East Pye Solar

The Applicant's Response to ExA Question Q1.11.4 PRoW Visual Amenity Sequential Assessment

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Document

1.1.1 This document has been prepared in response to Examining Authority Written Question 1, Question 1.11.4 PRoW visual amenity. The question reads as follows:

"The PRoW Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149] sets out the applicant's assessment of the impacts on users of footpaths and bridleways etc within the Order limits. ES Chapter 7 (Landscape and Visual) [APP-043] includes assessment of the visual effects on view locations including those on PRoW.

Notwithstanding the applicant's compartmentalised assessments referred to above, there is little in the way of a cumulative assessment of the effects on recreational users of PRoW who would be likely to traverse more than one named PRoW on any particular journey. For example, residents of Great Moulton or Saxlingham Nethergate/ Saxlingham Green (and other villages and settlements) may partake on circular routes to and from these villages involving a number of different footpaths. Consequently, building on assessment work already carried out, the applicant is requested to provide an assessment of the likely cumulative/ sequential visual effects on footpath users across the Order limits, taking account of the combined effects on users of commonly used footpath routes near to existing settlements."

1.1.2 This document therefore aims to address the Examining Authority's question by assessing the sequential effects on PRoW users who traverse multiple routes, assuming journeys between villages or settlements, or the use of circular routes for recreational purposes.

1.1.3 The document has utilised various documents from the Application as an evidence base to understand current conditions and the assessment outcomes in relation to PRoW and the Scheme, including the following:

- ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]
- ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.1 – Landscape and Visual Methodology (Revision 1) [APP-118],
- ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.5 – Photosheets [APP-122 to APP-134],
- ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.6 – Visualisations, Appendix 7.7 – Visual Assessment Tables [APP-147], and;
- ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].

1.1.4 The assessed sequential routes are shown in Figure 7.10 PRoW Receptors Plan [APP-085].

1.1.5 The sequential routes considered have been organised by Site or group of Sites.

1.2 Assumptions

1.2.1 As there is a large network of PRoW within the Site and the wider surrounding landscape, assumptions of potential travel routes are made. The following assumptions have been made to provide an assessment framework within which the visual effects on users of several PRoW can be scrutinised:

- The assessment assumes that potential travel routes include PRoW users undertaking journeys between villages or settlements. A continuous route of up to ~8km has been considered, representing a reasonable distance for commuting or recreational purposes (equating to approximately 1.5-2 hours at an average walking speed). Sequential routes of this length or less have therefore been selected and have considered routes where users pass through several sub-sites and/or along routes that traverse areas containing solar arrays.

- The chosen routes have also made assumptions on what routes users would realistically take, for instance where a reasonably natural circular route occurs, or routes that travel between villages and settlements, as opposed to passing through as many sites as possible.

- The assessments have been undertaken at Year 1 of operation which represents a scenario when the PRoW network would be fully accessible and the Scheme would be operational. This scenario would occur over a medium-term period and occur until mitigation planting is established (up to 15 years). In addition, a judgment at Year 15 is also provided when the mitigation planting is assumed to have established and would provide the purpose for which it was intended (i.e. screening of views). An explanation as to how the mitigation (once established) would alter the visual experience is provided.

- Users of local PRoW are generally considered to be of medium sensitivity to change in relation to the Scheme given their interest in their surroundings and their local importance. Where PRoW interact with long-distance routes, for instance the Boudicca Way, sensitivity may be heightened given its regional or national status, however this would not be the case where there is no intervisibility with the Scheme. Any change in sensitivity will be reflected in the assessment.

1.3 Exclusions

1.3.1 No routes have been included in relation to Site 6 as this Site does not have any proposed above ground infrastructure.

1.3.2 The sequential assessment does not consider cumulative visual effects (Inter-project cumulative effects).

1.3.3 Shotesham Parish Council published Shotesham Circular Walks (2016), which includes six walks. Of these, walks 1, 3 and 6 have the potential to be affected by the Scheme, as they include sections of Shotesham FP16, FP19 and FP22. For proportionality, only Walk 6 as the route with the most interaction with the Scheme has been assessed as a worst-case circular route within this sequential assessment. The individual PRoWs which form parts of Walks 1 and 3, have been considered separately in **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149],** and Walks 1 and 3 are not considered in this sequential assessment.

1.3.4 Circular routes that require a lot of walking along roads or carriageways have been excluded from the assessment, as it is considered unlikely that these routes would be undertaken for leisure purposes. These include routes at Sites 9 and 10, where no reasonable leisure route has been identified without involving sections of roads or carriageways.

1.3.5 The PRoWs likely to be affected by the Scheme at Sites 9 and 10 have been assessed in **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].**

1.3.6 A minimum 15m offset is applied to the PRoW from the Scheme elements. This is defined in the **Design Principles, Parameters and Commitments [REP1-078].** This reflects a standard approach to avoiding and mitigating potential effects and is therefore not considered further in this assessment.

2 Sequential View Assessment

2.1 Site 1 and 2 and BESS

Sneath Common Circular Route

2.1.1 The assessment of this route includes the following PRoW:

- Great Moulton RB19;
- Tivetshall St Margaret RB6;
- Wacton RB31; and
- Great Moulton FP11, FP12, FP13, FP14, FP15, FP16 and FP17.

Baseline Description

2.1.2 This broadly circular anticlockwise route originates on Great Moulton (GM) RB19 (as represented by VL1/BESS) east of Black Mill Lane and continues east past Frith Way before turning north for ~560m along Wacton (Wa) RB31 then west, crossing the railway line before ending at Meadow Close. This is a circular route of ~6.2km in total.

2.1.3 Users of these PRoW are of medium sensitivity overall (medium value/medium susceptibility).

2.1.4 The route starts and ends in the urban fringe of Sneath Common, but the majority of the route travels through rural, open agricultural land. The experience is generally open but varies as route users encounter tree-lined paths, woodland blocks and hedgerows.

2.1.5 Route users start from GM-FP17, traverse eastwards and cross the railway line. They then continue eastwards along GM-RB19, which follows the course of Hundred Lane. Route users first pass beneath an overhead power line within an open field, before experiencing a more enclosed, well-vegetated section of the route.

2.1.6 As users continue eastwards for ~600 m, they reach Lodge Road / Tivetshall St Margaret (TSM) RB6 (as represented by VL4/Site 2). Route users then turn north and continue along Wa RB31 (as represented by VL2/Site 2).

2.1.7 Route users then turn west along GM-FP11 and continue west along GM-FP12 (as represented by VL4/Site 1), FP13, FP14 (as represented by VL2/Site 1) and FP15 (as represented by VL1/Site 1). Route users cross beneath an overhead power line at Great Moulton FP14. At GM-FP16, route users cross the railway line again before returning to Sneath Common.

Description of Change

2.1.8 Recreational users of GM-RB19 would experience filtered views towards the solar arrays within Sub-Sites 1A and 1B to the north of solar arrays with more distant views of the National Grid Substation, however visibility would be limited by the vegetation enclosing Hundred Lane. To the south, users would experience filtered views towards the BESS compound, backdropped by the Project Substation. Before reaching the BESS compound, the proposed operational access to the National Grid Substation would cross Hundred Lane, resulting in a brief opening in the existing vegetation and increased views into the Sites to the north and south. These clear views towards the Scheme would be experienced over a limited section of the route.

2.1.9 As users continue eastwards, Site 1 would be behind the direction of travel and there would be no notable views of the Scheme for ~600 m, until users reach Lodge Road / TSM-RB6, to the south of the north-western part of Sub-Site 2B. Here, users would experience oblique, filtered views towards Sub-Site 2B to the north of the route for ~400 m, until the southern portion of Sub-Site 2B becomes visible to the south. For ~200 m, solar development within Sub-Site 2B would be present on both sides of the route, including as the route changes direction and travels north. Throughout this section, intervening vegetation would filter visibility of the development.

2.1.10 As users travel north along Wa-RB31 they would experience filtered, oblique views of solar arrays within Sub-Site 2C to the east, at an offset of ~300 m, with views limited by intervening field boundary vegetation. Users of Wa-RB31 were assessed as experiencing minor adverse and not significant effects.

2.1.11 Route users would travel west along GM-FP11 and FP12. At GM-FP11, intermittent filtered views of Sub-Site 2B would be available to the south, with filtered views of the National Grid Substation and solar arrays to the west (in the direction of travel). This is assessed as moderate adverse and significant at VL4 / Site 1.

2.1.12 As users continue along GM-FP12, users' visibility of the Scheme would increase with views at Frith Way notable. From here, and as users continue along Great Moulton FP13 for ~130 m, development within Site 1B would be visible, initially as filtered views to the south-west and as readily apparent views to the north-west. On GM-FP14 views would include solar PV arrays, overhead lines (modified from the baseline), the National Grid Substation and the Project Substation. Views of the Scheme would be on both sides of FP14.

2.1.13 Route users would continue west, with views limited to the solar PV arrays as the route enters Sub-Site 1A on GM-FP15.

2.1.14 In summary users travelling in an anticlockwise direction would experience varying levels of change, from fundamental change on GM-RB19 to limited visual change on GM-FP11.

2.1.15 As users traverse further west along GM-FP13 / 14 users would experience clearly noticeable changes, with the solar arrays and the substations notable elements within views. Views of solar arrays would continue for the majority of GM-FP15, before reaching GM-FP16 where the Scheme would be behind the view.

2.1.16 Clearly the visual intensity of the Scheme increases for users passing through the various Sub-Sites; however, the entire journey requires consideration. For recreational users the geographical extent of this change is considered to be medium, with change experienced over a moderate length of the overall route. The effect would be over the medium-term and partially reversible given that views would change progressively as a result of the establishment of the mitigation proposals over time.

Mitigation Measures

2.1.17 Mitigation proposals as shown associated with the route include linear tree belt planting along GM-RB19 and TSM-RB6 which would heavily filter views of the Scheme for users of the PRoW over time. For users of GM-FP13, FP9, FP14 and FP16 the introduction of new hedgerows with trees (offset from the PRoW to reduce enclosure along the route) would help filter views, albeit the substations and solar development would continue to be visible above the intervening features.

Assessment of Effects

2.1.18 A number of these PRoW were assessed individually within **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].** Although this provided judgements on the potential level of effect that would be experienced by these PRoW individually, it also provides a reasonable oversight into the potential for sequential effects, and is summarised below:

- Recreational users of GM-RB19 were assessed as experiencing major adverse and significant effects at Year 1 of operation, reducing to moderate adverse by Year 15.
- Users of TSM-RB6 were assessed as experiencing moderate adverse and significant effects, reducing to minor adverse and a not significant effect by Year 15.
- Users of GM-FP13 were assessed as experiencing moderate adverse and significant effects at Year 1 and Year 15, while users of GM-FP14 would experience major adverse and significant effects at Year 1 of operation, reducing to moderate adverse by Year 15.

- Users of GM-FP15 would experience major adverse and significant effects, reducing to minor adverse by Year 15.

2.1.19 Considering the Year 1 scenario overall, it is judged that for recreational users of this circular this would represent a **major adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **major adverse** level of effect which is considered **significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043].**

2.1.20 Considering the Year 15 scenario overall, it is judged that for recreational users of this circular this would represent a **moderate adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **moderate adverse** level of effect which is considered **significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043].**

2.1.21 It is considered that overall, the proposed mitigation planting along this route would reinforce existing landscape features and therefore the mitigation itself would not alter the characteristics of the user's sequential visual experience of this route. Over time and once established, these would typically filter views of the Scheme for sequential users of this route. For users travelling along GM-FP13, FP14, and FP15, the proposed hedgerow planting would alter openness, creating enclosure, along the route, but this would help reduce visibility of the infrastructure itself. As a landscape feature it is considered the planting responds to published landscape objectives and reduces the prominence, contrast and perceived influence of energy infrastructure.

Great Moulton Circular Route

2.1.22 The assessment of this circular route includes the following PRoW:

- Great Moulton RB19 and RB18; and
- Tivetshall St Margaret FP3 and FP2.

2.1.23 The route also includes Frith Way (broadly north to south from Great Moulton), Copyhold Lane which connects Tivetshall St Margaret FP3 to Station Road, and Station Road itself east to west for approximately 520m.

Baseline Description

2.1.24 This clockwise route originates at the south-eastern extents of Great Moulton on Frith Road. The entire route is ~3.6km in length. Users of these local PRoW are considered to be of medium sensitivity (medium value/medium susceptibility).

2.1.25 The route travels through a generally flat and open agricultural landscape, with some sections being more enclosed and vegetated.

2.1.26 The route begins on the outskirts of Great Moulton and travels south along Frith Way through the surrounding agricultural landscape (as represented by VL3/Site 1). The route passes through generally open farmland, with field boundary hedgerows and vegetation providing intermittent enclosure. Route users would also pass beneath an overhead power line. Once users reach the junction with GM-RB19, they would turn west for a short section, ~100 m, before turning south along TSM-FP3 (as represented by VL5/BESS).

2.1.27 As users travel further south, they would meet Copyhold Lane and then Station Road (as represented by VL9/BESS). Users would travel west along Station Road for ~550 m (as represented by VL4/BESS) before turning north to join TSM-FP2. They would then continue north along this PRoW for ~450 m before reaching Hundred Lane (as represented by VL8/BESS).

2.1.28 At Hundred Lane / GM-RB 19 the user will turn east for a short distance through an enclosed section (as represented by VL1/BESS), then travel north along GM-RB18 with views east limited by the field bounding hedgerow, the route user will cross under an overhead powerline (as represented by VL1/Site 1), before arriving back to the edge of Great Moulton.

Description of Change

2.1.29 As users leave the outskirts of Great Moulton and travel south along Firth Way, there would be filtered views towards the solar arrays within the northern part of Sub-Site 1B. Views towards the National Grid substation within the western part of Sub-Site 1B would be limited by the existing intervening field boundary in the first ~400m of the route. As users continue south (for ~1km) towards the Site the solar arrays within the north-eastern fields of Sub-Site 1B would appear clearly noticeable where there are hedgerow gaps or field entrances. Glimpses towards the National Grid Substation within the north-western fields above the solar arrays would also be possible. Views of the solar arrays would be moderately frequent as relatively long sections of this route have no vegetation; however, views towards solar arrays within the southern fields of Sub-Site 1B, which are separated by the adjacent field, would be screened or filtered by existing vegetation (and the intervening solar arrays).

2.1.30 Route users would travel west along GM-RB19 within an enclosed corridor for a short section of the route. Users would experience filtered views of the BESS to the south and solar PV array to the north. The route user will then travel south along TSM-FP3. Users travelling south on this PRoW (~525m) would experience filtered westward views towards the BESS site and 400kV substation.

2.1.31 The route user would then meet Copyhold Lane then Station Road. Travelling west along Station Road users would initially experience oblique views towards the Project substation (for ~150m) to the north prior to views becoming restricted by intervening vegetation. Users would continue on Station Road for ~400m before turning north to TSM-FP2. As users travel north along this PRoW there would be views of the BESS available to the east for the final ~100m (of the ~450m route length) before reaching Hundred Lane.

2.1.32 As users progress eastward along Hundred Lane views of solar arrays within Sub-Sites 1A and 1B would be possible but filtered by intervening vegetation on Hundred Lane. Users would then connect GM-RB18 (Narrowgate Way) and traverse north back towards Great Moulton. As they move northwards, they would pass Sub-Site 1B on their right for its entire western extents (~850m). For the second half of this route views towards the National Grid substation would be possible.

2.1.33 Views towards Sub-Site 1A would also be possible for the majority of GM-RB18; in views north, and then immediately west (~350m) as they pass its eastern extents (~385m).

2.1.34 For much of this route however views would be filtered by vegetation with views to the east of the PRoW filtered by a field bounding hedge. To the west views are less restricted until crossing GM-FP14, where the route passes between hedgerows either side of the PRoW. Once past the Site views would be behind the direction of travel, with the route terminating on High Green within Great Moulton.

2.1.35 Although there would be varying degrees of visibility of the Site for recreational receptors utilising this circular route, visual change would be experienced for the majority of the route; particularly for the Great Moulton RB18 as users pass the northern part of Sub-Site 1B. The geographical extent of visual change therefore is considered to be large overall. The effect would be over the medium-term and partially reversible given that views would change progressively as a result of the establishment of the mitigation proposals over time.

Mitigation Measures

2.1.36 Mitigation proposals which would affect this route include native hedgerow with trees along the eastern and western edge of Sub-Site 1B which follows Frith Way and Great Moulton RB18 respectively, native linear tree belts on the eastern (adjacent to TSM-FP3), southern extents of the BESS/400kV substation site, and eastern and southern boundary of Sub-Site 1B (south of GM-FP13). Woodland planting is also included to the west of the BESS Site, and hedgerows to the south of Sub-Site 1A. These proposals would serve to reinforce existing features and reduce visibility of the solar arrays within Sub-Sites 1A and 1B and would provide some level of screening of views towards the BESS and substation within the BESS Site.

Assessment of Effects

2.1.37 A number of these PRoW were assessed individually within **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].** Although this provided judgements on the potential level of effect that would be experienced by these PRoW individually, it also provides a reasonable oversight into the potential for sequential effects, and is summarised below:

- Recreational users of GM-RB19 were assessed as experiencing major adverse and significant effects at Year 1 of operation, reducing to moderate adverse by Year 15.
- Users of TSM-FP3 were considered to experience a moderate adverse and significant effect at Year 1 given wider views along this route to the east are unaffected reducing to minor adverse by Year 15.
- Users of GM-RB18 were assessed as experiencing a moderate adverse and significant effect at Year 1 and Year 15.

2.1.38 At Year 1 of operation, before the proposed mitigation is fully established, it is judged that recreational users of this circular route would experience a moderate to **major magnitude** of sequential effect which taken as worst-case would result in a **major adverse** level of effect which is considered **significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.1.39 Considering the Year 15 scenario overall, it is judged that for recreational users of this circular this would represent a **moderate adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **moderate adverse** level of effect which is considered **significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.1.40 It is considered that overall, the proposed mitigation planting along this route would reinforce existing landscape features and therefore the mitigation itself would not alter the characteristics of the user's sequential visual experience of this route. Over time and once established, these would typically filter views of the Scheme for sequential users of this route. For users travelling along Frith Way the tree belts and hedgerow planting will reinforce existing features. Further south for users of TSM-FP3 the new linear tree belt to the west of the PRoW, would reinforce the existing hedgerow. The trees would affect the western portion of the available view. The Applicant considers the provision of features along the east boundary of Site 1 and the BESS Site adjacent to the existing hedgerows will help reduce visibility of the Scheme for receptors using these routes thus reducing the

perception of the Scheme in the longer term. Wider views including those to the east will be preserved.

2.2 Site 3

Lundy Green Circular Route

2.2.1 The assessment of this circular route includes the following PRoW:

- Hempnall FP25, FP26, and FP28.

Baseline Description

2.2.2 This clockwise circular route of approximately 1.2km originates at the eastern outskirts of Lundy Green with Hempnall (Hp) FP25 (which would be accessed along Lundy Green and represented by VL5/Site3), following a north to south orientation for ~140m before entering the north-eastern parcel of Site 3. The PRoW continues for ~350m before connecting with Hp-FP28. The route then turns west and passes north of the central parcel of Site 3 for ~300m (as represented by VL4/Site 3). From there the PRoW joins with Hp-FP26 and turns north for approximately 120m before becoming Workhouse Lane and completing the circular route. The route mainly provides view of open agricultural field with Spring Wood in the background.

2.2.3 Users of the local PRoW network are of medium sensitivity (medium value/medium susceptibility).

Description of Change

2.2.4 As route users travel south along Hp-FP25, the user will have direct views of solar PV array to the east and to the south in the direction of travel. As the route user reaches Hp-FP28, the route user will have view of solar PV array to the south. These PRoW pass close to the Scheme and therefore represent a worst-case level of effect for recreational users. For users of Hp-FP25 visibility of the Scheme would be limited to typically easterly views and these backdropped by surrounding woodland. For users of Hp-FP28 visibility of the Scheme would be limited to oblique southerly views with views to the north preserved.

2.2.5 Taking the entire circular route into consideration, the portion affected broadly represents 70% of the journey, and once users pass are outside of the Order Limits and heading towards Lundy Green views of the Scheme would generally be screened by existing vegetation/built form or behind the direction of view.

2.2.6 Therefore the scale of visual change would fluctuate on this circular route, and the geographical extent of change is considered to be medium. This would be a medium-term and partially reversible effect

given that views would change progressively as a result of the establishment of the mitigation proposals over time.

Mitigation Measures

2.2.7 Following establishment of landscape mitigation, tree planting along the northern boundary of Site 3 would reduce visibility of the Scheme when outside of the Order Limits. As users travel south on Hp-FP25, views of the solar arrays to the east would be filtered by a hedgerow with trees. This would be located for the full length of the route until it joins Spring Wood and Hp-FP28. As users travel west along the length of the PRoW until it switches direction to the north and Workhouse Lane views of the solar arrays to the south would be filtered by the intervening linear belt of trees, with views to the north remaining unaffected.

Assessment of Effects

2.2.8 A number of these PRoW were assessed individually within **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].** Although this provided judgements on the potential level of effect that would be experienced by these PRoW individually, it also provides a reasonable oversight into the potential for sequential effects, and is summarised below:

- A major adverse and significant level of effect for users of PRoW Hp-FP25 at Year 1 of operation reducing to minor adverse and not significant effect at Year 15.
- A moderate adverse and significant level of effect for users of PRoW Hp-FP28 at Year 1 of operation reducing to minor adverse and not significant effect at Year 15.
- No change was reported for Hp-FP26.

2.2.9 Considering the Year 1 scenario, overall, it is considered this would give rise to a **moderate adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **moderate adverse** level of effect which is considered **significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.2.10 Considering the Year 15 scenario overall, it is judged that for recreational users of this circular this would represent a **slight adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **minor adverse** level of effect which is considered **not significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.2.11 For users of Hp-FP25 the proposed hedgerow along the western side of the route would reduce views of the infrastructure, however the Applicant considers this to be reflective of surrounding features and whilst it is representative of a visual change this is not incompatible with

existing visual characteristics and represents only a small change given views west from Hp-FP25 will remain unchanged.

2.2.12 For users of Hp-FP28 whilst the proposed tree belt would reduce views to the south, the tree belt is reflective of the integrated landscape and ecological design approach for the Scheme and would strengthen habitat connectivity as well as providing visual screening of the infrastructure. The Applicant considers this to be reflective of surrounding features and whilst it is representative of a visual change this is not incompatible with existing visual characteristics and represents only a small change given views northwards from Hp-FP28 will remain open.

2.3 Site 4

Long Stratton / Boudicca Way Circular Route

2.3.1 The assessment of this route includes the following:

- Long Stratton FP2, FP3, FP6, FP7, FP13 and FP14;
- Morningthorpe FP1, FP2 / Boudicca Way, FP21, FP33, FP34;
- Tasburgh FP2; and
- Hempnall FP1.

Baseline Description

2.3.2 This broadly clockwise circular route which covers approximately 7.3km originates at the northern extents of Long Stratton on Long Stratton (LS) FP7 (as represented by VL1/Site 4) which travels in a north-easterly direction and crosses the Long Stratton bypass (as represented by VL9/Site 4) before meeting LS-FP6 which turns north to meet Church Lane. Users would then turn east along Church Lane for a short section before connecting with LS-FP3 and turning north again (as represented by VL2/Site 4). Users would travel north for ~1km. As users travel this route it passes along field boundaries, with agricultural land to either side across its entire length. The landscape is generally open however individual trees break up visibility (as represented by VL7/Site 4). The A140 is a notable feature to the west.

2.3.3 The route then connects with Bungay Road (B1527) and head east for approximately 270m, whereupon they would meet LS-FP2 (as represented by VL5/Site 4). As the route travels north, it transitions into Morningthorpe (Mo) FP1 where it turns west, then Tasburgh (Ta) FP2 which runs northeast, then Hp-FP1 which follows a northern course, eventually connecting with Fairstead Lane and Boudicca Way. Users would then turn east along Fairstead Lane along the Boudicca Way for

approximately 400m before turning south along Chestnut Loke / Boudicca Way / Mo-FP34 (as represented by VL11/CRC). North of Bungay Road, the route is generally well contained by the valley landform, and woodland.

2.3.4 The route then re-connects with Bungay Road before continuing south on PRoW Mo-FP33 / Boudicca Way (as represented by VL10/CRC). The PRoW then joins Mo-FP2 / Boudicca Way to follow Devil's Loke (as represented by VL9/CRC), eventually connecting with Brick Kiln Lane. Sub-Site 5A will be to the east of the route user through this section.

2.3.5 Continuing south along Brick Kiln Lane the Site would be behind the view. The route then turns west along Mo-FP21 (as represented by VL6/CRC) which transitions into LS-FP14 before turning south along an access track to connect with LS-FP13 which turns south-west to meet Edge's Lane where the route terminates.

2.3.6 The route would mostly travel through an open agricultural landscape but the section to the north is more vegetated with the valley landscape reducing visibility. The route to the east (Mo-FP3 to Mo-FP21) is influenced by woodland blocks with the landscape which create a series of wooded horizons and limit wider visibility. Although the journey is largely rural, route users would need to cross the Long Stratton Bypass and Bungay Road.

Description of Change

2.3.7 Travelling from Long Stratton, views of the Scheme do not become apparent until the route arrives at LS-FP6. At this point there would be distant visibility of solar arrays within Sub-Site 4B. A similar outlook will continue to the north as route users travel east along Church Lane. Travelling north along LS-FP3, the views towards solar arrays would become more obvious within Sub-Site 4B, and its perception would increase when directly east of its eastern extents for ~660m. This is the only section of the route that would significantly interact visually with the Site.

2.3.8 The route users then travel north transitioning into Mo-FP1, Ta-FP2, and Hp-FP1 then heading east with Fairstead Lane and Boudicca Way and south on Mo-FP34. During this part of the journey the Scheme would not be visible, due to screening and filtering of views by existing vegetation.

2.3.9 The route user travel through Bungay Road then continuing south on Mo-FP33 / Boudicca Way. The PRoW then joins Mo-FP2 / Boudicca Way to follow Devil's Loke, eventually connecting with Brick Kiln Lane. There are potential for glimpsed views of solar arrays and the 400kV substation within Sub-Site 5A east of the route between Bungay Road and Brick Kiln Lane, and less so to the west towards the solar arrays and 132kV substation within Sub-Site 4B. For this part of the route in

the worst-case there would be glimpses of the 132kV substation above existing field boundary vegetation.

2.3.10 Where the PRoW passes the Scheme, users would generally have filtered and/or intermittent views of the solar arrays given the occasional screening offered by existing vegetation. Users of the local PRoW network are considered to be of medium sensitivity (medium value/medium susceptibility), while users of Boudicca Way are considered to be of high sensitivity (medium value/high susceptibility).

Mitigation Measures

2.3.11 Proposed mitigation measures which would affect this route would be related to those proposed at Sub-Site 4B. These include a range of features, with woodland and scrub planting proposed on the southern boundary of the solar arrays to reinforce the existing treed context and reduce visibility from the south to a new hedgerow along the length of LS-FP3 where it is adjacent to the proposed solar arrays. Adjacent to the 132kv substation a linear belt of trees is proposed. Over time the implementation of these measures would reduce visibility from the Year 1 scenario. Glimpses of the 132kV substation would remain likely, but these would be over a very short section of the overall route.

2.3.12 Within Sub-Site 5A the hedgerow feature along the western boundary of the Site is proposed to be reinforced with woodland, hedgerows and scrub planting to reinforce its screening effectiveness in views from the west (including from Mo-FP2 and Mo-FP33).

Assessment of Effects

2.3.13 As the majority of this route follows PRoW outside of the Order Limits only LS-FP3 was assessed individually within **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149]** for the operational phase**.** This concluded a moderate adverse and significant effect for users as a result of views towards the solar arrays and substation reducing to minor adverse and a not significant effect by Year 15.

2.3.14 In general, users of this route would typically experience limited visual change as a result of the Scheme with this present in the wider landscape. Close range views of the Site would be limited to the section as they pass the eastern extents of Sub-Site 4B (~660m of the total route) which is a small part of this route. Oblique intermittent glimpsed views of solar arrays and the 400kV substation within Sub-Site 5A to the east may be possible in a worst case for users of Mo-FP33/Mo-FP2.

2.3.15 Considering the Year 1 scenario overall, it is judged that for recreational users of this circular this would represent a perceptible change and a **slight adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **minor adverse** level of effect which is considered not **significant**. This is

consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043].**

2.3.16 Whilst the establishment of the proposed mitigation would reduce visibility of the Scheme in the year 15 scenario, it is considered this would still constitute a partial change for recreational users of this circular route. This would represent a **slight adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **minor adverse** level of effect which is considered **not significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.4 Site 5

Fritton Circular Route

2.4.1 The assessment of this circular route includes the following PRoW:

- Morningthorpe RB4; and
- Morningthorpe FP5, FP11, FP17.

2.4.2 A short section of the route also includes the Boudicca Way (~320m along School Road to the south of the Site). Receptors are considered to be of medium sensitivity overall (medium value/medium susceptibility), given the majority of the route is made up of local PRoW, and the section which included the Boudicca Way is relatively short with no intervisibility of the Scheme.

2.4.3 This route is considered a worst-case scenario, as route users would travel along two sides of Site 5 and, the route requires users to walk along parts of Bungay Road, which is considered less suitable for pedestrians. Therefore, the route is considered less likely to be undertaken.

Baseline Description

2.4.4 This clockwise circular route covers approximately 4.6km. The route user generally experiences an open and rural agricultural landscape, but the route also passes several small woodland blocks and along field boundaries which create a series of framed views and wooded horizon backdrops. The Grade I St Catherine Church would be seen in part of the route as the user travel towards Fritton.

2.4.5 The route originates at the Bungay Road north of the eastern part of Sub-Site 5A with PRoW Mo-FP5 (as represented by VL3/Site 5), travelling south following a broadly north to south orientation, passing directly east of the Scheme boundary for ~1km where the PRoW transitions into Mo-FP11 (as represented by VL4/Site 5), and then Mo-FP17 (as represented by VL6/Site 5). The PRoW carries on southward

through agricultural fields to meet School Road. It is at this point where the PRoW connects with the Boudicca Way long-distance route, following it westward along School Road for ~300m before picking up PRoW Mo-RB4 and heading north along Boylandhall Lane. RB4 passes adjacent to and close to the western edge of Sub-Site 5A for ~900m before terminating at the B1527 (as represented by VL1/Site 5 and VL2/Site 5).

Description of Change

2.4.6 For recreational users passing through the eastern extents of Sub-Site 5A there would be views of the solar arrays either to the west or, as they progress south. To the east these would be filtered by the intervening field bounding hedgerow. Once users pass the Scheme it would be behind their direction of view.

2.4.7 Once onto School Road / Boudicca Way oblique views north are possible, however here the Scheme would not be a notable feature due to intervening features which filter views. Once users turn north off School Road and head up Boylandhall Lane along Mo-RB4, the Scheme would not come into view for ~500m. As the PRoW continues north towards the views to the east (and of the Scheme) would be filtered by existing field boundary vegetation. Views on the B1527 views lessen as a result of woodland copses and increased separation from the Scheme.

2.4.8 In terms of visual change this occurs most noticeably along PRoW Mo-FP5 as solar arrays would appear either side of its partial length (~ 300m). However, for the majority of the circular route the Scheme would either be partially visible, filtered by existing vegetation, or not be visible. This would result in a clearly noticeable change for users over a short to moderate length of the route which would occur over the medium-term and would be partially reversible given that the mitigation planting would be expected to establish over time, further reducing visibility.

Mitigation Measures

2.4.9 Proposed mitigation measures include a range of features, with hedgerow and trees proposed along Mo-FP5 to reduce visibility of the Scheme to the west. To the east a combination of hedgerow improvements and new linear tree belts will reinforce the existing vegetation and screen views in these directions. This will however result in the route being located between two hedgerows for ~750m. In addition, hedgerow reinforcement on the southern boundary of Sub-Site 5A and 5B will provide additional screening for users of Mo-FP17 and the Boudicca Way. Adjacent to Mo-RB4 a range of measures are proposed to reinforce the existing tree and hedgerow features.

Assessment of Effects

2.4.10 A number of these PRoW were assessed individually within **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].** Although this provided judgements on the potential level of effect that would be experienced by these PRoW individually, it also provides a reasonable oversight into the potential for sequential effects, and is summarised below:

- A major adverse and significant level of effect on users of PRoW Mo-FP5 at Year 1 of operation, reducing to a moderate adverse and significant level of effect at Year 15.
- A moderate adverse and significant level of effect was predicted at Mo-FP11 at Year 1 of operation reducing to minor adverse and not significant effect at Year 15.
- It should be noted PRoW Mo-RB4 was not assessed individually in **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9** as the route only physically interacts with the Cable Route.

2.4.11 Considering the Year 1 scenario overall, it is judged that for recreational users of this circular this would represent a **moderate adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **moderate adverse** level of effect which is considered **significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.4.12 Considering the Year 15 scenario overall, it is judged that for recreational users of this circular this would represent a **slight adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **minor adverse** level of effect which is considered **not significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.4.13 For users of Mo-FP5 the proposed hedgerow along the western side of the route would reduce views of the infrastructure and create a vegetated corridor within which the PRoW would be located. The Applicant considers this to be reflective of surrounding features and whilst it is representative of a visual change this is not incompatible with existing visual characteristics and represents only a limited sequential change along the longer route.

2.5 Site 7

Saxlingham Nethergate Circular Route

2.5.1 The assessment of this circular route includes the following:

- Boudicca Way; and

- Saxlingham Nethergate RB17, FP9, FP10, FP11, FP12, FP14, FP15; FP27.

Baseline Description

2.5.2 This clockwise circular route begins on the Boudicca Way along Church Hill at Saxlingham Nethergate Church of England Primary School and continues East on Hall Lane then south towards Sub-Site 7D, then east again to pass Broaden Lane and PRoW SN-FP10 (represented by VL8/Site 7) before reaching PRoW SN-FP9 where the route turns south. As recreational users continue south om SN-FP9, they would pass the eastern extents of Sub-Site 7F for a section (~600m) (represented by VL9/Site 7), before then turning west along SN FP27 for approximately 470m which passes between Sub-Site 7F and Sub-Site 7E, (represented by VL16/Site 7).

2.5.3 The route then turns north along SN-FP10 for a short section (represented by VL17/Site 7), before again turning west on SN-FP11 directly south of Sub-Site 7F. From here users turn south along Broaden Lane before joining SN-FP12 which passes through Sub-Site 7D (represented by VL5/Site 7), then turns north along SN-FP14, east along SN-RB17 (Plummer's Lane) for ~75m, then north again on SN-FP15 to reach Church Hill, (represented by VL6/Site 7).

2.5.4 When not on roads or tracks and within the rural landscape the route typically follows field boundaries where defined and established hedgerows and / or woodland copses are typically present on one side of the route. Whilst views across the agricultural field can sometimes be open these are typically contained within a framework of vegetative features which limit long range views. When on roads and tracks hedgerows are typically present on both sides of the route.

2.5.5 The route covers 5.8km (approx.), with the northern section following the Boudicca Way. For this northern section however intervisibility with the Scheme would be limited to a short section (approx. 175m). Consequently, most of the route would utilise local PRoW, and therefore an overall sensitivity of medium is considered appropriate (medium value/medium susceptibility).

Description of Change

2.5.6 As users traverse the Boudicca Way along Church Hill / Hall Lane, solar panels within the northern extents of Sub-Site 7D would in a very worst case come into view for a short period, generally at an oblique angle to travel. From there, users would not experience views of the Scheme until they turn south along SN-FP9 where the northern extents of Sub-Site 7F would come into view. Users of this PRoW are offset from the solar arrays with the intervening community open space proposed.

2.5.7 For recreational users along SN- FP27 the Scheme would be present to the north and south (through the intervening hedgerow) for the majority of the route. SN-FP11 is a relatively short length of PRoW and oblique views of the solar infrastructure will be possible to the north. As users continue west and join SN-FP12**,** the solar arrays will continue to be viewed obliquely to the direction of the travel. Similarly for users of SN-FP14 views of the Scheme will be oblique (to the east) to the direction of travel with views to the west limited by the intervening hedgerow. Neither SN-RB17 or SN-FP15 were assessed individually as a result of little or no intervisibility with the Scheme.

Mitigation Measures

2.5.8 Proposed mitigation measures include a range of features, with hedgerow and trees proposed for sections of SN- FP27, FP11, FP12, and FP14. For these routes this would result in the PRoW being located between two hedgerows which once established would reduce visibility of the Scheme to the north (and east for SN-FP14). To the west of SN-FP9, a community open space is proposed containing a range of landscape measures (hedgerow improvements, trees, scrub and woodland) which will screen views of the solar arrays to the west but retain a degree of openness.

Assessment of Effects

2.5.9 A number of these PRoW were assessed individually within **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].** Although this provided judgements on the potential level of effect that would be experienced by these PRoW individually, it also provides a reasonable oversight into the potential for sequential effects, and is summarised below:

- Users of SN-FP9 were assessed as experiencing moderate adverse and significant effects in Year 1 of operation, reducing to **minor adverse** and **not significant** by Year 15.
- Users of SN-FP27 were assessed as experiencing **moderate adverse** and **significant effects** in Year 1 of operation, reducing to **minor adverse** and **not significant** by Year 15.
- Users of SN-FP11 were assessed as experiencing **moderate adverse** and **significant effects** in Year 1 of operation, reducing to **minor adverse** and **not significant** by Year 15.
- Users of SN-FP12 were assessed as experiencing **major adverse** and **significant effects** in Year 1 of operation, reducing to **moderate adverse** and **significant effects** by Year 15.
- User of SN-FP14 were assessed as experiencing **minor adverse** and **not significant effects** in Year 1 of operation and reducing to **negligible adverse** and **not significant** in Year 15.

2.5.10 Considering the Year 1, it is considered that although receptors utilising the above PRoW as a circular route would experience reasonable sections of the route with limited or no visibility of the Scheme, some sections of the route would have clear visibility, particularly along the southern sections where solar panels would be visible to either side (although filtered to the south). Views would be oblique to the direction of travel; however, the presence of the Scheme in such proximity would be notable. Overall visual change would occur over a moderate geographical area, would occur largely over the medium-term. The **moderate adverse** magnitude of effect would therefore give rise to a **moderate adverse significant level of sequential effect** at year 1 of operation.

2.5.11 Considering the Year 15 scenario overall, it is judged that for recreational users of this circular this would represent a **moderate adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **moderate adverse** level of effect which is considered **significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043],** .

2.5.12 It is considered that overall, the proposed mitigation planting along this route would reinforce existing landscape features. Over time and once established, these would typically filter views of the Scheme for sequential users of this route. For users travelling along SN-FP27, SN FP11, SN FP12, and SN FP 14, the proposed hedgerow planting would alter openness, creating enclosure, along the route, but this would reduce visibility of the infrastructure itself. As a landscape feature it is considered the planting responds to published landscape objectives and reduces the prominence, contrast and perceived influence of energy infrastructure. However, the introduction and establishment of planting would result in a perceptible change to the character and experience of a continuous section of this sequential route, particularly through the reduction in openness and increased enclosure. This partial alteration in character is reflected in the assessed moderate adverse and significant effect.

Saxlingham Nethergate to Hempnall Circular Route

2.5.13 The assessment of this route includes the following PRoW:

- Boudicca Way;
- Saxlingham Nethergate FP10, FP12, FP14, RB17, FP15; and
- Hempnall FP3, BR30.

Baseline

2.5.14 The clockwise route covers approximately 6.8km in total, from the south-eastern extents of Saxlingham Nethergate on Church Hill / Boudicca Way then south to Hempnall then back north to complete the loop. It is similar in nature to the Saxlingham Nethergate Circular Route assessed above but runs further south through the spine of Sub-Site 7F and returns north along the east of Sub-Site 7C. Users of this circular route are considered to be medium (medium value/medium susceptibility). Although the route contained a section of Boudicca Way, who are considered to be high sensitivity to the change proposed, the vast majority of routes where visual change would be predicted would be experienced by recreational users of local PRoW.

2.5.15 The route user will experience an open, rural agricultural landscape between Saxlingham Nethergate and Hempnall, pass through the village of Hempnall, and return through an open agricultural landscape. The views are generally open, although several woodland blocks are present to the south of Saxlingham Nethergate and Saxlingham Green.

2.5.16 The route begins on Church Hill / Boudicca Way, view here are represented by VL8/Site 7, and travels south-east towards the junction with Broaden Lane, before continuing east to meet SN-FP10 (represented by VL21/Site 7 and VL17/Site 7). Users then turn south along SN FP10 and continue towards Hempnall, connecting with Hp-FP3. From here, users connect with Wood Lane and then The Street before turning west through Hempnall.

2.5.17 Users then turn north to follow Hp-BR30, where views are generally contained by linear woodland. View of Hp-BR30 is represented by VL19/Site 7. From here, users briefly connect with SN-FP12 travelling west (as represented by VL5/Site 7), before heading north on SN-FP14 for approximately 500 m. The PRoW continues north through woodland before briefly connecting with SN-RB17 heading east. Users then turn north again onto SN-FP15 to complete the circular route (represented by VL6/Site 7).

Description of Change

2.5.18 For recreational users of Boudicca Way at the first stage of the journey there would be a short section of the route where the proposed solar arrays would be partially visible within Sub-Site 7D and to a lesser extent, Sub-Site 7F; however this would be the only section where views would occur along the Boudicca Way within this circular route.

2.5.19 The route user then travel south along SN-FP10. A mature hedge is located to the west, the route user will have direct views of solar panel to the east and glimpsed view to the west.

2.5.20 Continuing south users would then connect with Hp-FP3 which was also assessed as having a moderate adverse and significant level of effect for PRoW users as a result of its proximity with Sub-Site 7E. From here views of the Site would be behind the user as they connect with Wood Lane then The Street before turning west through Hempnall.

2.5.21 The user then travel north following Hp-BR30, glimpsed view of Sub-Site 7C to the west is possible but largely screened by existing vegetation. The user would continue north along SN-FP14 and SN-FP15, which is located to the west of existing vegetation, hence reduce visibility of the Scheme to the east.

2.5.22 For PRoW users a number of routes would pass adjacent to the various Sub-Sites which make up Site 7. This results in users experiencing the influence of the Site over a medium geographical extent. The effect would be over the medium-term and partially reversible given that views would change progressively as a result of the establishment of the mitigation proposals over time.

Mitigation

2.5.23 Proposed mitigation measures of relevance to this route include a range of features:

- Hedgerow with trees to the northern extents of Sub-Site 7D to reduce visibility of the solar arrays from Boudicca Way;
- Hedgerow with trees along SN-FP10 and Hp-FP3 which passes centrally through Sub-Site 7F to reduce visibility of the solar arrays and 132kV substation;
- Enhancement of existing hedgerows along the eastern extents of Sub-Site 7C by planting new hedgerows adjacent to provide reduced visibility of solar arrays along Hp BR30;
- Planting of hedgerow with trees along the western extents of Sub-Site 7D to reduce visibility of solar arrays for users of PRoW SN FP14.

Assessment of Effects

2.5.24 A number of these PRoW were assessed individually within **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].** Although this provided judgements on the potential level of effect that would be experienced by these PRoW individually, it also provides a reasonable oversight into the potential for sequential effects, and is summarised below:

- Users of SN-FP10 were assessed as experiencing **moderate adverse** and **significant effect** at Year 1 of operation, reducing to **minor adverse** and **not significant** by Year 15.

- Users of Hp-FP3 were assessed as experiencing **moderate adverse** and **significant effect** at Year 1 of operation, reducing to **minor adverse** and **not significant** by Year 15.

- User of Hp-BR30 were assessed as experiencing **negligible adverse** and **not significant** effects in Year 1 and Year 15 of operation.

- User of SN-FP14 were assessed as experiencing **minor adverse** and **not significant** effects in Year 1 of operation, reducing to **negligible adverse** and **not significant** by Year 15.

2.5.25 Overall, it is considered that a **moderate adverse** magnitude of effect would therefore give rise to a **moderate adverse, significant level of sequential effect** at year 1 of operation. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.5.26 Considering the Year 15 scenario overall, it is judged that for recreational users of this circular this would represent a **slight adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **minor adverse** level of effect which is considered **not significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.5.27 For users of SN FP 10 and SN FP14, the proposed hedgerow along would reduce views of the infrastructure and create a vegetated corridor within which the PRoW would be located. The Applicant considers this to be reflective of surrounding features and whilst it is representative of a visual change this is not incompatible with existing visual characteristics and represents only a limited sequential change along the longer route.

2.6 Site 8

Shotesham to Woodton Linear Route

2.6.1 The assessment of this route includes the following PRoW:

- Shotesham FP16, FP17, FP19, FP21, and FP22.

2.6.2 Although this route is not circular in nature it is considered that the route may feasibly be taken by users wishing to walk from Shotesham to Woodton utilising PRoW where possible. The baseline description and subsequent assessment assumes a south-east direction of travel.

Baseline Description

2.6.3 The total length of this route is 8.3km. Travel generally in a south-east direction from Shotesham to Woodton. Users of these routes are considered to be of medium sensitivity (medium value/medium susceptibility).

2.6.4 The route user generally experiences views across an open valley landscape. The views are predominantly rural and open, extending across the valley sides, although the degree of enclosure varies as the route passes woodland blocks and hedgerows.

2.6.5 For recreational users of the local PRoW network at Shotesham, the journey would begin at the southern extents of the village, south of the hamlet of Stubb's Green, on Brooke Road. Walking south, users would connect with Shotesham (Sh) FP22 and journey west through agricultural land for ~460m before connecting with Market Lane, (as represented by VL6/Site 8). From there, users would turn north along the road for ~100m to connect with Sh-FP17 (as represented by VL5 /Site 8). Travelling west, this short footpath then connects with Sh-FP16, (as represented by VL3 /Site 8), and turns south/south-east through agricultural land, broadly parallel with Market Lane.

2.6.6 Where Sh-FP16 terminates, users would cross Market Lane and connect with Sh-FP19, which continues south-east through agricultural land. A sparse hedgerow is present alongside part of this section of the route (VL7/ Site 8 provides a representation of Sh-FP19 to the south-east of Sub-Site 8A).

2.6.7 Continuing south-east along Sh-FP19, the PRoW becomes Sh-FP21 at Fylands Road, directly west of Woodton Farm. It continues south-east through agricultural land before turning northeast for approximately 250m (represented by VL11/Site 7) and reaching Woodton Road, (as represented by VL12/Site 7). From there, users would continue south-east towards Woodton along Woodton / Shotesham Road.

2.6.8 When not on roads or tracks and within the rural landscape the route typically follows field boundaries where defined and established hedgerows and / or woodland copses are typically present. Whilst views across the agricultural field can sometimes be open these are typically contained within a framework of vegetative features which can restrict views. When on roads and tracks hedgerows are typically present, often on both sides of the route.

Description of Change

2.6.9 The route begins at Sh-FP22, the user passes directly north of Sub-Site 8B, with views south towards the solar arrays on one side of the route. From there users would turn north along the road for around 100m to connect with PRoW Sh-FP17. Travelling west, this short footpath then

connects with Sh-FP16 and turns south/south-east through agricultural land, broadly parallel with Market Lane. Glimpsed views towards the solar arrays within Sub-Site 8B would be likely here as the Sub-Site lies across higher ground.

2.6.10 Where Sh-FP16 terminates users would cross Market Lane and connect with Sh-FP19 which continues south-east and through Sub-Site 8A. For a section of this PRoW solar arrays within Sub-Site 8A would be to either side of the receptor (~380m). There is a sparse hedgerow providing some screening to the south western field, but users would experience views of solar arrays within both fields for the majority of this footpath. Following this Sub-Site 8A would be behind the direction of travel.

2.6.11 Carrying on south-east along Sh-FP19, the PRoW then becomes Sh-FP21 at Fylands Road directly west of Woodton Farm and continues south-east through agricultural land before turning northeast directly north of Sub-Site 7K for ~250m before reaching Woodton Road. The user will have direct views of the solar PV array. From there users would continue south-east towards Woodton, passing the eastern extents of Sub-Sites 7K and 7L initially along Woodton Road, with no interaction with the Scheme from there.

2.6.12 For recreational users utilising PRoW to connect between Shotesham and Woodton there are potentially three PRoW which would interact directly with the Scheme; these being Sh-FP22, Sh-FP19, and Sh-FP21. Traversing the remaining PRoW would result in no or very limited visibility of the Scheme.

Mitigation Measures

2.6.13 Mitigation proposals related to this route include native linear tree belts and hedgerow with trees along the northern extents of Sub-Site 8B, reducing visual effects for users of PRoW Sh-FP22, and hedgerow with trees along the length of Sub-Site 8A, reducing views of solar arrays for recreational receptors on PRoW Sh-FP19. For PRoW Sh-FP21 the northern boundary of Sub-Site 7K is proposed for hedgerow improvements to reinforce its form and reduce visibility of the Scheme.

Assessment of Effects

2.6.14 A number of these PRoW were assessed individually within **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].** Although this provided judgements on the potential level of effect that would be experienced by these PRoW individually, it also provides a reasonable oversight into the potential for sequential effects, and is summarised below:

- Users of Sh-FP22 were assessed as experiencing **moderate adverse** and **significant effects** in Year 1 of operation, reducing to **minor adverse** and **not significant** effects by Year 15.

- Users of Sh-FP19 were assessed as experiencing **moderate adverse** and **significant effects** in Year 1 of operation, reducing to **minor adverse** and **not significant** effects by Year 15.

2.6.15 Considering the Year 1 scenario overall, the combined route of 8.3km would be partially affected by the Scheme, and although the affected route lengths are relatively short for Sh-FP21 and Sh-FP22, it is of a moderate length for Sh-FP19 and views would also be possible along Woodton Road. Therefore, taking an overall position, it is considered users utilising this route would experience a **moderate adverse** magnitude of change. This gives rise to a **moderate adverse and significant** level of **sequential effect**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.6.16 Considering the Year 15 scenario overall, it is it is judged that for recreational users of this linear route this would represent a **slight adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **minor adverse**, level of effect which is considered **not significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043].**

2.6.17 For users of Sh-FP22 the proposed hedgerow along either side of the route would reduce views of the infrastructure to the south but also reduce visibility to the surrounding landscape. The Applicant considers this hedgerow to be reflective of surrounding features and whilst it is representative of a visual change this is not incompatible with existing visual characteristics and represents only a small change of this sequential route. Similarly for users of Sh-FP19 the proposed hedgerow along the eastern side of the route would reduce views of the infrastructure in this direction but also reduce visibility to the surrounding landscape. The Applicant considers this hedgerow to be reflective of surrounding features and whilst it is representative of a visual change this is not incompatible with existing visual characteristics and represents only a small change of this sequential route.

Shotesham Circular Route / Walk No. 6

2.6.18 Shotesham Circular Walk No. 6 is published by the Shotesham Parish Council in Shotesham Circular Walk (2016)[1]. The assessment of this route includes the following PRoW:

[1] Shotesham (2016) *Shotesham circular walks: Six walks with an introduction and maps*. Available at: [redacted] Accessed: 21 October 2026).

- Shotesham FP5, FP 16, FP17, FP19, FP 21, FP 22

2.6.19 The PRoW also forms part of the Boudicca Way, on Baxter's Lane.

2.6.20 This route has been selected from the published circular walks to represent the worst-case route, as it is the only route that traverses the development area boundaries of both Sub-Sites 8A and 8B. The original published route does not start from a settlement, which is considered unlikely to represent a typical recreational journey. The route has therefore been extended to include Sh-FP5 and part of the Boudicca Way, connecting Shotesham to the start of the published circular route.

Baseline Description

2.6.21 This counterclockwise route originates at the south-eastern extent of the village of Shotesham, travelling generally south-east along the western side of a tributary valley. It then heads east towards Woodton Road, turns northwest along Woodton Road and Baxter's Lane, before travelling west along Sh-FP22 and returning to Shotesham. Total length of this circular route is 8.3km. Users of these local PRoW are considered to be of medium sensitivity (medium value/medium susceptibility).

2.6.22 The route user generally experiences views across an open valley landscape. The views are predominantly rural and open, extending across the valley sides, although the degree of enclosure varies as the route passes woodland blocks and hedgerows.

2.6.23 The route begins by traversing southwest along Sh-FP5 for approximately 500m. Users would then head south-east along Sh-FP16 / Boudicca Way for approximately 800m As the route heads south-east along Little Wood, views are limited to the west, and users would experience an open valley to the east (as represented by VL5/Site 8).

2.6.24 Users would experience similar views as described in the Shotesham to Woodton Linear Route at this section.

2.6.25 The route then continues south-east along Sh-FP21 where it reaches Deal Plantation. Views are generally open but include occasional residential properties and woodland blocks. The route continues north along Woodton Road, then southwest along Fylands Road.

2.6.26 The path then heads northwest along Baxter Lane (the view at Baxter's Lane is represented by VL11/Site 8). The user then turns west along Sh-FP22. Path users would then return to Shotesham via Boudicca Way and Sh-FP7.

Description of Change

2.6.27 This journey would experience largely similar effects to those assessed for the Shotesham to Woodton Linear Route, with an additional encounter with the Scheme on the return journey along Baxter's Lane.

2.6.28 For recreational users utilising the Shotesham Circular Walk No. 6, three PRoW would interact directly with the Scheme; these being Sh-FP22, FP19, and FP21, with Sh-FP16 and part of Boudicca Way having glimpsed views of the Site. Baxter's Lane would also directly interact with sub-Site 8B for ~250m, with ~800m where glimpsed views of Sub-Site 8A or 8B are available. Traversing the remaining PRoW would result in no or very limited intervisibility with the Scheme. At PRoW Sh-FP21 users would experience views of solar arrays within Sub-Site 7K for part of the route; approximately 250m of its 1.2km overall length. For Shotesham FP16 and a small section of Boudicca Way, users would experience glimpsed views of the solar arrays at Sub-Site 8B and 8A.

Mitigation Measures

2.6.29 Mitigation proposals relevant to this route include native linear tree belts and hedgerow with trees along the northern extents of Sub-Site 8B, reducing visual effects for users of PRoW Sh-FP22, and hedgerow with trees along the length of Sub-Site 8A reducing views of solar arrays for recreational receptors on PRoW Sh-FP19. For PRoW Sh-FP21 the northern boundary of Sub-Site 7K is proposed for hedgerow improvements to reinforce its form and reduce visibility of the Scheme.

Assessment of Effects

2.6.30 A number of these PRoW were assessed individually within **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 – Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].** Although this provided judgements on the potential level of effect that would be experienced by these PRoW individually, it also provides a reasonable oversight into the potential for sequential effects, and is summarised below:

- Users of Sh-FP22 were assessed as experiencing **moderate adverse** and **significant effect** in Year 1 of operation, reducing to **minor adverse** and **not significant** effects by Year 15.

- Users of Sh-FP19 were assessed as experiencing **moderate adverse** and **significant effect** in Year 1 of operation, reducing to **minor adverse** and **not significant** effects by Year 15.

2.6.31 Overall, in Year 1, considering the combined route of 8.3km, it is concluded this would be partially affected by the Scheme, and although the affected route lengths are relatively short for Sh-FP21, FP22, and Baxter's Lane, it is of a moderate length for Sh-FP19, and for users this would result in visual change periodically experienced along the route. Although some PRoW do not traverse alongside the Scheme, short to

medium distance glimpsed views of the Scheme are present. In total, approximately 3.2km of the route is affected directly or indirectly. Therefore, a **moderate adverse** magnitude of change is predicted for users. This gives rise to a **moderate adverse** level of **sequential effect** in Year 1 which is considered **significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]**.

2.6.32 Considering the Year 15 scenario overall, it is it is judged that for recreational users of this circular this would represent a **slight adverse** magnitude of sequential effect, leading to a **minor adverse**, level of effect which is considered **not significant**. This is consistent with the reported effects in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043].**

2.6.33 For users of Sh-FP19 the proposed hedgerow along the eastern side of the route would reduce views of the infrastructure in this direction but also reduce visibility to the surrounding landscape. Similarly for users of Sh-FP22 the proposed hedgerow along either side of the route would reduce views of the infrastructure to the south but also reduce visibility to the surrounding landscape. The Applicant considers these hedgerows to be reflective of surrounding features and whilst they result in visual change this is not incompatible with existing visual characteristics and represents only a small change aspart of this wider sequential route.

3 Conclusions

3.1.1 A previous assessment was undertaken to assess the potential effects on recreational receptors utilising PRoW which physically interacted with the Scheme as set out in **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment**.

3.1.2 This report has sought to address *ExA question 1.11.4 PRoW visual amenity* by providing assessment of what could be reasonably assumed as circular or linear routes linking various PRoW and long-distance paths between settlements which recreational receptors may utilise.

3.1.3 The conclusions reached within this report are consistent with those reported in **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]** and the supporting **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment.**

3.1.4 This report assesses routes for linked PRoW / long-distance paths at Sites 1/2/BESS in relation to Sneath Common and Great Moulton, Site 3 in relation to Hempnall Green, Site 4 in relation to Long Stratton, Site 5 in relation to Fritton, Site 7 in relation to Saxlingham Nethergate and Hempnall, and Site 8 in relation to Shotesham, and Woodton.

3.1.5 The assessment considers the operational phase of the Scheme only (at Year 1 and Year 15). At Year 1, mitigation planting would not yet be fully established, and there would be increased visibility of the Scheme which could influence users experience of the PRoW network. By Year 15, the proposed mitigation as shown on the **Green Infrastructure Strategy [REP1-013]** comprising hedgerow, tree belts, woodland and other planting would have established and would provide filtering or screening of views towards the Scheme. The Year 15 assessment also recognises that this planting may itself alter the visual experience of some routes i.e. through increased enclosure.

3.1.6 The sequential effects identified for each route are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Sequential Effects on Identified Circular Routes

Site and Sequential Route	Significance of Effect in Year 1	Significance of Effect in Year 15
Sites 1, 2 and BESS: Sneath Common Circular Route	Major adverse, **significant**	Moderate adverse, **significant**
Sites 1, 2 and BESS: Great Moulton Circular Route	Major adverse, **significant**	Moderate adverse, **significant**

Site 3: Lundy Green Circular Route	Moderate adverse, **significant**	Minor adverse, not significant
Site 4: Long Stratton / Boudicca Way Circular Route	Minor adverse, not significant	Minor adverse, not significant
Site 5: Fritton Circular Route	Moderate adverse, **significant**	Minor adverse, not significant
Site 7: Saxlingham Nethergate Circular Route	Moderate adverse, **significant**	Moderate adverse, **significant**
Site 7: Saxlingham Nethergate to Hempnall Circular Route	Moderate adverse, **significant**	Minor adverse, not significant
Site 8: Shotesham to Woodton Linear Route	Moderate adverse, **significant**	Minor adverse, not significant
Site 8: Shotesham Circular Route / Walk No. 6	Moderate adverse, **significant***	Minor adverse, not significant

3.1.7 For the majority of the assessed routes, the sequential magnitude of change is judged to be moderate adverse in Year 1. Although users would experience clearly noticeable changes in views over parts of these journeys, including sections where individual PRoWs have previously been assessed as experiencing major or moderate adverse effects, these effects would not characterise the journey as a whole.

3.1.8 Visibility of the Scheme would vary as users progress along each route, with intervening vegetation, landform, changes in direction of travel and separation from the Scheme resulting in sections with filtered, glimpsed or no views. The Scheme would therefore influence a meaningful proportion of these journeys but would not generally form a continuous or defining feature of the overall recreational experience.

3.1.9 This contrasts with the Sneath Common and Great Moulton Circular Routes, where users would experience repeated interaction with the Scheme across a substantial proportion of each journey. Both routes would experience major adverse and significant sequential effects at Year 1.

3.1.10 Conversely, along the Long Stratton / Boudicca Way Circular Route, the principal interaction with the Scheme occurs over a comparatively limited part of the overall journey, resulting in a slight adverse magnitude and minor adverse sequential effect.

3.1.11 By Year 15, the establishment of the proposed mitigation planting would reduce the prominence and extent of views of the Scheme. As a result, five of the eight routes experiencing significant sequential effects at Year 1 would reduce to minor adverse or not significant effects at Year

15. The Long Stratton / Boudicca Way Circular Route remains minor adverse and not significant at both assessment years.

3.1.12 Significant sequential effects would nevertheless remain at Year 15 for the Sneath Common Circular Route, Great Moulton Circular Route and Saxlingham Nethergate Circular Route, although in each case the effect reduces to moderate adverse and significant. These residual effects reflect the greater interaction between these routes and the Scheme rather than an absence of effective mitigation.

3.1.13 For the Sneath Common Circular Route, users would continue to experience the influence of the Scheme across a number of successive sections, including views associated with solar arrays and substation infrastructure. Although established planting would substantially filter these views, some infrastructure would remain visible above or through intervening vegetation, and the proposed planting along parts of the route would also locally increase enclosure. The sequential effect therefore reduces from major adverse at Year 1 to moderate adverse at Year 15 but remains significant.

3.1.14 Similarly, along the Great Moulton Circular Route, visual change occurs across a relatively large geographical extent, with repeated interaction with Sub-Sites 1A and 1B, the BESS and substation infrastructure. At Year 15, mitigation would reduce the prominence of these elements and reinforce existing hedgerow and tree features. However, the repeated interaction with the Scheme across the journey means that a moderate adverse and significant sequential effect would remain.

3.1.15 For the Saxlingham Nethergate Circular Route, mitigation planting would substantially reduce direct views of the Scheme. However, proposed planting along SN-FP27, SN-FP11, SN-FP12 and SN-FP14 would create a more enclosed experience along a continuous part of the route. The residual Year 15 effect therefore reflects both the remaining influence of the Scheme and the perceptible change in the character and openness of the route resulting from mitigation planting. This results in a moderate adverse and significant sequential effect at Year 15.

3.1.16 Overall, the Year 15 assessment demonstrates that the proposed mitigation would materially reduce sequential visual effects as planting establishes. Five of the eight routes assessed as experiencing significant sequential effects at Year 1 would reduce to minor adverse and not significant effects by Year 15. Where significant effects remain, these arise from the extent and nature of the route's interaction with the Scheme and, in some locations, the change in openness and enclosure associated with the proposed mitigation planting.

3.1.17 The sequential assessment has not identified a level of effect greater than the effects reported for the relevant individual PRoW and

representative visual receptors in the ES. Rather, it provides additional consideration of how those effects would be experienced successively as part of longer recreational journeys. The findings therefore do not alter the overall conclusions of **ES Volume 1: Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual [APP-043]** or **ES Volume 3: Appendix 7.9 Public Rights of Way Visual Amenity Assessment [APP-149].** They provide further detail on the sequential experience of recreational users at Year 1 and Year 15.