Appendix C: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Introduction

Background and purpose of the study

In November 2019, LUC was commissioned by Cotswolds District Council, to undertake a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (LSA) to wind turbine and solar PV development for those areas within the District that falls outside the Cotswold AONB.

This Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (LSA) was prepared alongside an assessment of the technical potential for wind and solar energy developments within the District. The results of the study aim to provide an indication of landscape sensitivity across the District, so that potential landscape opportunities and constraints can be considered in addition to the technical opportunities/constraints for these developments.

This section sets out the policy context for the landscape sensitivity assessment at a European, national and local level, followed by the methodology and a summary of the assessment findings.

Policy context

European Landscape Convention

The European Landscape Convention (ELC) came into force in the UK in March 2007. It established the need to recognise landscape in law; to develop landscape policies dedicated to the protection, management and planning of landscapes; and to establish procedures for the participation of the general public and other stakeholders in the creation and implementation of landscape policies. The ELC remains relevant despite the UK's departure from the EU.

The ELC definition of 'landscape' recognises that all landscapes matter, be they ordinary, degraded or outstanding:
"Landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors."

Signing up to the ELC means that the UK is committed on the one hand to protect, manage and develop our landscapes and on the other to raise landscape awareness, involvement and enjoyment amongst local and visiting communities. Landscape character is defined by the ELC as "*a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse*".

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The Government published an updated and revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in February 2019, which sets out the environmental, social and economic planning policies for England. Central to the NPPF policies is a

presumption in favour of sustainable development, that development should be planned for positively and individual proposals should be approved wherever possible.

One of the overarching objectives that underpins the NPPF is set out in Paragraph 8: “an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.”

The NPPF also makes explicit reference to the need for defined strategic policies that make sufficient provision for climate change mitigation and adaptation and landscape and green infrastructure (paragraph 20).

The NPPF is explicit in its requirement for development plan policies to protect and where appropriate, enhance the landscape. Paragraph 180 states that “planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes” and “recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”.

Specifically with regard to renewable and low carbon development, the NPPF states in Paragraph 160, that to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, local plans should provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts).

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

Further guidance is provided in the NPPG on how local planning authorities can identify suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy. It states that:

"…when considering impacts, assessments can use tools to identify where impacts are likely to be acceptable. For example, landscape character areas could form the basis for considering which technologies at which scale may be appropriate in different types of location…".

This study uses the framework of Landscape Character Types and Areas for the landscape sensitivity assessment as set out in the Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment (2006) .

Local Plan Policy

The Cotswolds District Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in 2018. This document sets out the development plan for the district as well as policies to provide clear guidance on how the Council will respond to development proposals.

The Local Plan is clear about its commitment to supporting measures which mitigate against climate change. In paragraph 11.10.7 it states:
"The Council will support low or zero-carbon energy generating proposals that

contribute positively to the aim of reducing CO2 emissions although this support does not automatically override environmental protections. Proposals will need to fully consider the impact of the development and any associated infrastructure on amenity and landscape (including local topography), any cumulative impact, and demonstrate engagement with local communities."

Policies

The District's commitment to supporting renewables is reflected in **Policy INF10**: **Renewable and low carbon energy development**

"Proposals for the generation of energy from renewable or low carbon sources will be permitted, provided it is demonstrated that:

a) any adverse impacts individually and/or cumulatively, including; visual amenity; landscape character; heritage assets; biodiversity; water quality and flood risk; highways; residential amenity, including shadow flicker, air quality and noise, are or can be satisfactorily mitigated;

b) it is of an appropriate type, scale, and design for the location and setting;

c) it is compatible with surrounding land uses, such as military activities; and

d) it avoids using the best and most versatile agricultural land unless justified by compelling evidence."

Conservation of landscape character within the District is supported in **Policy EN4: The wider natural and historic landscape** which states:

- " Development will be permitted where it does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of Cotswold District or neighbouring areas.
- Proposals will take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness. They will be expected to enhance, restore and better manage the natural and historic landscape, and any significant landscape features and elements, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement patterns and heritage assets."

The Cotswolds AONB (now known as the Cotswold National Landscape)

The Cotswold National Landscape adopted a Position Statement on Renewable Energy in 2023, which states that the Board has made a commitment to identify a scenario which allows us to endorse a path to Net Zero emissions (or lower) by 2050 (or sooner) and that "*Renewable energy will play an important role in mitigating the impacts of climate change and achieving Net Zero in the Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) and its setting."*

The position statement identifies six main types of renewable energy: heat pumps, biomass, hydropower, solar energy, wind energy and battery storage. The statement

notes that the Board would be "*supportive of all of these forms of renewable energy at a small-scale, provided that relevant considerations have been adequately addressed. Large-scale forms of renewable energy are unlikely to be compatible with the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), such as the CNL.*"

With regard to Large-scale wind and solar energy development, it states that these are "*unlikely to be compatible with conserving and enhancing natural beauty of the CNL. However, consideration should be given to the sensitivity of the landscape to the type and scale of development being proposed, as this may vary from one part of the National Landscape to another, depending on factors such as topography.*"

It also states that "*National planning policy encourages the identification of 'suitable areas' for renewable energy in local planning authority (LPA) development plans. For wind energy, this is a requirement. We support the identification of suitable areas for wind and solar energy in LPA development plans, where this is underpinned by landscape sensitivity assessments and by relevant constraints and technical considerations.*"

Whilst the position statement does not represent development plan policy, it will be treated as a material consideration and is likely to hold weight in the planning decision process.

Methodology

This section summarises the method that was used to undertake the landscape sensitivity assessment.

Scope of assessment

This assessment focuses on the potential landscape issues associated with onshore wind energy and ground-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) developments.

The results of the assessment (see Section 1.3 below) provide an initial indication of the relative landscape sensitivities of different areas within the Cotswolds District (outside the AONB) to wind and solar PV energy developments. These results should be interpreted alongside the detailed information provided in separate assessment profiles (**Appendix 3**).

Spatial Framework

The assessment uses the spatial framework of Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and components Landscape Character Areas (LCA) identified by the Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment (2006) (see **Figure 2.1**).

There are five LCTs that fall within Cotswolds District but outside the Cotswolds AONB and these landscapes are the focus of this assessment.

Landscape designations

A significant proportion of the District is included within the nationally designated Cotswolds Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The landscape inside the AONB falls outside the scope of this assessment, however, the proximity of areas to this designated landscape, is relevant to the assessment. The District also contains locally designated Special Landscape Areas (SLA). The location of these protected landscapes in the context of the District is shown on **Figure 2.1**.

Potential effects of wind and solar energy development on landscape

In order to minimise effects on the landscape through siting and design, it is important to first understand the characteristics of wind and solar energy development and how they may affect the landscape. The following section describes the features of these developments and considers the potential impacts on the landscape.

In undertaking any landscape sensitivity assessment, it is necessary to acknowledge that varying attitudes to wind and solar energy development are expressed by different individuals and communities. Aesthetic perceptions can be positive or negative depending on individual attitudes to the principle and presence of renewable energy.

However, the present assessment has been based on an evaluative framework that is endorsed as good practice for studies of this nature, including via expression in national guidance and testing at Examination/Appeal. It is considered more appropriate to apply the environmental and other benefits of renewable energy, for example, as positive considerations within the overall planning balance, rather than for these benefits to modify the evaluation of landscape sensitivity per se.

Landscape effects of wind turbines

The key components of wind energy development are the wind turbines, which may be grouped together into a ‘wind farm’. The majority of wind turbines consist of horizontal axis three-bladed turbines on a steel tower (as shown in the photo below).

Wind turbines can be substantial vertical structures, and larger models will inevitably be highly visible within the landscape. The movement of the blades is a unique feature of wind energy developments, setting them apart from other tall structures in the landscape such as masts or pylons. Wind energy development may affect the landscape in the following ways:

construction of large turbines and associated infrastructure may result in direct loss of landscape features;

wind turbines are tall vertical features that may alter the perception of a landscape, potentially affecting the apparent scale of landforms;

movement of rotor blades may affect characteristics of stillness and solitude, as well as drawing the eye to turbines which may be a relatively small feature in the landscape;

the presence of turbines may increase the perceived human influence on the landscape, particularly in terms of overt modern development, and this can particularly affect landscapes which have a strong sense of naturalness or wild qualities, or which form a setting to heritage assets;

wind turbines, even at relatively small sizes, can appear large in the context of human-scale features such as domestic buildings and trees – at the largest scales, turbines can be perceived as 'overwhelming' when close to residential properties;

turbines on skylines may compete with existing landmark features for prominence where prominent skylines or landmark features are characteristic of the landscape; and

in order to be as efficient as possible, turbines are often placed in elevated locations, where they may affect views from wide areas.

Landscape effects of solar energy development

Field-scale solar PV developments comprise arrays of photovoltaic panels, mounted on linear racks up to 3m high. These are usually positioned at a fixed angle of 20-40 degrees from the horizontal, facing south, and sited in parallel rows with gaps between the rows for access and to prevent shading of adjacent rows. The actual arrangement of the arrays within the landscape varies from scheme-to-scheme (i.e. regular layouts versus more varied and irregular, depending on the site situation). Although generally, layouts of the solar arrays tend to be in regular patterns. The solar arrays are often accompanied by on-site inverter buildings, security fencing and CCTV cameras.

Solar energy developments can be substantial horizontal structures and can be highly visible and contribute to considerable change in the character of the landscape. Solar energy development may affect the landscape in the following ways:

- construction of solar panels and associated infrastructure may result in direct loss of landscape features such as hedgerows, woodland, farmland and other habitats;
- solar energy developments can cover large areas and the presence of solar panels may increase the perceived human influence on the landscape, particularly in terms of overt modern development, and this can particularly affect landscapes which have a strong sense of naturalness, or which form a setting to heritage assets; and
- at certain times of day and from certain viewing angles solar panels can reflect the sunlight, causing glint and glare which can draw the eye.

Type and scale of developments considered

The tables below set out the range of development scenarios covered in this assessment, based on bandings that reflect those that are most likely to be put forward by developers (now and in the future) in Cotswold District.

Wind turbines

The wind energy landscape sensitivity assessment applies to all forms of wind turbines, although it has been based on the most common horizontal axis three-bladed turbine. The assessment considers the suitability of different turbine heights (to blade tip).

The wind turbine heights referred to in the assessment are set out in **Table 2.1** below:

Table 2.1: Wind turbine development sizes:	
Turbine Height (to blade tip)	Turbine scale banding
Up to 25m	Very small wind installation
25m to 60m	Small wind installation
60m to 100m	Medium wind installation
100m to 150m	Large wind installation
150m to 200m	Very large wind installation

Field Scale Solar PV

The size of solar energy development can also differ greatly in terms of power output and area covered. Schemes in the UK range in area from less than 1 hectare, up to well over 100 hectares. The sizes used for this assessment are set out in **Table 2.2** below.

Table 2.2: Solar PV development sizes	
Solar PV size	Solar PV scale bandings
Up to 1 hectare	Very small solar PV installation
1 to 5 hectares	Small solar PV installation
5 to 20 hectares	Medium solar PV installation
20 to 50 hectares	Large solar PV installation
50 to 120 hectares	Very large solar PV installation

Evaluating landscape sensitivity

This landscape sensitivity assessment was undertaken in line with Natural England guidance ‘An approach to landscape sensitivity assessment '(June 2019) as well as building upon LUC’s considerable experience from previous and ongoing studies of a

similar nature. The Natural England approach includes the following definition of landscape sensitivity, which has been adopted for this assessment:

“Landscape sensitivity may be regarded as a measure of the resilience, or robustness, of a landscape to withstand specified change arising from development types or land management practices, without undue negative effects on the landscape and visual baseline and their value.”

Assessment criteria

Landscape sensitivity assessment requires judgements on both landscape susceptibility (how vulnerable the landscape is to change from the type being assessed, in this case solar PV and wind energy developments) and landscape value (consensus about importance, which can be recognised through designation as well as through descriptions within the 2014 Landscape Character Assessment).

The selection of landscape sensitivity indicators (‘criteria’) for this study is informed by the attributes of landscape that could be affected by solar and wind energy development. These consider the ‘landscape’, ‘visual’ and 'perceptual' aspects of sensitivity. Their selection is also based on current best practice and experience of LUC in undertaking similar studies elsewhere in the UK.

Table 2.4 and Table 2.5 provide guidance and examples of higher and lower sensitivity features/attributes for applying the criteria in the Cotswolds, for solar PV and wind energy, respectively. The assessments present a commentary against each criterion to inform the judgements on levels of sensitivity. It is important to note that the relative importance of each criterion varies between landscapes (due to differences in landscape character). The initial stage of the assessment involved a thorough desk-based study drawing on sources of spatial and descriptive information regarding the landscape (see Appendix xx). This was supplemented by field survey work undertaken by a team of landscape professionals to verify the findings.

Making an overall judgement on landscape sensitivity

Once the landscape sensitivity criteria were assessed individually, the results were translated into overall scores of landscape sensitivity (see **Table 2.3**) for the different bandings of solar PV and wind energy developments. This was undertaken for every LCT and the results are shown in the individual assessment profiles. If any component LCAs within the LCT were judged to be of higher/lower landscape sensitivity (due to local variations), this is accounted for in the assessments and results.

Table 2.5: The sensitivity scale	
High (H)	Key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are highly vulnerable to change from wind and solar energy development.

	Such development is likely to result in a significant change in character.
Moderate-high (M-H)	Key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change from wind and solar energy development. There may be some limited opportunity to accommodate wind turbines/ solar panels without significantly changing landscape character. Great care would be needed in siting and design.
Moderate (M)	Some of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. Although the landscape may have some ability to absorb wind and solar energy development, it is likely to cause a degree of change in character. Care would be needed in siting and design.
Low-moderate (L-M)	Fewer of the key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are vulnerable to change. The landscape is likely to be able to accommodate wind and solar energy development with limited change in character. Care is still needed when siting and designing to avoid adversely affecting key characteristics.
Low (L)	Key characteristics and qualities of the landscape are robust in that they can withstand change from the introduction of wind turbines and solar panels. The landscape is likely to be able to accommodate wind and solar energy development without a significant change in character. Care is still needed when siting and designing these developments to ensure best fit with the landscape.

The five defined levels of landscape sensitivity form stages on a continuum, rather than clearly separated categories. Any given landscape may or may not fit neatly into one category, and an element of professional judgement is required.

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of landscape sensitivity is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria').

There may be one criterion that has a particularly strong influence on landscape sensitivity which increases the overall sensitivity score (an example might be a landscape with a prominent/highly visible skyline, or particularly high levels of tranquillity or remoteness). There may also be criteria that produce conflicting scores. For example, a settled landscape, while containing greater human influence

(indicating a lower sensitivity), will also include more human scale features that could be affected by large-scale wind turbines (indicating a higher sensitivity). Conversely, a more remote landscape will lack the human scale features but is likely to present a higher sensitivity from a perceptual point of view. In these situations, a professional judgement is made on overall sensitivity, taking all criteria into account in the context of their importance to landscape character and quality overall.

Limitations of landscape sensitivity assessment

It is important to note that Landscape Sensitivity Assessment is strategic in nature and therefore should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of a certain location for a particular development. The LSA does not replace the requirement for more detailed assessment and all proposals will need to be assessed on their own merits through the planning process, including – where required – through proposal-specific Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs). It is also important to note that this assessment does not provide guidance on the wide range of other planning issues that may need to be considered as part of the preparation and determination of planning applications for renewable energy developments.

Table 2.4: Criteria and guidance for assessing landscape sensitivity to wind energy development				
Landform and scale (including sense of openness / enclosure)				
A smooth gently sloping or flat landform is likely to be less sensitive to wind energy development than a landscape with a dramatic rugged landform, distinct landform features (including prominent hills and valleys) or pronounced undulations. Larger scale landforms are likely to be less sensitive than smaller scale landforms - because turbines may appear out of scale, detract from visually important landforms or appear visually confusing (due to turbines being at varying heights) in the latter types of landscapes. Landscapes with frequent human scale features that are traditional of the landscape, such as stone farmsteads and small farm woodlands may be particularly sensitive to larger turbines. This is because large features such as wind turbines may dominate smaller scale traditional features within the landscape.				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
An extensive lowland flat landscape or elevated plateau, often a larger scale landform. A landscape that is open.	A simple gently rolling landscape, likely to be a medium-large scale landform.	An undulating landscape, perhaps also incised by valleys, likely to be a medium scale landform, with hidden areas as well as some visible slopes	A landscape with distinct landform features, and/or irregular in topographic appearance (which may be large in scale), or a smaller scale landform. The landscape may contain prominent, visible slopes.	A landscape with a rugged landform or dramatic landform features (which may be large in scale), or a small scale or intimate landform. The landform may be very steep with exposed, visible slopes e.g. narrow valleys

Landcover (including field and settlement pattern)				
Simple, regular landscapes with extensive areas of consistent land cover are likely to be less sensitive to wind energy development than landscapes with more complex or irregular land cover patterns, smaller and / or irregular field sizes,				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
An open, continuous landscape with uniform landcover and lacking in human-scale features, or an urban or 'brownfield' landscape.	A landscape of large open fields, with little variety in land cover. A landscape which contains areas of brownfield sites or urban influences.	A landscape with medium sized fields (or a mix of modern and historic enclosure), some variations in land cover. A rural landscape which may contain some brownfield sites or urban influences	A landscape with irregular or small-scale fields, variety in land cover. A rural landscape, perhaps with some areas of semi-natural land cover.	A landscape with a strong variety in land cover, complex field patterns, and / or semi-natural land cover. The field pattern may be characterised by small-scale, ancient fields.

Historic landscape character				
Landscapes which contain important archaeological or historic features are likely to have a higher level of sensitivity to wind energy development. Historical features may be in the form of historic land cover types and field systems, areas of buried archaeology, historic designed landscapes such as Registered Parks and Gardens or structures designated for their historical significance. Landscapes which make a significant contribution to the setting of a historical feature or landscapes may also have higher sensitivity to wind energy development. Landscapes that are primarily of modern influence and origin will have a lower sensitivity to wind energy development.				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
A landscape with relatively few historic features important to the character of the area, no designated heritage assets and little time depth (i.e. large intensively farmed fields).	A landscape with a small number of historic features important to the character area and some time depth.	A landscape with some visible historic features of importance to character, and a variety of time depths.	A landscape with many historic features important to the area and a strong sense of time depth.	A landscape with a high density of historic features (many designations) important to the character of the area and great time depth (i.e. piecemeal enclosure with irregular boundaries, ridge and furrow)

Visual character (including skylines / intervisibility)				
The relative visibility of a landscape may influence its sensitivity to wind development. An elevated landscape such as a hill range or plateau, which is viewed from other landscapes, may be more sensitive than a landscape with limited visibility. Landscapes which have important visual relationships with other areas, for example where one area provides a backdrop to a neighbouring area (which may be a designated landscape such as the Cotswolds AONB), are considered more sensitive than those with few visual relationships. The extent of inter-visibility may be modified by the importance of these views to appreciation of the landscape, and whether adjacent landscapes provide a setting for one another. Prominent and distinctive and/or undeveloped skylines, or skylines with important landmark features, are likely to be more sensitive to wind energy development because turbines may detract from these skylines as features in the landscape or draw attention away from existing landform or landmark features on skylines. Important landmark features on the skyline might include historic features or monuments as well as landforms. Where skylines are affected by development, e.g. through the presence of electricity pylons, the addition of turbines may lead to visual confusion. Therefore, the presence of existing development cannot always assume a lower sensitivity to development.				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
A self-contained landscape, or one with weak connections to neighbouring areas. A landscape in which skylines are not prominent, and there are no important landmark features on the skyline.	A landscape with limited connections to neighbouring areas, and/or where adjacent landscapes are not visually related. A landscape in which skylines are simple, flat or gently convex and/or there are very few landmark features on	A landscape which has some intervisibility with neighbouring areas, and/or where relationships between adjacent landscapes are of more importance. A landscape with some prominent skylines, but these are not particularly distinctive –	A landscape which is intervisible with several areas, and/or where adjacent areas are strongly interrelated. A landscape with prominent skylines that may form an important backdrop to views from settlements or important viewpoints,	A landscape which has important visual relationships with one or more neighbouring areas. It or the landscape(s) it is visible from is designated as AONB. A landscape with prominent or distinctive undeveloped skylines,

	the skyline – other skylines in adjacent LCTs may be more prominent.	there may be some landmark features on the skyline.	and/or with important landmark features.	or with particularly important landmark features on skylines.
Perceptual qualities				
Landscapes that are relatively remote or tranquil tend to be more sensitive to wind energy development, since turbines may be perceived as intrusive. Landscapes which are relatively free from overt human activity and disturbance, and which have a perceived naturalness or a strong feel of traditional rurality, will therefore be more sensitive. Qualities such as tranquillity can be found even in settled areas, where the influence of overtly modern development is reduced. Wind energy development will generally be less intrusive in landscapes which are strongly influenced by modern development, including settlement, industrial and commercial development and infrastructure.				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
A landscape with much human activity and modern development, such as industrial areas.	A rural or semi-rural landscape with much human activity and dispersed modern development, such as settlement fringes.	A rural landscape with some modern development and human activity, such as intensive farmland.	A more naturalistic landscape and/or one with little modern human influence and development.	A tranquil landscape with little or no overt sign of modern human activity and development.

Scenic and special qualities				
Landscapes that have a high scenic quality and exhibit a strong character or sense of place will be more sensitive than landscapes of low scenic quality or weak sense of place. Scenic qualities can include contrasts and combinations of landform and landcover which together contribute to attractive views. Scenic qualities may be recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment or may be referenced in tourist material. Scenic viewpoints may be marked on Ordnance Survey maps. Scenic quality is also considered in the field. Landscapes that are formally designated for their scenic quality (including those designated as SLA) are likely to be more sensitive to development than undesignated areas. The degree of sensitivity depends on the extent to which the special qualities of the designated landscape could be affected by the development type. Special qualities could include landscapes that are rare (rather than commonplace), landscapes that are in good condition, or have natural or heritage conservation interest (indicated by designation) or are valued for cultural associations or for leisure and recreation.				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
A landscape without attractive character, with no pleasing combinations of features, visual contrasts and/or dramatic elements, such as industrial areas or derelict land.	A landscape of limited attractive character, with few pleasing combinations of features, visual contrasts and/or dramatic elements.	A landscape of intermittently attractive character, with occasional pleasing combinations of features, visual contrasts and/or dramatic elements.	A landscape of attractive character, with some pleasing combinations of features, visual contrasts and/or dramatic elements, which may be recognised through designation.	A landscape of consistently attractive character, with pleasing combinations of features, visual contrasts and/or dramatic elements, which is recognised through designation.

Table 2.5: Criteria and guidance for assessing landscape sensitivity to solar PV development				
Landform and scale (including sense of openness /enclosure)				
A flat or gently undulating lowland landscape or extensive plateau is likely to be less sensitive to solar development than a landscape with prominent landforms and visible slopes. This is because arrays of solar panels will be less easily perceived in a flat landscape than on a slope, including hills and knolls, especially higher slopes. A landscape with a strong sense of enclosure (provided by land cover such as woodland, tree cover or high hedges) is likely to be less sensitive to solar PV development because these features provide screening. Landscapes of open and unenclosed character would have a higher sensitivity to field-scale solar PV development due to the lack of visual screening and less opportunities for screening mitigation without changing character.				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
An extensive lowland flat landscape or elevated plateau, often a larger scale landform. A very well enclosed landscape e.g. with fields bounded by high hedges and dense tree/woodland cover.	A simple gently rolling landscape, likely to be a medium-large scale landform. Some enclosure provided by hedges and tree/woodland cover.	An undulating landscape perhaps also incised by valleys, likely to be a medium scale landform, with hidden areas as well as some visible slopes. Some areas lacking screening by field boundaries or tree cover, whilst others might have a greater sense of enclosure	A landscape with distinct landform features, and/or irregular in topographic appearance (which may be large in scale), or a smaller scale landform. The landscape may contain prominent, visible slopes with little sense of enclosure (low, few or no	A landscape with a rugged landform or dramatic landform features (which may be large in scale), or a small scale or intimate landform. The landform may be very steep with exposed, visible slopes and no field boundaries

		owing to a denser occurrence of these features.	hedgebanks or trees /areas of woodland).	or trees to provide screening.
Land cover pattern (including field and settlement pattern)				
Since solar PV panels introduce a new land cover (of built structures), landscapes containing existing hard surfacing or built elements (e.g. urban areas, brownfield sites or large-scale horticulture) are likely to be less sensitive to field-scale solar development than highly rural or naturalistic landscapes. Landscapes with small-scale, more irregular field patterns are likely to be more sensitive to the introduction of solar development than landscapes with large, regular scale field patterns because of the risk of diluting or masking the characteristic landscape patterns. This would be particularly apparent if development takes place across a number of adjacent fields where the field pattern is small and intricate (bearing in mind that the height of panels could exceed that of a hedge).				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
A landscape with large - scale regular fields of mainly modern origin. An urban or 'brownfield' landscape.	A landscape which is mainly defined by large, modern fields or those sub-divided by non-traditional uses, e.g. horse keeping An area of large-scale horticulture or some urban or brownfield sites or urban influences.	A landscape with a mix of large-scale, modern fields and some smaller, more historic enclosures. A rural landscape with some brownfield sites or urban influences	A landscape dominated by ancient, irregular or small-scale field patterns with a few areas of modern enclosure and/or, some areas of semi-natural land cover.	A landscape with characterised by small-scale, ancient field patterns and/or a landscape dominated by semi-natural landcover.

Historic landscape character				
Landscapes which contain important archaeological or historic features are likely to have a higher level of sensitivity to solar PV development. Historical features may be in the form of historic land cover types and field systems, areas of buried archaeology, historic designed landscapes such as Registered Parks and Gardens or structures designated for their historical significance. Landscapes which make a significant contribution to the setting of a historical feature or landscapes may also have higher sensitivity to solar energy development. Landscapes that are primarily of modern influence and origin will have a lower sensitivity to solar energy development.				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
A landscape with relatively few historic features important to the character of the area, no designated heritage assets and little time depth (i.e. large intensively farmed fields).	A landscape with a small number of historic features important to the character area and some time depth.	A landscape with some visible historic features of importance to character, and a variety of time depths.	A landscape with many historic features important to the area and a strong sense of time depth.	A landscape with a high density of historic features (many designations) important to the character of the area and great time depth (i.e. piecemeal enclosure with irregular boundaries, ridge and furrow).

Visual character (including skylines)				
The relative visibility of a landscape may influence its sensitivity to solar PV development. An elevated landscape such as a hill range or plateau, which is viewed from other landscapes, may be more sensitive than an enclosed landscape, since any solar panels will be more widely seen. Landscapes which have important visual relationships with other areas, for example where one area provides a backdrop to a neighbouring area, (which may be a designated landscape such as the Cotswolds AONB), are considered more sensitive than those with few visual relationships. The extent of inter-visibility may be modified by the importance of these views to appreciation of the landscape, and whether adjacent landscapes provide a setting for one another. Prominent and distinctive and/or undeveloped skylines, or skylines with important landmark features, are likely to be more sensitive to solar PV development because panels may detract from these skylines as features in the landscape, or draw attention away from existing landform or landmark features on skylines if not sited appropriately. Important landmark features on the skyline might include historic features or monuments as well as landforms. Where skylines are affected by development, e.g. through the presence of electricity pylons, the addition of solar panels may lead to visual confusion. Therefore, the presence of existing development cannot always assume a lower sensitivity to development.				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
An enclosed, self-contained landscape, or one with weak connections to neighbouring areas. A landscape in which skylines are not prominent, and there are no important	A landscape with limited connections to neighbouring areas, and/or where adacjent landscapes are not visually related. A landscape in which skylines are simple, flat or gently convex and/or there are very few landmark features on	A landscape which has some inter-visibility with neighbouring areas. A landscape with some prominent skylines, but these are not particularly distinctive – there may be some landmark features on the skyline.	A landscape which is intervisible with several areas, and/or where adjacent areas are strongly interrelated. A landscape with prominent skylines that may form an important backdrop to views from settlements or important viewpoints,	A landscape which has important visual relationships with one or more neighbouring areas. It or the landscape(s) it is visible from is designated as AONB. A landscape with prominent or distinctive undeveloped skylines,

landmark features on the skyline.	the skyline – other skylines in adjacent LCTs may be more prominent.		and/or with important landmark features.	or with particularly important landmark features on skylines.
Perceptual qualities				
Landscapes that are relatively remote or tranquil tend to be more sensitive to solar PV development, since solar panels may be perceived as intrusive. Landscapes which are relatively free from overt human activity and disturbance, and which have a perceived naturalness or a strong feel of traditional rurality, will therefore be more sensitive. Qualities such as tranquillity can be found even in settled areas, where the influence of overtly modern development is reduced. Solar PV development will generally be less intrusive in landscapes which are strongly influenced by modern development, including settlement, industrial and commercial development and infrastructure. Landscapes that have a high scenic quality (including those areas within the SLA) will be more sensitive. Scenic qualities can include contrasts and combinations of landform and landcover. Scenic qualities are recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment, AONB Management Plans and noted from fieldwork.				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
A landscape with much human activity and modern development, such as industrial areas.	A rural or semi-rural landscape with much human activity and dispersed modern development, such as settlement fringes.	A rural landscape with some modern development and human activity, such as intensive farmland.	A more naturalistic landscape and/or one with little modern human influence and development.	A tranquil landscape with little or no overt sign of modern human activity and development.

Scenic and special qualities				
Landscapes that have a high scenic quality (including those designated as SLA) and exhibit a strong character or sense of place will be more sensitive than landscapes of low scenic quality or weak sense of place. Scenic qualities can include contrasts and combinations of landform and landcover which together contribute to attractive views. Scenic qualities may be recorded in the Landscape Character Assessment or may be referenced in tourist material. Scenic viewpoints may be marked on Ordnance Survey maps. Scenic quality is also considered in the field. Other special qualities could include landscapes that are rare (rather than commonplace), landscapes that are in good condition, or have natural or heritage conservation interest (indicated by designation) or are valued for leisure and recreation. Landscapes that are formally designated for their scenic quality (including those within the SLA). are likely to be more sensitive to development than undesignated areas. The degree of sensitivity depends on the extent to which the special qualities of the designated landscape could be affected by the development type.				
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	Moderate-High	High
A landscape without attractive character, with no pleasing combinations of features, visual contrasts and/or dramatic elements, such as industrial areas or derelict land.	A landscape of limited attractive character, with few pleasing combinations of features, visual contrasts and/or dramatic elements.	A landscape of intermittently attractive character, with occasional pleasing combinations of features, visual contrasts and/or dramatic elements.	A landscape of attractive character, with some pleasing combinations of features, visual contrasts and/or dramatic elements which may be recognised through designation.	A landscape of consistently attractive character, with pleasing combinations of features, visual contrasts and/or dramatic elements, which is recognised through designation.

Overview of results

Summary of landscape sensitivity in the Cotswold District

The overall results of the landscape sensitivity assessment for each landscape character type are set out in **Tables 3.1** and **3.2**. The overall results are also mapped in **Figures 2.7** to **2.11** (for wind energy) and **Figures 2.2** to **2.6** (for solar PV). The figures provide a spatial representation of the landscape sensitivity of Cotswolds District to accommodate new solar PV and wind energy development (by the different size bandings).

The LCTs in Cotswold District (outside the AONB) often contain areas of higher and lower sensitivity within them that vary from the overall sensitivity 'score'. **It is therefore very important to take note of the content of the individual landscape sensitivity assessments, including any commentary which highlights areas which deviate from the overall sensitivity.**

Presentation of results

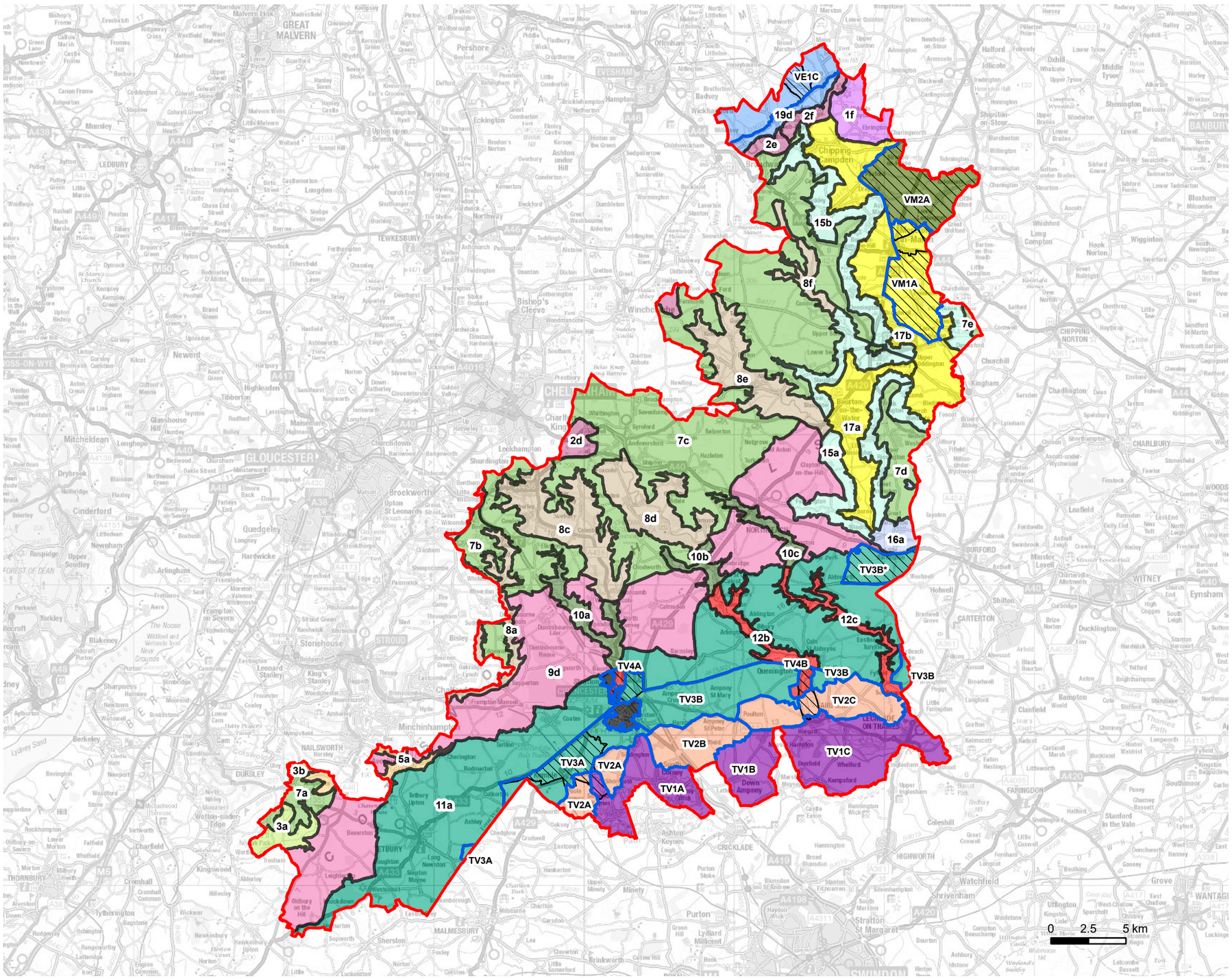
The full landscape sensitivity assessments for each of the LCTs are presented in separate assessment profiles. These are structured as follows;

- A **map of the LCT** with component Character Areas and representative photographs.
- A **summary description** of the LCT against each of the assessment criteria.
- An overall **discussion on the landscape sensitivity** of the LCT to new solar PV and wind energy developments, referencing particular features, attributes or locations which may be more or less sensitive.
- **Discussion of any variations** to the overall LCT scores at the LCA level.
- Recommendations and strategic landscape guidance for future development within the LCT.

Table 3.1: Overall landscape sensitivity scores to different wind energy development scenarios					
Landscape Character Type (LCT)	Overall sensitivity to wind development				
	Very small (Up to 25m)	Small (25m to 60m)	Medium (60m to 100m)	Large (100m to 150m)	Very large (150m to 200m)
TV1: River Basin Lowland	L	L-M	M-H	H	H
TV2: Cornbrash Lowlands	L	L-M	M-H	M-H	H
TC3: Dip Slope Lowland	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
TV4: Dip Slope Lowland Valley	L-M	M-H	H	H	H
VM1A: Pastoral Lowland Vale	L	M	M-H	H	H
VM2A: Undulating Lowland Vale	L	M	M-H	H	H
VE1C: Unwooded Vale	L	L-M	M	H	H

Table 3.2: Overall landscape sensitivity scores to different solar PV					
Landscape Character Type (LCT)	Overall sensitivity to solar PV development				
	Very small (up to 1 hectare)	Small (1 to 5 hectares)	Medium (5 to 20 hectares)	Large (20 to 50 hectares)	Very large (50 to 120 hectares)
TV1: River Basin Lowland	L	L-M	L-M	M-H	H
TV2: Cornbrash Lowlands	L	L-M	M	H	H
TC3: Dip Slope Lowland	L	L-M	M	H	H
TV4: Dip Slope Lowland Valley	L	L-M	M-H	H	H
VM1A: Pastoral Lowland Vale	L	M	M-H	H	H

Table 3.2: Overall landscape sensitivity scores to different solar PV					
Landscape Character Type (LCT)	Overall sensitivity to solar PV development				
	Very small (up to 1 hectare)	Small (1 to 5 hectares)	Medium (5 to 20 hectares)	Large (20 to 50 hectares)	Very large (50 to 120 hectares)
VM2A: Undulating Lowland Vale	L-M	M	M-H	H	H
VE1C: Unwooded Vale	L	L-M	M	M-H	H



Cotswold District Council boundary

LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Special Landscape Area

Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty LCTs

1. Escarpment Outliers
2. Escarpment
3. Rolling Hills and Valleys
5. Settled Valley
7. High Wold
8. High Wold Valley
9. High Wold Dip-Slope
10. High Wold Dip-Slope Valley
11. Dip-Slope Lowland
12. Dip-Slope Lowland Valley
15. Farmed Slopes
16. Broad Floodplain Valley
17. Pastoral Lowland Vale
19. Unwooded Vale

Figure 2.1: Landscape Character Types (LCTs) and Areas (LCAs) and Special Landscape Areas (SLAs)

Gloucestershire LCTs and LCAs

River Basin Lowland

TV1A: Somerford Keynes

TV1B: Down Ampney

TV1C: Fairford and Lechlade

Cornbrash Lowlands

TV2A: Poole Keynes and Ewen Lowlands

TV2B: Driffield Lowlands

TV2C: Southrop Lowlands

Dip Slope Lowland

TV3A: Kemble Dipslope

TV3B*: South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East)

TV3B: The Ampneys

Dip Slope Lowland Valley

TV4A: Lower Churn Valley

TV4B: Lower Coln Valley

Unwooded Vale

VE1C: Mickleton Vale Fringe

Pastoral Lowland Vale

VM1A: Upper Evenlode Vale

Undulating Lowland Vale

VM2A: Upper Stour Hills and Valleys

Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.
The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	Landscape character areas
Scale	1:280,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
8f
VM1A
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
7b
16a
10b
10c
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
5a
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
TV1C
3b
7a
TV1A
11a
TV2A
3a
TV3A
0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.2: Overall landscape sensitivity to very small scale solar development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Landscape sensitivity rating

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA VS Solar
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
8f
VM1A
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
7b
10b
10c
16a
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
TV1C
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
TV1A
5a
3b
7a
11a
3a
TV2A
TV3A

0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.3: Overall landscape sensitivity to small scale solar development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Landscape sensitivity rating

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

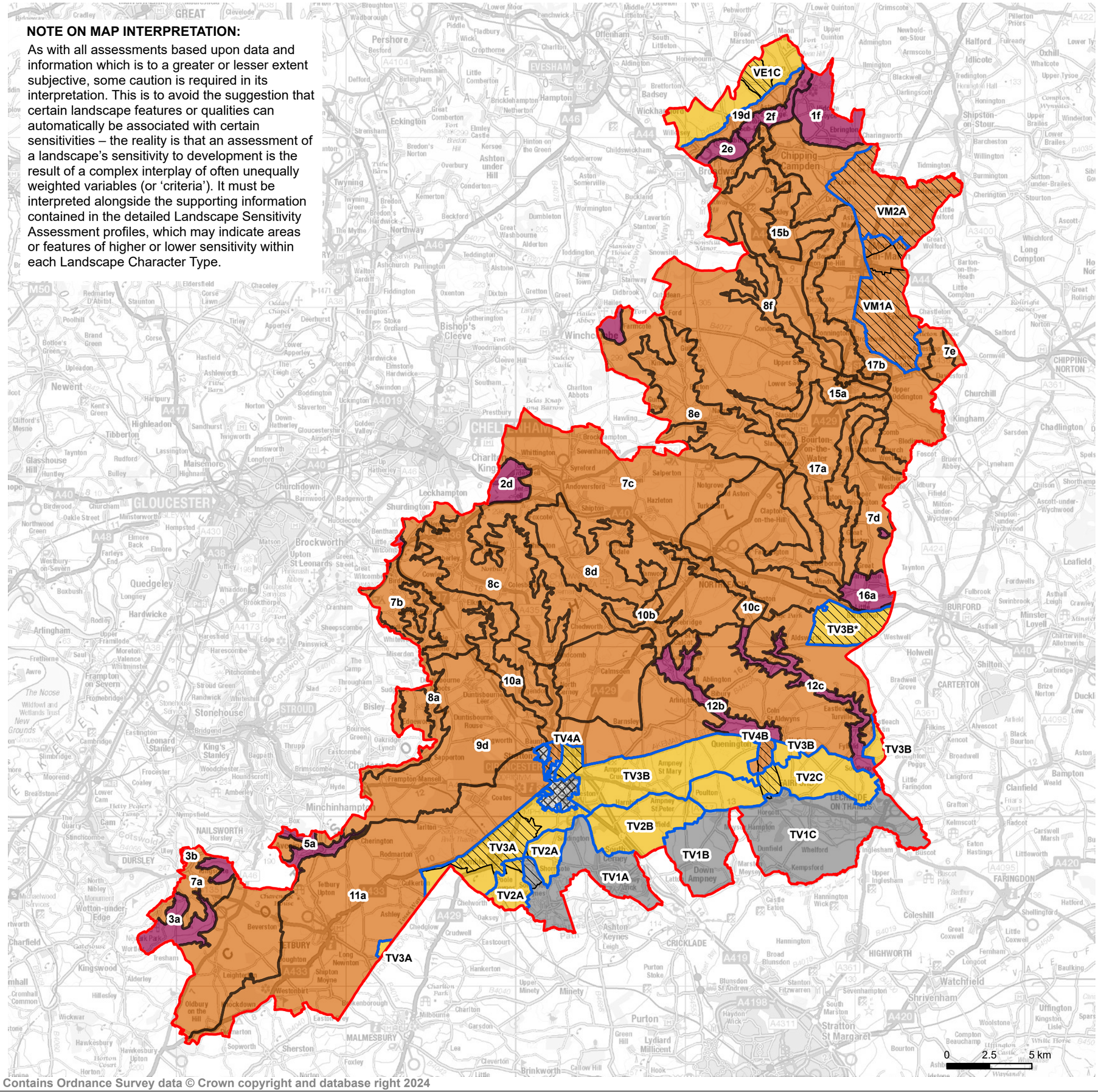
Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA S Solar
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2024

Figure 2.4: Overall landscape sensitivity to medium scale solar development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Landscape sensitivity rating

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA M Solar
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
8f
VM1A
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
7b
10b
10c
16a
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
TV1C
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
5a
3b
7a
TV1A
11a
TV2A
3a
TV3A

0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.5: Overall landscape sensitivity to large scale solar development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Landscape sensitivity rating

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA L Solar
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
8f
VM1A
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
7b
10b
10c
16a
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
TV1C
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
5a
3b
7a
TV1A
11a
TV2A
3a
TV3A

0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.6: Overall landscape sensitivity to very large scale solar development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Landscape sensitivity rating

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA VL Solar
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
8f
VM1A
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
7b
10b
10c
16a
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
TV1C
5a
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
3b
7a
TV1A
11a
TV2A
3a
TV3A

0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.7: Overall landscape sensitivity to very small scale wind turbine development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Landscape sensitivity rating

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA VS Wind
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
8f
VM1A
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
16a
7b
10b
10c
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
TV1C
5a
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
3b
7a
TV1A
11a
TV2A
3a
TV3A

0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.8: Overall landscape sensitivity to small scale wind turbine development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Landscape sensitivity rating

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA S Wind
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
8f
VM1A
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
16a
7b
10b
10c
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
TV1C
5a
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
3b
7a
TV1A
11a
TV2A
3a
TV3A

0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.9: Overall landscape sensitivity to medium scale wind turbine development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Landscape sensitivity rating

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA M Wind
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
8f
VM1A
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
7b
10b
10c
16a
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
TV1C
5a
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
3b
7a
TV1A
11a
TV2A
3a
TV3A

0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.10: Overall landscape sensitivity to large scale wind turbine development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Landscape sensitivity rating

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA L Wind
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
8f
VM1A
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
7b
10b
10c
16a
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
TV1C
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
5a
3b
7a
TV1A
11a
TV2A
3a
TV3A

0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.11: Overall landscape sensitivity to very large scale wind turbine development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Landscape sensitivity rating

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA VL Wind
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

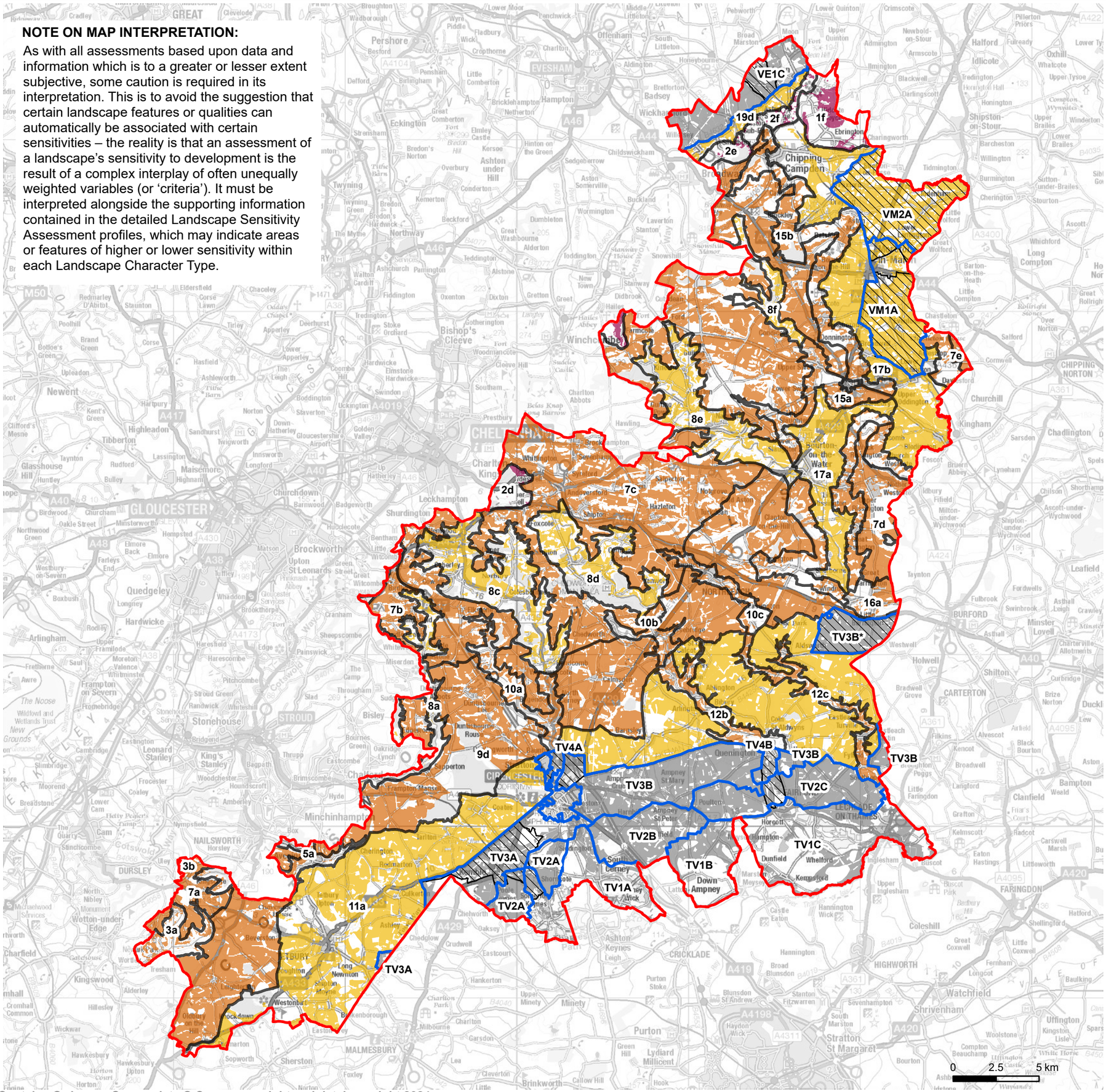


Figure 2.12: Overall landscape sensitivity and technical potential to small scale solar development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Areas with technical potential overlaid with landscape sensitivity (rated High to Low)

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA and Tech S Solar
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

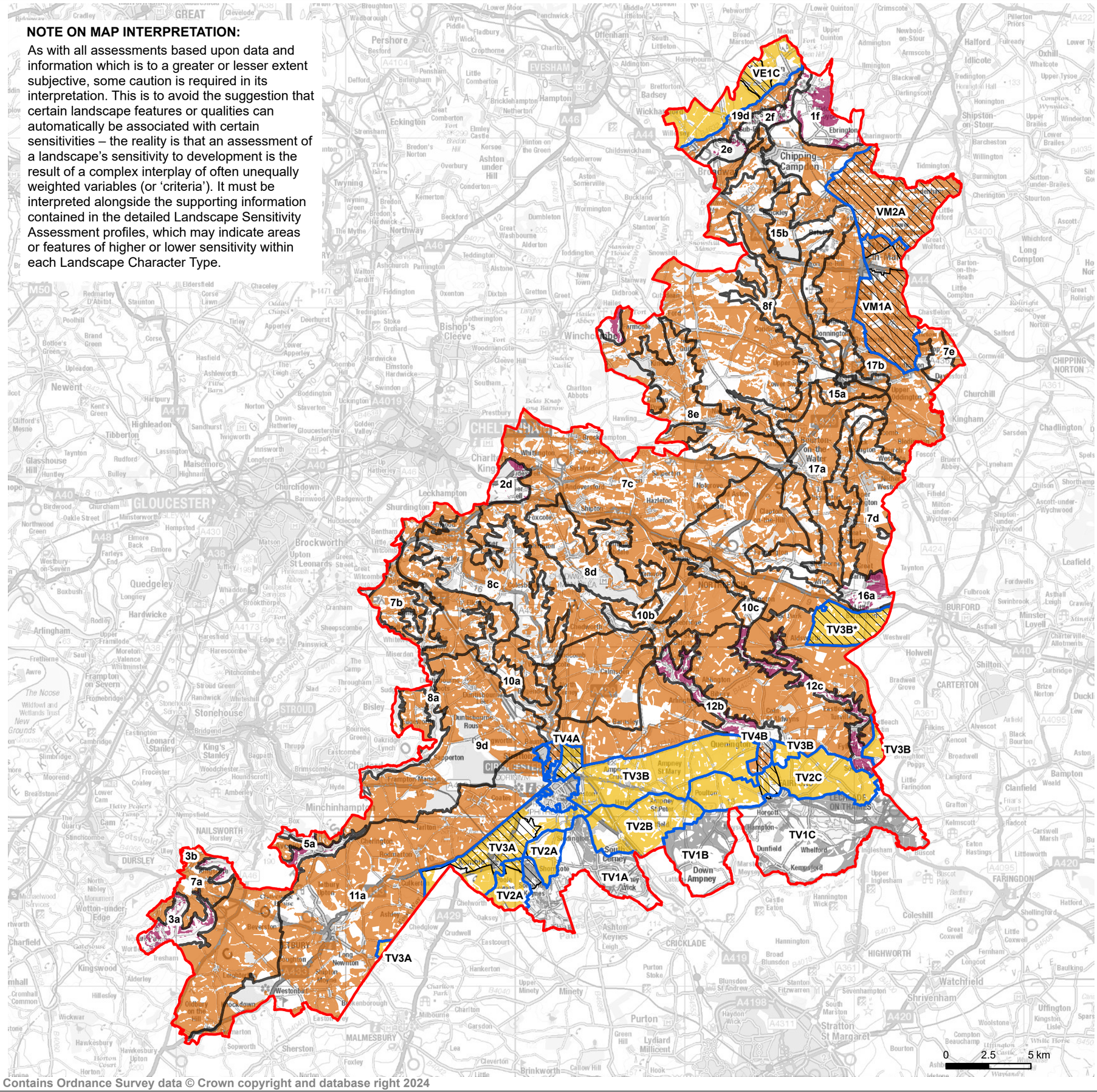


Figure 2.13: Overall landscape sensitivity and technical potential to medium scale solar development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Areas with technical potential overlaid with landscape sensitivity (rated High to Low)

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA and Tech M Solar
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

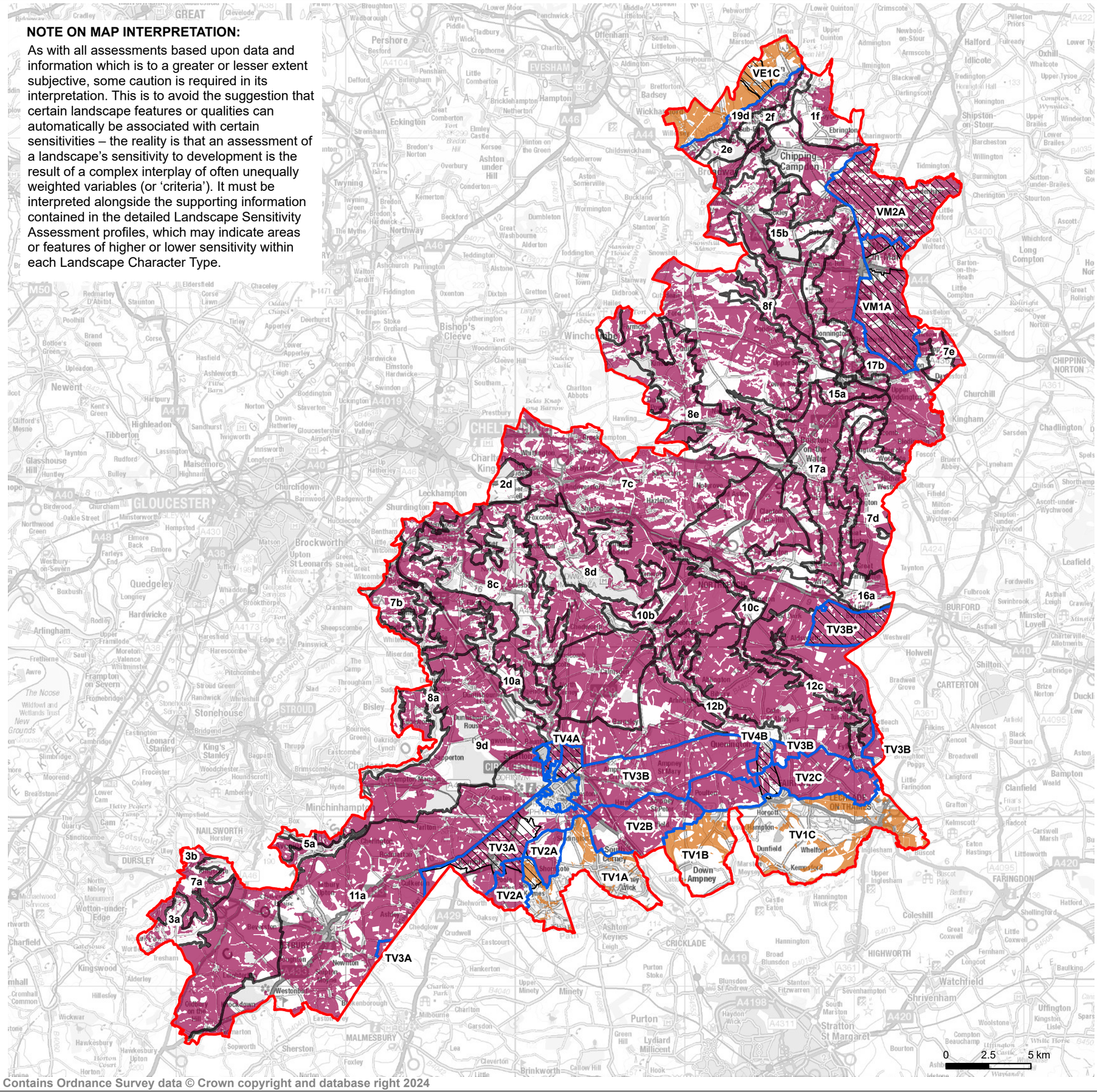


Figure 2.14: Overall landscape sensitivity and technical potential to large scale solar development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Areas with technical potential overlaid with landscape sensitivity (rated High to Low)

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA and Tech L Solar
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
VM1A
8f
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
16a
7b
10b
10c
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
TV1C
5a
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
3b
7a
TV1A
11a
TV2A
3a
TV3A

0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.15: Overall landscape sensitivity and technical potential to very large scale solar development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Areas with technical potential overlaid with landscape sensitivity (rated High to Low)

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA and Tech VL Solar
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

VE1C
19d
2f
1f
2e
VM2A
15b
8f
VM1A
7e
17b
15a
8e
17a
2d
7c
7d
8d
8c
7b
10b
10c
16a
TV3B*
10a
12c
8a
12b
9d
TV4A
TV4B
TV3B
TV3B
TV3B
TV2C
TV2B
TV1C
TV3A
TV2A
TV1B
TV1A
TV2A
5a
3b
7a
11a
3a
TV3A

0 2.5 5 km

Figure 2.16: Overall landscape sensitivity and technical potential to small scale wind turbine development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Areas with technical potential overlaid with landscape sensitivity (rated High to Low)

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA and Tech S Wind
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

Figure 2.17: Overall landscape sensitivity and technical potential to medium scale wind turbine development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Areas with technical potential overlaid with landscape sensitivity (rated High to Low)

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA and Tech M Wind
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

Figure 2.18: Overall landscape sensitivity and technical potential to large scale wind turbine development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Areas with technical potential overlaid with landscape sensitivity (rated High to Low)

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council.
Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA and Tech L Wind
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

NOTE ON MAP INTERPRETATION:

As with all assessments based upon data and information which is to a greater or lesser extent subjective, some caution is required in its interpretation. This is to avoid the suggestion that certain landscape features or qualities can automatically be associated with certain sensitivities – the reality is that an assessment of a landscape's sensitivity to development is the result of a complex interplay of often unequally weighted variables (or 'criteria'). It must be interpreted alongside the supporting information contained in the detailed Landscape Sensitivity Assessment profiles, which may indicate areas or features of higher or lower sensitivity within each Landscape Character Type.

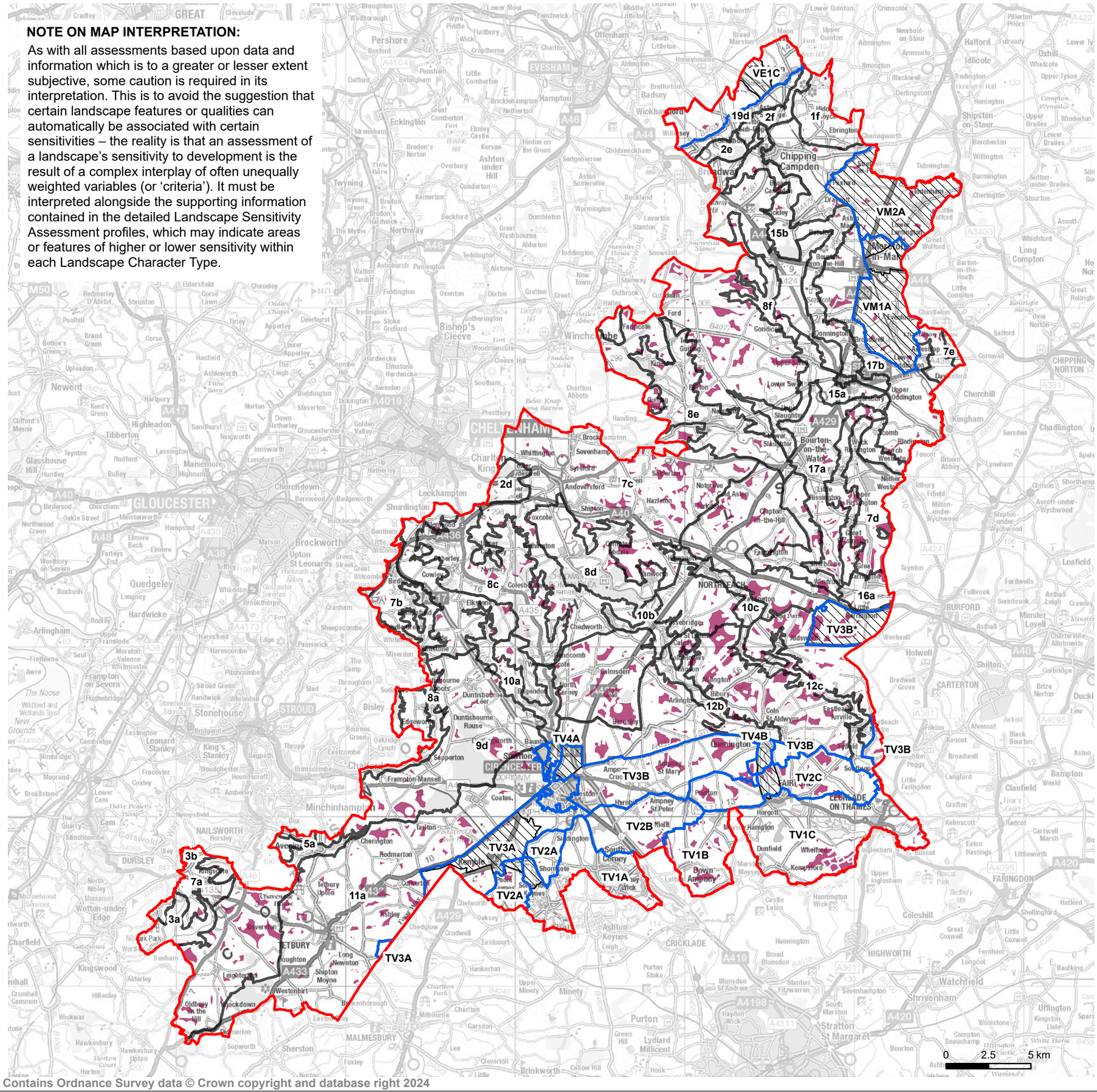


Figure 2.19: Overall landscape sensitivity and technical potential to very large scale wind turbine development

- Cotswold District Council boundary
- LCA outside Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- LCA within Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Special Landscape Area

Areas with technical potential overlaid with landscape sensitivity (rated High to Low)

- Low
- Low - moderate
- Moderate
- Moderate - high
- High
- Urban

Contains data from Gloucestershire County Council. Contains data from Cotswolds AONB.

*The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

The assessment of landscape sensitivity outside of the AONB was undertaken by LUC in 2021.

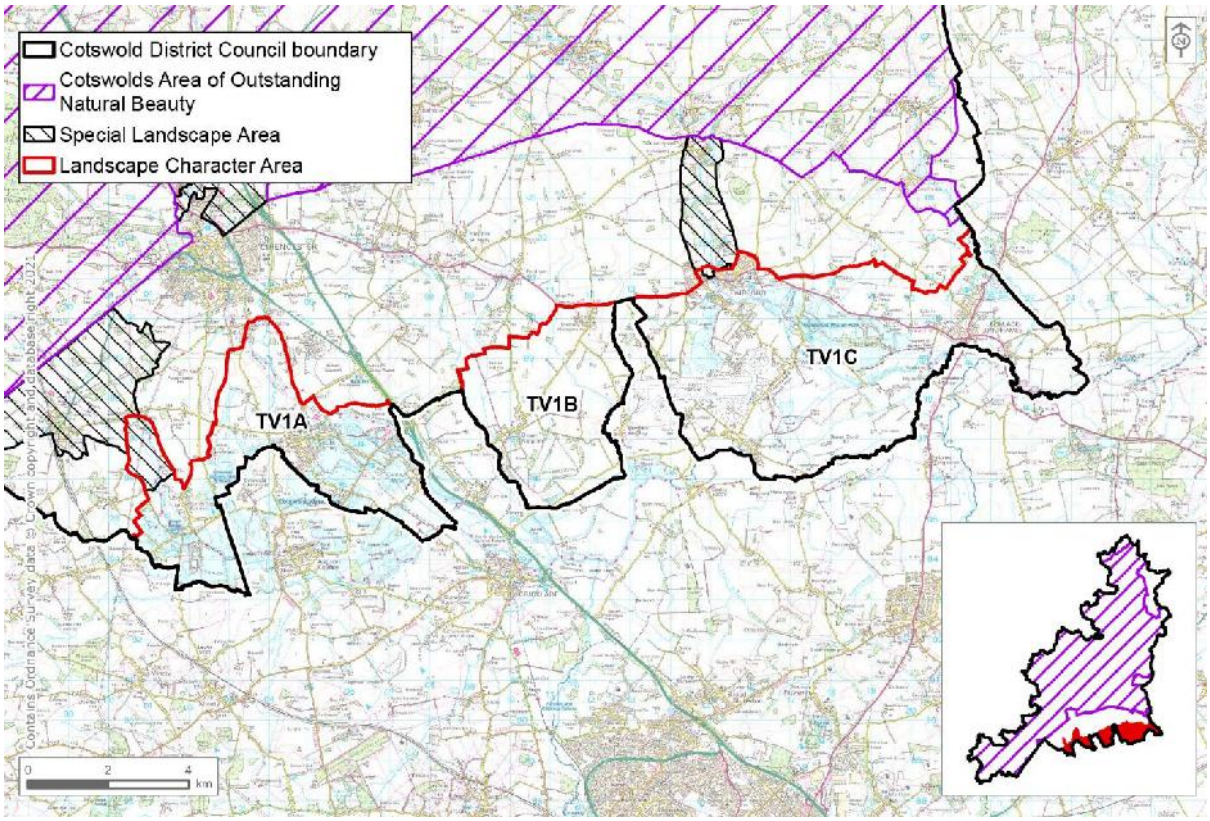
The assessment of landscape sensitivity within the AONB was undertaken by Cotswold District Council in 2023.

Project	Cotswold Renewable Energy Study
Client	Cotswold District Council
Figure	LSA and Tech VL Wind
Scale	1:220,000
Arial Bold 10	Arial Regular 10

centre for sustainable energy

LUC

Cotswolds LCT: TV1 River Basin Lowland



View south from near Siddington across flat pasture fields along the River Churn

View south across arable fields near Whelford showing banks which mask the edge of a mineral extraction site (TV1C).

Lakes at Whelfords Pool Nature Reserve in TV1C.

Landscape sensitivity assessment			
Criteria	**Description**	**Sensitivity Score**	
		Wind	**Solar**
Landform and scale (including sense of openness/ enclosure)	• Low lying, largely flat landform with some areas of gently undulating typography and small indistinct hills. • A broad floodplain associated with the River Thames and its tributaries including the Rivers Coln and Churn. • Elevations range from 70m AOD along the Thames in the south to 100m AOD on minor hills inIndent Lcluding Horcott Hill and Furzey Hill (TV1C). • Frequent trees and small pastoral fields bounded by low hedgerows create a human-scale character and offer enclosure across much of the LCT. • Large arable fields and wide floodplain pastures are more open (TV1B).	L-M	L
Landcover (including field and settlement patterns)	• Mixed agricultural land use with small-scale pastoral fields and some large arable fields in TV1B. Floodplain pastures and wet meadows are associated with watercourses. • Restored mineral extraction sites create a mosaic of lakes in TV1A and TV1B supporting a variety of habitats, many are LNRs with some designated as SSSI. • Tree cover is associated with lakes and watercourses with scattered copses elsewhere and woodpasture in the remnant parkland at Down Ampney. • A relatively well-settled landscape with rural farmsteads and small towns. • Historic settlements are concentrated near watercourses and at bridging points typically with limestone buildings. • Both active and former military airfields at Fairford and Down Ampney influence local landscape character. • Active sand and gravel extraction sites are located across the LCT.	M	M
Historic landscape character	• Field patterns are generally regular and post-medieval to modern in origin, with areas of riverine pasture and floated meadow systems. • Scheduled Monuments are scattered throughout and include abandoned settlements from a number of periods dating back to the Iron Age. • Most settlements are protected by conservation areas, containing high concentrations of listed buildings and often centered on historic churches.	M	M

	• Church House at Lechlade is a small grade II listed Registered Parks and Gardens (RPG).		
Visual character, (including skylines/ intervisibility)	• Views are generally enclosed by mature field boundaries trees in this flat landscape but can be extensive across larger scale, open fields. • There is a very limited visual relationship with surrounding landscapes except on the boundaries of the LCT. • Skyline features are limited to mature trees and woodlands. Taller features are less frequent but include pylons in the north of TV1A.	L	L-M
Perceptual qualities	• The watercourses and restored mineral extraction sites of the Cotswolds Water Park have a naturalistic and tranquil character. • Aircraft from RAF Fairford produce intermittent disturbance. • Active extraction sites result in localised disturbance, but visual enclosure prevents industry outside the LCT detracting from rural character. • A publicly accessible landscape with two Country Parks (TV1A) and a network of public rights of way including the Thames Path and Thames and Severn Way National Trails.	L-M	L-M
Scenic and special qualities	• Small areas of TV1A and TV1C are identified as part of the Kemble & Ewen SLA and Coln Valley (north of Fairford) SLA respectively. SLAs are identified as being locally valued landscapes that have particular qualities or character[1] including riparian habitats, parklands, unspoilt villages with limestone buildings and strong visual unity with the Cotswolds AONB[2]. • Situated to the south-east of the Cotswolds AONB, the LCT shares many of its special qualities including limestone buildings, river valleys, a highly accessibility landscape and features of cultural heritage significance[3]. • The restored lakes are a distinctive and often scenic feature of this landscape, many offering peaceful recreation.	M	M

[1] Cotswolds District Local Plan 2011-2031

[2] Cotswolds District Special Landscape Areas Review: Landscape Context and Physical changes, 2017

[3] Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Wind Energy					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (up to 25m)	L				
Small (25m to 60m)		L-M			
Medium (60m to 100m)				M-H	
Large (100m to 150m)					H
Very large (150m to 200m)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity: The large-scale and flat landform with high levels of human influence including active mineral extraction sites and airfields could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development. However, scattered human-scale features, extensive areas of semi-natural habitats, features of cultural heritage significance, the largely undeveloped skylines and the public accessibility of much of the area heighten levels of sensitivity.

Areas within the Kemble & Ewen and Coln Valley (north of Fairford) SLAs, and the north of TV1C that have a close association with the Cotswolds AONB, would have a higher sensitivity to wind energy developments.

TV1B, particularly to the north of Down Ampney would have a slightly reduced landscape sensitivity to wind energy developments due to its larger scale open arable character with fewer human scale features, the presence of RAF Fairford, and pylons on the skyline.

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Solar PV Developments					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (up to 1 hectare)	L				
Small (1 to 5 hectares)		L-M			
Medium (5 to 20 hectares)		L-M			
Large (20 to 50 hectares)				M-H	
Very large (50 to 120 hectares)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity: The large-scale flat landform with no distinctive slopes, visually enclosure offered by mature field boundaries and trees, and high levels of human influence including active mineral extractions sites and airfields, could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV developments. However, the open character of arable farmland, extensive semi-natural habitats, features of cultural heritage significance and public accessibility of much of the area would indicate a higher sensitivity to solar PV development.

Areas within the Kemble & Ewen and Coln Valley (north of Fairford) SLAs, and the north of TV1C that have a close association with the Cotswolds AONB, would have a higher sensitivity to wind energy developments.

Open fields in TV1B are likely to be more sensitive to solar PV developments as there is less visual enclosure.

Existing solar PV developments: There are no existing commercial scale solar PV developments in this LCT.

Recommendations and guidance for future development within the LCT

Wind energy developments

Overall recommendations:

- There may be opportunities to site single turbines up to 100m within the larger-scale, open rolling landscape, away from the more intimate areas of smaller scale pasture and woodland (ensuring the guidance below is followed).
- The scattering of turbines should be minimised to avoid significant cumulative impacts on landscape character from arising.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for large or very large turbines due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- Ensure that any new developments are similar in terms of siting, layout and relationship to key landscape characteristics, so as to present a simple image that relates clearly to landscape character[4].
- Avoid close juxtaposition of different turbine designs and heights, aiming instead for a consistent design and height in any given area.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure wind energy development does not detract from historic landmarks such as the numerous Scheduled Monuments (including abandoned settlements), historic villages and listed buildings including churches with spires that are often locally important skyline features.
- Avoid siting wind turbines in the smaller scale and irregular pastoral areas of the landscape including in TV1A and TV1C which would be highly vulnerable to wind energy development
- Consider views from local settlements and popular recreational routes/areas including the National Trails and the Country Parks when considering the siting and design of wind energy development in the landscape.
- Ensure wind energy development does adversely affect the tranquil character of the floodplain of the River Thames and the Cotswolds Water Park.
- Ensure wind energy development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape or the rural setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB to the north.

[4] For further guidance in designing multiple wind turbine developments, see Scottish Natural Heritage (2017) Siting and Designing
Wind Farms in the Landscape: Guidance. Version 3a available here.

- Ensure wind energy developments do not compromise the quality of the Kemble & Ewen and Coln Valley (north of Fairford) SLAs.

Solar PV developments

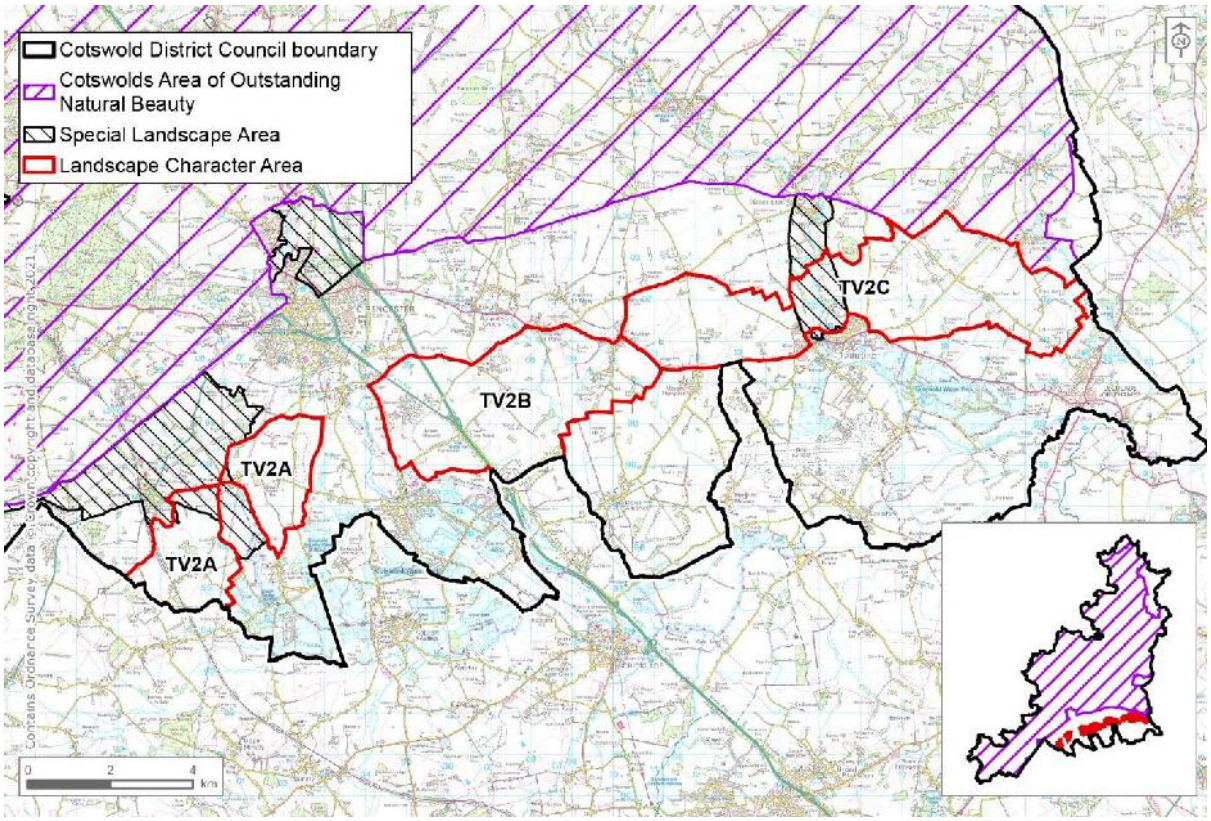
Overall recommendations:

- There are opportunities to locate solar PV developments (up to and including 20ha) within more enclosed fields where they are bound by tall hedgerows or lines of riparian vegetation, notably in TV1A and TV1C.
- PV developments should be sited within farmland, avoiding semi-natural habitat to retain naturalistic characteristics and habitat interest.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for 'large' or 'very large' solar PV development due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. avoiding significant cumulative impacts on the LCT from multiple developments that would result in an overall change in landscape character).
- New Solar PV development should make use of the visual enclosure provided by woodlands, tree belts and hedges to screen development, particularly in TV1A and TV1C .
- Where additional screening is required, ensure that screening provided is in character with the landscape, using appropriate species in planting.
- Ensure that solar PV developments form part of the mixed farmland mosaic – rather than becoming a dominating land use.
- Avoid locating solar PV development where it would be directly overlooked at close quarters, particularly side-on.
- Ensure the siting of new solar PV development does not detract from the enjoyment of the landscape for users of Country Parks and public rights of way including Thames Path and Thames and Severn Way National Trails.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure solar PV development does adversely affect the tranquil character of the floodplain of the River Thames and the Cotswolds Water Park.
- Ensure new solar PV development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape or the rural setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB to the north.
- Ensure solar PV developments do not compromise the quality of the Kemble & Ewen and Coln Valley north of Fairford SLAs.

Cotswolds LCT: TV2 Cornbrash Lowlands



View south form near Pool Keynes showing rural lanes and pylons in TV2A.

View east towards the disused airfield associated with South Cerney Army Station in TV2B.

View north across expansive arable fields near Fairford, showing traditional stone walls (TV2C).

Landscape sensitivity assessment			
Criteria	**Description**	**Sensitivity Score**	
		Wind	**Solar**
Landform and scale (including sense of openness/ enclosure)	• A very gently undulating landscape often perceived as flat which slopes gently down to the south. • Minor tributaries of the River Thames cross the landscape creating occasional minor undulations. • An expansive open landscape of large-scale fields often with low hedgerow or stone boundaries and some hedgerow trees. • Scattered small woodlands, mostly geometric in form, combine with mature hedgerow trees to provide limited local enclosure (particularly in the west of TV2A and along the southern boundary of TV2B).	L	M
Landcover (including field and settlement patterns)	• Arable cultivation is the dominant land use in large-scale regular fields, field patterns become more geometric and uniform in the east. • Smaller pasture fields associated with watercourses or around settlements add to the landscape diversity. • Tree cover takes the form of scattered deciduous/coniferous woodland blocks, riparian trees and occasional hedgerow trees. • Large areas of woodpasture and parkland Priority Habitat exist around Harnhill, Poulton Priory and north of Fairford. • There are several small LNR s encompassing road verges, a deciduous woodland surrounding the Ampney Brook and Broadwater Lake. • A dispersed settlement pattern of linear villages, hamlets and farmsteads.	M	M
Historic landscape character	• The regular field patterns are a result of 18th and 19th century enclosure with evidence of modern field amalgamation due to intensive farming. • Features of heritage interest are isolated and include a Roman villa and the Rambury ring earthwork near Apney St Peter, a Saxon cemetery at Fairford (all Scheduled Monuments) and the Ermin Way, a Roman road in TV2B. • Most settlements are protected by conservation areas with high concentrations of listed buildings. • Traditional stone-built properties constructed in limestone predominate and add to the historic character of the landscape.	L-M	L-M

	• Pockets of (non-designated) historic parkland occur in TV2B and TV2C.		
Visual character, (including skylines/ intervisibility)	• Wide views are possible across the flat farmland, although long distance views are often restricted by woodland blocks and hedgerow trees. • From northern parts of TV2C there are some views to the adjacent Dip Slope Lowland LCT within the Cotswolds AONB. • Skylines are simple, marked only by woodlands and hedgerow trees, although pylons crossing TV2A are intrusive.	L-M	L-M
Perceptual qualities	• The quiet, rural landscape is locally disturbed by the A417 and A419 (TV2B) and intermittent noise disturbance from passing trains (TV2A). • Features such as the South Cerny Airfield (TV2B) and the pylon route crossing TV2A have a slightly urbanising effect on this intensively farmed rural landscape. • Public rights of way include the Thames and Severn Way.	L-M	L-M
Scenic and special qualities	• A small area of TV2A near Ewen is identified as part of the Kemble & Ewen SLA, distinguished by its gentle landform and scenic wooded streams. • Parts of TV2C are within the Coln Valley (north of Fairford) SLA, which is locally significant due its scenic combinations of vegetation, intact drystone walls and high recreational value[1]. • Much of the area is under intensive agricultural use with gappy field boundaries in places. Golf courses and army barracks have an urbanising effect, most notably in TV2B. • The LCT shares some of the special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB including drystone walls and historic villages with the distinctive Cotswold vernacular[2].	M	M

[1] Local Countryside Designation Review: Special Landscape Areas, 2001

[2] Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Wind Energy					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (Up to 25m)	L				
Small (25m to 60m)		L-M			
Medium (60m to 100m)				M-H	
Large (100m to 150m)				M-H	
Very large (150m to 200m)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity: The large-scale and flat lowland landform with a simple pattern of arable landcover, and high levels of human activity could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development. However, the scattered human-scale features and rural character heighten levels of sensitivity.

Areas with a strong visual connection with the Cotswolds AONB, such as the north-east of TV2C as well as areas within the Kemble & Ewen and Coln Valley (north of Fairford) SLAs have a higher sensitivity to wind energy developments.

Parts of TV2C (to the east and west of Fairford) which have a large-scale and open character in which skylines are not prominent, are more intensively farmed, and with limited heritage features are likely to have a slightly lower landscape sensitivity to wind energy developments. Areas with high levels of human activity, such as along the A419 and adjacent to military bases in TV2B are also likely to also have a reduced landscape sensitivity to wind energy developments.

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Solar PV Developments					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (up to 1 hectare)	L				
Small (1 to 5 hectares)		L-M			
Medium (5 to 20 hectares)			M		
Large (20 to 50 hectares)					H
Very large (50 to 120 hectares)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity: The large-scale flat landform with no distinctive slopes, enclosure provided by hedgerows and woodland blocks, regular field pattern of arable fields, and high levels of human activity could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV developments. However, the open character of large arable fields, small historic villages, areas of parkland and rural character could indicate a higher sensitivity to solar PV development.

Areas with a strong visual connection with the Cotswolds AONB, such as the north-east of TV2C as well as the areas within the Kemble & Ewen and Coln Valley (north of Fairford) SLAs would have higher sensitivity to solar PV developments.

Areas where there is ample enclosure offered by hedgerow boundaries and woodland blocks and existing human disturbance, would be less sensitive to solar PV developments.

Existing solar PV developments: Although there are no existing solar PV develoments within this LCT there is a small solar farm, which has been consented and may be under construction at the Duke of Gloucester Barrack, South Cerney (TV2B).

Recommendations and guidance for future development within the LCT

Wind energy developments

Overall recommendations:

- There may be opportunities to site single turbines up to 60m within the more large-scale, open rolling landscape away from the more intimate areas of smaller scale pasture and woodland (ensuring the guidance below is followed).
- The scattering of turbines should be minimised to avoid significant cumulative impacts on landscape character arising.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for large or very large turbines due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- Ensure that any new developments are similar in terms of siting, layout and relationship to key landscape characteristics, so as to present a simple image that relates clearly to landscape character[3].
- Avoid close juxtaposition of different turbine designs and heights within the height category, aiming instead for a consistent design and height in any given area.
- Avoid locating larger turbines in the more rural and tranquil parts of the LCT where there is a distinct lack of human disturbance.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure wind energy development does not detract from historic landmarks such as Scheduled Monuments, villages with conservation areas and the setting of listed buildings.
- Avoid siting wind turbines in the smaller scale and irregular pastoral areas of the landscape including those following minor streams which would be highly vulnerable to wind energy development.
- Consider views from local settlements and popular recreational routes/areas including the Thames and Severn Way National Trail when considering the siting and design of wind energy development in the landscape.
- Ensure wind energy development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape or the visual setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB to the north.

[3] For further guidance in designing multiple wind turbine developments, see Scottish Natural Heritage (2017) Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape: Guidance. Version 3a available here.

- Ensure wind energy developments do not compromise the quality of the Kemble & Ewen and Coln Valley north of Fairford SLAs.

Solar PV developments

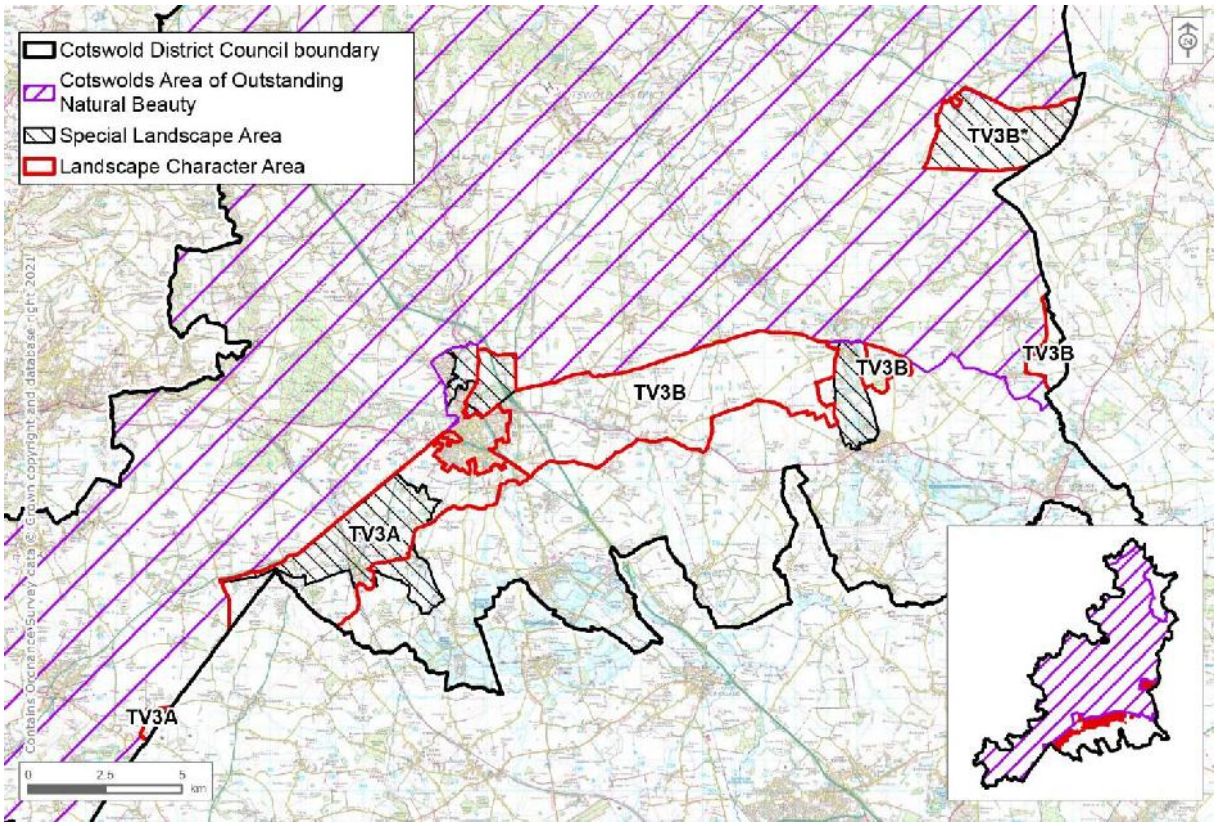
Overall recommendations:

- There are opportunities to locate solar PV developments (up to and including 20ha) on within more enclosed fields bound by hedgerows and/or woodland blocks.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for 'large' or 'very large' solar PV development due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. avoiding significant cumulative impacts on the LCT from multiple developments that would result in an overall change in landscape character).
- Developments should be clearly separated so that collectively they do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape.
- New solar PV development should make use of visual enclosure provided by existing woodlands, tree belts and hedges to screen development, particularly in the west TV2A and along the southern boundary of TV2B.
- Where additional screening is required, ensure that screening provided is in character with the landscape, using appropriate species in planting.
- Ensure that solar PV developments form part of the mixed farmland mosaic – rather than becoming a dominating land use.
- Avoid locating solar PV development where it would be directly overlooked at close quarters, particularly side-on.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure solar PV development does adversely affect the tranquil character of the area or detract from the enjoyment of the landscape for users of public rights of way including the Thames and Severn Way.
- Ensure new solar PV development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape or the visual setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB to the north.
- Ensure solar PV developments do not compromise the quality of the Kemble & Ewen and Coln Valley (north of Fairford) SLAs.

Cotswolds LCT: TV3 Dip Slope Lowland



View north to Church Farm near Siddington, showing horse pasture and the grade II* listed Church of St Peter (TV3A).

View south-west across the open north-eastern section of TV3B* with views extending to pylons crossing the AONB.

View south from the edge of the Cotswolds AONB showing aircraft and hangers in the Cotswold Airport (TV3A).

Note regarding TV3B*: The 2006 Gloucestershire Landscape Character Assessment does not include a written description of the South and Mid Cotswolds Lowlands (East) LCA. This study assumes that this LCA is part of the LCT Dip Slope Lowland.

Landscape sensitivity assessment			
Criteria	**Description**	**Sensitivity Score**	
		Wind	**Solar**
Landform and scale (including sense of openness/ enclosure)	• A gently sloping lowland landform generally falling to the south-east. • Infrequent shallow tributary valleys draining into the Thames create subtle undulations which become more pronounced in the north of TV3B. • Low field boundaries and limited woodland result in a large-scale, open character. • Areas surrounding settlements often have human scale features including small fields enclosed by hedgerow trees and shelterbelts.	L-M	L-M
Landcover (including field and settlement patterns)	• A simple pattern of predominantly large scale, rectangular arable fields. • A smaller scale field pattern of improved pastures and horse grazing surrounds settlements. • Mature trees are prevalent in field boundaries or follow watercourses and line the disused canal and rail line, part of which is designated as a SSSI. • Woodland copses and shelterbelts (often geometric in shape) are scattered across the LCT, with areas of woodpasture and parkland habitats at Kemble House and Ampney Park. • The Ampney Book and some road verges are identified as LNRs. • A largely unsettled landscape of dispersed hamlets and scattered farmsteads with the nucleated settlement of Kemble in TV3A.	M	M
Historic landscape character	• Field patterns are mostly of pre-modern origin, consisting of regular planned enclosure with localised areas of irregular enclosure. • To the north of Ampney Park is an area of ancient piecemeal enclosure of strip fields, whilst modern amalgamated fields characterise the south. • Ornamental parkland characterises Kemble House and Ampney Park.	L-M	L-M

	• A landscape with a small number of historic features including the Fosse Way and Scheduled Monuments of prehistoric or Roman origin. • Industrial relicts include the disused railway line and canal. • Most settlements are protected by conservation areas and contain high concentrations of historic stone buildings.		
Visual character, (including skylines/ intervisibility)	• Open and often expansive views extend across the almost flat landscape, screened by field boundaries and shelterbelts. • Views extend to the Cotswolds AONB from the edge of the LCT. • Church towers/ spires are locally distinctive on the simple, open skylines. • Pylon lines surrounding Cirencester (TV3A and TV3B) and large aircraft and hangers at Cirencester Airport are visually intrusive.	L-M	M
Perceptual qualities	• A largely quiet landscape with a rural and remote agricultural character. • The Cotswolds Airport at Kemble, and the outskirts of Cirencester including modern development on the settlement edge, industrial estates and caravan parks, pylons and a large solar farm (East of Cirencester), have a locally urbanising influence on the LCT. • Busy roads including the A429 and A417 produce localised sound and visual disruption. • A network of public rights of way surround settlements (including the Thames Path National Trail and the D'Arcy Dalton Way) but are largely absent in the rest of the LCT.	M	M
Scenic and special qualities	• A landscape of intermittently attractive agricultural character with some pleasing combinations of features. • The Kemble & Ewen, North Cirencester and Barrington Downs SLAs (in TV3A, TV3B and TV3C respectively) are identified as being locally valued landscape that have particular qualities or character[1] including limestone walls and buildings and a strong visual unity with the Cotswolds AONB[2]. • Situated directly to the south of the Cotswolds AONB, the LCT has many views into the protected landscape and shares some of its special qualities such as tranquillity and distinctive settlements with the local Cotswold stone vernacular[3].	M-H	M-H

[1] Cotswolds District Local Plan 2011-2031

[2] Cotswolds District Special Landscape Areas Review: Landscape Context and Physical changes, 2017

[3] Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Wind Energy					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (Up to 25m)	L				
Small (25m to 60m)		L-M			
Medium (60m to 100m)			M		
Large (100m to 150m)				M-H	
Very large (150m to 200m)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity

The relatively large-scale, flat lowland landform and simple landcover pattern, limited time-depth and influence of modern development could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development. However, areas with frequent human scale features, smaller fields surrounding settlements, semi-natural habitats and the special qualities of the landscape identified through its local designation as SLAs and its proximity to the AONB, heightens levels of sensitivity.

Areas to the north of the LCT with strong visual connections to the AONB, and areas within the Kemble & Ewen, North Cirencester and Barrington Downs SLAs would be particularly sensitive to wind energy development.

Areas with high levels of human disturbance along the route of the A419 and on the outskirts of Cirencester would be less sensitive to wind energy developments. Areas with flat, large-scale arable fields, an open character, simple skylines and distant from historic villages are likely to have a slightly lower landscape sensitivity to wind energy developments, including some eastern parts of TV3B and the west of TV3A.

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Solar PV Developments					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (up to 1 hectare)	L				
Small (1 to 5 hectares)		L-M			
Medium (5 to 20 hectares)			M		
Large (20 to 50 hectares)					H
Very large (50 to 120 hectares)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity

The relatively large-scale flat lowland landform with no distinctive slopes, simple landcover pattern, visually enclosed small-scale fields surrounding settlements, limited time-depth and the presence of modern development could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development. However, areas with important semi-natural habitats, features of cultural heritage significance, publicly accessible areas and open arable fields (where there is little visual enclosure) and special qualities of the landscape identified through its local designation as SLAs an its proximity to the AONB, could indicate a higher sensitivity to solar PV development.

Areas that have a visual connection to the adjacent Cotswolds AONB to the north, as well as the areas within the Kemble & Ewen, North Cirencester and Barrington Downs SLAs would be particularly sensitive to Solar PV developments due to their scenic and special qualities.

Areas along the route of A14 and on the outskirts of Cirencester or areas associated with airports and military bases would have a slightly lower landscape sensitivity to solar PV developments.

Existing solar PV developments:

Crucis Park solar farm lies in the north of TV3B between the B4425 and the A417, is a large solar farm (approximately 30ha). Cirencester Solar Farm is a very large solar farm (approximately 63 ha) that has been consented and is under construction at Wilpit Lane in TV3B**.**

Recommendations and guidance for future development within the LCT

Wind energy developments

Overall recommendations:

- There may be other opportunities to site single turbines up to 100m within the larger-scale, open landscape away from more intimate areas of smaller scale pasture (ensuring the guidance below is followed).
- The scattering of turbines should be minimised to avoid significant cumulative impacts on landscape character from arising.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for large or very large turbines due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- Ensure that any new developments are similar in terms of siting, layout and relationship to key landscape characteristics, so as to present a simple image that relates clearly to landscape character[4].
- Avoid close juxtaposition of different turbine designs and heights within the height category, aiming instead for a consistent design and height in any given area.
- Avoid locating larger turbines in the more tranquil locations such as the villages to the north of the A417 which have distinctly small scale and rural feel, with frequent human scale features and are protected by conservation areas.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure wind energy development does not detract from historic landmarks such Scheduled Monuments, villages with conservation areas and the setting of listed buildings, including church spires that are often locally important skyline features.
- Consider views from local settlements and popular recreational routes/areas including the Thames Path National Trail and the D'Arcy Dalton Way when considering the siting and design of wind energy development in the landscape.
- Ensure wind energy development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape or its visual setting to the neighbouring Cotswolds AONB to the north.
- Ensure wind energy developments do not compromise the scenic qualities and character of the Kemble & Ewen, North Cirencester and Barrington Downs SLAs.

[4] For further guidance in designing multiple wind turbine developments, see Scottish Natural Heritage (2017) Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape: Guidance. Version 3a available here.

Solar PV developments

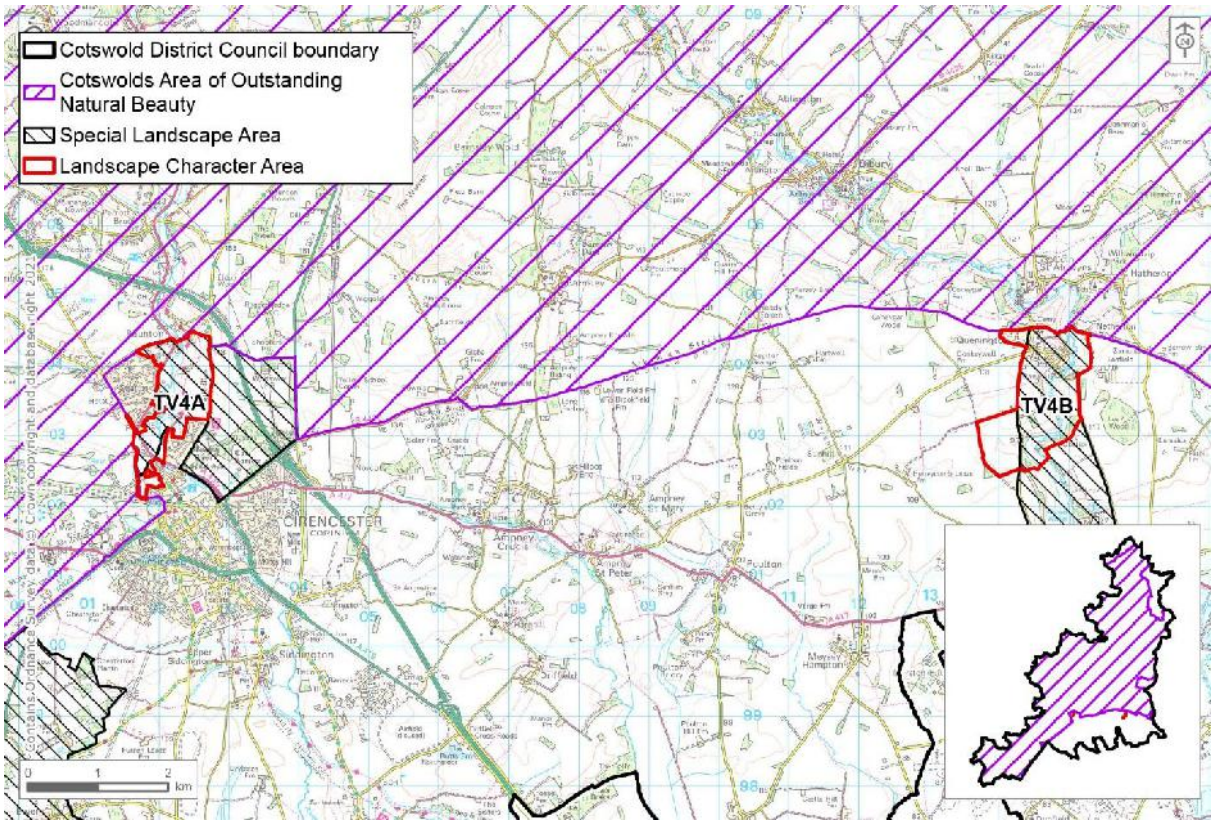
Overall recommendations:

- There are opportunities to locate solar PV developments (up to and including 20ha) on within more enclosed fields bound by tall hedgerows.
- PV developments should be sited within farmland, not semi-natural habitat, to retain the naturalistic characteristics and habitat interest.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for 'large' or 'very large' solar PV development due to its sensitivities.
- Consider opportunities to site new solar PV developments in association with existing built features such as on the outskirts of Cirencester or in relation to airfields or military bases.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. avoiding significant cumulative impacts on the LCT from multiple developments that would result in an overall change in landscape character).
- Developments should be clearly separated so that collectively they do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape.
- Ensure that solar PV developments form part of the mixed farmland mosaic – rather than becoming a dominating land use.
- Avoid locating solar PV development where it would be directly overlooked at close quarters, particularly side-on.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure the siting of new solar PV development does not detract from the enjoyment of the landscape for users of public rights of way including Thames Path National Trail and the D'Arcy Dalton Way.
- Ensure solar PV development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape or its visual setting to the neighbouring Cotswolds AONB to the north.
- Ensure solar PV developments do not compromise the scenic qualities and character of the Kemble & Ewen, North Cirencester and Barrington Downs SLAs.

Cotswolds LCT: TV4 Dip Slope Lowland Valley



View south over Baunton (TV4A), showing young woodland on the upper slopes.

View north-east to Quenington showing the traditional village with vernacular buildings within the valley (TV4B).

Larger arable fields on the upper slopes of TV4B, with stone walls and linear woodland enclosing the lower valley.

Landscape sensitivity assessment			
Criteria	**Description**	**Sensitivity Score**	
		Wind	**Solar**
Landform and scale (including sense of openness/ enclosure)	• The broad valley landforms of the braided rivers Churn (TV4A) and Coln (TV4B), with shallow sloping valley sides. • Low field boundaries, medium to large fields and gentle valley slopes result in areas of TV4A and upper slopes of TV4B having an open character. • Parts of the valley floors have an intimate, small-scale a character due to enclosure from surrounding wooded valley slopes and hedgerows.	M	M
Landcover (including field and settlement patterns)	• Predominantly improved pasture in TV4A, with a mix of pasture and arable land in TV4B, bounded by a mix of hedgerows, fencing and stone walls. • Important habitats include extensive areas of floodplain grazing marsh habitats along the valley floors and linear woodlands extending along the slopes of TV4B as well as young woodland in TV4A. • The River Churn and ancient woodland at The Grove are LWS. • The LCT has a rural character containing the traditional villages of Baunton and Quenington, although TV4A is overlooked by adjacent settlement.	M	M
Historic landscape character	• The HLC identifies a mixture of field patterns with most being pre-modern planned fields and some floodplain meadows typically ancient in origin. • A high density of historic features, including traditional villages with conservation areas and concentrations of listed buildings (Gloucester Street and River Walk, Cirencester Park, Baunton and Quenington). • Views to the undeveloped pastoral river valleys provide important setting to these conservation areas. • Part of the grade I listed RPG Cirencester Park extends into the southern corner of TV4A. Whilst the Grade II RPG of Hatherop Castle is situated directly north of TV4B. Both have limited visual connections to the LCT.	M-H	M-H
Visual character, (including skylines/ intervisibility)	• The landform, woodland and settlement, prevent long-distance views or visual connections to surrounding LCTs. • Views over the valleys from upper slopes are extensive and the farmed valley slopes form a backdrop to views from the valley floors. • There are some short-distance views up the valleys into the Cotswolds AONB from the northern edge of the LCT.	M	L-M

	• The tower of the grade I listed Church of St John the Baptist provides a local landmark within TV4A. • Skylines are simple, made up of buildings in surrounding settlements, mature woodlands and field boundary trees.		
Perceptual qualities	• The valleys retain a rural and tranquil agricultural character, with large areas only accessible on foot, increasing the perception of remoteness. • Public access and rights of way include Fairford Park (TV4B) and part of the Monarch's Way National Trail (TV4A). • The character of TV4A a is strongly influenced by the settlement edge of Cirencester, with views to the settlement, horsiculture and busy roads such as the A435 having a slightly urbanising influence.	M	M
Scenic and special qualities	• The LCT lies directly south of the Cotswolds AONB exhibiting many of its special qualities such as Cotswolds stone buildings, significant historical associations, ancient broadleaved woodland and high river water quality[1], contributing to a strong sense of place. • Most of the LCT falls within the North Cirencester SLA (TV4A) or Coln Valley (north of Fairford) SLA (TV4B). Both are identified as locally valued landscapes with particular qualities or character[2] including intimate small-scale landscapes, stone-built villages and a remote and rural character[3].	M-H	M-H

[1] Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023

[2] Cotswolds District Local Plan 2011-2031

[3] Cotswolds District Special Landscape Areas Review: Landscape Context and Physical changes, 2017

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Wind Energy					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (Up to 25m)	L-M				
Small (25m to 60m)				M-H	
Medium (60m to 100m)					H
Large (100m to 150m)					H
Very large (150m to 200m)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity

A self-contained landscape with limited connections to neighbouring areas, few distinctive skyline features and some urban influence from surrounding settlements, which could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development. However, the valley landform, visible slopes, intimate small-scale valley floors, pastoral land uses and semi-natural habitats, the concentration of features of heritage significance including historic parkland, traditional villages and stone buildings, the special qualities of the landscape identified through its local designation as SLAs and proximity and visual connections with the Cotswolds AONB, all heighten levels of sensitivity to wind energy developments.

TV4B would have a slightly higher sensitivity to any wind energy development due to its more rural and tranquil character, which is less influenced by the urban edge of Stratton and Cirencester in TV4A.

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Solar PV Developments					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (up to 1 hectare)	L				
Small (1 to 5 hectares)		L-M			
Medium (5 to 20 hectares)				M-H	
Large (20 to 50 hectares)					H
Very large (50 to 120 hectares)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity

A well-enclosed landscape with limited visual connections to surrounding LCTs, some urban influences from surrounding settlements, could indicate a lower sensitivity to Solar PV developments. However, visible slopes, intimate small-scale valley floors, pastoral land uses and semi-natural habitats, the concentration of features of heritage significance including historic parkland, traditional villages and stone buildings, the special qualities of the landscape identified

through its local designation as SLAs and proximity and visual connections with the Cotswolds AONB, all heighten levels of sensitivity to wind energy developments.

TV4B would have a slightly higher sensitivity to any solar PV development due to its more rural and tranquil character, which is less influenced the urban edge of Stratton and Cirencester present in TV4A.

Existing solar PV developments

There are no existing commercial scale solar PV developments in this LCT.

Recommendations and guidance for future development within the LCT

Wind energy developments

Overall recommendations:

- The scattering of turbines should be minimised to avoid significant cumulative impacts on landscape character from arising.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for medium to very large turbines due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- Ensure that any new developments are similar in terms of siting, layout and relationship to key landscape characteristics, so as to present a simple image that relates clearly to landscape character[4].
- Avoid close juxtaposition of different turbine designs and heights within the height category, aiming instead for a consistent design and height in any given area.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure wind energy development does not detract from historic features including historic field patterns, conservation areas and adjacent RPGs.
- Avoid siting wind turbines in the smaller scale pastoral areas of the landscape which would be highly vulnerable to wind energy development
- Consider views from local settlements and popular recreational routes/areas including the Monarch's Way National Trail and Fairford Park when considering the siting and design of wind energy development in the landscape.
- Ensure wind energy development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape or the visual setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB.
- Ensure wind energy developments do not compromise the scenic qualities and character of the North Cirencester SLA in TV4A and Coln Valley (north of Fairford) SLA in TV4B.

[4] For further guidance in designing multiple wind turbine developments, see Scottish Natural Heritage (2017) Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape: Guidance. Version 3a available here.

Solar PV developments

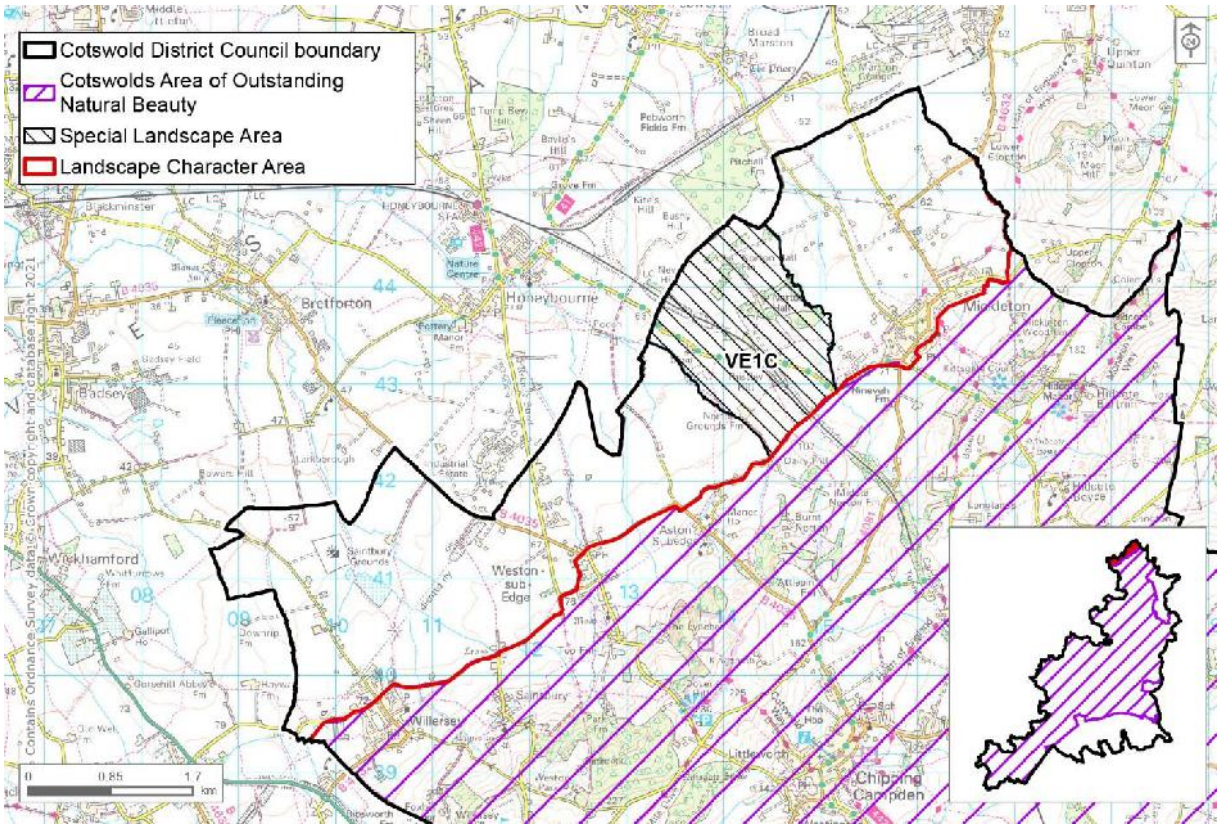
Overall recommendations:

- There are opportunities to locate solar PV developments (up to and including 5ha) within more enclosed fields on the valley floor bound by tall hedgerows or linear woodlands along the slopes, most notably in TV4B.
- PV developments should be sited within farmland, not semi-natural habitat to retain naturalistic characteristics and habitat interest.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for 'large' or 'very large' solar PV development due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. avoiding significant cumulative impacts on the LCT from multiple developments that would result in an overall change in landscape character).
- Developments should be clearly separated so that collectively they do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape.
- Ensure that solar PV developments form part of the mixed farmland mosaic – rather than becoming a dominating land use.
- Where additional screening is required, ensure that it is in character with the landscape, using appropriate species in planting.
- Consider views from the elevated slopes over the valleys when considering the siting and design of solar PV development in the landscape.
- Avoid locating solar PV development where it would be directly overlooked at close quarters, particularly side-on.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that development does not detract from its undeveloped character or from the enjoyment of the landscape for recreational users of public rights of way including Monarch's Way National Trail and Fairford Park.
- Ensure new solar PV development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape or its visual setting to the neighbouring Cotswolds AONB to the north.
- Ensure solar PV developments do not compromise the quality of the North Cirencester SLA (TV4A) and Coln Valley north of Fairford SLA in TV4B.

Cotswolds LCT: VE1C Unwooded Vale



Views to the north-western edge of Mikleton, across arable fields to the spire of the Church of St Laurence.

View north-west from the B4632 across gently undulating large scale arable fields bound by hedgerows.

View north-east across flat arable fields to the distinctive landform of Meon Hill (outside of the district).

Landscape sensitivity assessment			
Criteria	**Description**	**Sensitivity Score**	
		Wind	**Solar**
Landform and scale (including sense of openness/ enclosure)	• A flat to gently undulating landscape except for a low ridge at Norton Hall which crosses the landscape north-west to south east. • The land rises almost imperceptibly towards the foot of the Cotswold escarpment which rises from the south eastern edge of the LCT. • Medium to large scale fields bound by hedgerows with some hedgerow trees create a mixture of enclosed and open areas. The west-facing slopes along the Norton Hall ridge are notably open.	L-M	L-M
Landcover (including field and settlement patterns)	• Regular shaped medium to large-scale arable fields predominate bound by hedgerows. • Pasture fields are more common in the west, with irregular fields situated between the B4632 and route of the disused railway line. • Woodland is limited, concentrated on the minor ridge line, with tree lines marking the route of the dismantled railway line and minor watercourses. • Small orchards scattered across the LCT and parkland add to the landscape diversity. • Relatively sparsely settled with isolated properties and farms. Mickleton is the largest settlement with modern development around its historic core. • Commercial developments are located along Honeyburn Road, with nurseries and market gardening businesses scattered across the area.	M	M
Historic landscape character	• Field patterns are pre-modern in origin, notably in the south-west, but often show signs of some alteration and amalgamation. Some remnant ridge and furrow occur. • The landscape has a small number of designated heritage features including the site of a medieval village at White's Farm (Scheduled Monument). • The historic core of Mickleton is a conservation area containing several listed buildings including the grade I listed Church of St Lawrence. • A non-designated, ornamental parkland surrounds Norton Hall with avenues and mature in-field trees.	L-M	L-M

Visual character, (including skylines/ intervisibility)	• The wooded escarpment within the Cotswolds AONB to the south and Meon Hill to the east form a backdrop to many views. • The Norton Hall ridge is locally prominent, although less so than the hills and escarpments in surrounding areas. • A pylon route crosses the north-east of the area marking the otherwise undeveloped open skylines. • The spire of the Church of St Lawrence is a locally distinctive landmark.	L-M	L-M
Perceptual qualities	• Public rights of cross the area including the Heart of England Way. • The prevalence of commercial facilities, solar PV farms, modern residential development north of Mickleton and the pylon route in the north-east have a slightly urbanising influence on the landscape. • The railway line and A-roads produce localised disturbance.	M	M
Scenic and special qualities	• A landscape dominated by large scale modern arable agriculture, with some traditional and scenic features. • The ridge of Norton Hall SLA[1] is identified as a locally valued landscape that has particular qualities or character. Its wooded skylines provide a pleasing contrast to the adjacent flat vale[2]. • The LCT lies directly north of the Cotswolds AONB and has strong intervisibility with the wooded escarpment of the Dover's Hill to Mickleton escarpment, a key characteristic of the AONB[3].	M	M

[1] Cotswolds District Local Plan 2011-2031

[2] Local Countryside Designation Review: Special Landscape Areas, 2001

[3] Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Wind Energy					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (Up to 25m)	L				
Small (25m to 60m)		L-M			
Medium (60m to 100m)			M		
Large (100m to 150m)					H
Very large (150m to 200m)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity

The large-scale flat to gently undulating landform and simple landcover of modern arable fields, and the urbanising influence of modern infrastructure as well as commercial and modern residential development to the north of Mickleton, could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development. However, undeveloped skylines, the special landscape qualities and open slopes of the Norton Hall Ridge, and intervisibility with the adjacent escarpment within the Cotswolds AONB heighten level of landscape sensitivity to wind energy developments.

Areas within the Norton Hall SLA and those with a strong visual association with the Cotswolds AONB, would be particularly sensitive to wind energy development.

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Solar PV Developments					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (up to 1 hectare)	L				
Small (1 to 5 hectares)		L-M			
Medium (5 to 20 hectares)			M		
Large (20 to 50 hectares)				M-H	
Very large (50 to 120 hectares)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity

The large-scale, flat to gently undulating landform with mature treed boundaries, simple landcover, modern field patterns and urbanising influence of modern infrastructure as well as commercial and residential development to the north of Mickleton, could indicate lower levels of landscape sensitivity to solar PV development. However, the open character of the large arable fields and the visually prominent slopes and special qualities of the Norton Hall SLA and intervisibility with the adjacent escarpment within the Cotswolds AONB could indicate a higher sensitivity to solar PV development,

Areas with strong intervisibility with the Cotswolds AONB, as well as those within the Norton Hall SLA would be particularly sensitivity to solar PV developments due to their scenic and special qualities.

Areas associated with existing modern built features including roads and commercial areas as well as areas offered visual enclosure by hedgerow boundaries and/or woodland would have a reduced landscape sensitivity to solar PV developments.

Existing solar PV developments

There are two existing solar PV farms within this LCT, including a medium sized development (approxately10ha) at The Rainbows east of Badsey Lane, and a small development (approximately 7ha) at Norton Hall.

Recommendations and guidance for future development within the LCT

Wind energy developments

Overall recommendations:

- There may be opportunities to site single turbines under 100m tall within the large-scale arable fields (ensuring the guidance below is followed).
- The scattering of turbines should be minimised to avoid significant cumulative impacts on landscape character from arising.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for large or very large turbines due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- Ensure that any new developments are similar in terms of siting, layout and relationship to key landscape characteristics, so as to present a simple image that relates clearly to landscape character[4].
- Avoid close juxtaposition of different turbine designs and heights within the height category, aiming instead for a consistent design and height in any given area.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure wind energy development does not detract from historic landmarks such as Scheduled Monuments, Mickleton Conservation Area and the setting of listed buildings, including the spire of the Church of St Lawrence which is locally distinctive on the skyline.
- Avoid siting wind turbines in the smaller scale and irregular pastoral areas of the landscape including in the south west which would be more vulnerable to wind energy development.
- Consider views from local settlements and popular recreational routes/areas including the Heart of England Way National Trail when considering the siting and design of wind energy development in the landscape.
- Ensure wind energy development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape or the visual setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB.
- Ensure new wind energy developments do not compromise the landscape quality of the Norton Hall SLA.

Solar PV developments

Overall recommendations:

- There are opportunities to locate solar PV developments (up to and including 20ha) within more enclosed fields where they are bound by tall hedgerows or riparian vegetation more notably in TV1A and TV1C.

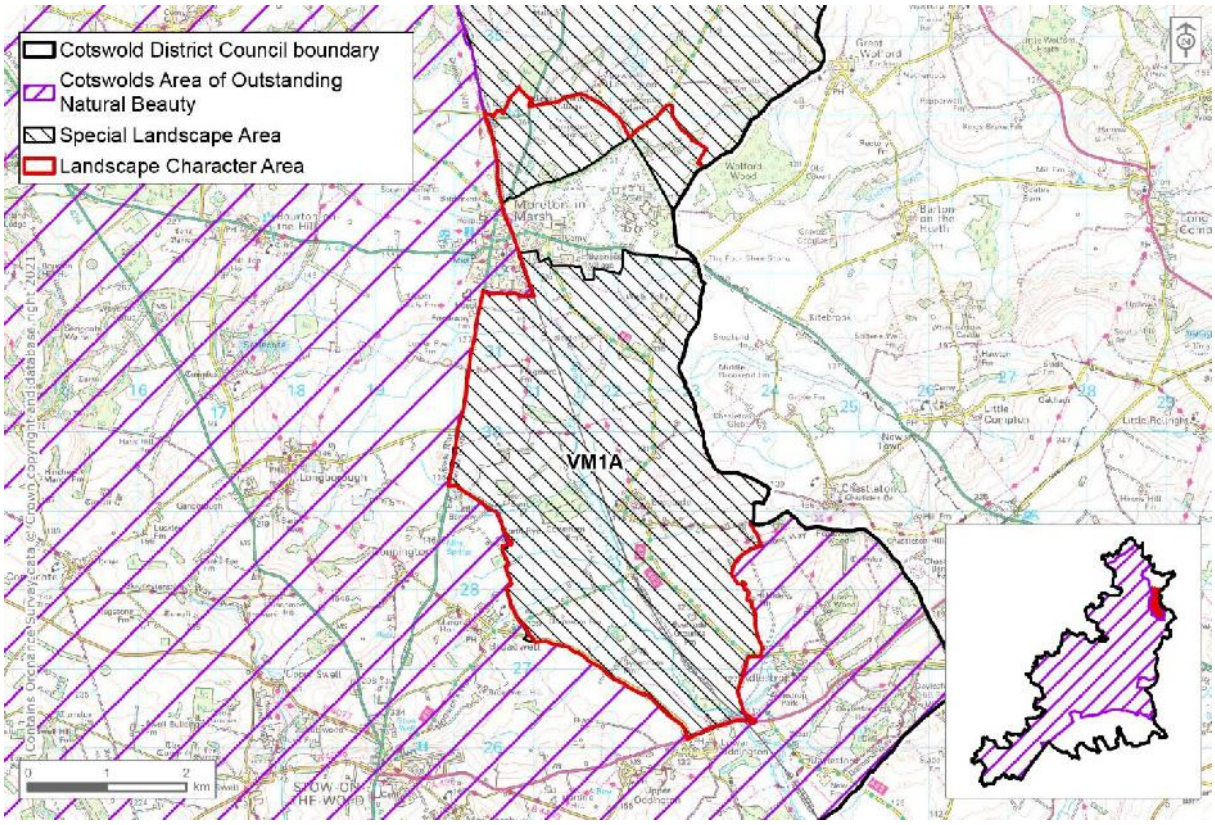
[4] For further guidance in designing multiple wind turbine developments, see Scottish Natural Heritage (2017) Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape: Guidance. Version 3a available here.

- PV developments should be sited within farmland, not semi-natural habitat to retain naturalistic characteristics and habitat interest.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. avoiding significant cumulative impacts on the LCT from multiple developments that would result in an overall change in landscape character).
- Developments should be clearly separated so that collectively they do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape.
- Ensure that solar PV developments form part of the mixed farmland mosaic – rather than becoming a dominating land use.
- Consider views from more elevated areas, particularly the Norton Hall SLA and Cotswolds AONB escarpment when considering the siting and design of solar PV development in the landscape.
- Avoid locating solar PV development where it would be directly overlooked at close quarters, particularly side-on.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Consider views from local settlements and popular recreational routes including the Heart of England Way National Trail when considering the siting and design of solar PV developments.
- Ensure new solar PV development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape or the visual setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB.
- Ensure new solar PV developments do not compromise the landscape quality of the Norton Hall SLA.

Cotswolds LCT: VM1A Pastoral Lowland Vale



View south towards Evenlode Grounds Farm showing ridge and furrow pasture fields in the background.

Views south-west from near Evenlode to the rising slopes within the Cotswolds AONB including a mast west of Icomb.

A minor rural lane crossing the stone Stock Bridge, with views to the elevated Cotswolds slopes to the south-west.

Landscape sensitivity assessment			
Criteria	**Description**	**Sensitivity Score**	
		Wind	**Solar**
Landform and scale (including sense of openness/ enclosure)	• A flat or gently undulating lowland landscape with the River Evenlode and tributary streams creating shallow valleys. • An intimate landscape of frequent human scale features including small-scale pastoral fields, farmsteads and woodland copses. • Hedgerow boundaries with occasional trees provide a sense of enclosure. • Locally elevated land around Evenlode has a larger scale more open character with larger fields and minimal vegetation cover.	M	L-M
Landcover (including field and settlement patterns)	• The landcover is predominantly pasture with some larger arable fields in the north, west of the A429 and in elevated areas surrounding Evenlode. • The field pattern is characterised by large and moderately sized geometric fields, with a neat patchwork of hawthorn hedges with smaller scale pastoral fields generally occurring along watercourses. • Limited woodland cover, although in places small woodland copses, hedgerow and lines of riparian trees combine to create a wooded character. • Areas semi-natural habitats add to the complexity of landscape cover, such as wet meadows and species rich grassland along watercourses. • A sparsely settled landscape characterised by scattered farms and dwellings and the small, nucleated village Evenlode. • Moreton-in Marsh, with its modern residential areas, a business park and fire service training college, has an urbanising influence locally.	M	M
Historic landscape character	• Most field patterns are 18th and 19th century enclosure. Fields along watercourses include floodplain and meadows of typically ancient origin. • Localised areas of distinctive ridge and furrow fields surround Evenlode and Evenlode Grounds Farm. • A landscape with few historic features, except for the site of a Roman town in the north (Scheduled Monument) and some isolated listed buildings. • The historic settlement of Evenlode is protected by a conservation area and contains a high concentration of listed buildings of local stone.	L-M	L-M

Visual character, (including skylines/ intervisibility)	• Open views extend across the gently undulating landscape including views to the Cotswolds AONB, particularly from elevated and open areas. • Skylines are largely undeveloped (except for settlement in the north) and marked by hedgerow trees. • The rising slopes of the Cotswolds AONB to the south and west create a distinct backdrop to this lowland landscape. • A mast to the west of Icombe is discernible on the skylines to the south-west of the LCT.	M	M
Perceptual qualities	• The south of the area retains a largely rural and tranquil agricultural character with a limited road network of minor lanes. • The north of the LCT has an urban feel due to the presence of modern residential development, the fire training college and the route of the A44. • Intermittent visual and audible disturbance from the railway line crossing the centre of the area detracts from the rural character. • Public rights of way are limited but include the Diamond Way National Trail.	M	M
Scenic and special qualities	• A landscape of intermittently attractive agricultural character with some pleasing combinations of features. • Locally designated as part of the Moreton-in-Marsh Surrounds SLA[1], the area is identified as having particular qualities including sweeping views to the Cotswolds Hills which give it a distinct sense of place[2]. • The landscape has a strong visual connection with the Cotswolds AONB, as well as possessing many of the special qualities of the protected landscape including rural tranquillity and the use of Cotswolds stone[3].	M-H	M-H

[1] Cotswolds District Local Plan 2011-2031

[2] Local Countryside Designation Review: Special Landscape Areas, 2001

[3] Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Wind Energy					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (Up to 25m)	L				
Small (25m to 60m)			M		
Medium (60m to 100m)				M-H	
Large (100m to 150m)					H
Very large (150m to 200m)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity

The generally flat lowland landform, areas of larger scale field patterns and modern development in the north could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development. However, it's intimate scale with many human scale features, areas of semi-natural habitats (particularly along the watercourses), pockets of ancient field patterns, undeveloped skylines, the special qualities of the landscape identified through its designation as an SLA and the strong visual connection to the Cotswolds AONB, could indicate a higher sensitivity to wind energy development.

Areas with a strong visual connection to the AONB, would be particularly sensitive to wind energy development.

The north of the LCT surrounding Moreton-in-Marsh where there are larger scale field patterns and a more developed character would have a slightly lower sensitivity to wind energy.

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Solar PV Developments					
Sensitivity to new developments					
Very small (up to 1 hectare)	L				
Small (1 to 5 hectares)			M		
Medium (5 to 20 hectares)				M-H	
Large (20 to 50 hectares)					H
Very large (50 to 120 hectares)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity

The generally flat lowland landform with no distinctive slopes, areas of larger scale fields and modern development in the north could indicate lower sensitivity to solar PV development. However, visually enclosure provided by hedgerows and woodland, areas of important habitats (particularly along watercourse) pockets of ancient field patterns, features of cultural heritage significance, undeveloped skylines and the special qualities of the landscape identified through its designation as a SLA, and a strong visual connection to the Cotswolds AONB could indicate a higher sensitivity to solar PV development.

Areas with a strong visual connection to the AONB, would be highly sensitive to solar PV development.

The north of the LCT surrounding Moreton-in-Marsh which has a more developed character has a slightly lower sensitivity to solar PV development.

Existing solar PV developments

There are no existing commercial scale solar PV developments in this LCT.

Recommendations and guidance for future development within the LCT

Wind energy developments

Overall recommendations:

- There may be opportunities to site single turbines up to 25m within the more large-scale, open rolling landscape away from the more intimate areas of smaller scale pasture and woodland (ensuring the guidance below is followed).
- The scattering of turbines should be minimised to avoid significant cumulative impacts on landscape character from arising.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for large or very large turbines due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- Ensure that any new developments are similar in terms of siting, layout and relationship to key landscape characteristics, so as to present a simple image that relates clearly to landscape character[4].
- Avoid close juxtaposition of different turbine designs and heights within the height category, aiming instead for a consistent design and height in any given area.
- Avoid locating larger turbines in the more rural and tranquil south of the LCT, where there is a distinct lack of human disturbance.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure wind energy development does not detract from historic features such as historic field patterns, Scheduled Monuments, villages with conservation areas and the setting of listed buildings.
- Avoid siting wind turbines in the smaller scale and irregular pastoral areas of the landscape including along stream valleys which would be highly vulnerable to wind energy development
- Consider views from local settlements and popular recreational routes/areas including Dimond Way National Trail when considering the siting and design of wind energy development in the landscape.
- Ensure wind energy development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape recognised through its designation as a SLA, or the rural setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB.

Solar PV developments

Overall recommendations:

- There are opportunities to locate solar PV developments (up to and including 5ha) within more sheltered fields where they are bound by tall hedgerows or riparian vegetation.

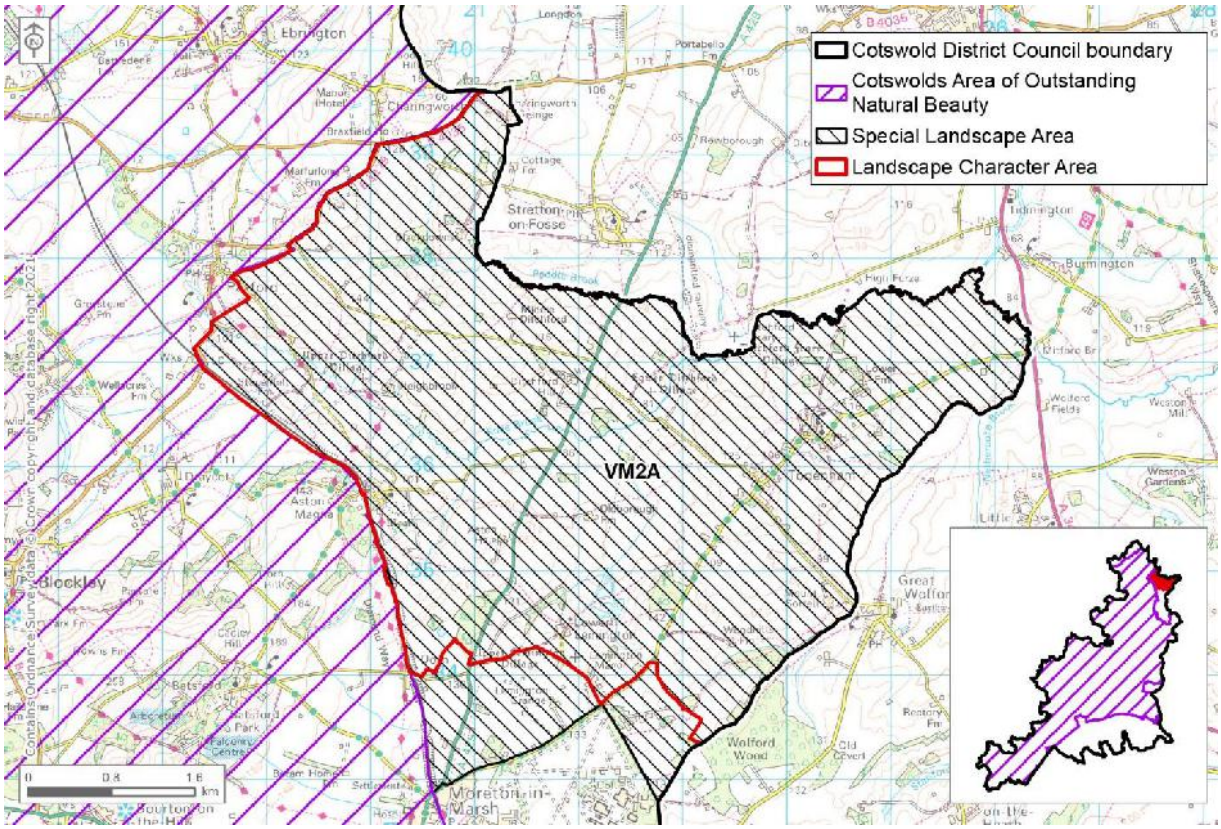
[4] For further guidance in designing multiple wind turbine developments, see Scottish Natural Heritage (2017) Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape: Guidance. Version 3a available here.

- There may be opportunities to locate new solar PV developments of up to 20ha in the north of the LCA in area strongly associated with existing development.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for 'large' or 'very large' solar PV development due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. avoiding significant cumulative impacts on the LCT from multiple developments that would result in an overall change in landscape character).
- Developments should be clearly separated so that collectively they do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape.
- Ensure that solar PV developments form part of the mixed farmland mosaic – rather than becoming a dominating land use.
- PV developments should be sited within farmland, avoiding semi-natural habitat in order to retain the naturalistic characteristics and habitat interest.
- Where additional screening is required, ensure that screening provided is in character with the landscape, using appropriate species in planting.
- Where additional screening is required, ensure that screening provided is in character with the landscape, using appropriate species in planting.
- Consider views from public rights of way when considering the siting and design of solar PV development in the landscape.
- Avoid locating solar PV development where it would be directly overlooked at close quarters, particularly side-on.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure solar PV development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape recognised through its designation as a SLA, or the rural setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB.

Cotswolds LCT: VM2A Undulating Lowland Vale



The spire of the church of St Thomas of Canterbury in Todenham is a distinctive historic feature on the skyline.

View south-west across sheep pasture from near Todenham showing well-wooded slopes in the south-west of the LCT.

View south across the valley of the Knee Brook from near Dichford Hill, showing long-distance views.

Landscape sensitivity assessment			
Criteria	**Description**	**Sensitivity Score**	
		Wind	**Solar**
Landform and scale (including sense of openness/ enclosure)	• An undulating landscape of rounded hills and ridges between the shallow winding stream valleys of the Knee Brook and its tributaries. • Undulations in the landform and hedgerows with mature hedgerow trees provide a sense of local enclosure, particularly on valley bottoms. • Rolling larger-scale arable fields with limited woodland cover and exposed valley slopes have a more open character. • Human scale features include frequent hedgerow trees, farmsteads and church spires.	M-H	M-H
Landcover (including field and settlement patterns)	• A patchwork of irregular arable and pastoral fields enclosed by hedgerows containing scattered mature trees and often bordered with drainage ditches. • Field patterns are generally large-scale with some modern amalgamation of arable fields near Aston Magna and in the centre of the LCT, as well as some smaller-scale fields surrounding Todenham. • Occasional woodland blocks and traditional orchards add to the diversity of landcover. • The south of the LCT has a more wooded character, including Aston Hale and Dunsden Coppice and Lemington Coppice which are of ancient origin and identified as LNRs. • A sparse rural settlement pattern dominated by dispersed linear villages and scattered farmsteads. Buildings often use local Marlstone Rock or brick.	M	M
Historic landscape character	• The HLC indicates that field patterns are a mix of irregular fields including piecemeal enclosure of open strip fields, floodplain and meadows (typically of ancient origin). • Important historical features include the remains of the abandoned medieval settlements of Upper and Lower Dichford and the moated Aston Magna Castle (all Scheduled Monuments). • The villages of Aston Magna and Todenham are protected by conservation areas and contain high concentrations of listed buildings • The A429 roughly follows the route of the Fosse Way, a Roman road.	M	M
Visual character, (including	• Elevated slopes are visually prominent and afford long-distance sweeping views with big skies.	M	M

skylines/ intervisibility)	• The distinctive landforms of the Cotswolds AONB to the north-west and west (LCA 1f and 15b) and Brailes Hill to the north-east, are visible from the LCT. • In places, views are restricted by undulations in the landform and mature hedgerow vegetation. • The spire of the grade I listed Church of St Thomas of Canterbury in the hilltop village of Todenham and the St Michal and All Angels Church in Wolford (to the west of the LCT) are locally distinctive landmarks. • Skylines are largely open, simple and undeveloped.		
Perceptual qualities	• The landscape has a remote and tranquil agricultural character with limited human disturbance except from the A29 and railway line. • A network of public rights of way cross the landscape, including the Diamond Way National Trail.	M-H	M-H
Scenic and special qualities	• Locally designated as part of the Moreton-in-Marsh Surrounds SLA[1], the area is identified as a locally significant and valued landscape with particular qualities including sweeping views to higher land which gives it a distinct sense of place[2]. • The landscape has a strong visual connection with the Cotswolds AONB to the west as well as possessing many of the special qualities of this protected landscape including areas of rural tranquillity, 'big' skies and long-distance views[3].	M-H	M-H

[1] Cotswolds District Local Plan 2011-2031

[2] Local Countryside Designation Review: Special Landscape Areas, 2001

[3] Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Wind Energy

Sensitivity to new developments

Very small (Up to 25m)	L				
Small (25m to 60m)			M		
Medium (60m to 100m)				M-H	
Large (100m to 150m)					H
Very large (150m to 200m)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity: The gently undulating landform and areas of larger scale field patterns could indicate a lower sensitivity to wind energy development. However, human scale features, irregular field patterns (some of which are ancient), deciduous woodlands (some of ancient origin), features of historic significance (including traditional villages), undeveloped skylines, the rural tranquil character and special qualities of the landscape identified through its designation as a SLA along with the strong visual connection to the Cotswolds AONB could indicate a higher sensitivity to wind energy development.

Areas with a strong visual connection to the AONB, would be particularly sensitive to wind energy development.

Overall Assessment of Landscape Sensitivity: Solar PV Developments

Sensitivity to new developments

Very small (up to 1 hectare)		L-M			
Small (1 to 5 hectares)			M		
Medium (5 to 20 hectares)				M-H	
Large (20 to 50 hectares)					H
Very large (50 to 120 hectares)					H

Summary of landscape sensitivity: Localised areas with visual enclosure due to topography and vegetation, and the gentle landform could indicate a lower sensitivity to solar PV development. However, the open character of the rolling fields and visually prominent slopes, irregular field patterns (some of which are ancient), deciduous woodlands (some of ancient origin), features of historic significance (including traditional villages), undeveloped skylines, the rural tranquil character and special qualities of the landscape identified through its designation as a SLA, along with the strong visual connection to the Cotswolds AONB could indicate a higher sensitivity to solar PV development.

Areas with a strong visual connection to the AONB, would be particularly sensitive to solar PV developments. Avoid siting Solar PV developments on the open slopes where they would have localised visual prominence.

Existing solar PV developments: There are no existing commercial scale solar PV developments in this LCT.

Recommendations and guidance for future development within the LCT

Wind energy developments

Overall recommendations:

- There may be opportunities to site occasional single turbines up to 60m within the more large-scale, open rolling landscape away from the more intimate areas of smaller scale pasture and woodland (ensuring the guidance below is followed).
- The scattering of turbines should be minimised to avoid significant cumulative impacts on landscape character from arising.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for large or very large turbines due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- Ensure that any new developments are similar in terms of siting, layout and relationship to key landscape characteristics, so as to present a simple image that relates clearly to landscape character[4].
- Avoid close juxtaposition of different turbine designs and heights within the height category, aiming instead for a consistent design and height in any given area.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure wind energy development does not detract from historic landmarks including the numerous Scheduled Monuments, villages with conservation areas and the setting of listed buildings, including churches with spires that are often locally important skyline features.
- Avoid siting wind turbines in smaller scale and irregular pastoral areas of the landscape including areas surrounding Todenham which would be highly vulnerable to wind energy development.
- Consider views from local settlements and popular recreational routes/areas including the National Trails and the Country Parks when considering the siting and design of wind energy development in the landscape.
- Ensure wind energy development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape recognised through its designation as a SLA, or the rural setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB.

[4] For further guidance in designing multiple wind turbine developments, see Scottish Natural Heritage (2017) Siting and Designing Wind Farms in the Landscape: Guidance. Version 3a available here.

Solar PV developments

Overall recommendations:

- There are opportunities to locate solar PV developments (up to and including 5ha) on within more sheltered fields where they are visually enclosed by folds in the landform, tall hedgerows or lines of riparian vegetation.
- None of the landscape is identified as suitable for 'large' or 'very large' solar PV development due to its sensitivities.

Strategic landscape guidance:

- The overall aim should be to make sure that solar PV developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape (i.e. avoiding significant cumulative impacts on the LCT from multiple developments that would result in an overall change in landscape character).
- PV developments be sited within farmland, avoiding semi-natural habitat to retain the naturalistic characteristics and habitat interest.
- Developments should be clearly separated so that collectively they do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape.
- Locate solar PV development in sheltered folds in the landscape where it will be less visible and have less of an influence on landscape character.
- Ensure that solar PV developments form part of the mixed farmland mosaic – rather than becoming a dominating land use.
- Consider views from more elevated areas within the LCT which may overlook the area when considering the siting and design of solar PV development in the landscape.
- Avoid locating solar PV development where it would be directly overlooked at close quarters, particularly side-on.
- Maintain the rural character of the landscape and ensure that cumulative development does not impact on the relatively undeveloped skylines.
- Ensure solar PV development does adversely affect the scenic qualities of the landscape recognised through its designation as a SLA, or the rural setting it provides to the Cotswolds AONB.