



Chapter 6 - Cultural Heritage

Postcombe and Lewknor Solar Farm Environmental Statement

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BGS	British Geological Survey
CBM	Ceramic Building Material
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeology
NHLE	National Heritage List for England
HE	Historic England
HER	Historic Environment Record



6. Cultural Heritage

6.1 Executive Summary

- 6.1.1 This chapter provides an assessment of the effects of the Proposed Development upon archaeological and cultural heritage assets. This includes direct effects resulting from the construction of the solar farm and associated infrastructure and effects upon the settings of heritage assets which may arise during operation of the Proposed Development.
- 6.1.2 The assessment has established that the Proposed Development has the potential to directly impact upon known remains that have been identified in the form of geophysical anomalies (Asset 126) some of which are thought to likely be related to the course of a Roman road and associated settlement as well as some having the potential to reflect earlier and later periods of activity. The assessment has also identified the potential for other previously unidentified archaeological remains. The assessment considers this potential to be high for late Prehistoric and Roman remains and modern agricultural remains, medium for early prehistoric remains, early medieval burials, medieval and post-medieval agriculture remains and low for other types of remains. Any early prehistoric, late prehistoric, Roman or early medieval burials surviving on the Site have the potential to be of at least Medium importance, any agricultural remains of medieval or post-medieval date would likely be considered to be of Low importance and any agricultural remains of modern date would likely be considered to be of **Negligible** importance. Potential direct impacts upon these assets would be of high magnitude and could potentially result in a significant effect in EIA terms.
- 6.1.3 It should be possible to mitigate any potential direct impacts on known and unknown archaeological remains via a programme of archaeological mitigation. The exact scope of any programme of archaeological works would be defined within a Written Scheme of Investigation and agreed with the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council.
- 6.1.4 Depending on the results of the evaluation it may be necessary to designate '*archaeologically sensitive areas*' where '*no dig*' solutions could allow for the preservation 'in situ' of important buried remains. Otherwise, any excavated remains recorded during the programme of archaeological works would be '*preserved by record*'. Where avoidance of impacts is not possible the residual levels of effect would be unchanged from the assessed Construction levels of impact although excavation and recording of the assets would ensure that impacts are offset by ensuring preservation by record.
- 6.1.5 This assessment had also established that the operational phase of the Proposed Development would have no significant effects, in EIA terms, upon the settings of any of the designated heritage assets identified within the 2 km Study Area (the scope being defined within the approved Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Environmental Impact Assessment which is attached as Appendix 6.4).



- 6.1.6 It is considered that there would be no cumulative effects upon any of the designated heritage assets identified within the 2 km Study Area.
- 6.1.7 Therefore, direct residual effects upon known and unknown heritage assets would be of Negligible level and not significant in EIA terms. Residual setting effects would be as per the effects predicted for the operational phase and not significant.

6.2 Introduction

This chapter addresses the potential effects of the Proposed Development upon Cultural Heritage, including archaeological remains, built heritage and historic landscapes. It has been prepared by AOC Archaeology Group. This chapter is supported by **Figures 6.1 – 6.12** as well as information contained in the below appendices:

- **Appendix 6.1:** Asset Gazetteer
- **Appendix 6.2:** Plates
- **Appendix 6.3:** Geophysical Survey Report
- **Appendix 6.4:** Cultural Heritage Environmental Impact Assessment WSI

6.3 Legislation, Policy & Guidance

Legislation

- 6.3.1 Relevant legislation documents have been reviewed and taken into account as part of this assessment. Of particular relevance are:
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (as amended by the National Heritage Act 1983);
 - Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
 - Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953; and the
 - Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

Planning Policy

- 6.3.2 The Planning Statement associated with this Town and Country Planning application sets out the planning policy framework that is relevant to the EIA. This section considers the relevant aspects of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, last updated February 2025) and the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011-2035 (adopted December 2020). Emerging planning policy in the form of the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council Joint Local Plan 2041 (submitted for examination December 2024) has also been considered.



Table 6.1: Relevant Policy and Legislation

Policy/ Legislative Document	Relevant Specific Policies
Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 , as amended by the National Heritage Act 1983	Statutory protection for archaeology is outlined in the 1979 and 1983 Acts. A schedule of nationally significant archaeological sites subject to legal protection is maintained by Historic England (HE). These assets are referred to as ‘ <i>Scheduled Monuments</i> ’ and HE is a statutory consultee in the planning process where development proposals could potentially affect them.
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	<p>Affords protection to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.</p> <p>With respect to Listed Buildings and their settings Section 66(1) of the Act states that planning authorities should “<i>have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses</i>”.</p> <p>With respect to Conservation Areas Section 72(1) of the Act makes similar provision stating that “<i>with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area... special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area</i>”.</p>
Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953	Part I Section 8C includes provisions relating to Registered Parks and Gardens.
Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023	<p>The most recent legislation, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, includes provision for designated heritage assets including Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Registered Parks and Gardens, as well as placing a Statutory duty on Local Planning Authorities to maintain Historic Environment Records (HERs).</p> <p>With regard to World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Protected Wrecks and ‘<i>other area[s] of land included in a register maintained by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England [Historic England]</i>’, Section 102 of the 2023 Act amends Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to include a new section, Section 58B, which states that:</p> <p><i>“In considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle for the development of land in England which affects a relevant asset or its setting, the local planning authority or (as the case may be) the Secretary of State must have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the asset or its setting”</i> (Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 58 as amended by LURA 2023, Section 102).</p> <p>Secondary legislation is required for this to come into force and therefore, whilst weight should be attached to Section 102 of LURA, until the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act is amended the legislative framework remains as set out in Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the 1990 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act which cover Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas respectively.</p>



Policy/ Legislative Document	Relevant Specific Policies
<p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in March 2012 and last updated in February 2025</p>	<p>The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for development can be produced and assessed.</p> <p>Chapter 16 of the NPPF is concerned with “<i>Conserving and enhancing the historic environment</i>”. It identifies heritage assets as “<i>an irreplaceable resource</i>” and notes that they “<i>should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations</i>” (MHCLG, 2025, Para 202).</p> <p>Where designated assets are concerned, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (<i>ibid.</i>, Para 212). The more important the assets the greater that weight should be.</p> <p>NPPF Para 213 states that:</p> <p>“<i>Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset... should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks and gardens, should be exceptional;</i> • <i>assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.</i>” (<i>ibid.</i>, Para 213). <p>With regard to proposals that are predicted to lead to “<i>substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset</i>”, Para 214 states that “<i>local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss</i>” (<i>ibid.</i>, Para 214).</p> <p>Para 215 says that “<i>Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use</i>” (<i>ibid.</i>, Para 215).</p> <p>Impacts upon non-designated heritage assets are also a pertinent planning consideration; Para 216 states that “<i>In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset</i>” (<i>ibid.</i>, Para 216).</p> <p>Para 218 states that where a heritage asset is to be lost, either in part or in whole, as a result of a development, the local planning authority should “<i>require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible</i>” (<i>ibid.</i>, Para 218).</p> <p>With respect to Conservation Areas Para 220 acknowledges that “<i>not all elements of a Conservation Area... will necessarily contribute to its</i></p>



Policy/ Legislative Document	Relevant Specific Policies
	<p><i>significance". Although it goes on to note that the "loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area ... should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area... as a whole" (ibid., Para 220).</i></p> <p>The NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as the <i>"surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral"</i> (ibid., Glossary).</p>
<p>South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011-2035 adopted December 2020</p>	<p>Policy ENV6: Historic Environment states that:</p> <p><i>"1. Proposals for new development that may affect designated and non-designated heritage assets should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of those assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. Heritage assets include statutorily designated Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings or structures, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, archaeology of national and local interest and non-designated buildings, structures or historic landscapes that contribute to local historic and architectural interest of the district's historic environment, and also includes those heritage assets listed by the Oxfordshire Historic Environmental Record.</i></p> <p><i>2. Proposals for new development should be sensitively designed and should not cause harm to the historic environment. Proposals that have an impact on heritage assets (designated and non-designated) will be supported particularly where they:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>i) conserve or enhance the significance of the heritage asset and settings. The more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight that will be given to its conservation;</i> <i>ii) make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (through high standards of design, reflecting its significance, including through the use of appropriate materials and construction techniques);</i> <i>iii) make a positive contribution towards wider public benefits;</i> <i>iv) provide a viable future use for a heritage asset that is consistent with the conservation of its significance; and/or</i> <i>v) protect a heritage asset that is currently at risk.</i> <p><i>3. Non-designated heritage assets, where identified through local or neighbourhood plan-making, Conservation Area Appraisal or review or through the planning application process, will be recognised as heritage assets in accordance with national guidance and any local criteria. Development proposals that directly or indirectly affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be determined with regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.</i></p>



Policy/ Legislative Document	Relevant Specific Policies
	<p><i>4. Applicants will be required to describe, in line with best practice and relevant national guidance, the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance. In some circumstances further survey, analysis and/or recording will be made a condition of consent.</i></p> <p><i>5. Particular encouragement will be given to schemes that will help secure the long-term conservation of vacant and under-used buildings and bring them back into appropriate use.</i></p> <p><i>6. Alterations to historic buildings, for example to improve energy efficiency, should respect the integrity of the historic environment and the character and significance of the building" (Oxfordshire County Council, 2020, 174-5).</i></p>
<p>South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council Joint Local Plan 2041 (submitted for examination 9th December 2024)</p>	<p>Policy NH8 – The historic environment</p> <p><i>"1) Proposals for new development that may affect designated and non-designated heritage assets should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of those assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.</i></p> <p><i>2) Proposals for new development should be sensitively designed and should not cause harm to the historic environment. Applicants will be required to demonstrate that they have considered this through a heritage assessment. Proposals that have an impact on heritage assets (designated and non-designated) will be supported particularly where they:</i></p> <p><i>a) conserve and enhance the significance of the heritage asset and its setting. The more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight that will be given to its conservation;</i></p> <p><i>b) make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (through high standards of design, reflecting its significance, including through the use of appropriate materials and construction techniques);</i></p> <p><i>c) make a positive contribution towards wider public benefits;</i></p> <p><i>d) provide a viable future use for a heritage asset that is consistent with the conservation of its significance; and</i></p> <p><i>e) protect a heritage asset that is currently at risk:</i></p> <p><i>3) When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight will be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight that will be given). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset will require clear and convincing justification.</i></p> <p><i>4) Non-designated heritage assets, where identified through local or neighbourhood plan-making or contained within the Historic Environment Record (HER), Conservation Area Appraisal, or review or through the planning application process, will be recognised as heritage assets in accordance with national guidance and any local criteria. Development</i></p>



Policy/ Legislative Document	Relevant Specific Policies
	<p><i>proposals that directly or indirectly affect the significance of a non-designated heritage asset will be determined with regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.</i></p> <p><i>5) In support of planning applications, applicants will be required to describe, in line with best practice and relevant national guidance, the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance. It should be demonstrated that, where relevant, surveys and field work have been carried out prior to submission and that the results have informed the heritage assessment. In some circumstances further survey, analysis and/or recording will be made a condition of consent.</i></p> <p><i>6) Encouragement will be given to schemes that will help secure the long-term conservation of vacant and under-used historic buildings to prevent deterioration of condition and bring them back into appropriate use” (South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Councils, 2024, 338-340).</i></p> <p>Policy NH9 – Listed Buildings</p> <p><i>“1) Proposals for development, including change of use, that involve any alteration of, addition to, or partial demolition of a Listed Building, or within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of a Listed Building will be expected to:</i></p> <p><i>a) conserve, enhance or better reveal those elements which contribute to the heritage significance and/or its setting;</i></p> <p><i>b) respect any features of special architectural or historic interest, including, where relevant, the historic curtilage or context, such as burgage plots, parklands or fields, or its value within a group and/or its setting, such as the importance of a street frontage or traditional shopfronts, designed landscapes or historic farmyards; and</i></p> <p><i>c) be sympathetic to the Listed Building and its setting in terms of its siting, size, scale, height, alignment, materials, and finishes (including colour and texture), design and form, in order to retain the special interest that justifies its designation through appropriate design, with regard to the Joint Design Guide.</i></p> <p><i>2) Development proposals affecting the significance of a Listed Building (including its setting) that will lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that demonstrably outweigh that harm or loss or where the applicant can demonstrate that:</i></p> <p><i>a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site;</i></p> <p><i>b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation;</i></p> <p><i>c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and</i></p> <p><i>d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.</i></p>



Policy/ Legislative Document	Relevant Specific Policies
	<p><i>3) Development proposals that would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of a Listed Building will be expected to:</i></p> <p><i>a) minimise harm and avoid adverse impacts, and provide justification for any adverse impacts, harm, or loss of significance;</i></p> <p><i>b) identify any demonstrable public benefits or exceptional circumstances in relation to the development proposed including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use as supported by relevant evidence; and</i></p> <p><i>c) investigate and record changes or loss of fabric, features, objects, or remains, both known and unknown, in a manner proportionate to the importance of the change or loss, and to make this information publicly accessible.</i></p> <p><i>4) Changes of use will be supported where it can be demonstrated that the new use can be accommodated in a manner appropriate to its significance and historic character without any adverse effect on the special architectural or historic interest of the building and its appearance, character, and setting' (ibid., 341-342).</i></p> <p>Policy NH10 – Conservation Areas</p> <p><i>1) Proposals for development within or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area must conserve or enhance its special interest, character, setting and appearance and comply with any additional restrictions. Development will be expected to:</i></p> <p><i>a) contribute to the Conservation Area's special interest and its relationship within its setting. The special characteristics of the Conservation Area (such as existing walls, buildings, trees, hedges, burgage plots, traditional shopfronts and signs, farm groups, medieval townscapes, archaeological features, historic routes etc.) should be preserved;</i></p> <p><i>b) take into account important views within, into or out of the Conservation Area and show that these would be retained and unharmed;</i></p> <p><i>c) respect the local character and distinctiveness of the Conservation Area in terms of the development's siting, size, scale, height, alignment, materials and finishes (including colour and texture), proportions, design, and form, and should have regard to the Joint Design Guide and any relevant Conservation Area Character Appraisal;</i></p> <p><i>d) be sympathetic to the original curtilage of buildings and pattern of development that forms part of the historic interest of the Conservation Area;</i></p> <p><i>e) be sympathetic to important spaces such as paddocks, greens, gardens and other gaps or spaces between buildings which make a positive contribution to the pattern of development in the Conservation Area;</i></p> <p><i>f) ensure the wider social and environmental effects generated by the development are compatible with the existing character and appearance of the Conservation Area; and</i></p> <p><i>g) ensure no loss of, or harm to, any building or feature that makes a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area.</i></p>



Policy/ Legislative Document	Relevant Specific Policies
	<p>2) <i>Where a development proposal within a Conservation Area would enhance or better reveal the significance of the Conservation Area and its setting, this will be encouraged. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) will be supported.</i></p> <p>3) <i>Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a Conservation Area, consent will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.</i></p> <p>4) <i>Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a Conservation Area, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.</i></p> <p>5) <i>Wherever possible the sympathetic restoration and re-use of structures which make a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area will be encouraged to prevent harm through the cumulative loss of features which are an asset to the Conservation Area (ibid., 343-344).</i></p> <p>Policy NH11 – Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments</p> <p>1) <i>Development must protect the site and setting of Scheduled Monuments and nationally important non-designated archaeological remains.</i></p> <p>2) <i>Applicants will be expected to undertake an assessment of appropriate detail to determine whether the development site is known to, or is likely to, contain archaeological remains. Proposals must show the development proposals have had regard to any such remains and that they have consulted the Historic Environment Record (HER).</i></p> <p>3) <i>Where the assessment indicates archaeological remains on site, or the potential for such remains to be present, and development could disturb or adversely affect archaeological remains and/or their setting, applicants will be expected to:</i></p> <p>a) <i>submit an appropriate archaeological desk-based assessment; and</i> b) <i>to undertake a field evaluation (conducted by a suitably qualified archaeological organisation), where necessary.</i></p> <p>4) <i>Applicants must agree the scope of assessment and field evaluation with Oxfordshire County Council or Historic England in the case of Scheduled Monuments, through a written scheme of investigation and in advance of any assessment or trial trenching / groundworks.</i></p> <p>5) <i>Nationally important archaeological remains (whether scheduled or demonstrably of equivalent significance) should be preserved in situ. Non-designated archaeological sites or deposits of significance equal to that of a</i></p>



Policy/ Legislative Document	Relevant Specific Policies
	<p><i>nationally important monument will be assessed as though those sites or deposits are designated.</i></p> <p><i>6) Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of such remains, consent will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss.</i></p> <p><i>7) Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of such remains, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.</i></p> <p><i>8) For other non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, the effect of a development proposal on the significance of the remains, either directly or indirectly, will be taken into account in determining the application. As such assets are irreplaceable, the presumption will be in favour of the avoidance of harm. The scale of the harm or loss will be weighed against this presumption and the significance of the heritage asset.</i></p> <p><i>9) In exceptional cases, where harm to or loss of significance to the asset is considered to be justified, the harm should be minimised, and mitigated by a programme of archaeological investigation, including excavation, recording and analysis. The aim of mitigation should be where possible to preserve archaeological remains in situ, to promote public enjoyment of heritage and to record and advance knowledge. Planning permission will not be granted until this programme has been submitted to, and approved by, the council and development must not commence until these works have been satisfactorily undertaken by an appropriately qualified organisation. The results and analysis of findings subsequent to the investigation must be published and made available to the relevant local and county authorities. The full archive generated from any archaeological assessment or investigation will need to be deposited with the Oxfordshire County Museums Service. Applicants will be required to adequately protect archaeological remains from impacts arising from climate change mitigation measures such as tree planting (ibid., 345-346).</i></p> <p>Policy NH12 – Historic Battlefields, Registered Parks and Gardens and Historic Landscapes</p> <p><i>“1) Proposals should conserve and enhance the special historic interest, character or setting of a battlefield, or park or garden on the Historic England Register of Historic Battlefields or Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England.</i></p> <p><i>2) Any harm to or loss of significance of any heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of these assets should be wholly exceptional in the case of Registered Historic Battlefields and Grade I and Grade II* Registered Historic Parks and Gardens and exceptional in the case of Grade II Registered Historic Parks and Gardens.</i></p> <p><i>3) Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, consent will only be granted</i></p>



Policy/ Legislative Document	Relevant Specific Policies
	<p><i>where it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Applicants must demonstrate that all other options for their conservation or use have been explored.</i></p> <p><i>4) Where a proposed development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.</i></p> <p><i>5) Development proposals that directly or indirectly affect the significance of non-designated historic battlefields, parks and historic landscapes, including historic routes, will be determined with regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.</i></p> <p><i>6) Applicants will be required to describe, in line with best practice and relevant national guidance, the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. It should be demonstrated that, where relevant, surveys and field work have been carried out prior to submission and that the results have informed the heritage assessment. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance. In some circumstances, further survey, analysis, and recording will be made a condition of consent" (ibid., 347-348).</i></p> <p>Policy NH13 – Historic environment and climate change</p> <p><i>"1) Proposals for small-scale renewable and low carbon energy generation affecting the historic environment will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and supported provided that they are designed to avoid or minimise harm to the significance of designated and non-designated assets, including their settings, and would not unacceptably harm that significance.</i></p> <p><i>2) Where proposals requiring planning permission and/or Listed Building Consent involve improving the energy efficiency of historic buildings, applicants should demonstrate that traditional and/or reversible methods have been fully explored before proposing irreversible and potentially harmful interventions to historic fabric of traditional construction.</i></p> <p><i>3) The retention and re-use of historic buildings, buildings of traditional construction and other heritage assets will be encouraged as a sustainable resource and for their value as part of the historic environment. The retention and re-use of historic buildings and historic fabric will also be encouraged where the embodied carbon within the existing structure would lower the carbon footprint of the proposed development" (ibid., 349).</i></p>

Guidance

6.3.3 Recognisance has been taken of the following best practice guidelines/guidance etc:

- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG);



- The Setting of Heritage Assets – Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (HE, 2017); and
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (HE, 2008).

6.3.4 The following table identifies the relevant technical guidance.

Table 6.2: Relevant Technical Guidance

Consultee	
<p>Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), published by MHCLG in April 2014; the section on the historic environment was last updated in July 2019 to expand upon the NPPF</p>	<p>Section 18a of the PPG is concerned with “<i>Conserving and enhancing the historic environment</i>”. The Guidance notes that “<i>Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets and diverse as listed building to as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest</i>” (MHCLG, Live Document, Para 18a-002-20190723).</p> <p>Paragraph 18 notes that where designated assets are concerned, then the extent or level of any harm should be clearly articulated in assessments. The level of harm, whether substantial or less than substantial, will determine the appropriate policy test (<i>ibid.</i>, Para 18a-018-20190723).</p> <p>The Planning Practice Guidance notes that: “<i>What matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset</i>”. It also notes that “<i>substantial harm is a high test</i>” and that as such it is unlikely to result in many cases (Paragraph 018 18a-018-20190723).</p> <p>Direct effects cause a reduction or loss of cultural or heritage significance because the physical alteration of the site, monument, building or feature reduces its evidential value and its ability to inform this and future generations about our past. If the physical effect materially alters the appearance of the heritage asset it may affect its aesthetic value.</p> <p>Conversely, adverse effects on setting commonly reduce the aesthetic value of the cultural heritage asset; but in some special cases can reduce the evidential value of a building or monument, principally by interrupting, or in severe cases completely obstructing, some designed-in view to or from the asset or by adversely affecting the ability to appreciate the heritage significance of the asset. Such an effect upon setting would reduce the information content, and thus the overall cultural significance of the asset.</p>
<p>The Setting of Heritage Assets – Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3, (2nd Edition). Historic England (HE), 2017</p>	<p>In December 2017, HE published a guidance document on setting as part of their Good Practice Advice Notes intended to explain how to apply the policies contained in the NPPF. This document states “<i>setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance</i>” (HE, 2017, 4).</p> <p>HE set out how setting should be considered as part of the development management process stating that “<i>a thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.</i>” (<i>ibid.</i>, 2).</p>



Consultee	
	<p>The HE Guidance sets out the ways in which setting may contribute to the significance of a heritage assets. It advocates a five-stage approach which comprises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected</i> • <i>Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated</i> • <i>Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it</i> • <i>Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm</i> • <i>Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes” (ibid., 8).</i> <p>The guidance provides a checklist of potential attributes of setting which may contribute to or make appreciable the significance of the asset in question. HE acknowledges that the checklist is non-exhaustive and that not all attributes will apply in all cases (<i>ibid.</i>, p.13).</p> <p>This assessment has regard to the HE checklist but, in the interests of being proportionate to the effects that would occur, only discusses attributes of setting where these are found to contribute to the significance of the asset.</p> <p>This assessment follows the five-stage approach set out in HE’s guidance. However, it is noted that, in many cases effects upon setting are neutral or result in less than substantial harm and are not significant in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) terms. As such, it is not always necessary or appropriate to propose mitigation or enhancement measures (Stage 4). Where relevant, mitigation and enhancement measures are identified as part of this assessment.</p> <p>The final bullet point set out in the HE guidance does not apply to this assessment as the monitoring of the outcomes of a decision can only be undertaken once the planning decision in question has been made.</p>
<p>Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance Historic England (HE), 2008</p>	<p>Harm is defined by HE as: <i>“Change for the worse, here primarily referring to the effect of inappropriate interventions on the heritage values of a place”</i> (HE, 2008, p71).</p>



6.4 Consultation

- 6.4.1 **Table 6.3** provides details of consultations undertaken with relevant regulatory bodies, together with action undertaken by the Applicant in response to consultation feedback.

Table 6.3: Consultation Responses

Consultee	Consultation Response	Applicant Action
<p>South Oxfordshire Council (11th April 2022)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-application response and letter drafted after meeting on 16th March 2023 	<p>Heritage Impact and Archaeology</p> <p>... <i>“The site is located in an area of considerable archaeological interest and potential as identified from previous archaeological investigations conducted in conjunction with the construction of the M40 carriageway that bisects the proposal site.</i></p> <p><i>An archaeological desk-based assessment, incorporating the results of a detailed geophysical survey, will need to be submitted along with any planning application for the site in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2021) paragraph 194. This assessment will need to be undertaken in line with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists standards and guidance for desk-based assessments and geophysical survey including the submission of an appropriate written scheme of investigation to agree the scope of the assessment.</i></p> <p><i>A programme of further archaeological investigation is likely to be required ahead of the determination of any planning application for the site. This investigation must be undertaken in line with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists standards and guidance for archaeological evaluation including the submission and agreement of a suitable written scheme of investigation” ...</i></p>	<p>AOC archaeology produced Written Schemes of Investigation (WSIs) for a Desk-based Assessment (DBA) and walkover and a geophysical survey.</p> <p>The results of the DBA and walkover survey are included in Sections 6.6 this chapter.</p> <p>The results of the geophysical survey are included in Appendix 6.3.</p>
<p>Planning Archaeologist, Oxfordshire County Council (August to October 2022)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AOC Archaeology requested approval of WSI for DBA and walkover survey in August 2022 AOC Archaeology 	<p>23rd August 2022 – DBA and walkover survey WSI Approved</p> <p>October 2022 – Geophysical Survey WSI approved.</p>	<p>AOC conducted geophysical survey as per approved WSI between 3rd and 21st of October 2022. The results of the survey are included in Appendix 6.3.</p> <p>AOC conducted walkover survey as per the approved WSI on the 15th of September 2022.</p>



Consultee	Consultation Response	Applicant Action
requested approval of WSI for geophysical survey in October 2022		<p>The results of the survey are included in Section 6.6 of this chapter.</p> <p>The baseline conditions have been established through the DBA, walkover survey and geophysical survey and are set out in Section 6.6 and Appendix 6.3.</p>
<p>Planning Archaeologist, Oxfordshire County Council (August 2023)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AOC Archaeology, on behalf of the client, sent a copy of the geophysical survey and design and requested advice on the development and next steps regarding archaeological mitigation strategy. 	<p>Response dated: 2nd August 2023</p> <p>....</p> <p><i>“The results produced by the geophysical survey identify the proposal area to contain a high potential for archaeological remains to be present. In view of this recognised potential and to ensure that the significance of any archaeological heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals is understood as set out in the NPPF, we would require further trenched evaluation to be conducted to inform an application. The purpose of this evaluation will be to provide an appropriate level of information as to the presence/absence, date, extent, character, complexity and state of preservation, and to sufficiently understand the significance that can be attached, to any archaeological heritage assets that would be affected by proposed development.</i></p> <p><i>In terms of scope for such further trenched evaluation, this should comprise a 2% trenching sample of the proposal area, utilising trenches measuring 30m long by 1.8m wide, these to be targeted to test anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey and to also provide for an appropriate spatial sample of the remaining area of the site. A contingency provision for the excavation of up to a further 2% trenching sample will also need to be made where this may be required to clarify any points of detail within the initial sample”....</i></p>	<p>Proposed mitigation strategy for the development is outlined in Section 6.9.</p>
<p>Planning Archaeologist, Oxfordshire County Council (March 2025)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AOC Archaeology requested approval of updated WSI for DBA and 	<p>March 2025 – WSI update in relation to DBA and additional walkover survey for grid connection route approved.</p>	<p>AOC conducted walkover survey of grid connection route as per the approved WSI in March 2025.</p> <p>The results of the survey are included in Section 6.6 of this chapter.</p> <p>The baseline conditions have been established through the</p>



Consultee	Consultation Response	Applicant Action
walkover survey in March 2025.		DBA, walkover survey and geophysical survey and are set out in Section 6.6 and Appendix 6.3 .

6.5 Assessment Methods & Significance Criteria

Study Area

6.5.1 In order to assess the potential for effects on cultural heritage assets resulting from the Proposed Development, the following study areas have been identified:

- A core study area (the Site), which includes all land within the solar site and along the proposed cable corridor, which will be subject to assessment for potential direct effects. This study area has been subject to detailed walkover survey and geophysical survey (of the solar site) and cultural heritage assets which may be directly affected by the Proposed Development have been identified.
- A study area of 1 km from the main solar site and 200m from the proposed cable corridor will be used to assess the likely nature and extent of the archaeological and built heritage resource within the Site and the immediate surrounding study area. This will be undertaken to identify any known heritage assets within the Site which could be subject to direct impacts and to understand the archaeological and historical character of the area to allow for an assessment of the potential for hitherto unknown buried remains to survive on the Site.
- A study area of 2 km from the main Site and 200m from the proposed cable corridor will be used for the assessment of potential effects on the settings of all designated heritage assets including Scheduled Monuments, all Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Garden, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas. This Study Area was defined within the Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Environmental Impact Assessment, which is attached as **Appendix 6.4**, which was approved by the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council on the 11th of March 2025.

Desk Study

6.5.2 The historic environment baseline has been established with reference to the following data sources, as agreed with the Oxfordshire Planning Archaeologist via the WSI presented in **Appendix 6.4**:

- The Oxfordshire HER for records of known heritage assets including:
 - Records of archaeological sites, finds, and monuments;
 - Records of previous archaeological investigations (events) including any associated reports; and
 - Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) data.
- The National Heritage List for England (NHLE) for records of designated heritage assets;



- Historic England Archives for:
 - Aerial photographs which cover the Site. These have been used to identify any archaeological features and also to identify areas of previous disturbance. Where archaeological features, e.g. cropmark sites, are identified the aerial photographs have been rectified to allow for accurate plotting of the features;
 - Data sets containing the aerial photographic transcriptions. These have been included if they cover the area of the Site; and
 - Additional data and grey literature reports held by HE Archives which pertain to the Site and Study Area.
- South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) for:
 - Conservation Area maps and appraisals.

6.5.3 The assessment has also been informed by a detailed map regression and archival research. The following repositories and online collections were consulted:

- The Oxfordshire History Centre (visited in September 2022 and again in March 2025) for:
 - Archival records associated with the Site;
 - Historical maps depicting the Site; and
 - Picture Oxon for online available historic maps and archival sources.
- The National Library of Scotland (NLS- <https://maps.nls.uk/>) for:
 - OS mapping depicting the Site; and
 - Pre-ordnance survey historical mapping depicting the Site.
- The Genealogist Website (<https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk>) for:
 - Tithe maps and apportionments for the Site.
- Old Maps Online (<https://www.oldmapsonline.org/>) for:
 - Historical maps depicting the Site.
- English Place Name Society (<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/groups/epns/>) for:
 - Details relating to historic place names for the Study Area.
- British Geological Survey GeoIndex (BGS, <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/>) for:
 - Information on bedrock and superficial deposits on Site; and
 - Information on historic boreholes.
- Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS, <https://finds.org.uk/>) for:
 - Details of finds within the Study Area.
- Environment Agency for:



- 1m-2m point cloud data, and composite digital surface models (DSM), digital terrain models (DTM).

Field Surveys

- 6.5.4 A walkover survey of the solar site and settings assessments were conducted in September 2022.
- 6.5.5 The walkover survey of the solar site was undertaken according to the approved Cultural Heritage Environmental Impact Assessment WSI (**Appendix 6-4**). It entailed a systematic survey along transects spaced at c. 30m intervals. All known heritage assets within the Site were assessed in the field (none were identified as observable remains). Weather, ground cover and any other conditions affecting the visibility during the survey were also recorded.
- 6.5.6 As per the approved Cultural Heritage Environmental Impact Assessment WSI (**Appendix 6.4**) site visits were undertaken to designated heritage assets within the 2 km that may have intervisibility with the Proposed Development and thus be subject to impacts upon their settings. These visits were undertaken to establish the current settings of the assets, how this contributes to their significance, and the extent to which the proposed development could impact upon this.
- 6.5.7 The geophysical gradiometer survey was carried out in October 2022.
- 6.5.8 All of the geophysical survey work was carried out in accordance with the approved WSI and recommended good practice specified in the EAC guideline documents published by Historic England (Schmidt et al. 2016) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for archaeological geophysical survey (2014). The cart-based survey used a Bartington non-magnetic cart system, with a configuration of four grad-01-1000L sensors, spaced at 1 m intervals, and two DL601 dataloggers. The data was collected on an east-west alignment using zig-zag traverses, with a sample interval of 0.25 m and a traverse interval of 1 m. Gradiometer data was collected with MLGrad601 and converted with MultiGrad601 and processed (compensated) using Terrasurveyor v.3.0.36.0.
- 6.5.9 A walkover survey of the proposed cable corridor was conducted in March 2025 according to the approved Cultural Heritage Environmental Impact Assessment WSI (**Appendix 6.4**).

Assessment of Significance

- 6.5.10 A single methodology is employed to assess effects of both the construction phase of the Proposed Development, and effects resulting from the completed operational phase.
- 6.5.11 This methodology is set out in the following paragraphs (**Paragraphs 6.5.12 – 6.5.30**) and addresses both direct physical effects and setting effects. It takes



account of the NPPF (MHCLG, 2025), PPG (MHCLG & DLUHC, Live Document) and HE's Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (HE, 2017).

- 6.5.12 The assessment distinguishes between the terms '*impact*' and '*effect*'. An impact is defined as a physical change to a heritage asset or its setting, whereas an effect refers to the significance of this impact. The first stage of the assessment involves establishing the importance of the heritage asset and assessing the sensitivity of the asset to change (*impact*). Using the Proposed Development and the Design Parameters set out in **Chapter 4** – Project Description an assessment of the impact magnitude is made and a judgement regarding the level and significance of effect is arrived at.

Criteria for Assessing Importance & Relative Sensitivity

- 6.5.13 The definition of cultural significance is readily accepted by heritage professionals both in the UK and internationally and was first fully outlined in the Burra Charter, Article One of which identifies that '*cultural significance*' or '*cultural heritage value*' means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations (International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), 2013). This definition has since been adopted by heritage organisations around the world, including HE. The NPPF defines significance (for heritage policy) as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting." (MHCLG, 2025, Glossary).

- 6.5.14 All heritage assets have some significance; however, some assets are judged to be more important than others. The level of that importance is, from a cultural resource management perspective, determined by establishing the asset's capacity to inform present or future generations about the past. In the case of many heritage assets their importance has already been established through the designation (i.e. scheduling, listing and register) processes applied by HE.
- 6.5.15 The rating of importance of heritage assets is first and foremost made in reference to their designation and to the NPPF (MHCLG, 2025, Para 207). For non-designated assets, importance will be assigned based on professional judgement and guided by the criteria presented in **Table 6.4** below; which itself relates to the criteria for designations as drawn from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport publication, Principles for Selection of Listed Buildings (DCMS 2010; Updated 2018).and the Scheduled Monuments Policy Statements (DCMS, 2013) published by the same body which outline the criteria for designating heritage assets, and the HE guidance written to expand upon the guidance by DCMS.

Table 6.4: Criteria for Establishing Importance of Heritage Assets

Importance	Criteria
Very High	World Heritage Sites; Other designated or non-designated assets with demonstrable Outstanding Universal Value.



Importance	Criteria
High	Scheduled Monuments (Actual and Potential) (UK Government, 1979); Grade I and II* Listed Buildings (UK Government, 1990); Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens (UK Government, 1953); Registered Battlefields (<i>ibid.</i>); Outstanding examples of some period, style or type; Non-Designated assets considered to meet the criteria for the designation as per the types and grades of designation noted above (as stated in NPPF (MHCLG, 2025, para 216 and footnote 75) and PPG (MHCLG, Live Document, Historic Environment Section - Para 18a-041-20190723).
Medium	Grade II Listed Buildings (UK Government, 1990); Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens (UK Government, 1953); Conservation Areas (UK Government, 1990); Major or representative examples of some period, style or type; or Non-designated assets considered to meet the criteria for the designations as set out above (as stated in NPPF (MHCLG, 2025, para 216 and footnote 75) and PPG (MHCLG, Live Document, Historic Environment Section - Para 18a-041-20190723).
Low	Locally Listed Assets; Examples of any period, style or type which contribute to our understanding of the historic environment at the local level; Non-designated heritage assets identified by local historic environment records protected by NPPF (as stated in NPPF (MHCLG, 2025, para 216 and footnote 75) and PPG (MHCLG, Live Document, Historic Environment Section - Para 18a-041-20190723).
Negligible	Relatively numerous types of remains; Findspots or artefacts that have no definite archaeological remains known in their context; Non-designated heritage assets of lesser heritage significance (MHCLG, Live Document, Historic Environment Section - Para 18a-041-20190723).

- 6.5.16 While determining the relative cultural significance of a heritage asset is essential for establishing its importance, it is widely recognised (HE, 2017, Paragraph 17) that the importance of an asset is not the same as its sensitivity to changes to its setting. Thus, in determining effects upon the setting of assets by the Proposed Development, both importance and sensitivity to changes to setting need to be considered.
- 6.5.17 The Xi'an Declaration (ICOMOS, 2005) set out the first internationally accepted definition of setting with regard to heritage assets and features, indicating that setting is important where it forms part of or contributes to the significance of a heritage asset. The NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as "*the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced*" and states the setting of a heritage asset is not "*fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve*" (MHCLG, 2025, Glossary). The NPPF also notes that elements of setting may make a positive, neutral or negative contribution to the significance of an asset.
- 6.5.18 Setting is a key issue in the case of some, but by no means all assets. An asset of Very High or High importance does not necessarily have high sensitivity to changes



to its setting (e.g. does not necessarily have a high relative sensitivity). An asset's relative sensitivity to alterations to its setting refers to its capacity to retain its ability to contribute to our understanding and appreciation of the past in the face of changes to its setting. The ability of an asset's setting to contribute to an understanding, appreciation and experience of it and its significance also has a bearing on the sensitivity of that asset to changes to its setting. Assets with high sensitivity may be vulnerable to changes that affect their settings, and even slight changes may reduce their significance or the ability of setting to contribute to the understanding, appreciation, and experience of the asset. Less sensitive assets may be able to accommodate greater changes to their settings without a reduction in their significance and, in spite of such changes, the relationship between the asset and its setting can still be legible.

- 6.5.19 In establishing the relative sensitivity of an asset to changes to its setting, the setting must first be identified. This assessment outlines a range of factors, through qualitative written narrative, which will be considered when establishing the setting of an asset and therefore determining its sensitivity. The factors will be assessed from known records and in the field. In defining these criteria, emphasis has been placed on establishing the current setting of each asset, how this contributes to the significance of the asset and how the Proposed Development would affect it.
- 6.5.20 The criteria for establishing an asset's relative sensitivity are outlined in **Table 6.5**. This table has been developed based on AOC's professional judgement and experience in assessing setting impacts. It has been developed with reference to the policy and guidance noted above including NPPF (MHCLG, 2025), PPG (MHCLG, Live Document), the Xi'an Declaration (ICOMOS, 2005) and HE's guidance on the setting of heritage assets (HE, 2017).

Table 6.5: Criteria for Establishing Relative Sensitivity of Heritage Assets

Importance	Criteria
Very High	An asset, the setting of which, is critical to an understanding, appreciation and experience of it should be thought of as having Very High Sensitivity to changes to its setting. This is particularly relevant for assets whose settings, or elements thereof, make an essential direct contribution to their cultural significance.
High	An asset, the setting, of which, makes a major contribution to an understanding, appreciation and experience of it should be thought of as having High Sensitivity to changes to its setting. This is particularly relevant for assets whose settings, or elements thereof, contribute directly to their cultural significance.
Medium	An asset, the setting of which, makes a moderate contribution to an understanding, appreciation and experience of it should be thought of as having Medium Sensitivity to changes to its setting. This could be an asset for which setting makes a contribution to significance but whereby its value is derived mainly from its other characteristics.
Low	An asset, the setting of which, makes some contribution to an understanding, appreciation and experience of it should generally be thought of as having Low Sensitivity to changes to its setting. This may be an asset whose value is predominantly derived from its other characteristics.



Importance	Criteria
Negligible	An asset whose setting makes minimal contribution to an understanding, appreciation and experience of it should generally be thought of as having Negligible Sensitivity to changes to its setting.

Criteria for Establishing Magnitude of Impact

- 6.5.21 Potential impacts, that is the physical change to known heritage assets, and unknown buried archaeological remains, or changes to their settings, in the case of the Proposed Development largely relate to the possibility of disturbing, removing or destroying in situ remains and artefacts during the construction phase or the placement of new features within their setting during the operational phase.
- 6.5.22 The magnitude of the impacts upon heritage assets caused by the Proposed Development is rated using the classifications and criteria outlined in **Table 6.6**.

Table 6.6: Criteria for Classifying Magnitude of change

Importance	Criteria
High	Substantial loss of information content resulting from total or large-scale removal of deposits from an asset; Major alteration of an asset's baseline setting, which materially compromises the ability to understand, appreciate and experience the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the asset and erodes the key characteristics of the setting.
Medium	Loss of information content resulting from material alteration of the baseline conditions by removal of part of an asset; Alteration of an asset's baseline setting that effects the ability to understand, appreciate and experience the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the asset to a degree but whereby the cultural significance of the monument in its current setting remains legible. The key characteristics of the setting are not eroded.
Low	Detectable impacts leading to minor loss of information content. Alterations to the asset's baseline setting, which do not affect the ability to understand, appreciate or experience the contribution that setting makes to the asset's overall significance.
Negligible	Loss of a small percentage of the area of an asset's peripheral deposits; A reversible alteration to the fabric of the asset; A marginal alteration to the asset's baseline setting.
None	No effect predicted.



Criteria for Establishing Magnitude of Impact

- 6.5.23 The predicted level of effect on each heritage asset is then determined by considering the asset's importance or relative sensitivity in conjunction with the predicted magnitude of the impact. The method of deriving the level of effect is provided in **Table 6.7**.

Table 6.7: Criteria for classifying level of effect

Magnitude of Impact	Importance/ Sensitivity				
	Negligible	Low	Medium	High	Very High
High	Minor	Moderate	Moderate	Major	Major
Medium	Negligible/Neutral	Minor	Moderate	Moderate	Major
Low	Negligible/Neutral	Negligible/Neutral	Minor	Minor	Moderate
Negligible/Neutral	Negligible/Neutral	Negligible/Neutral	Negligible/Neutral	Minor	Minor
None	None	None	None	None	None

The levels of effect recorded in grey highlighted cells are 'significant'

- 6.5.24 The level of effect is judged to be the interaction of the asset's importance and / or relative sensitivity (Table 6.5 and **Table 6.6**) and the magnitude of the impact (**Table 6.7**). In order to provide a level of consistency, the assessment of importance and relative sensitivity, the prediction of magnitude of impact and the assessment of level of effect is guided by pre-defined criteria. However, a qualitative descriptive narrative is also provided for each asset to summarise and explain each of the professional value judgements that have been made in establishing sensitivity and magnitude of impact for each individual asset.
- 6.5.25 Professional judgement will be used to establish those effects which are deemed to be significant. However, with reference to the Guidelines for Environmental Impact Assessment (IEMA, 2024), the level of effect determined from **Table 6.7** will help guide the assessor in their judgement. Effects determined to be moderate and greater (shaded grey in **Table 6.7**), are most likely to be significant, while minor and lesser effects are most likely to be considered not significant.

Harm

- 6.5.26 There are no designated heritage assets within the Site or along the proposed cable corridor and as such there would be no harm to designated heritage assets resulting from direct effects. As such, all discussion of harm, in terms of the tests set out in the NPPF (MHCLG, 2025, Paragraphs 212 to 215), in this assessment will relate to effects on the setting of designated heritage assets.
- 6.5.27 The PPG notes that '*substantial*' harm is a '*high test*' and that as such it is unlikely to result in many cases. As noted earlier in **Table 6.4** to **Table 6.7** what matters in establishing whether harm is '*substantial*' or not, relates to whether a change would



- seriously adversely affect those attributes or elements of a designated asset that contribute to, or give it, its significance.
- 6.5.28 In terms of effects upon the setting of designated heritage assets, it is considered that only those effects identified as '*significant*' in this assessment have the potential to be of '*substantial*' harm. Where no significant effect is found, the harm is considered to be '*less than substantial*'. This is because, as set out earlier in this methodology, effects only reach the significance threshold if their relative sensitivity to changes in setting is at the higher end of scale, or if the magnitude of change is at the higher end of the scale.
- 6.5.29 For many designated assets, setting may not contribute to their significance or contribution to significance may be limited. For these assets, even High magnitude changes to setting are unlikely to have adverse effects on the overall significance of the designated asset. As stated above lower ratings of magnitude of change tend to relate to notable or perceptible changes to setting but where these changes do not necessarily obscure or damage elements of setting or relationships which directly contribute to the significance of assets. As such, effects that are not significant will result in '*less than substantial*' harm. Where '*less than substantial harm*' is identified '*this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal*' in accordance with the NPPF (MHCLG, 2025, Paragraph 215) Where there are no effects or effects are deemed to be Neutral there will be no harm.
- 6.5.30 Where significant effects are found, a detailed assessment of the level of harm will be made. Whilst non-significant effects will cause '*less than substantial*' harm, the reverse is not always true. That is, the assessment of an effect as being '*significant*' does not necessarily mean that the harm to the asset is '*substantial*'. The assessment of level of harm, where required, will be a qualitative one, and will largely depend upon whether the effects predicted would result in a major impediment to the ability to understand or appreciate the heritage asset in question by reducing or removing its information content and therefore reducing its cultural significance.

Assessment of Cumulative Effect Significance

- 6.5.31 The assessment of cumulative effects will be undertaken in a similar manner to that of the potential effects but will take into consideration other developments as agreed with the planning authority, including those which are operational, under construction, consented or proposed. Cumulative effects relating to cultural heritage are for the most part limited to effects upon the settings of heritage assets.
- 6.5.32 The cumulative assessment will have regard to the guidance on cumulative impacts upon heritage assets as set out in Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook V5 (SNH & HES, 2018) and will utilise the criteria for assessing setting effects as set out above. The assessment of cumulative effects will consider whether there would be an increased impact, either additive or synergistic, upon the setting of heritage assets as a result of adding the Proposed Development to the cumulative developments. In line with HE setting guidance consideration will be given to whether the additional change, which would result from the Proposed Development will further harm the significance of the asset (HE, 2017).



- 6.5.33 **Chapter 4** describes the approach taken to identifying projects which may give rise to likely significant cumulative effects, including the short-list of projects which will be subject to cumulative assessment. For the purposes of the ES a review of these projects has been undertaken and an analysis of potential significant cumulative effects in relation to cultural heritage and archaeology is provided in **Section 6.11**.

Limitations to Assessment

- 6.5.34 This assessment is based upon data obtained from publicly accessible archives as described in **Paragraphs 6.5.2** and **6.5.3**. All heritage assets within 1 km of the solar site and 200 m of the proposed cable corridor were identified and all designated heritage assets within 2 km of the solar site 200 m of the proposed cable corridor were identified. Data from the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) was downloaded in March 2025 and an extract from the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) was obtained in March 2025.
- 6.5.35 Online search requests of the aerial photography archive held by History England were submitted in September 2023 and March 2025.
- 6.5.36 All the work carried out in this report is based upon AOC Archaeology Group's professional knowledge and understanding of current (March 2025) and relevant United Kingdom standards, codes, technology and legislation.
- 6.5.37 Changes in these areas may occur in the future and cause changes to the conclusions, advice and/or recommendations given.

6.6 Baseline

Current Baseline

- 6.6.1 The baseline aims to characterise the Site and surrounding area to identify any known heritage assets which may be impacted by the Proposed Development and allows for an assessment of the archaeological potential of the Site. The establishment of the baseline also helps in identifying the character and context of the landscape in which the designated assets are located and thus informs the setting assessment.
- 6.6.2 This assessment has been informed by a review of the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), maintained by Historic England (HE), a data extract of the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER), review of archival, photographic and cartographic sources and site walkover surveys, for the creation of the baseline.

Summary of Baseline

- 6.6.3 Lewknor Conservation Area (Asset 95) is located to the south of the solar site and Aston Rowant Conservation Area (Asset 96) is located to the east as is Kingston Blount Conservation Area (Asset 97) which lies just within 2 km of the solar site. The eastern extent of the Grade II Listed Shirburn Castle Gardens Registered Park and Garden (Asset 122) and Conservation Area (Asset 123) lies just within 2 km of the solar site, to its south-west.



- 6.6.4 The remaining designated assets recorded by NHLE as being within 2 km of the solar site and 200 m of the proposed cable corridor are a total of 62 Listed Buildings, with the majority being Grade II Listed and located within the above noted Conservation Areas or the villages of Adwell to the northwest, South Weston to the southwest, and Postcombe to the north. The Grade II Listed Harlesford Farmhouse (Asset 130) has also been included within the assessment due to its proximity to the end of the proposed Grid Connection (c.300 m south-west of the extant substation).
- 6.6.5 All designated heritage assets identified are shown on **Figure 6.1** and full details of each are outlined in the gazetteer which forms **Appendix 6.1**.
- 6.6.6 This assessment has also identified 64 non-designated heritage assets and 16 previous locations of archaeological investigation (Events) within 1 km of the main Site and 200 m of the proposed cable corridor via a review of Oxfordshire HER data (Ref HER 24-169), historic map regression, aerial photographic and LiDAR data analysis.
- 6.6.7 These include six non-designated heritage assets and one event within the solar site. The assets include five findspots that were identified by the M40 Research Group during fieldwalking undertaken in advance of the extension of the M40 from Stokenchurch to Waterstock Crossroads in Great Milton (Rowley, 1973). These findspots include medieval pottery (Asset 34) that was recovered from the eastern portion of the solar site; whilst a number of finds including Roman (Asset 21), Anglo-Saxon (Asset 22) and medieval pottery, along with a buckle (Asset 23) were recovered from the south-western portion of the solar site. A post-medieval silver coin (Asset 26) is also recorded as having been recovered from the southwestern portion of the solar site.
- 6.6.8 The remaining asset recorded within the solar site by the HER comprises a record of the currently undated occupational activity (Asset 126) that was identified during AOC's geophysical survey of the solar site in October 2022 (Event 127). This undated occupational activity includes a pair of parallel ditches orientated north-east-south-west, approximately 1.5 m-2m apart, that are considered to be typical of those found alongside roads during the Roman period. Further anomalies including ditched enclosure complexes, pits and a pair of north-west-south-east anomalies, potentially a trackway, are suggestive of later prehistoric to medieval date. Further linear anomalies were also identified which may be related to agricultural activities, with a few apparently correlating to those shown on 1st edition OS maps (Asset 126). The results of the geophysical survey (Event 127) are summarised in **Paragraphs 6.6.74 to 6.6.79** and the geophysical survey report is included in full in **Appendix 6.3**. The remaining assets recorded within the solar site (not recorded by the HER) include the no longer extant remains of the gardens of Nethercote Manor (Asset 128), identified via historic map regression in the south-western part of the solar site and the extant public footpath (Asset 129), which is visible as a route on historic maps as early as 1815, in the north-eastern part of the solar site.
- 6.6.9 The Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) also records the Lower Icknield Way Roman Road (Asset 40) forming the south-eastern boundary of the



solar site; it may have originated as a prehistoric trackway. The route of a ridgeway (Asset 60), utilised as a medieval road running between London and Oxford, following the route of what is now the A40 London Road runs alongside the north-eastern boundary of the solar site. A possible Bronze Age round barrow (Asset 6) is also recorded just to the north of the western portion of the main solar Site at Adwell Cop, as are three Anglo-Saxon burials (Asset 31) and a findspot of Iron Age pottery (Asset 7). The location of a medieval moat, dovecot and fish ponds (Asset 39) associated with the no longer extant Nethercote House (recorded as having burnt down in 1871), is recorded just to the west of the solar site.

- 6.6.10 The Oxfordshire HER records no heritage assets within the extent of the proposed cable corridor. AOC have identified four assets via historic map regression, aerial photographic and LiDAR data analysis that extend in to or cross its route. These include the recorded routes of a post-medieval road (Asset 140) that partially survives to the present day, having been truncated by the M40, the recorded route of a post-medieval road (Asset 145) between Tetsworth and Stoke Talmage which largely survives as a modern road despite some reorganisation after the M40 was built, the former route of a public footpath between Adwell and Postcombe (Asset 139) and an area of ridge and furrow to the northeast of Harlesford Farm (Asset 146).
- 6.6.11 The non-designated heritage assets outlined above and noted in the period by period discussion below are also illustrated on **Figure 6.2**, with the events being illustrated on **Figure 6.3**, and full details of each outlined in the gazetteer which forms **Appendix 6.1**.

Geology and Topography

- 6.6.12 According to the British Geological Survey (BGS) GeoIndex, the majority of the Site is underlain by the West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation, a sedimentary bedrock that formed between 100.5 and 93.9 million years ago during the Cretaceous period. The northern most part of the Site is underlain by the siltstones and sandstones of the Glauconitic Marl Member and the Upper Greensand Formation, both sedimentary bedrocks that formed between 100.5 and 93.9 million years ago during the Cretaceous period. The BGS does not record any superficial deposits across the Site (BGS, 2025).
- 6.6.13 The BGS does not record any boreholes within the solar site or proposed cable corridor but does record a series of boreholes that were sunk along the length of the proposed M40 in 1966. Four of these boreholes, running along the length of the M40 adjacent to the Site, are summarised below in order to provide an indication of the geological conditions on the solar site.

BGS ID: 429170; BGS Reference: SU79NW12 (Easting: 470870, Northing: 199240)

- This borehole recorded topsoil down to a depth of 1' (0.3 m) below ground level (bgl), a stiff calcareous clay down to a depth of 4' (1.22 m) bgl, and a calcareous clay siltstone down to the boreholes maximum depth of 10' (3.05 m) bgl (<https://api.bgs.ac.uk/sobi-scans/v1/borehole/scans/items/429170>).



BGS ID: 429174; BGS Reference: SU79NW14 (Easting: 470910, Northing: 199050)

- This borehole recorded topsoil down to a depth of 6" (0.15 m) bgl, a stiff calcareous clay with limestone fragments down to a depth of 4' 6" (1.37 m) bgl, and a clayey siltstone down to the boreholes maximum depth of 6' (1.83 m) bgl (<https://api.bgs.ac.uk/sobi-scans/v1/borehole/scans/items/429174>).

BGS ID: 429177; BGS Reference: SU79NW17 (Easting: 471020, Northing: 198900)

- This borehole recorded topsoil down to a depth of 1' (0.3 m) bgl, a firm calcareous clay with siltstone fragments down to a depth of 2' 6" (0.76 m) bgl, and a clayey siltstone down to the boreholes maximum depth of 3' (0.91 m) bgl (<https://api.bgs.ac.uk/sobi-scans/v1/borehole/scans/items/429177>).

BGS ID: 429180; BGS Reference: SU79NW20 (Easting: 471370, Northing: 198520)

- This borehole recorded topsoil down to a depth of 2' (0.61 m) bgl, a friable calcareous clay with siltstone fragments down to a depth of 4' 6" (1.37 m) bgl, and a calcareous clayey siltstone down to the boreholes maximum depth of 6' (1.83 m) bgl (<https://api.bgs.ac.uk/sobi-scans/v1/borehole/scans/items/429180>).

6.6.14 Six of these boreholes, running along the length of the M40 adjacent to the proposed cable corridor, are summarised below in order to provide an indication of the geological conditions along the proposed cable corridor.

BGS ID: 340096; BGS Reference: SP60SE62/A-H (Easting: 469050, Northing: 201160)

- This borehole recorded topsoil down to a depth of 1' (0.3 m) below ground level (bgl), a soft calcareous clay down to a depth of 4' (1.22 m) bgl, and a firm calcareous clay down to the borehole's maximum depth of 20' (6.1 m) bgl (<https://api.bgs.ac.uk/sobi-scans/v1/borehole/scans/items/340096>).

BGS ID: 340102; BGS Reference: SP60SE68/A-B (Easting: 469470, Northing: 200860)

- This borehole recorded topsoil down to a depth of 1' (0.3 m) bgl, a firm grey calcareous clay down to a depth of 10' (3.05 m) bgl, a firm to stiff blueish grey calcareous clay down to a depth of 172' (52.43 m), and a dense blueish green sand down to the borehole's maximum depth of 172' 6" (52.58 m) bgl (<https://api.bgs.ac.uk/sobi-scans/v1/borehole/scans/items/340102>).

BGS ID: 340109; BGS Reference: SP60SE74/A-B (Easting: 469910, Northing: 200490)

- This borehole recorded a dark brownish grey calcareous siltstone down to the borehole's maximum depth of 3' 6" (1.07 m) bgl (<https://api.bgs.ac.uk/sobi-scans/v1/borehole/scans/items/340109>).

BGS ID: 342591; BGS Reference: SP70SW4 (Easting: 470240, Northing: 200120)

- This borehole recorded topsoil down to a depth of 1' (0.3 m) bgl, a firm greyish brown clay down to a depth of 2' (0.61 m) bgl, and a very stiff greyish brown clay with calcareous siltstone down to the borehole's maximum depth of 6' (1.83) bgl (<https://api.bgs.ac.uk/sobi-scans/v1/borehole/scans/items/342591>).



BGS ID: 429156; BGS Reference: SU79NW5 (Easting: 470840, Northing: 199720)

- This borehole recorded topsoil down to a depth of 1' (0.3 m) bgl, claybound brown grey siltstone fragments down to a depth of 3' 6" (1.07 m) bgl, and a friable brownish grey calcareous clay siltstone down to the borehole's maximum depth of 6' (1.83 m) bgl (<https://api.bgs.ac.uk/sobi-scans/v1/borehole/scans/items/429156>).

BGS ID: 429161; BGS Reference: SU79NW10 (Easting: 470690, Northing: 199390)

- This borehole recorded topsoil down to a depth of 6" (0.15 m) bgl, a stiff brown sandy clay with pebble inclusions down to a depth of 2' (0.61 m) bgl, a stiff brownish grey calcareous clay down to a depth of 4' (1.22 m) bgl and a friable brownish grey calcareous clay siltstone down to the borehole's maximum depth of 8' 6" (2.59m) bgl (<https://api.bgs.ac.uk/sobi-scans/v1/borehole/scans/items/429161>).

6.6.15 The solar site is bisected by the M40 and is formed of three parcels of land which are referred to as the western field (one large field to south-west of the M40), the eastern field and the northern field (both to the northeast of the M40). The western field is slightly undulating with the main trend being it sloping downwards from the north-west, at 124 m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), to the south-east, down to 114 m AOD. The eastern field slopes gently from its south-western edge, at 120 m AOD, down towards its north-eastern edge, at 117 m AOD. The northern field slopes gently down from its southern corner edge, at 123 m AOD, down towards its northern corner edge, and the village of Postcombe, at 109 m AOD.

6.6.16 The proposed cable corridor runs north-westwards from the solar site, passing through an area of arable farmland on the south-western side of the M40 until terminating at its Point of Connection (POC) with the approved existing substation at Harlesford Solar Farm (P20/S3245/FUL). The ground level generally slopes downwards along the route of the proposed cable corridor from south-east to north-west. The ground level near to the Site is recorded at 117 m AOD whilst at the existing substation at Harlesford Solar it is recorded at 83 m AOD.

Historic Landscape Character

6.6.17 The Oxfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) Project categorised the majority of land in the Study Area under the broad term '*Enclosure*', which is typical of the county (Tompkins, A. 2017). The western field of the main Site (to the south-west of the M40) is recorded in the HLC data as being a re-organised planned enclosure (HLC Id: HOX6177) in an area that was previously open field systems. A small strip of land on the northeastern side of the M40, within the extent of the solar site, is also recorded in the HLC data as being a re-organised planned enclosure (HLC Id: HOX6178) that was formerly open fields. The rest of the eastern field and northern field of the solar site (both to the northeast of the M40) are also recorded as being planned enclosure (HLC Id: HOX6156) or reorganised planned enclosure (HLC Id: HOX6157) within an area that was formerly open fields.

6.6.18 The south-eastern section of the proposed cable corridor is recorded within the HLC data as being within an area of planned enclosure of open field with one boundary lost in modern times (HLC Id: HOX6156). To its north-west is an area of planned



enclosure that was subdivided by the M40 (HLC Id: HOX5159) which is partially bound by a parcel of wooded plantation (HLC Id: HOX5163, formerly part of a designed parkland). Beyond this to the north-west the proposed cable corridor passes through an area recorded as prairie and amalgamated enclosure (HLC Id: HOX5160, formerly part of a designed parkland). The area beyond this to the north-west is recorded as reordered enclosure (HLC Id: HOX5164) which includes boundary additions in the 19th century which have subsequently been removed to revert the area back to its early 18th century layout. The proposed cable corridor terminates at the Harlesford Solar substation which is recorded as being within an area or reorganised enclosure containing reverse 's' ridge and furrow (HLC Id: HOX5627).

- 6.6.19 These categories reflect a combination of the 18th and 19th century field divisions resulting from the Enclosure Acts, and later modifications resulting from modern infrastructure developments (Tomkins, A. 2017, p. 164-165). The reorganisation, where recorded, appears to be relatively recent and associated with the construction of the M40 (HLC Id: HOX7862) as the historic map regression undertaken as part of this assessment (see sections below) does not show much change in the layout of the fields within the solar site between that outlined on a map of the area dating to 1811 (**Figure 6.5**) and that shown on an Ordnance Survey map dating to 1960 (**Figure 6.9**).

Archaeological and Historical Evidence

Undated

- 6.6.20 The Oxfordshire HER records two undated non-designated heritage assets within the Study Area. These include a series of three-square enclosures which survive as earthworks visible in Environment Agency LiDAR data (Asset 76), located c.380 m south-west of the solar site.
- 6.6.21 The other undated remains recorded by the HER include the series of features (Asset 126) identified during the geophysical survey of the Site in 2022 (Event 127). These features include parallel ditches thought to be typical of those associated with a Roman Road as well as enclosure ditches, pits and linear features that could potentially be associated with activity dating from the later prehistoric to the medieval period. Further features that were identified appear to correlate to features depicted on post-medieval mapping. Where relevant the anomalies that could be associated with a particular period of activity, these are noted in the discussion below and the full results of the geophysical survey are summarised in **Paragraphs 6.6.74 to 6.6.79** with the full report forming **Appendix 6.3**.

Early Prehistoric (- 1500BC)

- 6.6.22 No early prehistoric remains are recorded within the Site but there is a reasonable amount of activity recorded within the Study Area. The earliest activity recorded is in the form of findspots of a Neolithic Macehead (Asset 8), found c.720 m south-west of the solar site and a Neolithic Greenstone Axe (Asset 36), found c.450 m



south-east of the solar site, which suggests a background level of activity of this date in the landscape.

- 6.6.23 The recorded Bronze Age Round Barrow at Adwell Cop (Asset 6), located c.200 m north-west of the solar site, measures c.34 m in diameter by 3.5 m in height. This barrow mound has been associated with later Iron Age and Romano British finds (and later served as a windmill mound) and has been associated with Bronze Age activity due to its form and topographical location, rather than any securely dated finds material recovered from within it (HER Id: 2498 - MOX6243). There were unrecorded excavations that took place upon the mound and in the area and it is recorded that an 'urn' (Asset 19) was recovered *from 'near the windmill on Adwell Cop'* (HER Id: 5650 - MOX6276). Further Bronze Age activity was identified in advance of the construction of the M40 in the form of an excavated Bronze Age pit and pottery (Asset 32) which were noted to potentially be earlier, possibly Neolithic, in date (HER Id: 5827 - MOX6307).
- 6.6.24 Overall, there is considered to be a Medium potential for early prehistoric remains to survive within the solar site. Although the geophysical survey did not identify any features that are thought likely to date to these earlier periods, the presence of a Bronze Age barrow (Asset 6), c.200 m north-west of the solar site, does indicate early prehistoric occupation and ritual activity within the area around the Site. Any early prehistoric remains that were to be identified within the Site have the potential to be considered to be of at least Medium importance, largely due to their relative scarcity in the archaeological record. There is also considered to be a Medium potential for early prehistoric remains to survive within the proposed cable corridor, considered most likely to be concentrated towards its southeastern end in the vicinity of the recorded Bronze Age barrow (Asset 6) located c.230m to the west of the route.

Late Prehistoric (1500 BC - AD 43) and Romano-British (AD 43 – 410)

- 6.6.25 Later prehistoric and Roman activity is recorded within the Site and is generally more prevalent in the Study Area than that of the early prehistoric periods.
- 6.6.26 Within the solar site, the Roman activity recorded comprises a scatter of Romano-British Pottery (Asset 21), located within the western part of the solar site, that was identified by the M40 research group in the Spring of 1971 in advance of the motorway's construction. The HER also records the route of the Lower Icknield Way Roman Road (Asset 40) running along the southeastern boundary of the main Site. This Roman Road is described by Margary as running from Pyrton or Lewknor to Aston Clinton, following the route of an earlier prehistoric trackway (HER Id: 8930 - MOX6325). As noted above a pair of north-east-south-west aligned parallel features identified during the geophysical survey of the Site in 2022 (**Appendix 6.3:** Figures 4.1 to 4.8, Anomalies 4a, 4b, 4c, 4e, 4f, 1a and 1c) are thought to be quite characteristic of ditches lining a Roman Road. This may indicate that the HER recorded course of the Lower Icknield Way Roman Road (Asset 40) is slightly misaligned and that it does, indeed run through the main Site. If this were to be the case then the other geophysical anomalies found adjacent to the supposed road



route (**Appendix 6.3:** Figures 4.1 to 4.8, Anomalies 4d, 4g and 4h) may also reflect further late prehistoric or Roman activity.

- 6.6.27 The later prehistoric activity recorded within the wider Study Area includes a findspot of Iron Age pottery (Asset 7) recovered from near to the Bronze Age barrow described above, possible Iron Age and Romano-British pottery (Asset 1) recovered during fieldwalking c.1 km north of the solar site in 1982 (no event number) and a possible later prehistoric settlement (Asset 81) visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs to the south-east of Adwell. Further Iron Age to Roman activity has been identified in the form of linear ditches, pits, a posthole line and a cremation (Asset 131) that were discovered during evaluation in advance of the development of the Harlesford Solar Farm (Event 136). The area of this evaluation is recorded as extending to include the end of the proposed cable corridor but the features noted above were recovered from across 54 trenches excavated to the south-west, west and north-west of the now extant Harlesford Solar Substation (AOC, 2022, 3-4 and Figure 2).
- 6.6.28 The Roman activity identified within the wider Study Area is comprised of a series of findspots of Roman pottery and artefacts (Assets 20, 24, and 29) that were recovered during works in advance of the construction of the M40 and a collection of Roman pottery (Asset 4) that was recovered from within a garden in Aston Rowant in 1984. The remaining Roman activity identified within the Study Area is comprised of a series of ditches and occupational debris, thought to be indicative of a Roman settlement (Asset 33), that were discovered during the construction of the M40, located c.600 m south-east of the Site.
- 6.6.29 Overall, there is considered to be a High potential for Late Prehistoric and Roman remains to survive within the solar site with the linear and enclosure anomalies identified in the geophysical survey considered likely to date to this period. Were these features to be indicative of a Roman road (along an earlier prehistoric route) and an adjacent settlement they would be likely to be considered to be of at least Medium importance. There is also considered to be a High potential for Late Prehistoric and Roman remains to survive within the proposed cable corridor, considered most likely to be concentrated towards its south-eastern end in the vicinity of the recorded Late Prehistoric and Roman remains and findspots (Assets 20 and 81) and towards the north-western end of the cable corridor in the vicinity of the recorded remains (Asset 131) discovered during the Harlesford Solar evaluation (Event 136).

Early Medieval (AD 410 – 1066)

- 6.6.30 The only early medieval activity recorded within the solar site is that of a findspot of grass tempered Anglo-Saxon pottery (Asset 22) that was recovered by the M40 research group in the Spring of 1971 in advance of the motorway's construction.
- 6.6.31 During the construction of the M40, two Anglo-Saxon inhumations (one crouched) were discovered (Asset 82) and subsequent excavations identified a further three inhumations in a small cemetery that was dated to the 7th century (Asset 31) and



- located just to the north-west of the solar site in an area crossed by the proposed cable corridor.
- 6.6.32 Further Anglo-Saxon finds and graves (Asset 77), identified by a metal detectorist in 2009, were found c.810 m south-west of the solar site.
- 6.6.33 The main solar Site is also bound along its north-eastern edge by the modern A40 which follows the route of a ridgeway (Asset 60) which is recorded as being the 'straet' that fords 'Herepath Road' in the Cuddeston charter of 956 AD (HER Id: 8865 - MOX10040).
- 6.6.34 The names of some of the settlements near to the solar site and proposed cable corridor appear to have an early medieval origin. Lewknor is derived from an Old English name '*Leofeca*' and an Old English word for a hill-slope '*ōra*' which was only used in parts of southern England where Jutish and West Saxon dialects were in use (University of Nottingham, 2025). South Weston is derived from the Old English words for west ('*west*') and '*tūn*', the Old English word for an enclosure, farmstead or village (*ibid.*). Adwell is derived from an Old English name '*Eadda*' and an Anglian word for a spring or stream '*wella*' (*ibid.*). Tetsworth is also derived from an Old English name '*Taetel*' and an Old English word for enclosure '*word*' (*ibid.*).
- 6.6.35 Lewknor's name is derived from Leofeca, who may be considered the first holder of the manor at Lewknor. The earliest documentary reference to Lewknor occurs in the record of a lawsuit in about 990 AD, where a '*Eadgyfu aet Leofecan oran*' (Edith of Lewknor) appears as a witness. The Monks of Abingdon record that the manor of Lewknor became the property of Edith, who later married Edward the Confessor in 1045 AD and who granted the lands at Lewknor to the Abbey of Abingdon (Lobel, M.D, 1969, 98 - 115).
- 6.6.36 It seems likely that the solar site was located within the agricultural hinterland of the village of Lewknor during the early medieval period (with the proposed cable corridor also extending in to land holdings likely associated with Adwell and Tetsworth to the north-west). The presence of identified Anglo-Saxon burials (Assets 31 and 82) to the north-west of the Site also indicates that there is a burial ground that does not appear to be associated with any of the later medieval churches which survive in the area. The potential for human remains within the solar site (particularly in the north-western part near to Ash Lane) and along the section of the proposed cable corridor, , cannot be dismissed and is considered to be Medium. There is also considered to be a Low potential for remains associated with agricultural activities (former field boundaries etc., which may be difficult to distinguish from later medieval remains of the same type) and further early medieval finds to survive within the solar site or along the proposed cable corridor. Any early medieval human remains identified would be likely to be considered of at least Medium importance; whilst any other early medieval remains, depending on their



nature and condition, could potentially be considered to be of at least Low importance.

Medieval (AD 1066 – 1540)

- 6.6.37 The medieval activity recorded on the solar site is comprised of findspots of pottery and a buckle (Assets 23 and 34), that were recovered within the Site during fieldwalking by M40 Research Group in the spring of 1971. The HER also records that medieval to post-medieval activity in the form of boundary ditches and ridge and furrow (Asset 132) was identified during archaeological evaluation (Event 136) in advance of the Harlesford Solar development. These features were recorded within 54 trenches excavated to the south-west, west and north-west of the now extant Harlesford Solar Substation (AOC, 2022, 3-4 and Figure 2). The other potential medieval activity recorded along the proposed Grid Connection route is an area of ridge and furrow (Asset 146), identified via processed LiDAR imagery, which appears to extend across its north-western end.
- 6.6.38 Within the Study Area, further medieval findspots (Assets 14, 25, 27 and 30) were recovered during the programmes of work that were undertaken in advance of the construction of the M40. A findspot of Roman to medieval pottery was recorded at 4 Church Lane (Asset 4), located c.980 m east of the solar site. A watching brief undertaken in 2024 on land at Aston Cottage (Event 137) resulted in the identification of a small enclosure feature containing medieval and post-medieval pottery (Asset 135). Further areas of potential medieval ridge and furrow (Assets 147 and 148) identified via processed LiDAR imagery, are recorded in the areas around the north-western end of the proposed cable corridor.
- 6.6.39 The remaining medieval activity recorded within the Study Area is largely concentrated within the modern settlements of Lewknor, Postcombe, South Weston, Aston Rowant and Adwell, most of which are recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086. Tetsworth, which is located outside the Study Area at the north-west end of the proposed cable corridor, is also recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086.
- 6.6.40 Lewknor is recorded in Domesday under two owners, the Abbey of St Mary (Abingdon) and Robert d'Oilly. Its recorded population is 66 households, putting it within the largest 20% of settlements recorded by Domesday, with the total recorded resources including 27 ploughlands (worked by four lords plough teams and 23.5 men's plough teams), six acres and eight furlongs of meadow, one league and four furlongs of woodland, one league of land under mixed measures and a mill (Open Domesday, 2025a). Parts of this large medieval settlement no longer appear to be within the extent of modern day Lewknor, with the HER recording a series of hollow-ways and platforms (Asset 18) in a field to the north of Church Farm, indicating the former extent of the settlement.
- 6.6.41 South Weston is recorded in Domesday under the ownership of Earl Hugh of Chester. Its recorded population of 22 households put it within the largest 40% of settlements recorded by Domesday with the recorded resources including eight ploughlands (worked by two lord plough teams and six and a half men's plough



- teams), 12 acres of meadow, four acres of woodland and a mill (Open Domesday, 2025b). The mill recorded in Domesday is also recorded by the HER (Asset 15); with the entry noting that a mill of some form was present at that location, c.370 m south-west of the Site, up until the 19th century (HER Id: 4059 - MOX6269). The former Church of St Lawrence (Asset 9), recorded within South Weston and c.560 m south-west of the Site, is recorded as being a 14th century church that was later entirely replaced in 1860 with a gothic style church.
- 6.6.42 Adwell is recorded in Domesday under the ownership of Miles Crispin. Its recorded population of ten households put it within the smallest 40% of settlements recorded by Domesday, with the recorded resources including three ploughlands (worked by two lord plough teams and two men's plough teams), a furlong of meadow and a mill (Open Domesday, 2025c). Modern day Adwell appears to have shrunk in size from its larger medieval extent, with the HER recording a series of well-preserved earthworks (Asset 125) extending beyond the bounds of the modern settlement.
- 6.6.43 Aston Rowant is also recorded in Domesday under the ownership of Miles Crispin. Its recorded population is 50 households putting it within the largest 20% of settlements recorded by Domesday, with the total recorded resources including 33 ploughlands (worked by three lord plough teams and 30 men's plough teams) and one and a half leagues of woodland (Open Domesday, 2025d). A pair of possible trackways located to the northwest of Aston Rowant (Assets 58 and 59), identified as cropmarks, may indicate former routes running from this large settlement in to its agricultural hinterland (these features may also be much later, post-medieval, in date).
- 6.6.44 The solar site is located within the modern-day parish of Lewknor and it is considered likely that it once formed the agricultural hinterland of the large medieval settlement of Lewknor. Documentary sources including an inquest dating to 1279 describe the Manor of Lewknor as containing numerous other smaller hamlets, including Postcombe (Lobel, M.D, 1969, 98 - 115). The HER records the site of a medieval cross in Postcombe (Asset 38 – location recorded by HER is not accurate, so it is depicted far to the southwest of the village) noting that by 1348 Postcombe had an '*ancient cross*' named 'Postelcombe Crouch' (HER Id: 5851 - MOX6315). The absence of Postcombe from the Domesday survey may simply be due to it been considered to be a smaller satellite hamlet for the major settlement at Lewknor.
- 6.6.45 The HER also records medieval moated sites at Moor Court (Asset 16), just to the northwest of modern day Lewknor, and at Nethercote House (Asset 39), just to the south-west of the Site. The medieval moat at Moor Court is well preserved, surviving as a water filled earthwork to the present day (HER Id: 4060 - MOX6270) while no remains associated with Nethercote House (Asset 39) survive (HER Id: 5853 - MOX6317). These moated sites appear to have been associated with two of the three medieval manors at Lewknor, namely Moorcourt, Nethercote and Lewknor.
- 6.6.46 The Manor of Moorcourt is documented as being derived from a hide of land held by Peter de Wheatfield, whose family held the manor through the 12th and 13th



centuries before much of the land was granted to the Abbey of Abingdon. The remnant passed to a Sir Geoffrey de Lewknor in 1279, whose family are documented as holding the estate until they pass it to Sir Robert Symeon in 1360. A legal dispute between Robert Symeon's collateral heirs in the mid-15th century over his properties (in which Moorcourt manor was specifically mentioned) resulted in the manor eventually being sold to Christopher Edmonds and Sir Richard Long in 1545. The Manor of Nethercote is documented as being derived from two hides of land that were held by Miles Crispin at Domesday. By 1196 Miles de Morley was recorded as the owner and the Morley Family held it until the early 13th century when it passed to the Fettiplaces whose descent is not well documented. The Manor of Lewknor is recorded as having been leased by the Abbey of Abingdon for most of the medieval period until the eventual suppression of the Abbey in 1583 (Lobel, M.D, 1969, 98 - 115).

- 6.6.47 The other surviving medieval remains within the Study Area are all surviving medieval Listed Buildings. These buildings include the Grade I Listed St Margaret's Church (Asset 12) in Lewknor and the Grade II* Listed Church of St Peter and Paul (Asset 10) in Aston Rowant, both of which retain architectural fabric dating from the 12th century. The Grade I Listed Church of St Andrew (Asset 102) in Wheatfield, and a Grade II Listed barn at Church Farm (Asset 17), in Lewknor were both originally constructed in the 14th century. The remaining medieval Listed Buildings within the Study Area are all Grade II Listed Buildings located in Lewknor (Assets 13 and 46) and Postcombe (Asset 56) that original date to the early to mid-16th century. Further details of these Listed Buildings are held by the NHLE with their descriptions replicated in the gazetteer which forms **Appendix 6.1**.
- 6.6.48 The solar site appears to have been located within the agricultural hinterland of the village of Lewknor in an area directly to the northeast of remains associated with the Manor of Nethercote (Asset 39). The proposed cable corridor appears to extend beyond into land holdings likely associated with Adwell and Tetsworth to the north-west. There is, therefore, considered to be a Medium potential for archaeological remains associated with agricultural activities (ridge and furrow, former field boundaries etc.) to survive with the solar site and along the proposed cable corridor. Any such remains are likely to be considered to be of Low importance.

Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1900)

- 6.6.49 The only post-medieval asset recorded by the HER within the solar site is a record of a post-medieval silver coin (Asset 26) that was recovered from the western portion of the Site by the M40 research group in the Spring of 1971. The HER records one other post-medieval findspot in the Study Area in the form of a post-medieval spur (Asset 37) that was discovered during excavations related to the M40 construction, c.450 m south-east of the solar site. The HER also records that medieval to post-medieval activity in the form of boundary ditches and ridge and furrow (Asset 132) was identified during archaeological evaluation (Event 136) in advance of the Harlesford Solar development. These features were recorded within



- 54 trenches excavated to the south-west, west and north-west of the now extant Harlesford Solar Substation (AOC, 2022, 3-4 and Figure 2).
- 6.6.50 Cartographic and documentary sources show the solar site and proposed cable corridor continued in agricultural use throughout the post-medieval period with much of the surviving evidence for post-medieval period in the Study Area taking the form of Listed Buildings dating from the late 16th to 19th centuries that are located within the surrounding villages and or comprise isolated farm complexes.
- 6.6.51 While the available pre-Ordnance Survey maps are largely schematic and small-scale, they give an indication of the nature of settlement in relation to key landscape and administrative features. Saxton's 1579 map (not illustrated) shows settlements at '*Lewkenor*', '*Aston Rowan*' and '*Tetsworth*' but does not illustrate the other smaller settlements in the vicinity of the Site and proposed cable corridor. This pattern recurs on several later maps, including Blaeu's 1662 map of Oxfordshire (**Figure 6.4**), which also shows the hundred boundaries.
- 6.6.52 The potential early post-medieval activity identified within the Study Area includes a now destroyed road to the east of Lewknor (Asset 35) that is thought to have been in use from the late 16th century onwards and a pair of possible trackways to the north-west of Aston Rowant that are visible as cropmarks (Assets 58 and 59) which were also discussed within the medieval section above due to potentially dating to that period. The remaining early post-medieval activity identified within the Study Area is comprised of surviving Grade II Listed Buildings. The ones identified within Lewknor include the late 16th century Church Farm (Asset 79) and Manor House (Asset 49) as well as the 17th century Moor Court (Asset 11), Knapp Farmhouse (Asset 41) and Ye Olde Leathern Bottle Public House (Asset 44). The Manor Farm Cottage (Asset 55), in South Weston, also dates to the early 17th century. Further afield, beyond 1 km from the Site, the NHLE records further Grade II Listed cottages, farmhouses and farm related structures in Wheatfield (Asset 99), Chalford (Assets 114 and 117) and at Copcourt Manor (Assets 106, 109 and 110).
- 6.6.53 Early post-medieval documentary evidence for Lewknor indicates that after the suppression of the Abbey at Abingdon, the Manor at Lewknor was granted in 1541 to Sir John Williams, who later became Lord Williams of Thame. After he died without an heir the manor was initially leased and finally granted to Christopher Edmonds of North Weston by 1565 who is recorded as having held the manors of Moorcourt and Nethercote since 1545. This united the three manors of Lewknor which were all sold on to Thomas Rolles in 1603 after Edmonds died without an heir. Successive members of the Rolles family mismanaged the estate and eventually had to sell it off 1720 to Paul Jodrell in order to satisfy their debts (Lobel, M.D, 1969, 98 - 115).
- 6.6.54 Jefferys's 1766-67 map (not illustrated) contains significantly more detail for the Study Area, showing roads, buildings, features such as trackways and parish boundaries. The Site is shown as being located within fields to the immediate south-west of the road running from Postcombe south-eastwards with an illustrated house annotated as '*Nethercot*' (Asset 39) depicted just to the south-west of the Site. The nearby settlements of Lewknor, Postcombe, South Weston, Adwell and Aston



- Rowant are all depicted with details of the internal road layouts and blocked out areas of buildings as well as artistic depictions of their churches. The HER records 18th century activity within the Study Area in the form of the former site of a gardens, park and watermill at Adwell House (Asset 3).
- 6.6.55 The NHLE records a large number of 18th century Listed Buildings within 2 km of the Site, most of which are located within the nearby settlements and may correspond to buildings depicted on Jeffery's Map. These 18th century Listed Buildings include Grade II Listed houses and farmhouses within Lewknor (Assets 45 and 48), Postcombe (Asset 52 and 65), South Weston (Asset 50, 72 and 74), Aston Rowant (Asset 63 and 71) and Adwell (Asset 106) as well as the Grade II* Listed Wheatfield Park Coach House, Stables And Farmhouse (Asset 101). Further afield the NHLE also records the Grade II Listed Glebe Cottage (Asset 98) and Wheatfield House (Asset 100), to the west of Adwell, and further 18th century Grade II Listed farm buildings associated with the complex at Copcourt Manor (Assets 107, 111 and 112) and Chalford Farmhouse (Assets 113, 115 and 116). The remaining 18th century Listed Buildings recorded by the NHLE within the Study Area are not depicted on Jeffery's map as they are chest tombs within the graveyards of the Church of St Peter and Paul in Aston Rowant (Assets 62 and 69) and St Margaret's Church in Lewknor (Assets 64, 67, 70 and 73). The Grade II Listed Harlesford Farmhouse (Asset 130), located towards the end of the proposed cable corridor is also recorded as being built in the 18th century.
- 6.6.56 Stanleys map of 1811 (**Figure 6.5**) shows the solar site in some detail with depictions of the roads running south-eastwards (now the A40) and south-westwards from Postcombe (now Salt Lane) both clearly depicted. The arrangement of the fields depicted within the area containing the main Site appears to indicate that there is a square plot of land to the immediate south of Postcombe with the rest of the Site being comprised of one large L-shaped plot. '*Nethercote Hall*' (Asset 39) is depicted to the immediate south of the solar site within what appears to be an arrangement of gardens (Asset 128) that extend within the solar site. This map also depicts roads running on a north-east alignment from Adwell (Asset 140) and Wheatfield (Asset 145), which cross the proposed cable corridor. The road running north-eastwards from Adwell (Asset 140) is no longer intact as a continuous road, due to the M40, with the section that the proposed cable corridor passes through being missing. The road from Wheatfield (Asset 145), however, appears to survive to the present day. This map also clearly depicts the complex at Harlesford Farmhouse (Asset 130).
- 6.6.57 A plan of the divisions of Lewknor and Postcombe in the Parish of Lewknor, dated to 1815 (not illustrated – viewed at Oxfordshire County Record Office, Ref: PAR161/16/H/1) shows detail of proposed land division (which seems largely the same as that depicted on the 1811 map) within the solar site. The smaller plot, apparently forming what is now the northern most field of the Site, is annotated as being the '*3rd allotment for Vicarial tithes*' with a smaller rectangular space in its southeastern corner being annotated '*4th allotment for the tithes of Lewknor Meadow*'. The remaining large L-shaped field, which comprises majority of rest of the Site, is annotated as being the '*2nd allotment to Paul Jodrell Esq*'. This map also depicts and annotates a public trackway (Asset 129) running through the Site



as a '*Public Footway and Churchway*'. This path runs southwards from Postcombe before turning south-eastwards towards a more formally drawn public carriageway (that survives to the present day along the supposed route of the Lower Ickfield Roman Road – Asset 40). Its route appears to broadly correlate to the modern day public footpath that runs through the solar site. Later OS mapping confirms that some of the gardens and features depicted in association with Nethercote House (Asset 39) are located within the solar site. These features appear to include a '*gardens*' (Asset 128), which contains a tree lined route running on a broadly north-east to south-west alignment that terminates within its plot and does not appear to connect up to any of the nearby roads or public footpaths.

- 6.6.58 A tithe plan of the Parish of Adwell dating to 1840 (**Figure 6.6**) depicts the area that the proposed cable corridor would run through as being an area of field systems to the south of the Oxford to London road (now largely replaced by the M40). In addition to the field systems the map clearly depicts the road layout noted on earlier mapping above (including Assets 140 and 145) but also depicts a public footpath running between Adwell and Postcombe which is annotated as the '*Church Way*' (Asset 139). This map also depicts a building annotated as a lodge (Asset 141) at the junction of the road (Asset 140) between Adwell and the Oxford to London Road (now the M40). The tithe map apportionment indicates that most of the land that the proposed cable corridor would pass through (including Plots 11, 12, 13, 56, 57 and 58) were fields that were owned and occupied by a Miss Frances Webb. The other plots are recorded as either being owned by Rev'd William Lewis Buckle (Plot 7) or are otherwise describe as being Church Land (Plot 13) (The Genealogist, 2025). The north-western end of the proposed cable corridor passes in to an area depicted on the tithe plan of the Parish of Tetsworth dating to 1840 (**Figure 6.6**). The two plots that the end of the proposed cable corridor passes through are both recorded as being pasture (Plots 187 and 188) owned by The Wardens and Fellows of Merton College, Oxford and occupied by a Thomas Meaks (*ibid.*). The late 18th and early 19th century activity recorded within the wider Study Area includes a possible post-medieval trackway or field boundary bank (Asset 28) that was discovered during excavation works associated with the M40 construction, located immediately adjacent to the solar site near its south-eastern boundary. The remaining late 18th to early 19th century activity identified within the wider Study Area is comprised of Listed Buildings recorded by the NHLE. These include Grade II Listed Houses and Farmhouses within Lewknor (Assets 42 and 43) and Postcombe (Assets 51 and 53), a series of decorative features at Adwell House (Assets 66, 68 and 105), a toll house (Asset 124), the Feathers Public House in Postcombe (Asset 54) and a chest tomb in the graveyard of the Church of St Mary in Adwell (Asset 104). The NHLE also records that the Registered Park and Garden (RPG) at Shirburn Castle (Asset 122), which just extends to within the 2 km Study Area, was largely lain out in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.
- 6.6.59 An Ordnance Survey map dating to 1883 (**Figure 6.7**) is the first to depict the solar site accurately and this map shows no major differences in the layout of the field systems from that depicted on Stanley's map of 1811 (**Figure 6.5**) or the parish map of 1815 (viewed but not reproduced). The tree lined route depicted on the parish map of 1815 has apparently been extended and runs across the southern part of the Site between a large copse of trees and the gardens (Asset 128) of



- 'Nethercot' House (Asset 39). This alignment does not appear to have been picked up in the geophysical survey which records a similarly aligned, north-east to south-west, anomaly further to the north (that is suspected to be Roman in date). This map also depicts the field boundaries of the solar site as being largely tree lined with the only exception being the northern most field of the Site which appears to be open up to its border with the road. 'Nethercot' (Asset 39) is still depicted on this map though the HER entry for the asset notes that the 'rebuilt house was burnt down' in 1871, perhaps indicating that the structures depicted on this map are actually surviving ancillary buildings. This OS map also depicts that there has been very little change in the arrangement of the roads and field systems to the north-west of the solar site, in the area that the proposed cable corridor passes through. The new features identified on this map in proximity of the proposed cable corridor include a clearly annotated a milestone on the Oxford to London road (Asset 142) as well as two unannotated barns/structures (Assets 143 and 144). The HER records some earthwork remains of this former road (Assets 133 and 134 - now replaced by the M40) to the north-east of the proposed cable corridor.
- 6.6.60 The 19th century activity recorded elsewhere in the Study Area includes the former site of a late 19th century windmill (Asset 2), the former site of a congregational chapel (Asset 47) in Postcombe, a drain, grave and skeletal remains discovered during works at St Peter and St Paul's Church (Asset 75) and the Watlington to Princes Risborough Railway (Asset 80). This railway line, which ran on a south-west to north-east alignment through the area to the south-east of Lewknor, was opened on the 15th of August 1872 and had two intermediate stations at Chinnor and Aston Rowant. It was closed to passengers in 1957 and fell out of use entirely by 1989 (HER Id: 29033 - MOX27412). The remaining 19th century assets identified within the Study Area are Grade II Listed Buildings which include the Church of St Mary (Asset 103) and Old Rectory (Asset 61) in Adwell, the Lewknor Church of England School (Asset 5) in Lewknor and a Model Farmhouse (Asset 118) and associated buildings (Assets 119 to 121) that are located c.1.7 km south-west of the solar site.
- 6.6.61 The HER data, historic map regression and documentary research indicate that the solar site was located within the agricultural hinterland of Lewknor throughout the post-medieval period with elements of the southern part of the Site apparently being within the gardens associated with the complex of buildings at Nethercote Manor (Asset 39); itself just outside the solar site). The '*gardens*' (Asset 128) are depicted as an enclosed area containing trees with a tree lined avenue that runs north-eastwards from Nethercote Manor (Asset 39) towards a copse of trees (Figure 6.7). The proposed cable corridor ran through the agricultural hinterlands of Adwell and Tetsworth during the post-medieval period, through what appears to be a mix of pastoral and arable farmland (**Figure 6.6**).
- 6.6.62 Overall, there is considered to be a High potential for post-medieval remains to survive on the solar site and along the proposed cable corridor which would most



likely be associated with agricultural activities (former field boundaries, ridge and furrow etc) that would likely be considered to be of Low importance.

Modern (AD 1900 -)

- 6.6.63 The OS map of 1900 (not reproduced) shows no changes within the solar site, with the garden and tree lined route associated with Nethercote Manor still visible. The route of the public footpath running through the Site is unchanged from that depicted on earlier mapping. No major changes are recorded within the area of the proposed Grid Connection route.
- 6.6.64 The only early 20th century heritage assets recorded within the wider Study Area comprises the site of the Lewknor Bridge Halt (Asset 57), located along the route of the Watlington to Princes Risborough Railway (Asset 80) which opened as a passenger stop point along the line in 1906 and closed by 1957 (HER Id: 12442 - MOX6355).
- 6.6.65 The OS map of 1922 (**Figure 6.8**) shows a minor change in the southern part of the solar site with the apparent boundary of the gardens (Asset 128) associated with Nethercote Manor (Asset 39) having expanded to enclose the entirety of the southern most portion of the solar site, which includes the tree-lined avenue and copse of trees. The only other modern heritage asset recorded within the wider Study Area that dates to the early 20th century is the Grade II Listed War Memorial in Aston Rowant (Asset 78), which was originally erected to commemorate those from the local community who died in service during the First World War and was later modified to include a commemoration for those who died in the Second World War.
- 6.6.66 The OS map of 1960 (**Figure 6.9**) shows no major changes within the solar site from the details depicted on earlier mapping. The map no longer depicts trees within the 'garden' (Asset 128), or the tree lined avenue associated with Nethercote Manor (Asset 39); perhaps indicating that this parcel of land has been turned over to agricultural use. No major changes are recorded within the area of the proposed cable corridor.
- 6.6.67 The main solar Site and surrounding areas underwent changes during the construction of the M40, which was constructed in stages between 1967 and 1974, and which bisects the Site. The former boundary associated with the garden (Asset 128) which had expanded by 1922 no longer survives as an extant boundary on this map, with the entirety of the solar site to the south-west of the M40 now forming one large field (Google 2023). The area to the north-east of the M40, however, appears to have undergone fewer changes since the construction of the M40 with the field divisions, public footpath within the Site (Asset 129), public footpath running along what is thought to be the route of Lower Icknield Way at the southern boundary of the Site (Asset 40), and trees lining parts of the eastern and north-east boundary of the Site apparently being unchanged from the 19th century mapping (**Figure 6.7**).
- 6.6.68 Overall, there is considered to be a High potential for remains associated with modern agricultural activities to survive with the Site which could include the former



boundary of the gardens associated with Nethercote Manor (Asset 39) which was apparently filled in after the construction of the M40. There is also considered to be a High potential for remains associated with modern agricultural activities along the proposed cable corridor. Any such remains would likely be considered to be of Negligible importance.

Previous Archaeological Investigations

- 6.6.69 The HER records one previous investigation ‘Event’ within the solar site, the geophysical survey undertaken by AOC in 2022 (Event 127) and a further 15 schemes of previous investigation ‘Events’ within the Study Area. The AOC geophysical survey (Event 127) will be summarised below in the following section. The HER also record one Event which extends to include the north-western end of the proposed cable corridor in the form of an archaeological evaluation that was undertaken in advance of the development of the Harlesford Solar Farm (Event 136). As noted above this evaluation identified Iron Age to Roman activity (Asset 131) as well as medieval to post-medieval agricultural features (Asset 132) identified within 54 trenches excavated to the south-west, west and north-west of the now extant Harlesford Solar Substation (AOC, 2022, 3-4 and Figure 2).
- 6.6.70 It is also noted that the HER does not appear to record any events associated with the investigations undertaken as part of the programme of works undertaken in advance of the construction of the M40 (field walking, excavations) that resulted in the identification of some of the heritage assets described above.
- 6.6.71 The remaining events recorded by the HER include nine programmes of building recording (Events 83 to 91) and a photographic survey at Moor Court Farmhouse (Event 92). These types of event are focussed on recording the standing remains of the buildings and structures and, as such, do not provide any information about the archaeological potential of the Site and will not, therefore, be discussed in detail here (their summaries are recorded within **Appendix 6.1**).
- 6.6.72 The only other intrusive investigations recorded by the HER within the Study Area include a watching brief at St Peter and St Paul's Church (Event 93) which was undertaken in 2011 to monitor the groundworks associated with the excavation of footings for a new toilet block and kitchenette extension and its associate drains and soakaways (HER Id: EOX3276). This watching brief identified 19th century remains including a drain, grave and skeletal remains (Asset 75). Another watching brief undertaken in 2024 on land at Aston Cottage (Event 137) resulted in the identification of a small enclosure feature containing medieval and post-medieval pottery (Asset 135). A final watching brief undertaken at the Malt House on Church Lane Aston Rowant in 2024 (Event 138) resulted in the identification of no archaeological features.
- 6.6.73 The HER also records a geophysical survey that was undertaken on land at Watlington Road (Event 94), c.803m south of the solar site, in 2017. This survey of



a 2 ha area to the south of Lewknor did not identify any anomalies thought to be associated with archaeological remains (HER Id: EOX6553).

Geophysical Survey

- 6.6.74 AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned to undertake an archaeological geophysical survey of the solar site, using the magnetic gradiometry method to investigate the potential for buried archaeological remains in advance of the Proposed Development (Event 127).
- 6.6.75 Overall c.80 ha were surveyed between the 3rd and 21st of October 2022, with the remaining 3 ha consisting of unsurveyable areas occupied by fences, vegetation and other obstacles. The summary below is extracted from the full geophysical survey report which is included as **Appendix 6.3** to this chapter.
- 6.6.76 The survey identified a pair of parallel anomalies (Anomalies 4A, 4B, 4C, 4E, 4F, 1A and 1C) likely to be caused by ditches that crossed the survey area from mid-way along the northeastern edge, running to the south-west. These features were consistently c.20 m apart with an interpretation being that these are the flanking ditches of a Roman Road – the orientation and overall direction matches the one known as the Lower Icknield Way (Asset 40), but the HER has it recorded running on the same orientation along the southern boundary of the survey area. Another possibility is that these ditches relate to former field boundaries of some sort, but character and spacing is consistent with a Roman road. In the same quadrant as this possible road, but primarily to the south of it, there is also a complex of curvilinear and rectilinear anomalies (Anomalies 4D and 4H) which form a group of what have been interpreted as enclosures, possibly enclosed in one overall triangular boundary feature. These contain discrete anomalies interpreted as pits, suggesting the enclosures may be settlement related, but their shape and character is not indicative of any particular period, and they could originate any time from later prehistory to the early medieval period.
- 6.6.77 Across the rest of the survey area, a large number of anomalies have been identified and categorized as possibly having archaeological origins. The majority of these are sections of fragmentary narrow linear or curvilinear anomalies (Anomalies 1B, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4G and 4I) or small, discrete subcircular anomalies of varying magnitudes.
- 6.6.78 Within the northern portion of the survey area, a range of indistinct anomalies has been identified that manifest as weak trends in the data or small (often 1m-2m diameter) discrete features. These may be the result of natural geological variation; however, they may also have an archaeological origin and they have been highlighted as such, particularly in light of the generally limited range of enhancement seen across the survey area. Furthermore, it is noted that the HER records Anglo-Saxon burials a short distance beyond the north-western edge of the survey area and caution has been applied to the interpretation given the potential



for similar archaeology, which may not typically involve large and/or strong magnetic anomalies.

- 6.6.79 The survey has also identified historical features and former boundaries as well as those related to modern services; alongside the range and varying character of the anomalies of archaeological interest, this suggests that magnetic gradiometry has proven successful in terms of the survey aims, which were to map and characterise anomalies of potential archaeological interest. Despite the uncertainty around the nature of the small discrete anomalies in the northern part of the survey area, confidence in the overall results is high, with it being unlikely that substantial features of interest have remained undetected (AOC, 2022).

Aerial Photography

- 6.6.80 A search of the aerial photographs held by Historic England Archives in Swindon was undertaken as part of this assessment. The aerial photographic archives at Historic England, Swindon were contacted in late September 2023 and in March 2025 and copies of the following aerial photographs were ordered.

Table 6.8: List of Aerial Photographs ordered from Historic England

Sortie Number	Frame Number	Centre point	Date
RAF/CPE/UK/1936	2067	SU 710 986	18/01/1947
OS/73250	15	SU 710 991	06/06/1973
OS/031054	904	SU 714 986	05/10/2003

- 6.6.81 The image dating to 1947 (Sortie RAF/CPE/UK/1936, Frame: 2067), and a photomontage dating to 1947 held by the NLS (<https://maps.nls.uk/view/238923505>), show the solar site containing further subdivision and internal field boundaries than are depicted on any of the historic OS maps (**Figures 6.6 - 6.8**). The northern most field, just to the south of Postcombe, is depicted as containing four distinct crops, with the boundaries between them in places appearing to be thin grass verges rather than ditches or hedgerows (the image is very grainy though so more substantial boundaries may well be present). The eastern most field is depicted as being subdivided into seven rectangular plots, with some of the boundaries between them apparently being formed by short hedgerows. The large field which forms the western part of the solar site is shown in these images as being subdivided into a solitary large plot at the southern end of the Site which contains an area of grassland and trees, possibly a garden (Asset 128), which appears to be associated with the complex of buildings at Nethercote (Asset 39). This area of grassland contains a row of trees which seems to broadly correlate with the tree lined route visible on the OS map of 1922 (Figure 6.7). The remaining area of the western part of the Site, to the north of the apparent gardens (Asset 128), is subdivided in to seven separate fields which appear to have thin grass verge boundaries; with only the boundary between the land in agricultural use and the apparent gardens (Asset 128) having a slightly more substantial boundary, potentially a hedgerow. The historic and OS mapping does not depict the majority of the internal field boundaries depicted within the solar site on this image. This is potentially due to the boundaries being formed by surface features like grass verges



- or juvenile hedgerows rather than more substantial boundary features like ditches. The only other clear feature within the solar site in this image is the route of the public footpath (Asset 129) which runs through the northern and eastern part of the Site. There are other linear and curvilinear linear trends visible within the fields, but these all appear to be related to modern agricultural activities.
- 6.6.82 The image dating to 1973 (Sortie: OS/73250, Frame 15) shows that the layout of the fields within the solar site is almost identical to that depicted on the OS map of 1960 (**Figure 6.9**). The south-western field is subdivided within this image, which shows two fields, one of which appeared to be associated with the former complex at Nethercote Manor (Asset 39). The eastern field appears to contain three distinct crops in this image, but there do not appear to be any formal boundaries between the areas. The clearest feature in the northern field is the public footpath (Asset 129) which runs through the northern and eastern part of the solar site. The major change in this image, however, is the appearance on the M40, which bisects the Site, which appears to be under construction at the time this photograph was taken. No cropmarks of the earlier field subdivisions or buried features identified above are visible in this image.
- 6.6.83 The image dating to 2003 (Sortie OS/031054, Frame 904) clearly shows the modern layout of the solar site, with the area to the south of the M40 (which bisects the Site) being comprised of one large field containing a juvenile crop or crop stubble. The area to the north-east of the M40 is comprised of two fields, each containing either a juvenile crop or crop stubble. The public footpath (Asset 129) is still visible as a clear feature running from Postcombe through the northern field and along the edge of the eastern field. No indications of the earlier field boundaries within the Site or other cropmarks are visible in this image.
- 6.6.84 The National Collection of Aerial Photography (NCAP), Cambridge Collection of Aerial Photography (CUCAP), Britain from Above and Historic England (HE) websites were all accessed on the September 2023 and in March 2025 in order to view any available online aerial photographs.
- 6.6.85 No viewable aerial photographs covering the solar site or proposed cable corridor were held by the CUCAP or Britain from Above.
- 6.6.86 Historic England holds an aerial image covering the entirety of the solar site and proposed cable corridor dating to 1943 (Sortie US/7PH/GP/LOC111). This image shows the solar site as being comprised of the same arrangement of field systems as noted on the slightly later 1947 aerial image noted above. The image shows that the proposed cable corridor passes through an area of arable farmland which appears to retain the field boundaries and subdivision visible on the late 19th century OS mapping (**Figure 6.7**). The layout of the roads (Asset 140 and 145) are clearly visible and routes still in use, as is the route of the footpath between Adwell and Postcombe (Asset 139). The unannotated barns or farm structures (Assets 143 and 144) visible on the late 19th century mapping also appear to be extant and there are also areas of visible ridge and furrow in this image towards the north-western most end of the proposed cable corridor (Assets 146 to 148). No other features were noted in this image (<https://historicengland.org.uk/images->



[books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/record/us_7ph_gp_loc111_v_5025](#)). NCAP holds two vertical images that were taken as part of a sortie in 1961 (Sortie: FSL/6125/02, Frames 0025 and 0026) which show most of the solar site (only the northernmost edge is beyond these images). These images show the overall layout of the external boundaries of the Site and surrounding area much as they appear in the Ordnance Survey map of 1960 (**Figure 6.9**). The south-western field, however, is further subdivided within these images which show nine different areas of crop within what is depicted on the OS map as two fields, one of which appeared to be associated with the former complex at Nethercote Manor (Asset 39). The aerial image show that the former area of apparent gardens (Asset 128) and the associated tree lined avenue (Asset 129) are no longer extant, with the fields being in crop. There is a large tree in the centre of one of the fields in that area and there is also, what appears to be, a grassed route through the fields that corresponds with the former tree lined avenue visible on pre-1960 historic mapping (**Figures 6.5 - 6.8**). The only other clear feature within the main Site in these images is the route of the public footpath (Asset 129) which runs through the northern and eastern part of the Site. There are linear trends visible within the fields, but these all appear to be related to modern ploughing regimes.

- 6.6.87 NCAP also holds two further vertical images that were taken as part of sorties in 1991 (Sortie: GEONEX/0041/91, Frame 0235) and 1995 (Sortie AF/95C/0356, Frame 7531). The image taken in 1991 (Sortie: GEONEX/0041/91, Frame 0235) clearly shows the modern layout of the solar site with the area to the west of the M40 (which bisects the Site) being comprised of one large field containing a mature crop. No indications of the earlier field boundaries within this large field are visible in the image. The area to the northeast of the M40 is mostly unchanged from the layout visible in the OS map of 1960 (Figure 6.9) with the only difference being that the eastern most field of the Site is half planted with crop and half fallow, though no formal boundary between the areas is visible. The image taken in 1995 (Sortie AF/95C/0356, Frame 7531) shows no difference from the 1991 image to the northeast of the M40 but shows that the large field to the west of the M40 is partly fallow, partly grass with the rest of the areas containing a mature crop (four areas in total, none of which appear to correlate to the 1961 division of the field). Neither of these images contains any visible cropmarks or features other than the route of the public footpath (Asset 129) which runs through the north-eastern half of the solar site.

LiDAR

- 6.6.88 LiDAR datasets that were produced by the National LiDAR Programme in 2019, 2020 and 2021 (ALS 2021), that covers 100% of the Study Area was used to produce a 1 m spatial resolution Digital Surface Model (DSM) and Digital Terrain Model (DTM). These were subsequently improved by implementing different visualisation techniques using the software Relief Visualization Toolbox 2.2.1 and SAGA GIS. These visualisation techniques include;
- Analytical Hillshading (x16),
 - Sky View Factor (SVF),
 - Visualisation for Archaeological Topography (VAT),



- Simple Local Relief model (SLRM) and,
- Laplacian Filter and VAT & Analytical Hillshading (x16) (Doneus, 2012; Hesse, 2010; Kokalj et al, 2011; Kokalj et al, 2017)

- 6.6.89 The most prominent features noted within the processed LiDAR data (**Figure 6.10**) are a series of enclosure features and linear features that appear to reflect earlier subdivision of the field plots within the main Site and along the proposed cable corridor. Some of features visible in the eastern field and northern field of the main Site appear to correlate to field boundaries visible on the aerial photography dating to 1947 and 1961. There are, however, features visible in the LiDAR data within these fields and the field to the southwest of the M40 which do not appear to relate to former field boundaries visible in either historic mapping or aerial photography. These LiDAR features seem to broadly correlate the general alignment of the fields visible in later post-medieval mapping so may reflect earlier post-medieval, or medieval, subdivision within the area. It also cannot be ruled out that these LiDAR features reflect earlier land enclosure though none of the anomalies thought to be potentially early in the geophysics appear to be clearly replicated as features in the LiDAR data. The LiDAR data also appears to show several areas of ridge and furrow remains (Assets 146 to 148) towards the northwestern end of the proposed Grid Connection route. Walkover Survey
- 6.6.90 The solar site was visited on the 15th of September 2022, on a bright and dry day. The Site is comprised of two parcels of land, a western parcel and a eastern parcel. The western parcel is currently comprised of a solitary irregularly shaped large arable field (**Appendix 6.2**; Plates 6.1 to 6.4) which will be referred to below as the western field. The eastern parcel is currently comprised of two roughly equally sized sub-rectangular arable fields (**Appendix 6.2**; Plates 6.5 to 6.12) which will be referred to as the eastern and northern fields below.
- 6.6.91 The western field of the solar site is bound by a short wooden fence and the M40 motorway to the north-east (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.4), by mature trees lining an embankment adjacent to Salt Lane to the north-west (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.1) and by mature trees lining a public footpath (formerly the course of a prehistoric trackway then Roman Road, Asset 40) to the south-east (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.3). The southern edges of the Site are irregular due to the presence of a farmhouse, yard and paddock in the adjacent plot (which also includes the former site of a moat, dovecote and fishponds for Nethercote House, Asset 39). The boundaries to this plot varied, with sections formed by a short post and wire fence bounding the paddock and a fence and tall hedgerow bounding the farmhouse (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.2). The field was slightly undulating with the main trend being it sloping downwards from the north-west to the south-east with the highest parts being adjacent to Salt Lane and the M40 in the western half of the field. The field also contained telegraph poles and overhead wires (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.3) which ran across the southern half of the field on a north-east to south-west alignment.
- 6.6.92 The western field of the solar site was walked in north-west to south-east aligned transects following, where possible, existing farm vehicle tracks. The field contained crop stubble during the survey and most of the ground surface was covered in short sections of cut straw and overgrown with grasses and weeds in places. Despite this



limitation to visibility, it was noted that flint nodules and fragments (most likely plough struck) were abundant across the whole field. Post-medieval to modern ceramic building material (cbm) fragments and occasional pottery sherds were also noted across the whole field, with higher concentrations along the edges (likely due to plough activity). The cbm and pottery was observed to be highly degraded due to having been repeatedly turned over and weathered. It was noted that the only buildings visible from this field were the farmhouse adjacent to its southern edge, occasional glimpses from the higher parts of the field of the top of the church tower of St Margaret's Church in Lewknor (Asset 12; **Appendix 6-2**, Plates 7.2 and 7.3) and distant structures atop the scarp to the southeast (outside the Study Area).

- 6.6.93 The eastern field of the solar site is bound by a public footpath, a small copse of trees and a separate field adjacent to the M40 to the south-west (**Appendix 6-2**; Plate 6.6), a line of mature trees forming a boundary to the adjacent field to the north-west (**Appendix 6-2**; Plate 6.8), mature trees on an embankment adjacent to the A40 to the north-east (**Appendix 6-2**; Plate 6.7) and by mature trees lining a public footpath (formerly the course of a prehistoric trackway then Roman Road, Asset 40) to the south-east (**Appendix 6-2**; Plates 6.5 and 6.7). This field was sloped gently from the south-west down towards the north-east with the highest parts of the field being in its south-western half adjacent to the public footpath. This field also contained telegraph poles and overhead wires (**Appendix 6-2**; Plates 6.5 and 6.6) which ran across the southern half of the field on a north-east to south-west alignment (crossing the M40 to continue the line described above as running across the western field).
- 6.6.94 The eastern field of the solar site was walked in north-east to south-west aligned transects following, where possible, existing farm vehicle tracks. This field also contained crop stubble during the survey and most of the ground surface was covered in short sections of cut straw and overgrown with grasses and weeds in places. Despite this limitation to visibility it was again noted that flint nodules and fragments (most likely plough struck) were abundant across the whole field as well as a high quantity of white stone (thought likely to have been introduced as part of modern agricultural practises). Post-medieval to modern cbm fragments and occasional pottery sherds were also noted within the field, with higher concentrations along the edges (likely due to plough activity). The cbm and pottery was observed to be highly degraded due to having been repeatedly turned over and weathered. It was noted during the walkover survey that no nearby buildings or settlements were visible from within the field.
- 6.6.95 The northern field of the solar site is bound by a hedgerow and mature trees to the south-west (**Appendix 6-2**; Plate 7.9) with the M40 beyond), a line of mature trees forming a boundary to the adjacent field to the south-east (**Appendix 6-2**; Plate 6.10), a short hedgerow and the A40 to the north-east (**Appendix 6-2**; Plate 6.12) and a hedgerow and mature trees along most of its north-western boundary (**Appendix 6-2**; Plate 6.11). The field is bound in its northern corner by fences and structures (including a large barn, houses and a Jet Garage) which form part of the village of Postcombe (**Appendix 6-2**; Plate 6.11). This field generally sloped gently down from the south-east down to the north-west with the highest parts of the field being within its southern half. The field was bisected by a public footpath (**Appendix**



- 6-2**; Plates 6.13 and 6.14), formed of a grass strip, which ran from the southern corner of the field northwards before turning north-westwards to its exit from the field in to the village of Postcombe. This field also contained telegraph poles and overhead wires (**Appendix 6-2**; Plates 6.13 and 6.14) which followed the alignment of the public footpath.
- 6.6.96 The northern field of the solar site was walked in north-east to south-west aligned transects following, where possible, existing farm vehicle tracks. This field also contained crop stubble during the survey and most of the ground surface was covered in short sections of cut straw and was overgrown with grasses and weeds in places. Despite this limitation to visibility it was again noted that flint nodules and fragments (most likely plough struck) were abundant across the whole field. Post-medieval to modern cbm fragments and occasional heavily abraded pottery sherds were also noted within the field, with higher concentrations along the edges (likely due to plough activity). The cbm and pottery was observed to be highly degraded due to been repeatedly turned over and weathered. It was noted during the walkover survey that the only visible buildings from within the field were the group of structures to the immediate north-west that form the southern edge of the village of Postcombe (of the A40 and Chalford Road).
- 6.6.97 The walkover survey of the proposed cable corridor was carried out on 5th March 2025. The weather was fine and bright enabling good visibility along the route. The walk over commenced from Salt Lane and followed the route from the solar site to the substation at Harlesford Solar Farm.
- 6.6.98 The route of the cable corridor from Salt Lane is bordered on the south-east by mature hedgerow and a wooden fence with mature cropped fields to the north-west (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.21). As the route turned north-west and ran parallel and very close to the M40 the dense hedgerow dissipates to a lower waist height hedge and fence. There are occasional mature trees along the route on either side (**Appendix 6.2**; Plates 6.22).
- 6.6.99 From Salt Lane to Parish Road, which runs between Adwell and the M40 (Asset 140), underfoot the ground was solid concrete slabs of hardstanding (**Appendix 6.2**; Plates 6.22). Beyond Parish Road, the route tracks along the edge of fields containing mature crops, with no foot path but a more established hedgerow and tree barrier to the M40 on their north-eastern side (**Appendix 6.2**; Plates 6.23). The route deviates south-westwards from the M40 before turning north-westwards again and continuing across arable farmland until it reaches the road adjacent to the substation (**Appendix 6.2**; Plates 6.24).
- 6.6.100 Due to the positioning of the cable corridor, its route, (*i.e.* mainly parallel to the M40), was relatively flat despite some of the fields having a distinct slope upwards away from the M40 (**Appendix 6.2**; Plates 6.21 to 6.24).
- 6.6.101 The whole route was surveyed up to the substation and no new archaeological remains were identified. The roads, that are visible on historic mapping were clearly present (Assets 140 and 145) as modern roads. There were no visible surface



remains of the either the ridge and furrow detected in the LiDAR data (Asset 148) or the former public footpath (Asset 139).

- 6.6.102 In addition to the walkover survey of the solar site and proposed cable corridor the designated heritage assets identified within the Study Area were also visited in order to assess the potential for intervisibility between them and the Proposed Development. It was noted during the Site walkover, however, that intervisibility with the designated heritage assets was unlikely due to intervening vegetation, topography and intervening modern development. The specific setting assessments are discussed below in the section outlining the potential operational effects (**Paragraphs 6.8.15 to 6.8.68**).

Future Baseline

- 6.6.103 The future baseline, as discussed here, is based upon a future scenario in which the Proposed Development is not implemented, and the fields would continue to be in arable agricultural use. This would likely, through ploughing, result in adverse direct impacts upon any surviving known or unknown buried archaeological remains within the Site. The magnitude of such impacts, and the importance of the remains being impacted, would remain unknown.

6.7 Scope of the Assessment

Spatial Scope

- 6.7.1 In order to assess the potential for effects on cultural heritage assets resulting from the Proposed Development, the following study areas have been identified:
- A core study area (the Site), which includes all land within the solar site and along the proposed cable corridor, which will be subject to assessment for potential direct effects. This study area has been subject to detailed walkover survey and geophysical survey (of the solar site) and cultural heritage assets which may be directly affected by the Proposed Development have been identified.
 - A study area of 1 km from the solar site and 200 m from the proposed cable corridor will be used to assess the likely nature and extent of the archaeological and built heritage resource within the Site and the immediate surrounding study area. This will be undertaken to identify any known heritage assets within the Site which could be subject to direct impacts and to understand the archaeological and historical character of the area to allow for an assessment of the potential for hitherto unknown buried remains to survive on the Site.
 - A study area of 2 km from the solar site and 200 m from the proposed cable corridor will be used for the assessment of potential effects on the settings of all designated heritage assets including Scheduled Monuments, all Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Garden, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas.



Temporal Scope

- 6.7.2 This assessment considers all aspects of human activity from prehistory until the present day. Geological activity and landform changes occurring prior to the prehistoric period are beyond the scope of this assessment.

Impacts Scoped Out of Assessment

- 6.7.3 The potential for direct impacts on known and unknown heritage assets outside the Site boundary during the construction, operational and decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development have been scoped out of the assessment. It is also considered that decommissioning effects would not exceed construction effects, unless ground breaking works were required outside the footprint disturbed for construction. As such, direct decommissioning impacts have been scoped out.
- 6.7.4 The heritage assets identified within the solar site include a series of findspots that were identified during field walking in advance of the construction of the M40 which date from the Roman period (Asset 21), early medieval period (Asset 22), medieval period (Assets 23 and 34), and post-medieval period (Asset 26). These finds have been collected and removed from the solar site and as such there is no potential for further impacts upon them, so they have been scoped out of further assessment.
- 6.7.5 It is acknowledged that there could be some temporary setting effects during construction, however as any such effects would be temporary and short-term it is not considered that they are likely to exceed potential operational effects. As such, in the interest of proportionality, setting effects will only be discussed under operational effects.

Receptors Requiring Assessment

Construction Effect Receptors

- 6.7.6 Impacts on known or unknown buried archaeological remains which may survive relate to the possibility of disturbing, removing or destroying in situ remains and artefacts during ground-breaking works (including excavation, construction and other works associated with the Proposed Development) on the main Site or along the proposed Grid Connection route. In the context of the Proposed Development, direct impacts have the capacity to result in permanent impacts of high magnitude as they could potentially result in the destruction or removal of any archaeological deposits which may be present.
- 6.7.7 The known and unknown heritage assets recorded within the solar site and along the proposed cable corridor that are scoped in to the assessment for direct impacts during from the Construction Phase include the assets laid out in **Table 6.9** below.

Table 6.9: List of known/unknown heritage assets scoped into assessment for direct impacts

Asset Number	Description and Location
126	Geophysical anomalies including parallel linear anomalies (Anomalies 4A, 4B, 4C, 4E, 4F, 1A and 1C) that are currently being



Asset Number	Description and Location
	<p>interpreted as being flanking ditches for a Roman Road which would likely be the Lower Icknield Way (Asset 40).</p> <p>Adjacent to this potential Roman Road, a complex of curvilinear and rectilinear anomalies (Anomalies 4D and 4H) was identified, which form a group of what have been interpreted as enclosures, possibly enclosed in one overall triangular boundary feature, that are potentially related to settlement.</p> <p>Elsewhere in the survey area a large number linear or curvilinear anomalies (Anomalies 1B, 3A, 3B, 3C, 4G and 4I) or small, discrete subcircular anomalies of varying magnitudes have been identified. The geophysical survey also identified a range of indistinct anomalies in the northern part of the survey area in the form of weak trends in the data or small (often 1m-2m diameter) discrete features which may reflect natural geological variation. They may also, however, reflect archaeological features and caution has been applied to their interpretation given the nearby presence of recorded Anglo-Saxon burials (Assets 31 and 82), which typically do not provide large or strong magnetic anomalies (AOC, 2022, Appendix 6.3).</p> <p>The likely importance of these assets could range from negligible to medium (or even high if there are burials) and this would largely depend on the presence/absence, date, extent, character, complexity and state of preservation.</p>
128	<p>Former area of gardens (Asset 128) in the southern part of the main Site, likely to have been associated with the adjacent now demolished Nethercote Manor (Asset 39). The gardens included an apparent tree lined avenue running on a northeast to southwest alignment. These gardens were extant on the earliest consulted detailed post-medieval maps (at least as early as c.1811, Figure 6.5) and were eventually converted to agricultural use at some point after 1949. The importance of any buried remains associated with these gardens would likely be considered Negligible due to being incomplete features which are common in the post-medieval and modern landscape.</p>
129	<p>The extant public footpath that runs through the Site (Asset 129) is visible on detailed plans and maps of the area dating from c.1815 (Oxfordshire History Centre Ref: POX0082832) onwards. This route is considered likely to be much older as it seems to be the route for parishioners in the hamlet of Postcombe to walk to their parish church, the Grade I Listed St Margarets Church. The importance of any buried remains associated with this route would be considered Negligible due to being a common feature.</p>
139	<p>Former route of a public footpath between Adwell and Postcombe that as visible on early 19th century mapping but is no longer extant. Proposed Grid Connection will pass through this area. The importance of any buried remains associated with this footpath would likely be considered Negligible due to being a largely removed example of a common feature.</p>
140	<p>Route of road running from Adwell. No longer extends to full extent and proposed Grid Connection route would pass through the area of</p>



Asset Number	Description and Location
	its former extent. The importance of any buried remains associated with this road would likely be considered Negligible, due to it being a common feature used well in to the late 20 th century.
145	Route of road running from Wheatfield no historic mapping which survives as a modern road. Proposed cable corridor will pass through this area. The importance of any buried remains associated with this road would likely be considered Negligible, due to it being a common feature used well in to the late 20 th century.
146	Area of ridge and furrow visible in historic aerial photography and LiDAR data in an area that the proposed cable corridor would pass through. The importance of any buried remains associated with this ridge and furrow would likely be considered Low, at most.
148	Area of ridge and furrow visible in historic aerial photography and LiDAR data in an area that the proposed cable corridor would pass through. The importance of any buried remains associated with this ridge and furrow would likely be considered Low, at most.
Previously unrecorded Early Prehistoric remains within the main Site and proposed Grid Connection route	<p>Overall, there is considered to be a Medium potential for Early Prehistoric remains to survive within the solar site as the presence of a Bronze Age barrow (Asset 6), c.200 m north-west of the solar site, does indicate early prehistoric occupation and ritual activity within the area surrounding the solar site. There is also considered to be a Medium potential for Early Prehistoric remains to survive within the proposed cable corridor, considered most likely to be concentrated towards its south-eastern end in the vicinity of the recorded Bronze Age barrow (Asset 6) located c.230 m to the west of the route.</p> <p>Depending upon the presence/absence, date, extent, character, complexity and state of preservation of any such remains could be considered to be of at least Medium importance.</p>
Previously unrecorded Late Prehistoric and Roman remains within the main Site and proposed Grid Connection route	<p>There is considered to be a High potential for late prehistoric and Roman remains to survive within the solar site with the linear (Anomalies 4A, 4B, 4C, 4E, 4F, 1A and 1C) and enclosure anomalies identified (Anomalies 4D and 4H) in the geophysical survey considered likely to date to this period. As such there is considered potential for further unrecorded associated remains to be present. There is also considered to be a High potential for Late Prehistoric and Roman remains to survive within the proposed cable corridor, considered most likely to be concentrated towards its south-eastern end in the vicinity of the recorded Late Prehistoric and Roman remains and findspots (Assets 20 and 81) and towards the north-western end of the cable corridor in the vicinity of the recorded remains (Asset 131) discovered during the Harlesford Solar evaluation (Event 136).</p> <p>Depending upon the presence/absence, date, extent, character, complexity and state of preservation of any such remains could be considered to be of Low to Medium importance.</p>
Previously unrecorded early medieval remains within the main Site and proposed Grid Connection route	<p>The potential for human remains within the solar site (particularly in the northwestern part near to Ash Lane) and along the section of the proposed cable corridor, particularly in the north-western part near to Ash Lane, cannot be dismissed and is considered to be Medium. There is also considered to be a Low potential for remains associated with agricultural activities (former field boundaries etc., which may be</p>



Asset Number	Description and Location
	difficult to distinguish from later medieval remains of the same type) and further early medieval finds to survive within the solar site or along the proposed cable corridor. Any early medieval human remains identified within the Site would be likely to be considered of at least Medium importance; whilst any other early medieval remains, depending on their nature and condition, could potentially be considered to be of at least Low importance.
Previously unrecorded medieval remains within the main Site and proposed Grid Connection route	There is considered to be a Medium potential for archaeological remains associated with medieval agricultural activities (ridge and furrow, former field boundaries etc.) to survive with the solar site and along the proposed cable corridor. Any such remains are likely to be considered to be of Low importance.
Previously unrecorded post-medieval remains within the main Site and proposed Grid Connection route	There is considered to be a Medium potential for archaeological remains associated with post-medieval agricultural activities (ridge and furrow, former field boundaries etc.) to survive with the main Site and along the proposed cable corridor. Any such remains are likely to be considered to be of Low importance.
Previously unrecorded modern remains within the main Site and proposed Grid Connection route	There is considered to be a High potential for remains associated with modern agricultural activities to survive with the Site which could include the former boundary of the gardens associated with Nethercote Manor (Asset 39) which was apparently filled in after the construction of the M40. There is also considered to be a High potential for remains associated with modern agricultural activities along the proposed cable corridor. Any such remains would likely be considered to be of Negligible importance

Operational Phase Receptors

- 6.7.8 The assessment of operational phase effects considers all of the designated heritage assets within 2 km of the solar site which are shown on **Figure 6.1** and listed in the Gazetteer in **Appendix 6.1**. A screened ZTV (**Figure 6.11**) and site visits, confirmed that, for majority of the 62 Listed Buildings (Assets 5, 10 to 13, 17, 41 to 46, 48 to 56, 61 to 74, 78 to 79, 98 to 121 and 124), Conservation Areas (Asset 95, 96 and 97) and the Grade II Registered Shirburn Castle Gardens Registered Park and Garden (Asset 98) there would be no intervisibility with the Proposed Development and, therefore, no potential impacts or resulting effects upon their settings or characters.

Environmental Measures Embedded into the Development Proposals

- 6.7.9 Embedded mitigation proposals are those mitigation measures that are inherent to the Proposed Development. Embedded mitigation includes all mitigation usually assumed to be in place during construction, operation and decommissioning, and is generally regarded as industry standard or Best Practice. Construction and environmental management plans are introduced in **Chapter 4: Project Description**. A CEMP is also to be drafted and agreed with SODC.
- 6.7.10 Alternative design approaches have been explored to ensure that the final design includes soft landscape proposals that utilise existing landscape features. Further



details on the design approach are set out within **Chapter 3: Site Selection and Alternatives** of this ES.

- 6.7.11 The proposals include retaining the route of the existing public footpath (Asset 129) and the retention of the mature trees and hedgerows that line the eastern, southern and western boundaries of the solar site as well as the copse of trees that divides the plot to the north-east of the M40 in two. These elements of the landscaping will preserve elements of the historic land divisions and public routes through the Site whilst providing screening of the modern elements of the Proposed Development from the wider area.

6.8 Assessment of Potential Effects

Construction Effects

- 6.8.1 The proposed construction works are set out in **Chapter 4: Project Description**, including anticipated timescales for construction works and traffic generation.
- 6.8.2 Potential impacts on known or unknown buried archaeological remains which may survive relate to the possibility of disturbing, removing or destroying in situ remains and artefacts during ground-breaking works (including excavation, construction and other works associated with the Proposed Development) on this Site. In the context of the Proposed Development, direct impacts have the capacity to result in permanent impacts of high magnitude as they could potentially result in the destruction or removal of any archaeological deposits which may be present.
- 6.8.3 There is some potential for temporary effects upon the setting of designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the Site during the construction phase. However, these would be temporary and the operational effects upon setting discussed below represent the worst-case scenario in terms of effect. On this basis and to maintain proportionality and avoid repetition, the discussion of setting effects is limited to the operational phase.
- 6.8.4 The assessment of potential effects upon heritage assets arising during the Construction Phase area outlined in **Table 6.10** below.

Table 6.10: Construction Phase Effects upon known/unknown heritage assets

Asset Number	Description and Location	Predicted Importance of Asset	Predicted Magnitude of Impact	Predicted Level of Effect
126	Geophysical anomalies within solar site	Negligible to High	High	Minor to Major
128	Former area of gardens within solar site.	Negligible	High	Minor
129	The extant public footpath in solar site considered Low.	Negligible	None (route being retained by design)	None
139	Former route of a public footpath between	Negligible	Low (documented)	Negligible



Asset Number	Description and Location	Predicted Importance of Asset	Predicted Magnitude of Impact	Predicted Level of Effect
	Adwell and Postcombe (not extant).		route extends well beyond proposed cable corridor so most buried remains would be preserved in situ)	
140	Route of road running from Adwell (largely extant).	Negligible	Negligible (route largely survives as a modern road)	Negligible
145	Route of road running from Wheatfield (extant)	Negligible	Negligible (route survives as a modern road)	Negligible
146	Area of ridge and furrow visible in historic aerial photography and LiDAR data	Low	Low (area extends well beyond proposed cable corridor so most remains would be preserved in situ)	Negligible
148	Area of ridge and furrow visible in historic aerial photography and LiDAR data.	Low	Low (area largely already disturbed by existing substation)	Negligible
Previously unrecorded Early Prehistoric remains	Solar site and proposed cable corridor	Medium	High	Moderate
Previously unrecorded Late Prehistoric to Roman remains	Solar site and proposed cable corridor	Low to Medium	High	Moderate
Previously unrecorded early medieval remains	Solar site and proposed cable corridor	Low to Medium (any burials would likely be High)	High	Moderate (Major in case of burials)
Previously unrecorded medieval remains (most likely former field boundaries, ridge and furrow etc.)	Solar site and proposed cable corridor	Low	High	Moderate



Asset Number	Description and Location	Predicted Importance of Asset	Predicted Magnitude of Impact	Predicted Level of Effect
Previously unrecorded post-medieval remains (most likely former field boundaries, ridge and furrow etc.)	Solar site and proposed cable corridor	Low	High	Moderate
Previously unrecorded modern remains	Solar site and proposed cable corridor	Negligible	High	Minor

Operational Effects

- 6.8.5 Once the construction phase has been completed it is proposed that the photovoltaic solar array would operate for a period of 40 years, after which the Proposed Development would be decommissioned and the Site returned to its existing condition.
- 6.8.6 **Figure 6.11** shows the predicted visibility of the Proposed Development as a worst-case scenario with the highlighted areas denoted as ‘*maybe*’ having visibility with the solar array (due to the screening effects of vegetation, topography and nearby buildings). The walkover survey and settings assessment visits confirmed that, for the most part, the visibility of the current main solar Site is very limited from the surrounding area due to the surrounding vegetation, topography and, in some cases, intervening development (especially within the villages of Lewknor and Postcombe).
- 6.8.7 This assessment deals with visual effects upon the setting of heritage assets. Other potential impacts (smell, noise etc.) upon the setting of heritage assets are not considered to be relevant given the type of Proposed Development (a photovoltaic solar array) and its distance from the assessed assets (as well as the existing noise and impact upon any setting background provided by the adjacent M40).
- 6.8.8 This assessment includes consideration of whether changes to setting would constitute an adverse impact (diminishment) to those attributes of the designated assets which directly contribute to their significance rather than simply being an alteration to, or addition of a new element to the existing settings of these assets. Where a new development may be located within the setting of an asset but does not diminish the significance of the asset or the ability to appreciate that significance, it may have a neutral effect. This is in line with the NPPF definition of setting which states that ‘*Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative*



contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.' (NPPF, 2025, Glossary).

- 6.8.9 Table 6.11 below details the predicted level of settings effect by the Proposed Development on each of these assets (which have been grouped within their respective Conservation Areas or villages where appropriate).



Table 6.11: Operational Phase Effects upon known/unknown heritage assets

Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Lewknor Conservation Area							
Asset 95	Lewknor Conservation Area	c.420 m to c.950 m south and south south-east of the Site	Mature vegetation including tall hedgerow and trees lining southern boundary of Site, intervening fields and built structures within village of Lewknor itself would limit visibility. For example of High Street view see Appendix 6.2 ; Plates 7.15. Only element of Conservation Area visible from within Site is part of the tower of the Grade I Listed Church of St Margaret (see Appendix 6.2 ; Plate 7.2).	Some potential for northern parts of Conservation Area	Medium	Negligible	Neutral
Asset 12 (1182190)	Grade I Listed Church of St Margaret	c.750 m south south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Mature trees and vegetation surround churchyard. There would be no views from the asset towards the Proposed Development; however the tower visible from Site from the Site (see Appendix 6.2 ; Plate 7.2).	No potential	High	Negligible	Minor
Asset 17 (1368861)	Grade I Listed Church Farm, Barn Approximately 30 m ESE Of Farmhouse	c.700 m south south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Line of mature trees and vegetation lines plot to north of Barn would limit views towards the Proposed Development.	Some potential	Medium	Negligible	Neutral
Asset 5 (1059755)	Grade II Listed Lewknor Church of England	c.780 m south south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Intervening development including Church of St Margaret would prohibit views.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
	School, High Street						
Asset 11 (1059724)	Grade II Listed Moor Court, Weston Road	c.470 m south of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Dense mature trees and vegetation surrounding plot containing Moor Court would limit views towards the Proposed Development.	Some potential	Low	Negligible	Neutral
Asset 13 (1059716)	Grade II Listed Town Farmhouse and Attached Wall, High Street	c.870 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Intervening development (most of Lewknor between Site and farmhouse) would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 41 (1059723)	Grade II Listed Knapp Farmhouse, Weston Road	c.720 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Intervening development, including Listed Barn and Stables for Knapp Farmhouse would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 42 (1182357)	Grade II Listed Barn and Stables, Knapp Farmhouse, Weston Road	c.690 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Line of mature trees and vegetation lines plot to north of Barn and Stables and would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 43 (1182171)	Grade II Listed No 2, Church Road	c.785 m south south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Intervening development in centre of Lewknor would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Asset 44 (1059757)	Grade II Listed Ye Olde Leathern Bottle Public House, High Street	c.770 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Intervening development and line of mature trees and vegetation to north of Public House would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 45 (1368863)	Grade II Listed No 16A (The Old Coach House), High Street	c.860 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Intervening development (most of Lewknor between Site and house) would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 46 (1368882)	Grade II Listed Home Farmhouse, Hill Road	c.820 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Intervening development (most of Lewknor between Site and house) would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 48 (1182271)	Grade II Listed No 16 (The Old Vicarage and The Old Rectory), High Street	c.840 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Intervening development (most of Lewknor between Site and old rectory) would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 49 (Asset 1182391)	Grade II Listed The Manor House, Weston Road	c.520 m south of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Dense mature trees and vegetation surrounding plot containing Manor House would limit views of the Proposed Development.	Some potential	Low	Negligible	Neutral



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Asset 64 (1059756)	Grade II Listed Chest Tomb approximately 4 and 1/2 m S of S porch of Church of St. Margaret	c.750 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Mature trees and vegetation surround churchyard and would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 67 (1182266)	Grade II Listed Chest tomb approx. 2 m. S of S porch of Church of St. Margaret	c.750 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Mature trees and vegetation surround churchyard and would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 70 (1368862)	Grade II Listed Chest tomb approx. 1 m. E of S porch of Church of St. Margaret	c.750 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Mature trees and vegetation surround churchyard and would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 73 (1284613)	Grade II Listed Chest tomb approx. 3 m. W of S porch of Church of St. Margaret	c.750 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Mature trees and vegetation surround churchyard would prohibit views of the Proposed Development.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 79 (1392408)	Grade II Listed Church Farm, Lewknor	c.660 m south-south-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 95 above). Line of mature trees and vegetation lines plot to north of Barn would limit views of the Proposed Development.	Some potential	Low	Negligible	Neutral



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Ashton Rowant Conservation Area							
Asset 96	Ashton Rowant Conservation Area	c.925 m to c.1.55 km east-north-east of the Site	Mature vegetation including tall hedgerow and trees lining northeastern and eastern boundary of Site and intervening fields. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Medium	None	None
Asset 10 (1368878)	Grade II* Listed Church of St Peter and St Paul	c.1 km east-north-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 96 above). Mature trees line churchyard (See Appendix 6.2 ; Plate 7.16) and are prevalent in western part of village. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	High	None	None
Asset 62 (1059711)	Grade II Listed Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Chest tomb to John Bennett approx. 12 m. S of tower	c.1 km east-north-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 96 above). Mature trees line churchyard and are prevalent in western part of village. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 63 (1059712)	Grade II Listed No 18 (Aston Cottage) & 19, Church Lane	c.980 m east-north-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 96 above). Mature trees and vegetation lining plots and roads to immediate west of cottage. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 69 (1194499)	Grade II Listed Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Chest tomb approx. 3	c.1 km east-north-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 96 above). Mature trees line churchyard and are prevalent in western part of village. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
	m. S of chancel						
Asset 71 (1194732)	Grade II Listed No 20, Church Lane	c.980 m east-north-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 96 above). Mature trees and vegetation lining plots and roads to immediate west of house. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 78 (1449662)	Grade II Listed Aston Rowant War Memorial	c.990 m east-north-east of the Site	Within Conservation Area (see Asset 96 above). Mature trees line churchyard and are prevalent in western part of village. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Medium	None	None
<i>Kingston Blount Conservation Area</i>							
Asset 97	Kingston Blount Conservation Area	c.2 km east-north-east of the Site	Mature vegetation including tall hedgerow and trees lining northeastern and eastern boundary of Site and intervening fields. Village of Ashton Rowant also located between Site and Conservation Area. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Medium	None	None
<i>Listed Buildings located within the village of Postcombe</i>							
Asset 51 (1368883)	Grade II Listed Barn, Adwell Farm, Lower Road, Postcombe	c.350 m north of the Site	Mature trees and vegetation within Postcombe along with intervening non-designated buildings at southern end of village, adjacent to the Site (see Appendix 6.2 ; Plate 7.17). Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Asset 52 (1059718)	Grade II Listed Adwell Farmhouse, Lower Road, Postcombe	c.345 m north of the Site	Same as Asset 51 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 53 (1368844)	Grade II Listed Poplars Farmhouse, Lower Road	c.250 m north of the Site	Same as Asset 51 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 54 (1059720)	Grade II Listed Feathers Public House, Postcombe	c.210 m north of the Site	Same as Asset 51 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 56 (1059717)	Grade II Listed Elsdale Cottage, Lower Road	c.410 m north of the Site	Same as Asset 51 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 65 (1059719)	Grade II Listed Granary approximately 4 m NNW of Adwell Farmhouse, Lower Road, Postcombe	c.340 m north of the Site	Same as Asset 51 above.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Listed Buildings located to the northeast of the village of Postcombe							
Asset 113 (1285692)	Grade II Listed Outbuilding approx. 4 m. W of Upper Chalford Farmhouse	c.1.5 km north-north-east of the Site	Complex of buildings at Upper Chalford Farmhouse and Chalford Manor Farmhouse are located within plots entirely surrounded by vegetation including mature trees. Short hedgerow along northern edge of Site and along boundaries of intervening fields also provides some screening. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 114 (1368877)	Grade II Listed Upper Chalford Farmhouse	c.1.51 km north-north-east of the Site	Same as Asset 113 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 115 (1059710)	Grade II Listed Cartshed approx. 45 m. NE of Upper Chalford Farmhouse	c.1.55 km north-north-east of the Site	Same as Asset 113 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 116 (1194473)	Grade II Listed Barn and attached animal house approx. 55 m. NE of Upper Chalford Farmhouse	c.1.58 km north-north-east of the Site	Same as Asset 113 above.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Asset 117 (1194442)	Grade II Listed Chalford Manor Farmhouse	c.1.82 km north-north-east of the Site	Same as Asset 113 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Listed Buildings located to the north of the village of Postcombe							
Asset 107 (1182105)	Grade II Listed Copcourt House and attached outbuildings	c.1.4 km north of the Site	Mature trees and vegetation around buildings and within intervening fields. Village of Postcombe also located between Site and Copcourt House. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 108 (1368875)	Grade II Listed Barn approx. 70 m. S of Copcourt Manor	c.1.54 km north of the Site	Mature trees and vegetation within plot containing structures associated with Copcourt Manor and within intervening fields. Village of Postcombe also located between Site and Copcourt Manor. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 109 (1368876)	Grade II Listed Stable, barn and dovecote approx. 45 m. S of Copcourt Manor	c.1.58 km north of the Site	Same as Asset 108 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 110 (1285726)	Grade II Listed Small barn approx. 45 m. SE of Copcourt Manor	c.1.57 km north of the Site	Same as Asset 108 above.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Asset 111 (1059707)	Grade II Listed Copcourt Manor (Formerly listed as Granary at Copcourt Manor)	c.1.59 km north of the Site	Same as Asset 108 above.	No potential	Medium	None	None
Asset 112 (1059706)	Grade II Listed Copcourt Manor	c.1.63 km north of the Site	Same as Asset 108 above.	No potential	Medium	None	None
Asset 124 (1059661)	Grade II Listed Attington Toll House	c.1.99 km north-north-west of the Site	Mature trees and vegetation around buildings and within intervening fields. Village of Postcombe also located between Site and Toll House. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None
Listed Buildings located within the village of Adwell							
Asset 106 (1059699)	Grade II* Listed Adwell House	c.1.08 km north-west of the Site	Mature trees and vegetation lining northwestern boundary of the Site and intervening fields. Intervening topography in form of Adwell Cop (c.50 m higher than village). Village itself lined with mature trees. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Medium	None	None
Asset 61 (1059705)	Grade II Listed No 3 & 4 (The Old Rectory)	c.1.03 km north-west of the Site	Within Adwell Village, same factors as Asset 106 above.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Asset 66 (1059702)	Grade II Listed Adwell House, railings approx. 40 m. S of house	c.1.05 km north-west of the Site	Part of Adwell House, see Asset 106 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 68 (1059701)	Grade II Listed Adwell House, railings approx. 35 m. SE of house	c.1.05 km north-west of the Site	Part of Adwell House, see Asset 106 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 103 (1059703)	Grade II Listed Church of St Mary	c.1.06 km north-west of the Site	St Marys Churchyard lined with mature trees. Within Adwell Village, same factors as Asset 106 above.	No potential	Medium	None	None
Asset 104 (1059704)	Grade II Listed Church of St. Mary, chest tomb to John Taylor approx. 1 m. S of chancel	c.1.06 km north-west of the Site	St Marys Churchyard lined with mature trees. Within Adwell Village, same factors as Asset 106 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 105 (1059700)	Grade II Listed Adwell House, balustrade attached to west side	c.1.08 km north-west of the Site	Part of Adwell House, see Asset 106 above.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Listed Buildings located to the west of the village of Adwell							
Asset 102 (1059672)	Grade I Listed Church of St Andrew	c.1.61nkm west-north-west of the Site	Mature trees and vegetation lining northwestern boundary of Site. Mature vegetation including trees within intervening copses and lining field boundaries. Intervening topography in form of Adwell Cop. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	High	None	None
Asset 101 (1059673)	Grade II* Listed Wheatfield Park Coach House, Stables and Farmhouse	c.1.75 km west-north-west of the Site	Same as Asset 102 above.	No potential	Medium	None	None
Asset 98 (1368900)	Grade II Listed Glebe Cottage	c.1.99 km west north-west of the Site	Same as Asset 102 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 99 (1181266)	Grade II Listed Gardener's Cottage	c.1.97 km west-north-west of the Site	Same as Asset 102 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 100 (1181273)	Grade II Listed Wheatfield House	c.1.87 km west-north-west of the Site	Same as Asset 102 above.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Listed Buildings and selected non-designated heritage assets located within the village of South Weston							
Asset 50 (1368845)	Grade II Listed Manor Farmhouse, South Weston	c.425 m south-west of the Site	Mature trees and vegetation lining southwestern boundary of Site and complex of buildings at Manor Farm within a plot lined with mature trees would limit views towards the Proposed Development.	Some potential	Low	Negligible	Neutral
Asset 55 (1059722)	Grade II Listed Manor Farm Cottage, South Weston	c.480 m south-west of the Site	Part of Manor Farm complex, see Asset 50 above.	Some potential	Low	Negligible	Neutral
Asset 72 (1182353)	Grade II Listed The Old Rectory, South Weston	c.720 m south-west of the Site	Mature trees and vegetation lining south-western boundary of Site. Rectory Lane lined with mature trees and vegetation, intervening development along Weston Road. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 74 (1059721)	Grade II Listed Granary approx. 18 m. NE of Manor Farmhouse	c.380 m south-west of the Site	Part of Manor Farm complex, see Asset 50 above.	Some potential	Low	Negligible	Neutral
Asset 9	Non-designated Church of St Lawrence	c.555 m south-west of the Site	Mature trees and vegetation lining southwestern boundary of Site and churchyard lined with dense vegetation including mature trees (see Appendix 6.2 ; Plate 7.18) would limit views towards the Proposed Development.	Some potential	Medium	Negligible	Neutral



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
Listed Buildings located to the southwest of the village of South Weston							
Asset 118 (1059732)	Grade II Listed Model Farmhouse	c.1.68 km south-west of the Site	Mature trees and vegetation lining southwestern boundary of Site. Model Farm complex adjacent to large copse of mature trees. Further copses and mature vegetation including trees lining fields between model farm and Site. Does not appear to have potential inversibility on screened ZTV.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 119 (1182651)	Grade II Listed Model Farm, engine house and attached buildings approx.15 m. SSW of farmhouse	c.1.69 km south-west of the Site	Part of Model Farmhouse complex, see Asset 118 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 120 (1182625)	Grade II Listed Model Farm, cattlesheds and attached buildings approx. 15m. S of farmhouse	c.1.74 km south-west of the Site	Part of Model Farmhouse complex, see Asset 118 above.	No potential	Low	None	None
Asset 121 (1368850)	Grade II Listed Model Farm, covered yards and flanking buildings	c1.74 km south-west of the Site	Part of Model Farmhouse complex, see Asset 118 above.	No potential	Low	None	None



Asset Number (Listing Number in brackets)	Designation and Name	Distance and orientation from Site	Other factors effecting intervisibility	Screened ZTV potential for intervisibility (Figure 6.11)	Relative Sensitivity	Magnitude of Impact	Level of Effect
	approx. 40 m. S of farmhouse						
Harlesford Farmhouse							
Asset 130 (1059660)	Grade II Listed Harlesford Farmhouse	c.2.7 km north-west of main Site (c.300 m south-west of existing substation at end of proposed cable corridor)	Distance, intervening mature trees, vegetation and topography will screen all visibility of the Proposed Development within the main Site. Cable corridor will be entirely subterranean and connect to the existing infrastructure of the extant substation.	No potential	Low	None	None



No Effects

- 6.8.10 Although the screened ZTV (**Figure 6.11**) indicates that there are large areas to the north, north-east, south-east, south-east and south-west of the Site that may have intervisibility with Proposed Development most of these areas are occupied by arable farmland with the designated assets listed in **Table 6.12** tending to be within villages or farmstead complexes that have more limited or no visibility.
- 6.8.11 For the assets noted in the table above, as having no impact there would be no effects upon their settings and no harm to these assets is predicted, and the policy tests as set out in NPPF are not invoked.

Neutral Effects

- 6.8.12 Neutral effects have been identified upon the character of the Lewknor Conservation Area (Asset 95) and upon the settings of the Grade I Listed Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17) and Grade II Listed Moor Court (Asset 11), Manor House (Asset 49) and Church Farm (Asset 79) that are located within the extent of the Lewknor Conservation Area.
- 6.8.13 Neutral effects have also been identified upon the settings of the Grade II Listed Manor Farmhouse (Asset 50), Manor Farm Cottage (Asset 55), Granary approximately 18 metres NE of Manor Farmhouse (Asset 74) and upon the non-designated Church of St Lawrence (Asset 9), all of which are located in South Weston, to the south-west of the Site.

Lewknor Conservation Area

- 6.8.14 Lewknor Conservation Area (Asset 95) has no Conservation Area appraisal document and appears to be based upon the historic core of the village of Lewknor, which is principally set off of two main roads, Weston Road which runs north-west to southeast through the village and the High Street which runs on a northeast to south-west alignment. There is also a second detached area of the Conservation Area, to the north-west of the village, which includes the Grade II Listed Moor Court (Asset 11) and Manor House (Asset 49), set around the former manorial moated Site (Asset 16). The Conservation Area is, by merit of its designation, considered to be of medium importance.
- 6.8.15 The Site visit confirmed that the village of Lewknor is well screened from the surrounding area by mature vegetation, both surrounding its extent and within Conservation Area, which creates a sense of isolation within the village from the adjacent major motorway (M40). The village is a rural settlement that has historically been surrounded by pastoral and arable farmland, a trend that continues to the modern day despite modern intrusions in the area (the M40 being the most prominent).
- 6.8.16 The foci of the village is the Grade I Listed St Margaret's Church (Asset 12), which is set back from the High Street. The majority of the other Listed Buildings within Lewknor either front on to the High Street or Weston Road and these streetscapes



- are, therefore, considered to be making a major contribution to the character of the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area is, overall, considered to have a medium sensitivity to changes in its wider setting (in this case considered to be the surrounding rural landscape which includes the Site) and a high sensitivity to changes in its immediate setting (i.e. its streetscapes).
- 6.8.17 The screened ZTV (**Figure 6.11**) and an LVIA viewpoint taken from the northern end of the village (Viewpoint 5), from north of the Grade I Listed Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17), indicate some potential for intervisibility with small elements of the Proposed Development from the northern parts of the Conservation Area. These views would be limited to glimpses of a small sections of the Proposed Development with the majority of its being entirely obscured by intervening topography and vegetation. During the walkover it was not considered possible to see any of the designated assets within Lewknor, with the exception of glimpses of the tower of the Church of St Margaret (Asset 12) (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.2).
- 6.8.18 Although the Proposed Development would be a new feature in an otherwise largely rural area, the limited visibility of the Site from the Conservation Area and vice versa, mean that the potential magnitude of impact of the Proposed Development is correspondingly limited. Given that it is assessed that the Lewknor Conservation Area (Asset 95) derives most of its significance from its historic streetscapes, and that the Proposed Development would not appear in any views along them, the overall assessed magnitude of impact is considered to be negligible. The Proposed Development would only be perceptible from very limited parts of the Conservation Area and would not, crucially, impact upon those elements of the Conservation Area considered to be making the most significant contribution to its character (i.e. its street scape).
- 6.8.19 Overall, the level of effect on the character of the Lewknor Conservation Area (Asset 95) is assessed to be neutral. This neutral effect acknowledges that there would be a perceptible change in the wider landscape surrounding the Conservation Area, but it would be very limited and would neither diminish nor enhance the elements of the Conservation Area that are considered to be making the most significant contribution to its character.

Grade I Listed Church Farm, Barn

- 6.8.20 The Grade I Listed Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17, Listing Number 1368861) is considered, by merit of its designation, to be of high importance. This barn retains architectural features dating from the mid-late 14th century and was originally an aisled three bay hall that was probably built by John de Lewknor, who rebuilt the east end of the church, c.1320-40. The original structure was previously described as 'one of England's most impressive halls' but only the timber framing of the original structure survives, with the remnants being used as a barn (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1368861> and HER Id: 4063 - MOX6271).
- 6.8.21 It is assessed that the Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17) derives a great deal of its importance from its evidential (the architectural remains and their inherent value)



- and historic value (related to the medieval development of Lewknor). As a former medieval hall its relationship to the village of Lewknor and the Church, which it is broadly contemporary with, is also considered to be making a significant contribution to its overall importance. The barn (Asset 17) also has some group value with the nearby Grade II Listed Church Farm (Asset 79) which is an 18th century replacement of a Rectory Farm that was likely contemporary to the Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17). It is, therefore, considered that the Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17) has a high sensitivity to changes in its immediate setting and a medium sensitivity to changes in its wider setting (in this case considered to be the surrounding rural landscape which includes the Site).
- 6.8.22 The screened ZTV (**Figure 6.11**) and an LVIA viewpoint taken from the northern end of the village (Viewpoint 5) indicate some potential for intervisibility with small elements of the Proposed Development from an area to the north of the Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17). The barn is private property and the grounds immediately to the north of the structure could not be accessed during the site visit, but it seems that there is a further band of intervening vegetation between the barn and the location of LVIA Viewpoint 5 on satellite imagery. During the walkover survey it was not considered possible to see any of the designated assets within Lewknor, with the exception of glimpses of the tower of the Church of St Margaret Asset (Asset 12) (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.2). Overall, therefore, it is considered that any views of the Proposed Development from the barn would be limited to heavily obscured glimpses with the majority of it being entirely obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.
- 6.8.23 Although the Proposed Development would be a new industrial feature an otherwise largely rural area, the limited visibility of the Site from the Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17) and vice versa, mean that the potential magnitude of impact of the Proposed Development is correspondingly limited. Given that it is assessed that the Grade I Listed Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17) derives most of its significance from its evidential and historical value, and that glimpses of the Proposed Development from the barn would be very limited, the overall assessed magnitude of impact is considered to be negligible.
- 6.8.24 Overall, the level of effect on the setting of the Grade I Listed Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17) is assessed to be neutral. This neutral effect acknowledges that there may be a perceptible change in the wider landscape setting of the barn, but it would be very limited and would neither diminish nor enhance the elements of the Listed Building (its historic importance as a former medieval hall) that are considered to be making the greatest contribution to its importance.

Church Farm

- 6.8.25 The Grade II Listed Church Farm (Asset 79, Listing Number 1392408) is considered, by merit of its designation, to be of medium importance. The farm retains architectural features dating to the 18th century (though may have a core dating to the 16th century) and appears to be a later construction replacing an earlier Rectory Farm that is documented as being in the possession of All Souls College in 1440. The farm it replaced would have been part of the complex built at



the same time as the medieval hall (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1392408> and HER Id: 28796 - MOX27174) that survives as the Grade I Listed Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17).

- 6.8.26 It is assessed that the Church Farm (Asset 79) also derives a great deal of its importance from its evidential (its architectural remains and the potential remains associated with the earlier farm complex) and its historic value (related to the medieval development of Lewknor). As a former rectory farm its relationship to the parish of Lewknor and the Church, which its predecessor would have been broadly contemporary with, is also considered to be making a significant contribution to its overall importance. Church Farm (Asset 79) also has some group value with the nearby Grade I Listed Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17) which it has historically been part of the same complex of despite being rebuilt in the 18th century. It, therefore, considered the Church Farm (Asset 79), has a high sensitivity to changes in its immediate setting and a medium sensitivity to changes in its wider setting (in this case considered to be the surrounding rural landscape which includes the Site).
- 6.8.27 The screened ZTV (**Figure 6.11**) and an LVIA viewpoint taken from the northern end of the village (Viewpoint 5) indicate some potential for intervisibility with small elements of the Proposed Development from an area to the north of the Church Farm (Asset 79). The farm is private property and the grounds immediately to the north of the structure could not be accessed during the Site visit, but it seems that there is a further band of intervening vegetation between the farm and the location of LVIA viewpoint 5 on satellite imagery. During the walkover survey it was not considered possible to see any of the designated assets within Lewknor, with the exception of glimpses of the tower of the Church of St Margaret (Asset 12) (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.2). Overall, therefore, it is considered that any views of the Proposed Development from the barn would be limited to heavily obscured glimpses with the majority of it being entirely obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.
- 6.8.28 Although the Proposed Development would be a new feature in an otherwise largely rural area, the limited visibility of the Site from Church Farm (Asset 79) and vice versa, mean that the potential magnitude of impact of the Proposed Development is correspondingly limited. Given that it is assessed that the Grade II Listed Church Farm (Asset 79) derives most of its significance from its evidential and historical value, and that glimpses of the Proposed Development from the farm would be very limited, the overall assessed magnitude of impact is considered to be negligible.
- 6.8.29 Overall, the level of effect on the setting of the Grade II Listed Church Farm (Asset 79) is assessed to be neutral. This neutral effect acknowledges that there may be a perceptible change in the wider landscape setting of the barn, but it would be very limited and would neither diminish nor enhance the elements of the Listed Building



(its architectural value and historic relationship with the nearby Grade I Listed barn) that are considered to be making the greatest contribution to its importance.

Moor Court

- 6.8.30 The Grade II Listed Moor Court (Asset 11, Listing Number 1059724) is considered, by merit of its designation, to be of medium importance. This farmhouse retains architectural feature that date from the late 17th century (but may have earlier origins) and is located within a trapezoidal moated Site (Asset 16) that may be medieval in date, though no dating evidence has been found and the moat does not appear on a 16th century map of the area (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1059724> and HER Id: 4021 - MOX6258).
- 6.8.31 It is assessed that the farmhouse derives a great deal of its importance from its evidential value (its architectural remains and the potential for remains associated with the associated moated site) and its potential historic value (it may be on a medieval moated site, potentially related to one of the earlier documented manors of Lewknor). The farmhouse has occupied a rural landscape, just outside the main core of the village of Lewknor along Weston Road, since its construction in the late 17th century. Moor Court (Asset 11) is, therefore, considered to have a medium sensitivity to changes in both its immediate setting and wider setting (in this case considered to be the surrounding rural landscape which includes the Site).
- 6.8.32 The screened ZTV (**Figure 6.11**) and an LVIA viewpoint taken from along Weston Road (Viewpoint 7) indicate some potential for intervisibility with elements of the Proposed Development from Moor Court (Asset 79). During the walkover survey, however, it was not considered possible to see any of the designated assets along Weston Road, including Moor Court (Asset 11) from within the Site (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.19). Overall, therefore, it is considered that any views of the Proposed Development from the farmhouse would be limited to heavily obscured glimpses, with the majority of it being entirely obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.
- 6.8.33 Although the Proposed Development would be a new feature in an otherwise largely rural area, the limited visibility of the Site from Moor Court (Asset 11) and vice versa, mean that the potential magnitude of impact of the Proposed Development is correspondingly limited. Given that it is assessed that the Grade II Listed Moor Court (Asset 79) derives most of its significance from its evidential and historical value, and that glimpses of the Proposed Development from the farmhouse would be very limited, the overall assessed magnitude of impact is considered to be negligible.
- 6.8.34 Overall, the level of effect on the setting of the Grade II Listed Moor Court (Asset 11) is assessed to be neutral. This neutral effect acknowledges that there may be a perceptible change in the wider landscape setting of the farmhouse, but it would be very limited and would neither diminish nor enhance the elements of the Listed Building (its architectural value and historic relationship with the moated site it is



built within) that are considered to be making the greatest contribution to its importance.

Manor House

- 6.8.35 The Grade II Listed Manor House (Asset 49, Listing Number 1182391) is considered, by merit of its designation, to be of medium importance. This house, formerly a Manor House, retains architectural features dating from the late 16th century despite being extensively remodelled in the late 19th century. A map dating to 1598 shows the house and it is documented in 1684 as 'having a hall and parlour, with the best chamber, dining room and closet over them' (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1182391> and HER Id: 10894 - MOX6343).
- 6.8.36 The Manor House (Asset 49) is assessed as deriving most of its importance from its historical value as one of the documented manorial houses of Lewknor, with its evidential values (including its 19th century remodel and any earlier surviving remnants of architecture) also assessed as making a significant contribution. The Manor House (Asset 49) is situated just outside the core of the village of Lewknor, along Weston Road, and is surrounded entirely by a farmed rural landscape, which is thought likely to be similar to when the house was first built and later remodelled. Manor House (Asset 49) is, therefore, considered to have a medium sensitivity to changes in both its immediate setting and wider setting (in this case considered to be the surrounding rural landscape which includes the Site).
- 6.8.37 The screened ZTV (**Figure 6.11**) and an LVIA viewpoint taken from along Weston Road (Viewpoint 7) indicate some potential for intervisibility with elements of the Proposed Development from Manor House (Asset 49). During the walkover survey, however, it was not considered possible to see any of the designated assets along Weston Road, including Manor House (Asset 49) from within the Site (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.19). Overall, therefore, it is considered that any views of the Proposed Development from the farmhouse would be limited to heavily obscured glimpses, with the majority of it being entirely obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.
- 6.8.38 Although the Proposed Development would be a new feature in an otherwise largely rural area, the limited visibility of the Site from Manor House (Asset 49) and vice versa, mean that the potential magnitude of impact of the Proposed Development is correspondingly limited. Given that it is assessed that the Grade II Listed Manor House (Asset 49) derives most of its significance from its historical and evidential value, and that glimpses of the Proposed Development from the house would be very limited, the overall assessed magnitude of impact is considered to be negligible.
- 6.8.39 Overall, the level of effect on the setting of the Grade II Listed Manor House (Asset 49) is assessed to be neutral. This neutral effect acknowledges that there may be a perceptible change in the wider landscape setting of the house, but it would be very limited and would neither diminish nor enhance the elements of the Listed



Building (its historic relationship with the village of Lewknor) that are considered to be making the greatest contribution to its importance.

Manor Farmhouse and associated buildings

- 6.8.40 The Grade II Listed Manor Farmhouse (Asset 50, Listing Number 1368845), Manor Farm Cottage (Asset 55, Listing Number 1059722) and Granary approximately 18 metres NE of Manor Farmhouse (Asset 74, Listing Number 1059721) form part of a complex of buildings either side of Weston Road in South Weston, to the southwest of the Site. These buildings are considered, by merit of their designations, to be of medium importance.
- 6.8.41 The Manor Farmhouse (Asset 50) and granary (Asset 74) date to the early to mid-18th century (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1368845> and <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1059721>) whilst the Manor Farm Cottage (Asset 55) retains architectural elements that date from the late 17th century (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1059722>). The Listing descriptions for these buildings does not make any reference to the Manor with which they were associated but it seems that they are located within the historic parish of South Weston, and possibly associated with a documented estate held by Hugh d'Avranches as early as 1086 that was later known as Weston Manor (<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol8/pp253-262>). Overall, it is assessed that these three Listed Buildings derive most of their importance from their group value, their evidential value (predominantly their surviving architectural features) and some of their importance from their historical value (including the potential for them to be associated with a manorial estate of South Weston). These buildings are located within the hamlet of South Weston, along Weston Road, and surrounded entirely by a farmed rural landscape, which is thought likely to be largely unchanged from the time of their first construction. These Listed Buildings are therefore, considered to have a medium sensitivity to changes in both their immediate setting and wider setting (in this case considered to be the surrounding rural landscape which includes the Site).
- 6.8.42 The screened ZTV (**Figure 6.11**) and an LVIA viewpoint taken from along Weston Road (Viewpoint 7) indicate some potential for intervisibility with elements of the Proposed Development from the Manor Farmhouse complex (Assets 50, 55 and 74). During the walkover survey, however, it was not considered possible to see any of the designated assets along Weston Road, including the complex at Manor Farmhouse (Assets 50, 55 and 74) from within the Site (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 7.20). Overall, therefore, it is considered that any views of the Proposed Development from these Listed Buildings would be limited to heavily obscured glimpses, with the majority of it being entirely obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.
- 6.8.43 Although the Proposed Development would be a new industrial feature an otherwise largely rural area, the limited visibility of the Site from these Listed Buildings and vice versa, mean that the potential magnitude of impact of the Proposed Development is correspondingly limited. Given that it is assessed that the Grade II Listed Manor Farmhouse and associated buildings (Assets 50, 55 and 74) derives most of their importance from their group and evidential value, and that glimpses of



the Proposed Development from the Listed Buildings would be very limited, the overall assessed magnitude of impact is considered to be negligible.

- 6.8.44 Overall the level of effect on the setting of the Grade II Listed Manor Farmhouse (Asset 50), Manor Farm Cottage (Asset 55) and Granary approximately 18 metres NE of Manor Farmhouse (Asset 74) is assessed to be neutral. This neutral effect acknowledges that there may be a perceptible change in the wider landscape setting of the Listed Buildings, but it would be very limited and would neither diminish nor enhance the elements of the Listed Building (primarily their group value and evidential value) that are considered to be making the greatest contribution to their importance.

Church of St Lawrence

- 6.8.45 The Church of St Lawrence (Asset 9) is a non-designated heritage asset that is being considered, for the purposes of this assessment, to be equivalent to a designated asset of medium importance. This church is located within South Weston, along Weston Road, to the southwest of the Site and its HER entry records that it was built in 1860 to replace an earlier 14th century church (of which no remnants survive).
- 6.8.46 As a functional church this asset is assessed as deriving a great deal of its importance from its historical and evidential value (representing a continuation of worship at the location and being built in a gothic architectural style typical of late 19th century church building). Its parish no longer exists (that of South Weston), being incorporated in to the parish of Lewknor in 1954, but its relationship to the hamlet of South Weston and isolated farmsteads within the former parish is still legible. The site visit confirmed, however, that the Church of St Lawrence is not a large and prominent building and is, for the most part, completely hidden by the mature trees within its churchyard (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.18). It is, therefore, considered that the church has a medium sensitivity to changes in both its immediate setting and wider setting (in this case considered to be the surrounding rural landscape which includes the Site).
- 6.8.47 The screened ZTV (**Figure 6.11**) and an LVIA viewpoint taken from along Weston Road (Viewpoint 7) indicate some potential for intervisibility with elements of the Proposed Development from the Church of St Lawrence (Asset 9). During the walkover survey, however, it was not considered possible to see any of the designated assets along Weston Road, including the church (Asset 9) from within the Site (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.20). Overall, therefore, it is considered that any views of the Proposed Development from the church would be limited to heavily obscured glimpses, with the majority of it being entirely obscured by intervening topography and vegetation.
- 6.8.48 Although the Proposed Development would be a new industrial feature an otherwise largely rural area, the limited visibility of the Site from the Church of St Lawrence (Asset 9) is considered likely to limit the potential magnitude of impact of the Proposed Development. Given that it is assessed that the church (Asset 9) derives most of its significance from its historical and evidential value, and that glimpses of



the Proposed Development from the house would be very limited, the overall assessed magnitude of impact is considered to be negligible.

- 6.8.49 Overall, the level of effect on the setting of the non-designated Church of St Lawrence (Asset 9) is assessed to be neutral. This neutral effect acknowledges that there may be a perceptible change in the wider landscape setting of the church, but it would be very limited and would neither diminish nor enhance the elements of the asset (its historic relationship with the hamlet of South Weston) that are considered to be making the greatest contribution to its importance.

Summary of Neutral Effects

- 6.8.50 Where neutral effects have been identified it is acknowledged that there would be a perceptible change within the wider settings of the designated assets but that this change would be very limited in terms of its visibility, and it would neither diminish nor enhance elements or characteristics of their setting which are considered to be making the most significant contribution to their importance. These predicted neutral effects cause no harm to the significance of the assets and the policy tests as set out in the NPPF are not invoked.
- 6.8.51 This assessment has found that there would be a minor effect upon the setting of the Grade I Listed Church of St Margaret (Asset 12).

Church of St Margaret

- 6.8.52 The Grade I Listed Church of St Margaret (Asset 12, Listing Number 1182190) is the parish church of Lewknor and is, by virtue of its designation, considered to be of high importance. The church retains architectural features dating from the late 12th century, with most of its earliest surviving elements dating from the 14th (chancel, south aisle and porch) and 15th centuries (vestry and tower). The church is documented as having originally been dedicated to St Mary and is the oldest surviving building in the village of Lewknor (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1182190> and HER Id: 4022 - MOX6259).
- 6.8.53 The importance of the Grade I Listed Church of St Margaret (Asset 12) is assessed to lie primarily in its exceptional historic and evidential value (including its architectural interest), as well as its group value with the other designated assets located within its churchyard. Given the scale of the church's tower some significance is also derived from the landscape setting in which it is experienced. The site visit confirmed, however, that the churchyard of the Church of St Margaret (Asset 12) is bound by large mature trees and vegetation that obscure most potential distant views of the church. Overall, it is considered that the church has a high sensitivity to changes in both its immediate setting and wider setting (in this case considered to be the surrounding rural landscape of the parish of Lewknor, which includes the Site) as, although somewhat obscured, the tower of the church was designed to be a prominent landmark feature in the surrounding landscape.
- 6.8.54 The screened ZTV (**Figure 6.11**) indicates no potential for intervisibility with elements of the Proposed Development from the Church of St Margaret and the visit confirmed that no part of the Site was visible from the churchyard due to the



mass of intervening vegetation and mature trees. Occasional glimpses of the top of the church tower of the Grade I Listed Church of St Margaret (Asset 12) were possible from the highest parts of the southwestern field (**Appendix 6.2**; Plate 6.2) during the walkover survey.

- 6.8.55 The public footpath (Asset 129) that runs through the Site (and would be retained by the Proposed Development) was the historic route to the church from the nearby hamlet of Postcombe. Although glimpses of the church tower were not possible from along its route during the walkover survey it seems likely that, during winter months with less vegetation cover, views from this route of its historic destination (the church tower) would be possible. This route has a documented historic relationship with the Grade I Listed Church of St Margaret (Asset 12) and it is considered to be within the church's wider setting. This route currently passes through arable farmland, which has likely been the case for its entire existence. The Proposed Development would result in a material change along the course of this route to the church, with the area being bound by solar development rather than open arable farmland. The Proposed Development would not be visible from the church. Whilst the Proposed Development would be visible with the uppermost parts of its tower when experienced from the public footpath within the Site these views would be very limited and the Proposed Development would not compete with the Church of St Margaret (Asset 12) as a landscape feature, nor would it impact upon its historical or evidential value.
- 6.8.56 Based on the above, and on balance, the impact upon the setting of the Grade I Listed Church of St Margaret (Asset 12) resulting from the Proposed Development is judged to be Low. Alterations to the church's wider setting would be noticeable (especially from along the historic foot route between Postcombe and the church) but they would not affect the ability to understand, appreciate or experience the contribution that setting makes to the asset's overall significance. Given the building's High relative sensitivity to changes to its setting the level of effect would be Minor which is not considered to be significant in EIA terms. Any harm would be '*less than substantial*' in terms of the NPPF.

Decommissioning Effects

- 6.8.57 It is proposed that the photovoltaic solar array would operate for a period of 40 years, after which the Proposed Development would be decommissioned and the Site returned to its existing condition.
- 6.8.58 Detailed assessment of impacts on cultural heritage assets arising from the decommissioning phase have been scoped out of this assessment. A detailed assessment of the cultural heritage impacts of decommissioning the Proposed Development has not been undertaken because:
- the future baseline conditions (environmental and other developments) cannot be predicted accurately at this stage;
 - the detailed proposals for decommissioning are not known at this stage, and
 - the best practice decommissioning guidance methods will likely change during the lifetime of the Proposed Development.



- 6.8.59 In general, it is anticipated that direct impacts during the decommissioning phase would be limited and would only occur if new ground works are required beyond the areas disturbed during the original construction works. As such no significant direct effects are expected to arise from the decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development. All operational effects upon the settings of designated assets would be reversed with the removal of the Proposed Development following decommissioning, leading to a neutral and not significant effect.

6.9 Mitigation

- 6.9.1 This assessment has identified a potential for significant direct effects upon known and unknown remains within the solar site and along the proposed cable corridor. The predicted significant direct effects arising from the Construction Phase include the following predicted construction related impacts:
- High magnitude impacts upon the geophysical anomalies within the solar site (Asset 126) which are predicted to be of Negligible to High importance and the resulting effect is, therefore, Minor to Major (Moderate or Major effects being significant in EIA terms);
 - High magnitude impacts on previously unrecorded archaeological remains of early prehistoric date (likely of medium importance) resulting in a Moderate level of effect which is significant in EIA terms;
 - High magnitude impacts on previously unrecorded archaeological remains of late prehistoric or Roman date (likely of low to medium importance) resulting in a Moderate level of effect which is significant in EIA terms;
 - High magnitude impacts upon unrecorded archaeological remains of early medieval date (likely of low to medium importance, though any burials would likely be of high importance) resulting in a Moderate or Major level of effect which is significant in EIA terms;
 - High magnitude impacts upon unrecorded archaeological remains of medieval date (most likely former field boundaries, ridge and furrow etc. of Low importance.) resulting in a Moderate level of effect which is significant in EIA terms; and
 - High magnitude impacts upon unrecorded archaeological remains of post-medieval date (most likely former field boundaries, ridge and furrow etc. of Low importance.) resulting in a Moderate level of effect which is significant in EIA terms.
- 6.9.2 It is proposed that these direct impacts upon known and unknown remains within the main Site will be mitigated, by a further programme of archaeological works (initially in the form of trial trenching) to be undertaken in order to refine the assessed potential, location and extent of any buried remains within the solar site.
- 6.9.3 The trenching would target features identified in the geophysical survey as well as providing coverage of the areas where there are anomalies of ‘*uncertain origin*’ identified in the geophysical survey (**Appendix 6.3**).
- 6.9.4 Pre-application advice from the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council has indicated that the trial trench evaluation of the main Site “*should*



- comprise a 2% trenching sample of the proposal area, utilising trenches measuring 30 m long by 1.8 m wide, these to be targeted to test anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey and to also provide for an appropriate spatial sample of the remaining area of the site. A contingency provision for the excavation of up to a further 2% trenching sample will also need to be made where this may be required to clarify any points of detail within the initial sample” (Weaver, S. 2023).*
- 6.9.5 Depending on the results of the evaluation it may be necessary to designate ‘archaeologically sensitive areas’ where ‘no dig’ solutions could allow for the preservation ‘in situ’ of important buried remains.
- 6.9.6 The proposed cable corridor would be established via the excavation of a narrow trench to facilitate the laying of a buried cable. Given the limited footprint of disturbance it is considered that the potential direct impacts caused along its length could be suitably mitigated via a programme of monitoring and recording during the construction works.
- 6.9.7 The exact scope of any programme of archaeological works would be defined within a Written Scheme of Investigation and agreed with the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council. Where significant remains are encountered during trial trenching and cannot be preserved in situ further phases of archaeological excavation, recording and post-excavation analysis followed by reporting, including publication where appropriate, would be required to ensure preservation by record of any significant archaeological remains.
- 6.9.8 Neutral level effects have been identified upon the character of the Lewknor Conservation Area (Asset 95) and upon the settings of the Grade I Listed Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17) and Grade II Listed Moor Court (Asset 11), Manor House (Asset 49) and Church Farm (Asset 79) that are located within the extent of the Lewknor Conservation Area. These predicted neutral effects cause no harm to the significance of the assets and the policy tests as set out in the NPPF are not invoked.
- 6.9.9 Neutral level effects have also been identified upon the settings of the Grade II Listed Manor Farmhouse (Asset 50), Manor Farm Cottage (Asset 55), Granary approximately 18 metres NE of Manor Farmhouse (Asset 74) and upon the non-designated Church of St Lawrence (Asset 9), all of which are located in South Weston, to the south-west of the Site. These predicted neutral effects cause no harm to the significance of the assets and the policy tests as set out in the NPPF are not invoked.
- 6.9.10 Minor level effects have been found upon the setting of the Grade I Listed Church of St Margaret (Asset 12). Any harm would be ‘less than substantial’ in terms of the NPPF.
- 6.9.11 These identified Neutral and Minor levels of effect are not significant in EIA terms.
- 6.9.12 On the basis that no significant effects are predicted, no mitigation, beyond that incorporated into the design (**Chapter 4**, is deemed necessary for setting effects.



6.10 Assessment of Residual Effects

Construction Phase - Direct Effects

- 6.10.1 It is assessed that the completion of any agreed archaeological mitigation works would result in direct impacts upon buried archaeological remains being mitigated via programmes of archaeological investigation. This would allow any remains that were to be destroyed to be '*preserved by record*' and for an enhancement of the current levels of knowledge regarding the survival and composition of the archaeological deposits within the solar site and along the proposed cable corridor.
- 6.10.2 The level of residual direct and indirect effects upon buried heritage assets would depend upon the mitigation employed following the initial archaeological investigations outlined above. Where avoidance of impacts is not possible the residual levels of effect would be unchanged from the construction levels assessed above although excavation and recording of the assets would ensure that impacts are offset by ensuring preservation by record.

Operational Phase – Setting Effects

- 6.10.3 The assessed levels of residual effects from the operational phase upon heritage assets are predominantly related to the potential visual impact of the completed Proposed Development. Although it is acknowledged that there may also be noise and traffic (for maintenance etc.) impacts during the operational phase these are not considered to have the potential to exceed the levels assessed for the visual impacts (especially given the proximity of the M40 to the Proposed Development area)
- 6.10.4 There are no mitigation measures recommended beyond those inherent in the Proposed Development design that would reduce the level of effect identified on each asset during the operational phase. Accordingly, it is considered that the residual levels of settings effect would be unchanged from the operational levels assessed above.

6.11 Assessment of Cumulative Effects

- 6.11.1 Cumulative effects relating to cultural heritage are for the most part limited to operational effects upon the settings of heritage assets. While there can, in some rare cases, be cumulative direct effects, none are anticipated to result from the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Development. As such this assessment will consider the potential for cumulative effects upon the setting of heritage assets which have the potential to occur during the operational phase.
- 6.11.2 It is necessary to consider whether the effects of other schemes in conjunction with the Proposed Development would result in an additional cumulative change upon heritage assets, beyond the levels predicted for the Proposed Development alone.
- 6.11.3 The in-combination effect also needs to be considered. However, only those assets which are judged to have the potential to be subject to significant cumulative effects are included in the detailed cumulative assessment provided.



- 6.11.4 The assessment of cumulative effects considers whether there would be an increased impact, either additive or synergistic, upon the setting of heritage assets as a result of adding the Proposed Development to a baseline, which may include operational, under construction, consented or proposed developments as agreed with the council.
- 6.11.5 In determining the degree to which a cumulative effect may occur as a result of the addition of the Proposed Development into the cumulative baseline a number of factors are taken into consideration including:
- the distance between solar farms;
 - the overall character of the asset and its sensitivity to solar farms;
 - the siting, scale and design of the solar farms themselves;
 - the way in which the asset is experienced;
 - the placing of the cumulative solar farm(s) in relation to both the individual proposal being assessed and the heritage asset under consideration; and
 - the contribution of the cumulative baseline schemes to the significance of the effect, excluding the individual proposal being assessed, upon the setting of the heritage asset under consideration.
- 6.11.6 This assessment is based upon the:
- Harlesford Solar Farm (Operational) – 3.1 km NNW of the solar site
 - Dodwells Solar Farm (Consented, Awaiting Construction) – 3.2 km N of the solar site
 - Cornwell Solar Farm (Operational) – 4 km NW of the solar site; and
 - Chalgrove Solar Farm (Operational) – 4.7 km W of the solar site
- 6.11.7 None of the heritage assets considered by this assessment to have the potential for operational effects upon their settings are considered to have any potential for cumulative effects in relation to the developments listed above. These developments are too distant from these assets and are located beyond screening topography and vegetation which would prevent any intervisibility.
- 6.11.8 Consequently, it is assessed that there would be no cumulative effects to effects relating to cultural heritage.

6.12 Summary

- 6.12.1 The cultural heritage chapter provides an assessment of the effects of the Proposed Development upon archaeological and cultural heritage assets. This includes direct effects resulting from the construction of the solar farm and associated infrastructure and effects upon the settings of heritage assets which may arise during construction and operation of the Proposed Development.
- 6.12.2 This assessment was conducted with regard to national planning policy (NPPF and PPG), local planning policy (South Oxfordshire) and relevant guidance on the historic environment.



- 6.12.3 Pre-application consultation advice received from the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council was also taken into consideration. The primary sources of data for the assessment were Oxfordshire County Council (for HER data), Historic England (for NHLE data), South Oxfordshire District Council (for Conservation Area information), Oxfordshire History Centre (for historic and cartographic sources) and observations made during the walkover survey and setting assessment site visits.
- 6.12.4 Pre-application advice has indicated that further archaeological work will be necessary. This initially will need to be a trial trench evaluation of the solar site that *“should comprise a 2% trenching sample of the proposal area, utilising trenches measuring 30 m long by 1.8 m wide, these to be targeted to test anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey and to also provide for an appropriate spatial sample of the remaining area of the site. A contingency provision for the excavation of up to a further 2% trenching sample will also need to be made where this may be required to clarify any points of detail within the initial sample”* (Weaver, S. 2023).
- 6.12.5 The assessment has established that the Proposed Development has the potential to directly impact upon known remains that have been identified in the form of geophysical anomalies (Asset 126) some of which are thought to likely be related to the course of a Roman road and associated settlement as well as some having the potential to reflect earlier and later periods of activity. The assessment has also the potential for other previously unidentified remains to be discovered on the Site. The assessment gauges this potential to be high for late Prehistoric and Roman remains and modern agricultural remains, medium for early prehistoric remains, early medieval burials, medieval and post-medieval agriculture remains and low for other types of early medieval remains. Any early prehistoric, late prehistoric, Roman or early medieval burials surviving on the Site would likely be considered to be of at least Medium importance, any agricultural remains of medieval or post-medieval date would likely be considered to be of Low importance and any agricultural remains of modern date would likely be considered to be of Negligible importance.
- 6.12.6 This assessment had also established that the operational phase of the Proposed Development would have no significant effects in EIA terms upon the settings of any of the designated heritage assets identified within the 2 km Study Area. In addition, no significant cumulative effects have been identified.
- 6.12.7 It should be possible to mitigate any potential direct impacts on known and unknown archaeological remains via a programme of archaeological mitigation. The exact scope of any programme of archaeological works would be defined within a Written Scheme of Investigation and agreed with the Planning Archaeologist at Oxfordshire County Council.
- 6.12.8 Depending on the results of the evaluation it may be necessary to designate ‘archaeologically sensitive areas’ where ‘no dig’ solutions could allow for the preservation ‘in situ’ of important buried remains. Otherwise, any excavated remains recorded during the programme of archaeological works would be



'preserved by record'. The level of residual direct and indirect effects upon buried heritage assets would depend upon the mitigation employed following the initial archaeological investigations outlined above. Where avoidance of impacts is not possible the residual levels of effect would be unchanged from the Construction levels assessed above although excavation and recording of the assets would ensure that impacts are offset by ensuring preservation by record.

- 6.12.9 Residual setting effects will be as per the effects predicted for the operational phase and not significant.



Table 6.12: Summary Table

Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measures	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial / Adverse		Significance	Beneficial / Adverse
During Construction & Decommissioning					
Direct impact upon any early prehistoric remains surviving within the Site	Moderate	Adverse	<p>The direct impacts upon known and unknown remains within the solar site will be mitigated, by a further programme of archaeological works (likely in the form of trial trenching) to be undertaken in order to refine the assessed potential, location and extent of any buried remains within the Site.</p> <p>The trenching would target features identified in the geophysical survey as well as providing coverage of the areas where there are anomalies of ‘uncertain origin’ identified in the geophysical survey (Appendix 6.3).</p> <p>Depending on the results of the evaluation it may be necessary to designate ‘archaeologically sensitive areas’ where</p>	<p>None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions)</p> <p>Moderate but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)</p>	None or Adverse



Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measures	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial / Adverse		Significance	Beneficial / Adverse
			<p>'no dig' solutions could allow for the preservation 'in situ' of important buried remains.</p> <p>The proposed cable corridor will be established via the excavation of a narrow trench to facilitate the laying of a buried cable, Given the limited footprint of disturbance it is considered that the potential direct impacts caused along its length could be suitably mitigated via a programme of monitoring and recording during the construction works.</p>		
Direct impact upon any late prehistoric to Roman remains surviving within the Site	Minor to Moderate	Adverse	As above	<p>None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions)</p> <p>Minor to Moderate but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)</p>	Adverse
Direct impact upon any early medieval burials surviving within the Site	Moderate to Major	Adverse	As above	None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions)	Adverse



Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measures	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial / Adverse		Significance	Beneficial / Adverse
				Moderate to Major but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)	
Direct impact upon any medieval remains (likely agricultural) within the Site	Moderate	Adverse	As above	None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions) Minor but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)	Adverse
Direct impact upon any post-medieval remains (likely agricultural or related to gardens) within the Site	Moderate	Adverse	As above	None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions) Minor but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)	Adverse
Direct impacts upon the geophysical anomalies within the main Site (Asset 126)	Minor to Major	Adverse	As above	None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions) Minor but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)	Adverse
Direct impacts upon the former area of gardens within main Site (Asset 128)	Minor	Adverse	As above	None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions)	Adverse



Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measures	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial / Adverse		Significance	Beneficial / Adverse
				Minor but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)	
Direct impacts upon the extant public footpath in main Site (Asset 129)	Minor	Adverse	Route is being retained by design	None	None
Direct impacts upon the former route of a public footpath between Adwell and Postcombe (not extant) (Asset 139)	Minor	Adverse	Given the limited footprint of disturbance it is considered that the potential direct impacts caused along its length could be suitably mitigated via a programme of monitoring and recording during the construction works.	Negligible	Adverse
Direct impacts upon the buried remnants of the Route of road running from Adwell (Asset 140) by the proposed Grid Connection route	Negligible	Adverse	Given the limited footprint of disturbance it is considered that the potential direct impacts caused along its length could be suitably mitigated via a programme of monitoring and recording during the construction works.	None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions) Negligible but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)	Adverse
Direct impacts upon the buried remnants of the Route of road running from Wheatfield (Asset	Negligible	Adverse	As above	None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions)	Adverse



Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measures	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial / Adverse		Significance	Beneficial / Adverse
145) by the proposed cable corridor				Negligible but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)	
Direct impacts upon an area of ridge and furrow visible in historic aerial photography and LiDAR data (Asset 146)	Negligible	Adverse	As above	None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions) Negligible but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)	Adverse
Direct impacts upon an area of ridge and furrow visible in historic aerial photography and LiDAR data (Asset 148)	Negligible	Adverse	As above	None (if preservation in situ is possible via no dig solutions) Negligible but offset (if preservation in situ is not possible)	Adverse
During Operation					
Effect upon the setting of the Grade I Listed Church of St Margaret (Asset 12, Listing Number 1182190)	Minor	Adverse	No mitigation is offered beyond that incorporated into the design (Chapter 4).	Minor	Adverse
Operational effect upon the character of the Lewknor Conservation Area (Asset 95)	Neutral	Neutral	As above	Neutral	Neutral
Operational effect upon the Grade I Listed	Neutral	Neutral	As above	Neutral	Neutral



Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measures	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial / Adverse		Significance	Beneficial / Adverse
Church Farm, Barn (Asset 17)					
Operational effect upon the Grade II Listed Church Farm (Asset 79)	Neutral	Neutral	As above	Neutral	Neutral
Operational effect upon the Grade II Listed Moor Court (Asset 11)	Neutral	Neutral	As above	Neutral	Neutral
Operational effect upon the Grade II Listed Manor Farm (Asset 49)	Neutral	Neutral	As above	Neutral	Neutral
Operational effect upon the Grade II Listed Manor Farmhouse (Asset 50)	Neutral	Neutral	As above	Neutral	Neutral
Operational effect upon the Grade II Listed Manor Farm Cottage (Asset 55)	Neutral	Neutral	As above	Neutral	Neutral
Operational effect upon the Grade II Listed Granary approximately 18 m NE of Manor Farmhouse (Asset 74)	Neutral	Neutral	As above	Neutral	Neutral
Operational effect upon the non-designated Church of St Lawrence (Asset 9)	Neutral	Neutral	No mitigation is offered beyond that incorporated into the design (Chapter 4).	Neutral	Neutral



Description of Effect	Significance of Potential Effect		Mitigation Measures	Significance of Residual Effect	
	Significance	Beneficial / Adverse		Significance	Beneficial / Adverse
Cumulative Effects					
No cumulative effects have been identified by this assessment	None	None	None	None	None



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