

**Planning, Heritage and Landscape Supporting
Statement**

**Installation of a Ground-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic
Array**

**Land Adjacent to Lower Leaze, Nettleton Road,
Nettleton, Chippenham, SN14 7NZ**

V1 2026

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1. Introduction

This Planning, Heritage and Landscape Supporting Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the installation of a ground-mounted solar photovoltaic array on land adjacent to Lower Leaze, Nettleton Road, Nettleton, Chippenham, SN14 7NZ.

The proposal seeks permission for a modest renewable energy installation to provide sustainable electricity generation for Lower Leaze, reducing reliance upon fossil fuel-derived energy and contributing towards local and national carbon reduction objectives.

land.

2. Site Description

The property lies to the north of the village, which is identified as a 'small village' under policy Core Policy 10 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS). The settlement is within the Cotswold National Landscape, specifically, the Dip-slope Lowland character type and 11A South & Mid Cotswolds Lowlands landscape character area.

Lower Leaze comprises a dwelling, including an annexe, and associated residential curtilage at the corner of Nettleton Road and Edgecorner Lane. A public footpath (NETT31) runs along the western boundary of the residential property. To the west of the foot path is a 1.48ha pasture, also in the ownership of the Applicants, used for the grazing of alpacas.

At it's northern edge, alongside Edgecorner Lane, the field boundary is comprised of a remnant stone wall and hedge with the field some 0.8m lower than the highway, falling gently some 30.0m to a post and rail fence and pronounced ditch that flows seasonally. To the south the ditch the field rises to the southern hedge boundary. Under reference N/04/00652/FUL planning permission was granted for the erection of stables in the field.

To the north of Edgecorner Lane is The Old School, a Grade II Listed dwelling spatially and visually separated from the application site, by intervening boundary planting, trees and the lane.

The development has been carefully designed and positioned to minimise any impact upon the surrounding landscape, nearby heritage assets, residential amenity and agricultural use of the

3. Proposed Development

The proposal comprises:

- 30 No. TRINASOLAR TSM-450-NEG9R.25 ALLBLACK Solar Panels.
- Ground-mounted support system.
- Two rows of 15 panels mounted on a W-2G2-25° frame.
- Associated inverter equipment and underground electrical connections.
- Post-and-rail fencing to protect the installation from livestock.
- Native species hedgerow planting to the eastern boundary of the array.

Each solar panel measures approximately 1762mm x 1134mm x 30mm.

The array will be positioned within the north-eastern corner of the field, immediately west of the existing field access, where it remains closely related to existing field boundaries and the host dwelling.

Planting native hedgerow planting is proposed to the east of the array to reduce visual impact from highway and from views off the PROW, and the array will be fenced off using post and rails to prevent damage to the photo-voltaic cells from the alpacas.

The development is entirely reversible and can be removed at the end of its operational life without permanent alteration to the land.

4. Planning Policy Context

The site lies within Nettleton, identified as a Small Village under Core Policy 10 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. There is currently no made Neighbourhood Plan applicable to the site.

Core Policy 42 of the WCS; 'Stand-alone renewable energy installations' supports such development subject to satisfactory resolution of all site specific constraints. CP42 confirms that 'applicants will not be required to justify the overall need for renewable energy development, either in a national or local context'.

A list of relevant factors to be taken into consideration are given in the policy, of particular relevance to the development, subject of this statement are;

- Landscape, particularly in and around National Landscapes (former AONB's)
- Biodiversity
- The historic environment
- Residential amenity
- Best and most versatile agricultural land

These relevant factors will be considered in turn, within the planning assessment below.

3.5. Paragraph 167 of the National Planning Policy Framework directs Local Planning Authorities to *'give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through the installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights). Where the proposals would affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other relevant designated heritage assets, local planning authorities should also apply the policies set out in chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of this framework'*.

The National Planning Policy Framework gives significant weight to renewable and low-carbon energy developments and recognises the important role that such developments play in supporting the transition towards a low-carbon future.

The proposal directly supports these objectives through the generation of renewable electricity and reduction of carbon emissions associated with the occupation of Lower Leaze.

5. Planning Assessment

Landscape Impact

The village is washed over by the Cotswold National Landscape designation; the application site lies within the Landscape Character Type Dip-Slope Lowland, specifically 11A; South and Mid Cotswold Lowland Character Area. The key characteristics include;

- Strong and structured farmland character,
- Well-managed, productive agricultural landscape of mixed arable and improved pasture

- Medium to large scale, regular fields predominate mainly enclosed by hedgerows, with hedgerow trees together with some stone walls or post and wire fencing
- Settlement pattern of intermittent small nucleated villages and hamlets, and isolated farmsteads
- Distinctive pattern of large estates and associated planned parkland landscape and woodland occurring throughout the Dip-Slope Lowland.

Forces for change to the National Landscape, relevant to the proposed, location, scale and form of development, are expansion of the built form into the landscape, resulting in the domestication of the agricultural landscape. To avoid such impacts the Guidelines advise the avoidance of isolated development, appropriate landscape planting and strict control of associated lighting.

The application site is well-related to existing boundaries of the field, and the closest position to the host dwelling while preserving the function of the field access, and providing sufficient space for planting to reduce views of the array from the PROW.

Available public views of the application site are available from the Nettleton Road through the field gate and from PROW NETT31 as shown in the photo-schedule at Appendix 1 of this statement. However, the low maximum height of the panels and the proposed boundary planting around the array will ensure that the development will not compromise the wider landscape setting and character, in accordance with the provisions of CP51; landscape, and appropriately meet the tests of CP42.

There is no intention or need to light the development. Should the Local Planning Authority consider it necessary to control future external lighting associated with the panels a suitability worded condition could be attached to a consent requiring written approval of lighting prior to installation.

Existing hedgerows, mature trees, stone walls and changes in topography already provide a significant degree of visual containment.

Additional native hedgerow planting is proposed to the eastern side of the array which will further soften and filter views of the development from the surrounding area.

Given the modest scale of the development, the low profile of the panels and the existing landscape containment, the proposal will not result in any material harm to the character or appearance of the Cotswolds National Landscape.

Biodiversity

The application site comprises an area of grazed pasture; the site is not a priority habitat listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

The panels will be attached to frames placed in the ground allowing the grass to be maintained. Mixed species planting will be sited to the east of the array and post and rail fencing will protect the array from damage by livestock. Given that the pasture under the array will not be compromised, the development is considered to benefit from the de minimis Biodiversity Net Gain exemption.

It will also be noted that the proposed planting represents an increase in habitat units arising from the proposed development, and the stationing of the photo-voltaic panels is entirely reversible and have no long term impact on the habitats present on the application site.

The proposal has been designed to retain all existing hedgerows, trees and landscape features. Grazing will continue beneath and around the solar installation ensuring that the existing agricultural use of the field remains unchanged.

The proposed native hedgerow planting will provide additional habitat opportunities for birds, pollinating insects and small mammals and will strengthen existing ecological corridors.

The proposal is therefore considered to result in a minor ecological enhancement when compared with the existing baseline conditions.

Heritage & Historic Environment

The nearest designated heritage asset is The Old School, Nettleton Road, a Grade II Listed Building which were first listed on 9th December 1985 when the building still functioned as the village School; the Official Citation is reproduced as Appendix 2 of this statement.

Historic England records the building as a former village school dating from approximately 1850 and constructed of coursed rubble stone beneath a slate roof.

The listed building is separated from the application site by Edgecorner Lane, existing boundary treatments, mature vegetation and changes in land levels.

The proposed development has been located in a discrete position, sheltered from the majority of views and will share limited inter-visibility with the Heritage Asset. As such, the impact of the proposals on the setting of the heritage asset will be extremely limited and will reduce over time

as the proposed planting establishes. It is also noted that any assessed impact must be weighed against the imperative to reduce reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

The proposed solar array has been deliberately positioned within a discreet corner of the field where intervisibility with the listed building is extremely limited. Existing vegetation already screens much of the site and the proposed native hedge planting will further reduce visibility over time.

The proposal will not alter the fabric, character or significance of the listed building and will preserve its setting.

Residential Amenity

Photovoltaic panels are passive installations and do not generate significant noise, vibration, emissions or operational activity.

As mentioned above, there will be no intervisibility of the development from the nearest dwellings. Photo-voltaic panels do not emit light or sound and therefore the development is considered entirely respectful of residential amenity.

Given the separation distances involved together with the presence of existing vegetation and screening, the proposal will not adversely affect neighbouring residential amenity.

Best & Most Versatile Agricultural Land

The site forms part of a pasture field currently used for alpaca grazing.

The proposed development occupies only a small proportion of the wider field and grazing will continue around and beneath the installation throughout its operational life.

The agricultural land surrounding Nettleton is classed as Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' land, and therefore the loss of the modest area to a stand-alone renewable energy development is not considered objectionable. Although it will be noted that the entire development is reversible, and the area could be brought back into active farming if the need for renewable energy changes in the future.

Accordingly, the proposal will not result in any significant loss of agricultural productivity.

6. Planning Balance and Conclusion

The proposed solar photovoltaic installation represents a modest, well-designed and sustainable form of development.

The development will generate renewable electricity, reduce reliance upon fossil fuels and make a positive contribution towards national and local climate change objectives.

The imperative to reduce reliance on fossil fuels is supported by local and national planning policy and represents significant positive weight in the planning balance. The associated hedge planting will make a modest contribution to biodiversity into the future, a point that lends moderate positive weight in the planning balance.

The proposed solar installation will provide sustainable power to Lower Leaze. The proposals accord with the general presumption in favour of development that assists in reducing reliance upon carbon-hungry sources of power and have been sensitively located to ensure that there will be no material impact on the landscape setting of the development

The proposal has been carefully designed to ensure that it:

- Conserves the character and appearance of the Cotswolds National Landscape.
- Preserves the setting of nearby heritage assets.
- Protects residential amenity.
- Maintains the agricultural use of the land.
- Delivers biodiversity enhancements through additional native planting.
- Supports the transition towards a low-carbon future.

The environmental and sustainability benefits arising from the proposal carry substantial weight in favour of the development and clearly outweigh any limited and localised visual change associated with the installation.

In conclusion, the proposed development represents appropriate development and should be granted consent without undue delay. Should the Local Planning Authority require any further information to assist in their consideration of this matter, please contact the Agent at the earliest opportunity.

Appendix 1 Photo Schedule

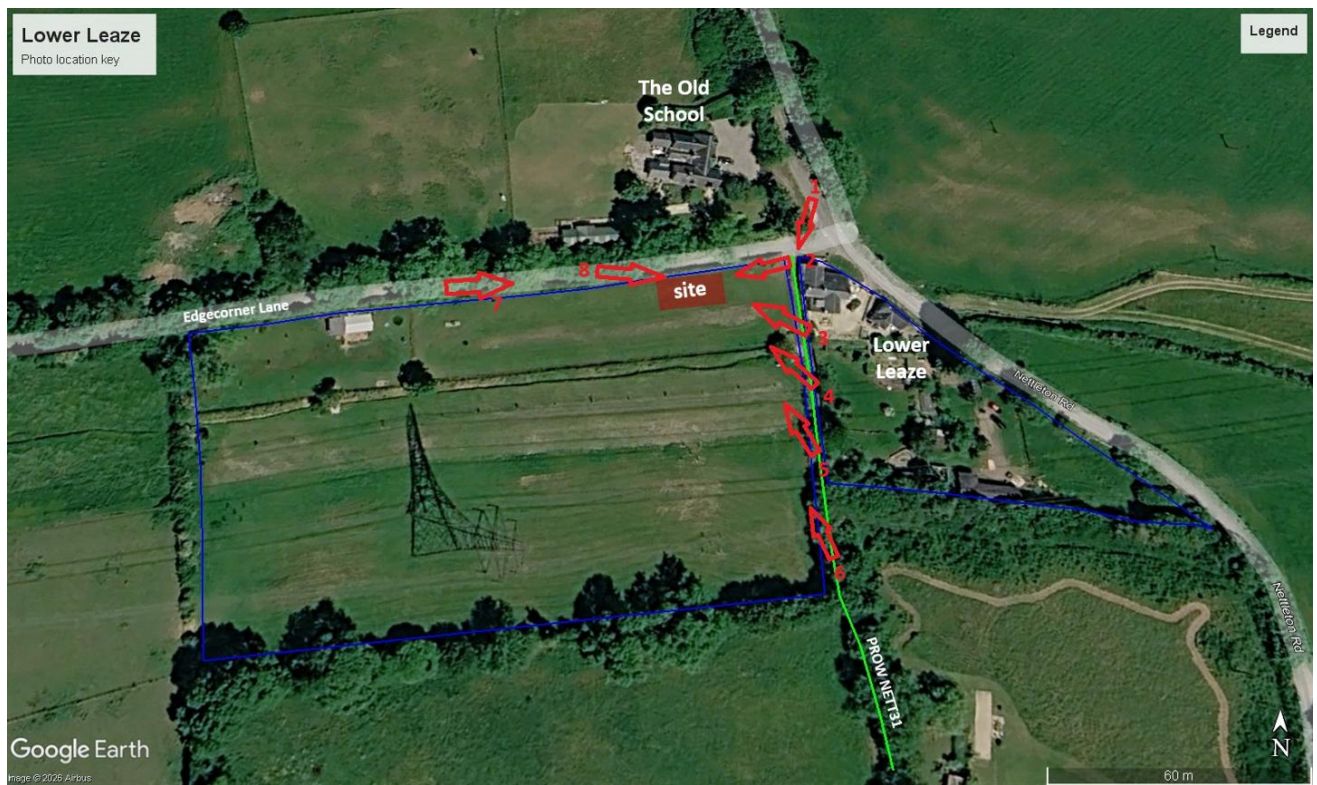




PHOTO 2



PHOTO 3



PHOTO 4



PHOTO 5

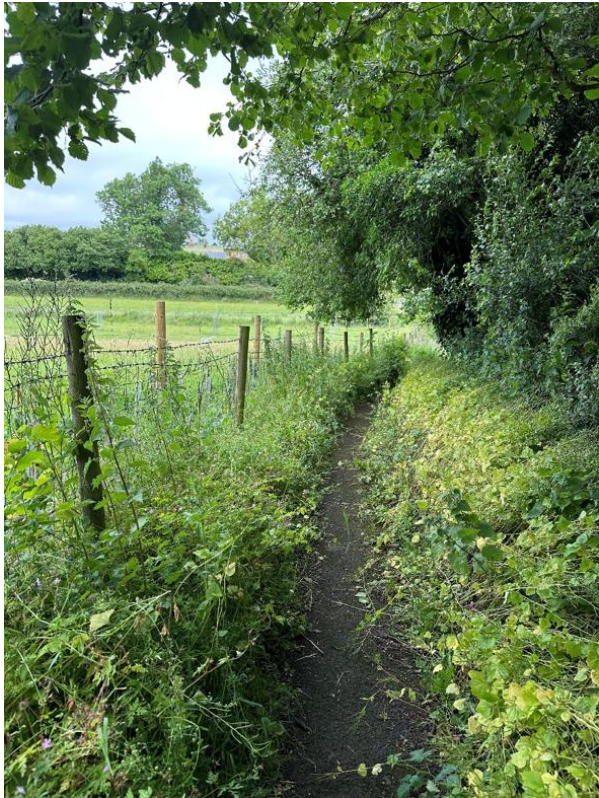


PHOTO 6



PHOTO 7



PHOTO 8

Appendix 2

Nettleton Primary School

Listed on the National Heritage List for England. **Search over 400,000 listed places**

(<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>)

Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1022969**

Date first listed: **09-Dec-1985**

List Entry Name: **Nettleton Primary School**

Statutory Address 1: **NETTLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL, NETTLETON ROAD**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

[Understanding list entries](#)

(<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

[Corrections and minor amendments](#)

(<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

Location

Statutory Address: **NETTLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL, NETTLETON ROAD**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: **Wiltshire (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Nettleton**

National Grid Reference: **ST 81795 78947**

Details

NETTLETON NETTLETON ROAD ST 87 NW Burton 2/376 Nettleton Primary School

II

Village school, 1850 by Salway of Chippenham, coursed rubble stone with slate roof. One storey schoolroom and 2-storey house range at south end. Flush quoins. Schoolroom has 2 gables over 3-light mullion and transom windows with hoodmoulds and ashlar gabled porch to left with Tudor-arched doorway. Plaque 'National School MDCCCL' to one gable. House has 2-storey east gable front with 2 south wall diagonal stacks and rear west end stack. One 2-light mullion window with hoodmould to each floor of east front. (Builder: 1849, 449.)

Listing NGR: ST8179578947

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **317467**

Legacy System: **LBS**

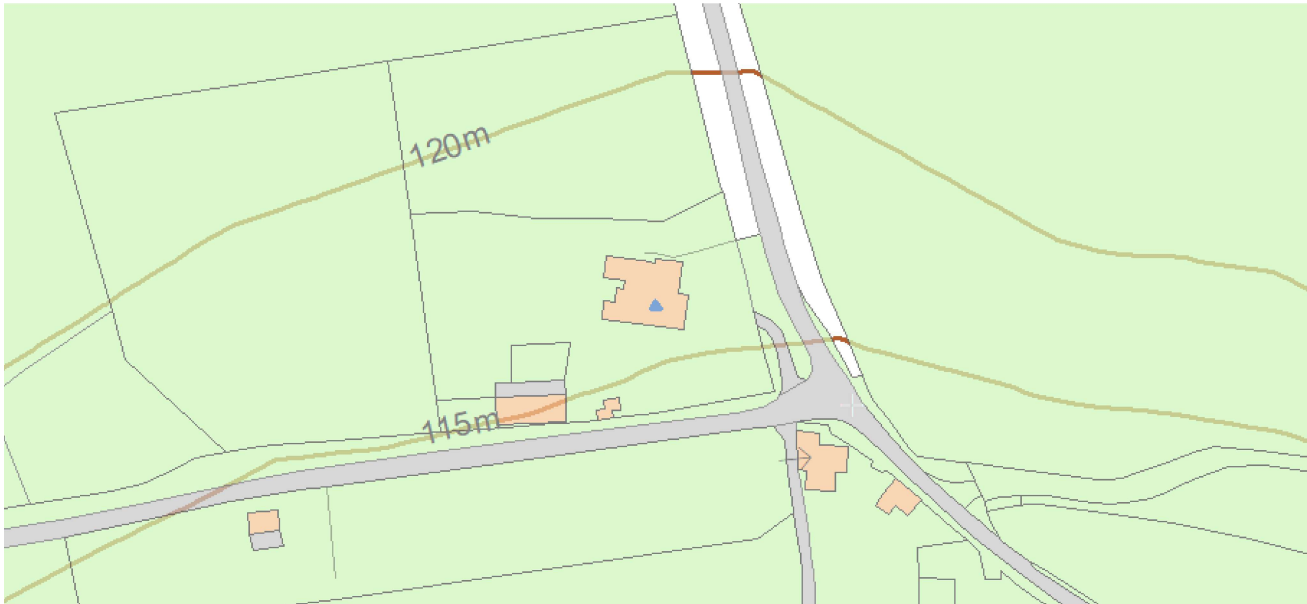
Sources

Books and journals

The Builder in The Builder, (1849), 449

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. This copy shows the entry on 15-Jun-2026 at 11:44:46.

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End of official list entry

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