
APPLICATION NO.	23/02225/FULLN
APPLICATION TYPE	FULL APPLICATION - NORTH
REGISTERED	12.09.2023
APPLICANT	Mr Batov
SITE	Land to the West of Winchester Road, Winchester Road, Wherwell, WHERWELL / GOODWORTH CLATFORD
PROPOSAL	Solar farm with ancillary infrastructure, security fence, access, and landscaping
AMENDMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amended site layout plan received 08.03.24• Amended Flood Risk Assessment received 15.09.23• Amended Archaeological Mitigation Strategy received 15.09.23• Amended Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment received 24.11.23• Additional LVIA figures received 24.11.23• Additional and updated heritage information received 11.01.24• Amended Landscape and Ecology Mitigation drawings received 24.04.24
CASE OFFICER	Katie Nethersole

Background paper (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)
[Click here to view application](#)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application is presented to Northern Area Planning Committee at the request of members as it raises issues of more than local public interest.

2.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

2.1 The application site measures approximately 56 hectares and is located to the west of Winchester Road in Wherwell. To the east of the site is the A3057 Romsey Road and to the south is the village of Wherwell. There are a number of public rights of way in the vicinity of the site. To the west of the site along the boundary with Winchester Road is existing hedgerows and trees. The land is currently in agricultural use and consists of a number of small to medium sized fields.

3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 It is proposed to provide a solar farm consisting of ground-mounted solar panels that would have the capacity to generate approximately 32MW and would provide enough power to support approximately 13,500 homes. The site area measures approximately 56 hectares and would consist of solar PV panels in arrays with ancillary infrastructure. The solar panels would be

mounted on galvanised metal frames set into the ground, with the exception of those located in the trial trench area where they would be positioned on a platform frame. The panels would be set in east-west rows with each panel tilted at a 20-degree angle. The overall height of the panels would be approximately 2.4 metres from the ground with the lowest edge of the panels being raised 0.8 metres to allow grazing of sheep around the frames. Inverters and transformers would be mounted on the panels. A substation would be located to the northwest of the site and would be approximately 170 metres from the nearest residential dwelling. There would also be a customer substation located adjacent to the substation. Around the perimeter of the site would be post and wire deer fencing and vehicle access gates. CCTV cameras would be positioned on the perimeter fence to provide site security. There would be no permanent external lighting.

3.2 The scheme would be operational for 40 years and once decommissioned the structures would be removed from the site and the land returned to its current agricultural use.

3.3 Access during construction would be via an existing field access to the northeast of the site off Winchester Road. Internal access roads would be provided to access the different parcels.

3.4 The proposal would result in the loss of existing agricultural land. The Agricultural Land Classification classifies the land as Grade 3b which is moderate quality.

4.0 **HISTORY**

4.1 22/01985/SCRN Screening opinion under the Environment Impact Assessment Regulations 2017: Proposed solar photovoltaic (PV) farm development with continued agricultural use, ancillary infrastructure and security fencing, landscaping provision and ecological enhancements at land west of Winchester Road Wherwell. EIA not required 24.08.2022

5.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 **Landscape** – No objection subject to conditions

5.2 **Ecology** – No objection subject to condition

5.3 **Trees** – No objection subject to condition

5.4 **Highways** – No objection subject to condition

5.5 **Conservation** – Objection

5.6 **Archaeology** – No objection subject to conditions

5.7 **Civil Aviation Authority** – No objection

5.8 **Natural England** – No objection

6.0 **REPRESENTATIONS** Expired 13.10.2023

6.1 **Chilbolton Parish Council** – Objection summarised as follows:

- Proposals are contrary to policy E1 (a) and (b)
- Concern about visual impact and glare, particularly from West Down Nature Reserve/higher points in the village.
- Proposed mitigation planting would compromise open landscape character
- Visual amenity of public rights of way would be adversely affected
- Three airfields may be affected by glare

6.2 **Goodworth Clatford Parish Council** – No objection summarised as follows:

- Not within the parish so Goodworth Clatford Neighbourhood Plan not directly applicable
- Some concern about cumulative impact
- Loss of agricultural land

6.3 **Wherwell Parish Council** – Objection, summarised as follows:

- Impact on the local landscape character and medieval approach to the historic village.
- Visual amenity – views from public footpaths and the village.
- Heritage – Windwhistle Cottage and Whitehouse Cottage are listed and are immediately adjacent to the site.
- Ecology – impact on SINC (Harewood Forest).
- Inverter and increased traffic noise.
- Inadequate public consultation.

6.4 32 letters of objection from the occupiers of the following addresses:

- Windwhistle Cottage, Winchester Road, Wherwell x 7
- 1 Chestnut Cottage, Station Road, Chilbolton
- Springfield, Fullerton Road, Wherwell
- Heather Cottage, 29 Church Street, Wherwell
- High Pad, Station Road, Chilbolton
- 1 Hill Cottages, Winchester Road, Wherwell x 2
- Aldings, Fullerton Road, Wherwell
- Wherwell Priory, Wherwell
- Watermeadow Cottage, Church Street, Wherwell
- Lynchet, Fullerton Road, Wherwell
- Field House, Longparish Road, Wherwell
- Whiteways, Village Street, Chilbolton
- The Spinney, Fullerton Road, Wherwell x 2
- The Round House, Drove Road, Chilbolton
- Dancing Ledge, Fullerton Road, Wherwell
- Chute Cottage, The Old Hill, Wherwell
- Harewell Hall, 26A Church Street, Wherwell x 2
- 1 Greenwich Cottages, Longparish Road, Wherwell
- New House, Fullerton, Wherwell
- CPRE, Sparsholt College, Westley Lane, Sparsholt
- Whitehouse Cottage, Winchester Road, Wherwell x 2

- Bramshill, Fullerton Road, Wherwell
- Fairways, River View Close, Chilbolton
- 5 Chestnut Close, Station Road, Chilbolton
- The Brae, Station Road, Chilbolton
- 1 x unknown address

For the following reasons:

Impact on landscape character

- The immediate area in Wherwell is beautiful and the solar farm would be a visual blight on the landscape
- Contrary to policy E2, adverse impact on landscape character and would not positively integrate with the area
- Adverse impact on the Landscape Character Area – Landscape Character Area Type 10: Open Chalklands
- The proposed hedging and fencing would interrupt the current open views across the countryside
- The amended LVIA has not addressed the concerns raised about the adverse impact on the landscape character
- As the site is elevated, views of the solar farm would be prominent in the landscape
- Adverse impact on views in the landscape due to its prominent position
- The erection of security fencing would look incongruous in the landscape
- Proposal would have a serious detrimental impact on the character of the village of Wherwell
- Proposed mitigation fencing at 3 – 4 metres would have an adverse impact on the landscape

Impact on biodiversity

- Adverse impact on biodiversity, including birds and insects Hawks and owls would be adversely impacted as the solar farm would obliterate their food chain
- Skylark mitigation area is not big enough
- Loss of natural habitat
- Skylark population would be reduced due to lack of areas to feed and the open ground to nest
- Proposed deer fencing will stop free passage of larger mammals, principally deer, from Harewood Forest which will greatly increase the risk of collisions with cars
- Adverse environmental impact both during construction and on completion

Impact on access

- Application does not take account of the permitted footpath through the site
- There is an opportunity to improve walking and cycling routes in the area
- Glint and glare could adversely impact road users on Winchester Road and A3057

- Increase in traffic in the vicinity of the site
- The construction and maintenance of the solar farm would result in an increase in traffic, noise and fumes
- No attempt by the developer to expand the existing public footpath network
- Adverse impacts on the local footpath network
- Constricts access to public footpaths

Impact on amenity

- If permission is granted assume that lighting would be conditioned, CCTV should not be intrusive to neighbours, and there should be a fire risk report covering the panels and inverters
- Noise from inverters
- Impact on residential amenity from glare
- Cumulative impact of solar farms must be considered
- Noise and danger during construction and operation with one sole site
- Visual glare and subsonic noise from solar panels

Impact on agricultural land

- Adverse impact on tourism in Wherwell
- The best and most versatile agricultural land (Grade 3a and above) should not be used for solar panels
- Understand that if this goes ahead, sheep grazing would be able to continue but how would this be managed
- Loss of agricultural land, a need for food security
- Agricultural land would not be reinstated for decades

Impact on heritage

- Adverse impact on archaeological site within the field
- Historic maps show there was a pond in the corner of the site, and rainwater still 'pools' in this location
- Adverse impacts on heritage assets, including listed buildings and Wherwell Conservation Area

Environmental Impacts

- Concern that development could increase the amount of surface water
- The carbon footprint and environmental impact of the solar farm would outweigh any possible 'green' benefit
- Solar arrays should be positioned on brownfield sites and on the roofs of large industrial or agricultural buildings

Other impacts

- 40 years is not considered temporary
- Unclear if the existing telegraph poles would be retained or relocated
- Financial gain to developer is wrong
- Application has been submitted by an unknown developer with no track record of success in the UK
- Potential conflict of interest as friends with landowner but oppose the proposal

- Insufficient public consultation has been carried out
- Contrary to the guidelines by the National Grid
- The proposed site is far too large
- Overdevelopment of solar farms in the area
- No detail on the connection to the grid and whether this would affect the overhead lines
- Contrary to policies in the NPPF

Identified positive benefits to the scheme

Whilst there have been no letters in support of the proposal, contributors have acknowledged that there are positive benefits to the scheme, including:

- Increase in 'environmentally friendly' (low carbon) power generation
- Potential for developers to improve the footpath network
- There is a need for solar farms in the UK but in the appropriate locations
- CPRE generally supports the principle of renewable energy, including solar energy

7.0 **POLICY**

7.1 Government Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

7.2 Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) (RLP)

SD1: Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

COM2: Settlement Hierarchy

COM15: Infrastructure

E1: High Quality Development in the Borough

E2: Protect, Conserve and Enhance the Landscape Character of the Borough

E5: Biodiversity

E7: Water Management

E8: Pollution

E9: Heritage

LHW4: Amenity

T1: Managing Movement

T2: Parking Standards

7.3 Neighbourhood Plan

Chilbolton Neighbourhood Plan 2019 - 2029

Goodworth Clatford Neighbourhood Plan 2018 – 2029

N.B. Officer – these are not directly relevant as the application site falls outside of the boundaries of these designations but is adjacent to them.

7.4 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

National Policy Statement for Energy – EN1 (renewables) January 2024

Revised National Policy Statement for Energy – EN3 (renewables) January 2024

Test Valley Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of Wind and Solar Developments December 2020

Test Valley Landscape Character Assessment 2018

8.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 The main planning considerations are:

- The principle of development
- Landscape and visual impacts
- Heritage
- Biodiversity
- Amenity and pollution
- Highway network
- Water management
- Other Matters

8.2 **The principle of development**

Planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) (RLP) was adopted in January 2016. There are no specific policies within the RLP relating to renewable energy. Policy SD1 of the RLP has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that where there are no policies relevant to the application the Council will grant planning permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – considering whether,

- a) Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole or;
- b) Specific policies within that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

8.3 The site is located within the countryside, outside of any defined settlements as defined by the RLP inset maps. RLP policy COM2 sets out that development would be permitted if it is appropriate within the countryside as set out in other relevant RLP policies, or it is essential for it to be located within the countryside. The relevant policies set out in RLP policy COM2 do not cover the creation of solar farms. Consideration therefore needs to be given to whether it is essential for the proposal to be in the countryside and whether there are any relevant material considerations.

8.4 The National Policy Statement for Energy EN-1 and EN-3 sets out the need for new low carbon energy infrastructure to contribute towards climate change mitigation.

8.5 The NPPF (2023) states in paragraph 163 that when determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and recognises that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution, and that the application should be approved if its impacts are or can be made acceptable.

8.6 There is clear support in national policy for renewable energy developments as a means of addressing the impacts of climate change, subject to the impacts of such developments being acceptable, or capable of being made so. Having regard to the approach as set out in the NPPF, the renewable energy generated by the proposal would represent a significant public benefit to the scheme. This weighs in favour of the proposal and should be given significant weight.

8.7 *Site selection*

The proposal is for a solar farm covering approximately 56 hectares. Sourcing viable sites is dependent on several factors including connection to grid, and the submitted Planning Statement sets out that “the site was selected in reflection of the primary site criteria for solar farms, which are:

- Visibility from other settlements
- Landscape character
- Potential effects on heritage assets
- Flood risk
- Agricultural land grade and ability to continue farming alongside energy generation
- Access for construction vehicles
- Potential effects on ecological designations and habitats
- Topography
- Existing landscape features on the site

The application has been supported by a Site Search document which demonstrates the process that the applicant has gone through to identify a suitable site. The Site Search document states that the applicant has adopted a sequential approach to identifying sites within the study area. Three other sites were considered but discounted for a variety of reasons including lack of landowner interest, grid connection cost not viable and too small a site.

8.8 *Use of agricultural land*

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) on Renewable and Low Carbon Energy advises that where possible solar farms should be located on previously developed land. Where a proposal involves greenfield land consideration should be given to “*Whether (i) the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary and poorer quality land has been used in preference to higher quality land; and (ii) the proposal allows for continued agricultural use where applicable and/or encourages biodiversity improvements around arrays.*”

8.9 Agricultural Land is classified into 5 grades. Grade 1 is best quality and Grade 5 is the poorest quality. The NPPF defines the Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land as being those in Grades 1, 2 and 3a and that local planning authorities should recognise the economic benefits of this land and steer significant development towards poorer quality land.

- 8.10 The application has been supported by an Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) report which concludes that the site is 95% subgrade 3b land and 5% other land (woodland and scrub). Therefore, the proposed development would be constructed on land that does not fall under the category of high-quality agricultural land of BMV, and the proposal would not result in any loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land. The National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy EN-3 states that the land type should not be predominating factor in determining the suitability of a site location for a solar farm and that where agricultural land is to be used, it should avoid the use of BMV land. In addition to this the written ministerial statement '*Solar and protecting our food security and best and most versatile land*' dated 15th May 2024 reiterates the importance of avoiding the use of BMV land for solar development. The development would accord with this guidance as there would be no loss of BMV land as a result of the proposed development.
- 8.11 The application submission sets out that the land would continue to be used for sheep to graze. In addition, the proposed development is a temporary and reversible use of the land with no permanent loss of agricultural land. Accordingly, the 40 year/temporary loss of the ability to farm the land for arable purposes is considered acceptable. A condition is recommended in respect of decommissioning the proposed development and returning the land to its former condition.
- 8.12 In conclusion on the principle of the proposed development, the agricultural land that would be utilised by the proposed development is 3b land and would be temporarily taken out of agricultural use to facilitate the provision of renewable energy. It is considered that it has been shown that to create a viable solar farm it is essential for it to be located within the countryside and as such accords with Policy COM2 of the RLP.
- 8.13 **Landscape and visual impacts**
The application site is located with an area of open chalkland as defined by the Landscape Character Area Assessment (LCA) 2018 which is described as an area of gently undulating and rolling area of chalk downland with small hills to the east and sloping down to the west with a series of dry valleys towards the River Anton and River Test (Character Area 10F). The landscape character features open areas of arable land separated by areas of settlement, new housing and infrastructure including solar panels. There are areas of isolated woodland, including small woodlands on non-productive land and on small scarps at Wallis Bottom (south of the application site).
- 8.14 Policy E2 of the RLP requires development to protect, conserve and enhance the landscape of the Borough. The NPPG on Renewable and Low Carbon Energy recognises that "*The deployment of large-scale solar farms can have a negative impact on the rural environment, particularly in undulating landscapes. However, the visual impact of a well-planned and well-screened solar farm can be properly addressed within the landscape if planned sensitively*".

- 8.15 The application site is visible from Winchester Road but visibility is limited in part due to the mature hedge and tree planting to the boundaries and the fall in land away from Winchester Road, in a southeast direction. From the A3057 Romsey Road, views are limited due to landform and a dense belt of mature trees to the southern boundary of the site including the small woodland at Wallis Bottom. There are several public rights of way near the site, including Wherwell 504, Wherwell 503, Wherwell 9, Wherwell 3, and Goodworth Clatford 17. There is also a permissive footpath that runs to the north of the site along Winchester Road. Views of the proposal from these public rights of way would be variable with views from the definitive rights of way being limited due to landform and vegetation, however it is acknowledged that from the permissive right of way on Winchester Road views of the development would be possible.
- 8.16 The application has been supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), reference LVIA01_Rev C. This has assessed the potential impact of the proposal on the landscape and the assessment was carried out during winter/spring 2022 when the deciduous trees surrounding the site were not in leaf. The LVIA considered the site-specific landscape character, key landscape features, and the national and regional landscape character appraisals. It concludes that the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors as medium and this view is concurred with. The methodology used in the LVIA is agreed with, and it is considered that the assessment has accurately and fairly assessed all relevant factors. Mitigation planting set out in Section 6 of the LVIA was considered to be lacking, however alongside the Landscape officer, the Case officer has worked with the applicant to further enhance the mitigation measures to provide a more robust strategy.
- 8.17 The conclusions of the LVIA state that the proposed development would result in harm to the landscape but that this would not be significant but 'medium'. The assessment deems the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors as medium, and this has been reviewed by the landscape officer who agrees with this conclusion. The methodology used in the LVIA is considered acceptable and the assessment accurately and fairly assessed all the relevant factors, and the viewpoints represented in the LVIA are considered to be an accurate representation of the views into the site from the immediate and wider landscape.
- 8.18 It is considered that the proposed solar farm would have an impact on the landscape, and it is agreed with the conclusions of the LVIA that the impact would not be classed as significant. The landscape harm would be moderate, and the enhanced landscaping and mitigation planting would help to mitigate this harm.
- 8.19 The existing permissive footpath that runs along the eastern perimeter of the site would be retained. This footpath currently benefits from long open views over the chalk downland, and this is recognised in the LVIA. The path would be retained at a width of 7 metres with hedging to the boundary of the development which would be maintained at a height of 2.4 – 3 metres. A new perimeter permissive footpath would be provided around the site which would link up with the existing permissive footpath and would be operational for the

lifetime of the solar farm. A native hedgerow is proposed to be planted along the route of the existing permissive footpath that would be maintained between a height of 2.4 and 3 metres. Security/ deer proof fencing is proposed around the perimeter of the site. This would be post and wire fencing at approximately 2 metres in height.

- 8.20 It is acknowledged that the proposed solar farm would have an impact on the wider and immediate landscape character of the area through the addition of solar panels which would alter the current arable landscape character of the area, and this harm would be moderate; however, it is recognised that solar arrays are becoming a part of the rural landscape. The proposed mitigation planting would take a time to mature however the hedgerows are proposed to be planted at a size where they would establish quickly, and the trees are proposed to be planted at a size where they would provide instant screening. Further to this, triple hedgerows are proposed to help strengthen the planting to provide a more robust screen in the long term. There are existing mature hedgerows and trees that run along the boundaries of the site which provide immediate screening and would be further enhanced by the proposed new native planting.
- 8.21 It is noted that Wherwell Parish Council have raised concerns about the landscape impact from the proposed solar farm and refer to the Test Valley Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of Wind and Solar Developments (December 2020). The site is in the Landscape Character Area – Andover Chalk Downland (10F) and the assessment says that large scale solar developments such as the scale proposed on the application site would have a medium to high sensitivity. The assessment goes on to provide guidance for solar developments and states that any solar development should take account of landscape sensitivity, other solar developments in the vicinity, aim for similarity of design to existing schemes, new solar developments should be visually separate, some open views of landscape are retained, area of development should be in scale with the landscape it is in, and consider views from settlements when designing schemes to prevent settlements being surrounded.
- 8.22 Whilst there would be a moderate impact on the landscape character as a result of the proposal, the existing landform, existing planting and proposed mitigation planting and enhancements would provide screening and in the medium to long term, mitigation.
- 8.23 *Conclusion on Landscape and Visual Impacts*
The proposal would result in a moderate adverse impact on the landscape character. The harm identified would be mitigated in the medium to long term by the proposed enhancement planting. Short term landscape harm needs to be balanced against the benefits of the proposals. This is considered further at paragraph 8.77.

8.24 **Heritage Impacts**

The solar farm would be located in the setting of listed buildings, including Whitehouse (Grade II) approximately 70 metres to the west, Windwhistle Cottage (Grade II) approximately 50 metres to the north, and Windwhistle Barn (Grade II) approximately 50 metres to the north, as well as Wherwell Conservation Area, approximately 84 metres to the southeast. The impact of the proposals on the settings of these heritage assets is assessed in the below paragraphs.

8.25 Local Authorities are required to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses as set out in Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

8.26 The application has been supported by a Heritage Statement (reference 00209 1.4 dated 28th December 2023) which covers both archaeological and built heritage matters. This statement confirms that from Winchester Road as one travels in a south-east direction, views are fairly open and include limited built form. This forms an intact, rural setting of the historic approach to the village of Wherwell and its conservation area, Windwhistle Cottage, Windwhistle Barn and Whitehouse. This current view makes a positive contribution to the significance of the listed buildings and the conservation area.

8.27 Paragraph 2.3.8 of the NPS EN-3 sets out that there are substantial public benefits from solar developments and that these benefits often outweigh any loss or harm to the significance of designated heritage assets through the positive role that these forms of developments play on the mitigation of climate change.

8.28 NPPF paragraph 205 sets out that weight should be given to the heritage asset's conservation irrespective of the level potential harm. Any potential harm to heritage assets should be justified as set out in NPPF paragraph 206. The submitted heritage statement clearly sets out the potential harm to the identified heritage assets, as discussed in the below paragraphs.

8.29 *Impact on Listed Buildings*

In terms of the impact on Whitehouse, it is noted in the submitted Heritage Statement that this is a relatively isolated dwelling, and that the Winchester Road along with the agricultural land around it forms part of its setting. The proposed development of the fields around Whitehouse would change the current agricultural context in which it is experienced and would introduce a large level of modern development. The proposal would therefore adversely affect the setting of this heritage asset.

8.30 The Heritage Statement notes that the setting of Windwhistle Cottage and its listed barn is the agricultural land on either side of Winchester Road. As a result of the proposed development, the setting of these heritage assets would be adversely impacted.

- 8.31 The harm to the setting of these listed buildings is considered to be less than substantial. Policy E9 of the TVBRLP and NPPF paragraph 208 set out that where a development results in less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset this should be weighed against the public benefits (as set out in paragraphs 8.79 – 8.81) of the proposal.
- 8.32 There are other listed buildings referred to in the heritage assessment, including Chalkdell Cottage (Grade II), St Michael's Cottage (Grade II), Chalkdell House (Grade II) that are within the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) and it has been concluded that there would be a neutral harm to the setting of these heritage assets, due to the separation distances from these heritage assets and the application site.
- 8.33 *Impact on Wherwell Conservation Area*
In terms of the potential impact of the proposed development on the character of Wherwell Conservation Area, it is noted that whilst the proposal is located approximately 84 metres (0.05 miles) from this designation, there would be a less than substantial impact on its setting.
- 8.34 *Impact on Chilbolton Conservation Area*
The application site is located approximately 801 metres (0.5 miles) from the edge of the Chilbolton Conservation Area. As with Wherwell, there is a significant drop in land levels from the application site to the Chilbolton conservation area. Views of the proposal from within the conservation area towards the application site would be limited and with very little potential for intervisibility, and therefore there would be no adverse impact on the setting of this heritage asset.
- 8.35 *Impact on Goodworth Clatford Conservation Area*
This designation is within the middle study area of the development site and lies approximately 1,268 metres (0.79 miles) to the north-west. Due to the topography of the area, there would be no intervisibility between this designation and the development. As such there would be no adverse impact on the setting of this heritage asset.
- 8.36 *Conclusion on heritage impact – built heritage*
It is considered that the harm to the setting of the Wherwell conservation area would be less than substantial due to the topography of the site where the development site is at a much higher level than the village and its associated conservation area, meaning that there is no intervisibility between the site and the conservation area. The identified harm to the setting of White House Cottage, Windwhistle Cottage and its curtilage listed barn would be less than substantial.
- 8.37 Whilst it is acknowledged that the proposal would result in harm to the identified heritage assets (Listed buildings and Conservation Area), this harm would be less than substantial and according to policy E9 this level of impact is considered against any public benefit of the proposal. It is therefore concluded that the less than substantial harm to the identified heritage assets would be outweighed by the identified public benefits, and this is discussed in paragraphs 8.73 – 8.81 of the report.

8.38 *Archaeological impact*

The application site is within a landscape that contains extensive archaeological activity. There are archaeological remains visible in cropmarks and indicate a presence of occupation, agricultural and funerary activity associated with prehistoric activity. The application has been supported by an Archaeological Geophysical Survey (reference 22/083 by Mola 2022), Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (reference 00209 by Abrams Archaeology 2023) and an Archaeological mitigation Strategy (reference 00209 by Abrams Archaeology 2023).

8.39 A geophysical survey was undertaken across the whole site and identified a number of anomalies of archaeological origin, which includes two areas containing substantive archaeological sites. The mitigation strategy proposes that where significant groundworks occur within low sensitivity areas, archaeological monitoring would be carried out to mitigate any potential impact. Within the medium sensitivity areas, the strategy proposes that an initial phase of targeted archaeological evaluation is carried out to determine the significance of any archaeology and the most suitable mitigation measures. These mitigation measures would be secured through conditions that are included in the recommendation.

8.40 In conclusion therefore, any impacts on archaeological remains would be mitigated and these measures would be secured through conditions.

8.41 **Biodiversity**

The application has been supported by a Preliminary ecological assessment (PEA) (11203 Rev O), method statement (AIA SC.619), tree protection plan (Plan 2) and an analysis of tree related shading effects to the site (Plan 3). This has demonstrated that the site's ecological and species constraints have informed the proposed layout.

8.42 Policy E5 of the RLP seeks to ensure that development does not have an adverse impact on protected species or sites. Development should conserve, and where possible restore or enhance biodiversity.

8.43 Development likely to result in the loss, deterioration or harm to habitats or species of importance to biodiversity or geological conservation interests, either directly or indirectly, will not be permitted unless:

- a) The need for, and benefits of, the development in the proposed location outweighs the adverse effect on the relevant biodiversity interest;
- b) It can be demonstrated that it could not reasonably be located on an alternative site that would result in less or no harm to the biodiversity interests; and
- c) Measures can be provided (and secured through planning conditions or legal agreements), that would avoid, mitigate against or, as a last resort, compensate for the adverse effects likely to result from development.

- 8.44 The submitted PEA provides details of an ecological survey carried out on the site which highlighted the species and habitats present including grassland, woodland, hedgerows, trees, bats, amphibians (newts), reptiles (slow-worms), birds, badgers, dormice, water voles, otters, brown hares, hedgehogs, and stag beetles. The protected species surveys required by the PEA for skylarks and badgers have been carried out and based on the findings of these surveys recommendations and mitigation measures have been proposed.
- 8.45 The PEA sets out several recommendations to avoid or mitigate impact on protected species. This includes a skylark mitigation area, mitigation strategy for construction methods, lighting strategy, an ecological watching brief, installation of bird and bat boxes, compensatory planting, wildlife corridors and a site walkover. The submitted plans show that five skylark plots have been incorporated into the proposed development which will provide suitable access to nesting habitats and an off-site mitigation area to the south-east of the site as a breeding area for skylarks.
- 8.46 An Ecological Management Plan (EMP, reference MAN.3059.004.EC.R.001) has been submitted with the application which demonstrates that the proposals have been considered following the findings of the PEA and resultant phase 2 surveys. This has been reviewed by the Ecology officer who has confirmed that this would ensure the development would not result in harm to protected sites or species.
- 8.47 There would be a substantial net gain in biodiversity as a result of the development which has been demonstrated through the submitted Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (dated 12th September 2023). Whilst the application is not required to demonstrate biodiversity net gain (BNG) as it was validated prior to this requirement being mandatory, the applicant has sought to demonstrate that through the provision of additional native planting and biodiversity enhancements that the proposal would result in an overall BNG of 78.03% increase in habitats and 16.46% increase in hedgerows.
- 8.48 In conclusion, subject to conditions to secure the mitigation measures, the proposed development would not result in any loss or harm to protected species or sites and would accord with policy E5 of the RLP.
- 8.49 **Amenity and Pollution**
Policy E8 of the RLP sets out that development will be permitted provided that it does not result in pollution which would cause unacceptable risks to human health, the natural environment or general amenity, and that development that would or could potentially generate pollution will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that there would not be any adverse impact on human health, the natural environment or general amenity. For the purposes of this policy, pollution includes noise and vibration, light, and air. The main considerations in respect of this proposal relate to noise emission from static plant and equipment; the risks to amenity and aviation from glint and glare from the solar panels; and the risks posed by the construction phase.

8.50 *Noise from static plant*

The application is supported by a noise assessment report (P23-066-R01 v2), which assesses the risk of noise impact upon residential receptors located to the north and east of the site, namely Whitehouse Cottage and Windwhistle Cottage. It is understood that some of the equipment/plant associated with the proposed solar farm may operate at nighttime hours. The conclusion from the assessment is that the impact upon residential amenity from the operation of the proposed development would likely be one of acceptable impact. This outcome would, however, be reliant on the equipment/plant meeting the emission outputs contained within the submitted assessment, and the position of the plant. A condition is therefore recommended to ensure that the plant and equipment are installed as per the details provided within the noise impact assessment.

8.51 *Glint and Glare*

The application has been supported by a Glint and Glare Assessment which assessed the potential effects of glint and glare and its impact on local receptors including residential, roads, and aerodromes. The study concludes that solar reflections would be possible at 9 out of the 33 residential properties assessed within the study area. Whilst some glint and glare would be possible, due to the mitigation planting proposed this impact would be reduced to none.

8.52 With respect to effects on roads, there would be some glint and glare, but this would be mitigated by the proposed planting. The assessment concludes that there would be no adverse impact on railways from glint and glare.

8.53 In respect of any impact on aviation, due to the distance of the development site from airfields or aerodromes (for example: Middle Wallop – 7km, Thruxton Airport – 10km, Stonefield Park Airfield – 4km) there would be no significant impact from glint and glare. Furthermore, the Civil Aviation Authority have commented on the application and confirmed that the proposal would be unlikely to result in an adverse effect on aviation from glint and glare and have raised no objection to the development.

8.54 In conclusion on the potential noise and amenity impacts from the development, there would be no adverse impacts from noise or from glint and glare and therefore the proposal would accord with policies E8 and LHW4 of the RLP.

8.55 **Highway Network**

Policy T1 of the RLP requires development to not have an adverse impact on the function, character and safety of and accessibility to the local and strategic highway network or the rights of way network. It is considered that during the operational phase, the proposed development would be an extremely low traffic generator. Therefore, any highway impacts would be in respect of the construction and decommissioning phases of the proposed development. The application is accompanied by a Transport and Access Statement (C22013/TS01) which includes details of construction phase and decommissioning phase.

8.56 *Site Access*

The site would be accessed from Winchester Road where there is an existing field access. This existing field access would be upgraded, and a drawing has been submitted with the application to demonstrate that sufficient visibility splays would be provided. This access would be used during construction, operation and decommissioning. It is proposed to widen this access in order to ensure that there is sufficient space to facilitate HGV movements to and from the site. The submitted drawings demonstrate that construction vehicles would be able to enter and leave the site in a forward gear and as such there would be no adverse impacts on the safety and efficiency of Winchester Road. A gate would be installed to the access set back from the highway by 10 metres to ensure vehicles can safely enter and leave the site.

8.57 *Construction Traffic*

It is proposed that construction vehicles would route to and from the north-east of the access via the proposed access and movements would be via Romsey Road (A3057), turning into Winchester Road. During construction it is anticipated that an average of 3 – 4 HGV deliveries would take place per day during the first 16 weeks of construction, and average of 8 HGV vehicle movements to the site per day during the construction period. Traffic during construction would be minimised by routing traffic movements and deliveries to the site and would be co-ordinated to avoid large numbers of vehicles arriving and leaving the site at the same time, and this would be secured through the provision of a construction management plan required by a condition that has been recommended.

8.58 *Parking*

There would be a temporary construction compound for construction parking and delivery vehicles during the construction period. No parking would be required after construction is complete.

8.59 *Public Rights of Way*

There are several Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the vicinity of the site, including Wherwell 503 to the south, Wherwell 502, Wherwell 10 and Wherwell 3 to the east, Wherwell 504, Wherwell 9 (Test Way) and Goodworth Clatford 17 to the north. There is also a permissive footpath that runs to the north of the site along Winchester Road. These rights of way would not need to be stopped up or diverted as a result of the proposal.

8.60 In conclusion it is considered that the proposed development would accord with policy T1 and T2 in respect of highway safety and parking, subject to a condition requiring the submission of a construction method statement.

8.61 **Water Management**

RLP policy E7 requires consideration to be given to the impact of development on flood risk and ground water matters. The site is located within Flood Zone 1, which is the zone with the lowest probability of flooding.

- 8.62 The application has been supported by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) (KRS.0612.004.R.001.C) which confirms that as the site is within Flood Zone 1, the sequential and exception tests do not apply. Whilst the site is at a low risk of flooding from a major river source (fluvial) there is a low risk of surface water flooding.
- 8.63 *Surface Water Flooding*
The FRA states that there would be no net loss in flood storage capacity or impact on movement of floodwater across the site. The proposed solar panels would not reduce the permeable area of the site as they would be raised off the ground by steel supports, meaning that any surface water would still be able to run across the ground under the panels. Further to this, the proposed access tracks would be constructed from permeable material. Recommendations have been provided in the FRA to ensure that surface water is minimised, and these would be secured by a condition that requires these recommendations, during and post construction, are adhered to.
- 8.64 In conclusion, subject to conditions ensuring that recommendations outlined in the FRA are adhered to, the proposal would not increase the risk of flooding in accordance with policy E7 of the RLP.
- 8.65 **Other Matters**
Cumulative Impact
It is acknowledged that there are other solar farms in the vicinity of the proposal, and it is noted that Chilbolton Parish Council has raised this point as a matter of concern in terms of the cumulative impact of such developments. To the west is Goodworth Clatford Solar Farm and Land South of Red Rice Road, to the north is Cow Down Solar Farm, to the east is Owls Lodge Solar Farm near Drayton Down, and to the south-west Saxley Solar Farm.
- 8.66 The submitted LVIA acknowledges these existing solar farms in its assessment of the impact of the proposal on the wider landscape. Due to the site being well contained by planted boundaries this means the proposed site would be visually separate from the existing solar farms in the vicinity of the site. The assessment goes on to set out that there are no public viewpoints where both the proposed and existing solar farms would be seen in conjunction with one another. This has been verified by a site visit carried out by the Case Officer, where the site itself was visited and walks along existing rights of way were carried out and no views of the proposed site and any of the existing solar farms were possible.
- 8.67 The LVIA acknowledges that there would be some cumulative effects attributed to landscape receptors such as land use, footpaths, and bridleways. The land use would change from arable farming to solar energy generation. The routes of the existing footpaths would not be altered and therefore it is considered that the combined effects would be minor. In terms of the change in land use and its effect on the landscape character, due to the existence of mature boundaries and trees to the application site, the cumulative effect would be low in its significance on the wider landscape character.

- 8.68 In conclusion, it is considered that due to the site being visually contained, there would be limited visibility of the proposed development and no public viewpoints from which the solar farms identified would be visible simultaneously with the proposed solar farm, apart from some locations along the road network; and there would be no inter-visibility between the existing and proposed solar farms.
- 8.69 *Public Consultation*
It is noted that Wherwell Parish Council have raised concerns that insufficient public consultation has been carried out. The LPA have advertised the application in line with the statutory requirements including the display of site notices, newspaper advertisement, parish council consultations and letters were sent to neighbours immediately adjacent to the application site. In addition, the applicant has carried out public consultation. A Statement of Community Involvement has been submitted with the application to demonstrate that public consultation has been carried out through a public event held on 30th January 2023, the creation of a website to publicise the development and attendance at Chilbolton Parish Council meeting on 24th April 2023. Further to this, the applicant met with neighbours from Whitehouse Cottage and Windwhistle Cottage on site, to discuss concerns that were raised during the course of the application with reference to impact on these heritage assets.
- 8.70 Wherwell Parish Council are specifically concerned about a lack of understanding from the developers about the existing permissive footpath. Amended landscape plans have been submitted during the course of the application which now includes the route of the existing permissive footpath as well as showing the proposed permissive footpath into the site and around its perimeter. It is noted that they have also raised concern about the lack of consultation in relation to impact on wildlife species. The application has been supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which demonstrates that the impacts on protected species has been considered and a condition is recommended to ensure that the mitigation and enhancement measures are carried out in accordance with the details submitted.
- 8.71 *Environmental Impact Assessment*
An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening opinion was issued by the LPA on 24th August 2022 which concluded that the proposed development did not require an Environmental Statement (ES). The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 provides guidance on EIA, and defines what developments fall under EIA. The regulations set out that a solar farm of this size would be classed as Schedule 2 Development, which is development of a type which is located wholly or part in a 'sensitive area' or meets one of the relevant criteria or exceeds one of the thresholds listed. In this case, the proposed development site exceeds the threshold being over 0.5 hectares in size.
- 8.72 The conclusions reached in this screening opinion were based on information submitted by the applicant and input from the relevant consultees. Based on this negative screening opinion, the application has not been submitted with an ES.

8.73 Following the receipt of a representation from a member of the public, the LPA have re-screened the development based on the information now provided in the application. This concludes that the development is not EIA development and therefore an ES is not required.

8.74 **Planning Balance**

Planning balance on heritage impact

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that “*determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise*”.

As set out above and in the comments provided by the Conservation Officer, the proposed development would result in harm to the setting of listed buildings, a conservation area and landscape character of the area, contrary to policies E2 and E9 of the RLP. As harm is identified the planning application would be in conflict with the TVBRLP and this should be afforded substantial weight in the section 38(6) balance.

8.75 Paragraph 208 of the NPPF states that,

‘Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.’

8.76 Whilst it is acknowledged that there would be less than substantial harm to the identified designated heritage assets, this harm would be outweighed by the benefits of the proposal. The benefits would include public benefits such as the provision of renewable energy and the addition of a permissive footpath around the perimeter of the site to enhance the existing footpath provision in the area.

8.77 Policy E9 of the RLP sets out that development that leads to a less than substantial harm to the significance of heritage assets is considered against the public benefits of the proposal. As outlined in the above paragraphs there are clear public benefits and as a result it is concluded that the proposed development is acceptable.

8.78 *Planning Balance on Landscape Character*

Whilst it is acknowledged that there would be a short-term harm to the landscape character as a result of the proposal, this harm would be moderate, and the harm identified would be mitigated in the long term by the proposed additional planting.

8.79 *Overall Planning Balance*

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that,

'The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only of material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.'

8.80 *Benefits of the Proposals*

There are clear public benefits to the proposal. It would result in the provision of solar a renewable source of energy which contributes to the governments aims of climate change. The development would also result in landscape and ecology enhancements, including the protection of the existing rights of way as well as the provision of an additional permissive right of way that would improve and enhance access. It is considered that these benefits would outweigh the less than substantial harm to designated heritage assets, as set out in Policy E9 of the RLP and the NSP EN-3.

8.81 In addition to this, it is concluded that there would be no adverse impact on highway safety and parking, ecology, archaeology, water management, amenity and pollution, subject to securing ecological mitigation measures and archaeological mitigation measures. The identified 'medium' harm to the landscape would be mitigated by the proposed enhancement planting that would be secured through conditions.

8.82 It is therefore considered that the planning balance tips in favour of the proposed development, subject to conditions.

9.0 **CONCLUSION**

9.1 The proposed development is considered to be acceptable in respect of the principle of the development, residential amenity, highway impacts and water management, and would comply with the relevant policies of the RLP in respect of these matters. However, it is acknowledged that the proposal would have an impact on heritage assets and the landscape character.

9.2 The impact on heritage assets would be less than substantial and would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal including the provision of solar energy, landscape and ecology enhancements and the protection of existing and provision of new permissive rights of way.

9.3 The identified harm to the landscape character would be 'medium' and the proposed enhancement planting would mitigate this impact and would be secured via conditions. Subject to adherence to these conditions it is concluded that the proposal would accord with policy E2 of the RLP.

9.4 It is concluded that the benefits identified would outweigh the less than substantial harm to heritage assets and would therefore accord with policy E9 and paragraph 208 of the NPPF.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

PERMISSION subject to:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years from the date of this permission. The development shall be removed, and the land restored to its former condition no later than the date 40 years from the First Export Date All structures and materials, and any associated goods and chattels shall be removed from the site and the land shall be restored to its former condition in accordance with a scheme of decommissioning work and land restoration that shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To comply with the provision of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and in order that the land is restored to its original condition following the expiry of the period of time whereby electricity is likely to be generated by the proposed development and for which a countryside location has been shown to be essentially required, in accordance with policies COM2 and E2 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2016.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the details shown on the submitted plans, numbers:

LB417_D01 1 of 6 Rev H

LB417_D01 2 of 6 Rev H

LB417_D01 3 of 6 Rev H

LB417_D01 4 of 6 Rev H

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1116_09 R01

1116_10 R01

1116_07 R01

1116_08 R01

1096_02_R14

1116_06 R01

TRP1096_11 July 2023

1116_04 R01

1116_04 R02

1096_01 R04

1096_11

1116_05

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. If the solar farm hereby permitted ceases to operate for a continuous period of 6 months then, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, a scheme for the decommissioning and removal of the panels and any other ancillary equipment, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority within 3 months of the end of the cessation period. The scheme shall include details for the restoration of the site. The scheme shall be implemented within 12 months of the date of its agreement by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the landscape impact of the development exists only for the lifetime of the development

- 4. No construction process shall be carried out, no machinery shall be operated and no construction or delivery traffic shall enter or leave the site outside the hours of 8.00am - 18.00pm Monday to Friday or 08.00am - 14.00pm on Saturdays, nor at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.**

Reason: In the interest of the amenities in the local area in accordance with Test Valley Borough Local Plan 2016 policy LHW4.

- 5. The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until full details of hard and soft landscape works have been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

Details shall include:

- proposed finished levels;**
- means of enclosure;**
- hard surfacing materials;**

Soft landscape works shall include:

- planting plans;**
- written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment);**
- schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities.**

The landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the implementation programme and in accordance with the management plan. Planting shall be implemented in the first planting season.

Reason: To improve the appearance of the site and enhance the character of the development in the interest of visual amenity and contribute to the character of the local area in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E1 and E2.

- 6. The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use until a schedule of landscape management and maintenance for a minimum period of 5 years has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The landscape management plan, including long term design objectives, management responsibilities and maintenance schedules for all landscape areas and an implementation programme, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved management plan shall be carried out in accordance with the implementation programme. Planting shall be implemented within the first available planting season.**

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by proper maintenance of existing and new landscape features as an improvement of the appearance of the site and to enhance the character of the development in the interest of visual amenity and contribute to the character of the local area in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E1 and E2.

- 7. There shall be no external lighting erection/provided for on the site during the construction or operational phase of the development unless details of such lighting is first submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. Lighting shall be installed in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: In the interests of the countryside location and to avoid impacts to ecological interests on the site in accordance with Policy E5 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016).
- 8. Prior to the development being brought into use details of the construction of the proposed permissive footpath shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall proceed in accordance with the approved details. The permissive footpath shall be provided prior to the development being brought into use and shall be retained for the lifetime of the permission.**

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by proper maintenance of existing and new landscape features as an improvement of the appearance of the site and to enhance the character of the development in the interest of visual amenity and contribute to the character of the local area in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E1 and E2.
- 9. No development shall take place until the applicant has secured a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) of archaeology that has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The approved WSI shall be adhered to.**

Reason: The site is potentially of archaeological significance in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E9.
- 10. No development in the affected areas as identified by the archaeological evaluation in the approved WSI shall commence until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological mitigation, in accordance with a final mitigation strategy and agreed phasing programme that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.**

Reason: The site is potentially of archaeological significance in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E9.
- 11. Following completion of archaeological fieldwork, a report will be produced in accordance with an approved programme submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority setting out and securing appropriate post-excavation assessment, specialist analysis and reports, publication and public engagement.**

Reason: The site is potentially of archaeological significance in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan (2016) Policy E9.

12. No development shall start on site until a construction method statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, which shall include:

- a programme of and phasing of demolition (if any) and construction work**
- the provision of long term facilities for contractor parking**
- the arrangements for deliveries associated with all construction works**
- methods and phasing of construction works**
- access and egress for plant and machinery**
- protection of pedestrian routes during construction**
- location of temporary site buildings, compounds, construction materials, and plant storage areas**

Demolition and construction works shall only take place in accordance with the approved method statement.

Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority can properly consider the effect of the works on the amenity of the locality and in accordance with policy T1 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2016.

13. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the Landscape and Ecology Enhancement Plan, reference LB417_D01 Rev H sheet 1 – 6, and Section 5 of the Preliminary Ecological Assessment dated June 2022 written by Phlorum Limited or as otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The mitigation and enhancement measures shall be permanently maintained and retained in accordance with the approved details with photographic evidence of these measures provided to the Local Planning Authority prior to the development being brought into use.

Reason: To ensure protected species are protected in accordance with Policy E5.

14. The development hereby approved shall be undertaken in full accordance with the provisions set out within the Salopian Consultancy Arboricultural Impact Appraisal and Method Statement reference SC:619 dated 10/03/2023 or as otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the enhancement of the development by the retention of existing trees and natural features during the construction phase in accordance with Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan policy E2.

15. The skylark mitigation as shown on approved drawings TRP1096_11 and MAN3059-ENZ-XX-XX-DR-Z-0001 and as detailed in the Skylark survey report reference MAN.3059.004.EC.R.003 shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and retained for the lifetime of the permission.

Reason: To ensure protected species are protected in accordance with policy E5.

Note to applicant:

- 1. In reaching this decision Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC) has had regard to the National Planning Policy Framework and takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. TVBC work with applicants and their agents in a positive and proactive manner offering a pre-application advice service and updating applicants/agents of issues that may arise in dealing with the application and where possible suggesting solutions.**
-