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North Dairy Farm, Dorset

Preliminary Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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Note: This report is intended to be printed at A3 for best legibility.

Section 1: Introduction and Scope

Introduction

1.1. This Preliminary Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared by Tyler Grange Group Limited on behalf of British Solar Renewables (BSR). The report considers the effect of the proposed renewable energy development on key landscape resources and visual receptors in connection with the land on North Dairy Farm, Dorset.

1.2. The aim of this assessment is to establish the nature of the change and the sensitivity of the receptors to changes arising from the development.

1.3. It should be noted that at this stage the location of mitigation planting has not been established and will evolve as the project progresses.

1.4. The area covered by the development within the application boundary (as shown on the Illustrative Masterplan) will be referred to as the "Site" within this report.

Scheme Overview

1.5. The Application Site is *c.*76 hectares in size. The Site consists of 11 small - medium sized rectilinear agricultural fields defined by mature hedgerow boundaries with hedgerow trees and vegetated water channels/ tributaries.

1.6. The site is not allocated within the Local Plan and does not have any landscape designations associated with it. However, there are several Public Rights of Way in close proximity of the Site, which will need to be considered in the assessment.

1.7. The proposed development comprises the construction, operation, management and decommissioning of a solar park for a temporary period of 35 years from the date of the first exportation of electricity from the site. The proposed planning application will seek full planning permission for a grid connected solar park that consists of ground-mounted solar PV panels including a battery storage facility together with all associated works, equipment and necessary infrastructure.

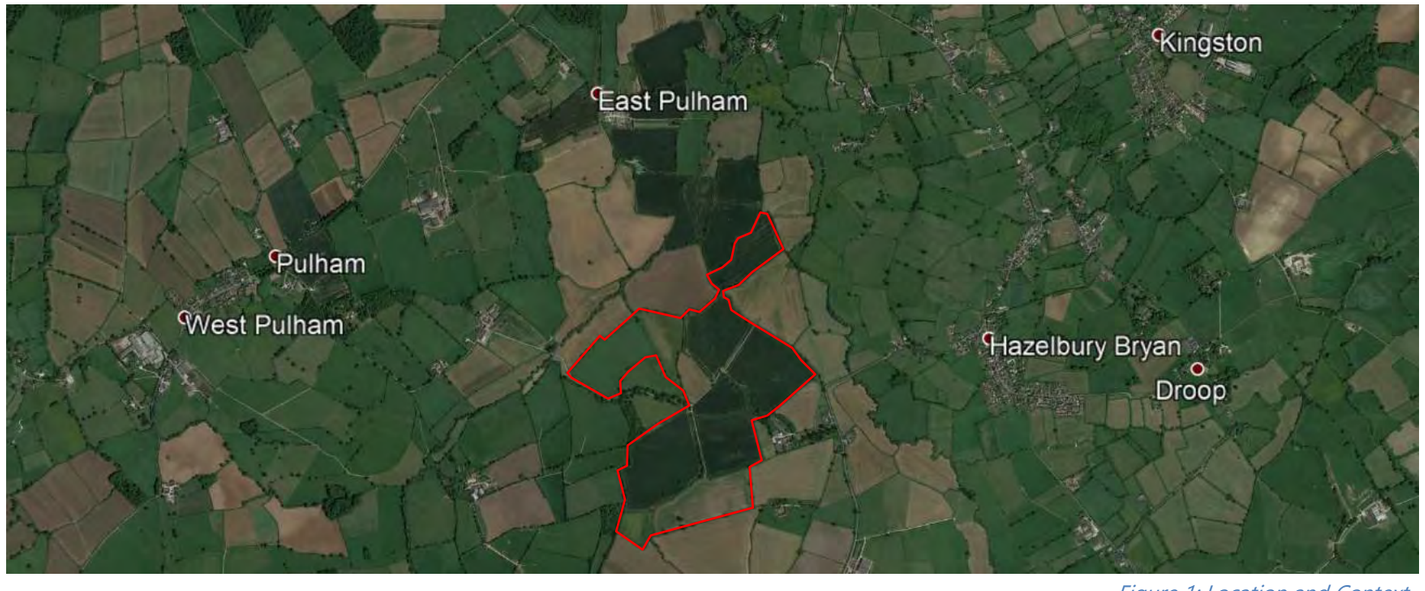


Figure 1: Location and Context

Location and Context

1.8. The Site is in North Dorset between the villages of Pulham (to the west) and Hazelbury Bryan (to the east) and approximately 1.25km (at closest) from the boundary of the Dorset AONB. North Dairy Farm is accessed off of Cannings Court Lane via a tarred lane that also provides access to Orange Nook and Glebe Farm. The B3143 lies approximately 0.7km to the north of the site.

1.9. The Site lies within the undulating lowland clay vale known as the Blackmore Vale which is characterised by hedged fields with an abundance of hedgerow tress and small woodland blocks. The landscape is criss-crossed by field boundary ditches, streams and rivers with agricultural land that is often waterlogged. The River Lydden cuts through North Dairy Farm flowing to the northeast, eventually joining the River Stour.

1.10. Settlements tend to be on the higher lying sandstone and limestone ridges above the floodplains. To the west of the site lies the linear village of Pulham, 'homestead by the pools or streams' with its church and the Old Rectory located to the north west of North Dairy Farm. Surrounding the farm are numerous farmsteads, the closest of which is Glebe Farm and Orange Nook cottage to the west. Other farmsteads include Cannings Court to the south, Parsonage Farm, Fir Tree Farm, Dairy House Farm, Boywood Farm and Povert Bridge Farm to the east as well as Manor Farm, East Pulham Farm and Grange Farm to the north.

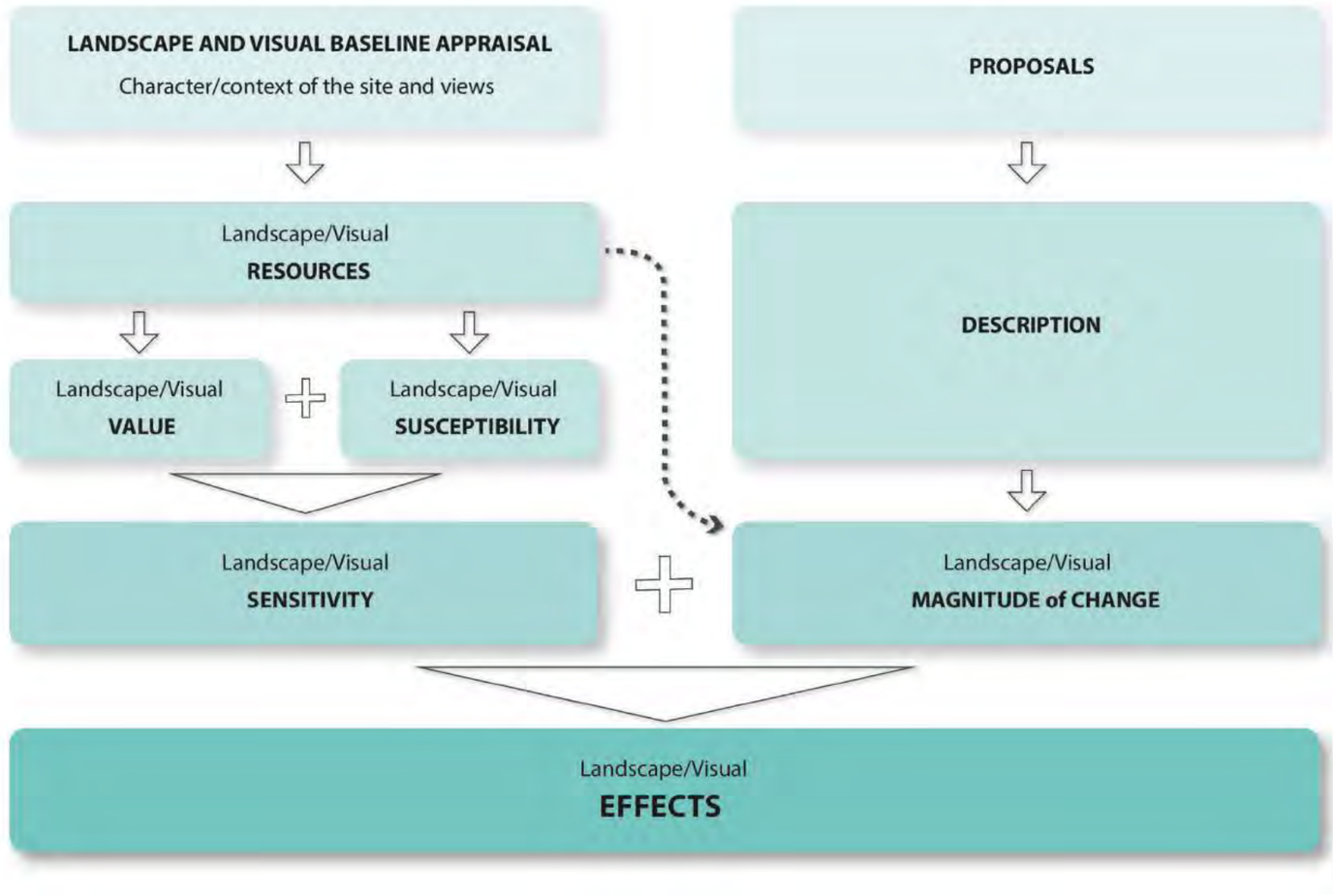
1.11. The Site is comprised of several fields, which form part of a mixed agricultural landscape that includes both pastoral and arable land use. This brings continuous change to the landscape through the seasons as crops are grow and annually as their use is rotated.

Methodology

1.12. The methodology and guidelines used in the preparation of this assessment have been developed from the following:

- *An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment*, Natural England, Second Version, March 2018;
- *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment* (GLVIA), Third Edition, LI and IEMA, 2013; and
- *Landscape Sensitivity to Wind and Solar Energy Development in North Dorset District*, LUC, April 2014.

1.13. The assessment process is set out in further detail below but involves the following steps:



Baseline Appraisal

1.14. The Baseline Appraisal process is a crucial part of any assessment and includes:

- An assessment of the landscape character of the site and surroundings with reference to published works and checked and verified through fieldwork. This includes the classification of the landscape into units of distinct and recognisable character and land use at a site-specific level;
- An overview of statutory plans and other data regarding relevant designations and landscape and visual related planning polices for the area;
- Field work to determine the extent to which the site can be seen from the wider area, taking into account any significant vegetation or built form which restricts or limits the extent of visibility; and
- Identification of representative viewpoints and determination of likely visual receptors.

Classification of Resources

1.15. This stage seeks to classify the landscape resources in terms of their individual or collective sensitivity to change. This is dependent on:

- The susceptibility of the landscape to the type of change proposed (see **Appendix 2: Table 1** for criteria); and
- The value placed on the landscape (see **Appendix 1** for criteria).

1.16. As a general rule those landscape resources which make a notable contribution to the character and cannot be replaced or substituted will be of high sensitivity, those resources which are replaceable or contribute little to the overall character of the landscape will be of low sensitivity.

1.17. Specific receptors, that is, people who may experience a change to views and visual amenity arising from the proposed development, are categorised according to their sensitivity to change. The sensitivity to change of the specific receptor is judged by combining the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change and the value related to that receptor. Viewpoints are then selected to represent the various identified receptors. The sensitivity of the visual receptors will be dependent on:

- The location and context of the viewpoint;
- The expectations and occupation or activity of the receptors; and
- The importance of or value attached to the view.

1.18. Those receptors that are classified as being of high sensitivity to change may include users of public rights of way or nearby residents, those of low sensitivity to change may include people in their place of work or travelling through the landscape in cars, trains or other modes of transport.

1.19. In order to assist in understanding the application of sensitivity to landscape and visual receptors, **Appendix 2** sets out a number of assessment criteria. These allow for the separate consideration of both value and susceptibility factors in order to establish a balanced assessment.

Assessment of Effects

1.20. The assessment of effects is undertaken in the knowledge of the scheme proposals and the existing baseline situation.

1.21. The significance of any landscape and visual effect is a function of the sensitivity of the affected landscape resources and visual receptors against the magnitude of change that they would experience (see **Appendix 2: Table 3 and 4**).

1.22. The magnitude of change lies along a continuum from high, where there is a prominent and notable change to the landscape character or view to low where the change is barely perceptible.

1.23. The consideration of mitigation with the aim where possible, of avoiding, reducing or offsetting significant adverse landscape or visual effects is determined during the course of the assessment where this can be addressed through a suitably worded condition.

1.24. The evaluation of landscape and visual effects following mitigation, are known as residual impacts. For the purposes of this report, the term 'impact' refers to the causation of change and effects that are the results of the changes to the landscape and visual context.

1.25. The assessment of the nature of the landscape and visual effects depends on the degree to which the development:

- Complements, respects and fits into the existing scale, landform and pattern of the landscape context;
- Enables enhancement, restoration or retention of the landscape character and visual amenity and delivers policy aspirations; and
- Affects strategic and important views in addition to the visual context of receptors.

Effects

1.26. Best practice guidelines stipulate that the effect of any landscape related impact should be evaluated, both during the construction works and following completion of the development. As such, the assessment of potential and residual effects is based upon the following thresholds set out in **Table TG1**.

1.27. There are instances where the impact results in an effect which is neither adverse nor beneficial. These effects are considered to be neutral. Negligible and minor effects are not considered to be of particular importance when considering whether a proposal is acceptable in landscape and visual terms. Effects that are assessed as being Moderate and High may need to be considered in the planning balance.

1.28. For clarity, criteria that relate to receptor sensitivity and magnitude of change have been set out in more detail and contained at **Appendix 2: Table 2 and 4**. These will be referenced as part of the assessment process set out within Section 3 of this report. It is also important to note that the GLVIA (3rd Edition) places greater emphasis on professional judgement and less emphasis on a formulaic approach; however, a transparent assessment process should still be evident.

Table TG1: Effect Thresholds	
Effect	**Justification**
High Beneficial	The development would fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, and enhance the existing landscape character. The development would create a highly improved change in the view.
Moderate Beneficial	The development would fit well with the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, maintain and/or enhance the existing landscape character. The development would create a noticeable but improved change in the view.
Minor Beneficial	The development would complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape, whilst maintaining the existing character. The development would result in minor improvements to the existing views.
Negligible	The development would cause very limited changes to the landscape and/or views.
Minor Adverse	The development would cause minor permanent and/or temporary loss or alteration to one or more key elements or features of the landscape, to include the introduction of elements that may not be uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape. The development would cause limited visual intrusion.
Moderate Adverse	The development would cause substantial permanent loss or alteration to one or more key elements of the landscape, to include the introduction of elements that are apparent but may not be substantially uncharacteristic with the surrounding landscape. The development would be clearly visible.
High Adverse	The development would cause total permanent loss or major alteration to key elements and features of the landscape, to include the introduction of elements totally uncharacteristic of the surrounding landscape. The development would be clearly evident and would disrupt fine and valued views both into and across the area.

Section 2: Baseline Appraisal

Landscape Character Context

2.1. The characterisation process is a non-value judgement process; therefore, classifying landscapes into distinct areas does not suggest that one character is more sensitive than another or valued by people more or less.

2.2. The landscape character appraisal process reviews the wider landscape character type at a national level and then explores more detail character features at a district/ local level, before analysing site-specific land use that informs local distinctiveness and sense of place. This report sets out the context to each of the published character assessments and the need to consider the character at a scale appropriate to the proposals.

2.3. This LVIA considers the local, site specific character, features and context as identified by Tyler Grange through fieldwork, and is informed by a review of published assessments and designations that provides an understanding of the value and susceptibility of the landscape to accommodate change associated with development through the identification of the sensitivity of the site and associated features of the proposals. This sets out the landscape context at a scale appropriate to the proposals.

Observations from fieldwork – Local Context and Site Specific Character

2.4. Whilst the site lies within the areas and types as defined by the published landscape character assessments and shares some of their characteristics, these do not consider the nature of the site or its location within the local landscape. Differences in landform, land use, landscape structure, degree of visual enclosure and influence of built development creates variation in landscape character and local distinctiveness.

2.5. Therefore, Tyler Grange has undertaken a site-specific character assessment in order to assist in gaining a greater appreciation of those features and characteristics to which the development of the site needs to respond. The description below summarises the characteristics of the landscape character as defined by Tyler Grange.

2.6. The pattern of the landscape is heavily influenced by its land use with numerous hedgerow field boundaries with standard hedgerow trees and infield trees (predominately oak), avenues to farmsteads, winding vegetated watercourses and stream corridors as well as numerous woodland blocks and spinneys that provide a robust landscape structure that imparts a wooded character to the landscape. This permanent landscape structure is contrasted by the agricultural fields which change not only seasonally as crops mature and but also annually as fields are rotated (see photo below).

2.7. The landscape is sparsely settled with settlements generally located on the higher lying ground (minor ridgelines and low lying hills). The small villages are often a mix of residential dwellings with light industrial units (Pulham, Hazelbury Bryan). These are interspersed with isolated cottages (Orange Nook, Boywood Cottages) and small nucleated farmsteads (Parsonage Farm, Dairy House Farm, Boywood Farm, Povert Bridge Farm, Glebe Farm, Cannings Court) and large spreading farms that are dominated by large barns (Fir Tree Farm, North Dairy Farm, Grange Farm), which lie close to key transport routes. There is the distinct area of landscape character associated with The Old Rectory, St Thomas Becket's Church and Rectory Cottage which has elements of a designed landscape.

2.8. There is a sense of tranquillity to the wider landscape due to the sparse settlement, however, this is often interrupted by the sound of a tractor or military aircraft flying overhead.

2.9. In addition to this there is a utilitarian element to the landscape which is exhibited by the large functional agricultural barns that are visible on the minor ridgelines and high voltage overhead lines (spaced at approximately 0.16km spacing) cutting across the landscape. In addition to this there is an electrical substation approximately 2.77km to the northwest of the site and a small solar array (0.5ha) lies approximately 1km to the north east of the site but has no interrelationship with the site.

2.10. There is a strong sense of enclosure within the valleys with high hedges flanking narrow lanes along with woodland blocks and tree belts limiting visibility. This is contrasted by the panoramic cross-valley views gained from the higher lying chalk ridgelines that define the Dorset AONB.

The Site

2.11. An initial assessment was undertaken that included the full extent of the landholdings of North Dairy Farm, which identified the following Landscape Character Types (See Plan 12761/P05a):

- A - North Dairy Farmstead;
- B - North Dairy Farm Mixed Agricultural Fields;
- C - River Lydden Corridor and Floodplain;
- D - Small Irregular Flat Mixed Agricultural Fields;
- E - Humber Wood Pasture and Avenue;
- F - Large Uniformly Sloping Mixed Agricultural Fields; and
- G - Large Open Undulating Arable Fields.

2.12. Following the initial assessment an integrated evaluation of the opportunities and constraints of the Site for all disciplines was carried out discounting Fields 1-3; 5; 14-15 and 18-27 from the Site.

2.13. The Site is located within a transitional landscape that straddles the Dorset Clay Vale LCT/ Blackmore Vale LCA (northern half of the Site) and the Dorset Rolling Vales LCT/ Blackmore Rolling Vales (southern half of the Site). See Plan 12761/P04a. The north/ south divide is perhaps most evident in the field boundaries where the southernmost boundaries between Field 10-13 are defined by vegetated channels with intermittent hedges whilst the northern boundaries are defined by mature hedges, often with oak hedgerow trees, except along the trackway where there is a post and wire fence between Field 6-9.

2.14. The north/ south divide is further strengthened by a strong sense of enclosure with views limited by the local topography and vegetation within the southernmost fields where there are a few views out over the treetops and hedges within the northernmost fields. There are also views of Dungeon Hill Fort from the north western area of the site that provides a visual link to the wider surrounding landscape.

2.15. The Site consists of 11 mixed agricultural fields that form part of North Dairy Farm. The nuances of the topography of the Site contributes greatly to the character of the site which can be classified into the following three Site Specific Landscape Character Areas (See Plan 12761/P05a):

- Small Irregular Flat Mixed Agricultural Fields;

- Large Uniformly Sloping Mixed Agricultural Fields;

- Large Open Undulating Arable Fields.

District Character Areas

2.16. The most recent Landscape Character Assessments were undertaken in 2008 for North Dorset District Council and in 2009 for Dorset Council. The assessments were also accompanied by a report *Physical Influences on the Dorset Landscape*, which informed the assessments.

2.17. The mixed geology and resultant topography of North Dorset has a marked influence on its landscape character. Here the predominantly rural landscape of open chalk downlands and distinctive chalk escarpments are subdivided by wide clay vales. The Site is located within the Blackmore Vale to the north of the chalk escarpment and is described as an *"extensive, flat clay vale bordered by limestone ridges to the North West and deeply undulating foothills beside the escarpment to the south and east of the vale. The vale is drained by the alluvial basin of the Stour and its tributaries the River Lydden and the Caundle Brook"* (Physical Influences on the Dorset Landscape).

The Dorset Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

2.18. The Dorset Landscape Character Assessment (online, 2009) identified 21 landscape types in Dorset. The Site lies within a transitional area between the **Clay Vale and Rolling Vale Landscape Character Types** (See Plan 12761/P04a).

2.19. The assessment identified the following Management Objectives and guidance notes relevant to the Site for the Clay Vales Landscape Character Type:

- The overall management objective for the Clay Vale Landscape Type is to **conserve the patterns that contribute to the rural, tranquil landscape of winding lanes and small-scattered settlements. Restoration of the elements, which are in decline such as the hedgerows, hedgerow trees and narrow corridors of wet woodlands is also a key objective**.
- Encourage maintenance and enhancement of boundaries, particularly along the vale and replant any gaps where necessary.

2.20. The assessment identified the following Management Objectives and guidance notes relevant to the Site for the Rolling Vales Landscape Character Type:

- The overall management objective for the Rolling Vales Landscape Type should be to **conserve and enhance the diverse pattern of trees, woodland, hedgerow and small-scale fields, watercourses and narrow lanes**. The conservation of the rural and tranquil nature of the area is also a key objective.
- Any new planting should reflect the existing varied visual structure of woods, copses, hedges and trees.

The Dorset Historic Landscape

2.21. The Historic Landscape Assessment is based on the Landscape Character Types and includes the following descriptions:

- Clay vale: *Generally mixed, but on a larger scale than e.g. Limestone Hills, with a preponderance of apparently planned enclosure, with some parliamentary enclosure. Larger field sizes with straight field boundaries are taken to indicate large scale, planned enclosure by landowners or larger tenants or groups of tenants. Alongside this there are substantial areas of less organised and piecemeal enclosure – smaller, less regular (in some cases very irregular) fields are taken to indicate less systematic enclosure by individuals or small tenants or communities. Alongside these are small patches of enclosed open fields, the origins of which are clearly indicated by sinuous field boundaries.*
- Rolling Vale: *Mixed but piecemeal enclosure and small-scale planned enclosure dominate, with some enclosed strip fields, particularly in the vicinity of settlements. A greater woodland element, with larger areas of woodland, than e.g. Limestone Hills. There are large areas (particularly areas of less organised enclosure) where the character of the field boundaries suggests that they may well be surviving prehistoric or Romano-British boundaries and trackways.*

North Dorset Landscape Character Assessment (2008)

2.22. North Dorset District Council undertook an updated Landscape Character Assessment in 2008 at a similar scale and used the same methodology as the *Dorset Landscape Character Assessment* (2003), which was updated in 2009. The updated assessment identified 8 Landscape Character Types and 18 Landscape Character Areas within North Dorset.[1]

2.23. The Site straddles two different Landscape Character Areas:

- **South Blackmore Rolling Vales; and**
- **Blackmore Vale**

2.24. South Blackmore Rolling Vales LCA is described as:

*"This is a similar landscape to the North Blackmore Rolling Vales with the same underlying geology. It acts as a transition zone between the flatter Blackmore Vale and the chalk escarpment. In this area, the foothills though are less distinctive than they are around Shaftesbury but the area does gradually become more hilly, folded and more wooded near the escarpment. The escarpment still provides a backdrop and skyline to the south and east and helps to visually enclose the area. The rolling farmland hills continue into the deeply indented valleys created by the chalk escarpment, typically in places such as Shillingstone and in the deep valley extending south to Ansty. **The undulating, rolling, mainly pastoral landscape is characterised by medium sized irregularly shaped fields sub-divided by thick but often trimmed hedgerows**. There are mature hedgerows similar to the Blackmore Vale in the area but they are not as distinctive in this rolling landscape. **The presence of isolated 'stag headed' oaks are a sign of the increasing maturity of these features.** There are some small scale deciduous copses and woodlands, some of which are designated as SNCI as well as some mixed plantation woodland in the area. The areas on the edge of the Blackmore Vale inevitably have characteristics similar to both areas and hence this is being a **transitional character area**".*

2.25. The key characteristics are (highlighted in bold are characteristics evident on Site):

- **Undulating and rolling farmland hills forming a transition zone between the Blackmore Vale and the chalk escarpment**.
- The chalk escarpment forms a backdrop and landmark to the area.
- A more folded landscape at the foot of the escarpment.
- **Irregular shaped fields bounded by thick hedgerows**.
- **Mature hedgerows are important features nearer the Blackmore Vale**.
- **Twisting hedge lined lanes with narrow verges**.
- Small bridged stream crossings are key features often with low parapets.
- Settlements are often situated at the foot of the escarpment or on elevated slopes overlooking the Vale
- There are numerous scattered farmsteads.
- Frequent use of locally distinctive building materials, mainly stone and brick, adds to character.
- A tranquil and unified landscape.
- The 'tongue' of rolling hills at Shillingstone, where the River Stour breaks through the chalk escarpment, is a key feature.
- Piddles Wood is an important SSSI woodland in the north of the area on the edge of the Stour Valley.

[1] North Dorset District Council, *North Dorset Landscape Character Assessment Addendum*, 2008

2.26. Blackmore Vale LCA is described as being:

*"**A broad, gently undulating clay vale drained by the River Stour and its main tributaries, the River Lydden and the River Cale, together with many small streams and brooks**. It is an open and expansive landscape with long views particularly to the chalk escarpment which defines its eastern and southern edges. The limestone ridge from Sturminster Newton to Bourton divides the Vale into two separate halves, west and east, with the western part extending into neighbouring West Dorset and Somerset. There is a blurring at the edges of the area particularly with the flat Stour Valley character area. The Vale becomes more undulating at the transition with the Blackmore Rolling Vales and Limestone Ridges character areas. There are a few more elevated and prominent areas within the Vale itself for example at Manston".*

2.27. The key characteristics are (highlighted in bold are characteristics evident on Site):

- A broad expansive clay Vale which is tranquil and unified.
- **A unique mosaic of woods, straight hedgerows and grassland fields 'dotted' with distinctive mature hedgerow Oaks**.
- **Open views across the undulating to flat pastoral landscape to the chalk escarpment backdrop.**
- Dense network of twisting lanes often with grass verges and sharp double 90o bends.
- Small hump backed bridges with low stone or brick parapets
- Many very small villages and hamlets built with locally distinctive materials, such as stone, redbrick, tile and thatch.
- **A network of ditches, streams and brooks which drain into the tributaries of the Stour**.
- Lydlinch Common (an SSSI) and Stock Gaylard Deer Park (an SNCI) are both key locally important features.

National Character Areas

2.28. Natural England's National Character Assessment identifies the Site within **NCA 133: Blackmore Vale and Vale of Wardour**, which is described as *"predominantly in pasture, the vale has a generally even pattern of regular hedged fields, scattered woodlands, dense hedgerows and frequent hedgerow trees. Willow and alder along the many streams imbue an almost wetland atmosphere, particularly in the winter, when water often stands in the poorly drained fields."*

2.29. The Site's wider landscape setting exhibits the following key characteristics, which contribute towards its character:

- A complex mosaic of mixed farming: undulating, lush clay vales dissected by a broken limestone ridge and fringed by Upper Greensand hills and scarps.
- Predominantly clay surface geology (soils) leading to seasonally high water table with standing water in fields; many ditches and streams.
- Broken low limestone ridges with shallow valleys, and steeper valleys around the margins of the area.
- Small villages and hamlets forming nuclei within a patchwork of fields, hedges, woods.

2.30. It is important to note that the national character mapping is not of a level of detail sufficient to provide an appreciation of the specific landscape character and context issues of the Site, which need to be considered in the development process. Therefore, although it provides context to the district character area descriptions, it is of limited relevance.

Visual Context and Visual Receptors

2.31. Chapter 6 of GLVIA3 sets out how the visual baseline is established. The baseline for visual effects should establish the area in which the proposed development may be visible, those people who may experience views of the development, the viewpoints where they will be affected and the nature of the views at the viewpoints. This section considers these factors, with reference to a number of representative viewpoints from within the local landscape.

Extent of Visibility

2.32. In order to determine the extent of the area from which the development has the potential to be seen GIS and Ordnance Survey Terrain data are modelled to create a topographical plan (see 12761/P01a **Topography**) and this is followed by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping (see **12761/P02a Zone of Theoretical Visibility**). The computer generated ZTV is created using bare earth Ordnance Survey 3D modelling data and does not take into consideration the screening effect of built form, trees and vegetation and how this may influence the visibility of the site and development upon it. This information provides a starting point for the fieldwork in terms of determining the extent of visibility and the likely receptors. Field verification is essential in establishing the extent of the actual visual envelope for the development.

2.33. The ZTV indicates the potential for the solar panels (2.6m at their higher edge), invertor stations (3.4m high), transformers (2.5m high), perimeter fencing (2.2m high)) and potential battery storage units (3m high) to be viewed from the surrounding landscape. The individual CCTV cameras (2.5 – 3m high at intervals of approximately 50m) have not been modelled for the ZTV as this would exaggerate the theoretical visibility of the proposals but these are considered in the assessment.

2.34. The field verification process enables the assessor to view the site and define the true limits of the visual envelope, so that it only includes those locations from which the site is evident in views, excluding those that are barely discernible and taking into account vegetation and built form. **Plan 12761/P02a** identifies the Field Verified Visual Envelope of Site, which is a much smaller area than suggested by the ZTV as the visibility of the site is relatively contained by intervening landform and vegetation.

Nature of Views

2.35. The sparsely settled wider landscape has a rural character that is complemented by long range panoramic cross-valley views from the surrounding ridges. There is generally little movement within the landscape, apart from the main roads, which imparts a tranquil quality to the landscape. The wider landscape consists of small scattered villages and isolated farmsteads located on the higher lying land. The lanes are narrow and flanked by hedges and much of the land is in private ownership and actively farmed and therefore views on the whole are limited to public rights of ways that follow field boundaries where substantial hedgerows frame the views.

2.36. Representative views of the site from a variety of receptors in the local area have been determined on the basis of the first sieve GIS mapping and subsequent fieldwork (see **12761/P06 Viewpoint Location Plan**). The identification of views has been carried out from external spaces within the public domain, and not from buildings or private spaces.

2.37. The photographs included in this report have been taken using an SLR digital camera using a focal length equivalent to 50mm, they are intended to provide an indication of the view and extent of visibility, it is recognised that such views are best experienced in the view. The photographs were taken during 3 site visits in November 2019, December 2019 and January 2020. The photographs represent conditions in winter illustrating a 'worst case scenario'. The photographs were taken during periods with good visibility.[2] These photographs are shown on the photo sheets (**12761/P07 - Viewpoints 1 to 20**).

2.38. The 20 selected viewpoints are as follows:

- Viewpoint 1: The Green, Kingston
- Viewpoint 2: PRoW N41/10 (Wonston, Hazelbury)
- Viewpoint 3: PRoW N41/9 (Muston Farm, Hazelbury)
- Viewpoint 4: Public Bridleway (PRoW N52/4)
- Viewpoint 5: Rawlsbury Camp Hillfort (10m north of PRoW N52/5)
- Viewpoint 6: Pleck Hill (Lane) near Fir Tree Farm
- Viewpoint 7: Mappowder (PRoW N46/11)
- Viewpoint 8: Taylor's Lane N46/17
- Viewpoint 9: Taylor's Lane
- Viewpoint 10: Humber Hill Farm (PRoW N46/19)
- Viewpoint 11: Sharnhill Green (PRoW S10/27)
- Viewpoint 12: Dungeon Hill Fort (PRoW S10/7)
- Viewpoint 13: Pulham (PRoW N49/22)
- Viewpoint 14: Dodies Wood (PRoW N49/9)
- Viewpoint 15: North Dairy Farm Footpath N49/7
- Viewpoint 16: Between Footpath N46/28 and Bridleway N46/21 (near Old Boywood Farm)
- Viewpoint 17: North Dairy Farm PRoW N46/21
- Viewpoint 18: Star Farm (PRoW N46/21)
- Viewpoint 19: Dairy House Farm (PRoW N46/20)
- Viewpoint 20: North Dairy Farm (PRoW 46/20) - On Site

[2] www.metoffice.gov.uk/guide/weather

2.39. The viewpoints are representative of views into the site from the surrounding landscape. A general description of these are given below.

- **Views from the north and west:** The low lying topography of Blackmore Vale accompanied by robust hedgerow field boundaries, winding river corridors, copses and small woodland blocks tend to limit medium-distance views from higher lying vantage points where cross-valley views are attained. The Site lies within the Blackmore Vale next to the River Lydden. Multiple layers of intervening vegetation obscure the Site from views from the north and west.

- **Views from the south and Dorset AONB:** Distant views from the south are restricted due to intervening landform and vegetation. There are only two distant views of the Site from the AONB and this is limited to just a couple of meters on Rawlsbury Camp Hill Fort and Dungeon Hill Fort. Medium distance views from the south are again very limited to the elevated hill off Taylor's Lane where there is a glimpsed view through a field gate from the lane and a view from the footpath where one field is visible in the view.

- **Views from the east:** Direct views of the Site from the east are limited to one medium distance view from The Green, Kingston, a short section of road to the front of Fir Tree Farm and footpaths west of Wonston.

- **Close-range views:** Close views looking directly into the Site are restricted to those within or close to the boundary of the Site where there is no intervening vegetation. That is, the footpath running through the four southern fields, the footpath to the northeast of the Site where one field is visible and a short section of footpath on the brow of the elevated land north of Parsonage Farm would have a direct view into the Site.

Types of Visual Receptors

2.40. Having conducted the site visit and analysed the views from the 20 viewpoint locations the following receptors have been identified as having the potential to be affected by the proposed development. It is also important to note that the sensitivity of the receptor would be moderated by distance.

2.41. **Road users (motorists)** - Direct views of the Site from local roads are greatly reduced due to intervening vegetation. The lanes have very narrow verges limiting their use for pedestrians. The following road user receptors with views of the Site were identified:

- Pleck Hill (Lane) motorisits: There are fleeting glimpses of the Site over the hedges flanking the lae but as this is a narrow country lane the driver's attention is focused on the road ahead rather than the view. See Viewpoint 6.
- Taylor's Lane motorists: This is a very narrow lane flanked by high hedges. There is one fleeting view of the Site through a field gate but as this is a narrow winding country lane the driver's attention is focused on the road ahead rather than the view. See Viewpoint 9.

2.42. **The Dorset AONB** – The setting of the AONB that includes views into and out of the AONB contribute towards its special qualities. Views out of the AONB are limited to the higher lying ridgelines where vegetation does not obstruct views. There are only two viewpoints where there is intervisibility between the AONB and the Site from publicly accessible areas. These are:

- Rawlsbury Camp Hill Fort recreational users: The Site is not evident in the extensive cross-valley panoramic views. Intervening vegetation and landform obscures views of Blackmore Vale from the hill fort. However, there is one spot where there is a glimpsed view of the Vale. The Site sits low within the view with partial long-distance views of the southern fields. See Viewpoint 5.
- Dungeon Hill Fort recreational users: The Site is not evident in the extensive cross-valley panoramic views. The Site sits low within the view with intervening vegetation screening most of the Site except for a partial long-distance view of the northern and southern most fields. See Veiwpoint 12.

2.43. **Recreational** – There are numerous PRoW footpaths and bridleways throughout the landscape. Views of the Site are limited due to intervening landform and vegetation. The following recreational receptors with views of the Site were identified:

- Footpath N14/10 and N41/9 (Wonston, Hazelbury Bryan): The Site is partially obscured by intervening vegetation with some direct views into the Site. The Site lies low within the cross-valley views and does not form part of the skyline. See Veiwpoint 2 and 3.
- Footpath N46/17 (Taylor's Lane): The Site is partially obscured by intervening vegetation with direct views of the parts of the southernmost fields. The Site lies low within the cross-valley views and does not form part of the distant skyline. See Veiwpoint 8.
- Footpath N49/7 (North Dairy Farm): Multiple layers of intervening vegetation obscures the Site from view. There is a heavily filtered glimpse of the Site from the trackway between the barns at North Dairy Farm. See Veiwpoint 15.
- Footpath N46/28 and Bridleway N46/21 (near Old Boywood Farm): The field boundary hedgerows provide robust screening of the Site. See Veiwpoint 16.
- Bridleway N46/21 (North Dairy Farm): Field boundary hedgerows screen the Site from view. In winter there are filtered views of the adjacent fields where hedges are less dense or a direct view through a field gate. There is direct view of the northern most field as it is elevated and forms part of the skyline. See Veiwpoint 17.

- Footpath N46/20 and N46/19 (Dairy House Farm): Field boundaries robustly screen the site from view in all instances apart from the gaps where there is a field gate and pedestrian gate. See Veiwpoint 19.
- Footpath N46/20 (North Dairy Farm): The footpath runs through the southernmost part of the Site. It has been partially diverted and runs through 3 fields along the field margins. Views are limited by the undulating landform and vegetation with views into adjoining fields where there are breaks in the hedgerows. Views out to the surrounding landscape are limited to the higher lying ridges to the south of the Site. See Viewpoint 20.

2.44. **Residential** - views of the Site from residential properties are very limited and, in most instances, limited to 1st floor rooms oriented towards the Site. The analysis has been carried out from external spaces within the public domain, and not from buildings or private spaces. The following residential receptors with possible views of the Site were identified:

- The Green, Kingston: The properties have cross-valley views out over Blackmore Vale to the surrounding chalk ridges. The Site sits low within the view and is partially screened by intervening landform and vegetation. The Site is not visible from gardens or ground floor rooms. There may be long distance views from 1st floor rooms but the Site would not be evident in these views at it sits low within the view and is partially screened by intervening vegetation. See Viewpoint 1.
- Hazelbury Bryan (properties on the western edge of The Orchard and De Briane Close): There are no views of the Site from gardens or ground floor rooms. There may be a very limited no. of views from 1st floor rooms from properties orientated towards the Site.
- Fir Tree Farm – The farmhouse lies on an elevated ridgeline. There are no views of the Site from the garden or ground floor rooms as these are screened by a hedge. There may be views of the Site from 1st floor rooms.
- Dairy House Farm: The garden and ground floor rooms have no views of the Site. There may be one filtered partial view of the Site from a 1st floor room orientated towards the Site (see photo below).

- Boywood Farm: There are filtered views into a very small area of the Site directly opposite the farmhouse where post and wire fencing marks the field boundaries (see photo below).

Landscape Policy Context

2.45. This subsection should be read in conjunction with **Landscape Designations and PRoW** (Plan 12761/P03a).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019

2.46. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11). The NPPF sets out three overarching objectives to achieve sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. For decision-taking, development that accords with a current development plan should be approved without delay; and, where the development plan is absent, silent, or relevant policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless:

"i. The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. Any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in [the NPPF] taken as a whole."

2.47. Footnote 6 outlines the protected areas or assets of particular importance that the NPPF policies refer to, these include:

- Habitat sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 176); and/ or
- Designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- A National Park (or within the Broads Authority); or
- Defined as Heritage Coast, irreplaceable habitats;
- Designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 63); and
- Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

2.48. It should be noted that the site is not located within an AONB. However, there may be some intervisibility between the site and the Dorset AONB.

2.49. Paragraph 20 refers to strategic policies that should set out a strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development and make sufficient provision for housing, infrastructure for transport, community facilities and conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes, and green infrastructure and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

2.50. Chapter 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change sets out how the *"planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. 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, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure."* (Paragraph 148)

2.51. Paragraph 151 states that *"to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:*

a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);
b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and
c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for colocating potential heat customers and suppliers."

2.52. Paragraph 154 states that *"when determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should:*
a) 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; and

b) approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas."

2.53. Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment specifies how planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment. Paragraph 170(a) states that protection and enhancement of *"valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils"* should be *"in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan"*. No definition of a *"valued landscape"* is provided in the NPPF or PPG. The value of the landscape is considered in relation to the sensitivity of the landscape and features within this report.

2.54. Attention is drawn to the difference between international, national and local landscape designations in Paragraph 171 where it states that plans should *"distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in [the NPPF]; take*

a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries."

2.55. Paragraph 172 goes on to elaborate that *"great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty"* in landscapes with the highest status of protection, National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Similarly, the *"conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads"*.

Planning Practice Guidance

2.56. Those categories of National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) that are of particular relevance to landscape and visual matters are set out below.

Design

2.57. The NPPG states that well-deigned places can be achieved by taking a proactive and collaborative approach at all stages of the planning process. The guidance sets out processes and tools that can be used through the planning system. The guidance is to be read alongside the National Design Guide with landscape forming an integral part of the design process.

Natural Environment

2.58. The NPPG makes reference to the National Planning Policy Framework, stating: "it is clear that plans should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and that strategic policies should provide for the conservation and enhancement of landscapes" (Paragraph: 036 Reference ID: 8-036-20190721).

2.59. It is therefore emphasised that the cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully, whereby proposals should "avoid adverse impacts on landscapes and set out necessary mitigation measures, such as appropriate design principles and visual screening, where necessary. The cumulative impacts of development on the landscape need to be considered carefully." (Paragraph: 036 Reference ID: 8-036-20190721).

Renewable and low carbon energy

2.60. The NPPG acknowledges that the *"deployment of large-scale solar farms can have a negative impact on the rural environment, particularly in undulating landscapes. However, the visual impact of a well-planned and well-screened solar farm can be properly addressed within the landscape if planned sensitively."*

2.61. It goes on to state that a local planning authority will need to consider the following factors relevant to the Site:

- *where a proposal involves greenfield land, whether*
  - *(i) the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary and poorer quality land has been used in preference to higher quality land; and*
  - *(ii) the proposal allows for continued agricultural use where applicable and/or encourages biodiversity improvements around arrays.*
- *that solar farms are normally temporary structures and planning conditions can be used to ensure that the installations are removed when no longer in use and the land is restored to its previous use;*
- *the proposal's visual impact, the effect on landscape of glint and glare and on neighbouring uses and aircraft safety (note that the LVIA has not assessed glint or glare impact);*
- *the extent to which there may be additional impacts if solar arrays follow the daily movement of the sun;*
- *the need for, and impact of, security measures such as lights and fencing;*
- *great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting. As the significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence, but also from its setting, careful consideration should be given to the impact of large scale solar farms on such assets. Depending on their scale, design and prominence, a large scale solar farm within the setting of a heritage asset may cause substantial harm to the significance of the asset;*
- *the potential to mitigate landscape and visual impacts through, for example, screening with native hedges;*
- *The approach to assessing cumulative landscape and visual impact of large scale solar farms is likely to be the same as assessing the impact of wind turbines. However, in the case of ground-mounted solar panels it should be noted that with effective screening and appropriate land topography the area of a zone of visual influence could be zero.* (Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 5-013-20150327)

Local Planning Context

2.62. The site falls within Dorset Council, which includes the former North District Council. Whilst the new Local Plan is being progressed the policies set out within the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (adopted 2016), as well as policies retained from the District-Wide Local Plan (adopted 2003) still apply.

2.63. The following text summarises the planning policies relevant to landscape and visual issues, as well as adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and other published guidance and studies that are of particular relevance.

Neighbourhood Plans

2.64. The site is located within a rural area, which is not covered by a Neighbourhood Plan. The closest Neighbourhood Plan Areas are Buckland Newton, which states that Policy COM11 of the Local Plan offers an appropriate way forward for planning renewable energy and Hazelbury Bryan, which does not refer to renewable energy developments.

North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 2011 - 2031 (LPP1)

2.65. The North Dorset Local Plan consists of two parts. Part 1 sets out the strategic planning policies for North Dorset. Part 2, which would have reviewed land allocations and settlement boundaries will not be undertaken at this stage.

2.66. The planning policies relevant to the landscape and visual aspects and context of the site are set out below.

Policy 1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

2.67. *"When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area."*

Policy 2: Core Spatial Strategy

2.68. The Policy states that all development proposals should be located in accordance with the spatial strategy for North Dorset. The Site falls outside of the four main towns and therefore is considered to be part of 'The Countryside', as such the policy states that "… the remainder of the District will be subject to countryside policies where development will be strictly controlled unless it is required to enable essential rural needs to be met."

Policy 3: Climate Change

2.69. The Local Plan states North Dorset's commitment to the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy targets set by national policy and that the council will encourage appropriate schemes. It states that *"whilst encouraging schemes, adverse impacts including cumulative landscape and visual impacts, will need to be satisfactorily addressed. Some renewable or low carbon energy developments may be large-scale and may require a countryside location; others may be incorporated into other development proposals.*

Policy 4: The Natural Environment

2.70. Policy 4 highlights the fact that almost 40% of the District is designated as an AONB and as such is highly valued. This places an emphasis on the protection of environmental assets within the landscape as well as the protection of the visual quality and character of the District's landscape.

2.71. Therefore Policy 4 states that:

"The natural environment of North Dorset and the ecosystem services it supports will be enhanced through the protection of environmental assets and the establishment of a coherent ecological network of designated sites and steppingstone sites linked via corridor features. Where development takes place, buffers should be provided to environmental assets to improve their biodiversity value and facilitate adaptation to climate change. Where opportunities exist, new habitats should be created to enhance this network further.

Developments that offer gains in biodiversity whether through the restoration of habitats or the creation of linkages between existing sites, will be looked upon favourably in the decision-making process.

Developments are expected to respect the natural environment including the designated sites, valued landscapes and other features that make it special. Developments should be shaped by the natural environment so that the benefits it provides are enhanced and not degraded.

Development proposals which seek to conserve or enhance the natural environment should be permitted unless significant adverse social or environmental impacts are likely to arise as a result of the proposal."

Landscape Character

2.72. *"The landscape character of the District will be protected through retention of the features that characterise the area. Where significant impact is likely to arise as a result of a development proposal, developers will be required to clearly demonstrate that that the impact on the landscape has been mitigated and that important landscape features have been incorporated in to the development scheme."*

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

2.73. *"Within the areas designated as AONB and their setting, development will be managed in a way that conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the area. Proposals which would harm the natural beauty of the AONBs will not be permitted unless it is clearly in the public interest to do so. In such instances, effective mitigation should form an integral part of the development proposals. Developers will be expected to demonstrate how they have had regard to the objectives of the relevant AONB management plan for the area."*

Policy 20: The Countryside

2.74. Policy 20 reiterates Policy 2 stating that:

"Development in the countryside outside defined settlement boundaries will only be permitted if:

a. it is of a type appropriate in the countryside, as set out in the relevant policies of the Local Plan, summarised in Figure 8.5"

2.75. That is, Policy 3 and 22 are the relevant policies related to renewable energy schemes.

Policy 22: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

2.76. North Dorset Council has undertaken a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (Landscape Sensitivity to Wind and Solar Energy Developments in North Dorset District, LUC, April 2014), which identifies the potential effects of wind and solar energy developments on the landscape character of North Dorset and evaluates their potential to accommodate renewable energy developments. This informs Policy 22, which states the following:

2.77. Assessing Benefits against Impacts:

"When considering proposals for heat or electricity generation from renewable or low carbon sources, the social, economic and environmental benefits of the scheme should be assessed

against the likely impacts. A proposal for generating heat or electricity from renewable or low carbon sources (excluding wind energy development) will be permitted provided it can be demonstrated that:

a. both individually and cumulatively, all adverse impacts arising from the proposal have been satisfactorily assessed; and

b. the proposal has maximised the potential to mitigate any adverse impacts that have been identified; and

c. the actual benefits that the scheme will deliver outweigh the adverse impacts that remain."

2.78. Impacts:

"Potential adverse environmental impacts (together with measures to mitigate such impacts) that will be assessed in relation to any proposal include: visual impact; and impacts on biodiversity, the landscape, the historic environment including designated and non-designated heritage assets, the water environment and agricultural land. In addition, in assessing the adequacy of mitigation measures in relation to a proposal it will be expected that:

d. the proposal's location has been identified having regard to sites that make best use of existing transport infrastructure and the minimisation of traffic movements whilst providing safe access; and

e. any issues of, noise and vibration or interference to radar or any communication systems including televisions can be fully overcome; and

f. early meaningful consultation has been undertaken with people in the locality that might be adversely affected by the proposal and clear regard has been had to the responses received; and

g. the proposal incorporates an agreed restoration scheme including measures to remove installations when operations cease.

2.79. Benefits:

"Potential benefits that will be assessed in relation to any proposal include:

h. the amount of heat or electricity that is likely to be generated from the proposed renewable or low carbon energy development and the consequential reduction in greenhouse gas emissions; and

i. local community benefits, including jobs, investment in the local economy, community ownership or shareholding of a scheme and local provision of renewable and low carbon energy, for example, through a district heating network.

Policy 25: Amenity

2.80. *"The Council wishes to ensure that any new development will not have an adverse impact on the enjoyment of privately or publicly owned land and that the amenity of potential occupiers of new development is not likely to be compromised by their surroundings and general environment."*

2.81. *"Amenity also has an important visual component which relates not only to the location of development but also to its scale, massing and so on. This is more relevant to discussion of broader design issues, though, and so is dealt with in Policy 24 – Design."*

North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan (Adopted January 2003) retained policies:

2.82. Appendix A of the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 (LP1) lists those policies from the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan 2003 that have been saved and replaced by policies included in the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1. As such, these policies have not been listed here. Although the LP1 replaces many of the policies from the District-Wide Local Plan, some policies from the older local plan have been saved. In addition, the Proposals Maps from the Local Plan (2003) are still largely relevant, an extract of which is shown above right.

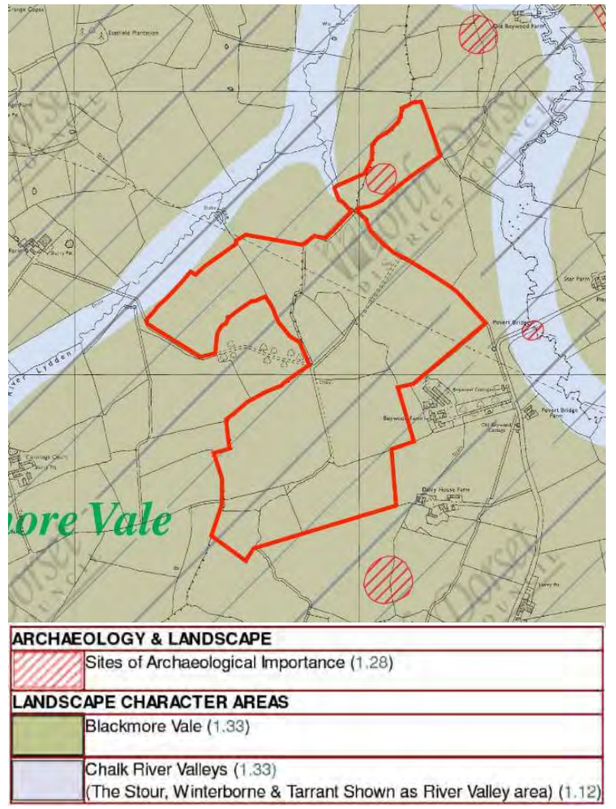


Figure 2 Extract from the North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan 2003 – Sheet 16 of the Proposals Map (Site boundary added in red)

North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan

Policy 1.12: RIVER VALLEYS

2.83. The Site is located adjacent to the Chalk River Valley Landscape Character Area. However, the policy states that:

"Development will not be permitted within the River Valley areas that are defined on the Proposal Maps where:
(i) the water quality of the river would be adversely affected by effluent pollution from the development.
(ii) the wildlife and their habitats, the vegetation and the landscape of the river valleys would be adversely affected by the development."

North Dorset District-Wide Local Plan

Policy 1.33: Landscape Character Areas

2.84. The Policy states:

"Within each of the Landscape Character Areas, defined on the Proposals Map, development should be situated and designed so as to integrate with the distinctive landscape character of the area.

This will be particularly important within the designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Environmentally Sensitive Area."

Local Plan Evidence Base Reports

Landscape Sensitivity to Wind and Solar Energy Development in North Dorset District (LUC, April 2014)

2.85. The report classifies the sensitivity of the landscape to solar development by Landscape Character Types and Areas. It further classifies the sensitivity of the landscape to size of development, namely <1ha; 1-10ha;10-30ha and >30ha.

2.86. The assessment defines landscape sensitivity as *"the extent to which the character and quality of the landscape is susceptible to change as a result of field-scale solar PV development."*

2.87. The Site is located within the South Blackmore Rolling Vales and Blackmore Vale Landscape Character Areas, which are classified as having a high landscape sensitivity to solar developments of >30ha. Table 4 states that High Landscape Sensitivity is achieved when *"Key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are highly vulnerable to change from the development type. Such development is likely to result in a significant change in character."*

2.88. It should be noted that the vast majority of North Dorset has been classified as having a high landscape sensitivity to solar developments of >30ha and that the assessment was carried out at a district level rather than a site specific level.

2.89. Section 6 of the assessment includes Table 7 that sets out the criteria for assessment of landscape sensitivity to solar PV development. Table 7 identifies landscape characteristics which could potentially be affected by solar PV development, and gives examples of physical landscape elements which, by exhibiting these characteristics, might suggest a greater susceptibility to character change.

2.90. Using Table 7 (**Appendix 3**) the susceptibility of the landscape on a site-specific scale will be assessed in **Section 3** of this report.

2.91. Section 11 of the assessment outlines generic Solar PV Energy Development Guidelines that recognise the importance of site specific assessment required to "identify the extent to which the typical characteristics identified in published assessments apply to the site in question." It also sets out the landscape characteristics that contribute to susceptibility which are:

- *Scale and Complexity of Landform;*
- *Scale and Complexity of Land Use and Field Pattern;*
- *Visual Exposure; and*
- *Development and Activity.*

2.92. Section 11 also states that: *"The size of a solar farm is the major factor that will affect the landscape sensitivity of a proposed development, but the arrangement of panel arrays and ancillary elements can also have a significant impact, particularly in a relatively undeveloped location or where a site is overlooked by higher ground."*

2.93. As set out in this section site design is a key consideration in reducing the impact as a first principle and one that has been considered in the site layout.

Other Relevant Policies and Designations

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

2.94. The site is not located within an ANOB, The Dorset AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 states that one of the special qualities of the AONB is that the ridgetops and escarpments *"allow the observer uninterrupted panoramic views to appreciate the complex pattern and textures of the surrounding landscapes".* The Site forms a very small part of the panoramic views and would not interrupt the views into or out of from the AONB.

2.95. Of particular relevance to the Site, and above are the following policies:

- ***Policy C1: The AONB and its setting is conserved and enhanced by good planning and development;***

  h. The landward and seaward setting of the AONB will be planned and managed in a manner that conserves and enhances the character and appearance of the AONB. Views into and out of the AONB and nonvisual effects, such as noise and wider environmental impacts, will be appropriately assessed.

- ***Policy C2: Landscape assessment & Monitoring is effective and Supports good decision making;***

  d. The key test of a proposal against the statutory purpose of the AONB will be its ability to demonstrate that the proposed change would conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty.

  e. The conservation and enhancement of the AONB's special qualities will be a significant consideration in the planning balance.

  f. Proposals that are harmful to the character and appearance of the area will not be permitted unless there are benefits that clearly outweigh the significant protection afforded to the conservation and enhancement of the AONB. Where impacts cannot be mitigated, planning gain and compensatory measures will be considered.

- ***Policy C3: Necessary development is supported***

  f. Support renewable energy production where compatible with the objectives of AONB designation.

- ***Policy C4: Development which has negative effects on the Natural beauty of the AONB, its special qualities, ecosystem flows and natural processes is avoided***

  c. Protect and where possible enhance the quality of views into, within and out of the AONB.

Conservation Areas

2.96. There are 48 Conservation Areas within North Dorset. The site is not located within a Conservation Area. The closets Conservation Areas are Hazelbury Bryan (0.7km at the closest point) and Mappowder (1.3km at the closest point). The impact on the setting of these Conservation Areas will be assessed separately by the Heritage Consultant and will not be included within the LVIA.

Listed Buildings

2.97. There are no listed buildings within the site. There are 4 listed buildings located within 1km of the site boundary to the north and several others within the Hazelbury Bryan Conservation Area to the east. The impact on the setting of these listed buildings (if relevant to their status) will be assessed separately by the Heritage Consultant and will not be included within the LVIA.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

2.98. There are a number of PRoW in close proximity to the Site (N49/4; N46/19; N46/21; N46/28) as well as one crossing through the Site (N46/20). The proposals will not alter the right of access but may alter the visual amenity. See Plan 12761/P03a.

Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

2.99. There are no Tree Preservation Orders within the site.

Section 3: Classification of Resources

Landscape Resources

3.1. The threshold and terminology referred to in this section are set out in **Appendix 1 and Appendix 3**. The classification of the sensitivity of the landscape character and landscape resources is related to:

- The susceptibility of the landscape;
- The type of change proposed; and
- The value placed on the landscape.

Landscape Susceptibility

3.2. It is relevant to note that the only scheme elements/ characteristics of a solar development *"which is considered to offer sufficient variation to have a significant impact on landscape sensitivity is the overall size of the solar PV development in terms of the land area covered by panels."* That is *"in general, the larger the proposed development the greater its impact is likely to be, but the characteristics of the landscape in which it is sited may either emphasise or diminish this impact."*[3]

3.3. This is the susceptibility of a landscape which is defined as the ability of the landscape to accommodate the proposed development without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline landscape conditions.

3.4. The classification of susceptibility to change is based on our experience as professional landscape practitioners, we apply the thresholds of susceptibility as **high, medium** and **low**.

3.5. The Site consists of 11 agricultural fields (pasture and arable), which forms part of a sparsely settled rural landscape that includes large agricultural farm buildings, small farmsteads, cottages, small villages and light industrial units. In addition to this there is an electrical substation approximately 2.77km to the northwest of the site and high voltage overhead cables (spaced at approximately 0.16km spacing) crossing through the north-western field parcels of the Site. A small solar array (0.5ha) lies approximately 1km to the north east of the site but has no interrelationship with the site.

3.6. **Appendix 3 - Table 7: Landscape characteristics and their susceptibility to Solar PV development** (*Landscape Sensitivity to Wind and Solar Energy Development in North Dorset District*, LUC, April 2014) includes the following criteria set out below.

- **Scale and complexity of landform:** The fields variable in scale ranging from small to medium. There is a distinct difference between the topography of the northern half of the site where the fields have a gentle uniform slope (4, 6-9, 16-17), the four southern fields (9,10,11,13) that have a rolling landform and the southernmost field that is flat (12).

- **Scale and complexity of land use & field pattern:** The Site and local context is a mixed pastoral and arable landscape with variation in field sizes and shapes with some semi-natural landcover along the water corridors.

- **Visual exposure**: The Site in of itself does not have a high scenic value as it is predominately arable land with detracting features such as post and wire fencing and overhead high-voltage pylons. The nature of the topography and strong landscape structure is such that it limits the visual exposure of the Site. In addition to this the Site is located within the floodplain and therefore does not provide a skyline backdrop to a neighbouring area. There is no visual connection between the landscapes of the Old Rectory and Cannington Court. There are very limited visual connections between the Site and the following landscapes that would have high visual sensitivity:

  A - Dorset AONB, where it forms a very small part of the panoramic view in only two locations.

  B – Hazelbury Bryan (Wonston) Conservation Area – the Site is visible from the fields to the west of the CA. However, the CA is limited to the footprint of the historic core and does not include fields surrounding the village. The Hazelbury Bryan Neighbourhood Plan notes that there is no appraisal for the CA that would identify if setting was important in its designation.

- **Development and activity:** The Site includes both traditional pasture and modern intensive farmland. It retains some naturalistic curved boundaries defined by watercourses but also straight channels and straight sided field boundaries with hedgerow trees with some loss of historic field boundaries. The Site includes some modern development/ detracting features such as the concrete track and high-voltage pylons.

3.7. Considering the landscape baseline set out in Section 2 the criteria set out above as per Appendix 3 and the criteria set

[3] *Landscape Sensitivity to Wind and Solar Energy Development in North Dorset District*, LUC, April 2014, p31, paragraph 6.7.

out in Appendix 1 – Table 1 **the susceptibility of the receiving landscape (wider landscape) to accommodate the development (changes to the Site) is Moderate**. This reflects the scale of proposed development and the site's relationship to the neighbouring landscape. Mitigation may be appropriate to enhance assimilation. These matters are considered in further detail in Section 4 of the report with regards to the proposed development and nature of change.

Landscape Value

3.8. The Site is not subject to any landscape designation that would indicate its value. In order to determine whether the landscape of the site itself and its immediate surroundings are valued, the GLVIA3 approach has been adopted within this LVIA. This is analysed in accordance with GLVIA3 Box 5.1 (See **Appendix 1**, which sets out the criteria) and is set out in Table TG2 of this report.

3.9. For each of these considerations, there is a range from 'good' through 'ordinary' to 'poor' in terms of the performance of the landscape against these criteria. In the table below these issues are considered in relation to the site and the nature of the proposed development.

3.10. Having considered the key elements related to the landscape value of the site in of itself, it has an **ordinary landscape value** within the wider landscape context. The landscape features present on the Site contribute to the overall landscape character but also includes some detracting elements as it is within a working agricultural landscape.

Table TG2: Assessment of factors which contribute towards landscape value of the Site

Criteria	Observations/Comments
Landscape Quality	Key elements which contribute towards the strength of landscape character and quality are the vegetated water corridors and field boundaries. The hedgerows are variable in condition but generally well maintained with oak hedgerow trees and oak in field trees. The water corridors tend to have a more natural character and are less intensively managed. The field pattern and scale of the Site has changed from that shown on the 1st Edition 25" OS map (c.1888). There has been considerable loss of historic field boundaries resulting in larger fields suitable for modern arable farming, which has replaced traditional pastoral farming (Fields 6,7,9,10,11,13). A small woodland copse has been lost (field 9) on Site as well as a woodland block (Humber Wood) adjacent to the Site. This is typical of the changes within the wider landscape, where there is a change from pastoral to arable farming. The Site also includes a modern concrete track flanked by post and wire fencing, which is in good condition but may be considered a detracting element within the landscape. There are also high voltage pylons (spaced at approximately 0.16km spacing) cutting through fields 6,7 and 16 which are detracting elements within the landscape. Overall, there is some degradation and loss of key landscape elements (hedges, woodland blocks, copses and traditional pasture), which contribute towards landscape character and quality. This aspect is considered ordinary.
Scenic Quality	The Site does not form part of a recognised view (i.e. recorded on maps). The mildly undulating landscape of the Site exhibits features typical to the prevailing character type but the arable fields, concrete track and pylons are not particularly attractive and therefore is not more attractive than the surrounding landscape. This aspect is considered ordinary.
Rarity	There are no rare or unique landscape elements present within the Site. This aspect is considered poor.
Representativeness	The Site does not contain particular features or elements which are considered particularly unique within the landscape. The Site includes water corridors, hedges, hedgerow trees and infield trees which are typical of the wider landscape and contribute towards the character of the wider landscape. This aspect is considered poor.
Conservation Interests	Apart from Field 4 where there are records of cultivation remains there are no other historical conservation interests. The river corridor is of local ecological conservation interest as an ecological corridor. There are no national or local designations within the Site that could add to the value of the landscape and therefore, this aspect is considered poor.
Recreational Value	A PRoW Footpath (N46/20) runs through Fields 13 and 11 and with the public also using a route through Field 10. There are also a number of PRoW (N46/19, 21, 28, N49/4,11) footpaths and a bridleway in close proximity of the site. These routes are generally informal paths along field margins, often not well signposted and are of local recreational value forming part of a larger network within the wider landscape that has many PRoW routes. This aspect is considered ordinary.
Perceptual Aspects	The Site is located within a working agricultural landscape. This aspect is considered ordinary.
Associations	There is an association to the local area with the heyday of hunting (*Tales of Good Sport - Stories of Fantastic Days Fox-Hunting from the Great Estates of England*, Read Books, 2011) but there are no particular associations to the Site itself. This aspect is considered poor.

Landscape Sensitivity

3.11. The classification of the sensitivity of the landscape (the site and its immediate surroundings) is related to the site's susceptibility to the proposed change and the quality of the factors that determine its value. The receiving landscape is considered to have an ordinary landscape value and a moderate susceptibility to the proposed change.

3.12. There are a number of moderating landscape features within the local context of the site that affect the specific sensitivity of the landscape to the proposed change. These include the local topography with few vantage points offering views of the site from publicly accessible areas and a landscape structure that further reduces the visibility of the site.

3.13. These moderating factors limit the extent to which the proposed changes would affect the landscape. Therefore, within the local site context the landscape has a **medium sensitivity** to the change that would result from the proposed development.

Visual Resources

Sensitivity of Visual Receptors

3.14. The susceptibility of the visual receptor to changes in views and visual amenity is dependent on the activity of the people experiencing the view and the extent to which their attention is focused on the view they are experiencing. This will influence the value attached to particular views and when combined with its susceptibility to change, the likely sensitivity of the visual receptor is identified.

3.15. As noted in **Section 2** the following visual receptors (where the Site is visible in the view) and their associated sensitivity (**Appendix 2: Table 2**) to change have been identified:

Table TG3: Assessment of factors which contribute towards visual sensitivity

Visual Receptor Groups	Value attached to Views (Activity of Users)	Visual Susceptibility	Sensitivity to Visual Change
Motorists within close proximity to Site - Viewpoint 6 and 9	Low	Medium-low – There are fleeting glimpses of the Site, very limited in distance and dependent on direction of travel. The local roads are narrow, flanked by hedges and often have 90^0-bends and therefore the driver's attention will be on the road ahead rather than on the view. There is a potential that this type of development may appear at odds with the visual composition.	Low
Recreational users within the AONB (vantage point) – Viewpoints 5 and 12	High	Low – there will be little potential for change to the composition of the view due to the distance and the wide panoramic view with the Site located low within the view and forming a very small part of the view.	Medium
Recreational users within the wider landscape (vantage point) - Viewpoint 8	High	Medium – only part of the site will be visible in the view. The proposal may introduce a strongly horizontal element within a strongly horizontal landscape. A regular pattern/ geometric layout may be at odds with the rolling landscape.	Medium - High
Recreational users in close proximity to the Site (vantage point) - Viewpoints 2 and 3	High	Medium –only part of the site will be visible. The proposal may introduce a strongly horizontal element within a strongly horizontal landscape. A regular pattern/ geometric layout may be at odds with the rolling landscape.	Medium - High
Recreational users in close proximity to the Site - Viewpoint 15	Medium - High	Low – there will be little potential for change to the composition of the view.	Low - Medium
Recreational users adjacent to the Site - Viewpoint 17	High	Medium –only part of the site will be visible. The proposal may introduce a strongly horizontal element within a strongly horizontal landscape. A regular pattern/ geometric layout may be at odds with the rolling landscape.	Medium - High
Recreational users in very close proximity to the Site – Viewpoint 16 and 19	High	Low – the proposals will not change the visual composition of the view.	Medium
Recreational users within the Site – Viewpoint 20	High	High – the proposals will change the visual composition and introduce incongruent elements.	High
Residential properties within wider landscape (vantage point) – The Green, Kingston	Medium	Low – there will be little change to the composition of the view due to the distance and with the Site located low within the view.	Low
Residential Properties in close proximity to the Site (vantage point) – Fir Tree Farm and western edge of Hazelbury Bryan	Medium	Medium – only part of the site will be visible and from a very limited number of 1st floor rooms. Views of the site will be filtered by intervening vegetation. The proposal may introduce a strongly horizontal element within a strongly horizontal landscape. A regular pattern/ geometric layout may be at odds with the rolling landscape.	Medium
Residential properties adjacent to the Site – Dairy House Farm	Medium	Medium – a small part of the site will be visible and from a very limited number of 1st floor rooms. The proposal may introduce a strongly horizontal element within a strongly horizontal landscape. A regular pattern/ geometric layout may be at odds with the rolling landscape.	Medium
Residential properties adjacent to the Site – Boywood Farm	Medium	Medium – a very small part of the site will be visible and from a very limited number of 1st floor rooms.	Medium

Section 4: Preliminary Assessment of Effects

The Proposals

4.1. In order to identify and describe the effects that are likely to occur it is necessary to understand the changes that may potentially affect the landscape and visual resources specifically. The following text therefore describes the development in those terms. This section should be read in conjunction with **Appendix 4: Planning Layout** (BSR Energy – 1641-0201-01 ISS06).

4.2. It should be noted that at this stage the location of mitigation planting has not been established and will evolve as the project progresses. The assessment below has taken into account the potential mitigation effects of enhancements to existing hedgerows but not additional buffer planting.

4.3. Below is a summary of the proposals:

- Static solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, ground mounted to a railing sub-structure. Laid out in rows with gaps of approximately 2-6m between each, arranged at an angle of c.22 degrees from east to west. The lower edge of the panels would be approximately 0.8m from the ground and up to approximately 2.6m at their higher edge;
- Approximately 14 inverter stations distributed evenly across the solar park. The inverters are located within a metal cabinet finished in green/white and positioned on a hardcore or concrete slab base. The cabinets are approximately 3.4m high;
- Approximately 14 transformers which are located next to the cabinets and are approximately 2.5m high;
- Compacted internal crushed stone tracks (constructed on a sub layer of geogrid membrane) to allow vehicular access between fields;
- Fencing 2.2m high and gates to enclose the panels within each field and allow sheep to graze securely. These comprise of wooden deer fence poles with galvanised fencing;
- Security and monitoring CCTV mounted on fence posts within each field. The poles would be approximately 2.5-3m high spaced at 50m intervals along the fence;
- Underground cabling to connect the panels to the proposed substation;
- A security-fenced enclosed substation compound (for both the Developer and the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) including associated ancillary services which will connect to the existing overhead power line. The sub-station measures approximately 50x40m and may require a single pole communications antenna (10m high);
- A substation access track with a cement based top layer (a statutory requirement of the DNO, SSE);
- A potential future battery storage area comprising a slab base measuring 50x50m with batteries housed within shipping containers (12x3x3m).
- There will be no lighting within the Site at night once operational.

4.4. The following sets out the predicted changes (effects) to the landscape and visual context that may be caused by the proposed development.

4.5. The effect of lighting, glint and glare do not form part of this assessment and will be addressed in separate reports should this be required.

Construction Phase

4.6. There will be a number of activities associated with the development of the site. The construction phase will be subject to a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) implemented to control construction related impacts. The following temporary impacts relevant to the LVIA will occur during the construction phase:

- Excavation and storage of spoil material associated with the development;
- Where the cable alignment crosses through hedges, routine practice would be to create a small opening approximately 3m wide to facilitate installation, which will be replanted;
- Lighting of the construction site, as necessary during the winter months, subject to a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and compliance with appropriate conditions;
- During construction one construction compound would serve the site and this will be located adjacent to the farm, thus reducing the distance delivery vehicles will need to travel after reaching the Site's entrance.
- Vehicles associated with the delivery of materials and staff, and movements within the site necessary for moving building materials;
- Temporary portable buildings to be used for offices, welfare and toilet facilities;
- Containerised storage areas;
- Parking for construction vehicles and workers vehicles;
- Temporary hard standing;
- Temporary gated compound; and
- Wheel washing facilities and road sweeper if ground conditions require, preventing mud and loose

material being transferred onto the local highway network;

- Fencing of the site for health and safety purposes and to protect existing vegetation from construction activities;
- Construction of new infrastructure;
- Removal of some vegetation so as to implement the proposals; and
- Implementation of new landscape proposals incorporating boundary planting (extent of these enhancements still to be established and will form part of the final assessment when this report is completed).

4.7. Existing trees and hedgerows that are to be retained within the proposed development will be protected during construction activity. Measures will be implemented to ensure that trees/hedgerows which will not be removed do not suffer direct damage through operations on-site or indirect damage from spillages within the root zone or storage causing root compaction in accordance with BS 5837:2012 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010.

Operational Phase

4.8. The completed development will result in the following visible changes that will last for approximately 35 years until decommissioned. These will be:

- A change in land use from the existing undeveloped land to a renewable energy site that includes static solar photovoltaic panels, inverter stations, transformers, a sub-station, a battery storage unit with additional crushed stone tracks and fencing with CCTVs.
- During the operational phase, the activities on site would amount to servicing of plant and equipment and vegetation management. The Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) would set out how the land would be managed throughout the operational phase of development.

4.9. On farmland outside of the proposed solar park, farming operations would remain unchanged. Within the solar park sheep grazing will be introduced to maintain the grassland for ecological and biodiversity enhancements.

4.10. The solar park would export renewable energy to the grid for 35 years following which it would be decommissioned. Any future battery storage element subsequently developed on site would also be decommissioned at the same time as the solar park.

Preliminary Mitigation Measures

4.11. Mitigation measures are those measures proposed to prevent / avoid, reduce and where possible offset or remedy (or compensate for) any significant adverse landscape and visual effects.

4.12. The effect of lighting and associated mitigation measures are not assessed as part of this report.

4.13. The effect of glint and glare and associated mitigation measures are not assessed as part of this report and will be addressed in a separate report should this be required.

Mitigation during Construction

4.14. Existing trees and hedgerows that are to be retained within the Site will be protected during construction activity. Measures will be implemented to ensure that trees/hedgerows which will not be removed do not suffer direct damage through operations on site or indirect damage from spillages within the root zone or storage causing root compaction in accordance with BS 5837:2012 and the Habitat Regulations, 1997.

4.15. A Lighting Management Plan will address issues related to light spill that may be related to the construction of the development should this be required.

Mitigation Incorporated Within the Development

4.16. The proposed development will seek to minimise potential effects to views associated with the AONB and the visual amenity of properties overlooking the Site. The Site itself does not have a high scenic value as it is predominately arable land with detracting features such as post and wire fencing and overhead high-voltage cables.

4.17. As a first principle the project has also sought to avoid sensitive landscape areas identified in the early stages of the project where the whole of North Dairy Farm was assessed. This resulted in Fields 1-3; 5; 14-15 and 18-27 being discounted. From a landscape and visual point of view these fields were discounted as they had a scenic value and contributed towards landscape character. This included an oak avenue (field 14 and 15), the treed river corridor and adjoining floodplain (fields3, 5, 18, 19, 27) as these are key elements of the local landscape character.

4.18. Areas of the site with clear intervisibility with the Dorset AONB were also excluded at an early stage, this included Field 1, 2, 5, and 20-27. The proposals were also limited in Fields 6-7 to further reduce the intervisibility.

4.19. In addition to this Fields 20 – 26, which forms part of the rural landscape associated with the North Dairy Farmstead, Orange Nook, Glebe Farm, The Old Rectory and Cannington Court were also discounted to reduce the effect on the landscape setting of The Old Rectory and Cannington Court.

4.20. The layout also sought to minimise any loss or changes to the landscape structure of the Site with stream corridors, hedges, trees and field patterns retained and buffered. The existing concrete track will be used for access and there

may be an opportunity to strengthen field boundaries with new hedges (if required for mitigation) providing long-term ecological enhancement.

4.21. In order to reduce the overall impact of the development a number of design strategies will need to be implemented. These include:

- Enhancement of the native hedgerow field boundaries and new buffer planting to reduce the prominence and screen the proposals from sensitive views (extent of these enhancements still to be established and will form part of the final assessment when this report is completed).

Preliminary Magnitude of Change

4.22. The sensitivity of the various receptors is set out in **Section 3** of this report. This sub-section now considers the magnitude of change, based on the scheme proposed. Reference should be made to **Appendix 2** for the terms used in this section.

4.23. As recommended by the professional guidance (GLVIA3) this report avoids the use of matrices and tables and sets out the assessment in a narrative format.

Landscape Character

4.24. The Site is comprised of 11 mixed agricultural fields that include both arable and pasture fields. Field boundaries include mature hedgerow boundaries, post and wire fences and water corridors that contribute towards a strong field pattern and treed character.

Construction Phase

4.25. Notwithstanding the above, during the construction phase, the activities and machinery on the site will introduce uncharacteristic elements into the landscape, resulting in a **temporary high, adverse magnitude of change** that would be limited to the site area.

Operational Phase

4.26. Upon completion, the development will introduce a solar farm with landscape enhancements that will be decommissioned in 35 years. The proposals will to a large extent be visually contained within the wider landscape although it would introduce temporary uncharacteristic features into the local landscape. Key landscape features (vegetation, water corridors and topography) will be retained and the scale and pattern of the landscape as demonstrated by the field boundaries, will be maintained.

4.27. There is an opportunity to enhance the landscape character in the long term with the restoration of field boundary hedges where there are currently post and wire fencing. **The magnitude of change to the landscape character is low, adverse**.

Landscape Features

4.28. Considering landform, there will be no discernible change to the topography of the site. **The magnitude of change to landform is therefore negligible**.

4.29. The mitigation planting will strengthen the landscape structure of the site. Planting will be deciduous in nature to reflect the characteristic seasonality of the wider landscape. **The magnitude of change to landscape structure is likely to be negligible**. This is not taking into account possible landscape buffering that may be established to reduce effects as the proposals evolve.

Key Characteristics of Dorset AONB

4.30. The Dorset AONB covers 1,129 square kilometres, approximately 42% of the county. Intervisibility between the Site and the AONB is very limited due to the character of the vale. The AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 includes a Statement of Significance which identifies the following key characteristics that contribute to *"Contrast and diversity – a microcosm of England's finest landscapes"*:

- *"striking sequences of beautiful countryside that are unique in Britain;*
- ***higher ground also allow the observer uninterrupted panoramic views to appreciate the complex pattern and textures of the surrounding landscapes**;*
- *numerous individual landmarks, such as hilltop earthworks, monuments and tree clumps that help to contribute an individuality and sense of place at a local scale;*
- *a sense of tranquillity and remoteness; and*
- *it retains dark night skies and an undeveloped rural character."*

4.31. Whilst the Site does not fall within the boundary of the AONB it does form part of the setting, that is the surrounding landscape referred to above. However, as already established the nature of the landscape is such that there is very limited intervisibility between the Site and the AONB. There are also limited instances where the Site forms part of the view from the surrounding landscape looking into/ towards the AONB.

4.32. The proposals are considered temporary and reversible and may introduce some uncharacteristic elements into a limited number of views. Mitigation may be possible in reducing the magnitude of change in views into the AONB from the surrounding landscape. **Magnitude of change to the key characteristics of the Dorset AONB (panoramic views out of and into the AONB and the AONB setting) is likely to be moderate, adverse**. This is not taking into account possible landscape buffering that may be established to reduce effects as the proposals evolve.

Views

4.33. During the construction phase, activity on the site and movement of materials and construction traffic will introduce movement and incongruous elements including fencing, machinery and construction workers. Hoarding to site boundaries may serve to screen some construction activities but will also serve to prevent views across the site.

4.34. Considering the above factors, the **visual magnitude of change during the construction phase will be high, adverse**, reflecting the degree of change in the context and composition of the view. However, these effects would be primarily temporary in nature.

- Motorists within close proximity to Site - Viewpoint 6 and 9: The view of the proposals will be brief and fleeting as seen from moving vehicles. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be low, adverse.**
- Recreational users within the AONB (vantage point) – Viewpoints 5 and 12: The proposals are perceived as a background component in views and would not alter the overall composition of the view. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be low, adverse to negligible.**
- Recreational users within the wider landscape (vantage point) - Viewpoint 8: Proposals introduce some uncharacteristic elements in limited localised views. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be moderate, adverse**.
- Recreational users in close proximity to the Site (vantage point) - Viewpoints 2 and 3: Proposals introduce some uncharacteristic elements in limited localised views. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be moderate, adverse**.
- Recreational users in close proximity to the Site - Viewpoint 15: There will be little to no discernible change to the view. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be negligible.**
- Recreational users adjacent to the Site - Viewpoint 17: The proposals may form skyline features in limited localised views. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be moderate, adverse.**
- Recreational users in very close proximity to the Site – Viewpoint 16 and 19: Proposals may be partially visible/ filtered by boundary vegetation. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be low, adverse**.
- Recreational users within the Site – Viewpoint 20: the proposals introduce dominant elements that alter the composition and balance of the view. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be high, adverse**.
- Residential properties within wider landscape (vantage point) – The Green, Kingston: proposals would be perceived as a background component in views and would not alter the dominance or balance of elements within it. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be low, adverse to negligible**.
- Residential Properties in close proximity to the Site (vantage point) – Fir Tree Farm and western edge of Hazelbury Bryan: proposals would not protrude above existing elements to be dominant on the skyline. Uncharacteristic elements may be introduced but this would be in very limited localised private views. **The magnitude of visual change is likely to be moderate, adverse.**
- Residential properties adjacent to the Site – Dairy House Farm: Views of the proposals would be seen in partial and would be very limited in extent. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be low, adverse.**
- Residential properties adjacent to the Site – Boywood Farm: Views of the proposals would be seen in partial and would be very limited in extent. **The visual magnitude of change is likely to be low, adverse**.

Preliminary Effects

4.35. As noted above the impact of any landscape and visual effect is a function of the sensitivity (**Section 3**) of the affected landscape resources and visual receptors against the magnitude of change (see above) that they would experience. As appropriate and in accordance with the published guidance professional judgement is used in the assessment of effects. The following narrative sets out the conclusions of significance based on the baseline analysis, the probable changes (impacts) and the sensitivity of the receptors described above.

Construction Phase

4.36. During the construction phase of the development programme, there will be continuous change to the landscape of the site and the views experienced by residents, those using the landscape for recreation and those travelling through the area. It is generally recognised that this is the most disruptive phase of the development.

Landscape Effects

4.37. In terms of the character of the site and its immediate context, the character of the area will experience localised and notable change with the introduction of elements and features associated with the construction process which are uncharacteristic of the site and the adjoining landscape. This disruption will last for the duration of the build. In the lifetime of the development **the construction phase landscape effects are likely to be high, adverse but are localised and short-term**.

Visual Effects

4.38. The character and composition of the views will change. These will include incongruent elements, such as movement within the landscape (people and construction vehicles), sounds from construction, scaffolding, hoarding and construction paraphernalia. The views will experience frequent change on a daily basis; however, the duration of

this change is limited and short-term. In the lifetime of the development **the construction phase visual effects likely to be high, adverse.**

Operational Phase

4.39. The assessment of effect seeks to place these changes into the local context rather than focusing on the specifics of the site boundary.

4.40. The effect of additional landscape buffering, which is still to be determined is not taken into account (this will be established when the report is completed). It is however acknowledged that proposed landscape mitigation planting is likely to assist with the assimilation of the proposals over time and reinforce the integration with the existing landscape. For the purposes of the assessment it is considered that new vegetation is likely to be effective in terms of landscape and visual contribution within 15 years of planting.

Landscape Effects

4.41. The proposals are likely to result in the temporary loss of undeveloped land and the establishment of long term landscape enhancements that would include hedgerow enhancement and additional buffer planting. The proposals are likely to temporarily change the local landscape character. Through considered design and mitigation measures it is considered that the development is likely to cause limited visual intrusion within the wider landscape. Therefore, the **landscape resource effect likely to be minor, adverse.**

Visual Effects

4.42. The significance of the visual effect of the proposals are moderated by the distance of the viewer to the site and their activity. The proposals may introduce elements that are uncharacteristic within the surrounding landscape but with limited visual intrusion and will be temporary. Therefore, visual receptors overall are likely to experience visual minor, adverse effects within the wider landscape.

4.43. However, within a very limited geographical area (Hammond Street Farm, Fir Tree Farm, Muston Farm, Wonston and part of PRoW N46/21) where the topography provides a vantage point overlooking the Site the proposals are likely to result in **moderate, adverse visual effects** as part of the Site will be visible and the PV panels would be apparent and clearly visible within the views. Additional mitigation measures within the Site may reduce this effect.

4.44. Again, within a very limited geographical area, where PRoW N46/20 crosses through the Site the proposals will be clearly evident and dominate the views, however, these are not 'fine and valued views' as is the case of views from AONB for example. It is likely to result in **moderately high, adverse effects**. Additional mitigation measures within the Site and flanking the PRoW may reduce this effect.

Dorset AONB Effects

4.45. The proposals have sought to limit as far as is possible the effects on the views into and out of the AONB and within its setting.

4.46. Whilst the Site does not fall within the boundary of the AONB it does form part of the setting. However, as already established the nature of the landscape is such that there is very limited intervisibility between the Site and the AONB. The proposals have sought to limit the visual intrusion within the setting of the AONB that may affect the quality of the landscape experienced from within the AONB. **The likely effects experienced from within the AONB are minor, adverse**.

4.47. There are also limited instances where the Site forms part of the view from the surrounding landscape looking into/ towards the AONB. This is within a very limited geographical area within close proximity of the Site which is considered to be part of the setting of the AONB. In these instances, due to the proximity of the receptor to the Site, the likely effects are **moderate, adverse**. Additional mitigation measures within the Site may reduce this effect.

Section 5: Preliminary Conclusions

5.1. When considering the landscape and visual effects of development it is important to recognise that any change to a greenfield site will result in adverse landscape and visual effects. The extent of the effects and degree of conformance with the local context need to be taken into consideration. Similarly, the effects need to be considered within the context of planning policy aspirations, which will balance all other economic, social and environmental effects of the development.

5.2. The Site is not covered by any national, regional or local-level landscape designation.

5.3. It is approximately 1.3km at the closest point to Dorset AONB, which lies to the south of the Site. Intervening landform and vegetation greatly reduce the intervisibility of the Site and AONB with direct views of the Site being limited to long distance views (>3km) from only two locations where there are only partial views of the Site that forms a small part of the panoramic views. There are also limited instances where the Site forms part of the view from the surrounding landscape looking into/ towards the AONB. Mitigation may be possible in reducing the magnitude of change in views into the AONB from the surrounding landscape.

5.4. It is approximately 0.7km at the closest point to Hazelbury Bryan Conservation Area and approximately 1.3km at the closest point to Mappowder Conservation Area. There is no intervisibility between the site and the village of Mappowder Conservation Area. Views within Hazelbury Bryan are contained within the village with very limited opportunities for views of the site from upper storey windows of dwellings that are orientated towards the site off The Orchard and De Briane Close on the western edge of the village.

5.5. In terms of visual receptors, the potential effects would be limited to properties closest to the site and users of adjoining PRoWs. On the whole vegetation screens low-level views from the ground floor rooms and gardens of these properties with limited visibility from some upper-storey rooms. There are a number of PRoW in close proximity to the Site (N49/4; N46/19; N46/21; N46/28) as well as one crossing through the Site (N46/20), which has been diverted through an additional field. The proposals will not alter the right of access but will alter the visual amenity. This will be very limited in extent due to intervening landform and vegetation. Direct close-views of the proposals will be limited to N46/20 and N46/21 and direct medium-range views of the proposals limited to short sections of N41/9 and N41/10. The potential effect on road users would be very minimal and limited to a very short section to the front of Fir Tree Farm where the hedges are lower.

5.6. As a first principle the project has also sought to avoid sensitive landscape areas identified in the early stages of the project where the whole of North Dairy Farm was assessed. The layout also sought to minimise any loss or changes to the landscape structure of the Site. However, changes to the landscape character and how it is perceived is inevitable as there will be a change to the land use and the introduction of solar panels in a rigid geometric pattern that contrasts with the existing landscape pattern. It is also important to note that this will be reversible once decommissioned as the solar panels will not require major earthworks for their installation. There will be very minimal loss to the landscape structure with stream corridors, hedges, trees and field patterns retained and buffered. The existing concrete track will be used for access and there may be an opportunity to strengthen field boundaries with new hedges (if required for mitigation) providing long-term ecological enhancement.

5.7. On balance, the proposals are likely to result in Minor, Adverse impacts within the wider landscape. This is due to the limited geographical extent of the change in views, limited impact to the landscape structure with some additional beneficial planting that will result in long term enhancement of the landscape and the reversibility of the impact to landscape character that would occur with the introduction of PV panels i.e. it would return to a farmed landscape after 35 years of operation.

5.8. Within a very limited geographical area (Hammond Street Farm, Fir Tree Farm, Muston Farm, Wonston and part of PRoW N46/21) where the topography provides a vantage point overlooking the Site the proposals are likely to result in moderate, adverse visual effects as part of the Site will be visible and the PV panels would be apparent and clearly visible within the views. Additional mitigation measures within the Site may reduce this effect.

5.9. Again, within a very limited geographical area, where PRoW N46/20 crosses through the Site the proposals will be clearly evident and dominate the views, however, these are not 'fine and valued views' as is the case of views from AONB for example. It is likely to result in moderately high, adverse effects. Additional mitigation measures within the Site and flanking the PRoW may reduce this effect.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Landscape Value Thresholds

Appendix 1: Landscape Value Thresholds (GLVIA Box 5.1)

GLVIA3 Box 5.1: Range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscapes

- **Landscape Quality** (condition): A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements;
- **Scenic Quality**: The term used to describe landscapes which appeal primarily to the senses (primarily but not wholly the visual senses);
- **Rarity**: The presence of rare features and elements in the landscape or the presence of a rare Landscape Character Type;
- **Representativeness**: Where the landscape contains a particular character, and/or features and elements, which are considered particularly important examples;
- **Conservation interests**: The presence of features of wildlife, earth science or archaeological or historical and cultural interest can add to the value of a landscape as well as having value in their own right;
- **Recreation value**: Evidence that the landscape is valued for recreational activity where experience of the landscape is important;
- **Perceptual aspects**: A landscape may be valued for its perceptual qualities and/or tranquillity; and
- **Associations**: Some landscapes are associated with particular people, such as artists or writers, or event in history that contribute to perceptions of natural beauty of the area."

For each of these considerations/ factors, there is a range from 'good' through 'ordinary' to 'poor' in terms of the performance of the landscape against these criteria, which are considered in relation to the site and the nature of the proposed development.

- **Poor** – No designation; features or elements that are uncharacteristic and detract from the landscape character of an area; Degraded landscape structure with fragmented pattern and poor legibility of character; detracting features notable within the landscape; opportunities for the restoration of landscape through mitigation measures associate with proposals;

- **Ordinary** – Locally important features contribute to the overall character of an area; features and elements protected by local policy;

- **Good** – National or Regional Importance (e.g. AONB, National Parks, Registered Parks and Gardens; Features which are dominant within the landscape and are fundamental to defining the distinct landscape of an area; Important characteristics and features recognised as forming intrinsic part of nationally and regionally designated landscapes; Distinct landscape structure with strong pattern and intact features; Few detractors or uncharacteristic features or elements present.

Appendix 2: Assessment Criteria – Sensitivity, Magnitude of Change and Significance of Effect

Appendix 2: Assessment Criteria – Sensitivity, Magnitude of Change

Table 1: Landscape Sensitivity Criteria

Sensitivity	Designated Landscapes (Value) Landscapes recognised and valued for their quality and / or cultural associations	Key Characteristics and Features As recognised in published Landscape Character Assessments	Landscape Condition Degree to which the landscape is intact and legible	Landscape Susceptibility The ability of a defined landscape to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences
High	National / Regional Importance (Landscape Designations - AONB, National Park, Registered Parks and Gardens)	Features which are dominant within the landscape and are fundamental to defining the distinct landscape character of an area. Important characteristics and features recognised as forming intrinsic part of nationally and regionally designated landscapes. Distinctive individual or rare features.	Distinct landscape structure with strong pattern and intact features. Few detractors or uncharacteristic features or elements present.	The landscape is such that changes in terms of the development proposed would be entirely at odds with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale and mass.
Medium	Local Importance (Other Designations - Special Landscape Areas / Protected Features)	Locally important and notable features that contribute to the overall character of an area. Features and elements protected by local policy.	Landscape exhibits recognisable structure and characteristic patterns. Some detracting features present.	The proposed development has a degree of consistency with the existing scale, pattern, grain, land use of the prevailing character, although mitigation may be appropriate to enhance assimilation.
Low	No Designation	Features or elements that are uncharacteristic and detract from the landscape character of an area.	Degraded landscape structure with fragmented pattern and poor legibility of character. Detracting features notable within the landscape. Opportunities for the restoration of landscape through mitigation measures associated with proposals.	The development proposed is entirely consistent with the character of the local area, related to matters including use, scale and mass.

Table 2: Visual Sensitivity Criteria

Visual Sensitivity	Occupation and Activity of Users (Visual Value)	Visual Susceptibility
High	• Observers whose attention or interest may be focussed on the landscape and recognised views in particular. • Recognised / Important Viewpoints, including those identified within and protected by policy. These viewpoints may be tourist destinations and marked on maps. • Designed views, including from within historic landscapes. • Residential Properties - Views from rooms occupied during daylight / waking hours (predominantly ground floor rooms). • Users of Rights of Way and Recreational Trails. • Users of land with public access (i.e. Open Access Land and National Trust Land).	The visual composition following the development as proposed will include discordant and incongruent elements.
Medium	• Views of the landscape are part of, but not the sole purpose of the receptors' activities. • Residential Properties - Views from rooms unoccupied during daylight / waking hours (1st floor rooms)[1]. • Those playing or participating at outdoor sports or undertaking formal outdoor recreation. • Users of local roads where there are clear / open views across the landscape and low levels of traffic.	The visual composition with the development as proposed will be consistent with the baseline situation, although some aspects may be at odds with the visual composition.
Low	• Attention is focussed upon the activity of the receptor and not upon the wider views. • Users of main roads travelling at speed, or local roads where the focus is upon the road ahead owing to traffic conditions and the context / composition of views. • Places of work • Views from permissive routes.	The visual composition following the development as proposed will be in harmony with the existing composition.

[1] This is based on the premise that habitable rooms are on the ground floor with bedrooms occupying the upper floors.

Table 3: Magnitude of Change Criteria - Landscape

Magnitude	Change experienced
High	Adverse Development would result in the irrevocable loss of key landscape elements and features, resulting in a permanent change to the landscape character and context of the area. Introduction of uncharacteristic, dominant elements within the landscape. Proposals erode of the context of existing features and their perception within the landscape. Result of change may undermine any designation. Mitigation measures do not reserve loss although will deliver some localised benefits.
	Beneficial Proposals strengthen existing landscape structure through the introduction of lost or degraded features and reinstatement of fragmented landscape patterns. Development fits within existing landscape character and enhances and / or reinstates key landscape features. Delivers policy objectives for landscape conservation or enhancement.
Moderate	Adverse Development would result in the localised medium to long- term loss of some key characteristic landscape features. Introduction of development / uncharacteristic elements within the landscape which alongside characteristic features.
	Beneficial Proposals introduce characteristic development and key landscape features whilst respecting the scale and pattern of the landscape.
Low	Adverse Development would result in the temporary loss of a low number of localised key features. Mitigation is possible and can maintain or restore losses. The proposals introduce temporary uncharacteristic features into the landscape.
	Beneficial The proposals retain existing key features and respect the pattern of the landscape. Proposals allow for local enhancements through the removal of detracting features.
Negligible	The development would introduce barely discernible elements or physical change to the landscape. Key characteristics of the landscape and the integrity of the landscape remain unaffected.

Table 4: Magnitude of Change Criteria - Views

Magnitude	Change experienced
High	Adverse Proposals introduce dominant, discordant elements altering the composition and balance of the view. Total and complete change in the composition of the view with the introduction of features and elements not present in the locality. Development interrupts or detracts from the focus of a recognised important view or vista. Proposals introduce features not present in skyline views of the area.
	Beneficial Development introducing positive elements that enhance legibility and composition of degraded views. Proposals reinstate a formerly lost valued view. Development introduces a valued landmark or feature within views from a recognised vantage point Proposal removing existing visual detractors and introduce development that respects the scale, form and layout of existing visual components.
Moderate	Adverse Development is clearly visible, but not prominent in views. Proposals may introduce some uncharacteristic elements that are incongruous in limited localised views. Development may form skyline features amongst existing development and / or vegetation where such skyline views are not typical.
	Beneficial Proposals enhance the visual setting and complement the composition of the view and the scale and form of development within it.
Low	Adverse Development does not introduce uncharacteristic or incongruent features into the view. Proposals do not alter the overall composition of the view or the dominance or balance of elements within it. Development does not protrude above existing elements to be dominant on the skyline. Views of the proposals are filtered or seen in partial, glimpsed views between existing development and vegetation. Views of development brief and fleeting as seen from moving vehicles.
	Beneficial Development compliments the composition and balance of elements within existing views.
Negligible	The development would be barely discernible in views. Proposals perceived as a background component in views or are subservient to other elements within it.

Appendix 3: Table 7: Landscape characteristics and their susceptibility to Solar PV development

(*Landscape Sensitivity to Wind and Solar Energy Development in North Dorset District*, LUC, April 2014)

www.landuse.co.uk

Landscape Sensitivity to Wind and Solar Energy Development in North Dorset District

Prepared by LUC
April 2014

Planning & EIA
Design
Landscape Planning
Landscape Management
Ecology
Mapping & Visualisation

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Registered Office:
43 Chalton Street
London NW1 1JD
LUC uses 100% recycled paper

Table 7: Landscape characteristics and their susceptibility to solar PV development

Scale and complexity of landform				
Arrays of solar panels will be less easily perceived in a flatter landscape than on a sloping one, and will also stand out less if the landform is even rather than undulating. A landscape in which topographic variations occur at a more localised scale is more likely to contrast with solar PV land use than a larger scale landscape in which variations are less frequent. The margins of character areas may be more sensitive, if there is a distinct change in landform. Information sources: Landscape Character Assessment, Ordnance Survey maps; fieldwork.				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity		⟷		**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. An extensive flat lowland landscape or elevated plateau, often a larger scale landscape with no distinctive landform features	e.g. A simple, gently rolling landscape, likely to be of medium-large scale, without distinctive landform	e.g. An undulating landscape, perhaps also incised by valleys, likely to be of medium scale	e.g. A landscape with distinct landform features, and/or irregular in topography (which may be large in scale), or a smaller scale landform	e.g. A landscape with a distinctive, rugged landform or dramatic topographical features (which may be large in scale), or a small scale or intimate landform
Scale and complexity of land use & field pattern				
A solar farm is a very homogeneous and typically geometric form, and one which is likely to contrast with more natural textures. The presence of a diversity of land uses in the landscape will act to reduce sensitivity in this respect, particularly if those uses include arable land, horticulture or brown-field sites, whereas there is more likelihood that solar PV development will stand out as a significant change in a semi-natural landscape or one in which permanent pasture features heavily. However, complexity of land use needs to be considered in tandem with scale and complexity of field patterns: the size of a proposed development relative to the scale of the field pattern in the locality is an important consideration because of the risk of diluting or masking the characteristic landscape patterns through development that is out of scale with boundary features. In general terms landscapes with small-scale, more irregular field patterns are likely to be more sensitive to the introduction of solar PV development than landscapes with medium or large scale fields in regular, geometric patterns, although an open area lacking field boundaries would also be highly susceptible to the imposition of a new pattern. Information sources: Landscape Character Assessment, Ordnance Survey maps; Google Earth (aerial photography); fieldwork.				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity		⟷		**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. A landscape with a strong variety in land cover, including significant arable or 'brownfield' elements, but with a geometric, medium or large field pattern	e.g. A mixed pastoral and arable landscape with medium sized fields mostly in geometric forms	e.g. A mixed pastoral and arable landscape with a some variation in field sizes or shapes and some semi-natural land cover	e.g. A landscape with irregular or small-scale fields and some variety of land use but largely pastoral	e.g. A landscape of small, irregular fields with uniform pastoral land use, or an open semi-natural landscape

Visual exposure				
The relative visibility of a landscape or distinctive elements within it, both from within the character area and in relation to other character areas, will influence its sensitivity. A landscape with a strong sense of enclosure is likely to be less sensitive to solar PV development than a more open and exposed landscape in which the development can be more readily perceived. Landscapes which have important visual relationships with other areas, for example where one area provides a skyline backdrop to a neighbouring area, are considered more sensitive than those with less important visual relationships. The sensitivity of the related landscapes will also affect the importance of visual exposure: a character area will for example be more sensitive if it forms part of the setting of a designated landscape (e.g. an AONB), and if the character area itself also has high scenic quality then its sensitivity will be further magnified. Visual sensitivities may also relate to specific landscape features, such as a prominent ancient monument. Information sources: Landscape Character Assessment, fieldwork.				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity		⟷		**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. An enclosed, self-contained landscape, or one with weak connections to neighbouring areas, and/or where related landscapes are of lower sensitivity	e.g. A landscape with limited connections to neighbouring areas, and/or where related landscapes are of low or medium sensitivity	e.g. A landscape which has some relationship with neighbouring areas, and/or where related landscapes are of medium sensitivity	A landscape which is intervisible with several related areas, and/or where related landscapes are of medium or higher sensitivity	e.g. A landscape which has important relationships with one or more neighbouring areas, and/or where related landscapes are of high sensitivity
Development and activity				
Landscapes which show evidence of modern development, including settlement, industrial and commercial development and infrastructure, tend to be less sensitive to solar PV development. Landscapes which are relatively free from overt human activity and disturbance, and which have a perceived naturalness, a strong feel of traditional rurality or are dominated by historic rather than modern buildings, will therefore be more sensitive. Information sources: Landscape Character Assessment, Ordnance Survey maps, fieldwork.				
Examples of sensitivity ratings				
Lower sensitivity		⟷		**Higher sensitivity**
e.g. A landscape with much human activity and development, such as industrial areas	e.g. A rural or semi-rural landscape with much human activity and dispersed modern development, such as settlement fringes	e.g. A rural landscape with some modern development and human activity, such as intensive farmland	e.g. A more naturalistic or historic landscape and/or one with little modern human influence and development	e.g. A tranquil landscape with little or no overt sign of modern human activity and development

Solar PV Development Typologies

6.7 Of the scheme elements considered in **Section 3** the only one which is considered to offer sufficient variation to have a significant impact on landscape sensitivity is the overall size of the solar PV development in terms of the land area covered by panels. The technology is very scalable, and can be used from garden-sized installations upwards; applications as large as 50

hectares have been submitted elsewhere in the UK. In general, the larger the proposed development the greater its impact is likely to be, but the characteristics of the landscape in which it is sited may either emphasise or diminish this impact.

6.8 The density of rows of solar PV panels doesn't tend to vary more than is necessary to allow sufficient spacing to avoid over-shading (which will differ a little depending on latitude), and the general appearance of a solar farm, in terms of array design, materials and associated fencing and built infrastructure, are fairly consistent.

6.9 Higher arrays are unlikely to appear because any benefit of additional vertical panels would be offset by the need to set parallel rows of arrays further apart, to avoid shading. A rare exception to this is where the intention is to graze cattle beneath the panels, requiring higher and stronger mountings.

6.10 For the purposes of assessing landscape sensitivity through this study, the following scales of solar PV development are defined:

- Up to 1 hectare (2.5 acres);
- 1 to 10 hectares (2.5 to 25 acres);
- 10 to 30 hectares (25 to 75 acres);
- Over 30 hectares (75 acres).

6.11 This banding has been defined with reference to the sizes of solar PV development already operational in the County, the range of sizes for which planning applications or pre-application requests have been made and a general assessment of sensitivity of the Dorset landscape.

6.12 In order to visualise these different areas, the table below sets out the size of features including some well-known landmarks and existing solar energy developments in the County:

Table 8: Comparative areas

Structure	Area (hectares)
Typical football pitch	0.6 – 0.8
Moors Lake (in Moors Valley Country Park)	3.6
Badbury Rings Hill Fort	7
Solar Farm at Park Farm, Shroton	8
Longham Reservoir (south of Ferndown)	10
Poole Park Boating Lake	21
Typical 18-hole golf course	50

Appendix 4: Planning Layout (BSR Energy – 1641-0201-01 ISS08)

Plot Date:
25/08/2020 17:56:51
File References:

File Name:
S:\New Solar\Design\1641 - North Dairy Farm\05 Site Plans\Planning\DWG's\1641-0201-01 Planning Layout ISS08.dwg

0 50 100 150 200 250

N

Notes: Unless otherwise stated, this drawing is for information only. Do not scale. Use figured dimensions only. Check all dimensions on site and advise of any discrepancies before commencing work on site.

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Sluice

Drain

Povert Bridge

Track

Issues

FB

Fenced Area (Approx) : 151.25 Acres

Red Line Area (Approx) : 191.08 Acres

Red Line Area (Approx) : 77.32 Hectares

Rev:	Revision History:	Date:	By:
01	Initial Issue	20/11/19	AK
02	Updated Fields	16/01/20	AK
03	Removed Arrays from Flood risk areas	22/01/20	AK
04	Removed all Arrays from Flood risk areas	24/01/20	AK
05	Redesign around substation	17/06/20	MB
06	Modules removed form flood risk area	09/07/20	MB
07	Modules removed form tree areas	24/08/20	MB
08	Modules removed form flood risk area	25/08/20	MB

Key:

- Site Boundary
- Fence
- Solar Arrays
- Inverter Station
- Future BESS Location
- 132kV Substation
- CCTV Camera
- Substation Access Track
- New Access Track

35 and 35a The Maltings
Lower Charlton Trading Estate,
Shepton Mallet,
Somerset,BA4 5QE
United Kingdom

E:info@britishrenewables.com
T:01458 224900
W:www.britishrenewables.com

Project:
North Dairy Farm Solar Park

Location:
Pulham, Dorchester,
DT2 7EA

Title:
Planning Layout

Scale: 1:5000 @A3

Issue Notes:
Modules removed form flood risk area

BSR Energy

Drawn By: MB
Issue Date: 25/08/20

Checked By: CR
Checked Date: 27/08/20

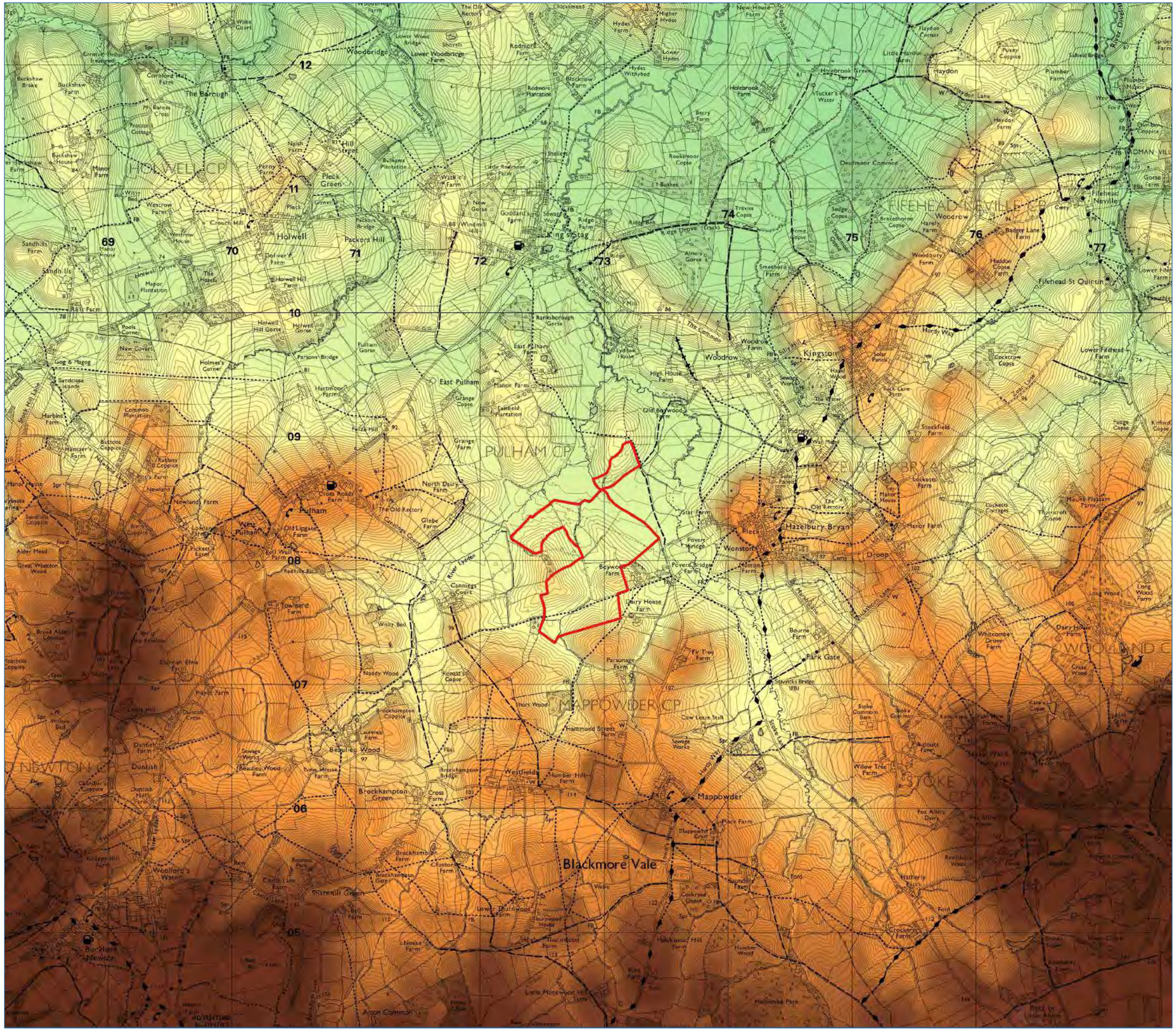
Approved By: CR
Approved Date: 27/08/20

Drawing Number:
1641-0201-01

Drawing Status: Approved
Issue: 08

Plans

Plan 1: Topography
11446/P01a
Plan 2: Zone of Theoretical Visibility
11446/P02a
Plan 3: Landscape Designations and PRoW
11446/P03a
Plan 4: Published Landscape Character Types
11446/P04a
Plan 5: Site Specific Landscape Character
11446/P05a
Plan 6: Viewpoint Location Plan
11446/P06



Project: North Dairy Farm, Dorset

Drawing Title: **Topography**

Scale: As Shown (Approximate) @ A3

Drawing No.: 12761/P01a

Date: January 2020

Checked: ER

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Tyler Grange Group Limited

Site Boundary

Field Verified Visual Envelope of Site

Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

High Potential Visibility

Low Potential Visibility

No Visibility

Source:
The Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) illustrates the extent to which the development on the site at 2.6m above ground is potentially visible within a 5km radius (1.6m high receptor). The ZTV has been modelled using GIS computer software (Global Mapper) and Ordnance Survey Terrain 5 data, and as such does not take into account built form or vegetation present within the landscape (worst case scenario). Field verification is required to refine the accuracy of the ZTV.

N

0 1000m

Project	North Dairy Farm, Dorset
Drawing Title	**GIS Zone of Theoretical Visibility**
Scale	As Shown (Approximate) @ A3
Drawing No.	12761/P02a
Date	January 2020
Checked	ER

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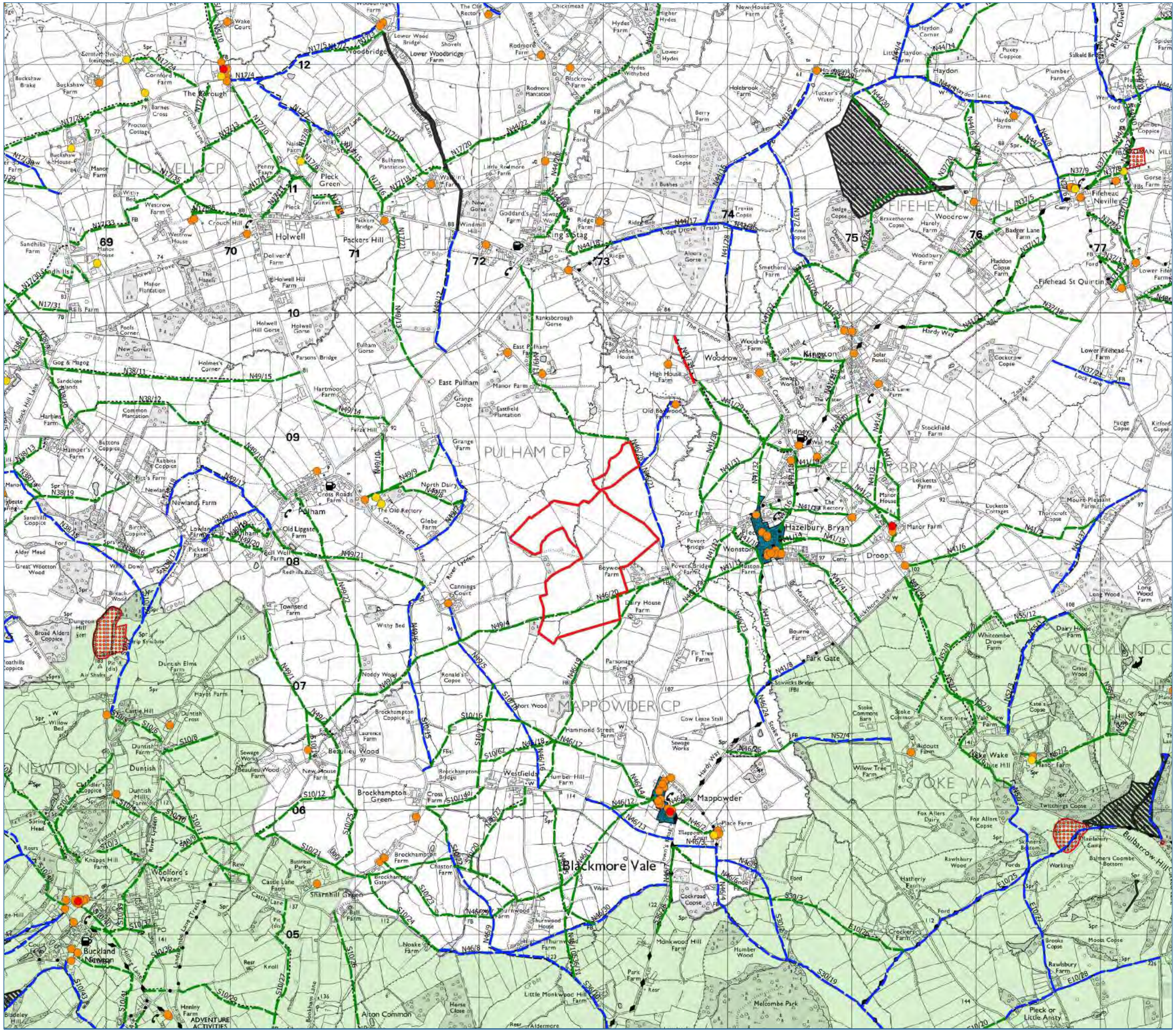

Site Boundary

Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Scheduled Monument

Rights to Roam/Open Access Land

Hazelbury Bryan and Mappowder Conservation Areas

Public Rights of Way

Public Footpath

Public Bridleway

Public Byway

Listed Buildings

Grade I

Grade II

Grade II*

N

0 1000m

Project	North Dairy Farm, Dorset
Drawing Title	**Landscape Designations and Public Rights of Way**
Scale	As Shown (Approximate) @ A3
Drawing No.	12761/P03a
Date	January 2020
Checked	ER

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Site Boundary

Landscape Character Types - Dorset Council

Clay Vale LCT
Blackmore Vale Landscape Character Area

Rolling Vales LCT
North Blackmore Rolling Vales and South Blackmore Rolling Vales Landscape Character Areas

Limestone Hills LCT

Chalk Valley & Downland LCT

Chalk Ridge/ Escarpment LCT

N

0 1000m

Project	North Dairy Farm, Dorset
Drawing Title	**Published Landscape Character Types**
Scale	As Shown (Approximate) @ A3
Drawing No.	12761/P04a
Date	January 2020
Checked	ER

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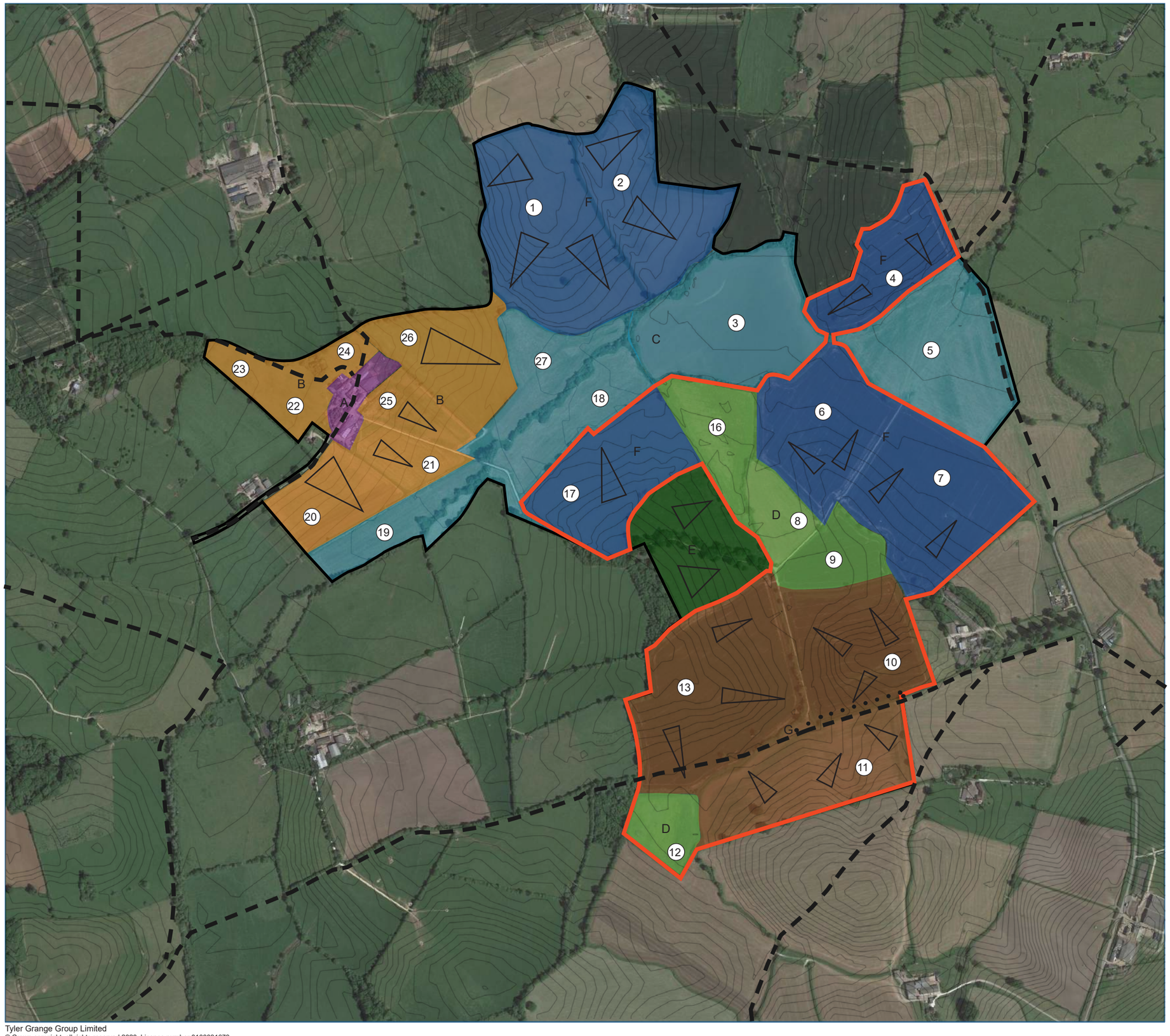

Site Boundary

North Dairy Farm
(extent of landholdings)

(1) Field numbers used in report
for cross-referencing

Slope

Definitive Public Rights of Way

Route used by public

North Dairy Farm Landscape Character Types

A North Dairy Farmstead

B North Dairy Farm Mixed Agricultural Fields

C River Lydden Corridor and Floodplain

D Small Irregular Flat Mixed Agricultural Fields

E Humber Wood Pasture and Avenue

F Large Uniformally Sloping
Mixed Agricultural Fields

G Large Open Undulating Arable Fields

N

0 1000m

Project	North Dairy Farm, Dorset
Drawing Title	**Site Character and Context**
Scale	As Shown (Approximate) @ A3
Drawing No.	12761/P05a
Date	January 2020
Checked	ER

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Site Boundary

Viewpoints

N

Project	North Dairy Farm, Dorset
Drawing Title	**Representative Viewpoint Location Plan**
Scale	As Shown (Approximate) @ A3)
Drawing No.	12761/P06
Date	January 2020
Checked	ER

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Photograph Sheets

Viewpoint Photographs
11446/P08

Photo Viewpoint 1:	The Green, Kingston	Distance from site:	1.9 km	Orientation:	Southwest	Co-ordinates:	ST 75046 09520

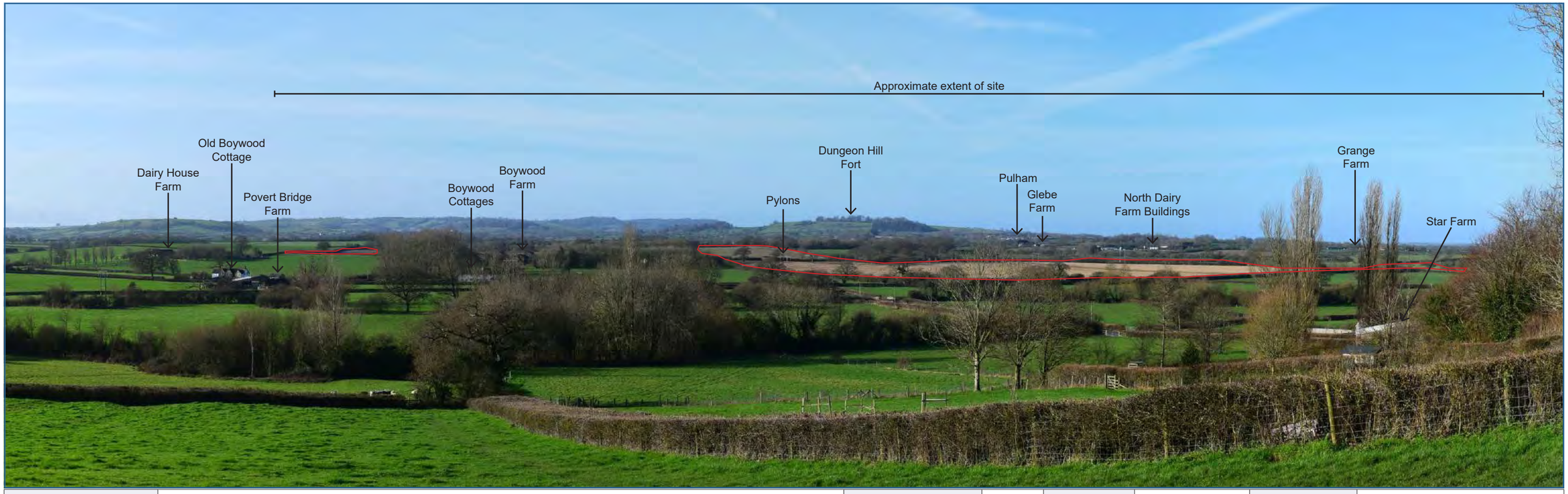

Photo Viewpoint 2:	PRoW N41/10 (Wonston, Hazelbury)	Distance from site:	0.6 km	Orientation:	West	Co-ordinates:	ST 74052 08234

Photo Viewpoint 3:	PRoW N41/9 (Muston Farm, Hazelbury)	Distance from site:	0.8 km	Orientation:	West	Co-ordinates:	ST 74245 08034

Photo Viewpoint 4:	Public Bridleway (PRoW N52/4)	Distance from site:	2.3 km	Orientation:	Northwest	Co-ordinates:	ST 75314 06578

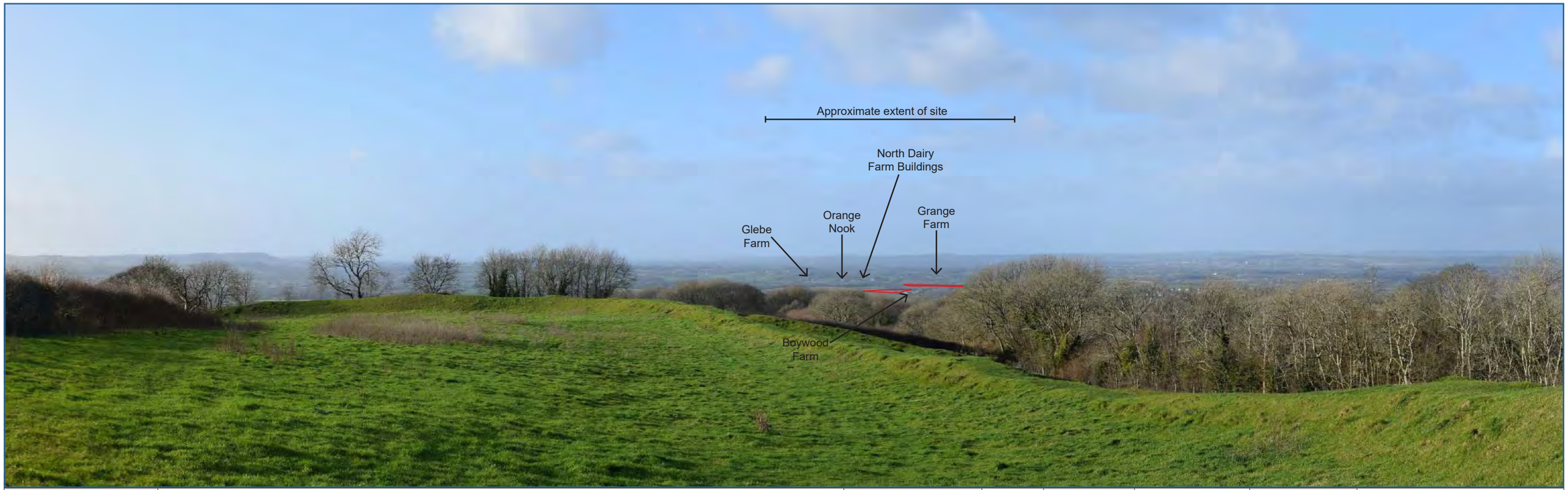

Photo Viewpoint 5:	Rawlsbury Camp Hillfort (10m north of PRoW N52/5)	Distance from site:	4 km	Orientation:	Northeast	Co-ordinates:	ST 76823 05840

Photo Viewpoint 6:	Pleck Hill (Lane) near Fir Tree Farm	Distance from site:	4 km	Orientation:	Northwest	Co-ordinates:	ST 73359 06083

Photo Viewpoint 7:	Mappowder (PRoW N46/11)	Distance from site:	4 km	Orientation:	North	Co-ordinates:	ST 73359 06083

Photo Viewpoint 8:	Taylor's Lane N46/17	Distance from site:	1.1km	Orientation:	North	Co-ordinates:	ST 73076 06381

Photo Viewpoint 9:	Taylor's Lane	Distance from site:	1.05 km	Orientation:	North	Co-ordinates:	ST 72931 06390

Photo Viewpoint 10:	Humber Hill Farm (PRoW N46/19)	Distance from site:	1.1 km	Orientation:	North	Co-ordinates:	ST 72477 06218

Photo Viewpoint 11:	Sharnhill Green (PRoW S10/27)	**Distance from site:**	3 km	**Orientation:**	North north east	**Co-ordinates:**	ST 70445 05155

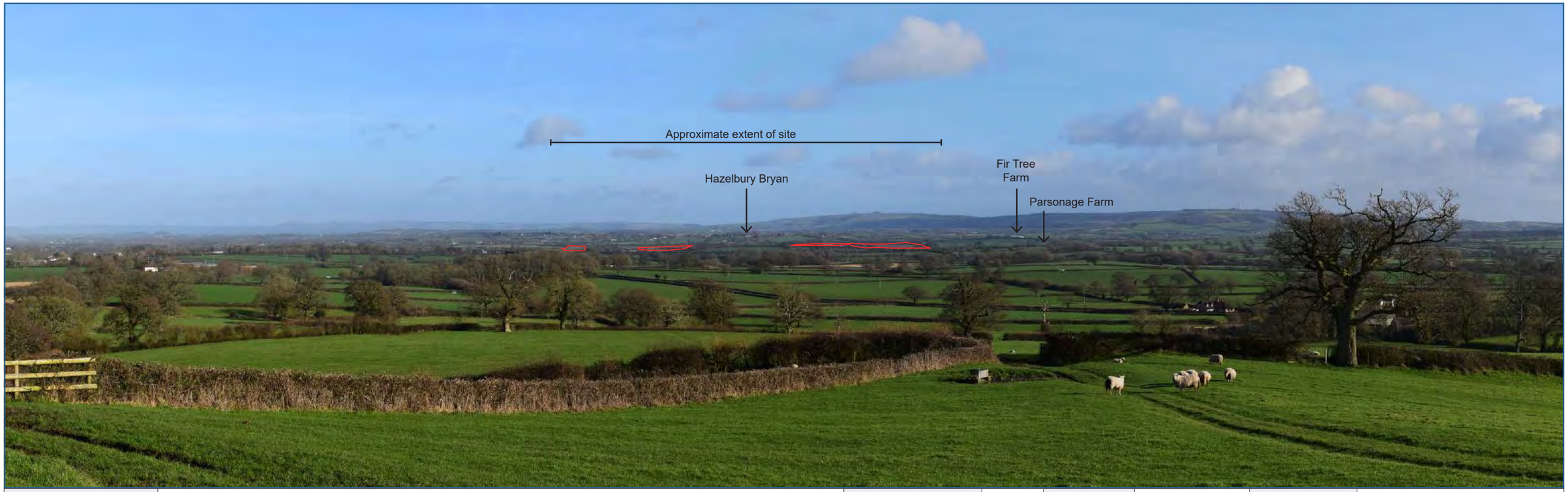

Photo Viewpoint 12:	Dungeon Hill Fort (PRoW S10/7)	**Distance from site:**	3.3 km	**Orientation:**	Northeast	**Co-ordinates:**	ST 69166 07183

Photo Viewpoint 13:	Pulham (PRoW N49/22)	**Distance from site:**	1.6 km	**Orientation:**	East	**Co-ordinates:**	ST 70594 08396

Photo Viewpoint 14:	Dodies Wood (PRoW N49/9)	**Distance from site:**	1 km	**Orientation:**	East south east	**Co-ordinates:**	ST 71369 08640

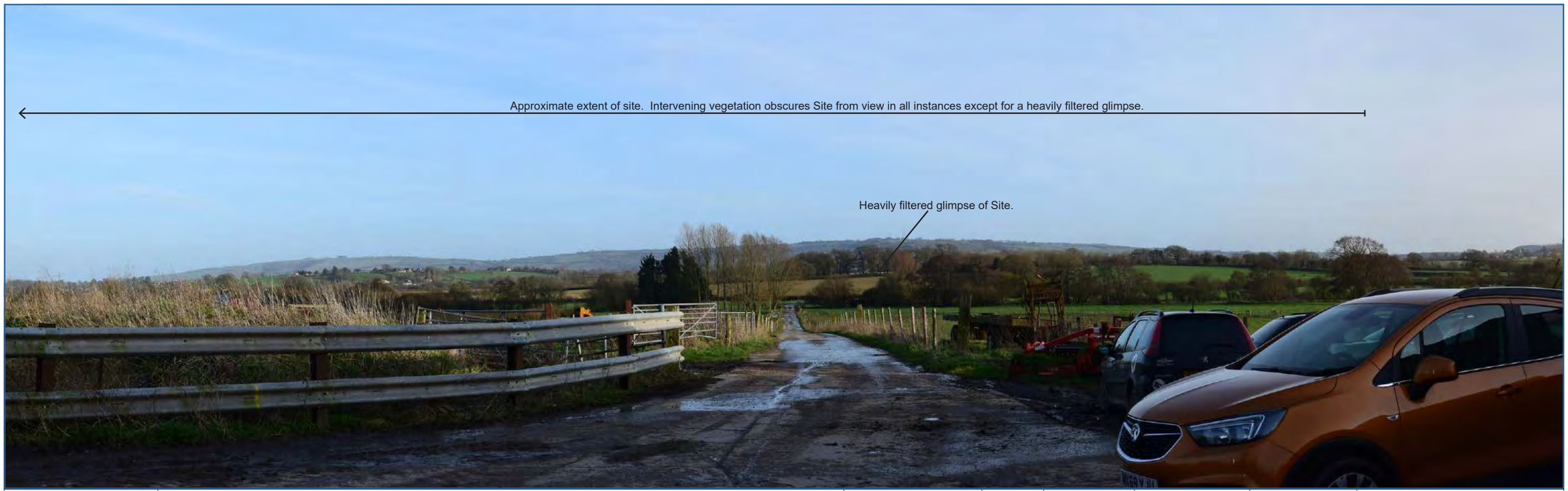

Photo Viewpoint 15:	North Dairy Farm Footpath N49/7	**Distance from site:**	0.5 km	**Orientation:**	East South East	**Co-ordinates:**	ST 71854 08405

Photo Viewpoint 16:	Between Footpath N46/28 and Bridleway N46/21 (near Old Boywood Farm)	**Distance from site:**	0.1 km	**Orientation:**	Southwest	**Co-ordinates:**	ST 73342 08894

Photo Viewpoint 17:	North Dairy Farm PRoW N46/21	Distance from site:	0.2 km	Orientation:	North north west	Co-ordinates:	ST 73392 08489

Photo Viewpoint 18:	Star Farm (PRoW N46/21)	Distance from site:	0.3 km	Orientation:	West	Co-ordinates:	ST 73770 08286

Photo Viewpoint 19:	Dairy House Farm (PRoW N46/20)	**Distance from site:**	0 km	**Orientation:**	Northwest	**Co-ordinates:**	ST 73359 06083

Photo Viewpoint 20:	North Dairy Farm (PRoW 46/20) - On Site	**Distance from site:**	0 km	**Orientation:**	Northeast	**Co-ordinates:**	ST 72724 07567