

Planning Committee Report	
Planning Ref:	PL/2023/0001062/FULM
Site:	Land South East of Shilton Lane, South and South East of Lentons Lane Coventry.
Ward:	Longford and Henley
Proposal:	Full planning application for solar farm development, including solar arrays, control buildings and associated infrastructure, internal access roads, landscaping, and associated development.
Case Officer:	Ayesha Saleem

SUMMARY

The application proposes a solar farm development, including solar arrays, control buildings and associated infrastructure, internal access roads and landscaping. The application falls predominantly with the Coventry City boundary and two fields to the further east fall within the Rugby Borough boundary.

BACKGROUND

The application has been recommended for approval. The application has received more than 5 public representations objecting to the proposal.

A screening opinion has been undertaken by the Council in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 which concludes that the proposal is not deemed to be EIA development.

KEY FACTS

Reason for report to committee:	Over five objections against the Officers recommendation
Current use of site:	Agricultural
Proposed use of site:	Solar Farm

RECOMMENDATION

Planning Committee are recommended to grant planning permission for those matters within their administrative boundary, subject to the Secretary of State not wishing to intervene and the conditions listed in the report; and delegate authority to the Strategic Lead Planning, in consultation with the chair of Planning Committee, to agree any amendments to these conditions, which are considered necessary.

REASON FOR DECISION

- The proposal is acceptable in principle. The public and other benefits arising from the scheme are considered to be of a sufficient magnitude to outweigh the harm arising to the Green Belt, landscape, visual and the less than substantial harm arising to the heritage assets.

- The proposal will not adversely impact upon highway safety, air quality, heritage assets, trees or ecology, subject to conditions.
- The proposal accords with Policies DS1, DS3, DS4, GB1, GB2, GE1, GE2, GE3, GE4, DE1, HE2, AC1, AC2, AC3, AC4, EM3, EM4, EM7 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016, together with the aims of the NPPF.

APPLICATION PROPOSAL

The Application seeks planning permission for the following:

- Approximately 60,180 solar panels with the majority being piled using ground screws and where there are wayleaves in place or other sensitive areas then ground mounted panels will be used and laid out across the site.
- The height of panels will be a maximum height of 3.0 metres above local ground level.
- 13 Invertor containers located at strategic locations arranged around the site. These are to have a width of circa 2.4 metres, length of circa 6.06 metres and height of 2.5 metres.
- A control and grid connection building approximately 14.2 metres in length, 4.1 metres in width, 3.0 metres in height and dark green in colour.
- Internal site electrical connections are to be made underground.
- Internal access roads and hardstanding.
- Security fencing wire mesh fencing no greater than 2.0m in height around the solar arrays.
- Security cameras located at strategic points, facing into the site.
- A temporary construction compound of circa 25m x 50m to enable the safe and efficient servicing of the site during construction and to be removed post construction works.
- Redirecting an existing footpath
- The proposals state a biodiversity net gain of 165.46 habitat units which is a 149.49% increase from the baseline units and a net gain of 17.09 hedgerow units which is a 43.08% increase from the baseline units.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises 51 hectares (ha) of primarily agricultural land, bisected by the Oxford Canal and adjacent to Lenton's Lane Cemetery and Sowe Common. It is bound by the settlement of Alderman's Green to the north, the M6 and Coventry Cruising Club to the south and Aldermans Green Road to the west.

The site slopes downwards from roughly north to south, from Lenton's Lane towards the M6 motorway. It is crossed by several overhead electricity and telecoms cables, towers, and poles.

The proposal is a cross boundary application with the western area of the site being located within the Coventry City Council's administrative boundary off Lenton's Lane. The eastern area of the site is located within Rugby Borough Council's administrative area accessed from Woodway Lane via Sowe Common.

The application site is located within Green Belt.

One further solar development is located approximately 1.3km to the northwest, known as Tolldish Hall Farm, Parrotts Grove. The proposed 25MW development is located in neighbouring Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council area (planning application reference 039235) and was granted approval in 2023.

PLANNING HISTORY

Coventry City Council:

Application Number:	Description of development:	Decision and date:
PL/2023/0000513/SCR	Request for EIA Screening Opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 for a proposed solar farm	17 th April 2023

Rugby Borough Council:

Application Number:	Description of development:	Decision and date:
R23/0316	EIA screening opinion for proposed solar farm	15 th March 2023
R23/0672	Construction and operation of a solar farm, including solar arrays, control buildings and associated infrastructure, internal access roads, landscaping and associated development.	Awaiting Determination

POLICY

National Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) updated September 2023. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that is relevant, proportionate, and necessary to do so. The NPPF increases the focus on achieving high quality design and states that it is "fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve".

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) adds further context to the NPPF and it is intended that the two documents are read together.

Local Policy Guidance

The current local policy is provided within the Coventry Local Plan 2016, which was adopted by Coventry City Council on 6th December 2017. Relevant policies relating to this application are:

Policy DS1: Overall Development Needs

Policy DS3: Sustainable Development Policy

Policy GB1: Green Belt and Local Green Space

Policy GB2: Safeguarded Land in the Green Belt

Policy GE1 Green Infrastructure

Policy GE2: Green Space

Policy GE3: Biodiversity, Geological, Landscape and Archaeological Conservation

Policy GE4: Tree Protection

Policy DE1 Ensuring High Quality Design

Policy HE2: Conservation and Heritage Assets

Policy AC1: Accessible Transport Network

Policy AC2: Road Network

Policy AC3: Demand Management

Policy AC4: Walking and Cycling

Policy AC5: Bus and Rapid Transit

Policy EM3 Renewable Energy Generation

Policy EM4 Flood Risk Management

Policy EM7 Air Quality

Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents (SPG/ SPD):

SPD Energy

SPD Coventry Connected

SPD Trees and Development

SPD Air Quality

The Green Space Strategy 2019 – 2024

UK Government Solar Strategy 2014.

EN-1: Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (July 2011).

EN-3: National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (July 2011).

Statement by the Minister of State for Energy and Climate Change (November 2013).

Written Ministerial Statement on Solar Energy: protecting the local and global environment made on 25 March 2015.

STATUTORY CONSULTATION RESPONSES

No objections received from:

Urban Design (CCC)

Sustainability (CCC)

Natural England

Public Health

National Highways

No comments received from:
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
Rugby Borough Council
National Grid

No objections subject to conditions and informatives have been received from:
Highways (CCC)
Public Rights of Way (CCC)
Archaeology (CCC)
Drainage (CCC)
Ecology (CCC)
Trees (CCC)
Environmental Protection (CCC)
Canal and River Trust
Cadent
West Midlands Police Services
West Midlands Fire Services

PUBLIC RESPONSES

Notification letters were sent out to neighbouring houses and 5 site notices were displayed on the 8th June 2023 and a press notice was posted on the 15th June 2023.

63 letters of objection were received raising the following material planning considerations:

- Impact upon Green Belt
- Permanent loss of Green Belt
- No very special circumstances have been demonstrated.
- Impact upon visual amenity and character of the area.
- The proposals do not comply with national policy
- Too close to residential dwellings
- Remove panels on fields 8 and 10
- Not enough community engagement
- Discrepancies regarding footpath
- Discrepancies in the plans
- Harmful impact upon wildlife
- Impact upon livestock freely moving on fields
- Concerns regarding removal of trees
- Increase risk of fire
- Attract more crime in the area
- Concerns regarding flooding
- The application should be referred to the secretary of state for overall size of the total solar farm in the area
- Impact upon quality of life

- Noise and dust pollution generated by the construction will decrease air quality
- Concerns regarding scale of solar farm
- Increased noise and pollution
- Increase traffic
- Endanger the public who use the motorway
- The electrical output that has been predicted is not achievable
- Concerns regarding contamination
- Concerns regarding health and well-being risks from radiation
- The land should be used for agricultural purposes given its classification
- Invertor too close to road and dwellings
- The control building is too high and close to dwellings
- No alternative sites have been assessed
- The new footpath is likely to be impassable for most of the year due to the level of the flood water in field
- Loss of privacy due to CCTV surveillance
- Design and height of fencing not acceptable
- Impact upon amenity from glint and glare of solar panels
- No community benefit
- Correct notice has not been served
- Impact upon the character of the landscape
- Impact upon ridge and furrow
- Loss of farmland for growing crops
- Personal circumstances and hardship

Within the letters received the following non-material planning considerations were raised, these cannot be given due consideration in the planning process:

- Devalue properties

A paper petition against the proposal with 112 signatures sponsored by Councillor Linda Bigham has been received. The petitions raise the following issues:

- Road safety;
- The fields are above shallow mines;
- No benefit to local residents;
- Mental health impacts on local residents;
- Loss of public footpaths;
- Fire risk;
- Ecology disruption;
- Visual impact;
- It is Green Belt land.

Technical documents were submitted, and neighbours were re-consulted on the application on the 12th October 2023 for 14 days.

68 letters of objection were received raising the following material planning considerations:

- Impact upon Green Belt
- Permanent loss of Green Belt
- No very special circumstances have been demonstrated.
- Impact upon visual amenity and character of the area.
- The proposals do not comply with national policy
- Too close to residential dwellings
- Remove panels on fields 8 and 10
- Not enough community engagement
- Discrepancies regarding footpath
- Discrepancies in the plans
- Harmful impact upon wildlife
- Impact upon livestock freely moving on fields
- Concerns regarding removal of trees
- Increase risk of fire
- Attract more crime in the area
- Concerns regarding flooding
- The application should be referred to the secretary of state for overall size of the total solar farm in the area
- Impact upon quality of life
- Noise and dust pollution generated by the construction will decrease air quality
- Concerns regarding scale of solar farm
- Increased noise and pollution
- Concerns regarding noise/ vibrations
- Increase traffic
- Endanger the public who use the motorway
- The electrical output that has been predicted is not achievable
- Concerns regarding contamination
- Concerns regarding health and well-being risks from radiation
- The land should be used for agricultural purposes given its classification
- Invertor too close to road and dwellings
- The control building is too high and close to dwellings
- No alternative sites have been assessed
- The new footpath is likely to be impassable for most of the year due to the level of the flood water in field
- Loss of privacy due to CCTV surveillance
- Harmful overlooking
- Design and height of fencing not acceptable
- A dwelling has not been included within the visual impact assessment

- Impact upon amenity from glint and glare of solar panels
- No community benefit
- Correct notice has not been served
- Impact upon the character of the landscape
- Impact upon ridge and furrow
- Concerns regarding the positioning of the Grid Connection and WPD Connection cables.
- Loss of farmland for growing crops
- Personal circumstances and hardship
- Agricultural tenancy regulated by the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986

Within the letters received the following non-material planning considerations were raised, these cannot be given due consideration in the planning process:

- Devalue properties

Amended plans have been submitted and some of the panels have been set further back from residential dwellings. As such it is not considered necessary to formally reconsult.

Any further comments received will be reported within late representations.

ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. At its core is the need for the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF explains that achieving sustainable development means the planning system has three overarching and interdependent objectives; these are economic, social, and environmental. Of particular relevance to this application is the environmental objective which seeks to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

Paragraph 157 of the NPPF sets out that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. It should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience, encourage the reuse of existing resources and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

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 recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Such applications should be approved if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable (NPPF, para.163).

The proposed solar farm would be located within the Green Belt.

Policy GB1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 states that inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Green Belt unless very special circumstances exist. Development proposals, including those involving previously developed land and buildings, in the Green Belt will be assessed in relation to the relevant national planning policy.

Policy EM3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 states that proposals for the installation of renewable and low carbon energy technologies, including both building-integrated and standalone schemes will be promoted and encouraged, provided that:

- a) any significant adverse impacts can be mitigated;
- b) where biofuels are to be utilised, they should be obtained from sustainable sources and transportation distances are minimised;
- c) any energy centre is suitably located and designed to a high quality such that it is sympathetically integrated with its surroundings; and
- d) all proposals are consistent with any relevant Policies in this Plan.

Section 13 of the NPPF (2023) established the national planning policy objective to protect the Green Belt, Paragraphs 149 and 150 define different types of development that would not be inappropriate in the Green Belt. The proposed solar farm scheme would not comply with any such provisions outlined within the NPPF (2023). The proposal is therefore considered to be inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Paragraphs 152 and 153 of the NPPF (2023) state that inappropriate development in the Green Belt is, by definition, harmful and carries substantial weight. Such development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. It continues that very special circumstances will only exist if the harm to the Green Belt by its inappropriateness, and any other harm, would be clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Paragraph 156 of the NPPF (2023) specifically relates to renewable energy projects within the Green Belt, and states that “elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases, developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources”.

Impact upon Green Belt and openness:

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF (2023) states that the fundamental aim of the Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl and keep land permanently open. Openness has both visual and spatial qualities. The site consists of 14 fields, these are enclosed by tree and hedge boundaries. In terms of topography, the gradient of the site varies slightly depending on the field. The land is relatively flat with some areas sloping southwards.

The site is currently used as agricultural land and from a spatial perspective, the proposed solar arrays would introduce substantial development into the area in terms of ground cover due to the number of arrays proposed. Furthermore, the proposed access tracks, perimeter fencing, inverter containers and a control building which would all result in additional built form and structures that would further diminish the openness of the Green Belt spatially.

Nevertheless, whilst the scheme is substantial in terms of the site area, the proposed solar arrays would be relatively modest in mass and would be spaced at regular intervals. The scheme would be in place for a temporary 40-year period, it would then be fully demounted, and land returned to its former condition and the end of its use and conditions could be imposed upon any permission granted to secure the appropriate restoration of the site. Therefore, in our view the impact on the openness of the Green Belt would be reduced with the site reinstated to its former open character.

Effect on Agricultural Land:

Paragraph 180(b) of the NPPF places value on recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside including the best and most versatile agricultural land. The glossary within the NPPF defines Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land as being land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) outlines a number of factors which local planning authorities will need to consider in the assessment of large-scale solar farms. The stance of the Guidance is to encourage the effective use of land by focusing large scale solar farms on previously developed and non-agricultural land. The NPPG goes on to qualify that where a proposal involves greenfield land, the local planning authority will need to consider whether the proposed use of agricultural land has shown to be necessary and where it has, that poorer quality land has been used in preference to higher quality land, and that the proposal allows for continued agricultural use.

The Written Ministerial Statement on Solar Energy: protecting the local and global environment made on 25 March 2015 is referred to in the NPPG. Eric Pickles (then – Secretary of State) made a statement on Solar Energy and protection of the global and local environments. In respect of the use of agricultural land, Mr Pickles stated that the most compelling evidence needed to be provided for solar on Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land.

The applicant has supported this application with an Agricultural Land Classification Report. The report demonstrates that the proposed solar farm will be constructed on 51 hectares of agricultural land, of which 32% is Grade 3a, 41.5% Grade 3b and 26.5% Grade 4. This is a range under the Agricultural Soil Classification of Good to Moderate to Poor with Grade 1 being the highest quality and Grade 5 being the lowest.

The applicant has confirmed that there is the potential for agricultural land use in the form of sheep grazing in tandem with solar energy generation. However, it is considered such an activity would be unlikely to fully offset the site's current capability for agricultural uses. At the end of the 40-year operational lifespan of the solar farm the site would be restored back to full agricultural use with all equipment and below ground connections removed.

Natural England have no objections to the proposals. As it would not appear to lead to the long-term loss of best and most versatile land as the panel arrays would be fixed with limited soil disturbance being secured through pins into the ground every few metres and could be removed when planning permission expired with no likely loss of agricultural land quality. Whilst soil would be disturbed in some parts of the site through the construction of the switch station and access tracks and installing of buried cables this amounts to a relatively small area and much of the soil disturbance may be reversible during decommissioning.

The PPG 'guide to assessing development proposals on agricultural land' (2021) requires local authorities to aim to protect BMV agricultural land from significant, inappropriate, or unsustainable development proposals. In our view the scheme would result in the loss of some BMV agricultural land. The temporary loss of land for agricultural uses are not considered to weigh against the scheme in the planning balance.

It is therefore concluded that it would be difficult to justify refusal on the grounds that the proposal would be on agricultural land and the proposal is considered to comply with the aims of national planning policy.

In determining this application, it is necessary to balance any recognised positive or negative effects against the strong presumption in favour of promoting renewable energy provision. The wider environmental and economic benefits of the proposal are a material consideration to be given significant weight in the determination of the application.

In the appeal decision by the Planning Inspector dated 29th September 2023 in relation to Warpole Green Limited against South Holland District Council, the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) considered whether planning permission should be granted for a solar farm and battery storage facility on high quality agricultural land. In this appeal, the inspector:

- acknowledged that the proposal would take land out of arable use, including for food production, for a temporary period of 35 years. However, there would not be a total loss of agricultural land as sheep could be grazed between the arrays. Following decommissioning, the land could be restored to agricultural use. The

proposal would also allow for biodiversity and landscape enhancements around the panels.

- acknowledged that there would be a reduction in the productivity of the land and poorer quality land would not be used in preference to higher quality land, as required by the written ministerial statement of 25 March 2015, planning practice guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It was noted that such poorer quality land was not available.
- concluded that the total area of agricultural land within each of the council's administrative areas was significant. The extent of land that would be occupied by solar farms, including the proposal, would represent a relatively small part of this. Due to the proposed connection to the intended substation, the proposal could not be located on previously developed land or non-BMV land.
- Given the scale and urgency of the need to move towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions, the inspector attached significant weight to this matter, including the impact of climate change on food production. A balance therefore needed to be struck to reduce the former to protect the latter, including in certain cases BMV land. Energy and food security were both key issues.
- The proposal had the potential to generate up to 49.9 megawatts, enough to power approximately 10,150 family homes which would reduce the potential implications of carbon dioxide pollutants generated by equivalent electricity produced from fossil fuels by 8,927 tonnes each year. This amounted to significant environmental and energy security benefits.

The Inspector thus concluded that increasing the country's ability to produce electricity from a renewable source and improve energy security justified the loss of BMV land.

Wider benefits:

At the local level, Coventry City Council have confirmed their commitment to tackling climate change. Coventry City Council Local Plan policy EM3 Renewable Energy Generation seeks to promote and encourage the installation of renewable and low carbon energy technology provided significant adverse impacts can be mitigated.

The proposed scheme will deliver significant benefits, most notably a renewable solar farm that would generate up to 30MW of renewable energy and save 7,080 tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum. This would help to combat climate change and would support the Government's policy for the UK's transition to achieving a low carbon economy and

assists in meeting the UK's legally binding obligations for Net Zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Solar farms are required to meet specific site selection and location requirements to ensure they are suitable for development. The application site has been chosen for its close proximity to a grid connection location with sufficient capacity.

The application aims to provide the following benefits to local people:

- Educational opportunities for schools and local residents to learn about renewable energy and sustainable solutions.
- Further wildlife habitat improvement or creation, to support endangered or specific species
- Improving walking and cycling connections – including relocating the existing footpath within the site to create a better connection with Hawksbury Village Green and the wider area
- Facilitating schemes to enable local residents to benefit from solar technology
- Working with community groups and local organisations

Even whilst attributing substantial weight to the harm resulting from inappropriate development in the Green Belt, it is considered that the benefits of the proposal amount to very special circumstances which clearly outweigh the harm.

Landscape and Visual Amenity

Chapter 15 of the NPPF (2023) is concerned with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 180 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, inter alia, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 states that development should respect the local character and street scene of the area and seeks a high-quality urban design. All development will be expected to meet the following key principles:

All development will be expected to meet the following key principles:

- a) respond to the physical context of the site;
- b) consider the local distinctiveness and identity of the site but also have regard to opportunities to enhance the local built and natural environment through new development and enhanced design;
- c) where appropriate, retain and incorporate into the layout the protection of important views, including key views of the three spires;
- d) preserve or enhance the character and setting of the historic built, landscape and where appropriate archaeological environment;
- e) preserve or enhance the character and setting of major road, rail and canal corridors;
- f) clearly define the boundaries between public and private spaces and enclosure of space;

- g) provide attractive, safe, uncluttered, active and easily identifiable, high quality public spaces;
- h) make places that inter-connect and are easy to move through;
- i) ensure places are easily understood by users, with clear routes and distinct physical features;
- j) seek high quality design and attention to detail in the layout of developments, individual buildings and infrastructure in terms of function and impact, not just for the short term, but over the lifetime of the development;
- k) be adaptable to changing social, technological, economic and market conditions and ensure that developments maximise the use of the site;
- l) promote diversity through mixes of uses within a site or building, which work together to create vital and viable places;
- m) be proactive in responding to climate change and adopt sustainable and low carbon construction principles in terms of their design, layout and density;
- n) consider green infrastructure at the earliest stage in the design process, to ensure that it is well planned, designed, managed and maintained. It should also be well integrated and serve multiple purposes (as appropriate);
- o) Support the integration of through routes for public transport and incorporate suitable bus priority measures as appropriate;
- p) minimise adverse impact on important natural resources;
- q) conserve, restore or enhance biodiversity; and
- r) respect and enhance landscape quality including trees, hedges and other landscape features of value.

The proposal, by virtue of its nature and scale, would result in harm to the character and appearance of the area. There is a distinction to be made between impact on landscape which should be treated as a resource, and impact on visual amenity which is the effect on people observing the development in places where it can be viewed, such as from roads, public rights of way and individual dwellings. The following section of this report sets out the landscape impacts of the proposal.

The local landscape within which the site is situated comprises various land uses that reflect the transition between urban and rural landscapes. The 14 fields which form the application site are well contained by boundary hedgerows and trees. Existing features on the site also already visually interrupt the local landscape including existing powerlines and pylons which cross the site and the backdrop of the M6 motorway. There are two public footpaths that cross the site. Other sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the site include a number of residential properties to the north on Lentons Lane and to the north west on Aldermans Green Road.

Mitigation measures are proposed to minimise, and in some cases avoid, adverse effects including retaining existing boundary vegetation with only small areas proposed to be removed to facilitate access between fields. The application also proposes planting new hedgerows and trees. The proposed mitigation and planting are recommended to be secured through the imposition of planning conditions.

The submitted Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) has considered the effects of the development on landscape character and visual amenity during construction, at completion taken as year 1- and 15-years following completion when new planting would have matured.

The effects of the development on views and visual amenity have also been considered in the submitted LVA. The LVA provides a summary of these effects, which has been reproduced below: -

- Major effects will be experienced by visual receptors in houses along Lenton's Lane in Alderman's Green, during construction and at year 1 of operation. This is due to the high sensitivity of residents and the proximity of the proposed development, which will replace views of farmland to the south. At year 15 of operation proposed planting along the northern site boundary will filter views into the site, and effects will reduce to moderate.
- Major effects will also be experienced by recreational receptors on the Oxford Canal and Oxford Canal Walk, during construction and at year 1 of operation. Although existing vegetation screens and filters views of the site from most of the canal, there are some sections with close and open views into parts of the site. Effects will reduce to moderate at year 15 once proposed planting has matured; this planting will filter views of the development but also remove longer-distance views.
- Effects on road users on Lenton's Lane will be moderate during construction, as a result of close views of construction activity including at site access points. Effects will remain moderate at year 1, before proposed mitigation planting has matured. Effects will reduce to minor at year 15 due to screening and filtering of views into the site by the hedgerow along the south side of the road, supplemented by proposed tree planting in the site.
- Visitors to Lenton's Lane Cemetery will experience minor effects during construction and at year 1, as there are some close views into the site through gaps in boundary vegetation. Effects will reduce to negligible at year 15 when proposed planting along the site boundary has matured.
- Minor effects will be experienced by recreational receptors in Hawkesbury Village Green during construction and at years 1 and 15 of operation, due to the screening of outward views by enclosing vegetation.

Officers have reviewed this document and conclude that the submitted LVA is adequate for the purpose of identifying the overall landscape and visual effects and its findings can form part of the overall consideration of the planning balance. The submitted LVA is generally carried out in an appropriate manner and is adequate. Therefore, the impacts upon the landscape character and views and visual amenity have been considered in the submitted LVA and reviewed by officers and the proposal would therefore result in landscape harm which would be partly mitigated by additional planting. The resultant landscape harm arising as a result of the scheme would be weighed in the planning balance.

The proposed scale of the associated development such as the proposed control buildings and inverter units are considered to be of an acceptable scale and materials.

When balancing all of the above and considering the proposed mitigation measures, Officers are of the view that the development would not have a harmful visual impact, as to justify a refusal of planning permission.

Heritage and Archaeology

Paragraph 196 of the NPPF (2023) states that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account: :

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place

Paragraph 205 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Paragraph 208 of NPPF (2023) states "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".

Paragraph 209 states "The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset".

Policy HE2 of the Coventry Local Plan 'Conservation and Heritage Assets' which is relevant to archaeological constraint areas (ACA) states that in order to help sustain the historic character, sense of place, environmental quality and local distinctiveness of Coventry, development proposals will be supported where they conserve and, where appropriate, enhance those aspects of the historic environment which are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, artistic, landscape or townscape significance. Proposals likely to affect the significance of a heritage asset or its setting should demonstrate an understanding of such significance using currently available evidence.

Heritage Assets:

There are two locally listed buildings Nos 181 and 183 Lentons Lane which are two houses that are located north of the application site. These are non-designated heritage assets. They are depicted on the 1888 Ordnance Survey map and are probably 19th century in date. The proposed solar farm is to be located in the adjacent field to these dwellings.

The development would be located within the setting of these locally listed buildings as it is within the associated agricultural fields to the south of the heritage asset which contributes to the appreciation of the locally listed buildings form. However, the harm to the heritage significance of these locally listed buildings is considered less than substantial. As such, the heritage harm identified to these non-designated assets should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal in line with Paragraph 209 of the NPPF (2023).

In making this assessment, Officers have had regard to the weight that should be given to the desirability of preserving the special interest and setting of the heritage assets and it is not considered that the harm arising to any of the locally listed structures would be any more than minor and certainly not of a scale to warrant refusal of the application.

Archaeology Provision:

The site located south east of Shilton Lane and south and south east of Lentons Lane is within an area of mineral extraction and agricultural activity. The applicants have submitted a desk-based assessment.

The evidence from the desk-based assessment has shown that there are remains of local heritage value surviving within the Proposed Development Site. These remains comprise areas of ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks (MCT 582 / R&F 1; MCT 1107 / R&F 2 and R&F 3), possibly relating to medieval agricultural practices, or preserving the form of open fields systems established in the medieval period and to post-medieval agriculture. In addition, areas of former coalmining remains (MCT 504 and MW 1) are located along the Oxford Canal in the northwest parcel of the Proposed Development Site.

Further archaeological evaluation, comprising geophysical survey in the first instance should be undertaken across the proposed development site. The applicant have confirmed that this archaeological assessment has not been carried out as access has been denied. The Archaeology officer has confirmed that this survey and any required mitigation can be conditioned.

Highways Impacts

Policy AC1 'Accessible Transport Network' of the Coventry Local Plan states that development proposals which are expected to generate additional trips on the transport network should:

- a) Integrate with existing transport networks including roads, public transport, and walking and cycling routes to promote access by a choice of transport modes.
- b) Consider the transport and accessibility needs of everyone living, working, or visiting the city.
- c) Support the delivery of new and improved high-quality local transport networks which are closely integrated into the built form.
- d) Actively support the provision and integration of emerging and future intelligent mobility infrastructure.

Policy AC2 of the Coventry Local Plan states new development proposals which are predicted to have a negative impact on the capacity and/or safety of the highway network should mitigate and manage the traffic growth which they are predicted to generate to ensure that they do not cause unacceptable levels of traffic congestion, highway safety problems and poor air quality. Highway mitigation and management measures should focus firstly on demand management measures (Policy AC3) including the promotion of sustainable modes of travel, and secondly on the delivery of appropriate highway capacity interventions. Highway capacity interventions should be appropriate to the scale of development and expected impact and will be determined through the associated Transport Assessment.

Highway officers initially raised concerns with vehicle tracking drawings, access design drawings, and measures to control vehicles during the construction process.

The applicant has submitted an updated Construction Traffic Management Plan and technical tracking and swept path drawings.

The updated vehicle tracking, and access design drawings have since been submitted, which address the concerns previously raised. The Highway Authority is satisfied that large vehicles expected to be used during the construction process can safely manoeuvre within the proposed vehicular accesses existing junctions.

The updated (Construction Traffic Management Plan) CTMP indicates that the construction period will last approximately 7 months, with an average of 42 two-way vehicle movements occurring per day, 17 of which would be HGV's. HGV routeing will be via M6 J2, Ansty and then Shilton which is all within the constituent boundary of Rugby Borough Council, up to the Shilton Lane / Lentons Lane junction when it becomes land within Coventry City Council's control. No abnormal load vehicles are anticipated to be used during the construction phase. Once operational, the site will generate approximately 4 two-way trips per week.

The Highway Authority is satisfied that the development proposals should not have a severe impact on public highway safety, or on the operation or capacity of the local highway network. Officer recommend that conditions are imposed in relation to access,

manoeuvring and parking layout, signage details and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the Construction Traffic Management Plan (November 2023).

Given the site is in the vicinity of the M6 that forms part of the Strategic Road Network, National Highways were also consulted on this application. National Highways have no objections to the proposals.

For the above reasons, Officers are therefore satisfied that the development is acceptable in this regard and as such accords with Policies AC1 and AC2.

Public Rights of Way

There are existing public footpaths within the site. A public right of way provides an access from Wyken Basin to Lentons Lane, via the Lentons Lane farm access road. The farm access road is adopted but has a gate at its entrance on Lentons Lane.

A further permissive footway is located within the northwest of the site connecting the Hawksbury Village Green with the road leading to the Coventry Cruising Club access road.

Woodway Lane to the south of the Sowe Common car park is primarily used by pedestrians, although the road is also the main vehicular access for the agricultural land to the southeast, albeit gated to prevent general vehicular access. The road connects with a public right of way and a bridge over the M6. Woodway Lane then continues south into the wider Coventry built up area.

The Oxford canal passes through the development site and the tow path allows for recreational access along its southern bank. The tow path is used by pedestrians and cyclists currently.

The permissive footway located within the northwest of the site connecting the Hawksbury Village Green with the road leading to the Coventry Cruising Club access road is to be rerouted.

The Public Rights of Way officer has no objections subject to conditions in relation to an access management plan, the diversion of the public footpath from Lenton's Lane to the Cruising Club and informatives.

Ecology, Biodiversity and Trees

Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan states that Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Ancient Woodlands, Local Wildlife and Geological Sites will be protected and enhanced.

Policy GE3 establishes that developments should provide a net gain and where this is not possible provide some form of offsetting.

The development area is in an ecologically sensitive area within the Green Belt and with statutory sites and Green Belt surrounding the area.

- The Oxford canal runs through the site and is an ecologically important blue habitat corridor. Water voles and otters are recorded along the canal and the canal provides a corridor for insects, fish and bats.
- Immediately to the north and east of the site is green belt land and Lenton's lane swamp local wildlife site.
- Within 50 m of the northwest corner of the development site, separated by the Oxford canal and B109, is Hawkesbury spinney Local Wildlife Site and old Tip, and Coventry 'B' supergrid Local Wildlife Site.
- To the south of the site, separated by the M6, lies Wyken Slough Local Wildlife site and Wyken Slough Local Nature reserve. A corridor beneath the M6 via the marina provides aquatic and terrestrial connectivity between the two areas.

The application includes an ecological appraisal and biodiversity impact assessment.

There are numerous badger setts on site based on our records and as is stated in the ecological appraisal. A license from Natural England will be required in order to carry out work in proximity to the setts. Numerous great crested newt (GCN) records exist on the site. Their presence was confirmed in 3 ponds on the site through eDNA survey work presented in the Ecological Appraisal. A license from Natural England will be required in order to carry out any work which will impact the current populations on site. The site contains numerous trees with bat roosting potential and bats are recorded within 1 km of the site. Any lighting should be ecologically sensitive to mitigate impacts on bats.

The information in the ecological appraisal is accepted and all recommendations made in it should be carried out, including the mitigation and enhancement recommendations made in chapter 5 and the and the policy and legislation requirements set out in chapter 6.

Particular enhancement recommendations beyond those statutorily required by Natural England should focus on:

- Enhancement of existing grassland
- Creating buffer areas along the canal bank, particularly the offside, to support otter, water voles and other small mammals and reptiles.
- Retention and enhancement of hedgerows and hedgerow trees

In line with Local Plan policy GE3 the development must deliver an improvement in biodiversity. The application includes a preliminary biodiversity net gain assessment which sets out an outline for the expected habitat creation and enhancement on site. This assessment is based on preliminary design proposals and is subject to detailed design proposals. An agreed biodiversity impact assessment and mitigation plan based on the final design proposals is a necessary condition of development.

As part of the development a construction ecological management plan (CEMP) and landscape ecological management plan (LEMP) will be a condition of development, to ensure that construction is carried out in an ecologically sensitive manner and to set out the management of the created habitats in future in order to achieve the required net gain in biodiversity.

The submitted information states there is a baseline of 110.69 habitat units, 39.67 hedgerow units and 14.09 river units, and the development would result in a loss of 73.37 habitat units, 0.4 hedgerow units and no loss of river units.

Currently the proposals state a net gain of 165.46 habitat units which is a 149.49% increase from the baseline units and a net gain of 17.09 hedgerow units which is a 43.08% increase from the baseline units. The Second scenario provides similar increases in habitat and hedgerow units but also a 15.66% gain in river units. This should be verified once landscaping proposals have been finalised.

The PEA has been updated following reflection on the arboricultural assessment to specify that:

- Following an Arboricultural Assessment (AA), it is understood two trees with moderate Bat Roost Suitability (BRS) (T13 and T32) and one tree with low BRS (T11) will be removed as part of the proposals. T11 and T13 are within 'G16' and T32 is referred to as 'T26' in the AA.
- A further 15 trees / groups of trees will be removed which do not have BRS. T13 and T32 will need to be subject to two further emergence surveys to determine the presence or probable absence of roosts. The survey method should follow best practice guidance. Dusk emergence surveys should commence at least 15 minutes before sunset and last for at least 1.5 hours after sunset. Surveyors and infrared cameras should be positioned around the tree such that all features can be observed simultaneously.
- If bat roosts are confirmed, a Natural England European Protected Species licence will be sought and appropriate mitigation measures implemented, to address potential impacts. Before Natural England can confirm the Site is registered and licensable works can commence, an assessment of the three tests must be undertaken by a Registered Consultant, although this does not need to be submitted to Natural England (Natural England may subsequently undertake a review of the project and request to see all evidence as collected by the Consultant). This can only be undertaken following a survey and impact assessment and must be carried out in accordance with licence conditions and BCT survey guidelines.
- T11 will be felled using soft felling techniques, such as section felling of trees and then gently lowering each section in a controlled manner to ground. The sections will be left for at least 24 hours with the features in an upright position to enable

bats to vacate. This would be completed at a sensitive time of year in spring/autumn to avoid the breeding season.

- To mitigate for the loss of small numbers of moderate and low BRS trees, bat boxes will be installed prior to felling to provide alternative roosting features for bats.

Ecology officers have no objections to the proposals subject to conditions in relation to nesting bird protection, bat survey, bat lighting, badger walk over survey, Badger survey, protected species mitigation, construction ecological management plan, landscape and ecological management plan and biodiversity off-setting to mitigate the impact and to achieve net gain of 165.46 habitat units and a net gain of 17.09 hedgerow units.

Trees:

Policy GE4 of the Coventry Local Plan states that trees make a valuable contribution to the city's green landscape. New developments should seek to retain existing trees and other landscape features, incorporating them into a high-quality design and landscape proposals where possible. Should loss be unavoidable, compensatory provision of new trees should be proposed as part of a well-designed landscape scheme.

An Arboricultural Impact Assessments has been submitted. The key arboricultural features on site are as follows:

- No ancient or veteran trees were found on or near the site.
- However, many high-value individual trees and groups of trees were found across both eastern and western parcels. Most of these high-value trees ,or groups of trees, are mature oak trees or high-value large mixed groups of mature trees along the canal.
- Most of the highest-value trees are found towards the peripheries of the site or make up linear features dividing the land along field boundaries.
- The areas with the highest density of high-value trees for the western parcel are to the south side of the canal within the linear north-to-south features breaking up the fields.
- There is also a large high-value (G27 – category A) group to the north of the canal containing many mature small-stature species such as hawthorn and elder which has high amenity value as it is used by walkers as well as high wildlife value being near the canal.
- Other important high-value arboricultural features are found within hedgerows to the northeast boundary of the site bordering Lentons Lane road, and to the eastern boundary bordering the cemetery.
- Many other trees were found within the interior of the western parcel and subdividing the area into smaller fields. Many of these are of moderate to low value.
- The eastern parcel contains large high-value groups where it borders the canal to the northwest (G73 and G74 – category A). Other high-value individuals were

found along the northern boundary as well as along the hedgerow that divides the parcel. Other high-value individuals were found around the pond in the middle of the eastern parcel.

A total of 163 trees, groups of trees and hedgerows were surveyed, please see details below:

	Total:	A- High quality trees where retention is most desirable	B- Moderate quality trees where retention is desirable	C- Low quality trees which could be retained but should not significantly constrain the proposal.	U- Very poor quality trees that should be removed unless they have high conservation value.
Trees	61	24	28	9	0
Groups	92	10	53	29	0
Hedgerows	10	-	9	1	0
Woodland	0	0	0	0	0
Total:	163	34	90	39	0

The proposed development, as set out on the proposed site layout, will require the removal of individual trees, tree groups (including partial removal) and the partial removal of hedgerows. These are summarised in the table below:

	Total:	A- High quality trees where retention is most desirable	B- Moderate quality trees where retention is desirable	C- Low quality trees which could be retained but should not significantly constrain the proposal.	U- Very poor quality trees that should be removed unless they have high conservation value.
Trees	4	-	2No: T43, T44	2No: T2, T6	-
Groups	11	-	8No: G3, G10, G16, G26, G47, G69,	2No: G21, G22	-

			G71, G88 (all partial)	1No: G2 (partial)	
Hedgerows	1	-	H6 (partial)		-
Total:	-	-	-	-	-

The Tree officer has no objections to the proposals subject to a condition in relation to tree protection measures and a method statement.

Drainage

Policy EM4 of the Coventry Local Plan states all major development must be assessed in respect of the level of floor risk from all sources.

Policy EM5 of the Coventry Local Plan states all development must apply SuDS and should ensure that surface water runoff is managed as close to its source as possible.

Drainage officers have assessed the proposals. The construction of a solar farm is not in itself likely to increase surface runoff, the construction of access roads and maintenance tracks will involve the compaction of selected stone to create an all-weather running surface. This compacted stone, potentially blinded with fines, will inevitably create a near impermeable surface and will increase localized and channelled runoff routes into the narrow steep-sided swales on both sides. The management of these swales is important and during extreme weather surface water runoff could become significant and erosion could occur. The management of surface water around the control building and associated works is not an issue, this is well considered and acceptable for the development.

Drainage officers have no objections subject to conditions in relation to an intrusive ground investigation report, SUD's and a detailed drainage scheme.

In view of the above, Officers are satisfied that the development is acceptable in this regard, would not exacerbate flooding or drainage risks and is in accordance with Policies EM4 and EM5.

Glint and Glare

A Glint and Glare Assessment (GGA) has been submitted to support the application.

Dwellings:

A total of 160 dwelling receptors have been assessed which provide a representative sample of receptors in all directions within a 1 km buffer of the proposed development. It has been determined that solar reflections are not geometrically possible at 29 receptors. There are 76 receptors in which solar reflections are geometrically possible, but there is adequate screening in place such that reflections are not expected to be experienced in practice. There are 17 receptors where solar reflections are possible and there is not

adequate screening in place, but due to the maximum length of time the solar reflections are predicted in a day, and the duration at which they occur across a year, these receptors are deemed to receive solar reflections of low impact and as such no mitigation is required.

Finally, there are 38 receptors in which a moderate impact due to solar reflections is predicted. In all instances this is due to solar reflections being predicted for longer than 3 months each year without adequate screening providing mitigation. Accordingly, further assessment has been undertaken to consider three factors: panel visibility, sun position and separation distance. For each receptor at which a moderate impact is predicted, when these additional factors are considered, it has been deemed that the impact of the solar reflections has been diminished such that mitigation measures are not required.

Environmental Protection officers have raised no objections in relation to this subject to a condition in relation anti-reflective panels to be placed where there is moderate impact to ensure that impact is mitigated.

Roads:

After detailed topographical analysis with high resolution terrain data and additional screening features along with the assessment methodology, a total of 13 road receptors were determined in which the magnitude of impact is high and therefore mitigation is required. In this instance mitigation in the form of screening is proposed. The proposed mitigation measures are receptor specific and include new screening, in-fill screening, and vegetation management. Highway officers have also not raised any objections in relation to this.

Canal:

The Glint and Glare Assessment submitted does not consider the potential impacts upon the amenity of the canal or tow path users because no permanent or temporary residential moorings have been identified within 1km of the proposed development and because of the slow-moving nature of canal boat travel.

The applicant submitted a landscape summary in support of the proposals. The Canal and River Trust state that the provision of landscape planting will probably be able to provide sufficient screening to minimise any glint and glare impacts. An updated Glint and Glare Assessment is required and will be conditioned to be provided prior to the submission of the landscaping layout.

The Canal and River Trust have no objections to this as any identified harmful impacts on canal users can be addressed through provision of tree/hedgerow planting.

The potential effect of construction of the access track and its subsequent use by vehicle on the nearby canal infrastructure is a material planning consideration. The Canal and River Trust would like a Construction method statement for works close to the canal to ensure no detrimental impact occurs and the appropriate measures are in place.

Residential Amenity and Health Impacts

Paragraph 180 (e) of the NPPF (2023) requires, amongst other things, that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. It goes on to state that development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality.

Paragraph 191 of the NPPF (2023) states that planning decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

- a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;
- b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and
- c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

The main impact issues when having regard to residential amenity are considered to be impacts upon visual amenity, privacy and outlook. Consideration has however also been given to the impacts arising from the construction and decommissioning periods, as well as health impacts.

Visual Impacts:

With regard to visual effects, there are a number of properties along Lentons Lane, Alderman's Green Road within the vicinity of the site. The submitted LVA sets out the visual effects on residential properties.

Major effects will be experienced by visual receptors in houses along Lenton's Lane in Alderman's Green, during construction and at year 1 of operation. This is due to the high sensitivity of residents and the proximity of the proposed development, which will replace views of farmland to the south. At year 15 of operation proposed planting along the northern site boundary will filter views into the site, and effects will reduce to moderate. Residents at Lenton's Lane Farm, who will be enclosed by the proposed development, will experience major effects during construction and at years 1 and 15.

Major effects will also be experienced by recreational receptors on the Oxford Canal and Oxford Canal Walk, during construction and at year 1 of operation. Although existing

vegetation screens and filters views of the site from most of the canal, there are some sections with close and open views into parts of the site. Effects will reduce to moderate at year 15 once proposed planting has matured; this planting will filter views of the development but also remove longer-distance views.

Minor effects will be experienced by recreational receptors in Hawkesbury Village Green during construction and at years 1 and 15 of operation, due to the screening of outward views by enclosing vegetation.

The proposed solar panels are to be located east to the properties on Aldermans Green Road in which the solar panels will be located at a distance of circa 18.0 metres away from these properties given the screening from the trees and hedges the proposed solar panels are not considered to be prominent to impact the amenity of these occupiers.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would result in significant effects on views, but only in views from certain windows, most of which would be at first floor level. The growth of the proposed planting, in some cases, can be expected to reduce the visibility of the development in most of these views with the effects reducing over time. None of the views available from the properties would be blocked by the proposal. On balance, the development is not considered to result in any unacceptable impacts upon the visual amenity of residents to warrant refusal of the application on this basis.

Overbearing Impacts:

With regard to overbearing effects, the low stature of the panels means that the proposals would not have an overbearing effect upon neighbouring properties.

Privacy:

In relation to privacy the proposed CCTV cameras would be located mostly to the perimeter of the proposed site. It is not considered that the CCTV cameras would be capable of any substantive overlooking of neighbouring properties or private amenity spaces. Full details will be required and conditioned.

Construction Impacts:

The construction phase of the development is expected to last a duration of approximately 7 months and planning permission is sought for a temporary operational period of 40 years. The site would be fully decommissioned, and land restored at the end of the temporary planning permission period. Whilst the construction and decommissioning periods would result in additional comings and goings to the site and an increased level of noise and disruption for nearby occupants, the impacts would not be significant to result in any unacceptable amenity impacts to neighbouring occupants to warrant a refusal of planning permission. In addition, the impacts arising from the construction and decommissioning periods are a temporary manifestation of any development project and would not represent a reason to resist the scheme. The Council would be able to control

the construction and decommissioning periods and traffic impacts through the imposing conditions.

Noise:

In respect of noise, the proposed control building, and inverters generate a slight hum during operation, however this would be contained within the site boundary with the panels themselves silently converting solar irradiation to electricity.

Health Impacts:

Having reviewed the submitted Health Impact Assessment Screening Report, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development would not overall give rise to negative impacts in respect of health and wellbeing. Public Health officers have raised no objections to the proposals.

Overall, subject to the imposition of conditions, the application is not considered to result in any unacceptable impacts upon neighbouring land uses, residential amenity or health impacts.

Other Matters

Air Quality

As the traffic flows associated with the site would be minimal post the construction phases of the development and owing to the sustainable nature of the development itself, air quality mitigation measures would not be necessary in this instance.

Other concerns raised

The following have also been received in respect of this application:

- Concerns have been raised that correct notices have not been served given the applicant has sign certificate B within the application form. The applicant confirmed that the correct notices were issued however, for transparency purposes these were reissued, and the notices were sent via Royal Mail (with tracking) on 20th December 2023 and officers have confirmation that all parties have received this.
- Residents have raised concerns that this development will result in an increased Fire Risk. The applicant has confirmed that there will be no batteries stored on site of there to be a risk of fire. West Midlands fire Services have also confirmed that they have no objections subject to an informative.

- Officers received a representation regarding the loss of agricultural land which is dealt within the report above.
- concerns in relation to the current occupier's personal circumstances and hardship caused by the proposed development. The representation raises that sufficient concern to ensure that the personal circumstances, hardship and difficulties of the occupier are addressed as a material consideration. It also references case law including R v Vale of Glamorgan District Council (ex parte Adams) [2000] and Westminster City Council v Great Portland Estates plc [1985] in support of this position. These cases established the principle that the personal circumstances of the occupier of premises could exceptionally be taken into account as material considerations when determining planning applications. Lord Scarman put it in the 1985 Westminster case that:

“Personal circumstances of an occupier, personal hardship, the difficulties of businesses which are of value to the character of a community are not to be ignored in the administration of planning control. It would be inhuman pedantry to exclude from the control of our environment the human factor. The human factor is always present, of course, indirectly as the background to the consideration of the character of land use. It can, however, and sometimes should, be given direct effect as an exceptional or special circumstance. But such circumstances, when they arise, fall to be considered not as a general rule but as exceptions to a general rule to be met in special cases. If a planning authority is to give effect to them, a specific case has to be made and the planning authority must give reasons for accepting it. It follows that, though the existence of such cases may be mentioned in a plan, this will only be necessary where it is prudent to emphasise that, notwithstanding the general policy, exceptions cannot be wholly excluded from consideration in the administration of planning control”.

- Officers have given due regard to the personal circumstances and it is recognised that the occupier has an agricultural tenancy regulated by the Agricultural Holdings Act 1986. The proposed solar farm development may have some impact on the current occupier who uses the land for agricultural purposes. There is the potential for agricultural land use in the form of sheep grazing in tandem with solar energy generation, this is a matter for the occupier and land owner to resolve. Whilst the impact on the occupier maybe significant, when considered against the wider impacts and the public benefits of proposals as set out in this report. it is considered that limited weight should be given to personal hardship which may be suffered. Members are however encouraged to satisfy themselves in reaching their decision as to whether any exceptional or special circumstances exist.
- Matters regarding the tenancy agreement is a civil matter between the applicant and tenant. This is not a material planning consideration.

Equality implications:

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states: -

(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Officers have taken this into account and given due regard to this statutory duty, and the matters specified in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 in the determination of this application.

There are no known equality implications arising directly from this development.

CONCLUSION

The applicant considers there are very special circumstances that justify the proposed development within the Green Belt. It is considered that the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness would be clearly outweighed by other considerations.

It is well established in case law that the definition of very special circumstances does not mean that they need to be rare or uncommon. In *R (Basildon District Council) v First Secretary of State and Temple* [2004] it was stated that "...in planning, as in ordinary life, a number of ordinary factors may when combined together result in something very special. Whether any particular combination amounts to very special circumstances for the purposes of PPG22 will be a matter for the planning judgement of the decision-taker."

This view was supported in the judgement of Lord Justice Wilson in *Wychavon District Council v secretary of State for Communities & Local Government & Ors* [2008] where it was held that "...in my view the judge was wrong, with respect, to treat the words 'very special' in the paragraph 3.2 of the guidance as simply the converse of 'commonplace'. Rarity may of course contribute to the 'special' quality of a particular factor, but it is not essential, as a matter of ordinary language or policy. The word 'special' in the guidance connotes not a quantitative test but a qualitative judgement as to the weight to be given to the particular factor for planning purposes.

The scheme would result in harm to the Green Belt from inappropriateness and loss of openness to which substantial weight is afforded. In addition, the scheme would result in

harm to the landscape and would convey visual harm to the area when having regard to the scale of the scheme, the findings set out within the submitted LVA, as well as the presence of Public Rights of Way. Such harm, given the mitigation proposed in the form of planting, as well as the temporary nature of the proposal, should be afforded moderate weight against the proposal in the planning balance. The less than substantial harm arising to the setting of the heritage assets would also need to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Other matters identified raise issues that either result in no harm or raise technical matters which would be adequately addressed through the imposition of planning conditions to mitigate the harm.

The NPPF (2023) identifies that renewable energy projects in the Green Belt will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases, developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances which could include the wider environmental benefits associated with the increased production of energy from renewable sources. Such support would not confer an automatic approval of renewable schemes within the Green Belt. Consideration must be given to the range of issues relating to the presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt and the harm arising from the proposal.

There is an indisputable need for renewable energy development; reference is made to the NPPF which states that local authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

The only logical conclusion to be taken from the acknowledged climate crisis is that a dramatic increase in sources of renewable energy supply is needed without further delay; to wait in the hope that a more suitable site or proposals as yet unidentified will come forward would be to accept the consequences of inaction resulting in carbon emissions continuing to be released at or above current rates.

The proposed development would deliver a renewable energy facility that would create up to 30 MW of power. This would provide power for approximately 7,650 households and result in carbon saving of 7,080 tonnes of CO₂ per annum which would help to combat climate change and would support the Government's policy for the UK's transition to achieving a low carbon economy and assists in meeting the UK's legally binding obligations for Net Zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The benefit of renewable energy attracts substantial weight in favour of the proposal. These benefits arising from the scheme would contribute to the ability to meet the requirements and aims of the Paris Agreement, the Climate Change Act 2008, Net Zero target, Net Zero Strategy and the 2022 Committee on Climate Change Progress Report to Parliament. The benefits are also clearly defined within section 14 of the NPPF (2023) which seeks to increase the use and supply of renewable energy and maximise the

potential for suitable development to come forward. It is considered that the delivery of suitable renewable energy schemes is fundamental in facilitating the transition to a low carbon future.

With regard to the landscape impacts, it is noted that the proposal would result in harm as set out in the above report, however, there are other interventions viewed within the context of the site to including existing powerlines and pylons. This feature enables the area to accommodate a degree of change where other locally approved solar farms would contribute to the visual evolution of the appearance of the area.

A solar farm development requires grid capacity and a viable connection to the grid to operate. This requirement places a locational restriction on site selection which limits the number of appropriate sites which would be suitable to accommodate such a facility. The possibility of a viable connection being made means that the site is placed in an advantageous location.

It should also be recognised that the scheme would result in a significant biodiversity net gain, specifically a net gain of 165.46 habitat units which is a 149.49% increase from the baseline units and a net gain of 17.09 hedgerow units which is a 43.08% increase from the baseline units. Such a gain would be a benefit arising from the scheme and planning conditions are recommended to be attached to ensure monitoring of the biodiversity value of the site. This benefit of the scheme should be afforded moderate weight in favour of the proposal.

The development and use of land is for a temporary period of 40 years from the date of first export of electricity from the site. Unlike other forms of development which by their nature are more permanent, the proposal would not result in the permanent loss of or removal of Green Belt land.

The proposals allow for the continued use of the land for grazing; the dual renewable energy/agricultural use has been successfully adopted for numerous solar schemes and allows the land to remain in agricultural production throughout the life of the development.

A recent study (Ground Mounted Solar Farms and Agricultural Land: The Facts published by Solar UK Ltd in December 2022) undertaken shows that solar development can have a positive influence on food production through a number of ways, including, by addressing climate change, which is the single biggest threat to food security, by cutting costs which in turn keeps farmers in business, by preserving agricultural land and supporting soil recovery, and by delivering a variety of ecological enhancements.

The public and other benefits arising from the scheme are considered to be of a sufficient magnitude to outweigh the harm arising to the Green Belt, landscape, visual and the less than substantial harm arising to the heritage assets as identified in the above report. The benefits set out, cumulatively, would attract very substantial weight in favour of the

proposal. The harm identified to the Green Belt would be clearly and demonstrably outweighed by other considerations identified and the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development are considered to exist. The proposals are therefore compliant with policies GB1 and EM3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

Overall, it is considered that the proposed solar farm would result in a substantial benefit in terms of sustainable energy production, and it is considered that the various harms identified in the above report and the adverse impacts which would arise as a result of approving the scheme would be outweighed by the very significant benefits. As such, based on a balancing exercise of positive benefits against the harms identified, it is considered that the scheme is acceptable and would represent sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF (2023) and the Council's Development Plan.

For the above reasons, it is recommended that planning permission be granted, subject to conditions and the secretary of state not wishing to intervene.

CONDITIONS/REASONS

1.	The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
Reason	<i>To conform with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)</i>
2.	The planning permission hereby granted shall be for a temporary period only, to expire 40 years and six months after the first export date of the development. Written confirmation of the first export date shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority within one month after the event. The use shall cease and any enabling works be removed from the site and the land restored to its former condition in accordance with a scheme which shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason	<i>The Local Planning Authority considers that a permanent planning permission is not appropriate in this case because of the temporary nature of the use which would not accord with Policy DE1 and GB1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016. However, this permission is granted for a limited period only in the recognition of the particular circumstances of the proposal concerned.</i>
3.	Within 6 months of the cessation of the export of electrical power from the site, or within a period of 40 years and 6 months following the first export

	<p>date, whichever is the sooner, the solar farm and all ancillary equipment, structures and fencing shall be dismantled and removed from the site and the land restored back to a condition suitable for exclusive agricultural use, in accordance with a scheme first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall make provision for the removal of the solar panels and associated above ground works approved under this permission. The scheme shall also include:</p> <p>(a) the management and timing of any works and a traffic management plan to address likely traffic impact issues during the decommissioning period;</p> <p>(b) methods to prevent mud and debris on the highway;</p> <p>(c) areas for the parking of contractors and visitors;</p> <p>(d) areas for the loading and storage of materials;</p> <p>(e) details of measures to be taken during the decommissioning period to protect wildlife and habitats;</p> <p>(f) details of site restoration measures to a condition suitable for exclusive agricultural use.</p> <p>The decommissioning of the site shall be undertaken in full accordance with the agreed details and timeframe.</p> <p>The operator of the solar farm shall notify the Council in writing no later than five working days following the cessation of electricity generation.</p>
Reason	<p>To safeguard the amenities of nearby occupiers, highway safety and to restore the site back to its former use in accordance with Policies DE1, GB1, AC1 and AC2 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</p>
4.	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:</p> <p>Location Plan-DWG-SK00-003</p> <p>Layout Plan-DWG-SK01-003</p> <p>Tracking DWG SK01 Rev 0</p> <p>Tracking DWG SK02 Rev 0</p> <p>Tracking DWG SK03 Rev 0</p> <p>Tracking DWG SK04 Rev 0</p> <p>Proposed Track-1-DWG-SK02A-003</p> <p>Proposed Track-2-DWG-SK02B-003</p> <p>Proposed Track 3 1-of-2-DWG-SK02C-003</p> <p>Proposed Track 3 2-of-2-DWG-SK02D-003</p> <p>Proposed Track 4 1-of-3-DWG-SK02E-003</p> <p>Proposed Track 4 2-of-3-DWG-SK02F-003</p> <p>Proposed Track 4 3-of-3-DWG-SK02G-003</p> <p>Proposed Widening-DWG-SK02-003</p> <p>Swept Path Assessments-DWG-SK03-P1</p>

	<p>Swept Path Assessments-DWG-SK03A-P1 Typical Track Construction-DWG-SK04-P1 Indicative Solar Panels-DWG-SK04C-P1 Indicative Inverter Container-DWG-SK04D-P1 Indicative Fence-DWG-SK04B-P1 Indicative Control Station-DWG-SK04A-P1 Indicative Construction Compound-DWG-SK04E-P1 Fence Boundary Plan-DWG-SK05-003 Cable Connection Plan-DWG-SK06-003 Consultation Enhancement Plan-DWG-SK07-P1 Consultation Enhancement Plan-DWG-SK07A-P1 Proposed Landscaping Summary- West Area DWG SK07 Rev 0 Proposed Landscaping Summary- East Area DWG SK07A Rev 0 Illustrative Cross Section C-C View- DWG-SK10-001 Illustrative Cross Section D-D View- DWG-SK11-001 Illustrative Cross Section E-E View- DWG-SK12-001 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment- September 2023 12102 Coventry Solar Farm Biodiversity-Metric-3 1 Final calculations 12102 Coventry Solar Farm Biodiversity Metric-3 1-Second Scenario Recommendations Biodiversity Calculations River Enhancement Ecological Appraisal- December 2023 Agricultural Land Classification Report- December 2022 Glint and Glare Assessment- May 2023 Arboricultural Impact Assessment- January 2024 Preliminary Risk Assessment– Rev P02 Flood Risk Assessment – Rev P03 Landscape and Visual Appraisal- May 2023 Planning Statement- May 2023 Construction Traffic Management Plan- November 2023 Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment- Report No 4354- December 2023 Health Impact Assessment- August 2023</p>
<p>Reason</p>	<p><i>For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning</i></p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Notwithstanding the details submitted, nor the approved plans contained in Condition 4, prior to their erection on site, details of the proposed materials and finish including colour of all solar panels, frames, ancillary buildings, containers, fencing, CCTV and enclosures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and be maintained as such for the lifetime of the proposed development, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.</p>

Reason	<i>To ensure that the proposed development has a satisfactory external appearance in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
6.	An investigation and risk assessment (in addition to any assessment provided with the planning application), must be completed in accordance with a scheme to assess the nature and extent of any contamination on the site; whether or not it originates on the site; and any report of the findings must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the commencement of development (including any demolition). The report of the findings, to be conducted in accordance with Environment Agency Guidance Land Contamination: Risk Management (2021) and must include (i) a survey of the extent, scale and nature of contamination; (ii) an assessment of the potential risk to; human health, property (existing or proposed) including buildings, crops, livestock, pets, woodland and service lines and pipes, adjoining land, groundwaters and surface waters, ecological systems, archaeological sites and ancient monuments; (iii) an appraisal of remedial options and proposal of the preferred option(s)
Reason	<i>To safeguard health, safety and the environment in accordance with Policy EM6 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the aims and objectives of the NPPF</i>
7.	The development shall only be undertaken in accordance with a detailed remediation scheme to bring the site to a condition suitable for the intended use by removing unacceptable risks to human health, buildings and other property and the natural and historical environment, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme must include all works to be undertaken, proposed remediation objectives and remediation criteria, timetable of works and site management procedures. The scheme must ensure that the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.
Reason	<i>To safeguard health, safety and the environment in accordance with Policy EM6 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the aims and objectives of the NPPF</i>
8.	The approved remediation scheme must be carried out in accordance with its terms prior to the commencement of development other than that required to carry out the remediation. The Local Planning Authority must be given two weeks written notification of commencement of the remediation scheme works.

Reason	<i>To safeguard health, safety and the environment in accordance with Policy EM6 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the aims and objectives of the NPPF</i>
9.	Prior to occupation of the development hereby permitted and following completion of the measures identified within the remediation scheme approved under condition No. 8, a verification report that demonstrates the effectiveness of the remediation carried out must be produced and submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval in writing
Reason	<i>To safeguard health, safety and the environment in accordance with Policy EM6 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the aims and objectives of the NPPF</i>
10.	In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, which was not previously identified, it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of condition 6, and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared in accordance with the requirements of condition 7, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with condition 9.
Reason	<i>To safeguard health, safety and the environment in accordance with Policy EM6 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the aims and objectives of the NPPF</i>
11.	No works to construct the proposed access track within the application site shall take place until a Method Statement detailing the means of construction of the track, including any proposed earth moving or excavation works required in connection with its construction has first been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Method Statement shall identify and incorporate any measures required to avoid the risk of adversely affecting the stability of nearby embankment and cutting slopes associated with the Oxford Canal (such as vibration monitoring or establishment of stand-off distances for operating plant or machinery during construction work) or provide sufficient information to demonstrate that no risk to the stability of these structures will occur, both during construction operations and also during subsequent operational

	use of the track by vehicles. The development shall thereafter only be carried out in accordance with the agreed Method Statement.
Reason	<i>In the interests of avoiding the risk of creating land instability arising from any impacts from works to construct the access track or subsequent use of the track which could adversely affect the stability of embankment and cutting slopes associated with the Oxford Canal in accordance with the advice and guidance on land stability contained in paragraphs 174 and 183 of the National Planning Policy Framework and in the National Planning Practice Guidance.</i>
12.	A Glint and Glare Assessment (in addition to any assessment provided with the application) shall be a completed in accordance with the scheme to assess the impacts upon the amenity of the canal or tow path users shall be submitted and approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to the submission of the landscaping scheme/ layout. All works shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved mitigation works and shall not be removed or altered in any way.
Reason	<i>To ensure that there is no detrimental impact with regards to glint and glare upon the amenity of the canal or tow path users in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.</i>
13.	The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied unless and until the access to the site, manoeuvring space(s) and car parking area(s) indicated on the approved drawings have been provided in full accordance with those details and thereafter those areas shall be kept marked out and available for such use at all times.
Reason	<i>In the interests of highway safety in accordance with the aims and objectives of Policies AC1, AC2 and AC3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
14.	No use of the solar farm hereby permitted shall commence unless and until details of road directional signage and road markings have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The signage and road marking shall be installed in full accordance with the approved details prior to first occupation of the solar farm and thereafter retained and shall not be removed or altered in any way.

Reason	<i>In the interests of highway safety in accordance with Policies AC1 and AC2 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
15.	The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the Construction Traffic Management Plan (November 2023) prepared by Pell Frischmann at all times, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
Reason	<i>In the interests of highway safety in accordance with the aims and objectives of Policies AC1, AC2 and AC3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
16.	<p>No development (including any demolition or preparatory works) shall take place unless and until an Access Management Plan (AMP) has been submitted to approved in writing by the local planning authority. This shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Details of any temporary or permanent diversion of public rights of way in the area b) Any signage required for temporary diversions c) Details of how public users of the public rights of way will be accommodated while the works are carried out. d) Full details of work being carried out on the public rights of way to accommodate access it the development site. e) Details of delap surveys. <p>The development shall only proceed in full accordance with these approved details.</p>
Reason	<i>The agreement of a Access Management Plan prior to the commencement of development is fundamental to ensure to minimise disturbance to local residents using footpaths during the construction process in accordance with Policies AC2 and AC4 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
17.	<p>The occupation of the development hereby permitted shall not begin until:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the local planning authority has approved in writing a full scheme of works of improvement to the Public Footpath from Lenton's Lane which connects to the public footpath to the Cruising Club and (b) the approved works have been completed in accordance with the local planning authority's written approval and have been certified in writing as complete on behalf of the local planning authority; Unless alternative

	arrangements to secure the specified works have been approved in writing by the local planning authority.
Reason	<i>In the interests of public safety and amenity in accordance with Policies DS4, DE1, AC1 and AC2 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
18.	<p>Prior to their installation/ planting, details of both hard and soft landscaping works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details of hard landscaping works shall include boundary treatment, including full details of the proposed boundary walls, railings and gates to be erected, specifying the type of bricks and colour of the railings and gates; footpaths; and hard surfacing (which shall be made of porous materials or provision shall be made to direct run-off water from the hard surface to a permeable or porous area). The hard landscaping works shall be completed in strict accordance with the approved details within three months of energy generation at the solar farm hereby permitted; and all planting shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details within the first planting and seeding seasons following the first energy generation. Any tree(s) or shrub(s) which within a period of five years from the completion of the development dies, is removed or becomes; in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority; seriously damaged, defective or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with another of similar size and species. All hedging, tree(s) and shrub(s) shall be planted in accordance with British Standard BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations and BS4428 - Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations.</p>
Reason	<i>To ensure a satisfactory standard of appearance of the development in the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policies GE1 and DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
19.	<p>Prior to the commencement of development, a method statement detailing the control of emissions into the air during the demolition/construction phase should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The method statement should accord with the Best Practice Guidance - 'The control of dust and emissions from construction and demolition' and include:- a) proposed hours of work; b) map with nearest receptors and distances for dust and noise; c) noise impact on nearest neighbours and control measures as required; d) monitoring methods and measurement locations for dust and noise recording details; e) dust mitigation measures; f) contact details for responsible persons and site personnel training; and g) information provision and liaison with local residents. The development shall only proceed in full accordance with the approved details.</p>

Reason	<i>To protect the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring residential occupiers in accordance with Policy EM7 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
20.	Except for emergency works, construction works and deliveries to the site shall not take place outside 08:00 hours to 18:00 hours Mondays to Fridays, and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays, and at no time on Sundays or Bank Holidays.
Reason	<i>To safeguard the amenities of nearby occupiers in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Development Plan 2016.</i>
21.	Prior to energy generation at the solar farm hereby permitted, details of the CCTV cameras and their locations within the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CCTV cameras shall be installed in full accordance with the approved details prior to first energy generation at the development and thereafter shall be retained and shall not be removed or altered in any way.
Reason	<i>To safeguard the amenities of the adjoining occupiers of the development in accordance with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
22.	No removal of trees/ hedges/shrubs/ or demolition of buildings/ structures shall take place between 1st March and 31st August (inclusive) unless a survey to assess the nesting bird activity on the site during this period has been undertaken by a qualified surveyor, and a scheme to protect any nesting birds identified on the site has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. No trees/ hedges/ shrubs shall be removed, or buildings/structures shall be demolished between 1st March and 31st August (inclusive) other than in strict accordance with the approved bird nesting protection scheme.
Reason	<i>To ensure that protected species are not harmed by the development in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the advice contained within the NPPF 2023.</i>
23.	No development (including any demolition or preparatory works) shall commence unless and until a further bat survey of the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include appropriate activity surveys in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust: Bat Surveys - Good Practice Guidelines and a detailed mitigation plan including a schedule of works and timings. The approved mitigation plan shall be implemented in full prior to any demolition or preparatory works taking place and thereafter any mitigation

Reason	<i>To ensure that protected species are not harmed by the development in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the advice contained within the NPPF 2023.</i>
24.	No development (including any demolition or preparatory works) shall commence unless and until a Biodiversity Method Statement for badgers, bats, birds, reptiles and amphibians, hedgehogs, water vole and otters including Reasonable Avoidance Measures, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be carried out in strict accordance with the approved Biodiversity Method Statement.
Reason	<i>To ensure that protected species are not harmed by the development in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the advice contained within the NPPF 2023.</i>
25.	No development (including any demolition or preparatory works) shall commence unless and until a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall include the following: (a) a risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities;(b) identification of biodiversity protection zones (e.g. buffers to trees and hedges or to protected wildlife habitat); (c) practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices, such as protective fencing, exclusion barriers and warning signs) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (particularly in relation to works within canopy and root protection areas for hedgerows or protected trees); (d) the location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features (in relation to breeding birds in particular); (e) the times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works (as required); (f) responsible persons and lines of communication; and (g) the role and responsibilities on site of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) or similarly competent person (as necessary). The approved CEMP shall be adhered to and implemented throughout the construction period strictly in accordance with the approved details.
Reason	<i>In order to safeguard protected and/or priority species from undue disturbance and impacts, noting that initial preparatory works could have unacceptable impacts; and in order to secure an overall biodiversity gain in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
26.	Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The content of the

	<p>LEMP shall include the following: a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed; b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management; c) Aims and objectives of management, including mitigation and enhancement for species identified on site; d) Appropriate management option for achieving aims and objectives; e) Prescriptions for management actions; f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a ten-year period); g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan, along with funding mechanism(s) for that body or organisation; h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures, including where monitoring shows that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met. The LEMP plan shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details within three months of the first occupation of the development and thereafter shall not be withdrawn or amended in any way.</p>
Reason	<p><i>In order to safeguard and enhance habitat on or adjacent to the site in order to secure an overall biodiversity gain in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i></p>
27.	<p>No development (including any demolition or preparatory works) shall commence unless and until a scheme ('the offsetting scheme') for the offsetting of biodiversity impacts at the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, to result in a minimum 10% net gain. The offsetting scheme shall include: a) a methodology for the identification of receptor site(s); b) the identification of receptor site(s); c) details of the offset requirements of the development (in accordance with the recognised offsetting metrics standard outlines in the Defra Metrics Guidance dated March 2012, or any document that may update or supersede that guidance). d) the provision of arrangements to secure the delivery of the offsetting measures (including a timetable for their delivery); and e) a management and monitoring plan (to include for the provision and maintenance of the offsetting measures in perpetuity). The offsetting scheme shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details within three months of the first occupation of the development hereby permitted and thereafter shall not be withdrawn or amended in any way.</p>
Reason	<p><i>In order to safeguard and enhance habitat and secure an overall biodiversity gain in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i></p>
28.	<p>Prior to the installation of any street lighting or any external lighting to be fixed to any building(s), an external lighting strategy (including a plan) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The strategy shall demonstrate that lighting shall be kept to a minimum at night in order to minimise impact on emerging and foraging bats, and to</p>

	restrict light spillage onto foraging corridors. The lighting shall be installed in full accordance with the approved strategy and all lighting thereafter shall be subsequently maintained in strict accordance with the approved details.
Reason	<i>To ensure that protected species are not harmed by the development in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the advice contained within the NPPF 2023.</i>
29.	No development (including any demolition or preparatory works) shall commence unless and until a walkover badger survey has been undertaken by a qualified ecologist to ensure that there have been no setts created within the application site since the date of the badger survey provided in support of the application. The results of this survey work together with the scope and timing of any necessary mitigation measures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any works. The mitigation measures shall be undertaken in full accordance with the approved details and timetable of works and once undertaken shall not be removed or altered in any way.
Reason	<i>To ensure that protected species are not harmed by the development in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the advice contained within the NPPF 2023.</i>
30.	Within one month of the installation and carrying out of any approved badger mitigation and conservation measures submitted, a qualified persons report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority to verify completion of the works.
Reason	<i>To ensure that protected species are not harmed by the development in accordance with Policy GE3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and the advice contained within the NPPF 2023.</i>
31.	<p>Prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted the following drainage details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:</p> <p>a) An appropriately scaled intrusive ground investigation report must be provided to establish the depth and type of strata, including percolation results in accordance with BRE 365 and identifying the presence and risk associated with migrant or soluble contaminants. Please provide evidence of existing groundwater levels and seasonal variation, in order to inform the drainage design.</p> <p>b) Full details and calculations of the open-air storage or attenuation in the form of a wet pond, dry basin, swale or other similar surface feature, aimed at managing water quantity, quality and introducing biodiversity at the ground surface is required.</p>

	<p>c) The use of infiltration drainage either as above ground (open air) or below ground (buried) – to be accompanied by a full intrusive Geotechnical Site Investigation is required.</p> <p>A detailed strategy document must be submitted to for the long-term inspection and maintenance of the SuDS and other surface water drainage elements on site. It should also mention any notable Health and Safety or specialist training, and special equipment required as part of the routine maintenance.</p> <p>d) The stormwater discharge rates from the development shall be managed in order to reduce flood risk to surrounding sites, downstream areas or the wider environment by means of a flow control mechanism (or mechanisms) limiting the total site discharge offsite to Qbar greenfield rates or 5 l/s, whichever is greater.</p> <p>e) Provisions must be made for the drainage of the site to ensure there are no temporary increases in flood risk, on or off site, during the construction phase, particularly with respect to the planned demolition/construction works and the deposition of silts and cementitious materials.</p> <p>f) Evidence must be provided to show the management of overland flow routes in the event of exceedance or blockage of the drainage system. Details should include demonstration of how the building(s) will be protected in such an event.</p> <p>g) Where new or redevelopment site levels result in the severance, diversion or reception of natural (or engineered) land drainage flow, the developer shall maintain existing flow routes (where there are no flood risk or safety implications) or intercept these flows and discharge these by a method approved by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>h) A wayleave of at least 5m must be provided from the top bank of any Ordinary watercourse to the nearest structure.</p> <p>The drainage details shall be installed in full accordance with the approved documentation prior to occupation of the development and thereafter shall be maintained and shall not be removed or altered in any way.</p>
<p>Reason</p>	<p><i>To ensure that adequate drainage facilities are available for the satisfactory and proper development of the site in accordance with policies EM1, EM4 and EM5 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and Coventry City Councils adopted Supplementary Planning Document for Delivering a More Sustainable City.</i></p>
<p>32.</p>	<p>Notwithstanding the details submitted, before any development commences on site (including any demolition, site clearance or other preparatory works) the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:</p> <p>a) Arboricultural Method Statement (6.1); and</p>

	<p>b)a Dimensioned Tree Protection Plan (to include protection measures during and after construction and any construction exclusion zones) (in accordance with 5.5/ Table B.1), site monitoring (6.3) of British Standard BS5837:2012 - Trees in relation to design demolition and construction - Recommendations, which shall also include any proposal for pruning or other preventative works.</p> <p>The approved mitigation and / or protection measures shall be put into place prior to the commencement of any works and shall remain in place during all construction work.</p>
Reason	<p><i>To protect those trees which are of significant amenity value to the area and which would provide an enhanced standard of appearance to the development in accordance with Policy GE3 and GE4 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i></p>
33.	<p>No development (including any demolition or preparatory works) shall take place unless and until the results of a programme of archaeological investigation (geophysical survey and trial trenching), in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation, that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority, with a detailed mitigation strategy. The strategy shall include details of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method of solar array installation • Cable routing • Construction compound • New road layouts and construction methodology • Areas of preservation due to archaeological significance <p>The report and strategy should contain the proper identification and evaluation of the extent, character and significance of archaeological remains within the application area, an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological remains, further phases of archaeological works, where required and details on any programme of public engagement, including open days, during and following any required site works. The development shall only proceed in full accordance with these approved details.</p>
Reason	<p><i>The submission of these details prior to the commencement of development is fundamental to mitigate the effect of the works associated with the development upon any heritage assets in accordance with Policy HE2 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i></p>

34.	Prior to their incorporation into the development details of anti-reflective panels for mitigation from glint and glare shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. These details shall be installed only in full accordance with the approved details prior to energy generation from the development and thereafter shall be retained and shall not be removed or altered in any way.
Reason	<i>To ensure that there is no detrimental impact from glint or glare to the neighbouring occupiers in accordance with Policies DE1 and EM3 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
35.	The existing hedges indicated on the approved plan DWG: BHA_5306_02 Sheet 1 -3 within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment- January 2024 to be retained shall not be cut down, grubbed out or otherwise removed or topped or lopped so that the height of the hedge(s) falls below m at any point. Any hedge(s) removed without consent or 2m dying, or being severely damaged or diseased or becomes; in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority; seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced within the next planting season with hedging, tree(s) and/or shrub(s) of such size and species details of which must be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. All hedging, tree(s) and shrub(s) shall be planted in accordance with British Standard BS 8545:2014 Trees: from nursery to independence in the landscape - Recommendations and BS4428 - Code of Practice for General Landscape Operations (excluding hard surfaces).
Reason	<i>To protect those landscape features which are of significant amenity value to the area and which would provide an enhanced standard of appearance to the development in accordance with Policies GE3, GE4 and HE2 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016.</i>
36.	The development hereby permitted shall be used for the operation of a solar farm with associated equipment and for no other purposes within the use class or any permitted change to a different use class.
Reason	<i>In the interest of residential and visual amenity and to ensure the details are acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.</i>