
EAST YORKSHIRE SOLAR FARM

**East Yorkshire Solar Farm
EN010143**

Environmental Statement

**Volume 1, Chapter 1: Introduction
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 This Environmental Statement (ES) has been commissioned by East Yorkshire Solar Farm Limited (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant') in relation to an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for East Yorkshire Solar Farm (hereafter referred to as the 'Scheme').
- 1.1.2 The Scheme will comprise the construction, operation (including maintenance and repair) and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating facility with a total capacity exceeding 50 megawatts (MW) and export connection to the national grid, at National Grid's Drax Substation. The 'Site' comprises approximately 1,276.5 hectares (ha) of land which is predominantly agricultural in nature. As illustrated in **Figure 1-3, ES Volume 3 [EN010143/APP/6.3]**, the Site is made up of the Solar PV Site, Ecology Mitigation Area, the Interconnecting Cable Corridor, the Grid Connection Corridor and Site Accesses (and is the subject of the Development Consent Order (DCO) Application). These elements are further described in section 1.2. The Solar PV Site, Ecology Mitigation Area, and the Interconnecting Cable Corridor lie wholly within the East Riding of Yorkshire, whilst the Grid Connection Corridor which links the Solar PV Site to National Grid's Drax Substation and the Site Accesses lie within the administrative areas of East Riding of Yorkshire Council and the North Yorkshire Council.
- 1.1.3 The landscape features immediately surrounding the Solar PV Site comprise several small rural villages and hamlets including Spaldington, Gribthorpe, Brind, Brighton and Wressle, and the market town of Howden.
- 1.1.4 Due to its proposed generating capacity being more than 50 MW, the Scheme is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and will therefore require consent via a DCO under the Planning Act 2008 (Ref. 1-1). The decision whether to grant a DCO will be made by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (hereafter referred to as the 'Secretary of State') following the Examination and Recommendation by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 1.1.5 The Scheme is considered to be 'EIA development' as defined by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended (the 'EIA Regulations') (Ref. 1-2), requiring an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Regulation 12(2) states that the purpose of the ES is to provide sufficient information to enable stakeholders to develop an informed view of the likely significant effects of the development (and of any associated development). This ES forms part of the application for a DCO and presents the findings of the EIA undertaken for the Scheme in accordance with the EIA Regulations and the Planning Act 2008 (Ref. 1-1).
- 1.1.6 This chapter is supported by the following appendices in **ES Volume 2 [EN010143/APP/6.2]**:
- a. **Appendix 1-1:** EIA Scoping Report;
 - b. **Appendix 1-2:** EIA Scoping Opinion;

- c. **Appendix 1-3:** EIA Scoping Opinion Responses; and
 - d. **Appendix 1-4:** Statement of Competence.
- 1.1.7 This chapter is supported by the following figures in **ES Volume 3 [EN010143/APP/6.3]**:
- a. **Figure 1-1:** Scheme Location;
 - b. **Figure 1-2:** Order limits; and
 - c. **Figure 1-3:** Elements of the Site.
- 1.1.8 A glossary and list of abbreviations are defined in **Chapter 0: Table of Contents, Glossary and Abbreviations, ES Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]**.
- 1.1.9 A Non-Technical Summary of the ES is presented in **ES Volume 4 [EN010143/APP/6.4]** and **ES Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.4]** comprises this report.

1.2 The Scheme

- 1.2.1 The Scheme will comprise the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of solar PV panels, and associated infrastructure. Subject to obtaining the necessary consents, construction is anticipated to commence in 2025, with operation anticipated to commence in 2027. The design life of the Scheme is 40 years with decommissioning to commence 40 years after final commissioning.
- 1.2.2 The location of the Scheme is shown in **Figure 1-1, ES Volume 3 [EN010143/APP/6.3]** with the Site boundary, referred to as the 'Order limits', shown on **Figure 1-2, ES Volume 3 [EN010143/APP/6.3]**. The land within the Order limits is referred to as the 'Site'. The different elements of the Site (Solar PV Site, Ecology Mitigation Area, Interconnecting Cable Corridor, Grid Connection Corridor and Site Accesses) are shown on **Figure 1-3, ES Volume 3 [EN010143/APP/6.3]**. The land within the Order limits and its surroundings are described in **Chapter 2: The Scheme, ES Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]**, with the consideration of alternatives and progression of the Site design and layout described in **Chapter 3: Alternatives and Design Evolution, ES Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]**.
- 1.2.3 The Site comprises approximately 1,276.5 of land for solar PV, a grid connection and associated infrastructure, along with landscaping and biodiversity measures. As mentioned above, the Site is comprised of three areas (the Solar PV Site, Interconnecting Cable Corridor, and Grid Connection Corridor):
- a. The Solar PV Site is approximately 966.4 ha in area. It is centred on approximate National Grid Reference SE 74632 33417 and comprises 16 Solar PV Areas that will contain the ground mounted solar PV panels and associated infrastructure, Grid Connection Substation, and associated development. The Solar PV Site will also incorporate areas of habitat creation/enhancement and landscaping;
 - b. Ecology Mitigation Area describes the area of land in the north-west of the Site which is to be managed to provide good quality habitat for overwintering and migratory bird species, mitigating the loss of functionally linked land elsewhere in the Site;

- c. The Interconnecting Cable Corridor describes the area outside of the Solar PV Site and Grid Connection Corridor within which the 33 kV cables will be installed linking the Solar PV Areas within the Solar PV Site to the Grid Connection Substation;
 - d. The Grid Connection Corridor describes the area outside of the Solar PV Site within which the 132 kilovolt (kV) Grid Connection Cables will be installed linking the Grid Connection Substations to National Grid's Drax Substation which is approximately 6.2 kilometres (km) south-west of the Solar PV Site (Solar PV Area 3c) at the closest point; and
 - e. Site Accesses describes additional land required to facilitate access to the Site, such as new access routes or measures to provide better visibility splays.
- 1.2.4 At the closest point, the boundary of the Solar PV Site is located 1.6 km north-west of new residential developments in Howden and approximately 1.3 km east of the villages of Brighton and Wressle. The closest properties in Gribthorpe, Spaldington and Brind are approximately 20 metres (m) from the Order limits, whilst the closest properties in Willitofth are approximately 120 m from the Order limits. Due to the provision of buffers, and land for landscaping and habitat enhancement, the actual distance of separation between residences and solar PV infrastructure will be greater than this, as shown in the indicative layout presented in **Figure 2-3, ES Volume 3 [EN010143/APP/6.3]**.
- 1.2.5 Further information on site design and infrastructure is provided in **Chapter 2: The Scheme ES Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]**.

1.3 Assessment of Impacts and Mitigation

- 1.3.1 Environmental impacts arising from the Scheme have been studied systematically as part of the EIA process, and the results are presented within this ES. The baseline for the assessment has been derived from surveys and studies within and around the Site. This is explained further in **Chapter 5: EIA Methodology, ES Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]** and in the methodology section of each technical assessment chapter (**Chapters 6 to 16, ES Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]**).
- 1.3.2 The EIA process assesses impacts resulting from the construction, operation (including maintenance and repair), and decommissioning of the Scheme, and considers measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate any significant adverse effects on the environment and, where possible, enhance the environment. It also identifies 'residual' impacts, defined as impacts remaining following the implementation of mitigation measures.
- 1.3.3 Where necessary and appropriate, the ES technical chapters set out mitigation measures that would be included as part of the Scheme. Over and above the Scheme and any proposed mitigation measures, the Applicant will provide various ecological enhancement measures, to provide additional biodiversity benefits across the Solar PV Site. These enhancement measures are not required to mitigate any significant adverse impacts of the Scheme, which have already been identified in the proposed mitigation measures. For those enhancement measures voluntarily provided, the effects of the Scheme, along with such measures, would be no worse than assessed in this ES. The **Environmental Mitigation and Commitments**

Register [EN010143/APP/6.5] sets out the schedule of proposed mitigation and enhancement measures.

1.4 Structure of this ES Report

1.4.1 The structure of this ES Report is outlined in **Table 1-1** below.

Table 1-1. ES Structure

Volume	Chapter	Description
Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]	Chapter 0: Table of Contents, Glossary and Abbreviations	These introductory chapters of the ES provide the basis for the technical environmental assessments which follow (Chapters 6–16). Chapter 0 sets out the contents of the ES, a glossary of technical terms and a list of abbreviations used. Chapter 2 provides a detailed description of the Scheme, while Chapter 3 discusses the design evolution and the alternatives considered. A summary of the consultation process undertaken is provided in Chapter 4 and the methodology used to undertake the EIA for the technical assessment chapters is set out in Chapter 5.
	Chapter 1: Introduction (this chapter)	
	Chapter 2: The Scheme	
	Chapter 3: Alternatives and Design Evolution	
	Chapter 4: Consultation	
Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]	Chapter 5: EIA Methodology	The ES considers the environmental effects associated with a number of identified topics, which may result in significant environmental effects. Each topic is presented in a separate technical chapter and details the results of the environmental assessment, likely significant effects arising from the Scheme, and the proposed mitigation measures. Each chapter also presents the potential cumulative effects resulting from other present, or reasonably foreseeable projects together (i.e. cumulatively) with the Scheme. Chapter 16: Other Environmental Topics includes consideration of Air Quality, Ground Conditions, Glint and Glare, Major Accidents and Disasters, Telecommunications, Television Reception, and Utilities, Electric and Electro-magnetic Fields, and Materials and Waste.
	Chapter 6: Climate Change	
	Chapter 7: Cultural Heritage	
	Chapter 8: Ecology	
	Chapter 9: Flood Risk, Drainage and Water Environment	
	Chapter 10: Landscape and Amenity	
	Chapter 11: Noise and Vibration	
	Chapter 12: Socio-economics and Land Use	
	Chapter 13: Transport and access	
	Chapter 14: Human Health	

Volume	Chapter	Description
	Chapter 15: Soils and Agricultural Land Chapter 16: Other Environmental Topics	
Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]	Chapter 17: Effect Interactions	This chapter considers the interactions arising from different environmental or social aspects affecting a receptor or receptors, which together may change the significance of effect.
Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]	Chapter 18: Summary of Environmental Effects	A brief summary of the ES outlining any residual significant effects remaining following the implementation of mitigation.
Volume 2 [EN010143/APP/6.2]	Appendices	A set of appendices is provided for reference and to provide further detail. These comprise background data, technical reports, tables, figures and surveys which support the assessments presented in the ES. Each chapter of the ES lists the appendices that are relevant to it.
Volume 3 [EN010143/APP/6.3]	Figures	This volume contains a set of figures to accompany the ES to aid the reader's understanding.
Volume 4 [EN010143/APP/6.4]	Non-Technical Summary (NTS)	The NTS is presented in a separate volume to provide a concise description of the Scheme, the considered alternatives, baseline assessment methodology, potential environmental effects and mitigation measures. The NTS is designed to provide information on the Scheme and the EIA in an accessible format using non-technical language which can be understood by a wide audience and to assist interested parties with their familiarisation of the Scheme.

1.5 Legislative Context and Need for Environmental Impact Assessment

Consenting Process

- 1.5.1 The Scheme is as an onshore generating station in England exceeding 50 MW generating capacity and is therefore classified as a NSIP under Sections 14(1)(a) and 15(2) of the Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008) (Ref. 1-1).

- 1.5.2 The PA 2008 provides that the Secretary of State is responsible for determining the application for development consent, with the power to appoint a single person or a panel from the Planning Inspectorate to manage and examine the application (referred to as the 'Examining Authority'). In its role, the Examining Authority will examine the DCO Application for the Scheme and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State who will then decide whether to grant a DCO.
- 1.5.3 In accordance with Section 104(2) of the Planning Act 2008 (Ref. 1-1), the Secretary of State is required to have regard to any relevant National Policy Statement (NPS), amongst other matters, when deciding whether or not to grant a DCO. Currently there is no NPS designated specifically for solar generating stations. Draft NPS EN-1 (Ref. 1-7) and Draft NPS EN-3 (Ref. 1-9) and Draft NPS EN-5 (Ref. 1-9) were published for consultation between March and June 2023. Draft NPS EN-1 (Ref. 1-7) and Draft NPS EN-3 (Ref. 1-8) include specific policy in relation to solar generating stations.
- 1.5.4 The DCO Application is anticipated to be determined in accordance with Section 105(2) of the PA 2008 whereby the Secretary of State must have regard to Local Impact Reports, prescribed matters and any other matter that is considered important and relevant to the decision. It should however be noted that the draft Energy NPSs are anticipated to be designated before the end of 2023. Should this occur prior to the DCO Application being accepted then it is anticipated (according to draft NPS EN-1 (Ref. 1-7)) that the determination of the DCO Application would be under Section 104 of the PA 2008.
- 1.5.5 Therefore, currently both the current and draft National Policy Statements for renewable energy and electricity networks are considered to be important and relevant to the Secretary of State's decision for the Scheme:
- a. Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy EN-1 (NPS EN-1) (Ref. 1-4);
 - b. National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy EN-3 (NPS EN-3) (Ref. 1-5);
 - c. National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure EN-5 (NPS EN-5) (Ref. 1-6);
 - d. Draft Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (Draft NPS EN-1) (Ref. 1-7);
 - e. Draft National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy (EN-3) (Draft NPS EN-3) (Ref. 1-8); and
 - f. Draft National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (Draft NPS EN-5) (Ref. 1-9).
- 1.5.6 Paragraph 1.6.2 of Draft NPS EN-1 sets out that where an application is accepted for examination before the new Draft Energy NPSs are designated, those newly designated NPS will not have effect. However, paragraph 1.6.3 goes on to clarify that "...any emerging draft NPSs (or those designated but not having effect) are potentially capable of being important and relevant considerations in the decision-making process."
- 1.5.7 A DCO, if granted, has the effect of providing consent for development, in addition to a range of other consents and authorisations, where specified, as

well as removing the need for some consents (such as planning permission). Section 115 of the PA 2008 (Ref. 1-1) also states that a DCO can include consent for 'associated development', which is development that is not a NSIP in its own right, but is functionally related to the NSIP. This may be development that supports the construction, operation, or decommissioning of the NSIP; which helps to address the impacts of the NSIP; or is of a type normally brought forward with the NSIP. The redevelopment of Johnson's Farm into the operations and maintenance hub is an example of associated development (as detailed in sections 2.2 and 2.6 of **Chapter 2: The Scheme ES Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]**).

EIA Regulations

- 1.5.8 The EIA requirement for NSIP developments is transposed into law through the EIA Regulations (Ref. 1-2). The EIA Regulations specify which developments are required to undergo EIA, and schemes relevant to the NSIP planning process are listed under either of 'Schedule 1' or 'Schedule 2'. Those developments listed in Schedule 1 must be subject to EIA, while developments listed in 'Schedule 2' must only be subjected to EIA if they are considered 'likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location'. The criteria on which the judgement on EIA being required must be made are set out in Schedule 3.
- 1.5.9 The Scheme is a Schedule 2 development, listed under Schedule 2, Part 3(a) - industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water (projects not included in Schedule 1).
- 1.5.10 Owing to its size, nature and location, the Scheme is likely to have significant effects on the environment and therefore is considered to constitute an EIA development.
- 1.5.11 The Applicant has confirmed to the Planning Inspectorate under Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations that an Environmental Statement (ES) will be provided with the DCO application for the Scheme as it is considered there is the potential for the Scheme to meet the criteria set out in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations (Ref. 1-2).
- 1.5.12 The issues that the Applicant has considered in the EIA process were identified in the EIA Scoping Report submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 9 September 2022 (**Appendix 1-1, ES Volume 2 [EN010143/APP/6.2]**). The EIA Scoping Report was developed following initial consultation with a number of statutory consultees and was informed by the EIA team's experience working on a number of other solar farm projects. The Planning Inspectorate reviewed and consulted on the EIA Scoping Report and adopted (on behalf of the Secretary of State) a Scoping Opinion on 20 October 2022. The Scoping Opinion included the formal responses received by the Planning Inspectorate from consultees (**Appendix 1-2, ES Volume 2 [EN010143/APP/6.2]**). Key issues raised in the Scoping Opinion are summarised and responded to in **Appendix 1-3, ES Volume 2 [EN010143/APP/6.2]**. All issues have been considered during the EIA process.

National Policy Statements

- 1.5.13 Given the importance of the NPSs, the EIA approach takes account of both the current adopted NPSs and the draft NPSs listed above. From a review of

the draft documents it is considered that the draft provisions do not change the assessment approach.

- 1.5.14 A summary of the relevant considerations for each technical assessment is provided for each environmental topic (**Chapters 6 to 16, ES Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]**) and the corresponding Legislation, Policy and Guidance appendix for each chapter, contained in **ES Volume 2 [EN010143/APP/6.2]**.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.5.15 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) (Ref. 1-10) sets out the Government's national planning policies for England and how these are to be applied. Although the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Paragraph 5 of the NPPF makes it clear that the document does not contain specific policies for NSIPs and that applications in relation to NSIPs are to be determined in accordance with the decision making framework set out in the Planning Act 2008 (Ref. 1-1) and relevant NPSs, as well as any other matters that are considered both important and relevant. However, Paragraph 5 goes on to confirm that the NPPF may be a matter that is both important and relevant for the purposes of assessing DCO applications. The EIA for the Scheme therefore has regard to the relevant policies of the NPPF (2023) (Ref. 1-10) as part of the overall framework of national policy and also the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (Ref. 1-27) which provides guidance for NPPF policies.

Local Planning Policy

- 1.5.16 Policies in Local Plans are frequently considered important and relevant matters and can influence the content of local impact reports (which the host local authorities will produce following submission of the DCO Application), and which the Secretary of State must have regard to in its decision making in accordance with the Planning Act 2008 (Ref. 1-1).
- 1.5.17 The Scheme lies within the administrative areas of East Riding of Yorkshire Council and the recently formed Unitary Authority of North Yorkshire Council. North Yorkshire Council was formed on 1 April 2023 by the merger of the administrative areas of North Yorkshire County Council and its six constituent District Councils. Prior to the merger and the formation of the Unitary Authority the Scheme was located in the administrative areas of Selby District Council and North Yorkshire County Council. As discussed below a new Local Plan for North Yorkshire Council will be prepared, however this is not currently available and it is anticipated that this will not be in place (either adopted or at draft review stage) within the timescale of the determination of the DCO Application. Consequently, it is anticipated that the planning policy for Selby District Council and North Yorkshire County Council, as described below, along with that for the East Riding of Yorkshire Council will continue to be the relevant local planning policy for the Scheme.

- 1.5.18 The following documents are considered to form the Development Plan for the land within which the Scheme is located:
- a. East Riding Local Plan 2012-2029(adopted April 2016) (Ref. 1-11);
 - b. East Riding Local Plan Allocations 2012–2029 adopted July 2016 (Ref. 1-12);
 - c. East Riding of Yorkshire and Kingston upon Hull Joint Minerals Local Plan (2019) (Ref. 1-13);
 - d. East Riding of Yorkshire and Kingston upon Hull Joint Waste Plan (2004) (Ref. 1-14);
 - e. Selby District Council Core Strategy Local Plan (2013) (Ref. 1-15);
 - f. Selby District Local Plan (2005) – Saved Policies (Ref. 1-16); and
 - g. North Yorkshire County Council, North York Moors National Park Authority, City of York Council Minerals and Waste Joint Plan (2022) (Ref. 1-17).
- 1.5.19 Emerging planning policy is considered pertinent when at an advanced stage as it may also be an important and relevant matter in the Secretary of State’s decision. The adopted Local Plan for East Riding of Yorkshire is in the process of being reviewed . An update to East Riding of Yorkshire Council’s Proposed Submission Strategy Document was published in October 2022 (Ref. 1-18, Ref. 1-19) and consultation on the proposals ended in December 2022. They submitted their Local Plan Update to the Planning Inspectorate for examination on 31 March 2023. The examination hearings commenced on 31 October 2023.
- 1.5.20 Selby District Council began the review of its Local Plan in 2020, prior to the formation of North Yorkshire Council. The Publication Version of the Local Plan was published for consultation in August 2022 (Ref. 1-19). The formal submission to the Secretary of State was expected in early-2023 however this has not occurred. The newly formed North Yorkshire Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan which it is required to adopt by 1 April 2028 however a detailed timetable for the preparation of this plan has not yet been published.
- 1.5.21 A review of East Riding and Hull Joint Waste Plan has also commenced, with the evidence base of current sites and projected need currently being developed to inform the Preferred Approach (to the development of an updated plan). A draft of the updated plan is therefore not yet available.
- 1.5.22 Within the administrative areas of East Riding of Yorkshire Council and North Yorkshire Council there are no neighbourhood plans (which form part of the Development Plan) that have been made which are of relevance or in close proximity to the Scheme. In 2017, Howden Parish Council designated its parish as a neighbourhood area with the purpose of preparing a neighbourhood plan. At the time of writing, however it has not published any draft plans for consultation.

Consideration of Planning Policy in EIA

- 1.5.23 This ES describes the national and local planning policies that are relevant to the assessment with a summary provided for each environmental topic. It does not assess whether the Scheme accords with planning policy, which is

instead presented in the **Planning Statement [EN010143/APP/7.2]** which accompanies the DCO Application.

- 1.5.24 The purpose of considering the abovementioned planning policy is twofold:
- a. To identify policy that could influence the sensitivity of receptors (and therefore the significance of effects) and any requirements for mitigation; and
 - b. To identify planning policy that could influence the methodology of the EIA. For example, a planning policy may require the assessment of a particular impact or the use of a particular methodology.
- 1.5.25 A summary of national and local planning policy relevant to each technical assessment is provided in an appendix to each environmental topic (See **[EN010143/APP/6.2]**).

1.6 Other Relevant Policy

- 1.6.1 Other policies which are likely to be important and relevant matters to the Secretary of State's decision and are considerations for the technical assessments include the UK Government's 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' (published in 2018 and updated in 2021), commonly referred to as The 25 Year Environment Plan (Ref. 1-20) and its update the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (Ref. 1-20); and the Energy White Paper: Powering our Net Zero Future (2020) (Ref. 1-22).
- 1.6.2 The 25 Year Environment Plan set out the Government's 25-year plan to improve the environment within a generation. It defined 10 goals and provided a framework and vision for how these were to be achieved. The goals included: achieve clean air; achieve clean and plentiful water; achieve thriving plants and wildlife; reduce risk of harm from environmental hazards like flooding and drought; use resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently; enhance beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment; mitigate and adapt to climate change; minimise waste; manage exposure to chemicals; and enhance biosecurity. In accordance with the Environment Act 2021 (Ref. 1-23) the 25-year plan is to be reviewed and updated every five years; the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (Ref. 1-22) is the first of these updates. The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 reinforces the intent of the 25 Year Environment Plan and sets out the progress made against all 10 goals, the specific targets and commitments made in relation to each goal, and the Government's plan to continue to deliver these targets and the overarching goals.
- 1.6.3 The 25 Year Environment Plan and the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (Ref. 1-21) highlight the Government's support for the reduction in the UK's carbon footprint; protection and enhancement of the natural environment; and ensuring land is managed with environmental gains.
- 1.6.4 The Energy White Paper published in December 2020 sets out how the UK will reach net zero emissions by 2050. It identifies the Government's aim for a fully decarbonised, reliable and low-cost power system by 2050.
- 1.6.5 The Paper explains that the Government is not targeting a particular generation mix however commits the Government to maintaining the market conditions which stimulate the cost reductions that have been seen in the renewables energy market over the last five years. It does, however, state

that it is possible to determine key characteristics of the future generation mix at this stage, identifying that a *“low-cost, net zero consistent system is likely to be composed predominantly of wind and solar”*.

- 1.6.6 This Paper therefore highlights the Government’s commitment to solar to achieve net zero targets and the need to provide this urgently.
- 1.6.7 The British Energy Security Strategy (Ref. 1-24) was issued in 2022 in response to the increase in global energy costs and the impacts this has had on the UK economy. The Strategy sets out a ten-point plan to reduce energy imports and move towards net zero. Along with improving energy efficiency a key aim is to move away from reliance on imports of oil and gas by accelerating the roll out of renewable energy technologies. The Strategy states that the UK Government expects a five-fold increase in solar deployment by 2035 (up to 70 gigawatts (GW) (i.e., 70,000 MW); and has an ambition of achieving a low-cost, net zero consistent electricity system, composed predominantly of wind and solar generation by 2050. There is therefore a pressing need to bring forward grid scale solar developments. Further, it is important that these assets are brought forwards quickly due to the urgency of the need.
- 1.6.8 To enable the British Energy Security Strategy, in 2022 the UK Government commissioned the Mission Zero Independent Review of Net Zero (Ref. 1-25) which was published in 2023. The review aimed to determine how the UK can *“deliver on its net zero commitments by demonstrating how to deliver and implement most effectively and efficiently a plan for our future energy transition”*. The review highlights *“the importance of delivering future energy security through the greater use of domestically generated renewable and clean sources of power”* and Objective 11: Accelerating Renewables recommends that a taskforce and deployment roadmaps are set up in 2023 for solar energy generation to reach up to 70 GW by 2035.
- 1.6.9 In March 2023, the UK Government published a policy paper on Powering Up Britain (Ref. 1-26). It emphasises the importance of energy security and the new Department for Energy Security and Net Zero’s aim to replace the reliance on fossil fuels with *“cheaper, cleaner, domestic sources of energy”*. The policy states that is the goal *“to quintuple our solar power by 2035”*.

1.7 The Applicant

- 1.7.1 The Applicant (East Yorkshire Solar Farm Limited) is a wholly owned subsidiary of BOOM Developments Limited who specialise in non-subsidised solar and battery storage projects. BOOM Developments Limited was founded in 2020, and the name BOOM is an acronym for Build Own Operate Maintain. This reflects the organisation’s intentions to be involved in sustainable energy projects from day one right the way through to operation. Further information on BOOM Developments Limited can be found in the **Funding Statement [EN010143/APP/4.2]**.
- 1.7.2 The BOOM Managing Director and team have been responsible in previous roles for constructing more than 700 MW of solar developments in the UK between 2015 and 2017 and developing more than 850 MW of solar projects, including the UK’s first NSIP solar PV project Cleve Hill which was granted a development consent order in 2020. In 2021, the UK based

BOOM, partnered with the Pelion Green Future group of companies based across Australia, America and the European mainland.

- 1.7.3 BOOM is committed to making a positive and significant impact on climate change and the achievement of the UK Government's aim for a fully decarbonised, reliable and low-cost power system and net zero emissions by 2050.

1.8 Consultation and Preliminary Environmental Information

- 1.8.1 A Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report was published in May 2023 as part of the statutory consultation process to satisfy the requirements of the EIA Regulations and in order to give consultees an understanding of the likely environmental effects of the Scheme (Ref. 1-2). Preliminary environmental information is defined in the EIA Regulations as information *"which (a) has been compiled by the applicant; and (b) is reasonably required for the consultation bodies to develop an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of the development (and of any associated development)"*.
- 1.8.2 Planning Inspectorate Advice Note 7 (EIA: Process, Preliminary Environmental Information, and Environmental Statements) (Ref 1-3) notes: *"A good PEI document is one that enables consultees (both specialist and non-specialist) to understand the likely environmental effects of the Proposed Development and helps to inform their consultation responses on the Proposed Development during the pre-application stage."*
- 1.8.3 In order to enable consultees to understand the likely environmental effects of the Scheme, the PEI Report presented preliminary findings of the environmental assessments undertaken up to that point. Together with ongoing discussion and meetings, this allowed consultees the opportunity to provide informed comments on the Scheme, the assessment process, and preliminary findings prior to the finalisation of the DCO Application and this ES. The Applicant sought the views of consultees on the information contained within the PEI Report, and there was an opportunity within the process up to submission of the DCO Application for both the EIA and the project design to have regard to comments received.
- 1.8.4 Further detail on the consultation undertaken is provided in **Chapter 4: Consultation, ES Volume 1 [EN010143/APP/6.1]**, within each of the technical discipline ES chapters (**Chapters 6 to 16**) and in the **Consultation Report [EN010143/APP/5.1]**.

1.9 IEMA Quality Mark

- 1.9.1 Regulation 14 (4) of the EIA Regulations (Ref. 1-2) requires that *"in order to ensure the completeness and quality of the environmental statement (a) the applicant must ensure that the environmental statement is prepared by competent experts; and (b) the environmental statement must be accompanied by a statement from the applicant outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts"*. AECOM is an Institute of Environmental Management



and Assessment (IEMA) Registered Impact Assessor and also holds the IEMA EIA Quality Mark as recognition of the quality of our EIA product and continuous training of our environmental consultants. A **Statement of Competence** is included as **Appendix 1-4, ES Volume 2 [EN010143/APP/6.2]** outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of the experts who prepared the ES.

1.10 The Environmental Statement

1.10.1 Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations sets out the information for inclusion in an ES.

1.10.2 **Table 1-2** below summarises where the requirements of Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations (Ref. 1-2) have been addressed in this ES.

Table 1-2. Requirements of Part 1 of Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations

Requirement	Location in this ES
1. A description of the development, including in particular:	Chapter 1: Introduction (this chapter)
a. A description of the location of the development	Chapter 2: The Scheme
b. A description of the physical characteristics of the whole development including, where relevant, requisite demolition works, and the land-use requirements during the construction and operational phases.	Chapter 2: The Scheme
c. A description of the main characteristics of the operational phase of the development (in particular any production processes), for instance, energy demand and energy used, nature and quantity of the materials and natural resources used.	Chapter 2: The Scheme
d. An estimate, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions (water, air, soil and sub-soil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation and types of waste produced.) during the construction and operation phases.	Chapter 2: The Scheme Chapter 6: Climate Change Chapter 9: Water Environment Chapter 11: Noise and Vibration Chapter 13: Transport and Access Chapter 16: Other Environmental Topics
2. A description of the reasonable alternatives which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects.	Chapter 3: Alternatives and Design Evolution

Requirement	Location in this ES
<p>3. A description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario) and an outline of the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the development as far as natural changes from the baseline scenario can be assessed with reasonable effort on the basis of the availability of environmental information and scientific knowledge.</p>	<p>Chapters 6 to 16 (technical assessments) Baseline Conditions sections</p>
<p>4. A description of the factors specified in regulation 5(2) likely to be significantly affected by the development: population, human health, biodiversity, land, soil, water, air, climate, material assets, cultural heritage, and landscape.</p>	<p>Chapters 6 to16 (technical assessments) Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects sections</p>
<p>5. A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment resulting from, inter alia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The construction and existence of the development;b. The use of natural resources considering as far as possible the sustainable availability of these resources;c. The emission of pollutants, noise, vibration, light, heat and radiation, the creation of nuisances, and the disposal and recovery of waste;d. The risks to human health, cultural heritage or the environment;e. The cumulation of effects with other existing and/or approved projects;f. The impact of the project on climate and the vulnerability of the project to climate change;g. The technologies and the substances used. <p>The description of the likely significant effects on the factors specified in regulation 4(2) should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long-term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development.</p>	<p>Chapters 6 to 16 (technical assessments) Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects and Cumulative Effects sections; Chapter 17: Cumulative Effects and Interactions.</p>
<p>6. A description of the forecasting methods or evidence, used to identify and assess</p>	<p>Chapters 6 to16 (technical assessments) Embedded Mitigation;</p>

Requirement	Location in this ES
the significant effects on the environment, including details of difficulties encountered compiling the required information and the main uncertainties involved.	Additional Mitigation, Enhancement, and Monitoring; and Assumptions, Limitations and Uncertainties sections
7. A description of the measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any identified significant adverse effects on the environment and, where appropriate, of any proposed monitoring arrangements during both the construction and operational phases.	Chapters 6 to 16 (technical assessments) Embedded Mitigation; Additional Mitigation, Enhancement, and Monitoring; and Assumptions, Limitations and Uncertainties sections
8. A description of the expected significant adverse effects of the development on the environment deriving from the vulnerability of the development to risks of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned.	Chapter 16: Other Environmental Topics section 16.5 Major Accidents and Disasters
9. A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 8 of this Part.	Non-Technical Summary
10. A reference list detailing the sources used for the descriptions and assessments included in the environmental statement.	Chapters 1 to 18 Reference sections

1.11 References

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