

Stonestreet Green Solar

Environmental Statement

Volume 4: Appendices

Chapter 1: Introduction

Appendix 1.3: EIA Scoping Opinion Compliance

PINS Ref: EN010135

Doc Ref. 5.4

Version 1

June 2024

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)

Planning Act 2008

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009



Appendix 1.3: EIA Scoping Opinion Compliance

- 1.1.1 In April 2022, the Applicant submitted an EIA Scoping Report to PINS (**ES Volume 4, Appendix 1.1: EIA Scoping Report (Doc Ref. 5.4)**). The PINS Scoping Opinion was issued on 30 May 2022 on behalf of the SoS (**ES Volume 4, Appendix 1.2: EIA Scoping Opinion (Doc Ref. 5.4)**). **ES Volume 2, Chapter 6: EIA Methodology (Doc Ref. 5.2)** provides more detail on the EIA scoping process.
- 1.1.2 In the Scoping Opinion (**ES Volume 4, Appendix 1.2: EIA Scoping Opinion (Doc Ref. 5.4)**), PINS identified where it had or had not agreed with the scope of certain aspects / matters to be included in the ES on the basis of information provided in the Scoping Report (**ES Volume 4, Appendix 1.1: EIA Scoping Report (Doc Ref. 5.4)**).
- 1.1.3 **Table 1** of this Appendix provides responses to the following aspects of the Scoping Opinion:
- Overarching Comments (Scoping Opinion Section 2); and
 - Cumulative Effects (Scoping Opinion Section 3.10).
- 1.1.4 Responses to the Scoping Opinion comments made in relation to *‘Topics to be Scoped Out’* (Section 3.1 of the Scoping Opinion) are provided in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 16: Other Topics (Doc Ref. 5.2)**.
- 1.1.5 Responses to the Scoping Opinion comments made in relation to *‘Environmental Aspect Comments’* (Sections 3.2 – 3.9 of the Scoping Opinion) are addressed in the Consultation section of the technical chapters included as **ES Volume 2, Chapters 7 – 15 (Doc Ref. 5.2)**.

Table 1: Responses to PINS' Scoping Opinion Comments

PINS ID	PINS Ref.	Description	PINS' Comments	Commentary
<i>2.1. Description of the Proposed Development</i>				
2.1.1	4.3.10 to 4.3.12 and 1.5.2	Alternative route for grid connection	Scoping Report paragraphs 4.3.10 to 4.3.12 identify that the preferred routing and connection to the grid is at the existing UK Power Networks ('UKPN') 132kV substation and cables will be underground. Paragraph 1.5.2 states that the alternative route and grid connection would be via a nearby tower at Sellindge Substation; as this connection is via a tower it is not clear whether this option would also mean the cables are underground or above ground. Should this option be taken forward, the ES should state where and to what extent cables are above or below ground and assess any associated impacts where significant effects are likely to occur.	The Scoping Report (ES Volume 4, Appendix 1.1: EIA Scoping Report (Doc Ref. 5.4)), the PEIR and PEIR Addendum included a description of an 'Alternative Grid Connection' route as a potential part of the Project. An assessment of the Alternative Grid Connection was included in the PEIR and PEIR Addendum. However, the Alternative Grid Connection, and associated tower and switching compound, is no longer proposed as part of the Project. This is because the Applicant has agreed with UKPN that a grid connection can be achieved via a Cable Route Crossing beneath HS1 / Network Rail railway south of Sellindge Substation. As such, the Alternative Grid Connection is not assessed within the ES. An explanation of the alternative grid connections considered by the Applicant and the reasons for selecting the grid connection that does form part of the Project are provided in ES Volume 2, Chapter 5: Alternatives and Design Evolution, Section 5.13 (Doc Ref. 5.2) .
2.1.2	4.2.4, 4.4.1 and 4.4.3	Construction compounds and access	Scoping Report paragraph 4.2.4 states that there will be 'one or more temporary construction compounds' and 4.4.3 states that the ES will describe the design and location of these compounds and accesses. The ES should explain how the optioneering process to locate both accesses and	ES Volume 2, Chapter 3: Project Description, Sections 3.10 and Section 3.11 (Doc Ref. 5.2) provide a description of the primary construction compounds and primary site access which will be located in the north of the Site. Secondary construction compounds and laydown areas will also be used on a temporary basis.

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			<p>construction compounds has sought to avoid or minimise impacts on human and ecological receptors. Where appropriate, existing accesses should be utilised and consideration should be given to the appropriateness of accesses for Heavy Goods Vehicles ('HGVs') and/or abnormal loads e.g. weight restrictions, width restrictions, turning area etc. Relevant measures to reduce construction traffic routing and access impacts on the local network should be agreed relevant highways authority, where possible.</p>	<p>Existing site accesses will be utilised for the construction stage of the Project wherever possible.</p> <p>Information on the Site access arrangements and the appropriateness of accesses for HGVs is provided in ES Volume 2, Chapter 13: Traffic and Access, Section 13.6 (Doc Ref. 5.2) and ES Volume 4, Appendix 13.7: Access Drawings.</p> <p>An explanation of the optioneering process to locate both accesses and construction compounds to avoid or minimise impacts on human and ecological receptors is provided in ES Volume 2, Chapter 5: Alternatives and Design Evolution (Doc Ref. 5.2), Table 5.3 under 'Site access' and Section 5.15.</p> <p>Relevant measures to reduce construction traffic together with information on the routing of construction traffic are set out in the Outline CTMP (Doc Ref. 7.9) which accompanies the DCO Application.</p>
2.1.3	4.4.1 and 4.4.2	Construction Phasing	<p>Construction is anticipated to begin in 2025 and last 12 months. Construction activities are set out in Scoping Report paragraph 4.4.2 but the phasing of construction is not provided, which should consider the worst case scenario. The ES should determine when each construction activity is anticipated to commence and complete, how and where such activities will overlap and what plant and</p>	<p>Construction activities are expected to be undertaken over a period of 12 months and are expected to commence in 2026. Details of the spatial phasing of construction activities across the Site are not defined in the DCO Application. This is to preserve flexibility in how the Project can be delivered. ES Volume 2, Chapter 6: EIA Methodology, Section 6.8 (Doc Ref. 5.2) sets out the general approach to reasonable worst-</p>

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			<p>machinery is required. Details of any demolition works and the extent and location of such works should also be set out.</p>	<p>case assumptions that have been applied to the construction phasing of the Project. ES Volume 2, Chapter 3: Project Description, Section 3.11 and Section 3.14 (Doc Ref. 5.2) provide a description of the construction activities and their likely duration. This includes a description of the indicative programme for construction activities. The nature and extent of overlaps is not known by the Applicant at this point, hence reasonable worst-case assumptions have been applied in the EIA.</p> <p>The Outline CEMP (Doc. Ref. 7.8) also provides a list of the main plant and equipment likely to be used during the construction stage.</p> <p>No demolition of buildings is proposed as part of the Project and Application. Some existing structures may be removed and replaced, such as existing footbridges over watercourses.</p>
2.1.4	4.4.3	Habitat Creation	<p>Scoping Report paragraph 4.4.3 states that habitat creation is proposed to be addressed in the ES. The description of habitat creation measures should include the location, extent, type of habitat creation and timeframe for establishment and should this be included off-site, the area should be included in the red line boundary of the Proposed Development.</p>	<p>A description of habitat creation measures including the location, extent, type and timeframe for establishment is provided in ES Volume 2, Chapter 8: Landscape and Views, Section 8.6 'Embedded Design Mitigation' (Doc Ref. 5.2) and Illustrative Landscape Drawings (Doc Ref. 2.7).</p> <p>No habitat creation is proposed outwith the Order limits.</p>

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2.2 EIA Methodology and Scope of Assessment				
2.2.1	11.3.2 and Figures 9, 12, 15	Figures and study areas	It is noted that a number of figures are suggested to show study areas but do not do so. For example, Figure 9 does not display the 2km and 10 km site buffers for biodiversity although they are included in the 'Legend' therefore it is unclear which designated sites are in the study areas. Additionally, Scoping Report paragraph 11.3.1 states a 2km buffer from the site boundary for the water environment will be used as a study area and that this is shown on Figure 12 however, no study area is defined on Figure 12. Figure 15 identifies Public Rights of Way ('PRoW'), but these do not correspond with those described in Scoping Report paragraph 12.4.15. The ES should identify the study area clearly on an associated Figure and describe why the study area is appropriate for each of the aspect chapters assessed where relevant.	Each aspect / topic chapter of the ES (ES Volume 2, Chapters 7-15 (Doc Ref. 5.2)) includes a section titled 'Study Area' under 'Assessment Methodology' which signposts where the corresponding figure that shows the relevant study area for the assessment (if applicable) is located. Assessment Methodology sections of each topic chapter also describe why each study area is appropriate for the particular aspect chapter.
2.2.2	6.1.4	Transboundary	The Inspectorate on behalf of the SoS has considered the Proposed Development and concludes that the Proposed Development is unlikely to have a significant effect either alone or cumulatively on the environment in a European Economic Area State. In reaching this conclusion the Inspectorate has identified and considered the Proposed Development's likely impacts including consideration of	In undertaking the EIA process, the EIA Project Team has not identified any transboundary effects.

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			<p>potential pathways and the extent, magnitude, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impacts. The Inspectorate considered that the likelihood of transboundary effects resulting from the Proposed Development is so low that it does not warrant the issue of a detailed transboundary screening. However, this position will remain under review and will have regard to any new or materially different information coming to light which may alter that decision. Note: The SoS' duty under Regulation 32 of the EIA Regulations continues throughout the application process. The Inspectorate's screening of transboundary issues is based on the relevant considerations specified in the Annex to its Advice Note Twelve, available on our website at http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/</p>	

3.10 Cumulative Effects

3.10.2	16.2.1	Location of cumulative developments	<p>Table 16.1 sets out the current schemes considered cumulatively with the Proposed Development as taken from the local authority's planning portal. This provides a description and distance to the Proposed Development and the Scoping Report states that this will be updated as the Proposed Development application progresses. The ES should include a figure depicting the locations</p>	<p>Table 16.1 of the Scoping Report (ES Volume 4, Appendix 1.1: EIA Scoping Report (Doc Ref. 5.4)) has been superseded by an updated cumulative scheme list.</p> <p>An updated list of cumulative schemes was included on Figures 2.1– 2.3 of the PEIR Addendum.</p>
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			<p>and extent of cumulative developments in relation to the Proposed Development.</p>	<p>The list included in the PEIR Addendum was updated and provided to ABC, KCC and Folkestone and Hythe District Council on 5 December 2023. This was provided in a note which is included in a note titled 'Informative Note for the Local Planning Authorities Inter-Project Cumulative Assessment' included in ES Volume 4, Appendix 6.2: Cumulative Schemes Correspondence (Doc Ref. 5.4).</p> <p>ABC and KCC responded in March 2024 and confirmed that that they had no comments on the updated list, although advised that the status of two schemes had been updated. This is reflected in the final list presented in ES Volume 4, Appendix 6.1: List of Cumulative Schemes (Doc Ref. 5.4). Relevant correspondence is provided in ES Volume 4, Appendix 6.2: Cumulative Schemes Correspondence (Doc Ref. 5.4).</p> <p>The location of the cumulative schemes in relation to the Project are shown on ES Volume 3, Figures 6.1 - 6.3 (Doc Ref. 5.3). An explanation of the cumulative schemes considered by the EIA process is provided in ES Volume 2, Chapter 6: EIA Methodology, Section 6.9 (Doc Ref. 5.2).</p>