**From:** Tim Screen <Tim.Screen@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>
**Sent:** 03 April 2023 15:31
**To:** Rebekah Morgan <rebekah.morgan@cherwell-dc.gov.uk>
**Subject:** FW: 22/03873/F - Land North And Adjacent To Mill Lane, Stratton Audley

Hi Rebekah

As promised

Having considered the LVIA I confirm the following response. This is a comprehensive and proportionate LVIA with an acceptable methodology based on the guidance of GLVIA3.

Overall landscape sensitivity is Medium. In respect of landscape character the change will be very noticeable with a loss of openness when solar arrays replace arable fields the judgement is Major . But this will potentially be reduced to Medium when the proposed planting and retained hedgerow, trees and woodland have established and matured over 15 years, but only if all the boundaries are equally reinforced with hedgerow and trees. For example, the southern boundary of the eastern field parcel appears to be open aspect on the Site Layout Plan – Overall, but is defined by a low hedgerow were the solar array, security fencing and CCTV will impact on the landscape receptor, therefore the hedgerow height to be increased/maintained to 3 m and native trees planted – refer visual response below*

I generally agree with the appraised viewpoints, subject to the appropriate maintained hedgerow height:

- VP1 the site is hidden behind woodland and topography and therefore the Significance of Effect is Slight.

- VP 2 The receptor experiences to the full the field of solar array. The is significance of effect is Major at year 0 and will remain so for 15 years. The residual effect is still Major
- The should be another VP at the edge of the field VP 1A to explain the experience.

- VP 3 The intervening field boundary hedgerow and sporadic trees define a Medium Significance of Effect at year 0, However this will reduce to low adverse at 15 years with the reinforced hedgerow and mature trees indicated by the drawing Site Layout Plan - 4 of 4. The regular ‘ regimented’ planting distances of the trees in the photomontage will draw the eye. I recommend an irregular planting pattern where tree canopies grow into one another which is more naturalistic.

- VP4 Intervening field trees and hedgerows and topography results in a Low a year 0 and a Slight at year 15 with the growth of the proposed trees.

- VP5 A panoramic view from an elevated location allowed more of the application site to be experienced Major Medium at year 0 reduce to Medium at year 15 with the growth of the trees and hedgerows.

- VP6 A view of the elevated site view of the site with Major Significance of Effect for the visual receptor and a Medium Significance of Effect at year 15 with the growth of the proposed trees.

- VP7 the site will be screened from this viewpoint because of the existing roadside hedgerow at year 0 and therefore there is a Low Significance of Effect at years 0 and 15.

- VP8 To determine on site. A fleeting experience for the roadside user. The site continues to be screened by the roadside hedgerow as one drives along. Significance of Effect is Low at year 0 and Slight at year 15

- VP9 Fleeting experience for roadside users and the sensitivity is not as high as for Visual receptors of PRoW the Sig of Effect therefore is Medium Low at year 0 and Low Adverse at year 15. Intervening topography and vegetation, exiting and proposed will visually mitigate the scheme.

- VP10 Low Adverse at year 0 after construction and Low Adverse at year 15

- VP11 so far in the distance Slight at year 0 because of intervening field boundaries and trees slightly undulating topography. Same result at 15 years of life.

- VP12 Slight at year 0 and 15

- VP13 Slight at year 0 and 15

- VP14 V Slight at year 0 and 15

- VP 15 Slight at year 0 and 15

- VP16 Slight at year 0 and 15

Note the minimum maintenance height of the new and existing hedgerows are to be confirmed to ensure that the appropriate level of screening is required. With the maximum height of the solar panels at 3 m were the most crucial visual impacts are experienced for visual receptors on the most sensitive PRoW, e.g. VP 5 and VP6, and the potential visual harm caused by reducing the height of hedgerow to below 3 m. A 3 m minimum hedgerow height should be stipulated.

*Where the southern boundary of the eastern field parcel is defined by a low hedgerow which means roadside users and potentially sensitive visual receptors from the elevated Poodle Wood will experience visual harm, which means this hedgerow must be drawn on the landscape proposals, along with hedgerow trees. The hedgerow to be maintained to a minimum of 3 m

The weighting attributed to all residential receptors effects, once the levels of mag. of change and sensitivity are been taken into account, are in my view generally correct.

**Landscape and Ecological Management Plan**
The Ecological Management Plan is comprehensive, but legal responsibilities of the parties, the BALI registered/ecologically competent landscape contractor and management company, should be included; the compliance with health and safety law and the implementation of landscape-related risk assessments are essential.

I see no reason to object in terms of landscape and visual impacts if the above concerns are addressed appropriately. I look forward to a detailed landscape proposals, implementation notes and tree pit details. Maintenance/establishment proposals to be addressed in the Ecological Management Plan, as indicated.

Kind regards

Tim

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