

**Planning Application 24/00384/FUL for the installation and operation of a solar farm and battery energy storage system, with associated works, equipment, infrastructure and landscaping at land adjacent to A614, Worksop, Nottinghamshire.**

- 1) This note has been prepared in response to the review by Wynne Williams Associates (WWA) of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal prepared by Sightline Landscape (SL) for the above proposed development.
- 2) It is agreed by both parties that the Proposed Development will have a Moderate to Major adverse effect on the landscape character of the Site, which is inevitable given the nature of the development and is an effect that can be attributed to the majority of solar schemes on greenfield land. The more important effect is the effect on the character of the wider landscape, with WWA concluding a Minor adverse and SL Neutral. Whether a Minor adverse effect or a Neutral, the effect will not be Significant. This limited effect is due to the enclosure provided by the established woodland and topography. In this respect it is a preferable site to many solar schemes which often have a wider impact on landscape character.
- 3) WWA has not identified any additional viewpoints and this is evidence that the Site is afforded good visual enclosure with relatively few receptors being affected and only one residential and one commercial receptor (the hotel) being affected. This is in contrast to many solar schemes of a similar size which are often visible over a wider area.
- 4) WWA has concerns that the level of predicted visual effect for walkers along FP6/Robin Hood Way long distance path adjacent to the southern boundary has been underestimated for summer views on passing Field 4. Having visited the Site in summer we maintain that the existing trackside vegetation will provide effective screening, particularly the bracken which forms a solid barrier along the boundary with the field and the wood.
- 5) Tree and hedge planting under overhead lines is determined by the height of the cables and their sag and swing. There must be a minimum of 5.3m clearance between the lowest point of sag and the top of the proposed hedge/tree when mature. Assuming the approval of the detailed landscape works will be a planning condition the clearance level will be checked, but site knowledge indicates that hedge planting at the least will be possible.
- 6) WWA presents a viewpoint, taken from bridleway BW5 to illustrate visibility through winter vegetation to Field 2, stating *“at the time the photograph was taken, plastic sheeting had been applied to the field for agricultural purposes. Whilst this does not exactly mimic the presence of photovoltaic panels, it does illustrate the visibility of a reflective surface within the field”*.

- 7) This view is only afforded from a short section of the bridleway as it converges onto the A road and traffic on the A road, the hotel and cars within the car park are also visible. And if the argument is that the agricultural polythene is visible and potentially similar to a solar farm, is also the case that this visibility is the baseline and so the impact of the solar farm will not be that substantially greater than the polythene. Woodland planting averaging 50m deep, including conifers is proposed at this location to screen panels within this view.
- 8) In the opinion of Sightline Landscape, the review of the LVA identifies no additional issues of significance that would warrant refusal on landscape grounds and, if anything, confirms the benefits of the Site in terms of the limited adverse effect on the wider landscape and limited visual receptors.