

1st October 2021

LANDSCAPE COMMENTS

Reference: **20/01182/FUL**

Status: **FULL PLANNING APPLICATION**

Proposal: Installation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels with a net installed generating capacity (AC) of up to 49.9MW, including mounting system, battery storage units, inverters, underground cabling, stock proof fence, CCTV, internal tracks and associated infrastructure, landscaping and environmental enhancements for a temporary period of 40 years and a permanent grid connection hub.

Site address: **Land East Of Jericho Covert, Jericho Lane, Barkestone Le Vale**

Grid Reference: **SK775361 E:477518 N:336187**

Applicant: **Green Farm Solar Ltd**

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 During my review of all available material relating to landscape and visual matters, I believe there are significant inconsistencies, errors and gaps in the information provided, these are outline below and noted in sections 10 and 13 of these comments.
- 1.2 When reviewing the LVIA by Richard Sneesy Landscape Architects the fundamental error is that the Site boundary assessed within this report does not reflect that shown on drawing '*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED Rev A*' - Savills ref: 20.11.301. The southwest corner which is bisected by a Public Right of Way has not been considered in the assessment
- 1.2 When producing both LVIA reports a methodology consistent with '*GLVIA, Third Edition by The Landscape Institute*' has not been followed. There is no direct reference to '*GLVIA, Third Edition by The Landscape Institute*' within the LVIA report by Richard Sneesy Landscape Architects, however it is listed as a reference in section 11 'Appendix 3' and therefore I would expect the methodology given in this LVIA assessment to be broadly consistent with this. There are a number of occasions when I do not find this to be the case.
- 1.3 It is my opinion that the desk-top elements of work for the LVIA material has not been thoroughly carried out, in particular there has been a lack of consideration for Landscape Character and Landscape Value.



- 1.4 In reviewing the results tabulated in the 'Viewpoint Assessment Tables' found in pages 7-10 of 'LVIA Plans and Representative Views, October 2020' by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects I found all the viewpoints receptor sensitivities to be inconsistent with the methodology given in appendix 1, section 9.6 of the LVIA and therefore the significance of change are not valid.
- 1.5 Within 'Additional viewpoints, supporting information Rev C' by Tetra Tech, an assessment consistent with 'The Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition' has not been provided which gives a judgement on the sensitivity of the receptor, magnitude of change or significance of change. This report includes 3 viewpoints for Belvior Castle and its grounds. Due to the historical significance of Belvoir Castle and its historical setting I deem this extremely important to ensure due diligence has been undertaken and for thoroughness of the LVIA to better understand what effects the Development Proposals may have.
- 1.6 Comments from English Heritage noting that a view of the Site may be seen from The Church of St Peter and St Paul in Barkestone Le Vale and that a viewpoint for this building would be valuable to the LVIA assessment has not been considered within the LVIA material.
- 1.7 Further to this landscape character and visual effects that the new CCTV poles, new access track, upgrade of the existing access track, construction compound and the permanent addition to the landscape of the Grid Yard providing a permanent grid connection hub have not been assessed. Nor has the seasonal change when predicting and describing the visual changes that a solar farm Development Proposal may bring to Jericho Covert.
- 1.8 An assessment of the cumulative visual and landscape character impacts of a solar farm Development Proposals at Jericho Covert with those known to have planning consent or already existing within the landscape has not been provided.
- 1.9 Due to the above reasons, I cannot make a judgement to whether the Development Proposal will result in material and visual harm.
- 1.10 I broadly agree with mitigation proposed for the solar farm Development Proposals but these could be further enhanced by the planting of individual standard trees within or against the proposed and existing hedgerows to provide additional screening.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 On 22nd July 2021, Red Kite Network Limited (RKN) was instructed on behalf of Melton Borough Council (MBC) to comment on landscape and visual matters, advise on soil testing and agricultural classification and source a soil tester, Soil Fertility Services Ltd, pertaining to the above Planning application. Red Kite Network Limited are Landscape Architecture, Green Space and Ecology Consultants of Coalport, Shropshire
- 2.2 The Application proposal – *“The planning application proposes the installation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels with a generating capacity of up to 49.9MW, including mounting system, battery storage units, inverters, underground cabling, stock proof fence, CCTV, internal tracks and associated infrastructure, landscaping and environmental enhancements for a temporary period of 40 years and a permanent grid connection hub.”* (Planning, Design and Access Statement (PDAS) 1.1.3).
- 2.3 The Site – *“The Site extends to circa 183.5 acres (74 ha) of agricultural land to the north of the Grantham Canal (disused) and a former railways track (dismantled)”* (PDAS 1.1.2).
- 2.4 At Pre-Planning Application stage this application was screened for an EIA (ref: 20/00836/EIA) and on the 27th August 2020 it was determined by MBC that an EIA was NOT required in this instance. The reasons for this are that the proposed development falls within the description of development within Schedule 2 to the 2017 Regulations (3a. Energy generation projects) and exceeds the threshold in column 2 of the table in that Schedule (0.5ha). The location is near to a ‘Sensitive Area’ (SSSI Grantham canal) but MBC were satisfied that the impacts could be adequately addressed through MBC’s normal consultation and assessment procedures. Having considered the relevant thresholds and the criteria in the Schedule 3 to the 2017 Regulations it was determined by MBC that the proposal would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its scale, location in terms of the sensitivity to the local environment, or characteristics of the potential impacts. It was noted that the proposal would generate up to 49.9 MW which is within the indicative criteria and thresholds. Any effects on the environment as a result of the Development Proposals were not considered to be of more than local importance. Accordingly, the development was not considered to be EIA development within the meaning of the Regulations.
- 2.5 In order to inform my comments, I carried out an independent desk top of the relevant background, the baseline situation, and the landscape-related documents submitted with the Development Proposals. My assessment is subjective based on my own professional judgement. The landscape related documents reviewed are as follows:
- 2.5.1 ‘Planning, Design and Access Statement’ (PDAS) - Savills (October 2020)
- 2.5.2 ‘Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (LVIA) (2020.10.13) – Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects
- 2.5.3 ‘Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Plans and Representative Views’ (2020.10.13) – Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects
- 2.5.4 ‘Additional viewpoints, supporting information Rev C’ (2021.03.04) – Tetra Tech

- 2.5.5 'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED Rev A' - Savills ref: 20.11.301 at 1:2500@A1
 - 2.5.6 'TYPICAL GRID YARD ELEVATION' – Savills ref: 20.11_100_2 at 1:100 @ A1 / 1:200 @ A3
 - 2.5.7 'Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)' (2020.10.13) – Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects
 - 2.5.8 'Flood Risk Assessment (FRA)' (2020.10.14) - Hydrock
 - 2.5.9 'Transport Statement (TS)' (2020.10.02) - Hydrock
 - 2.5.10 'Glint and Glare Assessment (GGA)' (2020.09.28) – Neo Environmental
 - 2.5.11 'Ecological Impact Assessment Report (EIAR)' (2020.10.14) – Tyler Grange
 - 2.5.12 'Heritage and Archaeological Assessment (HAA)' (March 2021) – HCUK Group
- 2.6 With my comments based on the review of Landscape and Visual material and the other supporting documents for the application as listed above, prepared to date, I would like to reserve the right to amend any comments once outstanding information as identified in section 13 of these comments has been submitted to determine the application.

3. **Planning History**

- 3.1 Historical planning information has been included by the Applicant within the PDAS and I am aware from MBC a Pre-Planning Application was submitted whereby it was agreed the Solar Farm at Jericho Covert fell outside the requirement for an EIA (refer to 2.4 above)
- 3.2 Following information provided by MBC I have referred to other planning applications for solar farm sites. An existing solar farm at Elton and Orston to the north and another at Langar, to the west. There is also a larger solar farm that has been recently permitted at Foston, to the north of Jericho Covert.

4 **Planning Policy and Guidance related to Landscape**

- 4.1 Although views on planning related matters will be dealt by MBC's Planning Officer, I have identified and commented on those relating to landscape relevant to the solar farm Development Proposals at Jericho Covert, which have been outlined in the following section.

Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems – BRE and Cornwall Council

- 4.2 As this planning application is for a solar farm this guidance has been used as the main criteria to assess the landscape and visual material provided by the applicant for the

Development Proposals. I have cited relevant *'Planning Application considerations'* from within this guidance in relation to landscape and visual effects and beneath determine whether I believe that the information provided by the applicant available at the time of comments is consistent with these considerations.

"b) Development in Relation to Current Land Use (Page 6 of 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems')

- 4.3 Section 3.3 of the PDAS states that 98% of the Site is Grade 3b agricultural land and therefore the solar farm Development Proposals and site selection at Jericho Covert are in line with this guidance.

"c) Assessment of the Impact upon Agricultural Land (Page 7 of 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems')

- 4.4 As stated in para 4.3 of these comments, section 3.3 of the PDAS states that 98% of the Site is Grade 3b agricultural land and therefore the solar farm Development Proposals and site selection at Jericho Covert are in line with this guidance.

"d) Ground Maintenance (Page 7 of 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems')

- 4.5 On drawing *'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED'* and within section 6.3 of the LEMP, it is stated that the grassland beneath the PV panels will be managed through sheep grazing. Within section 4.1.4 of the PDAS it is stated that the PV panels will be *"approximately 0.8m at its lowest edge"*. Therefore, the solar farm Development Proposals at Jericho Covert are in line with this guidance.

"e) Construction Compound (Page 9 of 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems')

- 4.6 There are no details within the Development Proposal material for the temporary construction compound or details of stripping, storage or replacement of topsoil.

"f) Soil stripping, Storage and Replacement (Page 9 of 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems').

- 4.7 There are no details within the Development Proposal material of stripping, storage, or replacement of topsoil.

“g) Access Tracks (Page 11 of ‘Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems’)

4.8 Section 4.6.2 of the PDAS describes the proposals for access at the solar farm Development Proposals at Jericho Covert and they are in line with the above guidance. Access will be via Flawborough Lane and an agricultural track is existing and stone track is proposed within the Site itself which is temporary, capable of removal and ‘reversible’. As per the ‘Planning Application considerations’ of the guidance, I consider that their landscape and visual impact would be minimal to the rural scene, but as noted later in para 7.2 of these comments this assessment has not been provided.

4.9 However, the buffer strip from existing hedges and the solar panels is 4m as indicated on the cross section found on drawing ‘*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED*’. This is 1m less than the recommended width within the guidance.

“h) Security Fencing / Lighting (Page 11 of ‘Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems’)

4.10 In section 4.1.2 of the PDAS a photograph of a typical solar farm with boundary stock proof fence is shown and is compliant with the above guidance and will not result in an unacceptable landscape/visual impact. The LEMP states that there will be a change in hedgerow management to provide more screening in general which in turn will provide screening to fencing which is compliant with the above guidance.

4.11 On drawing ‘*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED*’ most CCTV poles are sited in corners with mature trees screening their locations from outside the boundary. The applicant should consider the placement of new standard trees as recommend in section 9 of these comments, in relation to CCTV poles to screen their presence where mature trees do not do this whilst not compromising the function of the CCTV.

4.12 The height for fencing within the application material is consistent with standard security fencing height in the above guidance.

4.13 4.31 of the EIAR states that *“No lighting is proposed as part of the development works and as such impacts are not anticipated.”*

“k) Landscape / visual impact (Page 14 of ‘Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems’)

4.14 According to OS map information, the Site at Jericho Covert is north sloping. Drawing ‘*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED*’ shows that the existing hedges and established vegetation, including mature trees are to be retained with some hedge infilling proposed resulting in the pattern of landscape remaining as the baseline condition.

- 4.15 No details have been provided of how the existing hedges and trees will be protected on site during construction or associated Tree Survey / hedge assessment.

“Cumulative Impact (Page 14 of ‘Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems’)

- 4.16 Neither LVIA report by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects nor ‘Additional viewpoints, supporting information’ by Tetra Tech submitted by the applicant review the cumulative visual and landscape character impacts of a solar farm at Jericho Covert with those known to have planning consent or already existing within the landscape. Details of other applications can be found in section 3.2 of these comments and should be considered as part of both assessments.

- 4.17 I have made further comments about the LVIA report by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects and ‘Additional viewpoints, supporting information’ by Tetra Tech which can be found in sections 5 and 6 of these comments.

“(l) Ecology (Page 15 of ‘Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems’)

- 4.18 The existing ecological characteristics and features on site have been protected and enhanced through infill planting of the gaps in the existing hedges and the reduced management of hedgerows to allow these to grow naturally to provide further screening of the development from the surrounding area and ecological benefits. A large area of wildflower meadow in the south-west corner of the Site has been identified in drawing ‘SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED’ and has been stated will provide opportunities for breeding birds and reptiles within page 6 of the LEMP . Finally, a proposed native woodland planting along north-western boundary to enhance the Site’s wildlife opportunities is described within the LEMP however this is not clearly identified within the drawing ‘SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED’.

- 4.19 The cross-section illustrating the ‘Buffer zone to edge of panel arrays – typical detail’ found on drawing ‘SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED’ does not identify the width between the proposed perimeter fencing and existing hedges to ensure that the Development Proposals are consistent with the recommended 4-5m buffer. Judging by other dimensions noted on the drawings, I do not believe that the buffer zone indicated is greater than 4m, therefore I recommend that this distance is increased to be compliant with the above guidance.

- 4.20 It is noted that efforts have been made to enhance the potential biodiversity of the Site through changed land management and proposed habitats as illustrated in LEMP. However, I would urge the applicant should consider the planting of new standard trees as recommend in section 8 of these comments to further enhance the habitat opportunities of the Site.

m) Historic Environment (Page 16 of 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems')

4.21 I recognise that the Heritage and Archaeological Assessment has been produced by HCUK Group which determines the significance of built heritage assets, and the potential for harm to arise from physical change, and/or change within their setting. It determines the significance of archaeological structures, and the potential for harm to arise from physical change and/or change within their setting. And it determines and assesses the potential for buried archaeology with the Site and to assess the significance of any relevant heritage assets identified.

4.22 Whilst the original assessment; LVIA by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects did not include viewpoints from Belvoir Castle Grade II* Registered Park and Garden circa 3.7km to the southeast and associated with the Grade I listed castle, an additional 3 viewpoints are found in '*Additional viewpoints, supporting information*' by Tetra Tech. However, neither assessment includes viewpoints from other Listed Buildings such as the Church of St Peter and St Paul in Barkestone or Redmile Conservation Area found on higher ground and closer to the Site boundary.

'n) Drainage, Surface Water Run-off and Flooding (page 17 of 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems')

4.23 A Flood Risk Assessment by Hydrock has been provided as part of the submitted planning documentation. The assessment states in section 4.2.2 that the 'main Site' and 'point of connection' site are generally low risk of flooding. Access to the sites will be via the existing surrounding highway network, which is indicated to be at low risk of flooding within the immediate vicinity of the 'main' site, and in a southerly direction from the 'point of connection' site, based on the EA's Flood Zone and Flood Risk from Surface Water mapping.

'...the proposed drainage strategy utilises the existing topography and natural drainage regime to ensure that any overland flows, although not increased compared to the existing situation, will be allowed to run-off overland towards the lower lying northern and central portions of the site as shallow 'sheet flow' (whereupon flows will then likely either be conveyed away from the site by the ditch within the approximate centre of the site, or continue to flow northwards /eastwards away from the site with the prevailing topography), as per the existing situation. Assuming that grass cover will be retained across the site (with the exception of the proposed gravelled access tracking and construction compounds), this will therefore maintain the existing hydrological regime, without resulting in any increased volume or intensity of run-off; alteration of catchment drainage patterns; or, unintentional creation of preferential flow paths.' – Section 5.2. Therefore, the solar farm Development

Proposals at Jericho Covert are in line with this 'Planning Application consideration' of the guidance.

'o) Glint and Glare (Page 17 of 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems')

4.24 A Glint and Glare Assessment by Neo Environmental Limited has been submitted by the applicant as part of this planning application. I note within this assessment that in the Executive Summary, sections 1.5, 1.6 and 1.7, that the impacts are judged to be 'Low' and 'None' on residential receptors, 'None' on the road receptors, and 'No Effects' on nearby airfields, train drivers and railway infrastructure predicted. As a result of this effects on local receptors because of the Proposed Development are anticipated to be **Negligible**. No mitigation is recommended within the report. Therefore, I am satisfied that the proposed solar farm at Jericho Covert is compliant this 'Planning Application consideration' of the guidance.

4.25 However, I would expect the two LVIAs to reference the GGA within their assessment as it pre-dates both reports and co-ordination would have been possible.

"p) Community Involvement and Gain (Page 17 of 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems')

4.26 Within section 6.2 of The PDAS details of the engagement undertaken with the local community for this solar farm Development Proposals are given including details of how engagement continued through the Covid-19 global pandemic. This states that some potential impacts upon the nearby public right of way was a significant concern amongst those consulted. As a result, a decision was made to remove a large area (circa 22.5 acres) of the site in order to minimise direct impacts upon the route.

Melton Local Plan (LP)

4.27 Within the PDAS, the applicant has reviewed the solar farm Development Proposals at Jericho Covert against EN10 of the LP, which I will not repeat. However, there is not a review or analysis of other relevant LP policies within the PDAS or the LVIA and '*Additional viewpoints, supporting information*' reports. Other policies which would be pertinent to this development type and Site that should be reviewed and considered are:

- SS1 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
- EN1 Landscape
- EN2 Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- EN3 The Melton Green Infrastructure Network
- EN8 Climate Change

- EN13 Heritage Assets
- D1 Raising the Standard of Design

4.28 The is no published Neighbourhood Development Plan available for Barkestone, Plungar & Redmile CP.

5 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments

5.1 As the applicant has submitted two reports relating to Landscape and Visual Impact by two different authors within this planning application, I have reviewed each and outlined my finding for each separately below with a final subsection outlining my opinions which relate to both reports.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (13.10.2020) by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects

5.2 Firstly it is noted that the Site boundary assessed within this report does not reflect that shown on drawing 'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED Rev A' - Savills ref: 20.11.301. The southwest corner which is bisected by a Public Right of Way has not been considered in the assessment. This will have a land use and character change to wildflower meadow from the baseline condition and as such should be included in the assessment. Given this, it must be assumed that the areas and descriptions given in section 3.2.2 are incorrect and the Public Right of Way that is described as running around the southwest and western boundary actually can be found within the Site boundary. Due to this fundamental error this comment can be repeated through many sections of the report.

5.3 I welcome the detailed and thorough description of the solar panels and their arrangements, and the consideration of the angle of the panels and materials found within the landscape within section 5.1.3 of the assessment. This proves useful when considering and understanding the landscape and visual effects described in the visual impact results.

5.4 The is no direct reference to 'GLVIA, Third Edition by The Landscape Institute' within the LVIA report, however it is listed as a reference in section 11 'Appendix 3' and therefore I would expect the methodology given in this LVIA assessment to be broadly consistent with this. As noted in the following paras there are a number of occasions when I do not find this to be the case.

Landscape Character, Value and Effects

5.5 When reviewing the National Landscape Character Areas in section 6.2 of the LVIA, a copy and paste of the key characteristics listed in 'NCA Profile 48' in which the Site falls can be found but there has been no filtering of relevant key characteristics or analysis of those relevant to the Site and its context or the proposed solar farm Development Proposals. There is no reference to the 'Statements of Environment Opportunities' section found within the NCA Profile that would be useful to the assessment and relevant to the Development

Proposals. And finally, there is no acknowledgement that the Site is close to the boundary with 'NCA Profile 74' and that some of the key characteristics in this NCA may exert influence on the Site or that the Site and its surroundings may display some key characteristics.

- 5.6 Similarly when reviewing 'Leicestershire County Council Landscape Character Type' in section 6.3 the LVIA offers no filtering or analysis of key information in relation to the Site or the Development Proposals and appears to predominately be copied and pasted from 'Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Study for Leicester & Leicestershire, October 2017'.
- 5.7 A number of documents are noted as references within section 6. Baseline Conditions of the LVIA but not described, analysed, or noted as irrelevant to the Site or the type of development in the assessment. Para 5.15 of 'GLVIA, Third Edition by The Landscape Institute' states that 'existing assessments should be reviewed, and interpreted to adapt them for use in LVIA – for example by drawing out more clearly the key characteristics that are most relevant to the proposals.' I do not believe that process has been thoroughly carried out within the desk-top study section of the LVIA.
- 5.8 Although it is noted within the LVIA that there are no landscape designations within the Site boundary, there are no references to the designations found adjacent to the Site, within the landscape context of the Site and may be influenced by the Development Proposals. Such designations include Grantham Canal SSSI which lies southeast and very close to the boundary of the Site and the Site lies within its Impact Risk Zone. Or Belvoir Castle Grade II* Registered Park and Garden circa 3.7km to the southeast, associated with the Grade I listed castle.
- 5.9 A number of listed buildings can be found in surrounding villages within 2km of the Site and Redmile Conservation Area located circa 1.6km to the east are not referenced which the proposed development may exert landscape influence upon.
- 5.10 Para 5.22 of 'GLVIA, Third Edition by The Landscape Institute' states that 'A LVIA should consider the implications of the full range of statutory and non-statutory designations and recognitions and consider what they may imply about landscape values.' I would expect to find a defined study area appropriate to the proposed development type and landscape in which the landscape designations and other pertinent landscape features would be listed and commented against. This has not been outlined in the LVIA methodology or included within the assessment itself and I conclude that this aspect of the LVIA has not been completed.
- 5.11 Within an LVIA I would expect to find an assessment of the landscape value of the Site, defining important landscape features to establish the landscape baseline of the Site. As noted in 'GLVIA, Third Edition by The Landscape Institute' para 5.19, 'Considering value at the baseline stage will inform later judgements about significance of effects'. This has not

been outlined in the LVIA methodology or included within the assessment itself and I conclude that this aspect of the LVIA has not been completed.

- 5.12 Para 6.3.10. of the LVIA states that, *'The landscape is considered to have moderate sensitivity to residential development and moderate-high sensitivity to commercial development'*. However, in section 7.3 it states that, *'The site has a moderate sensitivity to changes to landscape character'*. The LVIA should outline and provide a narrative for the justification of assessing the Landscape Character as moderate, and when reading the report this is not clearly demonstrated.
- 5.13 This said, I agree with the *'Response to described Key Characteristics'* in section 7.3.
- 5.14 When reviewing *'Response to guidance and opportunities to conserve and enhance landscape character'*, I feel that the author concentrates on the visual aspects too heavily and refers to viewpoints assessed during the LVIA which confuses the narrative of the LVIA. The response does not address the following listed characteristics within para 7.3.3;
- *'Ensure that development does not detract from the setting of historic buildings and settlements.'*
 - *'Retain the valued rural character of the vale and avoid urbanising influences'*
- 5.15 I agree with the judgements made within the LVIA for the landscape sensitivities given in paras 7.5.1 to 7.5.7 and find them to be consistent with the methodology given in appendix 1, section 9.5 of the LVIA but as noted in para 5.11 there is not an assessment for the baseline landscape value of the Site to assess the Development Proposals against.
- 5.16 I agree with the magnitudes of effects for landscape character given in the table in para 7.5.8 which are consistent with the methodology found in appendix 1, section 9.3. I confirm that the significance of the effects determined by the values given for the receptor sensitivity and magnitude of change is consistent with the methodology given in appendix 1, section 9.8. I agree with the comments made against each categorised sensitivity.
- 5.17 I agree with the overall significance of effects for landscape character by the proposed solar farm at Jericho Covert given as **'Moderate to Slight'** within para 7.6.1. However, the same paragraph states. *"These beneficial or adverse effects are important but are not likely to be key decision-making factors. The cumulative effects of such issues may become a decision-making issue if leading to an increase in the overall adverse effect on a particular resource or receptor"*
- 5.18 As already expressed in para 4.16 of these comments, the LVIA does not assess the cumulative effects of a solar farm Development Proposals at Jericho Covert on the landscape character and value despite it being referenced as a consideration in the decision-making process in para 7.6.1.

Visual Envelope and Effects

- 5.19 It would assist when reviewing the LVIA that within para 6.5.5 a narrative with reasons for each viewpoint inclusion and their location illustrated on a plan in relation to the ZTV is provided. A further section later in the assessment should be given as to why these were discounted, moved or confirmed during the fieldwork to ensure due diligence has been undertaken in choosing each viewpoint and for thoroughness of the LVIA. As noted in para 4.7.2, *'The ZTV provides a guide as to the potential location of possible viewpoints, for further evaluation. As a ZTV is theoretical, it should not be used in isolation and, as part of the assessment process, requires on-site verification'*
- 5.20 The narrative for section 6.6 Visual Envelope is quite confusing as it begins to describe some of the results of the fieldwork found at various viewpoints within the Visual Envelope rather than demonstrating how the Visual Envelope was used to determine potential viewpoints.
- 5.21 Para 6.6.8 – VP 5 is described as found within Sutton village but in reviewing the *Viewpoint Locations* drawing this VP appears to be on the periphery of Granby village. Clarification of this is requested from the applicant.
- 5.22 Para 6.6.9 – VPs 6 & 7 are found on the PROW south of Granby village (which is northwest of the Site) when viewing the *Viewpoint Locations* drawing. However, the description within this para states *'No views were found in the village of Granby or the PROW network which is found north and east of Granby village (Viewpoints 6 & 7).'* It is unclear from this para of the LVIA if VPs 6 & 7 have views due to inconsistencies described.
- 5.23 Para 6.6.11 – VPs 9 & 10 are found within the Site boundary as illustrated within drawing *'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED Rev A'*, however they have not been assessed as such due to the differing site boundaries within the assessment. I would anticipate that there would be positive visual changes due to ecological enhancements proposed with wildflower meadow seeding shown west of the PROW in the block plan rather than pastoral fields currently found.
- 5.24 Para 6.6.16 - VP 14 is not marked on the *Viewpoint Locations* drawing or any other drawing found within the information provided and is not included in the *'Viewpoint Assessment matrix'* or *'photographic image's*. I concur with the comments given by Historic England that I can find no evidence that Belvoir Castle or Belvoir Castle Registered Park and Garden were visited as part of the field work for this LVIA and seems to have been dismissed based on the ZTV without verification by visiting these significant landscape features. This is despite that later in the LVIA within the *'Response to described key characteristics'* in section 7.3 it is noted that *'There is almost no inter-visibility between the site and Belvoir Castle. The exception is the extreme north-west part of the Site where the ZTV reveals some slight inter-visibility and from where the castle can be seen just under 5Km from the site boundary at the extreme edge of the study area'*. Considering the historical significance of Belvoir Castle and its context I feel at least a long-distance viewpoint from each should be included within the assessment.

- 5.25 I recognise that some gaps in information have been addressed in an additional report provided by the applicant; *'Additional viewpoints, supporting information Rev C'* by Tetra Tech, which includes viewpoints at Belvoir Castle. This report is reviewed separately in section 6 of these comments.

Visual Effects Results

- 5.26 In reviewing the results tabulated in the *'Viewpoint Assessment Tables'* found in pages 7-10 of *'LVIA Plans and Representative Views, October 2020'* by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects I found all the VPs receptor sensitivities to be inconsistent with the methodology given in appendix 1, section 9.6 of the LVIA.
- 5.27 VPs 1 and 2 - These VPs are both found on the same local road which connects the villages or Redmile and Sutton and Whatton-in-the-Vale beyond. The LVIA judges these viewpoints to be low sensitivity whilst the methodology states that *'The users of local roads will have a Medium sensitivity'*.
- 5.28 VPs 3-13 - These VPs are all located on PROWs. The LVIA judges these viewpoints to be moderate sensitivity whilst the methodology states that *'Recreational walkers and equestrians (High sensitivity)'*.
- 5.29 VP 14 – this VP is not included in the *'Viewpoint Assessment Tables'* and so there are no judgements given for the receptor sensitivity, visual change or significance of residual effects and therefore this viewpoint cannot be reviewed for this application.
- 5.30 Para 7.9.5 - VPs 10, 11 and 12 consider views to the solar panels (east) but due to the differing Site boundary they do not consider changes in management for the parcel of land found west of the footpath will have on the visual effect.
- 5.31 I broadly agree with mitigation proposed for VPs 9, 10, 11 and 13 within para 7.9.5, the new hedgerow management which will allow the boundary hedgerows to grow and provide additional screening. This will go some way in reducing adverse effects but would recommend that some individual specimen tree planting is undertaken within the existing hedgerow to further filter views from VPs 9, 10, 11 and 13. The applicant should consider the placement of new standard trees as recommend in section 9 of these comments.
- 5.32 Within para 7.9.6. I broadly agree with mitigation proposed for VP 12, in the form of a new hedgerow planted between the footpath and the solar arrays. As with VPs 10 and 11, I would recommend that some individual specimen tree planting is undertaken within the proposed hedgerow to further filter views from VP 12. The applicant should consider the placement of new standard trees as recommend in section 9 of these comments.
- 5.33 Para 7.9.9. - VP 4 is not marked on the *'Viewpoint Locations'* drawing and so it is unclear to where this representative view is taken from.

- 5.34 As already expressed in para 4.16 of these comments, the LVIA does not assess the cumulative effects of a solar farm at Jericho Covert on the visual effects despite it being referenced as a consideration in the decision-making process in para 7.6.1.
- 5.35 It is welcomed that a separate assessment within the LVIA has been made of the permanent Grid Yard. However, this is not a full assessment consistent with '*GLVIA, Third Edition by The Landscape Institute*', the viewpoints for this assessment are described but not located on a plan. A further assessment within the LVIA should be made for the Landscape Effect of the Grid Yard as this is a permanent addition to the landscape providing a permanent grid connection hub.

- 5.36 Section 7.1 of the LVIA –

'RESPONSE TO LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL CHARACTER ASSESSMENT AND APPLICATION OF GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE ON SITING SOLAR PV DEVELOPMENTS TO THIS SITE

vii. The proposal provides enhanced management of landscape features, and habitats as part of the development. This includes contributing to wider landscape scale targets and projects in LPA's Biodiversity Action Plans, guidelines in Landscape Character Assessments, and landscape management objectives set out in local landscape character assessments.'

- 5.37 The above statement may be true, but the projects and targets are not discussed or analysed within this the LVIA by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects and this is the first time they are mentioned within the report.

Associated LVIA Drawings for the LVIA by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects

- 5.38 '*Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)*' drawing – it would have been useful when reviewing the LVIA if key reference points such as the surrounding villages and Grantham Canal, the potential receptors / viewpoint described in section 6.6 of the report and the Site boundary were marked on this drawing.
- 5.39 '*Viewpoint Locations*' drawing – viewpoint 4 does not appear to be marked on this drawing.
- 5.40 '*Viewpoint photography sheets*' – The methodology for photography within the LVIA is broadly consistent with '*Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11*'. However, the viewpoint's height above ground level and OS grid coordinates or date, time, weather or lighting conditions for each photograph are not provided. The following comments apply to the '*Viewpoint photography sheets*';
- 5.41 It would be useful for the LVIA and ease in reviewing the submitted information to note or indicate on the image and small inset location plans the assessed Site boundaries.

- 5.42 I believe that many of the small inset location plans misrepresent the location and direction of view of where the photograph for this assessment was taken. For example, Viewpoint 6 small inset location plan does not reflect the position shown on the 'Viewpoint Locations' drawing and Viewpoint 5 shows the viewing direction opposite to that of the Site.
- 5.43 VP 5 does not provide any annotation on the photograph image to assist in assessing the viewpoint magnitude of change. VP 5's small inset location plan shows the viewing direction opposite to that of the Site.
- 5.44 I believe that VP 8's small inset location plan misrepresents the location and direction of view of where the photograph for this LVIA was taken and does not provide any annotation on the photograph image to assist in assessing the viewpoint magnitude of change.
- 5.45 VPs 9, 10 and 13 do not provide any annotation on the photograph image to assist in assessing the viewpoint magnitude of change and I believe that the small inset location plans shown do not show the viewing direction accurately.
- 5.46 VP 11 photograph does not show a view looking westwards to the parcel of land which is included in drawing 'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED Rev A'.
- 5.47 VP 12's small inset location plan shows the viewing direction opposite to that of the Site.
- 5.48 Several viewpoints note 'Jericho Barn' yet I cannot find a reference within the text as to whether this is part of Jericho Lodge.

6 'Additional viewpoints, supporting information Rev C' (2021.03.04) – Tetra Tech

- 6.1 The methodology for photography within the LVIA is consistent with 'Photography and photomontage in landscape and visual impact assessment Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11'.
- 6.2 The methodology for visualisations is consistent with 'The Landscape Institute's Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals, 17 September 2019'. I agree with the author that it is appropriate for the use of Type 3 visualisations, photographs with wireline within this assessment.
- 6.3 The site boundary used for the basis of the assessment reflects that of drawing 'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED Rev A'.
- 6.4 A thorough description of each landscape receptor and context, the existing view and view with development is provided within the assessment, illustrating a competent understanding of the existing and proposed changes to the viewpoints. However, it is very disappointing that the assessment is not consistent with 'The Landscape Institute's sensitivity of the receptor, magnitude of change or significance of change is not provided as part of the assessment. I understand through correspondence with Planning Officers at MBC

that this report has been submitted to MBC as *'fait accompli'*, and that MBC had little input in discussing the methodology to be used and that the decision to not use this industry accepted methodology was not theirs.

- 6.5 Due to the historical significance of Belvoir Castle and its historical setting an assessment in line with *'The Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition'* is deemed extremely important to ensure due diligence has been undertaken and for thoroughness of the LVIA to better understand what effects the Development Proposals may have.
- 6.6 The additional viewpoints fill some of the gaps in the previous assessment; *'Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Prepared for Green Farm Solar Ltd 13th October 2020'* by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects by providing 3 viewpoints from Belvoir Castle Grade II* Registered Park and the Grade I listed castle, the Public footpath G18/1, Grantham Canal SSSI and A52. It would be valuable to the assessment to describe the reason for the inclusion of the Public footpath G18/1 and A52. I understand through correspondence with Planning Officers at MBC that there has been no consultation with them on additional viewpoint locations but comments received by English Heritage highlight the importance of including Belvoir Castle and its grounds. The comments from English Heritage also note that a view of the Site may be seen from The Church of St Peter and St Paul in Barkestone Le Vale but a viewpoint for this has not been provided.

7 Comments applying to both LVIA Assessments provided by the applicant

- 7.1 There is no assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the access arrangements to the solar panel farm on Jericho Lane and there is only a small reference to the visual effects of the Grid Yard (section 7.10 of *'Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Prepared for Green Farm Solar Ltd 13th October 2020'* by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects) despite these being permanent features of the landscape unlike the temporary feature of the solar arrays for 40 years.
- 7.2 Additionally neither assessment discusses the visual effects that the new CCTV poles or new access tracks found within the Site boundary could have. Nor does either assessment discuss the inclusion or not of a lighting strategy for the solar farm at Jericho Lane. As noted in para 3.14, *"No lighting is proposed as part of the development works and as such impacts are not anticipated."*
- 7.4 Neither assessment discusses the visual and landscape character effects of the construction compound.
- 7.5 Neither assessment gives consideration to seasonal change when predicting and describing the visual changes that a solar farm Development Proposal may bring to Jericho Covert. As

cited in para 6.28 of 'GLVIA, Third Edition by The Landscape Institute', 'Consideration should be given to the seasonal differences in effects arising from the varying degree of screening and/or filtering of views by vegetation that will apply in summer and winter'. This is particularly pertinent to this Development Proposal as a change to the management of the existing hedgerows found on Site are part of the proposed mitigation.

- 7.6 As already expressed in para 4.16 of these comments, neither assessment assesses the cumulative effects of a solar farm Development Proposals at Jericho Covert on the landscape character and value.

8 Comments on other Development Proposal Material within Application

Drawing 'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED Rev A'

- 8.1 The bat, bird and log pile locations and numbers are not identified within this drawing, I would recommend that in the event of the application being granted planning permission, this information it to be requested as a condition.
- 8.2 The native woodland planting along north-western boundary, later referred to in page 4 of the LEMP, is not clearly identified.

Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (2020.10.13) – Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects

- 8.3 Firstly drawing 'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED' included in the LEMP is out of date as Rev – is included rather than the more recent Rev A (page 4).
- 8.4 The LEMP states that proposed native woodland planting along north-western boundary will be planted (page 5), however I cannot find details of the tree species, stock sizes or densities within the document or other associated information for this application.
- 8.5 The LEMP states that a 2m margin for wildflower to the boundaries will be provided (page 5). However, it is not clearly identified on drawing 'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED' if the position of the stock fencing will allow this.
- 8.6 I welcome the use of moling for the installation of cabling for the solar farm at Jericho Lane and that no hedgerows/trees are to be impacted during construction (page 6). However, I would recommend that in the event of the application being granted planning permission, that the planning conditions stipulate that moling beneath individual tree RPAs are avoided where possible.
- 8.7 The LEMP states that 'Management of woodland areas will be carried out through coppicing and thinning.' However, I cannot find details of the location of this woodland or a schedule for the described operations within the LEMP.
- 8.8 The LEMP states that 'Post development the ponds within the ownership of the scheme would also be enhanced to increase the carrying capacity and suitability for GCN.' (page 7). However, I cannot find details of the location of ponds for GNC or their construction within the LEMP or drawing 'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED'.

- 8.9 Section 3.0 '*Construction Exclusion Zones*' within the LEMP gives details for exclusion in relation to ecology but does not identify exclusions in relation to existing mature trees.
- 8.10 Within section 6 of the LEMP there is not a specification section for the maintenance of the existing and mature hedgerows which I would expect as these are fundamental to the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan for ecological and visual screening reasons.
- 8.11 Further in this section of the LEMP within section 6.4 the management of '*Areas of longer grass/open herb layer*' is described. The narrative for this section is quite confused, it would be beneficial for this section to be split into '*field margins*' and the larger swath of '*wildflower meadow*' found in the west corner as illustrated in drawing '*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED*'. I would expect that two different wildflower seed types would be required for these two application types, one appropriate for hedgerow margins seeding and one for a more sunny position as expected for the larger swathe. In addition, I believe that there is reference to a '*South-West Seeds*' mix in error within this section.
- 8.12 The same comment as above also applied to '*The Management Schedule: Pre-Construction Phase and Establishment Phase table*', item 9.
- 8.13 Para 6.3.3 within the LEMP states that '*In the absence of any regular grazing, the short grass shall be managed by strimming*', however, it is not stated how often strimming will be undertaken should grazing not occur.
- 8.14 Section 6.2 and item 11.0 the '*Management Schedule: Routine and Annual Maintenance and Management*' does not give details of cutting the side of the hedges.
- 8.15 The new hedgerow planting species as outlined in page 21 would provide a '*species-rich hedgerow*' and would be suitable for this development type. However, details of how regularly along the hedgerow and what stock size the individual supplementary tree species will be planted are not provided.
- 8.16 Within the '*Notes for Planting*' and '*Ground Preparation*' details for importation of subsoil is provided but none is given for the importation of topsoil should this be required.
- 8.17 There is no clarification of mulch type and locations or proposals for spiral guards or other protections whilst the planting establishes and staking.
- 9 Recommendations for additional Mitigation Measures** (in addition to those described within the Development Proposal material)
- 9.1 I recommend that the planting of new standard trees within new and existing hedgerows is included in the Development Proposals for the solar farm at Jericho. As well as the visual and ecological reasons given throughout these comments the applicant should look to;

- Improve the treescape of this wide open landscape
 - Leave a positive legacy within the landscape in the fields that are proposed to contain the PV panels once they are removed following 40 years of use
 - Provide enhancement to the LVIA baseline conditions and visual amenity
 - Provide successional tree planting within the landscape to replace existing mature trees found on Site once they reach the natural end of their lives
 - Provide landscape Development Proposals in line with SEO 2 of 'Statements of Environmental Opportunities' for NCA Profile 48 *'Enhance the woodland and hedgerow network through the planting of small woodlands, tree belts, hedgerow trees and new hedgerows to benefit landscape character...'* and the 'Landscape and Green Infrastructure guidance and opportunities' for Vale of Belvoir within the 'Landscape Sensitivity and Green Infrastructure Study for Leicester & Leicestershire'.
- 9.2 When reviewing the LEMP, page 21 gives *'Supplementary tree species'*, the two species given; *Quercus robur* and *Alnus glutinosa* are suitable but the applicant should include more species to give added ecological and seasonal interest value. I would suggest that native beech, horse chestnut, sweet chestnut and fruit trees amongst other native species are considered.

10 Summary

- 10.1 In summary the solar farm Development Proposals for Jericho Lane are broadly in line with 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems – BRE and Cornwall Council' however there are elements that require further information as identified in section 3 of these comments.
- 10.2 The main areas that contain gaps within the material submitted by the applicant for this planning application are;
- Consideration for historic features - that development does not detract from of the setting of historic buildings and settlements.
 - Evaluation of Local Plan policies which would be pertinent to this development type and Site.
 - Unevenly weighted consideration towards Visual Effects in comparison to Landscape Character within the LVIA information.
 - Discrepancies in the methodologies used within the LVIA information – discrepancies between own methodology given for receptor sensitivities (LVIA) and The Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition as a judgement on the sensitivity of the receptor, magnitude of change or significance of change (Additional Viewpoints).
 - Neither LVIA report review the cumulative visual and landscape character impacts of a solar farm at Jericho Covert with those known to have planning consent or already existing within the landscape.

- No assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the access to the solar panel farm on Jericho Lane and there is only a small reference to the visual effects of the Grid Yard can be found despite these being permanent features of the landscape unlike the temporary feature of the solar arrays for 40 years.
- Neither LVIA assessment discusses the visual effects that the new CCTV poles, new access tracks, a lighting strategy or construction compound found within the Site boundary could have on the visual and landscape character.
- Neither LVIA assessment gives consideration to seasonal change when predicting and describing the visual changes that a solar farm Development Proposal may bring to Jericho Covert.
- That the Site boundary assessed within the LVIA does not reflect that shown on drawing '*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED Rev A*' - Savills ref: 20.11.301.
- Further detail or clarification is required for the wildflower seeding, native woodland planting and GCN ponds within the LEMP;
- No details within the application material of stripping, storage or replacement of topsoil can be found.
- No details have been provided of how the existing hedges and trees will be protected on site during construction or associated Tree Survey / hedge assessment in accordance with BS5837.
- No details have been provided for the construction compound as recommended in 'Planning guidance for the development of large scale ground mounted solar PV systems' and therefore not assessed as part of the LVIA material.

10.3 I recognise that efforts have been made to create a landscape and ecology enhanced scheme for the solar farm at Jericho Lane but this could be taken further by the applicant addressing the Recommended Mitigation Measures found in section 8 and providing further information / clarification where requested in these comments.

10.4 The applicant should refer to the recommendations found in 'Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems' when providing a further revision of drawing '*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED*' as the current scheme does not comply with the required width for buffer strips against the existing hedges, and perimeter fencing as noted in paras 4.9 and 4.19 of these comments.

11 Conclusions

11.1 Further information is required from the Applicant to demonstrate that the Site can accommodate the Development Proposal of a solar farm at Jericho Covert as outlined throughout these comments in section 10 Summary and section 13 Recommendations.

12 Decision

- 12.1 In the absence of identified information I would recommend the decision of this Application with regards landscape and visual matters is **deferred** pending receipt of the items outlined in Recommendations (13 below).

13 Recommendations (in outline refer to Summary):

Information outstanding to determine the application

- 13.1 Provide information; plans and /or text for the proposals for the temporary construction compound
- 13.2 Review drawing '*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED*' and the allocated width for the buffer strip between the existing hedges and the solar panels and adjust this distance to be compliant with '*Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems*'
- 13.3 Review drawing '*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED*' and include new standard trees within the proposals in appropriate positions in relation to CCTV poles, create additional screening and filtering of views of the solar farm from the receptors identified within the LVIA material.
- 13.4 Review the section illustrating the '*Buffer zone to edge of panel arrays – typical detail*' found on drawing '*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED*' to ensure that the width between the proposed perimeter fencing and existing hedges are consistent with the recommended 4-5m buffer found within '*Planning guidance for the development of large-scale ground mounted solar PV systems*'. Provide an amendment to the existing section or an additional section showing the proposals for clarification.
- 13.5 Provide a revision to drawing '*SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED*' clearly noting / identifying the native woodland planting and ponds for GCNs as identified within the LEMP.
- 13.6 Provide a review and analysis of pertinent and relevant Local Plan policies in relation to a solar farm development and the Site selected at Jericho Covert.
- 13.7 Provide updated LVIA material with a review and analysis of '*NCA Profile 48*', '*NCA Profile 74*' and '*Leicestershire County Council Landscape Character Type*' and the documents noted as references within section 6 of the LVIA by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects.
- 13.8 Provide updated LVIA material a defined study area appropriate to the proposed development type and landscape with a review and analysis of landscape designations and other pertinent landscape features found adjacent to the Site, within the landscape context of the Site and may be influenced by the Development Proposals.
- 13.9 Provide updated LVIA material with an assessment for the existing landscape value of the Site, defining important landscape features to establish the landscape baseline of the Site. And provide an assessment of how Development Proposals may affect this.
- 13.10 Provide a narrative and justification for the decision to change the landscape sensitivity from moderate-high to moderate within section 7.3 of the LVIA by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects.

- 13.11 Provide updated LVIA material with a response to the following key characteristics *'Ensure that development does not detract from of the setting of historic buildings and settlements.'* And *'Retain the valued rural character of the vale and avoid urbanising influences'.*
- 13.12 Provide updated LVIA material and viewpoint assessments with the Site boundary reflected in drawing *'SITE BLOCK PLAN – PROPOSED Rev A' - Savills ref: 20.11.301.*
- 13.13 Review the descriptions and locations given for VPs 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 within the LVIA by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects and provide clarification or additional LVIA material.
- 13.14 Provide the missing information for VP 14 within the LVIA by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects for review.
- 13.15 Provide revised information for all the VPs receptor sensitivities which is consistent with the methodology given in appendix 1, section 9.6 of the LVIA by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects and in turn Significance of Effects as a combination of magnitude and receptor sensitivity.
- 13.16 Provide additional LVIA material consistent with *'GLVIA, Third Edition by The Landscape Institute'* of the landscape character and visual effects that the new CCTV poles, new access track, upgrade of the existing access track, construction compound and the permanent addition to the landscape of the Grid Yard providing a permanent grid connection hub.
- 13.17 Provided updated LVIA material which considers the seasonal change when predicting and describing the visual changes that a solar farm Development Proposal may bring to Jericho Covert
- 13.18 Provide clarification for how the proposals contribute to the wider landscape targets and projects in LPA's Biodiversity Action Plans as stated in the LVIA by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects.
- 13.19 Provide additional LVIA material with the cumulative visual and landscape character impacts of a solar farm Development Proposals at Jericho Covert with those known to have planning consent or already existing within the landscape.
- 13.20 Provide a revision of drawing *'Viewpoint Locations'* drawing by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects which includes the location of VP4.
- 13.21 Provide revisions to the *'Viewpoint photography sheets'* by Richard Sneesby Landscape Architects as described in section 5 of these comments.
- 13.22 Provide revised or additional LVIA material for the viewpoints reviewed in *'Additional viewpoints, supporting information'* by Tetra Tech which is consistent with *'The Landscape Institute's Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition'*. Information should include a judgement on the sensitivity of the receptors, magnitude of change and significance of change.
- 13.23 Provide additional LVIA material with a visual assessment or reasoning for viewpoints at Listed Buildings such as the Church of St Peter and St Paul and Redmile Conservation Area being dismissed from the previously submitted LVIA material.

13.24 Provide a revision to the LEMP or additional material for the maintenance of the existing and mature hedgerows, wildflower seeding and GNC ponds (if proposed).

Time Determined Conditions (should the MBC approve the planning application)

13.25 Provide details for the bat, bird and log pile locations and numbers.

13.26 Provide a detailed landscape management plan and maintenance schedule specified to the detail and appropriate duration (minimum 5years) to ensure the impact of the solar farm at Jericho Covert does not enhance significance through poor aftercare of the mitigation proposed. Include for the removal and replacement of failed trees/hedgerow planting. Include within this a schedule for woodland management as described in LEMP. Include clarification of amount of strimming required of short grass if grazing does not occur.

13.27 Provision that cable moling beneath individual tree RPAs is avoided.

Katie Lewis CMLI

Landscape Architect

For and on Behalf of Red Kite Network Limited

Footnotes

The following acronyms have been used:

- 1 LVIA - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- 2 ZTV –Zone of Theoretical Visibility
- 3 LCA – Landscape Character Area
- 4 SEO – Statement of Environmental Opportunities
- 5 NCA – National Character Area
- 6 GI – Green Infrastructure
- 7 NCA - National Character Area
- 8 MBC – Melton Borough Council
- 9 NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework
- 10 LP – Local Plan
- 11 PDAS – Planning, Design and Access Statement
- 12 LVIA – Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- 13 VP – Viewpoint
- 14 LI – The Landscape Institute
- 15 GLVIA3 - The Landscape Institute’s Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition
- 16 LEMP – Landscape and Ecological Management Plan
- 17 EIA – Environmental Impact Assessment



18 EIAR - Ecological Impact Assessment Report

19 GGA – Glint and Glare Assessment

20 GCN – Great Crested Newts

