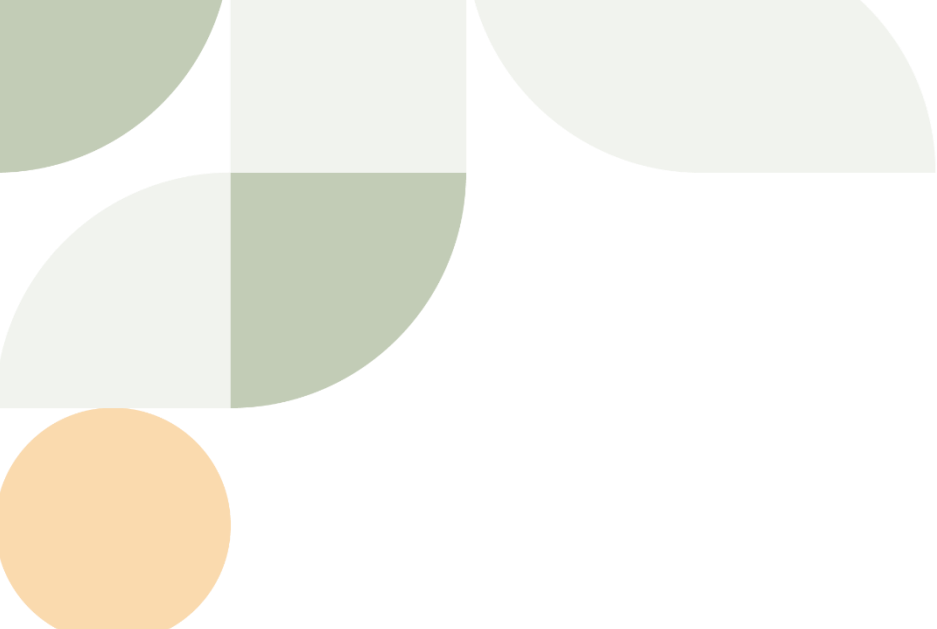




Lime Down

Solar Park

Applicant Response to Stop Lime Down Business Survey

October 2026

Revision 1

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List of Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Applicant's Approach to Assessment	2
2.1	Environmental Impact Assessment	2
2.2	Request for Additional Surveys	4
3	Applicant's Review of the Stop Lime Down Business Survey	6
3.1	Survey Limitations	6
3.2	Survey Methodology	6
3.3	Survey Findings	9
4	Mitigation Approach for Businesses	14

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document has been prepared following the submission of a written representation by Stop Lime Down (SLD), entitled the **Stop Lime Down Business Survey [AS-027]** dated September 2026. The representation was submitted by SLD and accepted by the Examining Authority on 9 September 2026. The Applicant understands that the representation was submitted in advance of the Issue Specific Hearings commencing in the week of 14 September 2026.
- 1.1.2 The representation presents the findings of a business survey conducted by SLD between July and September 2026. The business survey sought responses from businesses operating within the ‘tourism, hospitality, retailing, agriculture, and sports and leisure sectors’, receiving a total of 96 responses, six of which were from businesses associated with SLD.
- 1.1.3 The Applicant therefore has used this response document to provide a summary of its own assessment of impacts to business and the local economy, as assessed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** (Revision 2) and supported by the subsequent **Technical Note on Impacts to Non-Equine Businesses [REP5-111]**.

2 Applicant's Approach to Assessment

2.1 Environmental Impact Assessment

- 2.1.1 The Applicant has assessed the likely economic impacts on affected business sectors in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** (Revision 2), and has provided a summary of how impacts to business have been addressed through the **Technical Note: Impacts on Non-Equine Businesses [REP5-111]**.

Construction Phase

- 2.1.2 The Applicant confirms adverse economic impacts during the construction phase of the Scheme have been assessed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** (Revision 2).
- 2.1.3 Indicative losses to agriculture (~£628,000 per annum, 20 FTE jobs) have been identified based on the number of agricultural tenancies likely to be displaced by the Scheme. These are long-term impacts anticipated to remain throughout the lifetime of the Scheme. This is a loss of less than 0.29% of agricultural employment in Wiltshire.
- 2.1.4 Indicative peak losses to tourism during construction (~£1.76 million per annum, 50 FTE jobs) from reduced visitor spending have been identified based on worst-case estimates of the likely impacts to tourism and recreation receptors in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 16-2: Tourism and Recreation Receptor Tables [APP-241]**. This accounts for less than 0.7% of tourism-based employment within 5 km of the Scheme (Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), 2023), and approximately 0.17% of tourism employment across Wiltshire (Visit Wiltshire, 2021). This is also a temporary effect, anticipated to occur during construction, with recovery to tourism businesses anticipated to begin after construction works are complete.
- 2.1.5 The Applicant wishes to highlight that these estimates for financial and employment losses to agriculture and tourism-dependent industries does not include for additional mitigation measures (such as additional protective measures for PRoW users and enhancement measures to local training and recruitment opportunities, as set out in Section 16.11 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** (Revision 2) or as agreed through later discussions with Wiltshire Council) to reduce impacts on individual receptors, and is therefore considered a worst-case outcome.
- 2.1.6 Additional mitigation measures through the **Outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan (SSCEP) [REP3-104]** seek to reduce employment losses through focusing on local recruitment, promoting local suppliers where practicable, and particularly through providing retraining opportunities for

workers in agriculture and tourism-dependent industries. The Applicant seeks to clarify that the measures in the **Outline SSCEP [REP3-104]** are intended to be implemented throughout construction and the operational lifetime of the Scheme to support ongoing skills and employment opportunities. While retraining opportunities would largely focus on disciplines related to the Scheme (such as engineering, logistics, and land management), retraining into other industries adjacent or similar to agriculture or tourism based employment is not excluded from this offer and are therefore able to be provided beyond just direct construction employment and skills. This is secured by Requirement 18 in Schedule 2 to the **Draft DCO [EN010168/APP/3.1]** (Revision 7).

Operational Phase

- 2.1.7 The Applicant confirms adverse economic impacts during the operation and maintenance phase of the Scheme have been assessed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** (Revision 2). Losses to tourism (~£395,000 per annum, 11 FTE jobs) from reduced visitor spending have been identified based on worst case estimates of the likely impacts to tourism and recreation receptors in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 16-2: Tourism and Recreation Receptor Tables [APP-241]**. These impacts have been considered in the same manner as during construction. This therefore accounts for approximately 0.2% of tourism-based employment within 5 km of the Scheme (BRES, 2023), and approximately 0.04% of tourism employment across Wiltshire (Visit Wiltshire, 2021).
- 2.1.8 The Applicant confirms additional mitigation measures through the **Outline SSCEP [REP3-104]** are intended to be implemented throughout the operational lifetime of the Scheme to support ongoing skills and employment opportunities where businesses are affected by the Scheme. This is secured by Requirement 18 in Schedule 2 to the **Draft DCO [EN010168/APP/3.1]** (Revision 7).
- 2.1.9 Landscape and visual effects of the Scheme have been assessed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [REP6B-004]**. The Applicant recognises that there will be adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity during the early phases of operation. Adverse effects on landscape character at Year 1 of operation and maintenance is acknowledged but, by Year 15 when landscape and planting has been able to mature, the effects of the mitigation will reduce the adverse effects on landscape to non-significant levels. The above landscape and visual impacts have then been fully considered and are fundamental to the assessment of effects to tourism and visitor destinations and receptors in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** (Revision 2) and supporting **ES Volume 3, Appendix 16-2: Tourism and Recreation Receptor Tables [APP-241]**. These have been based on the assessment findings in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [REP6B-004]**.

Decommissioning Phase

- 2.1.10 The Applicant confirms adverse economic impacts during the decommissioning phase of the Scheme have been assessed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** (Revision 2). These effects are indicative, and based largely on construction impacts due to the comparable scale of works required. Future baseline conditions are not able to be accurately or reasonably identified, and as such, effects were measured against current conditions.
- 2.1.11 Losses to tourism (~£1.41 million per annum, 40 FTE jobs) from reduced visitor spending during decommissioning have been identified based on worst-case estimates of the likely impacts to tourism and recreation receptors in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 16-2: Tourism and Recreation Receptor Tables [APP-241]**. These impacts have been considered in the same manner as during construction. This therefore accounts for approximately 0.5% of tourism-based employment within 5 km of the Scheme (BRES, 2023), and approximately 0.04% of tourism employment across Wiltshire (Visit Wiltshire, 2021).
- 2.1.12 The Applicant confirms additional mitigation measures through the **Outline SSCEP [REP3-104]** introduced at the construction phase are also intended to be implemented throughout the decommissioning phase of the Scheme to support ongoing skills and employment opportunities where businesses are affected by the Scheme, as set out in the **Outline Decommissioning Strategy [EN010168/APP/7.14]** (Revision 6). These are secured by Requirements 18 and 20 in Schedule 2 to the **Draft DCO [EN010168/APP/3.1]** (Revision 7), respectively. Impacts on landscape and visual impacts to tourism and visitor destinations and receptors have been fully considered and are fundamental to the assessment of effects in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** (Revision 2) and supporting **ES Volume 3, Appendix 16-2: Tourism and Recreation Receptor Tables [APP-241]**.

2.2 Request for Additional Surveys

- 2.2.1 The Applicant's position is that a requirement for a comprehensive business survey would be disproportionate to the scale and nature of the socio-economic effects anticipated from the Scheme. This has been previously set out at Section 16 in the **Applicant's Response to the Local Impact Report [REP2-038]** and paragraph 4.4.5 of the **Technical Note on Impacts to Non-Equine Businesses [REP5-111]**.
- 2.2.2 A survey of individual businesses would principally capture perceptions and anticipated effects at a particular point in time. It would not, in itself, establish the actual magnitude or duration of any future effects, nor would it necessarily distinguish between effects attributable to the Scheme and those arising from wider economic or seasonal factors. This is particularly relevant given that the

principal potential adverse effects identified by SLD and Wiltshire Council relate to the temporary construction and decommissioning periods.

3 Applicant's Review of the Stop Lime Down Business Survey

3.1 Survey Limitations

- 3.1.1 The Applicant notes that within the business survey, a number of limitations are identified. These include the compressed timescale within which the survey was undertaken, the conduction of the survey during the summer holiday period, its reliance on volunteers and an incomplete database of businesses, including use of personal contacts. These limitations provide a potential for response bias. SLD also make the fair acknowledgement that businesses with strong, generally negative, views towards the Scheme may have been more likely to respond. The Applicant considers that these factors are relevant when determining the weight that should be afforded to the survey findings.
- 3.1.2 The Applicant notes that, notwithstanding these limitations, SLD considers the survey to provide a "*reliable barometer*" of business sentiment. The Applicant does not dispute that the survey provides useful evidence of the concerns expressed by participating businesses. However, the Applicant considers that there is an important distinction between a survey providing a useful indication of business sentiment regarding the Scheme and a survey providing a comprehensive or representative assessment of the likely socio-economic effects of the Scheme.

3.2 Survey Methodology

Survey Questions

- 3.2.1 The Applicant considers that given the type of survey undertaken, the nature of questions used in the survey are reasonable and within expectation to be able to gather qualitative data on how business interpret how they will be affected by the Scheme. However, the Applicant notes that in its questioning about the satisfaction of the sufficiency of information received by business owners, it does not identify the sources of information that these business owners are referring to. For example: whether or not the business was located within the Scheme's consultation zones for pre-application consultation leafleting, or whether these businesses have been solely reliant on information provided by Stop Lime Down. As such, the Applicant considers that this limits the confidence able to be given to determining the extent and accuracy of information these businesses have relied on to make their responses.

Survey Recipients

- 3.2.2 The Applicant acknowledges that SLD is likely to have access to local knowledge and established relationships with businesses and other stakeholders in the area that may provide it with greater local reach than the Applicant. This has been identified explicitly by SLD who have stated that

personal contacts have played a factor in compiling its dataset of companies contacted as part of the survey (paragraph 2.2.1). The Applicant considers that this local knowledge is useful in identifying the concerns of businesses and other local interests and does not seek to discount the value of the responses obtained through the survey.

- 3.2.3 The Applicant recognises that it may be considered appropriate for a business survey for the Scheme to focus on sectors considered most likely to experience direct effects from the Scheme, including tourism, hospitality, retail, agriculture, and sports and leisure. However, the targeted nature of SLD's survey is relevant when considering the extent to which its findings can be characterised as representative of the 'local economy' as a whole.
- 3.2.4 SLD states under paragraph 2.2.2 that its database excluded landowner-farmers, construction companies and businesses in other sectors which it did not consider representative of the local economy. The Applicant does not suggest that a survey should necessarily encompass every business or economic sector in the area. However, landowners, farmers and construction-related businesses may themselves experience economic effects arising from the Scheme and may contribute to the wider economic activity against which any adverse effects should be considered. The exclusion of these businesses therefore limits the extent to which the survey can be relied upon as a comprehensive assessment of the Scheme's overall economic effects on the local economy.
- 3.2.5 This is particularly relevant given that SLD's survey is subsequently relied upon to draw conclusions regarding the wider economic effects of the Scheme. The Applicant considers that the survey provides useful evidence of the views and concerns of participating businesses within the sectors targeted by SLD, including in relation to potential effects on visitor numbers, traffic, access and recreational activity. However, the findings should not be interpreted as establishing the views or likely economic effects across the wider local business community.
- 3.2.6 The Applicant also notes that SLD under paragraph 2.2.6 identifies Dyson, described as the largest employer in the affected area, as having declined to participate in the survey. The Applicant does not suggest that the non-participation of any individual business invalidates the survey. However, the absence of a major local employer is relevant when considering the extent to which the survey can inform conclusions regarding employment and the wider local economy.
- 3.2.7 The Applicant recognises that SLD approached more than 200 businesses and received 96 responses. This represents a substantial body of responses and provides useful evidence of the concerns of participating businesses. The relatively high response rate achieved by SLD indicates a substantial level of interest in the Scheme amongst the businesses approached and demonstrates

the benefit of SLD's established local relationships and connections, particularly where able to make follow up contact and in-person visits. The Applicant recognises that SLD has therefore been able to engage with businesses that may not otherwise have participated in a consultation exercise undertaken by the Applicant. The high indicative response rate of between 45-50% is notably beyond what has been achieved at any phase of consultation by the Applicant.

- 3.2.8 The Applicant does not consider that the number of responses should, in itself, be equated with a representative sample of the local economy. Given the targeted scope of the survey and the businesses and sectors selected by SLD, the exclusion of certain categories of business and the non-participation of some businesses, including a major local employer, the Applicant considers that the findings are more appropriately regarded as evidence of business sentiment within the surveyed population rather than as a representative or comprehensive assessment of the likely socio-economic effects of the Scheme. In particular, the survey was directed towards sectors considered by SLD to be most likely to experience effects from the Scheme. The response rate therefore cannot, without a greater and wider response, be taken as evidence that the findings are representative of the wider local business community.

Basis of Survey Responses

- 3.2.9 As stated previously, the survey does not appear to establish the extent to which information relied upon by respondents has been based on the application documentation. The survey identifies that majority of respondents were satisfied with the sufficiency of information provided by Stop Lime Down, and unsatisfied with the level of received information from Lime Down Solar Park Limited, Wiltshire Council, or media outlets. It is however unclear if this refers to how material was published and distributed, or whether respondents had reviewed and were informed by the Application documents available on the Planning Inspectorate website (including the Applicant's assessment of socio-economic effects and relevant mitigation measures).. The Applicant considers it likely that because Stop Lime Down had greater physical and social media presence for businesses to be able to access, this would have been more accessible for those respondents than the DCO application documents hosted online or in set accessible locations. Therefore, there is a likelihood that business owners responding to the survey would have relied most upon Stop Lime Down's information of the Scheme, rather than the full detail of the Applicant's application. This is relevant to the weight that can be given to respondents' views regarding the likely effects of the Scheme.
- 3.2.10 The Applicant further notes that the effects identified in the survey are generally expressed at a high level and do not appear to have been considered by respondents in the context of the mitigation measures proposed or secured by the Applicant. For example, where respondents identify potential effects arising from traffic and access the survey does not appear to test those anticipated

effects against the mitigation measures proposed by the Applicant to avoid, reduce or manage such effects as outlined within the relevant management plans. As a result, the responses do not necessarily reflect the potential residual effects that would be expected to remain following implementation of the proposed mitigation.

- 3.2.11 The survey also does not appear to distinguish between the different phases and potential effects. In particular, it does not clearly differentiate between anticipated effects arising during the construction and decommissioning phases, which are temporary in nature, and any potential longer-term operational effects. This distinction is important in assessing the significance of socio-economic effects. An anticipated short-term disruption during construction cannot necessarily be equated with a permanent or long-term adverse effect on the viability of a business or the local economy, especially considering the implementation of mitigation measures outlined within the relevant management plans.
- 3.2.12 The Applicant also notes that the survey does not appear to explain in detail how the potential effects associated with the cable route have been considered. Given the extent of the proposed cable route and its relationship with existing land uses, businesses and access arrangements, it would be relevant to understand whether businesses potentially affected by the cable route were included within the survey population, and whether the responses distinguish between effects associated with the different elements of the Scheme. This is relevant because the nature and geographical distribution of potential effects will differ between the works required for the cable route and Solar PV Sites especially when then considering operational requirements.

3.3 Survey Findings

- 3.3.1 As set out in the survey, its purpose was to identify businesses and consider the potential effects that respondents anticipated the Scheme would have on their businesses. The responses therefore provide evidence of the concerns and expectations of participating businesses, but cannot establish whether the anticipated effects will occur, the magnitude, duration or significance of any such effects. In particular, the survey does not establish that anticipated reductions in turnover or employment will materialise, that visitor numbers will decline by the amounts anticipated, that businesses will close or reduce investment, or that any such effects would result in a significant adverse effect on the local economy. This is reflected in the relatively limited proportion of respondents able to quantify the anticipated effects, with 23 respondents (24%) providing an estimate of potential turnover loss, while only 14 respondents (14.6%) provided an estimate of potential employee losses. The Applicant therefore considers that the survey should be regarded as evidence of anticipated business impacts and concerns, rather than as a quantified assessment of the likely socio-economic effects of the Scheme.

- 3.3.2 The Applicant considers that caution is required in interpreting the respondents' categorisation of the anticipated effects as either 'negative' or 'severe'. The survey defines 'severe' as including a risk of business closure; however, the assessment of whether an effect is 'negative' or 'severe' is ultimately a matter for the individual respondent. The survey does not appear to provide respondents with measurable framework against which to make that assessment. The resulting categorisation is therefore inherently subjective and should be distinguished from an assessment of the magnitude or significance of an economic effect undertaken against an established assessment methodology.
- 3.3.3 The Applicant acknowledges the significance of the concerns expressed by respondents who considered that the Scheme could affect the viability of their businesses. However, an individual respondent's assessment that there is a 'risk of closure' is not equivalent to an established likelihood of closure or a quantified assessment of the economic consequences of closure. The survey does not appear to establish the probability of any such closure, the anticipated timing or duration of the risk, whether closure would be temporary or permanent, the extent to which any effect could be mitigated, or the extent to which businesses might adapt their operations or customer base.
- 3.3.4 The survey furthermore does not establish the extent to which any anticipated business effects would be directly attributable to the Scheme, as opposed to other economic, market or seasonal factors. A respondent's expectation that the Scheme may adversely affect its business is therefore relevant evidence of perceived risk, but should not be treated as demonstrating that the identified outcome will occur. This distinction is particularly important where the survey findings are relied upon to support conclusions regarding the significance of the Scheme's effects at the local economic level.
- 3.3.5 The Applicant also considers that care is required in interpreting the quantitative outcomes presented by SLD. SLD reports that 81% of respondents considered that the Scheme would have a 'negative' or 'severe' effect on their organisation. This represents 78 of the 96 businesses that responded, comprising 58 respondents identifying a negative effect and 20 identifying a severe effect. The Applicant accepts that this finding demonstrates the substantial level of concern of the businesses that responded. However, it should not be interpreted as demonstrating that 81% of businesses in the affected area, or 81% of the local economy, would actually experience a negative or severe effect. The percentage relates only to those businesses that participated in the survey and must be considered in the context of the targeted survey population and the acknowledged limitations of the survey methodology.
- 3.3.6 The turnover responses provide a further illustration of this distinction. SLD reports that 76 respondents, representing 79.2% of respondents, anticipated a reduction in turnover. The Applicant recognises that this indicates a substantial

level of concern among participating businesses. However, only 23 respondents provided an estimate of the potential magnitude of that reduction. The estimates provided also vary considerably between individual businesses, with examples ranging from anticipated reductions of approximately 3–5% to 50%. The survey therefore provides evidence of the anticipated direction of effect for a number of businesses, but does not provide a sufficiently comprehensive or consistent basis for calculating the economic effect of those anticipated reductions in turnover.

- 3.3.7 In addition, an anticipated reduction in turnover cannot necessarily be equated with an equivalent reduction in economic output, employment or business viability. Businesses may respond to changes in turnover in different ways, including through changes in costs, staffing, operating arrangements, customer base or other commercial activity. The survey therefore does not establish the extent to which the anticipated reductions in turnover would translate into employment losses, business closures or a significant adverse effect on the local economy.
- 3.3.8 The Applicant also notes the reference in SLD's survey to the combined turnover of £60.53 million for 67 businesses that provided turnover information. The Applicant considers it important that this figure is not interpreted as representing the economic value at risk from the Scheme. It represents the existing turnover of the participating businesses and does not establish what proportion, if any, of that turnover would be affected by the Scheme. In particular, the figure does not account for the magnitude or duration of any anticipated turnover reduction, the ability of businesses to adapt, the effects of mitigation, or the wider economic activity generated by the Scheme.
- 3.3.9 The Applicant further notes that the narrative provided by respondents in support of their anticipated impacts does not generally appear to have been informed by consideration of the mitigation measures proposed or secured by the Applicant. The Applicant recognises that this may reflect concerns regarding the effectiveness of those measures, a lack of confidence in their implementation, or simply the extent of information available to respondents at the time the survey was undertaken. However, where respondents have identified potential effects arising from traffic, access, visitor numbers or disruption, it is important to distinguish between the potential effect prior to mitigation and the residual effect following implementation of the measures proposed by the Applicant. The survey does not appear to make that distinction.
- 3.3.10 The Applicant acknowledges the existing challenges currently facing pubs to remain open; this is an issue both locally and nationwide. Of the eight pubs that were approached by SLD and provided responses stating that they expected a 'negative' or 'severe' impact and/or a decline in annual turnover, it is not clear from the survey how many of these pubs are already facing viability challenges and have the potential to face closure in the coming years even if the Scheme

were not consented. As with other identified businesses in the survey the effects reported are considered subjective, however the Applicant acknowledges that the results appear more consistent in relation to turnover and employment impacts for this type of business.

- 3.3.11 The Applicant also considers that appropriate weight should be given to the businesses that did not respond to the survey, which is over half the number approached. SLD identifies a number of reasons why certain businesses did not participate, including pressure from landowners and businesses forming part of larger corporate chains. However, there may also be businesses that did not consider that the Scheme would have a material effect on their operations and therefore did not consider it necessary to respond. The absence of a response cannot, of course, be assumed to indicate that a business would experience no effect, but equally the non-response should not be treated as evidence of a negative effect. The survey findings should therefore be understood as reflecting the responses of participating businesses rather than the views of all businesses approached.
- 3.3.12 The Applicant also notes the response from Westonbirt Arboretum in support of the Scheme in principle. Given the Arboretum's significance as a major visitor attraction within approximately 5 km of the Sites, the Applicant considers that this response provides relevant contextual evidence when considering the potential effects of the Scheme on tourism and visitor-related businesses. It demonstrates that the views of businesses and visitor attractions in the area are not uniformly adverse and that the potential effects of the Scheme should not be characterised solely by reference to the concerns expressed by respondents identifying adverse effects.

Consideration of Evidence for Further Mitigation or Compensation

- 3.3.13 The Applicant therefore considers that the survey findings should be distinguished from a quantified socio-economic impact assessment. The survey provides useful evidence of business sentiment and of the concerns held by participating businesses, including concerns regarding indicative impacts to turnover, employment and business viability. However, the findings do not establish the magnitude, duration or significance of the effects that will actually arise, nor do they establish that those effects would result in a significant adverse effect on the local economy.
- 3.3.14 The Applicant considers that this distinction is particularly important in the context of the request by Wiltshire Council for a comprehensive business survey. The purpose of such a survey would need to be to provide material additional evidence capable of informing the assessment of the Scheme or identifying additional mitigation. The SLD survey demonstrates that there is concern amongst a number of businesses, but does not demonstrate that a further comprehensive survey would provide a sufficiently robust basis for

quantifying the likely economic effects of the Scheme or materially alter the conclusions of the Applicant's existing assessment. The Applicant therefore remains of the view that any further survey would be disproportionate to the level and nature of the effects identified. The subjective assessment of severity, the absence of consideration of mitigation, the characteristics of the responding and non-responding businesses, and the limited quantification of anticipated economic effects mean that the survey does not provide a sufficiently robust basis for concluding that the Applicant's assessment understates the likely effects of the Scheme or that a comprehensive business survey is required to make consenting of the DCO acceptable.

4 Mitigation Approach for Businesses

4.1.1 As noted, the Applicant does not consider it clear from the survey whether survey respondents were informed on the proposed mitigation for the Scheme for businesses. This is set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** (Revision 2) and the **Technical Note: Impacts on Non-Equine Businesses [REP5-111]**. As detailed in the ES Chapter, the Applicant has committed to mitigation and enhancement measures set out in the following documents:

- **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [EN010168/APP/7.12]** (Revision 8);
- **Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan [EN010168/APP/7.13]** (Revision 8);
- **Outline Decommissioning Strategy [EN010168/APP/7.14]** (Revision 6);
- **Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan [REP1-104]**;
- **Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [EN010168/APP/7.18]** (Revision 5);
- **Outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan [REP3-104]**; and
- **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan [EN010168/APP/7.22]** (Revision 7).

4.1.2 As part of the examination, the Applicant provided the **Mitigation Route Map [REP5-102]** to provide a more accessible means of identifying mitigation measures for each technical subject. For socio-economics, this is set out in Table 3-10 therein.

4.1.3 The provision of a detailed version of each these plans to the relevant local authority (predominantly Wiltshire Council) for approval ahead of any relevant works being commenced, is secured through the Requirements in Schedule 2 of the **Draft DCO [EN010168/APP/3.1]** (Revision 7).

4.1.4 During the construction (and decommissioning) phases, mitigation measures set out to reduce physical environmental impacts through controlling noise, air quality, hydrological, and ground conditions impacts. Mitigation measures have also been applied to reduce impact on public rights of way users, maintain safe access to the countryside, and to control the impact on construction traffic movements on the local highway network. Together, these mitigation measures seek to minimise adverse effects on local businesses by ensuring local residents and visitors are not subjected to adverse physical environment changes, visitors and recreational users of the public right of way network are not significantly discouraged from accessing the local area as a result of the

Scheme, and business clients and operators are not stopped from being able to readily access business premises.

- 4.1.5 Furthermore, the **Outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan [REP3-104]** sets out a programme of mitigation and enhancements measures that are directly focussed on supporting local business and economic prosperity. This includes focusing on local recruitment, promoting local suppliers where practicable, and through providing retraining opportunities for workers in agriculture and tourism dependent industries. It is considered that these measures would help to reduce local losses in the local economy, and help to generate additional GVA in the local economy in alternative industries.
- 4.1.6 During operation and maintenance of the Scheme, the design of the Scheme has sought to ensure its visual and physical environmental impacts are minimised, reducing the extent to which residents, visitors and clientele would be discouraged from accessing businesses near to the Scheme. The Scheme also features provision for enhancing existing public rights of way within the Solar PV Sites through new landscape planting along public right of way corridors, while enhancing countryside access through provision of new permissive paths. These mitigation and enhancement measures would reduce the potential for significant indirect adverse effects to occur on tourism and local businesses.
- 4.1.7 The **Technical Note: Impacts on Non-Equine Businesses [REP5-111]** provides further details on post-consent engagement, reinforcing that the Applicant's commitments to ensure local businesses located close to elements of the Scheme are included in post-consent communication and invited to be part of the Community Liaison Group. The terms of reference for the Community Liaison Group are secured by Requirement 4 of Schedule 2 to the **Draft DCO [EN010168/APP/3.1]** (Revision 7), and the Applicant has committed to providing draft or outline terms to Wiltshire Council for consideration ahead of Deadline 7. Following feedback from Wiltshire Council and Stop Lime Down, the **Outline Terms of Reference to the Community Liaison Group [EN010168/EXAM/9.91]** have been submitted to the examination at Deadline 7. The Community Liaison Group will act as an open channel of communication and engagement to mitigate concerns and anxieties around the Scheme. Through the Community Liaison Group, business owners will be able to obtain greater clarity on how detailed mitigation measures are being developed and will be implemented.
- 4.1.8 In consideration of the existing and additional mitigation measures secured during the examination process, the Applicant confirms that the assessment outcomes of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation [EN010168/APP/6.1]** (Revision 2) are robust, and confirms there are no significant effects to any business sector within the 5 km Study Area surrounding the Scheme.