



**WHITESTONE**  
solar farm

# WHITESTONE SOLAR FARM

## Volume 6: Environmental Statement

### 6.15 Chapter 15: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation, and Land-Use

Application Document ref. EN0110020/APP/6.15

Revision 01

June 2026

**Planning Act (2008)**  
Infrastructure Planning (Applications:  
Prescribed Forms and Procedure)  
Regulations 2009  
Regulations 5(2)(a)

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## ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

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Document Status					
Version	Purpose of Document	Authored by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Review Date
Rev01	DCO Submission	ERM	TLT, Pershing, DWD, Whitestone Net Zero Ltd	Whitestone Net Zero Ltd	01/06/2026

Approval for Issue		
Whitestone Net Zero Ltd		1 June 2026

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**Glossary**

Term	Meaning
<i>Agricultural Land Classification</i>	A system of classification of agricultural resource value of soils in England devised by Natural England, from Grade 1 (best quality) to Grade 5 (poorest quality), and based on criteria including soil characteristics (depth, structure, texture, chemistry, stoniness) as well as climate and site aspects.
<i>Best and Most Versatile</i>	“Agricultural land is land with an Agricultural land Classification of Grade 1 – Grade 3 (subgrade 3a)” (National Planning Policy Framework).
<i>Cable Corridors</i>	Corridors within which the high voltage cables would be constructed.
<i>Draft Environmental Statement</i>	The Draft Environmental Statement which presented the preliminary environmental information relating to the Proposed Development. The Draft ES was prepared to present information for statutory consultation in accordance with current EIA regulations.
<i>Environmental Statement (ES)</i>	The Environmental Statement which presents the environmental information relating to the Proposed Development. The ES has been prepared to present information for formal consultation in accordance with current EIA regulations.
<i>Gross Value Added</i>	Gross Value Added (GVA) is an economic metric that measures the contribution of a producer, industry, or sector to an economy, essentially representing the value of goods and services produced less the cost of inputs used in the production process.
<i>Order Limits</i>	Maximum extent of the Proposed Development comprising the Site and Cable Corridors.
<i>Scoping Opinion</i>	The opinion in response from the relevant consenting authority to an EIA Scoping Report adopted by the Secretary of State on 3 June 2025 which sets out the aspects to be assessed within an EIA. Informed by consultation with the relevant statutory bodies.

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Term	Meaning
<i>The Applicant</i>	Whitestone Net Zero Ltd.
<i>The Proposed Development</i>	The proposed Whitestone Solar Farm.
<i>The Site</i>	The land planned to be used for solar PV array and associated infrastructure, BESS, substations, and landscaping and habitat enhancement. The Site is split into W1, W2, and W3.
<i>Whitestone 1 (W1)</i>	The northern parcels of the Whitestone Solar Farm.
<i>Whitestone 2 (W2)</i>	The middle parcels of the Whitestone Solar Farm.
<i>Whitestone 3 (W3)</i>	The southern parcels of the Whitestone Solar Farm/

### Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
<i>AIL</i>	Abnormal Indivisible Load
<i>ALC</i>	Agricultural Land Classification
<i>AMP</i>	Advanced Manufacturing Park
<i>AMRC</i>	Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre
<i>APS</i>	Annual Population Survey
<i>ASHE</i>	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings
<i>BESS</i>	Battery Energy Storage System
<i>BGL</i>	Below Ground Level
<i>BRES</i>	Business Register and Employment Survey
<i>BMV</i>	Best and Most Versatile Land
<i>BNG</i>	Biodiversity Net Gain
<i>CAPEX</i>	Capital Expenditure
<i>CDC</i>	City of Doncaster Council
<i>CEBR</i>	Centre for Economics and Business Research
<i>CEMP</i>	Construction Environment Management Plan
<i>DCC</i>	Derbyshire County Council
<i>DCO</i>	Development Consent Order
<i>DEFRA</i>	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<i>DEMP</i>	Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan
<i>DESNZ</i>	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
<i>DMRB</i>	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
<i>EIA</i>	Environmental Impact Assessment
<i>ES</i>	Environmental Statement
<i>FTE</i>	Full Time Equivalent

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Acronym	Meaning
<i>GP</i>	General Practitioner
<i>GVA</i>	Gross Value Added
<i>HGV</i>	Heavy Goods Vehicle
<i>IEA</i>	International Energy Agency
<i>IEMA</i>	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment
<i>IMD</i>	Index of Multiple Deprivation
<i>ISEP</i>	Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals
<i>LCREE</i>	Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy
<i>LSE</i>	Likely Significant Effect
<i>LSOA</i>	Lower Super Output Area
<i>MHCLG</i>	Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government
<i>NCN</i>	National Cycle Network
<i>NEDDC</i>	North East Derbyshire District Council
<i>NHS</i>	National Health Service
<i>NMU</i>	Non-Motorised User
<i>NPPF</i>	National Planning Policy Framework
<i>NPS</i>	National Policy Statement
<i>NSIP</i>	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
<i>oCEMP</i>	Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan
<i>oCTMP</i>	Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan
<i>oDEMP</i>	Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan
<i>OEMP</i>	Operational Environmental Management Plan
<i>oOEMP</i>	Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan
<i>ONS</i>	Office for National Statistics
<i>OPEX</i>	Operating Expenditure
<i>oPRoWMP</i>	Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan
<i>oSMP</i>	Outline Soil Management Plan
<i>PRoW</i>	Public Right of Way
<i>PV</i>	Photovoltaic
<i>RMBC</i>	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
<i>SIC</i>	Standard Industrial Classification
<i>SOC</i>	Standard Occupational Classifications
<i>SYMCA</i>	South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority
<i>UAA</i>	Utilised Agricultural Area
<i>W1</i>	Whitestone 1
<i>W2</i>	Whitestone 2
<i>W3</i>	Whitestone 3

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Acronym	Meaning
<i>ZoI</i>	Zone of Influence

### Units

Units	Meaning
<i>ha</i>	Hectares
<i>km</i>	Kilometres
<i>kV</i>	Kilovolt
<i>kW</i>	Kilowatt
<i>m</i>	Metres
<i>MW</i>	Megawatt
£	Pound Sterling

# 15 SOCIO-ECONOMICS, TOURISM AND RECREATION, AND LAND USE

## 15.1 Introduction

- 15.1.1 This Chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared on behalf of Whitestone Net Zero Ltd ('the Applicant') to evaluate the potential effects of the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of Whitestone Solar Farm (the 'Proposed Development') in relation to Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use. The Proposed Development is described in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 5: The Proposed Development [EN0110020/APP/6.5]**.

### Order Limits

- 15.1.2 The extent of the Order Limits are described in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: The Site and Surrounding Area [EN0110020/APP/6.3]** and shown in **ES Volume 3, Figure 3.1: Order Limits [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**. The Proposed Development is described in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 5: The Proposed Development [EN0110020/APP/6.5]** and shown spatially on the **Works Plans [EN0110020/APP/2.3]**.

### The Proposed Development

- 15.1.3 The Proposed Development involves the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of more than 100 megawatts (MW) of solar photovoltaic (PV) array, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), onsite substations and supporting infrastructure, and grid connection infrastructure. The grid connection infrastructure would connect the Proposed Development to the National Grid at the new 400 kilovolt (kV) National Grid 400 substation proposed on land immediately east of Long Lane, Brinsworth, S60 4JJ (Long Lane 400kV Substation). National Grid has applied to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council for the development of this new substation which is intended by National Grid to be operational in time for the Proposed Development to connect in 2029. This substation is therefore not included in the Proposed Development and is subject to a separate planning application taken forward by National Grid.
- 15.1.4 As the Proposed Development would have a generating capacity in excess of 100MW, it is considered to be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008.
- 15.1.5 The Proposed Development would be located within the Order Limits. The Order Limits encompass the total area of the project comprising the Site and Cable Corridors. The Site is specifically the land that is planned to be used for solar PV array and associated infrastructure, BESS, substation, landscaping and habitat enhancement. The Site is split into Whitestone 1 (W1), Whitestone 2 (W2), and Whitestone 3 (W3).
- 15.1.6 Highway Works are sections of the highway network that will contain localised improvements, such as improvements to road edge where it is deteriorated, or

temporary highway and traffic works required to safely accommodate the Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) deliveries. These areas will support the movement of construction vehicles on narrower sections of the local highway network within parts of the construction vehicle routes to the Site (as described in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.13]**).

15.1.7 This Chapter of the Environmental Statement includes the following sections:

- Legislation, Policy, and Guidance;
- Consultation;
- Assessment Methodology;
- Baseline;
- Embedded Mitigation;
- Assessment of Effects;
- Additional Mitigation and Residual Effects; and
- Cumulative Effects.

15.1.8 This Chapter is supported by the following **ES Figures [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**

- **Figure 15.1: Socio-Economics Study Area (2019);**
- **Figure 15.2: Socio-Economics Study Area (2024);**
- **Figure 15.3: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation Study Area;**
- **Figure 15.4: Index of Multiple Deprivation;**
- **Figure 15.5: Social Infrastructure;**
- **Figure 15.6: Agricultural Land Classification;**
- **Figure 15.7: Public Rights of Way and Country Parks; and**
- **Figure 15.8: Tourism Attractions and Accommodation.**

15.1.9 This Chapter is also supported by the following **ES Appendices [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**

- **Appendix 15.1: Legislation, Policy and Technical Guidance.**

15.1.10 **Table 15-1** lists the categories of effects considered within this Chapter.

**Table 15-1: Categories of Effects Scoped into the Assessment**

Category	Effects	Construction Phase	Operation and Maintenance Phase
Socio-economic	The impact of new jobs and Gross Value Added (GVA) on the economy	✓	✓
	Wider socio-economic effects to existing local industries	✓	
	Socio-cultural changes to demographics and way of life associated with an influx of new workers	✓	

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Category	Effects	Construction Phase	Operation and Maintenance Phase
Tourism & recreation	Effects on tourism and recreation receptors including Public Rights of Way (PRoW) Impacts on tourism accommodation	✓	✓
Land use	Impacts on land use, agriculture and food production and security <sup>i</sup>	✓	

15.1.11 For most aspects of the assessment, any effects arising from the decommissioning of the Proposed Development are expected to be comparable to, or less than, those arising during the construction phase.

## 15.2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

15.2.1 There is no applicable legislation specific to the assessment of socio economics, land use, and tourism.

15.2.2 The policy, and guidance related to socio-economics, tourism and recreation and land use, as detailed in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 15.1: Legislation, Policy and Guidance [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**, and relevant to the Proposed Development, are outlined below. There is no specific legislation relevant to this assessment.

### National Policy

15.2.3 National policy that has been considered includes:

- Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1<sup>1</sup>) 2025;
- NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3), 2025<sup>2</sup>;
- NPS for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5), 2025<sup>3</sup>;
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF<sup>4</sup>) 2024; and
- The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy<sup>5</sup>, a 10-year plan aimed at making the UK a more competitive, secure, and resilient economy by boosting business investment, simplifying regulation, and accelerating innovation.

### Local Policy

15.2.4 Local policy that has been considered includes:

- South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) Strategic Economic Plan 2021-2041<sup>6</sup>;
- Doncaster Local Plan, 2015-2035<sup>7</sup>;

<sup>i</sup> Temporary or semi-permanent change in agricultural land use arising during the construction phase and continuing into the operation and maintenance phase is assessed as a long-term semi permanent construction effect

- Rotherham Local Plan Core Strategy, 2013-2028<sup>8</sup>; and
- Wickersley Neighbourhood Plan<sup>9</sup>;
- Maltby Neighbourhood Plan<sup>10</sup>;
- Dinnington Neighbourhood Plan<sup>11</sup>; and
- Northeast Derbyshire Local Plan 2014-2034<sup>12</sup>.

### Guidance

15.2.5 Relevant guidance that has informed the assessment includes:

- Institute of Sustainability and Environment Professionals (ISEP) (formerly the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)) (2025), Social Impact Assessment in Environmental Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland<sup>13</sup>;
- ISEP (2026), Solar PV on Agricultural Land<sup>14</sup>;
- ISEP (2022), A New Perspective on Land and Soil in Environmental Impact Assessment<sup>15</sup>;
- HM Treasury (2026), The Green Book: UK Government Guidance on Appraisal<sup>16</sup>;
- Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (2025), Solar Roadmap: United Kingdom Powered by Solar<sup>17</sup>;
- Natural England (2021), Guide to Assessing Development Proposals on Agricultural Land<sup>18</sup>;
- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), LA109 – Geology and soils<sup>19</sup>;
- UK Parliament (2024), Solar and protecting our Food Security and Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Land, Statement made on 15 May 2024<sup>20</sup>; and
- The Andersons Centre (2026), Nix Farm Management Pocketbook, 56<sup>th</sup> edition.

## 15.3 Consultation

15.3.1 This section provides a summary of the consultation undertaken to date regarding the Proposed Development. Further detail on the consultation can also be found in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology [EN0110020/APP/6.2]**.

### EIA Scoping

15.3.2 A Scoping Opinion was sought from the Planning Inspectorate to determine the content of the assessment, as well as the approach and methods to be used. The outcomes of this exercise were documented in the Scoping Report (**ES Volume 3, Appendix 2.1: EIA Scoping Report [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**), which was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 23 April 2025. The Scoping Report captures the findings of the scoping exercise and outlines the technical guidance, standards, best practices, and criteria to be applied in the assessment to identify and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use.

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- 15.3.3 A Scoping Opinion was received from the Planning Inspectorate on 3 June 2025 (**ES Volume 3, Appendix 2.2: EIA Scoping Opinion [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**).
- 15.3.4 **Table 15-2** summarises how this Chapter of the ES addresses key points from the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion comments related to Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use.

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**Table 15-2: Scoping Opinion Comments and How They Are Addressed in This ES**

Consultee	Issue Raised	How This is Addressed	Where Addressed in the ES
<p><i>The Planning Inspectorate</i></p>	<p><b>ID 3.10.2: Socio-cultural effects during operational phase</b>  <i>“The Scoping Report states that socio-cultural effects during operational phase of the Proposed Development are not expected to arise but no further justification is provided.</i>  <i>The Inspectorate also notes that indirect effects on the setting of designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets are scoped into the ES Chapter Cultural Heritage and Archaeology.</i>  <i>In the absence of information such as evidence demonstrating clear agreement with relevant statutory bodies, the Inspectorate is not in a position to agree to scope these matters from the assessment.</i>  <i>Accordingly, the ES should include an assessment of these matters, or the information referred to demonstrating agreement with the relevant consultation bodies and the absence of a LSE.”</i></p>	<p>The socio-cultural assessment refers to effects on the local population associated with physical and demographic changes, rather than effects on heritage assets. Physical changes to the landscape as a result of the Proposed Development will occur during the construction phase but be a long term effect. Operational employment is expected to be considerably smaller than construction employment and it is assumed that most jobs will be taken up by people living within an hour of the Proposed Development. This means that permanent changes in the population are likely to be small and Not Significant.</p> <p>Therefore, Socio-cultural effects are scoped in for construction but not for operation as the physical and demographic changes associated with operation are expected to be small and Not Significant. Effects on heritage assets are assessed in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology [EN0110020/APP/6.8]</b>. Heritage</p>	<p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology [EN0110020/APP/6.8]</b></p> <p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 15: Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use [EN0110020/APP/6.15], Section 15.8.36</b></p>

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Consultee	Issue Raised	How This is Addressed	Where Addressed in the ES
		assets are included in this Chapter where it is recognised that they have tourism and recreation value.	
<i>The Planning Inspectorate</i>	<p><b>ID 3.10.3 Direct and indirect effects on tourism and recreation receptors during operational phase</b></p> <p><i>“The Scoping Report states that direct and indirect effects on tourism and recreation receptors during operational phase are not expected to arise and any permanent changes arising during construction that would continue into the operational phase will be assessed as permanent construction effects. The Inspectorate considers that this approach is unclear in relation to the impacts being assessed on tourism. For example, the impacts and subsequent effects on tourism have potential to be different during construction compared to operation.”</i></p>	Direct and indirect effects on tourism and recreation receptors during operation and maintenance are scoped into the assessment.	<b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 15: Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use [EN0110020/APP/6.15], Section 15.7.38</b>

## Issues Scoped Out of Assessment

15.3.5 Following the scoping exercise, some elements were scoped out of assessment in this ES. **Table 15-3** presents the topics scoped out of assessment.

**Table 15-3: Issues Scoped Out of the EIA**

Potential Effect / Topic	Development Phase	Rationale
Wider socio-economic effects	Operation and maintenance	Is it not expected that there would be Significant effects during the operation and maintenance phase as operational employment is expected to be relatively small which limits the potential for structural changes in the economy.
Socio-cultural effects	Operation and maintenance	Is it not expected that there would be Significant effects during the operation and maintenance phase as operational employment is expected to be relatively small and it is assumed that most jobs will be taken up by people living within an hour of the Proposed Development, which limits the potential for demographic change.
Effects on tourism accommodation	Operation and maintenance	Is it not expected that there would be Significant effects during the operation and maintenance phase as any requirement for worker accommodation during operation and maintenance is expected to be very small.
Land use effects	Operation and maintenance	Is it not expected that there would be Significant effects during the operation and maintenance phase. Any temporary loss of land arising during the construction phase and continuing into the operation and maintenance phase is assessed as a long-term construction effect.

## Statutory Consultation

15.3.6 A Statutory Consultation period was held between 16 September and 28 October 2025 in line with Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008. Feedback was sought from the local community and a range of consultee bodies based on the preliminary information and assessments presented in the Draft ES.

15.3.7 **Table 15-4** presents feedback from statutory consultees given at Statutory Consultation, and how this is addressed in this ES.

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**Table 15-4: Statutory Consultation Feedback from the Statutory Consultation Period**

Consultee	Consultee Feedback	How This is Addressed	Where This is Addressed in the ES
City of Doncaster Council (CDC)	<i>“Care should also be taken to avoid damage or disturbance to soils of high environmental value and other soils that contribute significantly to ecosystem services.”</i>	Physical impacts on soils, including BMV soils, are assessed in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Ground Conditions and Land Quality [EN0110020/APP/6.9]</b> . An outline Soil Management Plan (oSMP) is provided as part of the outline Construction <b>Environment Management Plan (oCEMP) [EN0110020/APP/5.9]</b> .	<b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Ground Conditions and Land Quality [EN0110020/APP/6.9]</b> .
CDC	<i>“CDC at this stage considers the loss of 207.07ha of BMV productive agricultural land as significant.”</i>	The assessment has been updated for the ES, taking account of the design evolution and updated Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) data, and drawing on ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance published since the Draft ES was consulted upon.	Section 15.7 of this Chapter.
CDC	CDC noted that Figure 15.6, Volume 2 – Agricultural Land Classification Plan indicated that a significant proportion of Whitestone 1 had yet to be surveyed and so CDC would not be able to offer any detailed comments.	ALC surveys have been undertaken across the entirety of W1, W2 and W3. The findings of these surveys are shown in <b>ES Volume 3, Figure 15.6: Agricultural Land Classification [EN0110020/APP/6.19]</b> and have informed the baseline and assessment in this Chapter. Desk-based review of ALC classification of land within the Cable Corridors has been undertaken. Further information is provided in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter</b>	<b>ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.6: Agricultural Land Classification Report [EN0110020/APP/6.20]</b> <b>ES Volume 3, Figure 15.6: Agricultural land Classification</b> Section 15.5 and Section 15.7 of this Chapter.

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Consultee	Consultee Feedback	How This is Addressed	Where This is Addressed in the ES
		<p><b>9: Ground Conditions and Land Quality [EN0110020/APP/6.9].</b></p>	
<p>CDC</p>	<p>CDC’s Public Health – Healthy Places Team noted that the relevant chapters of the EIA should provide, where applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Description of the existing population, including demographic data, health status, and deprivation levels.</li> <li>- Summary of baseline conditions for potential impact areas like air quality, noise levels, and traffic.</li> </ul> <p>The Public Health – Healthy Places Team also requested that the ES chapters include considerations of public physical health, mental health, recreation and access. Mitigation measures should be included.</p> <p>The Public Health – Healthy Places Team also sought further information on matters such as Public Rights of Way, permissive paths, noise, air quality, road safety, and glint and glare.</p>	<p>A description of the existing population of the relevant Study Areas is provided in Section 15.5. This includes demographic data, community health, and deprivation. Impacts on human health, where relevant, are assessed within <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Air Quality, ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport, ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.12-6.15.</b> and summarised in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects Assessment [EN0110020/APP/6.17].</b></p> <p>The summary of baseline conditions for potential impact areas like air quality, traffic and noise levels can be found in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Air Quality, ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport, and ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.12-14],</b> respectively.</p>	<p>Section 15.5 of this Chapter;</p> <p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual [EN0110020/APP/6.7];</b></p> <p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Air Quality [EN0110020/APP/6.12];</b></p> <p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.13];</b></p> <p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.14];</b></p> <p>and</p> <p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 16: Other Environmental Topics [EN0110020/APP/6.16];</b></p> <p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects Assessment [EN0110020/APP/6.17];</b></p> <p>and</p> <p><b>Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.14]</b></p>

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Consultee	Consultee Feedback	How This is Addressed	Where This is Addressed in the ES
		<p>Further information of PRoWs can be found in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.7], <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.13], and the <b>outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan</b> [EN0110020/APP/5.14]. Impacts on road safety can be found in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.13]. Impacts on air quality, noise and glint and glare can be found in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Air Quality</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.12], <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.14], and <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 16: Other Environmental Topics</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.16], respectively.</p>	
<p>Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC)</p>	<p>RMBC requested revisions to the ES Chapter 15 to include full local planning policies, a Soil Resources Plan, and an assessment of impacts on farming viability and landowners.</p>	<p>An oSMP is provided as part of the <b>oCEMP</b> [EN0110020/APP/5.9] submitted with the Application, which includes measures relating to soil handling, storage and avoidance of compaction. Further information is provided in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Ground Conditions and Land</b></p>	<p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Ground Conditions and Land Quality</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.9].</p>

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Consultee	Consultee Feedback	How This is Addressed	Where This is Addressed in the ES
		<p><b>Quality [EN0110020/APP/6.9].</b> This Chapter assesses impacts on land use and wider socio-economic effects arising from changes in land use and implications for food security.</p> <p>The Applicant has engaged voluntarily with landlords, in most cases approaching them having carried out an initial assessment of the suitability of their land in terms of location, topography and ALC status, and in a few cases being approached by them.</p> <p>The Applicant has agreed options with 28 landowners to rent part of their land. This means the Applicant is providing income to ~6% of all the agricultural businesses in Doncaster and Rotherham without using the whole of anyone’s land.</p> <p>The Applicant will provide continuing work to farmers and contractors on the solar land, for example hedge-trimming, grass cutting, ditch clearing and raising sheep, which is a small part of the agricultural sector in the area with the potential to grow.</p>	
RMBC	RMBC highlighted the need for a separate Health Impact and Equalities Impact Assessment and robust ongoing community engagement.	The need for a separate Human Health chapter was considered in the Scoping Report, and was scoped out on the basis that human health would	<b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual [EN0110020/APP/6.7];</b>

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Consultee	Consultee Feedback	How This is Addressed	Where This is Addressed in the ES
		<p>be covered through the findings of other relevant technical assessments. Human health has therefore been assessed in the relevant chapters of this ES: <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.7], <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Air Quality</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.12], <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.13], and <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.14].</p> <p>An Equalities Impact Assessment was not scoped in within the Scoping Opinion received from the Planning Inspectorate on 3 June 2025 (<b>ES Volume 3, Appendix 2.2: EIA Scoping Opinion</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.20]).</p> <p>Intra-cumulative effects on human health have been considered in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects Assessment</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.17].</p> <p>The Applicant has engaged with representatives of CDC and RMBC,</p>	<p><b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Air Quality</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.12]; <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.13]; <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.14]; and <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects Assessment</b> [EN0110020/APP/6.17].</p>

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Consultee	Consultee Feedback	How This is Addressed	Where This is Addressed in the ES
		and will continue to engage with local communities.	
RMBC	RMBC noted that the ES lacks a complete survey and mitigation strategy for BMV agricultural land.	ALC surveys have been undertaken across the entirety of W1, W2 and W3. The findings of these surveys are shown in <b>ES Volume 3, Figure 15.6: Agricultural Land Classification [EN0110020/APP/6.19]</b> and have informed the baseline and assessment in this Chapter. An oSMP is provided as part of the <b>oCEMP [EN0110020/APP/5.9]</b> . Further information on mitigation for impacts on soils is provided in <b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Ground Conditions and Land Quality [EN0110020/APP/6.9]</b> .	<b>ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Ground Conditions and Land Quality [EN0110020/APP/6.9];</b> <b>ES Volume 3, Figure 15.6: Agricultural Land Classification [EN0110020/APP/6.19];</b> Section 15.5; and Section 15.7.
RMBC	RMBC noted that socio-economic benefits are quantified but lack commitments to local hiring, training, and apprenticeships despite local skills gaps. The council recommended a Local Employment and Skills Plan and a Community Benefit Strategy to share long-term benefits with host communities.	An <b>Outline Skills and Supply Chain Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.18]</b> will be submitted as part of this Application and will set out measures that will be put in place to support delivery of employment, training and supply chain opportunities during the construction and operation of the Proposed Development.	
Chesterfield Canal Trust	Chesterfield Canal Trust noted that: - Figure 15.7 should include non-definitive paths and promoted routes such as the	The Chapter has been updated to reflect these comments.	Section 15.5;and <b>ES Volume 3, Figure 15.7: Public Rights of</b>

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Consultee	Consultee Feedback	How This is Addressed	Where This is Addressed in the ES
	<p>Cuckoo Way along the Chesterfield Canal towpath, not just public rights of way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Section 15.6.30: Correct tourism spend figure from £7.4m to £7.4bn.</li> <li>- Section 15.6.34: Add references to Chesterfield Canal and Kiveton Woodlands as key local recreational resources.</li> <li>- Section 5.6.36: Replace “Trans-Pennine Way” with Trans Pennine Trail, and note its branch to Chesterfield, which is missing from Figure 15.7.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promoted long-distance walking routes, including the Cuckoo Way, are included in the baseline in Section 15.5 and shown on <b>ES Volume 3, Figure 15.7: Public Rights of Way and Other Recreational Receptors [EN0110020/APP/6.19]</b>.</li> <li>- The tourism spend figure has been corrected in paragraph 15.5.33.</li> <li>- Chesterfield Canal and Kiveton Community Woodlands have been added to the tourism and recreation baseline in Section 15.5.</li> <li>- “Trans-Pennine Way” has been amended to Trans Pennine Trail and is shown on <b>ES Volume 3, Figure 15.7: Public Rights of Way and Other Recreational Receptors [EN0110020/APP/6.19]</b>.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Way and Other Recreational Receptors [EN0110020/APP/6.19].</b></p>
<p>Chesterfield Canal Trust</p>	<p><i>“Chapter should acknowledge the recreational and future restoration potential of the Chesterfield Canal, even if impacts from Whitestone 3 are expected to be minimal.”</i></p>	<p>Canal towpaths, including those on Chesterfield Canal, have been included in the baseline in Section 15.5 and in the subsequent assessment in Section 15.7 of this Chapter.</p>	<p>Section 15.5 and Section 15.7 of this Chapter.</p>

## Other Consultation

15.3.8 Details of consultation to date undertaken outside of the scoping exercise and Statutory Consultation are presented in **Table 15-5**.

**Table 15-5 Summary of Other Consultation**

Consultee	Date	Summary of Discussions	Where This is Addressed in the ES
Business Doncaster Chief Executive's Directorate City of Doncaster Council	2 April 2026	Meeting to present the <b>outline Skills and Supply Chain Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.18]</b> and what it means for stakeholders. Meeting also to gain understanding regarding policies, sectors to approach, contacts in Education/Training/Recruitment/Events.	<b>outline Skills and Supply Chain Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.18]</b>
Economic Strategy Regeneration and Environment Services Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	2 April 2026	Meeting to present the <b>outline Skills and Supply Chain Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.18]</b> and what it means for stakeholders. Meeting also to gain understanding regarding policies, sectors to approach, contacts in Education/Training/Recruitment/Events.	<b>outline Skills and Supply Chain Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.18]</b>

## Targeted Consultation

15.3.9 A Targeted Consultation period was held between 4 March and 3 April 2026 on proposed changes to the Order Limits. This included notifying relevant prescribed consultees. Feedback from this Targeted Consultation and the Applicant's response is included in the **Consultation Report [EN0110020/APP/5.1]**.

15.3.10 A second Targeted Consultation was held for any individuals that had been identified as land interests after the Statutory Consultation.

15.3.11 No comments were provided by statutory consultees through the Targeted Consultation period in relation to Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation and Land Use.

## 15.4 Assessment Methodology and Significance Criteria

### Study Areas

15.4.1 The significance of Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation and Land Use effects can vary across different spatial scales. Therefore, impacts and effects are

assessed across multiple spatial scales as relevant to the specific impact or effect, including national, local and neighbourhood levels.

15.4.2 The national, local and neighbourhood Study Areas are defined as follows:

- The national Study Area is England;
- The local Study Area refers to the local administrative areas of City of Doncaster Council (CDC) and Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC). North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) and Derbyshire County Council (DCC) have not been included in the Study Area as only a very small area of land within the Order Limits falls within the local authority boundary, and so it is expected that the majority of local socio-economic impacts would occur in the CDC and RMBC areas; and
- The neighbourhood Study Area comprises wards from Doncaster and Rotherham that have been selected to determine an area of 'best fit' with the local potentially affected neighbourhoods. Ward boundaries changed in 2024 and so the wards used in the Census 2021 do not directly align with those used in more recent Office for National Statistics (ONS) datasets. Census ward boundaries are shown in **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.1: Socio-Economics Study Area (2019) [EN0110020/APP/6.19]** and the 2024 ward boundaries are shown in **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.2: Socio-Economic Study Area (2024) [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**.

15.4.3 The relevant Study Areas for each category of impacts and effects is as follows:

- **Socio-economic impacts** are direct, indirect, and induced effects on employment and GVA. Socio-economic impacts are likely to be realised at a national and local level. Some socio-economic impacts may occur at a ward level, for example, where jobs are filled by residents, or opportunities are secured by businesses located in the neighbourhood. However, this is unlikely to be Significant. Therefore, the local and national Study Areas are most relevant for socio-economic impacts. The Study Areas for socio-economic impacts are illustrated in **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.1: Socio-Economics Study Area (2019)** and **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.2: Socio-Economics Study Area (2024) [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**;
- **Wider socio-economic effects** are knock on effects to existing local industries arising from socio-economic impacts and changes in land use. Wider socio-economic effects are unlikely to be Significant at a national level but may affect very localised industries at the neighbourhood or local level. The neighbourhood and local Study Areas are therefore relevant for assessing wider socio-economic effects.
- **Socio-cultural effects** are effects on the local population, local services, and local culture and identity. Socio-cultural effects are not likely to be Significant at a national level but may be perceived or observed at a local or neighbourhood level, where there are changes impacting communities nearby. Therefore, the neighbourhood and local Study Areas are relevant for assessing wider socio-economic effects;
- **Tourism and recreation effects:** Effects on the tourism sector are assessed at neighbourhood and local level as part of the assessment of wider socio-economic effects. For direct impacts on tourism and recreation receptors the Study Area is land within the Order Limits. For impacts such as disruption to access or in-combination effects on amenity, the Study Area is a local impact area measured as 5km from the Order Limits, illustrated within **ES Volume 3,**

**Figure 15.3: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation Study Area [EN0110020/APP/6.19]; and**

- **Land use effects:** Land use effects relate to the impact of the change in land use and are specific to the land within the Order Limits. Therefore, the Study Area for land use is land within the Order Limits.

15.4.4 The Study Areas for each aspect of the assessment are summarised in **Table 15-6**.

**Table 15-6: Relevance of Study Area to Impact or Effect Type**

Category	Impacts and Effects	Order Limits	5km from Order Limits	Neighbourhood	Local	National
Socio-economic	Socio-economic impacts				✓	✓
	Wider socio-economic effects			✓	✓	
	Socio-cultural effects			✓	✓	
Tourism and recreation	Tourism and recreation effects	✓	✓			
Land Use	Land use effects	✓				

## Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use Scope

15.4.5 The scope of effects considered in the Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use assessment is presented in **Table 15-7**.

**Table 15-7: Scope of Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use, Assessment**

Category	Potential Significant Impacts and Effects
Socio-economics	Socio-economic impacts during the construction and operation and maintenance phases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct, indirect, and induced<sup>ii</sup> employment created by the Proposed Development; and</li> <li>• Direct, indirect, and induced productivity gains measured as GVA.</li> </ul>
	Wider socio-economic effects during the construction phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knock on effect to existing local industries arising from socio-economic impacts, specifically agriculture and food production and tourism sectors.</li> </ul>
	Socio-cultural effects during the construction phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local population changes arising from socio-economic impacts;</li> <li>• Effects on access to local services (health and education); and</li> </ul>

<sup>ii</sup> Jobs related through forward linkages as households benefiting from direct and indirect employment spend some of their additional income on goods and services in the economy

Category	Potential Significant Impacts and Effects
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change in local identity and sense of place due to Proposed Development impacts, population change, and changes to local identity and way of life.</li> </ul>
Tourism and recreation	Tourism and recreation effects during the construction and operation and maintenance phases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effects on tourism and recreation receptors (quality and access) including PRow and tourism accommodation.</li> </ul>
Land use effects	Land use effects during the construction phase: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change in land use and mode of agriculture and food production and security.</li> </ul>

- 15.4.6 The construction phase is expected to span approximately 24 to 36 months. While the exact timeline would depend on various factors, including the submission and determination of the Application, the current plan is to commence construction in 2027 and conclude in 2029.
- 15.4.7 However, construction works would be phased, so it is unlikely for one area to be undergoing construction for a continuous 24 to 36 months. The earliest date of operation would be 2029, in line with the connection date for the Proposed Development.
- 15.4.8 A shorter construction phase could increase the magnitude of impacts in terms of employment and the supply chain i.e. more people may be need to deliver a shorter construction programme. Therefore, although the effects associated with jobs and GVA are likely to be beneficial, a construction phase of 24 months represents a 'worst case' scenario in EIA terms.
- 15.4.9 The Application is seeking consent for an operational period of 60 years for the Proposed Development, after which it would be decommissioned. Decommissioning at the end of the Proposed Development's life is also considered qualitatively.

## Methodology for the Assessment of Effects

- 15.4.10 The following section describes the methodology that has been used to assess the significance of Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use effects. This methodology has been developed in line with relevant guidance, including ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance on social impact assessment in EIA<sup>21</sup>, and has been informed by professional judgement and established industry best practice.
- 15.4.11 The overarching methodology involves assessing the significance of potential impacts and effects relative to the established baseline, taking account of embedded mitigation. The baseline describes the current socio-economic, tourism and recreation, and land use conditions within the relevant Study Areas, as defined in Section 15.4, using latest available data and feedback gathered through statutory consultation.
- 15.4.12 Socio-economic impacts, including direct, indirect and induced jobs and GVA resulting from the Proposed Development, are then estimated using an economic model developed in line with Green Book standards<sup>22</sup>. This model draws on established industry examples<sup>23</sup> and trusted data sources<sup>24</sup>.

- 15.4.13 The assessment of wider socio-economic effects and socio-cultural effects is qualitative in nature, examining the secondary effects associated with the socio-economic impacts of the Proposed Development. Changes in local demographics and shifts in demand for social infrastructure are assessed against baseline conditions, taking into account the size of the local labour market and the population of the Study Area, and the proportion of workers expected to move to the area temporarily.
- 15.4.14 Tourism and recreation effects are assessed based on the Order Limits, the nature and scale of activities expected during the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases, and the findings of relevant environmental assessments including **ES Volume 2, Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual [EN0110020/APP/6.7]**, **ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.14]**, **ES Volume 2, Chapter 12: Air Quality [EN0110020/APP/6.12]**, and **ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.13]**. The assessment examines direct impacts, as well as indirect impacts on access and amenity, that may influence tourism and recreation receptors within the Study Area.
- 15.4.15 The impact on land use has been measured in relation to the area of agricultural land, including BMV land, that will be required for the Proposed Development. The assessment has been conducted against current baseline conditions. Potential implications for agricultural output are considered as part of the assessment of wider socio-economic effects for the agriculture and food production sectors.

### Assessment Criteria

- 15.4.16 The sensitivity of receptors is rated from high to negligible using criteria defined in **Table 15-8**. The ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance on social impact assessment<sup>25</sup> notes that the sensitivity of receptors is typically indicated by the following factors:
- The receptor’s social, economic, or environmental **value**, as recognised in relevant local, regional or national policy;
  - The receptor’s **resilience** or **capacity** to absorb change;
  - The receptor’s **scarcity value**, or the availability of suitable alternative resources; and
  - The community’s **dependency** on a resource, receptor or receiving environment.
- 15.4.17 For land use, criteria have drawn on ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance on land and soils<sup>26</sup>.

**Table 15-8 Sensitivity of Receptors**

Sensitivity of Receptor	Description
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The receptor is of international or national importance.</li> <li>• The receptor has little or no ability to absorb change or recover/adapt.</li> <li>• There is no or low availability of labour and skills in the local authority area workforce, for example as a result of very low unemployment rates.</li> <li>• There are no suitable alternative resources available within the relevant Study Area.</li> <li>• The receptor is used solely by sensitive groups such as older people, children, or people in poor health.</li> </ul>

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Sensitivity of Receptor	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agricultural land that is grade 3a or above according to ALC.</li> </ul>
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The receptor is of regional or local importance.</li> <li>The receptor has moderate ability to absorb change or recover/adapt</li> <li>There is a constrained supply of labour and skills.</li> <li>There is limited availability of alternative resources.</li> <li>The receptor is used principally, but not exclusively, by sensitive groups.</li> <li>Agricultural land that is ALC grade 3b.</li> </ul>
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The receptor is of local importance.</li> <li>The receptor has ability to absorb change or to recover/adapt.</li> <li>There is a readily available labour force, but potentially with some skill shortages in particular areas.</li> <li>There are alternative resources available.</li> <li>The receptor is used by the community including sensitive groups.</li> <li>Agricultural land that is ALC Grade 4 or 5.</li> </ul>

15.4.18 The ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance on social impact assessment notes that the magnitude of an impact is typically indicated by the following factors:

- The **size** of the impact based on anticipated change versus the baseline;
- The **scale** or **extent** of the impact;
- The **duration** of the impact;
- The **frequency** of the impact, if relevant; and
- The **reversibility** of the impact.

15.4.19 Magnitude criteria are presented in **Table 15-9**. For most categories of effects, criteria to determine impact magnitude have been developed based on the ISEP (formerly IEMA) social impact assessment guidance, and informed by best practice and professional judgement. For land use, criteria have drawn on relevant ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance<sup>27,28</sup>.

**Table 15-9: Magnitude of Impact**

Magnitude of Impact	Description
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total loss or major alteration (adverse or beneficial) of a socio-economic receptor.</li> <li>This could include permanent closure or severe effect upon the viability of a business, community facility or public service, or closure or restricted access to PRoW.</li> <li>Permanent, irreversible loss of more than 20ha of agricultural land.</li> </ul>
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of, or alteration to (adverse or beneficial) one or more key elements of a socio-economic receptor's baseline value.</li> <li>This could include a moderate change to business revenues with potential job losses but no threat to the viability of the business, moderate changes to the function</li> </ul>

Magnitude of Impact	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>or service of community facilities and public services, or a moderate reduction in access to recreational PRow.</li> <li>Permanent, irreversible loss of between 5 and 20ha of agricultural land.</li> </ul>
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slight alteration (adverse or beneficial) of the socio-economic receptor's baseline value.</li> <li>This could include a low change to business revenues with isolated job losses but no threat to the viability of the business, low change to the function or service of community facilities and public services, or low reduction in access to recreational PRow.</li> <li>Permanent, irreversible loss of less than 5ha of agricultural land, or temporary or semi-permanent reversible loss.</li> </ul>
Negligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very little change from baseline conditions. Change barely distinguishable, approximating to a 'no change' situation.</li> </ul>

### Significance of Effect

15.4.20 The significance of effect is a product of the magnitude of the impact and the sensitivity of the receptor, as show in **Table 15-10**. Effects assessed as Major or Moderate significance are defined as Significant in the context of the EIA Regulations; effects with a level of significance of Negligible and Minor are considered as 'Not Significant'. Additional mitigation measures will be proposed to address any Significant Adverse effects.

**Table 15-10: Significance of Effects**

Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	Major	Major	Moderate	Negligible
Moderate	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Low	Moderate	Minor	Minor	Negligible
Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

### Basis of the Assessment

15.4.21 This assessment considers Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use impacts and effects against the baseline. Effects are considered during the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development, as appropriate.

15.4.22 The baseline assessment relies on data from trusted government sources (see **Table 15-11**) and the findings of related ES chapters including, **ES Volume 2, Chapter 7, Landscape and Visual Impact [EN0110020/APP/6.7]**, **ES Volume 2, Chapter 8, Cultural Heritage and Archaeology [EN0110020/APP/6.8]**, **ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.13]** and **ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.14]**.

## Assumptions, Exclusions and Limitations

### Assumptions

15.4.23 The following assumptions have been made to assess the socio-economic, tourism and recreation, and land use effects of the Proposed Development:

- NEDDC and DCC have not been included in the Study Area as only a very small area of land within the Order Limits falls within the local authority boundary, and so it is expected that the majority of local socio-economic impacts would occur in the CDC and RMBC areas;
- The construction phase for the Proposed Development is 24 to 36 months. For the purposes of the assessment, the construction phase is assumed to be 24 months which represents the 'worst case' in terms of socio-economic assessment as a shorter duration could increase the magnitude of impacts in terms of employment and the supply chain;
- The construction phase will commence in 2027 and end in 2029. The operation and maintenance phase begins in 2029;
- The Proposed Development will operate for 60 years;
- Based on professional judgement and understanding of local and national supply chains, it is assumed that approximately 10% of construction spend will occur within Doncaster and Rotherham, 20% elsewhere in England, and 70% outside of England (further information is provided in Section 15.7 and details of the Proposed Development's contribution to local supply chain is provided in the **outline Skills and Supply Chain Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.18]** submitted as part of this Application);
- During operation and maintenance, it is assumed that approximately 25% of spend will occur within Doncaster and Rotherham, 40% elsewhere in England, and 35% outside of England (further information is provided in Section 15.4);
- The majority of construction workers from outside of the Doncaster and Rotherham local authority areas will be from surrounding areas and will commute to the Proposed Development each day;
- There will be no Significant increase in tourism or recreation as a result of the Proposed Development;
- In terms of the working-age population, the future baseline will remain broadly stable throughout the lifetime of the Proposed Development;
- For most aspects of the assessment, any effects arising from the decommissioning of the Proposed Development are expected to be comparable to, or less than, those arising during the construction phase; and
- Following decommissioning, it is assumed that it will be possible for most of the land required for the construction and operation and maintenance phases of the Proposed Development to be returned to use for arable farming or other uses that preceded the Proposed Development.

### Exclusions

15.4.24 The following aspects have not been included in the assessment:

- Long-term demographic changes in population size or structure have not been included as the Proposed Development is not expected to influence migration or settlement patterns;
- Broader macro-economic trends e.g. levels of inflation or national employment shifts are not factored into the assessment which focuses on project specific impacts; and
- Tourism impacts beyond 5km buffer from the Order Limits are excluded due to the limited geographic influence of the Proposed Development.

### Limitations

15.4.25 The following constraints are acknowledged as limitations:

- The baseline assessment uses the most up-to-date data available from a range of government and other secondary data sources, and incorporates updates that have become available since the submission of the Draft ES;
- While efforts have been made to ensure that the key tourism and recreation facilities in the area have been identified, it is possible that there could be some attractions that may not be identified through the data collection process;
- Socio-economic baseline data is available at different spatial levels and does not always align neatly with the relevant Study Areas for each impact and effect. This is explained throughout the baseline section; and
- Economic impacts are projections only and subject to uncertainties.

## 15.5 Baseline

### Data Sources

#### Existing Baseline Data Sources

15.5.1 Existing Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use conditions within the Study Areas have been defined using the sources outlined in **Table 15-11**.

**Table 15-11: Data Sources**

Indicators	Data Source	Year
Population, age profile	ONS, Census	2021
Population projections	ONS, Population Projections for Local Authorities	2025
Economic activity, occupations	ONS, Annual Population Survey (APS)	2025
Employment	Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)	2024
Gross Value Added	ONS, Regional Gross Value Added	2024
Households	ONS, Census	2021

Indicators	Data Source	Year
Qualifications	ONS, APS	2024 <sup>iii</sup>
Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)	2025
Long-term health problems or disability	ONS, Census	2021
Health services	House of Commons Library constituency data <sup>29</sup>	2025
Tourism employment, tourism spending, tourism volume, tourism	Visit Britain	2016, 2022

### Future Baseline Data Sources

- 15.5.2 The Future Baseline has been considered by examining development sites across the relevant local plans:
- Rotherham Local Plan Core Strategy 2013 - 2028<sup>8</sup>; and
  - Doncaster Local Plan 2015 - 2035<sup>7</sup>.
- 15.5.3 The latest ONS population projections have also been used to understand projected population growth within the local Study Area.

### Existing Baseline Conditions

- 15.5.4 The baseline conditions are explained below. The baseline data is summarised against the categories included in the scope of this assessment, which are socio-economic, tourism and recreation, and land use.

### Socio-economic Context

- 15.5.5 As noted in Section 15.5, socio-economic effects include the impact on the economy measured by jobs and GVA that will be created by the Proposed Development. Effects are assessed for the local and national Study Areas, and therefore baseline data is supplied for Doncaster, Rotherham and England. Baseline data is also provided at ward level to explore the variation between neighbourhoods.

### Employment and Economic Activity

- 15.5.6 Data from the APS for the year to September 2025, set out in **Table 15-12**, shows that the rate of economic activity recorded in both Rotherham and Doncaster is below the national average<sup>30</sup>. In Rotherham, the rate of economic activity is considerably lower than in Doncaster and England. The employment rate is also lower in Rotherham than it is in Doncaster and in England, suggesting there may be more capacity within the labour force in Rotherham than in other areas.

<sup>iii</sup> APS data on qualifications is released on an annual rather than quarterly basis

## ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

15.5.7 APS data is not available at ward level. However, data from the Claimant Count, which measures the number of people claiming Jobseekers' Allowance or Universal Credit who are out of work, indicates some variation in the proportion of people who are out of work at neighbourhood level within the Local Study Area. As of December 2025, the claimant count in Doncaster was 4.0%, marginally above the national average of 3.9%, and in Rotherham was 3.7%, slightly below the national average. At ward level within the neighbourhood Study Area, the claimant count ranges from 1.9% in Anston and Woodsetts, to 3.9% in Conisbrough<sup>31</sup>.

**Table 15-12: Economic Activity and Employment**

	Doncaster	Rotherham	England
Economic activity rate (aged 16-64)	78.3%	75.6%	79.3%
Economic inactivity rate (aged 16-64)	21.7%	24.4%	20.7%
Employment rate (aged 16-64)	75.3%	72.3%	75.8%
Unemployment rate (aged 16-64)	3.8%	4.4%	4.4%

Source: APS, 2025

15.5.8 **Table 15-13** presents APS employment distribution by occupational level in the Study Area. The data indicates that there is a lower proportion of the workforce employed in the top three Standard Occupational Classifications (SOC) groups in Doncaster and Rotherham compared to the national average. Compared to the national rate, there is a higher proportion of the workforce employed in SOC groups 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 in Doncaster and Rotherham. Doncaster also has above average proportion of the workforce employed in SOC group 7.

**Table 15-13: Occupational Level**

	Doncaster	Rotherham	England
Managers, directors and senior officials (SOC 1)	7.2%	8.2%	11.7%
Professional occupations (SOC 2)	17.8%	22.3%	27.2%
Associate professional and technical occupations (SOC 3)	11.8%	11.0%	15.0%
Administrative and secretarial occupations (SOC 4)	10.3%	11.6%	9.2%
Skilled trades occupations (SOC 5)	13.1%	11.5%	8.3%
Caring, leisure and other service occupations (SOC 6)	11.0%	11.5%	8.5%
Sales and customer service occupations (SOC 7)	7.0%	2.9%	5.6%
Process, plant and machine operatives (SOC 8)	7.9%	8.5%	5.6%
Elementary occupations (SOC 9)	13.6%	12.6%	8.8%

Source: APS, 2025

15.5.9 Qualification levels<sup>32</sup> in Doncaster and Rotherham are below national averages. **Table 15-14** uses APS data and shows that both areas – and Doncaster in particular – have fewer residents with Level 4 qualifications and more with no qualifications compared to national figures. This suggests skills gaps in the local workforce which may limit access to higher-skilled employment opportunities and affect economic resilience.

**Table 15-14: Qualifications Achieved<sup>iv</sup>**

	Doncaster	Rotherham	England
RQF4+	25.5%	33.2%	46.8%
RQF3+	53.4%	52.5%	67.3%
RQF2+	79.5%	76.1%	86.5%
RQF1+	83.4%	81.0%	89.0%
Other qualifications	6.6%	4.1%	4.4%
No qualifications	10.0%	14.9%	6.6%

Source: APS, 2024

### Earnings

15.5.10 Resident earnings in Doncaster and Rotherham are below the national average. Data from the 2025 ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE<sup>33</sup>) shows that median weekly earnings were £697 in Doncaster and £671 in Rotherham compared to £770 for England. The lower wages will reflect the types of jobs available locally and the skill profile of the workforce.

15.5.11 In both Doncaster and Rotherham, resident earnings are higher than workplace earnings. Doncaster and Rotherham residents earn £26 and £32 more per week, respectively, than the average workforce salary in their areas. This indicates that some residents commute out of the area to access higher-paid jobs. ASHE data is not available at ward level.

### GVA and Productivity

15.5.12 Collectively Rotherham and Doncaster account for 8% of regional (Yorkshire and the Humber) GVA. According to the most recent data available (2023<sup>34</sup>), Doncaster’s total GVA was £7,191m and Rotherham’s was £5,606m.

15.5.13 Workforce productivity in Doncaster and Rotherham is consistently below the regional and national averages. GVA per job, a useful measure of workforce productivity, was £52,500 in Doncaster and £57,302 in Rotherham in 2023, compared to an average of £61,059 across Yorkshire and the Humber, and £71,389 across England<sup>35</sup>.

### Wider Socio-economic Context

15.5.14 The scope for socio-economic effects also includes the knock-on socio-economic effects upon established or traditional industries within the neighbourhood Study Area, as well as for the local Study Area. Therefore, the baseline explains the wider socio-economic context in the neighbourhood and local Study Areas. As noted above, the neighbourhood Study Area is an area of best fit made up of

<sup>iv</sup> Figures do not sum to 100% as they are cumulative, e.g. the figure for RQF4+ includes those who have also achieved RQF1-3.

several wards. Baseline data has been averaged across the selected wards to custom build baseline evidence for the neighbourhood Study Area in the baseline below. Data on England is provided for context.

### **Economic Structure**

- 15.5.15 Manufacturing is a key employment sector in the local and neighbourhood Study Areas. As shown in **Table 15-15**<sup>36</sup>, manufacturing accounts for 13.7% of jobs in Rotherham and 7.5% in Doncaster. In the neighbourhood Study Area, manufacturing accounts for 20.2%, almost three times the national average of 7.0%. Construction is also an important employer locally, accounting for 9.2% of employment in the neighbourhood Study Area, 7.5% in Doncaster, and 7.8% in Rotherham, above the national average.
- 15.5.16 Outside of manufacturing and construction, Doncaster has a strong transport and storage sector, reflecting its importance as a rail terminal and interchange. In contrast all areas have a smaller proportion of employment in professional, scientific and technical roles suggesting a lower presence of high-value knowledge-based employment.

**Table 15-15: Employment by Sector**

Sector	Neighbourhood	Doncaster	Rotherham	England
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.1% <sup>v</sup>	0.7%	0.4%	1.2%
Mining, quarrying and utilities	1.5%	1.1%	1.5%	1.1%
Manufacturing	20.2%	7.5%	13.7%	7.0%
Construction	9.2%	7.5%	7.8%	5.0%
Motor trades	3.9%	3.4%	2.9%	1.8%
Wholesale	5.0%	3.7%	4.4%	3.7%
Retail	8.1%	9.0%	8.8%	8.2%
Transport and storage	4.2%	11.9%	5.9%	5.1%
Accommodation and food services	7.4%	6.0%	5.9%	7.6%
Information and communication	1.8%	0.9%	1.7%	4.7%
Financial and insurance	0.7%	1.7%	1.5%	3.3%
Property	0.9%	0.9%	0.6%	2.2%
Professional, scientific and technical	6.1%	6.0%	4.4%	9.7%
Business administration and support services	4.5%	7.5%	7.8%	8.7%
Public administration and defence	1.2%	4.5%	5.9%	4.4%
Education	11.7%	7.5%	8.8%	8.4%
Health	9.0%	16.4%	14.7%	13.5%
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services	4.7%	3.7%	3.9%	4.5%

Source: ONS 2025

### Employment in Key Industries

- 15.5.17 The construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development could create employment and supply chain effects in key employment sectors within the local and neighbourhood Study Areas including manufacturing, construction, and logistics, discussed above. Other industries that could be impacted include agriculture, which may adapt to changes in land use, and tourism, which could be influenced by increased demand for accommodation and changes in the landscape and visual environment.
- 15.5.18 Tourism-related employment varies across the Study Area. Employment in accommodation and food service is below average levels in Doncaster (6%) and Rotherham (5.9%) suggesting tourism plays a relatively small role in the local economy<sup>36</sup>. At a neighbourhood level, tourism-related employment is still below the national average (7.4%), but higher than the local Study Area. Ward level data shows above average employment in accommodation and food in wards including Bramley and Ravenfield (18.0%), Aston and Todwick (17.0%), and Sitwell

<sup>v</sup> BRES data at ward level does not include farm employment.

(15.1%). This is likely caused by proximity to the M1 corridor and attractions such as Gulliver’s Valley Theme Park. Employment in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector is below average in the local Study Areas, but above average in the Neighbourhood Study area, and particularly in certain wards, again likely reflecting the role of key attractions.

- 15.5.19 Agricultural employment is lower across the local Study Area than the national average, accounting for 0.4% of employment in Rotherham, and 0.7% in Doncaster, compared with 1.2% in England. BRES does not collect data on farm employment at ward level, and so it is likely that the figure of 0.1% included in **Table 15-15** underestimates total agricultural employment in the neighbourhood Study Area. Data from the Census on industry of employment, which is from 2021 and so not as up-to-date as BRES, indicates that employment in agriculture in the neighbourhood Study Area is around 0.4%, in line with local averages<sup>vi</sup>.
- 15.5.20 As noted above, the manufacturing sector is particularly prominent at the neighbourhood level, accounting for 20.2% of total employment compared with 7.0% nationally. Several sub sectors contribute to this including manufacturing of fabricated metal (22.3% of manufacturing employment), manufacture of furniture (16.9% of manufacturing employment) and manufacture of food products (12.3% of manufacturing employment). While the share of overall manufacturing employment that is accounted for by manufacture of food products is lower than the national average of 17.8%, ward level data shows that food manufacturing jobs are particularly concentrated in the Wales and Anston and Woodsetts wards. Employers in the Wales ward include Greencore Kiveton, a producer of convenience foods which employs over 600 people<sup>37</sup>.

### Socio-cultural Context

- 15.5.21 Potential socio-cultural effects arising from an influx of new workers are considered for the local and neighbourhood Study Areas. Relevant baseline data to describe the socio-cultural context is provided for these areas and with data on England for comparison.

### Population and Demographics

- 15.5.22 **Table 15-16** uses data from the Mid-year Population Estimates for 2024 and presents a breakdown of the population profile across the Study Areas<sup>38</sup>. While the demographic structures are similar, the neighbourhood Study Area exhibits a smaller working age population and larger population of people aged 65 and over than nationally. The proportion of the population that is of working age is also slightly lower than average across Doncaster and Rotherham. Ward level data indicates that, within the neighbourhood Study Area, the proportion of the population that is of working age is lowest in Anston and Woodsetts (56.1%) and highest in Rother Vale (66.0%).

**Table 15-16: Population Profile**

	Neighbourhood	Doncaster	Rotherham	England
Population aged 0-15	18.5%	19.0%	19.0%	18.4%

<sup>vi</sup> ONS (2022), Census 2021.

	Neighbourhood	Doncaster	Rotherham	England
Population of working age (16-64)	60.1%	61.4%	61.3%	62.9%
Population of pension age (65+)	21.4%	19.6%	19.7%	18.7%

Source: ONS Mid-year Population Estimates (2021-based)

### Community Health

15.5.23 Data from the 2021 Census shows that self-reported health is less favourable in the neighbourhood and local Study Areas than across England as a whole<sup>38</sup>. As **Table 15-17** shows, there is a higher proportion of residents with bad or very bad health in the neighbourhood Study Area, Doncaster, and Rotherham in comparison to the national average. This suggests poorer overall health in the areas closest to the Proposed Development.

**Table 15-17: Health Profile**

	Neighbourhood	Doncaster	Rotherham	England
Very bad health	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%	1.2%
Bad health	4.8%	5.3%	5.4%	4.0%
Fair health	14.2%	14.7%	14.8%	12.7%
Good health	33.9%	34.1%	34.0%	33.7%
Very good health	45.7%	44.3%	44.2%	48.5%

Source: Census 2021

15.5.24 The proportion of the population who report long-term health problems or disabilities is higher in the Study Area compared to England<sup>38</sup>. As **Table 15-18** shows there is a notably higher proportion of residents classified as disabled under the Equality Act 2010 at both the neighbourhood level and in Doncaster and Rotherham.

**Table 15-18: Disability**

	Neighbourhood	Doncaster	Rotherham	England
<b>Disabled under the Equality Act</b>	19.9%	20.3%	21.1%	17.3%
Day-to-day activities limited a lot	9.1%	9.4%	9.8%	7.3%
Day-to-day activities limited a little	10.9%	10.8%	11.3%	10.0%
<b>Not disabled under the Equality Act</b>	80.1%	79.7%	78.9%	82.7%
Has long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities are not limited	7.2%	6.5%	6.8%	6.8%
No long term physical or mental health conditions	72.9%	73.2%	72.1%	74.4%

Source: Census 2021

## Deprivation

- 15.5.25 Doncaster and Rotherham experience high levels of deprivation<sup>39</sup>. Doncaster is more deprived than 85% of local authority areas in England, with Rotherham more deprived than 82%.
- 15.5.26 Deprivation is recorded across seven ‘domains’: income, employment, health and disability, education and skills, crime, barriers to housing and services, and living environment. In the employment deprivation domain specifically, Doncaster is more deprived than 88% of local authorities and Rotherham is more deprived than 87%. Additionally, Doncaster is one of the most deprived local authorities in terms of crime (more deprived than 97% of local authorities), with Rotherham more deprived than 79%.
- 15.5.27 **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.4: Index of Multiple Deprivation [EN0110020/APP/6.19]** illustrates multiple deprivation at Lower Super Output Area (LSOA)<sup>vii</sup> level. The neighbourhood Study Area generally records relatively low levels of multiple deprivation, however there are some concentrations of deprivation in areas such as Conisbrough and Thurcroft, with some LSOAs in these areas falling within the 10% most deprived in England. Across the local Study Area, there are also high levels of deprivation in LSOAs in central Doncaster and central Rotherham, and in other areas including Mexborough, New Edlington, Dinnington and Maltby.

## Social Infrastructure

- 15.5.28 The neighbourhood Study Area has a higher proportion of home ownership<sup>38</sup>. As shown in **Table 15-19** below, 72.2% of homes in the neighbourhood Study Area are owned, compared to 62.6% nationally and there is a lower proportion of socially rented housing.

**Table 15-19: Household Tenure**

	Neighbourhood	Doncaster	Rotherham	England
Owned	72.2%	62.8%	63.6%	62.6%
Shared ownership	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%
Social rented	14.3%	17.0%	20.7%	17.3%
Private rented	12.9%	19.4%	15.0%	19.4%
Lives rent free	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%

Source: Census 2021

- 15.5.29 Primary schools<sup>40</sup> in Doncaster and Rotherham are operating below full capacity. In the 2023/24 school year, Doncaster’s 98 primary schools had 25,907 pupils enrolled out of 29,723 available places (87% capacity), while Rotherham’s 96 schools were at 85% capacity. This suggests there is some flexibility within the primary education system to accommodate any future population growth.
- 15.5.30 Secondary schools are also operating below full capacity. There are 20 secondary schools in Doncaster operating at 85% of total capacity. There are 16 secondary schools in Rotherham operating at 88% of total capacity. This suggests there is

<sup>vii</sup> Lower super output area (LSOA) is a statistical geography used by the Office for National Statistics. Each LSOA comprises between 400 and 1,200 households and between 1,000 and 3,000 persons.

also flexibility in the secondary education system to accommodate any future population growth.

- 15.5.31 Both local authorities, Doncaster and Rotherham, fall within the North East and Yorkshire National Health Service (NHS) region. Within that region there are 4,342 fully qualified General Practitioners (GPs) and 1,639 GPs in training grades. There are 1,553 patients per GP across the region, which is slightly lower than the national average of 1,672 patients per GP<sup>41</sup>.

### Tourism and Recreation Baseline

- 15.5.32 Recreation effects include the impact on key tourism and recreation receptors including PRoW and accommodation. As noted in Section 15.4, the Study Area is measured as 5km from the Order Limits, illustrated within **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.3: Land Use, Tourism and Recreation Study Area [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**. The baseline therefore includes data on the local tourism context in South Yorkshire and identified receptors within this 5km buffer.

### Tourism Economy and Visit Numbers

- 15.5.33 Visit Britain tourism data is reported at a regional level. Both Rotherham and Doncaster are within the Yorkshire region. The latest data<sup>42</sup> shows that Yorkshire has the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest number of day trips out of the nine English regions. For overnight trip, Yorkshire ranks 6<sup>th</sup> out of the nine regions. In 2024, there were 80 million day trips to Yorkshire and 9.3 million overnight trips. Total tourism spend was £7.4b.

### Tourism Accommodation

- 15.5.34 The most recent Visit Britain Accommodation Stock Audit was published in 2016<sup>43</sup>. As this data is now ten years old, and pre-dates the Covid-19 pandemic which impacted on tourism activity in the UK, this should be treated with some caution. However, this is currently the best available source of data providing an indication of the tourism accommodation market at local authority level. The data shows that, in 2016, there were 49 hotels or similar establishments in Rotherham equating to 1,495 rooms and 3,177 bedspaces. In Doncaster, 88 hotels or similar establishments were recorded equating to 2,583 rooms and 5,514 bedspaces.
- 15.5.35 In relation to self-catering, or non-serviced accommodation, there were four establishments recorded in Rotherham and 14 in Doncaster in 2016, providing 236 and 1,374 bedspaces respectively, most of which were on campsites. More recent data is available from the ONS for short-term lets, which indicates the growth in the non-serviced sector since the pandemic. In 2023, there were 210 listings for short-term lets in Rotherham, providing a total of 1,150 bedspaces, while in Doncaster there were a further 610 listings providing a total of 2,680 bedspaces<sup>44</sup>.
- 15.5.36 The most recent hotel occupancy data from Visit Britain shows that, at the peak of the tourist season in July 2025, average hotel room occupancy in Yorkshire and Humberside was 86%, in line with the national average<sup>45</sup>. In January 2025, it was lower at 69%, underlining the seasonality of demand for tourist accommodation<sup>46</sup>. Short-term rental occupancy rates are generally lower, with the UK-wide rate peaking at 54% in August in 2025, and falling to 37% in November 2025<sup>47</sup>.

**Tourism and Recreation Receptors**

15.5.37 **Table 15-20** outlines the tourism attractions located within approximately 5km radius of the Order Limits. This assessment defines tourism attractions as assets that are likely to attract visitors from outside of the local Study Area, based on professional experience and judgement. Conisbrough Castle and Roche Abbey are both managed by English Heritage with Conisbrough Castle providing visitor facilities including a visitor centre and gift shop. Tourism attractions<sup>48</sup> are shown in **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.8: Tourism Attractions and Accommodation [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**.

**Table 15-20: Tourism Attractions**

Receptor	Category	Local Authority	Distance from Order Limits	Visitor Numbers (2024)
Conisbrough Castle	Castle	Doncaster	1.5km	27,783
Gulliver's Valley Theme Park	Theme park	Rotherham	2.4km	N/A
Roche Abbey	Historic Monument	Rotherham	4.8km	5,009

15.5.38 Recreation resources are defined, based on professional experience and judgement, as assets that are likely to attract recreational users primarily from within the local Study Area. Recreational resources within 5km radius of the Order Limits include Thrybergh Country Park, Rother Valley Country Park, and Ulley Country Park, all of which are managed by RMBC. Rother Valley Country Park offers a range of facilities including a play park, walking and cycling trails, water sports and activity centre, and miniature train.

15.5.39 Kiveton Community Woodland and Dinnington Community Woodland are community woodlands that have been developed on former colliery sites, managed by the Land Trust. Both woodlands provide networks of accessible footpaths, while Kiveton also has a community orchard and sculpture trail<sup>49,50</sup>.

15.5.40 There are a number of accommodation providers including hotels, holiday let and self-catering accommodation located within 5km of the Order Limits. These are shown on **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.8: Tourism Attractions and Accommodation [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**. Serviced tourism accommodation within the Study Area, such as hotels and bed and breakfasts, is generally concentrated in the centre of Rotherham, and along the M1 / M18 motorway corridor where there are several hotels located at motorway service areas. Non-serviced accommodation, such as holiday lets, is more scattered around the 5km Study Area.

15.5.41 PRoW and other recreational routes within the Order Limits and a 5km radius of the Order Limits are shown in **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.7: Public Rights of Way and Other Recreational Receptors [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**. There are 62 PRoWs within the Order Limits, comprising of both footpaths and bridleways. The Trans Pennine Trail Long Distance Path intersects the Order Limits close to Ulley and Whiston. A stretch of National Cycle Network (NCN) route 6 follows the same route as the Trans Pennine Trail in this location and therefore also intersects with

the Order Limits. National Cycle Network (NCN) routes 62, 67m and 674 are within the 5km Study Area.

15.5.42 The following promoted long-distance walking routes intersect the Order Limits:

- The Cuckoo Way;
- Five Churches Walk;
- Don Valley Way;
- Rotherham Ring Route;
- Rotherham Round Walk; and
- South Yorkshire Way<sup>51</sup>.

15.5.43 Short stretches of the Cuckoo Way, Five Churches Walk, Rotherham Ring Route, and South Yorkshire Way intersect with the Order Limits.

15.5.44 There are also parts of several canals within the Study Area, with towpaths that are recognised as important recreational resources. For example, parts of the Chesterfield Canal towpath, within the Study Area, form part of the Cuckoo Way long distance walking route<sup>52</sup>.

15.5.45 **ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.13]** provides an indication of roads within the relevant Study Area that may be used by non-motorised users (NMUs), including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.

### Land Use Baseline

15.5.46 The Land Use Study Area is the land within the Order Limits. Therefore, the baseline draws on land use data available for the Proposed Development. Data for the local Study Area is also included to provide context.

### Agricultural Land Classification

15.5.47 The Order Limits comprise a total area of approximately 1,488ha, consisting of approximately 339ha proposed for Cable Corridors, and 1,149ha proposed for the remainder of the Site (excluding Cable Corridors), much of which is currently in agricultural use. ALC surveys have been undertaken to confirm the grading of agricultural land within the Site, i.e. areas W1, W2, and W3.

15.5.48 The findings of the surveys are set out in **Table 15-21** and shown on **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.6: Agricultural Land Classification [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**. ALC Grades 1-3a are classed as BMV land. Grade 3b, Grade 4, Urban and Non-agricultural are not considered BMV land.

**Table 15-21: ALC Survey Findings for Site**

ALC Grade	Area in ha	% of Site
Grade 1 (excellent quality)	10.85	0.94%
Grade 2 (very good quality)	81.24	7.06%
Grade 3a (good quality)	128.39	11.16%
<b>Total BMV</b>	<b>220.48</b>	<b>19.17%</b>
Grade 3b (moderate quality)	907.16	78.86%
Grade 4 (poor quality)	3.64	0.32%

ALC Grade	Area in ha	% of Site
Urban (no soil resource)	7.65	0.67%
Non-agricultural	1.50	0.13%
Non-BMV	919.95	79.98%
Not surveyed	9.83	0.85%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,150.26</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.6: Agricultural Land Classification Report [EN0110020/APP/6.20]. Note : totals/percentages may not calculate exactly due to number rounding.

- 15.5.49 The ALC surveys show that only 19.17% of land surveyed in the Site is classified as BMV land. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.6: Agricultural Land Classification Report [EN0110020/APP/6.20]** notes that the proportion of surveyed land that is BMV land is less than would be reasonably expected for a site of its size and location.
- 15.5.50 As shown on **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.6: Agricultural Land Classification [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**, much of the BMV land within areas W1, W2 and W3 is distributed in scattered patterns within wider landscapes of non-BMV land. For these reasons, it may be more challenging to reach optimal agricultural use of the existing BMV land.
- 15.5.51 The majority of land within the Cable Corridors has not been surveyed. Analysis of Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) Predictive ALC data<sup>53</sup> suggests that there could be 255ha of BMV agricultural land within the Cable Corridors. However, not all of this will be required for cable installation and therefore we have used professional judgement and data obtained from the Site survey to understand the likely composition of soil quality in the Cable Corridor and the likely area of land that would be used for laying cables. Consistent with survey findings within the Site, the majority of land in the Cable Corridor is likely to be Grade 3b, with some BMV (grade 3a and 2) in scattered patterns through the Cable Corridor. In addition, construction widths for cable installation are much smaller than the Cable Corridors so the area of BMV agricultural land that has potentially to be within cable construction widths is much smaller. With an estimated 20km of cable required, with a typical cable construction width of 40m, this equates to 80ha of land temporarily required for cable construction. Using professional judgement and extrapolating data from Site surveys (i.e. 19% of land is BMV land), it can be estimated that approximately 15ha of BMV land would be temporarily used the Cable Corridor. Land required for cable installation would be required temporarily during the construction phase only. The construction of the Cable Corridor would be phased and, once cables are laid, they would be covered over and the land returned to agricultural use where possible.

### Agricultural Land Use and Production

- 15.5.52 At the time the ALC surveys were undertaken, the majority of agricultural land within the Order Limits was in use for winter cereals or under grass, with a limited number of fields used for oil seed rape, winter beans, or left fallow or with stubble.
- 15.5.53 The wider local Study Area includes agricultural land uses which sustain some employment locally. In 2025, there were 323 farm holdings in Doncaster, employing a total labour force of 842, and 127 farm holdings in Rotherham, with a total labour force of 322. Collectively, this represents a total of 46,820ha of land

on farm holdings, of which 29,265ha was reported as being in use for arable purposes and 9,567ha as grassland<sup>54</sup>.

- 15.5.54 Government data on agricultural production is available for the UK, and for regions, but not at local authority level. In 2024, 2,955,000ha of agricultural land in the UK was in use for cereals, 18% of the total utilised agricultural area (UAA)<sup>55</sup>. Harvested production of wheat in the UK was 11.1 million tonnes, and barley was 7.1 million tonnes<sup>56</sup>. The UK’s total cereal crop was worth £3.5bn, 11% of total agricultural output<sup>57</sup>. In Yorkshire and the Humber, 192,000ha were used for growing wheat and 127,000ha for growing barley<sup>58</sup>.
- 15.5.55 The most recent UK Government United Kingdom Food Security Report shows that the UK’s production to supply ratio – the value of what is produced is in the UK compared with what is consumed – is broadly stable, with the UK producing 62% of all the food consumed in the country and 75% of the food that can be grown in the country<sup>59</sup>. In relation to cereals, the production to supply ratio has increased over the last 20 years, and the UK now produces over 90% of the cereals it consumes.

### Future Baseline Conditions

- 15.5.56 The Doncaster Local Plan outlines the local authority’s development plans up until 2035<sup>7</sup>. While the Plan doesn’t identify any development sites within the Order Limits or in close proximity, it notes that the area is undergoing significant change and is planning on reasserting itself as a major economic centre in the North of England.
- 15.5.57 The Plan outlines a number of strategic aims including the delivery of 481ha of employment land over the plan period (2015-2035). There are a number of employment sites outlined to help reach this growth including Doncaster Sheffield Airport (approximately 10 miles north east), Port (approximately 9 miles north east), Unity and West Moor Park (approximately 14 miles north east). The Plan also outlines a minimum of 920 new homes per annum (15,640 over the period 2018 to 2035).
- 15.5.58 The Rotherham Local Plan outlines the strategy for development and transformation over the period 2013 to 2028<sup>18</sup>. The Plan outlines a 6.7% increase in household projections from 2023 to 2033 (119,000 to 127,000). The main locations for growth are the Rotherham urban areas.
- 15.5.59 **Table 15-22** shows the latest population projections<sup>60</sup> for Doncaster and Rotherham from 2026 to 2047. While both local authorities are estimated to see a population uplift, the driving factor is overwhelmingly the over 65 category for both authorities. This indicates that there is likely to be an ageing population locally to the Proposed Development.

**Table 15-22: Population Projections (2025 - 2043)**

Age	Doncaster	Rotherham
0-15	-9.9%	-8.6%
16 - 64	6.6%	6.8%
65+	21.8%	14.8%
Total	6.8%	5.6%

Source: ONS 2025<sup>59</sup>

### 15.6 Embedded Mitigation

- 15.6.1 The following specific mitigation measures relevant to Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use, have been identified and have been considered as part of the assessment. A **Commitments Register [EN0110020/APP/6.20]** has been included with this ES.
- 15.6.2 The following mitigation measures have been incorporated into the design of the Proposed Development as shown in the **Illustrative Masterplan [EN0110020/APP/2.6]**. The following mitigation measures have been incorporated into the assessment as embedded mitigation:
- An **outline Skills and Supply Chain Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.18]** will be submitted as part of this Application and will set out measures that will be put in place to support delivery of employment, training and supply chain opportunities during the construction and operation of the Proposed Development;
  - Any creation of access tracks to utilise sections of existing tracks wherever practicable with new routes located to pass through existing gates and gaps in hedgerows where feasible;
  - Siting and layout of the solar arrays and associated structures to avoid important landscape features (i.e. features with cultural associations and/or historic context) and elements such as existing trees and hedgerows and to provide suitable buffers between the panels and construction areas and woodland, trees, properties and PRoW;
  - Development of the **Illustrative Masterplan [EN0110020/APP/2.6]**, including landscape proposals for the Site and landscape reinstatement proposals for the Cable Corridor. An **outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.13]** has also been submitted as part of this Application and is secured by a requirement in the **Draft Development Consent Order (DCO) [EN0110020/APP/3.1]**;
  - Post-consent, a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) would be developed to describe the mitigation of potential adverse environmental impacts during the Construction Phase i.e. specific measures to mitigate identified impacts, such as dust suppression techniques, noise barriers, and proper waste management, details of best practice measures to be used on-site, measures to minimise impacts on water resources and flood risk. An **outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [EN0110200/APP/5.9]** has been submitted with the Application;
  - The CEMP and Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) would describe measures that will be put in place so that the Proposed Development is designed and operated in a way that it will not cause contamination to soil and groundwater. An **outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [EN0110020/APP/5.10]** has been submitted as part of this Application and is secured by a requirement in the **Draft DCO [EN0110020/APP/3.1]**;
  - A Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) would describe how waste from decommissioning will be managed and detail opportunities for re-use and recycling. An **outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) [EN0110020/APP/5.11]** has been submitted as

part of this Application and is secured by a requirement in the **Draft DCO [EN0110020/APP/3.1]**; and

- **ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.3]** provides details on standard mitigation where appropriate. An **outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) [EN0110020/APP/5.12]** has also been submitted as part of this Application and is secured by a requirement in the **Draft DCO [EN0110020/APP/3.1]**.

## 15.7 Assessment of Effects

- 15.7.1 This section outlines the likely Significant Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use effects arising from the construction and operation and maintenance phases of the Proposed Development.
- 15.7.2 Effects arising from the decommissioning of the Proposed Development are expected to be comparable to, or less than, those arising during the construction phase.

### Construction

#### Socio-economic Impacts

- 15.7.3 Socio economic impacts are derived from the Capital Expenditure (CAPEX) and expressed in person years of employment and GVA. Impacts have been calculated for the local Study Area (Doncaster and Rotherham) and at a national level. The construction phase is anticipated to be 24 months from 2027 to 2029.
- 15.7.4 Total CAPEX is estimated using industry benchmarks. The estimated CAPEX has been split across three spend categories based on research from existing studies<sup>61, 62</sup>: materials (53%), labour (28%), and equipment and other costs (19%). These spend categories have been assigned a Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code and relevant Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and GVA effects and multipliers from the ONS input-output tables<sup>63</sup>, which are then used to estimate direct and indirect effects. ONS do not produce Type II multipliers to estimate induced effects and therefore comparable proxies are used from the Scottish Government<sup>64</sup>.
- 15.7.5 The breakdown of local, national and international spend has been estimated based on understanding of the capacity of the local and national supply chain. Capital expenditure on materials and equipment for solar developments is predominantly incurred outside the UK, reflecting the internationally concentrated nature of solar manufacturing. UK Government commissioned analysis notes that, while there has been significant investment in new manufacturing capacity for solar PV, the vast majority of this has been in China<sup>65</sup>. The trade body Solar Energy UK also notes that many of the companies involved in solar panel manufacturing are based in China and other countries in East Asia<sup>66</sup>, while the International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates that China's share of solar panel manufacturing exceeds 80%<sup>67</sup>. The IEA notes that solar module and cell manufacturing are the most labour-intensive segments of the solar PV supply chain, and that the use of automation has increased labour productivity and reduced labour intensity over the last decade.
- 15.7.6 Analysis of UK solar procurement indicates that there are 661 solar suppliers within the UK, of which around 7% are located within Yorkshire and the Humber<sup>68</sup>.

The largest concentration of suppliers is in London, the South East, and East of England. However, South Yorkshire has been positioned as a ‘clean-tech zone’, supported by established manufacturing, research and logistics capability. For example, Rotherham’s Advanced Manufacturing Park (AMP) is a nationally recognised centre for low-carbon technologies, hosting the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre (AMRC) and Nuclear AMRC, which support renewable energy and hydrogen supply chains<sup>69</sup>. The baseline also shows that there is above average employment in relevant sectors of the economy including construction and manufacturing.

15.7.7 On the basis that the majority of the solar PV manufacturing supply chain is located outside the UK, it is estimated that up to 60%-70% of CAPEX could be spent outside the national Study Area of England. The remaining 30%-40% would be spent within England, of which it is estimated that ~10% could be spent on goods and labour within the local Study Area, with a further 20%-30% elsewhere in England. The final outcome could change depending on the availability of workers and suppliers with the necessary capabilities within the Study Area.

**Employment**

15.7.8 Based on the method described above, **Table 15-23** shows that the construction phase of the Proposed Development would create or safeguard 1,616 FTEs per annum over the two year construction period, including direct, indirect and induced FTEs. Indirect employment refers to jobs created as a result of linked purchases within the supply chain, and induced employment refers to those created by local spend by direct and indirect workers.

**Table 15-23: Construction Phase Employment (FTE pa) (2027 - 2029)**

	Local	National	Total
Direct employment	253	506	759
Indirect employment	236	473	709
Induced employment	49	98	147
Total	538	1,077	1,616

Source: ERM 2026

15.7.9 It is estimated that 538 FTEs would be within the local Study Area. The sensitivity of the labour market in the local Study Area is assessed as **Moderate**. This is because the baseline shows there is average and below average unemployment and above average economic inactivity (**Table 15-12**) which could suggest there is limited spare capacity in the existing local labour market.

15.7.10 The magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Low** for the following reasons:

- The impact is temporary, lasting two years;
- The number of jobs created is a relatively small proportion of the overall workforce in Rotherham and Doncaster – where the baseline shows there is already an existing critical mass in construction and manufacturing, the sectors where most jobs are likely to be created; and
- Jobs may be filled by workers from reasonable commuting distances nearby such as Sheffield and Chesterfield.

15.7.11 This results in a **Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)** effect as per **Table 15-10**.

15.7.12 The construction phase would create an estimated 1,077 FTE person years per annum of employment elsewhere in England (lasting two years). The sensitivity of the labour market for the national Study Area is assessed as **Low** due to the size and flexibility of the labour market nationally. The magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Negligible** because the effect would be temporary and barely perceptible increase compared to the national labour force. This results in a **Negligible Beneficial (Not Significant)** effect as per **Table 15-10**.

15.7.13 As explained in Section 15.4, the assessment of employment effects within the EIA is at local authority and national level, as effects at ward or neighbourhood level are difficult to predict accurately. However, further consideration of the potential impact of jobs and training opportunities on the economies of particular towns and settlements within the local Study Area, for example Conisbrough, is provided in the **outline Skills and Supply Chain Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.18]**, which sets out measures to maximise opportunities for local businesses, supply chains, and the workforce.

**GVA**

15.7.14 GVA measures the contribution of the Proposed Development to the economy. The estimated GVA benefit is outlined in **Table 15-24** shows that the construction phase of the Proposed Development would generate a total of £222.6m in GVA over the 24-month period, of which £74.2m would be retained within the local Study Area.

**Table 15-24: Construction Phase GVA Impacts (Total over 2027- 2029)**

	Local (£m)	National (£m)	Total (£m)
Direct GVA	£32.6	£65.2	£97.9
Indirect GVA	£32.5	£65.0	£97.6
Induced GVA	£9.1	£18.1	£27.2
Total (£m)	£74.2	£148.4	£222.6

Source: ERM 2026 (may not sum due to rounding)

15.7.15 The sensitivity of the local economy is assessed as **Low**. The local economy is receptive to change and has the ability to absorb additional GVA. Growth in green energy production is recognised in local economic policy.

15.7.16 The magnitude of the impact at local level is assessed as **Negligible** as any change in GVA would be temporary. Also, the local economy has a significant manufacturing and construction base and is therefore likely to have the capacity to absorb additional economic activity. This results in a **Negligible Beneficial (Not Significant)** effect as per **Table 15-10**.

15.7.17 The construction phase would generate a further £148.4m GVA nationally. The sensitivity of the baseline for the national Study Area is assessed as **Low**, as the national economy is large, diverse and receptive to change.

15.7.18 The magnitude of the effect is assessed as **Negligible** as:

- Any change in GVA would be temporary;
- The national economy has sufficient capacity to absorb additional economic activity; and
- The alteration to the economic base would be barely perceptible due to the size of the potential GVA uplift relative to national GVA.

15.7.19 This results in a **Negligible Beneficial (Not Significant)** effect as per **Table 15-10**.

### **Wider Socio-economic Effects**

15.7.20 The previous section (Socio-economic Impacts), presented above, considers the potential employment and supply chain effects that would be created by the construction of the Proposed Development, and takes into account relevant sectors within the local economy including construction and manufacturing. There is the potential for wider socio-economic effects for other sectors such as tourism and agriculture from changes in land use and / or environmental impacts arising from construction. These effects are assessed below.

#### **Tourism Sector**

15.7.21 During the construction phase, potential impacts on tourism and tourism-related sectors can be caused by:

- Access disruption;
- Visual and landscape disruption;
- Noise and disturbance; and
- Increased demand for accommodation.

15.7.22 Impacts on PRoW, other recreational routes, and other tourism and recreation assets, including disruption to access, visual and landscape disruption, and noise disturbance are assessed under Tourism and Recreation effects, below.

15.7.23 There is potential for some additional demand for local tourism accommodation during the construction phase, associated with the presence of a non-local construction workforce. As shown in **Table 15-23**, it is estimated that the construction phase of the Proposed Development would generate approximately 759 direct FTEs over a two year construction phase, of which 506 could be taken up by workers from outside of the local Study Area. While not all of these workers would be based on site every day, this gives an indication of the potential size of the incoming construction workforce that may be required.

15.7.24 Data published in the Construction Industry Training Board's Workforce Mobility and Skills in the UK Construction Sector report<sup>70</sup> shows that the average daily distance travelled by construction workers in the UK from their place of residence to their workplace is 17 miles. A 17-mile radius from the Order Limits includes large settlements such as Sheffield, Chesterfield and Worksop. Whilst it is not possible to predict with accuracy, it is assumed that many of the jobs created outside of the local Study Area would be taken up by workers from commutable distances who would travel to the Proposed Development each day, and who would be unlikely to require temporary accommodation within the Study Area.

15.7.25 A small portion of the workforce may travel from further afield and could require temporary accommodation nearby. These non-local workers may need to travel during the construction phase which may create short-term demand for accommodation, including tourism accommodation which could have implications for the tourism sector.

15.7.26 Should the peak of the construction phase coincide with the peak summer tourist season, an increase in demand for tourist accommodation (from workers) has a

very low potential to displace tourists, with adverse knock-on effects for hospitality and tourism-related businesses in the local and neighbourhood Study Areas.

15.7.27 **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.8: Tourism Attractions and Accommodation**

**[EN0110020/APP/6.19]** shows that much of the serviced tourist accommodation within 5km of the Order Limits is concentrated either in Rotherham town centre or along the M1 / M18 motorway corridor, suggesting that it already caters for business travel or passing trade rather than holiday visitors. There are some non-serviced providers such as holiday lets scattered throughout the Study Area, and it is likely that there are some tourists who visit the area for attractions such as Gulliver’s Valley Theme Park and others identified in **Table 15-20**.

15.7.28 Visit Britain and ONS hotel and short-term rental occupancy data is presented in the baseline and shown in **Table 15-25**, which uses the data to estimate hotel and short-term rental capacity at the peak of the tourist season. While the hotel bedspace data is from 2016, and occupancy rates are at regional or UK level, these estimates provide an indication that there is likely to be some spare capacity within the tourist accommodation sector, even during peak season. Non-local construction workers may therefore create beneficial effects for accommodation providers and other hospitality businesses by providing additional demand, particularly outside of the peak season, when occupancy rates are lower.

**Table 15-25: Estimated Tourism Accommodation Capacity**

	Rotherham	Doncaster
Hotel bedspaces (2016)	3,177	5,514
Short-term rental bedspaces (2023)	1,150	2,680
Peak hotel occupancy (Yorkshire and Humberside, August 2025)	86%	86%
Peak short-term rental occupancy (UK, August 2025)	54%	54%
Estimated hotel spare capacity at peak	445	772
Estimated short-term rental spare capacity at peak	529	1,233

Source: ERM calculations based on ONS and Visit Britain data

15.7.29 The sensitivity of the tourism sector in the neighbourhood Study Areas is assessed as **Moderate**. This is due to tourism-related employment that is in line with the national average, and considerably above the national average in some ward areas (Section 15.5.18). In the local Study Area (Doncaster and Rotherham) the sensitivity is assessed as **Low**. These areas are not heavily reliant on destination tourism and a relatively small proportion of the workforce are in tourism-related sectors.

15.7.30 The magnitude of the impact in both the local and neighbourhood Study Area is assessed as **Low**, as:

- Any adverse impacts will be temporary in nature;
- There are no Significant effects from disruption to PRow or from construction noise, and short-term visual effects for users of a small number (12) of PRow and recreational receptors;
- Increase in demand for temporary accommodation is expected to be small and potentially beneficial; and

- There is likely to be enough capacity to absorb increased demand. Tourism accommodation within 5km of the Order Limits is shown in **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.8: Tourism Attractions and Accommodation [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**, and data presented in the baseline shows that there are over 3,000 tourist bedspaces in Rotherham and over 5,000 in Doncaster.

15.7.31 This results in a **Minor Adverse (Not Significant)** effect in both the local Study Area and the neighbourhood Study Area, as per **Table 15-10**. Further, additional demand for accommodation from non-local construction workers may create beneficial effects for accommodation providers and other hospitality businesses, particularly outside of the peak season, when occupancy rates are lower.

### Agriculture and Food Production

15.7.32 A change in land use could have implications for the agricultural sector, its supply chain including food production and ultimately food security. The baseline shows that employment in both agriculture and food production locally is below the England average, suggesting these sectors are under-represented in the local economy. Therefore, wider socio-economic effects of a change in land use, such as structural economic change to the local economic base or labour markets is unlikely. The effect of changing land use on agriculture and food security is therefore assessed under Land Use Effects below.

### Socio-cultural Effects

#### Demographics

15.7.33 As noted above, construction workers are likely to travel from the neighbouring areas, including Sheffield and Chesterfield which are within one hour's travel time of the Site. It is assumed that only a small proportion of construction workers would require temporary accommodation within the neighbourhood Study Area. As the construction phase is relatively short, at worst case scenario (in terms of intensity of impact) of 24 months (see Section 15.4), the proportion of construction workers likely to move to the area and bring family members with them temporarily is expected to be very small. This reduces the likely impact on local demographics.

15.7.34 The sensitivity of the population in the neighbourhood Study Area and the local Study Area is assessed as **Moderate**. Local plans highlight the importance of managing population growth sustainably. The magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Negligible** because the number of workers moving to the area is expected to be low and the construction phase is short at 24 months. This results in a **Negligible Adverse (Not Significant)** effect in both the local and neighbourhood Study Area, as per **Table 15-10**.

#### Access to Services

15.7.35 An influx of non-local workers can put increased pressure on services including housing, health and education.

15.7.36 The baseline shows there is some capacity in health and education services in the local Study Area. However, health and deprivation data suggest that there could be high levels of demand on public services within the local Study Area. Deprivation within the neighbourhood Study Area is generally lower. The

sensitivity of services in the local Study Area is therefore assessed as **Moderate**, and in the neighbourhood Study Area is assessed as **Low**.

15.7.37 The magnitude of the impact is expected to be **Negligible** in both the local and neighbourhood Study Area due to:

- Any changes in demand on services are likely to be temporary;
- It is expected that only a small proportion of construction workers are likely to require temporary accommodation within the local Study Area; and
- It is expected that very few workers would choose to relocate their families to the area due to the short nature of the construction phase.

15.7.38 This results in a **Negligible Adverse (Not Significant)** effect in both the local and neighbourhood Study Area, as per **Table 15-10**.

### Tourism and Recreation Effects

#### Effects on PRow and Other Recreational Routes

15.7.39 As illustrated in **ES Volume 3, Figure 15.7: Public Rights of Way and Other Recreational Receptors [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**, there are 62 PRow located within the Order Limits. This section considers the potential for impacts on users of these routes due to temporary disruption or diversions that may be necessary during the construction phase. It also considers potential effects on amenity for NMUs using local roads, and the potential for effects on amenity for users of PRow both within the Order Limits and within a 5km radius due to construction-related noise, visual intrusion, and increased traffic activity.

15.7.40 **ES 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.13]** concludes that temporary diversions and management measures may be required for some of the paths within the Order Limits. An **Outline PRow Management Plan (oPRowMP) [EN0110020/APP/5.14]** is submitted as part of this Application and is secured by a requirement in the **Draft DCO [EN0110020/APP/3.1]**. The outline PRow Management Plan includes details of specific routes that may be affected and also sets out any proposed mitigation required to mitigate the impacts of the potential interactions between construction traffic and the users of the PRow network resulting in no Significant effects amenity.

15.7.41 **ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.13]** notes that a number of rural roads within the Traffic and Transport Study Area may be used by NMUs, including pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists, who may be sensitive to an increase in Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) traffic. The change in HGV traffic on affected roads would be temporary, and fully reversible. Measures proposed in the oCTMP would effectively minimise any potential adverse effects on amenity for NMUs at these locations, resulting in no Significant effects on NMU amenity.

15.7.42 In relation to effects on amenity for users of PRow, **ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.13]** notes that the presence of plant and equipment in work areas adjacent to the PRow network may temporarily reduce the amenity value of paths and bridleways, however, the effects would be temporary and short-term. The assessment concludes that there would be no Significant effects for users of the PRow network during construction.

15.7.43 An assessment of visual effects has been undertaken (see **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4: Visual Baseline and Assessment [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**) and

reports that there would be some Significant Adverse effects for a small number of viewpoints during construction, including users of 12 PRow and other recreational routes. These include users of the Cuckoo Way and of NCN Route 6 at the junction with Walseker Lane Bridleway, close to Kiveton Community Woodland; users of PRow to the south of Kiveton Community Woodland, which form part of the Five Churches Walk; and users of the Rotherham Round Walk at Spa Hill. While there would be a reduction in visual amenity for users of these paths and bridleways, this would be short-term and temporary during construction activity.

- 15.7.44 **ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.14]** concludes that there would be no Significant effects arising from construction. The noise assessment considers the likely significant effects for noise sensitive receptors, most of which are residential dwellings, and does not assess changes in noise for PRow or other outdoor recreational receptors. However, noise effects arising from construction would be temporary and short-term, which reduces the likelihood of effects on amenity for users of PRow and other recreational routes from a combination of visual and noise effects.
- 15.7.45 Receptors within the Study Area include routes that are of local or regional importance, such as the Trans Pennine Trail, NCN, and a number of promoted long-distance recreational routes. The sensitivity of receptors is therefore assessed as **Moderate**.
- 15.7.46 The magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Low**, as:
- Any diversions or management measures for PRow within the Order Limits would be short-term, temporary, and mitigated by measures set out in the **Outline PRow Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.14]**;
  - There will be no Significant effects on amenity for NMUs using local roads;
  - Visual impacts on users of PRow and recreational routes would be short-term and temporary; and
  - There would be no Significant noise effects from construction.
- 15.7.47 This results in a **Minor Adverse (Not Significant)** effect, as per **Table 15-10**.

### **Effects on Other Tourism and Recreation Receptors**

- 15.7.48 Tourism and recreation receptors within 5km of the Order Limits are shown in **Figure 15.8, Tourism Attractions and Accommodation [EN0110020/APP/6.19]**. This section considers the potential for impacts on users of these receptors due to temporary disruption to access as a result of construction activity and construction traffic on the local road network. It also considers the potential for effects on amenity for users of tourism and recreation receptors within a 5km radius of the Order Limits due to construction-related noise, visual intrusion, and increased traffic activity.
- 15.7.49 As noted above, **ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.13]** provides an assessment of likely significant effects on the local road network. At this stage, no Significant Adverse effects are identified as a result of short-term increase in construction traffic along HGV routes, including delays to road vehicles or passengers.
- 15.7.50 An assessment of visual effects has been undertaken (see **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4: Visual Baseline and Assessment [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**) and concludes that there would be some Significant effects at a small number of viewpoints. These include a viewpoint located on a bridleway south of Kiveton

Community Woodland, and on a PRow to the northeast of Kiveton Community Woodland. This suggests that visitors to Kiveton Community Woodland could experience Significant visual effects during construction. Based on the assessment provided in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4: Visual Baseline and Assessment [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**, it is not expected that users of any of the other tourism and recreation receptors identified in the baseline would be likely to experience Significant visual effects.

- 15.7.51 **ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.14]** concludes that effects from both construction noise and construction traffic noise are Not Significant. The noise assessment considers the likely significant effects for noise sensitive receptors, most of which are residential dwellings, and does not assess changes in noise for outdoor recreational receptors. However, noise effects arising from construction would be temporary and short-term, which reduces the likelihood of effects on amenity for users of tourism and recreation receptors from a combination of visual and noise effects.
- 15.7.52 Tourism and recreation receptors within the Study Area are of local or regional importance. The sensitivity of receptors is therefore assessed as **Moderate**.
- 15.7.53 The magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Low**, as:
- There would be no Significant effects on the local road network as a result of construction traffic and therefore no impact on access to receptors;
  - Visual impacts on users of PRow and recreational routes would be short-term and temporary; and
  - There would be no Significant noise effects from construction.
- 15.7.54 This results in a **Minor Adverse (Not Significant)** effect, as per **Table 15-10**.

### Land Use Effects

#### Change in use of agricultural land

- 15.7.55 This section assesses land use effects including the change in agricultural land use, mode of agriculture, and implications for food production and security. As noted earlier, use of land arising during the construction phase and continuing into the operation and maintenance phase is assessed as a long-term construction effect.
- 15.7.56 The construction phase of the Proposed Development would require the use of land within the Order Limits that is currently in agricultural use. The baseline indicates that most of the land within the Order Limits is arable agricultural land used for winter cereals or under grass, with some fields used for oil seed rape, winter beans, or left fallow or with stubble.
- 15.7.57 **Table 15-26** provides a breakdown of ALC grade by proposed land use within the Site. This shows that the majority of BMV land within the Site (131.62ha, or 59.6% of the total BMV land) would be used for solar PV, with smaller areas required for substations, BESS and access tracks (7.34ha, or 3.3%) and for mitigation planting and enhancement (77.57ha, or 35.2%). Solar PV also accounts for the largest share of non-BMV land, at 520.84ha (56.6% of total non-BMV land).

**Table 15-26: ALC Grade by Land Use in Site**

ALC Grade	Solar PV (ha)	Substations, BESS and Access Tracks (ha)	Mitigation Planting and Enhancement (ha)	Other	Total
Grade 1 (excellent quality)	6.5	0.16	4.03	0.16	10.85
Grade 2 (very good quality)	51.62	2.22	25.33	2.07	81.24
Grade 3a (good quality)	73.50	4.96	48.21	1.72	128.39
<b>Total BMV</b>	<b>131.62</b>	<b>7.34</b>	<b>77.57</b>	<b>3.95</b>	<b>220.48</b>
Grade 3b (moderate quality)	520.84	35.66	333.13	17.53	907.16
Grade 4 (poor quality)	0.68	0.06	2.83	0.07	3.64
Urban (no soil resource)	0	0	0.08	7.57	7.65
Non-agricultural	0	0	1.5	0	1.5
<b>Not considered BMV</b>	<b>521.52</b>	<b>35.72</b>	<b>337.54</b>	<b>25.17</b>	<b>919.95</b>
Not surveyed	0.01	0.06	0.77	8.99	9.83
<b>Total</b>	<b>653.15</b>	<b>43.12</b>	<b>415.88</b>	<b>38.11</b>	<b>1,150.26</b>

Source: ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.6: Agricultural Land Classification Report [EN0110020/APP/6.20].

15.7.58 The use of agricultural land for solar arrays, substations, BESS, access tracks and associated infrastructure would arise during construction and would continue throughout the operation and maintenance phase for a period of up to 60 years, requiring the semi-permanent use of a total of up to 138.96ha of BMV agricultural land and 557.24ha of non-BMV agricultural land. Following the decommissioning of the Proposed Development, solar arrays, BESS and associated infrastructure would be removed, and land would be returned and be available for arable use.

15.7.59 The area of land required for substations, BESS and access tracks set out in **Table 15-26** includes the construction compounds that would be in place for the construction phase only. **ES Volume 2, Chapter 9: Ground Conditions and Land Quality [EN0110020/APP/6.9]** estimates that the total area of BMV land required for BESS, substations or other infrastructure that would be in place for the duration of the Project (60 years) would be 0.4ha of Grade 3a land that intersects with a substation in W1.

15.7.60 The use of land required for mitigation planting and enhancement, including landscaping, habitat enhancement, and biodiversity works, would also arise during the construction phase and would continue throughout the operation and

maintenance phase. Much of this planting would be agricultural field margins and species rich grassland. Further information is provided in **Appendix 6.4: BNG Report [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**. It is not known at this stage whether planting would be left in place following decommissioning as this would depend on the preference of individual landowners. ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance suggests that the use of agricultural land for biodiversity net gain (BNG) planting as part of solar developments should be treated as a semi-permanent loss of agricultural land<sup>71</sup>. Therefore, there is the potential for the semi-permanent change in use of up to 77.57ha of BMV agricultural land and 337.54ha of non-BMV agricultural land.

- 15.7.61 The construction of the Cable Corridor would also reduce available land for arable farming in the short-term and may disrupt farming for a period of up to 24-36 months. The majority of land within the Cable Corridors has not been surveyed. Analysis of DEFRA Predictive ALC data<sup>72</sup> suggests that there could be 255ha of BMV agricultural land within the Cable Corridors. However, not all of this will be required for cable installation and therefore we have used professional judgement and data obtained from the Site survey to understand the likely composition of soil quality in the Cable Corridor and the likely area of land that would be used for laying cables. Consistent with survey findings within the Site, the majority of land in the Cable Corridor is likely to be Grade 3b, with some BMV (grade 3a and 2) in scattered patterns through the Cable Corridor. In addition, construction widths for cable installation are much smaller than the Cable Corridors so the area of BMV agricultural land that has potentially to be within cable construction widths is much smaller. With an estimated 20km of cable required, with a typical cable construction width of 40m, this equates to 80ha of land temporarily required for cable construction. Using professional judgement and extrapolating data from Site surveys (i.e. 19% of land is BMV land), it can be estimated that approximately 15ha of BMV land would be temporarily used the Cable Corridor. Land required for cable installation would be required temporarily during the construction phase only. The construction of the Cable Corridor would be phased and, once cables are laid, they would be covered over and the land returned to agricultural use where possible.

### Effects on the agriculture sector

- 15.7.62 The temporary and semi-permanent use of agricultural land for solar, as outlined above, could have potential effects on the agriculture sector.
- 15.7.63 The NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) includes a preference to use poorer agricultural land before higher quality land and states: *“Where the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary, poorer quality land should be preferred to higher quality land avoiding the use of “Best and Most Versatile” agricultural land where possible.”* The Government in Powering Up Britain: Energy Security Plan clarified that while *“solar and farming can be complementary”* developers must also have “consideration for ongoing food production.”
- 15.7.64 The design evolution described in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design [EN0110020/APP/6.4]** explains how land included in the Order Limits was identified to avoid impacts on BMV land as far as practicable. Results of the ALC baseline surveys, see **Table 15-21**, indicate that the majority (79.98%) of the land in the Site is not BMV. Based on the criteria set out in **Table 15-8**, the sensitivity of non-BMV land is assessed as **Low-Moderate** and the sensitivity of BMV land is

assessed as **High**, where recent ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance suggests all BMV land should be rated as having high sensitivity.

15.7.65 In relation to the semi-permanent use of agricultural land associated with solar PV, and loss of land associated with substations, BESS, access tracks, mitigation planting and enhancement, and the temporary loss of agricultural land associated with construction compounds and Cable Corridors, the magnitude of impact is assessed as **Low**, based on the criteria set out in **Table 15-9**. Key reasons are:

- The total area of land within the Site (1,151ha) represents a very small proportion (2.5%) of overall agricultural land available on farm holdings within the local Study Area of Rotherham and Doncaster (46,820ha). Analysis of DEFRA Predictive ALC data<sup>73</sup> suggests that the BMV land within the Site could represent approximately 0.6% of BMV land within Rotherham and Doncaster;
- As shown in **Table 15-26**, BMV land accounts for a relatively small proportion of the agricultural land in the Site at 19.17% or 220.48ha. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.6: Agricultural Land Classification Report [EN0110020/APP/6.20]** notes that the volume of BMV is less than would be reasonably expected for a site of its size and location;
- Land required for construction compounds and for the Cable Corridor, including BMV land, would be required temporarily during the construction phase only. The construction of the Cable Corridor would be phased and, once cables are laid, they would be covered over and the land returned to its previous use;
- The change in agricultural land use required for solar PV, substations, BESS and access tracks would be **reversible** after 60 years on decommissioning and the land made available for arable use, subject to agreement with landowners. Recent ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance recommends that solar PV leads to 'a **semi-permanent** reduction in land used for agriculture' following uncertainty around the temporal nature of solar developments in recent NSIP applications;
- It is not known at this stage whether land required for mitigation planting and enhancement would be returned to agricultural use after 60 years. It is assumed that this change in use would be **reversible** and, based on ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance, this is assessed as a **semi-permanent** impact;
- Some evidence suggests that solar farms on agricultural land can give soil the opportunity to recover from intensive use with the potential for longer term benefits<sup>74</sup>; and
- There is also evidence that solar developments can provide a steady source of income for farmers that can help to support the long-term financial stability of farms<sup>75</sup>. The Applicant has agreed options with 28 landowners to rent part of their land, which would provide an additional revenue stream to diversity farmers' incomes and support the financial sustainability of their businesses.

15.7.66 This results in:

- A **Moderate Adverse (Significant)** effect on the availability of BMV agricultural land; and
- A **Minor Adverse (Not Significant)** effect on the availability of non-BMV agricultural land.

- 15.7.67 While the loss of BMV land is Significant, the baseline shows that much of the BMV land is distributed in scattered patterns within wider landscapes of non-BMV land, suggesting that it could therefore be potentially challenging to reach optimal agricultural use of BMV land. In addition, for the reasons set out in paragraph 15.7.63 above, this impact needs to be seen in the context of the temporary or semi-permanent use of a relatively small part (2.5%) of the locally available resource of agricultural land.
- 15.7.68 There is no evidence to indicate that a change in agricultural output within the Order Limits could result in Significant effects on local or national food production or security. As noted in the baseline, the UK’s production to supply ratio is broadly stable, and in relation to cereals the UK now produces 90% of the products it consumes<sup>76</sup>. Harvested production of wheat in the UK in 2024 was 11.1 million tonnes, and barley was 7.1 million tonnes<sup>77</sup>.
- 15.7.69 Alternative agricultural uses, for example, grazing of sheep could continue within the Site during the Proposed Development’s lifetime. The extent to which solar farms are grazed is in part dependent on the availability at any one time of a grazier ready to put their animals on the land. While grazing on solar farms is increasingly well-established across England, the extent to which it takes place on the Proposed Development can only be confirmed once it enters the operations and maintenance phase.

## Operation and Maintenance

### Socio-economic Impacts

- 15.7.70 The Proposed Development has a life span of 60 years with the first full year of operation expected to be 2030. Operational jobs and GVA have been estimated based on an assumed Operating Expenditure (OPEX) provided by the Applicant.
- 15.7.71 The Proposed Development will offer a range of employment opportunities from entry level to advanced roles. The breakdown of potential employment opportunities has been derived from existing literature and sources<sup>78</sup>. The National Solar Jobs Census (2023<sup>79</sup>) produces an occupational profile for operations and maintenance of solar farms, with the majority being employed in management/professional (29%), installation and repair (26%) and administrative (20%). While this data is from the United States, it is the best available source and it is assumed that it is broadly comparable to the UK context.
- 15.7.72 The estimated breakdown of local, national and international spend during operation and maintenance is provided in **Table 15-27**. OPEX spend outside of England at 35% is lower than for CAPEX because the proportion of OPEX spent on materials and equipment is comparatively small<sup>80</sup>. Local and rest of England Spend is assumed based on professional judgement and informed by relevant project precedents.

**Table 15-27: Estimated Local Content (OPEX)**

Location	% of Spend
Doncaster and Rotherham	25%
Rest of England	40%
Outside of England	35%

**Employment**

15.7.73 The operation and maintenance phase would create 39 FTEs, 15 of which would be local and 8 of which would be local direct. **Table 15-28** shows the breakdown of estimated employment for the Proposed Development in the first full year of operation (2029). Estimates of FTEs created are precautionarily low, to give a worst case, due to the relatively few operational sites of this size in the UK at present, and the large number of specialised trades that will carry out work at the Site on an occasional basis. Similarly, the Local/National balance will be driven by the availability of workers with the right skills within the local area, and whether potential suppliers set up offices there.

**Table 15-28: Operation and Maintenance Phase Employment Impacts (2029)**

	Local	National	Total
Direct employment	8	13	22
Indirect employment	5	8	13
Induced employment	2	3	4
Total	15	24	39

Source: ERM 2026

- 15.7.74 The sensitivity of the labour market in the local Study Area is assessed as **Low** reflecting the existing availability of labour in sectors relevant to the operation of the Proposed Development.
- 15.7.75 The magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Negligible** given that the anticipated change (15 FTE roles represents an insignificant proportion of the current baseline employment of 82,250 jobs in relevant sectors). This level of change is not expected to alter existing industry structures or trigger wider economic shifts.
- 15.7.76 While long-term operational employment, both direct and through the supply chain, would contribute positively to the local economy, the overall effect is assessed as **Negligible Beneficial (Not Significant)**.
- 15.7.77 The operation and maintenance phase of the Proposed Development is expected to generate an additional 24 jobs at the national level. The sensitivity of the labour market for the national Study Area is assessed as **Low** due to the size and flexibility of the national labour market.
- 15.7.78 According to Government estimates, there will be demand for approximately 35,000 direct and indirect jobs in the solar sector across Great Britain by 2035<sup>81</sup>. The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), through its most recent Low Carbon and Renewable Energy Economy (LCREE) survey, estimated that in 2022, the sector employed approximately 9,000 direct FTEs and 8,500 indirect FTEs.
- 15.7.79 DESNZ have also outlined a commitment to ensure that there is a comprehensive suite of apprenticeships, training and technical qualifications for the solar sector’s required skills.
- 15.7.80 Given this context, the magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Negligible** as:
- There would be a barely perceptible change to the existing sectors. The 24 additional jobs represent less than 1% of both the 2022 workforce and the projected demand by 2035; and
  - It is anticipated that the training provision can provide the skills to ensure that the solar industry labour force continues to grow with demand.

15.7.81 This results in a **Negligible Beneficial (Not Significant)** effect.

### GVA

15.7.82 The Proposed Development is estimated to generate £0.4m of direct local GVA annually as shown in **Table 15-29**.

**Table 15-29: Headline Operation Phase (Including Maintenance) GVA Impacts (2029)**

	Local	National	Total
Direct GVA (£m)	£0.4	£0.7	£1.1
Indirect GVA (£m)	£0.3	£0.4	£0.7
Induced GVA (£m)	£0.1	£0.2	£0.3
Total (£m)	£0.8	£1.3	£2.1

Source: ERM 2025

15.7.83 The sensitivity of the local economy is assessed as **Low**. The size of the economic base means it is receptive to change and has the ability to absorb additional GVA.

15.7.84 The magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Negligible** as there would be a barely perceptible alteration to the baseline GVA of £12,797m (2023).

15.7.85 While this would be a benefit to the local economy, the effect is estimated as **Negligible Beneficial (Not Significant)**.

15.7.86 The operation and maintenance phase would generate a further £1.3m in GVA elsewhere at the national level. The sensitivity of the baseline for the national Study Area is assessed as **Low**, as the national economy is large, diverse and receptive to change.

15.7.87 It is estimated that in 2024 the solar and battery storage sectors produced around £1.9bn in GVA at the national scale<sup>82</sup>. Therefore, the magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Negligible** as there will be a barely perceptible alteration to the existing GVA through the addition of £1.3m per annum during the operation and maintenance phase of the Proposed Development.

15.7.88 This results in a **Negligible Beneficial (Not Significant)** effect.

### Tourism and Recreation Effects

15.7.89 It is not anticipated that any temporary closure or management of PRoW will be required during operation and maintenance. Impacts during the operation and maintenance phase have been scoped out of the assessment in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Transport [EN0110020/APP/6.20]** because the level of traffic associated with this phase will be insufficient to trigger the threshold for assessment as set out in relevant ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance. It is therefore not anticipated that there will be any disruption to users of PRoW, direct impacts on NMUs using local roads, or impacts on access to tourism and recreation receptors. An **outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan [EN0110020/APP/5.14]** has been submitted alongside this Application.

15.7.90 There is the potential for effects on amenity for users of PRoW, recreational routes, and other tourism and recreation receptors within 5km of the Order Limits from a combination of noise and visual effects once the Proposed Development is in operation. In relation to noise effects, **ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.14]** reports that, without mitigation, there would be the potential that seven noise sensitive receptors could experience adverse

impacts which could result in Significant effects. With embedded mitigation measures in place, however, operational noise will be **Not Significant** due to commitment to noise mitigation measures to reduce operational noise to an acceptable level.

- 15.7.91 Most of the noise sensitive receptors assessed are residential dwellings, and **ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.14]** does not assess changes in noise for PRow or other outdoor recreational receptors. There may be the potential for users of some outdoor recreational receptors to experience localised noise impacts in some locations and at some times, however it is expected that this would be reduced by the mitigation measures set out in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.14]**. Users of PRow and other outdoor recreational receptors are typically transitory or short-term visitors to the area, which would further reduce the magnitude of the noise impact.
- 15.7.92 In relation to visual effects, **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4: Visual Baseline and Assessment [EN0110020/APP/6.20]** concludes that there would be Significant effects for recreational users of sections of a small number (nine) of PRow, bridleways and other recreational receptors in Year 1 of operation. These include users of a section of the Cuckoo Way and of NCN Route 6 at the junction with Walseker Lane Bridleway, close to Kiveton Community Woodland; users of PRow to the south of Kiveton Community Woodland, which form part of the Five Churches Walk; visitors to Kiveton Community Woodland; and users of the Rotherham Round Walk at Spa Hill. By Year 15 of operation, Significant visual effects would remain for users of small sections of five PRow, including the section of the Cuckoo Way and of NCN Route 6.
- 15.7.93 Users of the majority of PRow within the Study Area would not experience Significant visual effects during operation. As noted above, with mitigation in place there would be no Significant noise effects for noise sensitive receptors, and it is expected that any increase in outdoor noise would be limited and localised. While users of a very small number of PRow, including short sections of the Cuckoo Way and NCN Route 6, could experience visual impacts during operation, it is not expected that there would be effects on amenity for users of these receptors from a combination of visual and noise effects. Further information on visual effects is provided in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 7 : Landscape and Visual [EN0110020/APP/6.7]**.
- 15.7.94 As noted above, PRow, recreational routes, tourism and recreational receptors within the Study Area include are of local or regional importance. The sensitivity of receptors is therefore assessed as **Moderate**.
- 15.7.95 The magnitude of the impact is assessed as **Low**, as:
- There would be no disruption to PRow or to NMUs using local roads;
  - Visual impacts would affect nine PRow and recreational receptors in Year 1 of operation, and five by Year 15 of operation; and
  - There would be no Significant noise effects for noise sensitive receptors, and any increase in outdoor noise would be limited and localised.
- 15.7.1 This results in a **Minor Adverse (Not Significant)** effect, as per **Table 15-10**.

## Decommissioning

- 15.7.2 The Proposed Development would be operational for 60 years, after which time it would be decommissioned and the land returned to its original use. Decommissioning is likely to involve the dismantling and recycling of the PV arrays with associated vehicle movements. Removal of BESS and substation foundations to 1.2m below ground level (BGL) would be completed subject to landowner agreement. Components of the Proposed Development such as mitigation planting, Site accesses, and ducts for cabling buried beneath plough-depth would be left in place subject to landowner agreement. These activities would be managed through appropriate environmental management plans – including an **oDEMP [EN0110020/APP/5.11]**, discussed below – and industry best practices and are not expected to result in any adverse environmental impacts.
- 15.7.3 Decommissioning is expected to take between 12 and 24 months and would be undertaken in phases. The specific method of decommissioning the Proposed Development at the end of its operational life is uncertain at present as the engineering approaches to decommissioning will evolve over the operational life of the Proposed Development.
- 15.7.4 An **oDEMP [EN0110020/APP/5.11]** has been submitted as part of this Application and is secured by a requirement in the **Draft DCO [EN0110020/APP/3.1]**. The oDEMP describes the framework of mitigation measures as identified in the ES to be followed and carried forward into a DEMP, which accords with the principles of the oDEMP, prior to decommissioning.
- 15.7.5 For most aspects of the Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use assessment, effects arising from the decommissioning of the Proposed Development are expected to be comparable to, or less than, those arising during the construction phase. Following decommissioning, it is anticipated that it would be possible for the majority of land required for the Proposed Development to be returned to its original use. This has been taken into account in the assessment of Land Use effects in relation to the impact on agricultural land.

## 15.8 Additional Mitigation Measures and Residual Effects

### Additional Mitigation

- 15.8.1 The assessment has identified a **Moderate Adverse** effect that would be **Significant** as a result of the change in availability of BMV agricultural land, based on the criteria set out in **Table 15-8** (BMV land is assessed as High sensitivity) and **Table 15-9** (semi-permanent, reversible loss of land is assessed as Low magnitude). While some agricultural use may be possible on affected BMV land during the operation and maintenance phase of the Proposed Development, the land would be taken out of arable production for a period of up to 60 years. No additional mitigation has been identified, and so the effect would remain as reported.

## Residual Effects

15.8.2 A summary of the potential for Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use effects is presented in **Table 15-30**.

## ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

**Table 15-30 Summary of Residual Effects**

Activity and Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Additional Mitigation	Significance of Residual Effect
<b>Construction Phase</b>							
Creation of jobs within the local Study Area	oCEMP	Local labour supply	Moderate	Low	Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Minor Beneficial (Not Significant)</b>
Creation of jobs within the national Study Area	oCEMP	National labour market	Low	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>
GVA to the local economy	N/A	Local economy	Low	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>
GVA to the national economy	N/A	National economy	Low	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>
Wider socio-economic effects on the tourism sector	oCEMP	Neighbourhood tourism sector	Moderate	Low	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Minor Adverse (Not Significant)</b>
Wider socio-economic effects on the tourism sector	oCEMP	Local tourism sector	Low	Low	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Minor Adverse (Not Significant)</b>
Changes to local demographics due an influx of non-local	oCEMP	Neighbourhood population	Moderate	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>

## ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Activity and Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Additional Mitigation	Significance of Residual Effect
workers seeking accommodation							
Changes to local demographics due an influx of non-local workers seeking accommodation	oCEMP	Local population	Moderate	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>
Increased pressure on access to local services due to an influx of non-local workers	oCEMP	Neighbourhood population	Low	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>
Increased pressure on access to local services due to an influx of non-local workers	oCEMP	Local population	Moderate	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>
Direct and indirect effects on	oCEMP	PRoW and recreational routes	Moderate	Low	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Minor Adverse (Not Significant)</b>

## ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Activity and Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Additional Mitigation	Significance of Residual Effect
PRoW and other recreational routes							
Direct and indirect effects on tourism and recreation receptors	oCEMP	Tourism and recreation receptors	Moderate	Low	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Minor Adverse (Not Significant)</b>
Change in availability of BMV agricultural land	N/A	Agricultural land (BMV) within Order Limits	High	Low	Moderate Adverse (Significant)	N/A	<b>Moderate Adverse (Significant)</b>
Change in availability of non-BMV agricultural land	N/A	Agricultural land (non-BMV) within Order Limits	Low-Moderate	Low	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Minor Adverse (Not Significant)</b>
<b>Operation and Maintenance Phase</b>							
Creation of jobs within the local Study Area	oOEMP	Local labour supply	Low	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>
Creation of jobs within the national Study Area	oOEMP	National labour market	Low	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>

## ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Activity and Impact	Embedded Mitigation	Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Significance of Effect	Additional Mitigation	Significance of Residual Effect
GVA to the local economy	N/A	Local economy	Low	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>
GVA to the national economy	N/A	National economy	Low	Negligible	Negligible (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Negligible (Not Significant)</b>
Indirect effects on PRow and other recreational routes	oCEMP	PRow and recreational routes	Moderate	Low	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Minor Adverse (Not Significant)</b>
Indirect effects on tourism and recreation receptors	oCEMP	Tourism and recreation receptors	Moderate	Low	Minor Adverse (Not Significant)	N/A	<b>Minor Adverse (Not Significant)</b>
<b>Decommissioning Phase</b>							
For most aspects of the assessment, any residual effects arising from the decommissioning of the Proposed Development are expected to be comparable to, or less than, those arising during the Construction Phase.							

## 15.9 Cumulative Effects

15.9.1 This section assesses the cumulative Socio-economic, Tourism and Recreation, and Land Use effects of the Proposed Development. The methodology of this assessment is presented in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 2: EIA Methodology [EN0110020/AP/6.2]**.

### Intra-Cumulative Effects

15.9.2 Intra-cumulative impacts can be defined as those that occur where a single receptor is affected by more than one source of effect arising from different aspects of the project. These have been considered as part of the assessment presented in Section 15.7, in relation to disruption to PRow and recreational routes, impacts on access to tourism and recreational receptors, and in-combination effects on amenity for users of PRow, recreational routes, and tourism and recreational receptors, arising from noise, visual change, and increased traffic, during construction and operation and maintenance. The assessment concludes that these effects would be **Negligible to Minor Adverse**, and therefore **Not Significant**. Intra-cumulative effects relating to human health have been assessed in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects Assessment [EN0110020/APP/6.17]**.

### Inter-Cumulative Effects

15.9.3 Inter-project effects refer to the impacts that arise from other existing and, or approved developments within reasonable proximity of the Proposed Development, which individually might not be Significant, but when considered together could create a Significant cumulative effect on a shared receptor.

15.9.4 Inter-project effects are considered for the Proposed Development and other existing and, or approved developments within a defined Zone of Influence (Zol). The Zol for Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation and Land Use is the Local Study Area, as this is the scale at which cumulative effects on jobs and GVA would be most likely to arise. Other projects identified in the Cumulative Long List provided in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 17.2: Long and Short List of Developments for the Cumulative Effects Assessment [EN0110020/APP/6.20]** were reviewed, and those within the Zol considered to be of a scale and nature likely to have the potential for a Significant cumulative effect on Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation and Land Use were screened in for assessment. The following categories of projects have been screened in:

- Solar developments;
- BESS developments;
- Substations; and
- Major residential developments.

### Construction

15.9.5 The construction phase of some of the consented developments within the Study Area defined for this topic is anticipated to overlap with that of the Proposed Development. Consequently, the cumulative number of construction-related employment opportunities and the GVA — both local and national — may increase during this period. The Proposed Development alone is assessed to

have a potential Minor Beneficial effect on employment that would be Not Significant. There is limited information available at this stage regarding the likely employment and GVA associated with the other consented developments that have been considered; however, these are mostly smaller in extent than the Proposed Development. While the scale of the impact may increase, based on the information available at the time of writing it is not expected that the cumulative impact arising from concurrent developments would change the overall significance of the effect at local or national level.

- 15.9.6 There is also the potential for a negative cumulative effect associated with increased demand for labour which could put pressure on the local labour market and lead to displacement of economic activity. However, the assessment in Section 15.7 shows that the Proposed Development would have access to a larger regional labour market, which reduces the likelihood of cumulative displacement effects. This also reduces the likelihood of cumulative effects on demographics, demand for housing and services, and demand for tourist accommodation, as it is assumed that many of the construction jobs created by the Proposed Development and other consented developments would be taken up by workers residing in neighbouring areas who would travel to site each day, and who would therefore be unlikely to require temporary accommodation within the Study Area.
- 15.9.7 There is the potential for cumulative effects for users of PRowS, recreational routes, and other tourism and recreational receptors as a result of disruption, construction traffic, noise, and visual impacts arising from the Proposed Development and other consented developments. **ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.14]** concludes that there would be no inter-cumulative effects on noise from the Proposed Development and other consented developments.
- 15.9.8 The assessment has identified a Moderate Adverse effect on the availability of BMV agricultural land. While this land would be taken out of arable use for a period of up to 60 years, the change of use is temporary / semi-permanent and reversible as it is expected that, following the decommissioning phase, the land will be available for arable use as previously used. There may be the potential for alternative agricultural uses, such as grazing, to continue within the Order Limits during the operational life of the Proposed Development.
- 15.9.9 The significance of the cumulative impact on agricultural land from the other developments will depend upon:
- a) the land area affected by them - several are solar related, but are smaller in extent than the Proposed Development. There are also a number of residential developments, however these are again smaller in extent than the Proposed Development;
  - b) the area of BMV land used by them - we assume those within the ZoI will be similar to the Proposed Development with around 20% or less BMV land;
  - c) the extent to which the land area of solar developments is managed for grazing during the operational life of the development;
  - d) their current pattern of agriculture which we assume to be largely but not exclusively arable;

- e) for solar developments, the period of use for solar, which we assume to be temporary with reversion after decommissioning to the previous mix of agricultural practices, subject to the state of agricultural markets at that time.

15.9.10 It is assumed that residential developments would require the permanent loss of land.

15.9.11 It is not known at this stage the total area of BMV land that would be required temporarily or permanently by other developments, or how much of the land required is currently in active agricultural use, as this information is not available for all projects. The following projects (in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 17.2: Long and Short List of Developments for the Cumulative Effects Assessment [EN0110020/APP/6.20]**) have publicly available information in relation to the ALC of land required:

- Land off Moat Lane, Wickersley (RB2024/0063);
- Land off Moat Lane, Wickersley (RB2024/0321);
- Land off Carr Lane, Ulley (RB2025/0029);
- Land at Hard Lane, Kiveton Park (RB2025/0240);
- Land off Morthen Lane, Morthen (RB2025/0714);
- Land West of St Albans Way, Wickersley (RB2025/1161);
- Land at Long Lane, Whiston (RB2025/1468);
- Land off Bilham Lane, Hooton Pagnell (25/02389/FULM);
- Common Farm, Bookers Lane, Dinnington (RB2022/1203);
- Land off Oldcotes Road, Dinnington (RB2022/1203); and
- Land to the South of Barnsley Road, to the East and West of Marr Grange Lane, Marr (23/02634/FULM).

15.9.12 Of these projects, six would require BMV agricultural land. Based on the information available at the time of writing, it is estimated that these projects could require in the region of an additional 120ha of BMV land, a very small proportion (0.3%) of the BMV land available in the Study Area of Doncaster and Rotherham.

15.9.13 If all other developments go ahead during the same temporal scope, it is likely that the scale of the of impact would be increased. For the reasons outlined above, however, cumulative effects are unlikely to be greater than currently identified for the Proposed Development, as it is assumed that the Proposed Development in combination with the other consented developments would account for a relatively small proportion of the agricultural land, and BMV agricultural land, available within the local Study Area<sup>viii</sup>.

### **Operation (and maintenance)**

15.9.14 In addition to the Proposed Development, the operational phases of other existing and consented developments within the Study Area are likely to contribute to an increase in employment opportunities and GVA to the local and national economy.

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<sup>viii</sup> For context, the ISEP (formerly IEMA) guidance on solar notes that PV on agricultural land notes that solar farms currently occupy less than 0.1% of the UK's land, according to Solar Energy UK, and that, to meet the government's net-zero target, the Climate Change Committee estimates that solar farms would account for approximately 0.6% of UK land by 2050, at most.

These developments, when considered cumulatively, may result in a greater number of direct and indirect jobs being supported locally.

- 15.9.15 There is limited information available at this stage regarding the likely employment and GVA associated with the other consented developments that have been considered. However, the relatively small operational employment typically associated with solar, BESS and residential developments means that it is not expected that the cumulative impact arising from concurrent developments would change the overall significance of the effect at local or national level.
- 15.9.16 There is the potential for cumulative effects for users of PRowS, recreational routes, and other tourism and recreational receptors as a result of disruption, noise, and visual impacts arising from the Proposed Development and other consented developments once in operation. **ES Volume 2, Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration [EN0110020/APP/6.14]** concludes that there would be no inter-cumulative effects on noise from the Proposed Development and other consented developments.

### Decommissioning

- 15.9.17 For most aspects of the assessment, it is expected that any cumulative effects arising from the decommissioning of the Proposed Development are expected to be comparable to, or less than, those arising during the Construction Phase.

## 15.10 Summary

### Statement of Significance

- 15.10.1 This Chapter has considered the likely significant effects on jobs, GVA, tourism and recreation, and land use, from the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. The majority of effects have been assessed as **Minor to Negligible** and therefore **Not Significant**.
- 15.10.2 The assessment has identified a **Moderate Adverse** effect that would be **Significant** on the availability of BMV agricultural land arising from the construction of the Proposed Development. BMV land accounts for a small proportion of the total area of agricultural land within the Site (19.17%) with only 0.4ha of BMV land changed to Substation infrastructure in W1. The effect would be reversible on decommissioning, and there is the potential for alternative agricultural uses, such as grazing of sheep, that can continue during the lifetime of the Proposed Development.
- 15.10.3 The Proposed Development also presents an opportunity to deliver the following beneficial impacts:
- Improved availability of jobs for the local and national workforce;
  - GVA to the local and national economy;
  - Revenue for local farmers through rent and for the local authorities through business rates; and
  - Enhancements to the local PRow network.

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