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Rev	Description	Ву	СВ	Date



20 Western Avenue, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxfordshire, OX14 4SH T: +44(0)1235 821 888 E: rpsox@rpsgroup.com

Berden Solar Ltd

Berden Hall Farm Solar Farm

Location of internal viewpoints

Drawn By PM/Checked By

 $\mathsf{CM}$ Project Number

Scale @ A3

Date Created

CAM

07.10.22 5.3 Rev







# Photograph A

The first of a series of pans from the driveway to the Pelham Substation. This view is northeast down to the Pelham Road, which is largely obscured by the roadside hedge. Open fields on the ridge further north afford views of the Site (see Viewpoint 14), but the historic cluster of properties at Berden Priory, are screened by topography and a block of woodland at Arnold's Spring. A gap in the roadside hedge cover, along the Pelham Road, allows views into the site (see viewpoint 11).

# Photograph B

The pan continuing to the east illustrating the level of enclosing tree cover around the Site. The roofs of a few properties on the edge of Berden are just visible on the right side of the image. The local countryside and the Site is adversely influenced by the overhead transmission lines. There is a long distance view from Chalk Pit Lane to the Northeast (see view 15).









# Photograph C

The pan continuing to the southeast, again illustrating the enclosing tree cover and the adverse landscape and visual influence of the overhead transmission line. The water tower is visible but not the nearby dwellings at its base. The upper parts of residential properties on The Street can just be seen.

# Photograph D

The pan continuing to the south. The battery electricity storage facility is visible, with the upper section of the Pelham Substation and transmission towers visible beyond. The tree line on the ridge provides visual enclosure to the Site to views from further south. The proposed Pelham Spring solar farm (currently refused) lies on the far side of the ridge, further down the slope, and so the two solar farms will not be inter-visible. Viewpoint 3 is from a public footpath which passes through the Site.









# Photograph E

This is a summer view from PRoW 5/26 looking northeast, illustrating the level of visual enclosure to the Site. It also illustrates the slight dip within the central eastern side of the Site. PRoW 5/22 runs along the hedgeline within the dip.

# Stocking Pelham lies behind the tree line The Pelham Road lies behind the hedgerow Public Footpath

# Photograph F

View from PRoW 5/26 looking northwest across the Site towards Stocking Pelham, which lies screened by the high degree of visual enclosure. The start of the slight dip in the landform in the centre of the Site is visible and continues to the east.





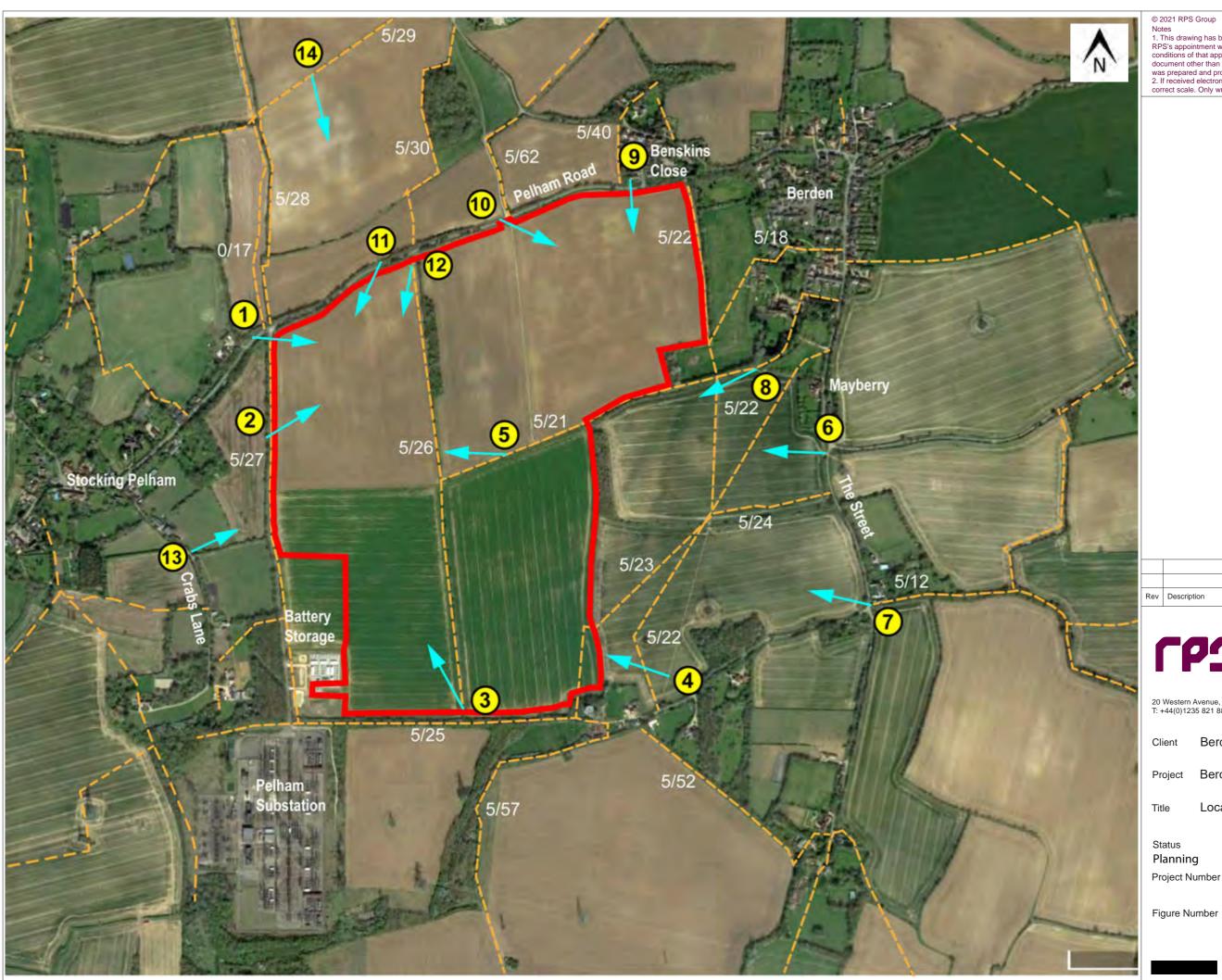
# Photograph G

From PRoW 5/21 looking south, illustrating the high level of visual enclosure.

# Photograph H

Access to the Site will be via this existing agricultural access onto the Pelham Road which will be upgraded. Hedge planting has already been undertaken along the Site's boundary with the Pelham Road and this will be augmented with further hedge an tree planting.





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Berden Solar Ltd

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Location of external viewpoints

Drawn By PM/Checked By

CAM  $\mathsf{CM}$ Scale @ A3 Date Created

07.10.22

Rev

5.5







**Direction of view: West** 

Distance to nearest site boundary: 32 m

Elevation: 114 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 45676 29421

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

## The existing view

This is the first view of the Site when heading east from the village of Stocking Pelham. Prior to this point views are blocked by intervening trees and hedges, even in winter. Part of the Site is visible through a gap in the hedge which runs alongside the access to the Pelham Substation. The Site appears as an open rural field with a hedge on the far side of the field forming the skyline.

# Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

Solar panels will be seen side on through the gap in the hedge and through the perimeter deer fencing, but the first panels will be set 35 m back from the fence.

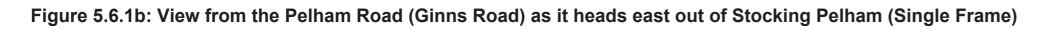
The sensitivity of users is Medium and the magnitude of change is Medium in winter and summer, resulting in a Moderate adverse impact in winter and summer.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant a native hedge with trees set 2 m out from the deer fence to screen the proposed solar farm. Once established the hedge will be managed at a winter cut height of 3 m and 3 m wide at the base.

Once established the hedge will screen the solar farm from view in summer, resulting in a Negligible impact on visual amenity. In winter it will be possible to glimpse the panels and fencing through the leafless branches (a Low magnitude of change), resulting in an adverse impact of Minor significance.















**Direction of view:** Northeast

Distance to nearest site boundary: 5 m

Elevation: 124 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 45708 29178

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

#### The existing view

This PRoW heads south from the Pelham Road, along the tarmac access road to the Pelham Substation. A hedge runs along the eastern edge, but several large gaps afford views through to the Site, such as this one. It is a rural view which is curtailed by rising ground and hedge cover to the east and south. There are wider, but not extensive, views over the valley to the north.

#### Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

The solar panels will be visible through the gaps in the hedge, typically set back 15 - 25 m from the exsiting hedge and seen through the deer fencing.

The sensitivity of walkers is High and the magnitude of change is High (when walking sequentially along the PRoW) in winter and Medium in summer, resulting in a Major adverse impact in winter and Moderate – Major in summer.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant a native hedge set 2 m out from the deer fence to screen the proposed solar farm. Once established the hedge will be managed at a winter cut height of 3 m and 3 m wide at the base.

Once established the hedge will screen the solar farm from view in summer, resulting in a Negligible impact on visual amenity. In winter it will be possible to glimpse the panels and fencing through the leafless branches (a Low magnitude of change), resulting in an adverse impact of Minor significance.



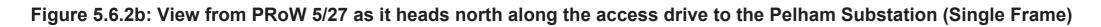






Figure 5.6.3a: View from PRoW 5/26 as it heads north towards the Pelham Road through the Site (Panoramic View)





**Direction of view:** North northwest **Distance to nearest site boundary:** 0 m

Elevation: 126 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 46113 28652

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

#### The existing view

PRoW 5/27 terminates at the boundary of the substation, joining with PRoW 5/25 which heads east to join with PRoW 5/26. Views towards the Site from PRoW 5/25 are very restricted by a substantial intervening hedgerow, even in winter. PRoW 5/26, however, heads south, first affording clear views over the Site, as at this point, and then it continues through the Site until it meets Ginns Lane.

#### Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

The solar farm will be visible in the foreground, with the panels facing the viewer when heading north, seen through the deer fence. Walkers will then continue through the solar farm within a corridor flanked to the east by an existing hedge and the deer fence of the proposed solar farm set around 12 m from the hedge.

The sensitivity of walkers is High and the magnitude of change is High in winter and summer resulting in a Major adverse impact on visual amenity.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant a native hedge set 2 m out from the deer fence to screen the proposed solar farm. Once established the hedge will be managed at a winter cut height of 3 m and 3 m wide at the base, leaving a 7 m wide grass corridor for the PRoW.

Once established the hedge will screen the solar farm from view in summer, resulting in a Minor impact on visual amenity (due mainly to the loss of openness). In winter it will be possible to glimpse the panels and fencing through the leafless branches (a Medium magnitude of change), resulting in an adverse impact of Moderate - Major significance.













Direction of view: West northwest

Distance to nearest site boundary: 118 m

Elevation: 122 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 46520 28716

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

#### The existing view

This view illustrates the relationship between the residential property, water tower and the Site. The Site lies behind the hedge and is not visible, even in winter. A small part of the Site becomes visible through gaps in the hedge as walkers on the footpath head north. There are a few other residential properties along the lane to the southeast of this viewpoint but their views towards the Site are blocked by hedge and tree cover.

# Predicted change to the view without mitigation

The residential properties will not afford views of the solar farm from within the dwellings or their immediate environs. The sensitivity of the viewer is High, and the magnitude of change is Negligible resulting in a Negligible adverse impact on visual amenity, winter and summer. Users of the PRoW will be able to glimpse some panels resulting in a Moderate adverse impact on visual amenity.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant a block of woodland within the southeast corner of the Site to ensure there is spatial and visual separation between the solar farm and the nearby residential properties. Tree planting will be undertaken to close of gaps in the hedgerow to screen the panels from walkers.

The impact of the Proposed Development on visual amenity will be Negligible.









Figure 5.6.5a: View from PRoW 5/21 as it passes through the Site (Panoramic View)



Direction of view: West

Distance to nearest site boundary: 0 m

Elevation: 111 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 46174 29182

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

#### The existing view

This footpath heads east from PRoW 5/26, passing through the Site. The view has been chosen to illustrate the change in view to walkers as they pass through the Proposed Development.

#### Predicted change to the view without mitigation

Solar panels will occupy the field to the left of the existing hedge and within the field in which the footpath runs. Deer fencing will be erected to leave a broad corridor for the existing footpath and hedge. The panels will lie 5 - 10 m beyond the deer fence.

The sensitivity of the viewer is High, and the magnitude of change is High in winter and summer resulting in a Major adverse impact on visual amenity, winter and summer.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant a native hedge set 2 m out from the deer fence to screen the proposed solar farm. Once established the hedge will be managed at a height of 3 m and 3 m wide at the base, leaving a 7-8 m wide grass corridor for the PRoW.

Once established the hedge will screen the solar farm from view in summer, resulting in a Minor adverse impact on visual amenity (mainly due to the loss of openness). In winter it will be possible to glimpse the panels and fencing through the leafless branches (a Medium magnitude of change), resulting in an adverse impact of Moderate – Major significance.













Direction of view: West

Distance to nearest site boundary: 250 m

Elevation: 108 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 46842 29212

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

#### The existing view

Views towards the Site from The Street are limited by the sunken nature of the lane and hedge cover, but this field gate affords a clear view across to the Site. The majority of the Site lies beyond the far hedge/tree line, but it is proposed to erect panels on the far side of the foreground field. The field has a significant dip to it, falling to the west, and so most of the field which comprises the Site is screened from view. There are some residential properties along the lane, but their views are restricted by intervening garden and hedge cover, but clearer views will be possible from west facing upper windows.

# Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

The majority of the solar farm will be screened from view, but it will be possible to glimpse the tops of some of the panels on the eastern edge. It will also be possible to see panels in the far field, through the gap in the tree cover.

The sensitivity of the viewer is High and the magnitude of change Medium in winter and summer, resulting in a Moderate adverse impact on visual amenity in Summer and winter.

# Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant a native hedge along the eastern edge of the proposed solar farm, which will be managed at a height of around 3m. Since the hedge will run along the high point of the field it will screen the panels beyond, including those in the far field. The residual impact will be Negligible in summer and adverse of Minor significance in winter since it may be possible to glimpse some panels through the leafless branches.



Figure 5.6.6b: View from field gate on The Street by Easingwell Pond (Single Frame)









Direction of view: West northwest

Distance to nearest site boundary: 354 m

Elevation: 120 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 46919 28893

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

#### The existing view

Views from The Street and the dwelling The Crump are restricted by hedge banks, but this open field access on the corner affords a glimpsed view over the countryside towards the Site. The view is marred by the overhead transmission line which crosses in the foreground. Originally the closest part of the Site was within part of this field (out of view to the left), but this field has been taken out of the application to avoid any adverse archaeological effects within this field. The Site now lies behind the hedgerow on the far side of the field and is only visible through gaps in the internal hedge and tree cover.

#### Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

It will be possible to glimpse panels in the far fields through gaps in the hedgerow. Users of PRoW 5/16 and 5/22 which cross the field in the foreground will also afford glimpsed views of the panels. It is not proposed to place panels in the foreground fields.

The sensitivity of the viewer is High and the magnitude of change Low in summer and Medium in winter. This will result in a Moderate adverse effect in both summer and winter.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant a native trees on the far side of the existing hedge to close up the gaps.. Once established the trees will form an effective screen in summer, but it will still be possible to see areas of panels through the leafless branches in winter.

The residual effect to users of the lane will be Negligible in summer and Minor adverse in winter. To users of the PRoW which cross the fields the effect will be Negligible in summer and Moderate adverse in winter.















Direction of view: West southwest

Distance to nearest site boundary: 245 m

Elevation: 104 m AOD

**Grid reference:** TL 46766 29363

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

#### The existing view

The village of Berden benefits from substantial tree and hedge cover within and on the edge of the village and so there are no views of the Site from within the village. Originally the Proposed Development included panels within this field adjacent to the woodland but due to the discovery of evidence of the buried remains of a Ring Fort, this area has been taken out of the application. The woodland and hedgerows screen the majority of the Site from view. Views are limited to gaps in the hedge.

#### Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

In summer it will be possible to glimpse a very small area of panels where there is a low part of the hedge, but it will be barely perceptible. In winter it will be possible to glimpse some of the panels through the leafless branches. The sensitivity of walkers is High and the magnitude of change Negligible in summer and Low in winter, resulting in a Negligible adverse effect on visual amenity in summer and Minor adverse in winter.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant a native hedge either side of the PRoW which will, once established, screen the panels in the far field from view. The density of branch structure should be sufficient to screen the panels in winter. The residual effect on the visual amenity of walkers on this stretch of the PRoW will be Negligible, in winter and summer.









Figure 5.6.9a: View from footway adjacent to dwellings at Benskins Close, on the western edge of Berden (Panoramic View)



Direction of view: South

Distance to nearest site boundary: 48 m

Elevation: 113 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 46430 29747

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

#### The existing view

The dwellings are single storey and views are limited from within by garden vegetation. The environs afford limited views over the open countryside and the Site. The upper section of the Pelham Substation is visible and the transmission lines which radiate from it. The recently built battery storage facility is also visible, although this will eventually be screened by landscaping.

#### Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

The proposed solar farm occupy the part of the field which lies to the west of the properties but will stop short of the area of field in front of the properties to maintain their rural outlook. A hedge has recently been planted along Ginns Road (the rabbit guards are just visible in the photograph), and this will screen the remainder of the proposed development from view in summer. In winter it may be possible to glimpse areas of panels through the leafless branches, sensitivity is High and the magnitude of change Low, resulting in an adverse impact of Moderate significance.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

A native species hedge will be planted along the eastern boundary of the solar farm to act as a second layer of screening to the hedge recently planted along the road. Once established there will be a Negligible impact on visual amenity, in summer or winter.









Figure 5.6.10a: View from the Pelham Road (Ginns Road) where it is met by PRoW 5/62, also the location of the existing farm access (Panoramic View)



Panels will be set back in the field and will eventually be screened by new planting

This entrance will be upgraded



Viewpoint 10

**Direction of view:** Southeast

Distance to nearest site boundary: 11 m

Elevation: 114 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 46172 29672

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

# The existing view

To those travelling along Ginns Road, views of the Site are partially restricted by roadside vegetation and a slight bank. But gaps do allow some views to travellers. The landowner has recently planted a hedge alongside the road, which once established will block views of the Site in summer and only allow glimpsed views in winter.

## Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

The existing farm access will be retained for agricultural use by the landowner, but it will be upgraded to form the main point of access to the solar farm. The gate will be set 17 m back from the edge of carriageway to allow an HGV to turn in without waiting for the gate to be opened. This 17 m section will have a tarmac or concrete surface. Agricultural vehicles will head east on entering the Site and run parallel to Ginns Road until the open, undeveloped part of the field is reached. A 10 m wide grass corridor will be retained for this purpose (and does not form part of the Site). The deer fencing, forming the northern edge of the solar farm, will be set around 32 m back from the edge of Ginns Road, with the panels between 5 m and 20 m beyond. Construction and maintenance traffic for the solar farm will turn west on passing through the deer fencing.

Once the hedge along Ginns Lane has established it will only be possible to see the solar farm in summer through the remodelled entrance. In winter it will be possible to glimpse the rear edges of the panels through the leafless branches. Sensitivity of road users is Medium and the magnitude of change in summer will be Low and Medium in winter, resulting in a Minor adverse impact in summer and Moderate in summer.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant a second native hedge in front of the deer proof fence, which will be managed at a height of around 3 m. This will add a second layer of screening to road users which should effectively screen the solar panels from view in winter and summer. The entrance gate has been offset so that the view through the agricultural entrance will be blocked by the proposed hedge.

As a result, the impact on the visual amenity of road users will be Negligible in summer and winter.















Direction of view: Southwest

Distance to nearest site boundary: 12 m

Elevation: 112 m AOD

**Grid reference:** TL 45913 29565 **Date photo was taken:** 20.01.2022

### The existing view

This view illustrates another long gap in the existing hedgerow cover on Ginns Road, allowing views into the Site. The landowner has planted a hedge along the road and, once this has established, it will screen the Site from view in summer and only allow glimpsed views through the leafless branches in winter.

### Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

The deer fence along the northern boundary will be set between 25 m and 55 m from the edge of the highway, but until the planted hedge has established, will be visible, with the panels behind. The sensitivity of road users is Medium, and the visual impact will be Medium, resulting in a Moderate adverse impact on visual amenity in summer and winter, declining to Negligible in summer and Minor adverse in winter once the hedge has established.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant the space between the deer fence and the hedge alongside the road with woodland planting. This will ensure that the solar farm will be fully screened from view in winter and summer. The residual impact on the visual amenity of road users will be Negligible, winter and summer.



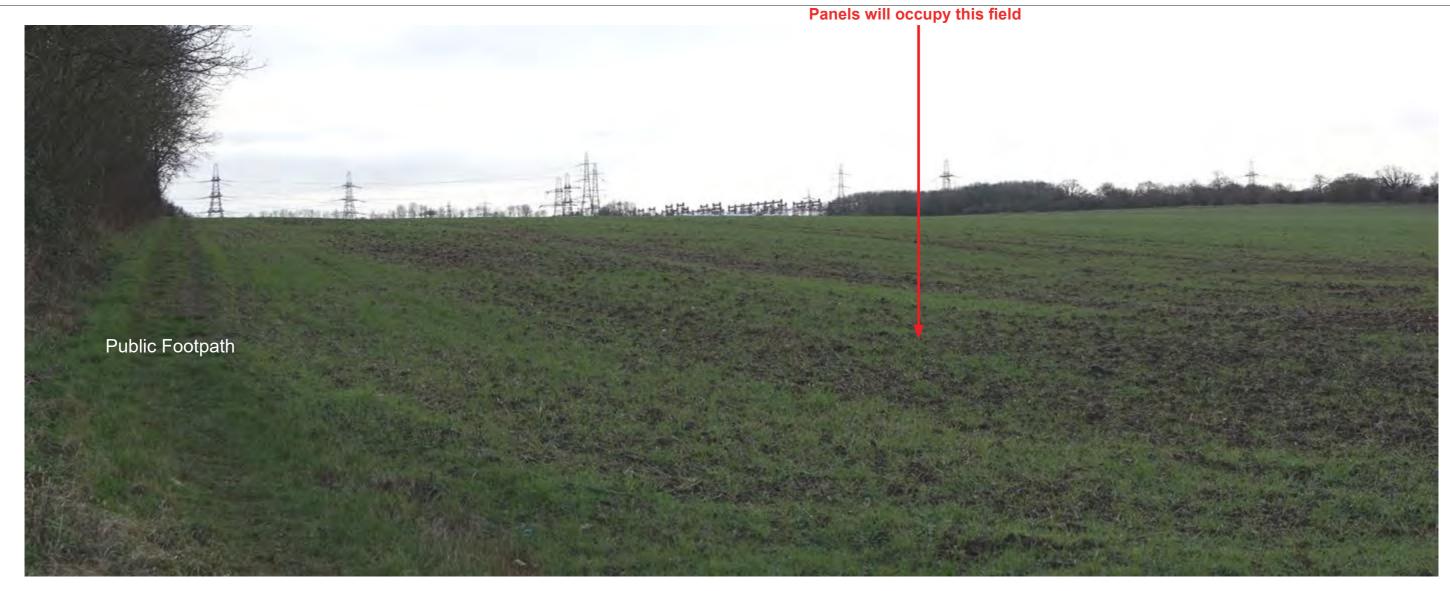








Figure 5.6.12a: View from the start of PRoW 5/26 as it heads north from the Pelham Road (Ginns Road) (Panoramic View)



**Direction of view:** South southwest **Distance to nearest site boundary:** 0 m

Elevation: 113 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 45994 29582

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

#### The existing view

The footpath runs along the west side of the hedge, through the Site. Currently it is a rural outlook but is substantially adversely influenced by the electrical infrastructure which is clearly visible on the skyline.

#### Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

A deer fence will be erected 15 m from the existing hedge, with the solar panels visible behind. Panels will also be erected on the east side of the hedge, but this broadens out into a 30 m wide block of woodland which will screen the panels from view. The sensitivity of walkers is High and the magnitude of change High, resulting in an adverse impact of Major significance.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

It is proposed to plant a native species hedge in front of the deer fence which, once established at a height of 2.5 m, will screen the proposed solar farm from view in summer, with glimpsed views through the leafless branches in winter. The magnitude of change will reduce to Low in summer and Medium in winter, resulting in a Moderate residual impact in summer and Moderate-Major adverse in winter.













**Direction of view:** East northeast

Distance to nearest site boundary: 180 m

Elevation: 128 m AOD

**Grid reference:** TL 45548 28973 **Date photo was taken:** 20.01.2022

## The existing view

This view has been chosen to illustrate the lack of visibility between the village of Stocking Pelham and the Site. Views towards the Site are only possible from the few field gateways, but views of the Site are blocked by intervening tree and hedge cover, even in winter.

# Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

The Proposed Development will be screened from view. There will be no visual impact to users of the lane or from within the properties along the lane.

The sensitivity of the viewer is High and the magnitude of change Nil. Resulting in no visual impact.

## Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

A hedge will be planted along the west side of the solar farm, ensuring that it remains fully screened for the long term and in the control of the applicant.













Direction of view: South southeast

Distance to nearest site boundary: 432 m

Elevation: 116 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 45761 29946

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

# The existing view

This PRoW crosses open elevated ground on the far side of the valley that lies to the north of the Site. The Site is visible through the gaps in the intervening hedges, although the view is marred by the overhead transmission lines which occupy the skyline. The battery storage facility can be glimpsed just beyond the southwest corner of the Site, seen set against the backdrop of the Pelham substation.

#### Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

The panels will be visible between the gaps in the vegetation but will be seen from the rear where they will appear less prominent. The sensitivity of the viewer is High and the magnitude of change Medium, in summer and winter, resulting in an adverse impact of Moderate – Major significance, summer and winter

## Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

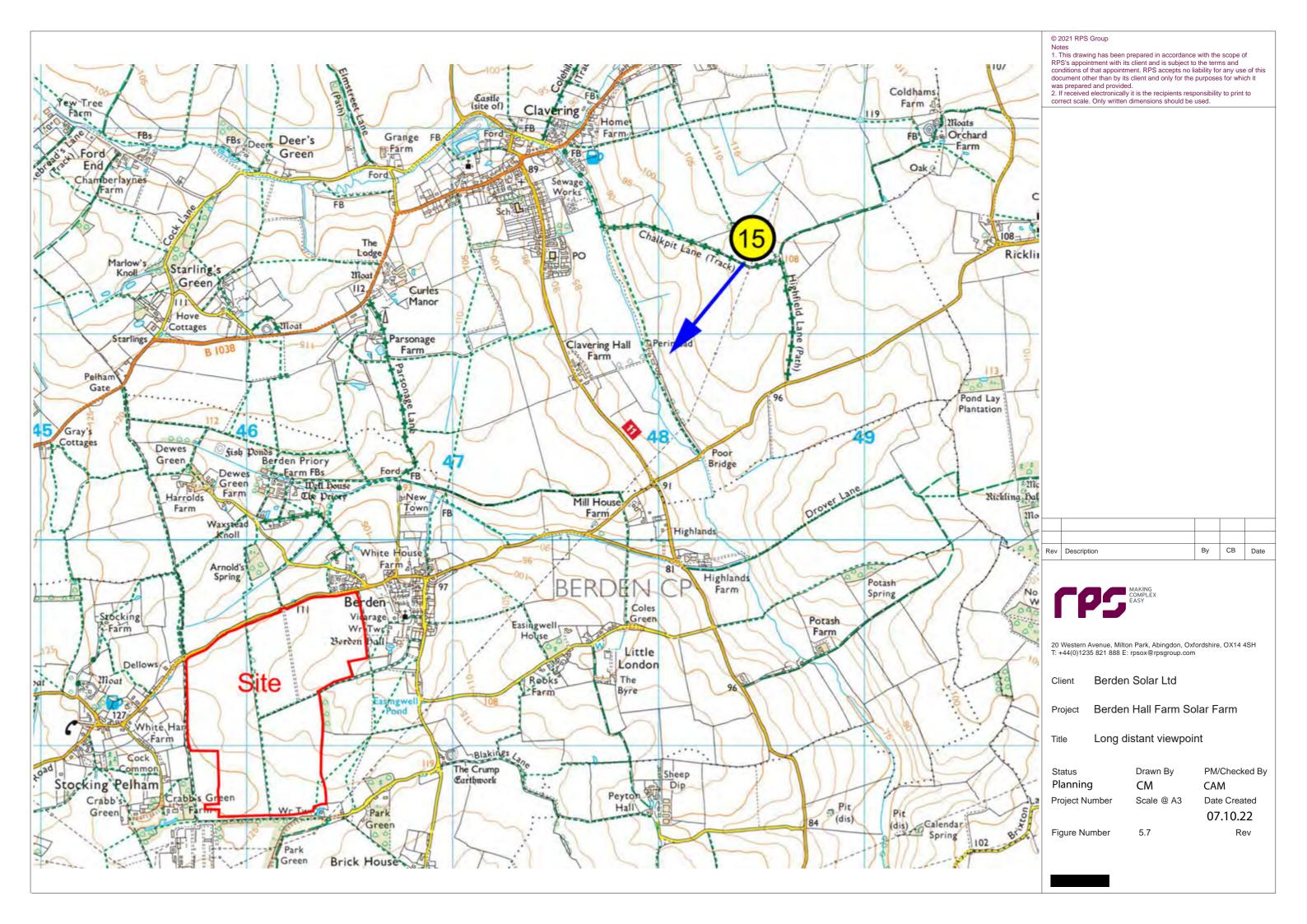
It is proposed to plant a block of woodland along the northern edge of the solar farm, up to 50 m in width. This will eventually screen the solar farm from view, but it may take 10 - 15 years to do so fully.

Once effective the residual impact on visual amenity will be Negligible in summer and winter.



Figure 5.6.14b: View from PRoW 5/29 which crosses slightly elevated ground south of the site (Single Frame)











Direction of view: Southwest

**Distance to nearest site boundary:** 2.7 km

Elevation: 108 m AOD

Grid reference: TL 48552 31349

Date photo was taken: 20.01.2022

#### The existing view

This is one of the few publicly accessible views from the landscape to the northeast of the Site. The majority of Chalk Lane runs between two hedgebanks, preventing views over the wider landscape, but a short section at this location crosses elevated open ground before soon dropping down into a valley where views are lost. The Site is visible as a thin sliver on the horizon, but the horizon and view is dominated by the electrical infrastructure which radiates from the substation.

### Predicted changes to the view without mitigation

The panels will be visible as a thin sliver in the distance but seen from the rear they will appear as a dull grey tone and will not be particularly prominent.

The sensitivity of the viewer is High and the magnitude of change Low resulting in a Minor adverse visual impact.

#### Mitigation and assessment of residual impact

All of the proposed tree and hedge planting will reduce the visual impact of the Proposed Development, but particularly the woodland planting along the northern edge, which will eventually almost screen it entirely from view. The residual impact once the woodland has established will be negligible, but it will take 10 - 15 years to achieve this.









