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Planning Services  
North Lincolnshire Council,  
Church Square House,  
30 – 40 High Street,  
Scunthorpe,  
North Lincolnshire  
DN15 6NL

10<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

**Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended 2015):  
Regulation 6 (1) Request for a Screening Opinion in Relation to the installation and operation of a ground  
mounted solar farm with all associated works, equipment and infrastructure on land north of Carr Lane,  
Hibaldstow, Brigg, Lincolnshire DN20 9PE**

ILOS New Energy UK Ltd (“the applicant”) duly requests an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion from North Lincolnshire Council for the provision of a ground mounted solar farm of circa 21.9MW (final output to be confirmed) occupying approximately 34.05 hectares (ha) on land north of Carr Lane, Hibaldstow, Brigg, Lincolnshire DN20 9PE.

**1. Background**

This Screening Opinion request is made under Regulation 6 (1) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended). The Information contained in this letter is in accordance with Regulation 6(2) which states that a request for a screening opinion shall be accompanied by:

- (a) a plan sufficient to identify the land;
- (b) a description of the development, including in particular—
  - (i) a description of the physical characteristics of the development and, where relevant, of demolition works;
  - (ii) a description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected;



- (c) a description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development;
- (d) to the extent the information is available, a description of any likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment resulting from –
- (i) the expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and
  - (ii) the use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity; and
- (e) such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make, including any features of the proposed development or any measures envisaged to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.

The remainder of this letter is split into the following sections:

- Section 2: The Development Site
- Section 3: The Development Proposal
- Section 4: EIA Assessment
- Section 5: Conclusions

This screening opinion request is also supported by the following:

- Enclosure 1: Draft Indicative Site Layout Plan
- Enclosure 2: EIA Screening Matrix

The Screening Matrix (Enclosure 2) is provided to assist North Lincolnshire Council in providing a response to this Screening Request.

## **2. The Development Site, Proposal and Overview of Environmental Constraints**

### **2.1 Description of Development Site**

The proposed development site (see Enclosure 1 and Figures 1 and 2 below) comprises two large, low lying agricultural fields of circa 34.05ha located 1km northeast of the village of Hibaldstow and 10km southeast of Scunthorpe. The setting is dominated by low lying agricultural fields intersected by field drains and River Ancholme to the east. The subject site is defined by the Highland Drain to the north and a combination of the Old River Ancholme Drain and Carr Road to the south.





200m west of the site lies Hibaldstow Poultry farm containing 14 poultry houses with a current capacity of 400,000 birds. The River Ancholme, a former navigation canal, lies east of the site on its way northwards to the Humber Estuary. Access to the site is via Carr Lane, a single lane tarmacked country road. High voltage electricity cables traverse the southwestern part of the site running parallel to Carr Road mapping suggests that the topography of the site is characterised by gently undulating terrain which ascends towards the north/northeast of the site.

There are no statutory landscape designations within or in close proximity to the site.

## **2.2 Description of the Development Proposal**

The proposal is for the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a ground mounted solar farm with an export capacity of circa 21.9MW, complete with landscaping, associated infrastructure, and the provision of access and operational access tracks.

An indicative Site Layout Plan is provided at Figure 2 and Enclosure 1.

As a general design principle, the solar panels would follow a linear layout. The distance between the panels would respond to the topography. It is not yet determined whether fixed panels (orientated east to west across the site) or tracking panels (orientated north to south) would be used. The indicative layout at Enclosure 2 shows a fixed panel arrangement. Typically fixed solar panels are no higher than 3.5 metres above ground level at the highest point. The arrays would be set within a 2.0m high stock-proof fence.

The proposal would also include a package of landscape and biodiversity benefits that could include the installation of barn owl boxes, bird breeding boxes, beehives, log piles, and other hibernacula such as small, buried rubble piles suitable for reptile species, amphibians, and insect life. Land between and beneath the panels could be used for biodiversity enhancements and seasonal grazing. Existing vegetation surrounding the Site will be managed appropriately and would continue to deliver biodiversity enhancements by providing green ecological corridors. The extent of the additional planting will be set out in a Landscape and Ecological Strategy Plan that will accompany any future planning application.

The proposed development would typically have a life of up to 40 years at the end of which the modules would be decommissioned and removed from the site.

## **2.3 Renewable Energy and Carbon Displacement**

North Lincolnshire Council have adopted a Climate Action Plan that outlines the range of activities required across the Council to improve environmental sustainability this includes an aim for the Council to meet all its electricity needs from renewable sources by 2030.

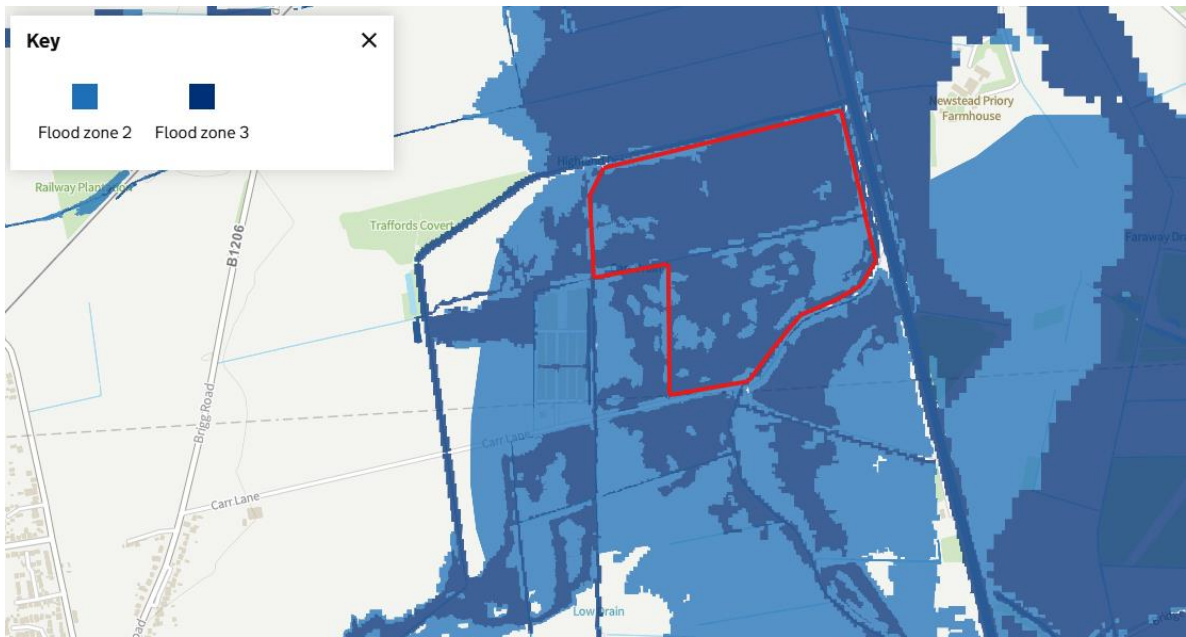
It is acknowledged that construction of the Proposed Development will result in the release of carbon as well as other emissions associated with the use of HGV vehicles and other plant/machinery. However, considering the temporary nature of construction phase the development and the low level of physical construction work required, it is considered that these emissions are unlikely to be complex or significant.

Once operational the proposed 21.9MW solar facility will be producing 'green' energy from renewable sources, by providing 'clean' energy to the grid as well as a backup source during periods of high demand and when less renewable energy is being generated elsewhere. Therefore, the development will contribute positively to the climate through reducing the reliance on fossil fuel-based energy production facilities and helping to support carbon sequestration.

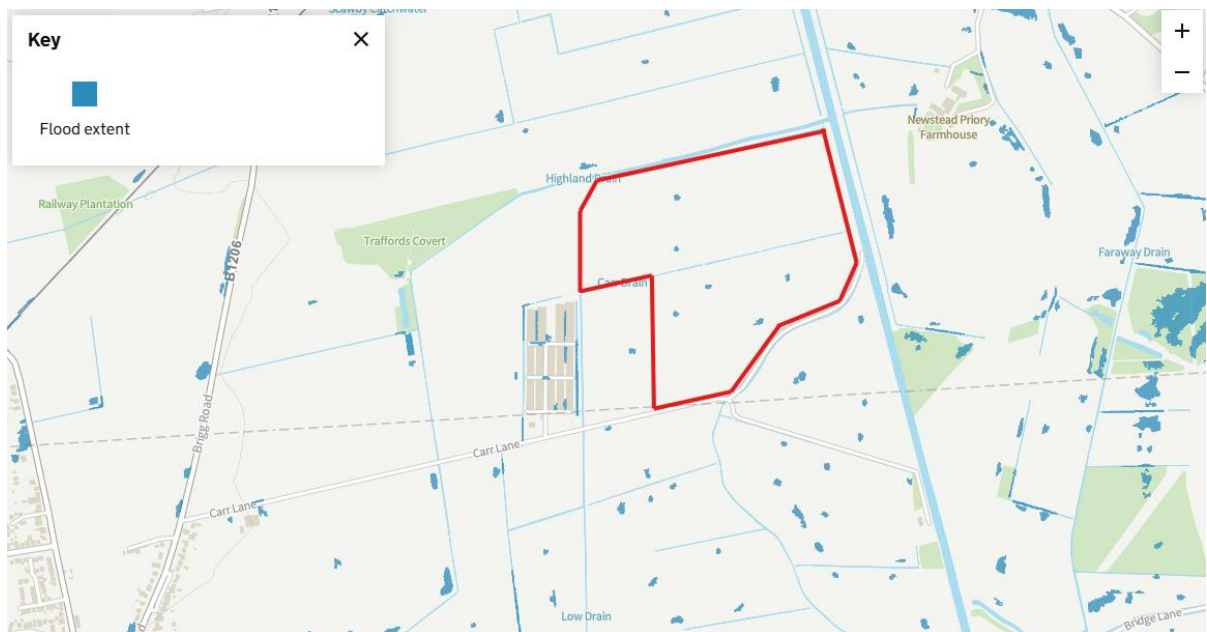
The proposal would provide a clean, renewable, and sustainable form of electricity. It would make a valuable contribution to the generation of electricity at a local level. Following decommissioning of the site, the lands can return to agricultural use.

## **2.4 Flood Risk and Drainage**

As highlighted in Figure 3a below, the subject site falls within flood zones 2 and 3 which indicates a medium to high probability of flooding from rivers. A Flood Risk Assessment will therefore be required to accompany any application which will also address the flood sequential and exception tests.



**Figure 3a - River Flooding Map (Uk Government Flood Risk Service)**



**Figure 3b - Surface Flooding Map (Uk Government Flood Risk Service)**

Figure 3b above shows only small pockets of the site are at risk of surface water flooding. Surface water run-off will be managed on-site during the construction and operational phases, although it is generally accepted that ground-mounted solar projects do not exacerbate surface water run-off.

## **2.5 Environmental Designations and Ecological Sensitivities**

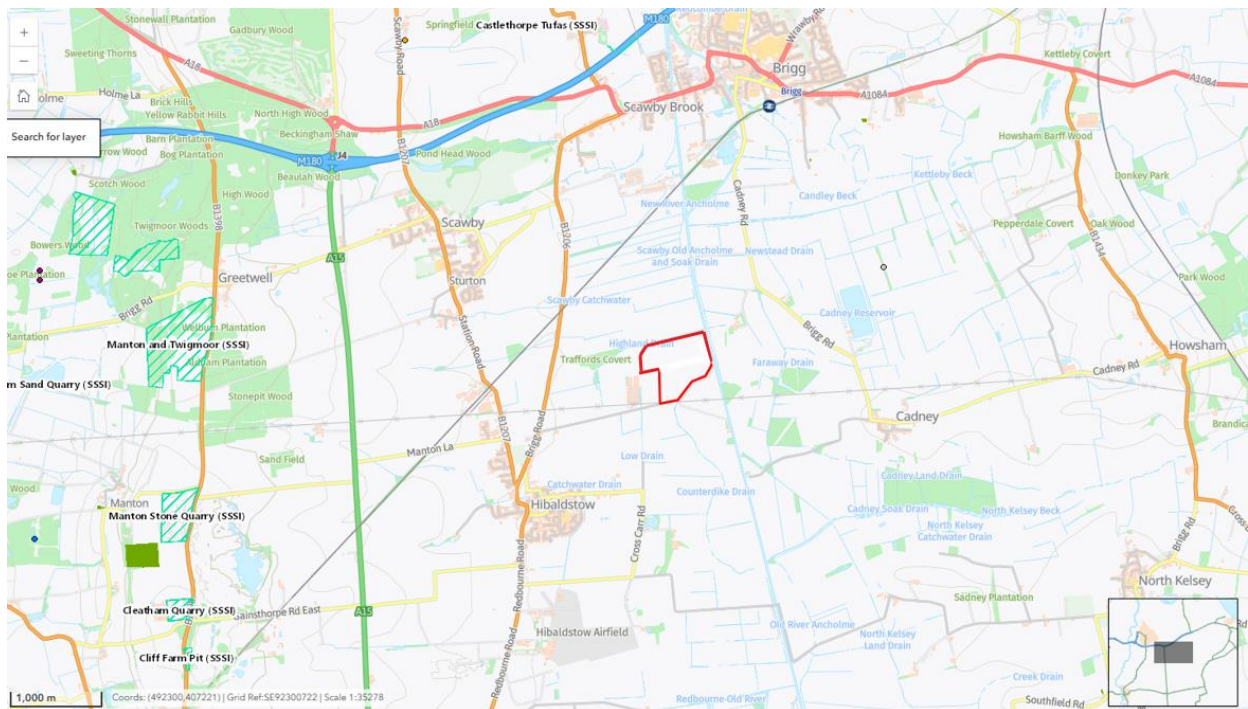
The site itself is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations.

### *Statutory and Other Designated Sites*

There are no statutory environmental designations impacting the site. The closest environmental designation is Castlethorpe Tufas SSSI which is circa 3.5km of the site. Other designations in the wider area include the following:

- Manton and Twigmoor SSSI – circa 5km west.
- Manton Stone Quarry SSSI – 5.1km SW
- Cleethen Quarry SSSI – 5.6km SW
- Cliff Farm Pit SSSI – circa 5.8km SW

Figure 4 below identifies the relationship between the site and the environmental designations.



**Figure 4: Location of statutory ecological designations (source: Magic Map)**

No other non-statutory ecological designations are identified in the local area.

The applicant intends to undertake a preliminary ecological appraisal to fully assess the presence of protected species and habitats on site. Given the rural nature of the site, opportunities exist for habitat retention, creation and enhancement to ensure the development provides at least 10% BNG.

Through the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures during construction, the potential effects from the development can be managed and are unlikely to be significant.

## **2.6 Heritage Assets**

The closest cultural heritage assets to the subject site are a small number of grade 1 and 2 listed farm buildings located c. 300m east (ref 1346518, 1083704 and 1083705). Cadney Bridge which crosses the Ancholme canal c.1km south of the site is also listed (ref 1083703). The closest schedule monuments (a Romano-British settlement ref 495772 and moated site red 1016429) are more than 3km west and north away respectively.

Figure 5 below identifies the location and grade of listed buildings in the vicinity of the site.

A Heritage Statement will also be submitted as part of the planning application to fully consider potential impacts on the historic character of the surrounding areas and their associated heritage assets. In terms of archaeology, a desk based archaeological assessment will be required to inform the need for archaeological fieldwork such as a geophysical survey and trial trenching. This will ensure any potential archaeological features are recorded and mitigated accordingly.



**Figure 5 – Location of Listed Buildings (source: MagicMap)**

## **2.7 Access and Public Rights of Way**

As shown in Figure 6 below, there are Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) in close proximity to the site (Route 30 on the opposite side of the Ancholme Canal and route 277 to the north and west of the site. None of these routes traverse directly through the site.

No national cycle routes are located within proximity of the site.



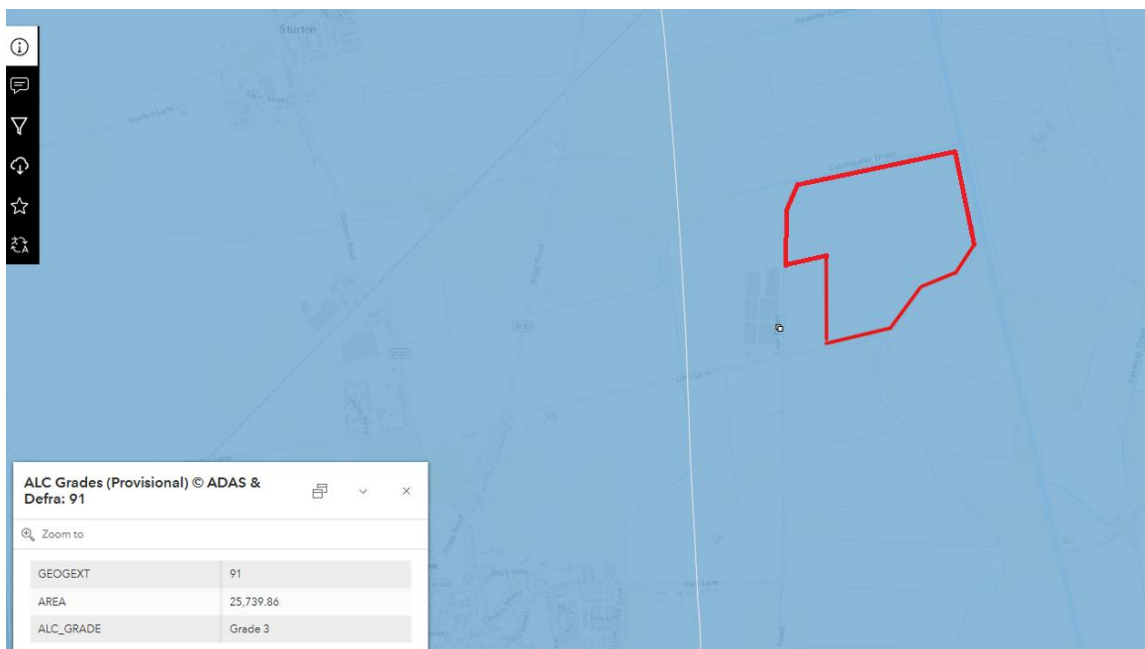
**Figure 6– Public Rights of Way Map (source: <https://www.northlincs.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/definitive-map/> )**

## **2.8 Agricultural Land Quality**

The construction of the proposed development will involve the long term, but temporary, use of circa 34.05 ha of agricultural land during the operational life of the development (up to 40 years). The Provisional Agricultural Land Classification Map provided by Defra in Figure 7 below, shows the site to fall within an area of Grade 3 land (Good to Moderate).

Reflecting this a detailed soil survey would be undertaken and submitted with the application with a statement to clarify whether the land is BMV and to identify the reasons for the location of this site compared to areas with poorer quality agricultural land.

The proposed development is considered to be a suitable type of development for the site, especially given its temporary nature. Once the use of the land for the solar farm has ceased, the land can be returned to agricultural use as the development is fully reversible. With the land having a period of time to rest following intensive agricultural activity, it is generally accepted that the health of the soil profile within the site will improve over the lifetime of the solar farm. A Soil Management Plan could be a condition of any planning permission.



**Figure 7: Agricultural Land Classification Map (Natural England)**

## **2.7 Sensitive Residential Receptors**

Located 1km northeast of the village of Hibaldstow on agricultural lands, the immediate setting around the site is sparsely populated. From a desktop review, the closest residential dwelling is located within the existing poultry farm c. 350m west of the subject site and 300m east in a farm grouping located on the far side of the Ancholme canal.

Where considered necessary, appropriate buffer areas would be provided between the solar arrays and the residential properties with screening established to be strengthened in accordance with the recommendations of the LVIA. Additionally, the routing of construction traffic would be considered with regard to the amenity of the residential properties and users of the PRowS.

A Noise Survey will be undertaken to inform the layout and accompany the planning application. Noise generating equipment such as transformers and substation would be separated from residential properties with mitigation as required.



## **2.8 Arboriculture**

There are no Tree Preservation Order (TPOs) within the site; vegetation is limited to the site boundaries.

## **2.9 Landscape and Visual**

There are no landscape features either within or immediately adjacent to the land which have any particular sensitivity that would inhibit the development of a well-designed solar farm at this location. The site is not situated within or near a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or a National Park.

Views from the various agricultural holdings, residences and PRowS around the site would be considered as part of a LVIA to be submitted with any application on the site. This will include an assessment of the cumulative impact of the proposed development in conjunction with nearby proposals to determine the impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside.

## **2.10 Other Constraints**

In relation to other matters relevant to environmental impact:

- There are no current or historic landfill sites within the immediate surrounds of the site.
- The whole of the site and the surrounding area is identified as lying within areas of low risk for unexploded ordnance.
- A glint and glare assessment will also be submitted to demonstrate the proposal will not adversely impact upon ground-based receptors such as road, rail and residential dwellings, as well as aviation interests in the area. It is noted that Hibaldstow airfield is located 3km southeast of the subject site and Humberside Airport is located 11km northeast of the site.

## **3. The EIA Assessment**

### **3.1 Legal Context**

For the purpose of this screening request, we have considered the EIA Regulations.

The EIA Regulations, in conjunction with Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Environmental Impact Assessment (originally published March 2014 and most recently updated on 13 May 2020), set out a legal framework in relation to Environmental Impact Assessment. The EIA Regulations contain two development schedules (Schedule 1 development and Schedule 2 development).

Schedule 1 contains a list of development where EIA is mandatory. The screening proposal does not fall within Schedule 1 Development.

Schedule 2 contains a list of development, coupled with development thresholds, where EIA may be considered. The Local Planning Authority must screen every planning application falling under the Schedule 2 development thresholds to determine whether or not EIA is required. When a local planning authority has to decide whether a Schedule 2 development is EIA development, Schedule 4 sets out how the LPA must take into account the information provided by the applicant; and the selection criteria set out in Schedule 3 as are relevant to the development.

Schedule 2 contains a list of development descriptions (categories) and applicable thresholds and criteria for the purpose of classifying development as Schedule 2 development. The development description pertinent to this development proposal is 'Energy Industry'.

Type	Development description	Applicable threshold and criteria
3. Energy Industry	(a) Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water (unless included in Schedule 1).	The area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectares.

Given the site size exceeds the applicable threshold of 0.5 hectares, it is appropriate to screen the proposal with the Local Planning Authority to clarify if there are potential significant effects likely to arise from the proposed development that constitute EIA Development. The associated Planning Practice Guidance identifies that '*only a very small portion of Schedule 2 development will require an Environmental Impact Assessment*'.

Regulation 6(4) of the EIA Regulations (2017) sets out how a screening request, where relevant, must take into account the criteria set out in Schedule 3 which considers:

1. Characteristics of development,
2. Location of the development and;
3. Types and characteristics of the potential impacts.

The relevant issues are duly considered in this screening request.

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 prepared by Government, and these are presented as a tabulated annex to the PPG. The relevant extract is set out below:

Development type	Indicative criteria and threshold	Applicable threshold and criteria
3. (a) Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water	Thermal output of more than 50 MW. Small stations using novel forms of generation should be considered carefully.	Level of emissions to air, arrangements for the transport of fuel and any visual impact.

For development falling under category 3(a) the indicative threshold relates to development which produces more than 50MW. The proposed solar farm scheme is below this threshold as it will have a maximum export capacity of circa 21.9 MW.

In addition, the Planning Practice Guidance provides 'key issues to consider' when screening this type of development, these are: "*level of emissions to air, arrangements for the transport of fuel and any visual impact*". These are discussed below.

### **3.2 Physical Scale of Development and Visual Impacts**

The PPG identifies how the more environmentally sensitive the location, the more likely it would be that the effects would be significant. Paragraph 32 of the PPG goes on to identify how an EIA assessment would be more likely to be required if the project affects the features for which the sensitive area was designated. Consequently, it does not follow that all Schedule 2 development in such areas will require EIA and as such it will be necessary to judge the likely effects on the environment on a case-by-case basis. The site does not fall within the definition of a 'Sensitive Area' as per the EIA Regulations 2017.

There are no statutory or non-statutory landscape designations covering the site.

The land in the vicinity of the site is low-lying and predominantly used for agriculture with dispersed residences and agricultural development. The village of Hibaldstow lies 1km SE and the Ancholme River/Canal adjacent to the eastern site boundary. The site extends to approximately 34.05ha of land used for agricultural purposes and the majority of which will benefit from green infrastructure enhancements as a result of the proposal.



The proposed solar PV development would inevitably change the character of the site from level farmland to solar arrays, transformer boxes, inverter stations, security fencing and other associated infrastructure. However, the uniform layout of a solar PV development is suited to open, low-lying fields which are considered capable of absorbing the scale of the proposed solar PV development.

In summary, the potential Landscape and Visual impacts will be subject to further assessment by way of a LVIA to understand any impact upon the character and appearance of the local area. This will include advice on the siting and height of the proposed design and layout to reduce impacts on sensitive receptors, as well as inform any mitigation required, such as a robust landscaping scheme around the boundaries of the site.

### **3.3 Cumulative and Interactive Effects**

As part of any application process, a cumulative impact assessment will be undertaken to identify any major existing or approved applications within the vicinity of the site, which may give rise to significant cumulative effects. We are not aware of any unimplemented extant planning consents for solar arrays or farms within 2kms of the proposed site.

In this regard, it is noted that there are two proposals for development on sites in close proximity to the proposal. The first of these is for a solar farm under PA/2025/292 located NW of the subject site. Directly west and adjoining the site is a proposal to extend the Hibaldstow Poultry farm with an additional 6 sheds. Both of these applications are currently under consideration.

The planning submission will involve careful consideration of these proposed developments when read together with the proposed development to consider their cumulative impact upon the character and appearance of the countryside.

The assessment of potential cumulative effects is an iterative process which we will continue to monitor, and potential effects will continue to be assessed as the planning application and design of the project continues to evolve and we welcome the Council's input into this to help inform any future assessment and planning application.

### **3.4 Levels of Emissions to Air and Arrangement for Transport of Fuel**

During the construction phase there could be potential for other minor pollution or nuisance consistent with construction works, i.e., lighting of external works, dust / noise from vehicles / construction processes, surface water run-off from bare earth / stockpiles, plant noise etc. However, the activities are anticipated to be short term, limited in scale and it should be emphasised that construction activities would be appropriately controlled by good practice measures. These would be set out within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) along with appropriate safety measures. Accordingly, the development is not expected to have significant effects with regards to dust or noise during its construction period. Once operational, the only vehicle movements, typically, would be a weekly maintenance vehicle that would not give rise to a significant effect on air quality. No significant effects are therefore anticipated.

The anticipated impact from decommissioning would be similar to those for construction, therefore the development is not expected to have a significant impact during the decommissioning phase.

Based on the site's use as agricultural land, the existing soil profile is unlikely to have significant forms of contamination above the expected potential from historic pesticide use, if any. Once operational there will be no abnormal risk to human health. The development relies on well-established modern technology and responsible operators who will utilise the Construction Quality Assurance (CQA) plans as necessary.

Appropriate Health and Safety signage will be displayed on the site boundary, to warn of potential danger from working near electrical equipment and to prevent illegal access and trespass.

Consequently, there are no unusual or abnormal risks to human health and significant impacts are not anticipated.

## 4. Conclusions

It is considered that the proposals fall within the category of Schedule 2 (3 a) as described in the EIA Regulations 2017. Development proposals described under Schedule 2 require an EIA if they are considered likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as nature, size, or location. Given that the proposed development exceeds the screening threshold in Schedule 2 (3 a) of 0.5 hectares, it is appropriate to screen the proposals with the Local Planning Authority to determine if there are significant effects likely to arise from the proposals.

The Screening process should consider the development proposals against the criteria and thresholds which are included within the EIA Regulations and accompanying PPG in determining the requirement for an Environmental Statement (ES) to accompany an application for planning permission.

Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations provides selection criteria for Screening Schedule 2 development, which includes three broad categories for consideration: the characteristics of the development; the environmental sensitivity of the location; and the characteristics of the potential impacts.

The PPG, under the Environmental Impact Assessment section (Paragraph 057), provides further indicative criteria and thresholds, as well as key issues to consider, in the determination of likely significance of effects. For 3 (a) Energy Industry, the criteria and advice given are:

- “Indicative Criteria and Threshold – ‘Thermal output more than 50MW. Small stations using novel forms of generation should be considered carefully.’”
- “Key Issues to Consider – ‘Level of emissions to air, arrangements for the transport of fuel and any visual impact.’”

Importantly, the proposal falls below the indicative threshold of 50MW. Neither the character of the proposed development would result in significant adverse environmental effects, nor the location of the proposed site is considered sensitive and vulnerable to adverse impacts. The most significant matters are considered to be the following:

- Short term impacts associated with construction associated both with vehicle movements and on-site operations. Potential construction impacts can be mitigated through construction management controls. The construction period is expected to last for less than 8 months and is therefore short term and of a temporary duration. Minor pollution or nuisance consistent with construction works could cause limited impacts, however, these can be appropriately controlled with measures set out in a CEMP and/or CTMP. Therefore, significant effects during the construction phase are not anticipated.
- Potential impact on high quality agricultural land - The proposed use, although long-term, is temporary and will allow full restoration to agricultural use and, indeed, there is an expectation that, due to leaving the land fallow for an extended period, this will result in an overall improvement in soil quality.
- Visual impacts are anticipated to be localised due to the low-lying nature of the site and can be mitigated through landscaping. The site is not located in an area identified as high-quality landscape. An LVIA will be submitted as part of the planning application to assess all of these potential visual effects including in-combination effects from existing and proposed developments.
- There are a small number of listed buildings c.300m west of the proposal and no scheduled monuments within 3km. A Heritage Statement will be submitted as part of the planning application to fully consider potential impacts on the historic character of the surrounding areas and their associated heritage assets, and outline mitigation to minimise impacts.
- Areas of the site are classified as having a medium to high flood risk from rivers in addition to small pockets



which are subject to surface water flooding. A flood risk and drainage assessment will be submitted as part of the planning application to fully assess and mitigate these potential risks.

- No other potentially major environmental impacts are anticipated to arise from the proposal including ecology, air and water emission, transport, amenity and access.

Once operational, the only vehicle movements to / from the site would be from the occasional maintenance vehicle, which would visit the site approximately once a week. Such a low level of traffic to the site would not give rise to significant effects on air quality or existing highway networks.

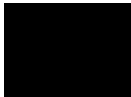
Whilst there are no specific indicative criteria and thresholds for screening solar farms; transport and visual impacts are generally considered to be key considerations. These potential impacts will be addressed comprehensively as outlined above and mitigation measures proposed for the solar farm will be outlined in any future planning application.

Given the nature of the development proposals, it is considered that whilst there may be some impacts on the local environment as a consequence of the proposed development, none of these are considered to constitute 'significant impacts', as set out in central government guidance. Consequently, it is considered that the proposals do not constitute EIA development and would not require an Environmental Statement to be submitted with a planning application for a solar farm in this location. This is consistent with the findings of the EIA screening carried out by the council for the adjacent solar farm development proposed under PA/2025/292.

Notwithstanding the above, any subsequent planning application will be accompanied by the necessary technical assessments to enable the Local Planning Authority to consider and determine the planning application on its own merits.

We look forward to receiving the Council's response to this Screening Request within the designated 3-week timeframe on receipt of this request, as stated in the EIA Regulations (Part II-6(6)).

Yours faithfully,



Dan Chalk  
**Head of Planning**

