

Reference No: P/FUL/2025/06819
Proposal: Proposed cable route in conjunction with approved solar farm developments (North Farm Solar Farm ref. P/FUL/2023/02829 and Woodlands Solar Farm ref. P/FUL/2023/03415) at Mannington, Horton.
Address: Land between Woodlands Solar Farm, North Farm Solar Farm, and Mannington Substation
Recommendation: GRANT
Case Officer: Naomi Shinkins
Ward Members: Cllr David Tooke
CIL Liable: N/A

Fee Paid:	£2578.00		
Publicity expiry date:	17 January 2026	Officer site visit date:	Dec 2025
Decision due date:	28 July 2026	Ext(s) of time:	28 July 2026
No. of Site Notices:	8		
SN displayed reasoning:	Displayed in public areas along the cable route including Horton and Chalbury Village Hall, several on Horton Road and one close to Mannington Substation – to allow for public awareness.		

1.0 This application has been brought to the Strategic Planning Committee for determination based on the scale of the proposal.

2.0 Summary of recommendation:

2.1 GRANT subject to conditions at Section 18 of this report.

3.0 Reason for the recommendation:

- Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004 provides that determinations must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out that decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development where it accords with an up-to-date development plan.

- Solar farms are identified at a national level as playing an essential role in energy transition and ability to fully decarbonise the electricity grid by 2035 and achieve net zero by 2050.
- The proposal is for a cable route that will connect previously approved solar farms to Mannington Substation. The cable route enables approved solar farms to make a significant contribution towards tackling climate change through the provision of renewable energy.
- The proposal is considered to be acceptable in terms of the scale, design and impact on the surrounding area.
- The proposal is considered to be acceptable in Green Belt terms where the cable is underground and there is no visual impact.
- Biodiversity net gains would be delivered through on and off site requirements as set out in this report.
- The proposed development would have no landscape and visual impacts and would not harm the characteristics of the wider area or the National Landscape.
- The proposal is acceptable in respect of impacts on neighbouring amenity, parking, highway safety, flood risk and drainage.
- There are no material considerations which would warrant refusal of this application.

4.0 Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	Acceptable
Impact on the Green Belt	Acceptable, no impact on the openness
Scale, design, impact on character and appearance of the area (including impact on the National Landscape)	Acceptable, little or no visual impact
Impact on neighbouring amenity	Acceptable, subject to conditions
Biodiversity	Acceptable, subject to conditions
Highway impacts, safety, access and parking	Acceptable, subject to conditions
Flood risk and drainage	Acceptable, subject to conditions
Impact on trees	Acceptable, subject to conditions
Archaeology and heritage assets	Acceptable, subject to conditions
Minerals and Waste Safeguarding	Acceptable

5.0 Description of Site

- 5.1 The Site comprises the land required to provide a cable route between the approved Woodlands and North Farm solar farms and the Mannington Substation located around 3km to the south-east of the solar farms.

5.2 Two potential routes have been proposed to provide a cable link between the two solar farms:

- North Farm to Woodlands Potential Cable Route 1 - would involve the cable running out of the southern boundary of North Farm, east onto Horton Road, north onto Horton Road and east into the Woodlands Site.
- North Farm to Woodlands Potential Cable Route 2 - would involve the cable running out of the eastern boundary of North Farm, north along Horton Road, then east into the Woodlands Site.

5.3 Two potential routes are then proposed to provide a link between the Woodlands Site and the Mannington Substation to the southeast:

- Woodlands to Mannington Substation Potential Cable Route 1- would see the cabling return out of the western boundary of the Woodlands Site (using the same entrance route as above), south down Horton Road, east onto Horton Road before turning south along Holt Road and into the substation.
- Woodlands to Mannington Substation Potential Cable Route 2 - would see the cabling exit the Woodlands Site through its southern boundary, passing through the camp site to the southeast and south along Slough Lane, before turning east along Horton Road, south onto Holt Road and into the substation.

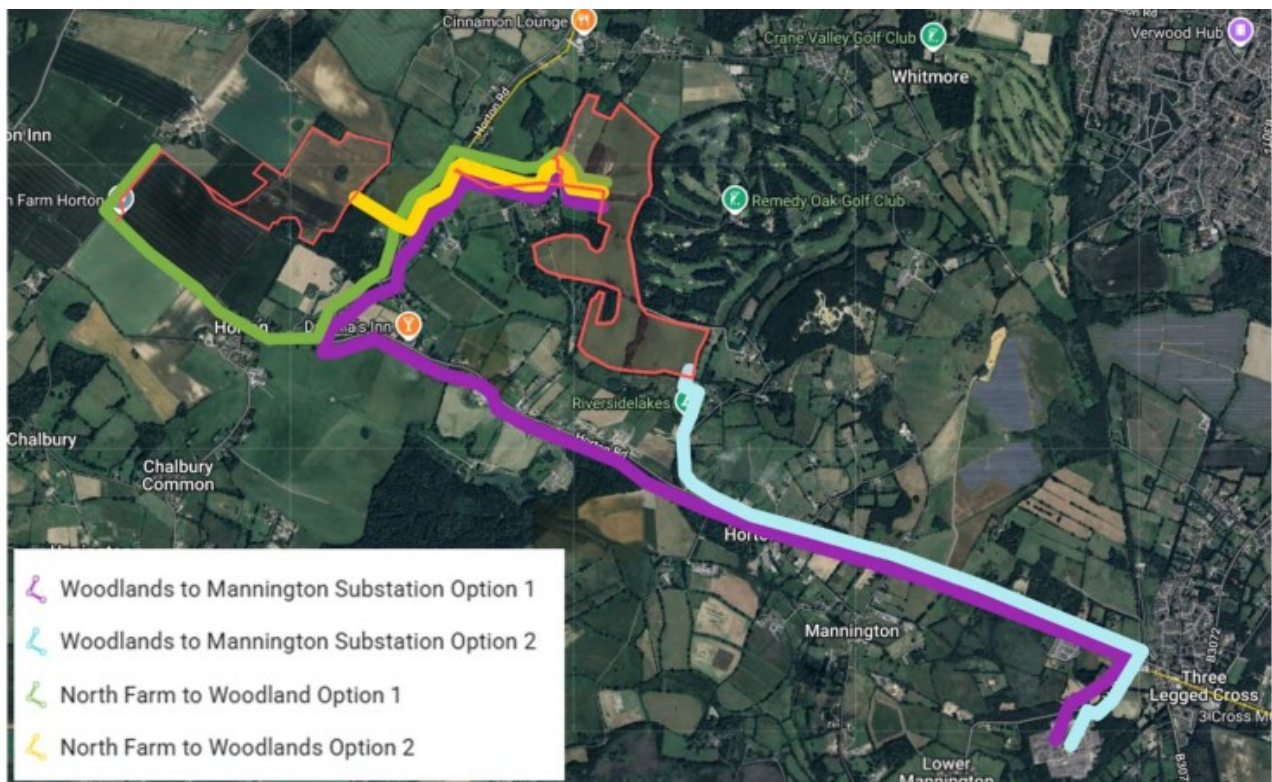


Figure 1- Potential Cable Routes

5.4 Given the length of the cable route, the land included within the red line boundary varies. The majority of the route however utilises existing tracks and highway/highway verges.

The route which passes through the Woodlands site aligns with the location of the proposed access tracks associated with the approved solar farm.

- 5.5 Constraints within and close to the red line boundary are listed below in section 8 of this report.

6.0 Description of Development

- 6.1 The Proposed Development is for the installation of underground cabling required to connect the approved North Farm Solar Farm (ref. P/FUL/2023/02829) and Woodlands Solar Farm (ref. P/FUL/2023/03415) to the National Grid Mannington Substation, where a grid connection has been secured. The cable is essential infrastructure, enabling the export of electricity generated by the consented solar farm to the national transmission network. Both approved solar farms have been conditioned so that planning permission must be granted for the cable route prior to commencement.
- 6.2 The submitted Planning, Design and Access Statement (PDAS) notes the applicant has optionality within the red line boundary to allow for a comprehensive assessment whilst they finalise third party landowner agreements, and it should be noted that not all of the red line boundary will be utilised. Potential Route 2 is the preferred route, and whilst the various routes have been included in the planning application to provide the applicants with maximum flexibility, only one will ultimately be utilised, with the final route to be confirmed at the detailed design stage and is conditioned as such.
- 6.3 The total length of the cable route, accounting for all potential routes and without any overlapping of these, is 9.87km. As only one final route will be utilised, the final route will be shorter than this figure. Of the 9.87km total, the majority is within the highway/verge, amounting to 8.24km (83%). 1.63km (17%) would be on undeveloped/non-highway land. Again, this is an estimation as it includes all potential routes.
- 6.4 Submitted information advises the proposed cable would be designed to accommodate 2 x 33kV circuits, enclosed within uPVC ducts and covered with sand for protection. The underground cable will be laid within a trench typically measuring approximately 920mm in width and 1m in depth, but this would be defined by on site conditions. The installation method will vary according to local constraints, with the majority of works taking place either within the carriageway or roadside verge. All affected land will be fully reinstated post-installation.
- 6.5 The proposed cabling would take place in individual sections along the route with a trench being dug within the highway, verge or National Grid land before the duct/cable is installed into the trench.
- 6.6 Submitted information advises the precise arrangement would be dependent upon subsequent agreements with the Local Planning Authority (LPA) in respect of final traffic management arrangements. It is the intention of the Applicant is to work with the LPA and the local community to program the works to reduce the disruption and total duration of the works as much as possible. This will be done by identifying in the early stages,

constraints in relation to community events or locations whereby specific works can be planned in order to mitigate any adverse impacts.

Relevant Planning History

P/PAP/2025/00333 - Decision: RES - Decision Date: 21/08/2025
Cable route planning application to connect two consented solar farms to the national grid

P/ESC/2025/04777 - Decision: RES - Decision Date: 26/08/2025
Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion pursuant to Regulation 6 of the Town and County Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 for a proposed cable route in conjunction with the approved solar farm developments known as North Farm Solar Farm (planning application reference P/FUL/2023/02829) and Woodlands Solar Farm (planning application reference P/FUL/2023/03415) at Mannington Farm, Horton.

P/FUL/2023/03415 – Decision: Grant – Decision Date: 07/05/2025
Construction of Solar Farm and associated infrastructure (Woodlands).

P/FUL/2023/02829 – Decision: Grant – Decision Date: 07/05/2025
Construction of Solar Farm and associated infrastructure (North Farm).

8.0 List of Constraints

Grade: II Listed Buildings: THE VILLAGE PUMP List Entry: 1154772; HART'S COTTAGE List Entry: 1323536; HORTON COTTAGE List Entry: 1323535; THE CHASE List Entry: 1120086; ORCHARD FARMHOUSE List Entry: 1120085; CART SHED 30M NORTHWEST OF WOODLANDS FARMHOUSE List Entry: 1120075; HEYTHORNE COTTAGE List Entry: 1120070

Horton Conservation Area

Tree Preservation Order (TPO) reference EDDC/HN/3, 4, 11

Mineral Sites Plan 2019 and Waste Plan 2019 – Safeguarding Sites and Allocated Sites

Mineral Strategy 2014 – Mineral Safeguarded Policy SG1 - Sand and Gravel

Wessex Water Treatment Works Catchment Other WRC catchments

Public Right of Way: Bridleway E46/33, Footpath E59/15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26 and Bridleway E46/1, 2, 3, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 29, 34, 35

National Grid Overhead Lines, Substations, Towers and Cables

Bournemouth Water Consultation Area

Environment Agency - Groundwater – Susceptibility to flooding

Dorset Council Land Freehold land for road widening and laybys

Waste Water Treatment Works and Tanks

Existing ecological network - Terrestrial and Higher Potential ecological network

Site of nature conservation interests (SNCIS): SU00/075 - Horton Wood;

Haythorn Copse; Woodlands Park (Part of); Hart's Copse; St Anne's Cottage; Mannington Sub-station; Slough Lane Meadows.

Wildlife Present: flowering plant; Hedgehog; bird; Hazel Dormouse; Winter Heliotrope; bats

Policy E8: Dorset heathlands - 400m heathland buffer and 5km Heathland Buffer

Bournemouth Greenbelt

Ancient Woodland: Hart's Copse; Haythorn Copse; Woodlands Park; Ferndown Forest; Barewood Coppice

Natural England - RAMSAR

Special Area of Conservation (SAC): Dorset Heaths (UK0019857)

Special Protection Area (SPA): Dorset Heathlands (UK9010101)

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact risk zone – Natural England consultation required

New Forest Recreational Area with a 13.8km buffer

Flood Zone 2 and 3, 3a and 3b (indicative)

Environment Agency - Risk of Surface Water Flooding Extent 1 in 30, 1 in 100, 1 in 1000

Surface water flooding - 1 in 100-year event plus 20% and 40% allowance

Radon: Class: 1.0 and 3.0

Contaminated Land

9.0 Consultations

The following is a summary of consultee responses received. All consultee responses can be viewed in full on the website.

Consultees

1- Ward Cllrs - No response

2- Knowlton Parish Council (Knowlton Group Parish Council for Wimborne St. Giles, Woodlands, Horton and Chalbury) – Comments

Councillors are concerned over the potential disruption to the local community: Councillors have expressed concerns regarding the proposed route along the C2 road. Could you confirm whether the works will involve the use of boring machinery, or whether the road and verges will need to be excavated? The latter option is likely to cause significant disruption along Horton Road. Councillors would also like clarification on the transport plan for the HGVs transporting the solar panels. In particular, will an ESCROW arrangement be put in place to address the anticipated increase in HGV traffic, given the potential impact on the condition of local roads along the C2 and

Haythornes/Woodlands, and to ensure that any necessary restoration works are covered?

[Officer note – an email was received on 7 July 2026 from a Horton Ward Cllr advising the development is unanimously opposed by the PC and the local population and there is still significant public interest in what is going to happen].

3- Holt Parish Council – No objection

4- Dorset Council (DC) Environmental Assessment

Satisfied the Environmental Statement (ES) generally meets statutory requirements (Addendum - Environmental Impact Statement Volumes 1-4).

Only concern is that there is no mention of e.g. Human health impacts, Risk of accidents, Pollutants etc. other than saying all other topics (aside from Ecology, Heritage, Landscape and Visual Impact and Soils) have been Scoped out of the ES. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) guidance states *the emphasis should be on the “main” or “significant” environmental effects to which a development is likely to give rise. Impacts which have little or no significance for the particular development in question will need only very brief treatment to indicate that their possible relevance has been considered* (and they haven't been).

5- Cranborne and Wiltshire Chase National Landscape (NL)

Effectively the routes run south-eastwards towards the substation at Mannington and away from this NL. I note that for the majority of the route the cables would be in highway verge or carriageway. An assessment has been undertaken of the trees and hedges along the routes.

I have not found any consideration of the impacts of the cable routes on the proposed landscape planting and screening for the two solar installations, and that proposed planting does not appear on the submitted cable application plans. However, it does appear that the Option 1 exit route from North Farm would impact on that proposed screen planting as I presume tree growth, and particularly tree roots, would not be allowed over the cable routes. That gap in the screening is likely to impact adversely on the integration of an intrinsically industrial development into the sensitive landscape adjoining this NL. Furthermore, such a gap is likely to facilitate views into the development from the Public Rights of Way west and south-west of Horton.

I have also not found any details about the restoration of the cable route after installation. That does, I advise, need to be addressed otherwise there is a significant risk that the route will either remain bare or be colonised by ruderal species, both of which will not aid restoration of the local scene.

6- Natural England (NE) - Comments

Natural England fully supports that the majority of the proposed cable route is along the main road verge. Due to route 2 being more direct, this would be the preferred route. The proposed cable passes adjacent to several designated sites such as Dorset Heathlands / Dorset Heath SAC, SPA & RAMSAR and the Holt and West Moors Heaths SSSI which are found adjacent to Horton Road. Natural England recommend that the cable can be sited entirely within the existing Horton Road carriageway as it passes adjacent to these designations to avoid any in any direct impacts to these protected sites.

Ancient woodland is present in numerous areas within the locale, the closest being Haythorn Copse. These ancient woodlands must be protected by maintaining a 15-metre buffer from any development along the boundary of the proposed development site.

The development lies within the setting of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape. Natural England fully support the comments made by the Cranborne Chase National Landscape Team. Their knowledge of the location and wider landscape setting of the development should help to confirm whether or not it would impact significantly on the purposes of the designation. They will also be able to advise whether the development accords with the aims and policies set out in the National Landscape management plan.

Natural England advises a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be submitted to and approved in writing by the district ecologist/biodiversity officer that identifies the steps and procedures that will be implemented to avoid or mitigate constructional impacts on species and habitats.

Biodiversity enhancements to be agreed with the DC Natural Environment Team.

7- DC Natural Environment Team (NET) - Comments

The applicants state there is no overlap between their habitat creation/enhancement for this application and the provisions for Woodlands, which is accepted

NGET have confirmed compensation for SNCI loss cannot be provided on site. New woodland creation (in addition to that at Woodlands) sufficiently compensates for harm to the SNCI.

Some habitat creation/enhancement is within the red line which will be secured by condition. Some is within the blue line which they've stated will be registered with Natural England - a separate process and only required at the point that the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) condition is discharged.

There remains a deficit in area and hedgerow units requiring purchase of units from other habitat banks on the register. They stated previously they felt they'd exhausted the options available to them onsite and nearby so no issues with this.

On site enhancements meet the criteria for being significant requiring a legal agreement and condition for a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.

Mitigation from the EclA will need to be secured by condition.

8- DC Trees – Comments

I have looked at both options and my preference would be option 2 as it seems simpler and more direct. However there is no construction method statement or tree/hedge protection documents and this can be addressed via condition.

9- National Highways – No objection

The proposed cable connection route crosses, and follows the line of, Horton Road which runs roughly west to east between the solar arrays and the sub-station. Horton Road forms part of the local highway network for which Dorset Council would be the relevant highway authority. At no point does the cable connection impact on the A31 trunk road, although there may be some traffic impacts depending on any potential traffic management or diversion routes implemented to accommodate the works.

However, on balance, National Highways is satisfied that the proposals are unlikely to result in a scale of impact on the A31 that would be considered unacceptable or severe impact in safety or capacity terms, in accordance with the requirements of DfT Circular 01/2022 and the NPPF.

10-DC Highways – No objection, subject to condition

The applicant has submitted an outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) prepared by DHA Planning. It outlines the four possible routes, two for each site, with the intension of one of each route being utilised, with the final routes to be confirmed at the detailed design stage.

All the vehicular accesses are existing in use with the solar farms; no new accesses are proposed. These sites will be utilised as construction compounds for the delivery and storage of any necessary deliveries, equipment and vehicles associated with installing the cable. They will be located to minimise disruption to local residents and road users. External roads will be cleaned proactively should any mud or debris be left beyond the site confines to protect local highway safety.

Traffic generation in relation to the proposed development will be minimal, and temporary, with the highest flows estimated at the beginning and end of the construction period. The works are anticipated to last 26 weeks in total with as minimum disruption as possible. Initial disruption experienced during the construction

phase would end upon completion of the development, leaving no visible development above ground, this would be short term disruption for long term gain.

It is agreed that the information provided within the submitted documents provides a comprehensive assessment of the proposed development and confirms that the development can be delivered without giving rise to any unacceptable impacts.

Once a lead contractor has been appointed to undertake the works, the detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan will need to be submitted.

The applicant will need to liaise with Dorset Highways to make sure that they have all the appropriate licenses and permits in place to carry out the proposed works in the Highway, this falls outside of the planning process.

11-DC Rights of Way – Comments

Public right of way strategy document considered acceptable and condition required for updated document when the cable route is confirmed.

Throughout the duration of any works, the full width of the public footpath/bridleway must remain open and available to the public, with no materials or vehicles stored on the route. Any damage to the surface caused by vehicles, increased usage or as a by-product of the works must be returned to the same or better standard than before the damage. The safety of path users should be considered at all times (signage and safe passing places/refuges).

The free passage of the public on all rights of way must not be obstructed at any time. If the public are unlikely to be able to exercise their public rights on this path, then a Temporary Traffic Restriction Order must be obtained. This can be applied for through www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/ttro, but the application must be completed and returned at least thirteen weeks before the intended closure date. It should be noted that there is a fee applicable to this application.

We would like to request a financial contribution towards the improvement of the local Rights of Way Network. As detailed above, there are many footpaths and bridleways that run through and around the two solar farms and the proposed cable vicinity. I would be happy to provide improvement proposals and costings should this request be deemed appropriate.

12-DC Lead Flood Authority (LLFA)– No objection subject to informatives

The LLFA has reviewed these proposals and I can confirm that they are considered low risk from our perspective and we have no objection to them.

Informatives required in relation to prior land drainage consent and flood risk activity permits.

13-Environment Agency (EA) – No objection subject to conditions

We have no objection to the proposal provided that the following conditions and informative are included in any permission granted. Without these conditions we would object to the proposed development due to its adverse impact on the environment.

Condition and informative required in relation to flood risk and levels.

14-DC Archaeology – No objection, subject to condition

Second 8 of Volume 2A of the application 's Environmental Statement covers the Historic Environment. Paragraph 8.10.3 proposes mitigation where disturbance of archaeological remains is likely.

In my opinion this is effectively what we agreed for the Woodlands site (application P/FUL/2023/03425) following the archaeological evaluation of that site. Hence, I consider that the archaeological condition attached to the grant of consent for the Woodlands site would also be appropriate if consent is granted for the present application.

15-DC Conservation – No objection

Special regard and due consideration has been given to statutory and local and national policy considerations: We concur with the applicant's heritage assessment, that no harm would result from the proposed development with regards to built historic assets, as the cable is mostly within the existing highway/highway verge, and the short sections of cable which are not to do not cross near to or within the setting of, any built heritage assets.

16-Historic England – No comment

17-DC Environmental Protection – No objection

The proposal contains a CEMP, which outlines methods for mitigating noise, dust and vibration. The conditions within are sufficient and suitable.

18-National Grid – No objection

No objection to the proposal provided the applicant has a valid connection agreement and agree an easement with us for their cable routed through our non-operational land to their point of connection at Mannington Substation via the Use of National Grid Energy Transmission (NGET) Land Process.

19- DC Minerals and Waste – No objection

Do not consider that the proposed cabling would negatively impact the existing minerals and waste interests. In this case, for this proposed development, the Minerals and Waste Authority has no objection on minerals and waste safeguarding grounds.

Consultees consulted with no response:

- Dorset Wildlife Trust
- Ramblers Association
- DC Asset and Property
- Bournemouth Water
- Forestry Commission

Representations received

Site notices were displayed around the application site. A summary of comments received include (full comments available online):

Comments – 2 received:

- Liaise with landowners directly.
- Allow cable to be located within the verges and reinstate verges with a footpath would benefit residents.
- At Clump Hill, there are no verges—only banks on either side of the road. Excavating and reinstating these banks level with a slight height increase could allow a new footpath.
- This presents an opportunity to improve pedestrian infrastructure similar to Horton Road.
- Introducing footpaths here could improve pedestrian safety and potentially influence driver behaviour.
- This proposal would protect pedestrians and mobility scooter users along this very dangerous stretch of road.

Duties

s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of planning applications must be in accordance with the development plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise.

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that when considering whether to grant planning permission for a development which

affects a listed building or its setting, there is a general duty to 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.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) requires Local Planning Authorities to seek to further the purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of National Landscape (formerly known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) when making any decision which affects such land.

Development Plan Policies

The development plan for this area is the Adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan – Part 1 – Core Strategy 2014 (CEDLP), saved policies from the East Dorset Local Plan 2002, the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Minerals Sites Plan 2019 and the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

Adopted Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan – Part 1 – Core Strategy 2014 (CEDLP):

The following policies are considered to be relevant to this proposal:

- KS1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- KS3 Green Belt
- ME1 Safeguarding biodiversity and geodiversity
- ME2 Protection of the Dorset Heathlands
- ME3 Sustainable development standards for new development
- ME5 Sources of Renewable energy
- ME6 Flood Management, Mitigation and Defence
- HE1 Valuing and Conserving our Historic Environment
- HE2 Design of new development
- HE3 Landscape Quality

East Dorset Local Plan 2002 (Saved Policies)

- LTDEV1 Criteria for external lighting on developments.
- DES 2 Criteria for development to avoid unacceptable impacts from types of pollutions (Noise, smell, safety, health, lighting, disturbance, traffic or other pollution.
- DES6 Landscaping schemes in rural areas and on the edge of settlements should be of indigenous species.
- DES7 Criteria controlling the loss of trees.
- DES11 Criteria for ensuring developments respect or enhance their surroundings.

Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Minerals Sites Plan 2019

Policy MS-8: Preventing Land-Use Conflict

Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014)

Policy SG1 - Mineral Safeguarding Area

Policy SG2 - Mineral Consultation Area

Policy SG3 - Safeguarding of mineral sites and facilities

Other Material Considerations

Emerging draft Dorset Council Local Plan:

Paragraph 49 of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant plan policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan are to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The Dorset Council Local Plan Options Consultation took place between January and March 2021, with further consultation between 18 Aug – 31 October 2025. Being at a very early stage of preparation, the relevant policies in the draft Dorset Council Local Plan should be accorded very limited weight in decision making.

Dorset Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing supply as required by National Policy. In addition, the strategies for meeting housing needs in the adopted local plans are not designed to deliver the housing need under the Government's standard method and therefore, in accordance with NPPF footnote 8, the housing policies within the adopted Development Plan(s) are out of date and the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies. The emerging Dorset Local Plan is not sufficiently progressed and can be afforded very limited weight in decision making.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy identifies local priorities for nature recovery and maps areas where action would be most beneficial. In planning decisions it is a material consideration, helping to ensure that development supports biodiversity enhancement and aligns with Dorset's agreed priorities for nature recovery.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended 2025):

Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Development plan proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay. Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date then permission should be granted unless specific NPPF policies protecting areas or assets provide a strong reason for refusal and/or any adverse impacts of approval would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF as a whole, with particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well designed places and providing affordable homes.

Other relevant NPPF sections include:

- Section 4 'Decision making': Para 39 - Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available...and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- Section 14 'Meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change'
- Section 15 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment'- In National Landscapes (formerly known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), paragraph 189 requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty. Decisions in Heritage Coast areas should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation (para 191). Paragraphs 192-195 set out how biodiversity is to be protected and encourage net gains for biodiversity.
- Section 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'- Paragraph 212 says that when considering designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. The effect of an application on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should also be taken into account (para 216).

National Planning Practice Guidance

The NPPG notes:

Increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will help to make sure the UK has a secure energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to slow down climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses. Planning has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable.

Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 5-001-20140306

The PPG also notes:

The deployment of large-scale solar farms can have a negative impact on the rural environment, particularly in undulating landscapes. However, the visual impact of a well-planned and well-screened solar farm can be properly addressed within the landscape if planned sensitively.

Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 5-013-20150327

National Policy, Government Guidance and Strategy

- Climate Change Act 2008
- UK Solar PV Strategy (2014)
- Energy White Paper (December 2020)
- Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021)
- British Energy Security Strategy (2022)

- The Growth Plan (September 2022)
- Powering Up Britain (2023)
- Powering Up Britain Energy Security Plan (2023)
- Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (2024)
- National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) (2024)

Other material considerations

Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance

- Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 Supplementary Planning Document
- Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy, Dorset Council (15 July 2021)
- Natural Environment, Climate and Ecology Strategy 2023-25 Refresh (March 2023)
- Planning for Climate Change: Interim Guidance and Position Statement (December 2023)
- Cranborne Chase National Landscape Position Statements (position statement 5 – renewable energy)
- Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership Plan 2025 – 2030
- Cranborne Chase AONB Landscape Character Assessment
- SPG07 Horton Conservation Area

12.0 Human rights

Article 6 - Right to a fair trial.

Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life and home.

The first protocol of Article 1 Protection of property.

This recommendation is based on adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.

13.0 Public Sector Equalities Duty

- 13.1 As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims:-
- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
 - Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
 - Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove or minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty. It is not considered that the application will affect anyone with protected characteristics.

14.0 Financial benefits

- 14.1 Employment, particularly during the construction phase of the development will provide some financial benefits to the local economy.

15.0 Environmental Implications

- 15.1 At a national level the Government aims to reduce carbon emissions by 80% (compared to 1990 levels) by 2050 and fully decarbonise the electricity grid by 2030. The Government aims to achieve these targets in a number of ways, including through development of up to 50GW of offshore wind by 2030 and a fivefold increase in solar by 2035 (Powering Up Britain, 2023).
- 15.2 The Government’s Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (October 2021) acknowledges that the path to net zero in 2050 will respond to the innovation and adoption of new technologies over time. Whilst the exact technology and energy mix in 2050 cannot be known now, the Government identifies a number of green technologies, which interact to meet demand across sectors.
- 15.4 Most recently the Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1) (2024) sets out in paragraph 1.2.1 states EN-1, in combination with any relevant technology specific NPSs, are a material consideration in decision making on energy generation applications that fall under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Paragraph 1.2.2 advises that whether the policies in EN-1 are material and to what extent, will be judged on a case-by-case basis and will depend on the extent to which the matters are already covered by applicable planning policy. Paragraph 2.3.3 states: *“our objectives for the energy system are to ensure our supply of energy always remains secure, reliable, affordable, and consistent with meeting our target to cut GHG emissions to net zero by 2050, including through delivery of our carbon budgets and Nationally Determined Contribution. This will require a step change in the decarbonisation of our energy system”*.
- 15.5 The National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) (2024) covers nationally significant renewable electricity generating stations and confirms the Government’s commitment to sustained growth on solar capacity. It reiterates the governments expectation to achieve up to 70GW of solar deployment by 2035.
- 15.6 The NPPF (Para.168) sets out that when determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable energy and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to significant cutting of

greenhouse gas emissions. It also sets out that applications should be approved if the impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.

- 15.7 Dorset Council accepts that energy needs to be produced from renewable sources and the Council must aim to provide this within its administrative area. The Council recognised this by declaring a climate emergency in May 2019, with the aim of taking a lead as an authority in tackling climate change. In November 2019 this was escalated to a Climate and Ecological Emergency. On 28 July 2024 Dorset Council declared a Nature Emergency.
- 15.8 Dorset Council's Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Strategy (2023) includes a number of missions to support the strategy. 'Mission 1: Renewable Generation' identifies the deployment of renewables and storage to support the overarching mission of decarbonising the grid by 2035. Dorset Council published the Climate Change: Interim Guidance and Position Statement in December 2023. It notes climate change will be given substantial weight as a material consideration in the balance when determining applications, in line with the legislative and national policy context.
- 15.9 The proposed cable represents a vital element of the approved wider renewable energy scheme. It is operationally essential to enable the export of electricity generated by the consented 30MW Woodlands Solar Farm and 19.88MW North Farm Solar Farm to the national electricity transmission network. Without the proposed cable route to enable the grid connection, the approved solar farms cannot deliver their intended contribution to national and local energy and climate targets. It was confirmed under the previously approved solar farm applications that the Applicant has secured a Point of Connection (POC) to the Mannington substation.

16.0 Planning Assessment

The main considerations involved with this application are:

- 16.1 - EIA development
- 16.2 - The principle of the development
- 16.3 – Potential routes
- 16.4 - Impact on the Green Belt
- 16.5 - Impact on the character of the area (including setting of the National Landscape)
- 16.6 - Archaeology and heritage assets
- 16.7 - The impact on neighbouring amenity
- 16.8 - Highway impacts, safety, access and parking
- 16.9 - Flood risk and drainage
- 16.10 - Impact on trees
- 16.11 - Impact on Public Rights of Way (PRoW)
- 16.12 - Impact on Biodiversity (protected sites, species and BNG)
- 16.13 – Other matters
- 17 – Conclusion

16.1 EIA Development

- 16.1.1 Following consideration of the relevant selection criteria for screening Schedule 2 development presented in Schedule 3 of the EIA regulations, it is concluded that the proposed development is EIA development. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Assessment has been submitted as part of this application. Based on a scoping opinion provided by Dorset Council the submitted EIA includes information on the following:
- EIA process
 - Planning and policy guidance
 - Ecology impacts
 - Cultural heritage impacts
 - Summary of effects and conclusions
- 16.1.2 The Environmental Impact Assessment Officer has reviewed the submitted documents, including revised information submitted, and has confirmed the Environmental Statement (ES) contains all the required information for the submitted planning application.
- 16.1.3 However it was noted there is no mention of some issues, for example human health impacts, risk of accidents, pollutants, other than saying all other topics (aside from Ecology, Heritage, Landscape and Visual Impact and Soils) have been scoped out of the ES. EIA guidance states *the emphasis should be on the “main” or “significant” environmental effects to which a development is likely to give rise. Impacts which have little or no significance for the particular development in question will need only very brief treatment to indicate that their possible relevance has been considered.*
- 16.1.4 The applicant has advised the ES submitted for the cable route should be read in conjunction with the ES for the two solar farm applications (provided as Appendix 1.1 and 1.2 to the cable route ES). The solar farm ES were subject to a detailed Scoping process, including submission of a Scoping Report (provided as Appendix 5D within both solar farm ES), which set out that the above topics were to be scoped out of those ES. This approach was agreed with the LPA and these topics were not covered in the solar farm ES. The same scope has been applied to the cable route ES, which was agreed to be an acceptable approach.
- 16.1.5 The above was discussed with the EIA officer who confirmed they had no objection to the submitted ES and that no further information was required.

16.2 Principle of Development

Principle development - Sustainability

- 16.2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material conditions indicate otherwise.

- 16.2.2 The Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan (CEDLP) does not reference planning policy in relation to solar farms or required cable routes specifically. However in Objective 3: *To Adapt to the Challenges of Climate Change*, an aim of “at least 10% of total energy used on developments of 10 or more dwellings or 1,000 m2 of non-residential floor space will come from decentralised, renewable or low carbon sources”, highlighting the need for renewable energy sources systems like solar farms to be put in place within the Dorset Council administrative area. The use of photovoltaic arrays is noted throughout the CEDLP when referring to renewable energy sources.
- 16.2.3 Policy ME3 states “*Developments will be required to incorporate carbon emissions reduction, water and energy efficiency measures and to demonstrate they have explored a range of sustainable and low carbon options*” and “*In line with current government requirements and targets, all new development will ensure CO2 emissions are minimised to practical and viable levels by following the hierarchy for regulated energy (unless it can be demonstrated that utilising measures further down the hierarchy will achieve greater carbon reductions)*”:
1. *Energy efficiency measures resulting from maximising building fabric performance, scheme layout and building orientation.*
 2. *On-site renewable, decentralised, and low carbon energy.*
 3. *Carbon reductions through off-site measures, known as 'Allowable Solutions' (to compensate for carbon emission targets that are difficult to achieve on site)”*
- 16.2.4 Although not directly related to renewable energy schemes themselves, Policy ME3 does advocate the transition to a low carbon future. Solar farm schemes and the associated infrastructure would work to achieve this directly.
- 16.2.5 Policy ME5 states that “*The Council encourages the sustainable generation of energy from renewable and low carbon sources where adverse social, environmental and visual impacts have been minimised to an acceptable level. Proposals for renewable energy apparatus will only be permitted where:*
- *The technology is suitable for the location and does not cause significant adverse harm to visual amenity from within the landscape and views into it, and within the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is in accordance with its current Management Plan;*
 - *It is in accordance with Policy ME1 regarding adverse ecological impacts upon the integrity of priority habitats or local populations of priority species and opportunities for biodiversity enhancement;*
 - *Cumulative impacts are taken into account, and assessments undertaken for impacts on the landscape, visually, the local amenity and biodiversity;*
 - *It would not cause interference to radar, or electronic communications networks, or highway safety;*
 - *It would not cause significant harm to neighbouring amenity by reason of visual impact, noise, vibration, overshadowing, flicker (associated with turbines), or other nuisances and emissions;*

- *It includes an agreed restoration scheme, any necessary mitigation measures, and measures to ensure the removal of the installations when operations cease;*
- *Safe access during construction and operation must be provided; and*
- *It avoids harm to the significance and settings of heritage assets.*

16.2.6 The proposal would assist in adding to the energy supply for renewable energy across the grid by providing a connection for previously approved solar farms. The previously approved solar farms cannot be delivered without this cable route. Policy ME5 should be considered in conjunction with the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy which recognises electricity will need to be generated from renewable energy. The criteria under Policy ME5 regarding individual and cumulative impacts on landscape, visually, local amenity, biodiversity, neighbouring amenity, access safety and decommissioning are considered later in this report.

16.2.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also addresses climate change. Paragraph 8c of the NPPF notes that a key part of achieving sustainable development is *"mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy"*.

16.2.8 Para. 161 of the NPPF specifically states that the planning system should support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Para 165 requires local planning authorities to: *'help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:*

a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);

b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; ...'

Para. 168 notes that local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and recognise that even small scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions and that such applications should be approved if the impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.

16.2.9 The National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (NPS EN-1) sets out national policy for nationally significant energy infrastructure and states that it may be a material consideration for any relevant application. Given the nature of this application officers consider that it is a material consideration here. The Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (NPS EN-1) is part of a suite of NPSs issued by the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change. It sets out the government's policy for delivery of major energy infrastructure. The Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (2024) Part 3 sets out the urgent need for a significant amount of new infrastructure. Paragraph 3.3.1 sets out the need for security of supply with sufficient margin to ensure there is enough

energy to meet unexpectedly high demand and to mitigate risks such as unexpected plant closures and extreme weather events. Paragraph 3.3.2 states the larger the margin, the more resilient the system and consequently the lower the risk of a supply interruption. 1.5.15 Paragraph 3.3.3 on future states, *“To ensure that there is sufficient electricity to meet demand, new electricity infrastructure will have to be built to replace output from retiring plants and to ensure we can meet increased demand. Our analysis suggests that even with major improvements in overall energy efficiency, and increased flexibility in the energy system, demand for electricity is likely to increase significantly over the coming years and could more than double by 2050 as large parts of transport, heating and industry decarbonise by switching from fossil fuels to low carbon electricity.”*

- 16.2.10 EN-1 establishes the urgent need for electricity generating capacity and confirms the need for all the generating technologies within it to meet the government’s energy objectives at Paragraph 3.3.61 with Paragraph 3.3.62 concluding that energy generating technologies are Critical National Priority (CNP) infrastructure.
- 16.2.11 This application proposes infrastructure that will enable the creation of more renewable energy. The proposed cable route is required by condition under the previously approved applications at North Farm and at Woodlands. The principle of the proposed development is consistent with the aims and objectives of relevant Local Plan policies and provisions of the NPPF summarised above and is considered to be acceptable subject to all other material planning considerations of which an assessment is provided in this report and summarised in a planning balance exercise at the end of this report.

16.3 Potential Routes

- 16.3.1 As set out at the beginning of this report, two potential routes have been proposed to provide a cable link between the two solar farms:

- North Farm to Woodlands Potential Cable Route 1 would involve the cable running out of the southern boundary of North Farm, east onto Horton Road, north onto Horton Road and east into the Woodlands Site.
- North Farm to Woodlands Potential Cable Route 2 would involve the cable running out of the eastern boundary of North Farm, north along Horton Road, then east into the Woodlands Site.

(See figure 1 in section 5 of this report for potential routes).

- 16.3.2 Two potential routes are then proposed to provide a link between the Woodlands Site and the Mannington Substation to the southeast:

- Woodlands to Mannington Substation Potential Cable Route 1 would see the cabling return out of the western boundary of the Woodlands Site (using the same entrance route as above), south down Horton Road, east onto Horton Road before turning south along Holt Road and into the substation.
- Woodlands to Mannington Substation Potential Cable Route 2 would see the cabling exit the Woodlands Site through its southern boundary, passing through the

camp site to the southeast and south along Slough Lane, before turning east along Horton Road, south onto Holt Road and into the substation.

(See figure 1 in section 5 of this report for potential routes).

- 16.3.3 As previously noted, the applicant has optionality within these routes to allow for a comprehensive assessment whilst they finalise third party landowner agreements. Potential route 2 is the applicants preferred route, and whilst the various routes have been included in the planning application to provide the applicants with maximum flexibility, only one will ultimately be utilised, with the final route to be confirmed at the detailed design stage and conditioned as such.
- 16.3.4 Despite it being unlikely that all the land within the red line boundary will be utilised, the following assessment is based on the constraints for all the land within the red line boundary and officers and consultees have assessed it as such. The officer report therefore considers the scheme as a whole and will not focus specifically on either potential route separately.
- 16.3.5 Given the cable route is not yet finalised, it is considered necessary to condition the details of the final cable route to be submitted to and agreed with the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement.

16.4 Impact on the Green Belt

- 16.4.1 The whole of the cable route is within the Green Belt (as are the approved solar farms and the substation).
- 16.4.2 It was considered the proposed solar farm developments would result in 'harm' to the Green Belt because it constitutes inappropriate development as defined by the NPPF. However a case for very special circumstances (VSCs) was submitted and it was concluded the benefits of both the North Farm and Woodlands Solar Farm clearly outweighed the harm to the Green Belt and amounted to VSCs.
- 16.4.3 In the case of the cable route specifically, paragraph 154 of the NPPF states:

“ Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

.....

h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

i. mineral extraction;

ii. engineering operations;

iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;

iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;

v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and

vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right

to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order. ”

- 16.4.4 In accordance with Paragraph 154 of the NPPF, engineering operations are not considered inappropriate development in the Green Belt where they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The provision of cable route is considered to be an engineering operation. The cable route would be installed below ground, with all land reinstated upon completion, ensuring no lasting visual or spatial impact.
- 16.4.5 The Proposed Development, which includes all potential routes, would therefore preserve the openness of the Green Belt, would not conflict with its purposes, and is accordingly not considered inappropriate development.
- 16.5 Impact on the character of the area (including the National Landscape)
- 16.5.1 The application site is not located within any nationally designated landscape; however the following designations are noted:
- **Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV):** the site sits within the AGLV. It abuts the National Landscape described as having landscape quality similar to the CCNL.
 - **Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs National Landscape (CCNL):** to be within the setting of the CCNL.
 - **Ancient Woodlands:** Ancient woodlands located along the route.
 - **Horton Village Conservation Area:** located along the cable route.
 - **Listed Buildings:** Grade: II Listed Building: THE VILLAGE PUMP List Entry: 1154772; HART'S COTTAGE List Entry: 1323536; HORTON COTTAGE List Entry: 1323535; THE CHASE List Entry: 1120086; ORCHARD FARM HOUSE List Entry: 1120085; CART SHED 30M NORTH WEST OF WOODLANDS FARM HOUSE List Entry: 1120075; HEYTHORNE COTTAGE List Entry: 1120070
 - **Green Belt:** The site is within the Green Belt.
 - **Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs):** TPOs located along the route.
- 16.5.2 As noted previously, the cable route would be installed below ground, with all land reinstated upon completion, ensuring no lasting visual or spatial impact.
- 16.5.3 The National Landscape Officer has been consulted and raised the following concerns:
- Impact on approved mitigation planting for North Farm.
 - Lack of information for restoration of cable route post installation.
- 16.5.4 The above was discussed with the applicant who advised the potential route 1 cable route leaves North Farm along the southern edge of the solar farm boundary and will

be using the existing gap in the trees which aligns with a proposed track. The gap was already proposed in the approved landscaping plan for the solar farm to allow for the maintenance access tracks. The cable will follow the same route as it exits the site. Therefore the proposed route will not be removing any vegetation, and nor would this impact the planting scheme proposed. A condition is applied for restoration details to be provided post installation to address this concern raised.

- 16.5.5. Based on the assessment of the visual impact above, the proposed development, which includes all potential routes, is considered to be acceptable causing no harm to the setting of the CCNL and complies with Policies HE2 of the Core Strategy and section 12 of the NPPF.

16.6 Impact on Heritage Assets

- 16.6.1 There are no designated heritage assets identified within the immediate extent of the application site; thus proposals are not considered to impact directly (physically) on the fabric of any encompassing assets. There are a number of heritage assets in the vicinity of the site as follows:

- Grade: II Listed Buildings:
 - o THE VILLAGE PUMP List Entry: 1154772;
 - o HART'S COTTAGE List Entry: 1323536;
 - o HORTON COTTAGE List Entry: 1323535;
 - o THE CHASE List Entry: 1120086;
 - o ORCHARD FARM HOUSE List Entry: 1120085;
 - o CART SHED 30M NORTH WEST OF WOODLANDS FARM HOUSE List Entry: 1120075;
 - o HEYTHORNE COTTAGE List Entry: 1120070
- Conservation Areas:
 - o Horton Conservation Area

- 16.6.2 The Council has a statutory duty under section 66 of the 1990 Act requires to 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"*. The Council also has a statutory duty under section 72 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 that *'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'*.

- 16.6.3 The main issues to consider are the effects of the application on the character and significance of the heritage assets. In addition, considerations must also be given to whether any harm, which may occur, would be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.

- 16.6.4 Para 212 of the NPPF states; *'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of whether any*

potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss of or less than substantial harm to its significance.'

- 16.6.5 Para 215 of the NPPF states; *Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'*

Listed Buildings and Horton Conservation Area

- 16.6.6 The DC Conservation Officer has been consulted and advised that they concur with the applicant's heritage assessment, that no harm would result from the proposed development with regards to built historic assets (listed buildings and Horton Conservation Area), as the cable is mostly within the existing highway/highway verge, and the short sections of cable which are not, do not cross near to or within the setting of any built heritage assets.
- 16.6.7 Historic England (HE) have also been consulted. HE advised they have no comment and that defer to the Council's heritage asset specialists for advice on impact of listed buildings.

Archaeology

- 16.6.8 The site is within an area of archaeological significance and both the County Archaeologist and Historic England have been consulted on this matter. Again Historic England they have no comment to make on the application.
- 16.6.7 Section 8 of Volume 2A of the application's Environmental Statement covers the Historic Environment. Paragraph 8.10.3 proposes mitigation where disturbance of archaeological remains is likely.
- 16.6.8 The County Archaeologist has advised the submitted information is effectively what was agreed for the Woodlands solar farm application following the archaeological evaluation of that site.
- 16.6.9 The mitigation is considered acceptable and a condition is applied to this report to ensure it is secured.

Conclusion

- 16.6.10 As set out above there is considered to be no harm to heritage assets (listed buildings and the Horton Conservation Area) and appropriate archaeological mitigation can be secured by condition. On this basis it is considered the proposed development, which includes all potential routes, is acceptable in terms of impact on heritage assets and therefore complies with Policy HE12 and section 16 of the

NPPF.

16.7 Impact on neighbouring amenity

- 16.7.1 Given the extent of the site there are several residential properties along the extent of the potential cable routes, in particular where the cable route runs along Horton Road.
- 16.7.2 The key issue in terms of potential amenity impacts relates to construction.
- 16.7.3 The DC Environmental Protection (EP) Officer has been consulted and has advised that submitted information in relation to methods for mitigating noise, dust and vibration is sufficient.
- 16.7.4 It is noted a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been referred to in the submitted documents but has not been submitted. Therefore it is necessary to apply a condition that will require a CEMP to be submitted, which secure measures in relation to dust, noise and vibrations during construction.
- 16.7.4 Once construction is complete the proposed cable will not impact on neighbouring amenity.
- 16.7.5 Based on the above assessment and mitigation measures proposed to be secured via planning condition the proposed development, which includes all potential routes, would not have an adverse impact on residential amenity in accordance with Policy HE2 of the Core Strategy.

16.8 Highway impacts, safety, access and parking

- 16.8.1 The applicant has submitted an outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) in support of the application. It outlines the possible cable routes, with the intention of one of each route being utilised, with the final routes to be confirmed at the detailed design stage.
- 16.8.2 All the vehicular accesses are existing in use with the solar farms; no new accesses are proposed. These sites will be utilised as construction compounds for the delivery and storage of any necessary deliveries, equipment and vehicles associated with installing the cable. They will be located to minimise disruption to local residents and road users. External roads will be cleaned proactively should any mud or debris be left beyond the site confines to protect local highway safety.
- 16.8.3 Traffic generation in relation to the proposed development will be minimal, and temporary, with the highest flows estimated at the beginning and end of the construction period. The works are anticipated to last 26 weeks in total. Initial disruption experienced during the construction phase would end upon completion of the development, leaving no visible development above ground, this would be short term disruption for long term gain.

- 16.8.4 The DC Highways Officer has been consulted and advised it is agreed that the information provided within the submitted documents provides a comprehensive assessment of the proposed development and confirms that the development can be delivered without giving rise to any unacceptable impacts.
- 16.8.5 DC Highways have also advised once a lead contractor has been appointed to undertake the works, the detailed CTMP will need to be submitted.
- 16.8.6 The applicant will need to liaise with DC Highways to make sure that they have all the appropriate licenses and permits in place to carry out the proposed works in the Highway, this falls outside of the planning process.
- 16.8.7 DC Highways considers that the proposal does not present a material harm to the transport network or to highway safety and consequently has no objection to the proposed cable route.
- 16.8.8 National Highways has also been consulted and advised their primary interest is in the ongoing safe and efficient operation of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) which comprises the A31 corridor which passes approximately 7 miles to the south of the development site.
- 16.8.9 The proposed cable connection route for each potential route crosses, and follows the line of Horton Road, which runs roughly west to east between the solar arrays and the sub-station. At no point does the cable connection impact on the A31 trunk road, although there may be some traffic impacts depending on any potential traffic management or diversion routes implemented to accommodate the works.
- 16.8.10 National Highways is satisfied on balance that the proposals are unlikely to result in a scale of impact on the A31 that would be considered unacceptable or severe impact in safety or capacity terms, in accordance with the requirements of Department for Transport Circular 01/2022 and the NPPF.
- 16.8.9 Knowlton Parish Council have raised some concerns in relation to the impact on highways during construction and noted:

Councillors are concerned over the potential disruption to the local community: Councillors have expressed concerns regarding the proposed route along the C2 road.

Could you confirm whether the works will involve the use of boring machinery, or whether the road and verges will need to be excavated? The latter option is likely to cause significant disruption along Horton Road. Councillors would also like clarification on the transport plan for the HGVs transporting the solar panels. In particular, will an ESCROW arrangement be put in place to address the anticipated increase in HGV traffic, given the potential impact on the condition of local roads along the C2 and Haythornes/Woodlands, and to ensure that any necessary restoration works are covered?

- 16.8.9 The applicant has advised the cable is to be laid underground and a cable trench will need to be dug to facilitate this. The majority of which will be along existing roads and road verges. This includes along Horton Road as per the proposed cable route plans submitted with the application. During these works, traffic management measures will be required; these measures are set out in the submitted Construction Traffic Management Plan and may include lane closures, temporary traffic signals, stop/go boards and pedestrian diversions. It should be noted that works would typically affect short sections of road (circa 50 metres) for a single day, before works move to the next section. A Section 50 Licence from the Highways Authority would be required to authorise works within the public highway. While temporary disruption to local residents is acknowledged, it can be managed to avoid unacceptable impacts on highway safety and disruption.
- 16.8.10 With regards to the query in relation to the transport of solar panels - this query relates to the previous consent for the solar farms (refs. P/FUL/2023/02829 and P/FUL/2023/03415) rather than the application for the cable route upon which is under consideration. DC Highways raised no objection to the solar farm developments and did not consider it necessary to impose specific conditions on the approvals requesting a highways condition survey prior to and following construction. Planning condition 21 on both approvals requires that the developments shall be carried out in strict accordance with the submitted Construction Traffic Management Plans (CTMP) dated March 2023, and construction traffic management will be controlled as such.
- 16.8.11 The NPPF, paragraph 116, states that development should only be prevented or refused where the cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. In this case, the impacts are temporary and can be mitigated to minimise disruption. Again, the DC Highway Authority considers that the proposed development, which includes all potential routes, does not present a material harm to the transport network or to highway safety and consequently has no objection to the proposed cable route.
- 16.9 Flood risk and drainage
- 16.9.1 The Environment Agency's (EA) Flood Map for Planning indicates that the area of the site proposed for development is within Flood Zones 1, 2 and 3. The EA's Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) mapping indicates that the site has some areas affected by surface water. The mapped flood extents is not unexpected given the size of the site and the countrywide extents of surface water mapping.
- 16.9.2 A flood risk assessment has been submitted as part of the application and the DC Local Lead Flood Authority (LLFA) has been consulted on this. They have advised proposals are considered low risk from a flood risk perspective and they have no objection to them, subject to land drainage and flood risk permit informatives.
- 16.9.3 The Environment Agency have also been consulted and advised they have no objection to the proposal provided that conditions and informatives in relation to flood risk are included in any permission granted. The required conditions have been applied in this report.

16.9.4 Based on the advice of the LLFA and the EA the proposed development, which includes all potential routes, is considered acceptable in terms of flood risk, subject to conditions requiring the development to be in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment and for construction environmental management plan to be submitted.

16.10 Trees

16.10.1 A number of trees and hedgerows are present across the extent of the site, some of which are protected trees.

16.10.2 An Arboricultural Impact Assessment supports this planning application, which assesses the proposed cable route in accordance with BS 5837:2012 – Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction.

16.10.3 The report concludes that, as the majority of the cable route lies within existing highway land or open fields, any damage to tree roots and impacts on trees would be avoided. However, the presence of several mature Category A and B trees, tree groups, and areas of woodland, including some designated as Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland, adjacent to the site boundary warrants a precautionary approach.

16.10.4 Accordingly, the report recommends that a detailed Arboricultural Method Statement and finalised Tree Protection Plan be prepared to guide the excavation of the cable trench and associated works. Overall, it finds that the risk of significant damage to trees or root systems during installation of the cable connection would be low.

16.10.5 The DC Tree Officer has been consulted and has advised they have no concerns subject to a condition relating to tree and hedge protection.

16.10.5 From the submitted information and the DC Tree Officer assessment, it is concluded that the proposed development, which includes all potential routes, is acceptable subject to conditions for tree and hedge protection.

16.12 Impact on Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

16.12.1 Both potential cable routes are in the vicinity of several PRoWs. The majority of PRoWs located in proximity to the proposed cable routes are situated adjacent to, but out with, the red line boundary of the proposed development. However, there are six PRoWs which are located within the development boundary. The DC Ranger for the area raised concerns initially that there was no PRoW Strategy submitted.

16.12.2 The DC Ranger has also advised throughout the duration of any works, the full width of the public footpath/bridleway must remain open and available to the public, with no materials or vehicles stored on the route. Any damage to the surface caused by vehicles, increased usage or as a by-product of the works must be returned to the same or better standard than before the damage. The safety of

path users should be considered at all times (signage and safe passing places/refuges).

- 16.12.3 In response to concerns raised, a PRow strategy was submitted and the DC Ranger has been consulted on this.
- 16.12.4 The strategy details management during construction and rectification of effects.
- 16.12.5 The DC Ranger has reviewed the PRow Strategy document and has no objection to the proposed subject to a condition requiring an updated strategy once the route has been finalised.
- 16.12.6 It is noted the DC Ranger requested a contribution for the improvement of PRowS in the area. The proposed is for a cable route only, any impact on PRowS would be from installation and there is the requirement for restoration. Therefore it is not considered that a contribution to improve PRowS is necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.
- 16.12.7 On this basis the proposed development, which includes all potential routes, is considered acceptable in relation to impact on public right of ways.

16.13 Impact on Biodiversity

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 16.13.1 A minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain is required for this development and a biodiversity metric has been submitted in support of the application.
- 16.13.2 Some habitat creation/enhancement is provided within the red line; however it has not been possible to provide the required 10% within the site boundary. Therefore the applicant has submitted details of offsite mitigation adjacent to and in close proximity to the red line boundary. Mitigation land within the blue line is owned by the applicant.

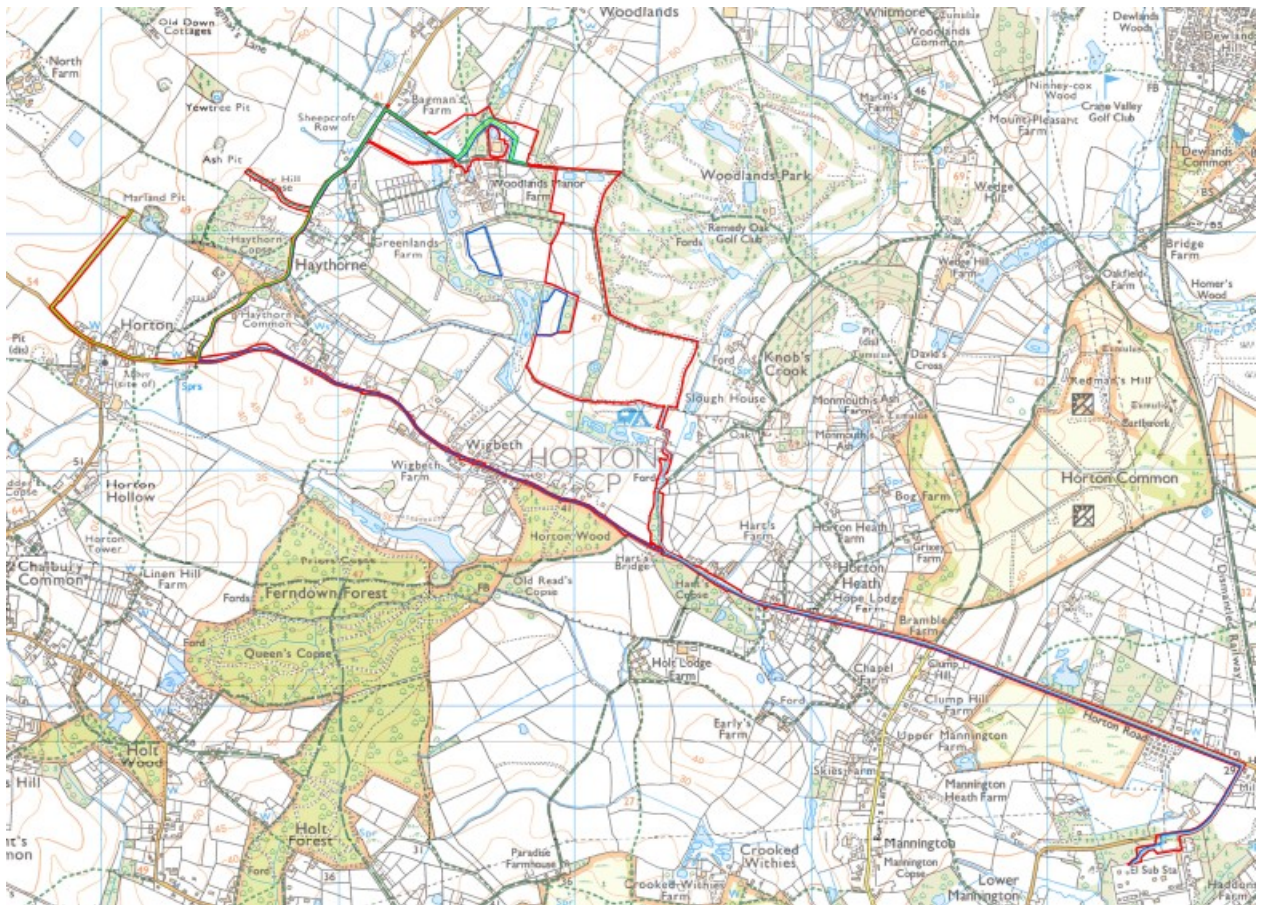


Figure 2 - Offsite mitigation land within the blue lines

- 16.13.3 The applicant has stated mitigation land within the blue line will be registered with Natural England - a separate process and only required at the point that the BNG condition is discharged.
- 16.13.4 The DC NET Officer also advised with regards to BNG:
- *There remains a deficit in area and hedgerow units requiring purchase of units from other habitat banks on the register. The applicant advised they have exhausted the options available to them onsite and nearby and there is no objection to the purchase of credits for this purpose.*
 - *On site enhancements meet the criteria for being significant requiring a legal agreement and condition for a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.*
- 16.13.5 The DC NET Officer has confirmed that information submitted in relation to BNG is acceptable subject to BNG requirements and conditions.

Protected Sites

- 16.13.6 There are number of designated sites close to the application site, one of which is within the application site:
- Sites of nature conservation interest (SNCIs):

- Horton Wood;
 - Haythorn Copse;
 - Woodlands Park (Part of);
 - Hart's Copse;
 - St Anne's Cottage;
 - Slough Lane Meadows;
 - Mannington Sub-station (within the site).
- Ancient Woodland:
- Hart's Copse;
 - Haythorn Copse;
 - Woodlands Park;
 - Ferndown Forest;
 - Barewood Coppice

Parts of the application site are also within 400m of the Dorset Heathlands.

- 16.13.7 The DC NET Officer was consulted on information submitted and the main concern raised was the impact to the woodland within the Mannington Substation SNCI.
- 16.13.8 It is noted some woodland clearance has already been carried out within the application site, albeit not related to this application. These works have been carried out by the National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET), who are the owners of the site, and is not relevant to this application.
- 16.13.9 However, some further loss is likely as a result of the cable route installation. As this specific loss is related to the application this is a material planning consideration.
- 16.13.10 Paragraph 193 (a) of the NPPF notes:
- ‘.....if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;....’*
- 16.13.11 It is noted that the loss of woodland cannot be avoided within the Mannington Substation SNCI as this is where the connection must be made. Nor is it possible to provide mitigation. Therefore as a last resort compensation is required.
- 16.13.12 NGET has provided confirmation that third parties cannot provide compensation on the Mannington Substation site, it is therefore considered necessary to provide off site compensation.
- 16.13.13 The applicant has advised, in terms of the mitigation of any habitat loss within NGET land, NGET have an overarching Restoration and Compensation Principal that is applied to all cases of habitat loss. As such, the applicant believes that the felling and associated compensation are clearly and entirely linked to NGET's permitted development rights and should therefore not have any impact on the proposed development.

- 16.13.14 The DC NET officer has reviewed additional information submitted and notes that despite the above advice, BNG information submitted seems to account for the felling within the substation/SNCI boundary undertaken previously by NGET. The DC NET officer has confirmed that new woodland creation (which is additional to that at Woodlands solar farm) sufficiently compensates for harm to the SNCI.

Protected Species

- 16.13.15 In terms of protected species, bats, breeding birds, hedgehog and hazel dormouse all have the potential to be affected from the proposals. An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) has been submitted in support of the application.
- 16.13.16 The DC NET Officer was consulted on information submitted and raised no objection to the proposed subject to securing mitigation measures set out in the submitted EclA by condition.

Conclusion

- 16.13.17 Based on the above assessment in relation to BNG, protected sites and protected species the proposed development, which includes all potential routes, is considered acceptable in relation to ME1 and ME2 of the local plan.

16.14 Other Matters

Contaminated Land

- 16.14.1 The application site consists of mostly highway verge and some undeveloped land. Given the extent of the site there may be areas of contaminated land, which are unknown. On this basis it is considered necessary to apply a condition for potential contaminated land should contamination be found during installation of the cable.

Mineral safeguarding

- 16.14.2 The DC Minerals and Waste Team have been consulted and do not consider that the proposed cabling would negatively impact the existing minerals and waste interests. In this case, for this proposed development, the Minerals and Waste Authority has no objection on minerals and waste safeguarding grounds.

Restoration

- 16.14.3 A suitably worded planning condition to secure appropriate restoration of the site would ensure that the cable route is suitably restored post installation.

Requests for additional footpaths

- 16.14.4 Comments from neighbours have raised concerns regarding highways safety due to the lack of safe roadside footways and existing speed limits. Requests have been made for footways to be included as part of the restoration process post installation.
- 16.14.5 While concerns are noted, in order for such an obligation to be imposed the request must meet the following test:
- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms - It must address a genuine planning issue that would otherwise justify refusal.
 - Directly related to the development- There must be a clear link between the obligation and the specific proposal.
 - Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development - The obligation must not be excessive; it should match the development's impacts.
 - Reasonable in all other respects - The obligation should not be unjustifiable or overly burdensome.
 - Compliant with relevant planning policy and statutory requirements - It must align with local plans and national policy (e.g. NPPF).
- 16.14.6 The proposed is for an underground cable route that will link previously approved solar farms to Mannington substation. Improving existing road safety conditions for pedestrians is outside the remit of the application and is not considered necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It is also not directly related to the development or fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Therefore it is not considered appropriate for footways to be included in restoration plans.

17.0 Conclusion

- 17.1.1 The application proposes development that will support the creation renewable energy in the form of a cable route for previously approved solar farms and as a result will help to reduce carbon emissions to the benefit of the environment. Without the implementation of the cable route the previously approved solar farms cannot be delivered. The proposed cable route would help respond to Dorset Council's declared climate emergency and ecological emergency. The renewable energy benefits of the development therefore attract significant positive weight in the planning balance. The development is in accordance with national and local planning policy and the environmental benefits weigh strongly in favour of the development.
- 17.1.2 The proposed cable represents a vital element of the approved wider renewable energy scheme. It is operationally essential to enable the export of electricity generated by the consented 30MW Woodlands Solar Farm and 19.88MW North Farm Solar Farm to the national electricity transmission network. Without the proposed cable route to enable the grid connection, the approved solar farms cannot deliver their intended contribution to national and local energy and climate targets.

- 17.1.3 It is considered that the development (which includes all potential cable routes) is sustainable, does not impact the Green Belt and is acceptable in relation to all other planning considerations as set out in this report. It is considered that the proposal is in accordance with the Development Plan and policy within the NPPF and there are no material considerations meaning that planning permission should be refused. The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to planning conditions.

18.0 Recommendation

Approve subject to the following planning conditions:

Officer note: Written agreement to the pre-commencement condition(s) was received from the applicant 10 July 2026.

Commencement and approved plans:

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:
 - Man7b.v7 Es Figure 1.1 Full Cable Route Planning Boundary
 - Man7c.v2 Es Figure 3.1 3.15 Full Cable Route Planning Boundary Detailed
 - Man5.v5 Es Figure 3.16 Potential Cable Routes
 - MAN7d.v1 Indicative cable trench

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Pre commencement:

3. Prior to commencement of any development hereby approved, details of the final cable route shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The cable route shall be installed in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure final details of proposed cable route are agreed.

4. Prior to commencement of any development hereby approved, a scheme for the restoration of land post installation within the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Restoration of the land shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable restoration of the site in the interests of the setting of the National Landscape and the character of the area.

5. Prior to commencement of any development hereby approved, an updated Public Right of Way (PRoW) Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The PRoW Strategy shall confirm the final cable route, associated impacts on PRoWs and details of how impacts will be mitigated and rectified.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed strategy.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable restoration of the site in the interests of the setting of the National Landscape and the character of the area.

6. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), incorporating biodiversity and pollution prevention measures, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include:

- a) Risk assessment of potentially damaging construction activities.
- b) Identification of "biodiversity protection zones".
- c) Practical measures (both physical measures and sensitive working practices) to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (may be provided as a set of method statements).
- d) The location and timing of sensitive works to avoid harm to biodiversity features.
- e) The times during construction when specialist ecologists need to be present on site to oversee works.
- f) Responsible persons and lines of communication.
- g) The role and responsibilities on site of an ecological clerk of works (ECoW) or similarly competent person.
- h) Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers and warning signs.
- i) Details of pollution risks including:
 - the use of plant and machinery
 - wheel washing and vehicle wash-down and disposal of resultant dirty water
 - oils/chemicals and materials
 - the use and routing of heavy plant and vehicles

- the location and form of work and storage areas and compounds
- the control and removal of spoil and wastes.

The development shall proceed in strict accordance with the agreed CEMP, including an implementation timetable.

Reason: To protect biodiversity and prevent pollution during the construction phase.

7. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The CTMP must include:
 - construction vehicle details (number, size, type and frequency of movement)
 - a programme of construction works and anticipated deliveries
 - timings of deliveries so as to avoid, where possible, peak traffic periods
 - a framework for managing abnormal loads
 - location of construction site access
 - contractors' arrangements (compound, storage, parking, turning, surfacing and drainage)
 - wheel cleaning facilities
 - vehicle cleaning facilities
 - inspection of the highways serving the site (by the developer (or his contractor) and Dorset Highways) prior to work commencing and at regular, agreed intervals during the construction phase
 - a scheme of appropriate signing of vehicle route to the site
 - a route plan for all contractors and suppliers to be advised on
 - temporary traffic management measures where necessary

The development must be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Reason: To minimise the likely impact of construction traffic on the surrounding highway network and prevent the possible deposit of loose material on the adjoining highway.

8. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, details of construction management shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include:
 - no bonfires;
 - protection of nearby receptors from dust, noise and vibration arising from construction;
 - storage of waste materials prior to removal from site

The development must be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the occupants of residential properties in close proximity to the construction route.

9. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved (including site clearance and any other preparatory works), a scheme for the protection of trees and hedges in accordance with the current BS5837 recommendations shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. Such a scheme shall include an Arboricultural Impact assessment and Method statement. Additionally, a detailed Construction Method Statement complying with required Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement shall be submitted to the LPA prior to the commencement of any works and approved in by the LPA. The development must be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme and statements.

Reason: To safeguard trees and natural features which are important to the visual amenities of the area

10. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, including any excavation, a written scheme that details a programme of investigative archaeological work shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This scheme shall include archaeological fieldwork together with post-excavation work and publication of the results. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To safeguard and/or record the archaeological interest on and around the site.

11. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (the HMMP) which accords with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The HMMP shall include:

- i) A non-technical summary;
- ii) The roles and responsibilities of the people or organisation(s) delivering the HMMP;
- iii) The planned habitat creation and enhancement works to create or improve habitat to achieve the biodiversity net gain in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan and a timetable for implementation;
- iv) The management measures to maintain habitat in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Gain Plan for a period of 30 years from the completion of the habitat and enhancement works as set out in the HMMP.

- v) The monitoring methodology and frequency in respect of the created or enhanced habitat to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Thereafter the development shall be carried out, along with the management and monitoring of habitat, in accordance with the approved HMMP.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity to secure the monitoring and management of significant onsite habitats.

12. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, a badger sett survey of the development site and immediately adjacent areas shall be undertaken. A report detailing the results of the survey is to be submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority. If surveys show that specific relevant works require a licence to disturb a badger sett, a copy of a valid licence is to be submitted to the planning authority prior to the commencement of the relevant works.

Reason: in the interest of protected species.

13. Prior to the commencement of any development hereby approved, details of the proposed SNCI off site compensation planting, located within the blue boundary of 'Man7b.v7 Es Figure 1.1 Full Cable Route Planning Boundary', shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Net Gain information submitted 'E24127701 Mannington Solar Cable Route BNG Process Note (rev B)'. Details shall include:

- Baseline plan;
- post development habitat plan;
- species lists/assemblages;
- planting density; and
- maintenance and management details.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason : To ensure mitigation planting is provided for the loss of woodland within the Mannington Substation SNCI.

Compliance:

14. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted flood risk assessment (ref Planning, Design And Access Statement, PWA Planning Group, November 2025, EP-24-179) and the following mitigation measures it details:
- The cable route to be installed below ground, with all land reinstated upon completion.
 - The land within the flood zones must be reinstated to the same level as it was before the cable route's installation.

These mitigation measures must be fully implemented prior to connection to the solar farm. The measures detailed above shall be retained and maintained thereafter throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To prevent flooding elsewhere by ensuring that there is no loss of storage for flood

Other

15. In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority and an investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with requirements of BS10175 (as amended). Should any contamination be found requiring remediation, a remediation scheme, including a time scale, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved remediation scheme shall be carried out and on completion of the approved remediation scheme a verification report shall be prepared and submitted within two weeks of completion and submitted to the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure risks from contamination are minimized.

16. For the duration of the construction and restoration period, hours of work (including deliveries) shall only be between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00 hours Monday to Saturday and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: To protect the amenity of the occupants of residential properties in close proximity to the construction route.

Informative Notes:

1. The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition "(the biodiversity gain condition)" that development may not begin unless:
- (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and

(b) the planning authority has approved the plan.

The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Dorset Council.

There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These are listed below.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because none of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements listed below are considered to apply.

Read more about Biodiversity Net Gain and Biodiversity Gain Plans at <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/biodiversity-net-gain> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/submit-a-biodiversity-gain-plan>.

2. This application is subject to Biodiversity Net Gain. A Section 106 Agreement is likely to be required to secure the maintenance and monitoring of any Biodiversity Gain Plan or Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) approved by the Council.
3. Prior Land Drainage Consent (LDC) may be required from DC's FRM team, as relevant LLFA, for all works that offer an obstruction to flow to a channel or stream with the status of Ordinary Watercourse (OWC) – in accordance with s23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. The modification, amendment or realignment of any OWC associated with the proposal under consideration, is likely to require such permission. We would encourage the applicant to submit, at an early stage, preliminary details concerning in-channel works to the FRM team. LDC enquires can be sent to floodriskmanagement@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk.
4. A Flood Risk Activity Permit may be required from the EA, as relevant regulator for all works to a designated Main River that take place in, under or over, or as prescribed under relevant byelaws in accordance with section 109 of the Water Resources Act 1991. To clarify the Environment Agency's requirements, the applicant should contact the relevant department by emailing floodriskpermit@environment-agency.gov.uk.
5. The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit or exemption to be obtained for any of the following activities:
 - erecting any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, such as a culvert, outfall, weir, dam, pipe crossing, erosion protection, scaffolding or bridge
 - altering, repairing, or maintaining any temporary or permanent structure in, over or under a main river, where the work could affect the flow of water in the river or affect any drainage work
 - building or altering any permanent or temporary structure designed to contain or divert flood waters from a main river

- dredging, raising, or removing any material from a main river, including when you are intending to improve flow in the river or use the materials removed
 - diverting or impounding the flow of water or changing the level of water in a main river
 - quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert
 - any activity within 8 metres of the bank of a main river, or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river
 - any activity within 8 metres of any flood defence structure or culvert on a main river, or 16 metres on a tidal river
 - any activity within 16 metres of a sea defence structure
 - activities carried out on the floodplain of a main river, more than 8 metres from the riverbank, culvert or flood defence structure (or 16 metres if it is a tidal main river), if you do not have planning permission (you do not need permission to build agricultural hay stacks, straw stacks or manure clamps in these places)
6. For further guidance please visit [Flood risk activities: environmental permits - GOV.UK](#) or contact our National Customer Contact Centre on 03708 506 506 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm) or by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk. The applicant should not assume that a permit will automatically be forthcoming once planning permission has been granted, and we advise them to consult with us at the earliest opportunity.
 7. The applicant should contact Dorset Highways by telephone at 01305 221020, by email at dorsethighways@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, or in writing at Dorset Highways, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ, before the commencement of any works on or adjacent to the public highway, to ensure that the appropriate licence(s) and or permission(s) are obtained.
 8. The safe free passage of the public on all rights of way must not be obstructed at any time. If the public are unlikely to be able to exercise their public rights on a right of way, then a Temporary Path Closure Order must be obtained. This can be applied for through Rights of Way at Dorset Council see <https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/w/changing-the-definitive-map>, but the application must be completed and returned at least thirteen weeks before the intended closure date. It should be noted that there is a fee applicable to this application. This application and legal order must be confirmed before any works obstructing the path are commenced. Any damage to the surface of the footpath attributable to the development must be repaired to Dorset Council's specification, in accordance with Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980 by the applicant.
 9. In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development. The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:
 - offering a pre-application advice service, and
 - as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case:

- The applicant was made of aware of issues and additional information was submitted to address these.