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Environmental Statement

Chapter 4: Summary of Mitigation and Residual Effects

Stokes Lane Solar Farm

Stokes Lane Solar Farm Limited

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4. Summary of Predicted Residual Effects

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) provides a summary of the key conclusions of the EIA, namely the residual effects. Residual effects are the effects of the Proposed Development that are predicted to remain, following implementation of the proposed mitigation.

The Proposed Development would comprise of the installation and operation of ground-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels fixed to a dual-axis solar tracking system, and associated infrastructure including access roads, substation, cabling, power stations, control room; a Distribution Network Operator (DNO) station; spare parts containers; security fencing and CCTV; and temporary construction compound.

The Proposed Development would have a generating capacity of up to 28 megawatts (MW) and includes the grid connection cable route beyond the main solar farm site.

4.2 Schedule of Mitigation

The significance of potential effects has been minimised as reasonably practicable through design modifications and input to the design process from various technical disciplines. This section of the chapter provides a summary of the key conclusions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) namely, the mitigation measures identified through the assessments as being required to address particular effects and to meet Schedule 4, Paragraph 7 of the EIA Regulations (UK Government, 2017).

An EIA Report is required to include:

> "*A description of the measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any identified significant adverse effects on the environment and, where appropriate, of any proposed monitoring arrangements.*"

The mitigation measures included in the EIA for the Proposed Development fall into the following categories:

- Embedded mitigation, including primary mitigation which are measures incorporated into the design of the Proposed Development, such as the movement or reduction of proposed infrastructure where reasonably practicable as an intrinsic part of the Proposed Development design. All embedded mitigation measures are detailed within Chapter 2: Landscape and Visual and Chapter 3: Cultural Heritage of this ES. Dependent on the technical assessment, embedded mitigation can also include tertiary mitigation (mitigation required regardless of any EIA, as it is imposed, for example, as a result of legislative requirements and/or standard sectoral practices); and
- Additional mitigation measures, including monitoring and management measures, identified as a result of the EIA, e.g., topic specific management plans. The additional mitigation measures that have been identified are presented in Chapter 2: Landscape and Visual and Chapter 3: Cultural Heritage of this ES.

A Schedule of Mitigation, proposed to address likely significant adverse effects arising from the Proposed Development is provided in **Table 4-1**.

Table 4-1: Schedule of Mitigation

ID	Section reference	ES Chapter	Phase	Mitigation Commitments
LV-01	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Removal of panels from higher central areas within the Proposed Development Site and field sections along both sides of Stokes Lane, which are more visible from the surrounding landscape. This would help to break up the expanse of panels and scale of development and retain views along the road and across the landscape to the north. This would also reduce visibility and / or the prominence from surrounding points including high points to the south, along the A339, across the golf course to the east, from the Public Right of Way (PRoW) to the west and from lower lying points to the north.
LV-02	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Set back areas would be retained as farmland with new environmental enhancement buffers to the development edges and adjacent to sensitive receptors such as residents along Stokes Lane. These areas would incorporate Green Infrastructure (GI) initiatives to enhance biodiversity and retain and enhance amenity with new mitigation planting and hedgerow gapping up and management. This would also include a new permissive footpath to link and provide better connections within the PRoW network.
LV-03	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Removal of panels from the northern field sections to the north of field 5 to reduce visibility from adjacent points to the north and west, including the edges of settlement, PRoW and the edges of the Monk Sherborne Conservation Area (CA). These areas would be retained as farmland with new environmental enhancement buffers to the development edges and adjacent to sensitive receptors. These areas would incorporate GI initiatives to enhance biodiversity and recreational interest with new permissive path to link with wider network of PRoW and retain and enhance amenity.
LV-04	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Management of existing field boundaries which are intermittent scrubby and overmature, with new understory and infill planting to gap up and maximise screening potential of these boundaries.
LV-05	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Screening elements of the Proposed Development from key receptor locations, e.g., users of the PRoW and residential properties adjacent to the Proposed Development Site boundaries.
LV-06	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Reflecting existing landscape elements and character in new mitigation planting and tying in with local character objectives.
LV-07	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	The cable route has been selected to minimise direct effects on landscape fabric elements.
LV-08	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Up to c. 35 hectares (ha) of retained land for farming, mitigation, environmental and GI enhancements including management of existing features. This would include new areas of wood pasture, scrub, field trees and tree belt enhancements. These would be planted within perimeter buffer areas, where residential properties exist and where PRoW run adjacent to or through the Proposed Development Site, using a native mix species of local provenance. These would be allowed to mature up to heights of 6m for scrub and hedgerows and 10-12m for woodland and tree belts.
LV-09	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Enhancement areas and perimeter buffer areas would also include new species-rich native wildflower meadows. This would be maintained mechanically twice per year as a hay meadow.
LV-10	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Gap up and reinforce existing tree belts and hedgerows, within the Proposed Development Site and at points on the Proposed Development Site boundaries. This would comprise native mix species hedgerows of local provenance, which would be allowed to mature up to heights of 6m to screen views from the PRoW and residential properties.

ID	Section reference	ES Chapter	Phase	Mitigation Commitments
LV-11	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Close further small gaps of the existing field boundaries and allow hedgerows to grow out and mature up to 6m along boundaries (comprising native species of local provenance).
LV-12	2.7	Landscape and Visual	Design	Low intensity grazing areas throughout the Proposed Development Site in fields with panels, with a conservation grazing regime to enhance biodiversity.
CH-01	3.6	Cultural Heritage	Design	The Proposed Development has been designed, where possible, to avoid direct impacts upon potential archaeological finds or features. The current layout of the Proposed Development avoids Assets 106 and 108-109 and the majority of Asset 113 which mark the location of possible prehistoric and Roman features. The fence of the Proposed Development will be microsited to avoid Asset 107.
CH-02	3.6	Cultural Heritage	Design	Panels have also been set back from the road between Monk Sherborne and Wooton St Lawrence to limit impacts upon the setting and character of the landscape on approach to the Monk Sherborne CA.
CH-03	6.8	Cultural Heritage	Construction	An archaeological excavation would be undertaken on the site of possible prehistoric trackway at Asset 116 and the Bronze Age Ring Ditch at Asset 174. An archaeological excavation would be undertaken on aspects of the probable Iron Age settlement at Asset 113 subject to impact by the Proposed Development.
CH-04	6.8	Cultural Heritage	Construction	A watching brief would be maintained on all groundbreaking works along Stokes Lane (Asset 173). A watching brief would be maintained on all works within 50m of known heritage assets and on a proportion of all other ground breaking works to assess remains which would be impacted by the Proposed Development and to assess the potential for hitherto unrecorded buried archaeological remains to survive within the Proposed Development Site and mitigate impacts upon these as required.

4.3 Residual Effects

The residual effects of the Proposed Development following the implementation of embedded and additional mitigation are presented in detail within Chapter 2: Landscape and Visual and Chapter 3: Cultural Heritage of this ES.

A summary of residual effects is presented in **Table 4-2** and **Table 4-3**.

Table 4-2: Summary of Residual Effects on Landscape and Visual Receptors

Nature of Effects	Receptor	Construction and Year 1 Residual Effects	Year 15 Residual Effects
Landscape Effects	Landscape Fabric	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant	Minor Adverse, Not Significant
	LCA 16: Basingstoke Down	**Moderate to Major Adverse, Significant**	Moderate to Minor Adverse, Not Significant
	NWD NL	Moderate to Minor Adverse, Not Significant	Moderate to Minor Adverse, Not Significant
Visual Effects	VP1 - A339	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant	Moderate to Minor Adverse, Not Significant
	VP2 - PRoW, north of the A339	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant	Moderate to Minor Adverse, Not Significant

Nature of Effects	Receptor	Construction and Year 1 Residual Effects	Year 15 Residual Effects
	VP3 - PRoW Stokes Lane, west	**Major to Moderate Adverse, Significant**	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant
	VP4 - PRoW Stokes Lane, east	**Moderate to Major Adverse, Significant**	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant
	VP5 - PRoW, Sherborne St John	**Moderate to Major Adverse, Significant**	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant
	VP6 - PRoW east side of All Saints Church	**Major to Moderate Adverse, Significant**	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant
	VP7 - PRoW, east of Basingstoke Road	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant	Moderate to Minor Adverse, Not Significant
	VP8 - Minor Road to Monk Sherborne	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant	Moderate to Minor Adverse, Not Significant
	VP9 - PRoW west side of Rookery Farm	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant	Moderate to Minor Adverse, Not Significant
	VP10 - PRoW north of Sherborne St John	**Moderate to Major Adverse, Significant**	Moderate Adverse, Not Significant

Table 4-3: Summary of Residual Effects on Cultural Heritage Receptors

Receptor	Residual Effects
Construction Phase	
Direct impacts on known non-designated assets within the Proposed Development Site.	Negligible to Minor Adverse, Not Significant
Direct impacts on previously unrecorded non-designated assets that could be present within the Proposed Development Site.	Unknown (the residual effect would be dependent upon the significance of the asset identified and magnitude of impact assessed following discovery of any unrecorded assets).This was be confirmed post-consent through an appropriately worded planning condition.
Operational Phase	
Direct impacts on known non-designated assets within the Proposed Development Site.	Negligible Adverse, Not Significant
Settings effects upon designated heritage assets within 2 km of the Proposed Development Site.	None to Minor Adverse, Not Significant

4.4 References

UK Government (2017) The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/571/contents/made [Accessed: 06/06/2025].