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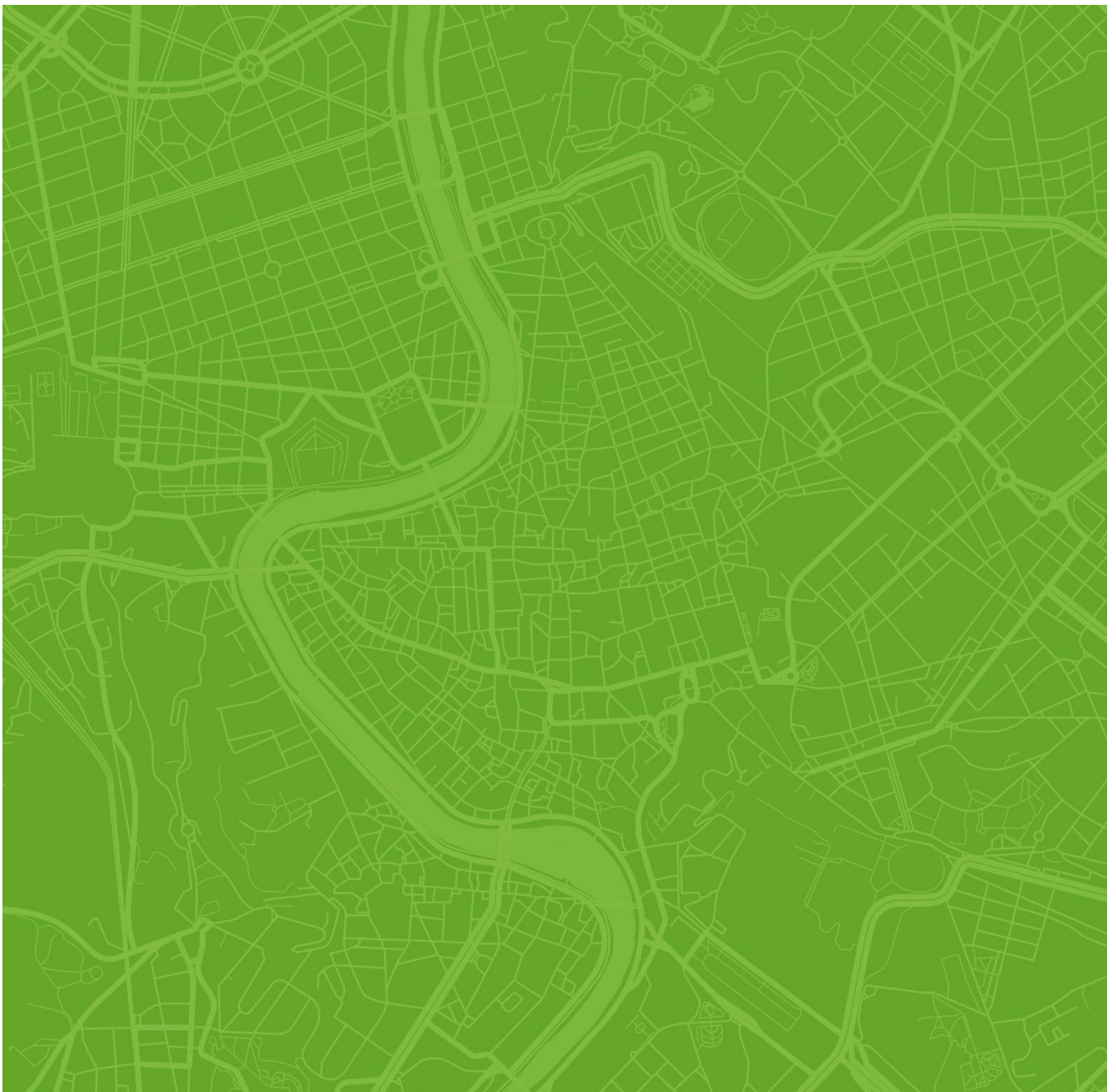
HMP Werrington Solar Farm

Historic environment opinion

Final report

Prepared by LUC

April 2021



Mace

HMP Werrington Solar Farm Historic environment opinion

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11357

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Project background

1.1 LUC was commissioned by Mace in March 2021 to provide advice on the historic environment in relation to a proposed ground mounted solar farm on land belonging to HMP Werrington, Stoke-On-Trent, ST9 0DX.

1.2 The development proposal¹ consists of a sub-rectangular array of ground-mounted solar panels, each panel a maximum of c.3m high, surrounded by an access route and fenced enclosure. The Site is located approximately 135m to the south of the main prison building complex, immediately south of the playing fields. There is an existing track that facilitates access to the Site, following the prison's perimeter fence. The solar array connection will follow this access route.

1.3 This report provides a high-level appraisal of the likely changes to the historic environment associated with the proposed development on the Site and its surroundings.

Purpose of the assessment

1.4 This assessment provides a proportionate understanding of potential historic environment impacts at the site. The assessment focuses on identifying the heritage assets in and around the site and drawing broad conclusions on the likely level of risk of harm to the historic environment from the development proposal.

1.5 The output consists of a short report summarising the process and findings of the assessment, and conclusions on the potential for harm to the significance of the historic environment at and around the site.

Method and scope

Task 1: data gathering and asset identification

1.6 This included collating readily available information on the historic environment around each proposed site from sources including the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), conservation area appraisals, the local Historic

¹ Refer to Mace, Site Location XXXXXX-MAC-XX-XX-DR-A-0100 and Proposed Ground Mounted PV Generation Layout, XXXXXX-MAC-XX-XX-DR-A-0101

Environment Record where available online, historic mapping and Google Earth aerial imagery.

1.7 From this review we have identified designated and non-designated heritage assets falling within a reasonable search area of the site, including on the site itself, with the range influenced by site context / topography. A search area radius of 1km from the centre of the Site was used.

Task 2: asset scoping

1.8 Once a list of assets within the search area was established it was then subject to a scoping exercise. This identified the heritage assets within the search area which are likely to have their significance affected by the installation of a solar array (either physically affected or by changes in their setting).

1.9 We have also taken a broader look around the search area to identify any other assets that are likely to experience potentially harmful setting change. This part of the assessment was carried out using professional judgement, based on our understanding of asset types and their relationship with the surrounding landscape – for example, a registered park or garden 10km away may be at risk of effects from the reflectivity of an array, depending on orientation and relationship between the sites, but a single listed building at that distance would be unlikely to experience harm.

Task 3: summary of potential effects

1.10 The report highlights:

- the main historic environment issues likely to be encountered.
- where further assessment of individual assets would be recommended to fully understand the likely nature and scale of harm.
- where further scoping work is required to address gaps in the coverage (e.g. if HER data is not publicly available)
- each site is given a rating using a 'traffic light' approach to categorise the potential effects to the historic environment.

Task 4: Reporting

1.11 The remainder of the report is set out as follows:

- **Chapter 2** sets out the assessment of heritage assets on and around the site.
- **Chapter 3** summarises the historic environment issues and potential effects.

1.12 A 'traffic light' approach has been used to categorise the likely level of effects to the historic environment in relation to the proposed development as follows:

Table 1.1: Potential level of effects to the historic environment

	Major – likely to have significant negative effects to the historic environment
	Moderate - may have some negative effects to the historic environment, but unlikely to be significant
	Minor – unlikely to have effects to the historic environment
	Uncertain – level of effect cannot be estimated without further research

1.13 A rating level is applied to each heritage asset, then a judgment is formed on the overall, cumulative level of effect across all the assets within the conclusions. There may also be instances where potential effects cannot be assessed under the remit of Stage 1 (e.g. because a site visit would be required) and these are rated 'Uncertain'.

1.14 The following guidance documents have been taken into account in the preparation of this report:

- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. 2019. *Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)*.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA). 2017. *Standard and Guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment*.
- Historic England. 2015. *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (GPA 2)*.
- Historic England. 2017. *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (GPA 3)*.
- Historic England. 2019. *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*.

Task 5: Revision of conclusions following mitigation

1.15 Detailed landscape design proposals were developed in parallel with the initial historic environment assessment process. The assessment was revisited to take account of the effect of these measures on the historic environment, and to report the residual level of effect resulting from them. These

are shown as a separate column in the assessment table, 2.1, and summarised as an addendum to the Conclusions section.

Limitations and exclusions

1.16 The assessment is based on an indicative location and design of the solar PV panels and associated infrastructure only. Therefore, only 'in-principle' potential issues and risks can be highlighted.

1.17 There is no detailed analysis of impact on individual assets and, as a result, no recommendations on avoidance, minimisation or mitigation of harm can be made at this initial stage. This would form part of any stage 2 detailed assessments.

1.18 Heritage assets identified include those designated and non-designated assets which can be reasonably identified from publicly available sources including:

- Historic England's National Heritage List (NHLE)
- Heritage Gateway²
- Staffordshire County Council Heritage online mapping
- Local council online information sources including conservation area appraisals and local lists.

1.19 The HER data held on Heritage Gateway may not be up to date.

1.20 There has been no consideration of archaeological potential.

1.21 The scope of the brief at this stage is only to identify high-level issues and risks to the historic environment. Detailed Historic Environment Record (HER) data has not been obtained given the high-level nature of this report. Data has not been interrogated in detail to form an in-depth understanding of asset significance. This would be required if further stages of more detailed assessment were carried out.

1.22 The work in this report is based entirely on desk review of information. No site visits have been undertaken at this stage.

² <https://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/Gateway/>

Chapter 2

Historic environment appraisal

The site

2.1 HMP Werrington is a young offender institution (YOI) for young people ages 15 to 18, accommodating over 100 individuals. It is located approximately 200m from the A52 on the southern outskirts of Werrington, a village within the Staffordshire Moorlands, approximately 5.5km east of Stoke-on-Trent.

2.2 The prison opened as a Senior Detention centre in 1957. Following implementation of the Criminal Justice Act 1982 it converted to a Youth Custody Centre in 1985 and in 1988 it became a Juvenile Centre.

2.3 The Site is located immediately south of the prison playing fields in an area of undeveloped agricultural land.

Baseline data

Designated assets

2.4 There are no designated heritage assets – World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, historic battlefields, or registered parks and gardens – within the Site.

2.5 The nearest designated asset is the grade II listed Milepost at SJ 943 475 [NHLE ref: 1374659] which stands approximately 150m northeast of the prison on the side of the A52.

2.6 No other designated heritage assets have been identified within the study area.

Non-designated assets

2.7 Heritage Gateway records a variety of non-designated heritage assets within the vicinity of the prison. This includes the findspots for a possible lithic working site [HER ref: 00547] and a sandstone head of unknown date [HER ref: 01622].

2.8 The majority of non-designated heritage assets within the study area relate to the rural and transport history of the area. This includes: Werrington windmill [HER ref: 00546]; Hanley and Bucknall turnpike road [HER ref: 58477]; Withystakes Gate tollhouse [HER ref: 55862]; and two farms, Armshead Farm [HER ref: 57787] and Upperhouse Farm [HER ref: 57481].

Aerial imagery and historic mapping

2.9 Google Earth current aerial imagery and a selection of historic OS maps were reviewed. Historic mapping shows the development of Werrington from a small village into the denser settlement it is today. This includes a school and hospital in the location of the current prison from at least the end of the 19th century which has undergone several expansions in the last century.³ The agricultural landscape surrounding the village comprises irregular field patterns.

Site development and context

2.10 The earliest evidence of human activity in the vicinity of the village dates to the late Bronze Age or early Iron Age, with a possible flint working site recorded in the grounds of the prison complex [ref: 00547]. A red sandstone carved head has also been found nearby [ref: 01622], along Ash Bank Road, however this object is undated.

2.11 The area to the immediate north east of the prison contained the pre-1800's settlement from which Werrington grew around a windmill constructed around 1730 which stood at the highest point in the village, dominating the skyline.

2.12 Running through the historic centre of the village, a turnpike road (or toll road) was established in 1771 to connect Hanley in the west to Bucknall, Cellarhead and Weston Coyney in the east, with the current A52 largely following the route of the original road. In total, the 10.6 mile road had six main toll gates and three side gates with the income paid by road users used to repair and improve the road, especially important when high quality roads were vital for the transport of light weight high-value goods. With the village located on this main route, a toll house appeared in the 19th century at Withystakes Gate on the eastern outskirts which acted as a location to collect payment, displaying a toll board and acting as a place to rest for the pike men. Those built in the early 19th century often had a distinctive bay front to give the pike man a clear view of the road, with the tollhouse today still having its prominent porch built in a vernacular style.

2.13 By the end of the 19th century, the village remained relatively rural, with 2nd edition OS mapping depicting the turnpike road, the windmill, an inn, a smithy, various farmsteads and a school in the location of the current HMP Werrington.⁴ Although not depicted in mapping and now disappeared, a range of small industries existed in the vicinity until the early part of the 20th century including quarrying, coal mining, weaving and nail making.⁵ Being a rural community, the dominant industry was farming which is best understood

through the preservation of small rectilinear fields, planned enclosures enclosed by stone walls and their associated historic farmsteads to the south of Werrington.

2.14 Rapid expansion of Werrington began in the inter-war period was driven by two factors; firstly, when the Meigh family broke up and sold their Ash Hall estate and secondly when power, sewage, and transport services expanded.⁶ This transformed the small rural village into a self-sufficient community with a range of facilities appearing in the past century for the growing population including a village hall, leisure facilities and a new school. In 1955 the industrial school was purchased by the Prison Commissioners. Two years later it opened as a Senior Detention Centre. The ground to the immediate south of the prison buildings has been developed for recreational use including a football pitches. It appears that some historic elements of the school survive within the prison complex.

Archaeological potential

2.15 Based on the known archaeology of the area and the site's historical development, there is good potential for remains associated with the previous use of the Site as a school.

2.16 For the earlier periods, an absence of archaeology is not the same as evidence for absence and most likely represents the low number of investigations in the area rather than an absence of past human activity. Therefore, it is possible that the local authority may require further investigation of the archaeological potential of the site, should ground intrusive works be required.

2.17 Any hitherto undiscovered remains within the southern portion of the Site are likely to survive well given that the undeveloped agricultural character, although ploughing may have resulted in some vertical truncation.

³ National Library of Scotland, OS One-Inch Sheet 123 – Stoke upon Trent (Outline), Revised: 1895, Published: 1898

⁴ National Library of Scotland, OS One-Inch Sheet 123 – Stoke upon Trent (Outline), Revised: 1895, Published: 1898

⁵ Welcome to Werrington website, <http://werrington.org/index.php/home-about-werrington> [accessed 22/02/2021]

⁶ <http://werrington.org/> [accessed 22/02/2021]

Table 2.1: High-level consideration of the effect of the proposal on the historic environment

Heritage asset	Designation NHLE/SHER ref.	Summary/key facts	Impact type (physical or setting)	Potential for impact from development	Residual impact after mitigation
Milepost (at SJ 943 475)	Grade II Listed 1374659 (also in SHER – ref. 12866)	A cast iron milepost of late 19 th century or early 20 th century date located along the A52/ Ash Bank Road. Its left face is inscribed with distances to Bucknall, Hanley, Stoke, Newcastle and its right face with those to Froghall, Cheadle and Ashbourne. This asset has an important historical/ functional relationship with the road.	Setting	Minor – The asset primarily gains its significance from its fabric and relationship with the road network, which will not be affected by the proposal. Intervening development also prevents the site from having any meaningful visual relationship with the asset.	Minor (no change to level of effect)
Werrington Industrial Boy's School	Non-designated	Established in 1868 in an old farmhouse, two adjacent cottages and a barn which had been a chapel. It was entirely the conception of Mr. J. E. Davis, Stipendiary Magistrate for the Potteries. It was supported by Mr. James Edwards who contributed £200 towards the scheme. Until 1933, the School was officially an "Industrial School", but in that year the Children's Act substituted the term "Approved" for "Industrial". In 1955 it was bought by the Prison Commissioners and subsequently became a detention centre. Although much rebuilt the northern boundary wall of the prison appears to be historic as do the two buildings just south of it.	Setting	Minor - The proposal should not perceptibly affect the setting of the remaining elements of this asset due to the intervening modern prison complex.	Minor (no change to level of effect)

Heritage asset	Designation NHLE/SHER ref.	Summary/key facts	Impact type (physical or setting)	Potential for impact from development	Residual impact after mitigation
Werrington Windmill	Non-designated 00546	The remains of a probable 18 th century windmill, circular in structure and located in the highest part of Werrington. Under the same ownership as the adjacent former inn, the last miller was Mark Greatbach who is mentioned in White's Gazetteer of 1851. In 1940, the mill was converted to a Home Guard observation post who, after gutting and reconstruction, castellated it for use during World War II. It was subsequently used as the location of a telecommunications mast by the Midlands Electricity Board still present today.	Setting	Minor – This asset is located c. 440m north of the Site, which should not perceptibly affect the setting of this asset due to intervening development.	Minor (no change to level of effect)
Domain Farm, Leek Road, Werrington	Non-designated 57483	An isolated farmstead laid out around a loose, two-sided yard with detached farmhouse, orientated approx. east to west. The farmstead appears to date to at least the earlier 19 th century, as it is depicted on the 1830's 1" OS mapping. It remains extant today. This asset has a historical and functional association with its agricultural hinterland.	Setting	Moderate – The proposal may result in a perceptible change to the agricultural character of this asset's setting, as it is located c. 700m to the NW of the asset. If intervisible, some harm may result to the asset's significance although it is likely to be less than substantial. However, the level of intervisibility is unclear as the Site stands on higher ground and the intervening field boundaries include trees, which may provide some screening.	Minor – The combination of existing and proposed screening mean the site and the development are unlikely to be experienced from, or in combination with, the asset. The development will not have a perceptible effect on the significance of the asset through change to its setting.

Heritage asset	Designation NHLE/SHER ref.	Summary/key facts	Impact type (physical or setting)	Potential for impact from development	Residual impact after mitigation
Upperhouse Farm, Salters Lane, Werrington	Non-designated 57481	An isolated farmstead laid out around a loose, two-sided courtyard with detached farmhouse, orientated approx. north-south. The farmstead appears to date to at least the earlier 19 th century, with the Upper House named on the 1830's 1" OS mapping. It remains extant today and has an important historical and functional relationship with its surrounding agricultural landscape.	Setting	Moderate – The proposal may result in a perceptible change to the agricultural character of this asset's setting, as it is located c. 290m to the NE of the asset. If intervisible, some harm may result to the asset's significance although it is likely to be less than substantial. However, the level of intervisibility is unclear as the Site stands on higher ground and the intervening field boundaries include trees, which may provide some screening.	Minor – The combination of existing and proposed screening mean the site and the development are unlikely to be experienced from, or in combination with, the asset. The development will not have a perceptible effect on the significance of the asset through change to its setting.
Hanley and Bucknall Turnpike Road	Non-designated 58477/ MST22343	A turnpike toll road dating to the late 18 th century, first recorded in 1771. The 10.9 miles route connected Hanley with Bucknall, Cellarhead and Weston Coyney. The route had six main gates and three side gates. Now delineated by the A52/ Ash Bank Road. It has an historical/ functional relationship with the milestones that marked the route of the road and the toll house all constructed by the relevant turnpike trust.	Setting	Minor – This road is now the A52/ Ash Bank Road and runs east to west past the northern boundary of the prison. The proposals should not perceptibly affect the setting of this asset due to intervening development.	Minor (no change to level of effect)
Toll House, Withystakes Gate, Werrington	Non-designated 55862	Located on the Hanley and Bucknall Turnpike Road, a toll house of probable 19 th century located at Withystakes, Werrington. The original tollhouse still survives with some alterations and additions. It includes a prominent	Setting	Minor – This asset is located c. 800m to the NE of the Site. The proposals should not perceptibly affect the setting of this asset due to	Minor (no change to level of effect)

Heritage asset	Designation NHLE/SHER ref.	Summary/key facts	Impact type (physical or setting)	Potential for impact from development	Residual impact after mitigation
		porch, built in a vernacular style with rendered walls and plain tile roof. This asset has an important historical and functional with the former toll road – now the A52.		intervening development /vegetation.	

Chapter 3

Conclusions

Likelihood of effects to the historic environment

3.1 This high-level assessment has identified no known assets of archaeological interest within the Site. However, there are several listed and non-designated buildings within the 1km study area.

3.2 Two non-designated assets – Domain Farm and Upperhouse Farm - have been identified as having the potential to experience change to their significance as a result of the proposals. If experienced, adverse effects would take the form of visual intrusion of an area of development, consisting of horizontal, linear, geometric forms and potentially obtrusive reflectivity, out of character with the landform and historic land-use forming the historic setting to the assets. The precise level of effect is unclear without fully understanding the relationship between the Site and the assets, but given the nature of the proposals, the change is likely to result in less than substantial harm (NPPF paragraph 196) to the assets' significance, possibly reducing to negligible or no harm if there is very limited or no intervisibility.

3.3 No effects to any other built heritage assets in the study area are anticipated due to intervening development and vegetation.

3.4 Absence of investigations in the area means that there is little known archaeology. If archaeological remains are present, they could be affected by the proposals. However, ground intrusive works should be minimal given that the proposed solar arrays are ground mounted and the only intrusive works relate to the connection route to the existing switchboard, fencing and the access route.

3.5 Taking an overall view of the likelihood of harm to the significance of the historic environment, a **Moderate** overall level of effect has been identified.

Addendum: residual level of effect after mitigation

3.6 The landscape design proposals (ref. drawing LUC-11357-LD-PLN-105 A) retain the existing linear hedge boundaries to the field in which the site lies, adding an additional line of native hedging along its south edge and an area of native woodland and scattered trees along the east side. The area within the ownership boundary is proposed to be planted as species-rich grassland.

3.7 The proposal preserves the existing landscape character and will help to reduce the visibility of the site and the development in views from the south and east. As a result, the potential Moderate effects identified to two non-designated assets, Domain Farm and Upperhouse Farm, are reduced to Minor. The level of effect to other nearby assets would not change. The overall residual level of effect is therefore **Minor**.

Chapter 3
Conclusions

HMP Werrington Solar Farm
April 2021