

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF A SOLAR
PARK ON LAND AT BARNHAM COURT
FARM, BARNHAM, WEST SUSSEX
LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Addendum (Historic assets)

for

BL Solar 7 Ltd

November 2015

 **The Landmark**
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SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) addendum provides additional information to inform a planning application for development of a Solar Park at Barnham Court, Barnham, West Sussex. The application site covers an area of 2.2 hectares approximately 1.1 km southwest of Barnham and 4 km north of Bognor Regis.
- 1.2 The application site and the proposed development are described in the main body of the LVIA.
- 1.3 This addendum describes the site and the proposals in relation to the historic assets at Barnham, including the Grade I Barnham Court, the Church and the assemblage of buildings which make up Barham Court Farm. This information has been requested by the Council's Historic Buildings Officer.
- 1.4 The results of the assessment in this addendum show that, while the development footprint lies within 500m of two Grade I listed buildings, it is located in an *extended setting* of these buildings and the significance of the effect of the proposed development on the landscape character of the setting of these assets is categorised as low.
- 1.5 Further, the assessment shows that generally the proposed development site is well screened by vegetation and topography and does not form part of any key existing views from, or indeed, any views of Barnham Court or the Church.
- 1.6 There are no locations where the proposed development will be seen in conjunction with the historic assets, the subject of this assessment. A public right of way and the railway to the west and south, both afford opportunities to view the development site but not at the same time as the Grade I Listed Buildings or the other assets in the Barnham Conservation Area. It is considered, therefore, that the significance of the landscape and visual effect of the proposed development on these historic assets and their setting is minor adverse to no change.
- 1.7 The development site lies close to the former Portsmouth and Arundel Canal, alongside which runs the public right of way. This narrow linear feature is not affected, either directly or indirectly by the proposed development, and any experience of the former canal gained by users of the PRoW will be negligible, the canal having been filled in at this point. Elsewhere, where the canal's hollow route can still be discerned or where, for example, tangible lock gate remains lie, the development site is not visible.

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Please also refer to the Figures presented in the LVIA

- Figure 1: Aerial view with site boundary
- Figure 2: Location of historic assets
- Figure 3: Zone of Visual Influence and key views
- Figure 4: Viewpoint locations
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared to inform a planning application for the development of a photovoltaic (PV) power generating installation (a 'Solar Park') on agricultural land at Barnham Court Farm, Barnham, West Sussex. The application site lies approximately 1.1 km southwest of Barnham and 4 km north of Bognor Regis (OS Grid Ref: SU 95086 03423).
- 1.2 The site comprises a single field of agricultural land bound by small woodland blocks to the north and the east, an earth bund with mature shrubs to the northeast and a poorly maintained hedgerow to the west. The southern boundary is partially open and includes a post and wire fence. The Bognor Regis to Barnham railway line lies immediately adjacent to the western site boundary. A stream and PRow run along the northern boundary through a small woodland. The immediate landscape is flat with a dominant mix of agricultural land, but settlements lie within 2 kilometres to the north and west. Renewable energy infrastructure is present in the district, including the approved Bilsham Park PV site 1 km to the southeast.
- 1.3 This addendum assesses the potential effects of the proposed development on the area's historic assets most notably (but not confined to) the two Grade I listed buildings which lie within 500 m to the north.
- 1.4 The existing historic assets are identified below, and their characteristics and features which constitute the setting of these assets are examined. Relevant planning policy is also reviewed.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 Drawing on the comments from the Arun District Council Historic Buildings Officer, *'The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning'* Guidance Note and the *'Proposed Development of a Solar Park on Land at Barnham Court Farm, Barnham, West Sussex'* LVIA, this assessment considers the effect of the proposed development on the heritage assets in proximity to the site.
- 2.2 This report identifies each heritage asset, reviews their setting and the contribution setting makes to the significance of each asset. The extent of a setting varies depending on the heritage asset.
- 2.3 A detailed assessment has been undertaken considering the sensitivity of heritage assets and their settings, magnitude of change, and significance in terms of landscape and visual effects utilising the existing criteria defined within the LVIA report as well as an overall conclusion. Where appropriate the setting of the heritage assets is considered before and after the proposed development has been constructed.
- 2.4 *'The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning'* guidance note defines the setting of a heritage asset as:
- '...the surroundings in which the heritage asset is experienced'.*
- This definition will be used for the purpose of this report.
- 2.5 There are six Listed Buildings which lie within 1 km of the application site. Their location in relation to the proposal site is detailed in **Figure 2** and **Table 2.1**.
- 2.6 There are no Scheduled Monuments or Registered Parks and Gardens within a 3 km radius of the site.
- 2.7 Non-listed structures which may be considered historic assets comprise Fattening Ground Barn (formerly Highground Barn) and the site of the former Portsmouth & Arundel canal. Both lie in close proximity to the application area. The above historic assets are tabulated below.

Table 2.1 Location of Historic Assets

Site	Grid reference	Distance to nearest edge of site	Approximate elevation AMSL
Proposed Development Site	SU 95086 03423	N/A	2 m
Barnham Court	SU 95577 03572	350 m	5 m
Parish Church of St Mary	SU 95642 03558	405 m	6 m
The Lodge (of Barnham Court)	SU 95616 03655	420 m	5 m
Manor Cottage	SU 95711 03642	500 m	6 m
The Street Cottage	SU 95707 03712	530 m	4 m
Curacao	SU 95744 03760	590 m	4 m
The Old Portsmouth & Arundel Canal (linear)	Nearest point: SU 95236 03478	5 m	2 m – 4 m
Fatting Ground Barn	SU 95196 03102	290 m	1 m
Barnham (Church Road) Conservation Area	Nearest point: SU 95552 03533	320 m	4 m

Description of the proposed development site

- 2.8 The northern boundary of the site consists of a small woodland block with a small stream, and an earth bank with mature shrubs. Beyond is the 'Old Canal' which has been infilled (although with extant hollows remaining elsewhere) and runs east-west. The Bognor Regis to Barnham railway line cuts diagonally across the landscape in a southeast-northwest direction, from the western side of the site to Barnham Station. The line merges with the Chichester to Littlehampton railway line which runs east-west across the landscape 0.8 km away.
- 2.9 Internally, the site is open grassland with an earth bund covered with mature naturalised scrub along the northern boundary. There are no other landscape features on the site. Just beyond the site boundary are small woodland blocks.
- 2.10 Residential development is a notable feature in the wider landscape with the villages of Woodgate, Westergate, Eastergate and Barnham creating an arc of built development to the north. Extensive areas of glasshouses and poly-tunnels are notable features within the landscape, which merge with residential development to the north and northeast.
- 2.11 There is a notable network of tree belts along field boundaries to the west of the site. Intensification of farming has resulted in a significant loss of any distinctive field pattern,

with fields of varying sizes and shapes; existing field boundaries which remain are largely of hedgerows with hedgerow trees.

Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI)

- 2.12 A computer-generated Zone of Theoretical Visual Influence was prepared for the LVIA and this indicated that the application site is potentially highly visible across the majority of the surrounding landscape within the 5km study area. A subsequent site visit confirmed, however, that in fact the extent of the visual envelope (the Zone of Visual Influence) is extremely localised and, in public-accessibility terms, restricted to a single PRoW north of the site. Intervening vegetation, a flat topography of the landscape and the site's depressed location, greatly limit the extent of views to the site. The ZVI is shown on Figure 3.
- 2.13 There are partial and glimpsed views of the site from the PRoW, (ref no 200/1) in the northeast through gaps in hedgerow along the western boundary, through trees in the woodland block and through a gap before the earth bund. There are immediate views into the site from moving rolling stock on the railway line.
- 2.14 As has been shown in the LVIA the key publicly-accessible receptors potentially affected by changes resulting from the proposed development are those using PRoW 200/1.
- 2.15 This assessment examines the historic assets identified in terms of the extent of their setting, which will vary depending on asset and their relationship with the site and the ZVI.

3.0 ASSESSMENT

Effect on the setting of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

- 3.1 As described above there are six Listed Buildings within close proximity of the site including the Grade I Barnham Court and Parish Church of St Mary. These resources which are of **high and local** sensitivity are also located within the Barnham Conservation Area which is of **medium and regional** sensitivity.

Barnham Court (Grade I)

- 3.2 Arun District Council's Historic Buildings Officer commented: *"Views of the house ... from the west are clear from the footpath as it passes the development site"*.
- 3.3 Barnham Court is a red brick mid-17th century house in the 'Artisan Mannerist' style, similar to Albourne Place, Ford Place, and Kew Palace near London. The immediate setting of the building consists of the extent of formal gardens to the north, north east and immediate west. To the south east lies the Grade I Listed Building of the parish Church of St Mary. To the south lie Barnham Court farm buildings, a mixture of modern farm buildings and buildings defined by the Barnham (Church Lane) Conservation Area Appraisal as *'contributing to the character and appearance of the area'*. To the west Barnham Court looks out over linear strip fields currently used for horse grazing, a view partially marred by a line of mature poplar trees and woodland to the north west. Beyond the formal gardens to the north east lies the bulk of the settlement of Barnham village.
- 3.4 The immediate setting of Barnham Court is defined by its surrounding formal gardens, screened views out onto open fields, its relationship with Barnham Court Farm and the settlement of Barnham village of which it is the principal building. The wider context includes the old Portsmouth and Arundel Canal and associated bunding, the woodland clumps to the west and a fractured visual connection with the Barnham to Bognor Regis railway line. The extended setting of this heritage asset is a mosaic of fields with relatively open character.
- 3.5 The proposed development falls within this extended setting, rather than the immediate or wider setting of the heritage asset, and despite its relative proximity to Barnham Court, neither is visible from the other and there are limited locations from which both can be experienced.
- 3.6 The setting of Barnham Court contributes to its significance as a heritage asset; Barnham village and Barnham Court Farm are of highest importance as historic setting as they provide a historic context to the house. As stated in *'The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning'*: *'.....where [there are] relationships between the asset and other historic assets are particularly relevant'*. The connection with the area of open horse grazing fields contributes less to the significance of the heritage asset as the formal gardens have not been landscaped to provide a strong vista to the house, and views from the surrounding open landscape are partially screened by formal planting.

Landscape effects

- 3.7 The sensitivity of Barnham Court has been defined in the LVIA as being of **high and local sensitivity** based primarily on its status as a Grade I Listed Building, and this rating is also given to the asset's setting. The proposed site is located within the extended setting of Barnham Court, which is typified by open fields. The change in land use will alter the character of Barnham Court's extended setting and there will be a slight increase in activity for the duration of the proposal construction. However, due to the temporary nature of the development, it is small scale, the distance from the heritage asset and the relative lower importance of the extended rural setting, the magnitude of the landscape effect has been classified as of low magnitude. The significance of the effect of the proposed development on the character of Barnham Court's setting as a result is categorised as **minor adverse**.

Visual effects

- 3.8 As can be seen from the zone of visual influence (**Figure 3**) there will be no views of the proposed development from Barnham Court. However, how Barnham Court is experienced visually from within its setting will be affected by the proposed development. The two main visual receptors who may potentially experience views of both Barnham Court and the proposed development are users of the PRoW (200/1) and passengers on the Barnham to Bognor Regis railway.
- 3.9 **PRoW 200/1 users:** Walkers utilising PRoW 200/1 are considered to be of **medium** sensitivity to the development as they will be moving along the Old Canal (the site of the former Portsmouth and Arundel Canal which is of local cultural importance) and will have time to consider and appreciate views. Due to the bunding associated with the old canal, and the existing vegetation on the periphery of the proposal site boundary, views into the site from PRoW 200/1 will be very limited. This is illustrated in **Viewpoint 5**, where, even in winter, the site will only be seen through gaps in vegetation. **Viewpoint 1a** and **1b** taken from the same position illustrate how in order to experience both a view of the proposed development and of Barnham Court walkers must turn at least 45 degrees. It should be considered that walking towards Barnham Court receptors will be focussed on the House and the mature trees which make up its setting, and walking away on the railway crossing and vegetation associated with it. In the eventuality that walkers do experience the proposed site as part of Barnham Court's visual setting it is considered that the magnitude of the visual effect would be **negligible**.
- 3.10 **Barnham to Bognor Regis railway passengers:** Passengers using the railway line are considered to be of **medium** sensitivity as they may be looking out of the window and viewing the surrounding landscape for pleasure, but the train is likely to be moving at considerable speed through the landscape limiting the duration that passengers can appreciate a view. There are two points along the railway where passengers may be afforded glimpsed views of the site (see zone of visual influence **Figure 3**). Moving south to north the first of these glimpsed views is illustrated by **Viewpoint 11**. It can be seen from this viewpoint that due to the topographical dip in which the proposed site is located, the proposed development and Barnham Court will not be visible in the same view. The second location where glimpsed views of Barnham Court will be experienced is along a section of the railway line immediately north of the railway crossing. Due to the dense vegetation at the railway crossing the proposed development will not be visible from this point. Railway users will experience glimpsed views of Barnham Court, then of the proposed site and then again of Barnham Court. Whilst receptors'

experience of the proposed development will be fleeting, it will have a slight effect on their experience of Barnham Court, and as a result the magnitude of the visual effect is **low**.

- 3.11 Generally the proposed development site is well screened by vegetation and topography and does not form part of any key existing views from, or indeed, any views of Barnham Court. To visually experience the proposed development within the setting of Barnham Court it must be viewed independently of the heritage asset within its immediate settings and as a result the likely significance of the visual effect will be **minor adverse**.

Parish Church of St Mary (Grade I)

- 3.12 Arun District Council's Historic Buildings Officer comments: *"Views of the... church from the west are clear from the footpath as it passes the development site"*
- 3.13 The Parish Church of St Mary dates from Norman times, receiving numerous subsequent additions including a distinctive boarded white bellcot. The immediate setting of this heritage asset consists of the surrounding graveyard containing a number of mature specimen trees, the majority of which are evergreen species such as Yew. The graveyard is bordered by a locally distinctive flint brick wall and has the narrow Church Lane running along its southern boundary. South of Church Lane lies Barnham Court Farm and associated structures (see above). To the north and west the graveyard is surrounded by the formal gardens of Barnham Court House. As with Barnham Court House, the village of Barnham forms the north western edge of the heritage asset's immediate setting.
- 3.14 The enclosed nature of the church's immediate setting, resulting from mature evergreen vegetation within the graveyard and along its boundary with Barnham Court, restricts the extent of the church's wider setting by comparison to Barnham Court. There are views of the church's bellcot from the open horse grazing land to the west. These views are, however, partially screened, limiting the extent of the church's setting and its contribution to the significance of this heritage asset. The church's key setting is comprised of its relationship with the rest of the urban fabric of Barnham village, and its importance as a key component of this settlement. It does not have a strong connection with the open land to the west and cannot be clearly seen from this area.
- 3.15 The proposed development is situated on the outer fringes of the church's extended setting. The inter visibility between the two is very poor.

Landscape effects

- 3.16 The sensitivity of the Parish Church of St Mary and its setting is considered to be of **high and local sensitivity** based on the heritage asset's status as a Grade I Listed Building. The magnitude of the landscape effect is considered to be **negligible**. This is due to the limited extent of the church's setting as a result of its enclosed surroundings, the distance and very low potential for inter visibility between the proposed site and the church and small scale of the proposed development. A further factor contributing to the classification of magnitude as negligible is the non-permanent duration and reversibility of the proposed development. The significance of the effect of the proposed development on the character of the Parish Church of St Mary setting, as a result, is categorised as minor adverse.

Visual effects

- 3.17 There will be no views from the Parish Church of St Mary of the proposed site, as illustrated by the zone of visual influence (**Figure 3**). The key visual receptors of concern are, again, users of PRoW 200/1 and passengers on the Barnham to Bognor Regis railway.
- 3.18 **PRoW 200/1 users:** The sensitivity of walkers moving along PRoW 200/1 will be **medium**. As discussed in the assessment of Barnham Court and illustrated by **Viewpoint 1a** and **1b**, in order to experience views of both the proposed site and the church bellcot walkers must turn from one to the other. **Viewpoint 1a** further illustrates that only a glimpse of the white of the bellcot will be visible from PRoW 200/1 and without knowledge of what it is, it cannot be clearly distinguished as being part of the church. The magnitude of the visual effect is thus classified as **negligible**.
- 3.19 **Barnham to Bognor Regis railway passenger:** Passengers using the railway line are considered to be of **medium sensitivity**. **Viewpoint 5** and **Viewpoint 11** illustrate that from the railway there will be a glimpsed view of the church which will appear as a dash of white within the landscape. Since the site will only form a very small part of the church's setting the magnitude of visual effect is considered to be **negligible to no change**.
- 3.20 The enclosed nature of the Parish Church of St Mary's graveyard limits views of the church to the extent that there are a mere two locations where gaps in the vegetation along PRoW 200/1 allow both the proposed site and this heritage asset to be seen. The view of the church is so limited from these locations that the likely significance of the visual effect of the proposed development on the setting of the church will be **negligible to no change**.

The Lodge (of Barnham Court) (Grade II)

- 3.21 The two storey early 19th century Lodge is identified as being listed for its architectural merit. Its immediate setting is bound by the adjoining Old Granary and densely planted boundary of Barnham Court gardens, of which the Lodge is not situated within. Neither PRoW 22/1 nor the Barnham to Bognor Regis Railway line allow for views to the Lodge due to it being screened behind trees, hedges and buildings.

Manor Cottage, The Street Cottage, Curacao (associated Grade II residential buildings within Barnham Conservation Area)

- 3.22 In terms of the development, the heritage assets listed above are entirely hidden from view and neither the Listed Buildings nor their settings have any visual or contextual relationship with the proposal.

The Old Portsmouth and Arundel Canal

- 3.23 The linear feature originally comprised a three part excavation to allow vessels to move between trading localities without using the English Channel. The canal was completed in 1823 with much of it falling into disrepair by 1847 due to the introduction of rail. Much of the canal route bears little or no evidence of its former use, most sections having been infilled and returned to agriculture or supporting farm access tracks. At

Barnham there are some short sections of the canal where infilling is less pronounced and also where some restoration has taken place. At the rear of the riding stables associated with Barnham Court Farm there are extant remains of lock features and the route can be easily discerned. Closer to the proposed development site the route becomes much less obvious and, closer to the railway crossing, any hint of a former waterway is non-existent.

- 3.24 Adjacent to the development site the only remaining feature of the former canal is a raised bund on which runs the public right of way. This narrow linear element is not affected, either directly or indirectly by the proposed development, and any experience of the former canal gained by users of the PRoW will be negligible, the canal having been completely filled in at this point. Elsewhere, around the rear of the riding stables, where the canal's hollow route can still be discerned or where, for example, tangible lock gate remains lie, the development site is not visible.
- 3.25 It is considered that there will be **negligible** significant effects on the historic asset of the former canal.

Fatting Ground Barn

- 3.26 Fatting Ground Barn (formally Highground Barn) is recognised by the Historic Buildings Officer as being evident on historic mapping from the late 19th Century. The proposed site could be considered as forming part of the barn's wider setting as both can be seen from the Barnham to Bognor Regis Railway line. The barn, however, is not listed nor registered as a heritage asset within Arun District Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Buildings or Structures of Character'.

Barnham (Church Road) Conservation Area

- 3.27 Due to intervening built form, topography and vegetation there is no inter-visibility between the proposed development and the Conservation Area.
- 3.28 During the construction phase there will be a (temporary) change in activity within the setting of the Listed Buildings described above and the Conservation Area with vehicles passing through Barnham village (Church Lane). The changes will be short term and of **low magnitude**. Once operational there will be infrequent maintenance checks at the site causing a barely perceptible change to the setting. The magnitude of change is considered negligible and there is a **negligible** effect in terms of both landscape and visual effects.

Summary of the Effect on historic assets and their settings

- 3.29 Overall the proposed development will have at worst a **minor adverse** effect on immediate visual receptors along the PRoW 200/1 to the north of the site. Such effects will be localised and temporary (and therefore reversible). If mitigation is applied, most significance effects will be reduced to **negligible adverse** during the winter months and further reduces to **no change/no significance** during the summer. The only residual **minor adverse** effect will be during construction with movements along the access track, which cannot be mitigated against. Due to the low lying nature of the landscape, the adverse effect on visual receptors reduces significantly at viewpoints further afield. In summary, during construction the effects to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas will

be of **negligible adverse** significance and once operational there will be **no change/no significance** effects.

4.0 COMPLIANCE WITH PLANNING POLICY

- 4.1 A copy of all relevant National, Local and Supplementary planning policy used in this assessment can be found in **Appendix 1** of this document.
- 4.2 In view of the above assessment the proposed development is not considered to adversely affect the appearance or setting of the Listed Buildings or existing local buildings or structures of interest and importance. Neither the line nor configuration of the Portsmouth and Arundel Canal or the preservation of the character and appearance of the Church Lane Conservation Area will be impacted upon by the proposed development. This assessment concludes that the application scheme will not have any significant effect on the setting of the identified heritage assets and is therefore considered to accord with the relevant policies of the Development Plan and emerging policy context, particularly Policies GEN 22, DEV 11, AREA 2 and AREA 18.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The proposed development is temporary and will not have any adverse effect on the historic assets and their setting either during operation or once it is decommissioned and removed.
- 5.2 While operational the development will have no more than a minor adverse visual effect on receptors utilising the PRow running to the north of the site when viewed in that direction. Such effects are extremely localised as only part of the site will be visible. Of importance is that these short glimpses cannot be seen in combination (i.e. in the same view) as any historic assets such as the two Grade I listed buildings or the conservation area.