



GS VOGT LTD

HAWTHORN FARM SOLAR FARM

**TECHNICAL NOTE: REVIEW OF VISUAL MATTERS IN RELATION INTERVISIBILITY
OF THE SITE WITH SCROPTON VILLAGE AND IDENTIFIED HERITAGE ASSETS**

OCTOBER 2021

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1 This Technical Note has been prepared to provide additional information on visual matters requested by the case officer in the determination of a re-submitted planning application (LPA reference DMPA/2021/0315) for a proposed solar scheme on a site in Scropton, Derbyshire.
- 1.1.2 Specifically, this Note provides a review of the visual context of and intervisibility between the Site and Scropton. This includes a discussion of views from within the Site towards the village, from Scropton Road towards the Site, and with identified heritage assets. It also summarises the assessment of such relevant likely visual effects identified within the Landscape and Visual Appraisal; “LVA”; (Wardell Armstrong, February 2021) submitted in support of the Planning Application.
- 1.1.3 Matters relating to the heritage assets themselves (i.e., the assessment of the significance of these identified assets and the determination of the level of harm to this significance, if any, which may be experienced as a result of the proposed development) are addressed within the Wardell Armstrong report of September 2021; ‘Additional Information: Heritage Statement for the Church of St Paul and The Old Hall’.

2 VISUAL CONTEXT OF THE SITE AND ITS SETTING

- 2.1.1 The Site's surrounding context is largely rural in nature, located on low lying land associated with the River Dove. The Dove floodplain forms a fairly shallow valley in this area, running in an east-west direction, although it rises more notably to the south than it does to the north. Besides the influences of the nearby settled edge of the village, some urban elements are observed within the landscape including the route of a railway line following the river's course and set upon an embankment, the A50 dual carriageway, and a line of overhead power cables supported by a series of pylons.
- 2.1.2 With this relatively gentle local topography combined with successive features within the landscape (such as hedgerows, tree lines and settlement) that increasingly screening views, the visual extents of the Site are largely confined to circa 1-2km although in most cases these would be within 0.5km.
- 2.1.3 The LVA identified a visual envelope generally defined by the low-lying nature of the site and the very gentle topography of the local area;
- hedgerows and trees adjacent to Watery Lane to the west and north of the Site;
 - vegetative screening and embankments along the A50;
 - successive hedgerows with trees and the settlement of Hatton to the east;
 - vegetation along the River Dove and high ground at Tutbury to the south-east;
 - Settlement, hedgerow and trees along Scropton Road to the south of the Site; and
 - Tree cover and field hedgerows to the west and generally within floodplain.
- 2.1.4 Potential views are therefore primarily focused on receptors in immediate proximity and at short distance from the Site. These principally comprise footpaths at short distance and crossing the Site, and potentially a small number of residential dwellings on the northern edge of Scropton to the south / south-west of the Site.
- 2.1.5 There are occasional opportunities for marginal views from locations at medium to longer distances toward the western settled edge of Hatton, from Tutbury Hill, and from rising ground extending towards the south.

3 INTERVISIBILITY WITH THE SITE AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

3.1.1 This review of intervisibility references supplementary photo plates taken in October 2021 to illustrate views looking towards Scropton from within and in close proximity to the Site, and where relevant, the likely effects upon applicable receptors as assessed within the LVA.

3.2 Scropton Road

3.2.1 Scropton Road passes the Site to the south along an east-west course, at its closest being 100m away. To the south-west of the Site it passes through the village and is flanked by frequent dwellings, other buildings and boundary treatments. Directly to the south is a farmstead including large agricultural outbuildings with paddocks separated from the road by a hedgerow and belt of trees. To the southeast the northern side of the road is flanked by a generally continuous hedgerow (save field access points) and to the southern side is a cluster of dwellings and a factory site.

3.2.2 From Scropton Road to the southwest and south of the Site views are well enclosed by consistent settlement within the village fronting the road, or by the farmstead and tree belt effectively controlled by boundary hedgerows and there are no readily apparent opportunities for intervisibility from the road itself. Change to views experienced by road users along the highway is likely to be limited to the construction period when receptors approaching and passing the proposed access may see equipment and traffic entering and exiting the site.

3.2.3 For receptors to the south-east along the road, there may be fleeting opportunities for partial glimpses of the solar panel development via occasional breaks in the roadside hedgerow but these would not be typical and given the existing development immediately to the south of the road and the transient nature of such receptors whose focus is on the road itself it is likely that should the proposed development be visible that it would not comprise a readily discernible element of the view.

3.2.4 Plate 7 illustrates the view looking towards Scropton Road from one of the Public Rights of Way at short distance to the east of the Site where vegetation south of the paddocks adjoining the road do not provide direct impediment to views towards the road. From here, this shows that even during the winter months the road remains well screened by the single intervening hedgerow to the northern roadside and demonstrates the prominence of the factory together with nearby properties. Slightly further west the Site benefits from additional intervening hedgerows and tree lines.

3.3 Scropton Village

- 3.3.1 The intervisibility of the Site with the settled edge of Scropton is illustrated in the Additional Photo Plates 8 to 10.
- 3.3.2 From the eastern half of the Site; within which the majority of the proposed solar panels would be situated; southward views towards existing development associated with the village are confined to large farm outbuildings and a bounding concrete wall and hedgerow, together with the factory beyond to the southeast (Photo Plate 8).
- 3.3.3 Plate 9 illustrates the typical views looking towards the settled edge as experienced from the west of the Site. This demonstrates that the boundary hedge almost entirely screens the Site from the village with the exception of breaks for field access. Plate 10 is situated beyond the Site to the west but illustrates the properties with potential views looking towards the Site. These comprise seven or eight dwellings on the north side of Scropton Road to the south / southwest of the Site with rear elevation views, or possible oblique or partial views. In addition there are six terraced properties fronting towards the Site access on Scropton Road although views to the Site itself are marginal / partial and notably restricted by buildings on the northern side of the road.
- 3.3.4 The LVA acknowledges that several properties may experience change of an adverse nature as a result of the proposed development and provides an assessment of the level of such effects. It also notes that – on the basis of the constitution and directness of the available views – that these could vary between slight to moderate and moderate to substantial adverse. Due to the orientation of these dwellings, proximity to the Site and intervening elements within the view, it is considered that only three properties (The Wilderness, Millstone House and the farmhouse south of the Site) with rear elevation views directly towards the Site would be subject to the greatest effects, with a further two or three experiencing slight to moderate adverse effects.
- 3.3.5 The remaining five or 6, plus four of the 6 terraces opposite the site access and one or two properties to the south-east would be subject to lesser effects due to distance, screening, orientation, limitations on rear elevation view opportunities, or the presence of existing buildings forming part of their current views.
- 3.3.6 The mitigation proposed includes the management of the existing southern hedgerow to a height of 3m which is comparable to the heights of the proposed solarpanels and associated structures. This would serve to provide some effective screening of the scheme particularly for the dwellings at increasing distances from the Site.

3.4 The Church of St Paul (NHLE Reference 1096553)

- 3.4.1 This church is situated towards the core of the village, on the south side of Scropton Road. Its setting includes a tea room to the east, existing dwellings to the west and north, and scattered established vegetation and trees, including along the railway line at short distance to the rear of the church to the south. As such, it is noted to have a well settled context with views looking north also screened by the line of trees along the boundary of the churchyard to Scropton Road.
- 3.4.2 The proposals would introduce a solar farm 280m north-east beyond intervening residential development. In terms of views from the church towards the Site the solar farm would be visible from the top stage of the bell tower but it would not be visible from the main body of the church or from within the churchyard.
- 3.4.3 Considering views back towards the church, although the church tower can currently be observed from gaps in the southern hedgerow boundary of the Site and from footpaths to the west, the tower is similarly visible within numerous views from around the village, and there is no identified intervisibility between the Site nor any direct maintained open lines of sight between the two.

3.5 The Old Hall (NHLE Reference 1280826)

- 3.5.1 The Old Hall lies on the northern side of Scropton Lane with its principal elevations looking east and west. It sits opposite the tea rooms and is closely flanked by modern (late 20th century) housing. Given the situation of agricultural structures to the north of Scropton Road to the rear of existing housing it is not considered that there is any readily identifiable visual interrelationship between the Old Hall and the Site. The structure has a well-developed immediate context and views of the proposed development are not considered likely.

4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The visual extents of the Site are largely confined to circa 1-2km although in most cases these would be within 0.5km. The principal receptors comprise footpath users at short distance and crossing the Site, and residents from a small number of dwellings on the northern edge of Scropton to the south / south-west of the Site.
- 4.1.2 From Scropton Road, to the southwest and south of the Site views are well enclosed by built form and curtilage vegetation or curtailed by roadside hedgerows, and as such there are no readily apparent opportunities for intervisibility between road users and the proposed development within the Site itself. Equally, the road is not apparent in views from within the Site which is typically enclosed by boundary hedges. Any views of activity from Scropton Road would likely be confined to construction at the Site access and vehicular movements.
- 4.1.3 In terms of intervisibility with Scropton itself, the boundary hedge almost entirely screens the Site from the village with the exception of breaks for field access, although a small number of properties were identified as having the potential to experience change of an adverse nature as a result of the proposed development. The mitigation proposed includes the management of the existing southern hedgerow to a height of 3m which is comparable to the heights of the proposed solar panels and associated structures. This would serve to provide some effective screening of the scheme. Views from some of the identified properties would be further impeded by virtue of their orientation relative to the Site, increasing distance, and the presence of neighbouring or intervening buildings within these views.
- 4.1.4 St Paul's Church has a well settled context enclosed by surrounding built form and landscape elements with views looking north screened by the line of trees along the boundary of the churchyard to Scropton Road. Although the church tower can currently be observed from the Site via gaps in the southern hedgerow boundary of the Site and from footpaths to the west, the tower is similarly visible within numerous views from around the village, and there is no identified intervisibility between the Site nor any direct maintained open lines of sight between the two.
- 4.1.5 Old Hall is on the northern side of Scropton Road flanked by existing dwellings. Given the structure has a well-developed immediate context and the principal outlooks from the building are to east and west, views of the proposed development are not considered likely.

APPENDICES – Plates 7-10



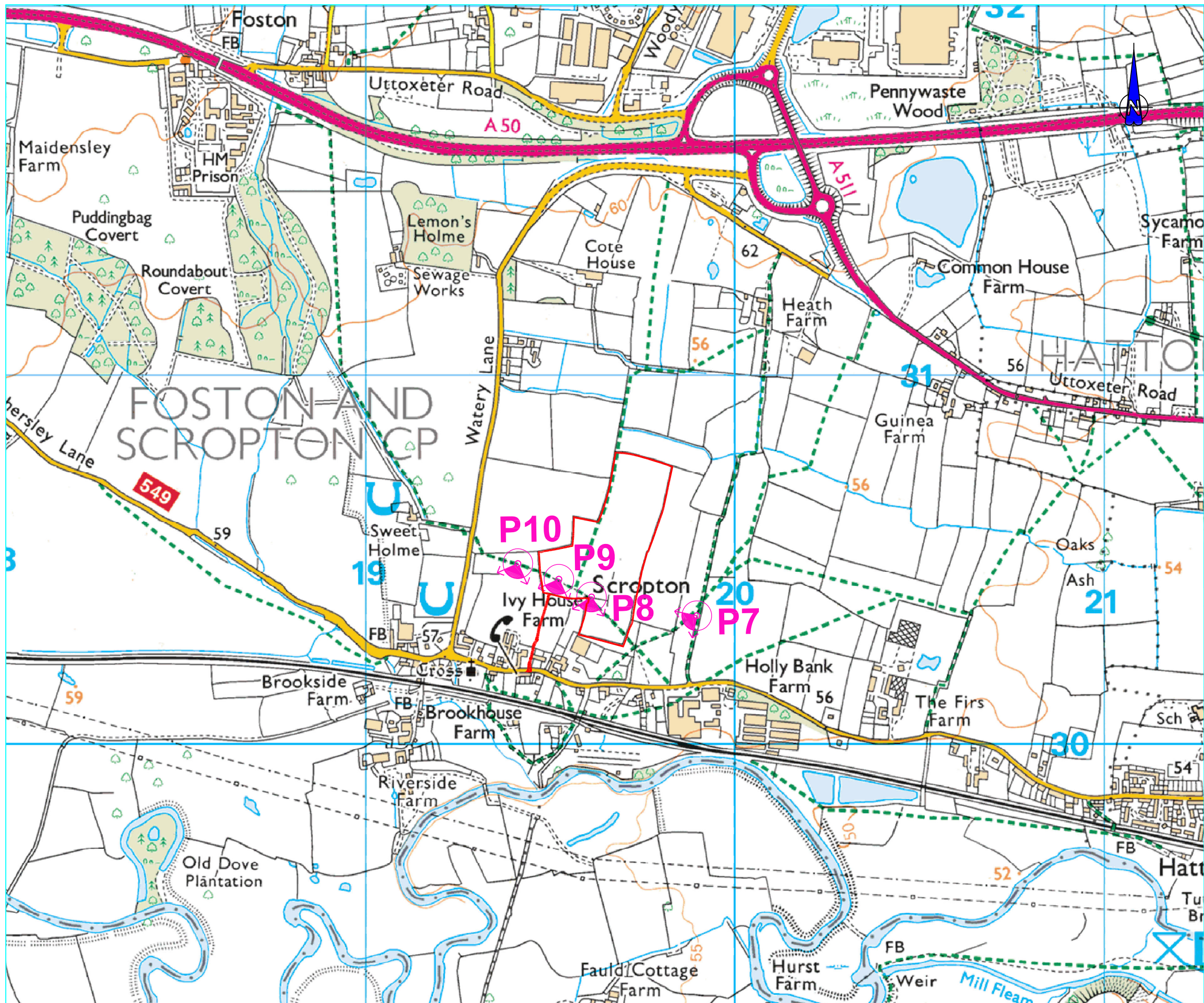
Plate 7



Plate 8







DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING

- KEY
- Site boundary
 - Photo plate and reference

A	Application boundary revision	02.02.21				
REVISION	DETAILS	DATE	DRN	CHKD	APPD	

CLIENT
G S VOGT LIMITED

PROJECT
HAWTHORN SOLAR FARM

DRAWING TITLE
ADDITIONAL PHOTO PLATE LOCATION PLAN

DRG No.	GM10971-028	REV	-
DRG SIZE	A3	SCALE	1:10,000
DRAWN BY	MB	CHECKED BY	KMS
		DATE	Oct 2021
		APPROVED BY	KMS

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