

Lime Down Solar Park

**Planning Inspectorate Reference:
EN010168**

**Wiltshire Council Comments on Submissions
Received at Deadline 4**

Deadline 5 (7 August 2026)

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1. 2.3 Works Plans

- 1.1. It is noted that there is no Applicant submitted Deadline 4 update to the 23 number works plan drawings identifying works proposed within public highway as Works Numbers 8A or 8B. As noted in past highway comments by the council, it is inferred that where lengths of public highway are excluded from these designations on the Works Plan, no mitigation or improvements are deemed necessary by the Applicant to accommodate the increased HGV trafficking expected during construction. This seems rather at odds with the latest Transport Assessment (Rev 4) [\[REP4-038\]](#), where passing bay works are indicated along lengths of the Fosse Way in addition to works at proposed access points to Lime Down Areas B and C.

2. 3.1 Draft Development Consent Order (Rev 4) [\[REP4-005\]](#) and 3.2 Explanatory Memorandum (Rev 4) [\[REP4-007\]](#)

Article 10

- 2.1. Article 10(4) now states that: “*The powers conferred by paragraph (2) **must not be exercised without the consent of the street authority, such consent to be in a form reasonably required by the street authority***”. The amendment to replace ‘may’ with the word ‘must’ is welcomed. This might usefully also cross-reference the said LHA Protective Provisions in Part 11 to Schedule 15.
- 2.2. However, as discussed at ISH4 and set out in the council’s position in Agenda Item 2.3, the council do not see why it should be necessary for Article 10 of the DCO to confer powers under (2) to alter the “alter the layout of any street”, so not just the streets identified with the Work Area plans and within the DCO Order Limits. Whilst Article 10(4) requires the Applicant to consult with the street authority, with the consent process to be in a form reasonably required by the street authority, the 6-week limit for determination / approval under Article 47(3) is a real concern as the council will have no idea as to the scale or complexity of any highway works outside the DCO Order Limits which the Applicant may seek to propose in the future. It is unclear whether Schedule 16 is to apply in respect of highway technical approvals or consents.

Article 11

- 2.3. There are no changes to this clause in Revision 4 to the dDCO so previous Highways Development Management comments apply. See also the comments concerning this Article at ISH4 (Agenda Item 2.4) below. It is accepted that completed works may be subject to ongoing HGV construction trafficking associated with the wider development following the expiry of the 12-month maintenance or defects period. As such, the risk of consequent damage by construction trafficking to highway works completed early in the construction phase is an issue. The council is seeking a formal s59 Agreement (Highway Act 1980) within the DCO to cover potential damage to this wider network

caused by extraordinary trafficking. If this is in place, then this would potentially cover damage defects liability for included road lengths which have been subject to construction trafficking beyond the 12-month period.

Article 14

- 2.4. There is again no drafting change made to this Article in this revision to the dDCO. The clause implies that approval by the highway authority is only required for new access locations proposed beyond those set out in Schedule 7, Parts 1 and 2, so all those listed in Schedule 7 deemed approved in at least principle under powers conferred in Article 14. This current level of design is insufficient, but the addition of the Local Highway Authority Protective Provisions in Part 11 to Schedule 15 (subject to final agreement) includes the requirement for technical approval of all works drawings (including Schedule 7 works) and associated Road Safety Audits. It would thus be helpful to make clear in sub-clauses 14(a) and 14 (b) that detailed design approvals must still be sought in accordance with the LHA Protective Provisions in Part 11 to Schedule 15, as it otherwise implies that they do not apply.

Article 15

- 2.5. Article 15 is also unchanged in this revision to the dDCO so previous comments remain.

Article 40 and Schedule 12

- 2.6. It is evident that the changes made to the draft DCO (Rev 4) do not address the comments made by the council at Deadline 3 or preceding deadlines.
- 2.7. As stipulated in the council's Comments on Deadline 3 submissions [[REP4-091](#)] and in its Post Hearing Summaries and Responses to Action Points [[REP4-092](#)], the council considers that evidence is still lacking to substantiate why it is necessary to list every hedgerow within the Order Limits, if as the Applicant advises, all hedgerow removal will be controlled by the provisions of Article 40(4) and be undertaken in accordance with that prescribed within the EPMS. The council again questions the adopted approach to Schedule 12 and why the overly wide powers afforded by Schedule 12 are in fact needed and why the extent of removal cannot be refined within the schedule. The council considers that it should, at the very least, be possible to specify in column (2) of Part 1 and Part 2 of Schedule 12, a range of hedgerow removal i.e. a minimum and maximum extent of hedgerow that may need to be removed from each of the hedgerows listed. This should be possible given the provisions of Article 40(4) and the footnotes in Schedule 12.
- 2.8. Furthermore, in the council's Comments on Deadline 3 submissions [[REP4-091](#)], as well as in Wiltshire Council's Relevant Representation [[RR-4934](#)], the council highlighted that the proposal that hedgerow removal within the section of the cable route corridor (CRC) that coincides with the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bat SAC consultation zone will be restricted to 10m has not been transposed into the relevant rows in the respective table in Schedule 12. It is

apparent that this request has still not been fulfilled. As specified in previous representations, it is the council's view that the omission of the proposed restrictions to hedgerow removal as set out in the HRA, from the relevant rows of Schedule 12 undermines confidence that the measures set out in the HRA will actually be delivered, despite the footnotes added to Schedule 12, Part 1 and Part 2 and the provisions of Article 40(4). The council remains unclear and unconvinced as to why continuity across the dDCO, the EPMS and the HRA has not been deemed permissible by the Applicant if the Council and ExA are to have certainty that Article 40(4) and the footnotes to Schedule 12 will be adhered to strictly.

Article 41

2.9. Wiltshire Council Arboricultural Officers maintain that sufficient prior notification of works to protected trees is required to ensure that:

- Local Planning Authority records remain accurate and up to date;
- Replacement planting requirements can be monitored;
- Replacement trees can be inspected to ensure successful establishment; and
- Compliance with relevant tree protection legislation and consent conditions can be adequately monitored.

2.10. The Applicant should therefore clarify:

- 1) What formal mechanism will be used to notify the Local Planning Authority of proposed works affecting protected trees (for example, submission of a 5-Day Notice or an alternative agreed procedure)?
- 2) Which officers within the Local Planning Authority will receive such notifications?
 - Arboricultural Officers;
 - Planning Officers;
 - Both.

2.11. A clear reporting and communication protocol should be established within the management documentation.

Schedule 2: Requirement 2 (Phasing)

2.12. The council reiterates its previously expressed requirement for dDCO to include the following drafting:

"No part of the authorised development may commence until a phasing scheme has been submitted to and approved by the relevant planning authority and

thereafter the authorised development must be carried out in accordance with the approved phasing scheme.”

Schedule 2: Requirement 11 (Surface and Foul Water Drainage)

- 2.13. The council considers that Requirement 11 should be future-proofed by reference to whatever standards are applicable at the date of submission or at amendment from time to time. Therefore it should state:

“11—(1) No part of the authorised development may commence until written details of the surface water and drainage scheme, and if applicable, the foul water drainage system for that part have been submitted to and approved in writing by the relevant planning authority following consultation with

- (a) The Environment Agency; and
- (b) The lead local flood authority.

(2) The written details submitted under sub-paragraph (1) must—

- (a) be substantially in accordance with the outline drainage strategy;
- (b) demonstrate compliance with the National standards for sustainable drainage systems (as amended, supplemented, or replaced from time to time) published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs applicable at the date on which the plans are submitted to the drainage authority for approval and
- (c) include arrangements for the management, maintenance and operation of the surface water drainage system throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning of the relevant part of the authorised development.

(3) Any approved scheme must be implemented, managed and maintained as approved.”

Schedule 2: Requirement 20 (Decommissioning and Restoration)

- 2.14. The council welcomes the amendments made to this Requirement by the Applicant in this revision, and notes the further information and clarification provided in the Applicant’s Post Hearing Submission for ISH4 at Action Point 7 [\[REP4-087\]](#) regarding the council’s powers under the Planning Act 2008.

- 2.15. Discussions are ongoing with the Applicant to provide the council with the comfort it seeks to ensure that the cost of any decommissioning works, should the council be required to step-in, will not fall on the public purse.

Schedule 15 – Part 11

- 2.16. The council notes the inclusion of Applicant’s proposed Protective Provisions for the Protection of the Local Highway Authority in Part 11 of Schedule 15. This is a matter under ongoing discussion with the Applicant, as the contained drafting is not agreed by the council.

- 2.17. Please also see the council’s response to the ExA’s Second Written Questions, which are included within a separate submission.

3. 6.1 ES Volume 1, Chapter 9 Ecology and Biodiversity (Rev 3) [\[REP4-011\]](#)

3.1. Table 9-3: Field Survey Scope and Schedule – Solar PV Sites has been amended to include a brief description of the methodology undertaken for hedgerow surveys and for determining whether hedgerows qualified as “important” under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. Paragraph 9.6.16 has also been amended to include the same brief description in relation to hedgerow surveys within the CRC. It is recognised that a full methodology is provided in 6.3 ES Volume 3 Appendix 9-1 Ecological Baseline Report (Rev 3) [\[REP4-020\]](#).

3.2. In ES Chapter 9 Ecology and Biodiveristy (Rev 3) [\[REP4-011\]](#) under the column heading of Details (Results and Methods) in Table 9-3 pertaining to the Solar PV Sites, it is specified:

*“ES Volume 3, Appendix 9-1: Ecological Baseline Report [REP1-083]
Results presented in 2.7 TPO and Hedgerow Plan (Change Application) (Rev 1) [CR1-016]”.*

3.3. In contrast, paragraph 9.6.16 pertaining to the CRC, does not state where the full methodology and results of the hedgerow survey within the CRC are presented.

3.4. Furthermore, despite the inclusion of a brief description of the methodology used to conduct hedgerow survey and for determining whether hedgerows qualified as “important” under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 within the latest iteration of Chapter 9, the associated results and details of the hedgerows which have been identified as “important” and / or any associated detailed discussion in terms of evaluation still seems to be omitted from the chapter. It is noted however, that paragraph 9.10.137 states: *“The vast majority of hedgerows within the Solar PV Sites were classified as being ‘Important’ as shown in the TPO and Hedgerow Plan [EN10168/APP/2.7].”*

3.5. It is noted that paragraph 9.10.74 has been amended because a new access track has now been proposed to be routed through Fields E2 and E3 at Lime Down E in response to concerns raised by the council about the potential for adverse effects on the edge of North Bincombe Wood (Rodbourne Plantation County Wildlife Site (CWS)), and concerns that the required 15m buffer to this ancient woodland would not be implemented.

3.6. In relation to the existing access track alongside North Bincombe Wood, it is noted that paragraph 9.10.74 now states: *“However, it is not proposed that this track will be utilised by heavy construction traffic; instead, a new access track routing through Fields E2 and E3 is proposed. Creation of a new access will ensure no additional impacts resulting from construction traffic occurs within the 15 m buffer from Rodbourne Plantation LWS, avoiding the risk of damage or root compaction to the trees on the outer edge of the LWS. Creation of the new*

access will require minor additional loss of internal hedgerows in the affected fields, described in the Hedgerows and Lines of Trees section below.”

- 3.7. Paragraph 9.10.74 therefore suggests that the intention is to avoid the use of the existing track alongside North Bincombe Wood by heavy construction traffic rather than all construction traffic. This raises concern that usage of the existing track will not be adequately avoided. This matter was discussed with the Applicant’s ecological, environmental and arboricultural consultants during a meeting on 27th July 2026. The arboricultural consultant advised that a cellular confinement system would be used along the existing track alongside North Bincombe Wood. The environmental consultant advised that the track would be maintained in accordance with the Applicant’s obligations to maintain access tracks within the Order Limits. The Applicant’s environmental consultant went on to suggest that the existing track would only be used for the purposes of hedgerow and / or vegetation maintenance. Whilst these points were acknowledged by the council during the aforementioned meeting, the council’s arboricultural and ecology officers specified that there shouldn’t be a need for such maintenance of the track given that it should be subject to minimal usage in light of the Applicant now proposing to create a new access track in order to avoid use of the existing track alongside North Bincombe Wood. The council also requested that the existing access track alongside the ancient woodland not be used by any construction traffic, not just heavy construction traffic, and that instead, the proposed new access track to be routed through Fields E2 and E3 should be used by all construction traffic given that it has been proposed for the purposes of avoiding use of the existing track next to the woodland. It is also requested that the proposed new access track is used during the operational phase instead of using the existing access track alongside North Bincombe Wood.
- 3.8. Although the existing access track adjacent to North Bincombe Wood is already used by the landowner, most likely primarily by agricultural vehicles, this is considered to be low-level use compared to the proposed use during the construction and operation of the Lime Down Solar Park scheme. It is the council’s expectation that additional information and clarity will be incorporated within the DCO application documentation in this regard, and this will be reviewed by the council when made available.
- 3.9. Paragraph 9.10.111, which discusses construction phase impacts on woodland, has also been updated. The Schedule of Changes at the front of Chapter 9 stipulates: *“Update to reflect proposed new access track at Lime Down E, and adherence to protective buffer of woodland.”*
- 3.10. Paragraph 9.10.111 specifies that protective development-free buffers of a minimum of 15m from all woodland within or adjacent to the Solar PV Sites has been designed into the Scheme and will be demarcated by protective fencing prior to commencement of construction, and that the buffers would be observed thereafter for the lifetime of the Scheme. The paragraph has been amended to specify that there is one exception as a track will be used alongside a woodland to the south of Field C22; whereas previously the paragraph had stipulated there would be two exceptions and it included reference to use of the existing

access track alongside North Bincombe Wood. Paragraph 9.10.111 has therefore been amended such that it has removed reference to the intention to use the existing access track alongside North Bincombe Wood. It is worth highlighting, however, that use of the phrase 'development-free buffer' does not necessarily indicate or provide assurance that construction traffic would not be routed through a buffer or use an access track within a buffer.

- 3.11. In addition, as discussed above, paragraph 9.10.74, which has also been amended, still infers that some use of the existing access track adjacent to North Bincombe Wood by the Applicant is proposed. As such, there appears to be a discrepancy between the proposals and intent detailed in paragraph 9.10.74 and those detailed in 9.10.111. This should be addressed so that it is clear what is now being proposed by the Applicant. As aforementioned, the council would prefer there to be no use of the existing access track adjacent to North Bincombe Wood by the Applicant except for the purposes of hedgerow and / or vegetation maintenance. As discussed above, it is the council's expectation that additional clarity will be incorporated within the documentation in this regard and this will be reviewed by the council once available.
- 3.12. It is recognised that under the heading 'Hedgerows and Lines of Trees' and the sub-heading 'Construction Phase Impacts', paragraph 9.10.137 has been amended to specify that an approximate total length of 346m of hedgerow, rather than the previously stipulated 327m, will be lost to facilitate access to particular fields / parts of the Solar PV Sites, including providing access for Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AIL).
- 3.13. In a previous representation, the council highlighted that there was an inconsistency between Chapter 9 and other chapters of the ES in respect of the discussion regarding frequency of the cleaning of the solar PV panels during the operational phase. Chapter 9 had assumed the panels would be cleaned every two years whereas other chapters had specified it would be every year. It is recognised that paragraph 9.10.103 of REP4-011 has now been corrected and now refers to annual cleaning of the panels. The discussion regarding the likelihood of effects as a result of the cleaning of the panels has not been amended however and continues to state: "*The avoidance of chemical use and likely infrequent intervals of cleaning means that there is a negligible likelihood of effects potentially arising from this procedure, such as degradation of habitat through chemical pollution or impacts to hydrological conditions at ground level.*"
- 3.14. The council considers that insufficient evidence has been provided to substantiate the Applicant's conclusion that the likelihood of effects as a result of cleaning the solar PV panels annually rather than every two years, is still negligible. It is deemed possible that cleaning the solar PV panels every year, such as by means of tracked machinery, could have adverse impacts upon the ground flora and habitats, upon ground conditions and soil (e.g. as a result of compaction) and hydrological conditions, especially if the ground is wet / waterlogged or very dry.

- 3.15. In previous representations the council had commented that the proposals detailed under the heading 'Breeding Birds Ground Nesting Birds of Open Farmland - Construction Phase Additional Mitigation Measures' had incorrectly specified that there would be large-scale creation of diverse grassland underneath and between the Solar PV Panels. It is recognised that paragraph 9.12.32 has now been amended and has replaced the phrase 'diverse grassland types' with 'low-input grassland types'.
- 3.16. Nevertheless, paragraph 9.12.32 still specifies that there will be "*large-scale creation of optimal foraging habitat in the form of low-input grassland types under/between Solar PV Panels and within buffer zones.*" Whilst it is accepted that the grassland proposed underneath and between the panels may comprise a betterment in terms of foraging habitat in those fields within the Solar PV Sites which are currently in arable production, the council is not convinced that the grassland which will be created underneath and between the panels will comprise optimal foraging habitat. In addition, fields in the Solar PV Sites which are not currently in arable production may already afford favourable foraging habitat for breeding birds, including ground nesting species and as such, the grassland attained in these fields once the solar panels have been installed may not in fact provide an improved or optimal foraging resource compared to the existing. This matter has already been raised in the council's previous representations and the council queried use of the word 'optimal' to describe the foraging potential of the grassland to be delivered underneath and between the panels. The council also raised concern that use of the word 'optimal' suggests that the grassland will confer greater benefits than will actually be attained and that this is important given the significant adverse effects on breeding birds, particularly ground nesting species, that the Solar PV Sites would cause due to loss of nesting habitat and resulting displacement.
- 3.17. The council also highlighted that the installation of the solar panels and maintenance of almost all the hedgerows across the Order Limits at a height of 4-5m above ground level (AGL) will increase availability of perch sites with good vantage points for predators and will result in the loss of open sight lines, and that this has potential to increase the risk of predation when birds are foraging. Whilst this is not a comment on the likely value and quality of the proposed grassland underneath and between the panels as a foraging resource in itself, these factors would affect the capability of the grassland in the Solar PV Sites to be 'optimal' foraging habitat for breeding birds, particularly ground nesting species.
- 3.18. The other amendments to REP4-011 as detailed in the Schedule of Changes at the front of the revised Chapter 9 are noted but do not require any specific discussion.

4. 6.1 ES Volume 1, Chapter 13 Transport and Access (Rev 4) [\[REP4-015\]](#)

- 4.1. There are only two changes indicated within Revision 4 as follows:

- Tables 13-19 and 13-32 have been updated to indicate whether the proposed highway works are temporary or permanent; and
 - Paragraphs 13.10.65 and 13.10.66 have been amended to confirm the status of Cable Route Construction access points following the construction phase.
- 4.2. Wiltshire Council's Highways Development Management Officer has no issue with these amendments, which just serve to provide clarity. The council would, however, re-iterate comments made in respect of Revision 3 which all remain applicable with Revision 4 for completeness:
- Paragraph 13.4.10: This states that *“Other than the Highway Improvement Areas which form part of the Order Limits, the assessment assumes that the road network and existing services will remain the same”*. As stated verbally at the ISH3 Hearing, it is considered passing space improvements along the narrow rural lanes forming parts of the HGV construction access routes are needed at locations outside the HIA (which is currently limited to Alderton Road).
 - Table 13-20 shows the forecast number of overall HGV movements over the construction period by Lime Down SF site (and mean / 'peak' daily predictions). This remains a subject of disagreement and discussion pending the provision of more information from the Applicant on assumptions and some validation against other Solar Farm forecasts. This was also discussed at length during the ISH3 Hearing.
 - Table 13-21 shows the expected number of shuttle buses and car / light van movements associated with the 622 workers expected across the Lime Down Solar Park sites. The assumed 50% mode share taken by the shuttle buses is considered too high to be seen as a worst-case scenario assessment, as made clear in the council's comments at CTMP/TA Scoping stage despite this being accepted on other Solar Farm projects. It is also noted from the table that, of the remaining workers (302), 98 are assumed to be car sharing (32%). As such, the single-occupant car trips are only assumed to comprise an 18% mode share which does seem low.
 - Table 13-23 shows the magnitude of the daily construction traffic movements expected along various routes. As noted in the past, whilst the HGVs will be forced to use the prescribed construction routes to the Lime Down Solar Park areas, it seems improbable that light vehicle trips associated with workers will be similarly channeled to just these routes. A wider distribution would be expected and more plausible.
- 4.3. The council welcomes the positive movement towards a commitment to managing new and existing site accesses along the Cable Route Corridor in paragraphs 13.10.65 and 13.10.66 once the scheme is complete.

5. 6.2 ES Volume 2, Figure 3-4-5.1 and 3-4-5.2 (4 of 4) [REP4-016]

- 5.1. The Applicant's Deadline 4 Cover Letter [REP4-001] states that the figures have been updated to reflect amendments to the Bincombe Wood access track. It is noted that a new proposed access track routed to the north of and away from North Bincombe Wood as discussed with the Applicant's environmental, ecological and arboricultural consultants in a meeting on 27th July 2026, is illustrated on the updated figure. The council welcomes the new proposal to create an alternative access track in order to avoid using the existing access track alongside the ancient woodland.
- 5.2. Nonetheless, it is noted that the existing access track alongside North Bincombe Wood is demarcated as a proposed access track on [REP4-016](#). This is a concern for the council as it appears to indicate that the Applicant does still intend to use this access track during construction and presumably also during operation despite proposing the creation of a new access track to be used instead of the existing access track next to the woodland. The resultant lack of clarity due to the provision of inconsistent information gives rise to a lack of certainty and assurance that the request of the council, namely for the existing access track not to be used except for hedgerow / vegetation maintenance, will be fulfilled. Furthermore, there are discrepancies in respect of the proposals in terms of usage of the existing access track next to North Bincombe Wood in REP4-011 as detailed above.
- 5.3. It is therefore requested and expected that the Applicant will provide further information to rectify and clarify the current inconsistencies observed across the recently updated documents and plans.

6. 6.2 ES Volume 2, Figure 13-5 Abnormal Load Routes – Solar PV Sites [REP4-017]

- 6.1. The council's Highways Development Management officer has no specific comments on this document. It is accepted that the purple route is needed to access Lime Down D (East) and Lime Down E because of the height constraints imposed by the railway bridge over the A429.

7. 6.3 ES Volume 3, Appendix 9-1 Ecological Baseline Report (Rev 2) [REP4-020]

- 7.1. The Schedule of Changes at the front of Appendix 9-1 Ecological Baseline Report (Rev 2) [REP4-020] details that:
- Paragraphs 2.3.7 to 2.3.10 have been amended to include methodology for hedgerow surveys and that the updates are in response to Wiltshire Council comments.

- Paragraphs 2.4.1 and Table 9-1-1 have been amended to confirm hedgerow survey personnel and that the updates are in response to Wiltshire Council comments.
- 7.2. The amendments have been reviewed and the provision of full details of the hedgerow survey methodology employed and for determining whether hedgerows qualified as “important” under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 is welcomed. Paragraph 2.3.7 states: *“The surveys were completed at the same time as the UKHab Survey undertaken at the Solar PV Sites and Cable Route Corridor. The method follows Defra hedgerow survey guidance.”*
- 7.3. However, despite the inclusion of the hedgerow survey methodology, within the latest iteration of within Appendix 9-1, the associated results and details of the hedgerows which have been identified as “important” and / or any associated detailed discussion in terms of evaluation and assessment of impacts upon those hedgerows is still omitted and is also omitted from the revised Chapter 9 Ecology and Biodiversity [REP4-011]. Instead, and as noted in the council’s comments on REP4-011, it appears that the results of the hedgerow survey are not actually presented, discussed or assessed anywhere other than on the 2.7 TPO and Hedgerow Plan.
- 7.4. As such, the council’s concern and comments made on this topic in a number of representations to date have not been fully addressed by means of the inclusion of the hedgerow survey methodology alone. Neither the revised ES Chapter 9 [REP4-011] or the revised Appendix 9-1 [REP4-020] include any amendments to the results, evaluation or assessment of impacts sections of the documents to discuss “important” hedgerows.

8. **6.3 ES Volume 3, Appendix 13-1 Transport Assessment (Rev 4) [REP4-038]**

- 8.1. As noted in the listed Schedule for Change at Deadline 4, most of the main-body changes to the report are minor and the council’s Highways Development Management officer offers only brief comment on these as follows:
- Table 13-10 detailing the proposed Solar PV access locations now refers to Drawing Nos of each. However, it is not made clear in the main body text, or a table note, where these drawings can be located (so Annex C).
 - Table 13-11 detailing the Cable Route Corridor access points. The same comment made above about the locations of stated drawings applies (so Annex D).
 - Table 13-20 now provides a summary description of the proposed improvements in the HIA, so Drawing PL302 (Insets 1-9) ‘Alderton Road’ and Drawing No PL303 (Insets 3-9) / Drawing No PL304 (Insets 1-4/8) ‘Fosse Way’. All these drawings are included in Annex I. The council’s comments on the latest drawings in this Annex are detailed below.

8.2. No changes are advised to Annex E, so the supporting calculations underlying the HGV trip generation during the construction phase, or the swept path analyses for a car / HGV and two HGVs (16.5m articulated) in Annexes J and K. The council's Highways Development Management officer therefore focuses here on the following changes:

- Annex H: Removal of Drawings SP11-A, SP13-A, SP14-A, SP16-A, SP20-A, SP21-A, SP25-A, SP28-A and replacement with drawings PL401 to PL408 to show swept-paths and mitigation works required in HIAs for AIL deliveries.
- Annex I: Update of HIA drawings. Inclusion of Drawings PL302 - PL304, showing details of proposed road widening. Inclusion of Drawings PL305, PL306 and PL309 showing usable road width on proposed construction routes.

Annex I

8.3. At the ISH3 Hearing it was noted that base topographical survey drawings for 'all' the minor roads forming the HGV construction routes should be provided, with the actual carriageway width dimensions indicated at intervals. It was suggested by Wiltshire Council that each road should ideally employ a chainage line, with widths indicated at, say, 10m intervals. As 5.5m is the minimum width necessary for 2-way HGV passage, and 4.8m for car / HGV passage (MfS), it was suggested it would be helpful to colour-shade route sections with carriageway widths 5.5m or greater and 4.8-5.5m, with unshaded lengths then indicating lengths with a width of less than 4.8m. It was considered this would provide a better 'at a glance' suitability of the existing routes, which is difficult to pick up from the swept path plots where a lot of underlying base detail is masked.

8.4. Drawings PL305, PL306 and PL309 are now included in Annex I. These show lengths on the rural lanes proposed for HGV construction trafficking where the carriageway width is advised as being either 6.0m or greater (blue box), or 5.5m in width or greater (red box), with distances indicated. It is accepted that this is an alternative means of displaying similar information, and expressly the lengths where the carriageway is 5.5m in width or greater and the relative spacing of these route sections. The council would, however, make the point that all Wiltshire Highway comments below are based on the explicit assumption that the Applicant's assessment of these existing carriageway widths is fully accurate. Wiltshire Council has not undertaken its own detailed carriageway width measurements along the narrow rural lanes in question or instructed any independent survey to be done as a means of verifying the Applicant's assessment. However, the council is aware that the transport consultants acting for Stop Lime Down have been undertaking their own measurements, so the council will expect these measurements to align.

8.5. However, one further general question the council does have concerning Drawing PL306 (Alderton Road / Fosse Way) is whether these are all existing

carriageway widths, or whether what is shown on the plan assumes the inclusion of the proposed passing space improvements in Drawings PL302-304. This needs clarification. If, as assumed, it does include proposed improvements, it would perhaps have been useful to see the same assessment based on the existing carriageway widths, which would then show the degree of improvement which the HIA changes achieve.

- 8.6. Drawing PL305 shows the existing carriageway width analysis for the Lime Down D access route between Dyson Roundabout and Bradfield Cottages. The drawing clearly illustrates the narrow section between The Street junction and the sharp bend to the north-west, where any pedestrians walking in the carriageway have no opportunity to step clear due to the banked verges. However, it is accepted that mitigating this by widening will be impractical. However, beyond this bend, the next available passing place for two HGVs is not reached until the railway bridge, so it is considered the flat lengths of verge between will be at risk of regular over-run damage with regular HGV trafficking. To the north of the Flying Monk café access, the extremely limited opportunities for passing two large vehicles is very evident. As such, previous views about the need for some widening mitigation to these parts of the routes are reiterated.
- 8.7. Drawing PL309 still appears to show that a large part of the route analysis for the road between Fosse Way and the Lime Down A access points is still based on an OS-Landline base and not a full topographical survey of the whole length. It has been repeatedly requested by Wiltshire Council that all existing width assessments should be based on a topographical survey 'base'. It is also noted that concerns about the carriageway width available between the 'Y' junction and the access to the Ladywood Stud were raised by both the Examining Authority and SLD at Hearing ISH3.
- 8.8. Drawing PL302 shows the passing place proposals along Alderton Road. The Overview plan shows nine proposed locations for localised carriageway widening, with dimensioned details now shown in Insets 1-9. All these inset details show a passage length of circa 20m or greater and width throughout of 6.0m or more. This is considered adequate to pass two 16.5m articulated HGVs in all cases, although at detailed design stage the undertaker would be asked to confirm this with a swept path analysis through each location as part of the suite of drawings for technical approval. Details of the construction make-up and 'tie-in' to the existing carriageway in these locations is not considered necessary at DCO approval stage. What is proposed will depend to some extent on whether the widening works are deemed to be permanent or temporary. Given that HGV trafficking along Alderton Road will continue during the operational phase after the construction phase is completed, it is the council's Highways Development Management officer's opinion that retaining these passing places as permanent works would be preferable. This will enhance future network resilience by improving 2-way passage opportunity for all large vehicles using this road. Returning to the previous query about Drawing PL306, the nine locations between Grittleton and the Fosse Way junction shown as having a carriageway width of >5.5m show a precise match with the Overview plan on Drawing PL302.

- 8.9. Drawing PL303 shows what are now assumed to be new passing place improvement works along the southern length of the Fosse Way. The nine locations shown in Insets 1-9 again seem to align with most of the locations advised as having a carriageway width of >5.5m on Drawing PL306, suggesting that at present most of the Fosse Way has a width under 5.5m, so insufficient to allow the passage of two large vehicles without the verge being regularly overrun. Proposed passing locations shown on Insets 3-6 seem quite close together when looking at the Overview plan, although the drawing does not indicate the relative spacing between these passing points. However, it is noted that Inset locations 4 and 6 are effectively at the proposed access points to Lime Down Area C, so localised widening to achieve a 6.0m carriageway width at these access points may not be necessary if the sight-line spacings between Inset locations 3-5-7 are acceptable. The dimensional details shown for Inset locations 3 and 5 are acceptable, whilst the passing location indicated in Inset 7 just south of the railway bridge is noted as existing. To the north of the railway bridge the widening details shown in Inset 9 are acceptable in length, whilst it is indicated that the proposed AIL access just north of the bridge (Inset 8) will provide another suitable passage point for two articulated HGVs. One concern which remains is the section to the immediate north-east of the Fosse Lodge junction, where it was previously noted in reviewing the HGV swept path analysis in Annex K that *“passing place spacing for 2-way HGV passage exceeding 300m is not accepted, with this shown to be the case immediately north of the Fosse Lodge junction”*. The spacing between the junction (Inset 2) and the passing point proposed at Inset 3 still seems quite lengthy.
- 8.10. Drawing PL304 now shows the proposed passing place improvements along the northern part of Fosse Way. The dimensional details of the proposed passing space works shown in Insets 1, 4 and 5 all appear acceptable, although the available passing length of circa 15m shown in the Inset 3 location is considered insufficient to accommodate the clear passage of two 16.5m articulated HGVs. It is not clear why the proposed works to the existing field gate access shown in Inset 2 would be necessary given the proximity of the Inset 3 works. Furthermore, the works shown in Inset 5 are shown to be very close to the existing passing bay shown in Inset 6. The existing driveway access shown in Inset 7 is not considered large enough to pass two HGVs, so it is noted a long narrow length of Fosse Way exists between locations shown in Insets 6 and 8. Widening works at the junction between Fosse Way and the road to Sherston are certainly required (Inset 8). Whilst what is shown appears adequate, it needs to be demonstrated with a supporting swept path analysis that an articulated HGV travelling south from Lime Down A and turning right could do so with an opposing HGV waiting at the junction on Fosse Way in a position where the driver is able to see along this road to the first available passing place some 125m to the NW.

9. 6.3 ES Volume 3, Appendix 3-2 Cable Route Construction Method Statement (Rev 3) [[REP4-040](#)]

- 9.1. The council wishes to highlight that Revision 3 relates to Paragraph 1.2.4 and not Paragraph 3.4.1 as stated, although the council raises no concerns regarding the content of this revision. This is being identified for clarity.

10. 7.4 Design Principles and Parameters (Rev 4) [[REP4-044](#)]

- 10.1. The council notes and welcomes the update to this document to include a commitment to rounded wooded fence posts, agricultural in appearance in Tables 2-3, 2-5, 2-8 and 2-9, as requested by the council within ISH 2. However, the council notes that the Applicant has not incorporated the requested additional commitment to incorporate kerbs finished flush with adjacent road and verge levels (which sought to avoid use of uncharacteristic raised concrete kerb edges for retained site access points). The council requests that the Applicant incorporates this into the document as previously requested.

11. 7.8 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report (Rev 4) [[REP4-046](#)] and 7.9 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Appendix Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation (Rev 4) [[REP4-048](#)]

- 11.1. The Applicant's Deadline 4 Cover Letter [[REP4-001](#)] specifies that these documents have been updated to reflect amendments to the Bincombe Wood access track. However, the Schedule of Changes at the front of 7.8 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Report [[REP4-046](#)] lists a number of additional changes that relate to Change 1 and Change 4 of the Change Application and to correct errors and to reflect minor design changes, not all of which seem to pertain to the Bincombe Access track amendments.
- 11.2. Whilst these amendments are noted, they do not overcome or address all the concerns and issues raised by the council regarding the BNG submissions to date. During the Issue Specific Hearing covering Ecology and Biodiversity matters (ISH3), it was agreed that the SoCG between the Applicant and Wiltshire Council would be used to progress discussion on these matters further. Nonetheless, the council considers that it will still be necessary for REP4-046 and REP4-048 to be amended accordingly to reflect where matters are progressed to being agreed. The council expects revised documents to be submitted in due course.

12. 7.12 Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Rev 5) [\[REP4-050\]](#)

12.1. The Applicant's Deadline 4 Cover Letter [\[REP4-001\]](#) states that the Outline CEMP has been updated in response to actions from Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1 and Issue Specific Hearings 2 and 3.

12.2. Under Agenda Item 3.2 of ISH3, the Applicant's Post Hearing Summary [\[REP4-086\]](#) states:

"Ms Brodrick confirmed that there is an Arboricultural Clerk of Works and that as part of Table 4, section 3.15 of the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [\[REP3-092\]](#) it requires a person of at least 5 years' relevant experience."

12.3. Wiltshire Council Arboricultural Officers have reviewed Table 4 of the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [\[REP3-092\]](#), and this latest iteration, and cannot identify any requirement specifying a minimum of five years' relevant experience for the Arboricultural Clerk of Works.

12.4. This statement therefore appears inconsistent with the document referenced.

12.5. Furthermore, the requirement for an "appropriate qualification" and reference to BS 3998:2010 alone does not provide sufficient assurance that the appointed Arboricultural Clerk of Works possesses the level of practical experience necessary to oversee and advise on works of this scale and sensitivity, particularly where ancient woodland, retained trees and complex tree protection measures are involved.

12.6. Wiltshire Council Arboricultural Officers therefore request that the Applicant:

- Identifies where the stated five-year minimum experience requirement is secured within the application documents;
- Provides details of the minimum qualifications and experience requirements for the ACoW role; and
- Secures an appropriately qualified and demonstrably experienced Arboricultural Clerk of Works through the relevant management plans and commitments.

12.7. This is necessary to ensure that arboricultural supervision is undertaken by an individual with sufficient competence and experience to identify risks, advise contractors, and safeguard retained trees and ancient woodland throughout construction and operation.

12.8. In order to avoid duplication, comments on REP4-050 are also provided in response to DCO2.1 posed in the Examining Authority's second written

questions and requests for information (ExQ2) [\[PD-014\]](#), which have been responded to in a separate submission.

13. 7.13 Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (Rev 5) [REP4-052]

13.1. The Applicant's Deadline 4 Cover Letter [\[REP4-001\]](#) states that the Outline OEMP has been updated in response to actions from Issue Specific Hearings 3 and 4.

13.2. The oOEMP states:

"Should the existing track adjacent to Bincombe Wood be used during the operational stage, any upgrade to the track will follow a specialist 'no-dig' construction methodology and specification to avoid the need to excavate and potentially incur root damage. If an upgrade is required, the access track will be built on top of the existing ground level, with no digging into the ground for a subbase. Detailed design of the access track will take place post-DCO and will include consideration of cellular confinement systems with high load bearing capacities. Use of the track will be limited to light vehicles for occasional maintenance."

13.3. Wiltshire Council Arboricultural Officers question the need for an operational maintenance track within the 15 m buffer of Bincombe Wood Ancient Woodland.

13.4. The scheme already includes the proposed AIL access route, which appears capable of accommodating maintenance vehicles throughout the operational life of the development. The Applicant should therefore justify why a separate access track is required within the ancient woodland buffer zone rather than utilising the existing proposed access infrastructure.

13.5. Whilst the Applicant has indicated that the track would be used for hedgerow / vegetation maintenance, the hedgerow located along the track side of the buffer zone does not appear to require any additional management beyond that currently undertaken by existing landowners or users. As such, no clear arboricultural or land management justification has been provided for the Applicant requiring routine access within the buffer zone.

13.6. Given the sensitivity of the location adjacent to ancient woodland, the need for the track should be clearly demonstrated and alternatives outside the buffer zone fully explored.

13.7. In order to avoid duplication, comments on REP4-052 are also provided in response to DCO2.1 posed in the Examining Authority's second written questions and requests for information (ExQ2) [\[PD-014\]](#), which have been responded to in a separate submission.

14. 7.15 Outline Soil Resources Management Plan (Rev 3) **[\[REP4-054\]](#)**

- 14.1. Within 9.49 Written Summary of the Applicant's Oral Submissions and Responses at Issue Specific Hearing 2 and Responses to Action Points [\[REP4-085\]](#), and specifically in the response to Action Point 1 Annex A, the council notes the Applicant's confirmation that 24.1 Hectares of existing agricultural land is proposed to be surfaced with hard surfacing materials to create new access tracks and compounds etc.
- 14.2. The council estimates that excavation to 300mm depths covering 24.1 hectares of new hard surfacing would result in a requirement for circa 72,300 m³ of necessary topsoil storage requiring circa 4.47 hectares of land for this purpose, which equates to 3.42 km of linear soil storage bunds 13m wide x 3m high.
- 14.3. The council notes the amendments to 7.15 Outline Soils Resources Management Plan (oSRMP) (Rev 3) [\[REP4-054\]](#), including additional principles for locating soil stockpiles (paragraph 1.8.22) and the introduction of maximum stockpile parameters (paragraph 1.8.24). However, significant concerns remain regarding the scale of soil storage proposed, the absence of identified stockpile locations, and the lack of clarity regarding the management and disposal of hardstanding spoil generated during decommissioning.

Stockpile Volumes

- 14.4. The Applicant confirms within their response to ISH2 Action Point 1 in Annex A [\[REP4-085\]](#) that approximately 24.1ha of existing agricultural land will be hard surfaced for access tracks, compounds and associated infrastructure. Assuming average 300mm excavation depths, the council estimates this would generate an on-site topsoil storage requirement of circa 72,300 m³ which could equate to a footprint of approximately 4.47 ha based on the stockpile dimensions included within paragraph 1.8.24 of the oSRMP (Rev 3) [\[REP4-054\]](#).
- 14.5. The scale of storage required is substantial and reinforces the need for clearly identified and demonstrably suitable stockpile locations.

Stockpile Locations

- 14.6. Wiltshire Council remains concerned that no indicative stockpile locations have been identified within the latest revision of the oSRMP [\[REP4-054\]](#) or on any supporting plans. While paragraph 1.8.22 references good practice measures such as avoiding impacts on trees and construction activities, it does not adequately address other key environmental constraints, embedded mitigation areas, ecological buffers or consider landscape character or visual amenity.
- 14.7. The council notes that 6.1 ES Vol 1, Chapter 11 Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage (Rev 4) [\[REP4-013\]](#) identifies preservation of overland flow paths as a key design principle and states that no bunding is proposed within such areas.

However, the Applicant has not identified these flow routes or demonstrated how proposed stockpile areas would avoid them.

- 14.8. Given the potential extent of soil stockpiles, the council considers that indicative stockpile locations should be identified on the Works Plans, or alternatively that clear spatial constraints and exclusion areas should be incorporated within any relevant mitigation strategies.

Soil Resource Retention and Agricultural Restoration

- 14.9. The council considers it important to demonstrate that sufficient soil resources will remain available to facilitate agricultural restoration following decommissioning. At present, it remains unclear how soils will be safeguarded over the lifetime of the development, including whether significant quantities may ultimately be disposed of, sold, or incorporated into permanent landscape features.
- 14.10. This uncertainty raises concerns regarding the reversibility of the development and the assumptions that underpin the Environmental Impact Assessment. Furthermore, the Environmental Statement does not appear to consider the implications of importing replacement soils should adequate on-site soil resources no longer be available at decommissioning.

Long-Term Soil Health

- 14.11. The council also remains concerned regarding the long-term condition of soils proposed to be stored within stockpiles of up to 3m in height for potentially 60 years. While paragraph 1.8.24 of the oSRMP (Rev 3) [\[REP4-054\]](#) establishes maximum stockpile dimensions, the Applicant has not demonstrated how soil structure, biological function and agricultural quality will be maintained over such extended timeframes.
- 14.12. The council notes that best-practice guidance generally limits the duration of topsoil storage in high stockpiles to significantly shorter periods. Consequently, the council does not consider that sufficient evidence has been provided to demonstrate that soils can be retained in a condition suitable for successful agricultural restoration following decommissioning.
- 14.13. The council's primary concerns are that the Applicant has not yet demonstrated:
- where the significant volumes of topsoil and subsoil would be stored;
 - that stockpile locations can be accommodated without conflict with environmental constraints and numerous other design mitigation measures;
 - that soil quality can be maintained over the proposed 60-year storage period;

- and that sufficient soil resources will remain available to achieve successful agricultural restoration at decommissioning.

14.14. Accordingly, further spatially specific information and supporting evidence are required before the council's concerns can be satisfactorily addressed.

14.15. The council considers that all relevant environmental constraints likely to impact locational areas for soil stockpiles should be identified as locational restriction criteria and additionally listed under paragraph 1.8.22 of the oSRMP [\[REP4-054\]](#), as it is not just potential conflict with trees or other construction activities that should inform acceptable locations for soil stockpiles.

14.16. In order to avoid duplication, comments on REP4-054 are also provided in response to DCO2.1 posed in the Examining Authority's second written questions and requests for information (ExQ2) [\[PD-014\]](#), which have been responded to in a separate submission.

15. 7.19 Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy (Rev 4) [\[REP4-056\]](#)

15.1. The Applicant's Deadline 4 Cover Letter [\[REP4-001\]](#) states that the Outline EPMS has been updated to reflect amendments to the Bincombe Wood access track.

15.2. In order to avoid duplication, comments on REP4-056 are provided in response to DCO2.1 posed in the Examining Authority's second written questions and requests for information (ExQ2) [\[PD-014\]](#), which have been responded to in a separate submission.

16. 7.22 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (Rev 4) [\[REP4-058\]](#)

16.1. The council welcomes the amendments to the AIL movements routes.

16.2. As noted in the listed Schedule for Changes at Deadline 4, most of the main-body changes to the oCTMP within Revision 4 are minor and only serve to align the information with changes made to the Transport Assessment. So, for example, the changes to Tables 2 and 3 detailing the Lime Down PV and Cable Route Corridor accesses just replicate the changes in Tables 13-10 and 13-11 within the Transport Assessment for consistency.

Sub-Section 2.3: Detailed Design

16.3. Previous council comments still apply in respect of paragraph 2.3.1. The detailed design of permanent highway works is not considered to be an oCTMP 'requirement' matter. The Local Highway Authority Protective Provisions now included in Part 11 to Schedule 15 to the DCO will cover these requirements

and more, such as Bond sums, inspections, indemnity provision and certification (once agreed). It is suggested this paragraph should refer to the LHA Protective Provisions, even if continuing to provide a broad summary listing of the 'key' documentation required.

Section 3: Construction Vehicle Trip Generation

- 16.4. As noted in the council's comments on ES Volume 1, Chapter 13 Transport and Access (Rev 4) [REP4-015] above, matters relating to the number of expected HGV deliveries (Table 4) and the mode split associated with construction worker trips (Table 5) are still not agreed.

Section 6.12: Road Condition Surveys

- 16.5. To re-iterate, it remains the council's preference that that all matters relating to the Highway Condition surveys are included in a separate s59 Agreement, as opposed to be subsumed into the oCTMP or a later CTMP. It is stated in paragraph 6.12.2 that *"The extent of the survey will be agreed with the local highway authority prior to commencement and as part of the Final CTMPs"*. However, it is unclear as to why this cannot be determined now as all the roads likely to be impacted by extraordinary HGV trafficking are known and so a plan included within a s59 Agreement. It is the council's view, as stated before, that the Lime Down Solar Park HGV construction trafficking along the narrow rural lanes will be 'Extraordinary' in the context of the definition set out in s59 of the Highways Act. There is thus a concern with the use of the revised wording in paragraph 6.12.1 which states: *"Any identified highways defects or carriageway structural failures resulting from construction activities associated with the Site will be corrected to the satisfaction of the local highway authority either on the completion of the Construction Phase or, if required for safety reasons, prior to or during the Construction Phase. The Highway Authority will be allowed to recover any additional costs incurred, over and above its existing responsibility to maintain, in a steady state, the road(s) in question"*. This leaves a lot of potential for arguments about remediation noting the last sentence, unless this is accepted by the Applicant that construction trafficking on the rural lanes associated with LDSP is deemed extraordinary. In the absence of the LDSP development and given the existing level / type of trafficking along these lanes, any routine maintenance the council might be required to undertake would reasonably be expected to be small in scale and outlay. However, the level and duration of HGV trafficking over the LDSP construction period will likely lead to an accelerated risk of highway damage to these rural roads and a need for ongoing maintenance which would not otherwise occur. In short, the council's view is that all the identified roads shall be returned to a condition which is at least as good as the pre-construction highway survey state, or better, and that all costs for doing so must be borne by the Applicant. This removes any ambiguity as to what will be expected and liability for remedial costs.
- 16.6. It is not considered that simple video surveys of the roads to be included will suffice as suggested in paragraph 6.12.1. Plans showing each road length to be included will be needed, with a chainage shown and the location of all photographs taken indicated. The latter should include the location of all

existing defects found in the pre-construction condition survey. A separate Schedule would additionally be desirable describing the defects with some indication of severity. This may be useful to agree on any pre-emptive highway works, which may be needed to prevent early deterioration caused by regular HGV trafficking.

- 16.7. In order to avoid duplication, comments on REP4-058 are also provided in response to DCO2.1 posed in the Examining Authority's second written questions and requests for information (ExQ2) [\[PD-014\]](#), which have been responded to in a separate submission.

17. 8.1 Statement of Commonality (Rev 5) [\[REP4-060\]](#)

- 17.1. Wiltshire Council and the Applicant have held a number of topic specific meetings recently to review the Statement of Common Ground and discuss outstanding concerns, including consideration of the best way forward for those items where considerable differences in the respective positions remain. Discussions have recently been held for the following technical disciplines: archaeology, flood risk and drainage, ecology and biodiversity, soils and agriculture, built heritage, economy, public health, landscape and visual, and arboriculture.
- 17.2. As part of these discussions, the council and the Applicant are also looking to streamline the SoCG so that the issues and their current status are clearly identified and articulated.
- 17.3. Further detailed discussions are currently ongoing between parties in order to progress the Statement of Common Ground with Wiltshire Council. Whilst the update to the SoCG submitted at Deadline 5 contains revisions for some technical areas, some technical areas remain unchanged from the previous version, for example with regards to landscape and visual matters, transport and access and ecology and biodiversity. However, it is agreed that the parties will work positively together to provide an updated Statement of Common Ground for all technical disciplines at Deadline 6 and follow-up discussions have been or are in the process of being scheduled.
- 17.4. With regards to Transport and Access, whilst this matter remains under ongoing discussion with the Applicant, the previous 'key' highway matters reported as 'under discussion' remain the same, being:
- Predicted overall HGV trip generation during the construction phase and underlying calculation assumptions.
 - Passing place mitigation needed to accommodate two opposing HGVs along the narrow rural lanes proposed for construction access, and the location of these highway works. Whilst the latest HIA proposals in Annex I to the Transport Assessment include additional passing space works along Fosse Way, there are remaining queries on the relative spacing on these. Furthermore, there remain no proposals to improve

and accommodate HGV passage along the route between Dyson Roundabout and Bradfield Cottages, and expressly the length north-west of the junction with The Street.

- The council's desire for a bespoke s59 Highway Agreement to address wider consequential highway damages to the rural lanes being used for HGV construction trafficking, so those parts of the rural highway network not under direct highway works to form the necessary access points to the Solar PV sites or within defined HIA.

17.5. Both parties understand that a final signed version of the SoCG is required to be submitted at Deadline 7.

18. 9.42 Sequential Visual Effect on Wiltshire Cycleway [REP4-078]

18.1. The council raises concern that the methodology used is incomplete and does not fully follow the guidance issued in GLVIA 3. At Table 7.1 page 131 of GLVIA the definition of Sequential Cumulative Visual Effect specifically states:

*Occurs when the observer has to move to another viewpoint to see **the same or different** developments.* (emphasis added)

18.2. Therefore, the comment at 1.1.4 of 9.42 Sequential Visual Effect on Wiltshire Cycleway [REP4-078] that: *Sequential Effects relate to the visual experience of recognised routes and occur when the observer has to move to another location to see different developments*, is in fact incorrect and does not take account of different locations from where the same site is visible. This is particularly pertinent where Wiltshire Cycleway Route (WCR) passes through the Lime Down development areas and the same site is visible sequentially. Therefore, as 1.1.4 states that the receptor is moving to see different developments, this misses a key part of the assessment.

18.3. Another issue which is of concern is that apart from SVP12, all the SVPs are taken with the receptors moving broadly from north-east to south-west along the Wiltshire Cycleway, with the potential sequential views available to the receptor passing in the opposite direction not having been considered or appropriately expressed in the report.

18.4. The council considers that relying on the mitigation proposed in the LVIA is not necessarily appropriate for dealing with Cumulative Effects. Paragraphs 7.39 and 7.40 of GLVIA deal with this issue. However, the report does not state what mitigation is actually proposed and how it will be appropriate for mitigating the sequential cumulative effects to the extent shown in Table 3.1. The council does not agree with the assessment that decommissioning will have no effect on sequential cumulative effects. No evidence has been provided that this will be the case, as to all intents and purposes, the effects are likely to be similar to the construction effects.

- 18.5. The council further notes that the assessment does not consider the sequential perceptual visual aspects which can be reasonably anticipated to arise from regularly encountered and sustained construction traffic movements along these road sections shared with the WCR along Section 14 [\[REP4-078\]](#) (Annex A, Wiltshire Cycleway Section Map 14) between Grittleton Crossroads and Foxley impacting cycleway users' perceptual visual quality and sequential visual experiences during the projects construction, maintenance (replacement) and decommissioning phases.
- 18.6. The assessment's consideration of this matter is limited to comments at paragraph 3.2.7 [\[REP4-078\]](#) *"there will be temporary traffic management measures during construction which would have a short term and adverse effect to users of Wiltshire Cycleway"*. This commentary relates to the construction of HGV Passing places and AIL road widening works along this shared route length, but does not reflect the high level of increased visual and perceptual disturbance generated by the projects construction traffic, directly sharing relevant sections of the WCR, given that all construction traffic can only use this shared WCR section to construct, maintain and decommission all development proposed within Lime Down Areas A, B and C.

19. 9.43 Farming and Food Security Technical Note [\[REP4-079\]](#)

- 19.1. In Section 3.4 in relation to Self-Sufficiency Context, the Applicant suggests that as the Government is seeking to increase food exports, there is not a food security reason to retain domestically produced food in the UK. The council wishes to highlight that all Governments look to increase exports of a wide variety of goods, and just because a government looks to increase the export of defence goods, it does not mean that it's not concerned about having enough to ensure the defence of the country.
- 19.2. With respect to Sections 4.1.3 to 4.1.30, Wiltshire Council would like to thank the Applicant for the survey they have conducted with individual landowners which appears comprehensive. The council would, however, make the following comments on these sections:
- Land that is currently in environmental schemes like ELM, and on the whole is the least productive, could be brought back into food production very quickly should the economics change or there is a national imperative to increase food production. This would not be the case if the land is populated with solar panels.
 - Due to what has historically been more changeable weather over the summer months, the majority of UK cereal production has been for animal feed. However, with drier, hotter summers experienced in recent years this is beginning to change. Whilst the council notes the sentence 'Loss of the farmable area would have no impact on food production for direct human consumption', the council considers that it would be used

for milk, pork, chicken, beef, lamb and egg production in the UK. Therefore, the lost cereal production from this land will have to come from somewhere else.

- The council considers that the conclusion from the responses in section 4.1.31 that the presence of the scheme is unlikely to have any impact on food production is incorrect.

- 19.3. With regards to Section 5.1.4, the council considers that it would be a mistake to base any conclusions on a study that is 20 years old, given all the policy, economic and defence (both food and security) changes that have taken place during this time. Furthermore, as food has continued to be produced on this land during the intervening 20 years, the study clearly came to the wrong conclusion.
- 19.4. The council is concerned with Table 1 in that it shows a significant decrease in the amount of non-agricultural land, e.g. woodland, in Wiltshire and the increase in the amount of land that has been used for urban development, from 1.7% of the available land area to 5.5% in the last 50 years. With increased housing targets and demand for commercial development, there is likely to be increasing losses of land to urban development in the coming years, which would place an even greater pressure on food security. Agricultural land is a finite resource and cannot be created.
- 19.5. With regards to Section 5.2, Wiltshire Council assessed data that is available to them, and stands by the figures quoted in 5.2.1 by the Applicant. The only Grade 2 land that is currently being used for solar energy that the council could identify was on a brownfield site predominantly used for other activities.

20. 9.45 Applicant's Response to Other Parties' Responses to Examining Authority's First Written Questions **[\[REV4-081\]](#)**

CH1.2

- 20.1. Agreement to the list of viewpoints was requested at an early stage, before the Applicant's heritage assessment had been received and prior to detailed site visits being undertaken with Applicant's team. The request for the additional viewpoint is made following detailed assessment of the submissions in response to areas where there appear to be a gap in understanding.
- 20.2. However, following the recent meeting to discuss the SoCG, it is understood that access to allow the additional visualisation to be worked up is being sought.

CH1.6

- 20.3. The council has reviewed the Applicant's response and paragraph 1 is noted but this does not address the concerns raised. Therefore, the council maintains

its position. The commitment to opening a dialogue with the owners of Grittleton House and to continuing discussion with the council is, however, welcomed.

HW1.1 to HW1.3

- 20.4. Wiltshire Council welcomes the Applicant's commitment to establishing a Community Liaison Group (CLG) and to considering the principles set out within Suffolk County Council's *Energy Projects and the Wellbeing of Communities* guidance. The council agrees that meaningful and ongoing engagement with affected communities is an important component of mitigating potential impacts on community identity, cohesion and wellbeing.
- 20.5. However, the council maintains that the CLG should be viewed as only one element of a broader mitigation package. Whilst it may provide an effective mechanism for communication, information sharing and collaborative problem-solving, it is unlikely in isolation to fully address the potential mental health and wellbeing impacts associated with a development of this scale. These impacts may include increased stress, anxiety and uncertainty arising from prolonged construction activity, perceived changes to local character and landscape, and concerns regarding the long-term effects of the Scheme on local communities.
- 20.6. The council therefore continues to support the inclusion of requirements securing:
- A comprehensive Communication and Community Engagement Strategy, with clear, measurable and accountable actions to mitigate impacts on community identity, resilience and wellbeing; and
 - A Decommissioning Strategy which recognises and addresses community wellbeing impacts throughout the full lifecycle of the development.
- 20.7. The council also considers that the operation of the CLG should extend beyond construction and into the operational phase of the development, ensuring that communities retain an effective forum through which concerns can be raised, monitored and addressed over time.
- 20.8. In addition, the council welcomes further discussion with the Applicant regarding the practical application of the Suffolk guidance, including consideration of measures that strengthen community resilience and wellbeing, such as support for community assets, community-led initiatives and local wellbeing services where these are demonstrated to mitigate identified impacts.
- 20.9. The council notes that discussions on these matters remain ongoing through the Statement of Common Ground and welcomes the Applicant's commitment to continued working with Wiltshire Council to develop clear, proportionate and enforceable arrangements.

21. 9.46 Applicant's Response to Submissions Received at Deadline 3 [[REP4-082](#)]

WC-028

- 21.1. Please also see comments provided on REP4-060 and REP4-062 above.
- 21.2. The council has repeatedly raised certain specific matters, both prior to and during the formal examination, and disagrees with the Applicant's description of two-way engagement with Wiltshire Council in relation to landscape and visual matters.
- 21.3. As an example, fundamental issues in relation to assessment of landscape fabric including its definition, omission of land use, built fabric components, perceptual aspects and Zone of Influence (Zol) limits for cumulative assessment have been consistently highlighted, some as far back as EIA scoping and PEIR Stage Review stages. Each time the council has sought clarification on specific assessment methodology or raised outstanding landscape and visual matters as a concern during its formal written submissions, the Applicant's approach has simply been to either signpost the council to the relevant section of the Applicant's ES chapter, even where these same issues have been referenced within the council's formal written responses to date on these sections, including in its Relevant Representation [[RR-4934](#)], Written Representation [[REP1-138](#)], Local Impact Report [[REP1-137](#)], or initial draft of the SoCG with Wiltshire Council [[REP2-025](#)].
- 21.4. The council acknowledges the Applicant has prepared a number of additional technical notes relating to landscape and visual matters seeking to address outstanding matters, however each time these technical notes are reviewed by the council the common conclusion is they fail to provide any further meaningful explanation or information to actually address the council's concerns.

WC-035

- 21.5. Wiltshire Council confirms that discussions with the Applicant on the terminology used to describe the economic impact in the local area are on-going. The council have made the point that if the economic impact is as limited as the Applicant suggests then they should not have any concerns over a compensation scheme for local businesses, provided the eligibility criteria are robust enough to ensure only businesses that were previously viable and had a genuine claim would be compensated.
- 21.6. The council are disappointed to read that the Applicant feels the matter of monitoring local businesses during the operation of the scheme is still under discussion, particularly as in the July version of the Statement of Common Ground, it was the council's understanding that the Applicant had noted this as agreed.

WC-043

21.7. The council's preferred mechanism is to secure the PRoW contribution via a Section 106 agreement as it provides transparency and commitments to funds and mitigates against any possible risks in the future. The council is in active discussions with the Applicant on the appropriate mechanism,

WC-044

21.8. This merely repeats the area of disagreement with the council in respect of the application of Development Plan policy and the understatement of harmful adverse landscape effects. The Applicant's response provides no new evidence to allay the council's concerns.

WC-045

21.9. The response does not provide any definitive proposals for dealing with the issues of concern raised in the council's response to the ExA's first written questions LV1.4 [[REP3-142](#)].

WC-046

21.10. The council has made it clear in writing and at ISH2 that it considers the entire area to the north of the route of the Fosse Way to be within the setting of the CNL and that the effects of the proposals cannot be adequately mitigated. The Applicant's response does not provide any additional evidence to enable the council to modify its position.

WC-047

21.11. The council maintains its view regarding the scale of the development, the significantly negative landscape and visual effects and the unsuitability of the mitigation to the extent that in itself it will change the character of the receiving landscape. The council does not recognise the Applicant's description of the development areas as being 'independent' or 'discrete' as the sites are very large and closely interconnected. The majority of the information provided by the Applicant is taken from their existing documentation and is at odds with the council's assessment of the effects of the proposals on the receiving landscape and their long-term effects on the Limestone Lowland Character Type and Hullavington Rolling Lowland Landscape Character Area.

WC-048

21.12. The council considers that its position is clear. This is as included within the council's Relevant Representation [[RR-4934](#)], Written Representation [[REP1-138](#)] and Local Impact Report [[REP1-137](#)].

WC-049

21.13. This is a reiteration of the Applicant's views of the scheme and the mitigation and does not add any new information to the previous discussion. The council, however, does not agree that the LVIA has undertaken a worst-case assessment in accordance with the principles in the Rochdale Envelope. This is because the council does not consider that the Applicant has provided sufficient information regarding the specifics of the scheme for a full and accurate assessment to be undertaken and therefore does not, in the Council's opinion, fulfil the requirements of the Rochdale Envelope.

WC-050

21.14. The council notes the Applicant's comments, however the council considers that its position is clear.

WC-053

21.15. The council has reviewed the Applicant's response; however, it is unclear how the conclusion that it is not "likely that there would be a significant adverse effect to the business" has been reached. Therefore, the comment does not address the concerns raised in the initial comment and the council maintains its position in this regard.

WC-054

21.16. The council has reviewed the Applicant's response; however, this does not address the concerns raised in the initial comment. Therefore, the council maintains its position in this regard.

21.17. However, following the SoCG discussion earlier this week, clarification on the details of the Highway Improvement Scheme has been received from the Applicant and the council considers that it seems likely that this issue will be resolved.

WC-057

21.18. Please see comments relating to Farming and Food Security above.

WC-062 / WC-064

21.19. The council stands by its view that the proposal is not and has not been, landscape led. The Applicant has not followed what the council considers to be the fundamentals of a landscape led scheme as set out in WC-002 [\[REP2-039\]](#).

WC-063

21.20. The council maintains its stance in respect of non-compliance with Core Policy 51, which must remain a material consideration.

WC-065 / WC-066

21.21. Please see comments to REP4-078 above.

WC-069

21.22. The council's concerns have not been answered and therefore this issue remains outstanding. See also response to REP4-054 above.

WC-070

21.23. The illustrative example provided by the council related only to the BESS access track; the council has subsequently updated its calculations in relation to new information provided by the Applicant within their response to ISH2, Action Point 1 [\[REP4-085\]](#), which confirms at in Table A-1 'Summary of vegetation Gains and Losses' of Annex A that a total of 24.1 hectares of agricultural land is proposed to be surfaced with hard surfacing materials within Lime Down Areas A to E. See further detailed comments on REP4-054 above.

WC-071

21.24. The council accepts that the Applicant's proposed maximum soil stockpile heights and slope gradients for bunds, as now incorporated into the Outline Soil Resource Management Plan (Rev 3) [\[REP4-054\]](#), align with industry best practice. However, the long timeframes for storage (60 years) pending re-use, significantly exceed accepted industry best practice timeframes, and the council maintains concerns about unknown locations and forms for soil stockpiles. See further detailed comments and revised stockpiling calculations included under comments on REP4-054 above.

WC-072

21.25. The council's response to Action Point 16 for ISH2 was provided within its Post Hearing Submissions [\[REP4-092\]](#) and appended plans included at Appendix C showing suggested reduction in solar panel field areas close to and approaching the village.

WC-073

21.26. The Applicant's comment is noted. The council will review and provide further comment on the 'updated Tranquillity Assessment' once it is submitted into the examination.

WC-101

21.27. The council has reviewed the Applicant's response; however, this does not address the concerns raised within the initial comment. Therefore, the council maintains its position in this regard.

WC-102

21.28. The council has reviewed the Applicant's response; however, this does not address the concerns raised within the initial comment. Therefore, the council maintains its position in this regard.

WC-103

21.29. The council has reviewed the Applicant's response; however, this does not address the concerns raised. Therefore, the council maintains its position in this regard.

21.30. It is noted and welcomed that the Applicant will continue to discuss the wording of the outline oCEMP [\[REP4-050\]](#) and any additional mitigation that can be considered.

WC-104

21.31. The council has reviewed the Applicant's response; however, this does not address the concerns raised. Therefore, the council maintains its position in this regard. However, the council welcomes the comment that the Applicant is committed to ongoing engagement with the owners of Grittleton House and to consideration of further mitigation.

WC-105

21.32. The council welcomes the commitment to further dialogue with the owners of Grittleton House and consideration of additional mitigation.

WC-106

21.33. The council has reviewed the Applicant's response; however, this does not address the concerns raised. Therefore, the council maintains its position in this regard.

21.34. However, following the SoCG discussion earlier this week, clarification on the details of the Highway Improvement Scheme has been received from the Applicant and the council considers that it seems likely that this issue will be resolved.

VJS-001

21.35. The council shares the concerns of the owners of Grittleton House and have set out their own comments in detail (notably in the Wiltshire Council 'Response to comments submitted at Deadline 2' [\[REP3-141\]](#), and specifically with regard to WC-083 under 9.22 The Applicant's Response to Written Representations.

21.36. The Applicant's responses do not acknowledge the potential for impact and fail to address the concerns raised, but the council welcomes the commitment to

opening further dialogue with the owners of Grittleton House and consideration of additional mitigation.

22. 9.50 Written Summary of the Applicant's Oral Submissions and Responses at Issue Specific Hearing 3 and Responses to Action Points [\[REP4-086\]](#)

Agenda Item 1: Participant Introductions

- 22.1. Whilst a minor point, it is noted that the listing of Wiltshire Council officers in attendance and introducing themselves during ISH3 excludes those from the Highways team, so Kevin Cheleda and David Lear. It is also noted that SLD's Transport Consultant Bruce Bamber is also missing.

Agenda Item 2.2 Construction Traffic HGV Forecasting

- 22.2. The Applicant notes that *"An initial allowance was made for 600,000 solar PV panels (1,200 deliveries), based on standard containers, assuming 500 panels per HGV. If high-cube containers are used (720 panels per delivery), this would allow for 864,000 solar panels with the same number of deliveries"*. In the Wiltshire Council Comments on Submissions Received at Deadline 3 [\[REP4-091\]](#), and specifically those made in relation to 9.34 Applicant's Response to Stop Lime Down Written Representation – Appendix D Transport Report, the council noted that *"Annex E to the latest Transport Assessment (Rev 3) still advises that the overall PV component quantum over the five Lime Down Solar Park sites is expected to be 588,988, which based on the 469ha (1159 acre) area would yield a PV Module density of 508 per acre. This would appear to be insufficient to generate the 1MW output sought from every 2.4-acre area equipped with panels"*. This was in response to the Applicant's comment that *"NPS EN-3, paragraph 2.10.17, indicates that 2-4 acres will be required for each MW of output, with 50MW of generation requiring 125 to 200 acres and 100,000 to 150,000 panels. This equates to a panel density of 750 to 800 panels per acre"*. A satisfactory response to this query remains outstanding, despite the Applicant citing the SLD PV delivery figures as too high. It is further noted that the same point is made in the Deadline 4 SLD response to the Applicant's Deadline 3 replies (para 3.2.2 and Table paragraph reference item 2.1.7: Calculation of Numbers of Solar Panels) [\[REP4-132\]](#). It is also noted that the Examining Authority pose the same question in EXQ2 (TT2.1).
- 22.3. It is stated that: *"The Council's overarching position is that no control has been proposed over HGV movements, and the risk the Council wants to avoid is significant overestimation or underestimation going unchallenged. The Council wants the ExA to have confidence that the figures are realistic and that the concerns raised by Stop Lime Down have been properly addressed. The Council remains concerned that Mr Bamber's issues have not been sufficiently responded to and proposed to review Mr Bamber's next submission and respond in writing. Mr Bamber's assessment is to be submitted at Deadline 4, with a caveat that more information from the Applicant will be required"*.

- 22.4. Comments on Mr Bamber's comments in the SLD Deadline 4 response [[REP4-132](#)] are included as part of this overarching submission. However, whilst such crucial differences exist over the actual number of PV modules and so potentially the number of supporting structures as well, the council's concern that HGV movements are potentially being underestimated will and do remain.

Agenda Item 2.4 Highway User Safety

- 22.5. This is considered an accurate record of the ISH3 dialogue on the operational and safety concerns regarding the ability of two HGVs to pass along the narrow rural roads proposed for access to the solar PV sites. The Applicant post-hearing actions below are noted, and the council's comments on these plans are included on the Transport Assessment and the oCTMP above.

"The Applicant has provided the following:

- Additional plans in Annex I of ES Volume 3 Appendix 13-1: Transport Assessment [EN010168/APP/6.3] (Revision 4) (Drawing PL109B) which shows the width of construction routes.*
- Appendix E in the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [EN010168/APP/7.22] (Revision 4) which includes proposed Highway Improvement Area Drawings for road widening and AIL movements"*

Agenda Item 2.5 Highway Improvement Areas (HIAs)

- 22.6. This is considered an accurate record of the ISH3 dialogue on the proposed extent of HIAs. It is noted in the text that *"Mr Darrall confirmed that passing points along the Fosse Way within the order limits are shown in plans submitted for Deadline 4, and that improvements are intended for the Fosse Way"*. Highway Development Management comments on these passing place additions are made in reviewing the latest Transport Assessment (above).

Agenda Item 3.4 Monitoring

- 22.7. The council would like to thank the Applicant for the productive discussions held to date on the future funding mechanisms in relation to this scheme. The council is in ongoing discussions with the Applicant on this matter, and the council looks forward to receiving the first draft of the agreements to review.

23. 9.51 Written Summary of the Applicant's Oral Submissions and Responses at Issue Specific Hearing 4 and Response to Action Points [[REP4-087](#)]

Agenda Item 2.1 Article 2 – Interpretation: Definition of 'maintain' and whether the wording is precise enough

- 23.1. It is noted that alternative drafting has been provided by Wiltshire Council at Deadline 4 (ISH4 Action Point 2) [[REP4-092](#)] and that the Applicant will review

this. The council will provide further representations on this matter once the Applicant's response is available.

Agenda Item 2.3 Articles 10 and 15 – Justification for power to alter streets outside of the Order Limits, the street authority consenting provisions and the timeframe for issuing consent

- 23.2. This is considered an accurate record of the ISH4 dialogue. The Applicant's interpretation of 'Road Works' in the draft Wiltshire Council 'Protective Provisions' and deemed extent of applicability is a useful one, so the statement in the Post Hearing Note: *"as any works outside of the Order limits would be authorised by the DCO via Article 10 or Article 15 they would be subject to the protective provisions"*. This provides the necessary Highways Development Management comfort in respect of required Technical Approvals. However, as also alluded to by Ms Broderick *"the process under Section 278 does not have any timescales and the Applicant is therefore ensuring through the DCO process that the required information is provided to Wiltshire Council and that the Wiltshire Council reviews this information within a set period. If Wiltshire Council does not review that detail, then there is either a mechanism for appeal or a deemed consent process"*. This over-arching DCO power to undertake highway works outside the Order Limits throughout the life of the DCO is thus a concern, as the potential scale of any future works is unknown, so the necessary time for proper review and approval may be variable. As such, an assumed 'deemed consent' for highway works outside the Order Limits if all approval matters are not resolved within a set period in all cases is not acceptable or reasonable. This remains the council's position, in that there is no need to circumvent the normal Wiltshire Council s278 Agreement process or indeed the standard requirements within the Wiltshire Council Permit Scheme.

Agenda Item 2.4 Article 11 - Construction and Maintenance of Altered Streets

- 23.3. It would be the Council's Highways Development Management interpretation that this Article (11) only relates to highway works or alterations to roads carried out by the Applicant and the maintenance of these works through the agreed defects period. This appears to be the Applicant's view, noting the statement that: *"Article 11 only requires the repair of damage as a result of highways works carried out by the Applicant. However, there are provisions in the CTMP to deal with any damage caused as a result of the use of the roads which the Applicant is not altering. Article 11 only relates to altered streets and includes the works done to the streets and the maintenance of those works"*.
- 23.4. However, it is then stated by the Applicant that *"Ms Brodrick clarified that Article 11 applies where there are known works to the highway but if the Applicant had to do other works to the highway to facilitate the Scheme or to repair any damage caused by the Scheme, then this would be covered by Article 11. Therefore, the Applicant's position is that this obligation is wider than Wiltshire Council envisages"*. However, this seems to contradict the point that only areas subject to original direct works by the Applicant are covered by Article 11, so only local remedials to these areas.

Agenda Item 2.5 Article 14 - Access to Works

- 23.5. The detailed design approval requirements for the vehicular access locations listed in Schedule 7 will be secured through the Wiltshire Council Protective Provisions in Schedule 15 to the DCO when agreed and finalised. It is noted that the Applicant states that *“There is a requirement under the CTMP to provide that level of design detail, and therefore it is not needed in the operative provisions. The access to works powers gives the Applicant the statutory power to do works to the highway via the DCO, and then the detailed design is covered by the CTMP”*. So, there is no reference to the Protective Provisions. The council’s continued view is that the CTMP is not the mechanism for agreeing the design of permanent highway works, even though it is written in. However, it is the council’s expectation that the Protective Provisions will.

24. Post Hearing Submission from Aileen Hood [[REP4-099](#)]

- 24.1. Wiltshire Council has already commented on food security issues above, so will not repeat them here. However, Ms Hood does make a valid point regarding the grids capacity to cope with increasing amounts of renewable energy and NESO’s ability to manage the supply of renewable energy and distribution to end users, potentially resulting in an increased likelihood of blackouts.

25. Any Further Information Requested by the ExA Submitted by Dermot Farrington [[REP4-107](#)]

- 25.1. Wiltshire Council would like to thank Mr Farrington for his comprehensive response to the ExA’s question, which supports comments previously made the council regarding the impact of the proposed scheme on the equine sector in the local area and beyond. It also re-enforces the council’s belief that the economic impact of the scheme locally will be severe, rather than adverse as the Applicant contends.

26. Any Further Information Requested by the ExA Submitted by January Farrington [[REP4-116](#)]

- 26.1. Wiltshire Council acknowledges this comprehensive submission highlighting the importance of the equine sector in the area affected by the Lime Down proposal and requests that the ExA gives it due weight when preparing its Recommendation Report for the Secretary of State.

27. Comments on Responses to the ExA's First Written Questions from January Farrington [REP4-117]

- 27.1. From the issues raised within this response, Wiltshire Council are concerned that the equine survey may not be as robust as originally hoped. Whilst the council will reserve judgement until it has had a chance to review the information prepared by the Applicant following its submission into examination, the methodology employed may result in any conclusions that the Applicant draws being treated with caution. Furthermore, the council wishes to highlight that the Applicant has not provided Wiltshire Council with a copy of the survey, despite being one of the bodies that asked for it or asked the council to help identify businesses and individuals that it should be sent to.

28. Post Hearing Submission from Stop Lime Down [REP4-132]

- 28.1. The council's Highways Development Management officer comments initially below on SLD's comments on the Applicant's Response to their Written Representation Appendix D Transport Report (Paragraph 3.2.2). However, the council is also from comments made by the Examining Authority at ISH3 that this did not include a full response or rebuttal to comments made by SLD in their Appendix D:

Section 3.2 Traffic and Transport – Paragraph 3.2.2

- 28.2. Table: Paragraph 2.1.7: Calculation of the Number of Solar Panels: SLD state: that *"the Applicant is assuming 600,000 modules. The Applicant therefore bases its calculations of transport movements on only 65% of the number of modules that would be calculated using the figures in EN-3"*. This point is supported, and the council has raised the same query in a past Highways response.
- 28.3. Table: Paragraph 2.1.8: Meaning of 50% Buffer: SLD state that: *"Para. 1.5.4 of the TA makes it quite clear that the 50% uplift is not to allow for increased numbers of trips but to allow for day-to-day variation in trips: "it is acknowledged that there will be small peaks throughout the construction phase, especially during preparation of the Order Limits. To account for this, a 50% uplift has been applied for the purposes of assessment". The Applicant is now saying that the 50% uplift covers underestimates of predicted trip generation. This would mean that what was originally a "worst case" day, is now the average day"*. This view is supported by the council. The 50% uplift factor is not to be used as a 'catch-all' to mask deficiencies in the baseline trip generation calculations in predicting the average likely number of daily HGV trips. The latter needs to be robust, with the 50% only then applied to give potential 'peak' daily figures.
- 28.4. Table: Paragraph 2.1.12 BESS Containers: Taking the total of 270 BESS units, each requiring transport in two parts and on a 16.5m articulated HGV in each case, it is hard to see how the Applicant's estimate of only 425 is a reasoned

worst-case. The SLD view that a potential underestimate exists for this is supported.

- 28.5. Table: Paragraph 2.1.14 Depth of BESS and Substation Foundations: An average concrete foundation depth of 0.3m seems too low for these structures especially if, as noted, the latest ES Appendix 3-1 cites a possible foundation depth which is considerably greater.
- 28.6. Table: Paragraph 2.1.22 Spoil: How the 139,666m³ of excavated soil deemed unacceptable material would be dealt with or removed from off-site has been a past concern raised by Wiltshire Council. It is stated that: *“At the meeting it was stated that the assumption was that 10% of the 139,666m³ of excavated soil would be removed and that there would be no backfilling of aggregate vehicles”*. This seems to conflict with a previous assertion that all spoil would remain within the site. AS SLD note, even a 10% off-site haul would require a considerable number of HGVs (Tippers) assuming these trips are separate, and aggregate lorries are not used to do this. It is not acceptable to include this in the 50% uplift for ‘peak’ daily movements. It will be an ongoing activity over the construction period so should inform the ‘average’ figure in the first instance.
- 28.7. Table: Paragraph 2.1.34 Chances of HGVs meeting on Fosse Way: It is stated that *“Following discussions between the transport experts, it was agreed that a figure of 2.3 HGVs meeting per hour is correct”*. It would be helpful for Wiltshire Council to see the supporting calculations referred to. It is noted that this is presumably based on the current overall HGV estimates, which remain a matter of disagreement. As such, this figure could rise. It is also clear that, despite the past assertion from the Applicant that the risk of two HGVs meeting is negligible, there is in fact a chance of it happening every 20 minutes or so in every hour.
- 28.8. Table: Paragraph 2.1.35 Chances of HGVs meeting on Road to Bradfield Cottages: The comments above equally apply and assumed figure of 1.7 HGVs meeting per hour.

Appendix A

- 28.9. The council’s comments on the revised HGV Trip Generation Report in Appendix A are contained below. The SLD revised estimate of overall HGV movements associated with the Solar PV site during the construction phase is now 47,501, so lower than previous but still 82% higher than the Applicant’s forecast of 26,086 movements in the same period.

- Number of Solar Panels: The potential underestimate in the Applicant’s figure used for PV Modules has been raised by the council already. The SLD assumption which draws on the EN-3 paragraph appears reasonable. Using even the lower density of 1,854 panels/ha gives 869,592 panels over the Applicant’s stated area of panels (469ha). This is considerably greater than the PV number assumed now.

- Number of Solar Panels/HGV: SLD note that the use of a high load container only increases its volume by around 12%, so it is unclear how it is deduced by the Applicant that using these would lead to an increase in capacity of 44% (i.e. from 500 panels to 720 panels). The point is accepted, so more explanation by the Applicant is needed. However, it should not be assumed that all deliveries could be made using these if looking at a reasonable worst-case.
- Mounting Structures: Unless the Applicant can prove why the lower 43% figure is reasonable for Lime Down, so a much lower number of supporting structure HGV deliveries relative to those needed for panel deliveries, it would seem more reasonable to use the 73% figure forming the average ratio for Botley West, Green Hill and Heckington Fen.
- General Access Tracks: The assumed construction depth of 0.3m has been previously accepted by Wiltshire Council. SLD apply a 5% uplift for potential widening on bends. This is not unreasonable but unlikely to have a big impact on the number of HGVs needed over the construction period.
- Substation/BESS Access Tracks: It appears the length and width of these higher standard tracks is agreed, so the overall area. Similarly, the construction depth of 0.65m.
- Compound Surfacing: It is stated "*The Applicant makes no separate assessment of the HGV movements associated with compound construction and removal. It has been assumed that each compound will be 50m x 60m (slightly larger than the 50m x 50m that has been suggested as the minimum size by the Applicant)*". The construction and removal of the Solar PV site compounds need to be considered as a bespoke item, and assumptions suggested by SLD do not seem unreasonable.
- Spoil: SLD assumptions are based on the Applicant's assertion that 139,666m³ of soil would be excavated and that 10% of this would be taken off site. As stated already, the council view is that this part disposal of excavated waste off-site needs to be factored in directly, so not accounted for within the 50% peak day uplift.
- 132kV and 400kV Substation Foundations: It is noted that the agreed indicative foundation sizes of each of the 132kV substations is 3,455m², and the size of the 400kV substation base is 38,037m². The assumed 0.5m thickness of the 132kV substation bases appears reasonable. SLD assume that a mix of foundation depths will be needed under the heavier 400kV substations, so a typical 0.8m thickness over 75% of the site and a 0.3m thickness elsewhere. The council's Highways Development Management officer cannot comment on whether this is a reasonable split.
- BESS units: It is advised that "*The Applicant recognises that each BESS unit would be too large to be transported by a single standard HGV so*

there will need to be 2 deliveries associated with each BESS unit” (270). This seems a reasonable assumption based on the Applicant’s own information.

- BESS Power Conversion System (PCS) units: It is stated: “*Appendix 3-1 to the ES [REP3-041] shows the proposed layout of the BESS. This includes 45 PCS units comprising 90 inverters and 45 medium voltage transformers (Appendix 3-1, para. 1.2.1 [REP3-041]). The Applicant has made no allowance for these components*“. It is a bit concerning that no HGV transport allowance has been made for this kit if true. The allowance thus included by SLD in their calculations does therefore not seem unreasonable.
- BESS Foundations: It is advised based on the Applicant’s own response that the indicative size of the BESS area is 27,096m². In addition, as noted by SLD, the BESS foundations (BESS units and PCS units) are expected to be concrete piles up to 12m in depth. Both would sit on concrete platforms that would be supported on these concrete piles. SLD calculations assume an average depth of concrete for BESS and PCS foundations of 0.8m, as opposed to a 0.3m depth assumed by the Applicant. It is assumed this is to make some allowance for the concrete volume in the piles under these bases. SLD further assume that, due to the need to contain fire water from the entire BESS area, an additional impermeable concrete structure will be needed, with this likely filled with gravel. They have duly assumed a 0.3m depth of concrete and 0.5m of gravel infill over areas not occupied by BESS and PCS platforms. The council’s Highways Development Management officer is unable to comment on the need for the latter, but making due allowance for the piles under the platforms seems reasonable to the council.

Section 3.8 Human Health

28.10. Please see the council’s comments to HW1.1 to HW1.3 on REV4-081 above, which equally apply in relation to SLD’s response.

29. Post Hearing Submission from Whatley Manor [[REP4-134](#)]

29.1. Wiltshire Council would concur with the issues raised in this document and submit that a comprehensive compensation scheme as proposed would allay most of the concerns. This is relevant for a number of other businesses that have raised similar issues in Deadline 4 submissions.

30. Lead Local Flood Authority Deadline 5 Update

- 30.1. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) submissions at Deadline 5 relate to hydrology, flood risk, drainage and associated water environment matters for the Lime Down Solar Park project.
- 30.2. Wiltshire Council acknowledges the substantial volume of additional technical information submitted by the Applicant during Examination, including revisions to the Environmental Statement, Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, management plans, Draft Development Consent Order documentation, responses to representations and updated Statements of Common Ground.
- 30.3. The LLFA has reviewed the additional information and notes that a number of matters have been substantially narrowed through ongoing engagement. In particular, the LLFA is no longer seeking additional scheme-wide hydraulic modelling of solar panel areas and recognises the further explanation provided by the Applicant regarding assessment methodology and runoff management assumptions.
- 30.4. The LLFA's remaining concerns principally relate to how the measures relied upon by the assessment will be secured, implemented, monitored, maintained and governed throughout the lifetime of the Scheme. Key areas of ongoing discussion include the linkage between SuDS measures and SFRA objectives, residual performance and assurance arrangements, groundwater monitoring, operational management of buffers and runoff controls, and opportunities for natural flood management and wider flood risk betterment.
- 30.5. This response covers:
- a response to the Applicant's Hydraulic Modelling Report;
 - an updated LLFA position statement and SoCG update covering Topics 3.7.1 to 3.7.17; and
 - a focused review of the revised Draft DCO, Explanatory Memorandum and Schedule of Changes from an LLFA perspective.
- 30.6. The LLFA remains committed to constructive engagement with the Applicant and considers that the principal outstanding matters are capable of further refinement through the ongoing Statement of Common Ground process.

LLFA Response to Applicant Response on Hydraulic Modelling Requirements

- 30.7. This section sets out the LLFA Response to the Applicant's document 'Applicant's Response to Wiltshire Council Lead Local Authority Note on Hydraulic Modelling Requirements' dated 30 April 2026.
- 30.8. Following review of the Applicant's submissions and subsequent examination documents, the LLFA acknowledges the additional clarification provided

regarding assessment methodology, policy interpretation and the distinction between impermeable infrastructure and vegetated solar PV areas.

- 30.9. The LLFA is no longer seeking additional scheme-wide hydraulic modelling of solar panel areas. The principal issue has evolved from assessment methodology towards implementation, monitoring, maintenance and governance of the measures relied upon to support the conclusions of the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy.
- 30.10. The Applicant states that runoff performance is dependent on management-led controls including soil condition, vegetation establishment, flow connectivity, permeable track design, riparian management and post-construction remediation. The LLFA agrees that these factors are important determinants of runoff behaviour. The remaining question is how these assumptions will be secured, verified and maintained throughout the lifetime of the Scheme.
- 30.11. In particular, the LLFA seeks confidence that the management measures referenced throughout the CEMP, SRMP, LEMP and OEMP are translated into a clear implementation framework. This should include defined responsibilities, inspection arrangements, monitoring requirements, maintenance procedures, reporting mechanisms and corrective actions where performance differs from that assumed in the assessment.
- 30.12. For soil management, examples may include evidence of post-construction soil remediation, management of compaction risks, restoration standards and ongoing review of soil condition. For vegetation management, examples may include establishment criteria, maintenance requirements, remedial actions and monitoring of areas relied upon to manage runoff and water quality.
- 30.13. For surface water and water quality management, the LLFA considers that confidence would be enhanced through clear performance indicators, trigger thresholds, investigation procedures and escalation routes. Such arrangements would demonstrate how residual flood risk and water quality effects will continue to remain negligible to low throughout construction and operation.
- 30.14. The LLFA also remains interested in understanding how opportunities for riparian enhancement, natural flood management and wider catchment-scale flood risk betterment have been considered. The LLFA is not seeking additional hydraulic modelling to support the baseline assessment, but would welcome proportionate evidence demonstrating consideration of potential enhancement opportunities and the reasons why measures have or have not been adopted.
- 30.15. The LLFA welcomes the Applicant's commitment to continued engagement and considers that the principal matters in dispute have narrowed substantially. Remaining matters are reflected within the LLFA's updated Statement of Common Ground positions and primarily relate to securing, implementing, monitoring and maintaining the measures relied upon by the assessment rather than the assessment methodology itself.

30.16. In conclusion, the LLFA acknowledges the Applicant's response and no longer seeks additional scheme-wide hydraulic modelling. The remaining focus is on demonstrating that the assumptions and management measures relied upon within the flood risk, drainage, water quality and runoff assessments are appropriately secured and supported by robust implementation, monitoring, maintenance and governance arrangements throughout the lifecycle of the Scheme.

LLFA Position Statement

Legislation and Policy

30.17. Wiltshire Council acknowledges that the Applicant has identified the relevant national and local policy and legislative framework, including the NPPF, Wiltshire Local Plan Policies 95 and 96, the Wiltshire SFRA and relevant LLFA guidance. The LLFA's remaining concern relates to implementation rather than policy identification. The Applicant has not yet fully demonstrated how the measures relied upon to achieve compliance with these requirements will be consistently secured, implemented, monitored and maintained throughout the lifetime of the Scheme. The LLFA therefore seeks further confidence that appropriate governance, monitoring, maintenance and assurance mechanisms are embedded within the management framework.

30.18. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate how compliance with flood risk, drainage, water resources and SFRA objectives will be secured through the Scheme's management, monitoring, maintenance and governance framework. Examples may include clear responsibilities, inspection schedules, reporting procedures and escalation processes where management measures are not performing as intended.

SuDS and SFRA Linkage

30.19. The LLFA accepts that the Scheme relies upon a combination of formal drainage infrastructure and non-structural SuDS measures. The remaining issue is demonstrating how these measures contribute to Wiltshire SFRA objectives, Wiltshire LLFA SuDS guidance and greenfield runoff principles, and how their delivery is secured through the management framework.

30.20. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate which non-structural SuDS measures, such as vegetation management, soil management, riparian buffers, infiltration opportunities and run-off attenuation measures are relied upon by the Scheme. The Applicant is asked to explain which SFRA or SuDS objectives each measure supports, where it is secured within the management framework and how performance will be maintained over the Scheme lifetime.

Assessment Methodology

30.21. The LLFA broadly accepts the assessment methodology and is no longer seeking additional scheme-wide hydraulic modelling. However, confidence in the assessment outcomes depends on the effective implementation and long-

term maintenance of the soil, vegetation and land-management measures relied upon by the assessment.

- 30.22. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate how the soil, vegetation and land-management assumptions relied upon by the assessment are secured, monitored and maintained throughout the lifetime of the Scheme. The LLFA is specifically looking for how the assumptions relating to soil condition, vegetation establishment, land management and runoff behaviour are translated into practical management requirements. Examples may include soil restoration procedures, grazing management, vegetation maintenance plans and inspection regimes.

Cumulative Assessment and Temporary Works

- 30.23. The LLFA is not seeking further quantitative modelling of temporary construction conditions. The remaining issue relates to confidence that construction-phase flood risk and runoff controls will be implemented, monitored, maintained and adapted where necessary throughout the construction period.
- 30.24. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate how temporary drainage, sediment control, inspection, maintenance and corrective-action procedures will be implemented and monitored throughout construction. The LLFA is specifically seeking confidence that construction controls will be implemented and remain effective throughout the works. Examples may include temporary drainage details, sediment controls, inspection frequencies, maintenance procedures, corrective actions following storm events and responsibilities for implementation.

Residual Effects

- 30.25. The LLFA broadly accepts the Applicant's residual effects assessment. However, confidence in the residual flood risk and water quality conclusions is dependent upon the successful implementation, monitoring and long-term maintenance of the runoff-management, soil-management, vegetation-management and pollution-control measures relied upon by the Scheme.
- 30.26. The Applicant is asked to provide a monitoring and assurance framework that demonstrates how residual flood risk and water quality effects will be monitored, reported and managed throughout the lifetime of the Scheme, including performance indicators, intervention thresholds, monitoring locations, reporting arrangements, responsibilities, corrective actions and governance arrangements.

Watercourse Easements

- 30.27. The LLFA accepts the principle of watercourse buffers, drainage corridors and maintenance access provisions adjacent to watercourses. The remaining issue relates to demonstrating how these corridors will be protected, maintained and

kept available for inspection, maintenance access and long-term watercourse management throughout the lifetime of the Scheme.

- 30.28. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate how watercourse buffers, maintenance access routes and drainage corridors will be protected, managed and maintained, including arrangements for inspection, maintenance access, vegetation management and long-term watercourse function. Examples may include protection measures, access arrangements, vegetation management, inspection schedules and restrictions on activities that could compromise watercourse maintenance.

HDD Commitments

- 30.29. The LLFA broadly supports the proposed use of HDD at sensitive crossings. The remaining issue relates to demonstrating how crossing methodologies will be selected and how hydrological, hydrogeological and water environment risks will be assessed and managed on a site-specific basis.
- 30.30. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate the criteria for selecting HDD and alternative crossing methodologies, and how hydrological, hydrogeological and water environment risks will be assessed, managed and monitored at sensitive crossings. Examples may include sensitivity criteria, hydrogeological considerations, watercourse characteristics, pollution prevention measures and how site-specific risks influence methodology selection.

Draft DCO – HDD Approval

- 30.31. The LLFA recognises that the DCO, CEMP and associated management plans provide a framework for the approval and control of HDD and other crossing methodologies. The remaining issue relates to demonstrating how sensitive crossings will be identified, assessed, reviewed and approved within that framework.
- 30.32. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate how HDD designs, crossing risk assessments, construction methodologies and mitigation measures for sensitive crossings will be reviewed and approved through the DCO and associated management-plan framework. The LLFA is particularly interested in how sensitive crossings will pass through review and approval procedures. Examples may include risk assessments, method statements, technical approvals, mitigation proposals and the process for addressing concerns identified during review.

Draft DCO – GIS Mapping

- 30.33. The LLFA accepts that sufficient flood risk, drainage and water environment mapping has been provided for the purposes of the Examination. The remaining issue relates to how spatial information on drainage assets, watercourses, buffers, mitigation measures and monitoring requirements will be recorded and utilised during detailed design, implementation and long-term management of the Scheme.

30.34. The Applicant is asked to clarify the availability, content and intended use of GIS-based information to support detailed design, asset management, inspection, maintenance and future management activities throughout the lifetime of the Scheme. Examples may include mapping of drainage assets, buffers, inspection points, monitoring locations, maintenance records and future operational management activities.

Draft DCO – SuDS Guidance

30.35. The LLFA broadly accepts the Scheme's runoff-management approach and the Applicant's reliance on a combination of drainage infrastructure and non-structural SuDS measures. The remaining issue relates to demonstrating how the SuDS principles relied upon by the Scheme are translated into practical management, monitoring, maintenance and operational procedures throughout the lifetime of the Scheme.

30.36. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate how the SuDS principles relied upon by the Scheme are secured through the management framework and supported by appropriate monitoring, maintenance, inspection and review arrangements throughout the lifetime of the Scheme. The LLFA is particularly interested in how the SuDS principles will be translated into operational procedures. Examples may include maintenance requirements, inspection schedules, vegetation management, runoff management measures and periodic performance reviews.

Floodplain Compensation

30.37. The LLFA acknowledges and accepts the additional explanation and supporting calculations provided in relation to floodplain compensation. The remaining matter relates to ensuring that the agreed assumptions, calculations and supporting justification are retained and reflected within the final Flood Risk Assessment documentation.

30.38. The Applicant is asked to confirm that the supporting calculations, assumptions and explanatory text relating to floodplain compensation are retained within the final Flood Risk Assessment documentation. The LLFA wishes to clarify that no substantial additional evidence is sought beyond consistency checking.

Draft DCO – SPZ Monitoring

30.39. The LLFA broadly accepts the groundwater protection and pollution-control measures proposed for Source Protection Zones. The remaining issue relates to demonstrating when groundwater monitoring will be required, how potential impacts will be identified, and what response measures will be implemented should adverse effects be detected.

30.40. The Applicant is asked to clarify the criteria and triggers for groundwater monitoring within Source Protection Zones, including monitoring requirements, reporting arrangements, intervention thresholds and corrective-action

procedures where impacts are identified. The LLFA is specifically seeking clarification on when groundwater monitoring will be required and what actions would follow if impacts are identified. Examples may include trigger criteria, sampling frequencies, reporting requirements, intervention thresholds and corrective action processes.

Draft DCO – CRC Runoff Control

30.41. The LLFA accepts that the principal construction-phase runoff and drainage risks associated with the Cable Route Corridor have been identified and are capable of being controlled through the proposed management framework. The remaining issue relates to demonstrating how these controls will be implemented, monitored, maintained and adapted where necessary throughout the construction period.

30.42. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate how temporary drainage measures, runoff controls, sediment-control measures and water-quality protection measures will be implemented, monitored and maintained throughout construction of the Cable Route Corridor. Examples may include temporary drainage measures, sediment controls, inspection procedures, maintenance arrangements and corrective actions following adverse weather or incidents.

OLEMP Buffers and SuDS

30.43. The LLFA supports the principle of integrating landscape management, watercourse buffers and runoff-management measures within the operational phase of the Scheme. The remaining issue relates to demonstrating how these measures contribute to riparian enhancement, natural flood management objectives and wider multifunctional benefits beyond runoff control alone.

30.44. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate how opportunities for riparian enhancement, natural flood management, runoff attenuation and wider multifunctional benefits have been considered and incorporated within the operational management framework where feasible. Examples may include buffer management, habitat enhancement, infiltration opportunities, runoff attenuation measures and water quality improvements.

Strategic Flood Management and Betterment

30.45. The LLFA is not seeking additional hydraulic modelling to support the flood risk assessment. The remaining issue relates to demonstrating how opportunities for strategic flood management, natural flood management (NFM), runoff attenuation and wider catchment-scale flood risk betterment have been assessed and incorporated within the Scheme where feasible.

30.46. The Applicant is asked to demonstrate how opportunities for natural flood management, strategic runoff reduction, catchment resilience and downstream flood risk betterment have been assessed. Where appropriate, the Applicant is requested to provide a proportionate assessment of the potential benefits of feasible measures and explain how such measures have been incorporated

into the Scheme or why they have not been taken forward. Examples may include opportunity mapping, consideration of runoff attenuation measures, riparian restoration opportunities, or proportionate assessment of wider catchment benefits and reasons for measures adopted or discounted.

Wiltshire LLFA Review of Revised Draft DCO, Explanatory Memorandum and Schedule of Changes

30.47. The purpose of the LLFA's review was to consider whether hydrology, flood risk, drainage, water quality and related environmental commitments relied upon by the Applicant are adequately secured through the DCO framework.

Ref	Area	LLFA Observation	Potential Consequence	Recommended Action
DCO-01	Management Framework	Applicant case relies heavily on CEMP, OEMP, Water Management Plans and future approvals.	Reliance on future documents may reduce certainty if requirements are not sufficiently specific.	Confirm key assumptions relied upon by FRA and Drainage Strategy are clearly secured through Requirements.
DCO-02	Monitoring and Assurance	Monitoring obligations appear less explicit than mitigation commitments.	Limited evidence of long-term performance verification.	Clarify monitoring, reporting, trigger thresholds and corrective-action requirements.
DCO-03	Watercourse Buffers and Maintenance	Protective corridors are proposed but long-term operational arrangements should be clear.	Potential uncertainty regarding future maintenance access and management.	Confirm protection, inspection and maintenance arrangements within operational documents.
DCO-04	HDD Crossings	Framework for approval exists.	Need confidence in consistent treatment of sensitive crossings.	Clarify review and approval pathway for HDD risk assessments and method statements.
DCO-05	SPZ Protection	Groundwater controls generally provided.	Monitoring and intervention process may	Confirm triggers, responsibilities

Ref	Area	LLFA Observation	Potential Consequence	Recommended Action
			require further clarity.	and response procedures.
DCO-06	Cable Route Corridor Controls	Construction runoff controls identified.	Effectiveness depends on implementation and inspection.	Clarify inspection frequencies, maintenance and corrective actions.
DCO-07	SuDS and Runoff Management	Scheme relies partly on non-structural SuDS measures.	Long-term delivery depends on operational management.	Demonstrate how measures are secured, monitored and maintained.
DCO-08	Strategic Betterment	Limited evidence of specific DCO mechanisms securing wider NFM benefits.	Enhanced flood-risk benefits may not be fully realised.	Explain how NFM and betterment opportunities are considered and secured where feasible.

31. Response to Action Point 2 from Issue Specific Hearing 2 (Deferred Response)

- 31.1. The council was requested to provide reference to any Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project assessments where the assessment of landscape fabric has included both man made and natural components in character assessment.
- 31.2. Following review, the council provides the following Development Consent Order references, where both natural and man-made landscape components have been included within their respective LVIA's as specific landscape fabric receptors, assessed separately to assessment of Landscape Character receptor's.

HyNet Carbon Dioxide Pipeline Order (EN070007)

- 31.3. The principal LVIA document is: [ES, Volume III, Appendix 12.2 – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Methodology \(Document Reference: D.6.3.12.2\).](#)
- 31.4. The methodology at Paragraph 6.1.3 clearly includes reference to 'built form' as a landscape fabric / element i.e.

"Landscape fabric / elements - specific features and elements that make up the landscape such as the topography, vegetation and built form."

Cottom Solar Project Order (2024) (EN010133)

31.5. The principal LVIA documents are:

- [ES, Chapter 8 – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment \(Rev A\) \(Document Reference: EX2.C6.2.8 A\)](#)
- [ES, Appendix 8.1 – LVIA Methodology \(Document Reference: C6.3.8.1\)](#)
- [ES, Appendix 8.2 – Potential Land Effects \(Rev A\) \(Document Reference: EX1/C6.3.8.2 A\)](#)

31.6. The LVIA and its supporting appendices submitted for the Cottam Solar Project (also prepared by Lanpro) clearly includes Land Use, as a specific landscape receptor within its landscape assessment alongside other specific landscape receptors including; Topography and watercourses; Public Rights of Way and Access; Communication and Infrastructure; Settlements, Industry commerce and leisure; National and Locally designated landscapes; Cultural Designations; Ancient Woodlands and Natural Designations.

31.7. It should also be noted that the ES landscape assessment sheets clearly treat the introduction of solar panels and substations as new landscape fabric component additions introduced into the landscape which have been assessed separately from the assessment of landscape character / character areas.

32. Update on Response to Action Point 26 from Issue Specific Hearing 3

32.1. Further to the council's response to this Action Point within its Post Hearing Submissions and Responses to Action Points Arising [[REP4-0932](#)] and noting the ExA's original request for a response to be provided at Deadline 5, the council can confirm that discussions with the Applicant are ongoing with regards to the mechanism to ensure resources for monitoring, including Biodiversity Net Gain.

32.2. The Applicant and Wiltshire Council had a further constructive meeting on Wednesday 29 July, and following this, the Applicant is working on preparing the first drafts of the Section 106 and a further Planning Performance Agreement to cover the post-consent stage.

32.3. Discussion between the parties continues on the matters to be covered through the Section 106 agreement, although agreement has been reached that it will definitely cover monitoring, including for Biodiversity Net Gain.

32.4. Wiltshire Council will continue to work with the Applicant in order to be able to submit a signed and dated Section 106 agreement at Deadline 7 in accordance with the examination timetable.