

### ISH3 – Summary of oral representation made under agenda 3.1 – Landscape and Visual

Sporle with Palgrave Parish Council represented by [REDACTED] - [REDACTED]

#### *Cumulative impacts:*

It is understood that GLVIA3 is the key guidance document for assessing landscape and visual impacts. However, it still demands considerable amounts of professional judgement to assess these which is admitted in the ES chapter 6 on Landscape and visual.

When it is a matter of judgement it has been seen in this part of ISH3 that there are competing judgements between the Applicant's landscape consultant and that of Breckland District Council's landscape consultant both using GLVIA3. In addition there is local feeling and sentiment for the significance and scale of the visual impact.

The dispute between the Applicant and BDC that Sporle PC would highlight is whether the assessment should have been broken down into localised landscape classifications as BDC contend in addition to the large Breckland land classification E6 North Pickenham Plateau. (Sporle PC would agree with BDC's contention although not explicitly expressed in the hearing and will expand on that in representation in response to ASI1.)

Views from the Peddars Way show 6 fields, three from High Grove and three from Drovers so that, apart from the field closest to the path, the view to Round covert on the horizon is totally of solar arrays apart some break up by the hedges. Sloping ground makes the impact more significant and adverse in our judgement.

We note that section 6.11 of ES chapter 6 Landscape and Visual recognises the cumulative impacts caused by the High Grove development but still concludes its assessment that Visual Receptor Group 4 Great Palgrave and Little Palgrave is only significant and adverse during the construction phase. We would wish to contend that this will be the same for the operational phase of the project and that the ES needs amending to reflect this.

The Technical Information Note on landscape and visual, when referring to the Report on Interrelationships between Projects [APP/8.3.1], notes that:

*'The detailed design and embedded mitigation measures for the Scheme and the High Grove Solar DCO seek to reduce the potential cumulative landscape and visual effects between the two projects'*

Also: *'The oLEMP [APP/7.11.1] also seeks to ensure a cohesive and linked up landscaping approach between the two projects'*

However, it then goes onto say:

*'Where the projects are visible in-combination from the higher ground to the east at Representative Viewpoint 8 on the South Acre Road, for example, only a proportion of both projects would be visible within the same field of view'*

This might be true but the visual impact is still significant and adverse when traversing the view from south round to the southwest. The wireline photographs from Viewpoint 8 (APP-096) only colour the Drovers area and not the High Grove fields as well. As it stands this does not give a true picture of the visual impact. We would suggest that this viewpoint and all other viewpoints shown in the photo montages should include High Grove areas of solar array.

It is accepted that High Grove is still only at the PEIR stage in their proposals but they will have a material impact on the overall landscape and visual impact if the project was to

proceed. To include the High Grove areas within the photo montages will assist the ExA in assessing, more fully, the eventual landscape and visual impact.

Sporle PC contend that still more work is needed by both projects to reduce the visual impact as we are sure will be seen during ASI1 and hope that continued meetings with the Applicant and High Grove will assist in providing satisfactory solutions.

*Substation base levels:*

In response to the Applicant's response to question Q1.0.1 of ExQ2 Sporle PC would ask why the base levels for the NGET and customer substations are so high? We recognise that it is stated as a worst-case situation but it seems that this will require considerable importation of material to build up the base depending on what sort of base will be required.

If a lower base level is taken it will have a beneficial impact on the landscape and visual amenity and could be done without risking flooding from the pluvial flood zones. It is recognised that lowering the base levels will be possibly be impacted by heritage assets within that field and possible chalk.

In parts 2 and 3 of the Applicant's response to the question it would appear that the base levels do not relate to one another. Could the applicant make this clearer please? (Is the higher figure in part 3's response the overall maximum height taking into account the height of substation infrastructure?)

The drawing of the cross sections included as an appendix in the ExQ2 response document were extremely difficult to see in any great detail. Could a separate drawing be provided at a larger scale please?