Light Valley Solar

Outline Invasive Species Management Plan

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1. This Outline Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Management Plan has been prepared by Tyler Grange Group Ltd. on behalf of Light Valley Solar Ltd. (the 'Applicant') and relates to the Proposed Development of solar photovoltaic (PV) modules, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure.

1.2. The Proposed Development's boundary, herein referred to as the Order Limits, is made up of four broad areas, the Solar Development Sites (900 ha), Cable Route Corridor (328.5 ha), Highways Improvements Areas (17.1 ha), and Solar Development Site 8 Access (24.1 ha). Underground electric cables laid within the Cable Route Corridor will connect the Solar Development Sites and the existing Monk Fryston Substation, where the Proposed Development will connect to the National Grid. The Highways Improvement Areas are sections of the highway network that will contain localised improvements to allow movement of construction vehicles on narrower sections of the local highway network, such as improvements to the road edge, traffic management, and provision of temporary passing places or visibility splays. The Solar Development Site 8 Access area will provide optionality to access Solar Development Site 8 from the north. The entirety of the Order Limits is within the administrative area of North Yorkshire Council and falls within what was Selby district.

1.3. The main element of the Proposed Development comprises seven Solar Development Sites (Solar Development Sites 1-4 and 6-8), as presented in Figure 2.1: Illustrative Site Layout Plans (ES Volume 2) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.01]** and in the Outline Environmental Masterplan [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/02.12**], that will accommodate the Solar PV Panels, with the BESS Compound located within Solar Development Site 2. The Solar Development Sites 1-4 and 6-8 comprise parcels of agricultural fields bound by hedgerows, ditches, and some mature trees, a small block of woodland and some scrub. The Cable Route Corridor is similarly comprised of agricultural fields and associated boundary features and passes through the River Ouse and Selby Dam. The Highways Improvements Areas, and Solar Development Site 8 Access largely comprise hardstanding roads and adjacent habitats, with Solar Development Site 8 Access also including a crossing over Selby Dam.

1.4. Tyler Grange have previously undertaken UK Habitat surveys in 2024 and 2025 of the Order Limits, during which locations of any INNS were noted. Appendix 6.1: Habitats Report **[EN0110012/APS/LVS/06.03.06.01]** details the dates and methodology for the Uk Habitat surveys.

1.5. During the UK Habitat surveys, Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* and Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* were identified within the Order Limits. One stand of Japanese knotweed was located in the centre of Solar Development Site 8.

Himalayan balsam was located within Site 1 on the southern boundary of Field F1.7, within Site 4 in Ditch 4.1, Hedgerow 4.13, and in the arable field margin north of field F4.14, and within Cable Route Corridor 1-4 in H9.2, H9.4, H9.53, D9.18, D9.26, D9.28, TL9.1, and TL9.4. The location of these species within the Order Limits are shown on Figure 6.6: UK Habitat Classification **[EN0110012/APS/LVS/06.02.06.06]**.

1.6. Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam are listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981[1]. As such, it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause these species to grow/spread in the wild. Without mitigation, the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development could result in the disturbance and dispersal of these species within and outside of the Order Limits.

1.7. This document outlines the mitigation required to control the spread of these species within and outside of the Order Limits. This includes the identification of the potential pathways for accidental spread of INNS during construction, operation and decommissioning, and the biosecurity measures required to control this.

1.8. Post consent, a detailed Invasive Species Management Plan will be developed for approval prior to construction, which will be in substantial accordance with this Outline Invasive Species Management Plan. For the operational and decommissioning phases, relevant invasive species control measures will be included in the detailed OEMP and DEMP, building on the principles set out in this Outline plan.

[1] UK Government, "Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)," 1981. [Online]. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/contents

Section 2: Legislative Background

2.1. Relevant Legislation regarding invasive species, including Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed includes:

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

2.2. Section 14(2) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA 1981) states that "*…if any person plants or otherwise causes to grow in the wild any plant which is included in Part II of Schedule 9, he shall be guilty of an offence."* Anyone convicted of an offence under Section 14 of the WCA 1981 may face a fine of £5,000 and/or 6 months imprisonment, or 2 years and/or an unlimited fine on indictment.

Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019[2]

2.3. Himalayan balsam is listed under Part 2 of Schedule 2 within the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019. This means that it is in offence to release or allow to escape into the wild, or otherwise causes the species to grow in the wild. A person guilty of an offence under this order is subject to a penalty term not exceeding six months or to a fine, or to both.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA, 1990)[3]

2.4. The EPA 1990 contains a number of legal provisions concerning "controlled waste", which are set out in Part II. Any soil or plant material contaminated with Himalayan balsam or Japanese knotweed that you discard, intend to discard or are required to discard is classified as controlled waste. The most relevant provisions in the EPA are in section 33 (1) (a) and (1) (b). These create offences to do with the deposit, treating, keeping or disposing of controlled waste without a permit. Section 33 (1) (c) makes it an offence to keep, treat or dispose of controlled waste in a manner likely to case pollution of the environment or harm to human health. Section 34 places duties on any person who imports, produces, carries, keeps, treats or disposes of controlled waste. Waste must be handled responsibly and in accordance with the law at all stages between its production and final recovery or disposal.

[2] UK Government, "The Invasive Non-native Species (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019," 2019. [Online]. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/223

[3] UK Government "Environmental Protection Act 1990" 1990. [Online]. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents

Section 3: Survey Methodology

3.1. Tyler Grange have previously undertaken UK Habitat surveys in 2025 of the Order Limits, during which locations of any INNS were noted. Appendix 6.1: Habitats Report **[EN0110012/APS/LVS/06.03.06.01]** details the dates and methodology for the Uk Habitat surveys. All surveys were completed by Suitably Qualified Ecologists (SQE).

Limitations

3.2. Due to the spread of the Order Limits, some areas were surveyed early in the growing season (i.e. at the end of April 2024) or after mowing. As such, young plants, especially where vegetation was dense, may not have been identifiable. An updated survey of the Order Limits prior to the commencement of work to confirm the current location of invasive species will therefore be undertaken.

3.3. No access was permitted to the western terminus of the Cable Route Corridor CRC 4-POC (as described in Chapter 2: The Proposed Development (ES Volume 1) [**EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.02**]) where it meets Monk Fryston substation due to the active construction site present in this location for the approved Yorkshire Green development (EN020024). As such, any invasive species present in this location will not have been recorded. This area should be surveyed for invasive species prior to the start of works in that area.

Section 4: Impact Assessment

Extent Within the Order Limits

4.1. During the UK Habitat surveys, Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed were identified within the Order Limits. One stand of Japanese knotweed was located in the centre of Solar Development Site 8. Himalayan balsam was located within Site 1 on the southern boundary of Field F1.7, within Site 4 in Ditch 4.1, Hedgerow 4.13, and in the arable field margin north of field F4.14, and within Cable Route Corridor 1-4 in H9.2, H9.4, H9.53, D9.18, D9.26, D9.28, TL9.1, and TL9.4. The location of these species within the Order Limits are shown on Figure 6.6: UK Habitat Classification **[EN0110012/APS/LVS/06.02.06.06]**.

Impacts Without Mitigation

4.2. Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam are listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. As such, it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause these species to grow/spread in the wild. Without mitigation, the construction, operational and decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development could result in the disturbance and dispersal of these species within and outside of the Order Limits.

Section 5: Mitigation Measures

5.1. The following measures are to be implemented to prevent the spread of Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed known to the present with the Order Limits.

1. Prior to the start of works, a Suitably Qualified Ecologist ('SQE') will undertake an updated walkover of the construction/working area to search for any new stands of INNS.

2. Any exiting/newly identified stands of INNS will have an appropriate 'no-work' buffer zone implemented around the INNS, to be advised by the SQE. This buffer zone will be delineated by Heras fencing to prevent contractors and plant entering this area and inadvertently spreading this species through unintentional transportation of seeds.

3. Signage will be erected on the fencing to warn site personnel of the presence of INNS within the zone and to not enter.

4. The SQE will also provide a toolbox talk to all contractors to explain the legislation covering INNS including Himalayan balsam and Japanese knotweed.

5. A specialist invasive species contractor will be required to treat and remove the INNS following the most recent guidance and legislation.

6. The specialist invasive species contractor should continue to monitor the INNS no work buffer zone until they have confirmed there is no re-growth.

7. The fencing around the INNS no work buffer zone will then remain in-situ during the monitoring period until a time when the invasive species contractor has confirmed the species have been eradicated.

5.2. **Table 5.1-Table 5.3** detail the potential pathways for the accidental spread of INNS during construction, operation and decommissioning. Recommendations of biosecurity measures are provided in line with the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 and Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. However, eradication and treatment of INNS must only be undertaken by a specialist invasive species contractor.

Table 5.1: Pathways for Spread of INNS and Associated Biosecurity Measures during Construction

Impact Pathway	Risk Description	Biosecurity Measures	Residual Risk
Groundworks	Disturbance and fragmentation of invasive plant material during groundworks and access track formation	• Pre-commencement invasive species survey and mapping • Exclusion fencing around INNS • Toolbox talks for all contractors • Treatment of INNS by a specialist invasive species contractor	Low
Excavation and soil movement	Redistribution of contaminated soils within the Order Limits	• Detailed Soil Resource Management Plan implemented • Contaminated soils retained within no work buffer zones • No lateral movement of soil to clean areas within the Order Limits • Use of impermeable membranes beneath stockpiles	Low
Soil stockpiling	Establishment and spread from unmanaged stockpiles	• Stockpiles clearly labelled	Low

Impact Pathway	Risk Description	Biosecurity Measures	Residual Risk
		• Stockpiles located away from drainage routes, bunded and covered to prevent windblown seeds colonizing • Stockpiles located away from known INNS locations • Stockpiles regularly inspected for INNS	
Construction plant and vehicles	Transfer of INNS via tracks, tires and machinery	• Dedicated plant wash-down area • Mandatory cleaning/checking before entry/exit of plant from the Order Limits • Plant movement logs maintained • No plant to enter INNS no work buffer zones	Low
Materials importation	Introduction of invasive species via imported soils or aggregates	• Import only certified invasive-free materials • Supplier declarations required • Visual inspection of all loads • Control of fly tipping within the Order Limits	Negligible

Impact Pathway	Risk Description	Biosecurity Measures	Residual Risk
Workforce movement	Spread via footwear and clothing	• Boot-cleaning stations to be provided • Toolbox talk given to all contractors covering invasive species awareness and identification	Low
Surface water runoff	Downstream spread of seeds and fragments	• Himalayan balsam stands in watercourse treated by specialist contractor prior to flowering to reduce downstream spread. • Temporary drainage controls (silt fencing, bunds), where required • Monitoring after heavy rainfall	Low
Temporary access tracks	Linear spread along tracks	• Track alignment to avoid known areas of INNS • Regular inspection of margins	Low

Table 5.2: Pathways for Spread of INNS and Associated Biosecurity Measures during Operation

Impact Pathway	Risk Description	Biosecurity Measures	Residual Risk
Vegetation management	Disturbance of residual invasive plants during mowing, grazing or habitat management	• Maintain updated INNS map for site managers • Detailed OEMP to set out biosecurity measures for maintenance contractors to be followed • Targeted treatment of regrowth by specialist invasive species contractor where required • Annual refresher on INNS hygiene protocols. • Workforce to remain vigilant to the presence of INNS and to contact the SQE if INNS identified for how to proceed • Control of fly tipping within the Order Limits	Low
Solar panel maintenance	Spread via vehicles/workforce accessing panels	• Use of defined access routes where possible • Vehicle/boot cleaning to be completed if entering previous INNS areas • Checking for INNS contamination before entry/exit of vehicles from the solar sites	Low

Impact Pathway	Risk Description	Biosecurity Measures	Residual Risk
		• Annual refresher on INNS hygiene protocols. • Workforce to remain vigilant to the presence of INNS and to contact the SQE if INNS identified for how to proceed.	
Large-scale solar replacement activities	Risk similar to construction phase-see **Table 5.1**	• Biosecurity measures similar to construction phase-see **Table 5.1**	Low
Habitat creation and enhancement	Introduction or spread via soils and seeding	• Use only certified clean soils and seed mixes	Negligible
Drainage and SuDS features	Establishment and downstream dispersal	• Routine inspection of swales, ditches, attenuation areas and scrapes • Early treatment of INNS by invasives species contractor where required • Yearly treatment plan from a specialist contractor for Himalayan balsam within drainage ditches	Low
Boundary interactions	Spread to or from adjacent land	• Buffer zones maintained; coordination with neighbouring landowners where necessary	Low

Table 5.3: Pathways for Spread of INNS and Associated Biosecurity Measures during Decommissioning

Impact Pathway	Risk Description	Biosecurity Measures	Residual Risk
Removal of panels and infrastructure	Disturbance of contaminated soils	• Pre-decommissioning invasive species survey • Apply same controls as construction phase-see **Table 5.1** • Avoid unnecessary excavation	Low
Plant and vehicle movements	Risk similar to construction phase-see **Table 5.1**	• Biosecurity measures similar to construction phase-see **Table 5.1**	Low
Soil reinstatement	Re-use of contaminated soils during restoration	• DEMP to include suitable soil management measures • Contaminated soils managed in situ or disposed of at licensed facilities by specialist contractors	Low
Site restoration	Colonisation of disturbed ground	• Rapid re-vegetation with clean seed mixes • Post-decommissioning monitoring for invasive species by SQE	Low

Section 6: Conclusion

6.1. In summary, two species of invasive, non-native plants are currently present within the Order Limits. One stand of Japanese knotweed was located in the centre of Solar Development Site 8. Himalayan balsam was located within Site 1 on the southern boundary of Field F1.7, within Site 4 in Ditch 4.1, Hedgerow 4.13, and in the arable field margin north of field F4.14, and within Cable Route Corridor 1-4 in H9.2, H9.4, H9.53, D9.18, D9.26, D9.28, TL9.1, and TL9.4. The location of these species within the Order Limits are shown on Figure 6.6: UK Habitat Classification [**EN0110012/APS/LVS/06.02.06.06]**.

6.2. Japanese knotweed and Himalayan balsam are listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. As such, it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause these species to grow/spread in the wild. Without mitigation, the construction, operational and decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development could result in the disturbance and dispersal of these species within and outside of the Order Limits.

6.3. Section 5 outlines the mitigation required to control the spread of these species and includes the identification of the potential pathways for accidental spread of INNS during the Proposed Development, and the biosecurity measures required to control this. A specialist invasive species contractor must always be engaged to conduct any treatment or eradication of Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed or any other INNS.

6.4. Post consent, a detailed Invasive Species Management Plan will be developed for approval prior to construction, which will be in substantial accordance with this Outline Invasive Species Management Plan. For the operational and decommissioning phases, relevant invasive species control measures will be included in the detailed OEMP and DEMP, building on the principles set out in this Outline plan.

Step into our world

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Tyler Grange

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