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By email only to: [Lee.Burman@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Lee.Burman@wiltshire.gov.uk)

12 February 2021

Dear Lee

**APPLICATION NO:** 21/00554/SCO

**DESCRIPTION:** EIA scoping opinion for Installation of a solar farm with a 49.9 MW output for a temporary period of 40 years, including battery storage units, associated infrastructure, permanent grid connection hub and environmental enhancements

**LOCATION:** Land to the West of the A429 (Crudwell Road), Malmesbury

Thank you for consulting the Cotswolds Conservation Board ('the Board') on this EIA scoping opinion.

The proposed development would be located approximately 800m, at its closest point, from the boundary of the Cotswolds National Landscape.<sup>1</sup> Given this relatively close proximity and the type of development being proposed, we recommend that the EIA should consider potential visual impacts on the National Landscape (including the visual impact in winter conditions).

Depending on the 'zone of theoretical visibility', the most relevant viewpoints to consider, from a National Landscape perspective, would be:

- along the byway on the Fosse Way Roman Road (Public Rights of Way Reference: BROK22), to the north and south of the B4014 (i.e. approximately between Grid References ST9209160 and ST91359075);
- along the B4014 between its junction with the above byway (Grid Reference: ST91489092) and the road junction at Sunset Hill Cottages (Grid Reference: ST920999009), particularly where there is little hedging on the north side of the road;
- the footpath north of Brokenborough (Public Rights of Way Reference: BROK10) (approximately Grid Reference: ST91368984)

The first two locations form part of the boundary of the Cotswolds National Landscape and the third location is within the National Landscape.

As currently proposed, the solar farm would extend into a valley, west of the plantation at 'The Wedge', which is visible from the Cotswolds National Landscape. In order to minimize adverse visual impacts on the National Landscape, consideration should be given to avoiding extending the solar farm into this valley. In this scenario, the western limit of the solar farm would not extend beyond 'The L Strip' and 'Bishoper Plantation' or into the fields surrounding 'The Wedge'.

In line with paragraph 172 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and relevant case law, great weight would be given to the impact of the proposed development on views from the

#### **Cotswolds Conservation Board**

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The Cotswolds National Landscape is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), managed and looked after by the Cotswolds Conservation Board.

[cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](http://cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)

*Chairman:*  
**Brendan McCarthy**  
*Vice Chair:*  
**Rebecca Charley**

Cotswolds National Landscape. Further guidance on this issue is provided in the Board's Position Statement on 'Development in the Setting of the Cotswolds AONB' ([link](#)).

In line with Policy CE1 (Landscape) of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023 ([link](#)), views out of the Cotswolds National Landscape should be conserved and enhanced.

Finally, the EIA should also consider the potential cumulative impacts of the proposed development combined with the existing solar farm at RAF Long Newnton to the north, including in relation to visual impacts on the Cotswolds National Landscape.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Mills". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

John Mills  
Planning & Landscape Lead  
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**NOTES:**

- 1) Cotswolds National Landscape is the new name for the Cotswolds Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The new name takes forward one of the proposals of the Government-commissioned 'Landscapes Review' to rename AONBs as 'National Landscapes'. This change reflects the national importance of AONBs and the fact that they are safeguarded, in the national interest, for nature, people, business and culture.