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PROJECT: Land to the north-west of Westhide, Herefordshire, HR1 3RQ (Ref: P214619/F) CLIENT: Ersun (Westhide SPV) Ltd Date: 24st October 2022

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Addendum: Amendments to Landscape Proposals

Introduction

This addendum provides an update on landscape and visual matters in respect of amendments made to the Masterplan and Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plans submitted with the planning application (Ref: P214619/F). It is in response to comments received from officers at Herefordshire Council.

The amended drawings are included at the end of this note, which include the following:

3352_L_GA_0_01 Masterplan Rev O 3352_L_GA_0_02 Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan Rev E 3352_L_GA_1_01 Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan Inset 1 Rev B 3352_L_GA_1_02 Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan Inset 2 Rev B 3352_L_GA_1_03 Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan Inset 3 Rev B 3352_L_GA_1_04 Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan Inset 4 Rev A

Amendments to proposals

Removal of panels

Based on further feedback from the Herefordshire Council in regards to the use of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land for solar PV instead of food crops, it was agreed that panels would be removed from those fields that consisted predominantly of higher-grade agricultural land. Panels have therefore been removed from fields A, D, E, H and I. Proposed mitigation measures for the scheme have been amended accordingly to reflect the reduction in the extent of the array, which are shown on the accompanying drawings and as outlined below:

Fields A, D and E:

Proposed tree planting along the western boundary of Field A has been removed, as there is no longer a need to filter views of this field from the west. Tree planting to the eastern boundary of Field A and southern boundary of Field D has been retained to create a layering of vegetation, in combination with tree planting along the western and northern boundary of Field D. This is to assist in filtering views of the development in Fields C and F when views from the road to the south and from Westhide to the south-west.

Along the boundary between Fields D and E, the previously proposed hedgerow alongside the existing tree planting has been retained as part of the scheme to reinstate the historic field boundary and to enhance connectivity of natural features, including the isolated woodland block along this boundary. Similarly, the hedgerow has been retained along the eastern boundary of



Field E, restoring the historic field boundary and connecting the woodland belt with the vegetation along the stream to the south. Any additional tree planting along these boundaries have been removed as there is no longer a need to filter views of the development in Field E from viewpoints to the west.

Fields H and I:

The previously proposed tree planting along the eastern and western boundaries of Field I have been retained. The density of tree planting has been reduced slightly as additional tree planting is proposed along the eastern boundary of Field G which will contribute to the layering of vegetation, filtering views of the development in Field G when viewed from the road and properties to the east. Proposed hedgerow across Field H has been removed to retain a larger Field, which will be beneficial to ongoing agricultural uses.

<u>Drainage</u>

Comments:

• 'Space should be provided for an attenuation feature, such as a basin'

An attenuation basin (6000m² in area) has been added to Field C, positioned along the southern boundary. A species rich grassland seed mix is proposed within the basin which is tolerant of being seasonally wet.

Changes to the Assessment of Visual Effects

Due to the scale of reduction in the PV array and associated changes to the mitigation, the levels of visual effects recorded within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (16th December 2021, Revision FV2) have changed. Changes are outlined below.

Views from the road between Westhide and Withington (Viewpoints 1 and 2)

In views heading east along the road (Viewpoint 1), the PV array will no longer be visible due to the removal of panels in the Fields, A, D and E. Construction of the access track along the boundary of Fields D and E, any mitigation planting or ongoing maintenance will be barely discernible. The magnitude of change is now assessed to be *Negligible* and the levels of effects are reduced to *Negligible adverse* for all stages.

In views heading west from Westhide (Viewpoint 2) and from nearby private properties, the PV array will no longer be present in Fields A, D and E. The PV array will be visible in the more distant Fields C and F with the substation to the south-east corner of Field C. Although this is a notable reduction in the extent of the PV array, it will still be a notable addition in views from the road. The visual effects, therefore, remain as *Moderate adverse*. After 15 years, maturing tree planting along the boundaries of Fields A, D, C and F, will create layers of vegetation which will heavily filter views of the PV array to the extent that the development will be barely discernible. The visual effects will be reduced to *Negligible adverse*.

Views from Westhide (Viewpoints 3 and 4)

The assessment of visual effects on views from PRoW WS1 to the south of Westhide (Viewpoint 3), will not alter. The visual effects remain as *Negligible adverse* for all stages.



No part of the PV array will now be visible in views from the churchyard (Viewpoint 4). Construction of the access track up to Field G, any mitigation planting or ongoing maintenance will be below levels of perception. Therefore, the magnitude of change and visual effects are now assessed as **No change**.

Views from the road at Kymin (Viewpoint 5)

In the glimpsed views from the road and in views from nearby private properties, the extent of the PV array visible will be reduced by the removal of panels from Fields H and I. However, the panels on the higher ground of Field G will remain a noticeable feature in views and the visual effects remain as *Minor adverse* during construction and at completion. The layers of mitigation planting remain as previously proposed and, therefore, the visual effects after 15 years remain as *Negligible adverse*.

Views from Withington (Viewpoints 6 - 8)

The extent of PV development visible in views from PRoW WT31 (Viewpoint 6), near Withington Court, will be considerably reduced by the removal of panels in Fields A, D and E. Due to intervening woodland, the PV array in Field C will be obscured from view and only a portion of the PV array in Field F will be visible. In the context of the long distance, panoramic views afforded from this footpath, the visible extent of the development will form only a small part and will be of a similar scale and appearance to the poly tunnels already present in the landscape. During construction and on completion, the magnitude of change is now assessed to be *Low* and the visual effects are now assessed a *Minor adverse*, reducing to *Negligible adverse* on maturity of the mitigation tree planting proposed along the southern boundary of Field F.

No part of the PV array will not be visible in views from the grounds of the Church of St Peter (Viewpoint 7) or from the elevated PRoW WT10 (Viewpoint 8), south-west of the site. Any construction work, mitigation planting or ongoing maintenance will be below levels of perception. Therefore, the magnitude of change and visual effects are now assessed as **No** *change*.

Views from the north (Viewpoints 9 - 13)

In the brief view from the Three Choirs Way long distance footpath, near Thing Hill Court (Viewpoint 9), the PV array will no longer be visible in Field D. The remaining small portion of the PV array in Field F will be barely perceptible. Therefore, the visual effects are now assessed as *Negligible adverse*.

The assessment of visual effects on views from the long-distance footpath, where it passes Old Mokton (Viewpoint 10) and on higher ground further to the north-east (Viewpoint 11), will not alter. The visual effects remain as *Minor adverse* for all stages. Views from PRoW OP8#1 and PRoW PW9, remain as *No change*.

Changes to the Assessment of Landscape Effects

LCT Estate Farmlands

With the removal of panels from Fields A, D, E H and I, the PV array will now only be introduced into a single field (Field G) within the LCT Estate Farmlands. The northern part of Field G, in



which the PV array will be located, is relatively well contained from the wider landscape of the LCT and neighbouring LCT's by the mature trees to the north and west, and by its north facing slope, with limited visibility from surrounding roads, footpaths and settlement to the south and east. The addition of this PV array within this lightly settled, rural LCT would result in only the small and temporary loss of an agricultural field. During construction and on completion, the magnitude of change to the landscape is now assessed as *Low adverse*, and the landscape effects as *Minor adverse*.

On maturity of proposed hedgerow and tree planting along the boundaries of Field G, the PV array would become barely perceptible within the LCT. New hedgerow planting around Fields A, D, E and G will strengthen the local character of *'medium to large fields defined by hedgerows'* and restore historic field patterns. At year 15, the landscape effects are now assessed to be *Negligible adverse*.

LCT Riverside Meadows

AS per the previous LVIA assessment, there is PV development present across Fields C and F, and, therefore, the landscape effects on the LCT Riverside Meadows remain as *Minor adverse*.

LCT Principal Settled Farmland

Although the scale of the development has reduced, there will still be small amount of intervisibility from the north-east edge of the LCT around Withington (as demonstrated by Viewpoint 6). The landscape effects remain as **Negligible adverse**.

Site and Immediate Surroundings

The new proposals will result in the long term, but reversible, loss of only three of the eight agricultural fields within the site. As previously described, Field G is relatively well contained from the wider landscape by vegetation and landform. Fields C and F are also well contained by mature woodland and hedgerows, with some inter-visibility with the wider landscape to the south. As before, the majority of landscape features will be unaffected by the development and the proposals will introduce mitigation measures which enhance local green infrastructure corridors, restores historic field patterns and reinforces local landscape character. Therefore, the development will result in the temporary loss of a low number of localised landscape features. The magnitude of change to the landscape is now assessed as *Low adverse*, and the landscape effects as *Minor adverse*.

Conclusion

As a result of the reduction in panels in Fields A, D, E, H and I, the proposed development will still result in some limited adverse effects however lower than those previously assessed within the LVIA. All landscape and visual effects are reduced to *Minor adverse* or lower, except for views from the road heading west from Westhide (Viewpoint 2). During construction and completion, visual effects from the road are assessed as *Moderate adverse*, reducing to *Negligible adverse* on maturity of mitigation planting.







	refer to drawing 3352_P_DT_3_02
•	1.2 m high timber post and rail fencing (to rewilding areas)
•	Proposed steel palisade security fencing - 2.4 m higl (around DNO customer substation)
	Finish: Powder coated matt finish

INSET MAP G : Refer to drawing 3352_L_1_03

FIELD I

Maximum 2 m break in hedgerow to accommodate permissive path.

13. Species rich grassland will be cut once a year to reduce the vigour of grasses and to remove dead growth in autumn. Areas within security fence to be cut at 50 mm and outside of the security fence at 150 mm. After establishment (typically 3-4 years), areas within the security fence to be lightly grazed by sheep to maintain a sward height of approximately 50 mm, with grazing activities controlled to maintain species diversity (Refer to the LEMP for further details). Wild bird seed mix (outside of the security fence) does not require a cut and will be re-established annually or every two years.

Brick House

The Salt Pot

14. At the end of the defects period bare areas, dead grass, settlement, shrinkage, wheel ruts and other damage will be made good by recultivation, reseeding and returfing.

- 15. Bare root trees and hedgerow shrubs will be planted November end of February. Container grown trees and hedgerow shrubs will be planted at any time if ground conditions are favourable.
- 16. Plant quality will comply with the relevant part of BS 3936.
- 17. Tree planting will be in accordance with BS 4428, Part 7. Shrub planting will be in accordance with BS 4428, Part 9.
- 18. Trees to be protected with 60 cm spiral rabbit guard, supported with a 0.7m x 32 mm square pointed stake, attached using 1 no. buckle tie and 1no. spacer. Planting area to be maintained weed free by hand until 100% canopy closure.
- 19. Topsoil cultivation will achieve a fine tilth and weed free, with soil graded to remove lumps and hollows.
- 20. Broadleaf P4 or similar approved will be incorporated into topsoil where planting is carried out between March and September in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.
- Cultivation of topsoil/subsoil will achieve a friable tilth with levels graded to remove lumps 21. Bottom of planting holes/trenches will be free draining and deeper and wider than the root spread.
 - 22. Native hedgerow shrubs will be protected from rabbits where practical, using brown spiral rabbit guards supported with a bamboo cane.
 - 23. Planting beds will be mulched with 75 mm depth of composted wood bark of 5-75 mm size, to help retain moisture and suppress weeds, to minimise maintenance.
 - 24. Tree pits will be 600-750 mm deep and 0.9-1.2 m diameter, depending on tree size. Trees will be planted 1.5 m away from existing hedgerows to avoid roots. 25. Tree pit backfilling will comprise 75% topsoil with 25% peat-free compost.
 - 26. Maintenance will include removal of weeds with maximum weed heights permitted of 150mm; removal of dead weeds by hand; maintenance of a 1.2 m diameter grass free circle around trees in grass; watering during dry periods; hedge trimming; tree stake, rabbit and netlon guard reinstatement; firming plants after frost heave.
 - 27. Existing and proposed hedgerows to be relaxed to allow growth up to 3 m in height. 28. The rewilding areas will mainly be left un-manage to allow re-colonisation by locally occurring species. Low key management will be undertaken every two years to avoid complete bramble cover and to manage undesirable species. Management will be via mechanical cutting and hand pulling.
 - 29. At the end of the defects dead, dying, missing or defective plants will be replaced except as a result of vandalism.

ght cm	Root Zone	Specification	Mix %	Number	Comments
300	В	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	As shown	10	
300	В	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	As shown	34	
300	В	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	As shown	14	
300	В	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	As shown	36	
300	В	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	As shown	21	
300	В	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	As shown	9	See notes 18 20
300	В	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	As shown	21	See notes 18-29
300	В	2x; Feathered; 5 breaks	As shown	7	
300	В	2x; Light Standard; clear stem 150-175 cm; 3 breaks	As shown	25	
300	В	2x; Light Standard; clear stem 150-175 cm; 3 breaks	As shown	10	
300	В	2x; Light Standard; clear stem 150-175 cm; 3 breaks	As shown	12	
300	В	2x; Light Standard; clear stem 150-175 cm; 3 breaks	As shown	12	
	-		TOTALS	211	

ight cm	Root Zone	Specification	Mix %	Number	Comments
0	В	1+1; Transplant - seed raised	30	1780	
0	3L	Leader with laterals	10	593	Plant in 2 rows, 0.45m apart at
)	В	0/1; Cutting; branched; 2 breaks	35	2077	0.45m staggered centres, in
0	В	1+1; Transplant - seed raised; branched; 2 brks	20	1187	groups of 3-15 no.
0	В	1+1; Transplant - seed raised; branched; 2 brks	5	297	
			TOTALS	5934	

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		Bristol BS41 9LB United Kingdom	Status: PLANNING	Drawn: JH	Checked: LF	
		Tel: +44 (0)117 923 0455	Scale: 1:500@A1	Date: 03.12.2021	Approved: AS	
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- SITE BY THE CONTRACTOR PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION WORK COMMENCING.

Species rich grassland along GCN corridor

Legend

Site boundary

Permissive footpath

Existing overhead utility/electricity lines

Proposed solar panels 2.5m high refer to drawing 3352_P_DT_3_01 Proposed solar panels 3m high refer to drawing 3352_P_DT_3_01

Proposed inverter transformer unit

Softworks

	Existing woodland
\bigcirc	Existing tree (surveyed) <i>refer to arboricultural survey by Hillside Trees</i>
	Existing tree (not surveyed) <i>for context</i>
\bigotimes	Existing tree to be removed - Catagory U refer to arboricultural survey by Hillside Trees
	Buffer zone for ancient and veteran trees
	Existing whip tree planting Based on topographical survey and field survey
	Existing hedgerow Based on topographical survey
	Proposed species-rich hedgerow planting refer to plant schedule
+	Proposed tree planting - shown at approximate 25 year canopy spread. <i>refer to plant schedule</i>
+ · · ·	Proposed species-rich grassland refer to drawing 3352_L_GA_0_02
\otimes	Hibernacula

Hardworks

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Proposed access track refer to drawing 3352_P_DT_3_04 Proposed 3 m high CCTV camera refer to drawing 3352_P_DT_3_03 Proposed 2.5 m high post and wire security fencing refer to drawing 3352_P_DT_3_02 1.2 m high timber post and rail fencing (to rewilding areas)

New native hedgerow planted alongside existing trees

	Environmental Planning
Ch'd	
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* **

- CONJUNCTION WITH ALL RELEVANT ENGINEER'S AND ARCHITECT'S DRAWINGS AND SPECIFICATIONS. 3. ALL DRAWINGS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE LANDSCAPE SPECIFICATION.
- 4. ANY DISCREPANCY CONCERNING THE DRAWINGS SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE CA IMMEDIATELY.
- 5. ALL DIMENSIONS IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED
- OTHERWISE.
- 6. ALL LEVELS IN METRES.
- DO NOT SCALE OFF THIS DRAWING. EXISTING SERVICE ALIGNMENTS SHALL BE CHECKED ON SITE BY THE CONTRACTOR PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION WORK COMMENCING.

3352_L_GA_0_01 Masterplan 3352_L_GA_0_02 Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan 3352_L_GA_1_01 Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan Inset 1 of 4 3352_L_GA_1_02 Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan Inset 2 of 4 3352_L_GA_1_04 Landscape Mitigation and Enhancement Plan Inset 4 of 4

and report

3352_LEMP Landscape and Ecological Management Plan

Rev:	Date:	Description:	Drawn
A	17/06/2022	Updated proposals to respond to comments from the local authority	JH
В	20/10/2022	Panels removed from Fields A, D, E, H and I. Mitigation planting revised to suit.	JH

- SITE BY THE CONTRACTOR PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION WORK COMMENCING.

Rev:	Date:	Description:	Drawn	Ch
A	20/10/22	Panels removed from Fields A, D, E, H and I. Mitigation planting revised to suit.	JH	AS

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