufficient and appropriate.
3.6.2	Page 3, Para. 7	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council considers a notice provision should be included within Article 10 wherever possible, consistent with its position on ensuring adequate notification mechanisms. Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council understands the Applicant is considering how such notice requirements may align with the permit scheme and wishes to explore this further through discussion.	The Applicant refers to its response given in Action Point 4 of its Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) [EN010158/APP/8.17] [REP3-050] which explained that the Applicant does not consider it necessary for separate notice provisions to be incorporated into Article 10 because Buckinghamshire Council would be made notified of the relevant works upon permit application.
3.6.3	Page 3, Para. 10	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council's suggested wording for Section 278 agreements (Article 16), drawn from the Sizewell DCO, was discussed with the Applicant. Comment noting that discussions between the Council and the Applicant are ongoing and will continue following the hearings to resolve this matter.	Please refer to Applicant's response to Ref 3.1.18 in this document.
3.6.4	Page 3, Para. 11	Comment noting that Buckingham Council considered that Article 22 should not contain compulsory acquisition wording in relation to mines and mineral rights.	The Applicant refers to its response given in agenda item 4 of its Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) [EN010158/APP/8.17] [REP3-050] where it was explained that no additional paragraph was needed in Article 22 to confirm that compulsory acquisition powers do not extend to mines and minerals because Article 48 (Compulsory acquisition of land –

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		Further comment noting that this position should be secured within the DCO but will leave this to the ExA to resolve.	incorporation of the mineral code) ensures that where land is compulsorily acquired, the Applicant does not acquire rights to mines and minerals.
3.6.5	Page 4, Para. 15	Comment noting the mechanism to which part of the DCO could be transferred, with oversight from the SoS. Further comment noting no further comments besides the fact that the this matter should be resolved by the ExA.	The Applicant notes this comment. The Applicant's view on this matter is contained in its response given in agenda item 4 of its Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 2 (ISH2) [EN010158/APP/8.17] [REP3-050] .
3.6.6	Page 4, Para. 17	Comment noting, in respect of Article 41, discussions on the disapplication of certain tree protection orders. Further comment noting that the Applicant will be looking into this matter further and that the oLEMP and detailed LEMP will deal with such matters.	The Applicant refers to section 4.6.14 of the Explanatory Memorandum [EN010158/APP/3.2.4] [CR1-010]. That section explains the extent and purpose of the power in Article 41 and notes that it is a model provision which has been modified to reflect that no tree preservation orders (TPO) relevant to the Proposed Development currently exist. The drafting follows the approach accepted in the Cleve Hill Solar Park Order 2020, the Cottam Solar Project Order 2024 and the Springwell Solar Farm Order 2026 whereby the power applies to TPOs made after the submission of the Application because there are trees within the Order Limits with the potential to attract a TPO in the future. The Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] (secured by Requirement 7 in the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]) also contains measures related to the removal of trees subject to a TPO and replacement planting. It notes that, while no removals of trees subject to a TPO are proposed, where an individual tree subject to a TPO must be removed (e.g. due to its dead or dangerous condition) and the relevant planning authority requires replacement, a new tree of equivalent species and ultimate size will be planted in the same place or as near as reasonably practicable to the position of the removed tree, subject to operational requirements.
3.6.7	Pages 4 and 5, Paras. 19 and 20	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council considers the oCEMP provisions relating to working hours and noise appear sufficient in principle to control activity outside normal hours, subject to confirmation from relevant officers. Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council will confirm its position following consultation with its expert, indicating that this matter remains subject to final verification. Further comment from Buckinghamshire Council noting their expert has been on leave and so Buckinghamshire Council have not been able to confirm the matter but will do so by Deadline 4.	The Applicant welcomes Buckinghamshire Council's view on this matter and awaits the confirmation of its position at Deadline 4.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.6.8	Page 5, Paras. 22 and 23	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council wishes to discuss the provisions of Schedule 16 further with the Applicant, particularly in relation to ensuring that time limits are proportionate. Comment noting that this matter remains ongoing, with further engagement between Buckinghamshire Council and the Applicant anticipated and an update expected by Deadline 4.	The Applicant shared proposed amendments to the text of Schedule 16 (Procedure for discharge of requirements) with Buckinghamshire Council on 15 June 2026. The Applicant received comments from the Council on 16 June 2026 and incorporated these changes into the updated Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] submitted at Deadline 4. The Council indicated that it had no further substantive points on this issue at this stage.
3.6.9	Page 5, Para. 24	Comment noting that Buckinghamshire Council has raised a query regarding whether Article 6 should disapply Section 106 of the Water Industry Act 1991, given the inclusion of a bespoke water discharge provision in Article 18. Comment noting that the Applicant has indicated it will await the outcome of the ongoing Gatwick Airport DCO judicial review before providing clarification, which Buckinghamshire Council welcomes.	The Applicant is awaiting the judgement of the Gatwick Airport judicial review and will confirm its position at a later date.
3.6.10	Page 5, Para. 25	Comment noting that, in relation to Requirement 20 of Schedule 2, Buckinghamshire Council has raised concerns regarding the risk of the relevant undertaker being dissolved prior to decommissioning, and the implications this would have for securing and delivering those works. Comment noting that the Applicant has indicated this issue will be addressed following the hearing, and further detail is therefore expected on how decommissioning obligations will be secured in such circumstances.	The Applicant notes the position states Requirement 20 but the Applicant understand this query to be about Requirement 18. A response to this has been provided in Action Point 15 of ISH2 in the document Applicant's Outstanding Responses to Actions from ISH1 and ISH2 [EN010158/APP/8.24].

Table 3.7: Claydons Solar Action Group (Responses to comments on written representations (WRs)) [\[REP3-062\]](#)

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.7.1	Page 2, Paras. 1 - 3	Comment noting that the party maintains its written representation position (in REP2-086) and considers that their key concerns remain unaddressed, with disappointment that no scheme amendments have been made. Further comment noting that while the party is willing to engage through a Statement of Common Ground, their limited resources constrain further expert input where discussions are unlikely to lead to meaningful changes.	The Applicant notes the summarised position of the party. The Applicant would direct Claydons Solar Action Group to the responses provided in Tables 3.1 and 5.9 respectively of Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [REP3-051] and Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] (particularly Appendix 2). The Applicant continues to welcome engagement with Claydons Solar Action Group through the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Claydons Solar Action Group [EN010158/APP/5.23.2]. Several changes have also been made to the design of the Proposed Development since Deadline 3, including: the additional 50m BESS setback; the offer of temporary grazing land during construction and amendments to the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5] to secure stronger mitigation measures and the Construction Compound has been removed from Field E23.
3.7.2	Pages 2 - 4, Paras. 5 – 11 and Para. 14	Comment noting the Applicant's response to the party's REP2-086 submission, with consideration of the approach to site selection and assessment of alternatives, has misunderstood the party's central point. Further comment clarifying the party's point which is that the Applicant fails to consider any other site at the first stage of the mitigation hierarchy. Further comment that this is in conflict with the NPSs with references to NPS EN-1 (paras. 4.1.4, 4.2.10 and 4.2.11) and NPS EN-3 (para. 2.1.8).	In direct response to paragraph 7 of the party's submission, the Applicant reiterates that, as reported in Appendix 1 (Site Selection Report) to the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5], there is no standard methodology for the site selection of solar farms. The Applicant also points to Ref. 3.4.2 of this document and, in particular, the fact that the NPSs place no policy requirements on demonstrating that a proposed project is the best option locationally but, rather, that it is acceptable under the provisions of the relevant policies. The Applicant also points to Ref. 3.4.3 which, again, clarifies that once it was clear that the main landowner of the Order Limits was amenable in principle to bringing forward a solar scheme on their land, which met the site selection criteria and offered a large landholding with opportunities for flexibility in precisely where solar and associated mitigation was located, the Applicant did not look further for alternative sites. This is because the Applicant is confident that the mitigation hierarchy has been successfully applied at the site level through the micro-siting of elements across the land that was made available to the Applicant. To this end, the avoidance step of the mitigation hierarchy has been successfully implemented at the site level and this is reflected in Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014].
3.7.3	Page 4, Paras. 12 and 13	Comment noting that the Applicant failed to consider alternative sites and therefore did not assess whether impacts on the Bechstein's bat population, proposed SSSI, or affected businesses could be avoided. Further comment noting that the Applicant instead proceeded directly to mitigation, reduction and compensation, bypassing the initial avoidance stage of the mitigation hierarchy. Further comment noting that the Applicant cannot therefore claim the impacts are truly residual and cannot draw on NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.2.15.	The Applicant disagrees with the party's comments for the same reasons provided for at Ref. 3.7.2. For additional context, the proposed SSSI boundary was not identified when the Applicant began initial conversations with landowners in 2020/2021 or when the Applicant subsequently began refining potential areas for Solar PV development to inform the Phase One consultation. The Site boundary has consistently been defined to avoid the existing SSSIs, which are currently designated for a population of nationally scarce butterfly species (notably Wood White and Black Hairstreak) and associated vegetation. As noted previously in Ref. 3.7.2, the application of micro-siting measures would enable potential effects of the Proposed Development on these designated areas to be appropriately minimised. This application of micro-siting measures has also been applied to reduce impacts on potentially affected businesses. Subsequent Site investigations, following selection, identified the potential extension of the Bernwood SSSI to incorporate adjacent areas, along with the proposed inclusion of Bechstein's bat within the citation. Notwithstanding this, any potential impacts on bats are considered capable of being

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			effectively mitigated through the implementation of the proposed measures secured in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] . While the Applicant does not dispute that there are exceptions to the CNP presumption as set out in paragraph 4.2.15 of NPS EN-1, the Applicant maintains that the residual impacts of the Proposed Development are truly residual and do not meet the exceptions tests in paragraph 4.2.15 of NPS EN-1. The Applicant refers to its responses to Q1.17.1 within the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] and Ref. 3.5.19 of this document.
3.7.4	Pages 4 and 5, Paras. 15 - 19	Comment noting that the Applicant's site selection approach and consideration of alternatives is not compliant with the requirements of the EIA Regulations	The Applicant disagrees with these comments. The Applicant reiterates that, as reported in Appendix 1 (Site Selection Report) to the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5] , there is no standard methodology for the site selection of solar farms. The site selection methodology for the Proposed Development has therefore been informed by relevant national and local policy documents and regulations, which includes the EIA Regulations 2017. For each of the reasonable alternatives considered within ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010158/APP/6.1] [APP-047] . In particular, the Applicant sets out the alternative locations considered (i.e. the 10km search area) in Section 4.4: Alternative sites', while the size and scale of the development alternatives are set out across Section 4.4: Alternative sites and Section 4.7: Alternative layouts and design evolution. Further information is also provided in Appendix 1 of the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5] .
3.7.5	Pages 5 and 6, Paras. 20 – 25	Comment noting that the Applicant failed to properly consider NPS EN-3 (para. 2.10.9) site selection guidance on topography and irradiance and has instead relied on the Site's general location in the south of the country while overlooking the largely north-facing slopes and overshadowing constraints as a result of high overgrown hedges and trees (Field examples of B6, B7, B8, B9 and B10 are given). Comment noting that the Applicant is now proposing design-stage mitigation requiring increased land take, without demonstrating that more suitable alternative sites in accordance with the site selection guidance in NPS EN-3.	The Applicant notes the comments made by the party in response to the Applicant's response in Ref. 1.1.20 of Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] . The Applicant refers the party to ES Volume 3, Figure 2.3: Topography Plan [EN010158/APP/6.3] [AS-020] which demonstrates that the party's position on topography is not wholly accurate, with a number of the parcels referred to having broad south-facing topographies. Notwithstanding this, sloping land is useful for solar generation (beyond irradiance levels) and there is flexibility within the fixed parameters of the Proposed Development to make adjustments at the detailed design stage to suitably account for topography. Importantly, the Applicant refers the party to Q1.4.1 of Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] which confirms that, through Section 7.7 of the Statement of Need [EN010158/APP/5.6] [APP-036] , the Proposed Development lies within the range of 2 to 4 acres per MW of output as cited in Paragraph 2.10.17 of NPS EN-3 (2023). The Applicant notes, therefore, that the Proposed Development lies between the range indicated in NPS EN-3 (2023) (i.e. is an efficient use of land), and this position is retained under NPS EN-3 (2026) which has increased the range from 2 – 4 acres to 4 – 5.6 acres.
3.7.6	Page 7, Paras. 26 - 28	Comment noting that the Applicant has misinterpreted the party's position, which challenged the incorrect assertion that NPS EN-3 (paras. 2.10.23 – 2.10.25)	Network connection (paragraphs 2.10.21 – 2.10.26 of NPS EN-3) is a fundamental factor influencing site selection. Policy refers to the importance of an available network connection and how the distance of a solar farm to an existing network can give rise to a <i>significant</i> effect on the commercial feasibility of a development proposal (Paragraph 2.10.24 of NPS EN-3). Development proposals need to be commercially feasible to progress. Under this context, Paragraph 2.10.25 of NPS EN-3

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		establishes grid connection as the starting point for site selection. Comment noting that the Applicant has instead acknowledged that it was the Applicant's decision to set the grid connection as the starting (and end) point for its selection process.	recognises that applicants <i>may</i>, therefore, choose a site based on nearby available grid export capacity. What frames network connection as the starting point for site selection is the fact that, under Paragraph 4.11.12 of NPS EN-1, the Secretary of State should be satisfied that appropriate network connection arrangements are/will be in place. Given that the Secretary of State must be satisfied under Paragraph 4.11.12 of NPS EN-1, network connection in policy terms is naturally a reasonable starting point for site selection. The Applicant points to Section 2.2 of Appendix 1 (Site Selection Report) of the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.3] [REP1-016] which outlines those other solar DCOs which have established that grid connection is a reasonable starting point to a site selection exercise.
3.7.7	Pages 6 and 7, Paras. 29 – 33	Comment noting that CSAG maintains cumulative transport impacts have been inadequately assessed, with the Applicant applying overly narrow thresholds and failing to consider effects on the wider road network (including Botolph and East Claydon and roads linking them). Comment noting that the Applicant underestimates inter-project impacts by excluding relevant schemes and overlooking ongoing cumulative disruption from major infrastructure projects which continue to affect surrounding communities (e.g., HS2 and EWR).	The Applicant disagrees with these comments and notes that neither Buckinghamshire Council nor National Highways as the relevant highway authorities have raised any similar concerns with the methodology used in assessing cumulative matters. The process for selecting cumulative schemes is described in detail in ES Volume 4, Appendix 15.1: Transport Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] and accords with good practice guidance. The assessment already caters for existing major projects and ongoing engagement with these on transport matters and joint traffic management measures is fully detailed in Draft Statement of Common Ground with High Speed 2 Limited [EN010158/APP/5.19] [REP1-030].
3.7.8	Page 7, Paras. 34 - 36	Comment noting that the Applicant has not adequately assessed impacts on non-motorised users (with only minimal reference to cyclists and no evidence provided on usage levels of pedestrians, cyclists or equestrians). Further comment noting that the party has not seen any information from the Applicant about the numbers of pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians using the local roads. Further comment noting that there remains uncertainty regarding construction traffic routing, with unclear confirmation on use of Three Points Lane and potential access from Calvert Road.	The Applicant disagrees with the comments made. Section 4.5 of ES Volume 4, Appendix 15.1: Transport Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] describes non-motorised users (pedestrian, cyclist, equine, etc user facilities), the assessment detailed across ES Volume 2, Chapter 15: Transport and Access [EN010158/APP/6.2] [APP-058] covers all road and path users and specifically considers severance, pedestrian delay, non-motorised user amenity and fear and intimidation effects on non-motorised users in great detail. The Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] covers a range of measures for non-motorised users including Section 4.10 and all of Chapter 6. In addition, the Outline RoWAS [EN010158/APP/7.8.5] [CR1-026] almost exclusively caters for non-motorised users. To suggest that these road and path users have not been considered is misleading and incorrect. Construction access to the Site is clearly detailed in Figure 3 of ES Volume 4, Appendix 15.1: Transport Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2]. This clearly shows no construction access from Calvert Road and this would be enforced by the measures detailed in Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4]. The access junctions provided in the Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] clearly show that traffic would cross east – west at Three Points Lane.
3.7.9	Pages 8 and 9, Table Ref. 2.1.2 and Pages 21 and 22, Table Ref. 2.1.15	Comment noting that the Applicant's 'lumping' approach to ecological assessment obscures the specific impacts	The Applicant has not 'lumped' birds as a single receptor, having split out wintering birds, ground nesting birds, non-ground nesting birds and Schedule 1 bird species. The assessment has focused on the likely effects on both the breeding and wintering bird assemblage as, although individual species

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	(CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	on individual wintering bird and bat species of high conservation concern. Comment noting that this approach is generally misconceived, as assessing key species independently would provide greater clarity on the nature and significance of impacts and should not be disregarded. Further comment making an example that grouping means Bechstein's and barbastelle should be considered no different from noctule and pipistrelle when assessing the potential impacts of the Proposed Development on bats.	have slightly different requirements during both the winter and breeding season, the overall impacts arising from the Proposed Development will be similar (displacement due to habitat modification for example) and therefore, in the case of ornithology, it is proportionate to consider impacts at the level of the overall assemblage and not the individual species. It is common practice in EIA to assess some species groups at the assemblage level where the nature of likely effects is broadly similar. The Applicant does not consider further action is required.
3.7.10	Page 9, Table Ref. 2.1.2 and Pages 30 and 31, Table Ref. 2.1.32 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the proposed permanent grassland is insufficient to support displaced skylark and other open country species, with some areas unsuitable due to their physical characteristics. Comment noting that the Applicant's reliance on surrounding farmland to accommodate displacement of lapwing and golden plover is unevidenced and fails to consider cumulative impacts from other local schemes.	Some of the fields to the north of Finemere Wood are gently sloping, which is what the Applicant believes is being referred to. However, these fields are not so steep as to prevent arable management and these fields already support low numbers of farmland birds including skylark, yellow hammer and linnet (see ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.12: Breeding Bird Survey Report (2024) [EN010158/APP/6.4.3]). The Applicant does not consider the topography of these fields to be a barrier to using them for mitigation, given that ground-nesting species are already present, and that, with appropriate management, the carrying capacity can be increased. The Applicant is not placing reliance on displaced farmland birds being accommodated on areas of arable farmland nor is it unevidenced. For example, a recent paper² (peer reviewed by Mr Woodfield who is acting on behalf of CSAG) has indicated that "<i>mitigation measures should be proportionate and reasonable, so should focus on improving habitat quality at an appropriate scale, rather than attempting to mitigate for all displaced species</i>" and this is the approach that has been taken by the Applicant aiming to improve habitat quality. See the response below to 3.7.21 also. The Applicant has also undertaken a detailed cumulative assessment ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037] which has concluded that there may be some cumulative impacts with regards to ground-nesting birds. However, the Applicant considers the mitigation measures detailed in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] are adequate to ensure that a viable population of farmland birds can be maintained in the long term and reduce any residual effects arising from the Proposed Development. The Applicant does not consider further action is required.

² Solar Energy UK, Solar farms and Skylarks June 2026. <https://solarenergyuk.org/resource/solar-farms-and-skylarks/>

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3.7.11	Pages 9 and 10, Table Ref. 2.1.2 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that Parcel 3 has not been surveyed for wintering birds since 2021/22, though [APP-097] recommends this be done.	It is correct that Parcel 3 was only surveyed in the winter of 2021/2022 as access permission was not granted during the winter of 2023/2024 to Parcel 3. However, Parcels 1 and 2 were surveyed over two winters (see ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.3: Wintering Bird Survey Report (2022) [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-089] and ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.11: Wintering Bird Survey Report (2024) [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] [REP1-058] and Parcel 3 has been subject to breeding bird survey in both 2022 and 2024 (see ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.4: Breeding Bird Survey Report (2022) [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] and ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.12: Breeding Bird Survey Report (2024) [EN010158/APP/6.4.3]). Parcel 3 contains similar arable cropland habitat to Parcel 1 and 2 and therefore the Applicant believes there is sufficient baseline information with which to identify potential effects and conduct the assessment. It is not considered that an additional winter's survey of Parcel 3 would change the assessment conclusions that have been reached. The Applicant does not consider further action is required.
3.7.12	Page 10, Table Ref. 2.1.3 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the party considers the EIA has not adequately assessed arable plant species, with limited survey evidence identifying species not recorded in the ES. Comment noting that survey work appears insufficient and overly reliant on incomplete UKHab mapping, which failed to capture a significant proportion of field edge habitats and margins.	The Applicant undertook a detailed survey of the arable margins at an appropriate time of year (see ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.7: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2025) [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-093]) and no rare or scarce species were identified. Evidence of a clean line crop between crop and any grass margins indicated herbicide use, further reducing the capacity for scarce or rare species to be present. Notwithstanding this, all-grass margins to arable fields are being retained and incorporated into the wider buffer strips. The Applicant is confident it has not materially underestimated the extent of existing arable grass margins. There are some GIS mapping technicalities that may give rise to the assumption that not all arable margins have been mapped. The UK habitat definition states that, for hedgerows, the hedge definition should encompass margins up to 2m wide, so for margins up to 2m these have been accounted for within the hedge mapping and the condition assessment for hedgerow habitat, in accordance with UK habitat guidance. It is also standard practice for UKHab surveys to use a minimal mapping unit (MMU). The standard unit for this is 25m ² for area habitats or 5 linear metres for linear habitats. This means a habitat polygon has to be at least 5m wide to be recorded. However, in order to be fully transparent, the Applicant has reviewed the habitat mapping to ensure that all arable margins over 2m width (the UK habitat definition for arable margins being all grassed margins of 2-12m in width) have been recorded as part of the baseline. This amendment to the BNG metric in ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.17: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] has been submitted at Deadline 4.
3.7.13	Pages 10 and 11, Table Ref. 2.1.4 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the Applicant has inconsistently disaggregated Schedule 1 species while continuing to 'lump' other high conservation bird species, creating an unjustified and inconsistent approach. Comment noting that this approach is ecologically unsound and masks the extent of displacement impacts on species of high conservation concern and Species of Principal Importance.	The Applicant has been fully transparent with regards Schedule 1 bird species that have been recorded, both breeding and wintering. The breeding species include barn owl, hobby and red kite which are largely woodland or individual tree-nesting species, and all the woodland resource, together with the tree resource (other than 16 trees that may require felling) will be retained as part of the Proposed Development. In addition, nesting peregrine were observed using pylons within the substation. The Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] contain commitments to, where possible, avoid construction work during the breeding season and,

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			where this is not possible, pre-construction surveys so any nesting Schedule 1 species will be identified and appropriate safeguards put in place to ensure legislative compliance. In addition to this, the habitat creation and enhancement measures detailed in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] ensure that foraging habitat for raptor species is available. This approach is based on good ecological practice and has been deemed acceptable on a range of previous similar schemes. The Applicant does not consider further action is required.
3.7.14	Pages 11 and 12, Table Ref. 2.1.5 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the Applicant's statement <i>"there will be a minimum 10m offset buffer from all ponds, ditches and watercourses"</i> is incorrect due to crossings over and discharge outfalls being placed by the Claydon Brook. Further comment that these interactions risk to water quality and aquatic ecology. Comment noting that the absence of baseline data on fish and aquatic invertebrates undermines the sensitivity assessment and impact evaluation, rendering the decision to scope out these receptors a flaw in the ES.	The effect of crossing points has been assessed within ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] and no significant effects are identified. The chapter also states, in Table 7.7, that 10m buffers will be in place except where access tracks and/or cable routes are required to cross an existing features. The purpose of ES Volume 4, Appendix 16.2: WFD Waterbodies Stage 1 Screening Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] [REP2-055] was to determine if water bodies could support important aquatic habitats and/or species, and whether more detailed surveys were required. As outlined below the conclusions drawn were that additional surveys were not required to support the assessment. ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.9: Preliminary Aquatic Survey Report (2023) [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-095] used industry standard methodologies (Hendry & Cragg – Hind (1996)) to identify habitat types for all groups of fish. Habitat features were recorded in the field for each water body. This included flow type, substrate, presence of macrophytes, instream features and evidence of protected species and invasive non-native species (INNS). The habitats identified were less than optimal for any aquatic species to thrive. Typical features that indicated this are stagnant water with little or no flow, over shading from vegetation, no instream aquatic macrophytes, significant amounts of silty substrate, some ditches were dry and all were surrounded by intensive arable fields. The ponds may provide habitat for some invertebrate species but, due to the agricultural nature of the surrounding area, it is considered that the poor water quality will lead to limited suitability for fish, invertebrates and other aquatic species. None of the ponds within the area provide habitats of significant ecological value. For watercourses to be suitable for aquatic invertebrates and fish in a lowland area in the UK, the watercourse needs a diversity in flow with meandering channels, increase in water storage within the channel capacity and exposed gravels creating riffles, runs and pools which provide valuable microhabitats at different life stages for both fish and invertebrates. These features are largely absent in the water bodies identified in the preliminary aquatic survey area. It was therefore concluded that no further invertebrate or fish surveys were required. This lack of suitable features to support a diverse and functioning aquatic ecosystem is also recognised by the Baseline Water Framework Directive status of these waterbodies (see ES Volume 4, Appendix 16.2: WFD Waterbodies Stage 1 Screening Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] [REP2-055]). The waterbodies scoped in for assessment and their baseline WFD status in 2022 was as follows: • Claydon Brook Tributary, heavily modified, moderate ecological status; • Claydon Brook, heavily modified, moderate ecological status; • Claydon Brook (DS Granborough) heavily modified, moderate ecological status; and

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			River Ray is not designated as an artificial or heavily modified watercourse and was classified as 'moderate' ecological status. 'Moderate' ecological status of a water body refers to the waterbody having noticeable negative ecological alteration in comparison to the condition of a water body in a natural or near natural reference condition. The Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] clearly outlines measures to be put in place to protect any water bodies and the potential to cause deterioration in status of WFD surface water bodies, and agreement with the Environment Agency on biodiversity and WFD matters has been reached (see Draft Statement of Common Ground with Environment Agency [EN010158/APP/5.15.4]).
3.7.15	Page 12, Table Ref. 2.1.6 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment, in relation to brown hare, that the assessment remains predicated on unsupported premises, conjecture and no substantive or peer reviewed evidence.	The Applicant has outlined its position with regards brown hare within Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] (see Table 2-1, Ref 2.1.6). The Applicant disagrees with the assertions made.
3.7.16	Pages 13 and 14, Table Ref. 2.1.7 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the Applicant has failed to correctly identify and map Priority arable field margins within the Order Limits, despite evidence of their presence across the site. Comment noting that this omission, alongside incomplete habitat survey mapping, undermines the accuracy of the ES and calls into question the robustness of the BNG calculations.	See response to Ref. 3.7.12 above. The Applicant disagrees with the assertion made in the second point.
3.7.17	Pages 15 and 16, Table Ref. 2.1.8 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the party does not consider the Applicant's skylark population estimates to be representative, resulting in insufficient and poorly evidenced mitigation provision. Comment noting that the use of skylark territories as a proxy for all ground-nesting birds is flawed as it fails to account for species-specific requirements and underestimates impacts on other birds of conservation concern.	The Applicant has been wholly transparent with regards the breeding bird surveys undertaken and the number of territories it has estimated and considers this a more robust approach than reliance on anecdotal observations. The Applicant does not believe its mitigation approach unevidenced. A recent paper³ (peer reviewed by Mr Woodfield acting on behalf of CSAG) has indicated that "<i>mitigation measures should be proportionate and reasonable, so should focus on improving habitat quality at an appropriate scale, rather than attempting to mitigate for all displaced species</i>". This paper and work by the RSPB indicate that, where solar farms are well-designed with biodiversity in mind, particularly if they increase invertebrate food during the breeding season, this can lead to a general increase in farmland birds overall and potentially increase the carrying capacity of retained arable. The Applicant has used skylark as a proxy for other ground-nesting species as they were the most abundant. Although individual species have slightly different ecologies during the breeding season, the broad requirements are the same, being: suitable habitat to nest in; a source of invertebrate food during the breeding season; and wintering habitat. All these elements are provided by measures detailed in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5].

³ Solar Energy UK, Solar farms and Skylarks June 2026. <https://solarenergyuk.org/resource/solar-farms-and-skylarks/>

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			It is common practice in EIA to assess some species groups at the assemblage level where the nature of likely effects is broadly similar.
3.7.18	Pages 16 and 17, Table Ref. 2.1.10 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the Applicant's assessment undervalues the conservation status of barbastelle and Leisler's bats, relying on unpublished evidence (from HS2) and presenting unjustified downgrading of their importance. Comment noting that the Applicant has failed to adopt a precautionary approach in relation to the emerging Bernwood SSSI, demonstrating a lack of avoidance or sensitivity in the scheme design.	Assessments have been carried out using all available information, which is to the benefit of the assessment. It is not uncommon to rely on 'grey' sources (i.e. those which are available but unpublished). The data from HS2 stems from a formal monitoring programme agreed with Natural England, so is unpublished but not anecdotal. The Applicant has had sight of the latest HS2 monitoring reports which are not in the public domain but are shared with Natural England, and the broader findings of which are shared with a wider group of stakeholders including Buckinghamshire Council and BBOWT. Further information on barbastelle was also included within the Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105] – submitted at Deadline 1. The Applicant has already provided responses regarding the proposed Bernwood SSSI designation and its assessment of effects (see 2.1.47, 2.1.48 pages 50 and 51 of the Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086]). The Applicant has no further comments to make.
3.7.19	Page 18, Table Ref. 2.1.12 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that while the commitment to anti-reflective coatings is welcomed, uncertainty remains regarding the effects of polarised light on invertebrates. Comment noting that this uncertainty is relevant given that invertebrates are a key feature underpinning the proposed Bernwood SSSI designation.	The Applicant welcomes the acknowledgement of the use of anti-reflective coatings. The Applicant has outlined its position with regards aquatic invertebrates (see Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] (Ref 2.1.12, page 39) and Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] (RR-026, page 33)). Potential effects on invertebrates due to polarised light relates to aquatic invertebrates which are not a key feature underpinning the proposed Bernwood SSSI designation, the invertebrates in question being hairstreak butterflies, which are not aquatic and have been fully assessed within ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5]. The Applicant does not consider any further action is required.
3.7.20	Page 19, Table Ref. 2.1.13 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the Biodiversity Chapter's extrapolative assessment for the Cable Corridors falls short of best practice and risks omitting significant receptors.	As has been outlined by the Applicant in Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] (see Ref 2.1.13, page 39 and Ref 2.3.1 REP1-159, page 59) the cable corridors have been subject to detailed Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (see ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.7: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2025) [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-093]) which has provided sufficient information to determine the potential effects of the Proposed Development, and the cabling impacts are minor, short-term and temporary, with appropriate mitigation measures in place to address any potential impacts that could occur within the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] and Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5]. The Applicant does not consider any further action is required. Also as outlined previously (Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] (see Ref 2.1.13, page 39 and Ref 2.3.1 REP1-159, page 59) the habitats present within the cable corridors are no more remarkable than the habitats present within the Parcels where other infrastructure is proposed to be sited, therefore the Applicant is confident that potential impacts on bats and birds can be robustly determined based on

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			the studies that have been carried out across the rest of the site without the need for specific species surveys being carried out for the cable route.
3.7.21	Pages 20 and 21, Table Ref. 2.1.14 and Pages 32 and 33, Table Ref. 2.1.34 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the Applicant confirms no specific mitigation is provided for displaced lapwing and golden plover, instead assuming displacement to surrounding farmland without considering cumulative impacts. Comment noting that proposed grassland mitigation is unsuitable for these species and that the Applicant has failed to assess the risk of county-significant impacts arising from recorded population levels.	With regards wintering golden plover and lapwing, these are wintering species not recorded as breeding. Winter species range widely during the winter months with a large proportion of wintering birds being visitors from the continent. It is unlikely that wintering birds show strong fidelity to specific parts of the Order Limits given the wide availability of agricultural land in the landscape. Consequently, a high degree of displacement can be expected without detriment to the birds, and no significant effects were identified. Notwithstanding this, the management of 95ha of open uncluttered grassland will provide both species with additional habitat suitable for winter foraging, so the Applicant refutes the assertion that it has relied on farmland outside of the Order Limits as mitigation. Mitigation measures are detailed in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5]. The Applicant does not consider any further action is required. A cumulative impact assessment has been undertaken in ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037]. This has highlighted a potential loss of habitat as a residual cumulative impact for some developments depending on what mitigation measures are secured. In the Applicant's case, we consider that the measures outlined above have reduced the potential for the Proposed Development to contribute to any residual cumulative impacts.
3.7.22	Pages 22 and 23, Table Ref. 2.1.16 and Pages 34 and 35, Table Ref. 2.1.35 and Page 35, Table Ref. 2.1.36 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the Applicant's assessment of bat impacts relies on assumptions about grazing that are not secured, with the option to default to less suitable mowing management. Comment noting that this undermines the robustness and precautionary basis of the ES, including conclusions drawn regarding sensitive species such as barbastelle.	As set out in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] , the Applicant's primary aim with mitigation outlined for both foraging bats and foraging ground-nesting birds is to increase botanical diversity and hence invertebrate diversity. This would be delivered by enhancing habitat and sowing an appropriate seed mix to improved botanical diversity and hence invertebrate diversity. A suitable grass-cutting and collection regime, rather than being reliant on grazing, would be appropriate for the long-term management of grassland. However, the Applicant has indicated its willingness to secure grazing as part of the long-term management regime (and has had positive discussions with local suppliers who could provide either sheep or cattle grazing). This recognises that the presence of livestock may have some advantages but also that there may be factors outside of the Applicant's control that could prevent grazing. Therefore, the Applicant has given mechanical mowing and collection as an alternative option should grazing not be possible at any point in time or location(s).
3.7.23	Page 23, Table Ref. 2.1.17 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	The party note a phrase in Para. 7.8.103 of the Biodiversity Chapter which was intended to be a sub heading.	This was corrected in the submitted version of ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] at Deadline 3.
3.7.24	Page 23, Table Ref. 2.1.18	Comment welcoming that while the Applicant acknowledges the importance of open habitats for Bechstein's bats, the Applicant has failed to justify the placement of PV arrays within fields that should, under a	A full response to this question has been provided within the Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] and in addition the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006] (see RR-203, page 209). However, the

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	(CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	precautionary approach, be retained and enhanced for grazing. Comment noting that the Applicant has provided no clear justification for this design choice, despite concerns raised by the party, Natural England and Buckinghamshire Council. Further comment asking three questions of the Applicant: 1) whether the Applicant's assessment that bat foraging will be improved is predicated on future grazing of the totality of grasslands? 2) Or if only some then what proportion? 3) Or whether it is contending that a net or wholesale loss of grazing across the Order Limits would still deliver a net positive result for Bechstein's and other bat species?	Applicant is still in dialogue with Natural England over Fields B3, B6, B7 and B8 and is confident that an agreement can be reached. In response to the three questions raised: 1- See response to Ref. 3.7.22 above. Grazing is the Applicant's preferred method of grassland management but the overall mitigation strategy is not wholly reliant on grazing to increase invertebrate abundance and hence bat foraging resource. 2- It is intended to extensively graze grassland created for mitigation purposes as well as grazing grassland created under panels – see response to Point 3 below and Ref. 3.7.22 above. 3- The Applicant has stated on numerous occasions that there will no net loss of open grassland habitat, with twice as much grassland being created for mitigation purposes than currently exists within the Order Limits. Its distribution reflects the location of the closest breeding colony of Bechstein's bats but is also better distributed across the whole landscape. As per response to Ref. 3.7.22 above, the Applicant intends to provide grazing management, but the overall mitigation strategy is not reliant on grazing to increase invertebrate abundance and hence bat foraging resource. The Applicant is not claiming a net positive result for Bechstein's and other bat species but aiming to mitigate grassland loss. In addition, it is important to note the other habitat enhancement works, such as pond restoration and planting of woodland and scrub, all of which will contribute to improved bat foraging.
3.7.25	Pages 25 and 26, Table Ref. 2.1.19 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the Applicant accepts residual displacement impacts on lapwing and golden plover without secured mitigation, and has failed to assess their cumulative effects with other local projects. Comment noting that the Applicant has not clarified whether its conclusions on bat mitigation rely on secured grazing across all grassland, raising uncertainty over the robustness of claimed neutral or positive outcomes for species such as Bechstein's bats.	See response above to Ref. 3.7.21; the Applicant does not consider any further action is required. See response Ref. 3.7.24 above; the Applicant does not consider any further action is required.
3.7.26	Page 26, Table Ref. 2.1.20 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment requesting clarification from the Applicant as to whether the deliverability of proposed grassland habitat and management relies on grazing across all areas, or only a proportion. Comment noting that it is unclear whether the Applicant considers that a reduction or loss of grazing across the Order Limits would still achieve the same ecological outcomes.	See response Ref. 3.7.24 above; the Applicant does not consider any further action is required.
3.7.27	Pages 26 - 28, Table Refs. 2.1.22, 2.1.26 and 2.1.30	Comment noting that the Applicant's approach to buffer measurement is illogical, as it disregards existing	A response has previously been provided within the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006], with associated measures secured within the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6]. The spatial extent of development as set out in the DCO Application has similarly been based on offsets from the centreline of the hedgerows. This is

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
	(CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	buffers, double-counts future ones, and reduces the effective stand-off from key ecological features. Comment noting that this results in materially diminished real-world buffers and unclear protection of additional buffer land, which should be secured through binding DCO commitments (if relied upon).	considered to be the most consistent data source available across the Site. In designing buffers, these have also accommodated their root protection zones of trees sited within the hedgerows. The Applicant does not consider any further action is required.
3.7.28	Pages 28 and 29, Table Ref. 2.1.29 and Pages 32 and 33, Table Ref. 2.1.34 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that CSAG maintains concerns over vague and unsecured grazing commitments, with a high likelihood that less suitable mowing management will be implemented in practice. Comment noting that reliance on uncommitted grazing assumptions undermines the robustness and precautionary nature of the impact assessment and is not compliant with good EIA practice.	See response to Ref. 3.7.24 and 3.7.22 above; the Applicant does not consider any further action is required.
3.7.29	Pages 29 and 30, Table Ref. 2.1.31 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the Applicant's response improperly presumes that post-construction monitoring will not identify adverse effects requiring design changes, thereby prejudging outcomes. Comment noting that this approach is inconsistent with a precautionary and adaptive framework, as guidance does not preclude reactive mitigation and such flexibility should be secured if the assessment is considered robust.	The Applicant refutes this. The monitoring strategy for both habitats and species as detailed in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] has a feedback loop mechanism built in such that, if monitoring reveals desired objectives are not being met, then management operations will be altered to deliver the required end state. The Applicant does not consider further action is required. Further details with regards monitoring objectives have been provided within the updated Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] submitted at Deadline 4.
3.7.30	Pages 31 and 32, Table Ref. 2.1.33 and Page 33, Table Ref. 2.1.34 and Pages 39 and 40, Table Ref. 2.1.48 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that the Applicant continues to fail to justify the inclusion of Fields B6, B7 and B8 within the Proposed Development despite their ecological importance and the concerns raised by statutory consultees. Comment noting that the Applicant continues to misuse the term 'mitigation' in place of 'compensation', thereby misrepresenting its adherence to the mitigation hierarchy.	A full response to this comment has been provided within the Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086], in addition to the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006] (see RR-203, page 209). However, the Applicant is still in dialogue with Natural England over Fields B3, B6, B7 and B8 and is confident an agreement can be reached. The Applicant refutes this and has been transparent with the terminology used. ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] clearly identifies the ecological receptors and the likely impacts and has detailed embedded mitigation and additional mitigation measures to address these impacts secured by the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] in line with the mitigation hierarchy and no compensation measures are believed to be required.
3.7.31	Page 36, Table Ref. 2.1.37	Comment noting the party's previous comments on misleading inconsistency between the phraseology used in the Landscape and Visual Chapter have not been addressed or corrected.	As detailed in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] the Applicant has confidence that the proposed grassland buffers will replicate the retained grassland field margins, which consist of neutral grassland and already support a moderate diversity of wildflowers, that can be widened and extended by additional sowing.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
	(CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])		It is acknowledged that the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] was updated at Deadline 1 to refer to legume-rich grassland under the Solar PV, rather than wildflower grassland referred to in the LVIA. This reflects a pragmatic approach with regards to the type of habitat that can be created and it is not considered that this changes any of the assessment judgements made in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] .
3.7.32	Pages 37 and 38, Table Ref. 2.1.47 and Page 38, Table Ref. 2.1.48 (CSAG responses to Applicant's responses [REP2-086])	Comment noting that clarification is awaited on what information regarding the proposed SSSI the Applicant had at the time of assessment, in order to determine whether a suitably precautionary approach was adopted. Comment noting that there appears to be inconsistency between Natural England's written representation and its position at ISH1, where further amendments to protect Bechstein's bats were still being advised.	The Applicant has engaged pro-actively with Natural England throughout the consultation periods of the Proposed Development regarding the proposed Bernwood SSSI designation. Limited information on the proposed Bernwood SSSI designation is publicly available and the date for designation is not yet known (but it is formally 'paused'). Natural England has confirmed that, regarding the proposed Bernwood SSSI, the information that is publicly available is the only information it was able to share with the Applicant and that the Applicant could only use that information within its assessment (see https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6669682445910016 for the publicly available information that was available). However, in their written response for Deadline 3 [REP3-061], Natural England have confirmed that the draft mapping for the SSSI extension 'did not include Fields B3, 6, 7, and 8'. The Applicant would invite Natural England to provide any clarification required regarding the suggestion of inconsistencies in Natural England's responses.

Table 3.8: Claydons Solar Action Group (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions – Landscape Note) [REP3-064]

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.8.1	Pages 2 and 3, Para. 3.3	Comment noting that at ISH2 the parties agreed to progress discussions between the Applicant's and CSAG's landscape experts to narrow areas of agreement and dispute, with potential involvement from Buckinghamshire Council. Comment noting that any remaining technical disputes could be referred to the Landscape Institute's GLVIA Panel for independent clarification, provided anonymity requirements are met.	An online meeting was held on 11 June 2026 and has informed the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Claydons Solar Action Group [EN010158/APP/5.23.2] and Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4] submitted at Deadline 4.
3.8.2	Page 3, Para.3.4	Comment noting that clarification is still required from the Applicant on the distinction between proposed landscape and visual mitigation and enhancement measures within the Proposed Development. Comment noting that the Applicant should clearly identify and map where hedgerows and woodland are intended for mitigation versus enhancement, ideally within the indicative landscape plans.	As set out in response to Action Point 3 in the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1 (CAH1) [EN010158/APP/8.7] [REP1-107], the Applicant considers that the land included within Work No. 10 includes land sought for both landscape and ecological mitigation and enhancement, including PRoW and areas for biodiversity net gain. The Applicant is not able to ascribe a particular area as land required only for mitigation and another as only for enhancement, as the two work in parallel. The purpose of EIA is to report the environmental effects and not to explicitly classify the various design measures. The Applicant confirmed that, in terms of the LVIA, all proposed tree and hedgerow planting is referred to as mitigation. As set out in the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049], the Applicant confirmed that any measures considered to be purely enhancements had not been factored into the assessment of effects at Year 10 in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. Table 10.9: Embedded mitigation relevant to landscape and visual of ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] clearly sets out the mitigation measures shown in the plans appended to the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] that have been considered in the assessment.
3.8.3	Page 4, Para. 3.5 (iii, c and d)	Comment noting that clarification is required on whether 4.5m-high panels in lower-lying areas can be effectively screened by hedgerows of only 3–3.5m in height. Comment noting that supporting evidence, such as visualisations or cross-sections, should be provided to demonstrate the adequacy of proposed screening.	The Applicant does not agree that further supporting evidence is required to demonstrate the adequacy of screening. Only two PRoWs pass within the fields of 4.5m Solar PV modules in Parcel 3; the North Bucks Way/Midshires Way in Field E23 and PRoW ECL/4/2 in Field E11. In both instances, mitigation measures in the form of increased buffers and/or additional hedgerow planting have been incorporated to reduce impacts. Sections 6.17-6.19 in the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014] illustrate the effectiveness of this approach in terms of locating the screening elements in close proximity to the receptors, whilst also increasing the buffer for the Solar PV development itself. The existing visualisations in ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.6: LVIA Visualisations [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-115] [APP-116] demonstrate how this would be experienced in a range of different views. Where walkers would be within fields of raised Solar PV development, such as from Viewpoint 22 (North Bucks Way/Midshires Way) and Viewpoint 26 (PRoW GRA/2/1), existing hedgerows can be seen to be effective. In mid-range views at lower elevations, such as Viewpoint 27 (North Bucks Way/Midshires Way) Solar PV development would also be largely screened, in this instance by well-established hedgerows. Where viewpoints are more distant and elevated, such as Viewpoints 21 (North Bucks Way/Midshires Way) and 28 (PRoW GRA/10/1),

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			the increased height of the Solar PV development would be much less perceptible and it is not considered that increased hedgerow heights would further reduce the scale of change.
3.8.4	Page 4, Para. 3.5 (iv)	Comment noting that the Applicant's reliance on screen planting to reduce visual effects is overstated and does not account for the full range of landscape and experiential impacts. Comment noting that factors such as sound, smell, perception of safety, and sense of place cannot be mitigated through visual screening alone, undermining the Landscape and Visual Chapter's conclusions.	The Applicant does not agree that experiential effects of sound, awareness etc would influence the magnitude of effect in a greater manner than identified in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. The LVIA identifies such effects in terms of intense human activity, noise, movement of vehicles and lighting disturbance which would affect the tranquillity experienced in landscapes during the construction stage in certain instances. These effects would not be experienced on cessation of construction activity. Where mitigation planting would potentially screen or partially screen views of the Proposed Development, judgements have also taken into consideration the perceptual experience of receptors, in terms of the loss of views as a result of screening. This accounts for the relatively small reduction in the residual scale of change experienced by certain footpath users, even where views of Solar PV development could be largely screened, such as along Splash Lane bridleway between Botolph Claydon and Runts Wood. Hence the tangible loss of such experiences has been incorporated into the LVIA judgements.
3.8.5	Page 5, Para. 3.5 (vi) and Page 14, Para. 7.24	Comment noting that the Landscape and Visual Chapter lacks accurate visualisations of views from PRowS crossing the solar array sites, limiting understanding of likely visual impacts, particularly in confined corridors. Comment noting that visualisations should be provided for by the Applicant which include views of 4.5m panels from PRowS and with human scale references to better illustrate the true extent and perception of effects.	The Applicant points to Ref. 3.8.3 above with regard to sections and visualisations that indicate the effectiveness of screening elements.
3.8.6	Page 6, Paras. 4.2 and 4.3	Comment noting that the Landscape and Visual Chapter's states at para. 10.10.292 that "<i>there would be wildflower rich grassland beneath the Solar PV modules</i>" but the party considers the assumption of establishing wildflower-rich grassland beneath solar panels is flawed, given the high fertility of existing arable soils which are unsuitable for such habitats. Comment noting that the shaded conditions beneath solar PV modules further undermine the viability of wildflower and meadow species, which require low fertility soils and open, unshaded environments.	The Applicant notes the potential limitations of soil fertility with regards habitat creation, however, the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] already commits to soil nutrient testing pre-construction, so the fields with the lowest phosphate levels will be targeted. The Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] also commits to a period of nutrient stripping, if required, as part of the habitat implementation phase – therefore this limitation is acknowledged and addressed. The limitations of shading and so forth from panels is also recognised and the Applicant is proposing creation of other neutral grassland, not lowland meadow, under panels and is assuming that only poor-quality habitat condition will be reached. This has been clearly articulated in the ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.17: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3].
3.8.7	Page 6, Paras. 4.5 - 4.7	Comment noting that it is unclear whether species-rich seed mixes will be used within proposed buffer areas, corridors and field margins. Comment noting that clarification is required from the Applicant on how such habitats would be established on	As detailed in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] , the proposed buffers will comprise other neutral grassland and will replicate the grassland buffers that are already present (as they are being retained and already support a moderate diversity of wildflowers. As these buffers already exist, the Applicant has confidence that they can be widened and extended by additional sowing.

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3.8.8		existing high-fertility arable soils. Further comment noting that it is unclear how the Applicant would restore soil fertility post operation phase.	Soil fertility will be maintained into the long term by arable farmland entering a 40-year period of fallow with no intensive agricultural management, therefore there is potential to build up a considerable store of soil carbon likely to main soil fertility.
	Pages 7 and 8, Paras. 4.11 - 4.21	Comment noting that the Applicant's reliance on long-term 'resting' of arable soils conflates ecological and agricultural benefits with reductions in soil fertility potentially undermining future productive arable use. Comment noting that proposed ecological gains are uncertain and likely temporary. Further comment that the benefits of resting arable land are temporary and do not increase exponentially with longer cessations of arable use.	The assessment presented within ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Soil [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] does not rely on an assumption that stopping arable cultivation will give rise to increasing improvements in soil quality over time. The basis of the assessment is the avoidance of significant adverse effects on soil structure and function, rather than the guarantee of soil enhancement. The Applicant acknowledges that the response of soils to changes in land management is variable and dependent on site-specific conditions and management practices. While a reduction in intensive arable cultivation may provide an opportunity for the recovery of soil structure in some cases, outcomes relating to fertility, soil biology and wider ecosystem processes are not assumed within the assessment. The Proposed Development would maintain soils in situ across the majority of the Site, with continuous vegetative cover during operation. This reduces the frequency of mechanical disturbance associated with conventional arable farming and provides a stable soil environment. Where implemented, appropriate land management practices, including grazing or vegetation management, have the potential to support the maintenance of soil condition and nutrient cycling. Importantly, the soils would remain capable of supporting agricultural use following decommissioning, with reinstatement secured through the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069].
	Pages 9 and 10, Paras. 4.40 and 4.41	Comment noting concern that glint and glare effects may result on people using local roads and PRowWs, mainly in terms of safety, but also on amenity. Further comment that the Landscape and Visual Chapter does not appear to consider the effects of glint and glare on character or visual / other amenity.	Glint and glare effects are not noted in the LVIA on the basis that ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-082] does not describe any significant glint and glare effects. The Applicant therefore considers it reasonable that such non-significant effects are not included in the LVIA.
	Page 10, Para. 4.42 and Page 11, Para. 4.52	Comment noting that it is not clear whether or not Pager Power had undertaken the Applicant's Glint and Glare Assessment. Further comment that the Applicant's Glint and Glare Assessment would appear to be highly flawed due to it being based on informal industry-led guidance.	ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-082] for the Proposed Development was undertaken by RSK. In the absence of specific methodology for assessing glint and glare within current legislation and policies, it is the industry's best practice to rely on 'Solar Photovoltaic and Building Development Glint and Glare Guidance' (fourth edition, Pager Power 2022), which describes a methodology and significant criteria for aviation, railway operators, road users and dwellings. At present, the vast majority (if not all) glint and glare assessments in the UK are carried out using this methodology, and RSK has followed this approach. The Applicant disagrees that its glint and glare assessment is highly flawed.
3.8.11	Page 11, Paras. 4.53 and 4.54	Comment noting that glint and glare effects are likely to result in significant adverse impacts on receptors using nearby roads, PRowWs and local land, affecting both safety and amenity and potentially deterring visitors.	The Applicant points to Ref. 3.8.9 above.

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		Comment noting that these effects will be most pronounced in close proximity to the Order Limits, particularly along PRowS crossing the PV arrays.	
3.8.12	Page 11, Para. 5.5 – 5.8	Comment noting that the party does not agree with the Applicant's responses to Relevant and Written Representations where the Applicant has responded to say the 'Applicant does not consider the terms 'industrialisation' and 'industrialised' applicable to the Proposed Development'	The Applicant notes there is a point of disagreement with regard to the use of the term industrialisation to describe the change to the landscape. As set out in the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006] (see Table 2-1, page 47), the extent of manufactured metallic and glass structures introduced into the landscape as a result of the Proposed Development will be more than exists in the landscape at present, but this tract of the landscape is not wild or natural without human influence. It is a farmed, working landscape with some strong built influences such as the National Grid East Claydon Substation and converging overhead powerlines and occasional utilitarian agricultural buildings.
3.8.13	Pages 12 and 13, Paras. 7.4 – 7.7 and Pages 17 and 18, Paras. A1.1 – 1.10 and Page 21, Para. A1.30	Comment noting that the Applicant acknowledges grazing is neither guaranteed nor essential to mitigation with mowing identified as a viable fallback option. Comment noting that impact assessments should therefore be based on a precautionary scenario without grazing, given the lack of commitment to its delivery. Further comment noting frequent difficulty in grazing panelled areas of such scale. Further comment noting that it would be helpful if the Applicant could confirm whether the EIA is predicated on grazing being delivered, or otherwise.	See response to Ref. 3.7.22 above. The Applicant understands that grazing management is not simple, but: grazing management is possible under panelled areas; access routes for maintenance would ensure that access for moving stock would be practicable; and, given the size of the area, would likely be of sufficient scale to make it attractive to prospective graziers. The EIA has not been predicated on grazing being delivered; the Applicant is confident that increasing botanical diversity and hence invertebrate diversity does not require grazing management to be efficacious. However, grazing would be the preferred management regime of the Applicant and the Applicant has already had discussion with potential graziers who have expressed interest.
3.8.14	Page 13, Paras. 7.9 – 7.14	Comment noting that the Applicant has failed to justify its approach to colour selection for built forms despite the ExA's request and the scale and visibility of the Proposed Development within a sensitive rural landscape. Comment noting that inappropriate colours and materials could significantly exacerbate adverse visual effects (particularly where contrast with the surrounding landscape is high).	The Applicant has not indicated in their response to Q1.15.3 within the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] that there is no need to consider the colour choices for infrastructure forming part of the Proposed Development. The inclusion of commitments D13 to D16 and D18 relating to colour in the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] demonstrate that colour has been given consideration during the design process. However, the Applicant remains of the opinion that a full Environmental Colour Assessment is not necessary for the level of complexity of the Proposed Development. The Applicant considers that the response to part 2 of Q1.15.3 within the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] provides sufficient explanation of the Applicant's approach to colour selection. This includes text that has been taken from paragraph 6.7.7 of the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.2] [REP1-018] in relation to why colours have been selected. As the CSAG response [REP3-064] correctly states, "From different locations, the same built form/structures may be seen variously against sky, woodland, grass, crops, soil, water, solar panels, other built form/structures, and so on". The range of colours identified in the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] allows for retained flexibility to consider these points at the detailed design stage when both the final design will be known, to allow consideration of the context of each element of the Proposed Development, alongside consideration of colour choices available from manufacturers at the time. As stated in the response to part 2 of Q1.15.3 within the Applicant's Response to the Examining

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			Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087] , the final choice of colour and materials would be submitted (with justification as appropriate) as part of the detailed design for approval by the relevant planning authority in accordance with Requirement 4 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] .
3.8.15	Page 13, Paras. 7.15 and 7.16 and Page 14, Para. 7.30	Comment noting that the Applicant has not demonstrated how adverse landscape and visual effects arising from colour choices would be mitigated. Comment noting that an Environmental Colour Assessment should be undertaken to ensure appropriate selection of colours and materials in this sensitive landscape context. Comment noting that photomontages show Year 10 effects in late spring, when screening is higher than during the winter months, whereas the reasonable worst-case scenario of winter Year 10 should be adopted for the photomontages.	The Applicant has given appropriate and proportionate consideration to colour selection as part of the design process, with the aim of mitigating landscape and visual effects. This is reflected in the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.2] [REP1-018] and secured through Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] D13–D16 and D18, which establish parameters for colour and finish to ensure that infrastructure elements are responsive to their surroundings. The approach recognises that the Proposed Development would be experienced against a wide range of backdrops including sky, vegetation, and built elements. This flexibility is necessary to allow the final colour selection to respond to the specific context of each component at the detailed design stage, when full information on layout, orientation, and available materials is known. In this context, colour has been carefully considered as an embedded design measure to reduce visual prominence and integrate the Proposed Development into the landscape. This, in combination with the proposed planting, buffers, and layout strategy assessed within the LVIA, ensures that landscape and visual effects are appropriately mitigated. The Applicant considers that this level of assessment and control is proportionate to the nature and scale of the Proposed Development. A separate Environmental Colour Assessment is not considered necessary, as it would not materially alter the conclusions of the LVIA or provide additional meaningful mitigation beyond that already embedded within the design. The photography used in the photomontages was taken in winter (between January and March) and mid spring (April). Although there is a degree of leaf growth (particularly hawthorn) in the spring photography this does not overly increase screening in views hence the visualisations are still considered to show a worst-case scenario
3.8.16	Page 18, Para. A1.13	Comment noting that the Applicant has not provided evidence to support its claim that agricultural use, particularly grazing, can continue alongside solar development at operational sites in the UK. Comment noting that the Applicant should supply a note which provides examples and details of comparable sites where grazing is successfully practiced at scale to substantiate the assertion that grazing is practical.	Grazing is already a well-established and effective management practice at numerous operational solar farms across the UK. The use of livestock, particularly sheep, helps maintain vegetation at an appropriate height, supports biodiversity, and reduces the need for mechanical mowing or herbicide use. This approach has been successfully implemented on many existing sites, demonstrating that solar development and agricultural use can coexist and deliver dual benefits for land management.
3.8.17	Page 21, Para. A1.28	Comment noting that deer proof fencing may not be robust enough to keep animals (such as sheep and cattle) within fields but also thieves out.	ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010158/APP/6.1.4] and the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] describe and secure the proposed deer-proof fencing. They also indicate those locations where alternative fencing would be required for safety and/or security, such as around the Rosefield Substation, Satellite Collector Compounds, BESS and Main Collector Compound. Deer-proof fencing has been selected as appropriate fencing style for rural locations and is used around Solar PV development on many solar farm developments. The deer-proof fencing will act as a deterrent to

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			prevent anyone entering the Solar PV fields, with its height of no greater than 2.5m. It is designed to be robust enough to keep sheep within the fields should they be there for grazing. However, the Applicant is not reliant on deer fencing to keep determined would-be intruders from entering the Solar PV fields. For extra security, internal facing CCTV systems would be installed up to 5m high and would alert operators if there was unauthorised entry into the fields. During its operating life, the Proposed Development would also be subject to regular inspections and maintenance from operational staff. Cattle are not anticipated to be within fields with Solar PV modules. Fencing around fields that would be used for grazing cattle or moving livestock would be appropriately designed to secure the animals in the fields, within the overall parameters of the deer-proof fencing. Regarding the other comments raised in A1.28 the Applicant has indicated that grazing is its preferred management option both under panels and within mitigation areas and has had positive dialogue with prospective graziers, but the Applicant has also not relied solely on grazing to deliver the botanical enhancement required to deliver an increase in invertebrate diversity. Any grazing management under panels would be by sheep and would be extensive at low stocking with daily welfare checks on animals in line with good stock husbandry. Finally, the issue with regards badgers and hares being able to enter fields surround by deer fencing was addressed in previous responses and the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] secures a commitment to installing badger gates should pre construction surveys indicate a requirement.

Table 3.9: Claydons Solar Action Group (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions – Note of ecology comments to ISH1) [REP3-065]

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.9.1	Pages 2 and 3, Paras. 3.1 – 3.11	Comment noting that the ISH1 hearing discussion between the party, the Applicant, the Environment Agency and the ExA confirmed there was no established water quality baseline informing the EIA at the time conclusions on significance were reached. Comment noting that the absence of baseline data on water quality, fish and aquatic invertebrates calls into question the robustness of both the Applicant's assessment and the Environment Agency's position. Further comment noting a prompt that the Applicant was to submit an address of these points at Deadline 3.	ES Volume 4, Appendix 16.2: WFD Waterbodies Stage 1 Screening Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] [REP2-055] utilised available baseline information and published datasets to identify and assess potential risks to WFD elements. The assessment concluded that the Proposed Development would not result in deterioration of any WFD quality element, nor would it compromise the achievement of WFD objectives. Agreement on the WFD quality elements has been agreed with the Environment Agency (see Draft Statement of Common Ground with Environment Agency [EN010158/APP/5.15.4]). In addition, the Applicant has committed (in Table 3.9 of the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5]) to a six-month pre-construction water quality monitoring programme to establish baseline conditions, which will inform the assessment of monitoring data collected during construction and for 12 months post-construction. In regards to biodiversity, see response to Ref. 3.7.14 above - the purpose of the ES Volume 4, Appendix 16.2: WFD Waterbodies Stage 1 Screening Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3] [REP2-055] is to determine if water bodies could support important aquatic habitats and/or species and whether more detailed surveys are required. The conclusions drawn were that additional surveys were not required to support the assessment. ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] was updated at Deadline 2 in response to the Environment Agency's request to include an assessment that considers potential impacts from the clear span bridge crossing of the existing Claydon Brook watercourse and outfall locations upon aquatic ecological receptors and propose mitigation as appropriate.
3.9.2	Page 5, Para. 4.6	Comment noting that the Applicant was to clarify what information about the proposed Bernwood SSSI was known to it by Deadline 3.	See response to Ref. 3.7.32 above.
3.9.3	Page 6, Para. 4.8	Comment noting that the Applicant's reliance on unpublished HS2 studies to support conclusions on bat impacts lacks transparency since the evidence is not available for independent scrutiny within the Examination. Further comment noting that evidence from the local sections of HS2 would be especially useful to the Examination.	Assessments have been carried out using all available information, which is to the benefit of the assessment. It is not uncommon to rely on 'grey' sources (i.e. those which are available but unpublished). The majority of the data relating to Bechstein's bats is synthesised and publicly available in a report that Natural England published in support of the SSSI extension. This long-term assessment has also been made available to the Examination in the Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105] (see Appendix I). The Applicant also had sight of the latest HS2 monitoring reports which are not in the public domain but are shared with Natural England, and the broader findings of which are shared annually by HS2 with a wider group of their stakeholders including Buckinghamshire Council and BBOWT. The Applicant would highlight that radio-tracking results are those which are most relevant to Bechstein's bats, and all of the available radio-tracking studies are included in the Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105] (see Appendix I) (i.e. the report that Natural England published in support of the SSSI extension).

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.9.4	Page 7, Para. 4.10	Comment reviewing the Applicant's evidence on Bechstein bats before going on to note the statement points to whether an assessment of potential local extinction should have been identified within the Biodiversity Chapter.	A local extinction, in theory, <i>could</i> result from a decrease in breeding success over time; the causes of such a change <i>could</i> indeed be development, but also land management and climate change, alone or in combination. However, the potential contribution of the Proposed Development to such an impact has been limited through mitigation that is designed to maintain or provide the elements that Bechstein's bats (and other bat species) would need to thrive. Areas which are known to support their roosts are being retained; foraging will be increased and improved; and connectivity to ensure bats can access all areas of their home range will be strengthened. The assessment carried out by the Applicant considering the embedded and additional mitigation measures proposed therefore has not identified that local extinction of Bechstein's is a potential outcome of the Proposed Development (even in combination with other factors). See ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5].
3.9.5	Page 9, Para. 4.16	Comment noting that there is significant uncertainty over the Applicant's deliverability of grazing with evidence suggesting mowing is the more likely outcome (despite assessments relying on grazing assumptions). Comment noting that this undermines the robustness of the EIA and requires clear clarification from the Applicant on the extent of any secured grazing, the weight that can be attributed to it, and how conclusions would change in its absence.	See response to Ref. 3.7.22 above.
3.9.6	Page 10, Para. 4.18 – 4.19	Comment noting that the Applicant's approach appears to treat monitoring as a form of mitigation or compensation, contrary to the mitigation hierarchy and established good practice in ecological impact assessment. Comment noting that monitoring is not supported by binding commitments to implement effective reactive measures, with the Applicant unwilling to consider design changes such as removal of panels if significant impacts are identified. Further comment noting that the Applicant was to respond to these points at Deadline 3.	The Applicant believes that the mitigation as outlined in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] is adequate and follows the mitigation hierarchy. Monitoring is not being used as mitigation; monitoring will be undertaken against specific objectives to ensure that these are being met. Such monitoring will be used to determine if management regimes need to be amended to achieve the intended objectives. Further details with regards monitoring objectives are provided within the updated Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] which has been submitted at Deadline 4. The Applicant has designed the Proposed Development with embedded mitigation such that it adequately mitigates the potential effects of the Proposed Development.
3.9.7	Pages 12 to 14, Paras. 6.1 – 6.7	Comment noting that the full Biodiversity Metric calculation appears to vindicate concerns raised by Buckinghamshire Council and the party in that the Applicant's Biodiversity Net Gain assessment is materially flawed (e.g., it includes	See response Ref. 3.1.7. The Applicant has submitted a revised version of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric at Deadline 4 that now meets all of the trading rules and mapping errors have been addressed (see ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.17: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3]). Notwithstanding

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		mapping errors, habitat misclassification and double counting) which suppresses baseline value and inflates future gains. Comment noting that these errors are significant enough to undermine confidence in the 40% net gain proposed to be secured under the Development Consent Order, such that a ground-up reworking of the calculation is required before meaningful weight can be attached to the Applicant's biodiversity commitments.	this, the Applicant is still committed to delivering 40% area habitat, 17% hedgerow and 10% watercourse BNG, detailed and secured within Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7].

Table 3.10: Claydons Solar Action Group (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions – Note of submissions at issue specific hearing 1 (ISH1)) [REP3-066]

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.10.1	Pages 2 and 3, Paras. 6 and 7	The party raised concern at ISH1 over the lack of information about the risk of soil and water contamination from PFAS and other forever chemicals resulting from cabling left underground following decommissioning. Further comment raising concern with the Applicant's reliance on secured management plan measures.	As discussed at the ISH1, the Applicant will consider the process for how assets would be decommissioned and removed at the time of decommissioning in line with the then-current guidance and any updated understanding, including in relation to PFAS. See Applicants response to Action Point 7 in Section 4, page. 114 of the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049] for further detail.
3.10.2	Page 4, Para. 21 and Para 22	Comment noting that Simon Gillett, for the Applicant, has advised the BESS would have a storage capacity of around 1GWh which significantly exceeds the capacity of the generating station. Further comment noting that this scale indicates the BESS cannot be considered subordinate to the solar PV of the Proposed Development and that the greatest proportion of the income generated by the BESS is likely to arise from arbitrage. Comment that the greatest proportion of the income generated by the BESS is likely to arise from arbitrage. This entails downloading energy from the grid when energy demand and prices are low and returning it to the grid when demand and prices are higher.	This representation seeks to compare the installed power capacity of the solar (334.1MWp, indicative) with the energy storage capacity of the BESS (circa 1GWh) and infer from these numbers (which are expressed in different units) that the BESS is disproportionate to the main solar scheme. The Applicant holds that this comparison is inaccurate and misleading. Further information on energy and power capacity of storage facilities is provided in section 6.11 of the Statement of Need [EN010158/APP/5.6] [APP-036]. The Applicant considers that the BESS is subordinate to the main solar scheme because: 1. The BESS is subordinate to the solar array in that the principal benefit of the Proposed Development, being the generation of carbon free energy, derives from the solar array. The Proposed Development aims to meet the need for new energy generation on the grid by developing the solar array with a co-located BESS. A standalone BESS development would provide benefits to the energy system but on its own would not generate low-carbon electricity. However, the BESS will store predominantly low-carbon energy and therefore, the BESS is clearly functionally subordinate to the solar array. 2. Further, the BESS would operate in a subordinate fashion to the solar array, in that the output from the solar array would influence how the BESS could operate at any moment in time but the reverse would not be true. However, in practice, how the BESS would operate at any time would also depend on a large number of other factors including national demand, the weather, and the evolving composition of the future British generation fleet. 3. To illustrate this point, if at a time when the grid needed energy, the sun was shining and the BESS had available charge, the solar array would generate and discharge to the grid. The BESS, however, would not discharge unless spare export capacity to the grid was available, or at a later time became available, for the BESS to export (i.e. when the BESS is subordinate to the solar array in that the principal benefit of the Proposed Development, being the generation of carbon free energy, derives from the solar array. The Proposed Development aims to meet the need for new energy generation on the grid by developing the solar array with a co-located BESS. A standalone BESS development would provide benefits to the energy system but on its own would not generate low-carbon electricity.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			However, the BESS will store predominantly low-carbon energy and therefore, the BESS is clearly functionally subordinate to the solar array. The Applicant considers that the BESS is proportionate to the main solar scheme both in nature and scale because: 1. The power capacity of the BESS matches the grid export capacity available to it; 2. Based on the indicative layout of the solar array and the BESS design parameters, the energy generated by the solar array over the course of a day can regularly exceed the energy storage capacity of the BESS; and 3. The footprint of the BESS is much smaller than the footprint of the solar array. In response to Paragraph 22, the Applicant explained in its oral representations that energy supply and demand need to be balanced. Market price is the signal for flexible assets to adjust their generation profiles (both exports and imports in the case of storage facilities) to balance national supply with national demand. This includes supporting the operation of the main solar scheme by storing energy generated at times when it is not needed, and exporting it to the National Electricity Transmission System when it is needed more. At times when the BESS is not supporting the operation of the principal solar site, it may be useful for the BESS to support the national supply and demand balance by importing directly from the grid rather than from the co-located solar. The BESS would operate in a subordinate fashion to the main solar site. However, in practice, how the BESS would operate at any time, and what revenues that operation would attract, would also depend on a large number of other factors including national demand, the weather, and the evolving composition of the future British generation fleet. The Applicant is not aware of any analysis brought forward by the Claydons Solar Action Group to support its representation, but would welcome it to do so.
3.10.3	Pages 4 and 5, Para. 24	Comment noting that despite targeting a single large landowner, the Applicant has not demonstrated that there was no alternative land within the holding which could have avoided such levels of disruption or reduced impacts on sensitive uses and areas, including those by being near to the potential Bernwood SSSI designation. Comment noting that the Applicant has not adequately considered impacts on farmers and long-standing tenancies, with potential for significant disruption to livelihoods, homes and businesses.	The assembly of land within Claydon Estate ownership was an iterative process that had regard to considerations such as environmental constraints, farmers and long-standing tenancies, residential amenity, engineering/technical considerations, agricultural land quality, etc. The Applicant initially identified areas with development potential within the Claydon Estate boundary and these areas were amended and refined prior to launching the Proposed Development publicly based on planning, environmental, engineering and land considerations that arose during early feasibility studies. In making the decision to offer land to the Applicant, the Applicant understands that the Claydon Estate had regard for its leasehold arrangements and existing commitments with tenants of their land as well as the Claydon Estate's optimal uses.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.10.4	Page 5, Paras. 26 and 27	Comment noting that the Applicant has failed to demonstrate that alternative sites were considered which could have ensured the avoidance of the AAL, which is also within the Bechstein's bat Core Sustenance Zone. Comment noting that although it is suggested other sites were scoped out within the AAL, there is no evidence of this in the Site Selection or Alternatives documentation, undermining transparency of the process.	The Applicant points to Refs. 3.4.2 and 3.4.4 in this document and Q1.15.10 in Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087]. It was not stated that fields to the south of Parcel 2 were excluded from potential development at the Site Selection stage. The Brill-Winchendon Hills AAL was scoped out of the LVIA, as detailed in Table 10.3 of the ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3]. This was enabled, as noted in the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.2] [REP1-018], at Design Stage 2, by the removal of fields in the south of Parcel 2 (Fields D27, D30, D32, D33, D34, D35, D36 and D37) reducing visibility within the AAL and wider landscape. The exclusion of the AAL was therefore a result of the iterative design process. Ultimately, the Applicant is confident that the mitigation hierarchy has been successfully applied at the Site level through the micro-siting of elements across the land that was made available to the Applicant.
3.10.5	Pages 7 and 8, Paras. 38 - 44	Comment noting that the Applicant's reliance on general efficiency improvements between different manufacturers does not provide a robust basis for assessing design alternatives in panel size, layout and coverage. Comment noting that given evidence of increasing efficiencies without materially larger panel sizes, it is not credible for the Applicant to suggest that alternative configurations could not be meaningfully explored.	The Applicant has proposed parameters to control the Proposed Development and assess its impacts on a worst-case basis within those parameters. Following consent, if granted, the Applicant will embark on a process of detailed design, ensuring that all designs considered are compliant with those control parameters. The parameters are set out and secured under Section 3 of Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6]. The assessment of alternative designs is therefore covered from a worst-case basis through the approach taken and presented in ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010158/APP/6.1] [APP-047], and further design iterations will be explored at the detailed design stage.
3.10.6	Pages 8 and 9, Paras. 45 - 47	Comment noting that the Applicant has not provided sufficient detail on the specific panel type used for the indicative design, limiting understanding of potential design variation and compliance with NPS EN-3. Comment noting that this lack of information restricts proper assessment of potential impacts on landscape, visual amenity, transport and construction effects arising from alternative panel configurations.	The Applicant points to Ref. 3.10.5.
3.10.7	Pages 9 and 10, Paras. 50 - 55	Comment noting that the party disputes the Applicant's assessment of harm to heritage assets, particularly the encirclement of Knowl Hill by panels, which would introduce intrusive features into designed views from Claydon House.	The Applicant has considered the effect of panels on the lower slopes of Knowl Hill on the significance of Claydon House in ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] and has reached agreement with Historic England and National Trust that the harm to significance will be at the lower end of less than substantial harm (see Statement of Common Ground with Historic England [EN010158/APP/5.16.3] and Draft Statement of Common Ground with National Trust [EN010158/APP/5.17.2] [REP2-020]).

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		Further comment noting that reliance on existing and proposed vegetation beyond the Site for screening is flawed as it assumes long-term stability without accounting for loss or degradation which is contrary to a robust assessment of likely significant effects.	The Applicant considers that it is reasonable to rely on vegetation screening within the Order Limits (both existing and proposed) as mitigation as the Applicant would be responsible for maintaining the health of this vegetation or replacing any loss within the operation (including maintenance) phase of the Proposed Development as committed to in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/8.6.5]. The assessment of effects resulting from changes within the setting of heritage assets as a result of the Proposed Development considers a baseline of the current landscape and any changes from the original setting of the heritage asset. This is in line with GPA3. Potential future changes to the baseline other than the Proposed Development or other developments that are included within ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037] cannot be quantified and therefore it is not reasonable to provide a detailed assessment of them. The potential for other changes within the setting of heritage assets is acknowledged within paragraph 9.5.13 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] which has been updated at Deadline 4. The Applicant maintains that the assessment considers existing/baseline vegetation in a reasonable and appropriate manner but notes that, in any case, that the LEMP (secured by Requirement 7 in the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] is enduring and adaptable throughout the lifetime of the Proposed Development. Accordingly, additional mitigation planting could be delivered if necessary within the Order Limits.
3.10.8	Pages 10 and 11, Paras. 56 and 57	With regard for Knowl Hill, comment noting that the Applicant's site selection report sought a site to facilitate between 250MW and 500MW and that the Proposed Development (at 335MW) has scope to further remove panels from such sensitive areas.	The Applicant notes this comment and would direct Claydons Solar Action Group to the response provided at Ref. 3.3.1 .
3.10.9	Page 11, Para 62	Comment noting that the Applicant has not assessed the risk of contamination from BESS fire or thermal runaway events, despite potential impacts on agricultural land and soils. Comment noting that this omission raises concerns about significant disruption to local farming operations, including Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd, arising from unaddressed pollution risks.	As set out in the Outline BSMP [EN010158/APP/7.9.5], the BESS drainage system would be designed to isolate and contain any water during a BESS thermal runaway event to prevent pollution of the surrounding environment. Outfalls from the BESS surface water drainage system would have automatic and manual isolation systems to ensure that any firewater runoff is captured for analysis prior to disposal. These would be subject to regular maintenance. Following a fire event, retained water would be tested by the Operator. If contaminated (polluted), the water would be removed from Site by tanker for treatment at an appropriately licensed offsite facility. If testing confirms that the water is suitable for discharge or reuse, it would be released to the local drainage network under controlled conditions, in consultation with the relevant regulators or reused as a potential source of firefighting water by re-filling the water tanks. This approach ensures that environmental protection is maintained under both normal and emergency conditions. The tanks would be maintained and cleaned at regular intervals with any silt collected also tested and transported off-site if required. Following a fire event, the aggregate subbase would be evaluated for contamination and reinstated to maintain the integrity of the Site's drainage infrastructure. In the event of a fire, the gravel proposed for use as the sub-base of the

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			BESS Compound must be tested and replaced if found to be contaminated. UK accredited labs would be used for water testing. A recent report reviewing 35 large-scale BESS fire incidents and associated environmental monitoring data "Assessment of Potential Impacts of Fires at BESS Facilities" (Fire & Risk Alliance and American Clean Power, 2025) found that, where BESS fire events have occurred, contaminant concentrations did not pose a public health concern and impacts were limited to the immediate vicinity of the fire. The report concludes: <i>"Air sampling from past incidents has found that contaminant concentrations beyond the immediate fire scene do not pose a public health risk. For example, monitoring at the Escondido, CA and NY incidents showed no detectable hazardous concentrations in nearby communities and initial shelter in place and evacuation orders were generally lifted shortly after the measurements were taken. ... The rapid dispersion of gases in outdoor BESS fires limits the potential for widespread toxic exposure. Studies show that the local concentration of gases rarely reaches flammability limits in well-ventilated environments and toxic gases are rapidly diluted."</i>
3.10.10	Pages 12 and 13, Paras. 63 - 67	Comment noting that the evidence presented by the Applicant on BESS impacts was unsatisfactory; particularly as it failed to address the sensitivity of livestock to continuous noise and the risks posed by fire-related contamination. Further comment requesting that the Applicant should submit the results of real-life fire tests if these have been undertaken. Comment noting that the absence of disclosed fire test and plume data, including on particulates and fallout, undermines the Applicant's assertion that nearby agricultural land and animals would not be adversely affected.	A noise and vibration technical study was submitted at Deadline 2 to provide further information regarding the effects of noise and vibration on livestock and set out how guidance has been used to further develop the approach to monitoring, mitigation and engagement secured within construction and operational management plans. This is contained in Annex A to Appendix 1 of the Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086]. As set out in the Outline BSMP [EN010158/APP/7.9.5], an example approach to the Proposed Development's drainage could include a separate system around the BESS to collect water runoff into an attenuation/storage pond. The design will incorporate appropriate containment measures within drainage features and storage components to ensure a sealed and isolatable system; this will ensure that the pathway between retained fire water and the receptors is blocked, ensuring that the water does not infiltrate the ground and move to the surrounding receptors. Outfalls from the BESS surface water drainage system would have automatic and manual isolation systems to ensure that any firewater runoff is captured for analysis prior to disposal. These would be subject to regular maintenance. Following a fire event, retained water would be tested by the Operator. If contaminated (polluted), the water would be removed from Site by tanker for treatment at an appropriately licensed off-site facility. If testing confirms that the water is suitable for discharge or reuse, it would be released to the local drainage network under controlled conditions, in consultation with the relevant regulators or reused as a potential source of firefighting water by re-filling the water tanks. This approach ensures that environmental protection is maintained under both normal and emergency conditions. The tanks would be maintained and cleaned at regular intervals with any silt collected also tested and transported off-site if required. Following a fire event, the aggregate subbase would be evaluated for contamination and reinstated to maintain the integrity of the Site's drainage infrastructure. In the event of a fire, the gravel proposed for use as the sub-base of the

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			BESS Compound must be tested and replaced if found to be contaminated. UK accredited labs would be used for water testing. As outlined in the Applicant's Outline BSMP [EN010158/APP/7.9.5]: <i>As a minimum, the battery system will have completed unit or installation level UL 9540A (5th Edition) testing (Ref), the BESS design will have completed large scale fire testing (LSFT) to demonstrate that loss will be safely limited to one BESS enclosure without the intervention of Fire Fighters. NFPA 855 (2026 revision) mandates that Large Scale Fire Testing (LSFT) which is full scale burn testing of the BESS system to validate safe equipment spacing, must be conducted and the BESS selected at detailed design must as a minimum have completed this testing under the UL 9540A test program or an accredited 3rd party LSFT test program i.e. CSA, DNV, TUV SUD, etc.</i> As such, this testing has not yet been undertaken, but at detailed design stage once a BESS system has been selected this information can be shared.

Table 3.11: Dr Chris Jordan (Responses to comments on written representations (WRs)) [\[REP3-068\]](#)

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.11.1	Pages 1 and 2, Table Ref. 2.3.10	Comment noting that Natural England, Buckinghamshire Council and CSAG have all raised serious concerns regarding impacts on bats, particularly Bechstein's bats. Comment noting that the Applicant has not given sufficient weight to protecting the ecosystems on which these species depend, undermining confidence in the assessment.	Applicant notes this comment, however the Applicant has provided a full and detailed assessment on potential impacts on bat species and habitats, which is presented in ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] .
3.11.2	Page 2, Table Ref. 2.3.23	Comment that the Applicant has undertaken a minimalist approach to ecological surveys (limited to land Parcels 1, 1a, 2 & 3) which has not established a robust baseline against which to assess effects.	The entire area within the Order Limits has been subject to a full ecological appraisal as detailed in ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.7: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2025) [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-093] . Table 7.2 within ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] details the study and survey area used to inform the assessment which has provided a robust baseline against which to assess the potential impacts of the Proposed Development.
3.11.3	Page 2, Table Ref. 2.3.39	Comment noting that Runts Wood holds significant ecological and amenity value due to its role as habitat for rare species and its contribution to the PRoW network. Comment noting that the surrounding placement of solar panels on adjacent and visually prominent slopes would materially detract from its landscape character and user experience.	Runts Wood has been retained in its entirety with appropriate buffers detailed within ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] and the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5]. In addition, mitigation measures outlined within the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5], Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5] and Outline DEMP [EN010158/APP/7.4.5] will ensure the integrity of the woodland is not compromised. The Applicant has acknowledged in ES Volume 2, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] that there would be some significant landscape and visual effects in the vicinity of Runts Wood, albeit the woodland itself would remain unchanged.
3.11.4	Pages 2 and 3, Table Ref. 7.3.19	Comment noting the Applicant's response misses the key points which are that the Site's topography is unsuitable because it includes a number of north-facing slopes and because placing industrial developments in highly visible positions means that the landscape has to be changed in an attempt to screen the visual impacts.	The Applicant points to Ref. 3.7.5 with regard for comments on north facing slopes. The Applicant does not agree with the second part of this representation, which states that the landscape would be changed to screen visual impacts. As set out in the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014], mitigation has been developed in accordance with Project Principle 6: Lead with Landscape to ensure that "<i>proposals fit with the natural environment and draw from existing characteristics, informed by relevant local studies such as the Aylesbury Vale Landscape Character Assessment.</i>" Section 6.7 of the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014] sets out how this has been achieved.
3.11.5	Page 3, Table Ref. 10.3.7	Comment noting a lack of commitment to grazing within the Order Limits in retaining an element of agricultural productivity.	See response to Ref. 3.7.22 above.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.11.6	Page 4, Table Ref. 11.3.1	In relation to the wear and tear agreement committed to in the outline CTMP, comment made noting that local communities have already experienced severe and lasting damage to the road network from major infrastructure projects, including degradation of road surfaces, margins and substructure. Further comment noting that past repair approaches have been inadequate, leaving permanent underlying damage which raises concern about further cumulative impacts from additional construction traffic.	The Wear and Tear Agreement is a fundamental part of the Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] and is secured under the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]. As such, its implementation is a requirement under law. The process for the Wear and Tear process is detailed in Section 4.7 of the Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4]. The Applicant notes that Buckinghamshire Council, as local highway authority, is satisfied with the Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] and all of the component parts, including the commitment to a Wear and Tear Agreement and that the proposals are superior to those of previous schemes.
3.11.7	Page 4, Table Ref. 11.3.6	In relation to the outline CTMP's construction routing, comment noting that the Applicant has no control over non-HGV traffic, with evidence from comparable projects indicating increased traffic volumes, speeding and wider network effects beyond designated construction routes.	The comment that the Applicant has no control over the routing of non-HGV traffic is incorrect. The Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] applies to all traffic travelling to and from the Site.
3.11.8	Page 5, Table Ref. Background, 1.1	Comment noting that the Applicant has misconstrued the reference to former drovers' routes, which was intended to highlight the quality and value of the land for grazing rather than comment on ALC classification. Comment noting that the Applicant has failed to recognise the agricultural value and productivity of the soils, while providing unclear and qualified commitments regarding the viability and management of continued grazing during operation.	The ALC Revised Guidelines JP069 (Natural England, 2025) provide that: <i>"The ALC grades and subgrades are described below in terms of the types of limitation which can occur, typical cropping range and the expected level and consistency of yield... The most productive and flexible land falls into Grades 1 and 2 and Subgrade 3a and collectively comprises about one-third of the agricultural land in England and Wales. About half the land is of moderate quality in Subgrade 3b or poor quality in Grade 4. Although less significant on a national scale such land can be locally valuable to agriculture and the rural economy where poorer farmland predominates. The remainder is very poor quality land in Grade 5, which mostly occurs in the uplands."</i> Therefore, ALC is the most widely recognised measure of the agricultural value and productivity of the soil. This is what the Applicant's assessment has been based on, in accordance with standard industry practice, rather than historical or anecdotal information on land use. The Applicant has indicated its willingness to secure grazing as part of the long-term management regime within the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] (and has had positive discussions with tenants who may be willing to provide either sheep or cattle grazing). This recognises that the presence of livestock may have some advantages but also that there may be factors outside of the Applicant's control that could prevent grazing.
3.11.9	Page 7, Table Ref. Applicant Assessment, 2.5	Comment noting that the Population Chapter identifies agricultural businesses as very highly sensitive yet it only concludes minor and not significant effects across all phases. Comment noting that such conclusions are highly improbable given the localised and	The Applicant acknowledges that the sensitivity of agricultural businesses, and some non-agricultural businesses that operate within the footprint of wider agricultural landholdings, is very high. In-line with the approach to sensitivity set out in Table 14.21 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4], the sensitivity of agricultural businesses and landholdings draws on guidance (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) 'LA 112

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		significant impacts the development would have on affected agricultural businesses.	Population and Human Health') and is influenced by the ability for agricultural businesses and landholdings to respond to changes to land access and severance for their operation to remain viable. In all cases the agricultural businesses and landholdings within the Order Limits are considered to meet the 'very high' criteria as: a) The enterprise is wholly reliant on the spatial relationship of land to key agricultural infrastructure; and b) access between land and key agricultural infrastructure is required on a frequent basis. The magnitude of change for draws on guidance (DMRB 'LA 112 Population and Human Health') and is determined by criteria set out in Table 14.22 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4], which considers whether there is: a) Loss, damage or change to attributes, quality or key characteristics or vulnerability (A <u>Moderate/Major</u> change would mean loss or severe damage e.g. direct total or partial acquisition and demolition compromising viability; a <u>Minor</u> change would be a discernible change in attributes, minor loss of or alteration to key characteristics – e.g. amendment to access or acquisition of land resulting in changes to operating conditions that do not compromise overall viability); and/or b) Introduction of severance with adequate accessibility provision (a <u>Moderate/Major</u> change would require the introduction of complete or severe severance with limited/moderate accessibility provision; a <u>Minor</u> change provides adequate accessibility provision). In all cases, in the context of these criteria, at most a minor magnitude of change is anticipated. This is in consideration of embedded and additional mitigation in each case, including the provision of land swaps with equal or better provision of land in terms of quality and access, and additional mitigation has been developed through engagement with affected parties and in-line with standards and guidance for the management of (e.g. air quality, noise, traffic/access). Following the application of these mitigations, the Applicant believes that there would remain discernible change in attributes and a minor loss of some key characteristics of these businesses including amendment to access or acquisition of land (which where acquired, would be replaced) resulting in changes to operating conditions that do not compromise overall viability.
3.11.10	Page 8, Table Ref. Consequences of Granting CPO Rights, 5.4	Comment noting that the Applicant's approach to agriculture does not provide confidence that there are appropriate safeguards to facilitate a return to agricultural use post-decommissioning.	The Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] includes Requirement 18 which secures that the date of decommissioning of the Proposed Development must be no later than 40 years following the date of final commissioning. Requirement 18 also secures that the detailed decommissioning environmental management plan must be substantially in accordance with the Outline DEMP [EN010158/APP/7.4.5]. The Outline DEMP [EN010158/APP/7.4.5] confirms that landscape structural planting, including tree planting, hedgerows, scrub, etc., created to deliver biodiversity mitigation and enhancement associated with the Proposed Development would be left in situ when the Site is handed back to the relevant landowners, after which the Applicant would no longer have control of the Site. Earth bund(s) would also be removed/reinstated to allow the fields to be returned to agricultural use. Otherwise, it is assumed that the landowner would return the land to agricultural use following decommissioning.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			The decommissioning phase will not adversely affect soils due to the commitments detailed within the Outline SMP [EN010158/APP/7.7.3] [REP2-069] whereby the reduction in soil quality can be reversed.
3.11.11	Page 8, Table Ref. Consequences of Granting CPO Rights, 5.7	Comment questioning what guarantees there are that EDF Renewables would be the owners of the land throughout the lifetime of the project?	The Applicant, Rosefield EnergyFarm Limited is a joint venture between EDF Energy Renewables Limited and Padero Solaer Ltd. The Applicant's shareholders have extensive combined experience in developing, building and operating their renewable energy projects throughout the project lifecycle and it is the intention for the Proposed Development to be constructed and operated by Rosefield EnergyFarm Limited for the lifetime of the Proposed Development. However, in the event that the builder or operator of the Proposed Development were to change (in accordance with articles 36 and 37 of the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7]), the responsibilities secured in the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7], which (amongst other things) ensure that the Proposed Development and the Site will be managed safely and responsibly, would continue to apply and be binding on any other operator.

Table 3.12: East Claydon Parish Council (Any specific responses to points raised in oral submissions at the hearings) [REP3-058]

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.12.1	Page 1, Paras. 1.1 – 1.4	Comment noting that the BESS' primary purpose would be to store electricity generated from the solar installation but that the grid connection allows for both the import and export of electricity. Further comment noting the Applicant had explained that the business case for a BESS facility based purely on commercial arbitrage was no longer an attractive proposition	The Applicant does not agree with the second part of this comment. The Applicant explained that the primary purpose of the BESS is not purely to make money out of arbitrage, but is to support the solar farm in increasing the utilisation of its grid connection, in supporting the operation of that solar farm, and in ensuring that the energy that it generates can be best used to ensure that electricity supplies are secure and reliable. There is a real physical need for flexible assets, as set out in government policy and in the Clean Power Action Plan, to support renewable assets to a Clean Power system by and beyond 2030. The mechanism that incentivises a BESS and other flexible assets to help match supply to demand is arbitrage of market price. Market price is higher at times when energy is needed, and it is lower at times when energy is in abundance.
3.12.2	Page 1, Paras. 1.6 and 1.7	Comment querying whether the use of existing nearby storage capacity, such as the East Claydon BESS or Statera site, has been explored as a means of reducing the Proposed Development's impacts. Comment noting that such an approach could potentially eliminate the need for an additional BESS and reduce energy losses and greenhouse gas impacts of the Proposed Development.	The Applicant considers that the current policy position is that the need established by NPS EN-1 applies to all schemes or components of a scheme which currently has a Gate 1 connection agreement, whether or not they are within the scope of NPS EN-1. The Applicant has provided its reasoning at Action Point 5 of its Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [REP3-049]. Further, the Applicant notes that relevant government policy is supportive of solar that is co-located with other functions (for example, agriculture, onshore wind generation, or storage) to maximise the efficiency of land use (NPS EN-3 (2023), paragraph 2.10.10). The Proposed Development including both solar generation and flexible storage is aligned with relevant government policy. Further, the Applicant is able to bring forward, under its own control, a solar scheme with associated flexibility. By doing so, the Applicant is able to ensure that the storage component supports the operation of the main solar component of the Proposed Development through reducing wasted output, providing flexibility, maximising use of the grid connection, improving security of supply and reducing carbon emissions from electricity generation. East Claydon BESS has been consented independently of the Proposed Development and is being brought forward by a separate entity and is therefore not controlled by the Applicant. While the Applicant is not aware of any obvious reason why East Claydon BESS would not come forward to fruition, the Applicant is not able to rely on delivery of this project to provide BESS capacity for its own scheme. As with all energy market developments, there are a large number of steps required to take a scheme from consent to operation. Project attrition can occur at any stage. To mitigate the risk of relying on a different project which is not yet delivered, the Applicant is therefore proposing the Proposed Development over which it has total control. The potential for the Proposed Development to connect to the East Claydon BESS to utilise its storage capacity is not appropriate for the following reasons: • Each BESS facility has a separate connection agreement and should be considered as separate projects; • The Proposed Development's BESS is ancillary to the Solar PV development and would therefore require additional supporting infrastructure at the East Claydon BESS project to

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			enable the East Claydon BESS to store energy generated by solar PV at the Proposed Development; and There is a high rate of attrition amongst renewables projects and the Applicant cannot rely on the delivery of a separate project over which it has no control.
3.12.3	Pages 1 and 2, Paras. 2.1 – 2.3	Comment noting that the Applicant has relied on extrapolation from limited ecological surveys to inform assessments across the wider Order Limits without sufficient evidential basis. Comment noting that this approach fails to establish the presence of species in non-surveyed areas or their capacity to accommodate displaced populations, undermining the robustness of the assessment. Further comment noting examples of other local schemes where skylark territories have been lost.	The Order Limits have been subject to a full ecological appraisal as detailed in ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.7: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2025) [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-093]. Table 7.2 within ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] details the study and survey area used to inform the assessment which has provided a robust baseline against which to assess the potential impacts of the Proposed Development. The Applicant has undertaken a detailed cumulative assessment ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] [REP2-037] which has concluded that with some development there may be cumulative impacts with regards ground nesting birds. However, the Applicant considers the mitigation measures detailed in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] are designed to ensure that a viable population of farmland birds can be maintained in the long term and reduce the residual effect arising from the Proposed Development.
3.12.4	Page 2, Paras. 3.1 – 3.3	Comment noting that the Applicant was to respond further on points regarding the three points of access to the Site and how these would be managed (as well as known surface water flooding issues)	The access points detailed in the Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] will be constructed to the satisfaction of Buckinghamshire Council as local highways authority. This includes a technical approval process that includes road drainage to ensure that the road remains suitable for all road users. In flood risk terms, the Applicant notes that areas of surface water flooding have been identified within and around the Site. However, this represents an existing baseline condition and is not a consequence of the Proposed Development. ES Volume 4, Appendix 16.1: Flood Risk Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.4] [REP3-028] demonstrates that the Proposed Development would not increase surface water runoff or flood risk on-site or elsewhere, with appropriate drainage and mitigation measures incorporated into the design. As the Proposed Development would not increase surface water flood risk, and given the availability of multiple access routes, the Applicant does not consider that access to the Site would be materially restricted as a result of surface water flooding during the lifetime of the Proposed Development.
3.12.5	Page 2, Paras. 4.1 – 4.5	Comment noting that recent and adjacent archaeological investigations have identified significant heritage assets within and around the Order Limits, including Iron Age/Roman remains and a possible Roman road. Comment noting that unpublished results from local National Grid investigations across Fields SA52-54 and SA57-59 should be	As noted in Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049], the Applicant will consider the results of the National Grid investigations across Fields SA52-54 and SA57-59 when they become available. This may not be until after the examination closes. The Applicant considers that the consideration of "currently unknown heritage assets" within ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010158/APP/6.2.3] and the approach to post-DCO consent evaluation set out within the Draft Archaeological Management Strategy [EN010158/APP/7.10.2] [REP1-094] agreed with Buckinghamshire Council provide adequate assessment and a mechanism for securing appropriate

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		obtained by the Applicant and considered to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the extent and significance of buried heritage in the area.	mitigation for any remains identified in the National Grid site that may also be impacted by the Proposed Development.
3.12.6	Page 3, Paras. 4.6 – 4.7	Comment noting that the proposed access track across Fields SA15, SA16 and SA17 would cause substantial and irreversible harm to well-preserved ridge and furrow features, including one of the best examples identified during the site inspection. Comment noting that this intervention by the Proposed Development would also adversely affect the setting of the Grade II-listed Muxwell Farm, resulting in permanent loss of heritage value which cannot be mitigated.	The route of the access track across Fields SA15, SA16 and SA17 will be subject to detailed design as per DCO Requirement 4 in the Draft DCO [EN010158/APP/3.1.7] . This states that the details submitted must accord with any details approved under Requirement 10 (archaeology) and this will include consultation with Buckinghamshire Council's archaeological advisor and implementation of mitigation measures to minimise any harm to the earthwork ridge and furrow.
3.12.7	Page 5, Paras. 5.1 – 5.2	In relation to the Transport and Access Chapter, comment noting that the assessment of impacts on non-motorised users is superficial with limited reference to cyclists and no clear evidence base provided. Comment noting that the conclusion of minor and not significant effects appears unjustified given exceeded thresholds for fear and intimidation. Further comment requesting clarification from the Applicant on usage data and how residual impacts have been determined.	The Applicant rejects the comments made. Section 4.5 of ES Volume 4, Appendix 15.1: Transport Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.2] describes non-motorised users (pedestrian, cyclist, equine, etc user facilities), the assessment detailed across ES Volume 2, Chapter 15: Transport and Access [EN010158/APP/6.2] [APP-058] covers all road and path users and specifically considers severance, pedestrian delay, non-motorised user amenity and fear and intimidation effects in great detail. ES Volume 2, Chapter 15: Transport and Access [EN010158/APP/6.2] [APP-058] clearly states how effects have been reviewed and considered in detail. Buckinghamshire Council as they relevant highway authority has raised no objection to the assessment or its results, which have been undertaken in accordance with best practice guidance. The Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] covers a range of measures for non-motorised users including Section 4.10 and all of Chapter 6. In addition, the Outline RoWAS [EN010158/APP/7.8.5] [CR1-026] almost exclusively caters for non-motorised users. To suggest that these road and path users have not be adequately covered is misleading and incorrect.
3.12.8	Pages 5 and 6, Paras. 6.1 – 6.9	Comment noting that the Applicant has not assessed the risk of importing animal and plant diseases via the materials, vehicles and personnel associated with the Proposed Development despite there being known disease transmission pathways (from China, for example). Comment noting that clarification is required on how the Applicant will manage and mitigate biosecurity risks, particularly in relation to construction logistics and supply chains linked to regions with active disease presence.	The Application has committed to a biosecurity protocol in the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] . Further biosecurity measures are also set out in the Preliminary Biosecurity Statement [EN010158/APP/8.28] which has been submitted at Deadline 4 and sets out key measures that will be adhered to during the construction phase.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.12.9	Page 6, Paras. 6.10 – 6.14	Further comment noting concern for risks to livestock in proximity to the Order Limits from diseases that are currently within Great Britain. Comment posing a question to the Applicant as follows: What is the applicant's estimate of the risk associated with these movements with respect to importing of disease that would affect livestock within and adjacent to the Order Limits and how do they propose to limit that risk?	The Applicant will minimise any biosecurity risk by ensuring measures are in place to manage the risk on Site during the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development. The Applicant has committed to liaise with all agricultural tenants and Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd during the preparation of the detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan(s) to agree appropriate biosecurity measures reflective of the agricultural tenants' and Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd own biosecurity practices, to minimise any potential disruptions and biosecurity risks to their business operations. The Applicant has prepared a Preliminary Biosecurity Statement [EN010158/APP/8.28] which has been submitted at Deadline 4 and sets out key measures that will be adhered to during the construction phase.
3.12.10	Page 7, Paras. 6.23 and 6.24	Comment noting that the Applicant has failed to adequately consider the sensitivity of livestock to noise, with evidence demonstrating that even minor stimuli can induce significant stress responses in horses and other animals. Comment noting that such stress responses have wider implications for both animal welfare and human safety, as distressed livestock can become difficult and hazardous to manage.	The Applicant recognises the sensitivity of livestock to noise, as set out in the noise and vibration technical study contained in Annex A to Appendix 1 of the Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086]. The document provides further information regarding the effects of noise and vibration on livestock and sets out how guidance has been used to further develop the approach to monitoring, mitigation and engagement secured within the construction and operational management plans. In addition, in respect of Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd, temporary alternative grazing land within Parcel 2 has been offered for the duration of construction in Parcel 3 should the business wish to further reduce risk to the livestock from construction noise. The Applicant maintains its position that measures can be developed to enable coalescence between livestock and the construction and operation of the Proposed Development, through the careful management of noise and associated mitigation measures that it has proposed.
3.12.11	Page 8, Para. 6.26 – 6.28	Comment noting that livestock within and around the Order Limits are not limited to horses and are particularly sensitive to stress due to their non-intensive management and exposure to tranquil conditions, making them vulnerable to unfamiliar stimuli. Comment noting that stress responses in animals have significant implications for productivity, health and product quality, including impacts on growth, immunity, reproduction and the suitability of livestock-derived products (such as bloods).	The Applicant recognises the sensitivity of the livestock used by Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd and acknowledges the supporting information provided that links environmental change to stress. The Applicant maintains its position that measures can be developed to enable coalescence between the livestock and the construction and operation of the Proposed Development, through the careful management of noise, land use, access and biosecurity measures that it has proposed.
3.12.12	Page 9, Green Box	Comment posing a question to the Applicant as follows:	The Applicant is confident that individual members of staff would be aware of and comply with the contents of the toolbox talk insofar as the requirements relate to their particular role on-site. In addition, there would be a Site Health and Safety Manager who would be responsible for enforcing

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		If the Home Office were to conduct an unannounced visit to Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd, is the applicant confident that any individual member of staff, picked at random from those working on site in any role (construction, operation or decommissioning stages), would be able to give a full account of the 'Toolbox' working practices and demonstrate that they are adhering to them?	compliance with biosecurity measures and would be able to give a full account of all 'Toolbox' working practices and demonstrate that they are adhering to them. Enforcement of Health & Safety procedures is tightly controlled internally with regular spot checks, reminders on notice boards and record-keeping.
3.12.13	Page 9, Paras. 6.34 – 6.37	Comment noting that the Applicant has failed to recognise the value of agricultural tenants and the established, high-quality farming practices that underpin local rural communities, including strong standards of animal welfare and land management. Comment noting that the Population Chapter's conclusion of only minor and not significant effects on highly sensitive agricultural businesses is inconsistent and difficult to justify, particularly given the potential impacts on livelihoods and community wellbeing.	The sensitivity of agricultural businesses and workers in the agricultural sector has been recognised as very high – the maximum level applicable through the guidance – under which assessments for population (ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4]), and health and wellbeing (ES Volume 4, Appendix 5.5: Health and Wellbeing Summary Statement [EN010158/APP/6.4.6]) have been considered. The Applicant therefore does not consider that it has failed to recognise the value and sensitivity of agricultural tenants. It should be noted that health and wellbeing is considered as a separate assessment to business viability across the ES, but that they are clearly inter-related. The consequence of the Proposed Development on businesses has been considered in the application of magnitude criteria to the sensitive receptors in ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4], which considers in the context of mitigation, whether there is: a) Loss, damage or change to attributes, quality or key characteristics or vulnerability (A <u>Moderate/Major</u> change would mean loss or severe damage e.g. direct total or partial acquisition and demolition compromising viability; a <u>Minor</u> change would be a discernible change in attributes, minor loss of or alteration to key characteristics – e.g. amendment to access or acquisition of land resulting in changes to operating conditions that do not compromise overall viability); and/or b) Introduction of severance with adequate accessibility provision (a <u>Moderate/Major</u> change would require the introduction of complete or severe severance with limited/moderate accessibility provision; a <u>Minor</u> change provides adequate accessibility provision). As in each case the magnitude of the effect is considered minor – given that adequate accessibility provision is provided and the effect would result in a discernible change in attributes, minor loss of or alteration to key characteristics – e.g. amendment to access or acquisition of land resulting in changes to operating conditions that do not compromise overall viability.
3.12.14	Page 9, Paras. 6.38 – 6.42	Comment noting that the Applicant's proposed grazing strategy is vague and qualified by caveats, with no clear commitment as to whether grazing or cutting regimes will be implemented in practice.	See response to Ref. 3.7.22 with regards commitment to grazing management. Consideration has been given regarding the need to move stock and rotate between grazed areas as outlined in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] and a confirmed grassland management strategy will be provided in the detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan(s).

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		Comment noting that the fragmented and inconsistently defined grazing areas raise concerns over their practicality, management, and suitability, including issues of fencing, water supply, livestock movement and overall availability. Comment posing a question to the Applicant as follows: What thought has been given to the need for regular rotation between grazed areas?	
3.12.15	Page 10, Para. 6.47	Comment posing a question to the Applicant as follows: The Applicant has indicated that they would be responsible for managing grazing. How would they undertake that commitment?	The Applicant has had initial discussions with local farmers regarding potential grazing with agreements to be finalised prior to operation and a final grassland management strategy will be provided in the detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan(s).
3.12.16	Page 10, Paras. 7.1 – 7.3	Comment noting that the Applicant's reliance on averaged noise metrics does not capture intermittent but intrusive sounds, which are relevant to both human and livestock receptors. Comment noting that the Applicant's reasoning on BESS siting appears inconsistent, rejecting Parcel 3 due to cumulative noise but accepting Parcel 2 without adequately resolving similar concerns.	The adoption of an equivalent continuous A-weighted sound pressure level metric ($L_{Aeq,T}$) aligns with the prediction methods and criteria set out in BS 5228-1:2009+A1:2014 – '<i>Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – Part 1: Noise</i>'. This is consistent with similar developments and represents a standard industry approach. The nature of the construction activities associated with the Proposed Development do not warrant an alternative assessment methodology. During the operation (including maintenance) phase, the noise emissions will be relatively steady-state and therefore the equivalent continuous A-weighted sound pressure level metric is applicable, in accordance with BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 – '<i>Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound</i>'. Cumulative (inter-project) noise levels have been considered for the BESS located in both land parcels. Given their location, the predicted noise levels generated by the operation of the East Claydon BESS and National Grid East Claydon Substation extension are greater at receptors in the vicinity of Parcel 3, when compared with Parcel 2. The cumulative effects are therefore more significant, which has informed the placement of the BESS within Parcel 2.

Table 3.13: John Philip Claridge (Any specific responses to points raised in oral submissions at the hearings) [REP3-069]

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.13.1	Page 1, Paras 3 and 4	Comment noting that the Applicant's rationale for selecting parcels B18 and B19 was tested by the ExA and that the party was interested to learn that it was to offset from the residential property and the farm known as Knowlhill Farm as well as minimise visual effects. Further comment noting the party's request to the Estate and Applicant to not use Field B18 for panels and instead use Field SA1. Further comment that this would remove the party's visual effects.	The Applicant provided a response at Action Point 31 within the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049] to clarify the design reasons with respect to the proposed layout in Fields B18 and B19.
3.13.2	Page 1, Paras 5 - 6	Comment noting that locating solar panels in Field B18 would adversely affect visibility, amenity, access and operational use of the farm, which could be avoided by using alternative adjacent land. Comment noting that retaining Field B18 as part of a single, coherent field would support better field management, drainage and use of existing access tracks, reducing operational disruption.	Access through Field B18 to the well will be retained during all phases of the Proposed Development, as set out below at Ref. 3.13.3. The Applicant has provided a full response to Action Point 31 in the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049] to clarify the design reasons underlying the proposed layout in Fields B18 and B19. The Applicant has set out in the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at the Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1 (CAH1) [EN010158/APP/8.7] [REP1-107] how implications for the Claridge's farming operations were considered in the design of the Proposed Development, this includes the following: - The Applicant has included an indicative track across plots 3/11, 3/13, 3/14, 3/15, 3/16, 3/18,4/1 and 4/2 which can be utilised by the Claridge family for farm access purposes to assist with their movements around the farm holding. The final choice of corridor is referenced at paragraphs 5.5.28 and 5.5.29 of the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014]. - During design stages 1 and 2, a southern cable route and construction access track option located south of Home Wood was considered. However, among the factors taken into consideration when adopting the northern option at Design Stage 3 was the ability to keep construction traffic further from Knowlhill Farm thereby limiting traffic disruption to the Claridge family. - In order to avoid access to Site 1A which would pass through land which will continue to be farmed by the Claridge family, a new access route around Romer Wood (plot 2/7) was included at Design Stage 3, which follows the existing HS2 access route. This removes the need to pass via Knowlhill Farm via plots 2/3 and 2/4 unless necessary for reasons beyond the Applicant's control e.g. the access route through plot 2/7 is obstructed by HS2 works. This is included at paragraph 5.5.31 of the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014]. The loss of Field B18 from agricultural use would be compensated via a land swap agreement for which Heads of Terms have been signed and the solar PV proposed in Field B18 does not restrict

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			the use of adjacent land. As set out in ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4], it is considered that the effects on agricultural businesses and landholders, which includes Mr Claridge's farming operations, would be not significant. As indicated in response to Action Point 31 in Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049], the Solar PV modules located in Field B18 are unlikely to be visible from Knowhill Farm, as demonstrated in the ES Volume 4, Appendix 10.5: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-114].
3.13.3	Page 2, Paras. 1 - 5	Comment noting that The Well is situated at the top of track in Field B18 and that it would make it easier for all concerned to be able to get to the Well without obstructions. Further comment noting that the Well, associated spring and access track are integral to the operational management of Knowhill Farm, and that development in these parcels risks disrupting essential farm infrastructure and biosecurity. Comment noting that consolidating solar panels within Field B19 and SA1 would reduce impacts on farm operations, improve access arrangements and minimise disruption associated with routing traffic through the farmyard. Summary comment asking the Applicant to draw up agreements to allow Knowhill Farm access to The Well and Spring plus amend the fields used for solar which in turn helps with the agreements and access issues.	The Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6] were updated at Deadline 3 to include a commitment to retain the agricultural well within Field B17 in situ and retain access for the tenants on its current alignment. The point regarding the location of Solar PV development is addressed in Ref. 3.13.2 above.
3.13.4	Page 2, Paras. 6 and 7	Comment noting that the Applicant's justification for site selection based on Grade 4 soils is unsupported, given the absence of intrusive surveys to verify soil quality. Comment noting that the field in question is demonstrably productive and highly valued for agriculture, raising concern over its selection for development and BNG use without proper evidence.	The Applicant points to Ref. 3.3.2 in this document and also Ref. 10.1.1 of Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086]. As outlined in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] the Applicant believes it has been pragmatic with regards the type of habitat that can be created. However, the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] already commits to soil nutrient testing pre-construction, so the fields with the lowest phosphate levels will be targeted and the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] also commits to a period of nutrient stripping, if required, as part of the habitat implementation phase. Therefore, this limitation is acknowledged and addressed and is not considered a constraint to the biodiversity net gain objectives set out in ES Volume 4, Appendix 7.17: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4.3].

Table 3.14: Natural England (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions) [REP3-061]

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.14.1	Page 2, Paras. 1.2 and 1.3	Comment noting that the Proposed Development, in its current form, is likely to have a significant impact on a particularly vulnerable and sensitive Bechstein's bat population known to be present within the area. Comment noting that the Bernwood population is the north-easternmost and is genetically and geographically isolated, and given it is already under pressure from development, the Proposed Development should do more to avoid adding to this impact. Further comment noting that the bat population would have been an interest feature of the proposed Bernwood SSSI.	The Applicant has carried out a detailed assessment with regards Bechstein's bats (ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5]) that also considered the potential notification of the proposed Bernwood SSSI and the inclusion of Bechstein's bats. As set out in Paragraph 7.10.133 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5], a <i>potentially</i> significant effect does not equate to significant and that there would be no 'significant harm' (either alone or cumulatively). This is because the impacts, predicted on a precautionary basis only, are unlikely to result in an effect at a sufficient scale to adversely change the current conservation status of the species in the longer term. The mitigation outlined in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] is designed to: • maintain the Bechstein's bat range/distribution by avoiding woodlands and hedgerows; and • maintain the Bechstein's bat population by providing additional grassland of better quality than is currently the case, all within the Bechstein's bat current home range.
3.14.2	Page 3, Para. 1.9	Comment noting that Bechstein's bats are a quiet species that do not vocalise as often or as loudly as many other bat species and therefore use of acoustic survey methods are not appropriate for this species.	The Applicant does acknowledge that acoustic survey has limitations with regards Bechstein's bats but NE have agreed within the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Natural England [EN010158/APP/5.14] [REP1-025] that survey work carried out to date and additional information used has been sufficient to inform the assessment. In addition, the Applicant has acknowledged the limitations of acoustic monitoring with regards the pre- and post-construction bat monitoring and has submitted additional information with regards bat monitoring objectives at Deadline 4 in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5].
3.14.3	Page 3, Para. 1.12	Comment noting that the Applicant previously acknowledged potential impacts arising from the loss of these fields and proposed habitat creation elsewhere as mitigation, as set out in RR-026 of the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [PDA-006]. Comment noting that it is now unclear, following review of documents and ISH discussion, whether this remains the Applicant's position, and clarification is therefore requested.	A full response to this question has previously been provided within the Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] and in addition the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006] (see RR-203, page 209). The Applicant is still in dialogue with Natural England over Fields B3, B6, B7 and B8 (which Natural England considers to be important for future resilience) and is confident that an agreement can be reached that would address the points made in their representation.
3.14.4	Pages 3 and 4, Paras. 1.13 and 1.14	Comment noting that the proposed mitigation in Fields B9 and B17 is not adequate to offset the loss of the B pasture fields, as they do not replicate the same underlying characteristics or sheltered geographical context.	Comment is noted by the Applicant. Whilst Field B17 is more exposed, Field B9 is a smaller field and relatively sheltered by surrounding hedgerows and nearby woodland. See also response to Ref. 3.14.3 above.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
		Comment noting that fields B6, B7 and B8 play a critical functional role in linking ancient woodlands with known and potential Bechstein's roosts, and their loss would reduce the availability of high-quality foraging habitat in close proximity to roosts, thereby undermining the long-term suitability of the woods to support the population.	
3.14.5	Page 4, Para. 1.19	Comment noting that an avoidance-led approach should be consistently applied across the Proposed Development, with all grazed fields protected from development within the Order Limits. Comment noting that enhancements should prioritise the retention of grazing and increased buffers to safeguard existing habitat value and ensure long-term resilience of the nationally important Bernwood Bechstein's bat population.	Comment is noted by the Applicant, however the measures outlined in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] should be noted, namely that twice as much grassland would be created as is being lost and significant buffers are proposed to ensure connectivity between woodland blocks and the wider landscape. As such, whilst avoidance has not been possible across the entirety of the Order Limits, the Applicant's position is that appropriate and sufficient mitigation has instead been proposed, in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy. The location of replacement habitat does take into account the location of known breeding roosts. The Applicant directs Natural England to the Bat Technical Study [EN010158/APP/8.5] [REP1-105] (submitted Deadline 1) Appendix I (PDF p208), which shows the distribution of known Bechstein's roosts. The closest <i>breeding</i> roosts are concentrated to the south in/around Finemere Wood, where grazing land will be increased and targeted. See the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5], specifically Appendix 6 – Grazing Analysis (p130). See also response to Ref. 3.14.3 above.
3.14.6	Page 4, Para. 1.21	Comment noting that the increased hedgerow buffer widths in Parcel 1 fields are welcomed in terms of strengthening connectivity between blocks of ancient woodland. Comment noting that these measures should be provided alongside, rather than instead of, the retention of grazed pasture to reinforce habitat provision and reduce the likelihood of significant adverse effects on Bechstein's bats.	The Applicant welcomes this comment. The comment is noted by the Applicant, however the measures outlined in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] should be noted, namely that twice as much grassland would be created as is being lost. See also response to Ref. 3.14.3 above.
3.14.7	Page 5, Para. 1.25 and Page 9, Table Ref. 2.1.22 and Page 9, Table Ref. 2.1.23	Comment noting that Natural England requires buffer zones to be measured in addition to existing hedgerow features (rather than from a centre line) to ensure baseline ecological conditions are properly captured. Further comment noting some confusion on this during ISH1. Comment noting that failure to adopt this approach risks buffers only protecting existing ground flora rather than extending to canopy	A response has previously been provided within the Applicant's Response to Relevant Representations [EN010158/APP/8.3] [PDA-006] and secured within the Design Commitments [EN010158/APP/5.9.6]. The spatial extent of development as set out in the DCO Application has similarly been based on offsets from the centreline of the hedgerows. This is considered to be the most consistent data source available across the Site. The Applicant believes that the approach of measuring the hedgerow from the centreline is the most reliable. In addition, where trees are located within hedgerows, the buffers have also accommodated the root protection zones and the width of buffers has been extended in discrete locations due to concerns raised by consultees.

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		extents where hedgerow trees are present, and that an additive baseline method should therefore be applied.	The approach taken to date has been to increase buffer widths in areas where the corridors are considered to be more sensitive (including, but not limited to, the fields between Shrubs Wood, Decoypond Wood and Sheephouse Wood). The Applicant is willing to review the size of buffers in particular locations as part of the evolving bespoke approach to buffers, and has requested that Natural England make location-specific recommendations.
3.14.8	Page 5, Para. 1.27 and Page 13, Table Ref. Q1.7.17	Comment noting that reliance on a 15m buffer based on Bechstein's bats' echolocation range is not a robust justification, as the actual extent of bats' sensory perception cannot be accurately determined from current survey equipment alone. Comment noting that Bechstein's bats use a combination of hearing, vision, memory, and complex flight behaviour, meaning they will be aware of and influenced by features beyond buffer distances, undermining the assumption that impacts can be avoided solely on the basis of mitigating to their understood echolocation range.	It is accepted that the actual extent of bats' sensory perception cannot be determined from survey equipment; however, a Bechstein' call is both quiet and high-frequency, therefore attenuates over short distances in air. In addition, if it is the structure of the panels themselves causing a displacement effect, then that would be a result of returning echoes, and these would have a fraction of the energy of the emitted call. That said (and accepting that the above is both technical and somewhat theoretical), the mitigation does not rely on '15m buffers', but on providing an adequate distance between panels. That distance is 40m where the buffers extend 15m each side from the centre-line, because there is an additional 5m between each security fence and the closest panels. From a bat perspective, the principal function of the buffers is to ensure continued commuting, thus avoiding fragmentation. The hedgerow structure within the buffers facilitates navigation (as well as providing shelter, insect prey etc.), and the buffer width (the distance between panels) mitigates for the presence of the panels themselves, should that be the cause of any displacement effect.
3.14.9	Pages 5 and 6, Paras. 1.30 - 1.32 and Page 13, Table Ref. Q1.7.17	Comment noting that the existing grazed fields provide known value to Bechstein's bats, particularly during energetically demanding periods such as pregnancy and lactation, and that maintaining the current baseline is critical to reducing the risk of adverse impacts. Comment noting that while species-rich grassland creation is welcomed, its effectiveness as mitigation may be limited if grazing regimes, timing, and location are not appropriately aligned with bat ecology or if habitats are constrained by surrounding development that may discourage use.	The comment is noted by the Applicant. However, in relation to the point about grazing fields providing known value at energetically demanding periods, there is a known benefit from having good foraging close to breeding colonies. The Bernwood Bechstein's bat population (as set out in Natural England's own research report summarising bat trapping and radio-tracking surveys between 2011 and 2022) is described as comprising at least three breeding colonies that are centred on three woodlands currently designated as SSSI; Finemere Wood SSSI, Grendon and Doddershall Woods SSSI and Ham Home-cum-Ham Green Woods SSSI. Whilst it is accepted that there are, of course, as-yet unidentified roosts throughout the woodland complex, there is limited evidence of an additional colony further north, i.e. no Bechstein's bat maternity roosts in the woodlands surrounding Fields B3, B6, B7, B8*. This means that the mitigation as currently proposed is in close proximity and reflects the currently known distribution of breeding roosts. Also see response to Ref. 3.14.3 above. [*There is one maternity roost identified in Home Wood (east of Sheephouse Wood), and a handful of day roosts in Decoypond Wood and Sheephouse Wood – the one maternity roost tree identified in the south-west corner of Sheephouse Wood at an early stage has been lost to natural causes.]

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
3.14.10	Page 6, Para. 1.35	Comment noting that a robust monitoring strategy is required given the significant uncertainties associated with the proposal, including novel research approaches, untested mitigation measures, and unclear management practices. Comment noting that further detail on the monitoring framework should be provided and agreed prior to determination of the Development Consent Order to ensure impacts can be properly understood and managed.	These comments are noted by the Applicant and additional details regarding the bat monitoring objectives have been included in an update to the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] which has been submitted at Deadline 4.
3.14.11	Pages 6 and 7, Paras 2.3 and 2.4	With regard to the potential impacts from the loss of foraging habitat to bats, Natural England is currently reviewing whether, should a satisfactory mitigation solution not be agreed, a bat mitigation licence may need to be sought by the Applicant. Comment noting that the Applicant has indicated engagement with NatureSpace regarding the potential use of a District Level Licensing (DLL) approach for Great Crested Newts, as referenced in [REP2-087]. Comment noting that, should the Applicant proceed with DLL, further engagement will be anticipated in relation to securing a Letter of No Impediment.	The Applicant would like to clarify this further (as discussed at the meeting between the two parties on 10 June 2026). It is the Applicant's understanding that, if the mitigation proposed is not considered adequate to maintain favourable conservation status (FCS), then a licence could not be issued as it would not pass the FCS test; a licence cannot be issued to address a shortfall in mitigation. The Applicant is still in dialogue with Natural England over mitigation that Natural England considers to be important for future resilience and is confident that an agreement can be reached that would negate the point made here. This is not strictly correct as the Applicant has gone further and has received a cost estimate and assessment from NatureSpace indicating that a district level licence (DLL) is proceedable should the Applicant be minded to pursue this route. The Applicant has also been in discussions with Natural England regarding pursuing an alternative licensing route through Natural England, and the Applicant has received confirmation that this licensing approach would also be acceptable. This second comment is noted and the Applicant is committed to ongoing engagement with Natural England in regards to securing a Letter of No Impediment.
3.14.12	Page 7, Para. 3.1	Comment noting that through discussions at the ISH, it is clear that there is confusion around the Applicant's assessment methodology, their use of the terminology 'potentially significant effect', and which paragraphs of the National Policy Statement are most relevant to the assessment of impacts on Bechstein's bat.	The Applicant disagrees with this assertion. The Applicant points to its responses against Q2.5.7, Q2.5.8 and Q2.5.9 in Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23] .
3.14.13	Page 7, Paras. 3.2 - 3.5 and Page 12, Table Ref. Q1.7.7 and Page 12, Table Ref. Q1.7.13	Comment noting that the Environmental Statement identifies potential adverse effects on Bechstein's bats due to habitat modification and fragmentation, and explicitly acknowledges uncertainty over the effectiveness of proposed	As detailed within paragraph 7.10.133 of ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010158/APP/6.2.5] , the Applicant has given due consideration to the status of the Bernwood Bechstein's bat population and the assessment of its National importance, and a precautionary approach has been applied and the residual effects of the operation (including maintenance) of the Proposed Development are assessed as potentially being adverse, long-term and permanent

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		mitigation in a precautionary manner. Further comment that, as first presented, this did demonstrate a precautionary approach to assessment. Comment noting that subsequent responses by the Applicant appear to change this position by attributing the 'potentially significant' conclusion to limited evidence and uncertainty of effects, creating inconsistency with the earlier precautionary approach and leading to ambiguity in the assessment. Further comment requesting clarification from the Applicant on relevant statements made during ISH1. Further comment requesting clarity from the Applicant over whether there is uncertainty in relation to the effectiveness of mitigation or a question over the impact pathways being assessed.	for the duration of the operation (including maintenance) phase, in light of Bechstein's bat lifespans, and therefore potentially significant at the District level. It is considered that this potentially significant effect would not amount to, nor equate to, 'significant harm' as the predicted impacts will be of a scale that will not impact the overall FCS of the species as the Proposed Development design and mitigation has focused on protecting and enhancing Bechsteins's bat foraging and commuting habitat.
3.14.14	Pages 7 and 8, Para. 3.6 and Para 3.7	Comment noting that Natural England advises Solar PV installation should be treated as a loss of foraging habitat with an avoidance effect in a worst-case assessment, and that the loss of approximately 40ha of grazed grassland represents a significant negative impact on a nationally important Bechstein's bat population. Comment noting that such impacts have the potential to adversely affect the conservation status of the species, and clarification is therefore sought from the Applicant on whether there is any fundamental disagreement with these assumptions and conclusions. Comment noting that further justification is required from the Applicant as to why residual effects are assessed as potentially significant at the district level. Comment noting that impacts to a nationally important Bechstein's bat population would typically be expected to be assessed as significant at the national level, and clarification is therefore sought on this apparent discrepancy.	The Applicant notes that Natural England have set out their view as follows and asked specifically for comments on three points: <i>The installation of Solar PV Modules should be considered as a loss of foraging habitat and as having an avoidance effect/impact on bats in the absence of mitigation (in line with a worst case scenario assessment).</i> The installation of Solar PV modules will result in the loss of some habitat, but is not a like-for-like loss, given that much is arable and of lower value to bats. Even as a worst-case calculation, Natural England agree that <i>"the primary potential impact arising from the conversion of arable to solar is primarily one of connectivity and we have agreed in principle that buffers along hedgerows (i.e. commuting routes) can provide mitigation for this impact."</i> <i>The loss of approximately 40ha of grazed grassland and foraging habitat would constitute a significant negative impact on a nationally important population of Bechstein's bat.</i> Unmitigated, the loss of 40ha of grazed grassland would likely represent a significant impact on a nationally important population of Bechstein's bat; however, this loss is <i>not</i> unmitigated, and twice as much grassland is being provided of better quality. The distribution of that grassland differs from the current distribution of grassland, but better reflects where the closest known breeding colony is centred (i.e. Finemere Wood). This mitigation is embedded in the design; it is not 'additional'. The loss of 40ha of grassland habitat represents just under 1% of the Bechstein's bat home range (4160ha, as reported in Natural England Commissioned Report 558 "The Bernwood population of Bechstein's Bats", PDF p26). That report further notes that <i>'their collective home range and Core Sustenance Zone [7,934ha]... extends far beyond [the] discrete woodland blocks and Bechstein's bats were recorded commuting, foraging and roosting several</i>

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			<i>kilometres away</i>' (PDF p6). It therefore does not seem unreasonable to suggest that providing additional grassland within the home range is acceptable mitigation, even if it does not maintain replicate the current location of grassland. 3. <i>Significant impacts to this foraging habitat have the potential to negatively affect the conservation status of the species.</i> As for Point 2. Natural England accept that cultivated arable habitat itself provides very little by way of resources for bats, but make the point that it does not elicit an avoidance response. The Applicant believes that sufficient mitigation has been provided to avoid losses to foraging, and has created a network of substantial buffers to ensure connectivity (considered sufficient to mitigate a potential avoidance effect). Natural England further suggest that significant impacts to a nationally important population would usually be assessed as significant at the national level. This is not the case; the assessment of impacts is separate to the assessment of a receptor's value (they can be equal or less, but not greater than). For example, the loss of a single tree-roost would perhaps be significant (depending on its status), and would need to be compensated, but its loss would be unlikely to be a nationally significant impact. The residual effects of the Proposed Development are assessed as potentially significant at the district level because there is some uncertainty over the extent to which displacement effects are real (and the mechanism by which they would manifest), especially on a site which has been designed with biodiversity (and Bechstein's bats in particular) as a key driver. Given the mitigation, the residual effects are unlikely to result in a local extinction (which would be a nationally significant impact). See also response to Ref. 3.14.3 above.
3.14.15	Page 8, Paras. 3.8 and 3.9	Comment noting that clarification is required on the distinction drawn by the Applicant between the conclusions of the EIA and the test of "significant harm" to the favourable conservation status of the species, as referenced in the ISH transcript. Comment noting that paragraph 7.10.133 of the Biodiversity Chapter appears to define 'significant harm' as effects impacting favourable conservation status, creating an apparent conflict with the Applicant's explanation, and therefore further explanation is sought from the Applicant to resolve this inconsistency. Further comment that, in accordance with Paragraph 5.4.42 of NPS EN-1, Natural	The Applicant points to its responses against Q2.5.7 and Q2.5.8 in the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23].

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		England consider the impacts to foraging habitat in Parcel 1 to constitute significant harm to the Bernwood population of Bechstein's bats.	
3.14.16	Page 8, Para. 3.10	Comment noting that Natural England disagrees with the conclusion of the ES and they advise there is a risk that the Proposed Development in its current form has not mitigated potential impacts to an acceptable level and therefore a significant residual impact remains. Further comment requesting that the Proposed Development is amended to address this risk given the national significance of the population and the uncertainty over the effectiveness of the mitigation.	This comment is noted by the Applicant and as outlined above the Applicant is still in dialogue with Natural England to resolve these issues. Notwithstanding this, the Applicant's position is that effects have been mitigated to an acceptable level, in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy.
3.14.17	Page 9, Table Ref. 2.1.21	Comment noting that the Applicant's response appears to misinterpret earlier representations by focusing on construction noise, whereas the original point concerned the inappropriate use of bat detector range as a proxy for echolocation range in determining buffer sizes. Comment noting that further detailed clarification on this issue is provided in paragraph 1.27 of Annex 1, and that the Applicant has not addressed the substance of this concern.	Please see response to Ref. 3.14.8 .
3.14.18	Pages 9 and 10, Table Ref. 2.1.38	Comment noting that the Applicant's assertion that impacts are mitigated does not reflect the detailed concerns raised, which recognise design changes but conclude that the proposed mitigation does not sufficiently address potential impacts on bats. Comment noting that while arable land has limited intrinsic foraging value, its conversion from arable to grassland should not (on a precautionary basis) demonstrably result in improved foraging conditions as there is insufficient evidence that bats would forage over solar areas.	This comment is noted by the Applicant. However, the measures in the Outline LEMP [EN010158/APP/7.6.5] will create 95ha of grassland that is intended to be managed by extensive grazing within the known core sustenance zone for Bechstein's bats so there will not be a net loss of grassland. Notwithstanding this, the Applicant is still in dialogue with Natural England over Fields B3, B6, B7 and B8 and is confident that an agreement can be reached, as per the response to Ref. 3.14.3). It is accepted by the Applicant that conversion of arable to grassland within the fields where Solar PV modules are planned may not be used by all species of foraging bats due to a potential displacement effect. However, it is still considered that this would deliver an increase in invertebrate biomass that may improve foraging conditions away from the Solar PV modules. Also as indicated on the Illustrative Layout Plans and Sections [EN010158/APP/2.6.4] [CR1-007] the 95ha of grassland creation (without Solar PV modules) are not surrounded on all four sides by Solar PV modules, and have been located in locations within the core sustenance zone

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			adjacent to woodlands of known value for bats to provide alternate foraging, if indeed a displacement effect occurs, with the hedgerows and buffers designed to maintain connectivity.
3.14.19	Pages 10 and 11, Table Ref. 2.1.39	Comment referring back to the Applicant's response in [PDA-006] with further comment from the party that they have not asserted that the grazed fields in Parcel 1 are of greater value than grazed pasture elsewhere within the core sustenance zone. Further comment provided on why the party consider the proposed mitigation in Fields B17 and B19 are not ecologically equivalent to the baseline.	The Applicant has engaged with Natural England and understands that Natural England's position is that the complete loss of Fields B6, B7 and B8 (and more recently B3) are of particular importance to foraging Bechstein's bats within the core sustenance zone (Draft Statement of Common Ground with Natural England [EN010158/APP/5.14] [REP1-025]). This further comment is noted by the Applicant. The Applicant would note in response that, whilst Field B17 is more open and windswept, Field B9 is a smaller field and relatively sheltered by surrounding hedgerows and nearby woodland. Notwithstanding this the Applicant has proposed 95ha of grassland creation and enhancement within the wider core sustenance zone. See also the response to Ref. 3.14.3.
3.14.20	Page 11, Table Ref. 2.1.40	Comment welcoming the Applicant's commitment to consult Natural England in the production of the detailed LEMP.	This comment is noted. The Applicant welcomes continued engagement with Natural England over this matter.
3.14.21	Page 12, Table Ref. Q1.7.13	Comment noting that the Applicant states that potential impacts on Bechstein's bats would not result in an effect at a scale to adversely change the current conservation status of the species. Further comment noting that the Applicant highlights paragraphs 5.4.42 and 5.4.43 of NPS EN-1. Comment requesting that the Applicant considers paragraphs 5.4.54 and 5.4.55 of NPS EN-1.	The Applicant points to its responses against Q2.5.7 and Q2.5.8 in the Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's Second Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.23] .
3.14.22	Page 13, Table Ref. Q1.7.17	Comment noting that the Applicant has not adequately avoided, mitigated or compensated for the approx. 28ha of grazed grassland in Parcel 1. Further comment noting that Natural England do not disagree with what the Applicant has set out regarding habitat function for ground nesting birds. Further comment noting that grazing agreements out to be secured within the detailed LEMP especially as the Applicant has not offered evidence to suggest mowing is a suitable alternative.	This comment is noted by the Applicant. The Applicant remains in dialogue with Natural England over Fields B3, B6, B7 and B8 and is confident that an agreement can be reached (see Draft Statement of Common Ground with Natural England [EN010158/APP/5.14] [REP1-025]) and the response to Ref. 3.14.3. Applicant notes that Natural England are in agreement regards habitat function for ground-nesting birds (see Draft Statement of Common Ground with Natural England [EN010158/APP/5.14] [REP1-025]). The Applicant has indicated its intention to use grazing as part of the long-term management regime (and has had positive discussions with tenants who may be willing to provide either sheep or cattle grazing). Potential grazing regimes and stocking densities would be detailed in the detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan(s).

Table 3.15: Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd (Written summaries of oral submissions made at the hearings and any other post hearing submissions) [REP3-067]

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Comments on Site Layout			
3.15.1	Paras 43 to 55	Comments on the evolution of the site layout and confusion on this as a result of plans within the Bat and Wintering Bird Surveys document.	The Applicant has responded in detail to this point in its Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [REP3-049] at page 17-19 and the response to Action Point 21. The Applicant's clear position is that it was entirely appropriate for early conversations with landowners to include discussions with tenants which were then used to inform the initial design. The Applicant notes the strong representations made by Preston Farms about the impacts of the Proposed Development on their operation and has been working with them throughout the preparation of the DCO Application to try and address this impact. The 'proposals' referenced in paragraph 43 of the Preston Farms Deadline 3 submission (see Preston Farms Limited and TCS Bioscience Limited [REP3-067]) pre-dated the instruction of the project team and the analysis carried out by professional consultants as to the suitability of land in proximity to the National Grid East Claydon Substation for solar and associated infrastructure such as substations, including analysis of opportunities for construction access. They did not therefore form an alternative scheme for the purposes of the EIA Regulations, or in any other context. Separately, but related to these points, the Applicant wishes to clarify that Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Bioscience Ltd submission incorrectly dates the plan on Page 31 of the representation as being put forward in 2022, where this plan is dated April 2024. The Applicant, through discussions with Preston Farms, has made a number of positive changes to improve the position from the Proposed Development initially presented at Phase One consultation and to minimise private loss, including the measures listed in the 5.5.7 of the Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [REP3-051] such as removing the proposed substation from Field E23, creating a 20m corridor for the movement of horses (over four times the minimum width recommended by the British Horse Society) and the provision of replacement land. The responses below demonstrate how the Applicant has considered alternatives that would have a lesser impact on Preston Farm's operation and why they are not feasible, notwithstanding the Applicant's view is that the Proposed Development has an acceptable impact in the context of relevant planning policy.
Response to ISH1 Action 36 and 38			
3.15.2	Paras 57 to 59	Comments questioning the approach to mitigating the impacts from the use of Field E23, and the design evolution of the locations of Rosefield Substation and the BESS as part of the Proposed Development. Further comments setting out the importance of Field E23 to the business, the current use of the field, and the perceived impacts that the use of the field by the Proposed Development would have on the business.	The Applicant welcomes the further information provided by Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd in relation to the current operation of Field E23 at Appendix C to their Deadline 3 submission [REP3-067]. The Applicant has stated the reasons for retaining Field E23 as solar at reference 5.5.7 of the Applicant's Response to Deadline 2 Submissions [EN010158/APP/8.18] [REP3-051], in response to the Deadline 2 submission by Preston Farms and TCS Biosciences Ltd [REP2-107]. In summary, whilst precise figures cannot be confirmed until the detailed design stage, Field E23 is capable of providing approximately 15MW of renewable energy generation and is therefore an important part of the Proposed Development to meet the policy objectives of maximising the energy generation near the point of connection, making efficient use of the land and meeting the urgent need for renewable energy as CNP infrastructure, in line with NPS EN-1 (2023). This approximate figure is recognised as a correction and uplift to the indicative generating capacity quoted during ISH1, being 12.25 MWp (see Page 126 of Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049]). For completeness,

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			the Applicant observes that the Landlord is able to gain vacant possession of Field E23 through the use of Landlord and Tenant Law. If the Landlord were to gain vacant possession, this would avoid the need for the Applicant to exercise its compulsory acquisition powers over this land as discussed further in the Tenancy Position of Preston Farms Ltd [EN010158/APP/8.30] submitted at Deadline 4. The Applicant has carried out a robust and systematic process of considering land within the 10km Search Area, as set out in Appendix 1: Site Selection Report of the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5]. Inevitably this involved a balancing exercise, weighing up various planning and environmental considerations, using professional judgement and considering relevant planning policy. Some considerations were given greater weight, where for instance, they were required to address a planning policy requirement, such as the sequential test for flood risk, or where required to show compliance with the mitigation hierarchy of avoiding and reducing potential impacts. It should be noted in this context that there is no policy requirement to consider alternatives in relation to impacts on an existing business. Whilst the Applicant recognises Preston Farm Ltd.'s concerns, it considers that these have been addressed by the proposals put forward by the Applicant for offsets and replacement land and as such that they do not outweigh the sound reasons for discounting land which is not currently proposed for solar and related infrastructure in the Proposed Development (including impact on people's homes, heritage, landscape and visual impacts and impact on biodiversity). The Applicant has removed the Construction Compound from Field E23 at Deadline 4, including but not limited to on the Works Plans [EN010158/APP/2.3.5] and ES Volume 3, Figure 3.8: Indicative Location of Primary and Secondary Construction Compounds [EN010158/APP/6.3.5].
3.15.3	Paras 60 to 68	Comments setting out the business's use of Granborough Road and their concerns around the Proposed Developments use of this as an access, stating that access via Granborough Road is not necessary or proportionate. Further comments setting out why the party does not consider the proposed mitigations put forth by the Applicant are appropriate, and discussion of an alternative access.	The Applicant has provided a Construction Access Review [EN010158/APP/8.29] at Deadline 4 which details transport and access matters relating to Parcel 3.
'Designing in' mitigation			
3.15.4	Paras 41 and 69 to 77	Comments noting that the Applicant does not demonstrate that risk can be avoided at source, rather that risk can be managed by the mitigation measures that it has proposed in the DCO Application documents, and that the party considers that this is the wrong approach to biosecurity. Further comment that the party considers that the Applicant is expecting them to change how they run their business, rather than amending the Proposed	The Applicant has submitted a Preliminary Biosecurity Statement [EN010158/APP/8.28] at Deadline 4, which commits to a range of measures to avoid and minimise the risk at source. In relation to the representations made on the agent of change principle, paragraph 200 of the NPPF is providing policy on introducing new, sensitive uses (usually residential) to existing primarily employment and community areas and making sure that they do not as a result have unacceptable impacts placed on their operation. NPS EN-1 and EN-3 do not have similar policies on the basis that they are primarily concerned with the introduction of infrastructure into existing areas, and the policies are therefore focussed on making the impacts of that infrastructure as acceptable as possible, whilst recognising the infrastructure is CNP and thus that some residual impacts are inevitable. Paragraph 200 of the NPPF states that: "<i>Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new</i>

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		Development, with reference to “agent of change” NPPF principles. Further comments that the Applicant has not explained what would happen if the Proposed Development does result in an impact on the business.	<i>development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or ‘agent of change’) should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.”</i> It is clear in this context that the policy is focussed on instances where existing businesses would have a significant adverse effect on new development as a result of its introduction (not the other way around). It is also observed that the fields in which Preston Farms currently operate are not in an entirely quiet context – they are in a relatively busy agricultural area in the southeast of England, next to roads, with vehicle movements, farming activity and nearby construction (including HS2, East-West Rail and overhead line works near the National Grid East Claydon Substation). Separate to the commitments made during design evolution, several amendments to the Proposed Development and additional commitments have been made during examination in response to the requirements of the business and in the interests of avoiding significant risks. However, in light of the offers for long-term replacement land as well as temporary grazing land during construction, it is not justified to expect the Proposed Development to be designed in such a way that the business could continue to operate without reasonable alterations to its current operating practices, which in turn would place unreasonable expectations on how the landowner can make choices on what they do with other land in its ownership. The Applicant has submitted a note on the Tenancy Position of Preston Farms Ltd [EN010158/APP/8.30] at Deadline 4 which explains the current vulnerability of Preston Farms’ tenure, but also observes that if the legal agreement is completed between Claydon Estate LLP and Preston Farm Ltd that they will have the benefit of a 40-year Farm Business Tenancy which would ensure long-term security of their business.

Overview of Applicant’s response to WR and ExQ1

3.15.5	Paras 80 to 88	Comments setting out that the party does not consider that the Applicant has listened to their submissions during examination, and during the pre-examination period, and that the Applicant therefore has a lack of understanding of their business. Further comment noting requests for information from the Applicant to the party, and questions as to why this information was not requested earlier in the process, including the following: - Details of animal movement in Field E23 - Details of when animals are inside and outside	The Applicant does not accept that it has not listened to Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd.’s concerns both prior to and during the examination process. The Applicant has previously set out the changes made prior to submission in Appendix 1 of the Written Summary of the Applicant’s Oral Submissions at Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1) [REP1-107]. Several changes have also been made to date during the examination in response to their comments, including the additional 50m BESS setback, the offer of temporary grazing land during construction and amendments to the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5] and Outline OEMP [EN010158/APP/7.3.5] to secure stronger mitigation measures. In addition, at Deadline 4 the Construction Compound has been removed from Field E23 as shown in ES Volume 3, Figure 3.8: Indicative Location of Primary and Secondary Construction Compounds [EN010158/APP/6.3.5] and several new documents have been submitted including the Draft Animal Movement Arc Plan at Appendix 1 to this document, Preliminary Biosecurity Statement [EN010158/APP/8.28] and Construction Access Review [EN010158/APP/8.29]. The Applicant has attended several meetings with Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd which resulted in a greater understanding of the business and informed changes to the Proposed Development. Further information on communications with Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd is set out in the response at Ref. 3.15.14 below.
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Critical National Priority

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3.15.6	Paras 89 to 95	Comments setting out that the party considers that the potential impact on their business could fall within NPS EN-1 para 4.2.15 exception to the presumption in favour of CNP, by reason of unacceptable risk to, or unacceptable interference with human health and public safety. Further comment that the risk from the Proposed Development is not private or commercial, and that it concerns national level resilience in a specialist clinical diagnostic supply chain.	The Applicant's position is that any alleged impact does not fall within the definition of an 'unacceptable risk to or unacceptable interference with human health and public safety' in NPS EN-1 and therefore that the CNP presumption still applies. The Applicant points to previous addresses of this matter, such as Ref 5.3.1 in Applicant's Response to Written Representations [EN010158/APP/8.12] [REP2-086] and Q1.17.1 in Applicant's Response to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions [EN010158/APP/8.13] [REP2-087]. The Applicant has assessed the impact on existing business and landholdings in ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Population [EN010158/APP/6.2.4] which is concluded to be not significant for non-agricultural businesses, which includes TCS Biosciences. The sensitivity of the business as a receptor is considered to be very high, which is the highest level of sensitivity and so this has been given the appropriate level of importance in the assessment. The approach being taken by Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd appears to be that if there is any doubt over the potential for an impact on their operation, this would be too great a risk because any disruption would be fatal – see oral representations from Mr James Burton at ISH1 (Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [REP3-049]). This is then further developed in their Deadline 3 submissions which include letters from the Sepsis Trust and AMR Action. The Applicant is not disputing the importance of the product produced by TCS Biosciences Ltd. but considers that it is not appropriate to confer from it that any level of risk is essentially unacceptable. The Applicant has put in place measures that are considered to mitigate the impact on TCS Biosciences Ltd.'s operations and is therefore of the view that any risk that may remain has been minimised to an acceptable level. Importantly and as explained in the note on the Tenancy Position of Preston Farms Ltd [EN010158/APP/8.30] submitted at Deadline 4, agreement between Preston Farms Ltd and the landowner would provide long-term security for their business by virtue of a grant if a 40-year leasehold interest (which Preston Farms Ltd does not currently enjoy the benefit of).

Appendix A – Site Selection/layout, Alternatives and necessity

3.15.7	Paras A1.1 to A1.4	Comments questioning whether the Applicant has discharged the test for compulsory acquisition under section 122 of the planning Act 2008 and the Government's Guidance on the Compulsory Acquisition Process (September 2013, as updated). Further comment on whether the layout, fields, access route and other rights have been justified, given the impact on the party, as necessary, proportionate and the minimum interference with the operational holding.	The Applicant's Statement of Reasons [EN010158/APP/4.1.3] [REP1-010] sets out how the Applicant has complied with section 122 of the Planning Act 2008 in respect of all the land in which the Applicant seeks powers of acquisition and temporary possession over – including land in which Preston Farms Ltd has an interest in. Sections 5.3 and 5.5 of the Statement of Reasons [EN010158/APP/4.1.3] [REP1-010] address how the limbs of the conditions in section 122 have been met. For the purposes of satisfying these compulsory acquisition tests, it is relevant to note that TCS Biosciences Ltd (being the business which supplies the blood agar to the NHS), does not have an interest in any of the land within the Order Limits. Only Preston Farms Ltd holds a tenancy interest in parts of the Order Land, which is explained in detail in the note on the Tenancy Position of Preston Farms Ltd [EN010158/APP/8.30] submitted at Deadline 4. Whilst the Applicant is seeking compulsory acquisition rights, as explained in the Statement of Reasons [EN010158/APP/4.1.3] [REP1-010], to ensure that all of the land is assembled and to provide certainty, the main freeholder, the Claydon Estate LLP, have entered into a voluntary agreement for the area identified for solar development and associated works which will avoid the need for the use of compulsory acquisition powers.
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			As noted in the Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) [EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049]), by entering into the Option Agreement with the Applicant the Claydon Estate LLP has made a decision about how it would like to utilise its freehold land, whether it be for income or climate-change benefits associated with solar, which as landowner it is entitled to do. The letter from the Claydon Estate LLP appended as Annex 1 to the note on the Tenancy Position of Preston Farms Ltd [EN010158/APP/8.30] submitted at Deadline 4 further clarifies the Estate's views and the note as a whole explains why Preston Farms' tenancy position is relevant to the SoS's decision making. With regards to the consideration of alternatives and the Secretary of State's decision making, NPS EN-1 (2023) states at paragraph 4.3.25 that <i>"alternatives not among the main alternatives studied by the applicant...should only be considered to the extent that the Secretary of State thinks they are both important and relevant to the decision."</i> It further clarifies at paragraph 4.3.28 that <i>"alternative proposals which are vague or immature can be excluded on the grounds that they are not important and relevant to the Secretary of State's decision."</i> It is noted that no alternative land has been identified, however, if it were, it would need to be justified with the existence of the Order Limits, as a suitable alternative, with a willing landowner. It is likely that such land would be further away from the substation and would therefore lead to more land and parties being impacted by compulsory acquisition.
3.15.8	Paras A2.1 to A2.6	Comments that, aside from the viable grid connection, the factors included within the site selection assessment are commercial preferences of the Applicant. The party continues that the fact that the Site has three tenants was disregarded by the Applicant.	This is not a correct representation of the Applicant's site selection process which is set out in detail in Appendix 1: Site Selection Report to the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5]. As referenced above, the Applicant undertook a robust and systematic approach to site selection which included the consideration of various planning and environmental factors in selecting an appropriate site, as well as commercial considerations. This included early discussions with the freeholder, who considered tenants and their future aspirations, for how they wished to use their land and occupational interests, when deciding what land they wanted to put forward as potentially available for solar and related infrastructure. It is relevant that although Preston Farms Ltd currently occupy land required for the Proposed Development, the land where vacant possession is required is held under a Farm Business Tenancy, the term of which has come to an end and the current occupation is on an annual rolling basis as referenced at ISH1 (Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1)[EN010158/APP/8.16] [REP3-049] (see page 85). See also Tenancy position of Preston Farms Ltd [EN010158/APP/8.30]. There is no obligation on the landowner to continue leasing the Farm Business Tenancy land to Preston Farms Ltd and therefore the land could be made available for an alternative use. Whilst there is no obligation to, the landowner has chosen to reach an agreement with Preston Farms Ltd to offer replacement land and secure the long term use of land in its ownership. In the context of the agreement reached with Preston Farms Ltd, notices have been served on Preston Farms Ltd to terminate the occupation of this land in September 2026. Consideration should be given to the replacement land offered and the security of tenure offered should the Proposed Development proceed, which far exceeds the current vulnerability of the Preston Farms Ltd current tenure. See Tenancy position of Preston Farms Ltd [EN010158/APP/8.30].
3.15.9	Paras A3.1 to A3.7	Comments that the site selection and layout are different matters and layout justification within the Site should be considered separately. The party continues that the policy referred to by the Applicant	The Applicant notes that Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd accept the Applicant's policy position under NPS EN-1 (2023) on the consideration of alternatives in respect of site selection. The Applicant

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		does not apply to the test of compulsory acquisition and that the DCO Application does not engage with how that test is satisfied against the party.	does not agree with Preston Farms' Ltd assertions that it has not considered alternatives in respect of compulsory acquisition. The Applicant has considered reasonable alternatives to compulsory acquisition, as required by the statutory tests and DCLG Compulsory Acquisition Guidance (September 2013) (CA Guidance), including in its systematic process to determine a suitable site at first instance (see Site Selection Report which has been prepared and forms Appendix 1 of the Planning Statement [EN010158/APP/5.7.5]), through alternative layouts and configurations (see ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010158/APP/6.1] [APP-047]) and through design evolution which has been informed by consultation (see Consultation Report [EN010158/APP/5.1] [APP-020]). The Applicant's Statement of Reasons [EN010158/APP/4.1.3] [REP1-010] details why it is necessary to seek rights of compulsory acquisition, and section 5.6 sets out the alternatives to CA that the Applicant has considered by reference to other application documents and concludes that none of the alternatives or modifications considered for the Proposed Development would obviate the need for powers of compulsory acquisition powers and temporary possession over the Order Land.
3.15.10	Paras A4.1 to A4.4	Comments noting that landowners and affected interests are not the same thing, and that the Applicant has only considered landowners in the Site Selection process. The comment continues that the Applicant has not explained: - what land within the wider Claydon Estate landholding was/was not made available to them - Whether alternative configurations within the available landholding were tested against the operational consequences for existing occupiers	The land made available to the Applicant for the Proposed Development is shown by the draft and DCO Application Order Limits, see ES Volume 3, Figure 4.1: Stage 1 Zonal Masterplan [EN010158/APP/6.3] [APP-064], ES Volume 3, Figure 4.2: Stage 2 Zonal Masterplan [EN010158/APP/6.3] [APP-064] and ES Volume 3, Figure 1.2: Order Limits [EN010158/APP/6.3] [APP-061]. The Estate, when deciding which land to make available to the Applicant for the Proposed Development, considered tenants and their future aspirations, for how they wished to use their land and occupational interests, when deciding what land they wanted to put forward as potentially available for solar and related infrastructure. The Applicant, in its design development, also had consideration for existing occupiers, as set out in the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [CR1-014]. This is further evidenced in Tenancy position of Preston Farms Ltd [EN010158/APP/8.30], particularly Appendix 2 to that document.
3.15.11	Paras A5.1 to A5.4	Comment noting that the Applicant didn't not assess the sensitivity of the party at an early stage in the design process or understand how the business operates. The party continues that the Applicant did not ask for a site visit, request how Field E23 functions in terms of animal movement etc, request to be shown the indoor/outdoor seasonal cycle, etc	Please refer to the response at Ref. 3.15.5 .
3.15.12	Paras A6.1 to A6.8	Comment noting that changes to the layout have been driven by the Applicant's own commercial considerations rather than parties concerns eg the layout change to the Rosefield substation and BESS, continuing that the Applicant has refused to	The Applicant has taken an iterative approach to design development, both as a result of feedback from consultation and engagement with a wide variety of interested parties, and its own environmental information and design development. This is explained in both the Design Approach Document [EN010158/APP/5.8.3] [REP1-018] and Consultation Report [EN010158/APP/5.1] [APP-020] . It is not appropriate to characterise this as only relating to its own commercial considerations and other parties' concerns. The Applicant has made a number of concessions to attempt to meet the concerns of Preston

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		make targeted changes that the party seeks, while still changing the layout for other reasons. Further comment coming back to what the party consider to be a smaller site, shown in the APP-088 and APP-089.	Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd as referred to at Ref. 3.15.1 above. The contention appears to be that Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd consider that their concerns should be given greater weight than other local impacts and that the Applicant should have removed Solar PV development from Field E23 rather than those that were removed for other good planning and environmental reasons.
3.15.13	Para A7.1	Comment acknowledging a proposed 50m setback from BESS to the party's holdings, but that the assessment criteria, which is based on human exposure thresholds, is not focused on the specifics of their business.	Please refer to the detailed response in the Applicants Response to Action Point 45 from ISH1 [EN010158/APP/8.26]. This document provides more information about the plume modelling and atmospheric dispersion modelling including the additional work the Applicant has undertaken to review the Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd.'s adjacent field holdings around the BESS Compound. This note concludes that that within the surrounding fields the HF 1-hour levels are below AEGL1 (notable discomfort) and with an applied 50m buffer between the BESS units and the Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd field holdings, would be below all HF AEGL1s, and is the conclusion of the Atmospheric Dispersion Modelling study and meets the current NFCC guidelines for sensitive receptors. Therefore, this ensures that even if the livestock or farm workers were standing at the very edge of the fields and were not evacuated away during a BESS fire incident, that their exposure to any contaminants would still be below the AQO and AEGL guidance limits. It is highly likely that if there was a BESS fire event that animals would move away from the noise/fire to another part of the field away from the incident which would further limit their exposure to contaminant levels. These limits are set considering vulnerable people in society including, children and people with significant respiratory issues and there is no alternative evidence to suggest that these values can't also suggest no significant risk to livestock. Published HF toxicology studies, including animal studies considered in the derivation of human emergency exposure criteria, provide additional supporting context for the assessment methodology adopted. Whilst AEGLs are human-health emergency planning thresholds, the available toxicological evidence indicates that animal exposure studies associated with limited or no significant effects were generally undertaken at concentrations in the same region or greater as the conservative AEGL-1 screening levels applied within the plume assessment, particularly in the context of a transient short-duration event with rapid atmospheric dispersion and no sustained exposure pathway.
Appendix B – Timeline of Engagement			
3.15.14	Pages 23 to 27	The party sets out a timeline of engagement between them, Claydon Estate and the Applicant. This includes details of what was discussed and the relevance of this engagement to the examination and their concerns.	The Applicant agrees with the timeline but suggests that a much wider range of issues was discussed in the meetings than what is reported in this schedule and that several other matters and concerns were covered in the earlier meetings which are not reported here as they were addressed prior to examination. The timeline and the discussions held is at odds with the claims of Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd that they have not been listened to and that the Applicant does not understand the business. Instead, throughout the period both prior to and during the Examination process, the Applicant has sought to find ways to mitigate Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd concerns whilst still enabling the delivery of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. The measures and steps taken by the Applicant have to be considered in the context of the Preston Farm Ltd.'s occupational interest in the land and the wider

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			opportunity for security of occupation being offered by the landlord, which is explained further in the Tenancy Position of Preston Farms Limited [EN010158/APP/8.30]. The Applicant and Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd met on 9 September 2024. Notes from the meeting confirm that Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd initial concerns were the visibility of Solar, visual impacts on Hogshaw Farm and the movement of animals around Field E23. Concerns were also raised about the loss of land although Preston Farm Ltd acknowledged they held an occupational interest under a FBT and they were working with the Estate to identify replacement land. Concerns about the impact during construction were also raised. This was acknowledged by the Applicant and the parties agreed to work together to see what steps could be put in place. Following the meeting in September 2024 between the Applicant and Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd and ahead of the meeting in October 2024, the Applicant set out initial thoughts on how it might look to mitigate impacts on the business during construction. The information presented included construction access routes, cable routes, permanent access and construction methodology. A plan was provided showing the proposed development area and proposed access routes. The information did not purport to cover everything and was issued to assist discussions between the parties. As per the timeline provided by Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd, the Applicant and Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd met on 4 October 2024. At this time, proposals showed Field E23 as potential for the Rosefield Substation, BESS and/or solar PV. The access proposals followed the cable route between Parcels 2 and 3. Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd set out concerns regarding Field E23 and the Applicant confirmed it was looking into a redesign to remove the Rosefield Substation and BESS from Field E23 but it was likely that Solar PV would still be required. Access corridors were also raised as an option by the Applicant at this time. Construction and operational access was also discussed. Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd set out that they thought access should come from the north but it was confirmed by the Applicant that this was not possible. Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd raised concerns about the access route between Parcels 2 and 3 and Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd marked the preferred access on a plan running along Granborough Road and up into Field SA46. Concerns over biosecurity were raised by Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd and the Applicant set out measures that could be put in place including control over workers, security fencing and double fencing. Noise during construction was also discussed and the Applicant highlighted the contents of the noise report. After this meeting, the Applicant considered the design, and the following changes were made: - A commitment not to have the Rosefield Substation and BESS in Field E23; - Corridors for animal movement commitment given; and - Construction access removed across Fields SA35-SA45 and following a route from Parcel 2, along Granborough Road into Parcel 3 which Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd representatives proposed as a preferred alternative in the meeting of 4 October 2024. The Applicant sought to meet with Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd in May 2025 but it was not possible to arrange a meeting until October 2025. By this time Preston Farm Ltd had agreed Heads of Terms with the landowner which provided security of tenure and replacement land. In accordance with the agreed Heads of Terms notices were served on Preston Farm Ltd terminating the current tenancy on the land required for solar development on 29 September 2026. During the meeting the Applicant confirmed that the BESS would now be a reduced size and would not be located in Field E23. The Applicant also

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			confirmed the provision of movement corridors had been included in the design and the main construction compound had been moved to Parcel 2. Discussion was held regarding Site access and the Applicant, after reconsidering construction access, confirmed access from the north, via Winslow Road was not possible. Noise and mitigation planting was also considered during the meeting. It should be noted at this point that no details had been raised by Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd regarding the width of corridors, biosecurity measures they would like in place and/or the appropriateness of other mitigation measures offered during the meetings held. Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd have, and continue to, take the approach that no development should take place in Field E23 and access should come from the north, rather than engaging in dialogue regarding potential mitigation measures to protect their interest. The Applicant has continued to seek to engage constructively with Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd throughout the examination process and has responded positively, where possible, in order to try and meet concerns raised by Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd, find solutions and compromise. Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd have been less willing discuss their preferred mitigation measures as the use of Field E23 and the proposed construction access are matters which they will not agree.
Appendix C – Operational notes regarding ASI			
3.15.15	Page 39	Comments noting that the laboratory air management systems used at the business are designed to maintain clean environments and that the impact from the Proposed Development on this includes sustained soil disturbance, vehicle movement and dust generating activity close to the animals/ farm/laboratory would increase external particulate and bioaerosol load.	Dust emissions can be effectively controlled by appropriate dust control measures. Mitigation measures are listed in ES Volume 4, Appendix 6.1: Air Quality Assessment [EN010158/APP/6.4] [APP-086] and will be used to control potential dust and particulate matter emissions during the construction phase, so that a significant effect will not be likely. Mitigation measures are documented within and will be secured by the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5]. In specific regard to the laboratory on Botyl Road; the laboratory is on the boundary of the Institute of Air Quality Management Guidance, 250m screening buffer with the majority of the laboratory site siting outside the 250m buffer, therefore due to the distance and with the mitigation measures mentioned above no significant effect from construction dust on the laboratory is predicted.
3.15.16	Page 40 (see also reference to paras 21 to 23.	Comment noting that the business's strict ASPA licensing conditions demands constant inspection-readiness and tightly controlled animal management, meaning handling routines, animal movements, staffing and access arrangements cannot be altered to accommodate third-party construction without undermining the regulated specialist farming system. At paras 21 to 23 earlier in the document there is reference to the business 'essentially being a bubble', setting out that if that 'bubble' is breached it is at the peril of their product, their Home Office	The Applicant has submitted a Preliminary Biosecurity Statement [EN010158/APP/8.28] at Deadline 4 which proposes a range of measures to minimise and avoid biosecurity risks during construction and operation, including access and induction procedures, the use of a defined access tracks which can be fenced and gated, a disinfectant protocol and indemnity arrangements. The proposed biosecurity procedures will be developed further prior to construction in a Biosecurity Method Statement to be appended to the detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan(s) once the detailed design and Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd grazing regime for the construction period are known. The Applicant's construction and operational vehicle movements would not disturb, cross or block access to the Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd silage clamp. Furthermore, the Applicant has offered temporary grazing fields in Parcel 2 while Parcel 3 is constructed if the business would like to further minimise biosecurity and disturbance risks. However, it is not accurate to portray the outdoor grazing fields as a laboratory in farm form or a 'bubble' of biosecurity similar to the indoor laboratories and facilities observed during the ASI. The outdoor grazing

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		License, their business and ultimately the diagnostic end users in the medical world.	fields do not appear to be as tightly managed for biosecurity as the indoor areas. For example, the silage clamp is completely open from the road and not gated or protected as can be seen in Image 3 of the Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd submission [REP3-067]. No signage regarding access controls or biosecurity protection around the silage clamp was observed during the ASI. The animals also cross Granborough Road, a public highway which cannot be compared to a laboratory environment. In addition, there are existing PRoW which cross Parcel 3 grazing fields as shown on Sheet 7 of the Streets, Rights of Way and Access Plans [EN010158/APP/2.4.5]. These PRoW are not obviously subject to stricter access controls, signage or biosecurity measures than other PRoW outside of land occupied by Preston Farms Limited and/or TCS Biosciences Ltd. These include the Midshires Way/North Buckinghamshire Way which is a long-distance promoted route shown on OS mapping and promoted by Buckinghamshire Council. National Grid works have recently taken place within Parcel 3 as observed on the ASI and further overhead line realignment works associated with National Grid infrastructure are expected to be undertaken in this area prior to the construction of the Proposed Development. With regard to the concerns over dust, mould and pathogens released by construction vehicles disturbing the soil, the access track would be constructed with crushed aggregate, creating a buffer between the vehicles and the soil. The fields in question are currently traversed by heavy agricultural equipment as shown in Images 1, 3 and 5 of the Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd submission [REP3-067], demonstrating that this would not be a new risk introduced by the Proposed Development, albeit the number of vehicle movement would increase. As such, it is unclear how Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd has maintained or will maintain laboratory-level biosecurity standards on the grazing fields even in the absence of the Proposed Development. The Applicant is willing to adhere to reasonable and proportionate biosecurity measures on the construction access route into Parcel 3 from Granborough Road and in Parcel 3 as set out in the Preliminary Biosecurity Statement [EN010158/APP/8.28] but the Applicant should not be required to create a laboratory-like setting where none exists currently.
3.15.17	Page 40 and 41	Comment noting that Granborough Road is used by the business as part of a time sensitive, specialised production chain, and is not just a local access. The Party considers that construction access on Granborough Road would negatively interact with this. Note Image 5 in the visual materials showing farm movements and interfaces at Granborough Road.	The Applicant has provided a Construction Access Review [EN010158/APP/8.29] detailing transport and access matters relating to Parcel 3 at Deadline 4. These matters are addressed further in that document. Granborough Road is a public road open to all users. It is not for the exclusive use Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd and at any point, unrestricted traffic and other agricultural traffic can use the road. Currently, large agricultural traffic cannot pass without using the verge. This occurrence would impede access for Preston Farms/TCS Biosciences, however this is not acknowledged or referenced in the submission. The Applicant is proposing that construction movements are controlled by Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] and physical enhancements as detailed in the document. This would control and manage access, unlike any other potential user of the road. The Applicant notes that Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd states that Granborough Road is suitable for the use of heavy farm machinery. As detailed in Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4], the Applicant is providing several passing areas that will benefit all road users, including Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd. The ability for traffic associated with Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd to be significantly delayed is not correct. It is

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
			noted that the local Highways Authority, as the professional body responsible for Granbrough Road, does not share the same view as Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd and has raised no objection to the use of Granbrough Road in its evidence to date, see the Draft Statement of Common Ground with Buckinghamshire Council [EN010158/APP/5.22.4]. The Outline CTMP [EN010158/APP/7.5.4] makes provision for the creation of a safe livestock crossing facility on Granbrough Road for the benefit of TCS Biosciences Ltd. There is no current facility to enable this, and the proposed crossing will improve safety for all road users.
3.15.18	Page 42 and 43	Comment noting that Field E23 is a multi-function working field, used for movement, grazing, rotation, resting, cropping, later-season grazing, animal management and connectivity. The Party does not consider that the proposed 20m corridor is suitable, noting also that a 65m corridor in the National Grid parcel is too narrow also and therefore that parcel is not used. Further comment that the Party has insisted on a c.90m width access at the replacement land, and that they consider this to be the minimum. Note Image 1 in the visual materials showing the use of Field E23.	A Draft Animal Movement Arc Plan has been submitted as Appendix 1 to this document at Deadline 4, showing an arc that would be reserved for Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd animal movements from the southeast to the northwest of the field, should it still be required at the operational phase. The arc ranges from 30m to 170m in width but it has been designed so that it opens out from the narrowest points at the field entry/exit points, allowing the horses to fan out towards the middle of the arc. Machinery access around the perimeter of the field could still continue outside of the solar PV fenced area and gaps would be created in the boundary planting to allow continued movement of animals. The detailed design of the animal movement arc, including boundary treatments, would be confirmed prior to construction in consultation with Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd. It is not certain that access for animals will be required into the northeast corner of Field E23 as the Claydon Brook is an existing obstacle for animal crossings from the east and the fields to the north would be occupied by the Proposed Development. Were the Applicant to provide a 90m buffer around the edge of Field E23, there would be very little space left in the middle of the field for any solar development, rendering the whole field unviable. As observed during the ASI, there were several outdoor areas for feeding or holding horses on Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd premises which were considerably narrower. If the horses are able to use these areas without harm or distress, the arc shown on the Draft Animal Movement Arc Plan would be generous and sufficient for them to move between adjoining fields. Alternatively, if the proposed arc is not deemed sufficient for the animals to move between fields, Preston Farm Ltd and TCS Biosciences Ltd occupy contiguous fields in all directions which the animals could move through instead.
3.15.19	Page 43	Comment noting that replacement land is not equivalent unless it works within the existing system. Further comment that the replacement land is unsuitable due to its location, standard and bare minimum access width.	The replacement land was identified by Preston Farms Limited in conversation with the Claydon Estate as confirmed by the Claydon Estate at Appendix 1 of Tenancy Position of Preston Farms Ltd [EN010158/APP/8.30]. The land is contiguous to the existing land holding and provides an 80m access corridor that Preston Farms Ltd indicated at ISH1 would be suitable. It is accepted that work might be required to the replacement land to make it suitable for Preston Farms Ltd.'s use and the Landowner is seeking to agree what works are required with Preston Farms Ltd. The Applicant has also committed to providing at least six months advance notification of the location and timing of any construction activities in proximity to the agricultural tenants' and the Prestons' grazing land; as set out in the Outline CEMP [EN010158/APP/7.2.5]. The provision of replacement land far exceeds the statutory compensation payable under the notice served to terminate the tenancy as set out at Tenancy Position of Preston Farms Ltd [EN010158/APP/8.30] submitted at Deadline 4.

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
Appendix D – Biosecurity Risk and Disease Transmission Pathways			
3.15.20	Page 55	Comment noting that the Party considers the Applicant's approach to biosecurity to be inadequate. They consider that the Applicant is leaving critical biosecurity controls to later plans. Further comment that it is not clear to them how the Applicant and local planning authority can set the operating standard for biosecurity, or judge if a standard has been met, where the existing business is regulated under a specialist licensing regime. Instead the Party consider the proper response is to avoid unnecessary construction and access issues with the holding at source, including removal of access via Granborough Road.	Please refer to response at Ref. 3.15.16 .
Appendix E – Biosecurity and mitigation measures (Section 2)			
3.15.21	Page 60 and 61	Section sets out an early list of points for consideration with regards to biosecurity measures, the Party indicates that a complete list would be submitted at Deadline 4. Some of the points from the list are as follows: - Escorted, controlled and pre-arranged access - Fixed and agreed routes for Field E23 - Vehicle, equipment, clothing and footwear controls - Works blackout periods - Specific noise, vibration, lighting, glare, dust and biosecurity controls Comment also on the need for indemnity and compensation mechanisms for any potential losses arising from construction works. Further comment that the Party should be consulted and have final approval for any method statement of management plan affecting their land, animals, donor operations, access, feed, biosecurity or product-transfer routes.	Please refer to response at Ref. 3.15.16 .

Ref.	Page Reference	Summary Position	Applicant's Response
Appendix F – Proposed alternative route to Access Parcel 3			
3.15.22	Pages 63 to 65	Comments noting the Party's objection to the proposed access to Parcel 3 via Granborough Road due to biosecurity and disruption to their site. Further comment that access to Parcel 3 via Winslow Road is their preferred alternative due to less disruption and more management biosecurity risk.	The Applicant has provided a Construction Access Review [EN010158/APP/8.29] detailing transport and access matters relating to Parcel 3 at Deadline 4. These matters are addressed further in that document.
UK Sepsis Trust and AMR Action Letter			
3.15.23	Pages 67 to 70	Letters from The UK Sepsis Trust and AMR Action Group setting out the importance of TCS Bioscience LTDs products.	The Applicant acknowledges that TCS Biosciences Ltd and Preston Farms Ltd products are important for diagnosing sepsis and fighting anti-microbial resistance, as well as other communicable disease. However, these letters do not provide evidence that the Proposed Development would jeopardise the supply of biomedical products in light of the replacement land offered and the various mitigations set out in the DCO Application documents

Appendix 1

Draft Animal Movement Arc Plan





LEGEND:

- Order Limits
- Current access points into Field E23
 - Livestock access
 - Machinery access
- Proposed revised indicative area for Solar PV and/or ancillary development
- Current indicative locations for strategic early planting/vegetation management
- Indicative boundary of proposed animal arc

Notes:
Gaps would be created through the early planting where required at gateways to allow movement of animals though them. Width of gap to be agreed with Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Bioscience Ltd.

Boundary treatment between animal arc and Solar PV development to be designed in discussion with Preston Farms Ltd and TCS Bioscience Ltd at the detailed design stage.

Coordinate System: British National Grid
Projection: Transverse Mercator
Datum: OSGB 1936
Units: Meter



01	JUNE 2026	DEADLINE 4	LDA	LDA	EDF
Rev	Date	Description	Drn	Chk	App

Rosefield Solar Farm



DOCUMENT:
APPLICANT'S RESPONSE TO DEADLINE 3 SUBMISSIONS

TITLE:
APPENDIX 1: DRAFT ANIMAL MOVEMENT ARC PLAN

PINS REFERENCE NUMBER:
EN010158/APP/8.22

050100MetresScale: 1:2,500 @ A3


REV 01



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