

# Light Valley Solar

## Equality Impact Assessment

Document Reference: EN0110012/APP/LVS/05.02.04

February 2026

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN0110012  
APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)



Light Valley  
Solar

# Infrastructure Planning

## Planning Act 2008

### The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

# Light Valley Solar

## DCO Submission

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## Equality Impact Assessment

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<b>Regulation Reference</b>	APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)
<b>Planning Inspectorate Case Reference</b>	EN0110012
<b>Application Document Reference</b>	EN0110012/APP/ LVS/05.02.04
<b>Author</b>	Light Valley Solar Limited

Version	Date	Status of Version
1.0	February 2026	DCO Submission

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 This Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been prepared by Arup on behalf of Light Valley Solar Limited (hereafter referred to as ‘the Applicant’). This EqIA forms part of an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of Light Valley Solar (hereafter referred to as the ‘Proposed Development’).
- 1.1.2 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) (Ref 1) requires public authorities to have due regard to equality considerations when exercising their functions. Whilst the Applicant is not a public sector body specified in Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010 (Ref 1) as being subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under Section 149, the Equality Act’s Section 149(2) this Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) considers the potential for the Proposed Development to discriminate based on certain protected characteristics under the Act in order to assist the SoS in their consideration of the public sector equality duty under Section 149.
- 1.1.3 This EqIA aims to assist the Secretary of State’s decision-making process by demonstrating that due regard has been paid to the needs of protected characteristic groups in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Ref 1) and the PSED. Demonstration of due regard is provided through the assessment of potential impacts of the Proposed Development on protected characteristic groups, which is informed by a policy and legislation review, an overview of the Proposed Development, an equalities baseline and review of consultation activities.

## 1.2 Context

- 1.2.1 The Proposed Development will be located within the Order Limits as shown in Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan and Order Limits (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.01.01]**. The Order Limits outline the maximum extent of the land that will be required to facilitate the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the Proposed Development as depicted on the Works Plans **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/02.03]**.
- 1.2.2 The Proposed Development comprises a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating station of over 100 megawatts (MW) and associated development comprising Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), substations, grid connection infrastructure and other infrastructure integral to the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases. It is located on a total of just over 1,270 hectares (ha) of land within the administrative area of North Yorkshire Council and the Point of Connection (PoC) for the Proposed Development will be at the Monk Fryston 275 kV National Grid Substation (Monk Fryston Substation).
- 1.2.3 The Proposed Development comprises four main parts:

- 1) The seven sites (referred to collectively as the Solar Development Sites) where the Solar Arrays, Battery Energy Storage, and other associated development (other than those parts of the grid connection cable to be located in the Cable Route Corridor) would be located;
- 2) The Cable Route Corridor within which the underground cables connecting the Solar Development Sites and Point of Connection (PoC) will be located.
- 3) Highways Improvement Areas (HIAs)- sections of the highway network that will contain localised improvements, such as improvements to the road edge where it is deteriorated and provision of temporary passing places within the existing highways boundary, traffic management, and provision of visibility splays, or temporary highway and traffic works required to safely accommodate the Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) deliveries.
- 4) Solar Development Site 8 Access – As Solar Development Site 8 is constrained by rail lines, and in order to ensure the safe construction of the Proposed Development, multiple accesses have been developed and assessed to allow for routing of construction activity, bringing in some land that would be used only for access to Solar Development Site 8.

1.2.4 A full description of the Proposed Development is provided in Section 2: The Proposed Development (ES Volume 1) [EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.02].

## 1.3 Report structure

1.3.1 Following on from this introduction section, the remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- 1) **Section 2: Methodology** – sets out the approach to collecting desk-based evidence and assessment of impacts;
- 2) **Section 3: Legislation and policy review** – provides context through review of relevant national legislation and regional policy associated with equalities, planning and other relevant topics;
- 3) **Section 4: Proposed Development Summary** – an overview of the Proposed Development;
- 4) **Section 5: Equalities baseline** – uses secondary data sources, such as Census 2021 data, to form an understanding of residents living within the area and the local socioeconomic profile; This section also identifies potential equalities receptors within close proximity to the Proposed Developments Order Limits;
- 5) **Section 6: Consultation and engagement activities** – provides an overview of consultation and engagement activities undertaken thus far including key responses from affected stakeholders
- 6) **Section 7: Embedded Mitigation** – This sets measures of relevance to equalities which are included within the Management Plans and Design Commitments that form part of the DCO Applications, to reduce negative

impacts and enhance positive impacts associated with the Proposed Development.

- 7) **Section 8: Equality impact topics** – an overview of the topics that have potential to cause equality impacts, based on the findings of ES Volume 1 [EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.01 - 18];
- 8) **Section 9: Assessment of impacts** – provides an assessment of potential positive and negative equality impacts of the Proposed Development; and
- 9) **Section 10: Conclusions** – summary of equality impacts and demonstration of the Applicant’s due regard to the PSED.

## 2 Methodology

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 This section sets out the approach to addressing the equality impacts of the Proposed Development. The assessment considers potential direct and indirect equality impacts (both positive and negative) associated with the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development.
- 2.1.2 The approach for undertaking the EqIA and compiling the report follows a three – stage process:
- 1) **Desk-based review** – including review of relevant national legislation, regional policy, documents associated with the Proposed Development and secondary datasets relating to groups with protected characteristics;
  - 2) **Assessment of potential impacts** - informed by a consideration of the policy context, consultation and engagement activities, findings from ES Volume 1 [EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.01 - 18], and equalities baseline data; and
  - 3) **Conclusions.**
- 2.1.3 The approach is based on Arup’s professional judgement, an understanding of the Equality Act 2010, particularly Section 149 regarding the PSED, and supporting technical guidance produced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (ECHR) (Ref 4).

### 2.2 Desk-based review

- 2.2.1 In addition to a review of recent relevant national legislation and regional policies, the desk-based review included the following:
- 1) Review of all relevant documentation with regard to the DCO Application including design information, relevant assessment work and mitigation and management plans;
  - 2) Review of national and local datasets including Census 2021 data to develop an equalities baseline profile of groups with protected characteristics living within the Study Area, which comprises of data from the former Selby District; the region, consisting of Yorkshire and the Humber; and England and Wales;
  - 3) Identification of potential equalities receptors within close proximity to the Order Limits; and
  - 4) Review of the consultation and engagement activities undertaken to date by the Applicant in relation to the proposals to identify any issues of relevance to EqIA.

## 2.3 Assessment of impacts

2.3.1 The assessment of equality impacts takes into account the information gathered through the above activities. A judgement is made on how the Proposed Development could potentially impact people with protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010 (Ref 1). These protected characteristics are:

- 1) **Age:** this refers to persons defined by either a particular age or a range of ages. This can include children (aged under 16), young people (aged 16-25), older people or pensioners (i.e., those aged 65+), the elderly/very old (i.e./ those aged 85+);
- 2) **Disability:** a disabled person is defined as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. It can also include people who have progressive conditions such as HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis (MS), even when someone is able to carry out day-to-day activities;
- 3) **Gender reassignment:** this refers to people who are planning to undergo, are undergoing, or have undergone a process for the purpose of reassigning their gender identity;
- 4) **Marriage and civil partnership:** marriage or civil partnership can be between a man or a woman or between two people of the same sex;
- 5) **Pregnancy and maternity:** pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth;
- 6) **Race:** Equality Act 2010 defines race as encompassing colour, nationality (including citizenship) and ethnic or national origins;
- 7) **Religion or belief:** religion means any religion a person follows. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief, and includes those people who have no formal religion or belief;
- 8) **Sex:** this refers to a man or to a woman or a group of people of that same sex, while gender refers to the wider social roles and relationships that structure men's and women's, boys' and girls' lives; and
- 9) **Sexual orientation:** a person's sexual orientation relates to their emotional, physical and / or sexual attraction and the expression of that attraction.

2.3.2 Two additional characteristics have been considered in this assessment, as individuals with these characteristics are likely to experience disproportionate and differential impacts, although they are not included under the protected characteristics above. These are:

- 1) **Lower socioeconomic status:** refers to individuals or groups with limited financial resources, lower levels of education and reduced access to opportunities and services. People with lower socioeconomic status may

have limited ability to relocate and may rely more on public services including public transportation and community services and are therefore more vulnerable to any disruption in these services.

- 2) **Parents and caregivers:** refers to individuals or groups with full-time or part-time caring responsibilities. Parents and caregivers are likely to spend more time in the home, making them more vulnerable to visual disruptions and noise impacts near their place of residence. They are also likely to rely on community services including classes and programmes and public transportation and are therefore more vulnerable to any disruption in these services.

2.3.3 The assessment considers both disproportionate and differential impacts on groups with protected characteristics.

2.3.4 A disproportionate equality effect arises when an impact has a proportionately greater effect on protected characteristic groups than on the general population overall at a particular location. For the purposes of this EqlA, disproportionality arises:

- 1) When an impact is predicted for the Proposed Development, where protected characteristic groups are known to make up a greater proportion of the affected resident population than their representation in the Order Limits, Study Area or England; or
- 2) Where an impact is predicted on a community resource which is predominantly or heavily used by protected characteristics groups (e.g., primary schools attended by children or care homes catering for elderly people).

2.3.5 A differential equality effect is one which affects members of a protected group differently from the rest of the general population because of specific needs, or a recognised vulnerability associated with their protected characteristic.

2.3.6 In some cases, protected characteristic groups are subject to both disproportionate and differential equality impacts. The EqlA considers impacts on groups of people and not those on specific individuals.

2.3.7 The criteria used to determine disproportionate or differential impacts with respect to protected characteristic groups include:

- 1) People who share a protected characteristic form a disproportionately large number of those negatively impacted by the Proposed Development;
- 2) Amongst the population affected by the Proposed Development, people who share protected characteristics are particularly vulnerable or sensitive to a possible impact in relation to their possessing a specific protected characteristic;
- 3) People with shared protected characteristics amongst the affected population may not have an equal share in the benefits arising from the proposals. This can be either due to direct or indirect discrimination or

where the groups experience particular barriers to realising such benefits, unless suitable mitigations are proposed to overcome those barriers; and

- 4) The proposals may worsen existing community cohesion amongst the affected local population or exacerbate conflicts with community cohesion policy objectives.

2.3.8 Steps which have been included by the Applicant to mitigate negative impacts are also captured to demonstrate where due regard has been paid to the needs of affected groups.

## 2.4 Conclusions

2.4.1 The conclusions presented in this report are based on a systematic assessment of potential equality impacts across the consultation, construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development.

2.4.2 Conclusions are reached by analysing evidence from the legislation and policy review, equalities baseline, consultation feedback and findings from the Environmental Statement to determine whether any groups with protected characteristics may be differentially or disproportionately affected by the Proposed Development. Completion of the assessment and identification of impacts provides clear and reasoned reporting for the Secretary of State to take into account in having regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, as required under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

## 3 Legislation and policy

### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This section sets out legislation and policy relevant for this EqIA. Wider policy relating to net zero and energy is presented in full in ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Approach to EIA [EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.04], including:

- 1) Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy EN-1 (2025);
- 2) Other National Policy Statements (EN-3 and EN-5) (2025);
- 3) National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

3.1.2 Relevant to the EqIA, Section 4.4 of the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy recognises the potential direct and indirect health impacts that can result from new energy infrastructure (Ref 2). The document highlights that opportunities should be taken to mitigate negative impacts, including impacts on vulnerable groups within society and impacts on those with protected characteristics (paragraph 4.4.6).

3.1.3 In addition, Section 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework identifies that planning policies should promote healthy and safe communities, including guarding against unnecessary loss of values, facilities and services (Ref 3).

3.1.4 Only legislation and policy relevant for the EqIA and not included in ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Approach to EIA [EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.04] have been set out below.

### 3.2 Legislation

#### Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty

3.2.1 The Equality Act 2010 (Ref 1) provides the framework to protect the rights of individuals against unlawful discrimination and to advance equal opportunities for all. Section 149 of the Equality Act sets out the PSED to which the Secretary of State, as a public authority, must have due regard to in the exercise of their functions, including decision-making in the DCO process.

3.2.2 Those subject to the PSED must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- 1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- 3) Encourage good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

3.2.3 The Equality Act 2010 states that meeting different needs involves taking steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities (Section 149(4)). It describes

fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups (Section 149(5)). It states that compliance with the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others (Section 149(6)).

- 3.2.4 The PSED applies fully to the following eight protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
- 3.2.5 Therefore, while marriage and civil partnership is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act, it is not covered by the PSED in relation to its aims of advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.

### **Human Rights Act 1998**

- 3.2.6 The Human Rights Act 1998 (Ref 6) incorporated into UK law the European Convention on Human Rights (the 'Convention'). The following Articles of the Convention (as set out in Schedule 1 of the Human Rights Act 1998) are relevant to the Secretary of State's decision as to include powers of compulsory acquisition.
- 3.2.7 Article 1 of the First Protocol to the Convention provides that no one can be deprived of their possessions except in public interest and subject to the relevant national and international laws and principals.
- 3.2.8 Article 8 of the Convention protects private and family life, home and correspondence. No public authority can interfere with these rights except in accordance with the law, and so far, as is necessary in the interest of national security, public safety or the economic wellbeing of the country.

### **Planning Act 2008**

- 3.2.9 The Planning Act 2008 ("the PA 2008") (Ref 6) establishes a legal framework for applying for, examining, and determining DCO applications for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects. It sets out the requirement for obtaining development consent as well as thresholds for classifying projects as nationally significant. Under the PA 2008, the development consent may be granted only if an application is made for it, with the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (Ref 7) further setting out application requirements.
- 3.2.10 The PA 2008 does not contain any specific guidance relating to protected characteristics and equalities, but it does include a duty to consult with the local community as part of the DCO application process.

## **3.3 Local policy**

### **North Yorkshire Council Equalities Duties 2021-2025**

- 3.3.1 North Yorkshire Council (Ref 8) has a legal duty to prepare and publish one or more equality objectives at least every four years. Equality objectives focus

attention on priority equality issues to deliver improvements in policy-making, service delivery and employment, including resource allocation. Progress towards objectives is reported in quarterly performance reports and published in annual updates on our website. The current objective which is relevant to the Proposed Development is *To improve wellbeing, inclusion and feeling safe for vulnerable groups of children and young people.*

### **North Yorkshire Council: Our equality, diversity and inclusion policy 2021**

- 3.3.2 North Yorkshire Council published the principle and vision for the Council, which aims to provide services fairly to all sections of the community, and ensure equal opportunities for all existing and future employees of the Council (Ref 9).
- 3.3.3 Aims of the policy that refer to the wider community of North Yorkshire, and are relevant to the Proposed Development are as follows:
- 1) Support the development of places and situations where everyone is treated fairly no matter what their background, where people are empowered and have the confidence to play active roles in their communities; and
  - 2) Work with partners and local businesses to improve opportunities for the people of North Yorkshire, especially those who experience disadvantage and discrimination.

## 4 Proposed Development Summary

### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section provides a description of the physical characteristics of the Proposed Development and the activities that would be undertaken during the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases. This context helps inform the assessment of how the Proposed Development may interact with local communities and potentially affect people with protected characteristics.

### 4.2 The Site and surrounding areas

4.2.1 As described in ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: The Proposed Development, the Proposed Development comprises four broad areas:

- 1) Solar Development Sites (total area of 900 hectares (ha));
- 2) Cable Route Corridor (total area of 328.5 ha);
- 3) Highways Improvements Areas (total area of 17.1 ha); and
- 4) Site 8 Access (total area of 24.1 ha).

4.2.2 The total area within the Solar Development Site is approximately 1,270 ha. The Solar Development Sites are split across a total of seven separate land parcels as presented in Figure 2.1: Illustrative Site Layout Plan (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.01]**. The Proposed Development is entirely within North Yorkshire, on predominantly agricultural land interspersed with villages. Nearby settlements include Escrick, Monk Fryston, Birkin, South Milford, Hambleton and Hillam.

4.2.3 The Proposed Development comprises a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating station of over 100 megawatts (MW) and 'associated development' comprising Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), substations, grid connection infrastructure and other infrastructure integral to the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases. An indicative general arrangement across the sites is presented in the ES Volume 2 - Indicative Site Layout Plans **[EN110012/APP/LVS/06.02.02.01]** and in the Outline Environmental Masterplan **[EN110012/APP/LVS/02.12]**. The principal infrastructure of the Proposed Development will be as follows:

- 1) Solar PV modules and mounting structures;
- 2) Conversion Units and 33kV Switchrooms;
- 3) Transformers;
- 4) Extra high voltage (EHV) switchgear and control equipment (housed inside a building);
- 5) Onsite electrical compounds comprising substations, control buildings and associated equipment;

- 6) Onsite cabling;
- 7) A Battery Energy Storage System (BESS);
- 8) On-site and Interconnecting Cables: underground electrical cable routes within the Solar Development Sites, and underground electrical cable routes (located within the Cable Route Corridors) to connect the solar infrastructure (located within the Solar Development Sites 1-4 and 6-8) to each other;
- 9) Grid Connection Cables: underground electrical cable routes to connect the Proposed Development to the National Grid at Monk Fryston Substation, routing from Solar Development Site 4 to Monk Fryston Substation (POC) with the option to extend to Solar Development Site 2;
- 10) A 275 kV cable connection within the existing Monk Fryston Substation and associated works to connect into the substation;
- 11) Spare parts storage buildings or enclosures and back-up generators;
- 12) Fencing and security measures;
- 13) Access tracks;
- 14) Environmental mitigation / biodiversity net gain; and
- 15) Temporary works will also be required to facilitate construction, including, temporary construction compounds, haul roads and highway alterations.

### 4.3 Construction and decommissioning

4.3.1 As described in ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: The Proposed Development [EN110012/APP/LVS/06.01.02], the earliest construction could for the Proposed Development is in 2028. Construction work is unlikely to start on the Solar Development Sites in all locations at the same time. Each individual Solar Development Site 1-4 and 6-8 and the Cable Route Corridors would likely require different lengths of construction given their variance in size, and therefore there would be some overlap between them. Construction works within the Cable Route Corridor would commence with multiple teams spread evenly along the route. It is estimated that the construction period would require approximately 24-36 months in total starting in late 2028. Table 2-6 in ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: The Proposed Development [EN110012/APP/LVS/06.01.02] indicates the potential construction durations across the different parts of the Proposed Development, showing a series of overlapping stages.

4.3.2 Decommissioning will take place at the end of the Proposed Development's operational life (expected to be 60 years). Decommissioning is assumed to be up to a 24 month period, and it is assumed that the process of decommissioning would involve the removal of all above and below ground solar infrastructure, including the solar PV modules and BESS. It is assumed that the process of decommissioning would involve the removal of all solar infrastructure, including the solar PV modules, and BESS and all associated infrastructure (including On-Site Cabling) to 1.2 m bgl; to be recycled or disposed of in accordance with good

practice and processes at that time. Any piles would be removed. It is expected that relatively minor decommissioning activities would require the removal of the small manholes within the Cable Route Corridor to allow access to the joint bay and link boxes.

## 4.4 Operation and maintenance

- 4.4.1 As described in ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: The Proposed Development [EN110012/APP/LVS/06.01.02] once commissioned, the Proposed Development will generate renewable electricity for export to the grid. During general operational maintenance activity on the Solar Development Sites would be restricted principally to vegetation management, equipment maintenance and servicing, ad hoc replacement and renewal of any components that fail or reach the end of their lifespan, periodic fence inspection, vegetation management along accesses, permissive paths and landscape ecological mitigation maintenance, and monitoring to ensure the continued effective operation of the Proposed Development.
- 4.4.2 Along the Cable Route Corridor, operational activity will consist of routine inspections and any reactive maintenance such as where a cable has been damaged.
- 4.4.3 The frequency of regular maintenance visits would reasonably be expected to be limited to no more than five visits per month to any of the Solar Development Sites. Limited use of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) may be required for the ad-hoc replacement of components.
- 4.4.4 During the anticipated 60-year operational life of the Proposed Development, it is also expected that there will be a requirement for periodic replacement of some of the electrical infrastructure. It is not expected that an extensive replacement of all components will be required across the entirety of the Proposed Development during one period; instead, the programme for replacement of equipment across the Proposed Development is anticipated to be staged to maintain the electrical export to the National Grid.

## 5 Equalities baseline

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 A baseline profile of the population living in proximity to the Proposed Development enables an assessment of the potential impacts the Proposed Development may have on groups with protected characteristics.
- 5.1.2 The impact of the Proposed Development with respect to equality is considered at various spatial levels according to available data and the likely extent of the effect under consideration. This includes analysis of the 2021 Census, datasets from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and data from the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).
- 5.1.3 The geographical areas chosen for this baseline are referred to as the Study Area, which aligns with that used for the Socioeconomic assessment [EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.13] and comprises of data from the former Selby District; the region, consisting of Yorkshire and the Humber; and England and Wales, for comparison.

### 5.2 Population

- 5.2.1 In 2021 the population of the Selby district area was 91,988, accounting for 2% of the 5,480,774 people living in the Yorkshire and the Humber region. Since 2011, Selby has seen a 10.2% increase in the population, which is higher than both the regional and national average growth. Table 5.1 presents these figures in full. This small population reflects the more rural nature of the Selby district area (Ref 12).

**Table 5.1 Population and Population changes, Census (2021)**

Area	Population	Population increase
Selby	91,988	10.2%
Yorkshire and the Humber	5,480,774	3.7%
England and Wales	59,597,542	6.3%

### 5.3 Protected characteristics

- 5.3.1 Population data on the protected characteristics as established in the 2010 Equality Act, including sex, age, disability, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender identify and marriage or civil partnership, have been collated for the geographical areas of study.

## Sex

- 5.3.2 Across all geographies, there is a slightly larger proportion of females than males. In Selby, 50.9% of the population is female, compared with 49.1% of the population which is male. This is similar across the region of Yorkshire and the Humber, which has a population that is 50.9% female and 49.1% male, and England and Wales, which has a population that is 51.0% female and 49.0% male (Ref 13).

**Table 5.2 Sex (%) breakdown across geographies, Census 2021**

Sex	Selby	Yorkshire & the Humber	England & Wales
Male	49.1	49.1	49.0
Female	50.9	50.9	51.0

## Age

- 5.3.3 The concentration of ages in Selby broadly follows the regional and national pattern, with the three largest age groups being 50-64 (19.5%), 35-49 (19.3%) and 25-34 (13.5%). Selby does have a marginally lower than average working age population compared to the regional and national average (61.6% compared to 62.3% and 62.9% respectively), which can be explained by having a higher concentration of elderly people (65+). This group makes up 20.4% of the Selby population compared to 19.0% and 18.5% for Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales respectively. Plate 5.1 shows the age distribution across Selby, the region and England and Wales. Since 2011, there has been a 3.6% increase in the 65+ age group, with other age ranges falling since 2011. This follows both the regional and national story, illustrating the trend of an ageing population (Ref 14).

**Plate 5.1 Proportion of population between age bands, Census 2021**



### Disability

5.3.4 Of the residents in Selby, 16.3% are disabled under the Equality Act. This is lower than the Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales, with 18.3% and 17.5% of residents considered disabled under the Equalities Act, respectively (Ref 15).

**Table 5.3 Disability (%), Census 2021**

Disability	Selby	Yorkshire & the Humber	England & Wales
Disabled under the Equality Act: Daily activities limited 'a lot'	6.26	8.10	7.48
Disabled under the Equality Act: Daily activities limited 'a little'	10.0	10.5	10.0
Not disabled under the Equality Act	83.7	82.4	81.3

## Ethnic group

5.3.5 Table 5.4 shows the breakdown of ethnic groups in Selby, Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales. The largest ethnic group across all geographies is White, which makes up 97.7% of Selby. The second largest ethnic group in Selby is Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, which is different from Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales, where the second largest ethnic group is Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh. Overall, Selby is notably less diverse than the region, and England and Wales (Ref 16).

**Table 5.4 Ethnicity (%), Census 2021**

Ethnicity	Selby	Yorkshire & the Humber	England & Wales
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	0.754	8.89	9.25
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean	0.248	2.15	4.04
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	0.961	2.14	2.88
White	97.7	85.4	81.7
'Other' ethnic group	0.357	1.44	2.11

## Religion

5.3.6 Table 5.5 shows the religious breakdown of Selby, Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales. Christianity represents the largest religion across all geographies, although the proportion of Christians in Selby (54.7%) is notably higher than in the region and England and Wales (46.2%, 45.0%). The second largest religion across all geographies was 'no religion'. The religion representing the smallest proportion across all geographies is Judaism (Ref 17).

**Table 5.5 Religion (%), Census 2021**

Religion	Selby	Yorkshire & the Humber	England & Wales
No religion	38.8	39.4	37.2
Christian	54.7	45.0	46.2
Buddhist	0.199	0.288	0.457
Hindu	0.129	0.533	1.73
Jewish	0.070	0.171	0.455
Muslim	0.245	8.07	6.50
Sikh	0.111	0.439	0.879
Other religion	0.399	0.431	0.584
Not answered	5.27	5.72	6.03

## Sexual orientation

5.3.7 Table 5.6 refers to the breakdown of sexual orientation across the different geographies. Straight or heterosexual represents the largest proportion of residents across all geographies, although it represents a greater proportion of Selby residents (92.1%) when compared to Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales. The second largest proportion represents those who did not answer the question, which accounts for 5.75% to 7.47% of each population (Ref 18).

**Table 5.6 Sexual orientation (%), Census 2021**

Sexual orientation	Selby	Yorkshire & the Humber	England & Wales
Straight or heterosexual	92.1	89.7	89.4
Gay or Lesbian	1.06	1.43	1.54
Bisexual	0.852	1.31	1.23
All other sexual orientation	0.184	0.331	0.340
Not answered	5.75	7.18	7.47

## Gender identity

5.3.8 Table 5.7 provides a summary of different gender identities throughout Selby, Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales. The majority of residents in Selby identify with their sex as registered at birth (95.4%). This is similar to Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales (Ref 19).

**Table 5.7 Gender identity (%), Census 2021**

Gender identity	Selby	Yorkshire & the Humber	England & Wales
Same as sex registered at birth	95.4	93.6	93.5
Different from sex registered at birth but no specific identity given	0.133	0.250	0.242
Trans woman	0.062	0.093	0.098
Trans man	0.034	0.093	0.100
All other gender identities	0.057	0.101	0.100
Not answered	4.28	5.81	6.00

## Marriage or Civil Partnership

5.3.9 As shown in Table 5.8, the majority of residents of Selby who are aged 16 and over are married or in a civil partnership, which represents 51.8% of the population. The second most common partnership status is never married and never registered a single partnership, which represents 30.3%. Whilst this trend is the same for Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales, a higher percentage of Selby is in a marriage or registered civil partnership, and a lower percentage are never married or in registered civil partnership, when compared to the other geographical indicators (Ref 20).

**Table 5.8 Legal partnership status (%), Census 2021**

Legal partnership status	Selby	Yorkshire & the Humber	England & Wales
Never married and never registered a single partnership	30.3	37.8	37.9
Married or in a registered civil partnership	51.8	44.2	44.6
Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership	2.11	2.29	2.24
Divorced or civil partnership dissolved	9.64	9.42	9.11
Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner	6.17	6.43	6.12

## Pregnancy and maternity

5.3.10 Pregnancy and maternity statistics have not been identified for Selby or Yorkshire and the Humber but are reported at the national level by the NHS. In 2024-2025, there were 542,235 deliveries in NHS hospitals in England (Ref 21).

## 5.4 Socioeconomic profile

5.4.1 The socioeconomic profile considers several factors including levels of deprivation, employment, education, health, housing, transport and connectivity, as well as access to services and facilities, public realm and open space, safety, security and wellbeing and community cohesion. These factors are relevant to those with protected characteristics and inequality and as such, provide additional baseline information.

## Deprivation

5.4.2 Deprivation is measured by the 2025 English Indices of Deprivation (IoD) (Ref 22). This provides an overall deprivation score and rank for Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) across England by building upon seven distinct domains of deprivation, with 1 being the most deprived decile in the country and 10 being the least. These domains are seen as the key indicators which influence a person's level of deprivation, and are as follows:

- 1) Income;
- 2) Employment;
- 3) Health Deprivation and Disability;
- 4) Education, Skills Training;
- 5) Crime;
- 6) Barriers to Housing and Services, and;
- 7) Living Environment.

5.4.3 Overall, Selby performs well on the IoD, with an average of 7 (the 4th lowest decile). Only 1 of Selby's 54 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) falls into decile 1 (the most deprived), whilst 12 of the 54 LSOAs fall into deciles 9 and 10, the least deprived. The one LSOA in the most deprived decile is around 2 km away from the Cable Route Corridor, and over 6 km away from the closest Solar Development Site.

## Employment

5.4.4 In 2021, 61.9% of the population was economically active in Selby (Ref 23). This was largely made up of people in full-time employment (excl. full time students), with 59.9% of the population employed. This was much higher than both the regional (53.5%) and national (55.5%) employment figures - where full-time employment includes both full-time employees and self-employed individuals who work full-time.

5.4.5 36.6% of the population were economically inactive in Selby in 2021, with 25.3% of the total population retired – quite a bit higher than the 22.9% regional and 21.6% national retiree figures. Economically inactive students formed just 3.1% of the population - 2.7% less than the figure for Yorkshire and The Humber and 2.5% less than the figure for England and Wales.

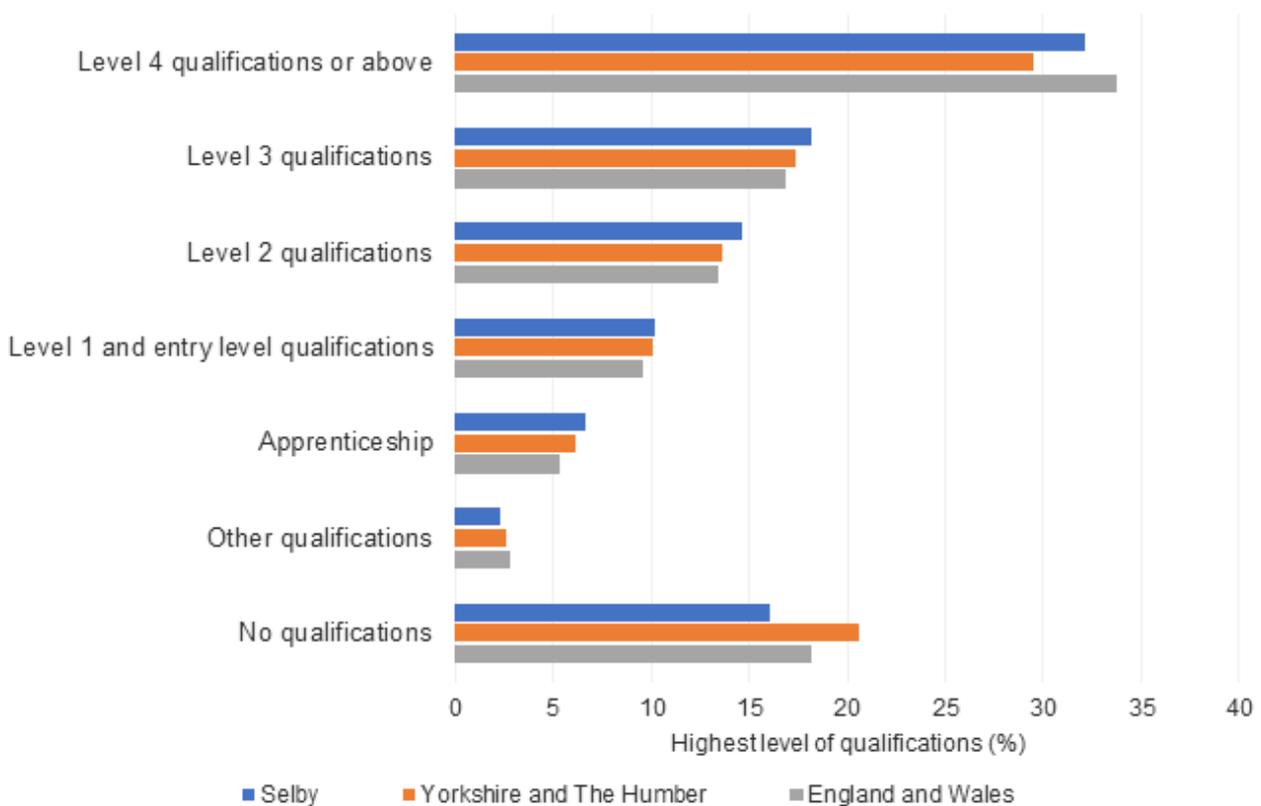
5.4.6 Looking at unemployment, only 2.2% of the population were unemployed compared to 3.4% both regionally and nationally, whilst there was also a far smaller concentration of people off work with long-term sickness or looking after the home or family (6.2% compared to 9.6% in Yorkshire and The Humber).

5.4.7 Overall, these figures indicate a relatively strong supply of employment opportunities in the local economy, which is met by demand from the labour force.

## Education

5.4.8 Plate 5.2 shows the highest level of qualifications by area (Ref 24). The population in Selby have a higher overall level of qualifications than both the region of Yorkshire and the Humber and England and Wales, with only 16.0% of the population having no qualifications compared to 20.6% and 18.2% regionally and nationally. This means that across most qualification levels Selby is slightly higher than the regional and national average. This is with the exception of Level 4 qualifications or higher (degree or above), which is 32.1% compared to the national average of 33.8%. This is still higher than the regional average of 29.5%.

**Plate 5.2 Highest Qualification level, Census 2021**



## Health

5.4.9 In the 2021 Census, 49.3% of residents in Selby described their health as ‘very good’, which was an increase from 47.5% in the 2011 Census (Ref 25). 34.3% of those surveyed in 2021 described their health as ‘good’. 0.9% of Selby residents described their health as ‘very bad’ in 2021 (similar to 2011), while those describing their health as ‘bad’ reduced from 3.8% in 2011 to 3.3% in 2021.

5.4.10 The male life expectancy at birth in Selby is 76.89 years, and the female life expectancy at birth is 83.77 years. This is slightly lower than the England average of 79.25 years for men, yet female life expectancy is similar to the England average of 83.12.

## Transport and connectivity

- 5.4.11 Transport and connectivity is described in ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Transport and Movement **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.14]**.
- 5.4.12 Twenty-seven Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) are within the vicinity of the Proposed Development, which include cycle routes, footpaths and bridleways. Many of these traverse or adjoin the Solar Development Sites or Cable Route Corridors. These routes are a mix of paved paths used for commuting, and paths through natural areas such as along fields, used for recreational walks. One of these routes is a, Sustrans National Cycle Route.
- 5.4.13 Figure 14.2 Bus and Rail Stations (ES Volume 2) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.02.14.02]** displays public transport facilities within the vicinity of the Solar Development Sites and Cable Route Corridor. Bus routes nearest to the Solar Development Sites and Cable Route Corridor include the 415, 64, 164, 193 and 496. These routes serve locations including York, Leeds and Selby. Rail services near to the Solar Development Facilities and Cable Route Corridor and include rail stations at Church Fenton, Sherburn-in-Elmet, Selby Station and South Milford. These stations serve locations including Halifax and Hull, Leeds, Wakefield, Upton and York.

## 5.5 Potential Equalities Receptors

- 5.5.1 Table 5.9 shows community and recreational receptors that have the potential to be impacted by the Proposed Development and are included in greater detail in Appendix 13.1 Socioeconomic Receptors Impact Assessment (ES Volume 3) **[EN10012/APP/LVS/06.03.13.01]** and the geographical locations of these potential receptors are displayed visually in Potential Equalities Impact Assessment Receptors Figure 1 **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/05.02.04.01]**. These receptors are likely to serve populations defined as protected under the Equalities Act. Users of these receptors may potentially experience differential and disproportionate effects due to the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

**Table 5.9 Potential equality receptors**

	Receptor	Protected characteristics	Sensitivity	Distance from Draft Order Limits (m)
<b>Solar Development Site 1</b>				
1	Yorkshire Gentleman's Cricket Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Younger people are likely to participate in the Junior Cricket program</li> </ul>	Low	555
2	Carol Saunders Swim School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to be used by younger people</li> <li>Provides services for people with disability</li> </ul>	Medium	810
3	Hot Tap Dance School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to be used by younger people</li> </ul>	Low	835
4	Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to be used by younger people and older people</li> </ul>	Low	915
5	Coronation Memorial Seat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commemorative monument with benches and steps for seating. May be used by older people to sit and rest.</li> </ul>	Low	930
6	Escrick Playing Fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to be used by younger people</li> </ul>	Medium	965
7	Escrick Village Hall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes facilities for young people, older people</li> </ul>	Medium	985
8	Escrick Church of England Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by younger people including children with special educational needs</li> </ul>	Medium	995
<b>Solar Development Site 2</b>				

	Receptor	Protected characteristics	Sensitivity	Distance from Draft Order Limits (m)
9	Lowfield Meadow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used as a dog field, not likely to be used disproportionately by groups with protected characteristics</li> </ul>	Low	230
10	Hambleton Playing Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to be used by younger people</li> </ul>	Medium	695
<b>Solar Development Site 3</b>				
11	Play Safe at the Pavillion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After school nursery used by younger people</li> </ul>	Medium	325
12	Monk Fryston United Football Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Younger people are likely to participate in the junior football club</li> </ul>	Medium	365
13	Hillam and Monk Fryston Community Sports Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to be used by younger people</li> </ul>	Medium	400
23*	Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides services for people with disability, including neurodiversity and mental ill-health</li> </ul>	High	0
<b>Solar Development Site 4</b>				
24*	Birkin Fishery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fishing location and tea room, likely to include use by a variety of age groups including the</li> </ul>	Medium	60

\*Birkin Fishery, Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing and Gascoigne Wood Fishery are included as Local Businesses in Appendix 13.1 Socioeconomic Receptors Impact Assessment [EN10012/APP/LVS/06.03.13.01]. As recreational facilities, they provide community value and are used by groups with protected characteristics. Therefore, for the purposes of this assessment, they are included as a community receptors.

Receptor		Protected characteristics	Sensitivity	Distance from Draft Order Limits (m)
		young and the elderly.		
14	St Mary's Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by people practicing religion, likely used by older people</li> </ul>	Low	580
35*	Gascoigne Wood Fishery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fishing location, likely to include use by a variety of age groups including the young and the elderly</li> </ul>	Medium	100
<b>Solar Development Site 6</b>				
15	St Wilfrid's Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by people practicing religion, likely used by older people</li> </ul>	Low	800
16	Swimfinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to include use by younger people</li> </ul>	Low	865
17	Monk Fryston Surgery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely used by older people, people with disability and pregnant people</li> </ul>	Low	880
18	The Royal British Legion Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely used by older people and people with disability</li> </ul>	Medium	910
19	Monk Fryston and Hillam Community Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely to be used by younger people</li> <li>Provides ante-natal and post-natal classes for pregnant people</li> </ul>	Low	955
20	Monk Fryston Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not likely to be used disproportionately by groups with</li> </ul>	Low	750

Receptor	Protected characteristics	Sensitivity	Distance from Draft Order Limits (m)
	protected characteristics		
<b>Solar Development Site 7</b>			
21	California Dog Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not likely to be used disproportionately by groups with protected characteristics</li> </ul>	Low 500
22	South Milford Football Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Younger people are likely to participate in the junior football club</li> </ul>	Low 585
23	South Milford Cricket Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Younger people are likely to participate in the junior cricket club</li> </ul>	Low 665
24	South Milford Methodist Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by people practicing religion, likely used by older people</li> </ul>	Low 900
<b>Solar Development Site 8</b>			
25	Bishop Wood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely used by younger people</li> </ul>	Low 720
<b>Highway Improvement Areas</b>			
26	All Saints Church, Wistow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by people practicing religion, likely used by older people</li> </ul>	Low 40
27	St Mary's Church, Hambleton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by people practicing religion, likely used by older people</li> </ul>	Low 70
28	Hambleton C of E Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by younger people including children with special educational needs</li> </ul>	Medium 75

	Receptor	Protected characteristics	Sensitivity	Distance from Draft Order Limits (m)
29	Wistow Parochial C of E Primary School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by younger people including children with special educational needs</li> </ul>	Medium	90
30	Blossom's Day Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by young children</li> </ul>	Medium	75
31	Tiny Toes Private Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by young children</li> </ul>	Medium	20
32	Riccall Play Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by younger people, parents and caretakers</li> </ul>	Medium	40
33	Skipwith Methodist Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by people practicing religion, likely used by older people</li> </ul>	Low	5
34	St Helens Church, Skipwith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by people practicing religion, likely used by older people</li> </ul>	Low	5
35	Wistow Village Pond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely used by people of all ages and characteristics, may be of particular value to younger people, older people and caretakers</li> </ul>	Low	70
<b>Village Greens</b>				
36	Mount Pleasant Recreation Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely used by people of all ages and characteristics, may be of particular value to younger people, older people and caretakers</li> </ul>	Low	

	Receptor	Protected characteristics	Sensitivity	Distance from Draft Order Limits (m)
37	Gateforth Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely used by people of all ages and characteristics, may be of particular value to younger people, older people and caretakers</li> </ul>	Low	
38	The Village Green, Skipwith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely used by people of all ages and characteristics, may be of particular value to younger people, older people and caretakers</li> </ul>	Low	

## 6 Consultation

### 6.1 Overview

6.1.1 This section provides a summary of measures undertaken to reduce potential negative equality impacts from the Proposed Development.

### 6.2 Consultation and engagement

6.2.1 Consultation was conducted in a way that gave anyone interested the opportunity to access information and provide their views. Methods such as design workshops, a dedicated Project website, direct communications, a published Project Information Booklet, meetings and briefing sessions and consultation information events were used.

6.2.2 The Applicant's consultation methodology was developed to accommodate communicating as effectively as possible with groups so they can have their say. Contact was made with bodies and gateway organisations, including organisations serving disabled people and those with learning disabilities, ethnic minorities, older people, younger people and carers, ahead of consultation starting to ensure the approach met the specific needs of their members. Further details are included in Consultation Report - Appendix 4 Statement of Community Consultation Materials **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/05.01.04]**.

6.2.3 In addition, the following measures were undertaken to promote accessibility of consultation events.

- 1) Events were held across different days of the week and different times to accommodate different working hours and care schedules;
- 2) Community Access Points ('CAPS') were selected based on their public accessibility and used as deposit locations where hard copies of relevant consultation materials were available;
- 3) Written feedback could be provided via an online feedback form, a PDF version of the physical feedback form submitted via email, a printed copy of the feedback form and submitted in person or returning it to FREEPOST LIGHT VALLEY SOLAR (no stamp required), and verbal feedback could be provided over the Proposed Development freephone information line;
- 4) Consultation materials were available in alternative formats, such as large-print, audio or braille;
- 5) In-person information events were accessible by public transport and accommodated the needs of individuals with limited mobility; and
- 6) A webinar 'Zoom' was held and recorded and was accessible via the internet and by telephone.

## 7 Embedded mitigation

7.1.1 The following measures of relevance to equalities are included within plans and strategies that form part of the DCO submission, to reduce negative impacts and enhance positive impacts associated with the Proposed Development.

7.1.2 The Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.02]** includes the following measures:

- 1) Design and use of site enclosures, housing and temporary stockpiles, where practicable and necessary, to provide acoustic screening at the earliest opportunity;
- 2) During construction, the appointed Contractor(s) will ensure that the impacts from construction traffic on the local community (including local residents and businesses and users of the surrounding transport network) are minimised, where reasonably practicable, by implementing the measures set out in the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.12]**.
- 3) Prior to commencing works on-site, the Contractor(s) will develop and implement a Stakeholder Communications Plan that includes community engagement and will detail a complaints procedure.

7.1.3 A Community Liaison Officer (or alternative) would be appointed to lead discussions with the local community during construction, as part of a Community Liaison Group. Details of the Community Liaison Group will be agreed with North Yorkshire Council pursuant to a DCO Requirement. In addition to embedded measures, the following receptors have been identified as requiring specific 'additional' mitigation to minimise significant adverse effects during the

construction phase. These measures are recommended to address their sensitivity and proximity to construction activities and traffic. There is a requirement in the oCEMP **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.02]** to further address these when producing the Detailed CEMP.

- 1) Birkin Fishery and Gascoigne Fishery: maintain ongoing engagement with fishery operators to coordinate works during key events, schedule noisy activities outside peak fishing times (early mornings, evenings, weekends) and install temporary acoustic and visual screening along boundaries closest to the fishery to reduce disturbance effects.
- 2) Birkin Fishery Tea Room: manage HGV movements to avoid peak visitor times, provide advance notice of high – activity periods and maintain communication with operators, and consider temporary screening for outdoor seating areas to reduce visual disturbance.
- 3) Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing: Manage HGV movements to reduce impacts or avoid peak visitor times when practicable , provide advance notice of any high-activity periods and maintain communication with operators and manage any activities that might result in excessive noise or visual disturbances (e.g., flashing lights, high visibility equipment) near paddocks.

7.1.4 An Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) has been prepared and submitted as part of the application **[EN110012/APP/LVS/07.05]**. This includes measures to mitigate the effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape and visual receptors, including the installation of appropriate planting, and landscaping screening to protect tourism and recreational receptors.

7.1.5 Although day to day lighting is very minimal, the oCEMP and Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.03]** include a requirement to develop a sensitive lighting scheme to ensure inward distribution of light and avoiding light spill onto existing boundary features during construction and replacement activities, and implement the use of motion detection security lighting to avoid permanent lighting within the substation and BESS area.

7.1.6 The Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.04]** provides that the measures proposed for the construction phase (see oCEMP) will also be adopted for the decommissioning phase in respect of socioeconomic impacts.

7.1.7 The Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (oSSCEP) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.13]** includes:

- 1) The Applicant will seek opportunities to work with existing further and higher education providers in and around the Study Area to offer apprenticeships and other academic support during the construction or operational phase of the Proposed Development.

- 2) The Applicant is committed to seeking opportunities for local recruitment and procurement and supporting local education and skills uplifting during the Proposed Developments operation;
- 3) The Applicant will introduce initiatives to maximise the diversity, equality and inclusion of the workforce. The following groups which would be the target of this measure include:
  - a) workers of a certain gender, ethnicity or age (e.g. women in construction and engineering, 16- to 24-year-olds or older workers); and
  - b) disadvantaged or under-represented groups, for example, long-term unemployed, ex-offenders or disabled people.
- 4) Through consultation post-consent, particular target groups would be identified using specialist local job brokerage agencies.

7.1.8 Regular reporting on the demographic profile of the workforce could be recorded and documented using a voluntary survey to collect data on the age, ethnicity, gender and disability of the workforce, to ensure hiring and working practices are equitable and inclusive.

7.1.9 The Applicant is committed to minimising disruption to the public along the PRoW network wherever practicable, while ensuring that safety considerations are carefully addressed throughout the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development. This is provided through the measures in the Outline Public Right of Way Management Plan (oPRoWMP) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.09]** which includes that where PRoWs are proposed to be closed for construction and later reinstated or diverted, condition surveys will confirm the replacement route meets or exceeds previous standards, and access to all existing PRoW and the permissive paths within the Order limits will be maintained. Surface finishes, and signage of reinstated and diverted PRoWs will be agreed upon with the Local Planning Authority before installation.

7.1.10 The management plans incorporate embedded and good practice measures, as well as any further mitigation that arises out of the EIA process. Outline versions of these management plans are submitted alongside the ES as part of this DCO Application to secure the commitments within each assessment. Requirements are included in the draft DCO **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/03.01]** to ensure detailed management plans will be prepared by the appointed Contractor(s), substantially in accordance with the outline management plans, and will be submitted for approval by North Yorkshire Council in advance of starting the relevant phase of works.

## 8 Equality impact topics

### 8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 Based on the findings of the topic chapters that form ES Volume 1 and the Consultation Report **[EN0010012/APP/05.01]**, this chapter presents an overview of the receptors and topics that have potential for disproportionate and/or

differential equality impacts as a result of anticipated activities associated with the Proposed Development.

- 8.1.2 Section 9 of this EqlA builds on these receptors and topics, considering the nature of their project-specific effects and an assessment of the consequent positive and negative impacts that may be experienced by equality groups.

## 8.2 Consultation phase

### Accessible and inclusive consultation activities

- 8.2.1 Accessible and inclusive consultation could have a positive equality impact by reducing participation barriers for protected characteristic groups. Providing materials online, in-person events, and formats such as large print or alternative languages could support engagement from older people, disabled people, people whose first language is not English, and those with mobility issues. Hosting events at accessible venues near public transport further increases opportunities for people who may otherwise struggle to take part in planning processes.
- 8.2.2 Vulnerable groups likely to be affected by accessible and inclusive consultation activities are older people, people with disability and parents and caregivers.

## 8.3 Construction phase

### Severance to Public Rights of Way (PRoW) or changes to journey length or time

- 8.3.1 Disruption to PRoW (notably temporary diversions and closures of PRoW) used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders (WCH) has the potential to differentially affect equality groups. For example, elderly and young people that may be less likely to have access to a car as an alternative method of travel, young families with pushchairs, wheelchair users and other disabled people, as well as their caregivers, may experience barriers to recreation, and children who may be more sensitive to changes in public access. Any changes in PRoW journey length or severance therefore have the potential to affect these equality groups.

### Increased traffic flows leading to changes in pedestrian amenity, fear and intimidation

- 8.3.2 Changes in traffic flows due to construction activity could differentially affect certain groups, particularly disabled people, women, older people, children, pregnant people and parents with young children and those using pushchairs. These impacts relate not only to physical safety but also to perceptions of danger, which may deter some groups from walking or cycling in affected areas (Ref 26).
- 8.3.3 Construction traffic, particularly heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), poses an elevated risk to road traffic accidents. HGVs are associated with a disproportionate number of pedestrian and cyclist fatalities due to risk factors such as limited driver visibility

and large vehicle size. These risks are especially acute for people with visual or hearing impairments, people with learning disabilities and children.

- 8.3.4 Increased traffic volumes and HGV movements may also result in heightened fear and intimidation, especially amongst vulnerable populations such as older people, people with restricted mobility and women walking with children.

### **Severance and accessibility impacts, during construction**

- 8.3.5 Increased traffic and construction activities may result in severance, which occurs when traffic or physical barriers discourage or prevent people from accessing services, facilities and social networks. This can be particularly impactful for children, older people and people with disabilities, parents and caregivers and people with lower socioeconomic status as these populations may rely more on services and facilities such as hospitals, schools, community centres and recreational activities.

### **Changes in views and landscape character**

- 8.3.6 Changes in views from community areas (people living and moving around the area) and recreational receptors, as a result of construction activity and loss of vegetation, have the potential to affect some equality groups differentially. In particular, such changes may affect those with disabilities such as autism that affect a person's ability to interact and experience their surrounding environment, or those with illnesses such as dementia, which can result in disorientation surrounding changes to the view and landscape character.

### **Elevated noise and vibration levels**

- 8.3.7 Certain groups with protected characteristics are more sensitive to changes in noise and vibration levels and may experience different effects compared to the overall population including children and young people, elderly, people with disabilities, and pregnant women.
- 8.3.8 Traffic-related noise is correlated more broadly with lower health-related quality of life in children and increased health risks for the elderly (Ref 27). Elevated environmental noise has the potential to cause health impacts such as hearing impairment, hypertension, ischemic heart disease, annoyance, and sleep disturbance. Vulnerable groups include those with long-term health problems disabilities, the elderly, and the unemployed who both tend to spend large amounts of time in their homes.
- 8.3.9 Exposure to noise could be a particular problem around schools, leading to cognitive distractions for children during lessons (Ref 28). Children with special needs including autism could be particularly sensitive to their environment, and in some cases could be extremely distressed by loud noise. Children with hearing difficulties also benefit from a quiet learning environment, and background noise could reduce the effectiveness of hearing aids.

### **Elevated dust levels and air pollutants**

- 8.3.10 Increased air pollution is linked to worse health outcomes and has disproportionate effects on certain populations including older people, children and those with pre-existing conditions, particularly respiratory illness. These populations are more vulnerable to increased air pollution and dust emissions from construction traffic and works.

### **Employment, skills and training opportunities**

- 8.3.11 Construction is expected to generate temporary employment opportunities. Employment skills and training opportunities generated during the construction period could positively affect protected characteristic groups that are disproportionately affected by unemployment, such as young people, males and people with disabilities.

## **8.4 Operational Phase**

### **Changes in views and landscape character**

- 8.4.1 During the operational phase, changes to views and landscape primarily relate to long-term alterations in the landscape character of the area particularly in relation to views from PRow, surrounding residential properties and recreational spaces. Changes to the visual landscape could have differential effects on groups who rely on local outdoor spaces for wellbeing, routine, or mobility. For example, older residents and those with limited access to transport may be disproportionately affected if the visual character or amenity value of familiar walking routes is diminished.

### **Employment opportunities**

- 8.4.2 The operation and maintenance phase is also expected to generate a limited number of employment opportunities, which could positively affect protected characteristic groups that are disproportionately affected by unemployment, such as young people, males and people with disabilities.

### **Improvements in PRow and permissive paths**

- 8.4.3 Once operational, the creation of new permissive paths will improve connectivity within the PRow network. They provide new links between existing PRow, create new loops, introduce increased accessibility to cyclists and improve connectivity. Appropriate gates and barriers will be installed at access points to control the type of users permitted on each path. Gates will be designed to allow pedestrian and cyclist access while preventing horse riders where equestrian use is not intended.

## 8.5 Decommissioning phase

- 8.5.1 The same impact topics identified during construction may also arise during decommissioning. Based on the findings of the ES Volume 1, any effects on protected characteristic groups are expected to be similar in nature and no more severe than those experienced during construction.

# 9 Assessment of Impacts

## 9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 The assessment considers the potential equality impacts on affected people sharing protected characteristics arising from the Proposed Development. It considers disproportionate and differential impacts (positive and negative) on protected characteristic groups during consultation, construction, operation, and decommissioning phases.

## 9.2 Assessment

- 9.2.1 Table 9.1 highlights the topics where there could be a potential pathway for equality impacts and the protected characteristic groups that may be affected. Note, decommissioning impacts are anticipated of equal or similar nature and extent as experienced during construction and have therefore been omitted here.
- 9.2.2 Table 9.2 provides a detailed assessment of the equality effects, informed by the findings of the topics within ES Volume 1 that have potential to impact the relevant equality groups identified in Table 9.1. A conclusion is provided to confirm whether equality groups may experience disproportionate and/or differential equality impacts. As above, decommissioning impacts are anticipated to be of equal or similar nature and extent as experienced during construction and have therefore also been omitted as a separate assessment from Table 9.2.

**Table 9.1** Topics with potential for equality impacts

Topics	Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and civil partnerships	Pregnancy and maternity	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual orientation	Lower socioeconomic status groups	Other groups: parents and caregivers
Accessible consultation events	✓	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓
Impacts to PRow	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	✓
Increased HGV and construction vehicles leading to changes in pedestrian amenity, fear and intimidation	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	✓
Severance and accessibility impacts during construction	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	✓	✓
Changes in views and landscape character	✓	✓	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓
Elevated noise and vibration levels	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	✓

Topics	Age	Disability	Gender reassignment	Marriage and civil partnerships	Pregnancy and maternity	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual orientation	Lower socioeconomic status groups	Other groups: parents and caregivers
Elevated dust and air pollution	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	✓	✓
Employment, skills and training opportunities	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	x	✓	x	✓	x
<b>Operation</b>											
Changes in views and landscape character	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	✓
Employment, skills and training opportunities	✓	✓	x	x	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x
Improvements to PRow and permissive paths	✓	✓	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	x	✓

**Table 9.2 Assessment of impacts**

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
<b>Consultation and engagement</b>		
<p>Accessible and inclusive consultation activities</p>	<p>Implementation of accessible and inclusive consultation methods could support positive equality outcomes among protected characteristic groups who may otherwise face barriers to engagement.</p> <p>There were six in-person consultation events held across different days of the week and covered a range of times to accommodate different working hours and care schedules, and one online webinar ‘Zoom’ was held. In-person information events were held at venues within the core consultation zone that were accessible by public transport and accommodated the needs of individuals with limited mobility. Community Access Points (CAPs) with printed consultation material were placed in locations that were publicly accessible, with alternative formats available including large print or braille.</p>	<p>By offering multiple participation channels and using accessible venues, the approach to consultation has made efforts to mitigate the common barriers to engagement. This supported better opportunity for equitable involvement from groups who wished to participate and who may otherwise have been excluded – such as older people, disabled individuals, parents and care givers. In addition, there was an effort to engage with seldom heard groups through working with gateway organisations. This inclusive consultation strategy is assessed as having a <b>minor long-term positive</b> impact on protected characteristic groups.</p>
<b>Construction</b>		
<p>Severance to Public Rights of Way (PRoW) or changes to journey length or time</p>	<p>ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Socioeconomics [EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.13] has identified that there are no significant effects on the desirability and use of PRoW due to construction noise, traffic, views, diversions or closures of routes during construction.</p> <p>However, there is still the potential for access barriers to affect specific population groups, which may cause</p>	<p>Temporary changes to the PRoW network during construction may result in some <b>temporary minor negative</b> impacts which may have differential impacts for groups such as older people, disabled people, and those who are pregnant or caring for young children,</p>

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
	<p>negative impacts. These impacts are considered differential and may be disproportionate for over 65s and individuals with disability in the local area where alternative routes are not appropriately accessible, due to their surface treatment or other reasons, or well-communicated to affected users.</p>	<p>particularly where diversions are less familiar or more physically demanding.</p> <p>The proposed Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan <b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.09]</b> includes measures to maintain connectivity. There are three permanent PRoW diversions proposed as part of the Proposed Development. They are located around Solar Development Site 1 and are rural in nature. The diversions will maintain the same rural character and value of the diverted PRoW. Elsewhere, where there are temporary diversions during construction, measures will be put in place to ensure temporary diversions are safe and clearly communicated alternative routes are provided. It is not likely that these diversions will involve walking along busy roads as the majority of PRoW intercepted by the Solar Development Sites or the Cable Route Corridors are rural and the diversions would typically be short term and localised.</p>
<p>Increased traffic flows leading to changes in pedestrian amenity, fear and intimidation</p>	<p>During the construction phase, increased traffic flows – particularly from HGVs traffic flows, particularly from HGVs accessing construction compounds and moving along local rural roads – may affect pedestrian experience and perceived safety. This includes effects such as reduced pedestrian amenity, increased noise, and a greater sense of fear and intimidation near construction traffic routes. ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Movement</p>	<p>The effects of construction traffic on pedestrian amenity may result in some temporary negative impacts for equality receptors.</p> <p>Temporary changes to the walking environment may result in differential impacts for groups such as older people, disabled people, and those who are pregnant or caring</p>

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
	<p><b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.14]</b> recognises that construction activities will temporarily affect pedestrian and cyclist amenity in the vicinity of site access points and along haul routes.</p> <p>However, these effects are assessed as not significant due to the embedded mitigation proposed in the <b>Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) [EN0110012/APP/LVS.07.12]</b>.</p> <p>However, equality impacts may still arise. People with protected characteristics, particularly older people, young persons, disabled people, pregnant people and those caring for young children may be more affected by the temporary change in character of walking environments. Vehicle presence, engine noise, or reduced sightlines could discourage walking, increase feelings of anxiety or intimidation, or reduce independence for these groups.</p> <p>Sensitive pedestrian receptors in the local area that may be disproportionately affected may include primary schools, places of worship, and community halls, which are frequently used by equality groups. The presence of construction vehicles near these locations may lead carers and parents to alter behaviour, such as avoiding walking routes, limiting children’s independent travel, or driving more frequently.</p> <p>Work has been done to try and route construction traffic away from sensitive equalities receptors. At Escrick, HGV construction traffic routes are routed away from the village centre and therefore do not pass by equality receptors such as the Primary School, Escrick playing fields, Hot tap dance</p>	<p>for young children. These groups may be more sensitive to increased traffic flows, noise, or proximity to HGVs, particularly where walking routes serve key community facilities or lack formal pedestrian infrastructure.</p> <p>However, the embedded mitigation proposed, including the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan, is expected to help manage these risks and maintain a safe and accessible environment during construction that mitigates any negative equality impacts. Therefore, there are expected to <b>be temporary minor negative impacts</b> on protected characteristic groups.</p>

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
	<p>school, or the Yorkshire Gentleman’s cricket club. At Hambleton, construction traffic routes do not run along Gateforth lane where the Hambleton C of E Primary School is located, avoiding direct impact from consistent construction traffic on this equality receptor. Whilst Gateforth Road will experience abnormal load movements, there will be extensive public awareness to allow residents to be informed and plan their journey to avoid disruption. It is also noted that this route was preferred by the local parish council over other routes which went past playing fields. Wistow Parochial C of E Primary School is located near to a Highways Improvement Area, but the route for ALLs does not run directly past the school.</p>	
<p>Severance and accessibility impacts during construction</p>	<p>Construction activity associated with the Proposed Development could cause severance and temporarily affect accessibility for protected characteristic groups. Several temporary changes to the local environment – such as increased traffic, diversions, and construction vehicle movements – could result in equality impacts for certain groups. These impacts may be particularly relevant where access to key destinations is disrupted. For example, medical facilities are especially important for older people and disabled individuals, who may rely on them more frequently. Similarly, changes affecting access to open or recreational spaces could disproportionately affect young people and families, who use these areas for play, exercise, and social interaction. Construction traffic may also impact access to one receptor in particular, Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing, which provides therapeutic services</p>	<p>Overall, severance and accessibility effects during construction will be temporary and are likely to have negligible impacts.</p> <p>Even minor severance and accessibility impacts during construction can have differential impacts for some groups. For example, older people, disabled individuals, and families with young children may be more vulnerable to disruptions in access to essential services or local facilities. However, ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Movement <b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.14]</b> concludes that there are no significant effects on severance and driver and pedestrian delay, and the Outline Construction Traffic</p>

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
	<p>to vulnerable receptors. This service is accessed via Fairfield Lane, which is a small rural lane, which will also be used as an access route by construction vehicles to access the Cable Route Corridor and a Cable Construction Compound. The presence of construction traffic and construction vehicles may discourage users of the service or reduce its value if it becomes difficult to access.</p> <p>The Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) [EN0110012/APP/LVS.07.12] sets out embedded mitigation measures during the construction phase. This includes the provision of signage and the appointment of a Community Liaison Manager to lead discussions with local communities and act as primary point of contact should there be queries or complaints in relation to traffic movements. In addition, the Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.09] sets out mitigation measures including the installation of signage to advise PRow users of construction activity, and closure/extinguishment of a PRow following the early implementation of an alternative/new route (e.g. via a new but similar length and location of route) (early re-provision).</p>	<p>Management Plan (oCTMP) [EN0110012/APP/LVS.07.12] and Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.09] set out mitigation measures during the construction phase.</p> <p>ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Movement [EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.14] also indicates a minimal increase in traffic, particularly of HGV trips, on Fairfield Lane during construction.</p> <p>Overall, the impacts on protected characteristic groups are considered <b>negligible</b>.</p>
<p>Changes in views and landscape character</p>	<p>Changes to local landscape character and visual amenity during the construction of the Proposed Development may lead to equality impacts for a small number of protected characteristic groups. ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.10] identifies that significant visual effects are predicted for a select number of receptors, particularly for some residents of Birkin Fishery and users of nearby Public Rights of Way</p>	<p>While the presence of protected characteristic groups at the identified receptors is unknown, there remains a possibility that temporary changes in views and landscape character during construction could affect certain individuals, particularly those who are more sensitive to changes in their visual environment. However, any negative impacts are expected to be minimal due to their short-</p>

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
	<p>(PRoWs), such as those at bridleway 35.28/1/1, footpath 35.37/8/1 and footpath 35.37/7/1.</p> <p>Some disabled individuals, including neurodivergent people or those with sensory or cognitive impairments, may be more sensitive to changes in their environment. For example, alterations to the openness or visual structure of familiar landscapes may affect how certain individuals perceive safety, orientation, or emotional comfort. People with neurodegenerative conditions such as dementia may be disorientated by visual change and loss of familiarity. These effects may be more pronounced near rural walking routes or open landscapes that are frequently used for recreation or wellbeing. In such cases, visual disruption could reduce the attractiveness or perceived accessibility of these settings for individuals. This may also result in individuals choosing not to use beneficial resources such as Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing, due to its exposure to landscape and visual changes as a result of construction works and the presence of a Cable Construction Compound.</p> <p>In addition, parents and caregivers, and pregnant people and parents on maternity or paternity leave, who are likely to spend more time at home may be more vulnerable to landscape and visual changes that are apparent from their place of residence. Changes in the visual environment due to the presence of construction works, equipment or vehicles may increase feelings of stress, and diminish the satisfaction of views from the residence.</p>	<p>term nature and the embedded mitigation measures are designed to reduce visual disruption, including visual screening along boundaries closest to the fishery and along outdoor seating areas to reduce disturbance effects on Birkin and Gascoigne Fisheries, and Birkin Fishery Tea Room, as outlined in ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Socioeconomics [EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.13 and secured in the oCEMP [EN110012/APP/LVS/07.02].</p> <p>Therefore, there are expected to be <b>minor and temporary negative</b> impacts on protected characteristic groups</p> <p>Early engagement with Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing indicates limited concerns regarding potential impacts on therapy services. However, engagement with this organisation will be ongoing during detailed design of the Proposed Development to discuss any potential mitigation requirements that are required.</p>

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
<p>Elevated noise and vibration levels</p>	<p>Whilst no significant noise and vibration effects were identified in ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Noise and Vibration <b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.11]</b>, it does identify a number of sensitive residential and community receptors alongside the Solar Development Site areas and the Cable Route Corridor. While no significant effects are predicted several receptors are located in proximity to construction activities and may experience temporary increases in noise levels. Receptors listed in ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Noise and Vibration <b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.11]</b> include residential dwellings but also portions of communities such as Riccall by the A19 and Thorpe-Willoughby, north of A1238 by Fir Tree Lane, which represent community facilities as well as residences in the area.</p> <p>The community facilities in these places may be used by, or serve certain equality groups, including young people, disabled individuals, and older residents. One specific facility, Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing, is located adjacent to the Cable Route Corridor and a Cable Construction Compound. This facility provides services to individuals with disability, neurodiversity or poor mental health and relies on calm and quiet environments and therefore may be differentially or disproportionately affected by noise and vibration impacts for a portion of the duration of the construction period.</p> <p>Mitigation measures are outlined in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) <b>[EN110012/APP/LVS/07.02]</b> including careful programming so that activities which may generate significant noise are planned with regard to local occupants</p>	<p>There is some potential for short-term annoyance, which may be differentially experienced by certain individuals, particularly those more vulnerable to heightened noise and vibrations such as older people, disabled people, children, and those with sensory impairments. The presence of community-facing receptors near construction areas means there could be temporary disturbance for these equality groups at these locations, including Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing.</p> <p>Mitigation measures as outlined in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) <b>EN110012/APP/LVS/07.02]</b> include careful programming so that activities which may generate significant noise are planned with consideration given to local occupants and sensitive receptors, including timing of noisy activities. This may include in relation to timing to avoid conflict with sensitive uses, activities or events at the receptor location. Temporary noise barriers may be used where appropriate and practicable to reduce adverse effects on the general population, including vulnerable individuals. The routing of construction traffic away from the village centres of Escrick and Hambleton, which host resources for individuals with protected characteristics, is another method which is expected to minimise</p>

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
	<p>and sensitive receptors and use of temporary noise barriers where appropriate and practicable will reduce adverse effects on the general population. However, some individuals sharing protected characteristics may be more sensitive to environmental disruption. For example, disabled people – particularly those with sensory processing difficulties, mental health conditions, or chronic illness – may be differentially affected by unexpected or unfamiliar noise. Older people, who are more likely to be home during the day, and pregnant people or families with young children, may also find sustained background noise disruptive.</p>	<p>the occurrence of elevated noise and vibration levels on vulnerable people. In addition, a Community Liaison Officer will be appointed to lead discussions with local communities and also act as the primary point of contact should there be any queries or complaints</p> <p>Early engagement with Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing indicates limited concerns regarding potential impacts on therapy services. Therefore, there are expected to <b>be minor and temporary negative impacts</b> on protected characteristic groups</p>
<p>Elevated dust levels and air pollutants</p>	<p>Construction activity will generate dust and vehicle emissions, especially during earthworks and material transport. Whilst air quality was scoped out of the Environmental Statement, temporary and localised changes in air quality may still impact individuals who are more vulnerable to pollution exposure. Appendix 16.1: Construction Dust Assessment <b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.03.16.01]</b> provides a summary of any likely effects associated with construction dust and found that with appropriate best practice mitigation measures suitable for high-risk sites in place, there is likely to be no significant effects on existing receptors from the dust-generating activities onsite.</p>	<p>Overall, <b>negligible impacts</b> on protected characteristic groups are anticipated from dust and air pollutants.</p>

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
<p>Employment, skills and training opportunities</p>	<p>The construction phase of the Proposed Development is expected to generate a peak of 434 net construction jobs, 217 of which would be sourced from within the Study Area. ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Socioeconomics <b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.13]</b> identifies this as a minor beneficial effect.</p> <p>Negative equality effects could arise where access to opportunities is not equitable. To mitigate this risk and support delivery of potential benefits, an Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan <b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.13]</b> has been produced. The Applicant will introduce initiatives to maximise the diversity, equality and inclusion of the workforce. The following groups which would be the target of this measure include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ workers of a certain gender, ethnicity or age (e.g. women in construction and engineering, 16- to 24-year-olds or older workers); and</li> <li>▪ disadvantaged or under-represented groups, for example, long-term unemployed, ex-offenders or disabled people.</li> </ul> <p>Through consultation post-consent, particular target groups would be identified using specialist local job brokerage agencies.</p> <p>The plan identifies that regular reporting on the demographic profile of the workforce could be recorded and documented using a voluntary survey to collect data on the age, ethnicity, gender and disability of the workforce, to ensure hiring and working practices are equitable and inclusive.</p>	<p>Opportunities for employment, skills and training could positively support protected groups who are disproportionately affected by unemployment, such as young people, disabled people, certain ethnic groups, and men.</p> <p>The construction employment opportunities could benefit individuals who face barriers to entering or re-entering the labour market, especially with the implementation of the Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan <b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.13]</b>.</p> <p>Overall, employment, skills and training opportunities generated during the construction phase are anticipated to have <b>positive impacts</b> on protected characteristic groups.</p>

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
Operation		
Changes in views and landscape character	<p>As reported in ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual <b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.10]</b>, there are significant visual effects for a select number of visual receptors at Year 1 and Year 15 of operation. These receptors include residential receptors and viewpoints along bridleways and footpaths.</p> <p>For equality groups, including older people and some disabled individuals – particularly those who are neurodivergent or have sensory disorders – changes in familiar landscapes may have an impact on feelings of comfort, orientation, or enjoyment of outdoor space.</p> <p>In addition, parents and caregivers, and pregnant people or parents on maternity or paternity leave, who are likely to spend more time at home may be more vulnerable to landscape and visual changes that are apparent from their place of residence. Changes in the visual environment associated with a loss of nature and greenery may contribute to feelings of stress and disruption.</p> <p>However, these effects are unlikely to be widespread or enduring due to the passive nature of the operation and maintenance phase when no new Proposed Development related infrastructure will be developed, and the stabilisation of the landscape setting over time.</p>	<p>There will be some long-term negative impacts on views and landscapes for a small number of locations. Effects on groups with protected characteristics are likely to be very limited, and affected groups are likely to adjust to changes in views and landscape character over time.</p> <p>Therefore, there are expected to <b>be minor and temporary negative impacts</b> on protected characteristic groups.</p>
Employment, skills and training opportunities	<p>Operational effects on employment are scoped out of ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Socioeconomics <b>[EN0110012/APP/LVS/06.01.13]</b>. Employment generated is expected to be minimal, with slight peaks in employment</p>	<p>Employment opportunities during operation are expected to have <b>negligible impacts</b> from an equality perspective.</p>

Impact	Assessment	Conclusion
	associated with replacement activities during the operational phase.	
Enhancements to PRow connectivity	The provision of enhancements to PRow connectivity are described in the Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.09]. This includes the creation of approximately 8 km of permissive paths to improve local connectivity. Permissive paths will be provided during the operational phase of the Proposed Development and will contribute to the wider network of PRow, facilitating greater public access to the countryside, and providing new links between existing PRow, creating new loops and introducing increased accessibility to cyclists. Surface finishes, and signage of reinstated and diverted PRow will be agreed upon with the Local Planning Authority before installation and are likely to bring improvements for accessibility for a number of equalities groups including the young, elderly, and those with mobility impairments.	Improved PRow connectivity is likely to have <b>long-term positive equality impacts</b> for local users and visitors, especially those with mobility impairments and elderly people within the local population.

## 10 Conclusions

- 10.1.1 This EqlA has considered how the Proposed Development may affect people with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. It supports the Secretary of State in determining the Applicant's application for development consent by providing the information that can be used to ensure that due regard is given to the aims of the PSED. The EqlA has been informed by a review of relevant legislation and policy, demographic data, the topic chapters that form ES Volume 1, the Consultation Report **[EN0010012/APP/05.01]** and the design and delivery proposals for the Proposed Development.
- 10.1.2 The assessment has identified both potential benefits and adverse equality impacts associated with the consultation, construction, operational, and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development. It has considered differential and disproportionate impacts in line with recognised good practice and guidance, drawing on demographic evidence from the Study Area to assess where groups may be more sensitive to change or unevenly affected.
- 10.1.3 The Applicant has taken steps to support inclusive and accessible consultation and engagement, including through a multi-channel approach that combined in-person and digital methods, the use of accessible venues, and the provision of materials in alternative formats. These actions are judged to have had a positive equality impact by reducing barriers to participation for older people, disabled people, carers, and those without access to private transport.
- 10.1.4 The construction phase of the Proposed Development has the potential to generate short term employment and supply chain benefits. This could positively support protected groups who are disproportionately affected by unemployment, such as young people, disabled people, certain ethnic groups, and men. The Applicant's commitment to an Outline Skills Supply Chain and Employment Plan (SSCEP) **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.13]** will help to maximise these benefits.
- 10.1.5 Several potential temporary negative equality impacts have been identified during the construction phase. These include impacts related to PRow diversions and changes to journey lengths or routes; elevated levels of traffic, noise, and air pollutants; changes to pedestrian amenity, fear and intimidation; and accessibility and severance. These may have differential impacts on older people, disabled people, and pregnant women, who may be more sensitive to disruption or access changes. In some cases, there may also be a risk of disproportionate impacts, particularly in rural areas where alternative options are limited or baseline health vulnerabilities are higher than average. These impacts are expected to be limited in duration, and the Applicant has proposed embedded and additional mitigation measures to reduce or manage their effects. These include the implementation of an Outline CEMP **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.02]** Outline PRow and Permissive Paths Management Plan **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.09]**, and Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan **[EN0110012/APP/LVS/07.12]**. The assessment has concluded that, with mitigation in place, most negative equality impacts are not likely to be substantial.

- 10.1.6 During construction, it is likely there will be temporary negative impacts on the equalities receptor Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing. This receptor provides therapeutic services, and offers emotional and psychological support, to individuals with disabilities and poor mental health through engagement with horses. The receptor is adjacent to the Cable Route Corridor and a Cable Construction Compound location and will likely experience some accessibility impacts due to construction traffic movements, as well as visual disruption and noise during a short duration of the construction period. Due to the sensitivity of the users of this receptor, the value of the resource for users may be affected. However, due to the relatively temporary duration of the construction activities necessary to install cables, and the relatively infrequent nature of the use of this service, this is not expected to cause major equality effects to people with protected characteristics. The Applicant will continue to engage with, and work with Fairfield Equine Facilitated Wellbeing to minimise the impact of construction activities on this equality receptor.
- 10.1.7 Equality impacts during operation are expected to be minimal. The Proposed Development may result in changes to views and landscape character, but these impacts are expected to be limited to a small number of receptors and equality effects therefore will likely be minimal. In addition, landscape enhancements and improved PRow connectivity could have positive impacts for local users and visitors and may have wider health and wellbeing benefits. This may be particularly beneficial for people with mobility impairments.
- 10.1.8 In conclusion, with mitigation measures and inclusive practices in place, the potential for significant negative equality impacts is unlikely. The Proposed Development presents opportunities to generate positive outcomes, particularly in relation to employment and inclusive engagement, and is not expected to cause major equality effects to people with protected characteristics.

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