

# **Green Hill Solar Farm**

## **EN010170**

### **Environmental Statement**

### **Appendix 8.5: Landscape Consultation**

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Date: May 2025

Document Reference: APP/GH6.3.8.5

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)



## Appendix 8.5 LVIA Consultation Record

Council Name	Feedback	LVIA Response
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.4 At the local level, the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (NNJCS) 2011-2031 (Adopted 2016) and Wellingborough Local Plan Part (WLPP) 2 (Adopted 2019) are of most relevance. The Applicant has failed to make reference to Policy 3 – Landscape Character of the NNJCS again. This should be reviewed and incorporated in future assessments. The policy is as follows: “Development should be located and designed in a way that is sensitive to its landscape setting, retaining and, where possible, enhancing the distinctive qualities of the landscape character area which it would affect. Development should:</p> <p>a) Conserve and, where possible, enhance the character and qualities of the local landscape through appropriate design and management.</p> <p>b) Make provision for the retention and, where possible, enhancement of features of landscape importance.</p> <p>c) Safeguard and, where possible, enhance important views and vistas including sky lines within the development layout;</p> <p>d) Protect the landscape setting and contribute to maintaining the individual and distinct character, and separate identities of settlements by preventing coalescence.</p> <p>e) Provide appropriate landscape mitigation and/or suitable off-site enhancements; and</p> <p>f) Preserve tranquillity within the King’s Cliffe Hills and Valleys Landscape Character Area (as shown on the Policy Map) and other areas identified in Part 2 Local Plans by minimising light and noise pollution and minimising the visual and traffic impacts of development.”</p>	Noted. Local Planing Policy identified within section 8.3 of LVIA.
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.5 The assumptions in Paragraph 8.5.4 of the PEIR rely on uniform growth rates for mitigation planting and assessments based solely on summer conditions, which may overestimate screening potential. Native species such as hawthorn and oak have variable growth rates, often slower during the establishment phase, and are influenced by site conditions and maintenance. Realistic growth rates should be used, as hedgerows and trees typically grow 20–50 centimetres annually, with slower growth in the early years. The focus on summer conditions at Year 15 also underestimates impacts during winter when vegetation provides minimal screening, particularly for residential receptors, public rights of way (PROW), and transport routes. To enhance the LVIA, NNC landscape consultant recommend the Applicant uses species-specific growth rates and assesses worst-case winter conditions for Year 15 as well as Year 1.</p>	Had a follow up meeting with NN (23/01/2025) stand this comment was addressed there. Estimated growth rates will be used as growing conditions and mitigation establishment will be addressed in the OLEMP in Landscape Mitigation Management
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.5 The inclusion of proposed buffers to infrastructure is a positive aspect of the Scheme and is supported. As highlighted in Paragraph 8.7.5 of the PEIR, these buffers should be considered a minimum standard, with larger buffers implemented where necessary to effectively mitigate adverse impacts.</p>	Had a follow up meeting with NN (23/01/2025) and this comment was addressed as no longer needing to be implemented
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.7 However, clarification is sought regarding whether the specified ecological buffers apply not only to existing habitats but also to proposed habitats and planting. A review of the masterplans shows several areas where new habitats are proposed that the maximum extent of the proposed solar panels appears to directly adjoin these new habitats. To ensure consistency and the successful establishment of proposed habitats, it is recommended that the maximum extent of boundaries of the solar panels incorporate the same buffer zones as those applied to existing habitats.</p>	Had a follow up meeting with NN (23/01/2025) and this comment was addressed as no longer needing to be implemented
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.8 It is appreciated that the Applicant has moved away from assessing and judging effects solely on various landscape character areas as receptors. Instead, the approach of evaluating effects on the landscape fabric, the 1 kilometre, 2 kilometre, and 5 kilometre study areas, guided by relevant landscape character assessments, are welcomed.</p>	Had a follow up meeting with NN (23/01/2025) and this comment was addressed as no longer needing to be implemented

North Northamptonshire	<p>6.9 However, it is noted that the local landscape character of the individual Sites (both individually and in combination) has not been explicitly included as receptors. While we acknowledge that the landscape fabric of the Sites is considered, this does not fully capture the broader impacts on local landscape character, including perceptual qualities, sense of place, and overall landscape quality. To provide a comprehensive assessment and ensure a more accurate reflection of the impacts, we recommend that site landscape character receptors (individual and in-combination) are incorporated into the assessment. This would enhance the robustness of the assessment and provide a clearer understanding of the Scheme's effects on the characteristics of each Site.</p>	<p>Study Areas have been defined based on the Scheme's Order limits as described in Chapter 3: Development Site [EN010170/APP/GH6.2.3] and physical characteristics and key parameters of the proposed Scheme as described in Chapter 4: Development Proposal [EN010170/APP/GH6.2.4].</p> <p>8.4.38 Landscape Effects have been assessed upon Landscape receptors collectively for the Sites themselves considered as 'Landscape Fabric' and each Study Area (1km/2km &amp; 5km). Due to the interconnected relationship landform has, each Study Area considers all landscape receptors as a whole for example all National Character Areas and all Regional Landscape Character Types and Areas within the individual Study Areas. For assessment of Landscape Effects please refer to Volume 3, Appendix 8.3.1 Landscape Assessment Sheets.</p>
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.10 The inclusion of a 0.5 kilometres study area for the Cable Route Search Area is considered appropriate, however, the assessment does not currently include any visual or landscape receptors specifically addressing impacts arising from the cable route.</p>	<p>An assessment of the impacts associated with the Cable Route has been undertaken within the LVIA.</p>
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.11 At this stage, the precise location of the cable route remains unclear. While it is noted that the cable would be underground, there is currently no understanding of vegetation loss, nor is there clarity on the locations of ground-level inspection chambers. Given these uncertainties, we recommend that additional visual receptors within the Cable Route study area be identified and assessed.</p>	<p>An assessment of the impacts associated with the Cable Route has been undertaken within the LVIA.</p>
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.12 Furthermore, landscape receptors, including both landscape character and fabric, should be considered in the assessment to reflect potential impacts during both the construction and operational phases. This would provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the cable route's effects on the landscape and visual environment.</p>	<p>An assessment of the impacts associated with the Cable Route has been undertaken within the LVIA.</p>
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.13 NNC landscape consultant recommend that a cumulative assessment that considers the combined impacts of all Sites and the cable route is also included to ensure a more accurate representation of the Scheme's overall impact on the landscape and visual environment.</p>	<p>An assessment of the impacts associated with the Cable Route has been undertaken within the LVIA.</p>
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.14 The PEIR categorises impacts on landscape and visual receptors based on effective mitigation from vegetation/habitat enhancements and implementation. However, the time needed for planting to mature and achieve its intended screening effect is likely to be longer than 15 years due to variability in planting conditions, competition or pests and diseases. The assumption that all vegetation reaches the prescribed heights by Year 15 may mean some of the residual visual and landscape impacts are underestimated.</p>	<p>Had a follow up meeting with NN (23/01/2025) and this comment was addressed as no longer needing to be implemented</p>
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.15 Many of the effect judgements in the assessment are currently uniform across all Sites. However, the landscape qualities and valued characteristics of the individual Sites vary significantly, reflecting differences in topography, vegetation, and surrounding land uses. We recommend that greater consideration be given to these variations, ensuring that judgements reflect the unique characteristics and sensitivities of each Site.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.16 Although the proposed development retains and incorporates key landscape features such as hedgerows and trees, either preserving them or introducing new planting as part of a mitigation strategy, this does not eliminate the potential adverse impacts on the character of the Sites and the surrounding landscape. The principle of this type of development inherently carries the risk of significantly altering the landscape character. The individual Sites will inevitably become more strongly influenced by energy-related infrastructure, leading to an engineered appearance and a heightened sense of enclosure that contrasts with the existing rural qualities.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.17 Similarly, many nearby settlements are likely to experience adverse effects, particularly along their rural fringes, which will become characterised by the presence of the development. Even as infrastructure becomes less visually prominent over time due to screening or mitigation planting, the awareness of its existence is still likely to influence how the landscape and settlements are perceived and valued. This enduring perception could undermine the area's sense of place and diminish its appeal as a rural environment.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
North Northamptonshire	<p>6.18 To try and mitigate these effects further, NNC landscape consultant recommends that the extent of solar arrays is reduced, particularly in areas adjacent to settlement fringes, PROWs, and where open, rural views are present.</p>	<p>Fields: AF1, BF1, CF1, CF2, DF4, EF9, EF16, EF18, EF34, FF7, FF13, FF14, FF16, FF21, FF22 FF23, FF24 and FF28 do not contain panels</p>

North Northamptonshire	6.19 NNC landscape consultant recommends that the Applicant explores options for refinement across all Sites to minimise impacts. For instance, development could be set back from the northern boundary of Wilby Road, as illustrated in Figure 8.15.3 Indicative Masterplan Green Hill C, D & E, by reducing the number of solar arrays within parcels EF5 and EF10–12.	Development is now set back a minimum of 55m on southern side of Wilby Road within: EF13, EF14 and EF15. No panels proposed in EF16. Development is now set back a minimum of 60m on northern side of Wilby Road within: EF10, EF11 and EF12. Development offset minimum of 40m within EF5. No panels proposed within EF9.
North Northamptonshire	6.20 Similarly, rather than creating odd solar array configurations round areas such as ‘Field Barn’ (Figure 8.15.3 Indicative Masterplan Green Hill C, D & E), pulling development back from boundaries in a more regular, straight-line arrangement would create a more cohesive design, minimising visual disruption and avoiding awkward patterns that draw attention to the infrastructure.	Noted, for example EF27 and EF28 amended to have linear infrastructure boundaries and fencelines.
North Northamptonshire	6.21 Many of the proposed habitat enhancements are linear, following existing corridors such as hedgerows and riparian zones. While this approach is beneficial for connectivity, there are additional opportunities to diversify the ecological strategy by incorporating woodland parcels. Establishing new woodland areas, particularly in close proximity to existing woodlands such as Horn Wood, would provide greater ecological resilience and strengthen habitat networks. These woodland parcels could also contribute to visual screening, helping to mitigate the visual impacts of the development whilst being sympathetic to landscape character.	Woodland planting is proposed throughout the scheme. Woodland proposed to the eastern extent of FF33 which connects to existing vegetation surrounding Horn wood. Similarly GF8 has proposed woodland planting to connect to Threeshire Wood.
North Northamptonshire	6.22 NNC landscape consultant appreciate it is late in the pre-application process to advise of further viewpoints. However, NNC landscape consultant recommend that a further viewpoint from Easton Maudit (Easton Lane) looking east towards Parcel F and the associated substation is included. Much of the view will be affected by the proposed development, which currently comprises open views of arable fields and associated hedgerows and trees.	In consultation with NNC landscape consultant 13 additional viewpoints have been added.
North Northamptonshire	6.23 The PEIR assessment is supported by summer visuals, where vegetation provides substantial screening. We stress that the DCO submission ES needs to be supported by winter photography, when minimal leaf cover is present. This would demonstrate a ‘worst case scenario’ in terms of visual impact.	Had a follow up meeting with NN ((23/01/2025) where winter photography was agreed.
North Northamptonshire	6.24 NNC landscape consultant advise that as part of the ES a number of photomontages at 60+ years are produced to show how mitigation measures will benefit the landscape. Ideally, these would show the view after the development has been decommissioned as this will demonstrate the remaining long-term legacy of the Scheme.	Had a follow up meeting with NN (23/01/2025) where photomontages were agreed - at year 60 photomontages there would be no infrastructure shown, just planting. Year 60 photomontages agreed for: VP9 VP18 VP19/20, VP28, VP31, NN1, NN9, NN13.
North Northamptonshire	6.25 - 6.26 The open views of the countryside as you leave Easton Maudit are a defining feature of the village's rural character and will be significantly impacted by the proposed development. NNC landscape consultant recommend that further consideration is given to the placement of buffers and the locations of solar arrays to minimise these effects and preserve the visual quality of the landscape. For example, the land in this area is undulating, rising towards the A509 to the east, where solar arrays are likely to be prominent. To mitigate these impacts, we advise reconfiguring or reducing the solar array parcels in this area, particularly in elevated locations. Adjustments to the layout would help protect the village's rural character and assimilate the development into the surrounding landscape.	Further set backs have been carried out on Site F so that infrastructure is not surrounding Easton Maudit. This includes: BF1, CF1, CF2, EF16, EF18, FF7, FF21 and FF28.
North Northamptonshire	6.27 NNC landscape consultant recommend that additional permissive footpaths to the east of Mears Ashby are provided, creating connections between areas to the north and south of the development area. This would enhance recreational opportunities while improving accessibility for local communities.	Permissive Paths on Site E have been discussed with NNC and added to the Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plans.
North Northamptonshire	6.28 Though the supporting evidence for judgements refer to winter views, the PEIR is supported by summer photography. The omission of a full winter assessment could mean the adverse visual effects are understated, particularly for receptors within 1 kilometre, residential receptors close to the Sites, such as properties in Mears Ashby, Grendon, Easton Maudit, PROWs and transport corridors with views of open fields, especially near Sites E and F.	Had a follow up meeting with NN (23/01/2025) where winter photography was agreed.
North Northamptonshire	6.29 - 6.30 Any assessment of cumulative effects with regards to landscape and visual sensitivity must consider that the receptors can move through the landscape (PROW), that therefore sequential effects need to be assessed and that a series of non-significant effects can become significant in accumulation. The effects on the receptors are also not restricted to visual effects. Even, when the infrastructure is not seen, is the knowledge that the infrastructure is there (for example, behind screen planting) likely to affect how the landscape is perceived and valued. NNC landscape consultant advise that cumulative information is included within photomontages and ZTV's for the final ES submission.	Cumulative effects are considered as part of the LVIA within section 8.4.

North Northamptonshire	6.31 Given their location, height and massing, it's considered that a clear vision for the landscaping surrounding the sub-stations needs to be developed for the ES. This is most applicable for the substation location to the east of Easton Maudit, which is in a prominent location outside the village and is proposed to be 13 metres tall.	Noted.
North Northamptonshire	6.32 The surface water drainage strategy should also be an integral part within the landscape masterplan and enable a creative and landscape-led approach to the required water attenuation.	Riparian corridors have been proposed on areas with greater risk of flooding. Ecology to also consider indicative pond locations
Milton Keynes	Two field parcels of site G proposed for solar farm development impinge on land identified as locally attractive landscape Ouse Valley Special Landscape Area in the local plan evidence base document - Milton Keynes Review of Local Landscape Designations. This has not been taken into consideration in the Constraints Plan shown on page 15 of the document 'Green Hill Solar Farm – Co:design workshops, May 2024' and should be. The GF9 and GF13 field parcels east of Lavendon bridleway BW 15 are located in identified locally attractive landscape. It is recommended that these fields should be removed from the proposal. In addition to removing parcels GF9 and GF13 from solar development, this 15m buffer should be applied along the Lavendon bridleway BW 15 providing sufficient offset from the SLA and should be bolstered by hedgerow planting for visual mitigation between the bridlepath and solar development to protect the attractive landscape of the Ouse Valley SLA.	Noted. 15m buffer applied to all PRoW on Site. Proposed hedgerow applied on Site G to provide visual mitigation between PRoW and solar.
Bozeat Parish Council	It is difficult to draw any conclusions from the PEIR on the likely level impact because the photographs showing the extent of the scheme do not indicate where the panels will be located within the view. The photographs that contain outlines of the BESS are of more value but we are concerned that some contain isolated vegetation that hides views of the BESS and that had the camera been better sited these views would not been hidden.	Noted. Photomontages have been produced to accompany the LVIA.
Bozeat Parish Council	The proposed study areas seem unduly restricted and not comparable with the areas used in other solar applications where a 10km study area seems more common.	Noted.
Bozeat Parish Council	It is important that the photomontages that form a part of the DCO should model the complexity of types of panels planned for each site and the inverters and other structures that will be present on each site.	photomontages will show detailed modelling of proposed infrastructure.
Earls Barton Parish Council	1) BESS - Grendon Sub-station – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there are concerns relating to the location of the BESS. The current site is located in a flood plain, which has badly flooded twice in the last four months resulting in the road from the A45 to the sub-station being closed. Any flooding would mean that there would be no access to the sub-station during the construction phase.</li> <li>• In addition, emergency services would not be able to access the BESS once it is up and running should an emergency occur when the area is flooded.</li> <li>• We also have grave concerns over the impact an emergency or major disaster would have on the surrounding area. The sub-station is bordered by a SSSI and a Ramsar site. Any potential major disaster could result in toxic elements being released into these sites, decimating wildlife and biodiversity.</li> <li>• We would also need further information as to the emergency procedures should a major disaster occur and, in the event of fire, how this would affect the village of Earls Barton and whether an evacuation would need to take place. Testing on plumes to 300m does not seem adequate.</li> <li>• We would like assurances that the construction of the BESS site should not allow water in, nor allow water or other chemicals out.</li> </ul>	Flood consultants and Transport consultants to respond to points BESS 3 (which borders the SSSI and Ramsar sites) have now been removed from scheme boundary
Earls Barton Parish Council	2) Traffic congestion and roads – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The traffic management plan does not account for flooding on the road from A45 to the BESS. What plans will be put in place to navigate this?</li> <li>• What mitigation is being proposed to ensure that the condition of the roads frequented by construction traffic is not adversely affected? The road from the A45 to the BESS is already in a poor state to repair due to the high volume of HGVs travelling to the gravel pits. This needs to be addressed before any construction work begins and, again, after construction is completed.</li> <li>• All roads affected must be assessed and a plan put in place to ensure that no deterioration to the road surface is left unrepaired.</li> </ul>	Transport consultant to respond

Earls Barton Parish Council	<p>3) Wildlife and Biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further consideration needs to be given to the wildlife that already lives in the fields that are to be used for the solar farm. Whilst hares and partridges may not be protected, they still need to move somewhere once their current habitat is removed.</li> <li>• In addition, there are comments regarding the renesting of skylarks. How would you propose to do this effectively? Are there examples of how this has been done in other locations and how successful it was?</li> </ul>	Skylark mitigation proposed throughout the scheme. For full details refer to the OLEMP
Earls Barton Parish Council	<p>4) Loss of farmland and food security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal entirely uses good quality farmland. There is no brownfield land used at all. The loss of this farmland will have an impact on food security, leading to less food being grown/produced locally and more food being imported in. This will, obviously, lead to an increase in carbon emissions.</li> <li>• Whilst you state that sheep can be grazed amongst the solar panels, we have yet to speak to a farmer who would consider this a realistic option due to the problems that would occur in rounding up the animals or getting to an animal should it be injured. Therefore, we do not believe that this is a viable option.</li> <li>• There is concern over what will be done with the land at the end of your tenure, and this is something that you need to consider and plan for. Will the land be in a good enough condition to be returned to agriculture? What research has been carried out into this? Would it, in fact, be treated as a brownfield site once the panels are removed and, therefore, only be fit for housing?</li> </ul>	Land at end of tenure is suitable to return to agricultural use
Earls Barton Parish Council	<p>5) Size of development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is significant concern over the sheer scale of the development. Whilst people are generally supportive of green energy and understand the need for this, this development is vast in its scale and could be reduced to minimise the impact on local communities.</li> <li>• There are also concerns over the amount of open countryside that will be impacted by the development and the effect on rights of way. Where rights of way are retained, they will no longer be the same with the outlook being on solar panels and security fencing, that look quite industrial, rather than on views of open countryside.</li> </ul>	Noted. Fields: AF1, BF1, CF1, CF2, DF4, EF9, EF16, EF18, EF34, FF7, FF13, FF14, FF16, FF21, FF22 FF23, FF24 and FF28 do not contain panels
Earls Barton Parish Council	<p>6) Community benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been no detail given of the community benefits that would be available and how that would be monitored.</li> <li>• There has been mention of a community benefit fund of £200,000.00 per year which affected communities could apply for. Due to the scale of the development, this would not amount to much if every community was to apply.</li> <li>• How would any community benefit fund be administered and how would the company be held accountable? If the planning permission was to be granted by the Local Planning Authority, a Section 106 agreement would be put in place, to legally bind the developer to certain payments. What legally binding mechanism is being used to ensure that the developer, and any future owners of the site, will continue to administer a community benefit fund throughout the 60year span of the proposed development?</li> <li>• We are disappointed that the comments made by representatives of Earls Barton Parish Council at the initial briefing held at Mears Ashby Village Hall in March have not been considered. Primarily, the request that a secure footpath is installed the length of Mears Ashby Road from the junction of Washbrook Lane until it meets the public right of way that has been included, leading into the south of Mears Ashby. This would allow for safe pedestrian access from Earls Barton to Mears Ashby.</li> </ul>	Not related to Landscape
Holcot Parish Council	As a community we are not opposed to solar-generated energy. Indeed, the Parish Council have recently supported a small installation on a local farm and many parishioners have installed solar panels on their houses. Our concerns with this project relate to its sheer scale and impact upon swathes of the local countryside - so many rural communities will be blighted by fields of solar panels and the assorted equipment, fences, lighting etc that is installed with them. The proposed solar farm would create a coalescence with the proposed site B and the planned expansion of the Northampton North SUE. It would create a further coalescence between Mears Ashby and Earls Barton completely changing the landscape and visual impact.	Noted.
Holcot Parish Council	The project will dominate the local landscape, with substantial adverse visual affects at all stages of its life. Your proposals give rise to substantial impacts on rurality, visual and activity amenity - people choose to live in rural settings and your proposals will fundamentally change so many people's lives. There is little in your proposals that suggests that you want to ameliorate those impacts, with comments about what might be done, rather than what would be done.	Noted.

Holcot Parish Council	Similarly, whilst you say this is only a very small proportion of national productive farmland, it has a substantial impact on the stock of farmland locally. You do not propose anything that will compensate for the impacts on the productivity of the farmland. This is particularly relevant with the substantial amount of farmland that has already been lost in Northamptonshire due to extensive development of housing, logistics facilities and HS2. To maintain food security we cannot lose a further 3,000 acres to a Solar Farm.	Not related to Landscape
Holcot Parish Council	For instance, the construction process is going to be impossible to manage with minimal impact on affected communities - nature of sites, access, cabling, vehicle movements, noise etc. You note this in your documentation, but the proposals for managing these impacts in practical terms are scant. There is not a sense from the documentation that minimising impacts on local people would be high up your priority list if a DCO is approved.	Not related to Landscape
Holcot Parish Council	What sanctions are available when GHSF does not manage the build properly, maintain the sites during the operational phase, etc? We have seen from other similar projects that once a project is approved, or indeed operational, it becomes purely an arms-length income generating investment that is sold on to Infrastructure Funds etc. Your proposals do not deal with the long-term commercial aspects of the project. For instance; - in the event of a sale what protection is there to the local communities over benefits, planning conditions and operating restrictions? - How will the decommissioning in 60 years be achieved? Will there be a financial bond for the end of 60 years to ensure that the sites can revert to arable? - What controls will be put in place to manage the local impacts of situations where the Farm needs changes during the construction or operational phases?	Not related to Landscape
Holcot Parish Council	We are being consulted on incomplete plans - at PEIR NTS 1.1.11 you say "The information contained in the PEIR is preliminary and may not represent the final project design or include the final EIA considerations and conclusions." Our conclusions can only be based on what we know and are consequently necessarily general. GHSF needs to engage communities again once they have firm plans, but this is not implied by the documentation as the final information is described as accompanying the DCO. For instance, we need to see the cabling route and its effect on local communities and the detailed layout of each site to see the effect on the local communities.	Not related to Landscape
Holcot Parish Council	2.4 Cumulative Impacts The cumulative impacts on Holcot are substantial. How will the GHSF development mitigate their impacts when they are layered on substantial impacts from other local developments, particularly in respect of traffic and road safety?	Not related to Landscape
Holcot Parish Council	4.1.20 Associated infrastructure The masterplan provided does not show the associated fencing, lighting and security. How will these features impact the rurality of the settings? What will the impact be on nocturnal fauna?	Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plans show fencing. For impacts on nocturnal fauna refer to ecology report
Holcot Parish Council	8.5.5 Visual effects Mitigation planting - 15 years to demonstrate mitigation is too long. Mitigation should be immediate term.	Immediate / instant screening has been used within Sites: A, A.2, C, D, E, F and G.
Holcot Parish Council	10 Flooding With solar panels being a hard surface, what is the expected impact of Site B on Sywell Road in respect of water runoff? Sywell Road already has a flooding problem - is there a potential for exacerbating this through your design?	Not related to Landscape
Holcot Parish Council	Site B design The site access route is crossed by a footpath between Holcot and Overstone. Traditionally this is a very safe route, with very-rare agricultural traffic movements. Local people routinely walk the route with free-roaming dogs for instance. How will GHSF ensure the continuing safety of users during the construction and operational phases, so that this utility continues?	Not related to Landscape
Holcot Parish Council	Table 20.9, Chapter 20 What Brown Field sites were targeted for this development as the land on site B (Holcot) states 42% of the land is identified in their table 20.9 as being grade 2 and 3A, which the guidelines say is the least preferable? Were locations based on which landowners said 'yes' to your proposals rather than targeting less poor agricultural land and brownfield sites?	Not related to Landscape

Lavendon Parish Council	<p>On this basis, the Council feels that Island Green Power should be able to be flexible on the way that the site is developed and take account of the concerns recently expressed at the Lavendon consultation event, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• extent of the proposed development</li> <li>• impact of the Solar Farm on the visual and natural environment of the Parish</li> <li>• residents' concerns on increased flood risk caused by drainage and runoff from the area to be occupied by the Solar Farm.</li> </ul>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Fields: AF1, BF1, CF1, CF2, DF4, EF9, EF16, EF18, EF34, FF7, FF13, FF14, FF16, FF21, FF22 FF23, FF24 and FF28 do not contain panels</p>
Lavendon Parish Council	The Solar farm site is currently open arable countryside crossed by the Three-Shire Way, an ancient trackway and well-used route for walkers, riders, and cyclists.	
Lavendon Parish Council	Some residents have expressed concerns about the visual Impact from the conversion of arable land to solar arrays, and to this end the Parish Council would like the proposals to make provision for boundary planting with a view to enhanced visual screening, in particular along the Three-Shire Way.	Mitigation and boundary reinforcements have been proposed at Site G
Lavendon Parish Council	<p>Owing to its intensively arable character, the baseline unit score (BNG) is expected to be low. As such, significant unit gain is likely to be achieved by the mere reversion of arable to grassland. However, Lavendon PC as the representative of the local community would expect the developer to part from the target-based quantification of post-intervention unit value and to concentrate, instead, on the true ecological needs of the Site, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the reestablishment of connectivity across the landscape;</li> <li>• the establishment of a more diverse habitat mix; and</li> <li>• a net reduction in surface water runoff through the implementation of nature-based solutions.</li> </ul>	<p>Riparian corridors have been proposed on areas with greater risk of flooding. Ecology to also consider indicative pond locations across the scheme.</p> <p>Where possible, proposed mitigation provides habitat links to the surrounding landscape</p>
Lavendon Parish Council	Lavendon Parish Council is particularly keen to ensure that the Three Shire Way is protected and enhanced as a green routeway, and that the visual impact of the solar farm development upon it is kept to a minimum.	Mitigation and boundary reinforcements have been proposed bordering the Three Shire Way to reduce the visual impact
Lavendon Parish Council	GF9: The proposed access track to enable access to parcel GF9 is too close to the woodland edge (<10m). An understanding of the methods employed to form tracks in the context of solar farms leads us to conclude that impact in the form of disturbance to wildlife, soil compaction and (potentially) root damage would be difficult to avoid. On this basis, we would like PV arrays to be replaced with a mix of habitats including grassland and scrub, effectively using parcel GF9 as an area for ecological mitigation.	For ARB to respond to
Lavendon Parish Council	GF13: Parcel GF13 is the closest to the settlement's boundaries, and the community has expressed concerns about the additional flood risks the development may pose, given Lavendon's history of flooding. While it is acknowledged that reverting the land to grassland could potentially enhance its infiltration capacity, there remains a possibility of increased runoff due to ground compaction during the construction phase. Furthermore, concerns have been raised about the visual impact of the development in this particular area. To address these issues, it is proposed that Parcel GF13 be excluded from the development and instead repurposed for the creation of natural habitats, including a pond or wetland and wet woodland. This approach would provide significant ecological value to local species assemblages while also serving as a nature-based solution to mitigate flood risks.	<p>There is minimum 50m from proposed development to existing property boundaries</p> <p>For flooding refer to drainage consultants report</p>
Lavendon Parish Council	The Site, over time, has undergone the systematic removal of green infrastructure (represented by copses, hedgerows and grassed field margins) to make way for an increasingly industrial approach to agriculture. In particular, over the past 2-3 years the south-western and western boundaries of the Three Shires woods, along with the ditch stretching along the eastern boundaries of parcels GF7 and GF11, have been the subject of extensive woody vegetation clearance.	Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plans aims to establish riparian corridor planting along ditches and to reinforce hedgerows and site boundaries
Lavendon Parish Council	There is an opportunity to reestablish lapsed field boundaries and enhance connectivity both across the Site and within the wider landscape by creating a network of native hedgerows, as outlined in Figure 1. This initiative would provide tangible benefits to local wildlife and, when combined with improved access resulting from the cessation of agricultural activity, would offer significant value to the community.	Figure 1, provided by Lavendon, have been taken into account and used to produce the LEMP plans. Hedgerows proposed within the scheme are proposed in locations and patterns that is appropriate to the existing field margins on site.
Lavendon Parish Council	Combined, these actions will strengthen local wildlife populations, attract species currently absent from the Site due to its inherently low biological diversity, contribute to carbon sequestration and flood mitigation, and leave a positive legacy of the development for the local community.	



Mears Ashby Parish Council	<p>Item 5. Connected Communities: To listen to our communities, giving them a greater say in their future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council is aware of the many expressions of concern from residents within the community. None the least of these being, bridleways and footpaths that will be changed forever. Corridors between solar panels with high fencing on each side, and security cameras, will create hostile environments which will constrain wildlife in all directions and likely to result in the loss of wildlife habitats for badgers, foxes, deer, and various bird species.</li> <li>• It will create no-go areas for dog walkers, hikers, and horse riders. Views will be impeded and do nothing for people's well-being by adversely affecting beautiful open countryside.</li> <li>• There will be no opportunities for local employment as all work is specialised.</li> </ul>	<p>The following offsets have been used throughout the Scheme to provide space and openness including:</p> <p>PRoW - 15m Ancient Woodland - 30m All Hedgerows - 15m Woodland - 20m Minor Watercourses - 15m</p> <p>It should be noted that the Scheme would have an operational lifetime of 60 years with decommissioning expected within 2089.</p>
Mears Ashby Parish Council	<p>The Landscape Character: Influenced by a combination of human and physical influences, which makes the area distinctive and needs to be conserved. To recognise the importance of views and vistas. The Landscape Character Assessment 2008 for the county is still relevant today. Visual impacts, concern the degree proposed development will become an adverse feature in particular views and the impacts that this has on people experiencing views.</p>	Noted.
Mears Ashby Parish Council	<p>The scheme design has not considered any alternative locations. Area C surrounds Wood Lodge Farm. Area D will completely ruin the longest and most widely used footpath in Mears Ashby and stifle an important wildlife corridor. Area E contains a huge amount of important archaeological remains in the fields to the East of Mears Ashby (closest to the village). These fields should be left undisturbed and outside the scheme boundary.</p>	<p>Woodland planting and riparian corridors have been proposed in D to benefit the existing wildlife corridor. Space for existing footpath is retained and permissive footpath proposed</p>
Mears Ashby Parish Council	<p>There has been no consideration to local flooding in Wellingborough Road. Mitigations have been documented as 'raising the height of the panels' which the council does not accept as being in anyway sufficient in addressing this concern.</p>	Not related to Landscape
Mears Ashby Parish Council	<p>The location of the 400kv substation close to Wood Lodge Farm is unacceptable. An alternative location, closer to the fields at the back of Park Farm must be considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BESS-Electromagnetic Fields &amp; Fire risks are well documented. Liable to catch fire requiring colossal amounts of water to extinguish Please see Appendix B (1).</li> </ul> <p>Consequential contaminated run-off to local water courses. Such a development being 1500 acres of industrial scale solar installations with a BESS &amp; 400 KV substation is inappropriate on fields adjacent to Mears Ashby and its heritage assets.</p>	<p>400kv substation proposed 520m northeast of Wood Lodge Farm with reinforcement of existing vegetation to screen views</p>
Mears Ashby Parish Council	<p>8. Alternative Sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The parish council, whilst recognising the current farm proposals has a reasonably good connectivity to the Grendon substation, being located 14km south of the proposed site, near the village of Old, the parish council argues that this proposed site is not conveniently located, and an alternative must be considered.</li> <li>• The parish council has been made aware of other numerous points of connection. Northamptonshire and some of the surrounding counties were subject to large opencast extractions. Many remain undeveloped and cannot be classified as prime agricultural land. For example, the London Road Solar Farm, near Irchester has been built over a restored opencast ironstone quarry.</li> </ul>	Not related to Landscape
Mears Ashby Parish Council	<p>Should this development be granted consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The parish council would be most concerned to ensure that the planning inspectorate, if granting approval of the proposed scheme, it would be strictly on the basis that finances and resources are a compulsory requirement to mitigate the loss of the countryside and to protect residents and road users from the adverse traffic impacts.</li> <li>• The parish council would seek that connected, proper footpaths, and cycleways along the sites access roads, are installed and maintained with developed connections from the village of Mears Ashby to the North Northamptonshire Greenway, being a strategic rural network of safer, largely traffic-free routes suitable for walkers, wheelers, cyclists and equestrian users where appropriate, connecting settlements, employment, leisure and tourism destinations across North Northamptonshire and beyond.</li> <li>• The parish council would seek that a piece of land from the development be set-aside as a Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG), close to the village with safe and easy walking distance for residents, that could be developed as an eco-friendly pocket park/play area.</li> <li>• The parish council would further seek that measures to mitigate should include Noise Barriers and other forms of landscaping including bunding and planting of natural hedgerows and trees to negate the development impact on the views and vistas from both within the village and from surrounding roads.</li> </ul>	<p>Not related to Landscape</p> <p>hedgerow reinforcements proposed throughout the scheme with instant screening proposed in areas with significant affects</p>
West Northamptonshire Council	<p>As noted in our previous comments there is a need to clearly set out any potential impacts on the existing PRoW network and proposed mitigation / management measures throughout both the construction and operational phases. Therefore, the provision of an Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan is requested.</p>	Not related to Landscape

West Northamptonshire Council	As noted above, WNC's Definitive Map / PRoW team have been consulted and their comments relating to the public rights of way are set out as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site A – Parishes of Old and Walgrave – no ROW within the site area</li> <li>• Site A.2 – Parish of Walgrave. Bridleway CT3 is to the southern boundary of the site. It is unclear whether this is within the site or outside. South of parcel A2F4 there is a 'green corridor.' However, we are unsure if this includes the bridleway, or if the bridleway is south of this. On the website, there doesn't appear to be an environmental masterplan which covers site A.2.</li> <li>• Site B – Parish of Holcot. Footpath CW1 passes through the site. The alignment of CW1 around the pond and woodland is slightly different on the submitted plans to those recorded on the Definitive Map (legal record of public rights of way). It is noted from the plans that there is the intention for a wildflower meadow to run alongside the footpath. The landowner would be responsible for maintaining this and any side growth which infringes on the footpath.</li> </ul>	Noted.
West Northamptonshire Council	Where public rights of way are close to the solar panels there is concern about the potential impact on drainage and run off and potential implications for the surface of the rights of way.	Not related to Landscape
West Northamptonshire Council	In terms of the potential cable routing, there are multiple public rights of way which could be impacted. CW1, CT3, CT5, CT6, CT7, CT8, CT9, DT8. Locating the trenches for cables crossing or laid along the rights of way should be avoided. Disruption to the surface of the right of way can also be an issue which we would want to minimise.	Not related to Landscape
West Northamptonshire Council	Please note Bridleway CT8 (Hannington) is subject to a diversion order which was made on 02/08/2019 (our case reference 202). Objections to this were received and the case needs to be referred to the planning inspectorate to determine and decide whether to confirm the order.	Not related to Landscape
Bedford Borough Council	It is noted that BBC do not have a full complement of in-house technical disciplines to respond to such detailed chapter aspects and consequently reserves the right to comment on such chapter aspects through technical working groups and future consultation.	Not related to Landscape
Bedford Borough Council	§9.4.4 Woodlands: BBC would like to see minimum 8m buffer zones to all Ancient woodlands and woodlands.	Minimum 30m offset applied to Ancient Woodlands
Bedford Borough Council	§9.4.5 'The potential for loss of hedgerows and trees is very limited as existing hedgerow gaps will be utilised wherever possible to gain access for construction and operation'. This statement is NOT supported by the Proposer's own evidence regarding visibility splays at access points (refer to BBC Scoping Response §4.10).	Not related to Landscape
Bedford Borough Council	§9.4.6 'The small size of any crossings required will not result in any significant fragmentation effects on the local ditch/ watercourse network'. This statement does not address the fact that a major Cable Corridor will be required across the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area and Ramsar site.	Not related to Landscape
Wellingborough Town Council	Section 3, Views on the project proposals – Question 4: Supportive but with concerns: As the organisers of the International Waendel Walk Weekend, our primary concern is the impact on Sites BESS and F, as they fall along the designated walking routes for the event. We strongly urge that permissive routes be established to ensure participants can safely access these sections of the route. To assist with this request, please find attached detailed maps of the Saturday 27K and 42K routes for Saturday which include marked outline of the proposed permissive routes.	Permissive Path on F considered and now taken forward. See within Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plan for Site F