

Contact: Jennifer Ashworth
Direct Dial: 01724 297315
Email: Jennifer.ashworth@northlincs.gov.uk
Our ref: PA/SCR/2025/7
Date: 13/11/2025

www.northlincs.gov.uk

Church Square House
30-40 High Street
Scunthorpe
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL

Mr Stuart Langar
Q-Energy Sustainable Investments Ltd,
58 Marylebone High Street,
LONDON,
W1U 5HT

Dear Mr Stuart Langar

**SCREENING OPINION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact
Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017.**

Proposal: EIA screening request for the River Trent solar farm

Location: land in the vicinity of Butterwick Road and Sand Lane, Messingham

Applicant: Mr Stuart Langar

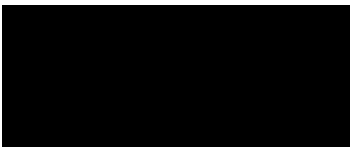
I am writing to provide you with a screening opinion of the local planning authority under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017.

This screening opinion is provided in response to development proposals for the proposed River Trent solar farm at land in the vicinity of Butterwick Road and Sand Lane, Messingham.

Given the understanding of the site environment and the development proposal at the time of writing, the local planning authority considers that the development would not comprise EIA development. As such, the authority cannot ask you to undertake an environmental impact assessment of the development proposed or submit an environmental statement with an application for planning permission.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss any aspect of this response.

Yours faithfully



**Jennifer Ashworth
Senior Planning Officer**

**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2017 SCREENING MATRIX**

| 1. CASE DETAILS | | | |
|--|----------------------------|---|---|
| Case Reference | PA/SCR/2025/7 | Brief description of the project / development | EIA screening request for the River Trent solar farm at land in the vicinity of Butterwick Road and Sand Lane, Messingham |
| Applicant | Mr Stuart Langar | | |
| LPA | North Lincolnshire Council | | The forthcoming planning application (anticipated to be submitted in Spring 2026) will seek consent to construct and operate a solar farm with an estimated export capacity of 50 mega-watts (MW) Alternating Current (AC) with associated infrastructure. The Proposed Development is located on land containing agricultural fields, approximately 3km southwest of Scunthorpe, 3km west of Messingham and 1.2km east of East Butterwick. |
| 2. EIA DETAILS | | | |
| Is the project Schedule 1 development according to Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations? | | | No |
| If YES, which description of development (THEN GO TO Q4) | | | |
| Is the project Schedule 2 development under the EIA Regulations? | | | Yes |
| If YES, under which description of development in Column 1 and Column 2? | | | The project is listed within Schedule 2, category 3a 'Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water (unless included in Schedule 1)'. The area of the Proposed Development exceeds 0.5 hectares. The site area is noted within the supporting Flood Risk Assessment as 184 ha. |
| Is the development within, partly within, or near a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations? | | | No |
| If YES, which area? | | | |
| Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in Column 2 exceeded/met? | | | Yes Exceeded |
| If yes, which applicable threshold/criteria? | | | The area of the Proposed Development exceeds 0.5 hectares. The site area is noted within the supporting Flood Risk Assessment as 184 ha. Whilst this is a large area the supporting plans and information suggests only 90 ha's of land is required for solar panel arrays this includes the modules themselves and also accounts for spacing between them to prevent overshadowing. This is a |

**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2017 SCREENING MATRIX**

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>worst-case value for the purposes of this EIA Screening Request, and the applicant suggests that the detailed design process will seek to reduce this. Fields 1-6, are considered to be less environmentally sensitive, and are proposed to be used for panels, comprise approximately 65 hectares. Additional panels, needed to achieve the 50MW AC export capacity will be located in fields 8, 9 and 11, location to be confirmed following more detailed survey, assessment and design. Field 10 will be the potential area for ecological and landscape enhancement and field 7 the proposed substation location.</p> |
| <p>To aid local planning authorities to determine whether a project is likely to have significant environmental effects, a set of indicative thresholds and criteria have been produced. This is contained within the PPG – Annex: Indicative Screening Thresholds. What are the Indicative Screening Thresholds for this project? And how does this apply to this project?</p> | <p>The indicative criteria and threshold: Thermal output of more than 50 MW. Small stations using novel forms of generation should be considered carefully.</p> <p>It should be noted that the proposed development is thought to have an estimated export capacity of 50 megawatts (MW) Alternating Current (AC) with associated infrastructure.</p> <p>Key Issues to consider: Level of emissions to air, arrangements for the transport of fuel and any visual impact.</p> <p>These matters will be considered in the relevant sections below. The proposed project is not expected to give rise to significant effects in relation to these matters.</p> |
| <p>3. LPA/SOS SCREENING</p> | |
| <p>Has the LPA or SoS issued a Screening Opinion (SO) or Screening Direction (SD)? (In the case of Enforcement appeals, has a Regulation 37 notice been issued)</p> | <p>No</p> |
| <p>If yes, is a copy of the SO/SD on the file?</p> | |
| <p>If yes, is the SO/SD positive?</p> | |
| <p>4. ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT</p> | |
| <p>Has the appellant supplied an ES for the current or previous (if reserved matters or conditions) application?</p> | <p>No</p> |

**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2017 SCREENING MATRIX**

**WHEN COMPLETING THIS DOCUMENT IN RELATION TO AN ENFORCEMENT APPEAL, THE
UNDERSIGNED OFFICER HAS HAD REGARD TO THE PROJECT AS ALLEGED IN THE RELEVANT
ENFORCEMENT NOTICE WHEN REFERING TO THE PROJECT / DEVELOPMENT.**

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?)) or N/A | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?)) or N/A |
|----------|---|---|
| | Briefly explain answer to Part 2a and, if applicable and/or known, include name of feature and proximity to site (If answer in Part 2a / 2b is 'No', the answer to Part 3a / 3b is 'N/A') | Is a significant effect likely, having regard particularly to the magnitude and spatial extent (including population size affected), nature, intensity and complexity, probability, expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact and the possibility to effectively reduce the impact? If the finding of no significant effect is reliant on specific features or measures of the project envisaged to avoid, or prevent what might otherwise have been, significant adverse effects on the environment these should be identified in bold. |

5. NATURAL RESOURCES

| | | | | |
|---|----|--|----|--|
| <p>5.1 Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?</p> | No | <p>The topography of the site would remain largely the same and so relatively flat. The solar panels will be attached to mounting structures which together form PV tables (or modules). The PV tables will be fixed to pile driven galvanised steel posts. The base of the mounting structures are thin 'H' or 'C' shapes, thus they have very little impact on the ground and do not require any prior excavation. The mounting structures are driven to a depth of a minimum of 2.0 to 3.0 m depending on ground conditions. When the Site is decommissioned, the mounting structures are pulled out from the ground causing minimal ground disturbance. The frames will allow the panels to be positioned at an angle of between 20-25 degrees from the horizontal axis and orientated</p> | No | <p>Any changes to the topography of the site would be relatively minor and so would not have a significant effect.</p> |
|---|----|--|----|--|

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| | | to the south, typically the height of a panel will be up to approximately 3.0m to the top of the panel frame on level ground, including up to approximately 0.8m of ground clearance to enable maintenance access and sheep grazing below the PV modules. | | |
| <p>5.2 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?</p> | Yes | <p>The Proposed Development comprises a solar farm and therefore will utilise solar energy which is a renewable natural resource. The planning application for the Proposed Development will seek a temporary use permission (for approximately 40 years). Therefore, the use of land will be temporary.</p> <p>The supporting Agricultural Land Class plan confirms the site for the location of the solar panels includes Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 land. The potential area for solar panels is Grade 2, 3 and 4 and the area for the proposed substation is Grade 4.</p> <p>The proposed development would as such result in the loss of agricultural land of the most best and versatile (BMV) quality.</p> | No | <p>The supporting information confirms a soil survey including an agricultural land quality assessment will be undertaken to inform the design of the Proposed Development and submitted alongside the planning application. The planning application will also be accompanied an outline Soil Management Plan (oSMP) which will set out how soils will be handled and will set out the construction techniques to be used on the Site.</p> <p>Whilst the development would remove an element of BMV land from circulation the proposed development is of a temporary nature and as such is not considered to result in a significant effect. Furthermore, the supporting information suggests evidence from similar developments identifies that soil health improves as a result of solar farms, because the intensity of the use reduces and as such there is less chemical treatment and disturbance through agricultural practices.</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) |
|----------|--|--|--|
| | | | <p>The hardstanding area for the Substation Compound is significantly larger than that required for the central inverters (if utilised in the design – which is to be confirmed), spare parts container and transformers. The Substation Compound is proposed to be located on Grade 4 agricultural land (according to Natural England’s ALC mapping), which is not considered to be the best and most versatile agricultural land.</p> <p>The proposal has the potential to create temporary disturbance to soil but the majority of this will be temporary as it will only occur during the construction and decommissioning periods. Some small areas will be affected for the 40-year operational duration of the Proposed Development, but these can be fully reinstated as the project is decommissioned and this can be addressed through the planning application.</p> <p>The supporting information also confirms that Qualitas Energy, in partnership with the landowner farmer, will utilise low intensity sheep grazing within the fenced solar panel areas, thereby retaining the agricultural use.</p> <p>No likely significant effects anticipated.</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <p>5.3 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?</p> | Yes | <p>As noted above the site includes a mix of Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3 and Grade 4 land. The potential area for solar panels is Grade 2, 3 and 4 and the area for the proposed substation is Grade 4.</p> <p>The proposed development would as such result in the loss of agricultural land of the most best and versatile (BMV) quality.</p> | No | <p>No likely significant effects anticipated.</p> <p>The proposed nature of the development is temporary in nature and following an agreed period would be decommission and returned to agricultural land. Through the development period the site would be used for low intensity sheep grazing within the fenced solar panel areas, thereby retaining the agricultural use.</p> <p>Any planning application would need to be accompanied by an Agricultural Land Assessment. Where proposals are located on agricultural land, it should be demonstrated that there is a need for this, and that they should be located on poorer quality land (ACL Grades 3b, 4 or 5) rather than the best and most versatile agricultural land (ACL Grades 1, 2 and 3a). A robust assessment of this loss of BMV land should form part of a planning application.</p> |
| 6. WASTE | | | | |
| <p>6.1 Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?</p> | No | <p>The applicant has confirmed that the Proposed Development will not give rise to significant levels of waste during construction. During decommissioning the materials used in the development will be recycled as is standard practice for</p> | No | <p>No likely significant effects anticipated.</p> <p>A waste management plan should be provided as part of any future planning application and / or appropriate conditions will be discussed at the</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| | | solar farm developments. | | planning application state. |
| 7. POLLUTION AND NUISANCES | | | | |
| 7.1 Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air? | No | The applicant has confirmed that the development is inert in nature and will not generate pollution known to be harmful to the environment. | No | No likely significant effects anticipated. |
| 7.2 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation? | Yes | <p>The applicant has confirmed that the Proposed Development will emit noise, however, as per standard practice and in line with typical planning controls this will be subject to assessment and mitigation.</p> <p>As a solar farm there is potential for glint and glare effects to arise.</p> <p>The solar panels are inert and electrical installation will be subject to strict regulatory controls and health and safety measures.</p> | No | <p>No likely significant effects anticipated.</p> <p>A noise assessment will be required at the planning application stage. An understanding of how noise emitted from the development will have an impact on surrounding sensitive land uses such as residential properties would need to be assessed.</p> <p>Whilst there is potential for noise effects it is not anticipated they will be so substantial to warrant the need for an Environmental Statement at this time.</p> <p>The design of the Proposed Development will be subject to a glint and glare assessment. The applicant has confirmed the scheme will be designed to reduce the risk of this accordingly. It is understood that mitigation for glint and glare is typically dealt with by an adjustment to the angle of panel fixing, or planting screening.</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| | | | | It is not considered that the Proposed Development would result in risks to human health. |
| <p>7.3 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?</p> | Yes | <p>The Site includes numerous drainage ditches used to drain the land. As such there is potential for the development activities to affect the wider hydrological / water environment.</p> <p>Due to the coverage of land with solar panels the proposed development has the potential to result in increased surface water run off to the drainage ditches and watercourses on site. The development also has the potential to reduce the area available for flood water storage and also to be affected by flooding events. Effects of flooding are considered possible during the construction and decommissioning periods.</p> <p>Sedimentation or entry of contaminants into the drainage infrastructure and watercourses on and near the Site could lead to effects occurring in an area wider than the Site itself, due to hydrological linkages, and could affect the Humber Estuary and the sea – noting that effects would be more diluted as the distance from the Proposed Development increases</p> | No | <p>Any risks associated with contamination would not be unusual for a development of this nature, and could be controlled by way of conditions attached to any planning permission or in line with relevant legislation.</p> <p>A planning application would need to consider typical construction and operational best practice includes measures, appropriate soil storage and handling to prevent runoff into local watercourses and measures prevent fuel / oil spills and a construction flood risk management plan and shall be accompanied with a flood risk assessment.</p> <p>Mitigation can be proposed at the planning application stage which can seek to address any potential effects. A future planning application will also need to be accompanied by evidence to demonstrate the sequential and exception tests are passed. Measures during construction, operation and decommissioning stage can be controlled by planning condition. consent will be required from the Internal Drainage Board,</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| | | | | <p>which will need to be satisfied in relation to surface water runoff.</p> <p>The risk of the effect would be limited to the construction and decommissioning stages, and the 40-year operational period only. After decommissioning the Site will be restored to its former condition.</p> <p>It is not considered the proposed development would result in significant effects.</p> |
| <p>7.4 Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?</p> | No | <p>The Environmental Protection department’s historic mapping data shows no record of specific contaminative uses of concern when considering the installation of solar panels.</p> | No | <p>The proposed development would have no significant effects.</p> |
| <p>8. POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH</p> | | | | |
| <p>8.1 Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?</p> | Yes | <p>Development relates to solar panels, a substation, tracks, fencing and CCTV.</p> <p>During the construction phase, the contractor(s) would implement measures in accordance with Health and Safety legislation/requirements, and best practice to minimise the risks of accidents that would have effects on people or the environment.</p> | No | <p>The risk of major accidents during construction or operation are not considered to be significant – it would not be any different to those experienced by other similar development projects.</p> <p>The solar panels and electrical elements of the Proposed Development will be subject to strict regulatory controls and health and safety</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| | | | | measures. The risk of a major accident or disaster arising from the Proposed Development is minimal. Furthermore, the risk resulting from a major accident or disaster affecting the Proposed Development is very low. The applicant has confirmed that the effects of climate change will be taken into account in the design of the Proposed Development so as to minimise any residual risks. |
| 8.2 Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example due to water contamination or air pollution) | No | <p>The solar panels are fixed and electrical installation will be subject to strict regulatory controls and health and safety measures.</p> <p>The Proposed Development includes solar panels and ancillary development. It will include high voltage infrastructure, which can be dangerous to health if a person were to touch any non-insulated parts of such equipment.</p> | No | <p>Health and safety requirements are required by non-planning legislation and the site will include the fencing and security arrangements. These measures should be set out at the planning application stage.</p> <p>No significant effects to population and human health are anticipated.</p> |
| 9. WATER RESOURCES | | | | |
| 9.1 Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, | yes | The Proposed Development is in an area of Environment Agency flood zones 1, 2 and 3. It is also located in an area which benefits from flood defence. | No | The proposed development would have no significant effects. It is considered that all flood risk and drainage can be managed within a planning application and that an EIA would not be required to address flood Risk and Drainage. |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?)) or N/A | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?)) or N/A | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk? | | <p>The Site also includes numerous drainage ditches to drain the land. As such there is potential for the development activities to affect the wider hydrological / water environment.</p> <p>A Flood Risk Technical Note has been submitted as part of this Screening Application Stage. It notes several water courses close to the site.</p> | | <p>The planning application will need to be supported by flood risk and drainage strategy, and appropriate conditions can be included to address surface water where required. The LLFA would expect infiltration testing to be undertaken in appropriate locations across the site to determine whether infiltration drainage would be viable. There are mitigation measures that can be introduced through careful design to ensure good practice is achieved across the site. The Sequential and Exception Test will also need to be met. This matter can be addressed at the planning application stage and it is unlikely will lead to significant effects.</p> |

10. BIODIVERSITY (SPECIES AND HABITATS)

| | | | | |
|--|-----|---|----|--|
| <p>10.1 Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or</p> | Yes | <p>The applicant confirms that the Proposed Development is 5km away from The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA and SSSI. The nearest SSSI is Messingham Heath, approximately 1.5km southeast of the Site Boundary.</p> <p>The Site does not form part of any statutory designated site for nature conservation.</p> <p>Sites within 5km of the site have been assessed as part of the supporting information.</p> | No | <p>An EIA is not required from an ecological perspective.</p> <p>In terms of both landscape and ecology, some adverse effects are expected, but not of a level of significance that would require EIA. The application site is proposed to be sited within an open landscape of primarily agricultural land, with drains, hedgerows and scattered hedgerow trees that may support protected and priority</p> |
|--|-----|---|----|--|

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?)) or N/A) | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?)) or N/A) |
|--|---|---|
| <p>woodlands, undesignated nature reserves or parks. (Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local))).</p> | <p>West Common North Road Local Wildlife Site (LWS) runs alongside the West Common North Drain and appears to be at least partially within the red-line boundary. Consideration will need to be given to minimising impacts of construction, operational and decommissioning works and traffic on the LWS.</p> <p>The Site provides breeding and foraging habitat for birds of high conservation concern. In this context, the Site is of Local Importance for farmland bird diversity.</p> <p>The supporting information confirms that the wider landscape context is highly significant. According to the BTO Data Report, the Site's 10-km square (SE80) accounts for up to 64% of both county (Lincolnshire) and vice-county (North Lincolnshire) populations, and up to 45% of regional (Yorkshire & Humber) populations for certain species. This indicates that the Messingham area functions as a County and vice-county-level stronghold, as well as being regionally important for several declining farmland birds. The Site therefore contributes to an area of County and vice-county Importance.</p> <p>In terms of the breeding bird population the Site is noted by the breeding bird survey as being of Local or District Value for its breeding bird assemblage and Local Importance for farmland birds species such as skylark and corn bunting, effects could theoretically extend to</p> | <p>species and habitats. There is a Local Wildlife Site that appears to interact with the application site boundaries and is likely to be used in some capacity during construction and operation.</p> <p>It is considered that an appropriate strategy and mitigation can be addressed through a planning application to address breeding birds on and around the site.</p> <p>The potential for harm to great crested newts (and thus an offence) needs to be taken into account on this site. District level licensing (DLL) may be a suitable approach to take for this development.</p> <p>A standard method water vole and otter survey is advised along the relevant drains, as well as surveying for terrestrial mammals considering the wooded patches border the agricultural land.</p> <p>Targeted botanical surveys should be undertaken within the Phase 1 survey, with consideration of nearby coversands and designated sites that may indicate the presence of sandy soils on-site and therefore the potential for associated plant species and communities.</p> <p>In relation to birds the LPA would expect provisions to be supplied to facilitate skylark</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| | | <p>district importance. The ten species with the most negative difference in trend between site and region were: Swift, Great Crested Grebe, Marsh Harrier, Magpie, Coal Tit, Skylark, Sand Martin, Swallow, House Martin, Whitethroat.</p> <p>The application site supports agricultural land, with hedgerows and drains along the field boundaries, as well as an existing access track. Hedgerows, drains and wooded patches are adjacent to the site; however, the site is primarily surrounded by agricultural land.</p> <p>It should be noted that Natural England has identified the proposal site as being partially within an "amber risk zone" for great crested newts - a European Protected Species.</p> | | <p>plots to support this declining species. The grassland enhancements may be used to provide buffers from drains and residential properties, as well as contribute to the required >10% Biodiversity Net Gain to be delivered on-site. If the soil analysis is suitable, NLC would further support the provision of acid grassland and species-rich grassland. Figure 2 "Opportunities Plan" does indicate that drain buffers are to be included as well as a ~39ha area in the northern section of the site to accommodate ecological and landscape enhancements. The requested species provisions could be facilitated in these fields.</p> <p>Further biodiversity enhancement should also be secured through the application process.</p> <p>Natural England should be consulted at the application stage.</p> <p>It is considered that any effects can be appropriately mitigated at the application stage.</p> |
| <p>10.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?</p> | <p>yes</p> | <p>The submitted information includes a breeding birds survey and confirms that a total of fourteen Notable Species were recorded as breeding within the Survey Area during field surveys completed in 2025, which is considered typical of such a location. The presence of a series of farmland bird species of conservation</p> | <p>No</p> | <p>The supporting information suggests that mitigation should be considered for ground nesting species to ensure favourable conservation status is maintained. This can be addressed as part of a future planning application. It is not considered that the</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|----------|--|---|---|--|
| | | <p>value, including ground nesting birds (skylark, yellow wagtail, corn bunting and grey partridge) indicates that the Site should be considered of Local or District Value for its breeding bird assemblage.</p> <p>The report concludes that Desk study records and analysis of these, provided by the BTO, is consistent with the results of field surveys, and identifies the Site as of Local Importance for farmland bird diversity. The report continues to note that a solar development proposed in this location would likely be of benefit to species associated with field margin habitats; however, mitigation should be considered for ground-nesting species to ensure favourable conservation status is maintained.</p> | | <p>development would result in significant effects in terms of protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use the site, on or around.</p> <p>Comments as ab</p> |

11. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

| | | | | |
|---|-----|---|----|--|
| <p>11.1 Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?¹ Where designated indicate</p> | Yes | <p>The Proposed Development lies outside of any nationally or locally designated landscape area. In terms of landscape character, the applicant confirms that the Proposed Development lies within the following:</p> | No | <p>It is considered that any effects would be localised. There are no nationally, or locally designated landscape areas close to the site. The site is located within the open countryside and as the site is low lying there will inevitably be views of the proposed development from surrounding agricultural land, public highway,</p> |
|---|-----|---|----|--|

¹ See question 8.1 for consideration of impacts on heritage designations and receptors, including on views to, within and from designated areas.

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?)) or N/A | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?)) or N/A |
|--|--|--|
| level of designation (international, national, regional or local). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Lincolnshire Council’s (NLC) Trent Levels character area 5 (CA); • NLC’s Flat Drained Farmland local landscape type6 (LLT); • Lincolnshire County Council’s (LCC) The Fens historic landscape character area 7 (HLCA); and • LCC’s The Axholme Fens historic landscape character zone (HLCZ). <p>The site is low lying in nature, effects would be localised to the site and the surrounding area. Initial visual assessment provided by the applicant suggests that the flood defence at the River Trent to the west, the M180 to the north, the A159 to the east and Scotton Common to the south are likely to contain views, thereby limiting visibility to around 5km from the Site boundary and in most of the surrounding area, less than this. This does not take account of any additional screening which would be</p> | <p>PROW and other land uses. It is considered this could be addressed at the planning application.</p> <p>It is considered that there is scope for the landscape to accommodate solar development without giving rise to significant visual effects. This is not to say there will be no localised impacts which need to be addressed at the planning application stage.</p> <p>Landscape and visual impacts will need to be considered at the application stage in terms of the adopted Landscape Assessment and Guidelines and the Countryside Design Summary. I also recommend the use of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment 3rd Edition (GLVIA3, 2013), produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment.</p> <p>Core Strategy Spatial Objective 10, policies CS5 and CS16 and Saved Local Plan Policies LC7 and RD2 as well as SPG5 should also be considered.</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| | | implemented as part of the Proposed Development. | | The LPA encourage the adherence to the Wooded Springline Farmland character area guidelines which encourages the retention of the area’s open character to protect and enhance the landscape character whilst mitigating impacts of the proposed development on the nearby residential properties and footpaths. |
| 11.2 Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?) | Yes | <p>The site covers a large area and will inevitably be visible within the surrounding landscape. The landscape in this location is low lying and open with views across the site being visible from Black Bank in the South, Sand Lane, Butterwick Road, West Common North Road and North Moor Lane. There are also potential for views from the M180 in the north and the east side of the River Trent.</p> <p>Elements of the Proposed Development which will be visible include the solar panels and ancillary development such as supporting frames, inverters, transformers, fencing and CCTV, as well as the Substation Compound and the ecological / landscape enhancements.</p> <p>Construction and decommissioning activities and equipment are also likely to have a similar effect. The Proposed Development therefore has the potential to alter the landscape character.</p> | No | <p>All effects would be completely reversed following the decommissioning of the Proposed Development.</p> <p>It is considered that landscape can be addressed as part of the planning application process through the provision of a Landscape and Visual Impacts Assessment (refer to points raised above 11.3) and a landscape strategy for the site. Existing vegetation and trees will also act as natural screening to the proposed development.</p> <p>A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) would be expected to be provided as part of any future planning application. Planting and management can also be secured through planning conditions.</p> <p>Whilst there will be visual impacts these are considered to be at the local level.</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| | | Effects from construction and decommissioning would last for 15-18 months for each phase. The operational effects would last for the 40-year lifespan. | | It is not considered that the development would result in significant effects in terms of landscape that would warrant the need for an LVIA. |
| 12. CULTURAL HERITAGE/ARCHAEOLOGY | | | | |
| 12.1 Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local). | Yes | <p>Comments have been received from the HER Officer who confirms that proposals have the potential to impact non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest however that the proposals are unlikely to trigger the Schedule 2 criteria for EIA in relation to Cultural Heritage and Archaeology.</p> <p>The HER database has been checked and records indicate that the proposed development has potential for direct and indirect effects on non-designated heritage assets and their settings. These heritage assets primarily relate to historic warping activity as well as known and potential archaeological remains and the palaeo-environmental resource of the underlying stratigraphy.</p> | No | <p>Any planning application for this proposal should include a Heritage Statement that identifies all heritage assets and their settings that may be affected and assesses their heritage significance and the impact of the proposals</p> <p>The proposed development would have no significant effects.</p> |
| 13. TRANSPORT AND ACCESS | | | | |
| 13.1 Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or | Yes | The proposed site of the River Trent Solar Farm has within or alongside it two public rights of way: Public Footpaths 185 and 186. The former follows the course of the access road leading | No | Although the submitted screening request does not specifically consider Traffic and Transport, it is unlikely that the nature of the proposed |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| other facilities, which could be affected by the project? | | north from West Common North Road towards Tripling Hows Farm; the latter runs the length of West Common North Road itself, being a metalled lane from North Moor Lane to the point of turning north towards Tripling Hows Farm and a grass track thereafter continuing westwards. | | <p>development would warrant an EIA on Traffic and Transport grounds.</p> <p>However, any planning application that may be submitted will require an accompanying Transport Assessment or Statement, which includes an Outline Construction Phase Traffic Management Plan.</p> <p>Both footpaths will need to be referred to as part of any future planning application in terms of their protection and possible enhancement. The LPA's main concern is that, as a material consideration, public access along both footpaths be retained in full and to best effect. This matter can be addressed at the planning application stage.</p> |
| 13.2 Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project? | No | The site is located within the open countryside where there are a limited number of residential properties, employment sites and other uses. As such vehicles utilising this area are mainly agricultural in nature. | No | Although the submitted screening request does not specifically consider Traffic and Transport, it is unlikely that the nature of the proposed development would warrant an EIA on Traffic and Transport grounds. However, any planning application that may be submitted will require an accompanying Transport Assessment or Statement, which includes an Outline Construction Phase Traffic Management Plan. |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| 14. LAND USE | | | | |
| <p>14.1 Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.</p> | Yes | <p>The site is located within the open countryside. The area surrounding the Site includes public highways including Butterwick Road, west Common North Road, Sand Lane and, to the south of the Site, Black Bank. Other land uses such as isolated residential dwellings (some of which are within 100m of the Site boundary), fishing lakes, an aerodrome, a zoo, sporting facilities, electrical and gas infrastructure as well as agricultural and industrial buildings.</p> <p>There are residential properties and farmsteads surrounding the proposed development. These include White Cottage and Hawthorne Cottage located off Butterwick Road, located centrally with proposed development to the north, southeast and west. Bonito Farm to the northwest, Holywood farm in a similar position to White Cottage being centrally located, Sand Lane Farn to the northeast and house farm to the southeast. Fir tree cottage, Fieldside and Gorselands are located to the north west with development within close proximity. Other residential properties are also situated close to the site.</p> <p>Concerns have been raised that there should be a distance of 2miles between solar farms and residential properties, according to the World</p> | No | <p>The Proposed Development does not intersect any 'sensitive areas', which are defined in regulation 2(1) of the EIA Regulations.</p> <p>Whilst the proposed development is located within close proximity to existing residential properties and concerns are raised, it is considered many of these concerns can be addressed at the planning application stage and that the proposed development would not result in significant effects that would warrant the need for an EIA. A noise assessment, landscape and visual impacts assessment should be undertaken to assess the likely impacts as well as any proposed mitigation which might be required. Any planning application will also need to ensure the surrounding land-uses are considered and any effects assessed. The site is close to an existing aerodrome, and any flicker will need to be assessed.</p> <p>The proposed development would have no significant effects to warrant the need for EIA.</p> <p>No significant effects are anticipated to material assets.</p> |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| | | <p>Health Organisation (WHO). The proposal is adjacent to existing residential properties.</p> <p>The Site includes four key material assets. These include the 132 kV overhead electrical line which the Proposed Development will connect into, an 11kV overhead line, a private gas main and the public highways. The electrical connection into the 132kV line will be only via agreement with the company operating the overhead line. Panels and other relevant project components will be set back from the 11kV line and private gas main. the cable route will need to cross public highways, these will be installed through open trenching or using horizontal directional drilling with a decision informed by impact assessment work.</p> | | |
| 14.2 Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project? | No | An EIA scoping request for a Humber Low Carbon Pipeline has been submitted for land to the north of the site - PA/SCO/2022/6. No decision has been given at this time. | No | The proposed development would have no significant effects. |

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| 15. LAND STABILITY AND CLIMATE | | | | |
| 15.1 Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems? | No | The location is not susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions. | No | The proposed development would have no significant effects. |
| 16. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS | | | | |
| 16.1 Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase? | Yes | Planning applications PA/2025/444 and PA/2025/445 seek permission on land within the wider area for Solar Farms. Development of all three sites would result in the loss of agricultural land of which is classified as BMV land. This has the potential to result in the loss of a large amount of best quality agricultural land which would be lost for a temporary period of 40 years. | No | It is considered that whilst there would be a loss of BMV land this would be temporary in nature. A cumulative Assessment should be provided at the planning application stage. Whilst this would result in the loss of BMV agricultural land it is not considered to result in significant effect and it is considered this can be assessed at the planning application stage. |
| 17. TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS | | | | |
| 17.1 Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects? ² | No | | No | Any impacts would be largely isolated to the site and the immediate surroundings. The |

² The Regulations require consideration of the transboundary nature of the impact. Due to the England’s geographical location the vast majority of TCPA cases are unlikely to result in transboundary impacts.

| Question | (Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?)) or N/A | (Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?)) or N/A |
|----------|---|--|
| | | proposed development would have no significant transboundary effects. |

18. CONCLUSIONS – ACCORDING TO EIA REGULATIONS SCHEDULE 3

It is considered that the principal environmental effects of the proposed development would relate to ecological impacts such as breeding birds during the construction and operational phase of development. Whilst this impact is assessed as having a local and potential district value and its importance potentially extending to district value, the proposed solar farm would be temporary in nature and would be decommissioned and returned to its current use after 40 years. It is considered that mitigation measures could be put in place to address breeding birds utilising the site and enhancements should be achieved through the planning application process. Post-mitigation impacts are therefore likely to be limited and not significant as to warrant EIA on this basis.

During the construction phase there will inevitably be an increase in traffic movements to and from the site, this will be temporary and similar to all sites of this nature. Landscape and visual impacts will occur, the site is low lying and it is considered appropriate landscaping strategy could be developed to ensure impact is minimal. Similarly, any noise impacts can be addressed through the planning application stage and managed accordingly. As a solar farm there is potential for glint and glare effects however again it is not considered this would give rise to significant effects.

Significant effects on the environment are not considered likely either alone or in combination with other development. The proposed development would be classed as a major development due to scale and size of development, however, any effects could be managed in accordance with standard methods.

Whilst there may be some non-significant environmental impacts that result from the development, these are largely local in nature and can be appropriately assessed and mitigated without the need for an Environmental Statement/EIA.

It is also considered that the proposed development is temporary in nature and that all the associated potential impacts are reversible. Once the solar farm has been decommissioned the site can be restored to its former agricultural condition and use.

It is the Council's opinion that the proposed development, whilst being a Schedule 2 development under these regulations, would not, based on all the information provided, have significant environmental impacts for it to require the carrying out of an Environmental Impact Assessment and the submission of an Environmental Statement.

19. SCREENING DECISION

| | |
|---|-----|
| If a SO/SD has been provided do you agree with it? | N/A |
| Is it necessary to issue a SD? | No |
| Is an ES required? | No |

20. ASSESSMENT (EIA REGS SCHEDULE 2 DEVELOPMENT)

OUTCOME

| | | |
|---|-----------------|-----|
| Is likely to have significant effects on the environment | ES required | No |
| <u>Not</u> likely to have significant effects on the environment | ES not required | Yes |
| More information is required to inform direction | No | No |

NAME

Jen Ashworth (Senior Planning Officer) NLC

DATE

13/11/2025