

WRITTEN REPRESENTATION BY SHOTESHAM ACTION GROUP

Reference number [REDACTED]

Note : *text provides evidence and substantiation for the case against the inclusion of Site 8 and other Sites within the Order limits.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES - Site 8 should not have been chosen for solar panel development. Despite letting the applicant know this point on numerous occasions, the applicant has failed to take any significant positive action to substantially decrease the environmental impacts on Site 8. National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-1 5.10 (Landscape and Visual) and (NPS) EN-3 2.10 (Landscape and Visual) sets out criteria for site selection to take account of the potential impact on the landscape and visual effects on sensitive receptors.

EN-1

5.10.6 Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate

5.10.19 The applicant should consider landscape and visual matters in the early stages of siting and design, where site choices and design principles are being established. This will allow the applicant to demonstrate in the ES how negative effects have been minimised and opportunities for creating positive benefits or enhancement have been recognised and incorporated into the design, delivery and operation of the scheme.

5.10.20 The assessment should include the effects on landscape components and character during construction and operation. For projects which may affect a National Park, The Broads or an AONBs the assessment should include effects on the natural beauty and special qualities of these areas’.

5.10.21 The assessment should include the visibility and conspicuousness of the project during construction and of the presence and operation of the project and potential impacts on views and visual amenity. This should include light pollution effects, including on dark skies, local amenity, and nature conservation.

5.10.22 The assessment should also address the landscape and visual effects of noise and light pollution, and other emissions (see Section 5.2 and Section 5.7), from construction and operational activities on residential amenity and on sensitive locations, receptors and views, how these will be minimised.

Shotesham is a pastoral village lying in the valley of Shotesham Beck, a key tributary of the River Tas. The settlements of Shotesham St Mary, Shotesham All Saints and Shotesham Hall form part of Shotesham Conservation Area. There are two SSSIs in the village, Shotesham Common lying either side of Shotesham Beck and Little Wood an ancient wood lying close to the south of the village and within 300m of Site 8b and well within the SSSI Impact Zone. The countryside around Shotesham is significantly undulating as it lies in a valley.

Shotesham is widely known as being one of the most attractive villages in South Norfolk. The applicant has chosen to construct solar panels on the side of sloping land (Site 8a) and on top of the hillside (Site 8b) where in both cases the solar panels will be visible to all receptors, including local residents, visitors and villagers using footpaths and road users. Due to the undulating countryside, mitigation will never be possible on either of the sites.

The applicant has failed to properly consider EN-1 5.10 (Landscape and Visual) and EN-3 2.10 . (Landscape, Visual and Residential Amenity) when developing the project and accordingly the project design is flawed. The provision of solar panels on Site 8a and 8b in the parish of Shotesham is clearly not environmentally appropriate and Site 8 should be removed from the Order limits.

Furthermore, it is evident that the applicant has not adhered to their own Island Green Power Design Principles despite saying they have. If the applicant had commissioned a proper Solar Feasibility Study, some of the Sites should have been excluded from the Order limits.

* At the Issue Specific Hearing (ISH1) the applicant was questioned about the site selection process. Following establishment of the Point of Connection (Great Moulton), the applicant confirmed that an environmental desktop assessment was undertaken, followed by the land selection process but avoiding compulsory purchase of land. The applicant then confirmed that an environmental refinement assessment was undertaken. It appears unlikely that a thorough environmental refinement process was undertaken, otherwise Site 8 would have been excluded due to its topography, river valley location, Valued Landscape, Zone 1 flooding, nearby Little Wood SSSI with barbastelle bat maternity colony, numerous public footpaths and proximity of dwellings. Site 9 (abutting Brooke Conservation Area) and sub Site 7f (very near Saxlingham Green Conservation Area) should also have been excluded at this early stage. The removal of part of Site 8 and part of Site 9 from the scheme is witness to a flawed design.

* The applicant is relying on NPS EN-1 and EN-3 to justify this scheme. The applicant is quoting NPS EN-1 and EN-3 clauses to justify the scheme although at the same time they should be complying with En-1 and EN-3 clauses, specifically EN-1 5.10.6, 5.10.19 and 5.10. At ISSH 1 the applicant stated the following:

01:15:08:14 - 01:15:50:14

Toby Yates, on behalf of the applicant. So you'll see, I guess, most clearly at stage two of the site selection assessment for suitable sites, you'll see that there's various environmental and planning constraints that need to be considered when identifying a suitable site. That includes things such as agricultural land classification, which is being discussed, and this policy relating to that also includes proximity to sensitive human receptors or dwellings, and that's set out in National Policy, paragraphs two point one zero point one nine of NPS EN three amongst areas of flood risk, and you'd be well aware that the majority of the site is in located Flood Zone one.

01:15:51:01 - 01:16:24:23

It also then, as part of that Stage two of the site selection assessment, considers various designations in relation to landscape, ecology and cultural heritage. Point I'm getting across here is that there's

various elements that need to be considered and have different national policy that points to how those need to be considered. And they have been and that's set out in the site selection exercise. And the selection of a site and suitability is driven by the key factors that are identified in the national policy as well as consideration of these other factors.

01:16:25:00 - 01:17:05:0

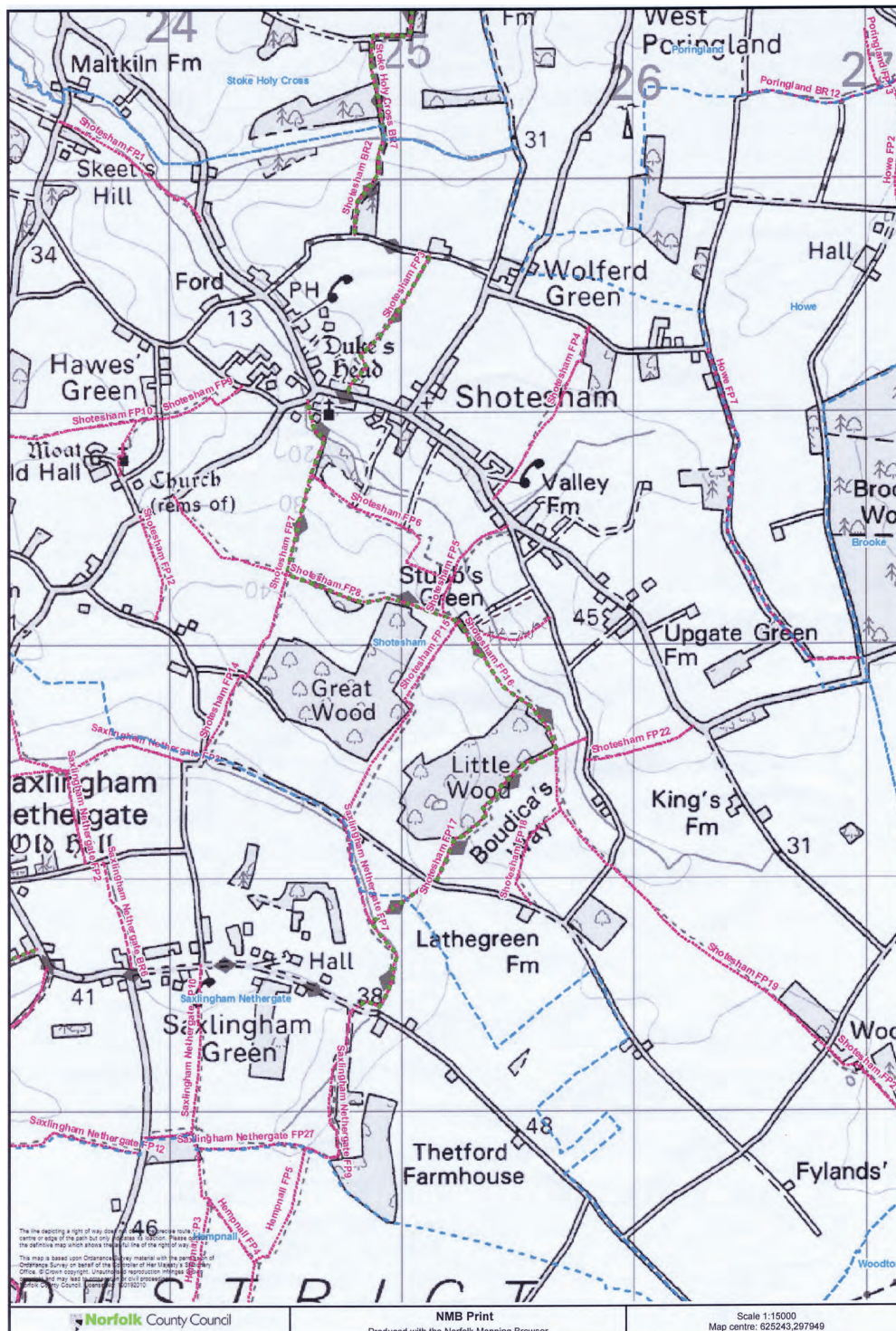
And in practice, you might move away from a site that's got a particular ecological designation. I can't talk about in too much detail. The key point is you might then move to a site where it's got other ecological or planning constraints. And that is why the policy sets out the different tests that need to be applied, including the likes of BMV where flexibility is given that if you cannot avoid a particular constraint and you've sought to do so where possible, you then are allowed to include it. It's the application of those policy tests, which the applicant has done, including in relation to ecological designations that is still determined that the site that was selected is deemed suitable in terms of the planning policy and on balance.

* The applicant admits that they have not considered environmental concerns in their site selection process i.e. ecological designations on sites (see above). They have allowed these to be included in the selection of the sites as long as the sites were determined suitable in terms of the NPS and on balance. Shotesham Action Group's determination is that the applicant has failed to abide by the terms of the (NPS) EN-1 5.10.6, 5.10.19 and 5.10.21. If the applicant had designed the project carefully in the early stages and refined environmental matters following initial engagement with land owners, some sites should have been removed from the scheme. If the applicant abided by (NSP) EN-5.10.6, 5.10.19 and 5.10.21 some Sites should have been excluded from the Order limits. **Their non compliance with (NPS) EN-1 and EN-3 renders the whole scheme inadmissible.**

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY- There are many public rights of way (PRoW) in Shotesham parish and these are very popular due to the scenic countryside and valued tranquillity and views. Boudicca's Way, a National Trail, runs through the village from north to south with a view to the proposed solar panels. PRoW footpath 19 bisects Site 8a and PRoW footpath 22 is adjacent to Site 8b. Both these footpaths will be enclosed with fencing causing loss of the open views previously enjoyed, loss of tranquillity, industrialisation and loss of perception of safety due to enclosure.

* Shotesham Circular Walks Booklet (appended) illustrates many different footpath routes in the village. The plan below indicates the numerous footpaths in the area. Footpaths 15,16,17,18,19 and 22 will all be in view of the solar panels and inverter units.

Norfolk County Council
Footpaths of the Parish of Shotesham



* Shotesham Action Group erected a booth on Church Hill in Shotesham where most people start their walks. The booth contained slips with the wording “I regularly use the public footpaths located south of Shotesham All Saints to enjoy the countryside. The proposed solar panels will be visible from 2 miles of public footpaths including Boudica’s Way and this will completely change the character of the landscape. I value this landscape and I strongly object to the proposed provision of solar panels in these fields, totalling over 120 acres of good agricultural land”.

Over 600 signatures and addresses of people who regularly use PRow footpaths have been obtained. The applicant has removed part of 8a and 8b from the scheme, nevertheless the impact remains the same.

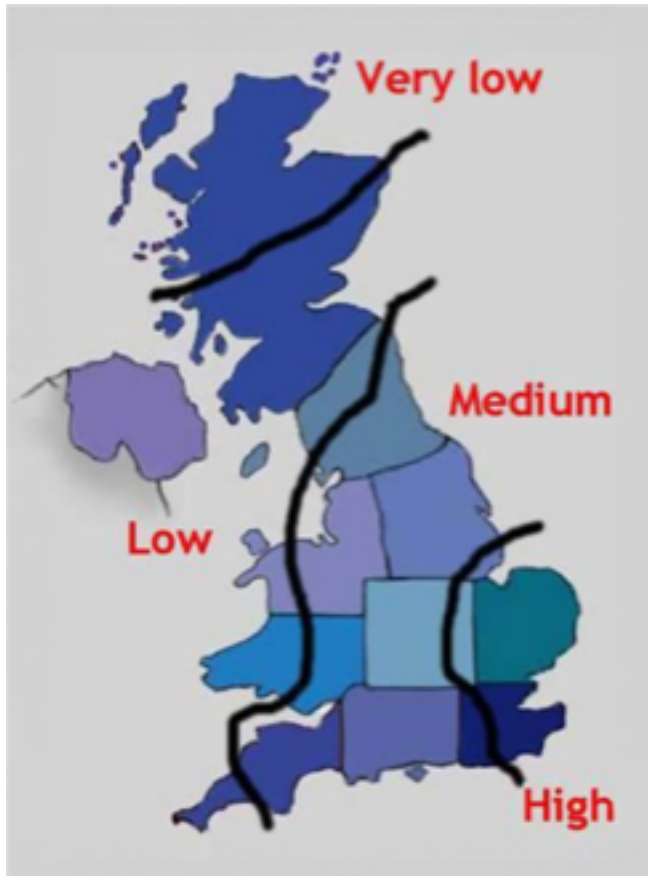
* Analysis of the signed slips revealed that 55% of walkers came from surrounding villages, 23% came from Norwich and Norwich suburbs, 14% came from Shotesham and the remaining 8% came from outside the county. As previously mentioned, Shotesham is one of the most attractive villages in South Norfolk and many people wish to visit to enjoy the scenery and the landscape. Solar development will significantly change this situation and this would be unacceptable.

Pdfs of the signed slips are included as a separate document.

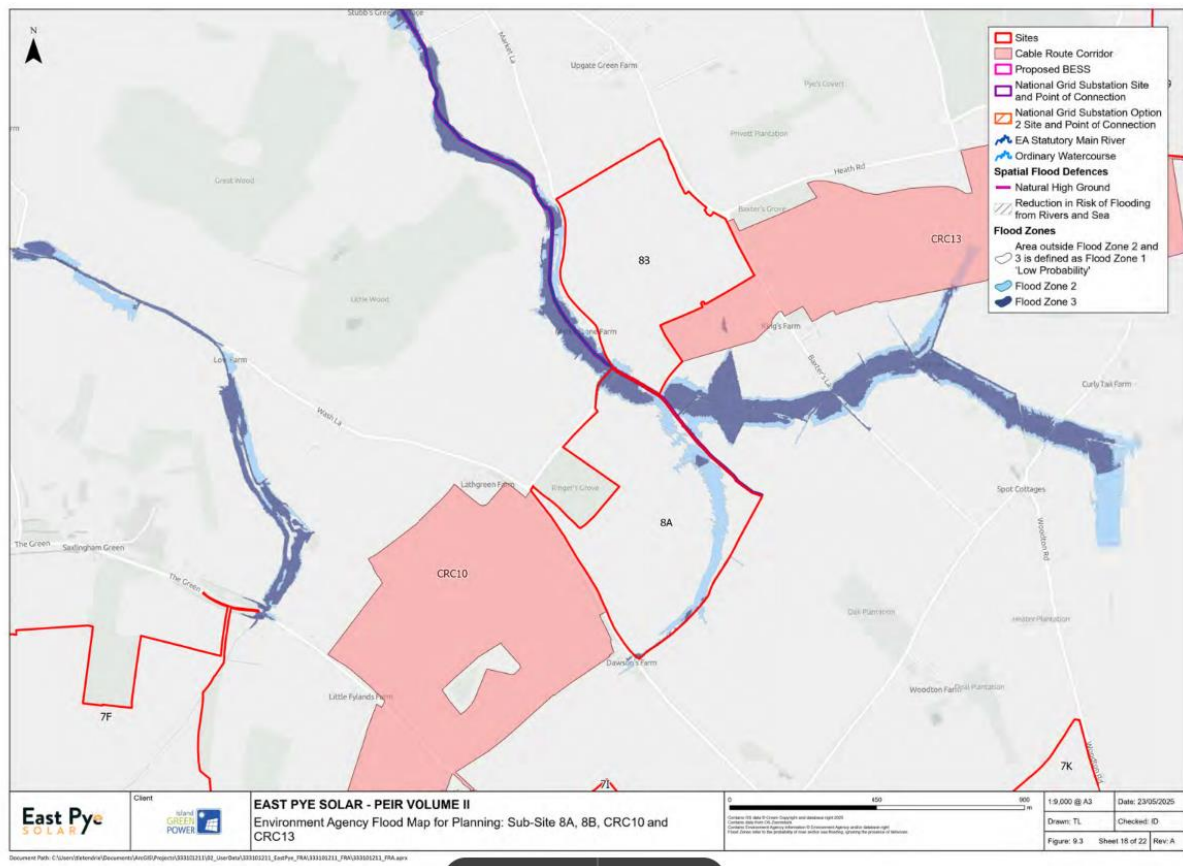
FLOODING IN SHOTESHAM - Shotesham Beck bisects Site 8a and 8b and this small stream is very sensitive to flash flooding. The lower lying part of Site 8a and Market Lane are in Flood Zone 2 and 3 areas. Significant flood events occurred in January 2013, December 2019, 23rd December 2023 and notably on 23rd October 2023 when there was significant flooding downstream in the Shotesham village and Shotesham Common. The cause of the flooding is due to an increase of surface water run-off from around one square kilometre of agricultural fields. Shotesham Beck is the only final receptor for this area. In the winter months the ground is saturated due to the clay nature of the soil and in the summer months the clay soil becomes hard baked. Accordingly flooding is a regular event. Also the south east of England has the highest rainfall intensity, approximately double the rainfall intensity of Scotland. The highest daily rainfall in South Norfolk in 2025 was 43.2mm. Climate change is predicted to increase rainfall and rainfall intensity - see Met Office report below.



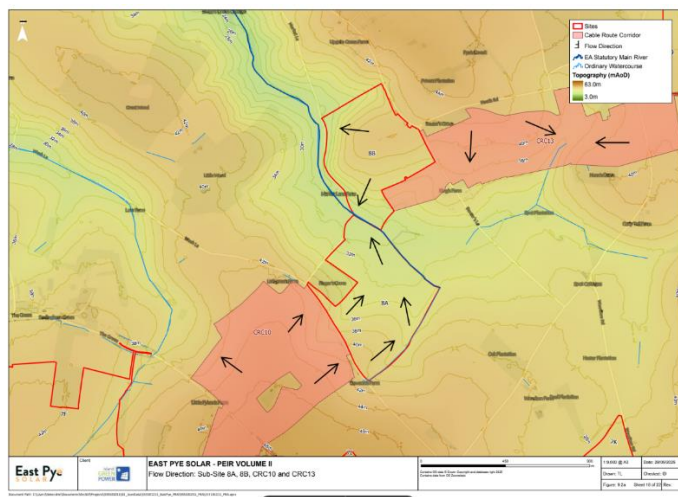
Hard baked clay soil in May 2026



Rainfall intensity



Flood Zone 3



Topography and direction of rainwater flow

MET OFFICE REPORT Climate change also had a strong influence on autumn and winter total rainfall. In a pre-industrial climate, wet periods such as the 2023-24 October-March season had an estimated return period of 1 in every 80 years. But in today's climate, they have become at least four times more likely, expected to occur about once every 20 years. The

scientists estimate that climate change contributed to increasing the amount of total rainfall by about 15%. If global warming reaches 2°C, similar periods of rainfall that can saturate soils and cause large agricultural losses will become much more common, expected to occur about once every 13 years. Met Office Science manager of Climate Attribution, Mark McCarthy, said: “The seemingly never ending rainfall this autumn and winter across the UK and Ireland had notable impacts across the two countries. “This new study shows how rainfall associated with storms and seasonal rainfall through autumn and winter have increased, in part due to human induced climate change. “In the future we can expect further increases in frequency of wet autumns and winters. That’s why it is so important for us to adapt to our changing climate and become more resilient to increases in rainfall.”

* The applicant has stated in Appendix 9.1 rev.2 that the incorporation of grassland within the order limits will effectively manage risks of run-off concentration. This statement appears to have been based on a paper ‘Hydrologic Response of Solar Farms’ by Cook and McCuen and although this maybe the case for a number situations, Cook and McCuen also state that soil type, ground slope and panel angle drip lines can significantly increase run-off volumes, however, this is not mentioned in any of the application documents. The applicant’s expert would be aware of this matter but the applicant has ignored to bring this matter to attention. The applicant has identified high ground slope for Sites 9, 4b, 7a, 7e, 7f, 8a and 10a -10d. Note : Site 8b has been missed out. The applicant also believes the topsoil is permeable. As mentioned above, the ground is not permeable, evidenced by the nature of the topsoil and historical flood events. The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) commented in their letter to Norfolk County Council dated 15 July 2025 that the applicant has underestimated the impermeable area and has not assessed or investigated the ground conditions and the viability of infiltration. Accordingly, it appears likely that surface water run-off is a significant issue and the provision of solar panels on site 8a (and other sloping sites) will exacerbate the risk of flooding in Shotesham and this will lead to a greater risk of flooding on both Market Lane and Shotesham Common (SSSI).

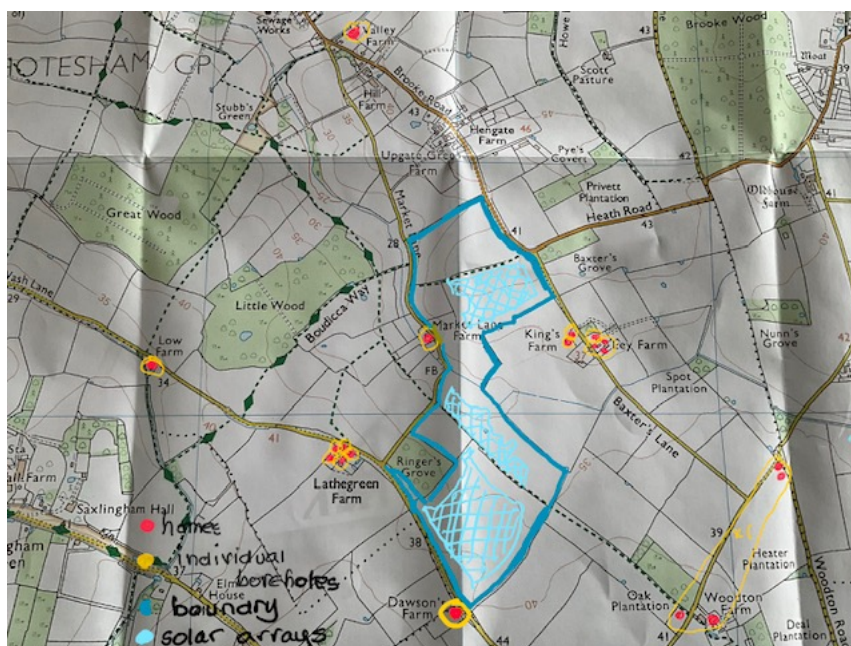
Shotesham Common (SSSI) has abundant flora and fauna and this could upset the balance if there are more flood events. Contaminants and increased run-off silt will also potentially damage this precious ecosystem. Shotsham Beck is not dredged as Natural England policy for wetland sites is to hold water as much as possible. Increased surface water run-off from the solar fields will lead to a greater risk of flooding and potential damage to The Common.

PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES - The applicant has stated 'Private Water Supplies (PWSs) have potential to be impacted by the Scheme by contaminants through mobilisation of contaminants to surface water and groundwater receptors. Therefore a mitigation strategy has been developed to address such risks during all phases of the Scheme'. The applicant does not appear to have developed a mitigation strategy in their Water Resources Assessment.

* The baseline provided for PWSs relies on assumptions which are not sound. The applicant has not addressed PWSs as required under regulation 24 of WDF. The applicant has failed to adhere to the available guidance on assessing PWSs (SEPA 2024⁸).

Figure 16.5 (Location of Private Water Supplies) identifies only 35 private water supplies within 250m of all the site boundaries throughout the Scheme.

* In Shotesham only three boreholes are shown on the applicant's plan within 250m of Sites 8a and 8b. There are ten boreholes supplies within 250m of Sites 8a and 8b serving twelve properties. On Baxter's Lane - four boreholes serving Golden Eye Barn, Kings Farm, Ley Farm, The Copse, Wodehouse and Hill View Barn. On Wash Lane six boreholes serving Dawsons Farm, Lathgreen Farm, The Stewarts House, Lathgreen Barn, Wash Lane Barn, and The Hay Barn, On Market lane one borehole serving Market Lane Farm. The applicant has failed to assess these boreholes.



PWSs around Site 8

The private water supply serving Market Lane Farm lies within a ground water recharge area and Source Protection Zone (SPZ). The applicant failed to identify Site 8 is within a SPZ. This may result in a contamination pathway during construction and operation stages. Market Lane Farm is located in Shotesham Beck valley which is likely to be subject to an increased flood risk and increased contamination from solar panel run-off.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL - The scheme has been chosen to be set mostly within the South Norfolk Claylands. This area has a historic and pre-enclosure landscape of small fields. The Tas river Valley and the tributaries create an undulating character. This is unlike most of Norfolk which is generally flat. The introduction of industrial scale infrastructure across this landscape would be ruinous in heritage terms and would cause substantial harm to the landscape setting. The countryside directly south of Shotesham encompassing Sites 8a and 8b has been assessed as 'Valued Landscape'.

Shotesham Action Group notes that South Norfolk Council's Landscape Susceptibility in Relation to Energy Generation, Storage and Transmission Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has not been considered by the applicant in their DCO application. The SPD was adopted on 18 February 2026. Shotesham Action Group requests that the ExA to ensure this SPD forms part of the application.

* A report written by Classic landscape Architecture Ltd dated June 2026 (appended) confirms 'Valued Landscape' fully justifying why Site 8 should be removed from the Scheme. Below is the Summary and Conclusions of the report.

9.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

9.1 This report concludes that Site 8 is fundamentally unsuitable for the proposed East Pye Solar development and should not have been included within the Order Limits. The Site lies within a highly sensitive and strongly distinctive rural landscape that forms an important part of the setting of Shotesham and contributes materially to local character, tranquillity, scenic quality, public amenity, ecological function and the appreciation of the wider historic landscape. The evidence set out in this report demonstrates that the Site forms part of a Valued Landscape and that development of the scale proposed would cause substantial and unacceptable harm.

9.2 The central landscape conclusion is clear. Site 8 occupies land on both the Tas Beck valley floor and the adjoining sloping valley side, within a landscape that is open, tranquil, intact and highly legible. Parcel 8B in particular sits on one of the most visually exposed and sensitive parts of the local landscape, where development would be conspicuous from a wide range of receptors and where mitigation would

not overcome the fundamental harm. The Site also makes a high contribution to the local landscape character areas and to the valued rural setting of Shotesham. In these circumstances, the overall landscape effects would be major adverse and significant.

9.3 The visual effects would also be severe. Footpaths 19 and 22 are two of the most open, scenic and sensitive Public Rights of Way within the Order Limits, yet their importance has not been given the weight it plainly required. Development would replace open farmland and panoramic valley views with solar arrays, fencing, associated infrastructure and mitigation planting that would itself erode the openness and character of the routes. The wider PRoW network, including the Boudicca Way and other connected routes, would also be materially degraded. The result would be major adverse and significant visual effects for highly sensitive receptors and a fundamental reduction in the recreational and experiential quality of the countryside.

9.4 The report also concludes that Site 8 is highly constrained in ecological, hydrological, agricultural and heritage terms. The Site lies in close proximity to Ancient Woodland, SSSI land, Tas Beck and sensitive protected species, and there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proposed development would avoid unacceptable ecological effects. The topography of both parcels gives rise to a direct hydrological relationship with the Beck and adjoining receptors, increasing concerns regarding runoff, sediment transfer and contamination. In agricultural terms, the Site is highly likely to comprise Best and Most Versatile land, yet the Applicant's evidence does not provide a sufficiently independent or robust basis for discounting that conclusion where the final assessment was arrived at by discussions with the landowner. In heritage and settlement terms, the Site contributes to the wider setting of Shotesham and to important southern approaches to the Conservation Area. These are not marginal considerations but significant constraints that should have carried substantial weight much earlier in the Site selection process.

9.5 A further and important conclusion of this report is that the Applicant's selection is materially and crucially flawed. The Applicant identified agricultural land quality, topography and environmental constraints as key considerations, yet Site 8 plainly fails against those criteria.

9.6 Furthermore, and more importantly, the Alternative Sites closer to the revised Point of Connection were not correctly assessed. The evidence indicates that the comparative treatment of alternatives has not been consistent, objective or transparent, particularly once the Point of Connection changed. The retention of Site 8 within the Order Limits is therefore not supported by a sound and policy-compliant appraisal of reasonable alternatives or by a properly evidenced design evolution responsive to genuine constraints. This matter needs further urgent

discussion and a revised, independent alternative Site Assessment should be carried out. Huge swathes of land close to the new PoC were summarily discounted due to the assessment failures and by their own admission, the Applicant's did not bother to seek new agreements with landowners close to the PoC as they had already secured land holdings.

9.7 PLANNING BALANCE AND DECISION-MAKING 9.7.1 In determining this application, the Examining Authority and Secretary of State must weigh the acknowledged benefits of renewable energy generation against the environmental, landscape, visual and other harms arising from the proposed development. It is accepted that the transition to a low-carbon energy system is a matter of substantial national importance and that significant weight should be attached to the delivery of renewable energy infrastructure. However, national policy does not require that all sites are suitable for such development, nor does it suggest that environmental constraints should be overridden where substantial harm would result.

9.7.2 The National Policy Statements make clear that landscape and visual effects are capable of carrying significant weight in the planning balance, particularly where those effects arise from poor siting, inadequate consideration of alternatives, or where harm cannot be adequately mitigated through design. The evidence presented in this report demonstrates that Site 8 represents a location where the fundamental characteristics of the receiving landscape, rather than the detailed design of the proposal, give rise to unacceptable effects.

9.7.3 The Site occupies an unusually sensitive position within the Tas Beck valley landscape and forms part of the wider setting of Shotesham. Its contribution extends beyond agricultural productivity alone and encompasses landscape character, visual amenity, ecological connectivity, settlement setting, public access, tranquillity and the appreciation of the historic environment. These are not isolated considerations but interrelated qualities that collectively contribute to the significance of the landscape and the experience of the area.

9.7.4 The assessment has shown that the proposed development would result in major adverse and significant effects on landscape character and visual amenity, including effects on highly sensitive Public Rights of Way and on views that are integral to the appreciation of the valley landscape. The evidence also identifies substantial concerns regarding ecological sensitivity, hydrological function, agricultural land quality and the contribution the Site makes to the setting and approach to Shotesham. Importantly, these effects are not temporary construction

impacts but would persist throughout the operational life of the development. Many of the impacts would be long term and irreversible

9.7.5 The report further identifies significant shortcomings in the site selection and alternatives assessment process. In the context of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, confidence in the robustness of the site selection process is fundamental. Where evidence suggests that key constraints were understated, inconsistently applied or not reassessed following the change in Point of Connection, the justification for retaining highly constrained parcels such as Site 8 is materially weakened. This issue is particularly important because the harm identified is not the inevitable consequence of renewable energy development, but appears to arise from the inclusion of a site that should have been discounted at an earlier stage.

9.7.6 The cumulative effects of the wider Scheme reinforce these conclusions. The evidence indicates that the cumulative impact on landscape character, settlement setting, the Public Rights of Way network, agricultural land and ecological resources is materially greater than suggested within the Environmental Statement. These cumulative effects add further weight to the conclusion that Site 8 represents one of the more sensitive and constrained locations within the Order Limits

9.7.7 Having regard to the evidence presented, it is concluded that the adverse effects arising from the inclusion of Site 8 are substantial, significant and incapable of being satisfactorily mitigated through landscape planting, design amendments or operational controls. The Site does not represent an appropriate location for development of this nature and scale and its inclusion within the Order Limits is not supported by a robust planning, environmental or landscape justification.

9.8 OVERALL CONCLUSION

9.8.1 For all of the reasons set out within this report, the Examining Authority is respectfully invited to conclude that Site 8 fails to satisfy the policy tests relating to landscape protection, good design, environmental stewardship and the proper consideration of alternatives. The evidence demonstrates that the Site is highly sensitive, highly constrained and incapable of accommodating the proposed development without causing significant and unacceptable harm.

9.8.2 Accordingly, if the East Pye Solar Project is to proceed, Site 8 should be removed from the Order Limits. Such an approach would better reflect the requirements of NPS EN-1, NPS EN-3, the National Planning Policy Framework, the Greater Norwich Local Plan and the South Norfolk Development Management Policies, whilst avoiding substantial and unnecessary harm to a valued and

distinctive landscape that forms an important part of the character, setting and identity of Shotesham.

*Solar panels on Sites 8a and 8b will cause significant adverse effects. In Appendix 7.2 the applicant records that Site 8 consists of arable fields beside ancient woodland, bounded by Market lane, Brooke Road and Baxter's Lane, surrounded by Ringer's Grove, Little Wood (SSSI), Great Wood, and Baxter's Grove, and bisected by local PRoW with Boudicca's Way nearby. In Appendix 7.3 the Applicant records site 8 as high value, high susceptibility and high sensitivity. The river valley setting and the open landscape character is proof of this matter. Appendix 7.3 records construction effects on open valley character, medium-distance views, rural lanes, PRoW, tranquillity, hedgerows and rural character, and concludes the construction effects on site 8 would be Major and Significant. Chapter 8 Tables 7.4 – 7.14 assesses the effects throughout the Scheme. For Site 8 Shotesham Action Group disputes the assessed effects. The below table by Classic landscape Architecture Ltd confirms a different and realistic assessment of landscape effects.

Classic Landscape Architecture Ltd Architecture report Page 51

PINS: EN0110014: EAST PYE SOLAR – SITE 8, SHOTESHAM – LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL MATTERS —
TABLE A: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

LANDSCAPE RECEPTOR	MAGNITUDE OF LANDSCAPE CHANGE HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW, NEGLIGIBLE NONE	NOTES	EPS LVIA			CLA REVIEW - SITE 8		
			LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY SUSCEPTIBILITY X LANDSCAPE VALUE	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15	LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY SUSCEPTIBILITY X LANDSCAPE VALUE	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15
TOPOGRAPHY AND DRAINAGE	HIGH-MEDIUM	INCREASED RUN-OFF, SEDIMENT BUILD UP AND HIGH RISK OF CONTAMINATION TO WATER COURSES			MODERATE BENEFICIAL	HIGH	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE -	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE -

		AND PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES					SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT
DESIGNATIONS	MEDIUM	LOSS OF APPRECIATION OF DESIGNATED/HISTORIC ROUTES (BOUDICA WAY) AND ANCIENT/SSSI WOODLAND ADJACENT TO THE SITE				HIGH	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
LAND USE	HIGH	UNREVERSIBLE/PERMANENT DEGRADATION OF SOILS AND LOSS OF LARGE AREAS OF HIGH QUALITY AND BMV LAND. DEGRADATION OF LAND FOR HAUL ROAD.				HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
EXISTING VEGETATION	LOW-MEDIUM (UNKNOWN)	LOSS OF TREES AND HEDGEROWS TO ACCOMMODATE DEVELOPMENT REPLANTING DETRIMENT TO THE HIGHLY IMPORTANT OPEN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE.				HIGH	MODERATE-MINOR ADVERSE	POTENTIALLY MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
BOUDICA WAY	MEDIUM-HIGH	VIEWS ACROSS THE VALLEY FROM THIS IMPORTANT ROUTE – REDUCING INTEGRITY AND APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE – VIEWS CANNOT BE MITIGATED		MINOR ADVERSE	MINOR ADVERSE	HIGH	MODERATE-MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MODERATE-ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
SHOTESHAM CONSERVATION AREA	MODERATE CHANGE TO SETTING	DEGRADATION OF THREE APPROACHES TO THE CONSERVATION AREA, REDUCING LEGIBILITY AND PERCEPTUAL VALUE. MITIGATION PLANTING CLOSING				HIGH	MODERATE ADVERSE SIGNIFICANT	MODERATE ADVERSE SIGNIFICANT

		DOWN OPEN VIEWS PROW NETWORK IMPORTANT PART OF ENTRANCE TO CA						
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TO NOTE:

It should be noted that EPS state that the development is short term. This development is for a generation of receptors and cannot be considered short term. A more accurate assessment would be medium term. In addition, there are factors within the development that are irreversible and therefore there are permanent effects. The following should be considered permanent or long-term effects

- - EFFECTS ON THE NCA – where land degradation is permanent
- - EFFECTS ON LAND USE – where land degradation is permanent
- - EFFECTS ON THE LCAS – where land degradation is permanent
- - EFFECTS ON PROW – where character is permanently altered

In Appendix 7.8 the applicant has arbitrarily chosen to limit Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) to within 100m of individual properties. Accordingly only seventeen properties have been identified, of which two did not meet the threshold and were further assessed. In the final judgement, neither properties were thought to be dominated or overwhelmed by the nearby development. Oakdene Cottage on Woodton Road in Shotesham is one of the two properties. Oakdene Cottage is situated in the south east corner of site 7I and will clearly be dominated by the development and the applicant's judgement is incorrect. The RVAA assessment limit should be increased to 250m to satisfactorily deal with residential visual impact for the Scheme. This is in line with Botley West Solar Farm where the RVVA has been increased from 100m to 250m .

Three residential properties on Baxter's Lane (Golden Owl Barn, Kings Farm and Ley Farm) and one residential property on Market Lane (Market Lane Farm) are all within 200m of Site 8b and will be adversely affected. Golden Owl Barn has picture windows facing west across the valley to Site 8a. Kings Farm and Golden Owl Barn have windows facing north within 200m of Site 8b. Users of Baxter's Lane travelling south will be significantly impacted by a large array of solar panels across the valley to Site 8a. Golden Owl Barn will be significantly visually impacted as the property faces west and north in full view of Sites 8a and 8b respectively.

The applicant proposes Industrial scale rotating (tracker) solar panels reaching 4.5m high. Alternative solar panels mentioned are fixed panels 3.5m high. Both heights would be highly visible at a distance on Site 8 elevated land, in particular at the north boundary of Site 8b is at the top of the sloping land. The solar panels would be in full view from Brooke Road and Baxter's Lane.



Site 8a (in red) as viewed from Baxter's Lane across the valley.



Photograph taken from Brooke Road showing the 4.5m height of proposed solar panels at the top of Site 8b sloping land.



Photograph taken from Baxter's Lane showing the 4.5m height of the proposed solar panels at the top of Site 8b sloping land.

The applicant's photomontages from Brooke Road (Figure 7.6.8) at year 15 show the solar panes still visible amongst mitigating trees but in the winter months the panels would be visible. From Baxter's lane the applicant's photowire from Kings Farm (figure 7.6.8) show the panels in stark reality on the southern boundary of Site 8b. Peoples' views and visual amenity from both these view points will result in an unacceptable visual impact to all receptors. The vast array of solar panels across the valley on Site 8a will blight this panoramic view.

UPDATED NPPF – The updated NPPF came into force on 17 August 2026. The significant change is the removal of 'Valued Landscape'. This places more emphasis on high quality LVIA's and strategic landscape planning from the outset of the development process. As previously mentioned, the site selection process for the project is flawed. The applicant did not abide with NPS EN-1 5.10.6, 5.6.19 and 5.10.21 at the early stages of design. Shotesham Action Group requests that the ExA ask the applicant to prepare a report to identify whether the landscape character and environmental quality of the chosen area would comply with the strategic landscape requirements of the updated NPPF.

BARBASTELLE BATS - The scheme is located in a nationally important bat landscape with barbastelle bats recorded across the entire area and specifically in Shotesham Little Wood (SSSI). Barbastelle bats are classified as a protected vulnerable species. Little Wood (an ancient wood) and local wet meadows provide perfect habitat for barbastelle bats. The recent report by Norfolk Barbastelle Study Group (appended) identifies multiple maternity colony core sustenance zones overlapping the entire Scheme area. There is mounting evidence that solar panel development could be harmful to bats.

Barbastelle bats have been identified in ancient woodland in most areas of the scheme many of which are SSSIs. The core Sustenance Zones of Barbastelle Maternity Colonies are shown in Figure 1 of the report - see below. Note: Little Wood Shotesham SSSI has inadvertently not been annotated on Figure 1.

The applicant has not shown that favourable conservation status would be maintained.

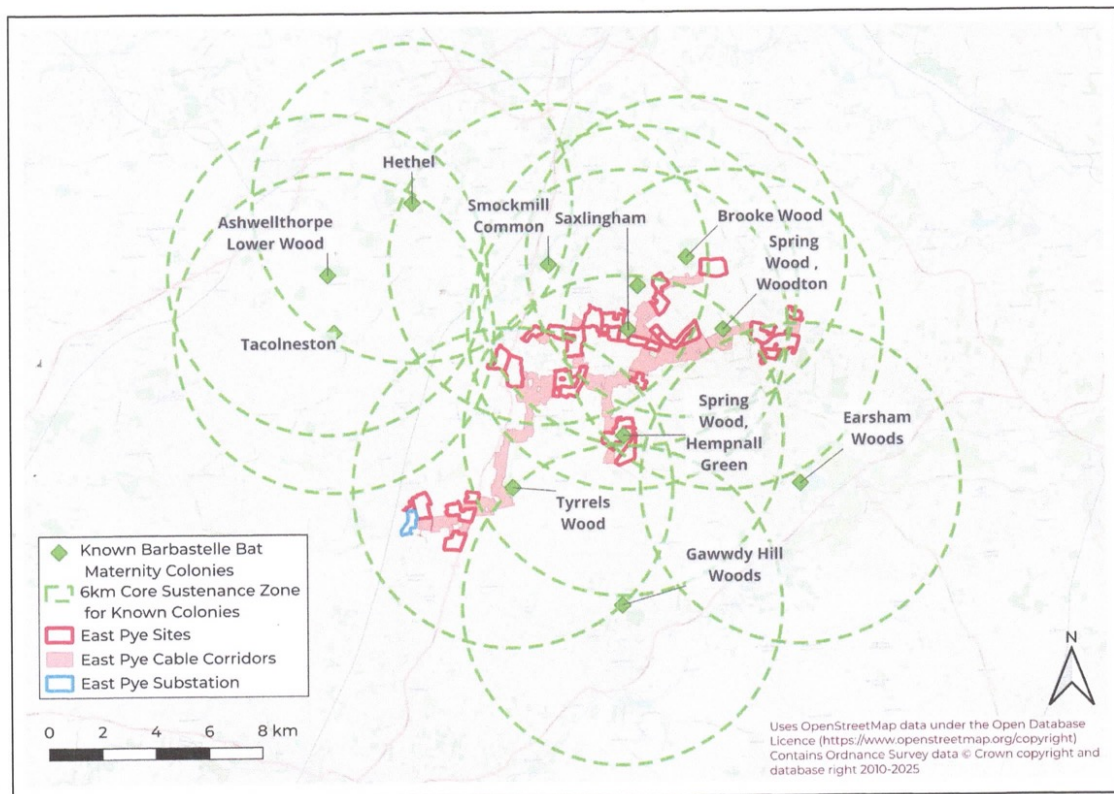


Figure 1. Core Sustenance Zones of Barbastelle Maternity Colonies within or close to the East Pye Solar Scheme Area

ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY- Part of Woodton Road in Shotesham has a Roadside Nature Reserve containing rare botany. This narrow single track lane has no adequate passing places for HGV lorries, nor have the majority of lanes proposed for accessing sites 7g-7l and 8a-8b. Damage to hedgerows and field margins throughout the scheme will be significant. Sites 8a and 8b form part of a wider ecological network. In particular Sites 8a and 8b are very close to Shotesham Beck which is a tributary to River Tas, a nationally important chalk stream. Contaminants and sediment from the solar fields will be transported to the River Tas system. There are many woods in the immediate area and Little Wood (SSSI) which is close by has added importance due to the presence of a barbastelle bat maternity colony. Farmland birds and mammals are in abundance. Brown hares (a protected and priority species) and deer will be prevented from traversing the fields due to the security fencing. Barn Owls (a protected species) thrive in this area and will be vulnerable to the security fencing, particularly fledged barn owls.

The ecological baseline for Site 8 is high due to the river valley, ancient SSSI woodland containing bat colonies, barn owls, protected small mammals including the brown hare. Any biodiversity gain on Site 8 is very unlikely. The bat colonies could be harmed, the river valley meadowland could become contaminated. The river and Shotesham Common SSSI could become silted and contaminated. No new habitats will be created. A few trees and hedges will not compensate the biodiversity loss. Grassland on the solar fields cannot be taken as a gain, as it is evident from most NSIP solar developments that they are devoid of grass.



Roadside Nature Reserve on Woodton Road in Shotesham

TRANSPORT AND ACCESS - Norfolk County Council Highways had serious concerns about the construction of the project by using unsuitable single carriageway single track unclassified lanes for HGV access to sites. It has now been proposed to use internal haul roads for sites 7a-7f, 7g- 7l and 8a-8b. This proposal makes little difference as the single track lanes will still be used to the same extent. Access to sites 7g-7l and 8a-8b will still be via Shotesham Road in Woodton and Woodton Road in Shotesham. Both these roads are very narrow (less than 2.8m wide) and in poor condition with undulations, settlement and regular potholes. The journey onward from site 7l to sites 8a-8a is via Woodton Road to Brooke and onwards to Baxter's Lane via Honeypot Lane and Heath Road. Baxter's Lane is also a single track lane. The volume of HGV traffic is not suitable for these roads. Also during the construction phase there will be a danger to other traffic, cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders.

Access onto Baxter's Lane from Heath Road encounters a steep slope and is an unsuitable junction for HGVs. Site 8a is proposed to be accessed by a haul road across site 8b starting on Baxter's Lane, an impracticable proposal due to a very steep gradient down from Site 8b to Market Lane and the necessity for major road works to gain access to Site 8a. The major works includes permanent devastation of the existing quaint bridge/ford crossing over Shotesham Beck. The Applicant's proposal to use internal haul roads does not alleviate the unsuitability of using single track country lanes to build a large infrastructure scheme.



Shotesham Road in Woodton showing the unsuitability of these lanes for HGV traffic.

CULTURAL HERITAGE - The Scheme of solar panels and substations has been chosen to be located over a footprint of approximately 12 miles. This disperses industrial infrastructure across multiple parishes, conservation areas and heritage settings, maximising cumulative effect. In terms of cultural heritage alone, the Scheme is not appropriate. Conservation areas in Brooke, Saxlingham Green and Fritton are all within 250m of the solar fields. Conservation areas in Seething, Shotesham, Hempnall and Wacton would all experience material harm to their wider landscape setting where surrounding fields are incorporated into the development. The cumulative consequence is a networked industrialisation of the historic landscape. The true scale and character of the infrastructure proposed is also out of scale with the landscape. The Applicant proposes industrial scale tilting (tracker) solar panels reaching 4.5m in height which would be visible above boundary vegetation, particularly in the winter months. Substations on Sites, 4b, 7f and 10c (132Kv) and substations on Sites 1b and 5a (400Kv) up to 15 m high will be highly visible at all times. The applicant's comments concerning Direct Impacts to Historic Landscape Character (Chapter 10) that the change is temporary and will be reversible and furthermore the field patterns will not change. The applicant also states that the development will better enhance the existing field boundaries through the introduction of hedgerows and tree belts. There are numerous existing hedgerows and trees. These statements are far from convincing and the industrialisation of the historic landscape will cause permanent undesirable change for the next sixty years.

In Shotesham there are two listed buildings which will suffer some harm as a result of the proposed solar panel development. Ugate Green Farmhouse and nearby barn (both Grade II) have a significant historic relationship with the countryside as Shotesham was historically a gated community, hence Ugate. The provision of solar panels clearly visible on the horizon on Site 8b will harm this concept. Oaks Farmhouse (Grade II*) on Woodton Road in Shotesham was originally an ecclesiastical building of importance, remotely situated in quiet surroundings. The proposed industrialisation of hundreds of acres of fields (Sites 7l and 7k) directly west of this heritage asset will harm this concept.

Shotesham St Mary comprises a historic cluster of Grade II and Grade II* dwellings and churches which are in line of site of solar panels in the distance. This will harm this special and historic cluster which the village greatly values. The applicant has not properly assessed this situation.



Ugate Green Farmhouse on Brooke Road overlooking Site 8b



Oaks Farmhouse on Woodton Road overlooking sub Site 7k and 7l

* Block East Pye Solar commissioned an independent Heritage Impact Assessment for the scheme by David Edleston BA (Hons) Dip Arch RIBA IHBC – see comments below.

The divergence between the Applicant and independent heritage evidence is substantial and quantifiable. The Applicant's own Heritage Statement carries forward one Scheduled Monument, two Grade I listed buildings, two Grade II* listed buildings, 42 Grade II listed buildings and four Conservation Areas. It ultimately identifies heritage harm to only two designated assets - Moulton Farmhouse and Barn Cottages - both at the lower end of less-than-substantial harm. David Edleston's independent Heritage Impact Assessment identifies less-than-substantial harm to 36 designated assets: 32 listed buildings and four Conservation Areas. The disagreement is not confined to minor assets. It includes moderate harm to Grade I St Michael's Church, Grade II* Old Rectory and Oaks Farmhouse, and moderate-to-high less-than-substantial harm to Grade I St Catherine's Church at Fritton. The reason for the difference is methodologically important. The Applicant relies heavily on distance, absence of direct intervisibility, retained foreground fields and eventual screening. The independent assessment places greater weight on the contribution made by open agricultural setting, isolation, approaches, historic land relationships, group value and the experience of buildings within an agricultural landscape. Barn Cottages provides a clear example. The Applicant accepts lower-end harm but says that it falls away when woodland screening matures; its own estimate is that adequate screening may take approximately 30 years. The independent assessment identifies moderate harm because the BESS and substation introduce industrial development into the open rural setting and the screening itself changes that setting.

GLINT AND GLARE - The Applicant's proposal to use industrial scale tilting (tracker solar panels reaching 4.5m high on Sites 8a and 8b will cause glint and glare for some receptors. Site 8a and 8b have very limited provision to screen the solar panels due to topography of the sites. The panels will be visible and the glint and glare will be significant. Site 8a solar panels will be fully visible across the valley from road users on Baxter's Lane and from the west elevation of Golden Owl Barn. The north elevation of Golden Owl Barn and Kings Farm will also be impacted by solar panels on Site 8b. Users of Baxter's Lane travelling north to south will be impacted when the solar panels are tilting eastwards and similarly for Golden Eye Barn. Solar panels tilting west on site 8a and or 8b will impact Lathgreen Farm and Dawsons Farm on Wash Lane, Market Lane Farm on Market Lane and users of Boudicca's Way. Users of footpaths 19 and 22 are likely to be impacted by glint and glare.

NOISE - The sound power level of solar panel inverters is 91 dB (Chapter 12 Table 12-21) With the inverters located centrally on Sites 8a and 8b the sound pressure level is likely to exceed the existing background noise at Golden Owl Barn, Kings Farm and Ley Farm and slightly beyond at The Copse, Wodehouse and Hill View Barn (barn conversions) all on Baxter's Lane and at Dawes Farm on Wash lane and Market lane Farm on Market Lane, especially if the frequency is low. The existing background noise for all these properties is very low. Footpath users will also hear the inverters in continual use and the solar tracking motors intermittently. The sound power level of each solar tracking motor is 50 dB. This would increase depending on the number of solar panels motors operating at the same time. It appears likely that the existing tranquillity of the area will be adversely affected by the proposed infrastructure.

* Shotesham Action Group does not accept that the rated noise level from equipment during the operation stage will be less or equal to the background noise level. The sound assessment tables in Appendix 12.2 for Site 8 receptors for Background Sound Level LA90 15 mins give an average 29dB for day, 19 dB for night and 22dB for early morning. These are extremely low levels and make Site 8 one of the quietest areas of the scheme. The Calculated Rating Level of the equipment averages 26dB for day and 27dB for early morning. The early morning equipment noise therefore exceeds the background noise. Paragraph 3.9.7 states the calculation methodology has an uncertainty of +/- 3dB and this would increase the rating level further and be Significant Adverse.

On Baxter's Lane there is an increase in traffic from around 7.30am to 9.00am when commuter traffic short cuts from Woodton to Norwich to avoid the build up of traffic in Poringland. This will have distorted the daytime background noise readings.

Shotesham Action Group requests that the ExA gives little weight to the applicant's present conclusion that noise effects are acceptable, in particular their belief that rating levels are below background levels for Site 8.

IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES Village communities will suffer from the effects of nearby solar development. East Pye Solar Farm encompasses 12 villages over a 12 mile distance. This will detrimentally affect a large proportion of South Norfolk. Village communities will suffer and gain no benefit. Village amenities will be adversely affected. Mental health is a known issue with solar development caused by concerns over destruction of the countryside, loss of countryside views, fall in house prices/reduced saleability, negative impact on leisure activities, unknown flood risk, wildlife destruction, noise pollution, traffic concerns, community disagreements due to differing opinions and uncertainty due to unknown health risks .

* A recent study on the impact of a large Solar Farm on mental health was carried out by a General Practitioner in Nottinghamshire (appended). The study revealed that 83% of participants stated they believed their mental health was already affected by the solar proposal with a similar majority (86%) believing their mental health was likely to worsen should the project be approved.

Whilst the NPS EN-1 and EN-3 fail to properly mention mental health impact on communities resulting from energy infrastructure projects, it should be incumbent for the ExA and the SoS to give weight to this matter. The protection of communities and mental health should be of paramount concern. Shotesham Action Group requests that the ExA gives weight to mental health in making their decision.

PROPOSED SUBSTATIONS - Five substations on agricultural fields and the National Grid substation in Great Mouton will significantly add to blight of solar panel industrialisation across South Norfolk. In Great Moulton a 400Kv substation is proposed in the same field as the National Grid substation. The installations are proposed within 250m of residential properties in Great Moulton. This proposal would be clearly overbearing for the village and by any standards should not proceed. It is known that this proposed location of the National Grid substation was originally planned out of the village in a less overbearing location and that the new proposed location was not subject to proper consultation.

OVERALL OPINION - The proposed scheme is not appropriate for the historic agricultural landscape covering such a large area of South Norfolk. There has been inadequate consideration for this proposal influencing site selection for the whole scheme but particularly for Site 8.

Shotesham Action Group request that the ExA ask the applicant to prepare a report to identify whether the landscape character and environmental quality of the area would comply with the strategic landscape planning requirements of the updated NPPF.

(NPS) EN1 5.10.26 concerning mitigation states there maybe exceptional circumstances where mitigation could have a very significant benefit and warrant a small reduction in function. The reduction in function (electricity generation output) for Site 8 would be minimal. The adverse impacts for Site 8 would be long term and not capable of being reduced in time. This is due to the topography, high landscape value and the environmental value of Site 8. Shotesham Action Group request that the ExA ask the applicant to remove Site 8 from the scheme.

APPENDIX

1. Shotesham Circular Walks
2. Landscape and Visual Matters report
3. Norfolk Barbastelle Study Group report
4. Mental Health and large solar farms

Summary of Written Representation by Shotesham Action Group – Reference number F7E12275C

- **Landscape & Visual Impact:** The group states that Shotesham is a highly attractive, undulating "Valued Landscape". Constructing 4.5-metre-high rotating solar panels on sloping hillsides (Sites 8a and 8b) will be highly visible, ruin historic landscape settings, and cannot be adequately mitigated.
- **Public Rights of Way (PRoW):** The solar fields will enclose popular walking paths, including the Boudicca's Way National Trail. Fencing will block panoramic valley views, reducing the area's tranquillity and safety perception.
- **Flooding Risks:** Shotesham Beck is highly prone to flash flooding. The group argues that replacing agricultural fields with solar arrays on clay soil will significantly increase surface water run-off, exacerbating severe flooding on local roads (Market Lane) and protected wetlands.
- **Private Water Supplies:** The applicant allegedly failed to properly assess or mitigate the risk to 10 local boreholes serving 12 properties, some of which lie in a critical Source Protection Zone vulnerable to construction contamination.
- **Ecology & Biodiversity:** The development threatens local wildlife, including a nearby Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) housing a rare Barbastelle bat maternity colony. Security fencing will block deer and brown hares, while infrastructure poses a threat to local barn owls.
- **Cultural Heritage:** The 12-mile infrastructure footprint disperses industrial clutter near multiple local conservation areas and Grade II/II* listed buildings, such as Uppate Green Farmhouse and Oaks Farmhouse. An independent assessment identified potential harm to 36 designated heritage assets, far more than the applicant admitted.
- **Noise, Glint & Glare:** Solar panel inverters (91 dB) and tracking motors will exceed the area's exceptionally quiet daytime and early morning background noise. Additionally, the tilting panels will cause significant glint and glare for local homeowners, road users, and walkers.
- **Community & Mental Health Impact:** The group highlights a referenced study showing that large solar farms negatively impact rural residents' mental health due to concerns over countryside destruction, falling house prices, and traffic.

Overall Conclusion

The Shotesham Action Group maintains that the applicant's site selection process was fundamentally flawed, lacking thorough environmental refinement or proper consultation. They are formally requesting the Examining Authority to require the total removal of Site 8 from the project scheme.

Study: The Impact of the One Earth Solar Farm on Mental Health

BACKGROUND

[REDACTED] I have a background in community General Practice, currently specialising in patient health in custodial settings with a special interest in Substance Misuse.

The One Earth Solar Farm Proposal is a plan to convert around 3,500 acres of agricultural land and countryside around the over 1,000 year old historic villages of North and South Clifton, Fledborough, Ragnall, and surrounding Nottinghamshire parishes into a massive industrialised solar 'farm'. In total almost 4,000 acres of farmland will be removed from important food production and if it is given the go-ahead, it will be one of – if not *the* – largest solar farm in Northern Europe, and over four times larger than the largest solar farms in comparable countries such as France and Germany.

The loss of countryside has profound effects on small communities, disrupting their way of life and cultural heritage. Rural areas often rely on the countryside for their economic activities, such as farming, tourism, and local craftsmanship. As these lands are lost to urbanization or industrial development, small communities may face economic decline, loss of jobs, and diminished social cohesion. Additionally, the natural environment plays a crucial role in the identity and traditions of these communities and its loss can lead to a weakening of communal bonds and a sense of place. This transformation can result in population decline as residents move elsewhere, further eroding the social fabric of these communities.

A study into the mental health effects of industrial development is crucial for understanding how rapid industrialization impacts psychological wellbeing. Industrial developments such as this, by the developers own admission, do not provide large long term employment opportunities and increased wealth across these communities, but can instead lead to environmental pollution, in the form of noise, constraints on social activities previously enjoyed and disruption. This may then contribute to stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues. Additionally, the loss of natural spaces due to industrial expansion can further exacerbate these problems.

Unwanted industrial developments such as the One Earth Solar Farm can significantly impact mental health, often fostering a sense of social injustice among affected communities. This sense of injustice arises from a perceived disregard for their well-being and opinions, leading to frustration and diminished trust in decision-makers. The emotional toll of feeling sidelined or unfairly treated can exacerbate mental health issues, highlighting the need for equitable and transparent planning processes that genuinely consider community concerns and protect their quality of life.

By investigating these effects, the study can inform policies and practices that mitigate negative mental health outcomes, promoting a healthier balance between industrial progress and community wellbeing.

Study: The Impact of the One Earth Solar Farm on Mental Health

As a GP, human health falls high on my agenda. When browsing the One Earth information booklets, I was immediately struck by the following statement:

‘Human Health – Likely significant positive effect’.

This is a quote from One Earth regarding how they believe their solar proposal will impact human health. The booklet refers to positive effects on physical health from green energy but there was little to no mention of mental health, which forms one of the major components of human health alongside the physical element.

There is a strong association between mental and physical health. Evidence indicates that mental health problems such as stress and anxiety are strongly linked to causality and exacerbation of many physical health problems, for example stress and anxiety causing and/or worsening high blood pressure. We also know that physical health problems can cause and/or exacerbate mental health problems. Or mental health conditions can run parallel to physical health problems, but they may be unrelated. There is overlap between these two brackets of health, but they are equally important.

Concerned that mental health had not been recognised by One Earth, I produced a document outlining some personal concerns regarding the mental health of numerous residents I had spoken to privately about how the project was making them feel (Appendix 1).

These findings prompted me to conduct a study within the local area to produce some evidence relating to the impact of the One Earth Solar proposal on mental health.

METHODOLOGY

This is an anonymous study conducted over approximately two weeks in July 2024 to ascertain the impact of the One Earth Solar project on the mental health of the people living in the affected areas.

Mental health questionnaires were distributed throughout the villages of South and North Clifton (Appendix 2). No personal information other than gender and age was asked to be provided.

Those wishing to partake completed the form and handed it back, either at the time or at a later date.

The data from the above forms was then collated and summarised as follows.

Study: The Impact of the One Earth Solar Farm on Mental Health

STUDY RESULTS

109 completed questionnaires were received.

Demographics

Age

- Range: 23 - 85 years
- Mean (average): 50 years

Gender

- Female: 54 (49%)
- Male: 47 (43%)
- Not Stated: 9 (8%)

Area of Residence

- South Clifton: 35 (32%)
- North Clifton: 65 (60%)
- Spalford: 2 (1.5%)
- Thorney: 2 (1.5%)
- Not Stated: 6 (5%)

Findings

Demographics

- There was a similar split between male and female participants (43% and 49% respectively).
- Mean age of participants 50 years.
- North Clifton had the majority of participants (60%), followed by South Clifton (32%).

Impact of One Earth Solar project on mental health

- 83% (90 participants) stated that their mental health was already being negatively impacted by the One Earth Solar proposal.
- 86% (94 participants) stated that their mental health was likely to worsen should the One Earth Solar proposal be approved.

Individual comments regarding how the One Earth Solar proposal is currently negatively affecting mental health

- See Appendix 3

Individual comments regarding how mental health is likely to worsen should the One Earth Solar proposal be approved

- See Appendix 4

Study: The Impact of the One Earth Solar Farm on Mental Health

Further comments relating to mental health and the One Earth Solar proposal

- See Appendix 5

DISCUSSION

An overwhelming majority (83%) of participants stated they believed their mental health was already being negatively affected by the solar proposal with a similar majority (86%) believing their mental health was likely to worsen should the project be approved.

Emotions and disorders most referred to in the comments section included anxiety, stress, sleep problems, low mood and depression. One comment from a participant made reference to the fact they had already sought advice and support from their GP and were now on medication and having therapy. There was further reference to medication, with one individual stating they were requiring sleeping medication and another that they had increased the dose of their anxiety medication because of the impact the One Earth proposal was having on their mental health. A further comment was from an individual who stated due to anxiety and sleep deprivation they have lost time with their newborn baby. There were statements from several individuals who were concerned about worsening of their current mental health conditions.

Regarding physical health, one individual stated the stress from a previous solar farm installation caused them to have a stroke, whilst another expressed concern that the stress of the current situation was causing flare-ups of their vertigo.

Common factors which were repeatedly referenced to relating to why the project was causing deterioration of mental health included concern over destruction of the countryside, loss of countryside views, fall in house prices/reduced saleability, negative impact on leisure activities, increased flood risk, food insecurity, wildlife destruction, community disagreements due to differing opinions, uncertainty of long-term health risks and noise/traffic pollution.

There is an overwhelming sense of despair. Many imply their lives will never be the same again should the project go ahead, and due to the fall in house values, moving away would probably not be possible. There is an overall impression that many individuals feel trapped within the area and unable to escape what is coming to them. Many of the comments were extremely upsetting and disturbing to read.

There were no positive comments given relating to impact on mental health, even by the study participants who indicated their mental health is not, and likely will not be impacted by the proposals.

There has clearly been an oversight of the important matter of mental health by One Earth. The evidence provided here clearly demonstrates there is a major concern relating to human health **currently** in our local community which has been created solely by the One Earth Solar Panel proposal. This evidence clearly contradicts the statement that the One Earth Solar project is likely to have a 'significant positive effect' on human health. Given that this research has been conducted at a relatively early stage in the project, this is of **grave concern**.

Study: The Impact of the One Earth Solar Farm on Mental Health

ACTIONS

1. To submit this study to the company One Earth as evidence for the negative impact this proposal is already having on the mental health of the local community.
2. To submit this evidence formally to the South Clifton Parish Council requesting it is presented to One Earth at their next joint meeting.
3. Although not a member of the Parish Council, I intend to participate in future Parish Council meetings to encourage our community mental health to be given the priority status it deserves.
4. To continue collecting data as evidence of how this project is impacting community mental health.

[REDACTED]
General Practitioner
[REDACTED]

July 2024



BARBASTELLE MATERNITY COLONIES IN THE EAST PYE SOLAR SCHEME AREA AT DECEMBER 2025

Author: [REDACTED]

1. Introduction

The work of the Norfolk Barbastelle Study Group, a specialist group within Norfolk and Norwich Bat Group, has shown that the South Norfolk Claylands support maternity colonies of Western Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*. This species is rare in both in the UK and across Europe and one of only two of our UK bat species to be listed as 'Near Threatened' globally on the IUCN Red List. Guidance on the conservation of barbastelles is provided by Natural England's Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) document.

Although landuse in the South Norfolk Claylands is predominantly arable, the landscape is typified by scattered woodlands, high hedges, pollarded trees, open fields and commons. These habitats provide sufficient roosting and foraging resources and landscape connectivity to support a metapopulation of barbastelles.

The Core Sustenance Zone (CSZ) of barbastelles is a 6km radius around the maternity colony (Collins, 2023). The CSZ of 6 colonies lies within or abuts to the East Pye Solar Scheme area. Two colonies are next to the proposed cable route, and one of these will also be surrounded by solar panel arrays. Furthermore, there are other woodlands along the scheme area which have not been surveyed for barbastelle, particularly at the east end of the scheme area.

2. Aims and objectives

The 2025 work aimed to:

- Assess the potential of woodlands not previously surveyed for their potential to support barbastelle maternity colonies, especially at the east end of the East Pye solar scheme area
- Confirm the presence or likely presence of barbastelle maternity colonies in these woodlands
- Identify all barbastelle maternity colonies where the East Pye solar scheme proposals may impact directly on the colony or its Core Sustenance Zone

3. Methodology

3.1 Woodland sites

Five woodlands immediately adjacent to or between 100m and 400m of the East Pye Solar scheme area were selected for survey. Three are County Wildlife Sites (CWS) with mature woodland, one is a SSSI designated for its ancient woodland and two are predominantly coniferous plantation containing stands of mature broad-leaved woodland (Table 1).

Landowner permission was obtained to survey all sites. Brooke Wood was divided into two blocks (west and east) due to its large size (64 ha).

Table 1. Woodlands surveyed in 2025

Site name	Location	Size (ha)	NGR	Designation
Spring Wood	Hempnall Green	55 2.76 mature oak belt	TM248919	CWS 90
Little Wood	Shotesham	20	TM253974	SSSI
Brooke Wood West of central track	Brooke	36 2.0 mature oak belt	TM 270985	CWS 115
Brooke Wood East of central track	Brooke	28 1.2 mature oak belt	TM 270985	CWS 115
Lower Spring Wood	Woodton	4	TM 284957	CWS 107
Round Wood	Woodton	1.5	TM 285963	CWS 108

3.2 Assessment of Roost Potential for barbastelle (BarbRP)

Each woodland was visited between January and February when Potential Roost Features (PRFs) were not obscured by foliage. Bright, sunny days were chosen to improve detection of PRFs at height. The walkover followed rides and tracks, but deviated into broad-leaved compartments in the coniferous woods and to get a closer view where needed. Trees were scanned from ground to crown with binoculars.

A broad assessment of BarbRP was made by recording the presence of PRFs specifically favoured by barbastelle, namely loose, lifted bark (bark collars, bark slabs, splits in bark) and deep cracks and fissures, regardless of height on the tree. The proportion of damaged, dying and dead trees was also noted.

3.3 Acoustic surveys

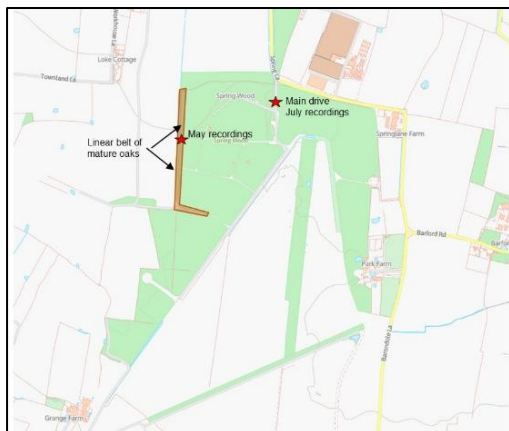
Recent work by O'Malley *et al* (2023) investigated the use of bat detectors to predict the presence of a maternity colony of barbastelles in a woodland. The research concluded that the number of barbastelle calls recorded from sunset to 1 hour after sunset is indicative of the presence of a maternity roost with a threshold of four barbastelle passes recorded by at least one detector between the true- and false-positive rates. This method requires that:

- i) To maintain a 90% probability of detecting colonies where they are present, detectors should be placed at a minimum density of 0.16 detectors ha per hectare for three nights.
- ii) Detectors should be placed along trails and rides where possible. Approximate equal spacing should be maintained but opportunistic placement of detectors is acceptable.

This approach is much less labour intensive and less expensive than radiotracking. Consequently, the method was used to increase the number of woodland sites in or close to the East Pye Scheme area that could be investigated in 2025.

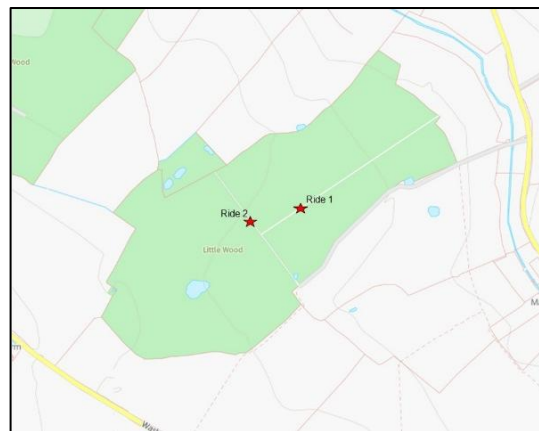
Audiomoth full spectrum recorders were attached to poles at 1.5m above the ground and orientated horizontally towards the likely flight path (usually a ride) or, where there was no obvious flight path within the mature oak belts in coniferous plantation, towards clearings amongst trees with high roost potential for barbastelle. Sampling rate was set to 192 and recording time was from 1 hour before sunset to 1 hour after sunrise and continuous over a minimum of 3 nights. The data was analysed using the BTO Acoustic Pipeline <https://bto.org/pipeline>. All barbastelle calls at lower than 0.8 confidence level were discarded but in practice there were very few.

The locations of the Audiomoths in each woodland block are shown below.



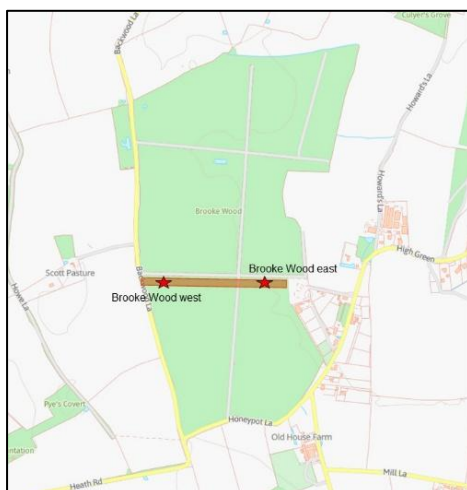
Spring Wood, Hempnall Green

No rides or clearings in mature oaks. Detector was located within the belt facing the woodland edge. Second detector on edge of main drive.



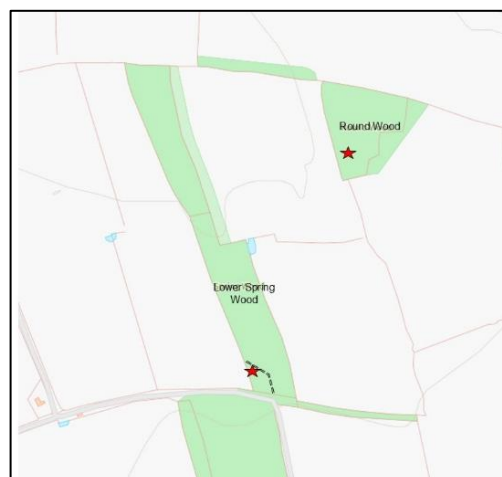
Little Wood

Two detectors on rides



Brooke Wood west and east

Detectors within the belt of mature oaks facing a clearing



Lower Spring Wood. *Detector on the edge of a short track in south west corner.*

Round Wood. *No rides or clearings. Detector amongst mature oaks and fallen ash.*

Audiomoths were deployed in Little Wood and Spring Wood Hempnall in May (the pre-parturition period) prior to attempting to trap and radiotrack pregnant female barbastelles to confirm the presence of maternity roosts. Brooke Wood, Lower Spring Wood, Round Wood were investigated using the acoustic method only. For these woods, Audiomoths were deployed in July which is the main maternity period when females have given birth and are suckling their dependent young. Additional acoustic recordings were made in the belt of mature oaks and on the main drive of Spring Wood Hempnall prior to a second trapping attempt.

3.4 Radiotracking to locate maternity colonies

All trapping and radiotagging was carried out under Natural England project licence 2024-69803-SCI-SCI. Mist nets were deployed at the north end of the central concrete track in Spring Wood Hempnall since there were no rides in the broad-leaved compartment and no access to other rides in the coniferous plantation. Nets were deployed on the 2 main rides through Little Wood. Biotrack Pip3 (< 0.46g) transmitters were attached to the skin between the shoulder blades

exposed by fur clipping using Torbot medical bonding cement. Tagged females were located daily in the roost trees and emergence surveys carried out for several nights to determine colony size.

4. Results

4.1 Barbastelle Roost Potential (BarbRP)

All woodlands had suitable roost features for barbastelle, although some were confined to small areas of broad-leaved woodland within large coniferous plantations. Little Wood has a particularly high frequency of roost features.

Table 2. Assessment of woodlands for Barbastelle Roost Potential

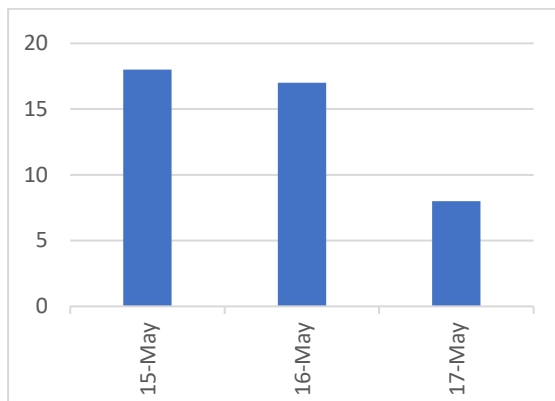
Site name	Description	BarbRP
Spring Wood Hempnall Green	A former WW2 airfield now managed as a commercial conifer plantation. Mature conifers interspersed with young ash. Hornbeam on some boundaries. A linear compartment of mature oaks runs north to south along the west side of the wood bordering the adjacent arable land. This extends east into the wood a short distance.	Mature oaks are tall with some obvious damage and deadwood in the crown. One dead oak with loose bark on the trunk in the central area. Access limited to south of wood. MODERATE
Little Wood	Ancient coppice-with-standards woodland. The standard trees are mostly pedunculate oak and ash and the main coppice species is hornbeam.	Numerous tall oaks and ash with damage in the crown. Loose bark at all heights. Several fallen ash trees with split bark. HIGH
Brooke Wood West of central track	Ancient woodland, predominantly managed as a commercial conifer plantation, divided into compartments by an extensive network of rides. Several compartments consist entirely of broadleaved semi-natural woodland, dominated by ash and oak. One linear compartment consists of broadleaved woodland dominated by oak	Mature conifers interspersed with young broad-leaved trees (beech, sycamore, oak, hornbeam) with no PRFs. A wide band of tall mature oaks running west to east adjacent to the south ride. Most have damage in the crown with loose bark visible. Evidence of acute oak decline. Several dying trees with loose bark at a low level. MODERATE
Brooke Wood East of central track	As for Brooke Wood West	As for Brooke Wood West. Wide band of tall mature oaks running west to east adjacent to the south ride. Damage in the crown with loose bark visible. Evidence of acute oak decline. Several dying trees with loose bark at a low level. MODERATE
Lower Spring Wood	Mature woodland dominated by ash, some of which arise from coppiced stools. Occasional oak and planted conifers.	Numerous dying and dead ash. Some splits in bark evident but not lifted. Woodpecker holes, rot holes and damaged trees. <i>See Appendix 1 for photographs</i> MODERATE

Round Wood	Mature hornbeam from former coppice with mature oak and ash throughout.	Mature oaks on west side with numerous PRFs. Several large fallen ash with loose bark. MODERATE
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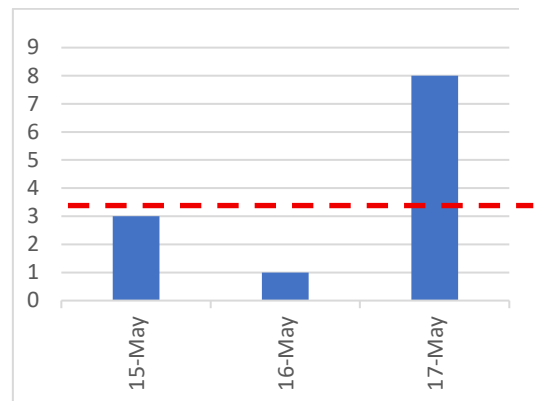
4.2 Acoustic surveys

Little Wood

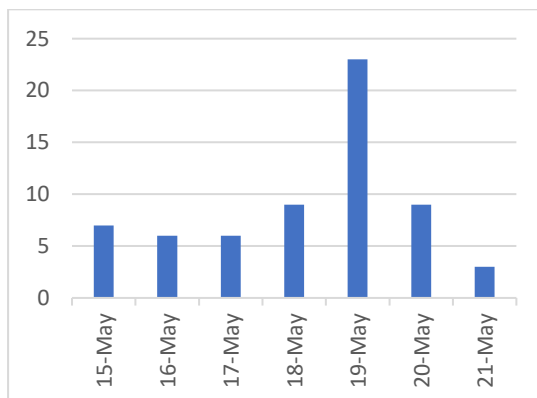
Barbastelles were frequently recorded in both rides in the wood in May with the threshold of 4 or more calls reached on several nights.



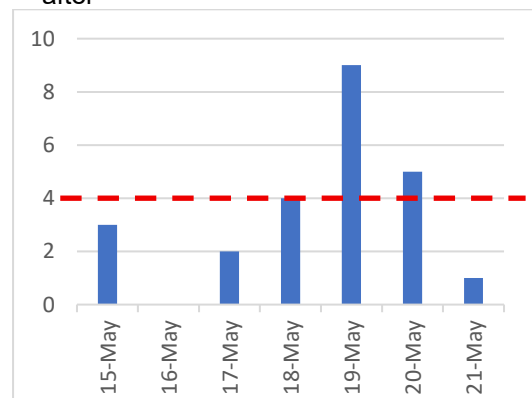
Ride 1. **May**. Calls from dusk to dawn



Ride 1. **May**. Calls from sunset to 1 hour after



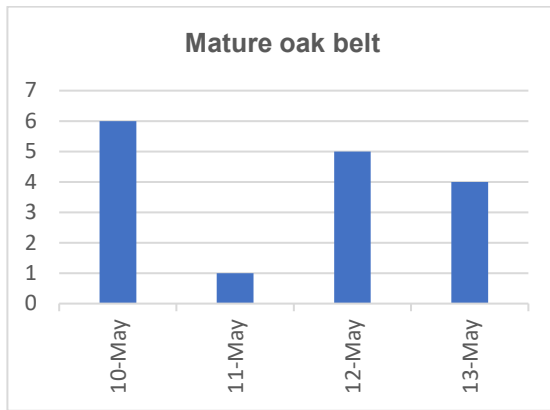
Ride 2. **May**. Calls from dusk to dawn



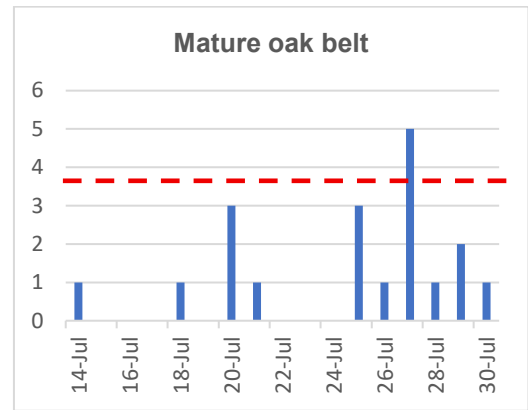
Ride 2. **May**. Calls from sunset to 1 hour after

Spring Wood, Hempnall Green

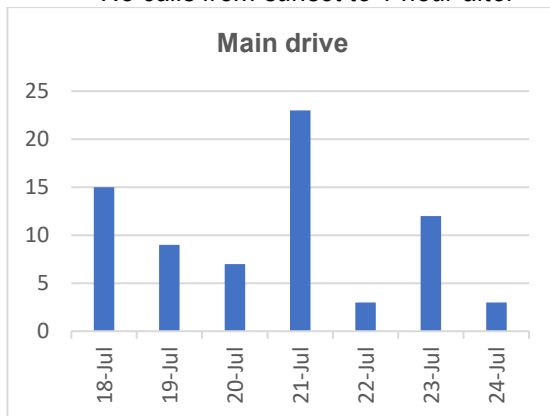
Barbastelle calls were recorded on all nights within the mature oak belt in both May and July, but only exceeded 4 calls on a single night in July. Activity was higher along the main drive in July but few calls were recorded in the hour after sunset.



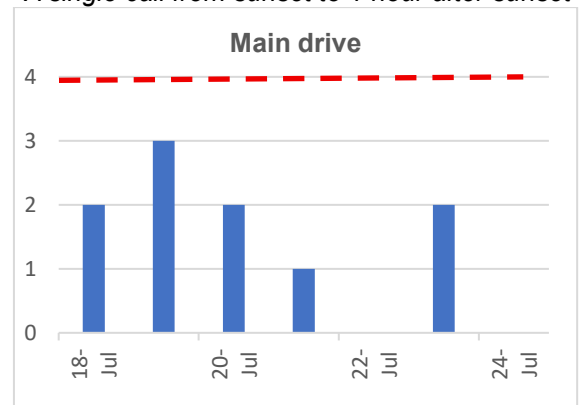
May. Calls from dusk to dawn
No calls from sunset to 1 hour after



July. Calls from dusk to dawn
A single call from sunset to 1 hour after sunset



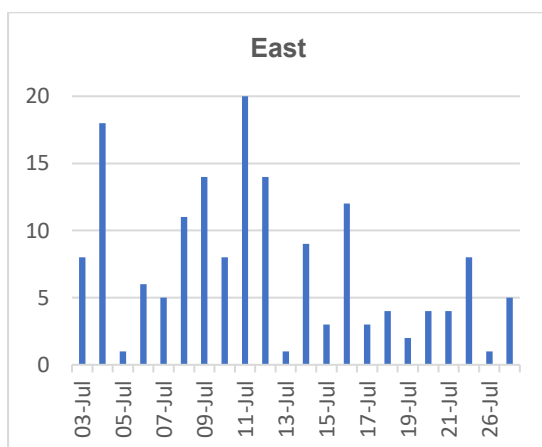
July. Calls from dusk to dawn



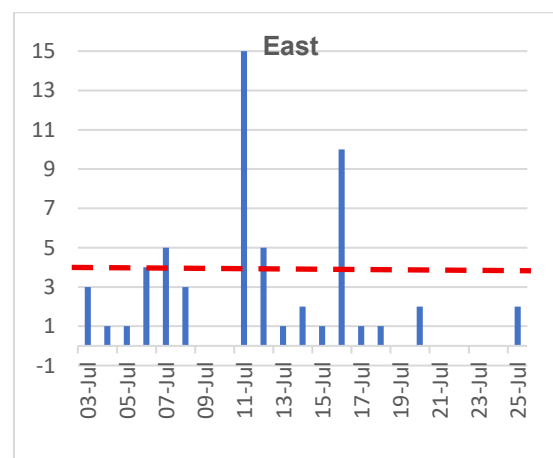
July. Calls from sunset to 1 hour after sunset
Threshold of 4 calls not reached.

Brooke Wood East

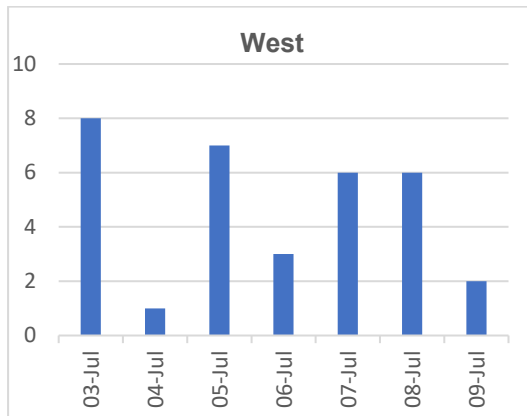
Barbastelle calls were recorded on all nights in July in both east and west sides of the mature oak woodland belt. The threshold of 4 calls in the hour after sunset was reached on 4 nights, with a peak of 15 calls on July 11th. Barbastelle calls were recorded on the west side of Brooke Wood on all nights in early July but less frequently than on the east side and the threshold of 4 calls in the hour after sunset was not reached.



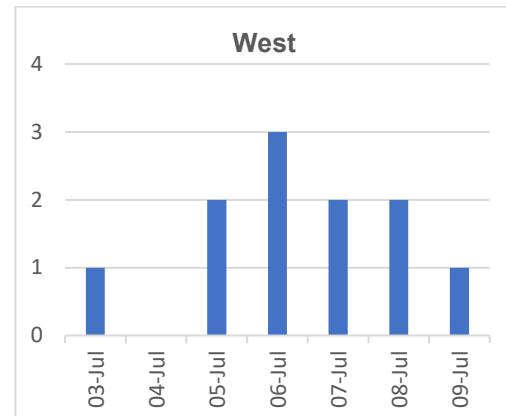
July. Barbastelle calls from dusk to dawn



July. Barbastelle calls from sunset to 1 hour after



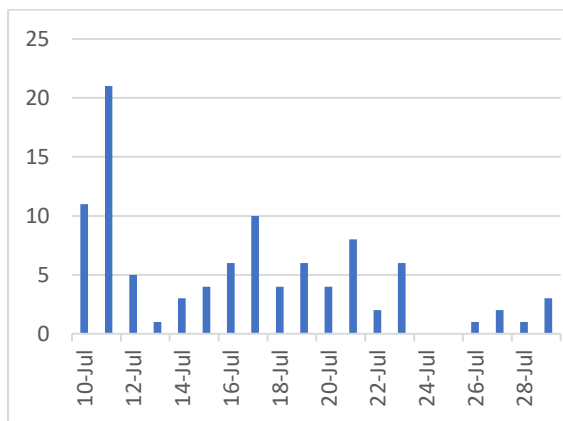
July. Barbastelle calls from dusk to dawn



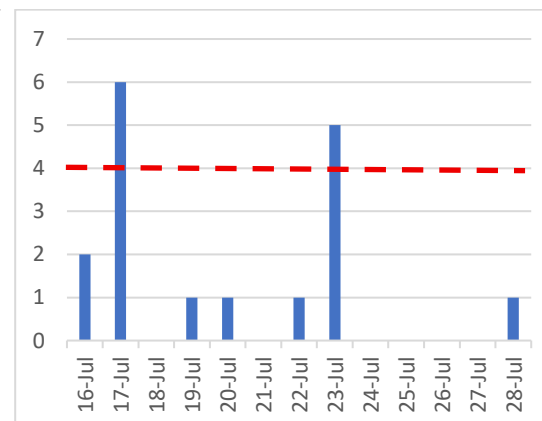
July. Barbastelle calls from sunset to 1 hour after

Lower Spring Wood Woodton

Barbastelle activity was recorded on nearly all nights, exceeding the 4 call threshold on 2 nights.



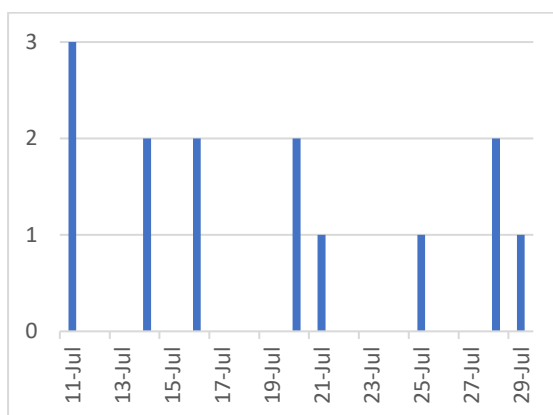
July. Barbastelle calls from dusk to dawn



July. Barbastelle calls from sunset to 1 hour after.

Round Wood Woodton

A few barbastelle calls were recorded on most nights but none within the hour after sunset.



July. Barbastelle calls from dusk to dawn
No calls from sunset to 1 hour after

4.3 Radiotracking

Spring Wood, Hempnall Green

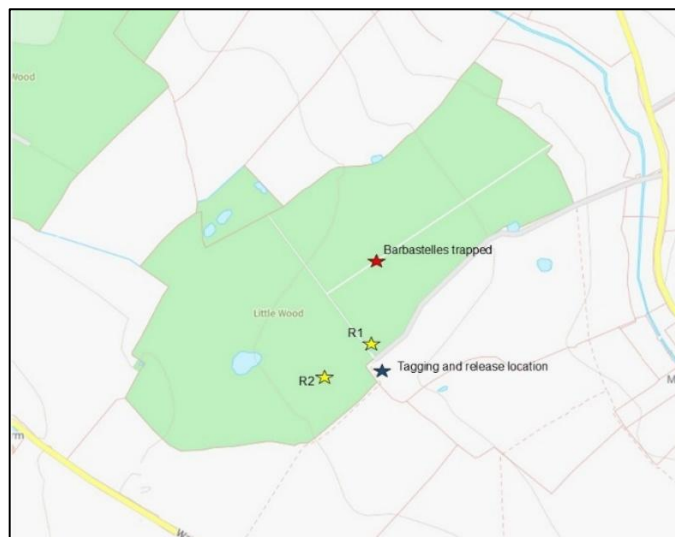
Three trapping sessions were carried out on the main drive but no female barbastelles were trapped. A single male was caught on 1st August.

Date	Barbastelle	Other species
2 nd June (pre-parturition)		Common pipistrelle x 6 Soprano pipistrelle x 3 Brown long-eared x 1
25 th July (post-parturition)		Common pipistrelle x 6 Soprano pipistrelle x 2 Brown long-eared x 17
1 st August (post-parturition)	1 adult male	Common pipistrelle x 1 Soprano pipistrelle x 1

Little Wood

Three female barbastelles were caught during the single pre-parturition trapping session. Two were assessed as pregnant and radiotagged. Roosts were located over the next 7 days and emergence counts carried out.

Date	Roost tree	Emergence count
6 th June	Both bats in oak (R1) close to trapping location. Possibly a panic roost. Roost obscured by surrounding vegetation. Tagged Bats emerged at 14 and 16mins after sunset	
7 th June	Thunderstorms in day and evening. No tracking	
8 th June	Both bats in leaning ash (R2) with split bark in Little Wood	29
9 th June	Both bats in R2	36
10 th June	Both bats in R2	36
11 th June	Both bats in R2	28
12 th June	Both bats in R2. 1 tag detached	25



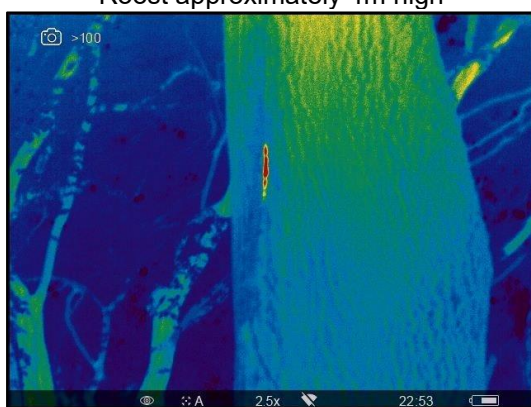
The roost tree used for 5 days continuously was a very tall ash which was still alive but leaning over and supported by adjacent trees. The trunk had twisted causing the bark to split and lift. The maternity roost was at the top end of the split.



Roost approximately 4m high



Roost under split bark



Thermal image of colony under loose bark



Colony before emergence, moving around along the length of the split

5. Discussion

A new maternity colony was predicted to be present in Little Wood near Shotesham by assessment of BarRP and acoustic analysis and was subsequently confirmed by radiotracking. The peak pre-parturition count was 36, and the post-parturition count is expected to be approximately 55 which is large in the context of Norfolk maternity colonies.

The acoustic method also predicts the presence of barbastelle maternity colonies in the mature oak belt in Brooke Wood and in Lower Spring Wood at the north east end of the solar scheme. It is uncertain if a maternity colony is present in Spring Wood Hempnall. Trapping was very much constrained by the lack of rides near the mature oak belt. The timing of calls, the trapping results and previous acoustic surveys (Mick Finnemore, personal communication) confirms that barbastelle roosts are present and the woodland is used for roosting and feeding. Further work is needed to confirm roost status.

A significant outcome of the work has been to show that small stands of mature oaks embedded within large coniferous plantations can support maternity colonies, provided that suitable roost features are present. Coniferous plantations should not be dismissed without detailed assessment.

Previous work in Norfolk has shown that oak and sweet chestnut are the major tree species used by barbastelles in north and west Norfolk. Ash and hornbeam are the predominant species in many South Norfolk woods, with oak often having often been removed during the WW2. Much of

the ash is now ageing and badly affected by ash dieback which is generating roost features for barbastelle, especially splits in loose bark (Appendix 1). The importance of ash woodlands as a roost resource for barbastelles in South Norfolk is likely to increase and should not be underestimated.

The map of barbastelle maternity colony CSZs is now updated for this new data (Figure 1). Further radiotracking is needed to confirm the presence of maternity colonies in Brooke Wood, Lower Spring Wood and Spring Wood Hempnall. Other woodlands within or close to the solar scheme area should be assessed regardless of size and investigated for the presence of maternity colonies. Candidate woods are the remaining two woodlands of the four Shotesham-Woodton Hornbeam Woods SSSI, namely Hempnall Little Wood and Winters Grove. Saxlingham Grove is already known to support a maternity colony. Ringers Grove is an ash wood of similar age to Lower Spring Wood. Tindall Wood, Sexton Wood, Hedenham Wood and Park Plantation are at the east end of the scheme area and should be assessed. There are many small scattered woodlands west and east of Hempnall which may provide a roost resource for the barbastelle metapopulation. The impacts of the East Pye Solar Scheme on barbastelles cannot be properly assessed without a full understanding of barbastelle distribution and habitat use within the scheme area.

6. References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition)*. The Bat Conservation Trust, London

O'Malley, K.D. *et al.* (2023), *An acoustic-based method for locating maternity colonies of rare woodland bats*. PeerJ, DOI 10.7717/peerj.15951.

7. Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to [REDACTED] for preparing the maps of barbastelle maternity colony Core Sustenance Zones and to Stuart Newson for use of the BTO Acoustic Pipeline. I am also grateful to members of Norfolk and Norwich Bat Group who assisted with the trapping.

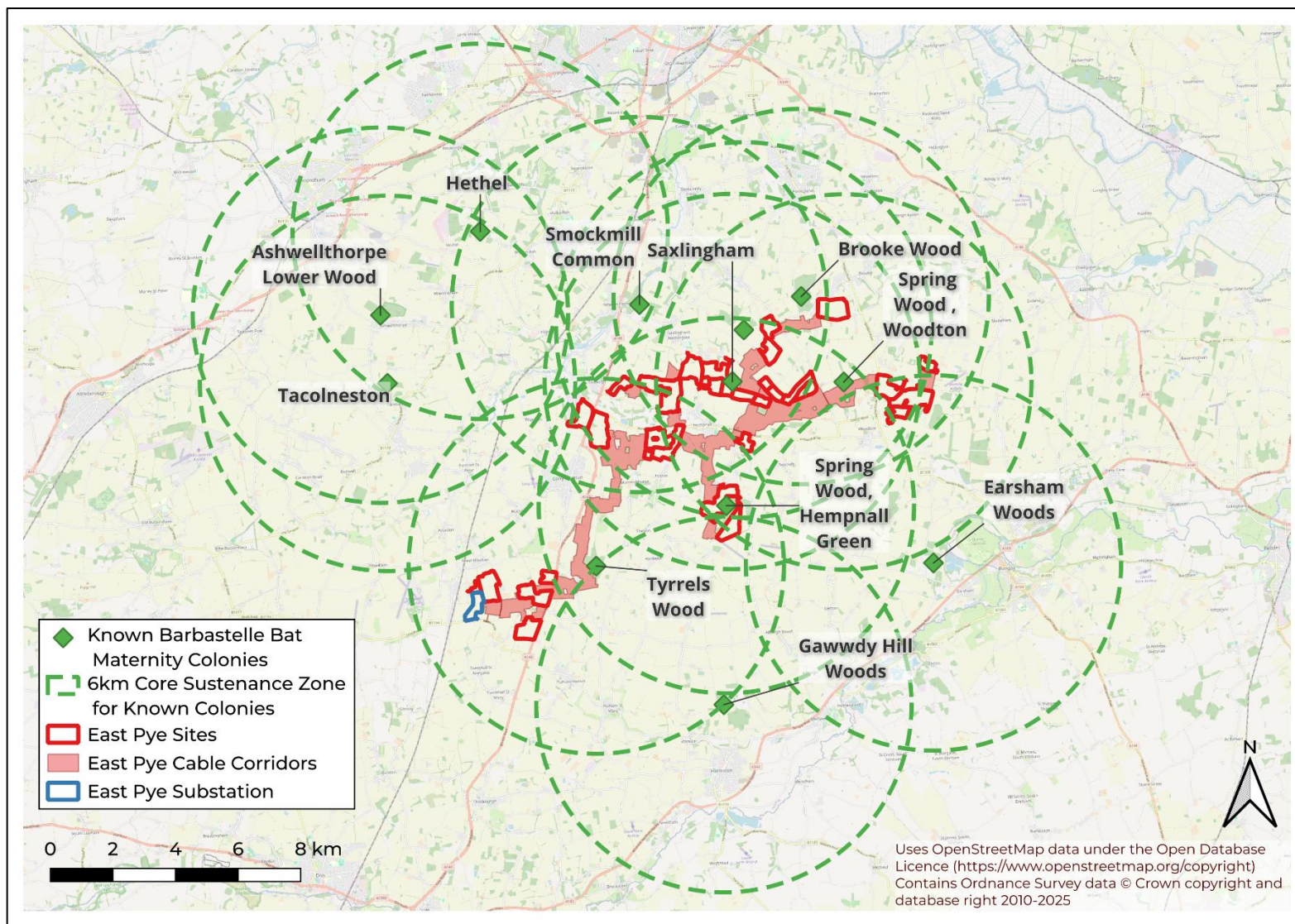
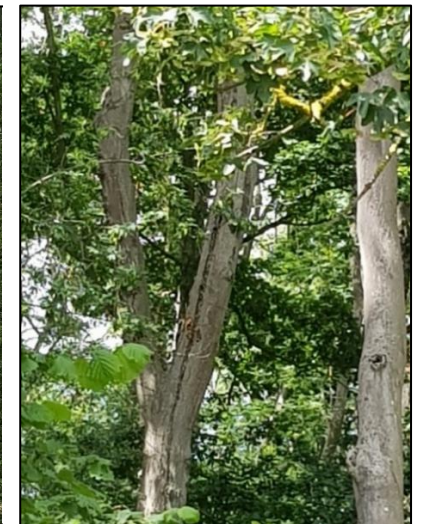
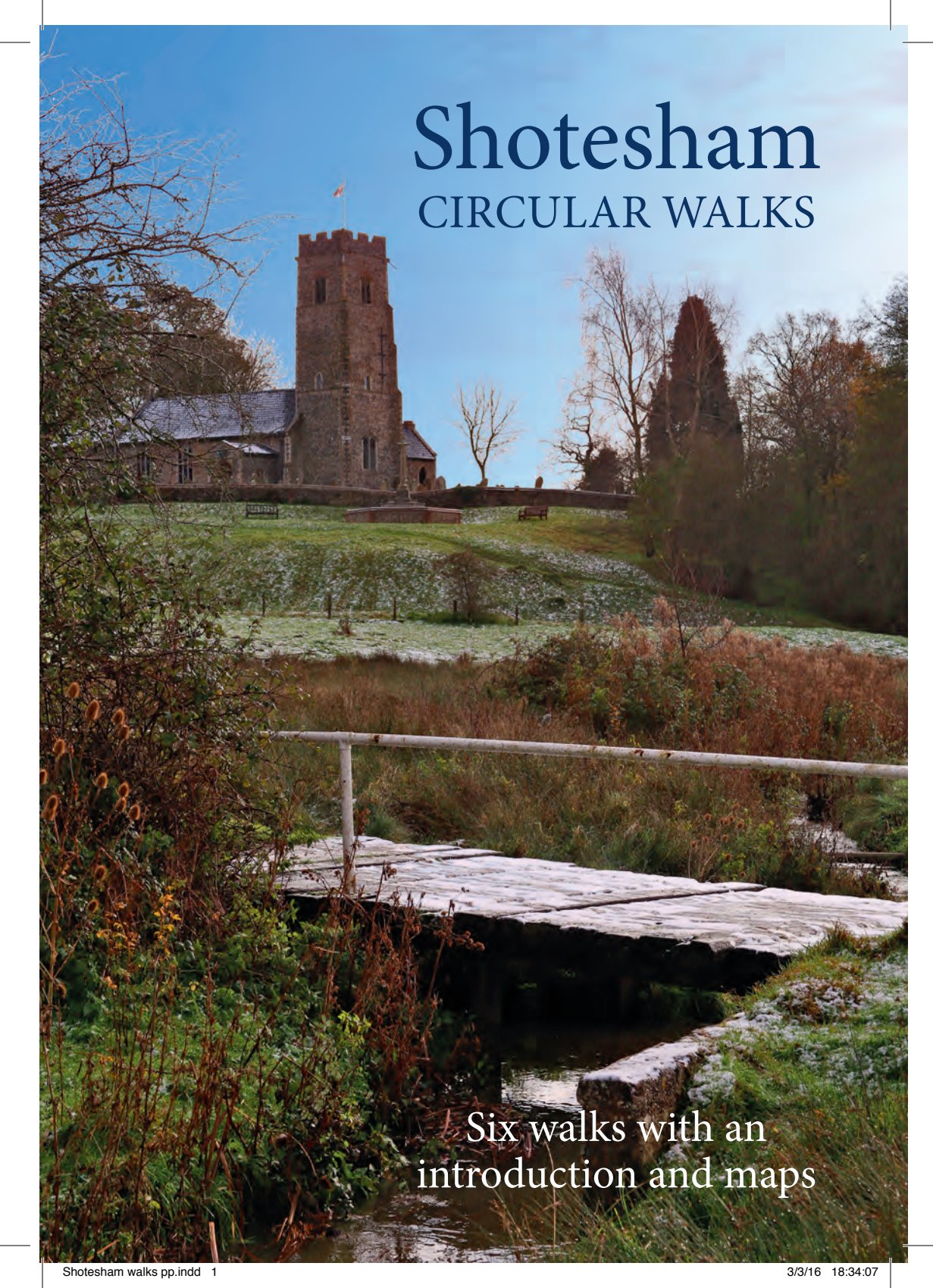


Figure 1. Core Sustenance Zones of Barbastelle Maternity Colonies within or close to the East Pye Solar Scheme Area

Appendix 1. Photographs of split and lifting bark in mature ash trees in Lower Spring Wood, Woodton





Shotesham

CIRCULAR WALKS

Six walks with an
introduction and maps

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Introduction

The area around Shotesham in Norfolk is very fortunate to have a large number of footpaths from the famous Boudicca Way that runs from Diss to Norwich, to Public Footpaths, Parish Walks and a Bridleway that provide a wonderful amenity for walkers. Whether you are a serious Rambler, dog walker or like an occasional stroll, a glance at the Ordnance Survey map for this area will reveal a high density of footpaths, possibly more than anywhere else in Norfolk.

In order to get the most out of them, it helps to know roughly where they go and how to get back to where you started. The purpose of this booklet is to assist you with just that. This is not an exhaustive description of the route of every footpath in Shotesham, all 22 of them plus a bridleway, but to give you choice from a number of circular walks, trying to keep road walking to a minimum, not always completely successfully and pointing out what you may expect to see on the way. The footpath numbering is from Norfolk County Council's parish footpath maps.

The countryside around Shotesham is generally flat with a little undulation from the glacial valley, making for easy walking. The scenery comprises fields and woods, streams, ponds and meadows. Typical crops are cereals, hay, beet, maize, oilseed rape and field beans. There are a few cattle and sheep from time to time. This is shooting country and in many places birds are being reared, so dogs should be kept under close control near to pheasant rearing areas.

Local farmers also value the network of footpaths and do a great deal to keep them in good condition. Many of these are cross-field footpaths.

In this booklet Explorer UK Grid References are used to indicate the start of each walk. Approximate distance and durations for an average walker are also given. Web references have been used for points of interest such as churches and are listed at the end of each section. All the walks can be varied to make them longer or in some cases shorter, according to taste. A narrative of what you might expect to see on the way accompanies each walk. For a more detailed heritage history of Shotesham, follow the link¹.

¹ [http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?TNF1597-Shotesham-\(Parish-Summary\)http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?TNF1597-Shotesham-\(Parish-Summary\)](http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?TNF1597-Shotesham-(Parish-Summary)http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?TNF1597-Shotesham-(Parish-Summary))

CIRCULAR WALK ONE

Market Lane



This circular walk, over easy paths, takes in woodland, open fields and lovely views over Shotesham.

DISTANCE Just over 4 miles (7 kms). **DURATION** About one hour and a half.

START POINT EXPLORER UK GRID REFERENCE TM 25807 97599.

Start at Market Lane at the stile and metal gate, recently removed, on the road near the eastern corner of Little Wood (Shotesham Footpath 17 on the attached map). Walk along this west-southwest path up a gentle slope to the base of Little Wood. Turn right onto Shotesham Footpath 16, part of Boudicca Way, the famous footpath that runs from Diss to Norwich.¹

Here the stile has recently been removed and there is an open gateway. Walk along the north eastern boundary of Little Wood, a precious hornbeam wood and Site of Special Scientific Interest.²

Little Wood itself is maintained by the farmer owner with help from grants from Natural England. The adjacent area is maintained by the Shotesham Conservation

Group who have cleared areas of dense undergrowth to allow light to enter and new habitat to develop, restoring some of the old woodland floor and allowing some of the overgrown ponds to come back to life. There is a mass of wildlife here in Little Wood including deer, hares, rabbits, pheasants and numerous species of birds. The path takes you north towards the northeastern edge of the wood. In May, there used to be a carpet of bluebells here, but the area is currently a little overgrown. Cross the stile where you will see open fields and in front of you in the distance just to the left, Great Wood. Ahead lies Stubbs Green and the gable end of a white house poking through the trees.

Continue straight on to that house that you leave on your right, pass a hedge on the left and you will see in front of you a lovely meadow that is quite spectacular in early summer with masses of wildflowers including orchids. (See separate aerial map of Stubbs Green.) Continue close to the hedge on your right for thirty yards and then on your left you should see Stubbs Green pond. Here, you can walk around the pond and sit on the little bench overlooking it with views over Shotesham. Further north, through the trees, you can see the tower of Saint Mary's Church. When you have sat enough, go back to other side of the pond, the Shotesham side and follow the northerly path Shotesham Footpath 5, that gently turns to the right with a tall hedge on your left. This follows the continuation of the meadow, with a house tucked away on your right and proceeds towards the



Stubbs Green aerial view (base picture Google Earth ©)

village end of Market Lane. However you don't go quite that far. At the bottom of the meadow slope, turn left over a planked walkway into the next field along Shotesham Footpath 6. This area is owned by Shotesham Park Estate, bought in 1731 by William Fellowes, founder of the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital.³

The land here also grows a rotation of crops, including linseed that displays sheets of blue flowers in June.

Continue your northwest direction up the slope of the field. At the end turn right to follow the edge of the field and then left at the end of the hedge. These fields can be very muddy in winter and boots are certainly essential then. As you proceed, you will see to your right the backs of the houses along The Street in Shotesham. These views are particularly pretty on a snowy day in winter.

To your right the houses are much closer now and you can see how the fields slope to a former glacial valley that caused this formation. A small stream, The Beck, runs along the base of the valley through Shotesham and across the village Common to join the river Tas.

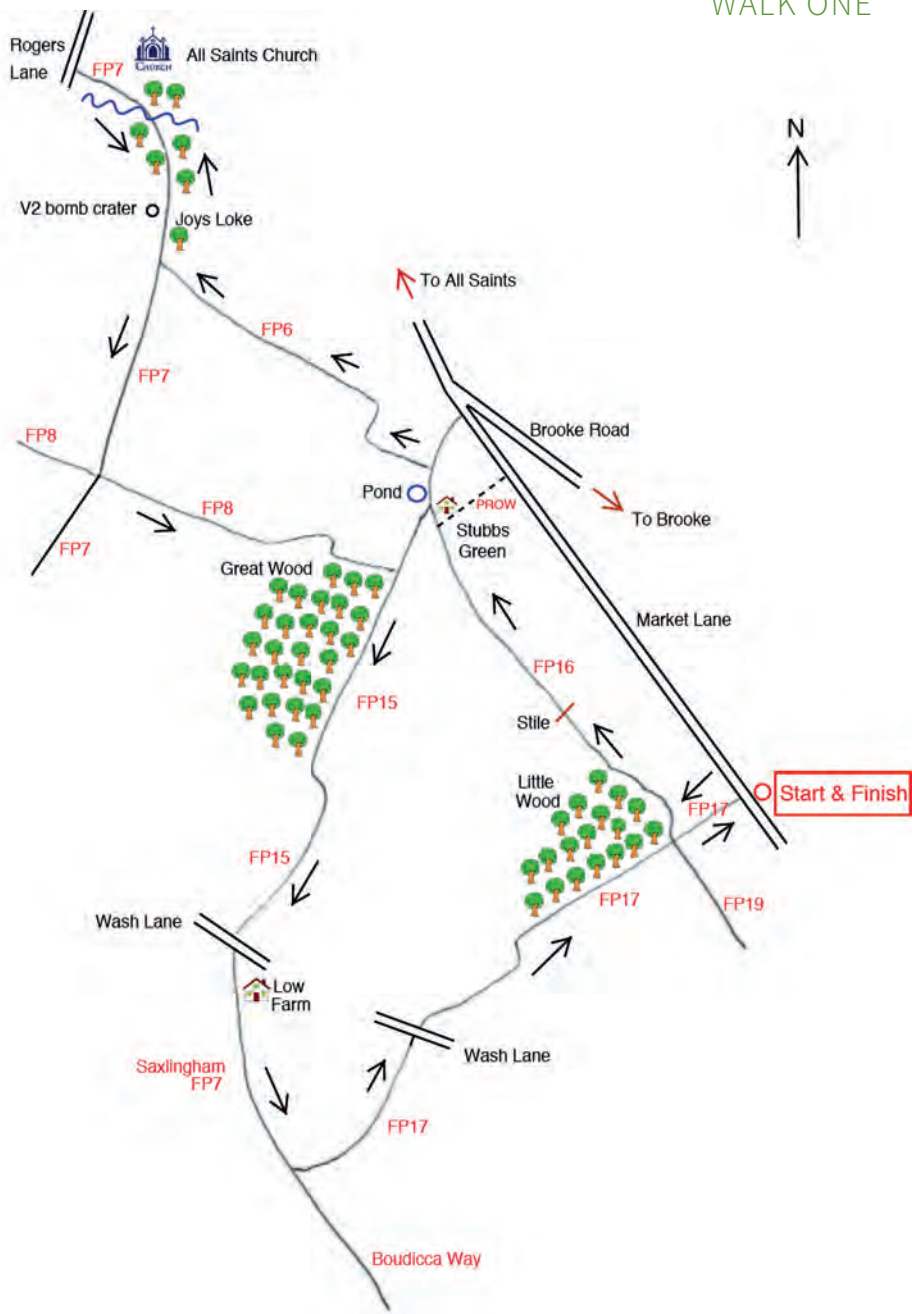
Now the scenery changes slightly as you'll find a tree-lined hedge to your right that marks the southwestern border of The Old Rectory. To your left, gently sloping upwards, there are still open fields of crops. Straight ahead Saint Mary's church is coming into view and in front of Saint Mary's you may just be able to see the ruin of St Martin's that was recently cleared and made safe following work from the Conservation Group and a fundraising effort by local people.

Follow this field edge path until the end of this hedge and you will come to a footpath that crosses north to south. This is part of Boudicca Way, Footpath 7 on the map. To the right you could take a small diversion from the circular route, down a wooded path, Joy's Loke to the stream, The Beck, mentioned earlier. There is a wooden bridge across and the path goes on a short way to Rogers Lane with All Saints Church on the right.

If you take this diversion, when you have done, retrace your steps coming back up Footpath 7 on Joy's Loke. Our circular route takes you south south-west still on Footpath 7 to follow Boudicca Way for just 2 fields, first a cross-field path, then through a gap in the hedge to a field edge path continuing in the same direction. In the distance to your right stand St Mary's church, St Martin's ruin and the barn conversions at Hawes Green opposite St. Mary's.

At the end of this second field, there is a crossing of paths as Shotesham Footpath 7 crosses Footpath 8. Turn left onto Footpath 8 keeping to the Boudicca Way. Great Wood, fifty-six acres of deciduous trees, is on your right. Follow this path back to the south end of Stubbs Green meadow. The final stretch differs from the official footpath map in that it follows the edge of Great Wood much more closely and passes through an almost invariably muddy twenty metre tree and bush lined stretch to the meadow on your left.

WALK ONE



CIRCULAR WALK ONE MARKET LANE 7

Follow the edge of the wood to its northeastern corner and turn right onto Shotesham Footpath 15. Follow this field edge path for one field, then you have a little twenty metre left and right skip to a plank bridge that crosses a dyke and into the next field to the south, where you continue to follow the edge of Great Wood. By now Low Farm on Wash Lane, very much an eco-barn, will have appeared and its wind turbine will probably have been the first part of it that you saw. This building has extensive solar panels as well as the turbine. Now there is another left and right dog-leg before Shotesham Footpath 17 descends cross field to Wash Lane.

At Wash Lane, turn right and after a few yards, find a way-mark with a path to the left, Saxlingham Nethergate Footpath 7. Follow this behind Low Farm on the south side, with open fields to the right and cross a wooden plank bridge then continue eastwards with a dyke on your left.

You are about to rejoin Boudicca Way and at the way-marked T-junction (currently hidden by undergrowth), turn left to head northeast and join Shotesham Footpath 17, whilst to the south-east, Boudicca Way heads off towards Saxlingham Green.

Cross Wash Lane following the way-mark onto the cross-field path opposite still on Footpath 17 and there are some lovely views over the eastern end of Shotesham and over towards Brooke with Brooke Wood to the east north-east. The cross-field path takes you to the south end of Little Wood and its hornbeams and follows the edge of the wood to its most easterly tip, crosses a planked bridge, turns left and after 20 yards turns right, to continue following the edge of Little Wood. As you descend, to your right you can see Market Lane Farm and surrounding paddocks. This attractive path will take you back to your starting point at the bottom of the slope on Market Lane.

1 http://boudicaway.co.uk/bw_spaw2/uploads/images/Boudicca Way Route Full.jpg

2 http://www.english-nature.org.uk/citation/citation_photo/1004212.pdf

3 <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/records.aspx?cat=153-fel&cid=-1#-1>

CIRCULAR WALK TWO

All Saints and Naiden's Lane



This is an easy walk taking in some of Boudicca Way with a little bit of a climb early on and takes in views over Shotesham and Howe and a walk over Shotesham Common.

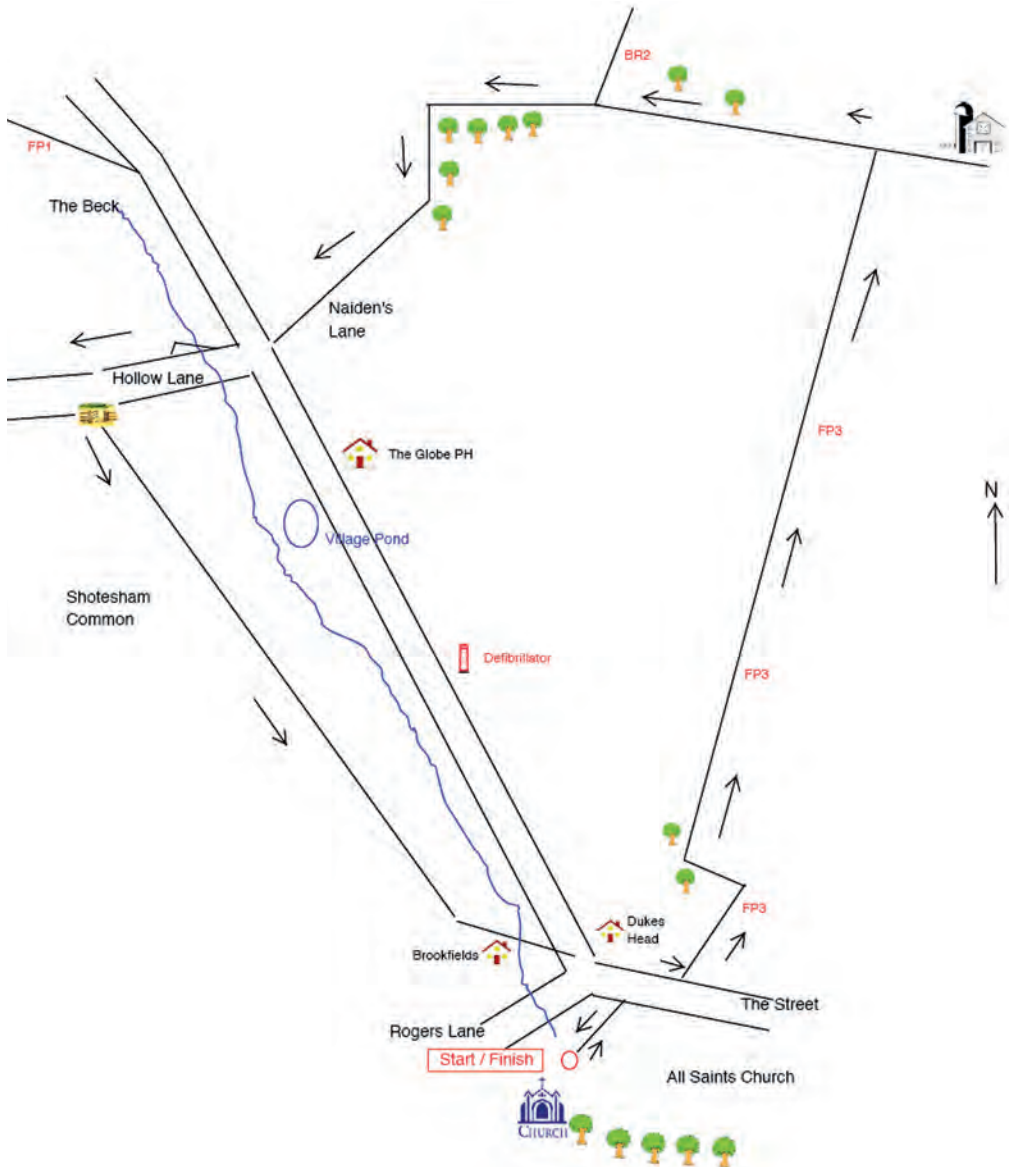
DISTANCE just under 2 miles (3 kms). **DURATION** 45 minutes.

START POINT All Saints Church, Shotesham.

EXPLORER UK GRID REFERENCE TM 24682 99056.

This walk starts at All Saints Church¹ where there are some parking spaces if needed. Walk back down the access road to The Street and turn right. After a few yards you will notice a sign on your right marking Hayles Cottage. At this point cross the road and you will see a way-mark at the start of a footpath going uphill, Shotesham Footpath 3. This is part of Boudicca Way². Follow this narrow path as it goes north east through a wooded area between gardens and then opens out onto fields.

WALK TWO



10 CIRCULAR WALK TWO ALL SAINTS AND NAIDEN'S LANE

Now turn left and follow a field edge path that turns right in front of a wood and then heads out as a cross-field path towards two grain stores that you can see in the distance, still following Footpath 3. This is real open countryside, as yet without any notable views. The path heads North East until you reach some chicken sheds. Here the path meets a track called Naiden's Lane (called Maiden Lane on Norfolk County Council footpath documents) and you turn left onto it and follow this hedge-lined track for some distance, passing Shotesham Public Bridleway 2 that goes off to the right to the parish boundary and Stoke Holy Cross. This is easy and pleasant walking. At various times of the year the hedgerows are full of blossom or berries. Shortly you will reach a point where there is a gap in the hedgerow on the left and you now have views across the rolling fields to Hawes Green and St Mary's Church in the distance.

Continue along Naiden's Lane as it curves gently to the left and starts to descend. As it winds and you pass a copse of trees on the left, St Mary's Church and Hawes Green open up in the distance this time to your right through a gap in the hedge. Your path now descends back to the village and becomes a lot steeper. It comes out onto The Street between some houses. For those requiring refreshments, The Globe public house is 50 yards to the left, just a short detour.

The route actually takes us across The Street and onto Hollow Lane. After just a few yards follow a narrow path on your right parallel to the lane to bridge over the ford. If you are walking a dog that likes swimming, this may present an opportunity.

Cross the road and open the gates to the common, not forgetting to close it behind you. Head across the common towards All Saints Church, taking one of the numerous paths, but keeping The Beck on your left so that you don't get trapped. At times, the common can become very boggy and this is an area requiring good walking boots or gumboots.

There are some lovely houses lining The Street, some of them thatched. The village has also retained its red telephone box, now housing a community defibrillator. On the common itself is a house called Brookfields. As you get to Brookfields, follow the path to the left and back to The Street. Turn right towards the church and back to your starting point.

1 <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/shotesham1/shotesham1.htm>

2 http://boudicaway.co.uk/bw_spaw2/uploads/images/Boudicca%20Way%20Route%20Full.jpg

CIRCULAR WALK THREE

Backwood Lane



This walk takes in some road walking, but is compensated by a lovely woodland walk from Backwood Lane to Grub Street and varied scenery.

DISTANCE 4 miles (6.4 kms). **DURATION** An hour-and-a-half.

START POINT Brooke Road close to the junction with Baxter's Lane.

EXPLORER UK GRID REFERENCE TM 26305 97646.

The starting point is the junction of Baxter's Lane and Brooke Road, just as the latter becomes Heath Road. This is the northwest tip of Baxter's Wood. The route takes us east northeast along Heath Road towards Brooke, tree lined on both sides at this point before it opens up a little. After about 750 yards, the road turns 90 degrees left. Look for a way-mark indicating a footpath on the left at the start of Backwood Lane. Follow this path, the start of Howe Footpath 7, west across a field, and enter a wood where our path turns immediately right and heads north. This is a quite lovely woodland path. Take your time to meander along this path that links nicely with the Shotesham footpaths to make our circular walk. Initially

to our left is Privett Plantation and Pye's Covert. Then you can see the back of Hengate Farm and its chicken sheds. The path runs parallel to Backwood Lane on the right, with Brooke Wood running along the first two thirds of its length.

Halfway along the path on the right is Scott Pasture, a farm and clump of trees. The whole path is quite long, around 1500 yards in total and opens up on its last section, before coming to a large, modern white house on the corner of Grub Street. Here turn left along Grub Street with a little more road walking, heading west, past a number of houses and a farm on the right. The road bends gently to the right and there are views towards Poringland on the right. The red flashing lights on the radio masts at Upper Stoke are quite a landmark and can be seen for many miles. The fields here can be a riot of yellow in the years when rape is grown.

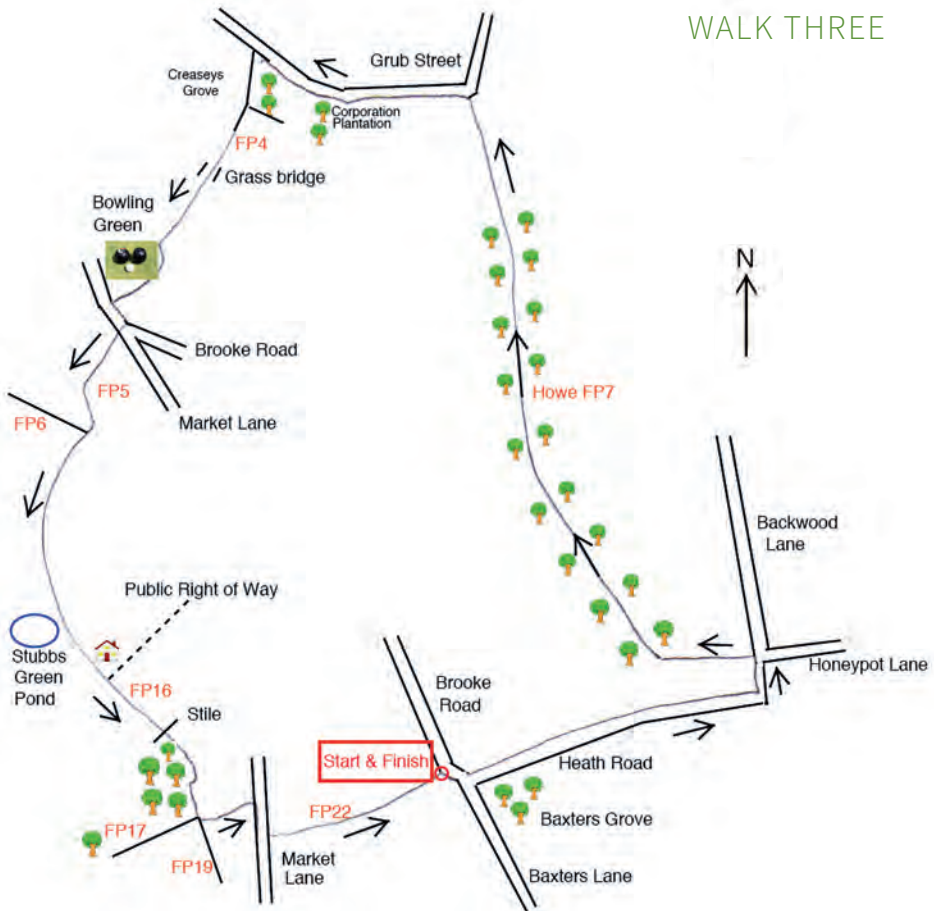
Now walk past the first little wood on the left named Corporation Plantation. You are looking for the next wood on the left called Creasey's Grove. At the end of this wood, look for a way-mark on the left indicating Shotesham Footpath 4. Look carefully as it is not that easy to find. Follow the path south along the western border of the wood. But take care, this is where it gets tricky as the signage isn't always easy to follow and the path can be sometimes a bit obscure if not walked frequently. As you walk along this western edge of Creasey's Grove, the path appears to turn 90 degrees to the left but the actual footpath proper is indicated by a waymark and goes off to the right in a south-southwest direction across two fields that are often muddy, sloping down to Brooke Road by the Bowling Green in Shotesham. The first time we walked this path a few years back, we spent an age looking for the gap in the hedge and ditch from the top field to the bottom field. Now we know that it is a grassy strip close to and just to the left of the telegraph pole. That should help.

Footpath 4 starts quite high up so there are some good views of the village to the right and Valley Farm to the left. The path takes you to the northeast corner of some gardens of houses along Brooke Road. Keep their boundary hedges on your right as the path curves left and then turns right for the final 25 yards alongside Shotesham Bowling Green to rejoin Brooke Road.

Turn left and continue for 40 yards until you reach the fork with Market Lane. Take the right fork onto Market Lane then almost immediately turn right after crossing the ford onto Shotesham Footpath 5. You are heading first southwest and then south to Stubbs Green and this path is again very picturesque with the stream on your right and trees on both sides.

The path is marked by an iron gate with the legend 'Stubbs Green Cottage' (currently missing) but this is still the footpath and the gate has been rather broken for a good while. Cross a small footbridge over The Beck that runs along the base of the old glacial valley and eventually drains into the River Tas further west. A newish wooden fence is on your left, the land is sometimes boggy and bushes are on your right.

WALK THREE



We now get to the base of a lovely sloping meadow in spring and summer full of colour from wildflowers and orchids. Shotesham Conservation Group has done a lot of work to open up and preserve the beauty of the area. Ignore Shotesham Footpath 6 that goes off to the right and walk south up the slope of the meadow on Shotesham Footpath 5 towards Stubbs Green Pond where a number of footpaths converge. In spring this area to the left of the meadow on the upward slope, the south side, by the 5 barred gate and beyond, is a riot of yellow with buttercups.

At the south end of Footpath 5 at Stubbs Green the configuration is not as per the official maps so please refer to the Google Earth aerial map in this booklet and you will see that Footpath 5 becomes Footpath 16 heading southeast.

When we arrived in the village, in 2006, the Stubbs Green Pond area was so overgrown that we couldn't find the pond at all. Now, thanks to the work of the Award Winning Shotesham Conservation Group, it makes a beautiful sight all year round. Sit here for a while if you wish on the little bench on the other side of the pond on the south slope. Incidentally, you have now joined Boudicca Way¹ on Footpath 16 that comes into Stubbs Green from the west and you are going to walk along it for a short way heading east.

So, leaving Stubbs Green pond, head east past the lovely house on your left. The hedges on both sides open out into fields and there is a wide, grassy path heading southeast to follow the length of this first field towards the northernmost corner of Little Wood. At this point, if you look to your left, you will see that considerable work has been done by landowners by field edge planting specific wildflowers to encourage butterflies and bees. Cross a stile to the next field. Note that nearly all the stiles are dog friendly in that there is always a gap somewhere for a dog to get through without having to do battle with barbed wire.

Continue southeast on Boudicca Way along the northeastern edge of Little Wood, the historic hornbeam wood², until the gap in the hedge at the end of the field. There we turn left onto Footpath 17 and walk down the slope to Market Lane. Horses or sheep sometimes graze in the field to your right depending on the time of year. Blackberries abound in late autumn. Cross the stile here or open the gate to go through as it is rarely locked and is usually open (currently missing).

Turn right and walk about 25 yards on Market Lane before turning left onto a well-marked footpath FP22, that heads east-northeast along the side of two fields. The first part of this wide, grassy path is quite a steep slope (by Norfolk standards) but very short. At the top, you can still see to the west the tower of St Mary's church in the far distance and the scattered farms and houses at the east end of Shotesham about you. The part of the path by the second field is still a grassy bank until about 30 yards from its end, then it becomes cross-field that can be a bit muddy. Pass out of the entrance and back onto Brooke Road and your starting point.

1 http://boudiccaaway.co.uk/bw_spaw2/uploads/images/Boudicca%20Way%20Route%20Full.jpg

2 http://www.english-nature.org.uk/citation/citation_photo/1004212.pdf

CIRCULAR WALK FOUR

Five Church Walk (including two ruins)



This walk takes in the four churches in Shotesham, two that are very much in use and two ruins, plus one church in Saxlingham on a spur, so this walk is not strictly circular. Included please find some links to historical information about each of the churches.

DISTANCE Just over 4.5 miles (7.5 kms). **DURATION** Two hours, plus browsing time. **START POINT** All Saints Church in Shotesham. **EXPLORER UK GRID REFERENCE** TM 24682 99056, where there is some space for parking.

For a brief description of the church, see the link to an article written in 2006 by Simon Knott on the Norfolk Churches Site.¹ The church is open daily. Do have a look around as visitors are welcome.

When you are ready, descend the driveway from the church to The Street. Cross the road, turn left and walk along the pavement in front of The Dukes Head², a grade II listed building that closed as a pub in 1918 and is now a private home. Go past the junction with Rogers Lane and after some twenty-five yards, look

for an entrance gate on the other side of the road that is also the driveway into Brookfields, a listed, probably 16th century former farmhouse. We are now entering Shotesham Common. Cross the bridge over The Beck and turn right in front of Brookfields.³ There are a number of different paths across the common, none of them the numbered official Shotesham footpaths, so you won't see any finger posts or way-marks here.

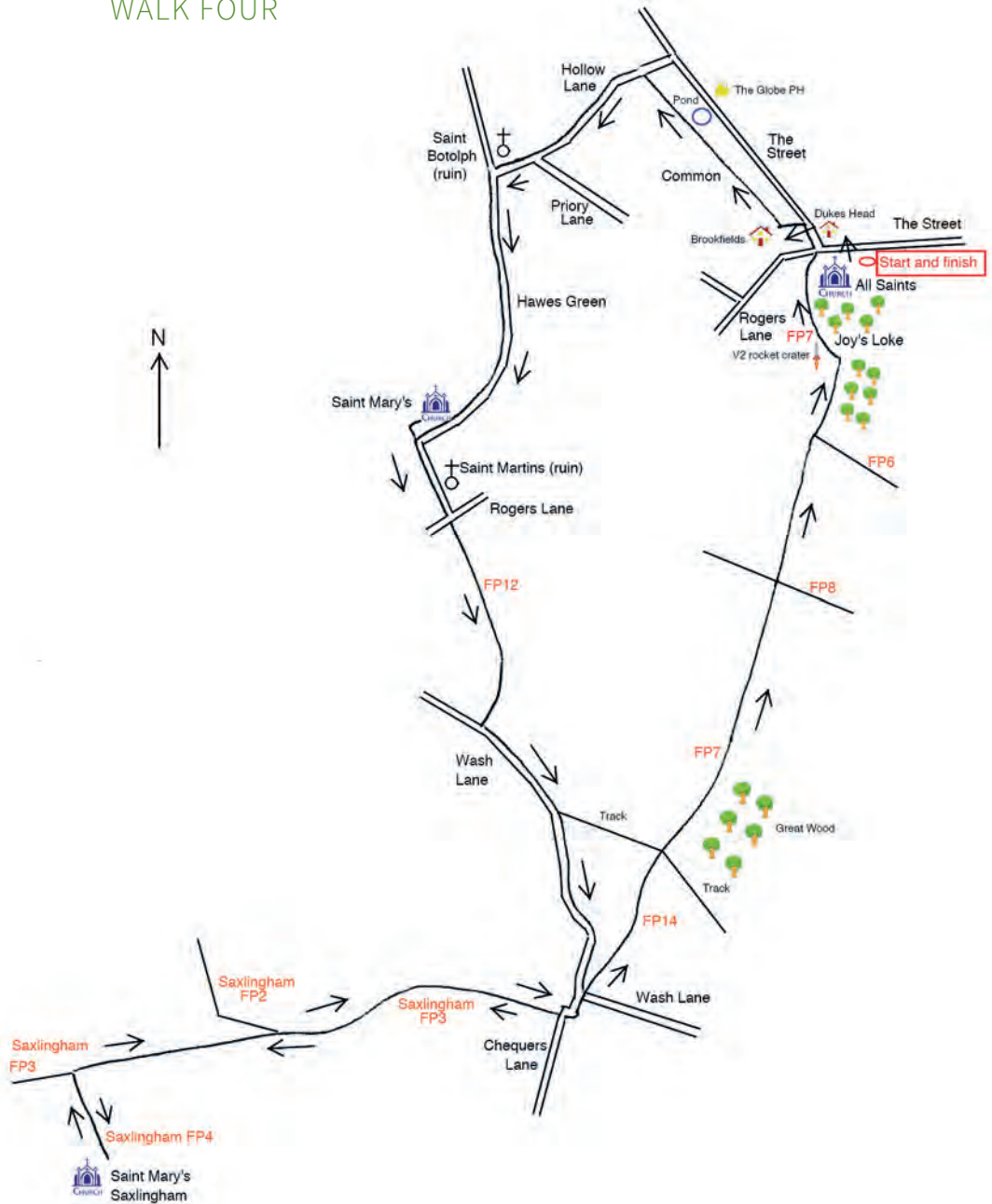
Cross the common heading west-northwest until you reach Hollow Lane. On arrival there, turn left and walk up the hill, passing Botolph Cottages on the right. At the top of the road, there is a junction with Hawes Green. Turn right and you will see a gate immediately on the right that is the entrance to the cleared area that contains what remains of the ruins of St Botolph Church,⁴ mostly the base of the tower. Walk over to the bench overlooking the valley beyond and enjoy excellent views over Shotesham.

In due course, go back out of the gate, turn left (don't go back down the hill) and follow Hawes Green south to St Mary's and St. Martin's. En route, pass Doctor's House and Nurse's House and then you will pass Oak Lodge on the left, a former mortuary and on the right, The Infirmary, now Archers House that housed mentally disturbed people. These buildings mark the site of possibly the very first Cottage Hospital in England.⁵ As the row of houses ends the road opens out to views over the west side of Shotesham to the left and the two churches ahead. First of all we will come to St. Mary's on the right. The path to the church is on the corner of the road on the right or you can simply walk a little further round to main entrance. For details of the church and opening times see footnote.⁶ The only recent update is the arrival, after many hundreds of years, of electricity.

When you are ready, walk the few yards south farther along Hawes Green to see the ruin of St Martin's Church, the grounds which have been cleared recently by the Shotesham Conservation Group and the tower made safe from irreparable decay following the raising of significant funds. For details of St Martins see the Norfolk Churches website.⁷

Now you are off to the fifth church, St Mary's in Saxlingham, a neighbouring village to the south, whose footpaths join up with those of Shotesham. From St Martin's head south-east to Rogers Lane. Cross straight over and follow the quite short Shotesham Footpath 12 across a field and then right along the field edge to its end. This path then joins Wash Lane where you turn left and follow the road as it winds down with quite steep banks past farm buildings. Just before a ford, Wash Lane turns ninety degrees to the left but continue straight on along Chequers Lane across the ford. Chequers Lane goes ninety degrees right and then immediately ahead you will see a finger post pointing directly west that is Saxlingham Footpath 3. This is the spur to Saxlingham, so the walk is not strictly circular, as we shall return to this point along the same path.

WALK FOUR



Follow a wide verdant easy walking path all the way to Saxlingham. St Mary's Church can be easily seen in the distance just off to the left and is reached by turning left onto Saxlingham Footpath 4 before you reach the main street. Saxlingham Footpath 4 continues on past the church. Enter through the churchyard. Here is the link for church details.⁸

Retrace your steps back to Saxlingham Footpath 3. Go back to the junction with Wash Lane, a straight easterly route. Turn left to re-cross the ford and look for a finger post on the right side that marks Shotesham Footpath 14. This path climbs diagonally up the field going to the right until you are following the western side of a hedge. This meets a track going east to west that you cross heading diagonally to the right to enter the next field, which does occasionally have cattle grazing. On the right, to the east, is the western edge of Great Wood. Cross this field either following the field edge or diagonally, depending on crops. The exit and junction with Shotesham Footpath 7 is at the northeastern corner of the field. There is a bit of a jumble of concrete and iron stile with some barbed wire, so it often easier to walk round a few paces to the right and cross through the bushes, which is what we have to do if we have a dog with us.

There are some lovely views again with St Mary's and St Martin's to the left with Hawes Green behind and you can often just see the flagpole and flag of St George on All Saints straight ahead.

Keep going straight on across two fields still on Shotesham Footpath 7, joining Boudicca Way after the first field, then down Joy's Loke with the V2 rocket crater⁹ on the left, marked by a plaque, over the stream, through the copse until you are back at All Saints and the starting point.

1 <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/shotesham1/shotesham1.htm>

2 <http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-226691-the-dukes-head-shotesham-norfolk#VcIjsxNViko>

3 <http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?MNF53497-Brookfields-Shotesham-Common&Index=46266&RecordCount=56734&SessionID=e40fb513-48d2-4d11-949d-d09788f234c9>

4 <http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?MNF9632-Ruins-of-St-Botolph%27s-church-Shotesham&Index=8978&RecordCount=56734&SessionID=8a9a261d-20c3-4fb6-9840-33e3f61d2e9e>

5 <http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?MNF31206>

6 <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/shotesham2/shotesham2.htm>

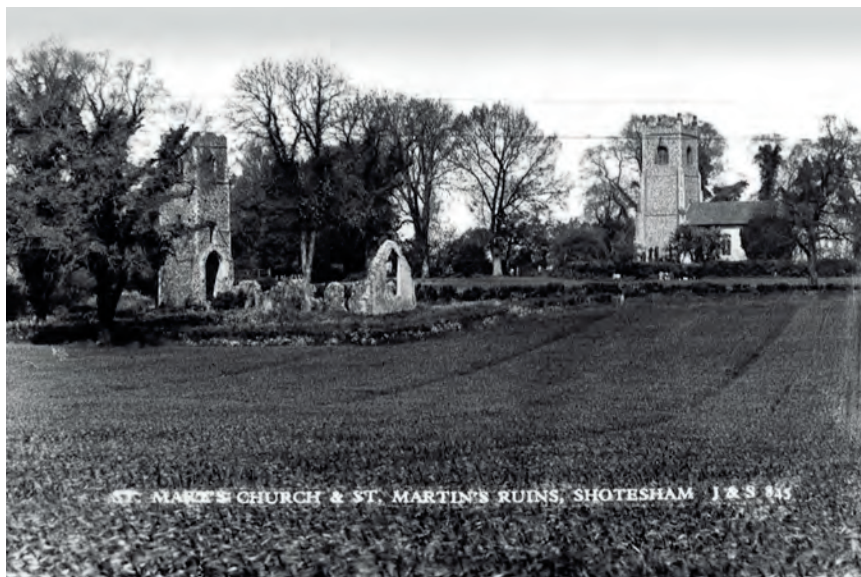
7 <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/shotesham3/shotesham3.htm>

8 <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/saxlinghamnethergate/saxlinghamnethergate.htm>

9 www.worldwar2heritage.com/en/page/9069/144/V2-Crater-Site

CIRCULAR WALK FIVE

St Mary's



This walk starts at St Mary's Church with splendid views.

DISTANCE 4 miles (6.4 kms). **DURATION** About two hours.

START POINT Explorer UK Grid reference TM 23775 98784.

The walk is not strictly circular with a spur in order to avoid a busy main road that is not suitable for walkers.



There is parking at St Mary's if needed. This is a medieval church, only recently fitted with mains electricity and still used regularly for services.¹

Start the walk in front of the south door. Facing the door, turn right and walk around the church to the east side and follow the footpath that goes straight ahead and through a gap in the surrounding hedge. You are now on Shotesham Footpath 12 and about to meet the junction of Footpaths 9 and 10. At this junction turn left onto the spur (see map) and follow footpath 10 over a stile and into the first field. The settlement of Hawes Green is on your right and to your left is the

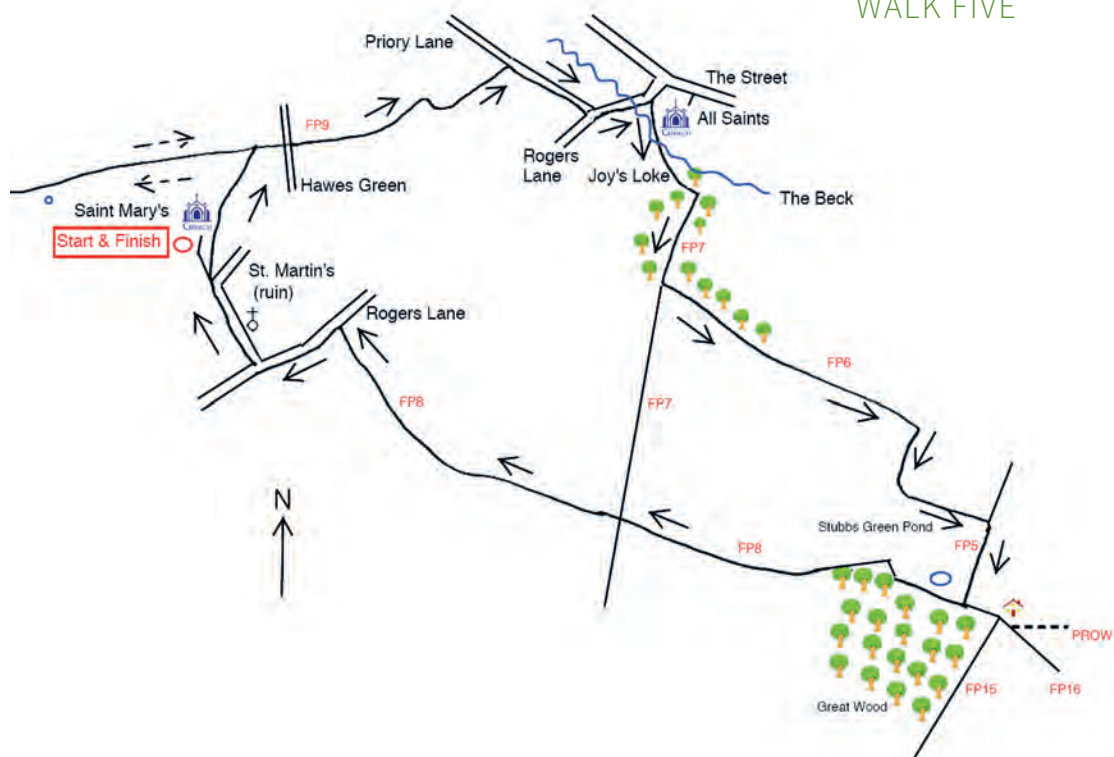
moated Shotesham Old Hall, a beautiful building, the south wing of which dates back to the 1580's, one of many grade II listed buildings in the parish. Around the Old Hall was the now ruined village of Shotesham St Mary where numerous earthworks have been discovered. Refer to the Norfolk Heritage Site.²

The cross-field path heads due west with a pond on your left at the end of the field. Cross the stile into the next field that again has a cross-field path at the end of which is another and larger pond with a beautiful tree lining.

Further on is the busy Norwich Road, so turn back here to return along Footpath 10 across the two fields to near St Mary's. Only this time, once you cross the second stile, do not turn right but continue straight on to the east and cross Hawes Green onto Footpath 9 that descends the valley, past a copse on the right, crossing a little wooden footbridge and descending left to get to Priory Lane. Look back from the lower part of Footpath 9 to see on the right the picturesque houses of Hawes Green, the site of England's very first cottage hospital.³

Turn right onto Priory Lane and walk southeast to the end to meet Rogers Lane. Turn left and after about 30 yards cross the road to a footpath that is marked as part of Boudicca Way. As you will see, you are also at the foot of the mound of All Saints Church, open every day to visitors.⁴

WALK FIVE



Follow this part of Boudicca Way, Shotesham Footpath 7, called Joy's Loke, as it traverses a small wood, crosses The Beck, the stream at the base of the glacial valley here and climbs up to open fields. Note on your right the plaque marking where a V2 rocket landed in 1944.⁵ At the start of the open fields, turn left onto Shotesham Footpath 6 and follow this path east-southeast, initially with the hedge of The Old Rectory on the left, then the backs of the houses along The Street become visible. Your path turns right heading south-southwest to halfway along the western border of the next field and then turn left to take a cross field path at the end of which is an opening and wooden footbridge meeting Shotesham Footpath 5. Turn right on Footpath 5 and walk up the meadow keeping to the path on the right until you reach Stubbs Green pond. Walk round the pond to the south side to the southern edge of Great Wood. The configuration of the footpaths here actually differs from the official maps so please see the Google Earth map of Stubbs Green in this booklet. A great deal of clearance work has been taking place here as part of the conservation of Great Wood. Turn right onto Footpath 8 and keeping on this track, cross Footpath 7 until you reach Rogers Lane. Along the way, there are views of both Hawes Green ahead and Shotesham All Saints⁶ to the right.

Turn left at Rogers Lane and walk a few yards up the lane until you meet the road to Hawes Green on the right. Follow this back past the ruin of St Martin's to your starting point.

1 <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/shotesham2/shotesham2.htm>

2 [http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?TNF1597-Shotesham-\(Parish-Summary\)](http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?TNF1597-Shotesham-(Parish-Summary))

3 <http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?MNF31206>

4 <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/shotesham1/shotesham1.htm>

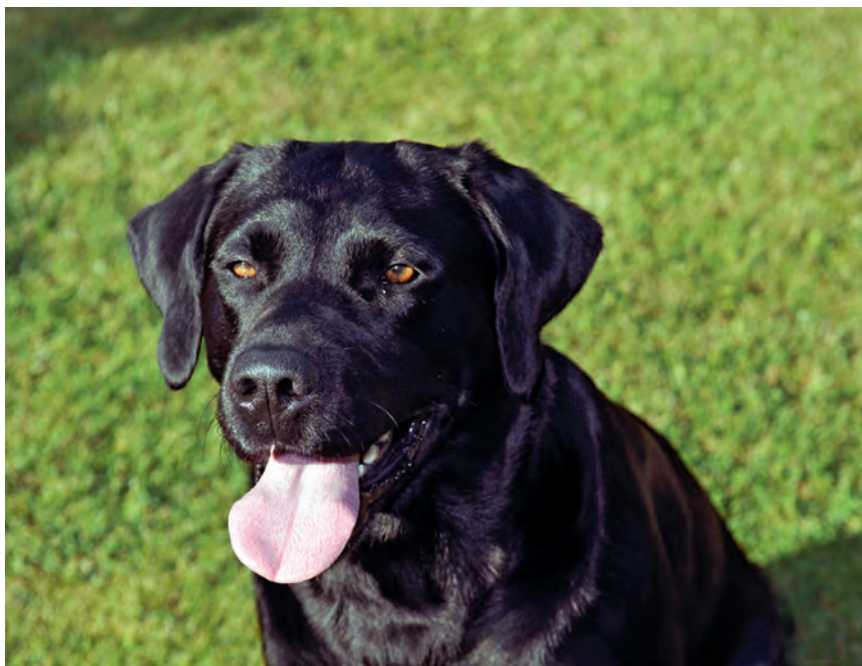
5 <http://www.worldwar2heritage.com/en/page/9069/144/V2-Crater-Site>

6 <http://www.norfolkchurches.co.uk/shotesham3/shotesham3.htm>

CIRCULAR WALK SIX

Baxter's Circuit

(named after the road and our dog)



This walk is at the south-eastern end of the village. The starting point is close to the junction of Baxter's Lane and Brooke Road, a few yards towards Shotesham Village at Footpath 22 that heads west from this point, marked by a finger post on Brooke Road.

DISTANCE Approximately 3.7 miles (6 kms). **DURATION** Around one hour and a half
EXPLORER UK GRID REFERENCE TM 26276 97652

This walk starts on Shotesham Footpath 22 with 50 yards of cross-field path that is generally easy walking but can be muddy after rain. This becomes a field-edge grassy track by a ditch and hedge. Here the fields on both sides are planted with one of the usual mix of local crops, either rapeseed, grass, field bean, wheat or sugar beet. To your right, you can just see the church tower of St. Mary's Shotesham in the far distance. At the end of the first field, look for the tree on

your right with a hollowed out trunk. In bright sunlight the telegraph wires that cross the fields here can appear green from their copper content, a curious phenomenon.

At this point you have views over the fields on both sides of the glacial valley and of Little Wood on the far side of Market Lane to your right. Follow this track downhill along the side of a second field towards Market Lane.

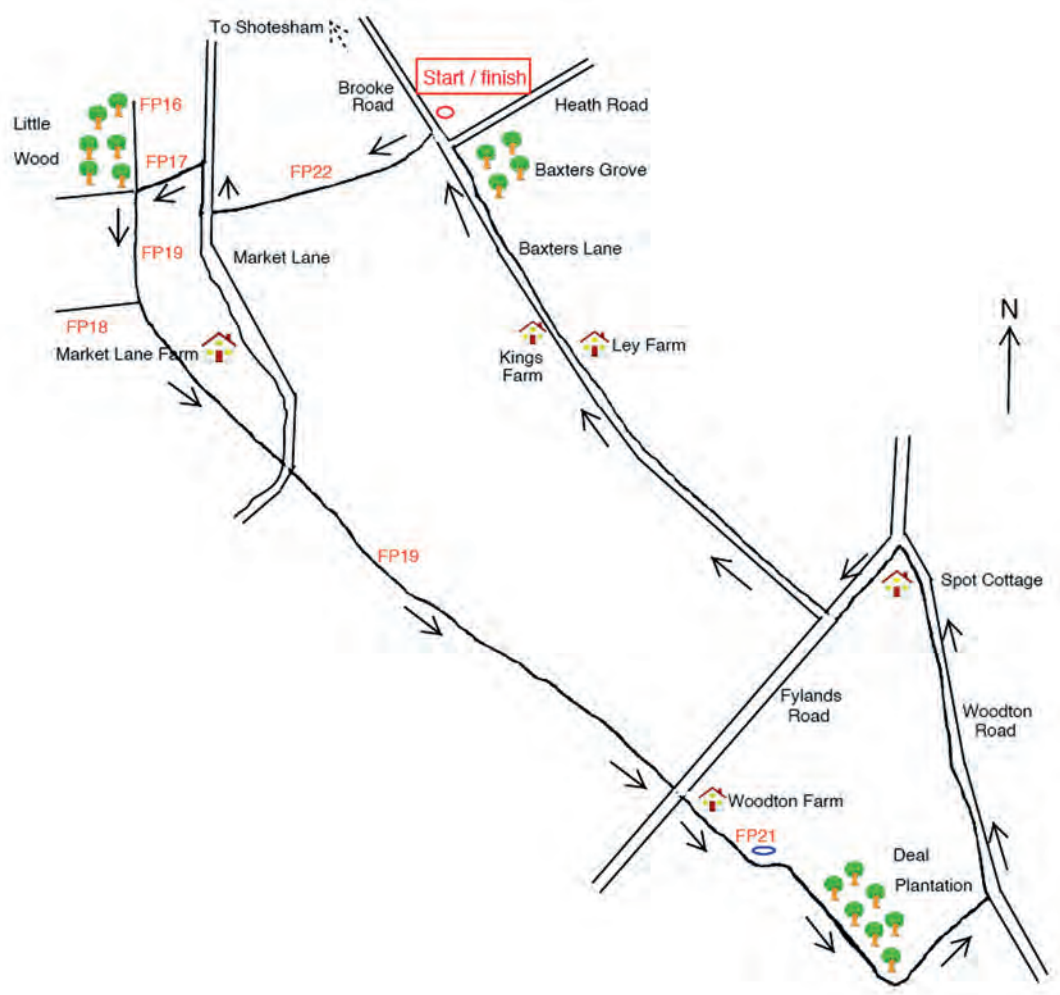
The opening here onto Market Lane is wide without a gate or stile. Turn right and walk 30 yards to the first field opening on the left, where a metal gate has recently been reset. Here you will also find a stile and finger post that marks Shotesham Footpath 17 heading southwest to the eastern edge of Little Wood, the rare hornbeam wood, just 50 yards along this path. Here, you will note a crossing of footpaths and whilst Shotesham Footpath 17 carries straight on along the southeastern border of Little Wood as part of the Boudicca Way, to the right is Shotesham Footpath 16, also part of Boudicca Way leading towards Shotesham village. But you turn left onto Shotesham Footpath 19, a cross-field path taking you south. The waymark indicating this path is somewhat buried in the opposite hedge. Heading south, at the end of the first field, look for a way-mark at the hedge dividing this field from the next. By an oak tree Shotesham Footpath 18 goes off to the right and is not always easy to see, but ignore this anyway and continue on Footpath 19 to a stile on the edge of a small copse at the back (south-western side) of Market Lane Farm, the only building in this area. This stile, although there is some barbed wire on the sides, is quite easy for dogs to negotiate.

Continue through the copse and along a field edge that looks as if it is at the bottom of Market Lane Farm's garden. At the south eastern corner, you will find another stile, more difficult for larger dogs this time but there are some small gaps in the hedges either side of the stile that most dogs should be able to negotiate if the drainage dykes in front of the hedges aren't too full and the dog can be safely let off the lead.

On the far side of this stile Footpath 19 continues southeast, so follow it cross-field again, to an opening in the hedge back onto Market Lane.

Cross straight over the road and you should see a finger post marking the further continuation of Footpath 19. Follow this field-edge path as it meanders southeast. It is often quite uneven underfoot. To the left across the fields, you can just see the buildings along Baxter's Lane. At the end of the field you will find two wide wooden planks across a dyke. Cross here into the next field that is usually a mix of grassy meadow on one side and maize on the other for pheasants and partridges. Please keep dogs under close control here or better still, on a lead. The path leads to the left side hedge and continues as a field edge path or track passing along the southwestern border of another wood used for rearing pheasants.

WALK SIX



Shortly, you will come to Fylands Road. Here, turn right and after just a few yards, on the left, find a finger post marking Footpath 21 that runs down the southwestern border of the barn of Woodton Farm. This is not always easy to find and is only partly shown on the County Council map of Shotesham footpaths. Please refer to Map 6 in this booklet. Follow this path that curves slightly to the right after the farm buildings, then curves to the left round a pond and heads southeast to the corner of this first field. Passing a row of trees on your left, cross through a gap in the hedge at the end. Turn left to head directly southeast along a field edge path, then take a little left and right into the next field. Although the official footpath is cross-field, as on the map, here there is actually a clear route along the field edge, turning 90 degrees right at the north-eastern corner of the field with a wood named Deal Plantation on your left. At the end of the wood the path turns 90 degrees left along the next field edge to head towards Woodton Road. The last hundred yards take you in a near semi-circle along the field edge to the finger post at the road.

The rest of this walk is on country lanes. First turn left to follow Woodton Road towards Spot Cottage. On Woodton Road there is a Norfolk County Council roadside nature reserve particularly for the Dyers Greenweed plant. At Spot Cottage turn left onto Fylands Road. Take the first right onto Baxter's Lane. In spring note the display of primroses in the ditches. Walk the whole length, around $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile. You are then at the junction with Heath Road to the right and Brooke Road to the left and just a few yards from your starting point.

PARISH OF SHOTESHAM

Footpath No. 1 (Norwich – Saxlingham Nethergate Road to Shotesham – Stoke Holy Cross Road).

Starts from the Norwich – Saxlingham Nethergate Road by a field gate immediately to the north of Bath Plantation, and runs south eastwards crossing the beck by means of a one plank bridge, then continues south eastwards across Shotesham Common to enter the Shotesham – Stoke Holy Cross Road.

Bridleway No. 2 (Maiden's Lane to Parish Boundary).

Starts from Maiden's Lane, and runs northwards, then north eastwards, then north eastwards, and then northwards again to the parish boundary where it joins Stoke Holy cross Bridleway No. 7.

Footpath No. 3 (Maiden Lane to Old Smithy).

Starts from Maiden Lane at a point approximately 80 metres west of the north-eastern corner of O.S. field 55 and runs south-westwards to the south-west corner of OS field 75 then south-eastwards to the north-east corner of OS field 102 and then turns south-westwards again to enter the public highway at a kissing gate near the Old Smithy.

Footpath No. 4 (Creasy's Grove to Malthouse Farm).

Starts from the public highway at the north western corner of Creasey's Grove, and runs south westwards along the western boundary of this plantation to a hurdle, then runs south westwards across four fields to enter the public highway north of Malthouse Farm.

Footpath No. 5 (Malthouse Farm to Footpath No. 8).

Starts immediately to the south of Malthouse Farm, and runs west south westwards along Wash Lane, passing through a wicket gate and crossing the ford by means of a footbridge, then turns south south westwards passing the southern end of Footpath No. 6, and then turns southwards to join Footpath No. 8.

Footpath No. 6 (Footpath No. 7 to Footpath No. 5).

Starts from Footpath No. 7, and runs south eastwards along the northern boundaries of three fields, then turns south south westwards along the eastern boundary of the third field, and then runs south eastwards again across a fourth field and through a field gate, then turns southwards for a short distance to join Footpath No. 5.

Footpath No. 7 (Falgate Farm to Footpath No. 14).

Starts from the public highway north east of Falgate Farm, and runs south south eastwards, then turns south south westwards, passing the north western end of Footpath No. 6 and crossing Footpath No. 8, to join Footpath No. 14 west of Great Wood.

Footpath No. 8 (Roger's Lane to Market Lane).

Starts from Roger's Lane, and runs south eastwards through a field gate to a second field gate, then runs east south eastwards crossing Footpath No. 7 and passing the southern end of Footpath No. 5 and the north eastern end of Footpath No. 15 to join the north western end of Footpath No. 16.

Footpath No. 9 (Hawes' Green Road to Priory Lane).

Starts from the public highway at Hawes' Green Road opposite the eastern end of Footpath No. 10, and runs east north eastwards, then south south eastwards for a short distance, and then east north eastwards again to enter Priory Lane by a stile

Footpath No. 10 (Saxlingham Road to Hawes' Green Road).

Starts from Saxlingham Road by a field gate, and runs east south eastwards, then east north eastwards, passing the north eastern end of Footpath No. 11 to enter Hawes' Green Road by a kissing gate opposite the western end of Footpath No. 9.

Footpath No. 11 (Entrance to Old Hall to Footpath No. 10).

Starts near the entrance to Old Hall, and runs northwards to enter St. Mary's Churchyard, then runs north eastwards through the churchyard to join Footpath No. 10 at a stile

Footpath No. 12 (Roger's Lane to road leading to Greatwood Farm).

Starts by a gap from Roger's Lane, and runs south south eastwards, then southwards, to enter the public highway leading to Greatwood Farm.

Footpath No. 14 (Wash Lane to Footpath No. 7).

Starts from Wash Lane at the parish boundary, and runs north eastwards across two fields to join Footpath No. 7.

Footpath No. 15 (Footpath No. 8 to Wash Lane).

Starts by a field gate from Footpath No. 8 and runs south westwards, then south eastwards for a short distance to the eastern corner of Great Wood. From this point the path runs south westwards again across two fields to enter Wash Lane.

Footpath No. 16 (Footpath No. 8 to Market Lane).

Starts from Footpath No. 8 and runs south south eastwards along the western boundaries of three fields, and then along the north eastern boundary of Little Wood to join Footpath No. 17. From this point the path runs southwards to join the north eastern end of Footpath No. 18, and then turns south south eastwards again to enter Market Lane opposite the north western end of Footpath No. 19.

Footpath No. 17 (Market Lane to Wash Lane).

Starts by a field gate from Market Lane, and runs west south westwards to join Footpath No. 16 at the eastern corner of Little Wood, then runs south westwards along the south eastern boundary of this wood, and then bears south south westwards across a field, to enter Wash Lane by a field gate opposite the north eastern end of Footpath No. 20.

Footpath No. 18 (Footpath No. 16 to Lathgreen Farm).

Starts from Footpath No. 16, and runs south westwards then south south westwards to a field gate, and then turns south eastwards to enter the public highway opposite Lathgreen Farm by another field gate.

Footpath No. 19 (Market Lane to Oak Plantation).

Starts from Market Lane by a field gate opposite the south eastern end of Footpath No. 16, and runs south eastwards across seven fields, to enter the public highway by a field gate at the southern corner of Oak Plantation.

Footpath No. 20 (Wash Lane to Parish Boundary).

Starts from Wash Lane opposite the south western end of Footpath No. 17, and runs south westwards to a stile at the parish boundary where it joins Saxlingham Nethergate Footpath No. 8.

Footpath No. 21 (Oak Plantation to Long Lane).

Starts opposite Oak Plantation, and runs south eastwards through the yard of Woodton Farm to a field gate at the south eastern boundary of Deal Plantation, then runs north eastwards to enter Long Lane at the parish boundary by another field gate.

Footpath No. 22 (Market Lane to Brooke Road).

Starts from Market Lane by a field gate, and runs east north eastwards along the northern boundaries of two fields, then crosses a third field to enter Brooke Road by a field gate.

Shotesham

CIRCULAR WALKS



This booklet has been produced by
Shotesham Village Association
to promote the local network of footpaths.
Grateful thanks to the many contributors
and proof readers.

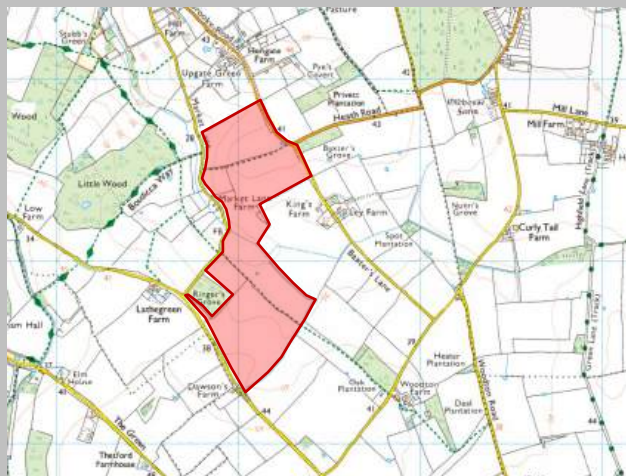
Text and some pictures by [REDACTED]

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EAST PYE SOLAR—SITE 8, SHOTESHAM

DCO EXAMINATION—WRITTEN REPRESENTATION

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL MATTERS

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IN SUPPORT OF SHOTESHAM PARISH/SHOTESHAM ACTION GROUP

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APPENDICES

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CLA/330/25/01 - ISSUE 1

8TH JUNE 2025

AUTHOR: [REDACTED]

CHECKED: CLA

EAST PYE SOLAR

DCO EXAMINATION

WRITTEN REPRESENTATION

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL MATTERS

Site 8 - Shotesham

Executive Summary

This report assesses the suitability of Site 8 within the East Pye Solar Project and considers whether its inclusion within the proposed Order Limits is justified when examined against national policy, local planning policy, environmental constraints and accepted principles of site selection for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).

The report recognises the urgent need to decarbonise the UK's energy system and acknowledges the substantial weight that national policy attaches to the delivery of renewable energy infrastructure. However, the National Policy Statements and National Planning Policy Framework make clear that the need for renewable energy does not remove the requirement to avoid, minimise and appropriately balance significant environmental harm. The planning balance must therefore consider not only the benefits of renewable energy generation but also whether development is proposed in an appropriate location and whether less harmful alternatives are available.

The evidence presented demonstrates that Site 8 occupies one of the most environmentally and visually sensitive locations within the Scheme. The Site forms an integral component of the Tas Beck valley landscape and contributes significantly to local landscape character, the rural setting of Shotesham, public amenity, ecological connectivity and the appreciation of the wider historic landscape. These characteristics collectively create a highly sensitive receiving environment that is poorly suited to large-scale solar development.

The assessment identifies substantial adverse effects on landscape character and visual amenity. The Site is highly visible from a number of public viewpoints, including well-used Public Rights of Way, and forms part of a

distinctive valley landscape whose openness, tranquillity and rural qualities would be fundamentally altered by the introduction of extensive solar infrastructure. The report concludes that the resulting effects would be significant, long-term and, in many respects, irreversible for the duration of the project.

In addition to landscape and visual concerns, the report identifies a range of other constraints affecting the Site. These include ecological sensitivity, hydrological considerations, agricultural land quality, public access impacts and effects on the setting and approach to Shotesham. Whilst each issue is important in its own right, their cumulative interaction substantially increases the overall level of harm associated with development of the Site.

A key finding of the report concerns the robustness of the site selection process. The evidence suggests that the constraints affecting Site 8 were either underestimated or insufficiently reflected within the alternatives assessment process. Furthermore, changes to the Point of Connection appear not to have been accompanied by a comprehensive reassessment of site suitability. As a result, the justification for retaining Site 8 within the Order Limits is considered weak when compared with the scale and significance of the identified environmental effects.

The report also concludes that the cumulative effects of the wider Scheme have not been fully reflected within the Environmental Statement. When assessed alongside other elements of the proposed development, the contribution of Site 8 to cumulative landscape, visual, ecological and community impacts becomes more pronounced, further strengthening the case for its exclusion.

Overall, the evidence indicates that Site 8 is a highly constrained and environmentally sensitive location where significant adverse effects would arise that cannot be adequately mitigated through design refinement, landscaping or operational measures. While the wider objectives of renewable energy generation are supported, the inclusion of Site 8 is not considered necessary to achieve those objectives and would result in disproportionate harm when measured against the benefits delivered.

Accordingly, this report concludes that Site 8 should be removed from the East Pye Solar Project Order Limits. Such an outcome would better accord with the requirements of NPS EN-1, NPS EN-3, the National Planning Policy Framework, the Greater Norwich Local Plan and South Norfolk Development Management Policies, whilst avoiding significant and unnecessary harm to a Valued Landscape and its associated environmental, community and heritage assets.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 APPOINTMENT AND BRIEF

- 1.1.1 My name is [REDACTED]. I am Director of Classic Landscape Architecture Ltd. I hold a [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I hold a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I am a [REDACTED] (I). I have worked in landscape architecture, management and planning for over thirty years.
- 1.1.2 Having been born in Saxlingham, I have a deep understanding of the East Anglian landscape, its agriculture and its historic and cultural associations.
- 1.1.3 I am preparing this statement as an individual and I am not sponsored or paid by any person/group but offer my report to Shotesham Action Group. I offer my expertise and local knowledge based on the belief that the proposed development has serious and significant adverse effects on the local area in both landscape and visual terms.
- 1.1.4 My professional judgement is added to the concerns and objections set out by local residents, whose opinions are both valid and reasoned despite their close association with the development.
- 1.1.5 My assessment is predominantly limited to Site 8 which fundamentally fails early stages of site selection process and again at each stage thereafter. This Site should not have been included within the Order Limits and should be removed.

1.2 SITE LOCATION

(Refer to Figures 1)

- 1.2.1 The Site, comprising 54.6ha (135acres), currently comprises a number of field parcels to the south of the village of Shotesham, sitting both on the valley side and within the valley bottom.
- 1.2.2 The Site sits within the landscape surrounding the village and forms an integral and important part of

its setting.

- 1.2.3 The Site lies 10.5km southeast of the City of Norwich within an area of highly rural and bucolic landscape.
- 1.2.4 Access to the Site is significantly limited with a minor road, Brooke Road – Shotesham Road to the north of the Site and single-track rural lanes to the south and through the Site. The closes ‘B’ class road is the B1332 Norwich Road at Brooke to the east which is 2.7km distance (as the crow flies). The closes ‘A’ class road, the A140 Norwich to Ipswich Road lies beyond winding lanes and through the village of Saxlingham 4.6km distant.
- 1.2.5 The Site lies approximately 12km from the proposed Point of Connection (PoC) at Great Moulton, beyond the A140.
- 1.2.6 The Site is designed to sit between Site 9 at Brooke (approximately 1.5km distant) and Site 7 at Saxlingham.
- 1.2.7 Access to Site 8b will also be via Wash Lane, a single-track rural lane.

1.3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

(Refer to Figure 7)

- 1.3.1 The Proposed Development at Site 8 comprises approximately 135 acres of agricultural land for the installation of solar arrays and associated infrastructure including cable runs and haul road.
- 1.3.2 The Site is divided into two parcels; Site 8a sitting within the valley bottom adjacent to Market Lane and Site 8B sitting on the sloping valley side and connecting to Baxters Lane and Brooke Road.
- 1.3.3 Following acknowledgement of the inappropriate road network in the local area, (after the site selection stage and very late within the design process) access between Site 8A and 8B will be accommodated by a haul road across the Site with a additional access points remaining off rural lanes.
- 1.3.4 Design iterations have retained two areas as arable; western Site B and a small section of Site A. Additional areas have been proposed as potential indicative mitigation.

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.4.1 The aims and objectives of this appraisal are to:
- summarise the characteristics of the landscape with reference to existing studies;
 - identify and assess the condition of landscape elements within the proposed development site and its immediate surroundings;
 - identify the potential visual envelope from which the site and the proposed development may be seen;
 - Assess the Site selection process and conclude on its effectiveness.
 - Assess the Value of the Site and its immediate setting;
 - outline the effects of the proposed development on the landscape character and landscape elements within it;
 - outline the effects of the proposed development on the visual receptors;
 - draw conclusions about the overall effects of the proposals.
- 1.4.2 This report will examine the impacts of the solar development on the landscape of the Site, its immediate setting and the wider character of the 'historic' settlement as a whole. Evidence is presented which shows that the development would bring major adverse change and detriment to landscape and settlement character of Shotesham and adverse effects on a 'Valued Landscape' and amenity and ecology of local, National and International value.
- 1.4.3 The overarching aim is also to highlight the overall quality of the existing baseline where EPS have brushed over, ignored, understated or underestimated either value or effects.
- 1.4.4 It is hoped that having read this report, together with additional information provided by Shotesham Parish, Shotesham Action Group and other consultees, it will become evident that Site 8 should not have been included within the DCO limits and indeed that it should, notwithstanding objections to the whole

scheme, be removed should the scheme proceed.

1.5 OUTLINE METHODOLOGY

*(Full methodology is set out in **Appendix B** which sets out the assessment criteria in detail. A brief note of the overall methodology is set out below.)*

- 1.5.1 The descriptions of the site and its surrounding landscape character and visibility are based on a desk study followed by a field survey. The site and visual surveys were carried out at various dates between 2024-2026. Photographs taken therefore a variety of levels of leaf cover.
- 1.5.2 The methodology follows the relevant sections in "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition 2013).¹ The report is based on the professional judgement, experience and knowledge of the author but follows a sequential methodology to provide a report that presents a professional assessment of the impact of the proposed development, together with offering valuable information and design input at the early design stage. The appraisal outlines the key facets of the Site and its surroundings in order to gain an understanding of the capacity for the Site and its development proposals, in particular, the distinction between landscape characteristics and views/visual amenity.

ASSESSMENT OF LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

- 1.5.3 The landscape character of the area has been established by reviewing published landscape character assessments completed at different scales from national to district and the local level. The documents were reviewed in detail and supplemented by local observations during the site survey and visual analysis.
- 1.5.4 A field survey of the site was carried out, noting characteristic landscape elements (including landform, drainage, land use, vegetation, key views and other features) and any differences from the district scale landscape character assessment. Existing trees and other significant vegetation in and around the site boundaries were assessed on a visual basis only for the purposes of this report. Additional, more in depth

¹ Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management, 3rd Edition, 2013

surveys are covered by others including arboricultural and ecological surveys which also inform this report.

- 1.5.5 The landscape effects are determined by assessing the sensitivity of the landscape receptors against the magnitude of the change. The overall landscape effects are drawn from the summary of the various effects.
- 1.5.6 **Appendix B** provides Tables showing the methodology for assessing these landscape effects that are described within this assessment.

ASSESSMENT OF VISUAL EFFECTS

- 1.5.7 The assessment of visual effects looks at the effects of the changes to the views and visual amenity of the landscape and its various receptors to be brought about by development.
- 1.5.8 The sensitivity of visual receptors depends upon several factors, and these are set out in the full Methodology in **Appendix B**.
- 1.5.9 In terms of the change to the view, the distance, size, scale, duration and reversibility are taken into account in addition to whether the view is full, partial, intermittent or glimpsed.
- 1.5.10 Topographical maps were used to define the likely Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) and this was confirmed in the field by an extensive walkover of the surrounding countryside. Representative views from publicly accessible areas, for example roads and Public Rights of Way, and informal paths within the ZVI were identified. The extent of visibility was confirmed, and photographs were taken at selected locations back towards the Site in order to inform the reader. (refer to Viewpoints in **Appendix A**). The photographic viewpoints have been limited to those provided, these forming a reasonable level of ‘representative’ views from all directions.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

- 1.6.1 This report is predominantly limited to Sites 8A and 8B of the DCO. Failure to comment on the remainder of the Site does not indicate that I consider this acceptable. Where I have deemed it necessary to comment on other aspects of the DCO I have done so. The purpose of this report is to ascertain how

significant the impact would be on this particular Site, and whether the development would conflict with the relevant national policy statements and national and local landscape policies.

- 1.6.2 I would like to respectfully point out that whereas EPS have a huge resource and timespan in which to prepare their evidence, following last minute design changes at the submission stage (many of which should have been carried out at an earlier stage), the timespan to comment on this application has been extremely short, despite earlier preparatory work.
- 1.6.3 Where references, titles, labelling are inconsistent or duplicated between with within reports, this is a reflection of the lack of time to consolidate reports between consultees, taking into account the fact that most consultees (including myself) have had to prepare the documentation during their ‘spare time’.
- 1.6.4 The village of Shotesham is an historic and important settlement entwined with its agricultural history. This appraisal therefore contains a settlement approach and looks at the landscape, setting and heritage of the settlement and assesses where and how these are affected by the development proposals.
- 1.6.5 I have predominantly limited my assessment to landscape and visual matters and commented on additional aspects where this helps with understanding or underpins my conclusions.
- 1.6.6 I have commented on areas of the EPS Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) where I consider this is useful to illustrate where the findings are not considered appropriate or correct.
- 1.6.7 A review of the documentation prepared by the EPS was undertaken. This sets out areas where I consider the effects of the proposed development have been understated/underestimated or where I do not concur with the methodology used. These comments are by no means exhaustive, and where I do not comment, this does not mean that I necessarily agree with their assessment or conclusions.
- 1.6.8 Photographs and plans have been included which help the understanding of the site and its setting. EPS mitigation is ‘indicative’ and marked up photo panels are based on an approximate areas.
- 1.6.9 At all times, I have sought to avoid duplication of evidence or policy in order to keep this report concise. Where I have repeated such wording, it is for the sake of clarification or emphasis.
- 1.6.10 I have visited the site on multiple occasions, and in particular during 2025-2026.

- 1.6.11 In addition to local consultation I have discussed proposals with EPS during the consultation process, giving them the opportunity to reassess and remove the Site prior to submission.
- 1.6.12 The evidence that I set out in this report is given in accordance with the relevant guidance of the Landscape Institute. I confirm that those opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.

2.0 LANDSCAPE POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1.1 This section identifies policy of relevance to the assessment of potential landscape and visual effects associated with the proposed development. I have not sought to summarise these as they are dealt with elsewhere and to keep this report as concise as possible.

2.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 2.2.1 Government policy for the delivery of energy infrastructure is set out in the energy National Policy Statements (NPS). The latest updated version was published in December 2025 and updated in 2026.²
- 2.2.2 EN-1 recognises that almost all nationally significant energy infrastructure will have some adverse landscape effects. The objective is therefore not to avoid all change, but **to minimise harm through siting, design and mitigation.**
- 2.2.3 National policy for energy infrastructure is set out in the Government’s Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1). Section 4.5 of EN-1 sets out the principles for good design that should be applied to all energy infrastructure, and states:

‘The visual appearance of a building, structure, or piece of infrastructure, and how it relates to the landscape it sits within, is sometimes considered to be the most important factor in good design. But high quality and inclusive design goes far beyond aesthetic considerations. The functionality of an object – be it a building or other type of infrastructure – including fitness for purpose and sustainability, is equally

important. 101 The Environment Act 2021 also allows for an extension to offshore development in the future. Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) 82 4.7.2 Applying good design to energy projects should produce sustainable infrastructure sensitive to place, including impacts on heritage, efficient in the use of natural resources, including land-use, and energy used in their construction and operation, matched by an appearance that demonstrates good aesthetic as far as possible. It is acknowledged, however that the nature of energy infrastructure development will often limit the extent to which it can contribute to the enhancement of the quality of the area....

Whilst the applicant may not have any or very limited choice in the physical appearance of some energy infrastructure, there may be opportunities for the applicant to demonstrate good design in terms of siting relative to existing landscape character, landform and vegetation. Furthermore, the design and sensitive use of materials in any associated development such as electricity substations will assist in ensuring that such development contributes to the quality of the area....

Applicants must demonstrate in their application documents how the design process was conducted and how the proposed design evolved. Where a number of different designs were considered, applicants should set out the reasons why the favoured choice has been selected.2.2.4Section 5.10 of EN-1 sets out the assessment principles relevant to landscape and visual considerations and highlights the need for projects ***‘Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate.’***

- 2.2.4 Regarding the potential mitigation of landscape and visual effects EN-1 states in paragraph 5.10.26 that ***‘Reducing the scale of a project can help to mitigate the visual and landscape effects of a proposed project.*** However, reducing the scale or otherwise amending the design of a proposed energy infrastructure project may result in a significant operational constraint and reduction in function – for example, electricity generation output. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances, where mitigation could have a very significant benefit and warrant a small reduction in function. In these circumstances, the Secretary of State may decide that the benefits of the mitigation to reduce the

² Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), 2025

landscape and/or visual effects outweigh the marginal loss of function.'

2.2.5 NPS EN-3³ sets out technical considerations for the IPC when determining consent applications for renewable energy infrastructure. It states that "Applicants will be expected to have taken into account the potential impact of a proposed solar farm on the landscape and visual amenity and to have followed the mitigation hierarchy. Applicants will be expected **to direct considerable effort towards minimising the landscape and visual impact of solar PV arrays...**'

'...Whilst there is an acknowledged need to ensure that solar PV installations are adequately secured, the applicant should consider whether the security measures such as fencing have been designed to minimise impacts on landscape character, visual amenity and biodiversity...'

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORKS (NPPF), (DEC 2024)

- 2.2.6 The updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁴ was published in December 2024 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and sets out the Government’s planning policies for England, and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF replaces all previous national planning policy and is a material consideration in decision making.
- 2.2.7 The following sections of the NPPF are relevant to the consideration of the current proposals in relation to landscape and the environment.
- 2.2.8 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF sets out the three overarching objectives of the planning system.
- 2.2.9 These include an environmental objective ‘to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, ...’
- 2.2.10 Paragraph 9 sets out that ‘Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so **should take local circumstances into account**, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area’.

2.2.11 The overarching objective to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment is reflected in specific policies about: achieving well-designed places (Section12); conserving and enhancing the natural environment (Section 15); and conserving and enhancing the historic environment (Section 16).

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT - PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE (PPG)

2.2.12 This PPG provides additional guidance on the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

2.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

2.3.1 The Scheme is located within the administrative areas of Norfolk County Council (NCC), and South Norfolk Council (SNC) who is the host authority.

GREATER NORWICH LOCAL PLAN

- 2.3.2 The Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP) (Ref 7-13) was adopted by South Norfolk Council on 25 March 2024. The adopted GNLP consists of three documents: The Strategy, The Sites Plan and The Monitoring Framework.
- 2.3.3 The Strategy consists of seven policies, of which the following are relevant to landscape and visual issues are Policy 3 – Environmental Protection and Enhancement and Policy 4 – Strategic Infrastructure.

SOUTH NORFOLK LOCAL PLAN

- 2.3.4 The South Norfolk Development Management Policies Document (DMPD) (Ref 7-14) was adopted on 26th October 2015 and forms part of the South Norfolk Local Plan. The Key Diagram, which sets out the spatial strategy for land use and transport planning in the DMPD, will be superseded by the Key Diagram in the GNLP Strategy. However, the remainder of the document is to be carried forward and used in conjunction with the adopted plan.
- 2.3.5 The relevant policies in the DMPD are as follows:

³ National Policy Statement for Renewable Electricity Generation Infrastructure (EN-3), 2025

⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. (2025). *National Planning policy framework*. (Updated February 2025)

- Policy DM1.4 – Environmental quality and local distinctiveness.
- Policy DM3.8 – Design principles applying to all development.
- Policy DM3.13 – Amenity, noise and quality of life.
- Policy DM4.4 – Natural environmental assets: designated and locally important open space.
- Policy DM4.5 – Landscape character and river valleys.
- Policy DM4.8 – Protection of trees and hedgerows.
- Policy DM4.9 – Incorporating landscape into design; and
- Policy DM4.10 – Heritage Assets.

LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY IN RELATION TO ENERGY GENERATION STORAGE AND TRANSMISSION SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (CONSULTATION VERSION)

2.3.6 Although East Pye did not consider this document to relevant to the scheme, the adopted version (November 2025) includes criteria for ‘very large scale’ developments under which the scheme falls. This document has been appraised and a refinement, relating to the Site is set out below showing the full sensitivity of the Site against the published criteria (see section 3).

3.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER BASELINE

(Refer to Figure 2 showing the landscape character within the study area)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 As well as providing a baseline identification of specific landscape characters across the country, the National Character Area (NCA) profiles outline ways in which enhancements to the character area or type can be made. This important document, prepared by Natural England, provides descriptions and cultural influences that create the various areas, each area being defined by a unique combination of their landscape, cultural and economic assets together with their biodiversity and geodiversity. This document forms the basis for development and enhancement of each specific character area.

3.2 NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA

(Refer to <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5095677797335040> for up-to-date assessments of the NCA)

- 3.2.1 The site lies within National Character Area 83: South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands.⁵
- 3.2.2 Relevant sections of the NCA include its key characteristics and Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEO’s) which may be used to inform the protection and enhancement of the Character Area as appropriate.

SUMMARY OF KEY LANDSCAPE FEATURES

- Extensive clay plateau** of chalky glacial till, generally flat or gently undulating, with open, expansive views.
- Dissecting shallow river valleys**, including the River Waveney, creating a strong contrast between large-scale arable plateau and smaller, enclosed pastoral and wetland landscapes.
- Predominantly arable land use**, with cereals, sugar beet and oilseed rape dominating; intensive pig and poultry units in places.
- Heavy, seasonally waterlogged clay soils** on the plateau; peat, alluvium and glacial outwash deposits within valley bottoms.
- Sparse woodland cover**, but a treed character provided by hedgerow trees, treed lanes, shelterbelts, estate planting and scattered ancient semi-natural woodland.
- Sinuuous ditch-lined field boundaries**, with areas of remnant medieval enclosure and species-rich hedgerows.
- High density of farm ponds**, particularly in High Suffolk, supporting notable amphibian and aquatic species.
- Ecologically rich valley habitats**, including grazing marsh, fen, carr woodland and remnant species-rich meadows.
- Strong historic landscape character**, including moated farmsteads, medieval greens and commons, round-towered churches, deer parks and WWII airfields.

⁵ Natural England, *National Character Area 83: South Norfolk and North Suffolk Claylands*.

Dispersed settlement pattern of scattered farmsteads, hamlets and small market towns.

Residual tranquillity and dark skies, especially away from main transport corridors

Key Environmental and Planning Protections

While the NCA designation itself is not statutory, its character and features are protected and enhanced through multiple mechanisms:

National planning policy (NPPF) requiring protection and enhancement of valued landscapes, biodiversity, heritage assets and tranquillity.

Local Landscape Character Assessments and Local Plans, which draw directly on the NCA profile to guide development scale, siting and design.

Agri-environment schemes (Environmental Land Management / Countryside Stewardship)

Statutory habitat and species protections, including SSSIs, priority habitats (ancient woodland, fen, grazing marsh) and protected species legislation.

Water Framework Directive objectives (via catchment partnerships) addressing water quality and hydrological function.

Heritage protection legislation covering listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas and registered parks and gardens.

Dark skies and tranquillity mapping (e.g., CPRE data) influencing landscape sensitivity and development control.

OVERALL PROTECTION PRIORITY

- 3.2.3 The overarching protection objective is *‘to maintain the defining contrast between the expansive, open arable plateau and the intimate, biodiverse, historically layered river valleys, while strengthening ecological connectivity, conserving dispersed settlement character, safeguarding tranquillity, and ensuring development respects the area’s scale, skyline and rural identity.’*
- 3.2.4 The NCA profiles provide important statements of environmental opportunity which outline the key features and methods for protection and enhancement. The following sets out these opportunities and highlights where the proposed development does or does not conform to these.

STATEMENTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL OPPORTUNITY (SEO) FOR NCA 83

SEO 1

*‘SEO 1: Maintain and enhance the **rural character of the landscape** and the contrast between the arable plateau and pastoral river valleys by **maintaining agricultural productivity and encouraging sustainable land management practices that protect and enhance the landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity assets while benefiting water quality and water availability, as well as the rural sense of place and of tranquillity.**’*

- 3.2.5 The proposed development, **both in itself, and in cumulation** with the other proposed major developments across the NCA (currently within the planning system) will:
 - **not** maintain or enhance the rural character of the landscape.
 - **not** maintain agricultural productivity
 - **not** encourage sustainable land management practices that protect and enhance the landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity assets.
 - **not** benefit water quality
 - **not** benefit water availability.
 - **not** protect or enhance the rural sense of place.
 - **not** protect or enhance the tranquillity.
- 3.2.6 Singular effects on the NCA are **Minor Adverse-Negligible** due to the scale of the proposed development.
- 3.2.7 Cumulative effects on the NCA are **Moderate Adverse** and **significant** due to the level of change across the NCA.

SEO 2

*‘SEO 2: Encourage measures that conserve and enhance the characteristic historic settlement patterns including notable village commons and greens, and historic features such as moated farmsteads and windmills, ensuring that access and educational opportunities are maximised; and ensure that the **design and location of new developments add to the sense of place and history across the National Character Area (NCA).**’*

- 3.2.8 The proposed development, **both in itself, and in cumulation** with the other proposed major developments across the NCA (currently within the planning system) will:

- **not** conserve or enhance the characteristic historic settlement patterns where development is completely uncharacteristic and dominating within the local historic landscape context.
- **not** add to, **respect or protect** the sense of place and history across the NCA.

3.2.9 Singular effects on the NCA are **Negligible-Minor Adverse** due to the scale of the proposed development.

3.2.10 Cumulative effects on the NCA are **Moderate Adverse** and **significant** due to the level of change across the NCA.

SEO 3

‘SEO 3: Maintain and enhance the river valleys and their grazed flood plains, as well as the important valley fens and riparian habitats, for their contribution to bio- diversity networks, geodiversity, soil quality, water availability and regulating water flow and for their contribution to the traditional rural character of the area.’

3.2.11 The proposed development, **both in itself, and in cumulation** with the other proposed major developments across the NCA (currently within the planning system) will:

- **not** maintain or enhance the river valleys.
- **not** maintain important valley habitats where the introduction of hard surfacing, contaminants, water pollution and potential interruption of ecological corridors will have an adverse effect on:
- **not** maintain or enhance water quality
- **not** maintain or enhance water availability (to areas on Site)
- **not** maintain or enhance water flow and flooding risk
- **not** maintain or enhance the contribution of the river valleys to the traditional rural character of the area.

3.2.12 Singular effects on the NCA are **Minor Adverse-Negligible** due to the scale of the proposed development.

3.2.13 Cumulative effects on the NCA are **Moderate Adverse** and **significant** due to the level of change across the NCA.

SEO 4

‘SEO 4: Protect and enhance the area’s ancient semi-natural woodlands, copses, river valley plantations

and ancient boundaries including hedgerows and hedgerow trees, through the management of existing and the creation of new woods and hedgerows to benefit biodiversity, landscape character and habitat connectivity, and for the benefits to soil erosion reduction, water infiltration and quality, timber provision and carbon storage.’

3.2.14 The proposed development, **both in itself, and in cumulation** with the other proposed major developments across the NCA (currently within the planning system) will:

- **predominantly** protect the structure but not enhance the area’s semi-natural woodlands, copses and river valley plantations. The ecological value of these features will however **not** be protected or enhanced where ancient woodlands and SSSI lie adjacent to the Site.
- **not** protect ancient boundaries
- **not** protect hedgerows and hedgerow trees
- **not** protect land from soil erosion
- **significantly inhibit** water infiltration through compaction
- **not** protect water quality, through run-off an contamination

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY 1

‘Additional opportunity 1: Improve opportunities for people to access, enjoy and understand rural and historic landscape assets, ensuring that access and recreational resources are managed to be compatible with the tranquillity of the area, while providing a valuable health, education and access resource.’

3.2.15 Singular and cumulative effects across the NCA will **significantly impact** the ability for people to **use, enjoy and understand the rural and historic landscape assets** where the landscape will no longer be legible in many parts and routes will become significantly degraded in many places.

3.2.16 Historic PRoW will be **significantly impacted** where are particularly large number of PRoW are affected by the proposed development both in isolation and cumulatively across the NCA.

3.2.17 Access and recreational resources will **NOT** be managed to be compatible with the tranquillity of the area.

- 3.2.18 There will be adverse impacts on the valuable health, education and access resource of the NCA.
- 3.2.19 In addition, the level of PRow within the proposed scheme and the emotional effects on the visual receptors thereof, although not quantifiable, are likely to be damaging – a country walk that was once a pleasure and a health benefit, will become a source of upset and potentially mental detriment.
- 3.2.20 It should be noted that it is very rare that development proposals trigger adverse effects on the NCA due to their scale and nature of development in relation to the relative scale of the NCA.
- 3.2.20 It is therefore of significant importance that both the singular and cumulative effects of the proposed development (s) will cause adverse effect with cumulative effects on the NCA up to Moderate Adverse.

3.3 LOCAL CHARACTER AREAS

(See figure 4 for Local Character Areas)

- 3.3.1 The Site sits within the Landscape Type A, Rural River Valleys and within subtype A1: Tas Rural River Valley. This encompasses part of the Site including the lower levels of 8B in plan form. However, in relality, a further refinement of this LCA (which is necessary arelatively broad brush assessment), it can be seen that Site 8A falls within this Local Character Area in reality.
- 3.3.2 The upper parts of Site 8B lie within Landscape Type B: Triburary Farmland and within subtype B1: Tas Tributary Farmland.

3.4 LANDSCAPE SUSCEPTIBILITY ANALYSIS

- 3.4.1 South Norfolk Council commissioned The Landscape Partnership to undertake A Landscape Susceptibility Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)⁶ in relation to Energy Generation, Storage and Transmission. This study was published in November 2025. Appendix 3.1 deals with solar PV.
- 3.4.2 The susceptibility assessment sets out the key characteristics of each area and the susceptibility to the

specific change brought about by energy infrastructure.

- 3.4.3 The extract below shows the results of the assessment prepared by the Landscape Partnership for very large-scale solar projects.
- 3.4.4 Site 8 sits on both A1: the Tas Rural River Valley and B2, Tas Tributary Farmland. The following outlines the key characteristics of each Landscape Type and sets out both the published findings by the Landscape Partnership (where these relate to the Tas Valley).
- 3.3.5 In the following column, I have further refined the (again broad brush) published assessment and included a column for the Site and its immediate context, with results that are Site-specific for each criterion showing the full susceptibility of the Site.

LT A: RURAL RIVER VALLEYS

- 3.3.6 It describes this Landscape Type as ‘*The Rural River Valley Landscape Type is very important in giving spatial definition to and creating variety within the South Norfolk Landscape. Five rural river valleys have been identified within South Norfolk.*

These are: the broad valley of the River Waveney in the south of the district, the narrower valleys of the Tud and Wensum, west of Norwich, the meandering upper reaches of the River Yare/Tiffey south west of Norwich, and the distinctive Tas Valley to the south of Norwich. The boundary of this landscape type is defined primarily by topography and corresponds with the upper crest of the valley side, which generally occurs below the 30m AOD contour. Occasionally, the perceived boundary has been affected by cultural features which have transgressed this natural boundary to either extend or reduce the influence of the valley-form character, for example in the valley of the Waveney where the settlements have grown up as an integral part of the valley landscape, although now extend beyond the natural valley line.’

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LT: A1 TAS RURAL RIVER VALLEY

- Distinct, moderately wide simple valley form with medium-scale clearly defined flat valley floor,

⁶ South Norfolk Council, *Landscape Susceptibility Supplementary Planning Document in relation to Energy Generation, Storage and Transmission* (commissioned from The Landscape Partnership, November 2025).

shallow side slopes and adjoining smaller-scale tributary valleys.

- Less enclosed than some other valleys with a feeling of exposure and openness and some long views within the valley but restricted external views.
- River alternately visible and hidden marked by sparse waterside vegetation including reed filled ditches and narrow woodland belts. The flat, wide, green valley floor is a distinctive feature.
- A large number of attractive fords and small bridges occurring at regular intervals along the river and side tributaries.
- Pastoral valley floor with cattle grazing and distinctive willow pollards lining the watercourses on the valley floor.
- Upper tributary valleys of great ecological richness and importance, including areas of fen, marsh and unimproved wet and neutral grassland.
- Fragmented woodlands and shelterbelts on the valley sides creating a wooded fringe to much of the valley interspersed with more open areas of arable land.
- Presence of historic earthworks including Scheduled Ancient Monuments, including the large highly visible defensive earthworks of Venta Icenorum and the earthworks at Tasburgh.
- Sparsely settled character with buildings clustered around fording points and at the top of the valley sides.
- Characteristic vernacular buildings particularly notably including weather boarded mill houses and Dutch gable ends.
- Presence of a small number of distinctive halls and parkland including English Heritage listed parkland at Rainthorpe Hall.
- Network of narrow peaceful rural lanes throughout the valley including sunken lanes.
- A more disturbed character in the north of the area due to the influence of pylons, railway and roads.
- Role in dividing and defining east and west of South Norfolk District.

3.4.2 It sets out Development Considerations in paragraph 5.12:

‘Any development must respect the character of the Tas Rural River Valley and conserve and enhance the key landscape assets as described in the landscape character assessment. In particular it must seek to maintain the peaceful rural qualities of the valley.

This will include reference to the following considerations:

- **respect the sparsely settled character of the valley, with its occasional buildings of local rural vernacular character, with a clear relation to the landscape context;**
- **maintain the distinctive settlement pattern**, either nucleated around bridges or around ford crossing points or as linear settlements along roads on the valley sides. The objective should be to maintain the linear settlements (e.g. Stoke Holy Cross) as discrete areas and prevent gradual and incremental extension along the roads;
- **consider the impact of developments within the adjacent landscape character areas, particularly the higher land of the Tas Tributary Farmland (character area B1) on the character of the rural valley. The openness of parts of the valley and views that can be obtained make it particularly vulnerable;**
- ensure that the northern part of the Tas Valley is not further degraded, by large scale of infrastructure developments associated with the roads. Ensure the rural character of the area adjacent to the Norwich Southern Bypass is maintained;
- **consider the impact of any proposals on the rural lane network;**
- **maintain the role of the sparsely-settled Tas Valley in dividing the more settled areas to the east and west and avoid developments that may create the impression of developed corridors running across the valley.**

LANDSCAPE TYPE: RURAL RIVER VALLEYS

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA A1: TAS RURAL RIVER VALLEY

LANDSCAPE ATTRIBUTE	VERY LARGE-SCALE SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENT (OVER 50MW)	SITE SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT – PARCEL 8 SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT
Scale The South Norfolk river valleys (except for the Waveney) are small in scale, with intricate topography. The Waveney is a broad shallow valley with simpler topography.	LCA A1: HIGH It is very unlikely that development of this scale could be accommodated within the small-scale valleys.	HIGH The Site sits adjacent to a tributary of the Tas River forming a small scale and intimate rural river valley with intricate topography. Development of this scale cannot be accommodated within the small-scale valley.
Sense of enclosure - A semi-enclosed landscape with some long views within the valleys but restricted views out. Areas of more intimate character on the valley floor. - Some river valleys less enclosed than others, the Waveney for example is a wide valley which has a more open character.	MEDIUM-HIGH Larger schemes are less likely to be contained by existing vegetation, so susceptibility is higher.	HIGH The proposed development cannot be screened by existing or proposed vegetation due to the sloping valley side of 8b. The susceptibility of this Site to the proposed development is therefore high. The PRoW 22 will also lose its open and panoramic nature. Site 8a is less exposed, being more enclosed within the local landscape. Screening of the Site from the PRoW which runs through the Site will not be fully possible and will create a ‘tunnel’ effect to this otherwise open route, increasing the susceptibility to HIGH.
Landform Distinct valley landform created by glacial and fluvial activity with distinct floodplain and shallow valley sides.	HIGH - Valley sides have high susceptibility to Solar PV arrays as they are likely to be visible and would be difficult to screen. - The sinuous landforms of the river valleys are not generally compatible with solar arrays.	HIGH The Site and its immediate context lie on the valley side with long views across adjacent farmland from important PRoW. The valley side is highly susceptible to Solar PV arrays and would be visible and difficult to screen from a large range of views. The local landscape has a sinuous landform which is NOT compatible with solar arrays. Susceptibility is therefore high.

LANDSCAPE ATTRIBUTE	VERY LARGE-SCALE SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENT (OVER 50MW)	SITE SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT – PARCEL 8 SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT
Field pattern A1- Tas - Meadows and fens, some surviving unenclosed land e.g. at Shotesham and Flordon. 19th century enclosure at Tasburgh along with earlier enclosures.	Medium-High Small-scale fields are considered to have higher sensitivity. Fields are typically enclosed by dikes which means there are no hedges to provide enclosure. Solar arrays would appear stark, while the introduction of hedges would be out of character.	MEDIUM-HIGH There are some small-scale field patterns, particularly along the valley bottom adjacent to the Site, and even where field amalgamation has taken place, fields remain relatively small, broken up by woodland blocks and field boundaries creating a relatively intimate landscape both in and adjacent to the Site with some long range views from the higher valley sides as well as from the valley bottom. The introduction of hedges would not be out of character, but the enclosure of PRoW within Site 8 would erode the open character.
Landcover - Distinctive land cover: small-scale field pattern and prevalence of grazed pastures on the valley floor, with mix of arable and pasture on the valley sides, creating a complex landcover pattern. - Characteristic ecological assemblages – reeds and marsh, wet meadows/ pastures, woodland plus areas of heathland. High ecological value recognised in designations (SAC/SSSIs). - Willow pollards and lines of poplar flank ditches and watercourses. - Some areas of active mineral working and open water associated with mineral extraction sites, for example in A3: Tud and A4: Wensum valleys. The Tas Valley features two historic	Medium-High River valleys have greater habitat diversity than the broader arable landscapes that typically surround them, including larger amounts of pasture. Woodlands can be found within the floodplain and on the valleysides. A diversity of natural landcover elements increases susceptibility to development. The river valleys contain rare and valuable land cover elements such as fens and meadows which would be incompatible with this type of development.	HIGH The Sites immediate context contains a tributary of the River Tas (Tas Beck) and both parcels lie within very close proximity to Little Wood an Ancient Woodland and SSSI. Grazed pastures on the valley floor are representative of the character. There is a diverse level of natural landcover in the immediate context with increased susceptibility to development. The presence of Grade 3a BMV land is an important feature of the valley bottom of in this local area raising susceptibility.

parks, an iron age hillfort at Tasburgh, and a Roman colony at Venta Icenorum.		
LANDSCAPE ATTRIBUTE	VERY LARGE-SCALE SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENT (OVER 50MW)	SITE SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT – PARCEL 8 SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT
Settlement pattern and human influence - Valleys have historically been a focus for settlement and the valleys contain some historic villages. - The floodplain, however, tends not to be settled, except for occasional mills. - Settlements predominantly small and nucleated of strong vernacular character. Isolated farms are present on the edges of the floodplain.	High Frequent small villages and narrow country lanes create a complex settlement pattern which is susceptible to change. Solar PV arrays could detract from historic features such as church towers or villages and would dilute the strong vernacular character.	HIGH Evidence of historic settlement in the local context dating to Neolithic times. Local archaeological finds. Nucleated linear settlement of Shotesham with strong vernacular and isolated farms on the edges of the floodplain.
Perceptual aspects - The river valleys are typically settled but for the most part this consists of small rural villages, often with historic character recognised through Conservation Area designations, connected by minor roads. - The generally quiet character and low density of settlement contribute to the perception of an intimate, tranquil rural landscape within the River Valleys. - Tranquillity is reduced in the Waveney Valley by the A1066 and the A143. - Tranquillity is also reduced in the middle section of the Yare Valley by the A47.	LCA A1, Medium-High - The sense of rural tranquillity increases susceptibility to all development types, including Solar PV. - Development would adversely influence the rural qualities of the river valleys. Noise from inverters/transformers would have an adverse effect on the peaceful rural environment.	HIGH The area comprises small rural villages connected by minor roads. The quiet character and low density of settlement contribute to the perception of an intimate, tranquil rural landscape within the River Valley. There are no detracting features within the local context. Development cannot be accommodated without compromising the visual characteristics and susceptibility is high.

LANDSCAPE ATTRIBUTE	VERY LARGE-SCALE SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENT (OVER 50MW)	SITE SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT – PARCEL 8 SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT
Visual characteristics - Views within the valleys vary from long range and open to some more enclosed, confined views. - Views frequently include landmark features. - Views into adjacent landscapes are for the most part restricted by the ridges marking the limits of the valleys. There are some views into the valleys from the surrounding higher land.	High Development of this scale would be more difficult to accommodate without compromising the visual characteristics of the valleys, so the susceptibility is judged to be higher.	HIGH
Skylines - The valley crests form a skyline in views from the valley floor marking the transition to the adjacent landscape type. - In A5: Waveney Valley- a series of churches on the ridgeline form a prominent landmark. - Skyline is usually undeveloped creating a rural context. Woodland along the valley crest is a key feature of A3: Tud River Valley.	Varies This form of development is low in height meaning it is less likely to affect skylines. There are however local sensitivities such as valley crests forming skylines, and churches on the ridgeline.	MEDIUM-HIGH The Site and its immediate surroundings have complex skylines with a mix of open and wooded horizons. These open horizons are very susceptible to the proposed development despite its relatively low level, particularly from the valley floor.
Intactness - Ditches, fens, meadows, riparian vegetation and vernacular buildings create a sense of place. - The Tas Valley has an intact character. Small villages are present just above the floodplain. The	High Development of this scale would have a profound effect on the intactness of the river valleys.	HIGH The character within the Site and its local context is NOT influenced by nearby pylons, railway or A roads and remains particularly intact with a very strong ‘sense of place’. Development of the area would have a profound effect on the intactness of the river valley.

character is somewhat influenced by nearby pylons, railway and A-road.		
OVERALL SUSCEPTIBILITY	VERY LARGE-SCALE SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENT (OVER 50MW)	SITE SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT – PARCEL 8 - SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT
LCA A1: Tas Rural River Valley	High The existing characteristics of the Tas Rural River Valley are considered highly sensitive to development of this scale. The narrow and intimate valley has limited space to accommodate development, and the organic landform is unsuited to solar arrays. Development of this scale would fundamentally alter the characteristics of the Tas RuralRiver Valley. The strong sense of place is vulnerable to Solar PV, which is composed of generic elements.	HIGH The existing characteristics of those parts of Site 8 within the Tas Rural River Valley are highly sensitive to development of this scale. The narrow valley with open sides and sinuous, intimate, organic landform is unsuited to solar arrays. Development of this scale would fundamentally alter the characteristics of the Site and its immediate setting, would adversely impact adjacent designated sites, important ProW, far reaching views and would destroy the strong sense of place that exists in this tranquil, intact landscape.

LT B: TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

3.4.3 The tributary farmland occupies a large extent of the South Norfolk landscape occurring across the whole of the district. It is a broad transitional landscape type defined by the plateau uplands and river valleys, lying between 20m and 50m AOD.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF LTB1: TAS TRIBURARY FARMLAND

- Open, gently undulating to flat and sloping landscape incised by shallow tributary valleys, the tributary streams of which are not prominent landscape features.
- Large open arable fields of cereal, sugarbeet and occasionally sweetcorn.

- Framed open views across the countryside and into adjacent character areas.
- Small blocks of deciduous woodland of high ecological and visual quality. These create wooded horizons which add variety to and create intimacy within the landscape.
- Damp grasslands of ecological importance located within the tributary valleys.
- Scattered remnant hedgerow trees, particularly oak, sometimes including intact avenues lining the roads or marking former, denuded, field boundaries.
- Transportation corridors including main connecting roads.
- Network of recreational footpaths.
- Ditches, low banks and wide grass verges associated with the network of rural roads.
- Settlement characterised by a small number of large villages including the administrative centre of South Norfolk – Long Stratton - with smaller hamlets, scattered farmhouses and agricultural buildings.
- Mixed vernacular of timber-frame, stepped and Dutch Gables, thatch and round-towered churches.

LT B: TRIBUTARY FARMLAND - SUSCEPTIBILITY TO SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENT

LANDSCAPE ATTRIBUTE	VERY LARGE SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENT (OVER 50MW)	SITE SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT – PARCEL 8 SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT
Scale - Transitional landscape occupying the mid ground between the upland plateaux and the main river valley landscapes providing opportunities for long and framed views. - Contrasting sense of enclosure from small scale and enclosed in the wooded valleys to wider, more open areas across large arable fields on higher ground.	Medium Fields are generally of a medium to large size which reduces susceptibility to large scale developments such as solar PV. However there is variation in both size and shape resulting in an intricate, small-scale landscape pattern in places. In addition, the presence of villages, narrow lanes, halls and farmsteads introduces human scale elements	MEDIUM-HIGH The Site contains long and framed views, it provides a contrast to the strong sense of enclosure from the small scale of the valley bottom to the open areas between wooded horizons. Fields are moderately sized. The scale of the landscape increases susceptibility to this size of development.

	which increase susceptibility to larger developments	
LANDSCAPE ATTRIBUTE	VERY LARGE SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENT (OVER 50MW)	SITE SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT – PARCEL 8 SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT
Sense of enclosure - Woodland blocks impart a semi-wooded, semi-enclosed character to much of the area. - Valley landforms offers opportunity for longer views.	Medium-High - Semi-enclosed landscape is moderately sensitive to development. - Developments of this scale are less likely to be enclosed by vegetation, so susceptibility is higher.	MEDIUM-HIGH There are long views on the high land across and over the valley bottom with views only interrupted in places by woodland blocks.
Landform - Varied landform from flat to gently undulating, sloping towards tributary valleys. - Minor stream valleys cut through the glacial till to create a landscape of restrained variety.	Medium The varied landform results in localised areas of higher and lower susceptibility to low developments such as Solar AD. Susceptibility varies according to the degree of slope and the potential screening of the landform. The area generally consists of gently undulating landscape which lies in the middle of the susceptibility spectrum.	MEDIUM-HIGH Higher susceptibility on sloping valley sides with wide and long uninterrupted views with no detracting features and no built form to the south and west. It is not possible to adequately mitigate even relatively low-rise development on high valley sides.
Field pattern B1 - Tas Tributary Farmland - Early rectilinear field patterns across much of the area. - Planned enclosures of former greens and heaths prior to the C18 creating semi-regular field pattern. - Common arable fields in	Medium-Low Whilst there are likely to be some early field systems these are somewhat poorly preserved.	MEDIUM -LOW

Forngett St Mary visible on tithe map. - Late enclosure of fens, for example at Hingham - Some unenclosed meadows/fen. - Widespread hedgerow loss means that most fields are now classified as 20th century enclosures.		
Landcover - Varied pattern from small scale, intricate networks of fields/hedgerows in tributary valleys and around settlements to large, open fields on higher ground. - An intricate network of narrow, winding lanes often bounded by ditches. - Elusive tributaries, evident but usually hidden within the landscape by topography or trees. - Medium to large-scale arable fields enclosed by sparse hedges with hedgerow trees. Permanent pasture and woodland found within valleys. - Remnant parkland which sometimes relates to former deer parks, plus areas of common land. High proportion of important assemblages protected as SSSIs including woodland and wetland habitat.	Medium-High Arable farmland is a resource in its own right and there is therefore higher susceptibility to this scale of development. Landcover is more sensitive to this scale of development as it would be more extensive and could alter the perceptions of typical landcover.	HIGH The Site has a high likelihood of being BMV land. A valued landscape with the Site and the surrounding context having high levels of distinctiveness, intrinsic and perceived tranquility, openness, key views and dark skies. Close proximity to designated natural assets and important PRowS no. 19 and 22 running through the Sites joining the wider local, extensive and well used PRow network. Very sensitive to the scale of development across valley views and within long stretches of PRow 22 and 19.

LANDSCAPE ATTRIBUTE	VERY LARGE SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENT (OVER 50MW)	SITE SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT – PARCEL 8 SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT
Settlement pattern and human influence - Dispersed settlement pattern of small villages, hamlets, farmsteads and manors distributed across the landscape. Occasional large agricultural buildings e.g. poultry sheds - Compact villages sheltered within small valleys. - Mixed architectural character comprising modern bungalow development and vernacular architecture with stepped gable ends and other vernacular characteristics. Local building materials such as brick and flint.	LCA B1, High - The historic settlement pattern is still evident with only modest recent expansion. - The existing dispersed settlement pattern is susceptible to change. - Within B2 the A11 introduces a modern element which reduces local susceptibility. Existing pylons introduce more human influence in places, which reduces the local susceptibility.	HIGH Very dispersed settlement pattern with views to the west and south showing no development. Important setting to Shotesham Conservation Area and containing two (of four) gateways into this important heritage asset. Remaining visible development comprising historic buildings made up from former scattered farmsteads. Strong PRoW network providing public amenity for both local and wider ranging visitors. This network has strong links to other parts to of the network within the Order limits. The existing dispersed settlement pattern is incompatible with large scale developments such as solar PV.
Perceptual aspects - For the most part the landscape is peaceful, rural and tranquil. - Roads introduce a local source of movement within the landscape.	LCA B1,: Medium-High B2: Medium - The sense of rural tranquillity increases susceptibility to all development types, including Solar PV. - Development would adversely influence the rural qualities of the tributary farmland. - Noise from inverters/transformers would have an adverse effect on the peaceful rural environment. Within B2 the A11 introduces a source of noise and movement	HIGH Very peaceful, rural and tranquil with notable dark skies and surprisingly remote for its distance from Norwich. Lanes are narrow, winding and often hidden by steep banks, hedges or local topography. The Site is perceived as a very scenic and bucolic scene and is considered a ‘Valued Landscape’ due to its multiple natural, historic and cultural associations, its distinctiveness, strong public function and well used local amenity. Long and panoramic views interrupted only by characteristic woodland blocks. No detracting features and only historic development in the local context typical of

	which reduces susceptibility.	the local vernacular. Close association with SSSIs at Stubbs Green and Little Wood which play important roles in the local footpath network.
Visual characteristics - Transitional landscape occupying the mid ground between the plateaux and the main river valleys, providing opportunities for long and framed views. - Within these landscapes views are across arable fields to sloping valley sides and down to small-scale wooded tributary valleys. - Framed and open, long-ranging views across the countryside. - Large agricultural buildings can be visually prominent. - Pylons and poles interrupt the landscape wherever they are present, notably towards the northern part of the district. - Important views to landmarks such as Wymondham Abbey and Wicklewood Windmill that provide a sense of place. - Elements of vernacular interest that include round-towered churches. - Generally undeveloped skylines. - Strong visual influence of the adjoining Broads in character areas B3 and B5. Visual influence of Norwich in character areas B1 and B3.	Medium-High Development of this scale is more likely to be noticeable within the landscape which indicates a higher susceptibility to this scale of development.	HIGH Strong visual characteristics with long views across the Tas Valley with no detracting features. Important views from PRoW 22. Undeveloped skylines.

Skylines The skyline varies across the landscape type from clear to interrupted by woodland blocks and undulations in landform. In the enclosed tributary valleys the skyline can include prominent valley crests.	Varies - This form of development is low in height meaning it is less likely to affect skylines. - There are however local sensitivities such as prominent valley crests.	MEDIUM-HIGH In places, the skyline will introduce solar arrays to the skyline. Thes views cannot be mitigated. The Site and its immediate surroundings have complex skylines with a mix of open and wooded horizons. These open horizons are very susceptible to the proposed development, particularly from the valley floor.
Intactness Some roads have been modernised and there has been some modest expansion of settlements. Changing agriculturalpractices have led to a simplification of the landscape pattern and the loss of some landscape features. The historic pattern is nonetheless legible, and there are relatively few modern elements. The rural character of the area is intact, and there is a moderately strong sense of place.	Varying from Medium-High to High Development of this scale would have a more profound effect on sense of place by introducing standard elements across a wide area. The existing rural character would also be more fundamentally altered by this scale of development.	MEDIUM-HIGH The landscape is unusually, and fully intact with no detracting features, good levels of vegetation in the local context and a strong range of characters with views from the valley sides over the valley bottom.

OVERALL SUSCEPTIBILITY	VERY LARGE-SCALE SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENT (OVER 50MW)	SITE SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT – PARCEL 8
LCA B1: Tas Tributary Farmland	Medium-High Solar PV is lower than other forms of development, but could still be visible within the gently undulating landscape of the Tas Tributary Farmlands. Whilst it might be possible to screen solar panels with planting development of this scale would have an extensive effect on the landscape, and mitigation planting is also likely to alter the predominantly open character of the landscape. The Tas Tributary Farmlands display a rural, farmed character. The changes to land use and to the visual experience of the landscape would alter its fundamental character, so susceptibility is assessed as Medium-High.	SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT HIGH Development of this sloping valley side and the valley bottom would alter the fundamental character of this tranquil, panoramic landscape which is also deemed to be a ‘Valued Landscape’ Development would destroy the rural, farmed landscape and would destroy areas of the Best and Most Versatile land. This, in combination with the close proximity to designated features, ecologically protected species and the unusually tranquil and bucolic scene and dark skies means that the Site is highly susceptible and not able to accommodate the proposed development.

3.5 SHOTESHAM SETTELEMENT ASSESSMENT

3.5.1 The approach, adopted to assess the village of Shotesham as a whole, is based on guidelines for HAA as set out by Historic England. The assessment seeks to determine, through an understanding of the historic evolution of the settlement and present-day character, the significance of different parts of the village and landscape setting and their sensitivity, as well as the identification of gateways which affect perceptions of arrival and departure. Importantly the assessment does not separate built areas from their landscape setting but considers them together. This approach seeks to identify the settlement’s special qualities.

THE VILLAGE AND ITS SETTING

- 3.5.2 The village of Shotesham has evolved from its rich agricultural heritage, its cultural associations with the river valley trade and riparian and undulating landscape. **Few villages can have such a distinctive character with the landscape forming such a varied, integral part of both its composition and its cultural and historic associations.**
- 3.5.3 The main road through the village extends from Brook Road to the southeast, merging into The Street which follows the Tas Beck river valley through the main settlement ends at its junction with The Stoke Road at Skeets Hill to the northwest.
- 3.5.4 The form of the settlement follows the topography of the surrounding landscape. Important buildings such as the All-Saints church, St. Mary’s, St. Martin, The Dukes Head among others, being set on the surrounding high points, looking down over the valley below. This provides historic and evidential value as to the evolution, character and history of the settlement.
- 3.5.5 Its architectural and historic character is therefore defined both by the quality and quantity of the surviving built form and the distinctive landscape that surrounds. The existence of historic open space within the settlement helps to interpret the evolution of the village settlement and its status is considerably elevated by the high-quality buildings throughout the village including the three surviving (of four) churches in the village as well as earlier Mesolithic and Roman cultural associations.
- 3.5.6 The settlement has a number of gateways with the main routes coming in from Brooke and Norwich, running directly through the villages. There are seven gateways in total, and the proposed development

would adversely affect three of these, all to the south of the village.

3.5.7 When approaching the village from the south, the site is an important area of open space which reinforces the rural character of the southern part of the village between the 'intermediate' and 'historic' gateways.

4.0 LANDSCAPE BASELINE STUDY

4.1 EXISTING SITE CONTEXT AND LOCATION

(Refer to Figure 1 showing the Site Location)

- 4.1.1 The Site, comprising 54.6ha (135acres), currently comprises a number of field parcels to the south of the village of Shotesham, sitting both on the valley side and within the valley bottom.
- 4.1.2 The Site sits within the landscape surrounding the village and forms an integral and important part of its setting.
- 4.1.3 The Site lies 10.5km southeast of the City of Norwich within an area of highly rural and bucolic landscape.
- 4.1.4 Access to the Site is significantly limited with a minor road, Brooke Road – Shotesham Road to the north of the Site and single-track rural lanes to the south and through the Site. The closes ‘B’ class road is the B1332 Norwich Road at Brooke to the east which is 2.7km distance (as the crow flies). The closes ‘A’ class road, the A140 Norwich to Ipswich Road lies beyond winding lanes and through the village of Saxlingham 4.6km distant.
- 4.1.5 The Site lies approximately 12km from the proposed Point of Connection (PoC) at Great Moulton, beyond the A140.
- 4.1.6 The Site is designed to sit between Site 9 at Brooke (approximately 1.5km distant) and Site 7 at Saxlingham.
- 4.1.7 Access to Site 8b will also be via Wash Lane, a single track rural lane.

4.2 TOPOGRAPHY AND DRAINAGE

- 4.2.1 Topography varies across the Site, which comprises two distinct parcels. In both cases, the land falls directly towards the tributary, creating an immediate hydrological pathway to the adjoining watercourse and increasing the risk of runoff, sediment transfer and pollution arising from the proposed development.
- 4.2.2 Site 8A lies within the valley floor adjacent to Tas Beck, now a minor watercourse. Although the Site is identified as falling within Tas Tributary Farmland, its character more closely aligns with Landscape Type A1: Tas Rural River Valleys, with land rising on either side to the north and south, albeit on relatively gentle slopes.
- 4.2.3 At its northern corner, the Site lies at approximately 30m AOD, rising to around 41m AOD at its southern corner. This change in level occurs over a distance of about 850m, with the landform directing surface water towards the Beck, particularly northwards to the low point where it meets Market Lane.
- 4.2.4 In this context, development of the Site is likely to affect drainage patterns towards Market Lane, increase runoff and sediment transfer, and present a significant long-term risk of contamination to the Beck.

Inset of contours of Site 8a



- 4.2.5 Site 8B occupies the sloping valley side to the east of Market Lane and rises more steeply than Site 8A. At its eastern end, adjacent to Footpath 22, the land lies at approximately 42m AOD, falling to around 28m AOD at its western end beside Market Lane.

- 4.2.5 The landform directs surface water westwards towards Tas Beck and Market Lane, including Market Lane Farm. In this context, development of the Site is likely to increase runoff and sediment transfer and to create a significant long-term risk of contamination to both the Beck and the private water supply serving Market Lane Farm.
- 4.2.6 The Site also contains a steeply sloping section at the high point of Footpath 22, from which there are highly valued views west and south across an unspoilt and strongly bucolic landscape. From this point, the outlook extends across the valley floor towards a horizon defined by high-quality woodland blocks.
- 4.2.7 This is a valued viewpoint within a well-used Public Rights of Way network, and the Site is therefore highly sensitive in both visual and landscape terms.

Inset of contours of Site 8a



- 4.2.8 The high-level topography plan provided by EPS (presumably used for its high level site selection) is inadequate. not at a useable scale and does not adequately show the sloping nature of Site 8b and its surrounding context.

4.3 LAND USE

HIGH QUALITY ARABLE LAND

- 4.3.1 Both Site 8a and 8b comprise arable fields, farmed in rotation. They sit on high quality arable land as defined by the latest classification - RDE118 Development of a Predictive Agricultural Land Classification

Map for England Final Report (draft)⁷ Cranfield Environment Centre 31 July 2025. This survey highlights the likelihood of BMV land as being ‘HIGH’.

- 4.3.2 Although the land at Site 8a has been categorised by EPS as ranging from Grade 2 to Grade 3b, the boundaries between the two are in no way compatible with such a variation. A small area to the south of Ringers Wood is defined as Grade 2. Beyond this, with no fundamental change of level, orientation, or other factor that may affect the fundamental condition and quality of the land. Indeed, the relationship with Ringers Wood places additional constraints on the land with considerable shading from the west, it is, in my view, likely to be incorrectly assessed the adjoining land is more likely to be Grade 3a and thus BMV land as set out within the Cranfield report. There is no evidence within the EPS report to show these results. EPS note that final categorisation was carried out by a walkover of the Site and discussion with the landowner. **This is not an impartial assessment and cannot be relied upon.**
- 4.3.3 An area to the north of the Site 8B is categorised as 3a which happens to coincide with the need to take development away from local heritage assets.
- 4.3.4 Grade 3a is land that can still deliver a fairly wide arable rotation most years, while Grade 3b is more often pushed towards grass, forage, or simpler arable options because its limitations occur more frequently.
- 4.3.5 The results fully contradict the up-to-date Defra/Cranfield study of Predictive Land Classification map.
- 4.3.6 Historical mapping shows very little change to the charager of the area with relatively little field amalgamation since the 1800’s (*Natinoal Library of Scotland*).

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

- 4.3.7 The land also functions as a very important part of the local and more wide-ranging ProW network.
- 4.3.8 Both Site 8a and Site 8b contain important footpaths (19 in 8a and 22in 8b) which link to the wider network which is heavily used and highly regarded with over 400 respondents registering their regular

use (*See Shotesham Action Group data*).

- 4.3.9 The landscape around the village of Shotesham is very well regarded for its beauty, accessibility and exceptional tranquility – just miles away from the City of Norwich. These PRoW are a very important aspect of the local landscape, encourage visitors to the countryside and provide considerable health and wellbeing opportunities.
- 4.3.10 The proposed development plans to enclose both of these PRoW, significantly impacting their relevance and largely destroying the legibility of the local landscape which is acknowledged as being highly valued and requiring protection under national planning policy.

SETTING TO THE CONSERVATION AREA OF SHOTESHAM

- 4.3.11 The Site forms part of the inseparable landscape that forms such an important part of the settlement of Shotesham. As described above, the quality of the settlement due very much to the quality and variation of the surrounding countryside, and the Site forms a palpable part of this setting. Destruction of the bucolic, tranquil and isolated landscape to the south of the village would significantly erode the setting of the Conservation Area which has, in recent years been extended to acknowledge the quality of the settlement.

IMPORTANT GATEWAYS INTO THE SETTLEMENT/CONSERATION AREA

- 4.3.12 The Site forms part of the important gateways to the settlement and the Conservation Area with views over open farmland providing an important transition into the village proper. Destruction of these views would erode the experiential quality of entering the village. Indeed, the replacement of open farmland with solar arrays would destroy the perceptual value of the landscape and, in turn the setting.

4.4 EXISTING VEGETATION

- 4.4.1 The baseline shows relatively little vegetation on or around the Site. Boundary hedgerows are limited

⁷ Hannam J.A., Keay C.A., Mukherjee K., Holden A., Liyana Arachchige M. 2025. Development of a Predictive Agricultural Land Classification Map for England: Final Report (draft). Defra Project RDE118. 28pp

and both Sites present as open landscapes with views across the adjoining farmland.

- 4.4.2 Existing vegetation on the bulk of both Site 8a and 8b has historically been arable cropping for many years.
- 4.4.3 There is a varied quality mixed native hedgerow running to the north of PRoW 22. This extends to the southern part of the route and opens up at the north eastern section close to where it joins the Brooke Road with approximately 140m with no hedgerow for this section.
- 4.4.4 Again, there are varied levels of vegetation along Brooke Road and Baxters Lane where open boundaries provide long views across the Site to the bucolic landscape over the river valley. Areas of hedgerow and hedgerow trees exist in places, comprising mixed native species. There is a pleasant and suitable mix of both intimate and open areas along these routes aligning well with the general landscape character of the immediate and wider landscape.
- 4.4.5 There is indeed, little to no ‘need’ for additional hedge planting where the existing landscape contains sufficient ecological corridors, areas of relatively small scale arable land and a fine mix of open and enclosed views. Further enclosure would significantly erode the sense of place in this location.
- 4.4.6 There would be few benefits brought about by proposed mitigation required try to mitigate development.

4.5 DESIGNATIONS/HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

(Refer to Figures 3 and 4)

HISTORIC LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

- 4.5.1 The landscape is recognised as ancient countryside with a strong sense of time depth. Its significance derives from a combination of prehistoric and Romano-British co-axial field systems, medieval and later agricultural patterns, historic routeways and drove roads, and surviving Ancient Woodland, field boundaries and hedgerows.
- 4.5.2 Collectively, these features create a landscape that is historically distinctive, highly legible and of clear evidential value and significance. The co-axial field system is a particularly important component of that significance, helping to preserve the historic structure of the landscape.
- 4.5.3 Local finds include both Roman and Mesolithic artefacts reflecting the historic settled nature of the valley side landscape.

SSSI IMPACT ZONES

- 4.5.4 Zones of potential impact around the local SSSI woodland is shown in Figure 4. They define zones around each SSSI which reflect the sensitivities of the features for which the site is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts and need further consideration.
- 4.5.5 Developers, consultants and members of the public, who are preparing to submit a planning application, can use the SSSI IRZs to help them to consider whether a proposed development is likely to affect a SSSI.
- 4.5.6 There is no evidence to show that these zones have been taken into account during site selection and Site 8 (amongst others) sits within the inner limits of several zones.

4.6 ECOLOGICAL VALUE

- 4.6.1 The ecological value of the Sites in themselves is moderate, with intensive arable production having an impact on species. However, the relatively small-scale field patterns, surrounding vegetation and the important designated features around the Site are important factors.
- 4.6.2 There is evidence of white crayfish, otter and water vole in the Tas Beck (see Shotesham representation) and as such the ecological value of the Beck is extremely important. Each of these species are protected and white crayfish and otter are European Protected Speceis (EPS), affording them the highest protection. **Watercourses are highly susceptible to small changes in conditions.**
- 4.5.3 Furthermore, there is evidence of Barbastelle maternity roosting in Little Wood – also a European Protected Species.
- 4.5.4 Site 8 (amongst others) lies between a range of Ancient Woodland and is likely to be used by a range of species in their movement/breeding/feeding.
- 4.5.5 Effects of pollution, sediment build up and run-off will have long term adverse effects on the Tas Beck, putting these species further at risk.
- 4.5.6 Within the EPS design iterations, Site 3A was altered to continued agricultural use and mitigation due to a range of factors including limited highways access, Spring Wood Ancient replanted woodland (with bat roosts) and G2 land. Site 8 has not been amended to take into consideration the high level of protected

local ecology.

- 4.5.7 Local Wildlife Sites exist within local woodland and Market Lane contains a Roadside Nature Reserve.
- 4.5.8 Ecological assessments have been carried out over the years and many species noted and recorded on the Shotesham Website (<https://shotesham.com/wildlife/>) with over 248 plant species recorded in 2010.

4.7 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS

(Refer to Figure 5 for local Public Rights of Way (PRoW))

- 4.7.1 As illustrated, there is an excellent number of PRoW within the local vicinity and within the wider local landscape with long stretches of footpaths and bridleways joining quiet, rural and safe lanes. These routes link the local parishes across open and bucolic farmland with a mix of long and intimate views create an extremely strong sense of place within an area widely acknowledged as tranquil and highly scenic.

PROW 19

- 4.7.2 Within Site 8a, PRoW (footpath) 19 extending some 600m, run directly through the centre of the Site running broadly southeast-northwest along a field boundary with ditch and hedgerow to the south. The character of this route is open and very pleasant, the route following a long thin field (representative of valley bottom landscapes) which extends to the end of the main Shotesham Beck tributary. The route is accessed off the single tracked Market Lane to the west and heads east through further farmland to Fylands Road, also a single-track lane.

PROW 22

- 4.7.3 Within Site 8b, PRoW (footpath) 22 extends approximately 500m across the centre of the Site linking Market Lane to the west with Baxters Lane/Heath Road/Brooke Road to the east following a field boundary hedgerow/ditchline. The character of this route is very open and pleasant, the route rising up from the west on the valley side to extend long, intact and panoramic views over the valley and tributary farmland beyond. Again, this links two single track rural lanes (Market Lane and Baxters Lane) which form part of the wider and well used PRoW network.

THE BOUDICA WAY

- 4.7.4 PEIR (Appendix 7.2 – Landscape Baseline)Paragraph 2.4.3 stated that

‘The Boudicca Way is a recreational route which runs for approximately 58km between Norwich and Diss, roughly parallel with the old Roman ‘Pye’ Road (now the A140). It passes through the countryside of south Norfolk and the Waveney Valley and villages such as Shotesham, Saxlingham Nethergate and Pulham Market, using Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and quiet country roads. Due to its cultural importance, it is considered to be of high value, with some ability to accommodate the Scheme, and therefore susceptibility is medium. Overall, the receptor is considered to be of High sensitivity.’

- 4.7.5 It is agreed that the route is High sensitivity, but it is not agreed that its susceptibility is ‘medium’. It is not sufficient to state that it has ‘some ability to accommodate the scheme’ without justification, indeed the route runs adjacent to large areas of the scheme with long views over the valley in places. Again, the cumulative effect on this route should be addressed.
- 4.7.6 Evidence gathered by Shotesham Action Group confirms that the landscape and footpaths, including Boudicca Way, which surround sites 8a and 8b are highly valued by the public and more than 550 individuals have signed slips confirming that they strongly object to the proposed provision of solar panels in these fields..
- 4.7.7 The statement confirms that the proposed solar development would be visible from approximately two miles of public footpaths and would fundamentally alter the character of the landscape. Clear objection was expressed to the loss of bucolic and productive agricultural land on the basis of the resulting harm to landscape character and recreational amenity.
- 4.7.8 A key feature of the local PRoW within Site 8 is the lack of visual intrusion or detracting features and this increases the sensitivity of receptor to the proposed form of development.
- 4.7.9 The local PRoW network is an extremely important feature of the landscape to the south of Norwich. The cumulative impact of the proposed development across the network has not been sufficiently taken into account.
- 4.7.10 With regard to Site 8, the disregard for the PRoW within the Site selection and design is unmistakable.
- 4.7.11 Two of the most open and scenic routes within the Site as a whole have been completely ignored in the

determination to keep Site 8 within the scheme.

4.7.12 It should be noted that PRow have been considered and key alternations made to the layout as set out below:

Site 4B: Stage 1 amendments - concerns (inter alia) about the relationship with the PRow – retained for agricultural land and potential mitigation

Site 2A: Stage 2 – ‘owing to the presence of PRow’ – scheme amendments

Site 1B: Stage 2 – Arrays reduced – ‘This was in response to views from the PRow’.

Site 1A: Stage 2 – ‘Areas of solar PV arrays were set back from the existing alignment of the PRow’

Site 7E: Stage 2: *‘The southern section of the sub-site has been excluded from solar PV arrays to preserve the openness of the PRowS that run through the area’.*

Site 7F: Stage 2: *‘Owing to aid the openness of the PRow’.*

4.7.13 Unlike the consideration given to the above Sites, it is clear that the quality of the footpaths at Site 8 has not been acknowledged with buffers only suggested (nothing more than standard practice). Furthermore, the text states that there was an ‘early understanding of the of the site context’; which is clearly not the case, indeed this fails at the present stage.

4.7.14 At some point during the design process, it was also acknowledged that Site 8 represents a ‘Valued landscape’. The ruination of the experiential element of these important PRow should then also have been taken into account. Futher amendments to the Site to take the PV arrays away from heritage assets did not even comment on the effect on the PRow and it is therefore clear that this has not been a serious consideration.

4.7.15 The table below (ES Chapter 5 – Reasonable Alternatives and Design Evolution – APP/6.1.5) shows the design progression for Site 8 with no mention of a ‘Valued Landscape’.

4.7.16 It illustrates that the constraints, even at later stages of the design process, have been ‘glossed over’ in order to retain the Site with the Order Limits.

East Pye Solar
Environmental Statement Chapter 5 – Reasonable Alternatives and Design Evolution
APP/6.1.5



Sub-Site	Design Stage	Design Choice / Considerations	Relevant Policy / Design Principle¹
8A			5.3 Behave as a considerate neighbour during the whole project lifecycle (all phases).
	Stage 1	The initial design of the sub-Site 8A considered the maximum extent of the Solar PV Arrays with buffers along the PRow, field margins, hedgerows and along the edge of Flood Zones 2 and 3.	Initial considerations relating to key policy tests, environmental and community constraints and early understanding of the site context.
	Stage 2	No significant change to the above.	2.2 Retain and enhance existing vegetation, where possible, and features of value to retain the fabric of the Sites and aid the integration of the Scheme within the environment and the characteristics of the surroundings, as far as practicable. 4.3 Make sure the Scheme is resilient to flooding and does not increase flooding at the Site or elsewhere.
	Stage 3	Solar PV Arrays removed from Flood Zones 2 and 3. Solar PV Arrays removed from a field adjacent to Ringers Grove Ancient Woodland and owing to a discrete parcel of Grade 2 BMV quality and identified.	4.3 Make sure the Scheme is resilient to flooding and does not increase flooding at the Site or elsewhere.
8B	Stage 1	The initial design of the sub-Site 8B considered the maximum extent of the Solar PV Arrays with buffers along the PRow, field margins, hedgerows with a proposed mitigation buffer along the northern boundary.	Initial considerations relating to key policy tests, environmental and community constraints and early understanding of the site context.
	Stage 2	No significant change to the above, other than buffers to trees introduced.	2.8 Careful siting of infrastructure and landscape buffers to minimise impact on recreational and residential amenity, where practicable. 3.2 Integrate the Scheme into the natural environment and strengthen habitat corridors through the farmed landscape.

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4.7.17 The introduction of a permissive route to the south of Site 8b through indicative mitigation does not compensate the dramatic and unacceptable change to the character of both PRow 19 and 22 proposed and submits that the section along Market Lane to be used for Site traffic will reduce its safety.

4.8 HISTORIC AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

(Refer to **Figure 3** for Heritage Points)

- 4.8.1 The landscape is recognised as ancient countryside with a strong sense of time depth. Its significance is derived from a combination of prehistoric and Romano-British co-axial field systems, medieval and later agricultural patterns, historic routeways and drove roads, and surviving field boundaries and hedgerows.
- 4.8.2 Collectively, these features create a landscape that is historically coherent, highly legible and of clear evidential value. The co-axial field system is a particularly important part of that significance, helping to preserve the historic structure of the landscape and the relationship between land use, movement and settlement.

LISTED BUILDINGS

4.8.3 There are a number of Listed Buildings within the local context but the only one with a specific visual interaction is Upgate Green Farm (GII Listed) which lies 250m north of Site 8B. The Site forms the setting to this heritage asset and design development has taken solar arrays from this asset.

SHOTESHAM CONSERVATION AREA

4.8.4 Shotesham Conservation Area lies approximately 900m from the Site and although there is no intervisibility between the two, as set out in Section XXX of this report, the Site forms part of the approach to this important heritage asset where three gateways into the village to the south are affected by the proposed development; Baxters Lane, Heath Road/Brooke Road and Market Lane.

4.8.5 The setting of the Conservation Area is an important consideration.

OTHER BUILT FORM/RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS

4.8.6 In addition to the Listed buildings, a number of properties on Market Lane and Baxters Lane would be adversely affected by development of the Site. This has been dealt with in more detail within the SAG representation, but buffer zones within the EPS report are unreasonably small, reducing the level of effects within the EPS assessment.

4.8.7 Views from properties on Baxters Lane and Market Lane cannot be mitigated as shown in the EPS visuals.

4.9 CONTRIBUTION OF THE SITE TO THE LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

4.9.1 Following assessment of the Local Character, it is important to assess the site within its wider landscape and to consider its contribution to the local character. It will therefore be possible to assess whether the site conforms to the local character or whether the site is in any way degraded within its wider intact setting. This evaluation provides a baseline against which proposals can be assessed.

4.9.2 The Site comprises a number of land parcels joined along the Shotesham Beck and sitting adjacent to the minor road between Shotesham and Brooke and single-track rural lanes; Baxters Lane and Market Lane.

4.9.3 The Site sits within an agricultural landscape with scattered farmsteads to the southeastern extent of the Parish of Shotesham and sitting approximately 670m from the southern extent of Shotesham Conservation Area. The Site contains two PRoW, sits on the valley sides and bottom of the Tas Beck river valley and is located in an area to the south of the village recognised for its tranquility, and relative remoteness due to the lack of development and the unclassified, single tracked roads, both of which limit the movement within the local area.

4.9.4 Parcel 8A is representative of the local character area but presents as a relatively low-lying arable field at the end of the Tas Beck, set amidst the surrounding arable and wooded landscape. Land levels out somewhat around this field but rises to the southwest around Ringers Grove woodland. Parcel 8B however sits on the distinct valley side and is viewed from longer views across the valley bottom. Land rises steeply (relative to the Norfolk landscape) on PRoW 22 which runs through Parcel 8B and this PRoW affords long scenic views across the adjacent bucolic landscape with, in many cases, no detracting features, a strong local identity and a sense of remoteness. Views into the Site are prominent from across the valley on PRoW including the Boudica Way. There are a number of good quality woodlands in the local area and the Site itself contains a number of hedgerows and hedgerow trees. The field pattern is relatively small scale in this area, as opposed to the flatter, more barren larger field patterns found elsewhere in the county.

4.9.5 Taking the above into account, the overall contribution of the Site to the local Character Area is considered to be high. Views from the Site are a very important feature of both Parcels 8A and 8B and these open views should be retained.

4.10 LANDSCAPE VALUE

4.10.1 The quality of landscapes may be judged by those who view them, but criteria exist within GLVIA3 (Box 5.1) to provide a rating for different levels of landscape value and quality. Those of the highest value are usually designated by statutory bodies but there will be local areas, that although not nationally or locally recognised by designation, still hold significant appeal. Other landscapes will be less important and more ‘ordinary’. The level of intactness also has a bearing on the overall quality.

4.10.2 The Landscape Institute published a Technical Guidance Note in 2021; (TGN) 02/21 ‘Assessing landscape value outside national designations.’

4.10.3 Landscape value is the ‘inherent’ component, which is independent of the development proposal, while the other component, susceptibility, is development specific.

4.10.4 The updated guidance uses two important terms:

Landscape qualities = characteristics/ features of a landscape that are valued.

Landscape value = the relative value or importance attached to different landscapes by society on account of their landscape qualities.

4.10.5 Landscape Designations - As the Site sits outside any statutory or non-statutory designations, Table 1 (TGN 02/21) outlines the updated criteria, and the following assessment helps to determine the overall value of the Site within its context

NATURAL HERITAGE

RIVERS

4.10.6 The Site lies across a small tributary of the River Tas known as Shotesham Beck which runs through Shotesham Common within the main village, through the village to the west of The Street, following west of Market Lane where it crosses this single track lane and ends at the northeastern corner of field 8a. This is a small beck but once formed a much larger navigable waterway (possibly up to Shotesham Common) prior to mills being erected which interrupted and reduced the flow.

ANCIENT WOODLAND

4.107 Site 8a and 8b lie adjacent to, and between areas designated as Ancient Woodland. Site 8b lies 136m east of Little Wood with Site 8a lying 490m to the southeast but surrounding Ringers Grove to the western extent of the Site. Great Wood lies just northwest of Little Wood with Pye’s Covert/Privet Plantation lying 170m northeast of Site 8b. Brooke Wood, a large woodland lies 760m to the northeast of the Site.

SITES OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI)

- 4.10.8 Site 8a and 8b lie adjacent to and well within the Risk Zones of Little Wood SSSI with 8b only 136m from this valuable natural feature. It is described within NHER thus: ‘Most of the Little Wood is now dominated by hornbeam coppice with oak standards. Overall, the wood covers 18.8 hectares, around 17.5 hectares of which appears to be the medieval core. This irregularly-shaped area is surrounded by a continuous (medieval) boundary bank.’⁸
- 4.10.9 A further three woodlands all of which are both Ancient Woodland and SSSI are located within 2km to the south of the Site, these being Saxlingham Grove, Little Wood and Winters Grove.
- 4.10.10 Shotesham Common SSSI lies 1.8km northwest of the Site and therefore the Site lies within the Impact Risk Zone of this asset.
- 4.10.11 There are a wide variety of species recorded within the local area including Barbestelle bats (maternity roost) surveyed in Little Wood adjacent to the Site in 2025 (see ecological section above).

CULTURAL HERITAGE

4.10.12 The local area has strong cultural associations with many archaeological finds across the adjoining farmland ranging with the Paleolithic period (700 000 BC to 10 001 BC) being well represented in Shotesham with the most numerous and diverse prehistoric finds date to the Neolithic period.

THE BOUDICA WAY

4.10.13 Named after the legendary warrior and Queen of the Iceni whose tribes once inhabited the area, the Boudicca Way runs for approximately 36 miles between Norwich and Diss, roughly parallel with the old Roman ‘Pye’ Road (now the A140). It is described by Norfolk County Council thus: ‘Boudicca Way passes through the rural, gently undulating countryside of south Norfolk and the Waveney Valley using Public Rights of Way and quiet country roads, where visitors can find unusual wildlife and flora.’

⁸ NHER

4.10.14 The area also has Roman cultural associations with the Shotesham Romano-British settlement where a huge range of finds have been recovered from this area. (NHER)

LANDSCAPE CONDITION

- 4.10.15 The condition of the landscape within the Site and its local context is excellent. The surrounding hedgerows are in good condition, although just prior to the application a number of hedgerows have been reduced in height. The area comprises a sound mix of open headlands and hedged boundaries along the valley bottom with often sunken lanes lined by high quality hedgerows, complemented with wide grass verges in places hosting a wide variety of flora and fauna.
- 4.10.16 There are no detracting features in or around the Site or its immediate context creating a highly bucolic scene with occasional glimpses of scattered historic dwellings and farmsteads. Many years of pastoral use in the valley bottom has maintained small scale field patterns whilst some field amalgamation has occurred on the valley sides. This however is broken up by the high quality and large woodlands in the immediate setting to the east, west and south of the Site.
- 4.10.17 Site 8a and 8b comprise arable fields which have been in use for many years and comprise Grade 3 and Grade 2 agricultural land (Cranfield Environment Centre in July 2025 - RDE118 Development of a Predictive Agricultural Land Classification Map for England Final Report (draft)⁹ Cranfield Environment Centre 31 July 2025), being categorised as the Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land.
- 4.10.18 The road network is in a relatively good condition where these are used for local traffic only. Market Lane does suffer from flooding and subsequent frost damage. The PRow network is in good condition with all paths well marked and maintained.
- 4.10.19 There are roadside nature reserves along Market Lane adjacent to Ringers Grove wood.

SCENIC QUALITY

4.10.20 The Site and its immediate surroundings have a high level of scenic value. The undulating and varied landscape across the Tas Rural River Valley is punctuated by high quality blocks of woodland and a highly scenic blend of lanes, native hedgerows, arable fields and pasture with open horizons in places and wooded horizons elsewhere within the views. Stubbs Green (part of Shotesham Common) to the northwest of the Site is a high quality common of particular scenic value linked to the Site and surrounding area through PRow (including the quiet rural lanes) The area provides a highly scenic backdrop to the very highly regarded village of Shotesham and is vital to the identity and sense of place.

DISTINCTIVENESS

- 4.10.21 The Site and the immediate surroundings show a distinctive, small scale rural river valley landscape set within the wider arable tributary farmland. This ‘spur’ continues from Shotesham Common and highlights the contrasting landscape which levels out towards the northeast corner of Site 8a where the tributary continues along this field’s northern boundary.
- 4.10.22 The local landscape has a number of hornbeam woodlands, distinctive of the heavy clay soils of this area just up from the loamier valley floor soilscape.
- 4.10.23 The River Tas Valley is described as a distinctive River Valley within the published Landscape Character Assessment.
- 4.10.24 The village of Shotesham itself is highly distinctive with its unusually undulating topography and very strong sense of place and its extremely strong association with the landscape in which it sits.
- 4.10.25 The river valley is particularly distinctive with meadows extending south from the main SSSI wetland in the centre of the village. Stubbs Green is a particularly strong feature (SSSI) forming a particularly strong feature within the the extensive PRow network that joins the Site.

⁹ Hannam J.A., Keay C.A., Mukherjee K., Holden A., Liyana Arachchige M. 2025. Development of a Predictive Agricultural Land Classification Map for England: Final Report (draft). Defra Project RDE118. 28pp

CONSERVATION INTEREST

- 4.10.26 The Site and its immediate context have varied conservation interest. The two fields, 8a and 8b have historically been under intensive arable cropping but contain a number of good quality hedgerow boundaries and the small watercourse running along the northern boundary of field 8a. Within the local vicinity, there is a very wide range of species as set out within a number of local assessments carried out in 2000 and 2010. In addition, Little Wood adjacent to the Site and a number of other local woodlands within the local context are designated as SSSI for their importance for nature conservation. Additionally, Shotesham Common and Stubbs Green are also SSSI with different wetland species worthy of conservation.
- 4.10.27 Of note, a number of bats have been found within Little Wood which lies adjacent to the Site, including a maternity roost of the rare Barbastelle Bat.
- 4.10.28 There are a number of hedgerows within the Site which provide habitats and connectivity across the landscape and the ecological value lies in these elements. Although the arable fields themselves provide little conservation interest, the high level of varied habitats within the immediate setting and identified rare species, represent a high conservation interest. Disturbance of the various networks and foraging areas are likely to cause adverse effects.

RECREATIONAL VALUE

- 4.10.29 Both sites 8a and 8b contain Public Rights of Way. These form part of an extensive wider network of footpaths, bridleways, byways and rural lanes which link Shotesham to the surrounding villages. The area is highly regarded in terms of its recreational value both locally and within the wider area where the number and quality of PRoW are an important feature of the landscape. Indeed, since Covid the number of visitors from outside of the area has increased significantly with many travelling out from Norwich to enjoy the peace and tranquillity.
- 4.10.30 A list of circular walks around Shotesham was produced in 2016 providing guidance and information on this valuable network. (Shotesham walks pp.indd 1 3/3/16).
- 4.10.31 The Boudica Way (described above) is an important route that runs through the village to the west of

the Site and has long views across the valley to Site 8b.

- 4.10.32 Recent improvements to the PRoW network within Shotesham Park have made the Boudica Way more accessible to users with reduced mobility.
- 4.10.33 Stubbs Green, just northwest of the Sites is common land (part of Shotesham common) and provides many opportunities for walkers, picnickers etc and forms a pleasant and interesting resting place on this PRoW route with its wildflower meadows and pond. The route from the common southeast is a particularly scenic one with the river valley landscape, large woodlands and sloping valley sides forming a very strong character at this point.
- 4.10.34 The routes are well used by horse riders with a number of bridleways, byways and quiet lanes providing a safe and scenic route which leads west to a further extensive network at Saxlingham Nethergate. This area is relatively unique within South Norfolk where horse riding is becoming increasingly perilous through increased traffic quantities and speeds. This network (including the rural lanes) is highly regarded, safe and tranquil. The Site and its immediate context therefore have very high recreational value.

ASSOCIATIONS

- 4.10.35 As stated above, the local area has associations with the Boudica Way and a strong and very long settled history all along the Shotesham Beck dating back to Paleolithic/Neolithic times. The settlement of Caistor Roman Town also known as Venta Icenorum, was the largest Roman town in East Anglia, established in the AD70s and lies in the river valley just 4.5km from Shotesham. Although the Site has not been specifically studied as yet, the Site and its immediate context have a medium-high level of associations, both historic and recent (within the setting of the Boudica Way).

PERCEPTUAL (SCENIC)

- 4.10.36 Site 8a is perceived as a relatively small-scale arable field at the edge of the Tas Rural River Valley, framed by woodland in local views and with visual hints of the Shotesham Beck running along its northern boundary with a ford crossing Market Lane at its northwest corner. The PRoW which runs through the Site (PRoW 19) is open, following a ditch and hedge along its route with land rising very

gently on either side toward a predominantly wooded horizon.

- 4.10.37 Site 8b is on rising land and is perceived as a larger more open field when viewed from the north but more intimate when viewed directly from the south. Where a hedgerow and ridgeline preclude some views of the top of the field from Market Lane. From Baxters Lane, on the higher land, the Site forms a crucial part of the view across the valley to the south and west where there are no detracting features and relatively long views studded with large areas of woodland and occasional farmsteads. The PRow which runs through Site 8b (PRow 22) is open, affording long views across the valley and tributary farmland beyond. The scene, as with 8a is characteristically bucolic and highly scenic.
- 4.10.38 There are no detracting features in the local area with scattered farmsteads being the only signs of settlement. Indeed, this part of the Tas Rural River Valley and Tas Tributary Farmland is particularly scenic due to the lack of the large detracting features of pylons, railway, major road (A140) and larger settlements to the west around the main Tas River. This area forms a more intimate landscape with varied and characteristic elements of a small tributary valley. The area therefore has high scenic value.

PERCEPTUAL (WILDNESS AND TRANQUILITY)

- 4.10.39 The area is not considered to be wild where agriculture and human intervention have influenced the landscape. Considering the relative distance from the City of Norwich, the Site and its immediate setting; and indeed a large area to the south and west of the Site show a high level of tranquillity. This is an area with very little settlement, narrow country lanes and PRow running through a predominantly arable landscape with pastoral areas within the valley bottom. Long walks can be undertaken without seeing or hearing traffic. The area is therefore perceived as having a high level of tranquillity.

FUNCTIONAL

- 4.10.40 The Site currently comprises predominantly arable production (or set aside). The Site performs a very important role in the production of food being at least Grade 3 land under the Agricultural Land Classification. This forms some of the Best and Most Versatile Land (BMV) which is afforded protection through National and Local Planning Policy. Much of the Site is likely to be Grade 3a with an area close to Ringers Grove being noted as Grade 2.

- 4.10.41 Two PRow run through the Site; PRow 22 running through 8b and PRow 19 through 8a. As stated these routes form part of a much wider and highly regarded and well used PRow network in this area and are valued for their scenic value and strong sense of place and tranquillity. The Site therefore has a high functional value within the local landscape in both landscape and visual terms as well as public amenity.

SUMMARY

- 4.10.42 The Site and its immediate surroundings contain a rich diversity of features of high value. The landscape is intact, tranquil and in good condition. There is little need for landscape enhancement where the character shows a very strong sense of place and is highly regarded by those visual receptors who interact with it. There are numerous and important designations, associations and functions within the immediate context. At all levels of the assessment set out above, the Site satisfies the criteria for high value attributes, and, when seen as a whole, it is concluded that the Site and the context in which it sits should be considered a ‘Valued Landscape’ and should be afforded enhanced protection in line with National and local policy.
- 4.10.43 Furthermore, although any site can be considered as a Valued Landscape by fulfilling a reasonable level of criteria, Site 8 has very strong and valuable attributes in each of the criteria set out.

5.0 VISUAL ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

(Refer to **Figures 8** showing the existing representative or specific views into the site and refer to **Appendix A Photographic panels**.)

- 5.1.1 The existing visual amenity creates a baseline of the current quality of the view and how it is valued or is likely to be valued by receptors. Potential impacts on views are assessed against this baseline to give an accurate picture of the extent of any changes to the views and provides valuable information for the iterative design process and potential mitigation measures required.
- 5.1.2 A visual appraisal of the Site and its surroundings has been carried out. This has evaluated the visibility of

the Site from the surrounding landscape and its relevant receptors. A series of viewpoints have been assessed, providing specific or representative views to the Site. Photographic panels illustrate these views whilst setting out the surrounding context of the Site.

5.1.3 The Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) – see **Figure 8**, outlines the extent of potential visibility to or from a specific area. The approximate visibility of the proposed development Site was ascertained by a desk survey of Ordnance Survey topographical mapping, together with Google images. Several Site visits were then undertaken, and a thorough walk/drive round ascertained actual visibility towards the Site. The photographs were taken at various times between 2024 and 2026. Seasonal variations will affect visibility to some extent and should be taken into consideration where summer views will be more limited, and winter views a little more open. Viewer eye height was calculated at 1.5m. The actual Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) is limited due to the topography, the surrounding dense vegetation and a computer generated ZTV was not considered appropriate or necessary.

5.2 SITE VISIBILITY

- 5.2.1 The selection of viewpoints considers a range of factors including accessibility to the public, the potential number, type and sensitivity of viewers (receptors) such as users of Rights of Way, highways etc. who may be affected by the development; viewing distance; and the nature and type of the view. Following Site survey, some viewpoints were discarded due to other factors affecting actual visibility at the time of survey such as existing vegetative screening and local topography.
- 5.2.1 I have not sought to duplicate EPS photography where many of their viewpoints are chosen to represent the ‘best case scenario’.
- 5.2.2 The viewpoints fall broadly into two groups:
- Representative Viewpoints – those viewpoints illustrating a large number of viewpoints from an area within the ZVI;
 - Specific Viewpoints – key viewpoints that are specific and noteworthy because of their visual and/or recreational amenity or their distance from the site.
- 5.2.3 The viewpoints are predominantly representative where the Site can be seen from large lengths of the

local PRow network.

5.2.4 The location of each viewpoint is shown on **Figure 8** and is represented by the photographs in **Appendix A**. An assessment table is included with each photograph.

5.3 VISUAL BASELINE SUMMARY

- 5.3.1 The visual baseline is one of a large site of 123 acres sitting on the valley side and valley bottom in a bucolic landscape to the south of Shotesham.
- 5.3.2 From the north, views into the Site are from properties on Brooke Road including one Listed Building at Upgate Green Farm, from Market Lane and from PRow that head south of Shotesham and past Stubbs Green including the Boudica Way.
- 5.3.3 From the east, there are views towards the Site from Heath Road, Brooke Road and Baxters Lane including properties on Baxters Lane which overlook the valley to the west.
- 5.3.4 From the south, there are views to the Site from Wash Lane, PRow 19 (within the Site) and PRow 21, the rural lane that joins Wash Lane to Baxters Lane (Fylands Road).
- 5.3.5 From the west, views are from Wash Lane, Dawson’s Farm, Lath Green Farm, the Boudica Way and PRow 16, 17, 18 and 19 (within the Site) as well as Market Lane (including Market Lane Farm).
- 5.3.6 Overall, the Site lying both on valley side and within the valley bottom is evident in many views within the local context and will influence a large stretch of the local PRow network. Furthermore, views from the east look down over both sites from Baxters Lane.
- 5.3.7 In addition to the effect on views from surrounding PRow, Footpath 19 runs through Site 8A and Footpath 22 runs through Site 8B. Both have very open views across the undulating landscape and views from both have no detracting features. Furthermore, views from the high point on PRow 22 are far reaching across the valley and provide a panoramic view with no distractions to the west and south.

6.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

(Refer to *Figure 7* for development proposals for Site 8)

6.1 INTRODUCTION

6.1.1 The purpose of assessing landscape character baseline and visual amenity is to ensure that any proposed changes will maintain, complement, or enhance the landscape of the area. The key principle of this philosophy ensures that:

- Elements which make an essential contribution to landscape character are maintained, enhanced and managed;
- Changes can be accommodated within the existing landscape and visual context;
- Improvements and enhancements can be made where uncharacteristic features detract from the character and visual amenity of the area or where the value of the landscape is currently low.

6.1.2 Proposed mitigation and enhancement should be informed by the landscape character, to ensure that this, in itself, does not have a detrimental effect on the existing landscape.

6.2 PROPOSALS

- 6.2.1 The Proposed Development at Site 8 comprises approximately 135 acres of agricultural land for the installation of solar arrays and associated infrastructure including cable runs and haul road.
- 6.2.2 The Site is divided into two parcels; Site 8a sitting within the valley bottom adjacent to Market Lane and Site 8B sitting on the sloping valley side and connecting to Baxters Lane and Brooke Road.
- 6.2.3 Cable runs (CRC 10 and CRC13) join Site 8 to Site 7 and Site 9 respectively and will have impacts at the Construction Phase.
- 6.2.3 Following acknowledgement of the inappropriate road network in the local area (after the site selection stage and very late within the design process), access between Site 8A and 8B will be accommodated by a haul road across the Site.

7.0 APPLICANT’S SITE SELECTION PROCES

- 7.1 The site selection process undertaken by the applicant is outlined in APP 7.20. It consisted of the following stages:
- 7.2 **Stage 1:** The first stage of assessment requires the identification of an area of search, based on an available PoC, and the general irradiance levels and topography of the area. The process identified an assessment area within 20km of the Norwich Main Substation.
- 7.3 They state: (author highlighted)
- ‘Irradiance and Topography
- 4.2.6 *As noted in Paragraph 2.10.11-12 of NPS EN-3, irradiance is a key consideration in identifying a potential site as the amount of electricity generated on site is directly affected by irradiance levels. Irradiance levels*
- 4.2.7 *Norfolk represents a good location within the UK to construct a utility-scale solar project as it is an area that benefits from higher levels of and irradiance compared to other parts of the UK and has potential availability of large areas of flat land...’*
- 7.4 **STAGE 2: APPROACH TO EXCLUSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND PLANNING CONSTRAINTS**
- 7.5 This applies a high-level assessment of the area of search, using publicly available data and an assessment of local and national planning policy to identify any planning, environmental or spatial constraints to be excluded from the area of search. Table 4.1 of their report provides details of the constraints identified and excluded at Stage 2.
- 7.6 **Of particular note is the following** (author highlighted for clarity)

Table 4.1: Environmental Constraints and Considerations

Constraint	Policy Consideration
Agricultural Land Classification and Land Type	Where practicable applicants should utilise suitable previously developed land, brownfield land, contaminated land or industrial land. Where the use of agricultural land is necessary, planning policy seeks to minimise impacts on the best and most versatile agricultural land (defined as grades 1, 2 and 3a), preferably use land that is not classified as best and most versatile (grades 3b, 4 and 5). For the purposes of Stage 2, all ALC grade 1, 2 and 3 land was excluded from the search area.

7.7 The Site selection process therefore fundamentally fails at Stage 2 of the process, and the Site as a whole should not have been considered further where East Anglia is widely acknowledged as having the best arable land in the country.

7.8 It goes on to say that

‘4.3.5 Best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land is defined as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification. Land that is not classified as BMV constitutes medium and low-grade agricultural land (grades 3b, 4 and 5).

4.3.6 Solar farms are temporary structures and unlike most built development and other renewable energy proposals (such as energy from waste plants) they do not constitute significant permanent development resulting in the loss of agricultural land. However, in accordance with planning policy, the site selection process initially sought to exclude land that the available data identifies as being within an agricultural land classification category that is, or includes, best and most versatile land. (author highlighted)’

7.9 The predictive BMV land assessment used by the Applicants was based on assessments carried out in 2001. This information is out of date and is superseded by an up-to-date study by Cranfield Environment Centre in July 2025 - RDE118 Development of a Predictive Agricultural Land Classification Map for England Final Report (draft) Cranfield Environment Centre 31 July 2025.

7.10 This Predictive ALC Map, shown below is a significant update providing a consistent, spatially comprehensive national view of land quality across England.

Predictive ALC - Final Report

Predictive ALC map for England

Table 1 summarises the proportion of the area of England occupied by the different ALC grades, non-agricultural land and urban areas. Best and most versatile (BMV) land (ALC Grades 1, 2 and 3b) covers 40.6% of the land area of England. Nearly 20% (19.8%) of the land area of England is non-agricultural or urban. Figure 4 shows the distribution of ALC grades and other areas across England.

Table 1 Proportion of area of England covered by ALC grades, non-agricultural (Non-Ag) land and urban areas in the Predictive ALC map for England.

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3a	Grade 3b	Grade 4	Grade 5	Non-Ag	Urban
3.5%	15.2%	21.9%	24.5%	7.6%	7.5%	8.4%	11.4%

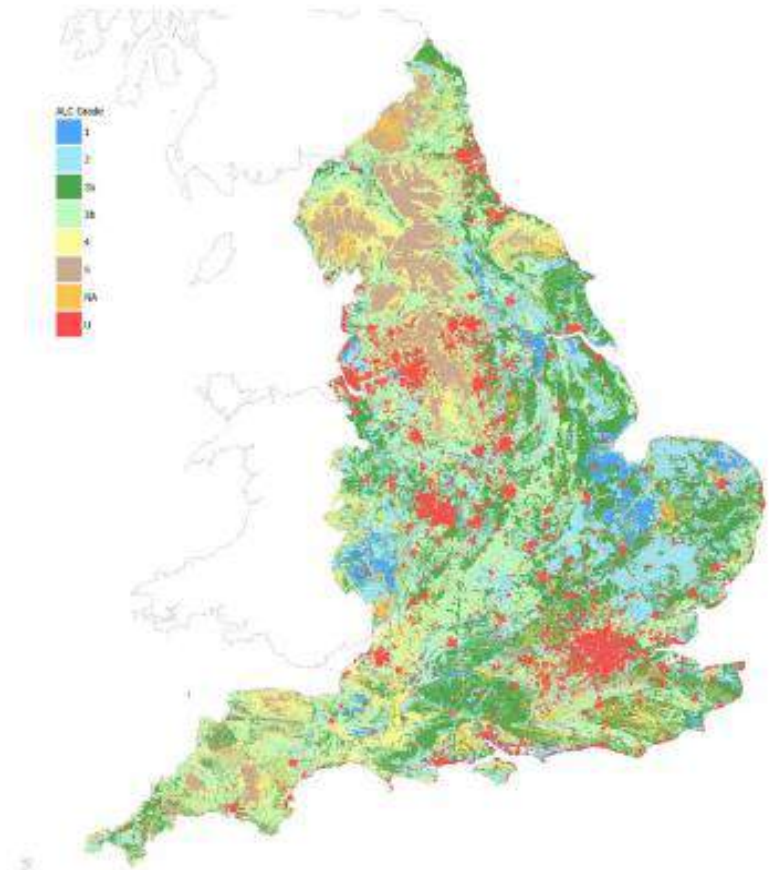


Figure 4 Predictive ALC map for England. NA Non-agricultural land; U Urban areas

- 7.11 The Predictive ALC Map for England was developed to replace the outdated Provisional ALC map, which lacked detailed soil and climate data and did not distinguish between Grades 3a and 3b.

7.12 The current grading follows the 1988 MAFF guidelines, **which introduced the important 3a/3b subdivision for BMV land.**

7.13 This provides the most up to date assessment of predictive BMV land and shows Site 8 (and the remainder of the DCO) to be within category 3a making it the Best and Most Versatile land.

7.14 The site selection process was fundamentally flawed with environmental constraints not properly considered. The applicant ignored their own findings relating to the identification of 'unconstrained land' and misrepresented the level of potential high likelihood of BMV land even within the outdated mapping.

7.15 An up-to date assessment would show that most of the DCO would fall within BMV land with a high potential to be Grade 3a.

7.16 Therefore, despite the proximity to the Norwich Main Substation, the Site is not able to successfully accommodate development without significant harm.

7.17 The first site selection process was flawed and misleading in that it states that there are small areas of likely BMV land round Hempnall and towards the A140. The map used for this Site selection (although out of date now) clearly shows that part of Site 8 is likely to be BMV land. (see Figure 6 below)

7.18 Furthermore, Site 8b in particular fails again with regard to their own assessment of Irradiance and Topography.

7.19 Other notable sites within the search area and in proximity to the Scheme were excluded, including Shotesham-Woodton Hornbeam Woods SSSI, Forncett Meadows SSSI, Fritton Common SSSI, Pulham Market Big Woods SSSI, Aslacton Parish Land SSSI, and Hedenham Wood SSSI.

7.20 Ancient woodland has also been excluded. This includes Sexton Wood, Spring Wood, Little Wood, Brooke Wood, and Great Wood.

7.21 **Although these have been 'excluded', (from being replaced by panels or cable runs), no appreciable**
- consideration has been given to their proximity to the Sites; a significant constraint on site selection.**

7.22 Particular to Site 8, Little Wood (also a SSSI and containing Barbastelle bat maternity roosts) is directly adjacent to the proposed development and should be considered as a significant constraint.

7.23 **Stage 3:** Stage 3 of the site selection applies the key operational criteria for large scale solar development – site size and land assembly; and topography to identify potential suitable sites for solar within 20km of Norwich Main Substation.

7.24 The report goes on to say:

'Topography

Flat or gently south-facing slopes are considered most suitable and beneficial for solar to maximise electricity generation. Therefore, this factor has influenced the focus on Norfolk as the preferred area for the Scheme, the general topography of which is relatively flat, making it particularly suitable for solar energy.

*Topographical constraints within the unconstrained areas have been identified and mapped. As flatter land is generally considered to be optimal, land with a gradient of 3% or less was mapped for Stage 3 as shown on **Figure 7 Unconstrained Land (<3% gradient) within 20km from Norwich Main Substation at Appendix B.** This land has been taken forward to the Stage 4 assessment therefore identifying the flattest areas of land within the unconstrained area.'*

7.25 Site 8b should therefore again, should not have been taken through to Stage 4 for both technical reasons as well as the well-known effects of development on sloping valley sides

7.26 Having ascertained that there is very limited NON BMV land within 20km of Norwich, it was then determined that development on BMV land would be necessary.

7.27 **Important to note is the following:**

7.28 Paragraph 4.5.5 states that, **'As set out in Section 3, following discussions with National Grid, it was considered to be unviable to connect to the Norwich Main Substation due to capacity constraints, and it**

was confirmed that an alternative PoC would be required.

7.29 On this basis, the Site selection criteria as set out above during Stages 1-3 has become redundant, since there is no longer the requirement to be within a 20km distance from the Norwich Main Substation, an alternative Site outside the potential areas of BMV land and on highly constrained sites should have been sought.

7.30 **Stage 5:** This stage looked at the ‘Approach to the Assessment of Alternative Solar Sites.’

7.32 It is stated that other sites were considered based on the change of location of the Point of Connection. It states that, regarding the Alternative Development Zones (ADZs)

‘The ADZs were considered against the technical, planning and environmental criteria used for assessment purposes in this report, as a comparison against the chosen sites for the Scheme. However, whilst the ADZs may be suitable for solar development, the ADZs were not considered to be reasonable alternatives to the Scheme, given that the land within them has not been made available to the Applicant. As set out in paragraph 4.3.24 of NPS EN-1, the Secretary of State ‘...should have regard as appropriate to the possibility that all suitable sites for energy infrastructure of the type proposed may be needed for future proposals.’

7.32 Alternative ADZs were identified within the unconstrained land previously identified by the applicant and were used in an assessment of alternative sites. At this point however, the order limits had already been identified based on the Stage 3 criteria, and therefore the **consideration of alternatives was in name only.**

7.33 The assessment map used by EPS for ALC classification showing high potential BMV land in blue is overlaid onto the Site and shown in Figure 6.

7.33 **The assessment belittles the occurrence of likely BMV land around the Site and in its paragraph 4.3.8 states that:**

‘... Natural England’s map showing the likelihood of BMV land indicates the Order Limits largely as a moderate likelihood of BMV land, with pockets of higher likelihood near to the A140 Norwich Road and along the Hempnall Beck.’

7.34 This is clearly not the case, even within this outdated mapping where Shotesham is clearly within areas of

high likelihood of BMV land. Site 8a and 8b potentially have reduced ALC grading due to their sloping nature – which again is a significant visual constraint to the Site.

7.35 It is therefore evident that, notwithstanding the fundamental issues with the initial site selection, particularly for Site 8, that the Site selection process was not carried out to the standard necessary for this Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. It is also the case that land closer to the new Point of Connection, with additional and targeted research may be more appropriate, rendering the existing Site and in particular the highly constrained areas such as 7, 8 and 9 inappropriate.

DEFICIENCIES IN THE RAG ASSESSMENT

REFER TO EPS SITE SELECTION ASSESSMENT APP/7.20

7.36 The Red Amber Green (RAG) assessment used to discount other PDAs was flawed and should not have informed the site selection process. The landscape and visual criteria were too broad at the early stages and failed to address landscape character impacts. As a result, the overall site selection process, particularly in relation to Site 8, wrongly treated the site as acceptable.

7.37 Key viewpoints, such as those at the highpoint of FP 22 were ignored. Due to this omission, the assessment failed to identify that it will not be possible to mitigate the impact on certain viewpoints due to topographical factors.

7.38 Although the development is fragmented, dispersed and covers a large area (>1000 ha), it was primarily assessed as a single site. As a result, the assessment was too crude to address adequately the distinct issues raised by its geographically separate parts.

7.39 The assessment did not consider the cumulative impacts of the development on receptors such as PRoW users, despite this being a distinct and particularly harmful feature of the proposal.

7.40 **There is a general lack of transparency with regard to alternative potential development areas.**

7.41 **Once the agreements had been made with landowners based on the Main Norwich substation Point of Connection, further assessment was weak, opaque and in name only.**

7.3.12 **The flawed site selection process underpins the harmful landscape and visual effects of the**

development, many of which will be difficult, and in some cases impossible, to mitigate, as explained in the following section.

7.42 SERIOUS ERRORS HAVE BEEN FOUND WITHIN THE SITE ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT – SEE SEPARATE REPORTS

STAGE 6: CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT ZONES (ADZS)

7.43 The report states paragraphs 5.1.1 and 2 that,

‘Following discounting PDAs 1 to 5, consideration was then given to Grade 3 agricultural land within the 20km search area. Figure 21 ALC Grade 3 Unconstrained Land shows there is a large extent of Grade 3 agricultural land within the search area.

Additional land sufficient to accommodate the Scheme has not come forward through the DCO pre-application process; and the Applicant has not approached other landowners in the search area, given that sufficient suitable land had already been identified and was available, as set out at Stage 3. As such no further PDA’s have been identified, or were necessary to be explored from a policy perspective. Notwithstanding, the Applicant has considered alternative development zones (ADZs) in the 20km search area to enable consideration of the suitability of the Scheme land, when compared to other land which may be similar or closer to the proposed PoC at the National Grid Substation.’

7.44 Land around Gt. Moulton (on the edge of the 20km unconstrained zone from Norwich) was not applicable to Stage 3 and hence no landowners would have been approached at this time. It is apparent that the Applicants were not prepared to seriously look further for less constrained sites.

Notwithstanding the serious error in the assessment of the ADZs, the assessment was in name only.

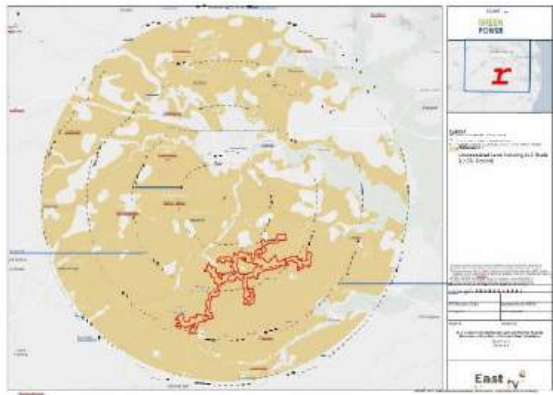
7.45 Highly constrained Sites including 7, 8 and 9 were included due to their distance from the Norwich PoC.

7.46 When looking at the unconstrained land, in brown in the following excerpt, it is EXCEEDINGLY unlikely that there are no alternative sites close to the new PoC. The serious errors in the Site selection document (areas shown as constrained mixed up with areas that are constrained leading to assessment of the WRONG areas), together with a lack of willingness on the part of the Applicants to find alternative land has fundamentally failed the site selections tests.

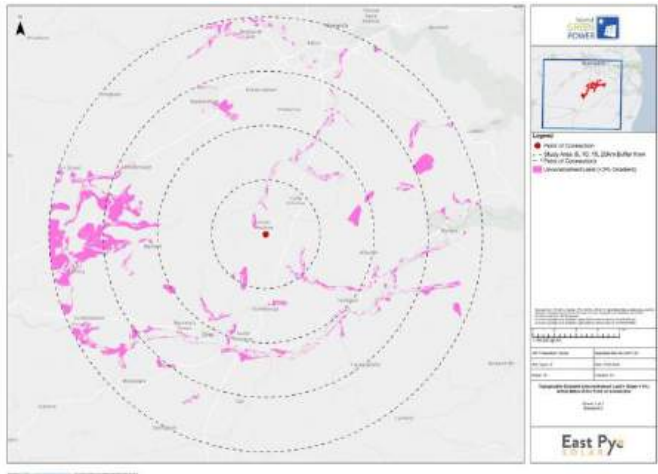
7.47 Although this document primarily deals with the significant issue for Site 8, further research has brought the above fact to our attention.

7.48 I would respectfully request therefore that this vital stage which completely undermines the application,

be looked at in detail and that the Applicant is required to resubmit with new evidence.



7.49 The following plan shows land that is apparently unconstrained in pink.



It suggests that the whole area in grey is more than 3% in gradient – which it clearly is not. This mapping is then used to assess areas that are pink only – not grey and thus the assessment has been carried out on the incorrect areas.

7.50 The methodology is inconsistent and potentially self-serving. If Grade 3 land is acceptable for East Pye’s selected sites, then it should not be used at the earlier alternatives stage to make alternative areas appear scarce or unsuitable. Conversely, if Grade 3 land is a meaningful constraint, then the applicant must apply that constraint equally to its own selected sites.

7.51 There is also a second flaw. The report says the original sites were identified through land agents and willing landowners, and that they did not consider every piece of unconstrained agricultural land because of the large extent involved. That means the “site selection” is not really a neutral environmental sieve. It

is largely a land-availability exercise dressed up as a constraints assessment.

7.52 The mapping uses ‘unconstrained land’ inconsistently. Grade 3 land is included when justifying the applicant’s own selected sites, but excluded when screening for alternatives around the Point of Connection, producing a misleadingly small pool of alternative land. Since the proposed scheme itself relies heavily on Grade 3 land, that exclusion is methodologically inconsistent and may materially distort the alternatives assessment.

8.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

- 8.1.2 Residual effects are generally assessed at year 15 as a best-case scenario. Due to the shorter time span of proposed development (and assuming that they are not replaced), the residual effects should ideally be considered earlier within the scheme where it is deemed that an acceptable level of mitigation is possible. However, I have retained the Year 15 effects in line with current practice.
- 8.1.3 It should be noted however that, although 40 years appears a short time span and therefore is considered ‘reversible’ in landscape and visual terms, this time span affects a whole generation of those receptors currently living within the area.
- 8.1.4 In addition, an important point remains that if the solar arrays are a successful means of energy production, they will inevitably be replaced (presumably on a 20 year rotation) and the development then fails to be reversible in the true sense and should be considered permanent over a lifetime.
- 8.1.5 Additional factors relating to the degradation of the panels and subsequent contamination of the agricultural land is a point of note where insufficient evidence is available at this stage. This does however potentially impact the ‘reversibility’ of the development.

8.2 LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

(Refer to Table A: Landscape Effects)

EFFECTS ON THE NATIONAL CHARACTER AREA

- 8.2.1 Although National Character Areas are often mentioned within LVIAs, it is exceptionally rare for development to affect the NCA to such a level that it is further considered due to the scale of the NCA and the relative scale of most proposed development.
- 8.2.2 The proposed development will have a minor bearing on the NCA where it stretches across a large area and has profound implications for a large number of receptors. The predominant LCAs in this area is relatively large and the scheme encompasses more than one LCA as indeed does Site 8.
- 8.2.3 The overall effects on the NCA are therefore to be noted and are not considered to be negligible or neutral as in most cases. The effects for the Scheme as a whole can be considered Minor Adverse at Construction and Year 1 reducing perhaps to Negligible at Year 15.
- 8.2.4 However, there are a large number of energy project within the planning system across the whole of NCA 83. The cumulative effects on the NCA are therefore very tangible and must be a material consideration, since the overarching aims are to protect and enhance the NCA as a whole. The text set out in Section 3 outlines where the proposed development both in itself and within the cumulative scenario would create adverse effects. Cumulatively, effects on the NCA (taking into account those developments proposed) cover an *expansive* area of the NCA which stretches from Norfolk to Suffolk and therefore must be considered to be at best Moderate Adverse in the potential overall effects. These effects are contrary to NPPF Paragraph 187.

EFFECTS ON THE LOCAL CHARACTER AREA WITHIN THE SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

- 8.2.5 The Site and its immediate context is accepted as a Valued Landscape. Its natural beauty, its intactness and its overall integrity is clearly evident. It has strong natural and cultural historic associations and a strong time depth. Views across the valley are highly prized by many visitors to the area, both local and more widespread, who come to enjoy the landscape using the high quality and quantity of PRoW and rural, quiet lanes.
- 8.2.6 Development of Site 8 overall, with intensive industrialisation, will fundamentally destroy or significantly impact the following:
 - the integrity of this Valued Landscape

- its perceived quality,
- its high-quality arable land,
- its ecological importance and the essential function it currently performs within the local landscape
- its open and panoramic views,
- its function in terms of local drainage
- the understanding of its historical importance

8.2.7 It is clear from the settlement assessment that the proposed development does not ‘make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness’. (as required in the NPPF 2024)

8.2.8 **To conclude, I do not consider that the site has the capacity to accept development without major adverse effects on the character of the area, the setting of the settlement**

EFFECTS ON LCA A1: TAS RURAL RIVER VALLEY AND LCA B1: TAS TRIBUTARY FARMLAND

8.2.9 As part of LCA A1, both Site 8b and 8a contribute highly to the local character area. Although Site 8a is shown within the Tas Tributary Farmland on the high-level published mapping, further assessment has shown that it adheres more to the qualities and function of the river valley landscape in places, following the Tas Beck which borders its northern boundary.

8.2.10 Site 8a comprises a gently sloping parcel which flows down to the Tas Beck and contains PRow 19 at the centre of the Site. There are long views east and west up the sloping valley sides with varied ridgelines of well treed and open aspects. The parcel comprises three distinct fields. The long narrow field to the northeastern section is characteristic of the valley bottom landscape and small-scale field pattern forming a long thin field.

8.2.11 PRow 19 runs between this field and a larger block to the west of the Site where land rises again to the west up to Wash Lane.

8.2.12 A small block east of Ringers Grove wood is not longer to be used for solar arrays.

8.2.13 The lower part of Site 8b has also been removed from the scheme and is proposed for mitigation, leaving only the upper parts of the valley sides for PV arrays.

8.2.14 Development, particularly the level of industrial development proposed, is fundamentally unworkable

and widely acknowledged as unacceptable on valley sides.

8.2.15 The effect of development on this location is profound. The landscape is acknowledged as a Valued Landscape, and it appears that little to no consideration (beyond its acknowledgement) has been given to this fact.

8.2.16 As a Valued Landscape within the LCT, it must be afforded particular consideration and clearly and demonstrably plays an important role in both of these Character Areas.

8.2.17 Although the Tas Tributary Farmland is generally accepted as being medium/high in sensitivity – it is clear that this Site is **highly** sensitive due to the topography and special nature of the area. The part of the Site located on the Tas Tributary Farmland is therefore considered also to be **highly sensitive**.

8.2.18 The sensitivity is **high**, the magnitude of change to the area is **high** and the effects are therefore **Major Adverse** and **Significant**.

EFFECTS ON TOPOGRAPHY AND DRAINAGE

8.2.19 As described, both 8a and 8b perform an important function in the topography and drainage of the local area. With both sites sloping down to the valley bottom and the Tas Beck, the impacts have potential to be **significant**. Important **adverse effects** are:

- Increased run-off and potential gulleys created by panels
- Sediment build up in Tas Beck
- Potential contamination of watercourse
- Potential contamination of private water supplies for Baxters Lane and Market Lane.
- Potential impact on European Protected Species within the Tas Beck (white crayfish evident).
- Increased flood risk

8.2.20 River valleys are highly sensitive to change. Their overall sensitivity is therefore high. The magnitude of change to the topography and drainage is medium to high where the natural percolation within the Site is highly compromised by the expanse of panels. Although the panel blocks have been removed from the lower part of 8b, long term effects of degradation of panels and its effects on groundwater are not sufficiently assessed. Effects on the topography and drainage of the Site are therefore Moderate-Major

Adverse.

EFFECTS ON LAND USE

- 8.2.21 The plan provided by EPS showing Agricultural Land Classifications for the Site was provided at the submission stage and at Site selection stage was not available. There appears to be no published evidence to back up this plan. Indeed, it highly contradicts the most up to date Predictive Land Classification Map prepared by Cranfield/Defra, which, although a relatively high-level study, predicts most areas of Site 8 and the surrounding arable landscape to be Grade 3a and hence BMV land.
- 8.2.22 The EPS plan shows two areas of higher quality land, that closest to the listed building to the north of the Site and a small, distinct area east of Ringers Grove.
- 8.2.23 The final ALC grading was based on a biased view. While a walkover survey was undertaken by a professional, any reliance on a discussion with the landowner regarding likely land classification is plainly incompatible with the neutrality required. Such an approach lacks the objectivity and rigour necessary to support reliable conclusions in the planning balance.
- 8.2.24 **An assessment of the current cropping in Site 8 (west) was undertaken using standard methodology and although the weight of the crop cannot be confirmed at this stage, yields showed averages of 520 heads per m2 with an average of 66 grains per head – indicative of highly productive (BMV) land.**
- 8.2.24 The haul road, proposed to access Site 8a will have a considerable detrimental effect on soils and hydrology with significant compaction on the clay soils. Run off and increased sediment into the Tas Beck will cause long term adverse effects.
- 8.2.25 The Site also functions as a setting to the village of Shotesham, its Conservation Area and the perceived beauty and tranquillity of the local area.
- 8.2.26 Within both Site 8a and 8b, high quality and well used footpaths exist. Both footpaths sit directly adjacent to the proposed solar arrays and these PRow would be severely comprised as set out below.
- 8.2.27 As stated by EPS, the long-term effects on the land itself will be **the long term, irreversible loss or downgrading** of the soils.

- 8.2.28 This is a fundamental, unacceptable impact and incredibly shortsighted in terms of future food production. As stated above, this land functions well with regard to arable production. Contamination, compaction and overall soil degradation (despite prescribed soil management principles) will render this, and large areas of East Anglia potentially unviable for the production of food.
- 8.2.27 The Site’s sensitivity is **high**, sitting on the valley side and bottom, predominantly on heavy clay with low permeability. The magnitude of change is **high** overall and the effects are as stated **Major Adverse**.

EFFECTS ON EXISTING VEGETATION

- 8.2.28 The existing vegetation on Site is of good quality and condition, providing a mix of characters across the Site and maintaining open views across the valley.
- 8.2.29 There will be some vegetation loss (although this is not specified at this point) in order to accommodate the development with breaks through hedgerows and removal of trees to accommodate the accesses and cable routes.
- 8.2.30 **The Site sits between three Ancient Woodlands (and SSSI); Little Wood to the west of the Site and Brooke Wood and Pye’s Covert/Privett Plantation to the northeast. This means that the Site sits within likely foraging and transit routes for a number of species.**
- 8.2.31 As stated, the Site provides a good level of vegetation which forms a bucolic scene with areas of more intimate nature and wide panoramic views across the valley retained. Loss of important hedgerows and trees will be mitigated by the replanting of additional green infrastructure and over the long term, this will form suitable mitigation. However, the addition of the proposed mitigation will change the character of the area to some degree and will, in fact, have a detrimental effect on this character which is highly influenced by the openness of the landscape in this particular area.
- 8.2.32 The sensitivity of the existing vegetation is high with good quality trees and hedging surrounding the Site. The magnitude of change is not yet known but could be assessed as **medium-low** due to the number of hedgerows likely to be affected. Overall effects are likely to be **minor- moderate** at construction. Longer term effects could increase where mitigation planting is not in keeping with the open character of the Site.

EFFECTS ON THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

8.2.33 Industrialisation of the Site will reduce the legibility of the landscape, where its perception will alter completely and its appreciation will be lost for at least a generation.

EFFECTS ON LOCAL ECOLOGY

8.2.34 EPS within their ES: Chapter 20 – Summary of Residual Significant Effects APP/6.1.20, state that there will be *‘No significant residual effects on ecology and biodiversity are predicted during the construction of the Scheme.’*

8.2.35 The Site lies within close proximity to Little Wood (Ancient Woodland, SSSI). This wood contains maternity roosts of rare Barbastelle bats.

8.2.36 The Tas Beck contains rare white crayfish, otters and watervole.

8.2.37 The Site sits within an area used by a large number of red listed birds.

8.2.38 The Site sits between three Ancient Woodlands (and SSSI); Little Wood to the west of the Site and Brooke Wood and Pye’s Covert/Privett Plantation to the northeast. This means that the Site sits within likely foraging and transit routes for a number of species.

8.2.39 The Site is within an area identified as having a high level of dark skies – an element that is particularly attractive to ecological receptors including rare bats.

8.2.40 Insufficient evidence has been provided to show that these species, including rare European Protected Species, will not be affected by the proposed development. The Site lies within the inner Risk Zones for the SSSI woodland and necessarily, development of the Site will impact this woodland, the bats therein and the white crayfish that exist within the watercourse through alteration to foraging patterns, lighting and runoff into the watercourse.

8.2.41 The sensitivity of the ecological features in close proximity to the Site is very high. The magnitude of change, being within the inner risk zones of the SSSI will therefore be Moderate at best (currently actually unknown). Effects will therefore be **Moderate-Major Adverse** for Site 8.

EFFECTS ON PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS

8.2.42 Of major concern is the lack of adequate survey on the PRoW as a local network. The cumulative effects on the network as a whole have not been addressed and early consideration of this should have ruled various sites out.

8.2.43 Public Rights of Way in the area include roads and lanes which, although open to traffic, are quiet, safe and form part of the extensive walking, cycling and riding routes around the area. The indicative masterplan sheets are somewhat misleading with regard to PRoW, where these are often hidden behind graphics, underplaying the number of routes contained within the scheme.

8.2.44 Figure 5 of this report illustrates clearly the nature of the road network around Shotesham and highlights the level of PRoW that link between Shotesham and Saxlingham.

8.2.45 The proposed development would directly affect a number of PRoW adjacent to the Site and two important footpaths within the Site. View and perception would be fundamentally changed in this bucolic, rural and unusually open landscape where wide views across the intimate river valley are strong feature of the landscape.

8.2.46 PRoW 22 runs through Site 8b heading from the low point on Market Lane to the west up a steeply sloping path to join Heath Road/Brooke Road and Baxters Lane. This comprises an important path, linking roads and creating circular walks around the village.

8.2.47 At the high point, there are panoramic views across the landscape to the west and south without distraction. Views to the north and east are equally bucolic, including only traditional farmsteads and historic buildings without further degrading features.

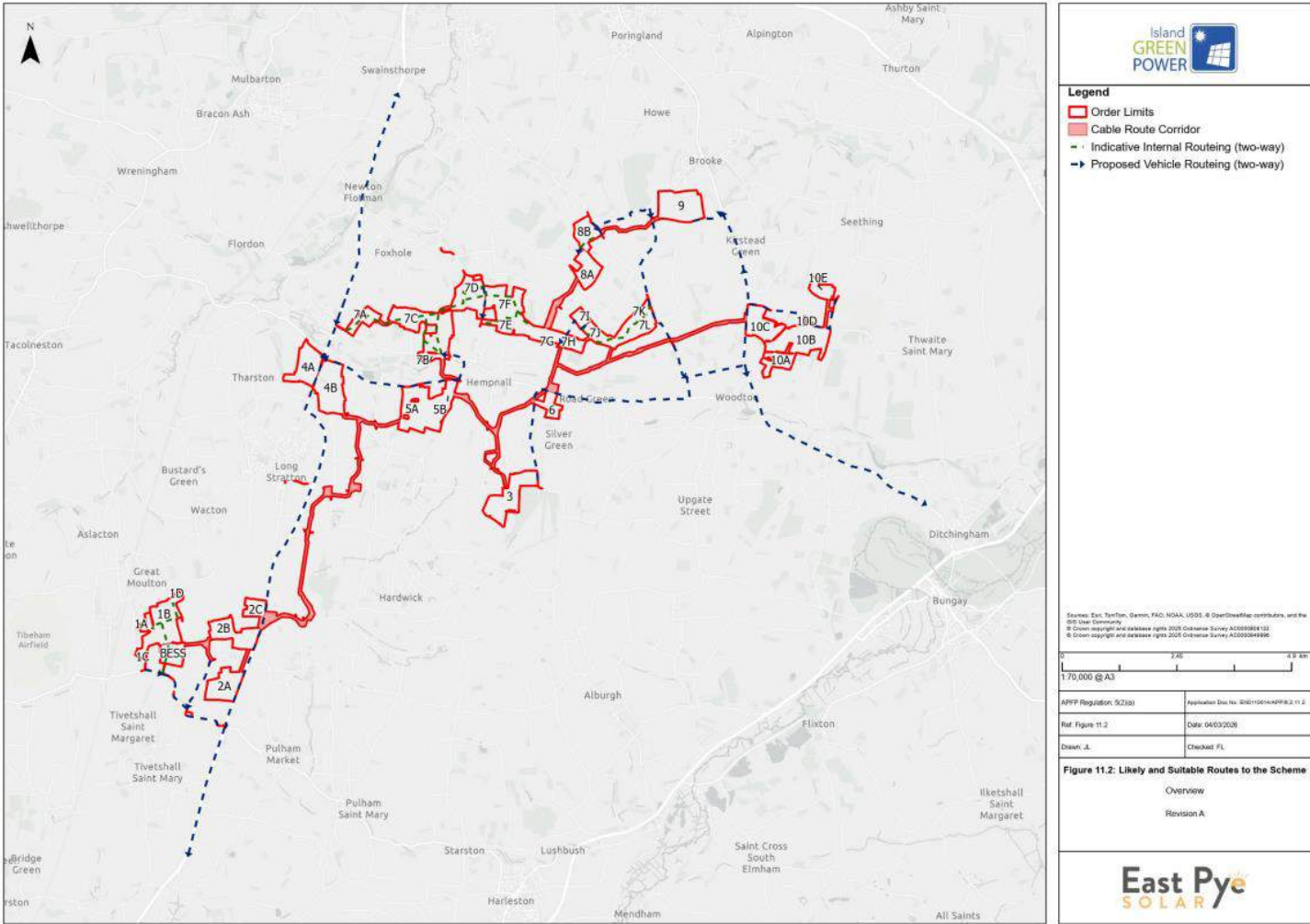
8.2.48 PRoW 19, also a footpath joins Market Lane to Fylands Lane running along the ditch and hedgerow that runs parallel to the Tas Beck on the eastern boundary of the Site 8a.

8.2.49 These two path place major constraints on the scheme. As set out earlier in this report, it is bewildering to see why PRoW have been designed out of several parcels within the scheme but these two, probably forming two of the most open and panoramic routes – particularly for FP22, have been materially dismissed. These constraints should have ruled out Site 8 at the earlier stages of site selection.

- 8.2.50 Both of these PRoW will be significantly affected by development with close range views of expanses of solar arrays, security fencing and other associated infrastructure.
- 8.2.51 Both of these views will be enclosed by mitigation planting with panels beyond. This will fundamentally change the open character of the paths and change the perceived value of both the walk and the surrounding landscape – indeed a ‘Valued Landscape’.
- 8.2.52 The sensitivity of the receptors is high, their focus being on the nature of the view, the PRoW themselves are also highly sensitive to change as features within themselves where their overall character and likely condition (enclosed paths are more likely to become wet and muddy) will change.
- 8.2.53 In addition to these two major footpaths within the scheme, the Boudica Way and a number of other footpaths are visually impacted by the proposed development where views cannot be mitigated on the high ground of the valley side. The visual effects are dealt with below.
- 8.2.54 The character and appreciation of all paths will fundamentally adversely change due to the proposed development and effects on the PRoW network will be palpable.
- 8.2.55 In addition, Site 8 and its surrounding PRoW, link closely to Site 7 which has an extensive PRoW network (something which should have been picked up and considered as a major constraint at the early stages of Site selection.)
- 8.2.56 Due to the high sensitivity of these routes within and adjacent to a ‘Valued Landscape’, together with a high magnitude of change, effects are **Major Adverse and Significant**.

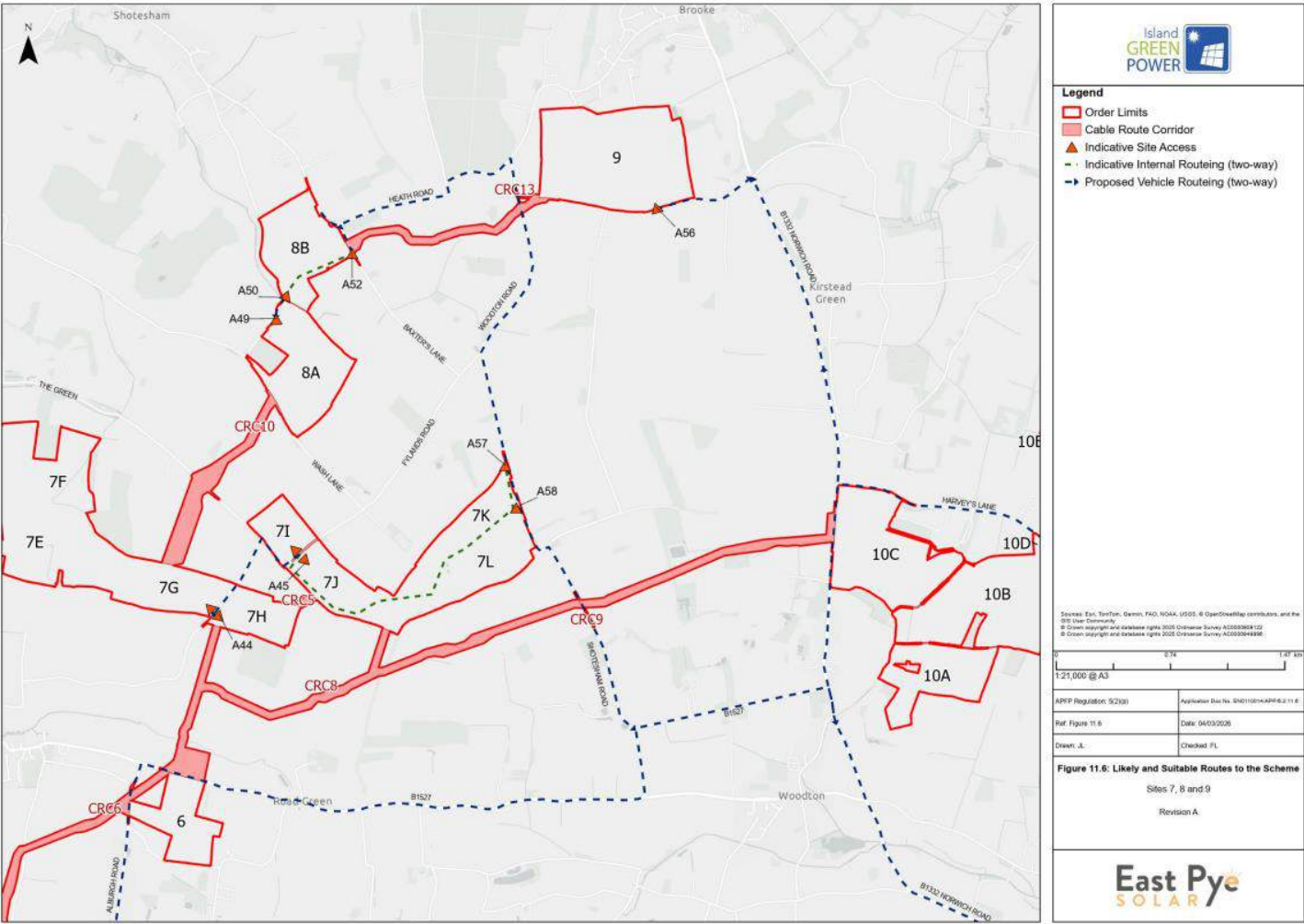
EFFECTS ON ACCESS

8.2.57 Figure 11.1 (EPS) shows **indicative** Transport and Access Study Area.



- 8.2.58 The above plan shows that there is no actual route into the Site from an A road (A140) and a very circuitous route from the east with no connections between the Site and Sites 9 or 7. This necessarily means that (with the exception of the indivisible loads, it is highly likely that construction and perhaps particularly maintenance traffic will use the local road network which, in the main, are single track, rural quiet, and currently safe routes for all users including walkers, cyclists and riders.
- 8.2.59 Effects on access to the Site will be felt by a large number of receptors during both the construction phase and the operational phase. The effects on the local road network will be significant, with Brooke village taking all traffic to Site 8.
- 8.2.60 Proposed haul roads across the Site will cause considerable and permanent damage to the soil structure, will ruin the tranquillity of this valued landscape and cause run off, increase in sediment and pollution into the Tas Beck. It will further industrialise the landscape with overall Major-Moderate Adverse effects

- overall, some of which are permanent.
- 8.2.61 All plans are ‘indicative’. There is nothing within the submission to confirm that the rural lanes will not be used. Contradictions between the above plans and the Site-specific plans exist, for example where access to 8a is shown to come off Wash Lane, a completely inappropriate route.
- 8.2.62 The reality of the operational period also means that it is highly likely that operatives will take the shortest route between sites which will predominantly be the rural lanes.
- 8.2.63 Access points into the Sites will leave unmitigated views into the Site in several key areas.



HISTORIC AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- 8.2.64 There are a small but important number of dwellings adjacent to Site 8.

- 8.2.65 Following much consideration (*and a long delay which has caused exceptional levels of unnecessary stress to the residents*), solar arrays have been taken away from Market Lane Farm. This is a positive design iteration but does not detract from the fact that solar arrays are still positioned on the high land of the valley side.
- 8.2.66 Arrays have also been taken away from the northern part of Site 8b where these would have impacted the setting of Upgate Green Farm (GII).
- 8.2.67 However, properties on Baxters Lane are shown to have significant views of the solar arrays, even after mitigation and in particular properties to the west of Baxters Lane have overbearing views of both parcels 8A and 8B.
- 8.2.68 The residential receptors are of high sensitivity and the magnitude of the change to their views is also high, particularly given the value of the landscape in which they site. Effects are therefore Major Adverse and will have a considerable impact on the saleability of these properties.

- 8.2.69 Effects on the Conservation area are set out above where they relate to the gateways into the settlement.

EFFECTS ON THE ‘VALUED LANSCAPE’

- 8.2.70 Site 8 and its surrounding context have been acknowledge by all as a ‘Valued Landscape’. The difference between the EPS assessment and this report is the appreciation of the significance of this designation. EPS have brushed over this designation, ignored the findings and ploughed ahead with their inclusion of Site 8 within the DCO despite the evidence.
- 8.2.71 Effects on this ‘Valued Landscape’ brought about by the proposed development are significant. The range and quality of the both the receptors and features around this site is unmistakable. The Site and its context provide positive attributes to ALL of the criteria for a Valued Landscape and hence this should provide stronger reason to exclude the Site from the DCO. **Effects are Major Adverse and Significant.**

OVERALL LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

- 8.2.72 Overall, the combined impacts of the development, through its extent, industrial nature and incongruous

visual characteristics would:

- Harm local distinctiveness through the loss of a substantial and representative part of the Tas Rural River Valley and Tas Tributary Farmland Landscape Character Areas.
- Harm perceptual aspects by developing land which has very high visual sensitivity due to its openness and strong rural in character and its status as a ‘Valued Landscape’.
- Result in the loss of the sense of remoteness and rural tranquillity which is experienced as a result of the long open views. These views would no longer be across a rolling arable landscape without any degrading influences but would instead be dominated by industrial infrastructure.
- Permanent, irreversible degradation of high-quality arable land.
- Undefined damage to watercourses, ecological features and hydrology.
- Degradation of high quality PRoW, completely altering the existing open character.
- High levels of cumulative harm to the NCA through large areas of development within East Anglia.

8.2.73 The susceptibility of the local landscape, including the Site and its immediate context, is **high**. This reflects the openness of the land, its strong contribution to local identity and sense of place, and its role as part of a landscape of **high** value. As set out above, the Site forms part of a **Valued Landscape** and its sensitivity to the proposed change is therefore **high** and the Site should be afforded special protection under national policy.

8.2.74 The magnitude of change would be **high**. When combined with the high sensitivity, the resulting effect on local landscape character would be **major adverse and significant**.

8.2.75 Although mitigation planting may, over time, begin to filter some views of the PV development this would not overcome the fundamental harm. On the contrary, such planting would itself exacerbate the loss of openness that is central to the character, identity and value of this landscape. Mitigation may be appropriate where enhancement is required, but Site 8 is not a degraded landscape and requires no such intervention. The long-term effect on the landscape would therefore remain major adverse.

8.2.76 The Site forms an important and integral part of the Tas Rural River Valley and the Tas Tributary Farmland LCTs. More than 500ha of land within the Rolling Estate Chalklands LCTs would be converted from farmland to electrical development.

8.2.77 Landscape effects are not short term as set out by EPS but are medium term (in general terms a generation of the current human receptors). Many of the important landscape effects, relating to the structure and integrity of the landscape including its continued use as a source of food production are long term or permanent.

8.2.78 Each of the elements within the landscape are impacted to some degree. **Most elements are significantly impacted** by the proposed development, and it is very difficult to see how this Site remains within the DCO limits.

8.3 VISUAL EFFECTS

8.3.1 The magnitude of change to the PRoW network around the Site is profound. At all levels of visibility, development is completely at odds with the bucolic scene and although large areas may not be visible from all stretches of the PRoW network, the level of change remains high where the panels will become the focal point of the view due to their detracting nature. There will also be an emotional element to the development which will change throughout the construction and operational phases but will play a fundamental role in the degradation of the benefits to health when walking this particularly scenic piece of countryside.

8.3.2 Effects for users of the PRoW is a matter of the quality of experience encountered when on a walk. Users of the routes around Shotesham and Saxlingham predominantly are walking for pleasure and to experience the health benefits that are associated with this form of recreation.

PROW 22

8.3.3 PRoW 22 runs through Site 8b. It links Market Lane to Baxters Lane/Heath Road/Brooke Road and is therefore a very important ProW. It also forms part of the network that provides the approaches to the settlement and the Conservation Area. It has far reaching views over the Tas Beck river valley with no detracting features in several directions.

8.3.4 Development of the upper half of the PRoW, replacing open farmland with solar arrays, metal fencing and general industrialisation will completely degrade this footpath, its open character and its considerable sense of place.

8.3.5 Visual receptors are of high sensitivity, and the magnitude of change will be high where the mitigation itself will be harmful to the character of this footpath. Effects will therefore be **Major Adverse and Significant**.

PROW 19

8.3.6 This footpath joins Market Lane with Fylands Lane. Again its character is open and although it is on relatively low land in the valley bottom, long views prevail. The walk is a very pleasant one where the character of the valley bottom is continued by the long, narrow field enclosure which emphasised the historic nature.

8.3.7 Development along this PRoW, replacing open farmland with solar arrays, metal fencing and general industrialisation will completely degrade this footpath, its open character and its considerable sense of place.

8.3.8 Proposed mitigation will, in itself be harmful to the character, the perception and the enjoyment of this footpath.

8.3.9 Visual receptors are of high sensitivity, and the magnitude of change will be high where the mitigation itself will be harmful to the character of this footpath. Effects will therefore be **Major Adverse and Significant**.

PROW 16

8.3.10 Footpath 16 runs to the west of the Site and heads broadly southeast. It is connected to footpaths 18 and 19 and is part of the Boudica Way where it joins footpath 17. This is clearly an important link to the south of the village and has links to the wider network that joins Saxlingham Green.

8.3.11 This PRoW runs behind Market Lane Farm, where views of the proposed development will be seen on the horizon beyond. It is possible to see how steeply the land rises across the road from this path.

8.3.12 Visual receptors are of high sensitivity, and the magnitude of change will be high where development on the valley side, with panels being evident on the ridgeline will materially alter the view. Effects will therefore be **Major Adverse and Significant**.

PROW 17

8.3.13 Footpath 17 heads up the valley side southeast of Little Wood (SSSI/Ancient Woodland). It makes up part of the Boudica Way There will be views over the valley from the rising land where it will not be possible to mitigate views where panels are proposed on the upper part of Site 8b.

8.3.14 Visual receptors are of high sensitivity, and the magnitude of change will be high where development on the valley side, with panels being evident on the ridgeline will materially alter the view. Effects will therefore be **Major-Moderate Adverse and Significant** where the site is screened to some degree by existing vegetation.

PROW 18

8.3.15 Footpath 18 heads north from Wash Lane down the valley side to Footpath 16. There are long ranging views across the valley to the rising ground and up towards Baxters Lane and the wooded horizon.

8.3.16 Visual receptors are of high sensitivity, and the magnitude of change will be high where development on the valley side, with panels being evident on the ridgeline will materially alter the view. Effects will therefore be **Major Adverse and Significant**.

BAXTERS LANE

8.3.17 Close range views from Baxters Lane will be subject to profound adverse effects. Not only will the open horizon be obscured with panels, fencing and other infrastructure, but the proposed mitigation will fundamentally destroy the character of the wide views across the valley.

8.3.18 Visual receptors are of high sensitivity, and the magnitude of change will be high where development on the valley side, with panels being evident on the ridgeline will materially alter the view. Effects will therefore be **Major Adverse and Significant**.

HEATH ROAD/BROOKE ROAD

Users of Heath Road/Brooke Road will be of both high and lower sensitivity with drivers being less susceptible to change but this road being used for walking, cycling and riding. The access road into the Site will provide clear views into the Site and will change the visual perception of the quality of the landscape when entering the village/Conservation Area as set out above.

MARKET LANE

8.3.19 Views from Market Lane will look up to Site 8b where the horizon, with a defunct hedge will have panels along this ridgeline heading back to Baxters Lane until mitigation planting as established. There will also be views into Site 8a where mitigation will again, close down the open views across the landscape with the Site entrances retaining open views of solar arrays. Overall effects along the route will be significant, where although there will be some mitigation planting, a long stretch around Market Lane Farm up to Wash Lane will comprise large areas of panels for many years and the character of the views in this area will alter with both industrial development and closing down of views.

8.3.20 Effects will be Moderate Adverse by Year 15 and will remain significant.

VILLAGE APPROACHES AND CONSERVATION AREA

8.3.21 The perception of the village approaches, both by vehicle and on foot/bike/horse will be fundamentally changed for three of the 7 routes into the village/Conservation Area. Receptors range from having high to low sensitivity overall and impacts on those entering from the south/east will be adversely affected with the quality of their transition from countryside to rural village significantly degraded in places.

OVERALL VISUAL EFFECTS

8.3.22 The PV modules in parcel 8B would be particularly prominent because this parcel occupies the west-facing slope of the valley side and is directly exposed to views across the intimate and strongly rural river valley. Their location on this elevated part of the Site would make the development visually conspicuous in a range of local views, particularly from the surrounding Public Rights of Way network, nearby lanes and residential properties where panels would replace the existing partially open.

8.3.23 The visual effects would be especially severe because the Site is widely visible and because parcel 8B

occupies one of the most sensitive and visually exposed parts of the landscape. From Footpath 22, Baxters Lane, Market Lane and other nearby receptors, the proposal would introduce a large-scale and overtly industrial form of development into a landscape that is presently open, tranquil and strongly bucolic, with very few detracting features.

8.3.24 In these views, the development would not appear as a contained or recessive element. Rather, it would form a prominent and incongruous feature on the valley side, interrupting valued outlooks across the valley and materially diminishing the scenic quality, openness and visual amenity of the area. The effects would be particularly harmful in relation to receptors using the local rights of way, whose experience of the landscape presently derives in large part from its openness, intactness and absence of visual intrusion.

8.3.25 Although Site 8a lies within the valley bottom, this is an open and gently sloping landscape with wide views and a very characteristic long, narrow field at the bottom. Footpath 19 would be completely altered with views becoming confined with a dramatic change in character. Panels would dominate.

8.3.26 Although mitigation planting may in time filter some views, it would not overcome the fundamental visual harm and would itself introduce further enclosure into a landscape where openness is one of the defining characteristics. In my opinion, the proposal would therefore result in major adverse visual effects that would remain significant over the long term.

8.3.27 Many sites within the scheme have been amended to accommodate views from PRoW, but Site 8 contains two PRoW that will be significantly impacted with standard **indicative** mitigation offered that will in itself harm the character of the routes and the surrounding landscape.

CUMULATIVE VISUAL EFFECTS - ADDITIONAL IMPACTS RESULTING FROM DEVELOPMENT OF ALL SITES WITHIN EPS AND THE WIDER AREA

EFFECTS ON RESIDENTS AND LOCAL AMENITY

8.3.35 A small number of dwellings on Baxters Lane, Market Lane and Brooke Road are affected by the proposed development, but the adverse effects are considerable due to the close distance between these (and their daily commutes/walks) and the proposed development.

- 8.3.36 Although the magnitude of change may be limited where direct views of the development do not apply to each dwelling, again the approaches to dwellings, the daily walks and the overall intrusion, loss of house value and inability to sell, are all major factors which affect each local resident.
- 8.3.37 Residents will each have put their views to the Inspector, and I have not dwelt overly on these because of this. However, the overall effects on residents at Market Lane and Baxters Lane will be profound. Major adverse effects will be felt overall.

EFFECTS ON SETTLEMENT GATEWAYS

- 8.3.38 Paragraph 197 of the NPPF acknowledges that Conservation Areas rely on a gradual transition from surrounding countryside to the historic core. Gateways are an experiential transition and not a geographical line. Three gateways area affected by the proposed development, breaking this transition and changing how visitors experience the Heritage Asset on arrival. This strips away local distinctiveness that frames the Conservation Area and creates accumulated less than substantial harm to this valuable and protected asset. ‘Ruining’ three approaches to the settlement creates a high level of less than substantial harm to an asset which NPPF Paragraph 205 states should be given ‘great weight’.
- 8.3.39 Furthermore, standard hedge and tree planting is not able to mitigate solar arrays on upper slopes and these will remain exposed to view from the lower areas and approaches to the Conservation Area.
- 8.3.40 In addition, PRoW 22 provides a pedestrian approach to the village and development around this feature will turn a highly tranquil, open panorama into a sea of glass, steel and security fencing. This is in clear conflict with paragraph 180 of the NPPF, as the proposal would fail to protect or enhance this Valued Landscape and would instead cause direct harm to the intrinsic character and beauty that are so evident from this viewpoint

EPS LVIA

- 8.3.41 I have not sought to comment on the EPS LVIA specifically, but it should be noted that their level of effects is generally shown with poor site photography (very dark), with selective self-serving viewpoint locations which at times are misleading. The level of effects are, in many cased understated, leading to a lower overall level of harm in their report. Where effects are considered significant, these appear to have been ignored for Site 8 in their determination to keep this land within the Oder Limits.

8.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- 8.4.1 GLVIA3 states that cumulative effects are the: *‘result from additional changes to the landscape or visual amenity caused by the proposed development in conjunction with other developments (associated with or separate to it), or actions that occurred in the past, present or are likely to occur in the foreseeable future’.*
- 8.4.2 The Environmental Statement concludes that cumulative effects are not significant; however, there appears to be no robust standalone cumulative assessment. Conclusions rely on individual topic assessments, many of which are flawed, incomplete or understated. In relation to landscape and visual matters in particular, the cumulative implications of the Scheme across the wider National Character Area have not been properly addressed, despite the fact that the Scheme forms part of a very substantial body of energy infrastructure currently proposed across South Norfolk and North Suffolk.
- 8.4.3 The Environmental Statement concludes that cumulative effects are not significant; however, there appears to be no robust standalone cumulative assessment. Conclusions rely on individual topic assessments, many of which are flawed, incomplete or understated. In relation to landscape and visual matters in particular, the cumulative implications of the Scheme across the wider National Character Area have not been properly addressed, despite the fact that the Scheme forms part of a very substantial body of energy infrastructure currently proposed across South Norfolk and North Suffolk. That omission is material because it is contrary to the requirement in national policy to take proper account of landscape character, valued landscapes, tranquillity, settlement character and the cumulative consequences of large-scale change. It is also inconsistent with the overarching objective in the NPPF to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment and to take local circumstances into account, and with NPS EN-1 and EN-3 which require applicants to minimise landscape and visual harm through siting, design and mitigation.
- 8.4.4 The cumulative position is important because this proposal is not a compact or contained development. It is geographically fragmented and dispersed across a wide area, with detached parcels, connecting infrastructure and repeated landscape change occurring across multiple settlements, routes and character areas. The result is that receptors are not affected once, in a single location, but repeatedly and sequentially across the wider landscape. This materially increases the overall level of harm and the

geographical extent over which it is experienced. In policy terms, that matters because national policy does not require decision-makers merely to identify whether harm exists, but to consider whether it has been properly minimised and whether the design evolution has responded to real constraints. Where the harm is repeated across multiple parcels and routes, the contention that it has been adequately minimised becomes significantly harder to sustain.

- 8.4.5 At the level of National Character Area 83, the issue is not the isolated effect of a single parcel, but the combined change arising from multiple solar, battery and associated infrastructure schemes currently within the planning system. The NCA is defined by the contrast between expansive arable plateaux and intimate, historically layered river valleys, by dispersed settlement, tranquillity, dark skies, agricultural productivity and a strong sense of place. The cumulative spread of large-scale energy infrastructure across that landscape would erode those defining qualities over a very broad area. In those circumstances, the cumulative effect on the NCA cannot reasonably be treated as incidental. It is a material planning consideration of considerable weight and directly engages the NPPF's requirement to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and to protect valued landscapes, as well as the aims in NPS EN-1 to minimise harm to landscape and in local policy to conserve landscape character and local distinctiveness.
- 8.4.6 The cumulative effects on the Public Rights of Way network are also serious and have not been properly acknowledged. Around Shotesham, Saxlingham and the surrounding parishes, the network of footpaths, bridleways, byways and quiet rural lanes is not a minor incidental feature but one of the principal ways in which the landscape is experienced, understood and valued. Footpaths 19 and 22 are themselves highly sensitive and would be majorly harmed in isolation, but the cumulative position is more severe still because they are part of a wider connected recreational resource that includes the Boudicca Way and numerous circular walking routes. The repeated loss of openness, the repeated enclosure of routes, the repeated introduction of industrial elements into valued views and the repeated degradation of tranquil walking experiences would materially diminish the function and enjoyment of the network as a whole. That is in clear tension with national and local policy objectives relating to amenity, local distinctiveness, valued landscapes and the protection of recreational resources.
- 8.4.7 This cumulative recreational harm is not limited to visual change alone. The local network provides health, wellbeing, educational and heritage benefits derived from a landscape that is presently legible,

scenic and notably free from detracting features. Once those qualities are repeatedly eroded across adjoining routes and neighbouring sites, the overall experience of the countryside changes fundamentally. The effect is not simply that one footpath is made less attractive, but that a substantial part of the local recreational landscape is industrialised, reducing the ability of residents and visitors to access, enjoy and understand the rural and historic environment in the way they currently do. That outcome conflicts with the policy emphasis on conserving and enhancing natural beauty, public amenity and the experiential quality of valued rural landscapes.

- 8.4.8 There is also no adequate evidence to demonstrate that cumulative ecological effects would not arise. Site 8 lies within a highly sensitive ecological context, closely associated with Ancient Woodland, SSSI land, Tas Beck and protected species, including species of the highest level of protection. Even if individual parcels are said to avoid direct land-take within designated sites, that does not address the cumulative effects of repeated disturbance, fragmentation of foraging and movement corridors, alteration to dark skies, hydrological change, runoff, sedimentation and long-term pressure on sensitive habitats and species across the wider area. In the absence of a precautionary and properly integrated cumulative assessment, it cannot be concluded that such effects would be insignificant. That evidential weakness is inconsistent with the precautionary approach expected where sensitive ecological receptors and statutory designations are engaged.
- 8.4.9 Similar concerns arise in relation to agricultural land and landscape function. The Scheme would contribute to the cumulative loss of extensive areas of productive farmland within a part of East Anglia whose identity and continuing function are strongly tied to high-quality agricultural land. Where a large number of parcels across the wider Scheme, and indeed across the wider NCA, are on land identified as Best and Most Versatile or highly likely to be so, the cumulative impact is not merely localised. It represents a substantial and widespread shift in land use away from food production and towards industrial energy infrastructure, with associated cumulative effects on rural character, landscape pattern and long-term land capability. That is directly relevant to the policy expectation that the use of BMV land should be minimised, and that the efficient and appropriate use of land remains part of the planning balance.
- 8.4.10 The cumulative effect on settlements and settlement approaches is likewise important. Rural villages such as Shotesham derive much of their identity from their relationship with the surrounding agricultural

landscape and from the gradual experiential transition between open countryside and historic settlement. Where multiple sites, repeated route corridors and repeated visual intrusions are introduced across the same broad area, that relationship is steadily weakened. The result is that the settlements risk becoming experienced not as villages within a coherent rural landscape, but as historic enclaves surrounded by an increasingly industrialised setting. That cumulative erosion of local distinctiveness is especially harmful in a landscape where setting, approach and sense of arrival are of clear importance and where both national and local policy require the conservation of character, heritage setting and the quality of place.

8.4.10 The inadequacy of the cumulative assessment is compounded by the deficiencies in the site selection process. Where fundamentally flawed, misleading and inadequate site selection has been carried out, pressure is placed on a large number of sites that are not capable of accommodating development without significant adverse impacts. That in turn increases cumulative harm because the overall scheme footprint is spread across parcels which should, on any fair and objective appraisal, have been discounted earlier on landscape, visual, ecological, agricultural or access grounds. In other words, the cumulative effects are not simply an unfortunate by-product of an otherwise robust process; they are in part the consequence of a flawed process that has retained highly constrained sites within the Order Limits. That is directly relevant to the policy requirement in NPS EN-1 for applicants to explain how the design process evolved and why the chosen option was selected, and it materially weakens the claim that the present scheme represents a properly constrained and policy-compliant design outcome.

8.4.11 Taking these matters together, the cumulative effects of the proposed development are considerable and materially greater than the Environmental Statement suggests. The combined effects on the National Character Area, on the valued and well-used PRoW network, on ecology, on agricultural land, on settlement setting and on the wider experience of the countryside are such that they cannot properly be described as insignificant. Rather, they reinforce the conclusion reached throughout this report: that Site 8 sits within an unusually sensitive, intact and highly valued landscape and that its inclusion within a fragmented and dispersed large-scale scheme would contribute to a wider pattern of unacceptable cumulative harm. These cumulative effects should therefore be given substantial weight in the overall planning balance and, when read alongside the policy tests in NPS EN-1, EN-3, the NPPF, the GNLP and the South Norfolk Development Management Policies, further support the conclusion, set out below,

that Site 8 should be removed from the DCO proposals.

9.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 This report concludes that Site 8 is fundamentally unsuitable for the proposed East Pye Solar development and should not have been included within the Order Limits. The Site lies within a highly sensitive and strongly distinctive rural landscape that forms an important part of the setting of Shotesham and contributes materially to local character, tranquillity, scenic quality, public amenity, ecological function and the appreciation of the wider historic landscape. The evidence set out in this report demonstrates that the Site forms part of a Valued Landscape and that development of the scale proposed would cause substantial and unacceptable harm.
- 9.2 The central landscape conclusion is clear. Site 8 occupies land on both the Tas Beck valley floor and the adjoining sloping valley side, within a landscape that is open, tranquil, intact and highly legible. Parcel 8B in particular sits on one of the most visually exposed and sensitive parts of the local landscape, where development would be conspicuous from a wide range of receptors and where mitigation would not overcome the fundamental harm. The Site also makes a high contribution to the local landscape character areas and to the valued rural setting of Shotesham. In these circumstances, the overall landscape effects would be major adverse and significant.
- 9.3 The visual effects would also be severe. Footpaths 19 and 22 are two of the most open, scenic and sensitive Public Rights of Way within the Order Limits, yet their importance has not been given the weight it plainly required. Development would replace open farmland and panoramic valley views with solar arrays, fencing, associated infrastructure and mitigation planting that would itself erode the openness and character of the routes. The wider PRoW network, including the Boudicca Way and other connected routes, would also be materially degraded. The result would be major adverse and significant visual effects for highly sensitive receptors and a fundamental reduction in the recreational and experiential quality of the countryside.
- 9.4 The report also concludes that Site 8 is highly constrained in ecological, hydrological, agricultural and heritage terms. The Site lies in close proximity to Ancient Woodland, SSSI land, Tas Beck and sensitive protected species, and there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that the proposed development

would avoid unacceptable ecological effects. The topography of both parcels gives rise to a direct hydrological relationship with the Beck and adjoining receptors, increasing concerns regarding runoff, sediment transfer and contamination. In agricultural terms, the Site is highly likely to comprise Best and Most Versatile land, yet the Applicant’s evidence does not provide a sufficiently independent or robust basis for discounting that conclusion where the final assessment was arrived at by discussions with the landowner. In heritage and settlement terms, the Site contributes to the wider setting of Shotesham and to important southern approaches to the Conservation Area. These are not marginal considerations but significant constraints that should have carried substantial weight much earlier in the Site selection process.

- 9.5 A further and important conclusion of this report is that the Applicant’s site selection process is materially and crucially flawed. The Applicant identified agricultural land quality, topography and environmental constraints as key considerations, yet Site 8 plainly fails against those criteria.
- 9.6 Furthermore, and more importantly, the Alternative Sites closer to the revised Point of Connection were not correctly assessed. The evidence indicates that the comparative treatment of alternatives has not been consistent, objective or transparent, particularly once the Point of Connection changed. The retention of Site 8 within the Order Limits is therefore not supported by a sound and policy-compliant appraisal of reasonable alternatives or by a properly evidenced design evolution responsive to genuine constraints. **This matter needs further urgent discussion and a revised, independent alternative Site Assessment should be carried out. Huge swathes of land close to the new PoC were summarily discounted due to the assessment failures and by their own admission, the Applicant’s did not bother to seek new agreements with landowners close to the PoC as they had already secured land holdings.**

9.7 **PLANNING BALANCE AND DECISION-MAKING**

- 9.7.1 In determining this application, the Examining Authority and Secretary of State must weigh the acknowledged benefits of renewable energy generation against the environmental, landscape, visual and other harms arising from the proposed development. It is accepted that the transition to a low-carbon energy system is a matter of substantial national importance and that significant weight should be attached to the delivery of renewable energy infrastructure. However, national policy does not require that all sites are suitable for such development, nor does it suggest that environmental constraints should

be overridden where substantial harm would result.

- 9.7.2 The National Policy Statements make clear that landscape and visual effects are capable of carrying significant weight in the planning balance, particularly where those effects arise from poor siting, inadequate consideration of alternatives, or where harm cannot be adequately mitigated through design. The evidence presented in this report demonstrates that Site 8 represents a location where the fundamental characteristics of the receiving landscape, rather than the detailed design of the proposal, give rise to unacceptable effects.
- 9.7.3 The Site occupies an unusually sensitive position within the Tas Beck valley landscape and forms part of the wider setting of Shotesham. Its contribution extends beyond agricultural productivity alone and encompasses landscape character, visual amenity, ecological connectivity, settlement setting, public access, tranquillity and the appreciation of the historic environment. These are not isolated considerations but interrelated qualities that collectively contribute to the significance of the landscape and the experience of the area.
- 9.7.4 The assessment has shown that the proposed development would result in major adverse and significant effects on landscape character and visual amenity, including effects on highly sensitive Public Rights of Way and on views that are integral to the appreciation of the valley landscape. The evidence also identifies substantial concerns regarding ecological sensitivity, hydrological function, agricultural land quality and the contribution the Site makes to the setting and approach to Shotesham. Importantly, these effects are not temporary construction impacts but would persist throughout the operational life of the development. Many of the impacts would be long term and irreversible.
- 9.7.5 The report further identifies significant shortcomings in the site selection and alternatives assessment process. In the context of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project, confidence in the robustness of the site selection process is fundamental. Where evidence suggests that key constraints were understated, inconsistently applied or not reassessed following the change in Point of Connection, the justification for retaining highly constrained parcels such as Site 8 is materially weakened. This issue is particularly important because the harm identified is not the inevitable consequence of renewable energy development, but appears to arise from the inclusion of a site that should have been discounted at an earlier stage.

9.7.6 The cumulative effects of the wider Scheme reinforce these conclusions. The evidence indicates that the cumulative impact on landscape character, settlement setting, the Public Rights of Way network, agricultural land and ecological resources is materially greater than suggested within the Environmental Statement. These cumulative effects add further weight to the conclusion that Site 8 represents one of the more sensitive and constrained locations within the Order Limits.

9.7.7 Having regard to the evidence presented, it is concluded that the adverse effects arising from the inclusion of Site 8 are substantial, significant and incapable of being satisfactorily mitigated through landscape planting, design amendments or operational controls. The Site does not represent an appropriate location for development of this nature and scale and its inclusion within the Order Limits is not supported by a robust planning, environmental or landscape justification.

9.8 OVERALL CONCLUSION

9.8.1 For all of the reasons set out within this report, the Examining Authority is respectfully invited to conclude that Site 8 fails to satisfy the policy tests relating to landscape protection, good design, environmental stewardship and the proper consideration of alternatives. The evidence demonstrates that the Site is highly sensitive, highly constrained and incapable of accommodating the proposed development without causing significant and unacceptable harm.

9.8.2 Accordingly, if the East Pye Solar Project is to proceed, Site 8 should be removed from the Order Limits. Such an approach would better reflect the requirements of NPS EN-1, NPS EN-3, the National Planning Policy Framework, the Greater Norwich Local Plan and the South Norfolk Development Management Policies, whilst avoiding substantial and unnecessary harm to a valued and distinctive landscape that forms an important part of the character, setting and identity of Shotesham.

TABLE A: LANDSCAPE EFFECTS

FIGURES

APPENDICES

			EPS LVIA landscape effects Tables APP/6.3.7.3			CLA REVIEW -SITE 8		
LANDSCAPE RECEPTOR	MAGNITUDE OF LANDSCAPE CHANGE HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW, NEGLIGIBLE NONE REVERSIBLE	NOTES	LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY SUSCEPTIBILITY X LANDSCAPE VALUE	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION / YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15	LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY SUSCEPTIBILITY X LANDSCAPE VALUE	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15
NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER – NCA 83- SOUTH NORFOLK AND NORTH SUFFOLK CLAYLANDS	MODERATE (SCHEME WIDE)	OVERALL SITE SMALL WITHIN NCA BUT STRETCHING ACROSS A 15KM RANGE	MEDIUM	MODERATE – SIGNIFICANT	MINOR ADVERSE	MEDIUM	MODERATE MODERATE – SIGNIFICANT	MODERATE- MINOR ADVERSE
CUMULATIVE EFFECT ON NCA	HIGH	LARGE AREAD ACROSS THE NCA TO BE AFFECTED BY SOLAR DEVELOPMENT				MEDIUM	MAJOR- MODERATE ADVERSE- SIGNIFICANT	MODERATE- MAJOR ADVERSE- SIGNIFICANT
LOCAL CHARACTER AREA A1: TAS RURAL RIVER VALLEY	HIGH	SOUTH NORFOLK SENSITIVITY STUDY AND POLICY PROTECTION SITE 8A ADHERES MORE TO THIS LCA THAN LCA B1	HIGH	MINOR ADVERSE	MINOR ADVERSE *	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR- ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
LOCAL CHARACTER AREA B1: TAS TRIBUTARY FARMLAND	HIGH	SOUTH NORFOLK SENSITIVITY STUDY AND POLICY PROTECTION – SITE ON HIGH VALLEY SIDE INCREASING SENSITIVITY	MEDIUM	MODERATE SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE *	HIGH-MEDIUM	MAJOR- MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR- MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER – THE SITE AND ITS IMMEDIATE SETTING	HIGH	LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENT ON A VALUED LANDSCAPE	HIGH		HIGH	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
ECOLOGY	MEDIUM	IMPACTS ON EUROPEAN PROTECTED SPECIES AND RED LIST SPECIES INCLUDING BARBASTELLE BATS AND WHITE CRAYFISH IN ADJACENT WOODS AN RIVER			MODERATE BENEFICIAL NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS	HIGH	MAJOR- MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR- MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
NATURAL HERITAGE	HIGH	LOSS OF BUCOLIC LANDSCAPE – VALUED LANDSCAPE				HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
BUILT HERITAGE	LOW	SETTING TO LISTED BUILDINGS				HIGH	MINOR ADVERSE	MINOR ADVERSE NEGLIGIBLE
PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY SITE 8	HIGH	SIGNIFICANT DEGRADATION OF IMPORTANT AND WELL USED FOOTPATHS 19 AND 22 ADDITIONAL ROUTES AFFECTED WHERE THE VIEWS ON THE VALLEY SIDES CANNOT BE MITIGATED.				HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT

			EPS LVIA			CLA REVIEW - SITE 8		
LANDSCAPE RECEPTOR	MAGNITUDE OF LANDSCAPE CHANGE HIGH, MEDIUM, LOW, NEGLIGIBLE NONE	NOTES	LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY SUSCEPTIBILITY X LANDSCAPE VALUE	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15	LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY SUSCEPTIBILITY X LANDSCAPE VALUE	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15
TOPOGRAPHY AND DRAINAGE	HIGH-MEDIUM	INCREASED RUN-OFF, SEDIMENT BUILD UP AND HIGH RISK OF CONTAMINATION TO WATER COURSES AND PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES			MODERATE BENEFICIAL	HIGH	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
DESIGNATIONS	MEDIUM	LOSS OF APPRECIATION OF DESIGNATED/HISTORIC ROUTES (BOUDICA WAY) AND ANCIENT/SSSI WOODLAND ADJACENT TO THE SITE				HIGH	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
LAND USE	HIGH	UNREVERSIBLE/PERMANENT DEGRADATION OF SOILS AND LOSS OF LARGE AREAS OF HIGH QUALITY AND BMV LAND. DEGRADATION OF LAND FOR HAUL ROAD.				HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
EXISTING VEGETATION	LOW-MEDIUM (UNKNOWN)	LOSS OF TREES AND HEDGEROWS TO ACCOMMODATE DEVELOPMENT REPLANTING DETRIMENT TO THE HIGHLY IMPORTANT OPEN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITE.				HIGH	MODERATE-MINOR ADVERSE	POTENTIALLY MODERATE ADVERSE – SIGNIFICANT
BOUDICA WAY	MEDIUM-HIGH	VIEWS ACROSS THE VALLEY FROM THIS IMPORTANT ROUTE – REDUCING INTEGRITY AND APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE – VIEWS CANNOT BE MITIGATED		MINOR ADVERSE	MINOR ADVERSE	HIGH	MODERATE-MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MODERATE-ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
SHOTESHAM CONSERVATION AREA	MODERATE CHANGE TO SETTING	DEGRADATION OF THREE APPROACHES TO THE CONSERVATINO AREA, REDUCING LEGIBILITY AND PERCEPTUAL VALUE. MITIGATION PLANTING CLOSING DOWN OPEN VIEWS PROW NETWORK IMPORTANT PART OF ENTRANCE TO CA				HIGH	MODERATE ADVERSE SIGNIFICANT	MODERATE ADERSE SIGNIFICANT

TO NOTE:

It should be noted that EPS state that the development is short term. This development is for a generation of receptors and cannot be considered short term. A more accurate assessment would be medium term. In addition, there are factors within the development that are unreversible and therefore there are permanent effects. The following should be considered permanent or long-term effects

- EFFECTS ON THE NCA – where land degradation is permanent
- EFFECTS ON LAND USE – where land degradation is permanent
- EFFECTS ON THE LCAS – where land degradation is permanent
- EFFECTS ON PROW – where character is permanently altered

- EFFECTS ON TOPOGRAPHY AND DRAINAGE – where contamination is likely to be long term/permanent.

* stated as minor adverse within landscape receptor assessment but moderate adverse and significant in full findings – EPS 6.1.20 Summary of Residual Significant effects.
‘Small scale’ and ‘very small scale’ losses or effects mentioned below are considerably understating the level of effects.

CRC 13 has not been assessed.

Excerpts below from EPS EIA show understating of effects and anomalies between final results where significant effects are recorded in the EPS 6.1.20.

East Pye Solar
ES Appendix 7.3 Landscape Assessment Tables
APP/6.3.7.3



Baseline and Sensitivity*				Magnitude of Effect and Significance									
Landscape Receptor	Value of Landscape Receptor	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity	Relevant Scheme elements	Scheme Stage	Description of Change to the Character	Size Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration	Reversibility	Overall Magnitude	Type and Direction of Effect	Level of Significance of Effect
Site 8	High	High	High	Sub-Site 8A and 8B and associated cable connections	Construction	The construction activities within Site 8; split between Sub-Sites 8A and 8B, would extend across the majority of the Site. These activities would have an effect on the following key characteristics of the Site: - Medium-scale localised changes from the installation of solar PV arrays, and associated infrastructure, including visibility of construction vehicles, task lighting, temporary fencing, and intermittent noise. - Medium-scale localised effect on open valley character, including medium distance views across the valley. - Small-scale direct effects resulting from construction activities on transport corridors adjacent to the Site. Activities would include traffic, crossings, and access requirements. Affected roads include Wash Lane, Baxter's Lane, and Market Lane. - Small-scale direct effects on rural lanes and PRow, including temporary closure of Shotesham FP19 and FP22, due to construction. - Small-scale indirect effects on perceived tranquillity, arising from increased activity and vehicle movements along Baxter's Lane and Market Lane. - Very small-scale loss of landscape features to facilitate site access during construction. - Very small-scale effect on the perceived tranquillity and rural character of the rural lanes. - Very small-scale hedgerow removal associated with access track, includes impact on important hedgerows. In conclusion, the construction activities would result in a partial change to some key characteristics of the Site, with effects confined to the Site and its immediate surroundings.	Medium	Adjacent Landscape	Short-term	Reversible (Construction Activity)	Moderate	Adverse Direct & Indirect	Major Significant
					Operation Year 1	During operation, the proposed solar PV arrays would occupy a proportion of Site 8, with the exclusion of parts of Site 8A due to flood zone status and Sub-Site 8B due to a combination of landform and proximity to Shotesham and residential properties. Access to the PRow crossing the Site would be maintained. The following effects as a result of the Scheme are considered: - Medium-scale experiential effects within the landscape, including PRow and recreational routes, with effects including solar PV arrays and substations being present in agricultural fields, colour contrast between solar PV arrays and surroundings, and solar PV arrays being seen above hedgerows. - Medium-scale localised effect on open valley character, including medium distance views across the valley. - Medium-scale change to the tranquil qualities of the Site resulting from energy generation activities. - Medium-scale localised effect on the recreational value of the PRow. - Small-scale long-term reversible loss of arable farmland resulting from the introduction of areas of landscape mitigation planting, and changes to the agricultural management practice to accommodate the Scheme. - Small-scale effects on land use being changed to energy generation. - Small-scale increase in perceived human influence due to presence of solar PV arrays, and associated infrastructure (fences, access routes, and CCTV), resulting in changes to the land cover and pattern of the rural landscape. In conclusion, the operational phase would result in a partial alteration to the character of land within the Site. These effects would remain localised and confined to the Site and its immediate context. Generally, landscape features would be retained and with appropriate offsets from these and landscape receptors therefore the Scheme would retain the current landscape pattern and structure albeit introduce new uncharacteristic elements.	Medium	Adjacent Landscape	Long-term	Reversible (Solar)	Moderate	Adverse Direct & Indirect	Major Significant

Terminology for Landscape Effect:

Landscape Value:	Very High, High, Medium, Low	Duration:	Long-term, Medium-term, Short-term, Brief
Susceptibility to Change:	High, Medium, Low	Reversibility:	Permanent / Partially Reversible / Reversible
Overall Sensitivity of Receptor:	Very High, High, Medium, Low	Overall Magnitude of Effect:	Major, Moderate, Slight, Negligible, No Change
Size/Scale of Visual Effect:	Very Large, Large, Medium, Small, Very Small, No Change	Type and Direction of Effect:	Direct, Indirect, Adverse, Beneficial, Neutral
Geographical Extent of Effect:	Wider Landscape, Landscape Character Type/Area, Adjacent Landscape, Site	Level of Significance of Effect:	Substantial, Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible, No change / Significant, Not Significant

*Refer to ES Appendix 7.2: Landscape Baseline [EN0110014/APP/6.3.7.2]

Figure 2 Green Infrastructure Strategy within Appendix 2 of the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan [EN0110014/APP/6.4], provides details on the location of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures.

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN0110014

East Pye Solar
ES Appendix 7.3 Landscape Assessment Tables
APP/6.3.7.3



Baseline and Sensitivity*				Magnitude of Effect and Significance									
Landscape Receptor	Value of Landscape Receptor	Susceptibility to Change	Overall Sensitivity	Relevant Scheme elements	Scheme Stage	Description of Change to the Character	Size Scale	Geographical Extent	Duration	Reversibility	Overall Magnitude	Type and Direction of Effect	Level of Significance of Effect
					Operation Year 15	By year 15 the proposed mitigation measures such as internal hedgerow reinforcement, woodland and scrub planting would have established to provide their environmental function essentially helping integrate the development into its setting. The landscape mitigation would support reducing the visibility of the Scheme, albeit this would have an effect on the open valley character. Measures would also provide some beneficial aspects including enhancement of the landscape character through reinforcement of woodland belts whilst supporting habitat connectivity and supporting biodiversity gains such as through delivering areas of species rich grassland. The change in character as a result of the Scheme will remain, however this will remain as a localised change affecting part of the Site. The effect of the Scheme would result in limited change to some of the key characteristics of the Site by Year 15. Direct effects would be contained to the Site and indirect effects generally limited to areas adjacent to the Site. It is considered the key characteristics (agricultural landscape and landform) will be preserved albeit these masked by the Scheme. Furthermore, the presence of established mitigation measures, together with retention of existing features will reinforce characteristic features which fit with the prevailing character, and respond positively to overarching landscape guidelines, leading to a reduction in the size and scale of reported effects. As such, the overall landscape character would remain largely intact, but the Scheme would continue to have the following effects on the key characteristics of the Site: • Small-scale increase in perceived human influence due to presence of solar PV arrays, and associated infrastructure (fences, access routes, and CCTV), resulting in changes to the land cover and pattern of the rural landscape. • Small-scale localised effect on the open valley character, due to reduced visibility as a result of increased vegetation cover, albeit this is not uncharacteristic within the landscape. • Small-scale experiential effects within the landscape, including PRow and recreational routes, with effects including solar PV arrays being present in agricultural fields, the colour contrast between solar PV arrays and surroundings, and solar PV arrays being seen above hedgerows. • Small-scale change to the remote and tranquil qualities of the Site result from energy generation activities. • Small-scale localised effects on the open valley character resulting from landscape mitigation planting and the presence of energy infrastructure.	Small	Adjacent Landscape	Long-term	Reversible (Solar)	Slight	Adverse Direct & Indirect	Moderate Significant
					Decommission	During decommissioning, effects are predicted to be similar to those experienced during the construction phase, albeit in reverse, with land within the Order Limits returned to its former use as far as practicable. Areas of landscape mitigation planting (trees, woodland, hedgerows, scrub) will be left in situ and would continue to provide landscape and biodiversity functions and reduce visibility of the uncharacteristic elements.	Medium	Adjacent Landscape	Short-term	Reversible (Decommission Activity)	Moderate	Adverse Direct & Indirect	Major Significant

Terminology for Landscape Effect:

Landscape Value:	Very High, High, Medium, Low	Duration:	Long-term, Medium-term, Short-term, Brief
Susceptibility to Change:	High, Medium, Low	Reversibility:	Permanent / Partially Reversible / Reversible
Overall Sensitivity of Receptor:	Very High, High, Medium, Low	Overall Magnitude of Effect:	Major, Moderate, Slight, Negligible, No Change
Size/Scale of Visual Effect:	Very Large, Large, Medium, Small, Very Small, No Change	Type and Direction of Effect:	Direct, Indirect, Adverse, Beneficial, Neutral
Geographical Extent of Effect:	Wider Landscape, Landscape Character Type/Area, Adjacent Landscape, Site	Level of Significance of Effect:	Substantial, Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible, No change / Significant, Not Significant

*Refer to ES Appendix 7.2: Landscape Baseline (EN0110014/APP/6.3.7.2)

Figure 2 Green Infrastructure Strategy within Appendix 2 of the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (EN0110014/APP/6.4), provides details on the location of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures.

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN0110014

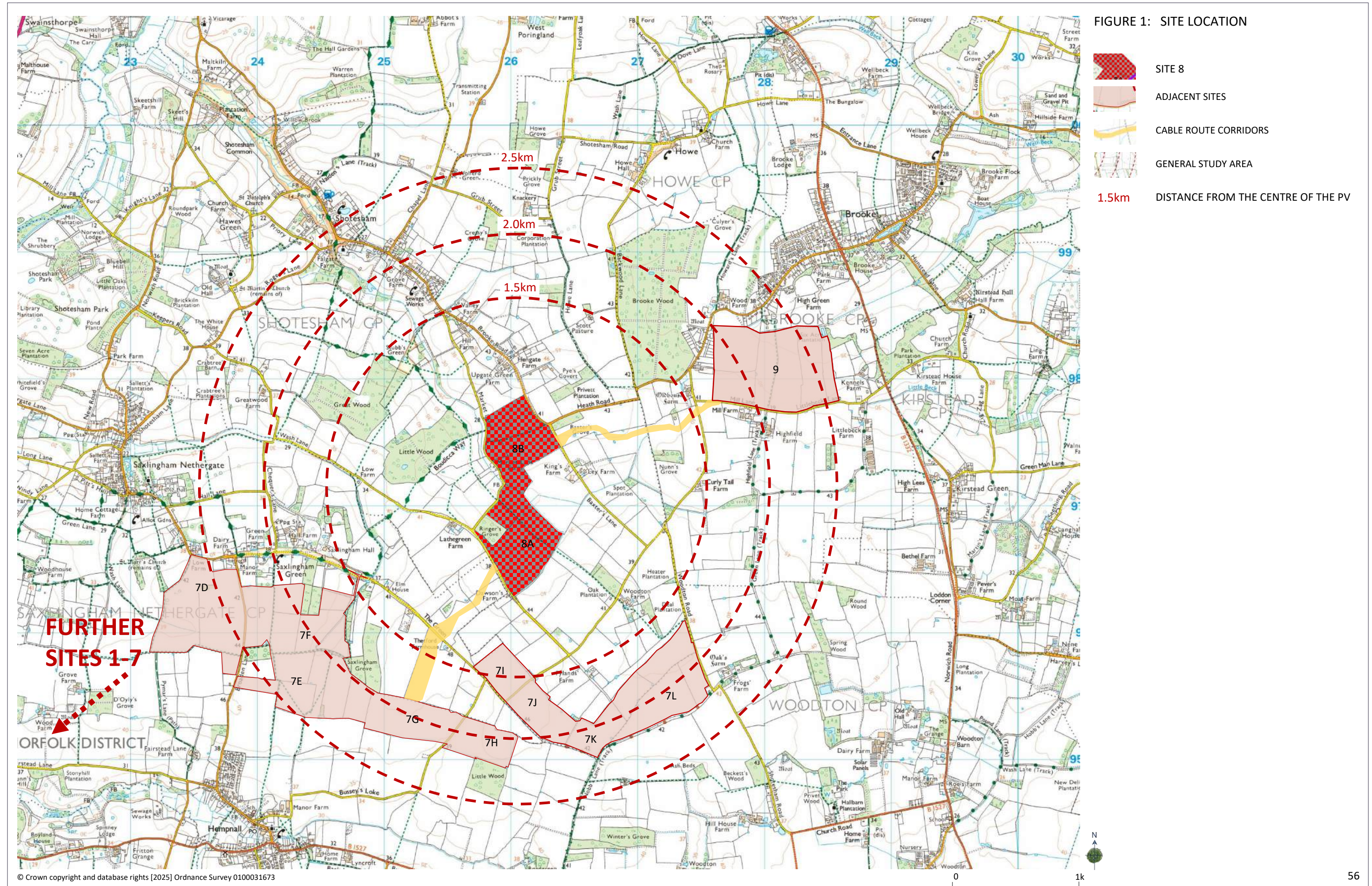
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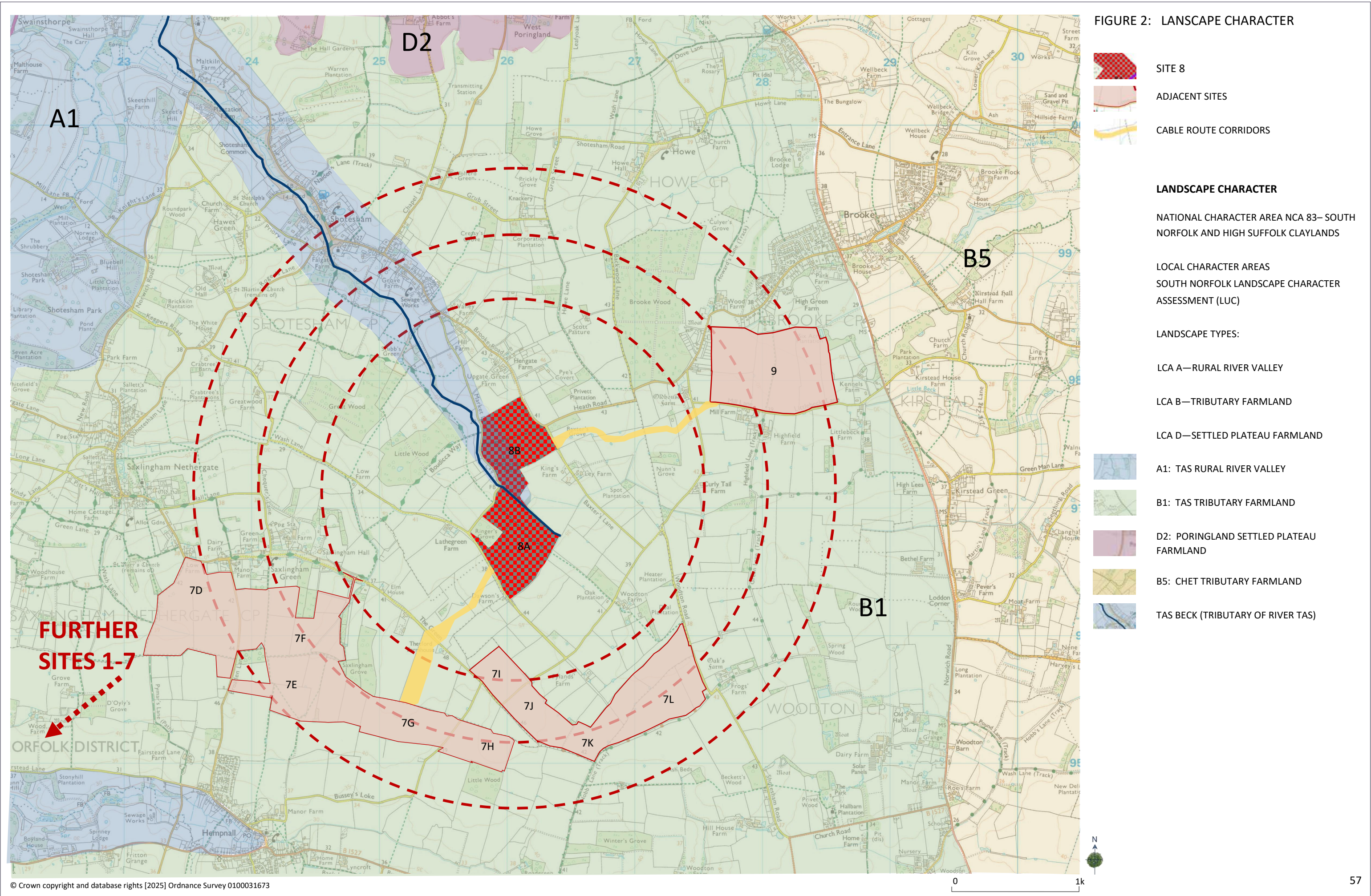
East Pye Solar
 ES: Chapter 20 – Summary of Residual Significant Effects
 APP/6.1.20

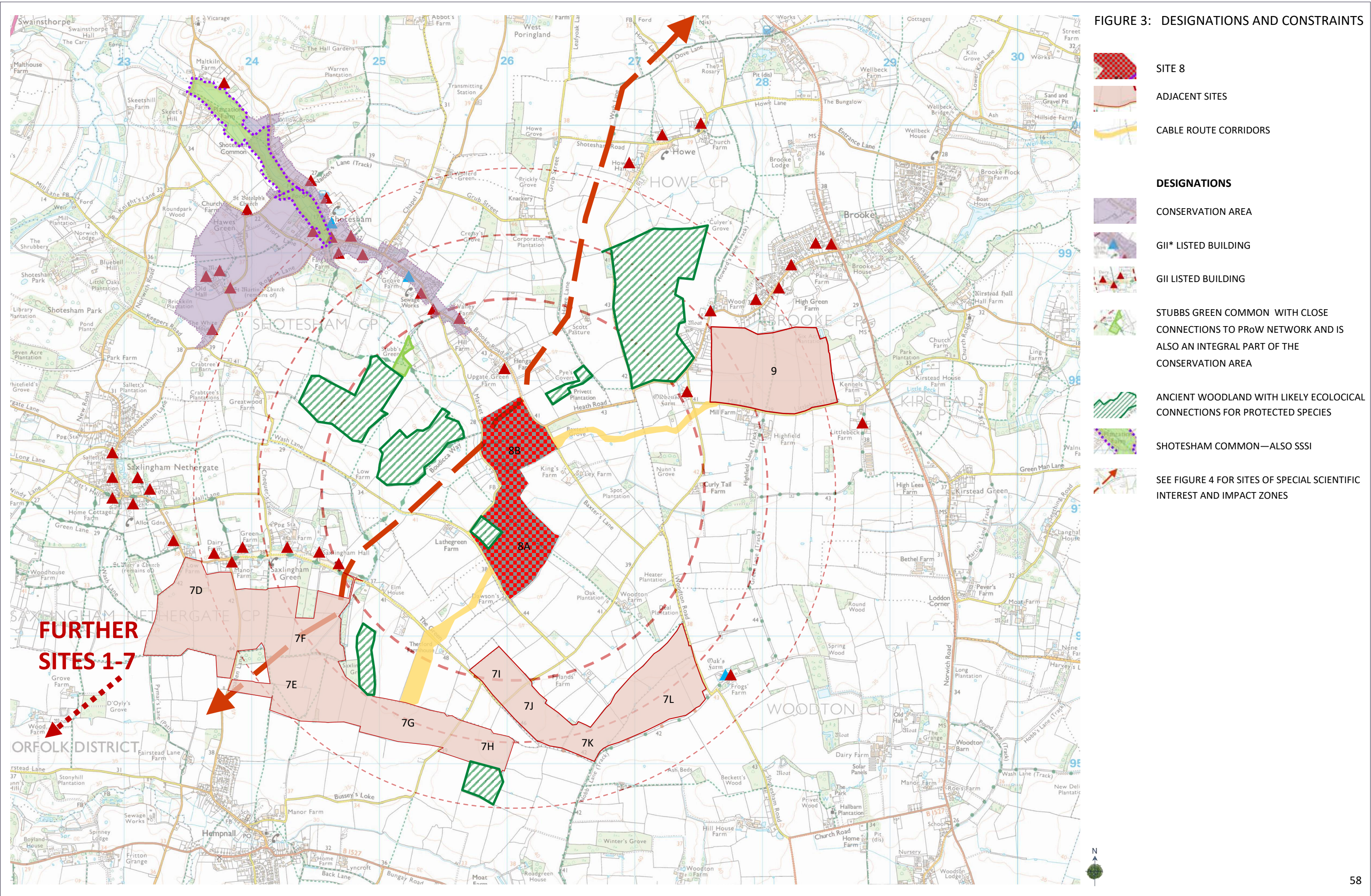


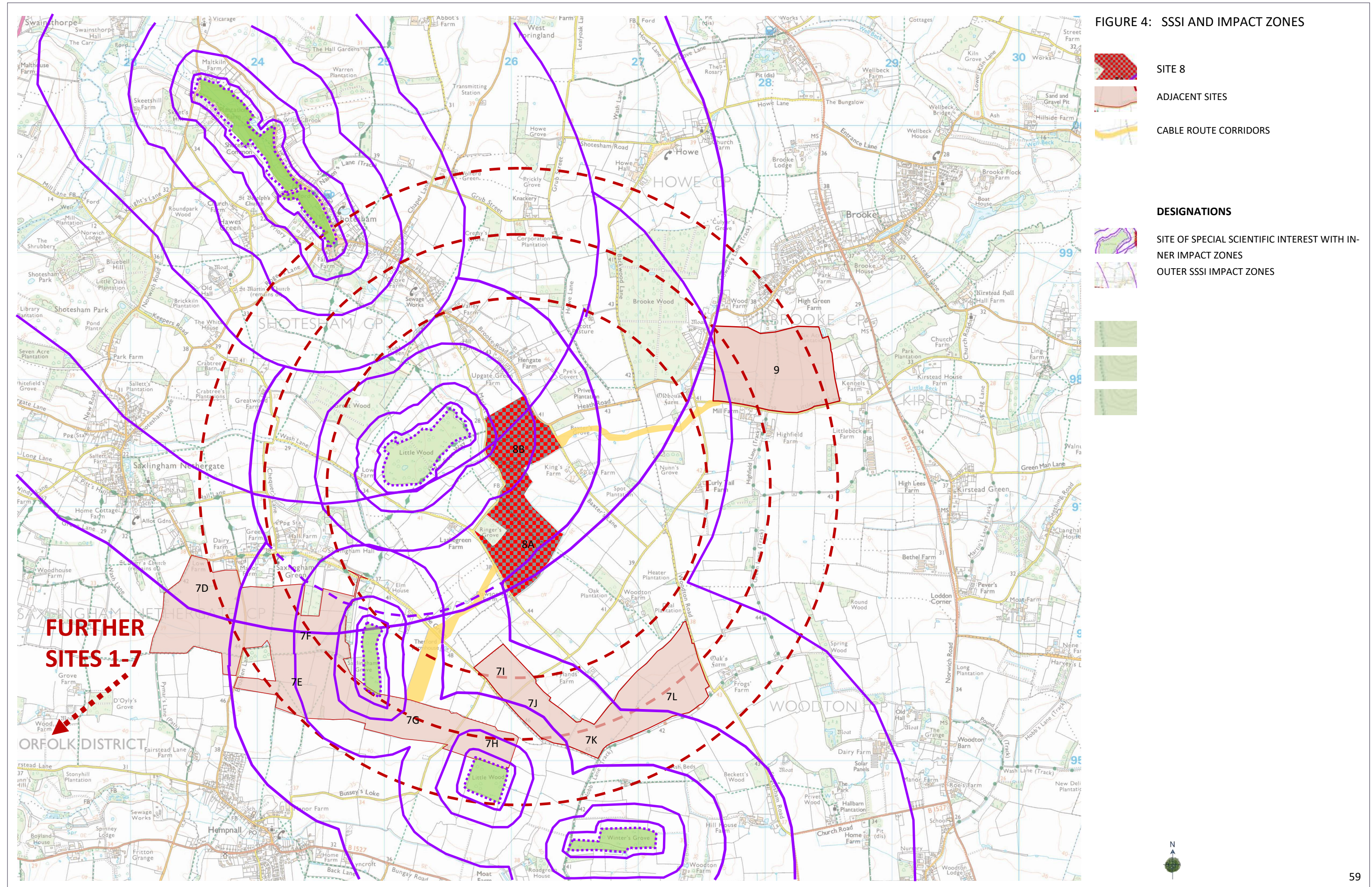
Table 20.1: Summary of Significant Residual Effects (Construction)

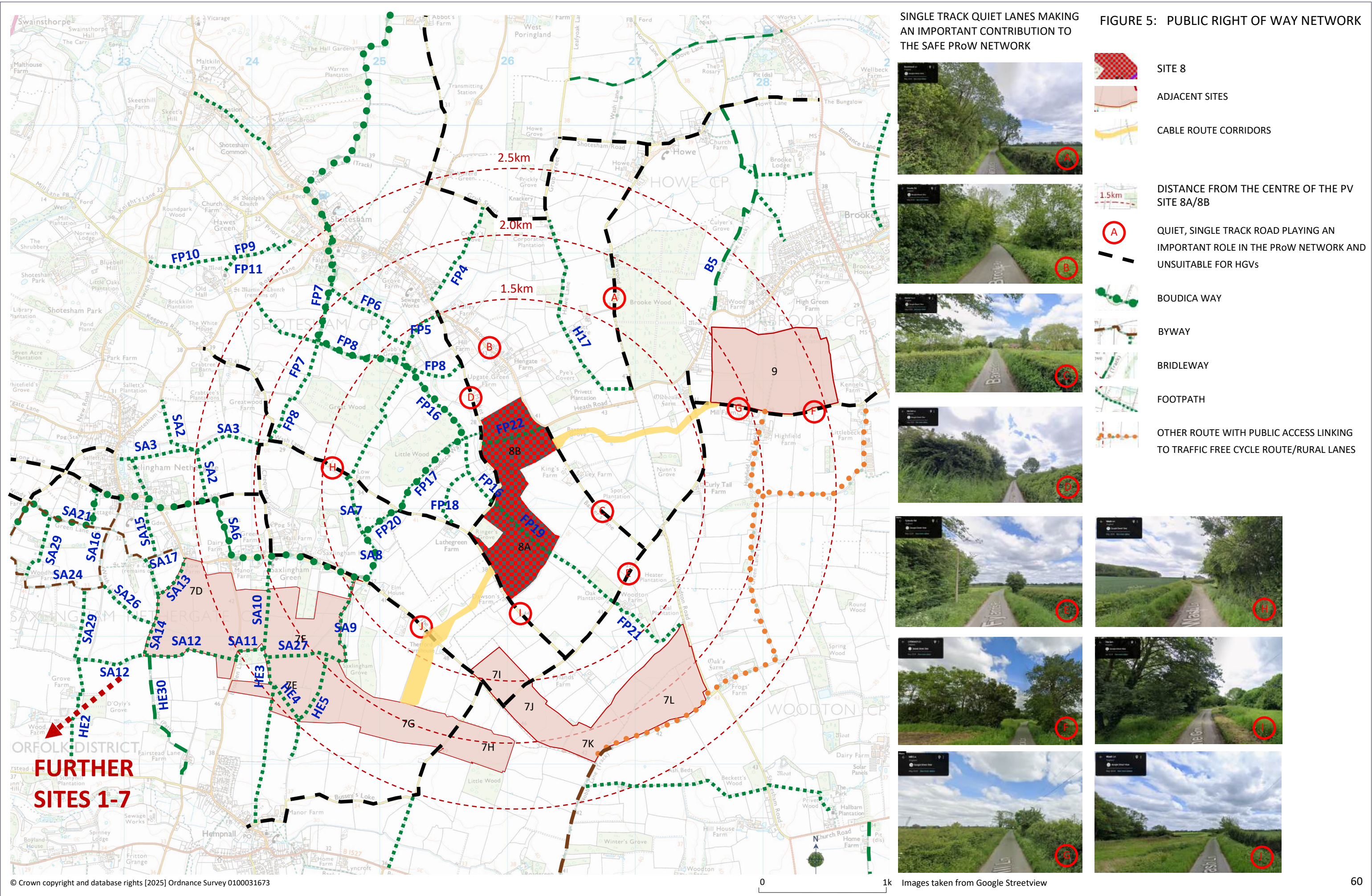
Receptor of Resource/Receptor and Effects	Sensitivity (value)	Description of Impact	Duration	Residual significant effect
Climate Change				
No significant residual effects on climate change are predicted during the construction of the Scheme.				
Landscape and Visual				
Via Beata Long Distance Walking Route / Recreational Route	High	Landscape	Short-term	Moderate Adverse
NCA 83 South Norfolk and High Suffolk Claylands	Medium	Landscape	Short-term	Moderate Adverse
LCA A1 Tas Rural River Valley	High	Landscape	Short-term	Moderate Adverse
LCA B1 Tas Tributary Farmland	Medium	Landscape	Short-term	Major Adverse
LCA B5 Chet Tributary Farmland	High	Landscape	Short-term	Moderate Adverse
LCA C2 Thurlton Tributary Farmland with Parkland	High	Landscape	Short-term	Moderate Adverse
LCA E2 Great Moulton Plateau Farmland	Medium	Landscape	Short-term	Major Adverse











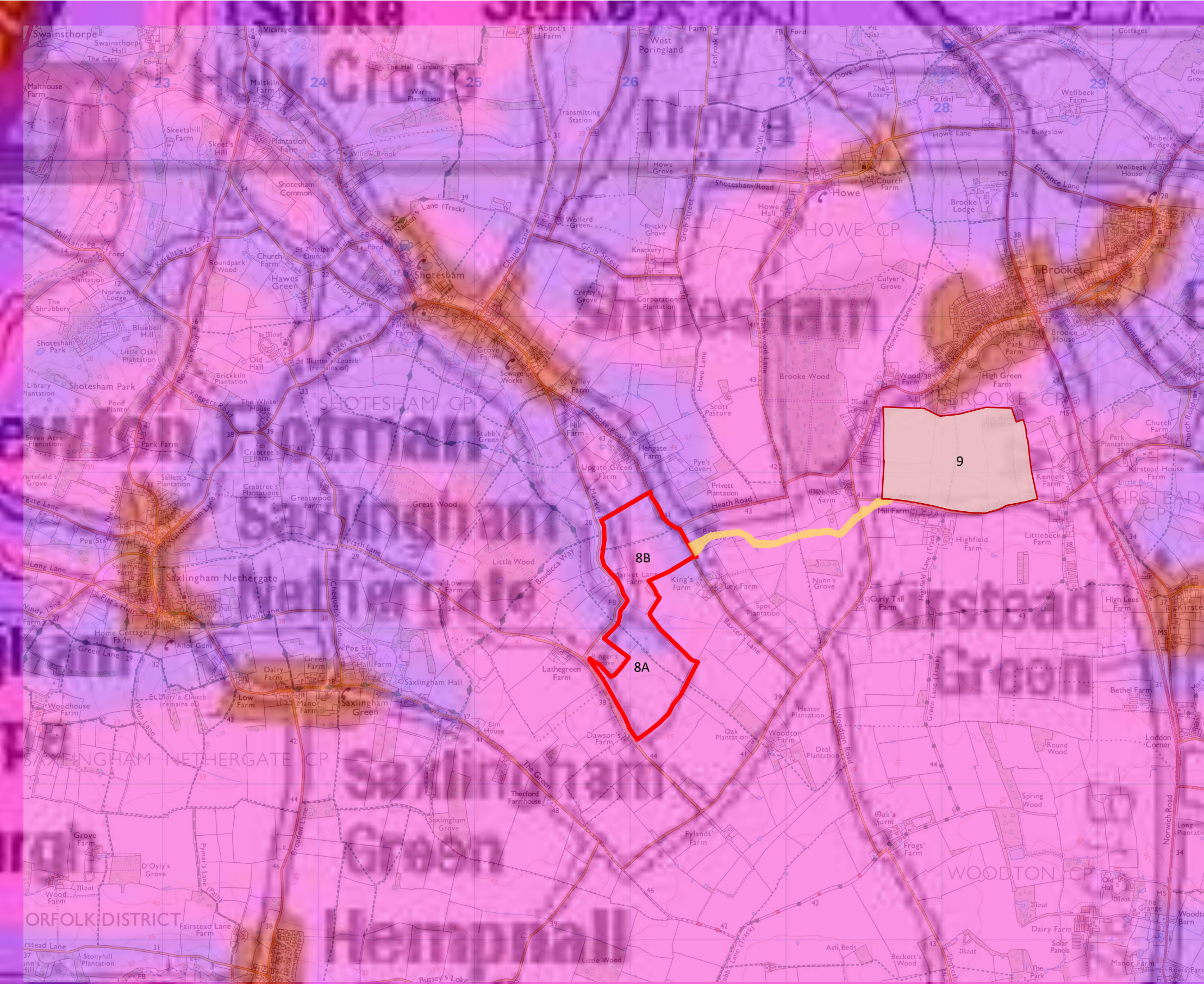
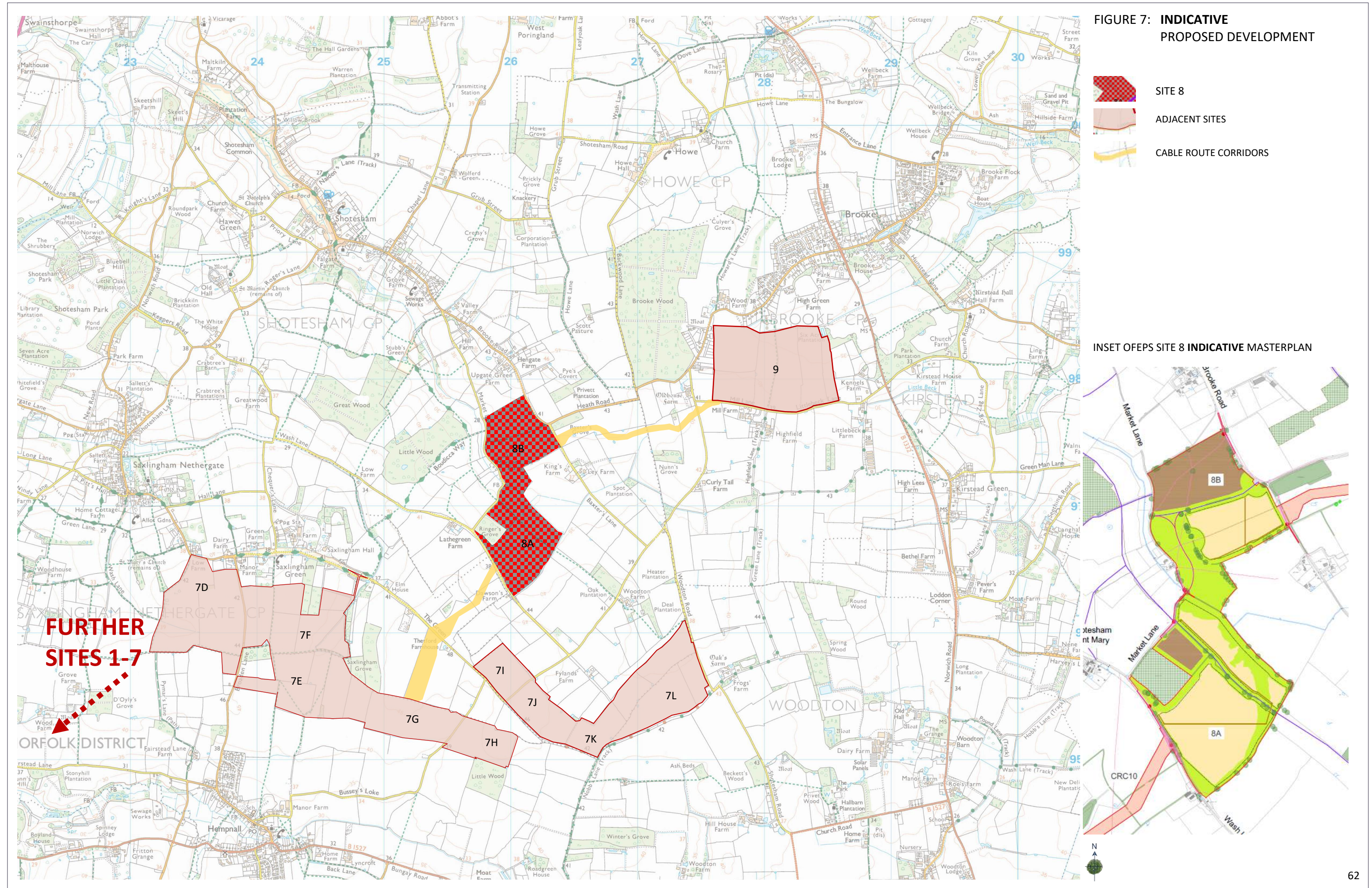


FIGURE 6: **EARLY SITE SELECTION ALC MAPPING USED BY EPS SHOWING SHOTESHAM (AND SAXLINGHAM) ON LAND HIGHLY LIKELY TO BE BEST AND MOST VERSATILE (BMV) LAND—INDICATIVE OVERLAY**

-  SITE 8
-  ADJACENT SITES
-  CABLE ROUTE CORRIDORS
-  MODERATE LIKELIHOOD OF BEST AND MOST VERSATILE (BMV) LAND
-  HIGH LIKELIHOOD OF BMV LAND



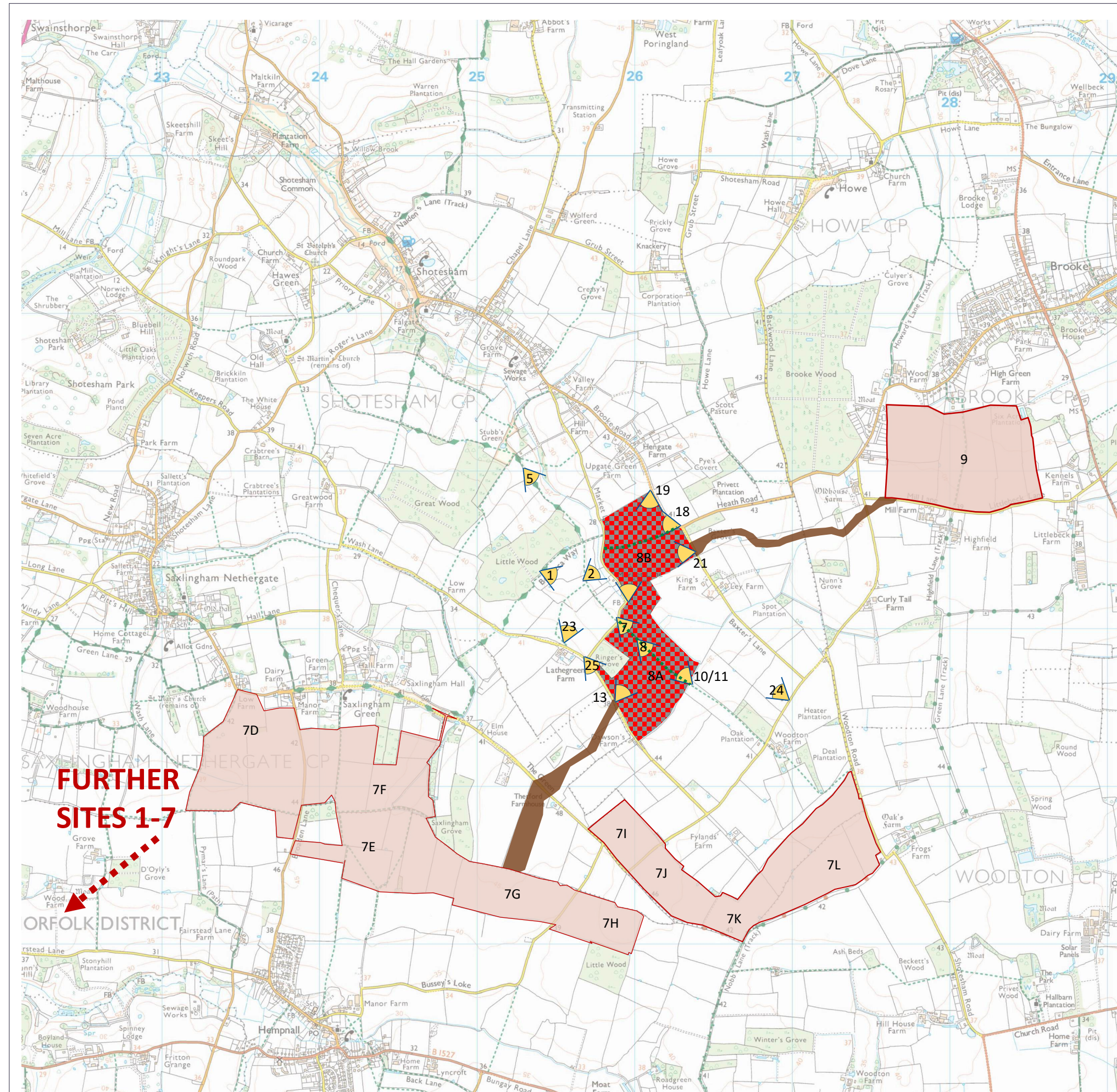
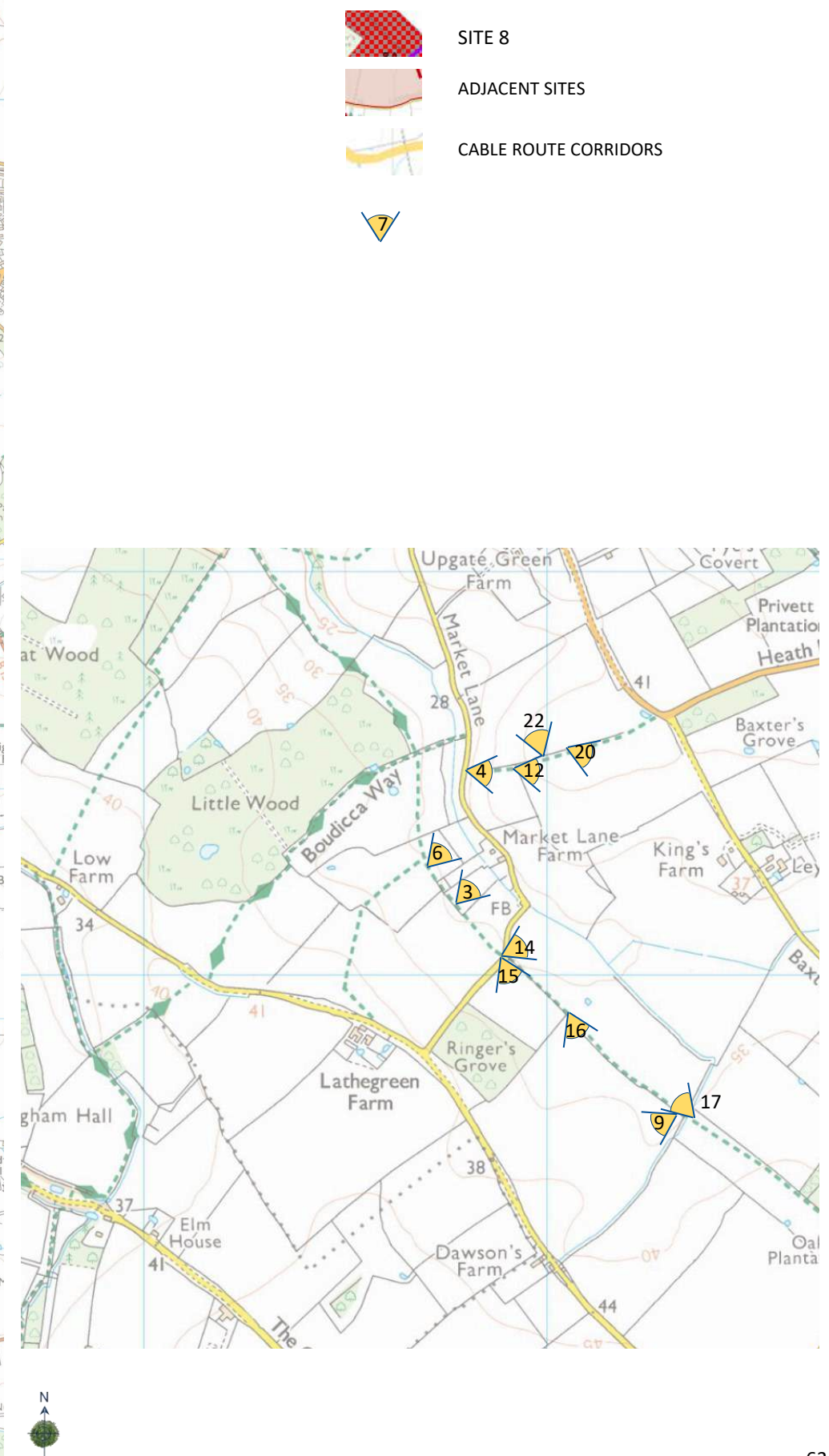
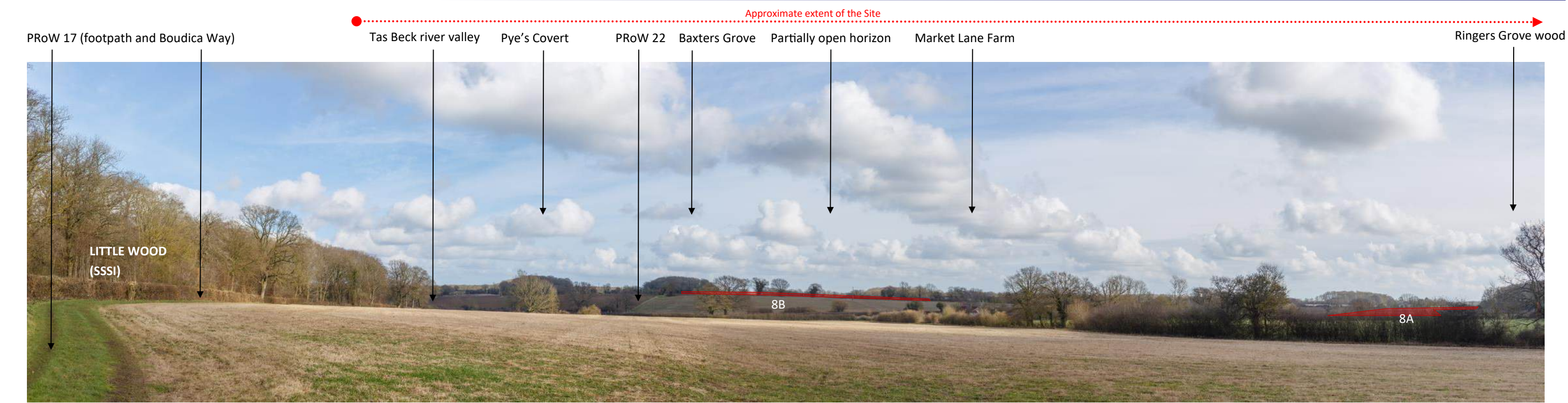


FIGURE 7: VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS



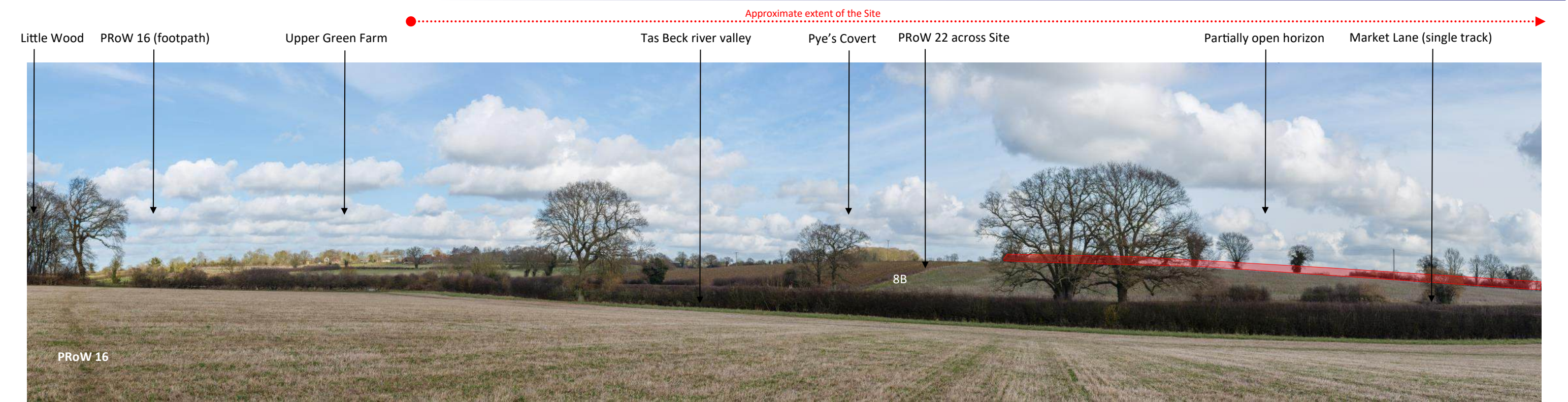
APPENDIX A

PHOTOGRAPHIC VIEWPOINTS



VIEWPOINT 1: View looking northeast from further along PRoW 17 (footpath and Boudica Way) towards the main bulk of Parcel 8b. Parcel 8a lies to the right of the view.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
	FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT		(SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW			
BASELINE: This viewpoint is looking northeast from further along PRoW 17 (footpath and Boudica Way) towards the main bulk of Parcel 8b adjacent to the northeastern boundary of Little Wood (SSSI and Ancient Woodland). This route is also part of the Boudica Way a 36 mile long distance Norfolk path linking Norwich and Diss. The Site forms a large part of this view on rising land to the east/southeast across the Tas river tributary known as Shotesham Beck. The scene is a wholly bucolic one, forming part of a larger area of tranquil and isolated landscape. The view offers a strong rural character with vegetation representative of the local area with a mix of wooded and open horizons. Relatively small scale field patterns offer a mosaic of features. There are no detracting features in this view. Scattered farmsteads to the centre of the view are consistent with the historic edge of village character with isolated farmsteads forming part of the local character. Market Lane Farm is visible within the valley bottom with a backdrop of the Site beyond. The view is mid range and the Site is very evident in the view. The area is a ‘Valued Landscape’ (see section 4.10 of the report) affording it enhanced protection within National and Local Policy. The view is representative of the route along PRoW 17. PROPOSALS: The proposed development will make up a moderate-large part of this view. Due to the sloping ground and the open horizon, the proposed development cannot be screened from this viewpoint. The hedgerow across Site 8b will obscure some development but this will be limited and any development on the higher land will be very visible. Development will be completely at odds with the bucolic scene and will form a strong detracting feature in the landscape where views from along this PRoW are both unavoidable and consistent along the route. AT CONSTRUCTION: There will be inevitable noise, dust and disruption which will be very evident in this view and from along PRoW 17. Visually, the works will be a very strong feature of the landscape for the duration of the construction where the Site makes up a large part of this view and where works will extend across almost the whole of this view. Visual effects will be Major Adverse and significant at Construction. AT YEAR 1: The existing view of the rising land across the river valley and partly open horizon will be replaced with solar arrays. These will be evident across the scene, where only limited areas will be softened by existing vegetation. During summer months some additional screening will occur on the very lower levels but the upper levels of the Site will remain a strong feature of the landscape. Visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 1 where any proposed planting will be immature. RESIDUAL EFFECT: By Year 15, there will be some additional planting provided by the proposed mitigation. However, due to the sloping nature of the Site, it will not be possible to screen the panels from this viewpoint and where the character of this valued landscape has been completely altered, visual effects will remain Major-Moderate Adverse and significant at Year 15.	Almost full view, of Parcel 8b and partial view of 8a from PRoW 17.	HIGH	PEDESTRIANS using PRoW 17 and the Boudica Way	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE	MAJOR ADVERSE	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE
	Mid range view.	REVERSIBLE ONLY IN THE LONG TERM			(SIGNIFICANT)	(SIGNIFICANT)	(SIGNIFICANT)
	Moderate to large part of overall view.						
	Representative of the route along PRoW 17.						



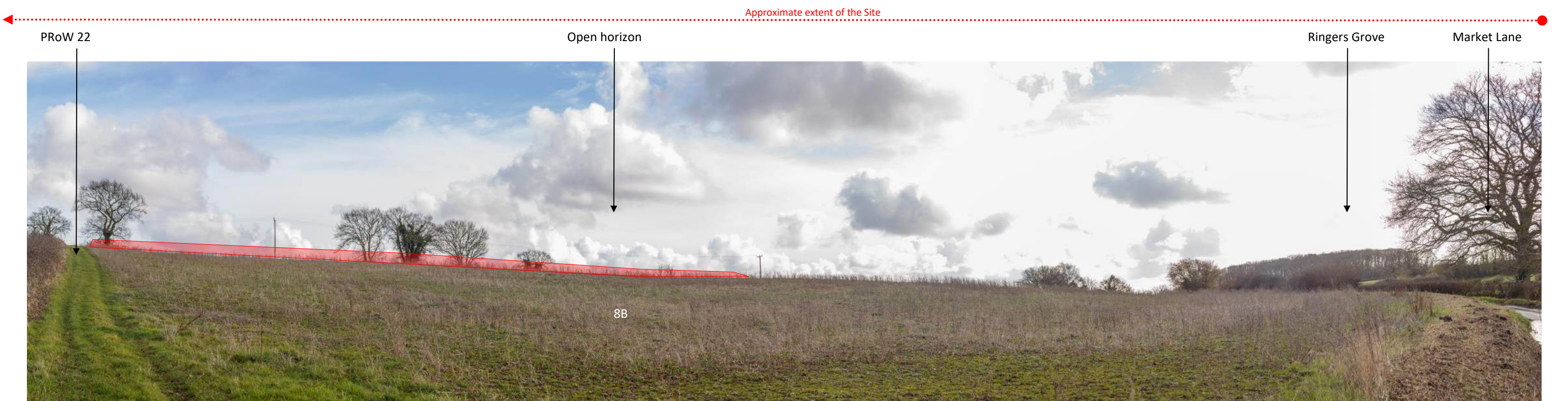
VIEWPOINT 2: View looking northeast-east from further along PRoW 16 to the east of Little Wood where it crosses an arable field running broadly parallel with Market Lane.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
	FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT		(SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW			
BASELINE: This viewpoint is looking northeast from further along PRoW 16 where it crosses a field towards the main bulk of Parcel 8b. This route heads southeast off the Boudica Way where it later joins Market Lane towards Parcel 8a of the proposed development. This part of PRoW 16 crosses an arable field relatively low in the valley where land rises to ahead and behind the viewer at this point. The Site forms a large part of this view on rising land to the east across the Tas river tributary known as Shotesham Beck. The scene is a wholly bucolic one, forming part of a larger area of tranquil and isolated landscape. The view offers a strong rural character with vegetation representative of the local area with a mix of wooded and open horizons. Relatively small scale field patterns offer a mosaic of features. There are no detracting features in this view, scattered farmsteads form part of the local character to the left of the image. Market Lane cuts across the view on the lower land bordered by close cut hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. The lower part of PRoW 22 is visible cutting across Parcel 8b along a field boundary. A hedgerow which crosses 8b (broadly north-south) is just visible in the view, obscuring the higher land beyond from this low viewpoint. The view is mid range and the Site is very evident in the view. The area is a ‘Valued Landscape’ (see section 4.10 of the report) affording it enhanced protection within National and Local Policy. The view is representative of the route along PRoW 16 across this field. PROPOSALS: The proposed development will make up a large part of this view. Due to the sloping ground and the predominantly open horizon, the proposed development cannot be screened from this viewpoint. The hedgerow across parcel 8B will obscure some development but this will be limited and any development on the higher land will be very visible. Development will be completely at odds with the bucolic scene and will form a strong detracting feature in the landscape where views from along this PRoW are both unavoidable and consistent along the route. AT CONSTRUCTION: There will be inevitable noise, dust and disruption which will be very evident in this view and from along PRoW 16. Visually, the works will be a very strong feature of the landscape for the duration of the construction where the Site makes up a large part of this view and where works will extend across almost the whole of this view. Visual effects will be Major Adverse and significant at Construction. AT YEAR 1: The existing view of the rising land across the river valley and partly open horizon will be replaced with solar arrays. These will be evident across the scene, where only limited areas will be softened by existing vegetation. During summer months some additional screening will occur on the very lower levels but development of the upper levels of the Site will remain a strong feature of the landscape. Visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 1 where any proposed planting will be immature. RESIDUAL EFFECT: By Year 15, there will be some additional planting provided by the proposed mitigation. However, due to the sloping nature of the Site, it will not be possible to screen the panels from this viewpoint and where the character of this valued landscape has been completely altered, visual effects will remain Moderate Adverse and significant at Year 15.	Partial view of Parcel 8b from PRoW 16. Close-Mid range view. Moderate-large part of overall view. Representative of the route along PRoW 16.	HIGH REVERSIBLE ONLY IN THE LONG TERM	PEDESTRIANS using PRoW 16	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MODERATE ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)



VIEWPOINT 3: View looking broadly east-southeast from PRow 16 where it passes land at Market Lane Farm showing both Site 8a and 8b.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE)	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
BASELINE: This viewpoint is looking broadly east-southeast from PRoW 16 adjacent to land/garden at Market Lane Farm showing part of Parcel 8b and part of 8a to the right of the view. This part of PRoW 16 crosses behind Market Lane Farm which obscures views towards the some of Site 8b. However, the rising land beyond the dwelling is visible through intervening vegetation. The Site forms a large part of this view on rising land to the east across the Tas river tributary known as Shotesham Beck. The scene is predominantly a bucolic one, with some minor detracting features of paddock fencing etc in this view. The relatively small scale field patterns offer a mosaic of features. Market Lane sits beyond the building and hedgerow on the low land bordered by close cut hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees. Hedgerow trees which crosse 8b (broadly north-south) are visible in the view, with the ridgeline obscuring the higher land beyond from this low viewpoint. The view is mid-close range and the Site is very evident in the view. The area is a ‘Valued Landscape’ (see section 4.10 of the report) affording it enhanced protection within National and Local Policy. The view is representative of the route that continues along PRoW 16 across this field where land is beginning to level out a little to the southeast and towards Parcel 8a. PROPOSALS: The proposed development will make up a modearate part of this view. Due to the sloping ground, the proposed development is unlikely to be fully screened from this viewpoint. The hedgerow along Market Lane will obscure some development but this will be limited, and any development on the higher land is likely to be visible. Development will be completely at odds with the bucolic scene until mitigation planting is fully established (potentilly by Year 15) and will form a strong detracting feature in the landscape where views from along this PRoW are both unavoidable and consistent along the route. AT CONSTRUCTION: There will be inevitable noise, dust and disruption which will be very evident in this view and from along PRoW 16. Visually, the works will be a very strong feature of the landscape for the duration of the construction where the Site makes up the majority of this view and where works will extend across almost the whole of this view. Visual effects will be Major Adverse and significant at Construction. AT YEAR 1: The existing view of the rising land across the river valley and partly open horizon will be replaced with solar arrays. These will be evident across the scene, where only limited areas will be softened by existing vegetation. During summer months some additional screening will occur on the very lower levels but development of the upper levels of the Site will remain a strong feature of the landscape. Visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 1 where any proposed planting will be immature. Effects for residents at Market Lane Farm will be significant and Major Adverse at all stages RESIDUAL EFFECT: By Year 15, there will be some additional planting provided by the proposed mitigation. However, due to the sloping nature of the Site, it may not be possible to screen the panels from this viewpoint completely and where the character of this valued landscape has been completely altered and views will still remain, visual effects will remain Major-Moderate Adverse and significant at Year 15 for pedestrians and Major Adverse for residents.	Partial view of Parcel 8b and 8a from PRoW 16. Close-Mid range view. Moderate part of overall view. Representative of the route along PRoW 16.	HIGH REVERSIBLE ONLY IN THE LONG TERM	PEDESTRIANS using PRoW 16 RESIDENTS at Market Lane Farm	HIGH HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)



VIEWPOINT 4: View looking east-southeast across the lower level of the southern section of Site 8b showing PRoW 22 (footpath) to the left of the view and Market Lane to the right.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
BASELINE: This viewpoint is looking broadly east-southeast across the lower level of the southern section of Site 8b showing PRoW 22 (footpath) to the left of the view and Market Lane to the right. The land is rising to the east at this point with the predominantly open horizon. A few trees mark the hedgerow line that crosses this southern section of 8b. A low hedge bounds the footpath, evident to the left of this view. The remainder of 8b lies to the left, right and ahead beyond the horizon to this view. Ringers Grove can be seen to the right of the view. A row of small electricity poles runs across this lower level, evident against the open skyline. Market Lane Farm lies just beyond the bank to the right of the view off Market Lane on the lower valley bottom. Land rises relatively steeply for this area where PRoW 22 follows an existing hedgerow over the crest and joins Baxters Lane/Brooke Road. PROPOSALS: The proposed development will make up almost all of this view. Development will be very close range, running along both the road and the PRoW where panels and fencing will totally dominate this view. Due to the sloping ground and close (immediate) range, the proposed development cannot be fully screened from this viewpoint. Development will be completely at odds with the bucolic scene. Views into the Site on both sides of the Prow and from the Market Lane will be unavoidable and consistent along both routes. Proposed mitigation will enclose the PRoW making a tunnel effect in contradiction to its current open character where long range views across the valley and local landscape are a very strong feature of the route. The character and user experience will be completely adversely affected. AT CONSTRUCTION: There will be inevitable noise, dust and disruption which will dominate the footpath and Market Lane at very close range in the immediate context. Visually, the works will be an overbearing feature of the landscape for the duration of the construction where the Site makes up the majority of this view and where works will extend across almost the whole of this view. Visual effects will be Major Adverse and significant at Construction. AT YEAR 1: The existing view of the rising land on the valley side and predominantly open horizon will be replaced with solar arrays and associated fencing. These will be evident across the whole scene. Any mitigation planting will be immature and the character of this view will be significantly altered. Although the footpath will remain open, the user experience will be a very hostile one, being surrounded on both sides by fencing and solar arrays. Visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 1. Effects for residents at Market Lane Farm will be significant and Major Adverse at all stages RESIDUAL EFFECT: By Year 15, there will be some additional planting provided by the proposed mitigation. However, due to the close range nature of the Site, it will not be possible to screen the panels from this viewpoint completely. Mitigation planting will enclose PRoW 22 removing valued views, and where the character of this valued landscape has been completely altered and views of panels will still remain, visual effects will remain Moderate Adverse and significant at Year 15.	Partial view of Parcel 8b from PRoW 22. Close (immediate) range view. Almost full part of overall view. Specific viewpoint at the junction between PRoW 22 and Market Lane.	HIGH REVERSIBLE ONLY IN THE LONG TERM	PEDESTRIANS using PRoW 22 PEDESTRIANS/ CYCLISTS/RIDERS using Market Lane	HIGH HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MODERATE ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)



VIEWPOINT 5: View looking southeast from a particularly scenic part of the valley bottom, having just left Stubbs Green (common) on Footpath 16.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
This view is framed by two blocks of woodland with an open horizon between with scattered trees in the mid-distance. Solar arrays would replace the horizon scene and mitigation planting would take some years to screen these elements. In itself, mitigation would also change the nature of this framed view in the longer term and although the Site makes up a relatively small part of the view, it is a highly important part. Views would be exacerbated during winter months.	Partial view of Site 8b Mid-long distance Representative of PRoW 16	HIGH—in relation to existing bucolic scene PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS / CYCLISTS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT

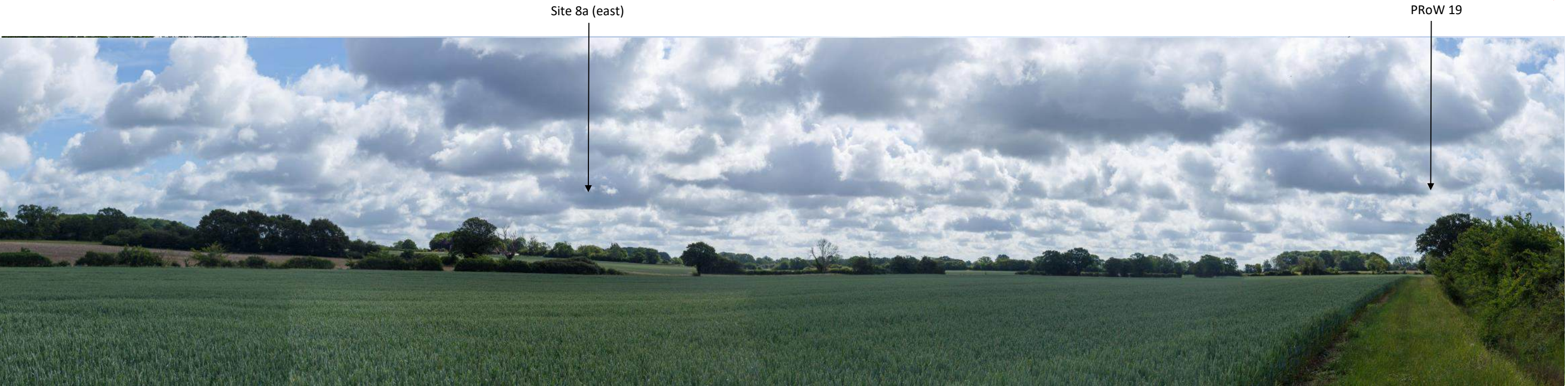




VIEWPOINT 6: View looking east to southeast from Footpath 16 towards Market Lane Farm.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
Views across and up the valley side show a predominantly and open horizon with scattered trees and larger trees in the mid-distance. Footpath 22 rising up the hillside is visible to the left of the scene. Mitigation would take some time to screen solar arrays and this would, in itself alter the character of the horizon in the longer term. Although development does not take up a large part of the view, due to its location on the horizon, it forms a particularly detracting feature.	Partial view, partly glimpsed through vegeta- tion. Representative of a s	MEDIUM-HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS / CYCLISTS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT



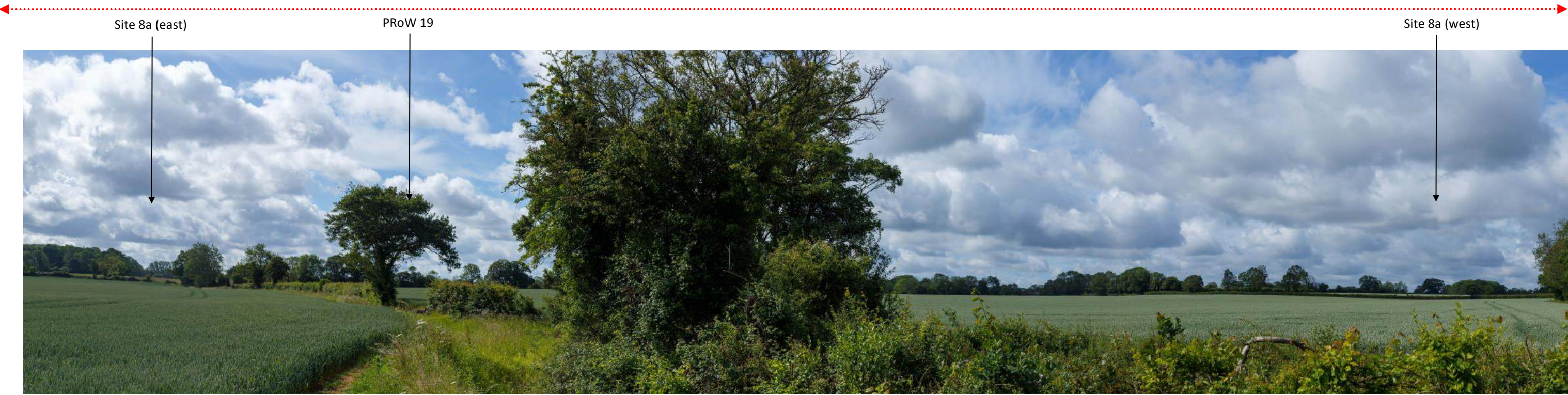


VIEWPOINT 7: View looking southeast along Footpath 19 (shown in yellow), clearly showing the characteristic valley bottom field pattern of a long, thin field. With gently rising land to the left and right of this view.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
The character of the Footpath along the western edge of this parcel is scenic and open. Further along, solar arrays will appear on both sides of this PROW. Proposed mitigation planting will not be able to fully screen the close range views and will take several years to develop. The mitigation in itself will have a harmful effect on the character of both the landscape and the PROW, replacing a pleasant, open walk with an enclosed, darker and necessarily muddier path for this long stretch of footpath.	Partial view only of Site 8a Close to mid range views Representative of views along the PROW	VERY HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT



Note: coloured blocks represent ground level of area with potential to have panels and will include mitigation which at present is indicative only. Note, this does not show heights of panels which would obscure views beyond in the close range views.



VIEWPOINT 8: View looking south-southeast further along ProW 19, showing a small part of both parcels within Site 8a.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
Further south along ProW 19, views of the western parcel of Site 8a open up fully. This open and scenic footpath will be replaced with solar arrays to either side completely dominating the walk. Mitigation will take some time to filter views, but close range views will not be fully mitigated even in the longer term. Mitigation in itself will have a serious adverse impact on the character of both the views and the experiential element of this route. Prow surrounded by hedgerows on either sides become dark and therefore muddy on this heavy land and become very unpleasant during winter months. There will be a perception of reduced safety along this long enclosed path.	Partial view only of both parcels within Site 8 Close and mid range views Representative of ProW 19	VERY HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS / CYCLISTS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT



Note: coloured blocks represent ground level of area with potential to have panels and will include mitigation which at present is indicative only. Note, this does not show heights of panels which would obscure views beyond in the close range views.



VIEWPOINT 9: View looking west towards Dawsons Farm on Wash Lane. This view is from PRoW 19 looking across the western parcel of Site 8a. Development continues right of this view and behind the viewer.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
Solar arrays will fill this parcel which runs from the footpath to wash lane and is south of Ringers Grove to the right of the view. Access is required from the eastern parcel of Site 8a and therefore views into the whole site will be clear. The access road will cross the PRoW. The bucolic scene will be re-placed with solar arrays, fencing and associated infrastructure and will completely impact on the character of views from this well used PRoW where panels will be situated for 180 degrees from this PRoW.	Partial view only on the western parcel of Site 8a Close to mid range views Representative of the route But specific to the gateway	VERY HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT



Note: coloured blocks represent ground level of area with potential to have panels and will include mitigation which at present is indicative only. Note, this does not show heights of panels which would obscure views beyond in the close range views.

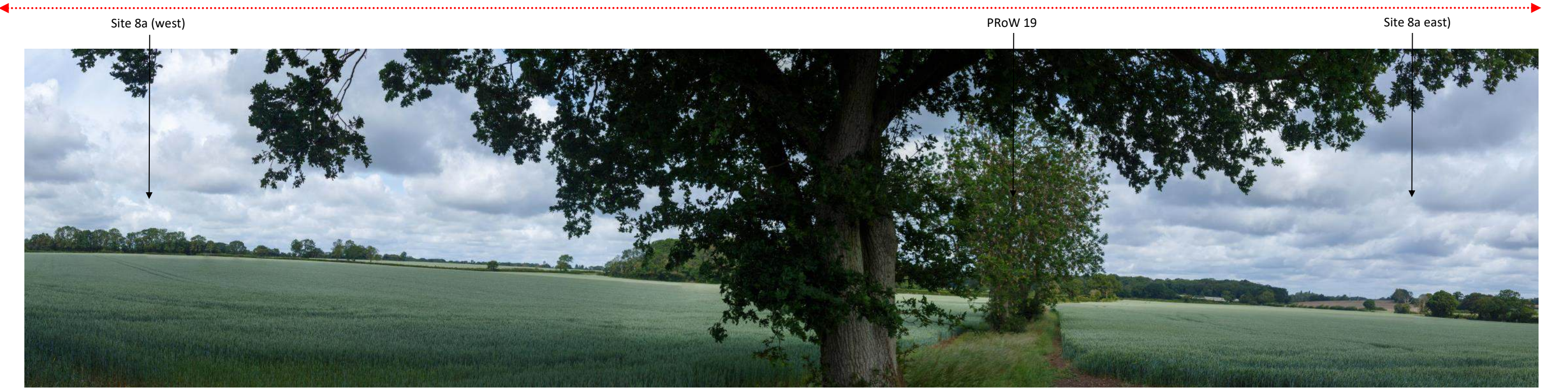


VIEWPOINT 10: View looking north and is a continuation of the previous viewpoint showing the western parcel of 8a. This view shows the eastern parcel of 8a and 8b in the distance.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
This view is looking broadly north back down PRoW 19 towards Shotesham. The western parcel of 8a lies to the left of this view and the development will completely dominate the scene. Although areas of mitigation are proposed within the flood zone to the centre and right of this view and around the footpath, it will, in itself be harmful to the character of the area where views will be totally foreshortened and the PRoW will become a darker, enclosed path in contrast to the open and bucolic scene that prevails. Site 8b, together with the wooded horizon will be screened by mitigation planting and solar arrays in the foreground.	Almost full view of the eastern parcel to Site 8a with parcel 8b in the distance on the valley side.	VERY HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT



Note: coloured blocks represent ground level of area with potential to have panels and will include mitigation which at present is indicative only. Note, this does not show heights of panels which would obscure views beyond in the close range views.



VIEWPOINT 11: View looking west

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
This view is looking broadly north back down PRoW 19 towards Shotesham. The western parcel of 8a lies to the left of this view and the development will completely dominate the scene. Although areas of mitigation are proposed within the flood zone to the centre and right of this view and around the footpath, it will, in itself be harmful to the character of the area where views will be totally foreshortened and the PRoW (19 shown in yellow) will become a darker, enclosed path in contrast to the open and bucolic scene that prevails. Site 8b, together with the wooded horizon will be screened by mitigation planting and solar arrays in the foreground.	Almost full view of the eastern parcel to Site 8a with parcel 8b in the distance on the valley side.	VERY HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT



Note: coloured blocks represent ground level of area with potential to have panels and will include mitigation which at present is indicative only. Note, this does not show heights of panels which would obscure views beyond in the close range views.

PRoW 22

Scattered trees across Site 8B on ridgeline)



VIEWPOINT 12: View looking east-southeast from Footpath 22 at a high point on the hedgeline that cuts across northwest to southeast.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
Solar arrays in the foreground will obscure views of the existing treed horizon beyond Baxters Lane. Mitigation in itself ill have significant harmful effects where the need to screen solar arrays will require enclosing Footpath 22 and the very open and important views from this route.	Almost full view of the southeastern parcel of Site B . Close to mid range Representative of PRoW 22	VERY HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT



Note: coloured blocks represent ground level of area with potential to have panels and will include mitigation which at present is indicative only. Note, this does not show heights of panels which would obscure views beyond in the close range views.



VIEWPOINT 13: View looking north-northeast over the western parcel of Site 8a, through the eastern parcel and up to Site 8b across the valley.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
Views of the solar arrays in Site 8b may be hidden by those in the foreground. Close distance views will remain detracting for many years. Mitigation will eventually close down this open and scenic view.	Partial view, partly glimpsed through vegeta- tion. Representative of a s	VERY HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS / CYCLISTS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
			ROAD USERS	LOW			



Note: coloured blocks represent ground level of area with potential to have panels and will include mitigation which at present is indicative only. Note, this does not show heights of panels which would obscure views beyond in the close range views.



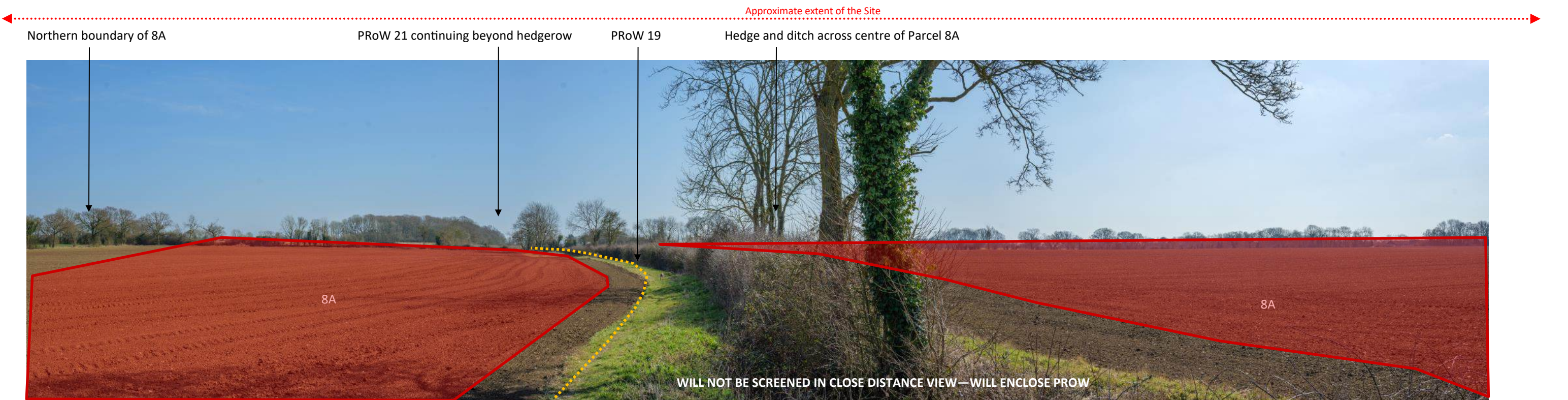
VIEWPOINT 14: View looking east-northeast from the point where PRoW 16 crosses Market Lane to become PRoW 19 and heads southeast through the middle of Site 8A showing part of Parcel 8A and 8B—potential mitigation areas illustrated.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
BASELINE: This viewpoint is looking east-northeast from the point where PRoW 16 crosses Market Lane to become PRoW 19 and heads southeast through the middle of Site 8A. The view shows Site 8A in the foreground and 8B beyond on the rising ground. There are no detracting features in this view and Market Lane forms a single tracked lane with protected verges either side. Land is beginning to level out at this point where the land to the north is more undulating but 8B is still visible rising up from the Tas Beck valley bottom. This is a very tranquil area and has a strong sense of remoteness within the local context in open farmland between Shotesham and Saxlingham/Hempnall. This is a well used and highly regarded route noted for its tranquility and access to the wider rural network to the south of Shotesham. PROPOSALS: The proposed development will make up the whole of this view. Development will be very close range, running along the PRoW and Market Lane where panels and fencing will totally dominate this view. Due to the close (immediate) range, the proposed development cannot be fully screened from this viewpoint, particularly during winter months. Development will be completely at odds with the bucolic scene. Views of development along Market Lane and the PRoW be unavoidable and consistent. Proposed mitigation will enclose the PRoW making a tunnel effect in contradiction to its current open character where long range views across the valley and local landscape are a very strong feature of the route. The character and user experience will be completely compromised forming major adverse effects. This area is open and highly scenic and its character will be completely compromised by the proposed development. AT CONSTRUCTION: There will be inevitable noise, dust and disruption which will dominate the footpath and links to it at very close range in the immediate context. Visually, the works will be an overbearing feature of the landscape for the duration of the construction where the Site makes up the majority of this view and where works will extend across the whole width of this view and beyond. Visual effects will be Major Adverse and significant at Construction. AT YEAR 1: The existing bucolic view will be replaced with solar arrays and associated fencing. These will be evident across the whole of this scene. Any mitigation planting will be immature and the character of this view will be significantly altered. Although the footpath will remain open, the user experience will be a very different and hostile one, being surrounded on both sides by fencing and solar arrays. Visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 1. RESIDUAL EFFECT: By Year 15, there will be some additional planting provided by the proposed mitigation. However, due to the close range nature of the Site, it will not be possible to screen the panels from this viewpoint completely. Mitigation planting will enclose PRoW 19 removing highly valued views along this route and Market Lane, and where the character of this valued landscape has been completely altered and views of panels will still remain, visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 15. It should be noted also that approximately at Year 20, the panels will be replaced and effects will also, once again be similar to those at construction.	Full view of part of Parcel 8A and 8B from the beginning of PRoW 19. Close (immediate) range view. Whole part of overall view. Specific viewpoint where PRoW 16 joins PRoW 19 across Market Lane and representative of views from Market Lane to the south.	HIGH REVERSIBLE ONLY IN THE LONG TERM	PEDESTRIANS using PRoW 19. PEDESTRIANS/ CYCLISTS/RIDERS using Market Lane	HIGH HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)



VIEWPOINT 15: View looking southeast-south across Parcel 8A from the corner in Market Lane at the small ford showing part of the northern section and part of the southern section beyond.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
BASELINE: This viewpoint is looking southeast-south across Parcel 8A from the corner in Market Lane at the small ford showing part of the northern section and part of the southern section beyond. The view shows Site 8A in the foreground and beyond the central hedgerow with part of the Site hidden from view. There are no detracting features in this view and Market Lane forms a single tracked lane with protected verges either side. Land is beginning to level out at this point where the land to the north is more undulating but this field follows the Tas Beck valley bottom where it terminates at the end of this field. This is a very tranquil area and has a strong sense of remoteness within the local context in open farmland between Shotesham and Saxlingham/Hempnall. This is a well used and highly regarded route noted for its tranquility and access to the wider rural network to the south of Shotesham. Parcel 8A encompasses three fields bounded by ditches/hedgerows. PRoW 19 runs directly through the centre of the Site (broadly north-east to southwest) where it joins PRoW 21 beyond. The Site forms the whole of this view and is close range from both Market Lane and the PRoW. There is a wooded skyline with Ringers Grove (around which the Site wraps) to the right of the view. PROPOSALS: The proposed development will make up the whole of this view. Development will be very close range, running along the PRoW and Market Lane where panels and fencing will totally dominate this view. Due to the close (immediate) range, the proposed development cannot be fully screened from this viewpoint, particularly during winter months. Development will be completely at odds with the bucolic scene. Views of development along Market Lane and the PRoW be unavoidable and consistent. Proposed mitigation will close down this open and scenic view in contradiction to its current open character where long range views across the valley and local landscape are a very strong feature of the route. The character and user experience will be completely compromised forming major adverse effects. This area is open and highly scenic and its character will be completely compromised by the proposed development. Mitigation, in itself will have a harmful effect on the open character of the Site and historic field pattern. AT CONSTRUCTION: There will be inevitable noise, dust and disruption which will dominate the footpath and links to it at very close range in the immediate context. Visually, the works will be an overbearing feature of the landscape for the duration of the construction where the Site makes up the majority of this view and where works will extend across the whole of this view . Visual effects will be Major Adverse and significant at Construction. AT YEAR 1: The existing bucolic view will be replaced with solar arrays and associated fencing. These will be evident across the whole of this scene. Any mitigation planting will be immature and the character of this view will be significantly altered. Although the footpath will remain open, the user experience will be a very different and hostile one, being surrounded on both sides by fencing and solar arrays. Views from Market Lane will be significantly altered. Visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 1. RESIDUAL EFFECT: By Year 15, there will be some additional planting provided by the proposed mitigation. However, due to the close range nature of the Site, it will not be possible to screen the panels from this viewpoint completely, particularly during winter months. Mitigation planting will close down views across the valley bottom removing highly valued views along this route and Market Lane, and where the character of this valued landscape has been completely altered and views of panels will still remain, visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 15.	Full view of part of Parcel 8A from Market Lane. Close (immediate) range view. Whole part of overall view. Representative viewpoint along part of Market Lane (where views of the remainder of the Site are evident along a much longer stretch)	HIGH REVERSIBLE ONLY IN THE LONG TERM	PEDESTRIANS using PRoW 19 and Market Lane (single track and quiet lane with protected verges). DRIVERS using Market Lane	HIGH MEDIUM due to scenic quality of lanes	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)



VIEWPOINT 16: View looking broadly southeast into the Site and along PRoW 19 which runs from Market Lane and joins PRoW 21 beyond to the centre left of the view. The Site sits either side of the PRoW and hedgerow/ditch.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/ LOW/ NEG/NONE	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
BASELINE: This viewpoint is looking southeast-south across the Site and looks along PRoW 19 which runs from Market Lane along then length of the Site to the southeast where it joins PRoW 21. This is a long and open route which follows the low hedgerow and ditchline that cross Parcel 8A. PROPOSALS: The proposed development will make up the whole of this view. Development will be very close range, running along the PRoW and Mar- ket Lane where panels and fencing will totally dominate this view. Due to the close (immediate) range, the proposed development cannot be fully screened from this viewpoint, particularly during winter months. Development will be completely at odds with the bucolic scene. Views of development along Market Lane and the PRoW be unavoidable and consistent. Proposed mitigation will close down this open and scenic view in contradiction to its current open character where long range views across the valley and local landscape are a very strong feature of the route. The character and user ex- perience will be completely compromised forming major adverse effects. This area is open and highly scenic and its character will be completely com- promised by the proposed development. AT CONSTRUCTION: There will be inevitable noise, dust and disruption which will dominate the footpath and links to it at very close range in the imme- diate context. Visually, the works will be an overbearing feature of the landscape for the duration of the construction where the Site makes up the ma- jority of this view and where works will extend across the whole of this view . Visual effects will be Major Adverse and significant at Construction. AT YEAR 1: The existing bucolic view will be replaced with solar arrays and associated fencing. These will be evident across the whole of this scene. Any mitigation planting will be immature and the character of this view will be significantly altered. Although the footpath will remain open, the user experi- ence will be a very different and hostile one, being surrounded on both sides by fencing and solar arrays. Views from Market Lane will be significantly altered. Visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 1. RESIDUAL EFFECT: By Year 15, there will be some additional planting provided by the proposed mitigation. However, due to the close range nature of the Site, it will not be possible to screen the panels from this viewpoint completely, particularly during winter months. Mitigation planting will close down views across the valley bottom removing highly valued views along this route and Market Lane, and where the character of this valued landscape has been completely altered and views of panels will still remain, visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 15.	Full view of part of Parcel 8A from PRoW 19 Close (immediate) range view. Whole part of overall view. Representative viewpoint along part of Market Lane (where views of the re- mainder of the Site are evident along a much long- er stretch)	HIGH REVERSIBLE ONLY IN THE LONG TERM	PEDESTRIANS using PRoW 19	HIGH MEDIUM	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT) MAJOR- MODERATE ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)



VIEWPOINT 17: View looking northwest across part of the Site 8A and along PROw 19, showing part of 8b in the distance. Development area shown in red indicative potential mitigation areas in green.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
BASELINE: This viewpoint is looking northwest across part of the Site 8A and along PROw 19, showing part of 8b in the distance. Market Lane, a single tracked, quiet lane bounded by designated wildlife verges connects to PROw 19 along the hedgerow to the distance. The PROw runs along the existing field boundary hedge and ditchline but sits between two parts of Parcel 8A. Parcel 8B can be seen on rising ground beyond with Little Wood (SSSI and Ancient Woodland) on the horizon at the centre of the scene. There are no detracting features within this view which forms a very open, tranquil and bucolic scene. Dwellings on Baxters Lane, an isolated farmstead is very representative of this local character area. Hedgerows are mostly intact with occasional hedgerow trees. The remainder of Site 8A lies to the left of this scene and is visible all along PROw 19. PROPOSALS: The proposed development will make up the whole of this view where proposed solar arrays will obscure views of the wider landscape. Development will be very close range, running along the PROw where panels and fencing will totally dominate this view. Due to the close (immediate) range, the proposed development cannot be fully screened from this viewpoint, particularly during winter months. Development will be completely at odds with the bucolic scene. Views of development along the whole of the PROw be unavoidable and consistent. Proposed mitigation will close down this open and scenic view in contradiction to its current open character where long range views and tranquility across the valley and local landscape are a very strong feature of the route. The character and user experience of the PROw will be completely compromised with proposed mitigation forming a tunnel effect along this route. The cable route (yellow) works will cover the construction phase. AT CONSTRUCTION: There will be inevitable noise, dust and disruption which will dominate the footpath and links to it at very close range in the immediate context. Visually, the works will be an overbearing feature of the landscape for the duration of the construction where the Site makes up the majority of this view and where works will extend across the whole of this view . Visual effects will be Major Adverse and significant at Construction. AT YEAR 1: The existing bucolic view will be replaced with solar arrays and associated fencing. These will be evident across the whole of this scene. Any mitigation planting will be immature and the character of this view will be significantly altered. Although the footpath will remain open, the user experience will be a very different and hostile one, being surrounded on both sides by fencing and solar arrays. Views from PROw 19 Lane will be significantly altered. Visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 1. RESIDUAL EFFECT: By Year 15, there will be some additional planting provided by the proposed mitigation. However, due to the close range nature of the Site, it will not be possible to screen the panels from this viewpoint completely, particularly during winter months. Mitigation planting will close down views across the valley bottom and along PROw 19 removing highly valued views along this route, and where the character of this valued landscape has been completely altered and views of panels will still remain, visual effects will remain Major Adverse and significant at Year 15.	Full view of part of Parcel 8A and 8B from PROw 19 Close (immediate) (8) and longer(8B) range view. Whole part of overall view. Representative viewpoint along PROw 19 with the remaining half of Parcel 8A to the left of the scene.	HIGH REVERSIBLE ONLY IN THE LONG TERM	PEDESTRIANS using PROw 19	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)	MAJOR ADVERSE (SIGNIFICANT)



VIEWPOINT 18: View looking west-northwest from Baxters Lane directly into Site 8b.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
Solar arrays will fill this field and fill the view. Mitigation planting will not screen close range panels for many years and long views across the Tas Beck Valley to Great Wood beyond will be completely closed down. This will form a major part of the approach to the settlement from Baxters Lane where a long stretch of headland is currently open. An access point will remain with open views into the Site somewhere along Baxters Lane.	Almost full view of Site 8b Close range Representative	VERY HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS / CYCLISTS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
			ROAD USERS	LOW			



Note: coloured blocks represent ground level of area with potential to have panels and will include mitigation which at present is indicative only. Note, this does not show heights of panels which would obscure views beyond in the close range views.



VIEWPOINT 19: View looking south across the proposed retained arable land to the hedgeline that runs adjacent to Footpath 22 from the field access.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
The wooded horizon flows down to join the backdrop across the valley to the west. Mitigation planting will take several years to screen solar arrays on this ridgeline and will bring the horizon closer to the viewer changing the nature of the long view. The field in the foreground is to be proposed for agri-cultural use. The PRoW 22 lies beyond the intermittent hedgerow.	Partial view of Site 8b Close-mid distance view	HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS / CYCLISTS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MODERATE ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT
			ROAD USERS	LOW			



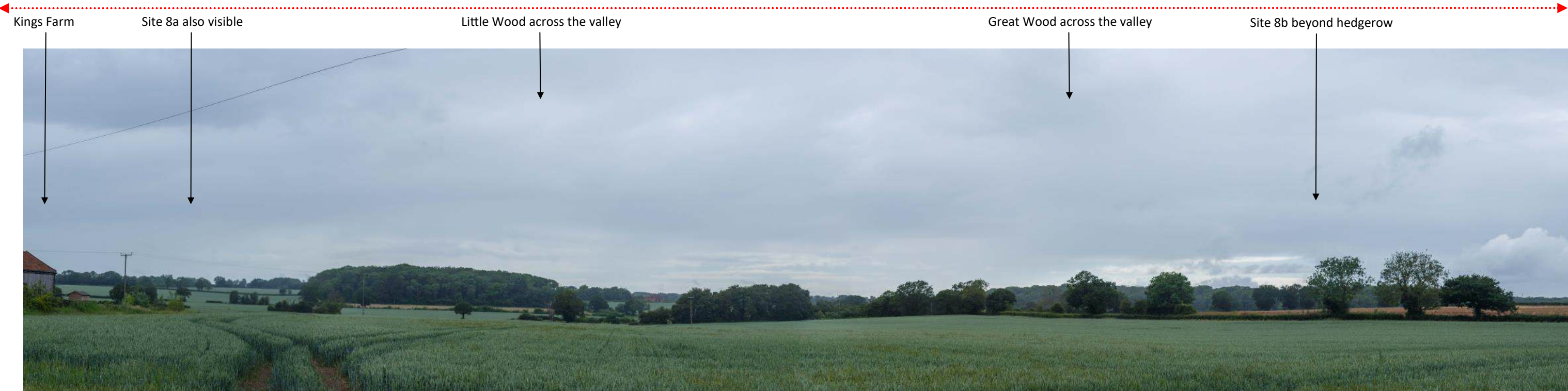


VIEWPOINT 20: This view is slightly further uphill on PRoW 22 with views of dwellings on Baxters Lane in the distance .

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
As well as a full view of Site 8b solar arrays, Site 8a is evident in the distance beyond the valley on rising ground to the west. Close range panels and mitigation will obscure views of Site 8a however but this will also erode the long distance bucolic views to the south with distinctive woodland blocks. Mitigation will, in itself be harmful to the character of the area closing down views completely. Close range views will however not be fully screened and significant adverse effects will prevail where planting will take some time even soften views.	Almost full view of the eastern parcel of Site B with parcel 8a in the distance. Close to mid range views. Representative	VERY HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT



Note: coloured blocks represent ground level of area with potential to have panels and will include mitigation which at present is indicative only. Note, this does not show heights of panels which would obscure views beyond in the close range views.



VIEWPOINT 21: This view is adjacent to Kings Farm on Baxters Lane looking west-northwest showing visibility of both Site 8a and 8b from this elevated position and from dwellings to the west of Baxters Lane

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
As well a view of Site 8b solar arrays beyond the hedgerow, Site 8a is evident in the distance beyond the valley on rising ground to the west. Close range panels and mitigation will obscure views of Site 8a however but this will also erode the long distance bucolic views to the south with distinctive wood-land blocks. Mitigation will, in itself be harmful to the character of the area closing down views completely. Close range views will however not be fully screened and significant adverse effects will prevail where planting will take some time even soften views.	Almost full view of the eastern parcel of Site 8a with parcel 8a in the distance. Close to mid range views. Representative	HIHG	PEDESTRIANS RESIDENTS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT	MAJOR ADVERSE - SIGNIFICANT





VIEWPOINT 22: View looking north-northwest from PRow 22—This view shows the field to be retained as arable in Site 8b where views will be blocked by proposed mitigation designed to screen panels from the north—illustrated below

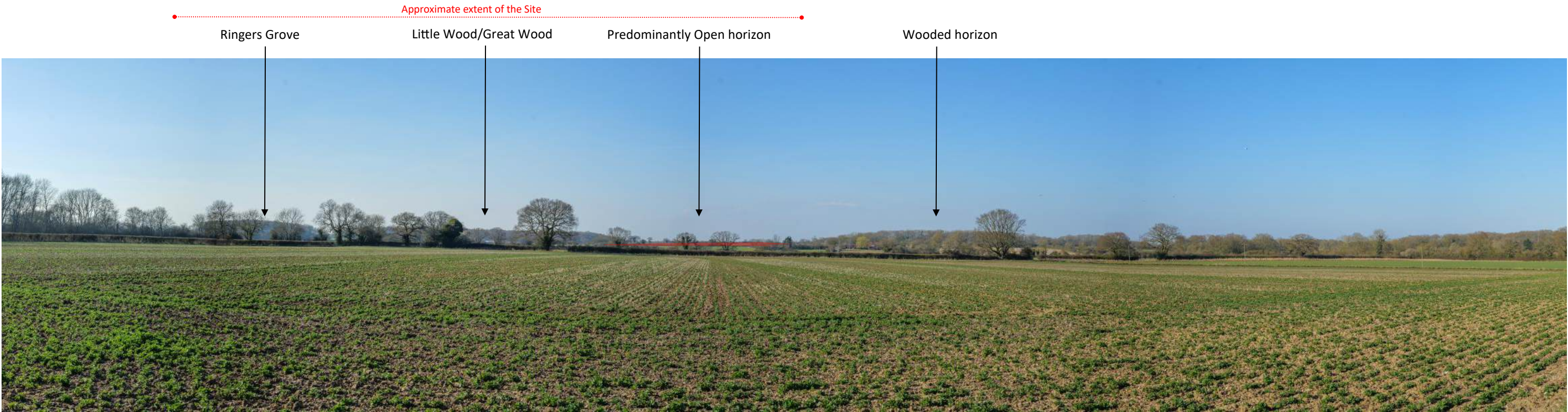
DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
View looking over the retained parcel of arable land in 8b from PRow 22. Effects show view looking this way only and do not take into account panels behind this point.	Partial view across bucolic scene towards Shotesham village	HIGH PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS	HIGH	NEGLIGIBLE	NEGLIGIBLE	MAJOR ADVERSE





VIEWPOINT 23: View looking northeast-east from PRoW 18 (footpath) walking from Wash Lane (single track) Lath Green down towards Market Lane (single track) showing part of Sites 8A and 8B.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
BASELINE: This viewpoint is looking northeast-east from PRoW 18 (footpath) walking from Wash Lane (single track) Lath Green down towards Market Lane (single track) showing part of Sites 8A and 8B and the cable run area. The PRoW runs across the arable field where it joins PRoW 16. Parcel 8B can be seen on rising ground beyond with Market Lane Farm with Little Wood (SSSI and Ancient Woodland) to the left of the view. This is a wooded horizon with land falling down from Wash Lane to Tas Beck valley bottom and up to Baxters Lane. There are no detracting features within this view which forms a very open, tranquil and bucolic scene typical of the local character area. Dwellings on Baxters Lane, isolated farmsteads are also very representative of this local character area. The remainder of Site 8A lies to the right of this scene beyond Ringers Grove. PROPOSALS: The proposed development will make up a moderate, but important part of this view where development will be visible from across the valley on the rising land in this mid-distance view. Due to the sloping nature of the valley side, the proposed development cannot be fully screened from this viewpoint and will be more evident during winter months. Development will be completely at odds with the bucolic scene. Views of development along the whole of the PRoW be unavoidable and consistent. The character and user experience of the PRoW will be completely compromised. The cable route (yellow) works will cover the construction phase. AT CONSTRUCTION: There will be inevitable noise, dust and disruption which will be very evident for the whole route . The view incorporates the cable run adding to the magnitude of adverse change. Visually, the works will be a strong feature of the landscape for the duration of the construction where the Site makes up an important part of this view and where works will extend across the valley side . Visual effects will be Major –Moderate Adverse and significant at Construction. AT YEAR 1: The existing bucolic view will be replaced with solar arrays and associated fencing. These will be evident across the valley side. Any mitigation planting will be immature and the character of this view will be significantly altered. Although the footpath will remain open, the user experience will be a very different and disrupted one. Views from PRoW 18 Lane will be significantly altered. Visual effects will remain Major-Moderate Adverse and significant at Year 1. RESIDUAL EFFECT: By Year 15, there will be some additional planting provided by the proposed mitigation. However, due to the rising nature of much of the Site, it will not be possible to screen the panels from this viewpoint completely, particularly during winter months. Mitigation planting will close down views across the valley bottom and along PRoW 19 removing highly valued views along this route, and where the character of this valued landscape has been completely altered and views of panels will still remain, visual effects will remain Moderate Adverse and significant at Year 15.	Partial view of Parcel 8A and 8B from PRoW 19 Mid range view. Moderate but important part of the overall view across the valley. Representative viewpoint along PRoW 18 with the remaining half of Parcel 8B to the left of the scene and 8A to the right behind Ringers Grove.	HIGH REVERSIBLE ONLY IN THE LONG TERM	PEDESTRIANS using PRoW 18	HIGH	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE	MAJOR-MODERATE ADVERSE	MODERATE ADVERSE
					(SIGNIFICANT)	(SIGNIFICANT)	(SIGNIFICANT)



VIEWPOINT 24: View looking northwest towards the Site from Fylands Road, a single track lane with views of part of Parcel 8B on rising land.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVI- TY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
BASELINE: This viewpoint is looking northwest towards the Site from Fylands Road, a single track lane with views of part of Parcel 8B on rising land. This is an open and tranquil scene from a single track road where there are not detracting features. The horizon is mostly wooded apart from a section where Site 8B lies on rising ground between two blocks of woodland. This is a mid-long range view and only part of the Site is visible with the remaining parcels being obscured by topography where 8A lies on lower land in parts and predominantly screened by existing vegetation in the foreground. PROPOSALS: The proposed development will make up a small a large part of this view but only development on rising land will be predominantly evident where the remainder is obscured by topography and potentially softened where some views exist by existing vegetation. Due to sloping landscape, the proposed development cannot be fully screened from this viewpoint, particularly during winter months. Development will be at odds with the bucolic scene but views are more limited by topography and the distance of the viewpoint reducing the magnitude of effects. The cable route works will cover the construction phase across this Site. AT CONSTRUCTION: There will be inevitable noise, dust and disruption which will be evident but not dominant from Fylands Road. Visually, the works will be a detracting feature of the landscape for the duration of the construction where the Site makes up a lare part of this view and where works will extend across much of this view . Visual effects for this peaceful route will be Moderate Adverse at Construction due to the relative distance. AT YEAR 1: The existing bucolic view will be replaced with solar arrays and associated fencing on the rising land on the horizon. These will be only be dominant however across the a small part of this scene. Any mitigation planting will be immature and the character of this view will be altered. The user experience will be a very different one. Effects for drivers will be reduced but views will remain. Visual effects will remain Moderate Adverse and significant at Year 1. RESIDUAL EFFECT: By Year 15, there will be some additional planting provided by the proposed mitigation. However, due to the rising nature of the Site on the valley side, it will not be possible to screen the panels from this viewpoint completely, particularly during winter months. Views of panels will still remain, and visual effects will remain Moderate-Minor Adverse at Year 15 for high sensitivity receptors.	Partial view of Parcel 8B from Fylands Road Lane. Mid-Long range view. Small part of overall view. Representative viewpoint along Fylands Road.	MEDIUM-LOW REVERSIBLE ONLY IN THE LONG TERM	PEDESTRIANS/ RIDERS/CYCLISTS using Fylands Road DRIVERS using Fylands Road	HIGH LOW	MODERATE ADVERSE (NOT SIGNIFICANT) MINOR ADVERSE- NEGLIGIBLE (NOT SIGNIFICANT)	MODERATE ADVERSE (NOT SIGNIFI- CANT) MINOR ADVERSE- NEGLIGIBLE (NOT SIGNIFI- CANT)	MODERATE- MINOR ADVERSE (NOT SIGNIFICANT) MINOR ADVERSE- NEGLIGIBLE (NOT SIGNIFICANT)



VIEWPOINT 25: View looking southeast towards the southern part of Site 8a. BELOW: Approximate area of solar arrays/works visible.

DESCRIPTION	NATURE OF VIEW FULL/PATIAL/GLIMPSED/ INTERMITTENT/PERMANENT/ SCALE/DISTANCE (RANGE) REPRESENTATIVE/SPECIFIC	MAGNITUDE OF VISUAL CHANGE VERY HIGH/HIGH/MED/LOW/ NEG/NONE REVERSIBLE/PERMANENT	VISUAL RECEPTOR	VISUAL SENSITIVITY (SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE X VALUE) HIGH/MED/LOW	EFFECT AT CONSTRUCTION	EFFECT AT YEAR 1	EFFECT AT YEAR 15 (RESIDUAL)
Mitigation planting will not screen the large area of panels for some time and once screened, this open view will be closed down and altered. Views of Site 8b are also visible to the left of this view looking along Market Lane and across the valley, exacerbating the change of view from this junction.	Partial view, partly glimpsed through vegetation. Representative of a s	LOW PERMANENT	PEDESTRIANS / CYCLISTS	HIGH	MAJOR ADVERSE	MAJOR ADVERSE	MODERATE ADVERSE SIGNIFICANT



Note: coloured blocks represent ground level of area with potential to have panels and will include mitigation which at present is indicative only. Note, this does not show heights of panels which would obscure views beyond in the close range views.

Illustrative wider views showing part of the extent of the wider landscape. In all cases, a 360 degree view shows no detracting features—just a wide open valley landscape .



Looking southeast from just off Market Lane showing PRoW 19 to the right of the view.



Looking north from PRoW 19 with Ringers Grove to the left of the view.



Looking north east from PRoW 16 towards Site 8b



Looking south from PRoW 16 after having just left Stubbs Green

Illustrative wider views showing part of the extent of the wider landscape. In all cases, a 360 degree view shows no detracting features—just a wide open valley landscape .



Looking southeast from along PRoW 19.



Looking north west from Baxters Lane across Site 8b



Looking north east from Market Lane up to the horizon at Site 8b



Looking south –southwest from PRoW 19 showing part of Site 8a (foreground) and 8b in the distance to the right of the view

APPENDIX B:
METHODOLOGY

- 1.1
- The following paragraphs set out the survey and assessment methods used within this LVA.
- 1.2
- This LVA provides an assessment of the landscape and visual matters as separate issues and is provided as part of the planning application.
- 1.3
- The methodology follows the relevant sections in “Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment” (Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment, 3rd Edition 2013) published by the Landscape Institute and IEMA¹. The report is based on the Professional judgement, experience and knowledge of the author but follows a sequential methodology to provide a report that provides a professional assessment of the impact of the Proposed Development, together with providing valuable information and design input at the early design stage. The assessment outlines the key facets of the Site and its surroundings in order to gain an understanding of the potential for the Site and the Proposed Development, in particular, the distinction between landscape characteristics and views/visual amenity as set out below:

Landscape Context:

The physical characteristics or elements of the environment, which together establish the character of each area e.g., geology, topography, hydrology, land cover, land use, including their designations, vegetation and settlement pattern.

Visual Context:

The views of the Site and the Proposed Development, and the perception in the change of these views by individuals both living in and visiting the area.
- 1.4
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) or Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) is a tool used to identify the effects of development on ‘landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people’s views and visual amenity’ (GLVIA para. 1.10). Although inter-related, landscape and visual effects are assessed separately.
- 1.5
- Para. 2.23 of the guidance confirms that professional judgement is an important part of the LVIA process and while there is scope for objectively quantifying changes to the landscape and visual environment, much of the assessment will therefore rely on qualitative professional judgement based on the general principles and methodology. It is important that these judgements are based upon a clear and transparent method so that the reasoning can be followed and examined by others.
- 1.6
- The approach should be proportional to the scale of the project and the nature of the likely effects, the intention being particularly to assess those that are likely to be significant. Where it is assessed that the results fall between two criteria, then the judgement will be thus described: minor-moderate, high-medium etc.
- 1.7
- The following paragraphs set out the survey and assessment methods used within this LVA.

- 1.8
- The descriptions of the Site and its surrounding landscape character and visibility are based on a desk study followed by a field survey. The survey was carried out at the time of instruction and therefore variations in the level of tree cover will occur depending upon the time of year. Where possible and necessary, photographs will be taken both during summer and winter months to illustrate the views when there is little leaf cover, however this may not always be possible.
- 1.9
- The overall process of LVA is based on the following steps:

-

Scoping: An initial, desk-based judgement on the scope of the assessment and the likely key issues including identification of the study area for the assessment.

-

Project Description: A description of the siting, layout and other characteristics of the Proposed Development to include the landscape proposals.

-

Baseline Study: An assessment of the existing nature of both the landscape and visual environment in the study area together with its value.

-

Identification and description of effects: The impacts resulting from the Proposed Development and the resulting changes on both landscape and visual receptors.

-

An assessment of the importance of the effects: Based on the nature of the receptor and magnitude of the effects identified.

-

Measures to avoid/prevent, reduce or compensate for potential landscape and visual effects are described as mitigation. Mitigation can fall into two categories:
Embedded mitigation: Mitigation that is inherent within the iterative design process
Additional mitigation: Mitigation that follows design and sets out principles for the management/specification for the Site’s development and management.
- 1.10
- As the characteristics of the Proposed Development, including vegetation, will vary over the life of the project, the landscape and visual effects are considered at the following stages:

-

Construction Phase: These effects are considered to be both temporary and short term.

-

Year 1 (Post Completion): To represent the worst-case scenario on the completion of the Proposed Development, where planting has been implemented but has limited impact;

-

Year 15: To represent the best-case scenario, where planting is considered to be fully established and effective. These are the permanent residual effects.
- 1.11
- For the purposes of the appraisal, the term ‘impact’ is used to describe the action or cause and ‘effects’ are the resultant changes on the landscape and visual context.
- 1.12
- Effects can be beneficial, adverse or neutral in nature:

-

Positive / Beneficial effects are those which enhance and/or reinforce the characteristics of the landscape or view;

-

Negative / Adverse effects are those which remove and/or undermine the characteristics of the landscape or view or those which add detracting features and

-

Neutral effects are changes which are consistent with the characteristics of the landscape or view and, on balance, result in neither an improvement nor a deterioration compared to the existing situation.

Scope

1.13 This LVA will assess the visual impact of the development as well as the effects on landscape character with reference to the “Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment” produced by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment. The extent of visual impact and viewpoints was established through a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZVI) reached by both a desktop and physical survey of the Site and its surroundings. Landscape and visual effects will be assessed at construction, completion (year 1) and in the medium term (year 15) where mitigation measures will have become effective.

Landscape Assessment

- 1.14 The European Landscape Convention (ELC) defines landscape as “an area as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors,” (Council of Europe, 2000). The scope of the ELC concerns all natural, rural, urban and peri-urban areas and applies to all landscapes everywhere and in any condition whether “outstanding, every day or ordinary.”
- 1.15 The purpose of the landscape assessment is to determine the effects of the Proposed Development on the landscape as a resource in its own right.
- 1.16 Aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by the proposals or landscape receptors comprise:
- Physical elements that make up the rural and built environment- topography, hydrology, land cover, land use, vegetation and settlement,PRoW etc;
 - Aesthetic characteristics such as tranquillity or openness; and/or
 - The character of a defined area or landscape type and its ‘sense of place’.
- 1.17 The appraisal requires a methodical assessment of the sensitivity of the landscape receptors to the Proposed Development and the magnitude of change which would be experienced by each receptor.

Baseline Study

- 1.18 The purpose of the baseline assessment is to identify and record the existing character and condition of the landscape and the elements, features and aesthetic and perceptual factors that contribute to it. This is completed by a desk study of published Landscape Character Assessments (from national to district level) followed up and refined using field work and visual appraisal.
- 1.19 The local landscape context is assessed to ascertain the adherence of the Site (and its surroundings) to the local character type and Local Character Area and the contribution it makes to this. This review explores the potential landscape receptors. See Table 1 below:

Table 1: Contribution to Landscape Character

CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Outstanding contribution	Where the existing character of the Site is representative of the local landscape character and the structure of the landscape is intact.
Very positive contribution	Where the existing character of the Site contains many attributes representative of the local landscape character and the structure of the landscape is apparent.
Positive contribution	Where the existing character of the Site contains some attributes representative of the local landscape character and some incongruous elements, but the Site does not detract from the local landscape character.
Limited contribution	Where the existing character of the Site contains some attributes representative of the local landscape character but also incongruous elements that detract from the local landscape character.
Negative contribution	Where the existing character of the Site contains no attributes representative of the local landscape character and the incongruous elements detract from the local landscape character.

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

- 1.20 The sensitivity of the landscape depends upon an evaluation of, “each key element or characteristic of the landscape likely to be affected by the Proposed Development, considering factors such as quality, value and contribution to landscape character, its ability to accommodate change and the degree to which elements or characteristics can be replaced or substituted”. (GVLA, 3rd Edition, 2013).
- 1.21 ‘Landscape Value’ is a standalone assessment of the existing landscape prior to any development. ‘Landscape Susceptibility’ is a term used when the development is brought into consideration within the landscape. Refer to Tables 2 and 3 below for details.
- 1.22 In evaluating the susceptibility of the landscape receptors to the development proposed, the degree to which such landscape elements and or characteristics can be replaced or substituted, and the type of development proposed are assessed alongside the value of these receptors.
- 1.23 The extensive landscape characterisation work that has been completed for the area provides a good level of baseline information. This characterisation work provides a basis for making judgements on the sensitivity of the area to the Proposed Development.

- 1.24

The Starting point for assessing the value of landscape receptors is the presence of designations (national/local, statutory or non-statutory). Such designations may include AONB’s, National Parks, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas, Sites of Special Scientific Interest or more local designations such as Special Landscape Areas, Ancient Woodlands, Nature Reserves and Wildlife Sites inter alia.
- 1.25

The ‘Landscape Value’ is an important aspect of the baseline assessment where landscapes sit outside of Nation or other designations. Technical Guidance Note (TGN) 02/21 ‘Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations prepared by the Landscape Institute provided guidance where confusion was being found at appeal level. This guidance sets out clear criteria for assessing the value of a Site. The value of the landscape is appraised through a series of assessments of the Site and the immediate/local setting in which its sits. It is important to note that the assessment is NOT based purely on the Site in isolation.
- 1.26

Where Landscape Sensitivity/Capacity Studies have been carried out by others (Local Authorities) these have been considered. In judging whether the Site is able to accommodate further development, these features must be considered. Where no capacity study has been prepared, professional judgement is used.
- 1.27

Sensitivity and capacity studies usually cover much larger areas and may not relate entirely to specific sites where a general overview/scale of an area is necessary for published assessments. For each site therefore, an additional, more localised assessment should be made where appropriate and a judgement on how well the site and its immediate context or local area adheres to this published assessment. This ‘Site-specific’ evaluation is a valuable tool which helps also to ascertain how the Site contributes to the local character. In many cases, specific sites vary importantly from the wider assessment.

Table 2: Landscape Value Criteria

CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Highest Value Landscape (Exceptional/ Nationally designated)	Includes the most aesthetically attractive landscapes, areas of particular natural beauty or rare landscapes perceived as special in a national or regional context. They are in exceptional landscape condition and remain intact and are very susceptible to change. Such areas are often Nationally designated landscapes such as AONBs, National Parks etc.
High Value Landscape (no National designation)	Areas include historic and designated landscapes. It may Include diverse, semi-natural or farmed landscapes with natural features or areas that provide high local importance in terms of recreation, heritage or scenic qualities. The area will be predominantly intact, will be perceived as wild or tranquil within the local area and may have local or national associations. There will be very few if any detracting features.
Medium Value Landscape	Countryside with some variety in farmland cover. Settlements and villages with pockets of open space and public recreation areas. There is a reasonable distribution of semi-natural vegetation, and the overall view of the area is pleasant. Local landscape designations of cultural and historical value may or may not be present. The landscape will be mostly intact with very few detracting features. Land may be within a green belt.
Low (Ordinary) Value Landscape	Typical open agricultural land where attractive features are offset by several detracting features. Some strategic planning is evident, but development is primarily functional. The scene is not particularly aesthetically pleasing, but has reasonable perceived value to its receptors. Lower Value Landscapes include areas where the landscape is not intact, it has many detractors, industrial, derelict or inappropriate built forms showing no strategic planning and very low/no aesthetic appeal. There is limited/no established vegetation. The land and its setting would benefit considerably from redevelopment.

- 1.27

The criteria to assess value includes: Natural heritage, cultural heritage, scenic qualities, distinctiveness, recreational value, associations, perceptual (scenic and wildness and tranquillity).

1.28 The judgement for undesignated landscapes is described as High, Medium or Low, with low encompassing landscapes that would considerably benefit from development. The highest value landscapes—those Nationally or Internationally designed or those assessed as ‘Valued Landscapes’ under the assessment outlined above, are afforded enhanced protection through national and local planning policy.

Susceptibility

1.29 GLVIA3 defines susceptibility as the ‘ability of the landscape receptor to accommodate the Proposed Development without undue consequences for the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.’ Judgement of susceptibility is particular to the specific characteristics of the Proposed Development and the ability of the specific landscape or feature to accommodate the type of change proposed. The judgement is described as High, Medium or Low.

Table 3: Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors

CATEGORY	SUSCEPTIBILITY
Taking into account the existing character and qualities, the landscape receptor is highly susceptible to the proposed development due to it being entirely at odds with the character of the area, there being no, or very limited potential for substitution, there is limited scope for mitigation, or the landscape character key characteristics have little or no capacity to accommodate the development without undue adverse effects.	High
Taking into account the existing character and qualities, the landscape receptor is moderately susceptible to the proposed development due to it having a degree of consistency with the existing baseline character, there being some opportunity for substitution or replacement and the key characteristics have some capacity to accommodate the scheme without undue adverse effects.	Medium
Taking into account the existing character and qualities, the landscape receptor has a low susceptibility to the proposed development as it is consistent with the baseline character of the area, there is good potential for substitution or replacement and the key characteristics have the capacity to accommodate the scheme without undue adverse effects. There are also good opportunities for mitigation within the scheme.	Low

1.30 The overall judgement is therefore based on the following:

- The extent to which the landscape is able to accommodate the type/nature/size of the Proposed Development;
- The extent to which the Proposed Development adheres to the character as well as development guidance; and
- The requirement and potential to provide mitigation.

Magnitude of Change

1.31 The magnitude of landscape change is assessed based on the degree of change in terms of size, scale, geographical extent, its duration or reversibility. Change can result from the loss or addition of element of the landscape which make up the overall character of the area. The changes can occur at local level or cover the wider landscape. Effects may be permanent or reversible, short, medium or long term. The following help to assess the magnitude of change:

- The extent/degree of landscape elements lost (built or natural);
- The extent/proportion of landscape elements added;
- The degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects may be altered; and
- Whether these changes are likely to alter the characteristics of the landscape.

1.32 The magnitude of change is assessed on a scale of very high adverse through to high beneficial (See Table 4 below).

1.33 The nature of the effect of the landscape impact is influenced by the following factors, providing an understanding of the likely magnitude of the effect of the proposed change:

- The geographical extent of the proposals-The nature and scale of the effect; (level of removal/introduction)
- The degree of change to the landscape, taking into consideration the proposed mitigating measures;
- The overall effect on the landscape may be one of enhancement or degradation.

Table 4: Magnitude of Landscape Change

PREDICTED LANDSCAPE CHANGES	MAGNITUDE
Complete or significant loss of, or alteration to, key characteristics of the landscape including its key features and elements. Inclusion of permanent elements within the development making significant changes to the existing landscape which are not reversible in the medium term.	Very High adverse
A Major or very noticeable loss of, or alteration to key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape or the introduction of elements within the development that will be considered to make important changes to the existing landscape. The changes will not be reversible over the medium term.	High adverse
A noticeable loss of, or alteration to key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape or the introduction of elements within the development that will be considered to make important changes to the existing landscape. The changes will not be reversible over the medium term.	Medium adverse
Partial loss of, or alteration to key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape or the introduction of some elements that may be noticeable within the existing landscape. The proposals may have potential to reverse.	Low adverse
Minor loss of, or alteration to, key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape or the introduction of some elements that will be barely noticeable in the existing landscape. The proposals have the potential to be reversed.	Negligible
No loss of, or alteration to, key characteristics, features or elements of the landscape and no introduction of elements.	No Change
Limited enhancement of landscape character and would: Fit well with the scale, landform and settlement pattern; Incorporate measures for mitigation that ensure the proposals blend in well with the surrounding area; Enable some sense of place and scale to be restored through good design and mitigation measures in line with local guidelines.	Low Beneficial
The proposed development would create a moderate enhancement of landscape character and would: Fit very well with the scale, landform and settlement pattern; Through design, or through mitigation enable the partial restoration of characteristic features, that have been lost or partially diminished; Enable a sense of place and scale to be restored through good design and mitigation measures, that are characteristic or in keeping with the locality, supporting objectives in local guidelines.	Medium beneficial
The proposed development would create a major enhancement of landscape character and would: Fit very well with the scale, landform and settlement pattern; Through design, or through mitigation enable the restoration of characteristic features, that have been lost or diminished; Enable a sense of place and scale to be fully restored through good design and mitigation measures that are characteristic or in keeping with the locality, supporting objectives in local guidelines.	High beneficial

Landscape Effects

- 1.34

Landscape effects are defined by the Landscape Institute as ‘changes to landscape elements, characteristics, character and qualities of the landscape as a result of development’. These may be adverse, neutral or beneficial.
- 1.35

Landscape receptors are things that are affected by landscape impacts and may include the following:

Landscape elements: such as trees, hedgerows, built features, and other vegetation as well as Public Rights of Way etc that forms the pattern of the landscape.

Landscape patterns: groups of elements or their arrangement that make up the character of the landscape.
- 1.36

Cumulative landscape effects are additional changes to the landscape in addition to, or in association with the proposed development, and these may need to be considered, whether it be past, present or possible future.
- 1.37

The duration of an effect is considered, for this purpose, to be:

Short term:1-5 years

Medium term:5-15 years

Long term:15 years plus
- 1.38

Consideration of the sensitivity of the landscape receptor against the magnitude of the change posed by the development gives the importance of the impact and is fundamental to landscape assessment. It is important to use sensitivity criteria of an appropriate scale to the development.

Sensitivity of Landscape Receptors

- 1.39

The sensitivity of the landscape depends upon an evaluation of, ‘each key element or characteristic of the landscape likely to be affected by the proposed development, considering factors such as quality, condition, value and contribution to landscape character, its ability to accommodate change and the degree to which elements or characteristics can be replaced or substituted’. (GVLA, 3rd Edition, 2013).
- 1.40

In evaluating the susceptibility of the landscape receptors to the development proposed, the degree to which such landscape elements and or characteristics can be replaced or substituted, and the type of development proposed are assessed alongside the value of these receptors. In judging whether the site is able to accommodate further development, these features must be considered. See Table 3 for the assessment of the Susceptibility of Landscape Receptors.
- 1.41

Having ascertained the Sensitivity of the Landscape Receptors, the magnitude of change is assessed in order to reach conclusions about susceptibility to the development.

VISUAL ASSESSMENT

- 1.42 The visual effects are concerned wholly with the effect of the Proposed Development on both the views and the visual amenity of the receptors associated with the Site.
- 1.43 Visual receptors are the people whose views may be affected by the change in the land-scape brought about by the Proposed Development. These receptors include users of Public Rights of Way, local residents or visitors, road users, cyclists, riders, users of recreational facilities and people at their place of work etc.
- 1.44 Visual effects may include:

- Visual intrusion: The visual intrusion of the Proposed Development into an existing view, or loss of a landscape feature or element currently in the view

- Visual obstruction: Physical obstruction of the existing view.

- Visual improvement: Instances where views may be improved through development either short term or over the longer term.

Visual Baseline

- 1.45 The purpose of assessing the visual baseline is to ascertain the visual qualities of the Site and the extent to which these may be viewed by various groups of visual receptors.
- 1.46 The visual envelope is ascertained by a desk study backed up with on/off-site assessment. This assessment provides an approximate Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI)
- 1.47 From this visual envelope, a number of viewpoints are chosen which best represent the views towards the Site and the variation of visual receptors that may be affected. These viewpoints take into account the following criteria:

- Public accessibility;

- The type, number and susceptibility of the visual receptors;

- Type of view;

- Near, mid and long range views to the Site;

- The nature of the viewing experience.
- 1.48 Photographs are taken at the relevant points in line with best practice.

Sensitivity

- 1.49 Sensitivity of Visual receptors is assessed by combining the value attached to the particular view, with the susceptibility of the visual receptors to the type of change brought about the Proposed Development.
- 1.50 The value of the view will be perceived differently by different receptors, but local or national designations and ‘Valued Landscapes’ will elevate the overall value to a larger group of viewers.
- 1.51 The criteria used to assess the ‘value’ of a view are set out in Table 6 below, the value being assessed as either High, Medium or Low.

Table 5: Visual Sensitivity

CATEGORY	SENSITIVITY
Includes receptors who are very aware of the value of the views. Including nationally designated areas (such as AONBs) or areas designated as ‘Valued Landscapes’ at a more local level.	Very High
Includes receptors using Public Rights of Way or the setting of a Listed Building. Some residential properties will have a high sensitivity but residents do not generally have a ‘right to a view’.	High
Including receptors engaged in outdoor recreation who are not wholly focussed on the surrounding landscape/Local residents.	Medium
Including receptors driving cars or other transport routes.	Low
Including receptors working inside, not focussed on the landscape or with limited views	Negligible

Table 6: Visual Value Criteria

VALUE	DESCRIPTION
HIGH	Exceptional-High visual amenity with particular scenic quality. The area will be highly valued by visitors as well as the local community and visitors will travel some distance to access the view. These views may include: Nationally recognised Sites such as AONB’s, National Parks or nationally important trails etc. Designed views Recognised tourist routes/views ‘Valued Landscapes’ Views referenced in art or literature which are well recognised
MEDIUM	Average to good visual amenity where the quality of the existing view is such that there are few if any detracting features or incongruous elements. These views are regularly valued by both visitors and local residents. These views may include: Locally designated sites or viewpoints Views from local designations or well used Public Rights of Way
LOW	Average to poor visual amenity with a number of detracting features and/or incongruous elements within the scene. Areas requiring regeneration or general improvement.

1.52 The susceptibility of the visual receptor will depend on the extent to which they are focussed on the view – dependent generally on their activity. The criteria informing the judgement is set out in Table 7 below and is considered either Very High, High, Medium or Low.

Table 7: Susceptibility of Visual Receptors

CATEGORY	SUSCEPTIBILITY
Includes receptors who are very aware of the value of the views. Including users of nationally designated areas (such as AONBs) and Valued Landscapes.	Very High
Includes receptors using Public Rights of Way or the setting of a Listed Buildings,	High
Including receptors engaged in outdoor recreation who are not wholly focussed on the surrounding landscape. Residents of adjacent properties.	Medium
Including receptors driving cars or using other transport routes, working inside, not focussed on the landscape or with limited views.	Low

Magnitude of Visual Change

- 1.53 The magnitude of visual change is assessed based on the degree of change in terms of size, scale, geographical extent, its duration or reversibility. Change can result from the loss or addition of element of the landscape which make up the overall view. The changes can occur at local level or cover the wider landscape. Effects may be permanent or reversible, short, medium or long term. The following help to assess the magnitude of change:
- 1.54 The scale of the change within the overall view considering the loss of landscape elements (built or natural);
- The scale of the visual intrusion of the Proposed Development;
 - The degree to which the aesthetic or perceptual aspects may be altered; and
 - The degree of contrast or integration of any new features.
 - The nature of the view in terms of whether the views will be full, partial, glimpsed, or transient views through a journey.
- 1.55 The extent will vary depending upon the following:
- The angle of the view
 - The distance from the viewpoint to the Site
 - The extent to which the Proposed Development will be seen throughout a journey (along a footpath etc)
 - Seasonal changes will affect the viewers perception of the Proposed Development

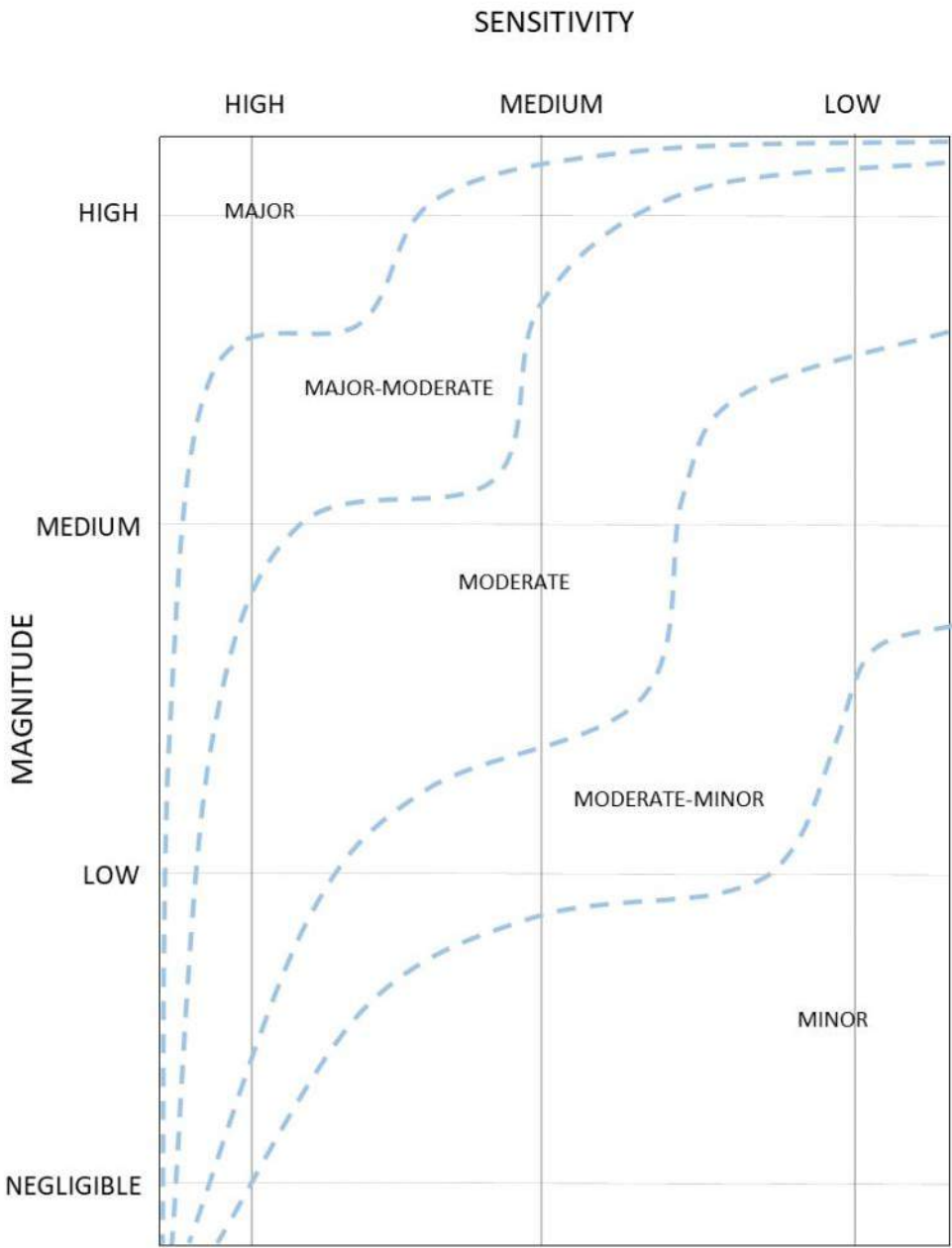
and where possible (and necessary), winter views should be assessed in addition to summer views where screening will be much greater.

- 1.56 Effects may be permanent or temporary and may be short, medium or long term. The effects may be adverse or beneficial and are described within the text as increasing or reducing.
- 1.57 The magnitude of change is assessed on a scale of very high adverse through to high beneficial (See Table 8 below).

Table 8: Magnitude of Visual Change

PREDICTED VISUAL CHANGES	MAGNITUDE
Where the scheme would cause a significant deterioration to the existing view or where it would become the dominant, irreversible feature.	Very high adverse
Where the scheme would cause a considerable deterioration/change to the existing view or where it would become a prominent or large component of the scene. The composition and balance of the view would be considerably altered.	High adverse
Where the scheme would cause a noticeable deterioration to the existing view.	Medium adverse
Where the scheme would cause a barely perceptible deterioration in the existing view.	Low adverse
Where the scheme would cause a slight change to the existing view, but that change is either barely imperceptible or would cause neither a deterioration nor improvement in the existing view.	Negligible
No part of the development, or work or activity associated with it, is discernible within the baseline view.	No change
Where the scheme would cause a barely perceptible improvement in the existing view.	Low beneficial
Where the scheme would cause a noticeable improvement in the existing view.	Medium beneficial
Where the scheme would cause a significant improvement in the existing view.	High beneficial

Table 10: LEVEL OF LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS



This table outlines how judgements are made to ascertain the significance or importance of the effects overall with written justification within the main text. There are no precise results and all results are a matter of professional judgement.

Landscape and Visual Effects

1.58 Effects that fall in the Major, Major-moderate or Moderate categories – the highest magnitude of change against the most sensitive receptors - are generally considered to be significant in the planning process.

- 1.59 Those effects falling in the remaining categories (Moderate -Minor, Minor and Negligible) are generally acceptable levels of change. However, where any adverse effects will be caused at the initial assessment, efforts to reduce impacts further through mitigation should be further explored.
- 1.60 Effects can also be beneficial and where significant landscape enhancements are possible this can range from Minor to Major beneficial overall effects both visually and in landscape terms.
- 1.61 Residual effects are those remaining after mitigation, once development is complete at 15 years onwards.
- 1.62 For schemes that may be considered ‘temporary’ or ‘short-term’, mitigation measures will need to be brought forward to provide suitable levels of protection and the residual effect of 15 years may not be an appropriate time span and may need to be reduced. Therefore, each scheme which falls into this category should be considered on its own merits.
- 1.63 ‘Reversible’ should only be considered effective for very temporary buildings/structures and not for schemes planned over a number of decades where a generation of receptors will be affected over many years. All assessments and judgements must be proportionate to the proposed development.