



Consultation Statement

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Regulation 12

Draft Supplementary Planning Document: Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

Scoping Consultation (July 2014)

The Council carried out an initial consultation on the scope and possible content of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) based on a landscape sensitivity of Mid Devon District to onshore wind energy and large scale photovoltaic developments. The consultation on the scope of the SPD took place from 25th July – 8th September 2014.

The Council wrote to 380 people on the Forward Planning consultation database. These comprised:

- Mid Devon elected members
- Mid Devon parish/town councils
- Adjoining parishes, neighbouring local authorities and statutory groups (including specific and general consultation bodies)

- General consultation bodies and other consultees including database groups defined as individuals, businesses, landowners and voluntary organisations

In addition the following methods were used to notify consultees:

- Press Releases
- Newspaper notice
- Information on the Council website

The Council invited people to make representations by post or email. 13 responses were received. Four of these offered no comment at this stage. The following table sets out a summary of the main comments raised during the scoping consultation, along with a response explaining how these have been addressed in the draft supplementary planning document:

Summary of representation	Response
General comments	
Report ignores the fact that Mid Devon’s countryside is made up of complex interwoven areas, impinging closely upon each other and in such a way that large energy developments will impact not only on the area in which they are proposed but equally on contiguous areas of higher sensitivity. The zoning approach used is therefore flawed.	It is important that the figures included in the document are not used in isolation but in conjunction with the relevant guidance sections contained within Appendix 3 of the draft SPD. The maps should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of a certain location for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their individual merits.
The assessment does not accurately recognise a scenario of placing a wind turbine on a hill which affects both the valley it is located within and the adjacent valley.	See above comment. Also note that wind energy development is no longer considered in this Supplementary Planning Document (see footnote 1 at the bottom of this table).
Impacts are experienced across multiple landscape types but the assessment only considers the landscape type in which the application is sited.	The assessment does refer to adjacent Landscape Character Areas which may not be in the same Landscape Character Type.
The document is flawed in principle because of the irreconcilable conflict between the need to develop on-shore renewable energy sources and the	The NPPF clearly states that local planning authorities should take a positive approach towards renewable and low carbon developments and that

objective to preserve the quality and character of the rural Mid Devon landscape.	planning has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable.
If economics permitted, a conservative approach might be to encourage smaller photovoltaic developments arranged along field headlands where visual impact would be mitigated.	No comment.
Objection to the report in principle as it is not fit for purpose. Preference for Landscape Character Assessment. The report shouldn't be a substitute for commissioning consultants on a case-by-case assessment, as each case is unique. The report appears to encourage solar and wind applications against the flow of Government advice.	See above comments re. NPPF and requirement for positive approach towards renewable and low carbon developments. As noted above, the maps should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of a certain location for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their individual merits. Also note that wind energy development is no longer considered in this Supplementary Planning Document (see footnote 1).
Advantage of solar and wind is that they need not be permanent. The study does not discuss de-commissioning. Propose both the engineering and ultimate restoration of the site receive scrutiny at the planning stage.	For solar, this will be covered in section 6 of the SPD. Also note that wind energy development is no longer considered in this Supplementary Planning Document (see footnote 1).
Organisations & Public Bodies	
Dartmoor National Park welcomes the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment as SPD and its increased weight. Support key issues and considerations in respect of the setting of the National Park and its special qualities.	No comment.
The Highways Agency's policy regarding wind development is detailed in DfT Circular 02/2013 "The Strategic Road Network and the Delivery of Sustainable Development". Appendix A of this guidance in particular sets out, set back distances and the need for detailed traffic management plans for delivery/removal of components during construction / decommissioning. In respect of PV developments it is important to stress the need to undertake glint and glare assessments to determine impact on trunk road traffic.	The guidance contained within the SPD will focus on landscape issues and therefore set back distances, traffic management plans and glint and glare assessments will not be covered in the SPD. It will however be acknowledged that these are important issues for consideration in planning applications/EIAs for solar developments.
Grand Western Canal Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) considers the	Comments noted.

<p>components of landscape are: physical landscape, experiential landscape, biodiversity, historic environment and visibility. The JAC hope the components of the landscape are considered in an integrated and equitable way and where there is need to make a decision that it is based on sound evidence. The JAC believe the canal along its length is sensitive to industrialisation of the countryside and development in this location should be avoided.</p>	
<p>The Devon Countryside Access Forum attaches new guidance produced by the Public Rights of Way Team at Devon County Council (DCC). They advise that the implications of on-shore wind and PV development on public rights of way and accessible green space, and the views enjoyed by users, should be included in the SPD being prepared. The SPD should cross-reference the DCC guidance to ensure all aspects are incorporated.</p>	<p>The DCC guidance will be used to assist the preparation of the SPD. However the SPD will only focus on landscape issues and therefore issues relating to access and recreation will not be explicitly covered.</p>
<p>CPRE support the principle of the document but have concerns that the report is a desk top study that is incapable of assessing intricate patterns of the Mid Devon Landscape. Wording in many places is ambiguous and open to interpretation. Concerns include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The sensitivity assessment scoring for small solar development (ground level) and for 50m high wind turbines are essentially the same, although impact would appear greater, this is considered an inconsistency. It is unclear what value the sensitivity assessments have. The report is therefore considered misleading. - The landscape sensitivity assessment does not appear to preclude any development however sensitive, but instead uses general phrases such as landscape is 'unlikely to accommodate turbines'. - The report refers to cumulative impact but provides no guidance to sequential cumulative effect, a relevant issue for all planning applications. - The assessment does not recognise a scenario where a landscape character type located some distance from a National Park (but in a 	<p>N/A - please note that wind energy development is no longer considered in this Supplementary Planning Document (see footnote 1).</p> <p>The sensitivity assessment does suggest any development is acceptable or unacceptable. It should not be interpreted as a definitive statement on the suitability of a certain location for a particular development. All developments will need to be assessed on their individual merits.</p> <p>The assessment of cumulative effects can only be effectively considered at the planning application stage and guidance will be included in the SPD of undertaking cumulative LVIAs.</p> <p>As above, all developments will need to be assessed on their individual</p>

<p>more prominent location) as more sensitive than a scheme in a closer location, but better screened. Instead the assessment is simply based on a distance calculation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of the fragmented nature of the landscape has not been given due weight in the report. - Support for the statement the 'overall aim should be to make sure that solar and wind developments do not become a key characteristic of the landscape'. 	<p>merits.</p> <p>It is not clear what this comment is referring to.</p> <p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Parish & Town Councils</p>	
<p>Bradninch Town Council supports the process of preparing an LSA SPD.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Halberton Parish Council propose such developments should not be located in close proximity to local communities; sites should have very small visual impact away from roads and communities; proposals should be located within brownfield sites or wastelands alongside railway tracks; wind proposals should be in industrial settings rather than on greenfield land; and all new farm/industrial buildings should have solar PV installed to reduce the need for large scale farms.</p>	<p>The document provides guidance on the landscape issues associated with solar developments. It will not include an energy strategy. Also note that wind energy development is no longer considered in this Supplementary Planning Document (see footnote 1).</p>
<p>Morebath Parish Council agrees with the proposed layout of the LSA SPD and refers to comments submitted by the Parish Council to application 12/01522/FULL, Keens Farm, Morebath and subsequent appeal submission outline their position on large scale PV.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Stoodleigh Parish Council endorses the contents of the LSA and the approach taken by MDDC to prepare the LSA as SPD.</p>	<p>Comment noted.</p>
<p>Willand Parish Council support using the information to prepare an LSA SPD. They suggest the document includes a section that outlines the grades of agricultural land or a link to the information, as this is relevant to sites considered for solar panels and sensitivity of the landscape.</p>	<p>The guidance contained within the SPD will focus on landscape issues and therefore agricultural land classification issues will not be covered in the SPD. It is, however, acknowledged that this is an important issue for consideration in planning applications/EIAs for solar developments.</p>

¹ Please note that a Landscape Sensitivity Assessment to onshore wind energy and large scale photovoltaics in Mid Devon District was prepared for the Council as part of the Local Plan evidence base and formed the basis for the 2014 scoping consultation on the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment SPD. On the 18th June 2015, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government released a Ministerial Statement on onshore wind energy. This stated that when considering applications for wind energy development, local planning authorities should only grant planning permission if the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan; and it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing. Due to this significant change in Government policy, it was decided that further advancement of this SPD would only cover solar developments and that the Council would give separate consideration to the application of the new policy context for wind. Note that the scoping consultation took place before the national policy change regarding wind energy development, therefore some comments received related to this development type. The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment will still be a material consideration for wind energy planning applications.

Draft Supplementary Planning Document: Landscape Implications of Solar PV Proposals

Draft Supplementary Planning Document Consultation (February 2016)

The Council carried out a second stage consultation on a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which focussed on the landscape implications of solar proposals and no longer on-shore wind energy due to the change in national policy and guidance (please see footnote 1 above). The consultation on the draft SPD took place from 15th February – 29th March 2016.

The Council wrote to a total of 362 individuals and organisations on the Forward Planning consultation database. These comprised:

- Mid Devon elected members
- Mid Devon parish/town councils
- Adjoining parishes, neighbouring local authorities and statutory groups (including specific and general consultation bodies)
- General consultation bodies and other consultees including database groups defined as individuals, businesses, landowners and voluntary organisations

In addition the following methods were used to notify consultees:

- Press Releases
- Newspaper notice
- Information on the Council website
- Three drop-in sessions were also held as part of the draft SPD consultation where planning officers were available to answer queries.

The Council invited people to make representations by post or email. 18 valid responses were received. One late response was received by Hemyock Parish Council which could not be logged as a representation, but has been published in the table below with a response for information purposes.

Note on the role of the SPD

A number of the comments received were not applicable to the role of the SPD. As set out in Chapter 1 of the SPD, ***the SPD provides guidance on the potential landscape issues associated with solar PV developments***. As per paragraph 1.4 of the document, domestic or commercial roof-mounted solar panels are not specifically covered in the SPD as they do not require planning permission, as long as specified limits and conditions of permitted development rights are met. As stated at paragraph 1.16 of the draft SPD, the document does **not** provide guidance on the range of other planning issues that may need to be considered as part of the preparation and determination of planning applications, including:

- Ecology and ornithology

- Historic environment
- Hydrology
- Traffic and transport
- Noise and vibration
- Socio-economics (e.g. tourism)
- Agricultural land use / productivity
- Glint and glare

The table starting on the next page sets out a summary of the main issues raised during the consultation on the draft SPD, and how these issues have been addressed where appropriate:

Summary of representation	Response
Individuals	
<p>There should be planning guidance for moving to 100% renewable energy which incorporates wind, solar, bio mass, green gas, hydro on suitable rivers in our area.</p> <p>The council should be actively encouraging the development of solar farms (also rooftop solar on industrial, commercial & private dwellings. Solar farms on agricultural sites are a very positive development, with low visual impact and very little impact on agricultural production. Solar farms will benefit the wildlife, with the introduction of wildflower meadows & hedgerow improvements.</p> <p>Consultation with the National Grid should be carried out in relation to battery storage sites.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Those relating to developments other than field-scale solar PV are not relevant to the SPD - please see 'Note on the role of the SPD' above. Wind energy is no longer considered in this SPD as set out in footnote 1, however the 2014 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment will still be a material consideration for wind energy development applications.</p>
<p>A summary would be most helpful for those of us with limited time to look at such documents.</p> <p>There are already far too many PV sites in Devon. These are industrial sites and should be treated as such. A far more rigorous planning process is long overdue.</p>	<p>A separate summary document will accompany the final SPD. Chapter 6 of the SPD provides guidance on how the cumulative impacts of multiple schemes should be assessed through the process of Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CLVIA).</p>
<p>1) Any site will not impact on any settlement/ village or any homestead operating a tourist/recreational business</p> <p>2) Any site will not impact or be close to listed buildings of sites of historic interest</p> <p>3) Any site will not use agricultural land</p> <p>4) Any site will not be visible from footpaths, bridal paths, tow paths of canals and waterways, cycle tracks. they should not impact on small roads and lanes</p> <p>The reasons for the above are to protect the tourism appeal to Devonshire, to preserve the landscape and thereby quality of life for local residents. 'Close' and 'impact' is defined proximity of nearer than one mile.</p> <p>5) wind turbines are the most intrusive of all renewables and the most inefficient.</p> <p>6) large solar farms over 1 acre on agricultural land are unacceptable.</p> <p>7) all new farm, industrial and commercial buildings should be obliged to have solar panels on their roofs. new houses should have a minimum of two panels to heat hot water.</p> <p>8) existing farm, commercial and industrial buildings as in 7) should be encouraged to</p>	<p>Comments noted. Tourism and agricultural land use/productivity are outside the scope of the SPD. Comments relating to developments other than field-scale solar PV are also not relevant to this SPD. Please see 'Note on the role of the SPD' above.</p> <p>Part of the LVIA process is to consider views to/from a particular development. Please see Chapter 6 of the SPD.</p> <p>Wind energy is no longer considered in this SPD as set out in footnote 1, however the 2014 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment will still be a material consideration for wind energy development applications.</p>

Summary of representation	Response
<p>install solar panels with maybe an incentive like a partial rate rebate for a short period 9) motorway verges and rail side lane may be acceptable for solar farms. Food security will become an issue and good land should be kept for food production.</p>	
<p>19thC objections to canals and railways come to mind when looking at most of the objections raised. Unlike those developments which would have an real long term impact on the landscape of an area, Solar PV will not be there for even a quarter of a century. Such developments might affect speculative house purchasers “views” and “vistas” but not the landscape.</p> <p>Real concerns include overhead power cables or new tarmac roads and steel/brick/concrete support buildings. These are the items that will never go away and therefore impact landscape in the long term.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Those relating to developments other than field-scale solar PV are outside the scope of the SPD - please see ‘Note on the role of the SPD’ above.</p> <p>Chapter 2 of the SPD acknowledges that solar PV developments are usually given planning permission for 25 years.</p>
<p>We have seen a proliferation of solar farms in this area. I was given to understand that such developments were only to be sited on low grade agricultural land. Yet for the sites adjacent to the M5 at Sampford Peverell and South of Cullompton this does not appear to be the case.</p> <p>Positioning the two sites mentioned above, so close to the main gateway to Devon can not be considered to be the best first impression of the County for tourists.</p> <p>It should be a condition of local planning that any agricultural or commercial building over a given size, with a roof of the correct orientation to the sun, must be fitted with panels.</p>	<p>Comments noted. Agricultural land use/productivity and tourism are outside the scope of the SPD. Comments relating roof-mounted solar PV panels are also not relevant. Please see ‘Note on the role of the SPD’ above.</p>
<p>Planning guidance requires consideration of: minimal visual impact, land quality/use (Industrial/brownfield sites and low quality agricultural land preferred); maintenance (e.g. grazing, mowing/strimming, spraying); screening (growth time of adequate hedging/trees); lifespan.</p> <p>No enforceable means of ensuring demolition, removal of underground foundations and cables or land reinstatement, or avoiding areas of future scrap or contamination; no means of recycling.</p> <p>This consultation should provide the opportunity for the proper local consideration of the means available for tough, enforceable measures to be put in place, backed with a secure financial Bond.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Agricultural land use/productivity is outside the scope of the SPD - see ‘Note on the role of the SPD’ above.</p> <p>De-commissioning of solar PV developments is beyond the scope of the SPD.</p>
<p>I just do not understand why new houses cannot be built with solar tiles such as the National Trust has used on some of their newer buildings. Neither do I understand</p>	<p>Comments noted. Agricultural land use/productivity and tourism are outside the scope of the SPD. Comments relating</p>

Summary of representation	Response
<p>why the ghastly solar farm on the B3181 was ever allowed. There are so many terrific uses for solar panels - on warehouse roofs in industrial estates for example. They look horrid on most cottage roofs because they are un sympathetic to any architectural aesthetic.</p> <p>As for fields of solar panels taking away our ever reducing farmland please think again. Do the planners seriously think that people want to visit Devon for a lovely view of hideous solar panels instead of crops or animals? Do they think that very unattractive solar panels on "cute" cottages are on people's wish list?</p> <p>Please try and invite some design into this important energy contributor and get the greedy developers to consider some decent architectural roof tiles. A whole roof could be built as a superb solar glass energy producer and look excellent when designed by the right, forward thinking architect of which we have many. Please don't ruin our environment and please ban solar panels as "farms"!</p>	<p>roof-mounted solar PV panels are also not relevant. Please see 'Note on the role of the SPD' above.</p> <p>We are unable to comment on specific proposals or decisions which pre-date the SPD's publication.</p>
<p>We note that on Figure 5.3 the area East of Tiverton Town is classed as "Moderate Landscape Sensitivity to Solar PV Development".</p> <p>In view of the abovementioned, we would like to take this opportunity to remind the Planning Department that as part of the EUE Eastern Urban Extension-Development of the land between the Old Railway Walk and the Grand Western Canal, known as "Green Buffer Infrastructure Zone" and not for development of any kind.</p>	<p>Planning policies beyond the scope of the SPD will be considered as part of the application process.</p>
<p>It is more energy efficient placing photovoltaic cells on the roofs of building than in a field away from the end user. Farmers have lots of buildings to install solar panels on and this will enable them to still be able to use the fields for agriculture.</p> <p>I call upon Mid Devon District Council to do the right thing and make it policy to not approve any more photovoltaic development on green field sites.</p>	<p>Agricultural land use/productivity and roof-mounted solar PV installations are outside the scope of the SPD. Please see 'Note on the role of the SPD' above.</p>
<p>Town and Parish Councils</p>	
<p>Crediton Town Council requests that, for large developments, they are informed even if they are 5 miles away. The Town Council would like to receive reports from MDDC's planning department on large scale solar developments that have been effective.</p>	<p>The Council already informs adjoining Town/Parish Councils on renewable energy proposals even if not within their jurisdiction. Planning applications received by Mid Devon District Council for large scale solar developments are also available to view on the Council's website, including their</p>

Summary of representation	Response
<p>Bradninch Town Council feel that the importance of agricultural land classifications (currently omitted) should be included in the document We hope that this comment will be taken on board and that agricultural land, particularly that of high value, will be given recognition and protection for future generations</p>	<p>decision status and associated documents. Agricultural land use/productivity is outside the scope of the SPD - see 'Note on the role of the SPD' above.</p>
<p>Knowstone Parish Council submitted a response relating to the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan – specifically a consultation on their proposed policy on wind energy development. The representation was therefore not relevant to this draft SPD consultation.</p>	<p>This representation refers to the North Devon and Torridge proposed wind development policy which is not applicable to Mid Devon District. No response has therefore been provided.</p>
<p>Willand Parish Council consider the document is the result of an 'academic' exercise as opposed to a working document that will be user friendly. It could be made more 'user friendly' by the reduction or removal of explanatory sections. It is suggested that consideration be given to the preparation of a summary of key principles at the beginning of the document with direction toward relevant appendixes/sections.</p>	<p>A separate summary document will accompany the final SPD.</p>
<p>Hittisleigh Parish Council – whilst planning consent is granted for 25 years, the economic value of the installation will change and the renewal/maintenance costs will rise. We suggest that a review period is built into approval so that unviable installations are not left to decay in the countryside. We suggest a review after 5 years and each 5 years thereafter. If the review indicates that the installation is no longer meeting production targets then enforcement of decommissioning and land reinstatement should be carried out.</p>	<p>De-commissioning of solar PV developments is beyond the scope of the SPD.</p>
<p>Hemyock Parish Council supports small scale sites but prefers solar panels to be on roofs of agricultural buildings rather than on good agricultural land.</p>	<p>Roof-mounted solar PV installations and the consideration of agricultural land use/productivity are outside the scope of the SPD. Please see 'Note on the role of the SPD' above.</p>
<p>Other organisations</p>	
<p>National Trust advise that Mid Devon Policy DM27 on <i>development affecting heritage assets</i> is also relevant in terms of designated historic landscapes. The setting sensitivity for both Killerton and Knightshayes needs to be referred to under 'Historic Landscape Character' for the relevant LCTs and the issue indicated in the additional specific guidance for development. It is critical that additional guidance</p>	<p>Noted – Policy DM 27 has been added into the list of relevant policies included at Table 2.1 of the SPD. Reference to the registered parkland estates within the district, as well as Killerton (which is within East Devon but areas of Mid Devon form part of its setting) have been included in the</p>

Summary of representation	Response
<p>for development is given on this issue in all relevant Landscape Character Types. The setting studies for Killerton (LUC; 2013) and Knightshayes (The Parks Agency; 2007) are included with the electronic version of this submission.</p>	<p>relevant sections of the SPD, with cross reference to the two setting studies (Killerton and Knightshayes) provided in footnotes.</p>
<p>CPRE states that there is no government directive for local councils to identify areas suitable for development of Solar PV Proposals, and that Mid Devon has already more than met its obligation on renewable energy installations.</p> <p>Mid Devon is typified by rolling hills with deep valleys leading into rivers and streams intersperse with small copses, woodland and farms and is very largely unspoiled. Much of the area is designated of medium to high sensitivity to Solar PV installations. One such valley designated to be of med/high sensitivity has already been given planning permission for a large scale Solar PV installation (13.4 hectares): which was to have been promoted as An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.</p> <p>The Planning Practice Guidance states that “the views of local communities likely to be affected should listened to” and not ignored. This guidance has largely been ignored by the planners in Mid Devon and local residents have not been listened to. Both large and small developments have an accumulative fragmented effect on this beautiful area.</p> <p>CPRE Mid Devon has no objection to Solar PV installations on the roofs of houses, offices and factories and subject to planning considerations. It emphatically opposes them on farm land, Farm land is for growing food.</p>	<p>The solar SPD is not identifying areas suitable for solar PV proposals. It aims to highlight which parts of the landscape (and features within it) are more or less sensitive to this type of development to aid both developers and decision makers.</p> <p>These landscape variations are accounted for within the detailed LCT assessments included at Appendix 2 of the SPD. We are unable to comment on specific proposals or decisions which pre-date the SPD’s publication.</p> <p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Roof-mounted solar PV installations and the consideration of agricultural land use/productivity are outside the scope of the SPD. Please see ‘Note on the role of the SPD’ above.</p>
<p>Tiverton Civic Society believe that the draft SPD is a carefully researched, thorough, document not only outlining the main landscape characteristics of Mid Devon, but also indicating the general level of impact of solar panels of various sizes on these characteristics. It is clear that applicants for planning permission will need to get pre-planning guidance for specific sites as well as taking guidance from the document, and consider the cumulative effects of solar panel developments in the immediate area. Overall, we think the levels of assessment for solar panel developments for different bandings is broadly correct.</p> <p>P.11 Landscape Character Assessment Framework. - Having read landscape character assessments, I wonder why <i>Plateaux</i> have been grouped with <i>Ridges</i> in <i>LCT 1</i> as the impact for solar panel development is very</p>	<p>Comments noted</p> <p>The LCTs are defined in the 2011 Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Devon. Please refer to Chapter 3 of the published report for information on the methodology and</p>

Summary of representation	Response
<p>different for each. - Would 1E, wooded ridges and hilltops, be better classified under <i>LCT 2 Scarp Slopes</i>, becoming 2E? They seem to have more in common. 1F contradicts its upland classification with its description as ‘farmed lowland moorland. Perhaps ‘farmed moorland’ would be a better term.</p> <p>There is no mention or discussion of the environmental impact of solar development on SSSIs.</p> <p>The respondent also picked up on a number of typos in the document.</p>	<p>process followed to produce the assessment and define the LCTs.</p> <p>Please see ‘Note on the role of the SPD’ above – ecological issues are outside the scope of this document.</p> <p>Noted and addressed</p>
<p>Cheldon, Chawleigh & Chulmleigh Landscape & Heritage Protection Group (CCCLHPG) feel that special care should be considered where an application is proposed in a ‘moderate’ landscape area that is within 2km, of a highly sensitive landscape. This can be further exasperated by the surrounding topography and the perceived impacts of the residents. Grounds for decisions should be based on the worst views and their impacts, not the acceptable views. Applications need to be considered with little or no adverse impacts affecting the character of that landscape.</p> <p>Where a solar development of any size is within the proximity of 2km of any non-financially advantaged resident, then any permissions should seek their agreement. Greater weight therefore should be afforded to the residential amenity of any residents rather than the applicant’s development. No solar development within 3km of any affected residential community should be considered unless it is a community based project and the affected community do not object to it. This would be established by numbers of people locally supporting or objecting to it.</p> <p>The LPA to ensure that thorough pre consultation occurs, so that affected Parishes and parisioners are fully aware of applications proposed. This includes adjoining parishes adjoining the Mid Devon borders. The process should include all residents within the ZTV, especially those that have objected to renewable energy schemes in the preceding 10 years or those existing on the LPA’s database.</p> <p>We are not aware of any other South West Councils consulting on solar and we don’t want an open door policy where developers target Mid Devon. Please ensure that there are adequate constraints with the policy so that only limited development can</p>	<p>Individual applications will be considered on their own merits, with the information in this SPD providing guidance on how to address the landscape implications of solar PV developments.</p> <p>Other planning issues beyond those relating to landscape will be considered through the planning process, including through the use of Environmental Impact Assessments and Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments, where appropriate (further information is provided in Chapter 6 of the SPD).</p> <p>The Council already informs adjoining Town/Parish Councils on renewable energy proposals even if not within their jurisdiction. Planning applications received by Mid Devon District Council for large scale solar developments are also available to view on the Council’s website, including their decision status and associated documents.</p> <p>A number of landscape sensitivity assessments for solar PV developments have been published by other Devon districts</p>

Summary of representation	Response
<p>occur.</p> <p>Consider the utilization of roof space i.e. on an applicant's farm buildings.</p> <p>There are far reaching unspoilt panoramic views across Mid Devon, so consider only small 'well-screened' arrays placed along low lying fields, beside hedgerows, directly beside farm buildings, or near main roads, to mitigate visual impacts.</p> <p>Any landscape sensitivity maps should include an example of hectare size, by means of a filled in block in the map identifying key' section, that is in scale to the map to show how big an area of land is.</p> <p>Consider that insufficient grid connection and capacity does not lead to more pylons being built, which would further despoil the landscape.</p> <p>Please consider incorporating the sentiment of the Written Statement to Parliament 25 March 2015, by the Rt Hon Sir Eric Pickles MP, DCLG, into any proposed policy: <i>"We are encouraged by the impact the guidance is having but do appreciate the continuing concerns, not least those raised in this House, about the unjustified use of high quality agricultural land. In light of these concerns we want it to be clear that any proposal for a solar farm involving the best and most versatile agricultural land would need to be justified by the most compelling evidence."</i></p>	<p>and local authorities in the region.</p> <p>Roof-mounted solar PV installations are outside the scope of the SPD. Please see 'Note on the role of the SPD' above.</p> <p>The maps presented in the report are intended to be a strategic district-scale overview of the key variations in landscape sensitivity. Each application will be considered on its own merits.</p> <p>Not relevant to the scope of the SPD.</p> <p>Agricultural land use/productivity is outside the scope of the SPD - see 'Note on the role of the SPD' above.</p>