

# Springwell Solar Farm

## Environmental Statement

### Appendix 5.2 Scoping Opinion

Volume 3

EN010149/APP/6.3  
November 2024  
Springwell Energyfarm Ltd

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)  
Planning Act 2008  
Infrastructure Planning  
(Applications: Prescribed Forms  
and Procedure) Regulations 2009





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# **SCOPING OPINION:**

## Springwell Solar Farm

**Case Reference: EN010149**

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Adopted by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) pursuant to Regulation 10 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

**02 May 2023**



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.0.1 On 22 March 2023, the Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) received an application for a Scoping Opinion from Springwell Energyfarm Ltd (the Applicant) under Regulation 10 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations) for the proposed Springwell Solar Farm (the Proposed Development). The Applicant notified the Secretary of State (SoS) under Regulation 8(1)(b) of those regulations that they propose to provide an Environmental Statement (ES) in respect of the Proposed Development and by virtue of Regulation 6(2)(a), the Proposed Development is 'EIA development'.
- 1.0.2 The Applicant provided the necessary information to inform a request under EIA Regulation 10(3) in the form of a Scoping Report, available from:  
  
<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/document/EN010149-000006>
- 1.0.3 This document is the Scoping Opinion (the Opinion) adopted by the Inspectorate on behalf of the SoS. This Opinion is made on the basis of the information provided in the Scoping Report, reflecting the Proposed Development as currently described by the Applicant. This Opinion should be read in conjunction with the Applicant's Scoping Report.
- 1.0.4 The Inspectorate has set out in the following sections of this Opinion where it has / has not agreed to scope out certain aspects / matters on the basis of the information provided as part of the Scoping Report. The Inspectorate is content that the receipt of this Scoping Opinion should not prevent the Applicant from subsequently agreeing with the relevant consultation bodies to scope such aspects / matters out of the ES, where further evidence has been provided to justify this approach. However, in order to demonstrate that the aspects / matters have been appropriately addressed, the ES should explain the reasoning for scoping them out and justify the approach taken.
- 1.0.5 Before adopting this Opinion, the Inspectorate has consulted the 'consultation bodies' listed in Appendix 1 in accordance with EIA Regulation 10(6). A list of those consultation bodies who replied within the statutory timeframe (along with copies of their comments) is provided in Appendix 2. These comments have been taken into account in the preparation of this Opinion.
- 1.0.6 The Inspectorate has published a series of advice notes on the National Infrastructure Planning website, including [Advice Note 7: Environmental Impact Assessment: Preliminary Environmental Information, Screening and Scoping \(AN7\)](#). AN7 and its annexes provide guidance on EIA processes during the pre-application stages and advice to support applicants in the preparation of their ES.
- 1.0.7 Applicants should have particular regard to the standing advice in AN7, alongside other advice notes on the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) process, available from:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/>

- 1.0.8 This Opinion should not be construed as implying that the Inspectorate agrees with the information or comments provided by the Applicant in their request for an opinion from the Inspectorate. In particular, comments from the Inspectorate in this Opinion are without prejudice to any later decisions taken (e.g. on formal submission of the application) that any development identified by the Applicant is necessarily to be treated as part of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) or Associated Development or development that does not require development consent.

## 2. OVERARCHING COMMENTS

### 2.1 Description of the Proposed Development

(Scoping Report Chapter 2 and 3)

ID	Ref	Description	Inspectorate's comments
2.1.1	Paragraph 2.1.2	Installation, construction and decommissioning methods	<p>The Scoping Report states that the installation, construction and decommissioning methods to be utilised will be determined by the appointed contractor(s) while the EIA will represent a 'worst case'. The ES should set out the construction and design parameters and the works that will be involved for each of the three sites comprising the Proposed Development to ensure a clear understanding of assumptions and cumulative construction impacts to ensure that the worst-case construction scenarios are understood.</p>
2.1.2	Section 2.2	Flexibility	<p>The Inspectorate notes the Applicant's intention to apply a 'Rochdale Envelope' approach to maintain flexibility within the design of the Proposed Development, namely relating to the number of solar PV modules or construction methods. Scoping Report paragraph 2.2.7 also states that the design parameters will be further developed during statutory consultation.</p> <p>The Inspectorate expects that at the point an application is made, the description of the Proposed Development will be sufficiently detailed to include the design, size, capacity, technology, and locations of the different elements of the Proposed Development or where details are not yet known, will set out the assumptions applied to the assessment in relation to these aspects. This should include the footprint and heights of the structures (relevant to existing ground levels), as well as land-use requirements for all elements and phases of the development. The description should be supported (as necessary) by figures, cross-sections, and drawings which should be</p>

ID	Ref	Description	Inspectorate's comments
			<p>clearly and appropriately referenced. The Inspectorate considers that early refinement of options will support a more robust assessment of likely significant effects and provide certainty to those likely to be affected. Where flexibility is sought, the ES should clearly set out and justify the maximum design parameters that would apply for each option assessed and how these have been used to inform an adequate assessment in the ES. The Inspectorate advises that each aspect chapter includes a section that outlines the relevant parameters / commitments that have informed the assessment.</p>
2.1.3	Paragraphs 2.5.9 and 2.5.10	Use of borrow pits	<p>The ES should provide details regarding the consideration of the proposed borrow pit locations. The potential environmental impacts should be considered, including cumulative effects arising from the working and restoration and where significant effects are likely to occur.</p>
2.1.4	Paragraph 2.5.16	Habitat creation	<p>Scoping Report paragraph 2.5.16 states that a programme of construction reinstatement and habitat creation will commence during the construction phase. The Inspectorate expects that these are included in the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP). The description of habitat creation measures should include the location, extent, type of habitat creation, timeframe for establishment, ongoing maintenance requirements and any accompanying plans. Should habitat creation be included off-site, the area should be included in the red line boundary of the Proposed Development.</p>
2.1.5	Section 2.7	Decommissioning	<p>The ES should provide a description of the activities and works which are likely to be required during decommissioning of the Proposed Development, including the anticipated duration. Where significant effects are likely to occur as a result of decommissioning the Proposed Development, these should be described and assessed in</p>

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
			the ES. Any proposals for restoration of the site to agricultural or other use should also be described.

## 2.2 EIA Methodology and Scope of Assessment

(Scoping Report Chapter 4)

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
2.2.1	Section 4.5	Baseline conditions	It is noted that a number of surveys have been undertaken which have informed the Scoping Report however these have not been included or appended. Any information relied upon for the assessments in the ES should be appended to the ES in order for the Inspectorate to gain a full understanding of issues. The Applicant should ensure that surveys are up to date and adhere to current good practice.
2.2.2	Section 4.8	Mitigation and monitoring	The Scoping Report refers to several mitigation plans which will be provided with the application documents. The draft mitigation plans provided with the application should be sufficiently detailed to demonstrate how significant effects will be avoided or minimised and the ES should clearly demonstrate how the implementation of these plans will be secured. Any measures identified to minimise likely significant effects should be consulted on with relevant consultation bodies. Mitigation measures should be clearly identified and justified in the ES with an explanation provided on how this mitigation would be secured through the Development Consent Order (DCO) process.
2.2.3	Paragraph 2.4.61	Lighting	The Report states that the National Grid Substation (NGS) compound, Project Substation compound, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) compounds, and Collector Compounds would include lighting, in



ID	Ref	Description	Inspectorate's comments
			<p>accordance with relevant standards, but will not be permanently lit. External lighting should be assessed in a lighting assessment, for all elements and phases of the Proposed Development. It should be explained what measures are proposed to minimise light spill into the surrounding area and minimise impacts on sensitive human and ecological receptors.</p>
2.24	Section 5.11	Transboundary	<p>The Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State (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 potential pathways and the extent, magnitude, probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impacts.</p> <p>The Inspectorate considers 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.</p> <p>Note: The SoS' duty under Regulation 32 of the 2017 EIA Regulations continues throughout the application process.</p> <p>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 <a href="http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/">http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/</a></p>

## 2.3 Environmental aspects proposed to be scoped out

(Scoping Report Chapter 5)

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed aspects to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
2.3.1	Section 5.2	Glint and glare	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to scope out a Glint and Glare ES aspect chapter, however a detailed stand-alone glint and glare assessment is proposed to be submitted in support of the DCO application. A description of any relevant mitigation measures and safety considerations will be included in the Proposed Development Chapter in the ES. The Inspectorate is content with this approach, however the stand-alone glint and glare assessment should be included as a technical appendix to the ES as well. The stand-alone glint and glare assessment should assess the worse-case scenario. In the event that glint and glare effects are identified, it should be used to inform the relevant chapters in the ES, in particular for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) aspect Chapter.</p>
2.3.2	Section 5.3	Heat and radiation	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to scope out an assessment of impacts from heat and radiation during construction, operation and decommissioning as no significant sources are anticipated. The Inspectorate draws the Applicant's attention to the response from Ashby de la Launde, Bloxholm with Temple Bruer and Temple High Grange Parish Council (Appendix 2) regarding heat and micro-climatic impacts. The agrees that this matter may be scoped out from further consideration, on the basis that the ES clearly signposts any identified sources of heat (and radiation), and how this has been considered with respect to site-selection, site layout, and mitigation design.</p>
2.3.3	Section 5.4	Major accidents and disasters	<p>A standalone Chapter for major accidents and disasters is not proposed on the basis that the nature, scale, and location of the Proposed Development is not considered to be vulnerable to or to</p>

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed aspects to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
			<p>give rise to significant impacts in relation to the risk of accidents and major disasters.</p> <p>Scoping Report Table 5-1 presents a list of possible major accidents and disasters that will require consideration including flooding, fire risk, aircraft disasters, rail accidents and plant disease. The Report states that the above potential major accidents and disasters will be considered in the design of the Proposed Development and covered in the flood risk assessment, Battery Safety Commitments, glint and glare assessment and planting design and Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP).</p> <p>The Inspectorate has considered the characteristics of the Proposed Development and agrees with this approach. However, the ES should clearly signpost where these impacts are assessed in other relevant chapters and where any relevant mitigation measures are secured, if required.</p>
2.3.4	Section 5.5	Utilities	<p>The Scoping Report suggests that existing infrastructure will be identified through consultation and a desk-based study and will inform the design and protective provisions to avoid impacts on receptors. The oCEMP will include any additional mitigation measures to protect against interference with below ground utilities during construction. The Inspectorate is content that a standalone ES Chapter for utilities is not required. However, the ES should explain the findings of the desk-based study and signpost to where any required mitigation measures are secured.</p>
2.3.5	Section 5.6	Human Health	<p>The Scoping Report proposes that impacts to human health will be considered in other relevant Chapters including Air quality; Landscape and visual; Noise and vibration; Traffic and transport. Potential human health effects from glint and glare will be considered in the glint and glare assessment. The Inspectorate is content with this</p>

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed aspects to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
			<p>approach, however the ES should clearly set out potential impacts to human health from the Proposed Development during construction, operation and decommissioning and cross-reference where impacts are assessed within the ES; this may extend beyond the chapters proposed above, e.g. Land Contamination.</p>
2.3.6	Section 5.7	Material assets	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to include a description of the potential streams and volumes of construction and operation materials within the Project Description chapter of the ES, in lieu of a standalone chapter. The Report proposes to manage impacts through a Materials Management Plan required through an oCEMP.</p> <p>Scoping Report paragraph 5.7.6 states that it is not intended to remove significant quantities of excavated arisings from the site during construction and that where possible, soil arisings will be balanced through a cut and fill exercise to retain volumes on site. However, there is no reference to the potential use of borrow pits. The Inspectorate agrees that this can be scoped out as a specific chapter of the ES; however borrow pits should be considered within the ES Chapter on Land, soils and groundwater, and the ES Project Description should confirm the cut and fill balance.</p>
2.3.7	Section 5.7	Waste	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to include a description of the potential streams and volumes of construction and operational waste disposal within the ES Project Description chapter and manage impacts through an outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan, and a Site Waste Management Plan required through the oCEMP.</p> <p>There is no commitment to recycle solar panels at decommissioning. The ES should include an assessment of waste impacts for the decommissioning phase and include and outline what measures, if any, are in place to ensure that components (e.g. batteries and</p>

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed aspects to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
			<p>panels) are able to be diverted from the waste chain and managed in line with the waste hierarchy based on available technology at the time. The ES should also consider the requirement for cumulative impacts to be assessed at decommissioning due to a number of solar farms in the local area also likely to be decommissioning in a similar timescale.</p>
2.3.8	Section 5.8	Population - private property and housing, community land and assets, and development land and businesses	<p>The Inspectorate agrees with the proposal to scope out an assessment of impacts on private property and housing, community land and assets, and development land and businesses as the Scoping Report states there are none of these types of assets located within the site boundary.</p> <p>The ES should ensure however that the socio-economic effect of amenity impacts (e.g. visual impacts on tourism/ recreational receptors, disruption/ diversion of Public Rights of Way (PRoW)) is clearly addressed in other relevant chapters and mitigated through management plans.</p>
2.3.9	Section 5.8	Population - agricultural land holdings/ socio-economic benefits	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to scope out impacts to agricultural land holdings, considering that the loss of these agricultural operations is not expected to lead to a significant effect in relation to employment in the local area. Paragraph 5.8.19 of the Report anticipates various socio-economic benefits as a result of the Proposed Development and proposes to submit a Socio-Economic Benefits Statement with the DCO Application, separate from the ES, to highlight the positive impacts on the local and regional area.</p> <p>The Inspectorate considers that such an assessment should form part of a specific chapter of the ES which considers both the positive and negative socio-economic impacts of the development, including the cumulative loss of agricultural operations within the region.</p>

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed aspects to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
2.3.10	Section 5.8	Population - walkers, cyclists and horse riders	<p>There are a number of PRow within the Site boundary some which would be temporarily diverted during the construction phase. The Applicant proposes to present these and detail relevant mitigation measures in a Public Rights of Way Commitments document, separate from the EIA process.</p> <p>The Inspectorate considers that surveys should be undertaken to provide baseline data in relation to the use of the PRow's affected by the Proposed Development and the ES should provide a figure clearly depicting the location of said PRow's. The ES should assess impacts to PRow and on walkers, cyclists and horse riders from the Proposed Development (and cumulatively with other developments) such as the need for temporary closures or diversions, or reduction in amenity, where significant effects are likely to occur.</p>
2.3.11	Section 5.9	Water – flood risk	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to scope out increases in flood risk during construction (paragraph 5.9.14), operation (paragraph 5.9.24) and decommissioning (paragraph 5.9.31). However, a Flood Risk Assessment would be submitted with the application. Given the nature of the site and the development, and subject to ensuring no increase in flood risk and agreeing design and mitigation measures with Environment Agency, Lincolnshire County Council (the Lead Local Flood Authority) and the Witham First Internal Drainage Board, the Inspectorate is content to scope these matters out of the ES.</p>
2.3.12	Section 5.9	Water	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to scope out the following from the ES, on the basis of drainage design and mitigation measures controlled through an oCEMP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sedimentation and pollution of watercourses as a result of silt laden runoff arising from construction (paragraph 5.9.16);</li> </ul>

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed aspects to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• water pollution as a result of chemical spillages during construction (paragraph 5.9.17) and operation (paragraph 5.9.25);</li> <li>• watercourse pollution as a result of cements and concretes being mobilised in surface water runoff (paragraph 5.9.18);</li> <li>• alterations in the surface water regime during construction;</li> <li>• increased foul flows to the foul sewers network during operation (paragraph 5.9.28);</li> <li>• disposal of contaminated water in the event of a BESS fire (paragraph 5.9.29);</li> <li>• increased demand for drinking water during operation (paragraph 5.9.30); and</li> <li>• impact of the decommissioning works on water quality (paragraph 5.9.31).</li> </ul> <p>The Inspectorate notes that impacts from herbicide and pesticide mobilisation have not been discussed in the Scoping Report and that horizontal directional drilling may be required but a breakout plan is not proposed. The Inspectorate does not consider enough evidence regarding the final design and control measures has been provided to scope impacts to water quality out during construction or decommissioning. The ES should identify relevant receptors and pathways of effect, the likely mitigation required to mitigate such effects and any monitoring required; this should include a drilling fluid breakout plan which should also be submitted with the Application if trenchless techniques are employed.</p>
2.3.13	Section 5.9	Water resources	The Scoping Report does not consider water resources although the site is located within an area of 'serious water stress' designated by

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed aspects to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
			<p>the Environment Agency. The ES should provide details relating to water supply and demand requirements during construction and operation (including in the context of BESS fire risk) and water resources should be assessed in the ES where significant effects are likely to occur.</p>
2.3.14	Section 5.9	Water Framework Directive	<p>The Scoping Report identifies the potential for contamination of surface water and groundwater bodies. Given the geographic location of the Proposed Development, the ES should consider the potential impacts on Water Framework Directive (WFD) water bodies. The Applicant's attention is drawn to the Inspectorate's Advice Note Eighteen: The WFD in this regard. The ES should explain the relationship between the Proposed Development and any relevant water bodies in relation to the current relevant River Basin Management Plan.</p>
2.3.15	Section 5.10	Electric, magnetic and electromagnetic fields (EMF)	<p>The Applicant proposes to scope out EMF on the basis that the Proposed Development would not require cables and infrastructure exceeding 132kV; a threshold set out by Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) Power Lines: Demonstrating compliance with EMF public exposure guidelines, A Voluntary Code of Practice 2012 guidance. However, the project description at paragraph 2.4.1 of the Scoping Report includes "up to two new 400kV transmission towers to facilitate the electrical connection of the National Grid Substation to the existing 400kV transmission line". It is also noted that the location of the proposed 400kV National Grid Substation compound has not yet been determined.</p> <p>Given the uncertainty surrounding the location of the substation and proximity to receptors, the ES should address the risks to human health arising from EMF to the extent that it is relevant to the nature of the development, taking into account relevant technical guidance,</p>



<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed aspects to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
			and where significant effects are likely to occur. The Inspectorate considers that the ES should demonstrate the design measures taken to avoid the potential for EMF effects on receptors from the substation infrastructure.

### 3. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT COMMENTS

#### 3.1 Air Quality

(Scoping Report Section 6.1)

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed matters to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
3.1.1	Paragraph 6.1.9	Site activities and road traffic exhaust emissions during operation	The Scoping Report proposes to scope out these matters given that the site activities and movement of vehicles during operation are expected to be minimal. On this basis, the Inspectorate agrees that these matters can be scoped out. The ES must however provide information on the nature of vehicle movements during the operational phases (alone and cumulatively) and confirm these projections fall below the relevant thresholds set out in guidance. The ES project description should also confirm that there are no emissions from operational plant that require further assessment.

ID	Ref	Description	Inspectorate's comments
3.1.2	Paragraph 6.1.2	Study area	The Scoping Report states that the study area for sensitive ecological receptors will be up to 50m from the Site boundary or 50m from the edge of the roads. The ES should provide justification with reference to the relevant guidance for the study area for ecological receptors and agree with relevant consultation bodies.
3.1.3	Paragraph 6.1.11	Demolition	Scoping Report paragraph 6.1.11 refers to four sources of potential dust and particulate matter effects but only lists three: earthworks; general site activities; and trackout. Demolition is not scoped in. Given that there are no demolition works proposed during construction, the Inspectorate agrees that this can be scoped out during construction, however should the decommissioning phase

ID	Ref	Description	Inspectorate's comments
			entail demolition works then these should be assessed, where significant effects are likely to occur.
3.14	n/a	Plan	The ES should be accompanied by a plan showing the location of sensitive air quality receptors within the vicinity of the Proposed Development to aid understanding of the extent of effects.

## 3.2 Biodiversity

(Scoping Report Section 6.2)

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed matters to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
3.2.1	Paragraph 6.2.9	Internationally and nationally statutory designated sites (all phases)	The Scoping Report seeks to scope out these receptors on the grounds that there are no internationally protected nature conservation sites within 10 km of the Site and no nationally protected statutory designated nature conservation sites within 2 km of the Site. The Inspectorate agrees that the proposal is unlikely to adversely impact any European or internationally designated nature conservation sites or nationally designated sites and this matter can be scoped out of the ES.
3.2.2	Paragraph 6.2.9	Blankney Brick Pit Local Wildlife site (LWS); Temple Road Verges, Welbourn to Brauncewell 2 LWS; A15, Slate House Farm to Dunsby Pit Plantation 1 LWS; A15, Green Man Road to Cuckoo Lane 2 LWS; Bloxholm Wood LWS / Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust reserve (all phases)	The Scoping Report states that these sites would be avoided by the current Proposed Development design minimum offset distance of 15m from LWSs and they would also be protected by the oCEMP.  It is not possible to locate these LWSs on the Environmental Features Plan in Appendix C of the Scoping Report as it is not accompanied with a schedule of sites. No site layout options have been presented and as such it is not confirmed that impacts have been avoided. The ES should consider any impacts upon local wildlife and geological sites, including local nature reserves with reference to the reasons for designation, and the findings of other impact assessment disciplines (noise, air quality, water resources). The ES should clearly present the location of LWSs and how they interact with the Proposed Development. The assessment of potential direct and indirect effects on LWSs needs to be made.
3.2.3	Paragraph 6.2.9	Other 17 LWS within 2 km of Site (all phases)	The Scoping Report seeks to scope these receptors out due to the distance from the Site and a lack of relevant links or impact pathways. The Scoping Report has not supported this with evidence

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed matters to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
			regarding the sites and impact pathways, in light of this the Inspectorate is unable to scope these receptors out at this stage.
3.2.4	Paragraph 6.2.9	Lowland Meadow Priority Habitat (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to avoid the grassland parcels assessed as priority habitat Lowland meadow by design, and protect them through the oCEMP.</p> <p>No site layout options have been presented and as such it is not confirmed that impacts have been avoided. The Inspectorate is unable to agree to scope this receptor out at this stage.</p>
3.2.5	Paragraph 6.2.9	Hedgerows and hedgerow trees (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report states that the Proposed Development would be designed to include a buffer from panels to boundary features including hedgerows and trees and measures in the oCEMP would safeguard their protection. It also states that mitigation for any habitat loss will be included in the oLEMP.</p> <p>A commitment to provide habitat mitigation/compensation cannot be relied upon to scope habitats out. An assessment should identify the relative nature conservation value of receptors, any impact pathways, the extent and significance of effects, and should demonstrate that the mitigation hierarchy has been applied. The Inspectorate is unable to agree to scope this receptor out at this stage.</p>
3.2.6	Paragraph 6.2.9	Ponds (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report states that no ponds would be lost to the Proposed Development and the implementation of the oCEMP would include standard practice pollution prevention measures.</p> <p>No site layout options have been presented and as such it is not confirmed that impacts have been avoided. No detail has been provided regarding the proposed mitigation measures. Insufficient information has been provided to enable the Inspectorate to scope out ponds at this stage.</p>

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed matters to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.2.7	Paragraph 6.2.9	Semi-improved grassland (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report states that the oLEMP would include measures to sufficiently compensate for habitat loss and to protect any retained areas of this habitat during construction.</p> <p>A commitment to provide habitat mitigation/compensation cannot be relied upon to scope habitats out. An assessment should identify the relative nature conservation value and apply the mitigation hierarchy. The Inspectorate is unable to agree to scope this receptor out at this stage.</p>
3.2.8	Paragraph 6.2.9	Invasive species (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report seeks to scope out this receptor as no invasive species were identified during the Preliminary Ecological survey and that if any are found during further survey, then an invasive species method statement would be implemented to prevent the spread of this species during construction.</p> <p>The Inspectorate agrees that this matter can be scoped out if no invasive species are identified. Should invasive species be identified during further survey work, an assessment of the effects arising from the spread of invasive species during construction and decommissioning should be included within the ES and biosecurity measures incorporated into the oCEMP where necessary.</p>
3.2.9	Paragraph 6.2.9	Invertebrates (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to scope out invertebrates due to a lack of records of protected species and a lack of high-quality habitat within the Site that could support an important invertebrate assemblage. The Inspectorate notes that the fields at the northern and southern edges of Springwell West have not been surveyed. This matter can be scoped out if the Applicant can demonstrate that no protected species or high-quality habitat are observed following completion of the surveys, with agreement from the relevant consultees.</p>

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed matters to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
3.2.10	Paragraph 6.2.9	Reptiles (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report argues that the majority of the site is unsuitable for reptiles and seeks to scope them out on this basis. It suggests that precautionary measures would be detailed in the oCEMP to safeguard low numbers of reptiles that may be present in semi-improved grassland areas.</p> <p>The Inspectorate considers that further reptile surveys should be undertaken but restricted to the areas of suitable habitat identified in the PEA.</p>
3.2.11	Paragraph 6.2.9	Non-ground nesting birds (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report argues that through the retention of boundary hedgerows and trees and implementation of precautionary measures detailed in an oCEMP, nests would be safeguarded during construction. The Scoping Report does not anticipate any effects during operation and does not mention decommissioning.</p> <p>No site layout options have been presented and as such it is not confirmed that habitats will be retained. No detail has been provided regarding the proposed precautionary mitigation measures. Insufficient information has been provided at this stage to enable the Inspectorate to scope out this matter.</p>
3.2.12	Paragraph 6.2.9	Wintering birds (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report states that the site is not considered of importance for overwintering waders and wildfowl due to distance from coast and any significant wetland areas (i.e. it is more than 35 km from the Wash Special Protection Area).</p> <p>The Inspectorate agrees that the site is not likely to represent functionally linked habitat to any European sites, nevertheless the site could still have value for wintering birds and impacts could arise from the substantive land use change for the proposed development; therefore this matter should be scoped in.</p>

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed matters to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.2.13	Paragraph 6.2.9	Barn owl (all phases) Marsh harrier (all phases) Bats (foraging/commuting and roosting) (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report states that disturbance arising from construction and decommissioning to these species would be mitigated by buffer zones and measures detailed within the oCEMP and oLEMP, and any loss of foraging habitat would be mitigated through habitat creation and enhancement secured through the oLEMP. The Scoping Report does not anticipate any significant effects to these species during operation.</p> <p>A commitment to provide habitat mitigation/compensation cannot be relied upon to scope habitats out. The ES should assess impacts on these species during construction and decommissioning as well as operation and this should include impacts from habitat loss, disturbance and lighting.</p>
3.2.14	Paragraph 6.2.9	Water vole (all phases) Otter (all phases) European eel (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report states that no ponds or watercourses will be lost to the Proposed Development but where small sections of watercourses may be affected, 'standard mitigation' and pollution prevention measures (secured with the oCEMP) would be implemented.</p> <p>Given the potential for watercourses to be affected, and the lack of detail regarding the proposed mitigation measures, the Inspectorate is unable to scope these species out at this time.</p>
3.2.15	Paragraph 6.2.9	Badger (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report states that all known setts would be retained with an appropriate buffer and implementation of precautionary measures detailed in an oCEMP would mitigate for any residual risk.</p> <p>No site layout options have been presented and as such it is not confirmed that habitats will be retained. No detail has been provided regarding the proposed precautionary mitigation measures.</p>



<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed matters to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
			Insufficient information has been provided at this stage to enable the Inspectorate to scope out this matter.
3.2.16	Paragraph 6.2.9	Deer and other mammals (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to scope out the impact of fencing on foraging and dispersal for deer and other unspecified mammals on the grounds that the fencing will be designed to be 'semi-permeable' allowing movement across the site.</p> <p>The Inspectorate agrees that no likely significant effects are anticipated for deer and therefore an assessment can be scoped out of the ES. The application should provide further details regarding fencing design.</p>

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.2.17	Paragraph 6.2.7	Impact pathways	<p>Scoping Report paragraph 6.2.7 refers to habitat loss/ degradation but fails to describe any other impact pathways (e.g. disturbance, lighting, habitat fragmentation/ severance, collision risk). The Proposed Development would entail a range of activities with the potential to generate ecological impacts.</p> <p>The ES Ecology chapter should consider all potential impact pathways and assess any impacts arising from the Proposed Development which are likely to result in significant effects on ecological receptors. Justification for scoping out any ecological impact should be provided.</p>
3.2.18	n/a	Plants, veteran and ancient trees	<p>Notable flora is not specifically addressed within the survey scope. Consideration should be given to scarce arable flora that could occur in arable fields and be adversely affected by changes in land use. There is no information on veteran and ancient trees in the Scoping Report. The ES should identify any veteran trees and assess any</p>

ID	Ref	Description	Inspectorate's comments
			significant effects on these receptors where they are likely to occur and propose adequate mitigation where identified.
3.2.19	n/a	Brown hare, hedgehog	Scoping Report paragraph 6.2.5 notes the presence of brown hare and hedgehog in the study area but these have not been proposed to be scoped into the assessment. The ES should consider effects on these species and be supported by robust survey data, unless otherwise agreed with relevant consultation bodies.

### 3.3 Climate

(Scoping Report Section 6.3)

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed matters to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
3.3.1	Paragraph 6.3.9	Climate resilience during construction, operation and decommissioning – flooding	<p>Scoping Report Table 5-1 states that the majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1 and the vulnerability of the Proposed Development to flooding will be covered in the Flood Risk Assessment appended to the ES. On this basis, the Inspectorate agrees that significant effects are not likely to occur and an assessment of resilience to flooding can be scoped out of the Climate chapter of the ES.</p> <p>The Inspectorate agrees that given the distance of the site to the coastline, sea-level rise is not a relevant consideration.</p>
3.3.2	Paragraph 6.3.9	Climate resilience during construction, operation and decommissioning – high heat, wind speeds	<p>The Inspectorate agrees that this can be scoped out of the assessment on the basis of embedded resilience of solar PV modules to high heat and wind speeds. However, the ES project description should explain how the development has been designed to be resilient to such effects.</p>
3.3.3	n/a	In-combination Climate Change Impact (ICCI) Assessment	<p>The Scoping Report has not proposed to scope in/out an ICCI assessment. Solar panels have potential to alter precipitation runoff rates and patterns. In light of this, and in the absence of more detailed information regarding drainage design and controls, the Inspectorate considers that the ES should consider effects arising from a change in precipitation as a result of climate change in-combination with the scheme, where significant effects are likely to occur.</p>

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.3.4	n/a	n/a	n/a

### 3.4 Cultural heritage

(Scoping Report Section 6.4)

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed matters to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
3.4.1	Paragraph 6.4.9	Setting effects on all heritage assets within the study area (construction)	The Scoping Report argues that the construction phase effects resulting from changes in the setting of heritage assets will be temporary and no worse than the operational phase effects, therefore, it is not considered necessary to repeat the settings assessment for the construction phase. Given that setting can be negatively affected through more than simply visual effects (e.g. noise, dust) the Inspectorate does not agree with the assumption that the construction phase effects would be no worse than the operational phase effects and therefore does not agree to scope out this phase.
3.4.2	Paragraph 6.4.9	Impacts on the setting of listed dwellings within settlements over 1 km from the Site (operation)	The impacts on setting to these receptors are proposed to be scoped out on the basis that the positive contribution made by setting to the significance of residential listed buildings within settlements is typically confined to their immediate street scene.  The Scoping Report does not justify why and how the 1km reference has been derived. The Inspectorate considers there is insufficient evidence provided to scope out this matter at this stage.
3.4.3	Paragraph 6.4.9	Listed K6 telephone kiosks (operation)	These receptors are proposed to be scoped out on the grounds that their surroundings make a neutral contribution to their significance as they are found in a variety of contexts throughout the UK. The Inspectorate agrees that significant effects on such assets are unlikely to arise and this matter can therefore be scoped out of the ES.

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed matters to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.4.4	Paragraph 6.4.9	Various findspots recorded by LCC HER (listed in Scoping Report) (construction and operation)	The Scoping Report explains that as findspots, these have been removed from the Site and the heritage significance of their former locations would not be harmed by the Proposed Development. The Inspectorate agrees that the findspots can be scoped out of the ES.
3.4.5	Paragraph 6.4.9	Milepost 20 metres south of Ashby Lodge Farm (Grade II Listed) (operation)	The Scoping Report argues that the positive contribution made by setting to the significance of the milepost derives from its relationship with the road network, and this would not be altered by the Proposed Development during operation. The Inspectorate agrees on this basis that this asset can be scoped out of this phase.
3.4.6	Paragraph 6.4.9	Avro Lancaster crash site (operation)	This receptor is proposed to be scoped out on the basis that its significance does not draw on its wider surroundings. The Inspectorate agrees this asset can be scoped of the operational assessment.
3.4.7	Paragraph 6.4.9	Hawker Hurricane crash site (operation)	This receptor is proposed to be scoped out on the basis that its significance does not draw on its wider surroundings. The Inspectorate agrees this asset can be scoped of the operational assessment.
3.4.8	Paragraph 6.4.9	Sites of former extractive pits in Ashby de la Launde and Bloxholm, and Rowston (construction and operation)	These receptors are proposed to be scoped out on the grounds that they have negligible importance and significant effects upon them are therefore unlikely. The Scoping Report has provided no justification/evidence to support its assessment of 'negligible importance' and therefore the Inspectorate is unable to scope this matter out at this stage.
3.4.9	Paragraph 6.4.9	All heritage assets within the study area during decommissioning	The Scoping Report seeks to scope out the decommissioning phase on the basis that it would not result in impacts to any additional heritage assets not affected during construction and operation, and changes in

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed matters to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
			<p>the setting of heritage assets in the surrounding area will be no worse than the construction or operational phase effects.</p> <p>The Inspectorate considers that there is potential for decommissioning stage effects on buried archaeological resource, such as the potential for harm due to compaction, removal of piles, and subsequent potential changes in drainage patterns. In addition, given that the potential effects on setting during decommissioning are likely to be similar to those experienced during construction the Inspectorate is of the opinion that this matter cannot be scoped out at this stage. Cultural heritage should be a consideration as part of any outline decommissioning plans.</p>

ID	Ref	Description	Inspectorate's comments
3.4.10	Paragraph 6.4.1	Consultation	The Applicant is also advised to liaise with the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire who act on behalf of North Kesteven District Council, especially in relation to the scope of and timing of any intrusive evaluation following completion of the geophysical survey.
3.4.11	Paragraph 6.4.2	Study area	The Scoping Report proposes a 2 km study area for non-designated assets. For the assessment of setting, the study area should be agreed with the relevant stakeholders and informed by the visual analysis.
3.4.12	Paragraph 6.4.3	Data sources	The Applicant is advised to also consider the North Kesteven District Council's local list of non-designated heritage assets and the Scopwick and Kirkby Green Neighbourhood Plan which contains schedules and descriptions of heritage assets within the Plan area.

ID	Ref	Description	Inspectorate's comments
3.4.13	Paragraphs 6.4.4 and 6.4.6	Intrusive evaluation	<p>The Scoping Report proposes a programme of archaeological investigation and recording secured by a DCO Requirement. Measures to mitigate risk to buried archaeological remains such as exclusion zones/ avoidance routes and concrete shoes rather than piles require a robust understanding of archaeological risk to be effective. These considerations should be factored into the programme and scope of intrusive evaluation (if required), to be agreed with the statutory consultees.</p> <p>Noting the responses from North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council indicating the potential need for intrusive field evaluation to understand the full extent of any potential impact, and inform a fuller programme of archaeological investigation and ultimately the scheme design, the Inspectorate advises that further discussions are held with the relevant consultation bodies to discuss the detailed findings of desk studies and geophysical surveys, and whether these area adequate to inform design, assess the effects of the scheme and demonstrate that any potential significant effects can be adequately mitigated. Pending the results of the non-intrusive surveys the Inspectorate is not in a position to agree that a programme of intrusive archaeological investigation is not required to inform the ES.</p>
3.4.14	Paragraph 6.4.8	Receptors to be scoped in	<p>The ES should assess the effects on the Conservation Areas at Scopwick, Blankney and Bloxholm where significant effects are likely to occur.</p>



### 3.5 Landscape and visual

(Scoping Report Section 6.5)

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed matters to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
3.5.1	Paragraph 6.5.9	Assessment of impacts to Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) during construction, operation and decommissioning	The Scoping Report states that the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB is located over 20km away from the Proposed Development. Due to the distance and intervisibility, an assessment of impacts on the AONB is proposed to be scoped out of the LVIA. Considering the nature and characteristics of the Proposed Development and the distances involved, the Inspectorate agrees that an assessment of impacts on the AONB can be scoped out of the ES.
3.5.2	Paragraph 6.5.9	Assessment of impacts to Lincoln Cliff Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) during construction, operation and decommissioning	The Scoping Report states that the Lincoln Cliff AGLV is located over 3km to the west of the Proposed Development and it is proposed to be scoped out due to no intervisibility confirmed through field work. On this basis, the Inspectorate agrees that an assessment of impacts on the AGLV can be scoped out of the ES. The ES should demonstrate there is no intervisibility with reference to photos from field work or other appropriate evidence.
3.5.3	Paragraph 6.5.9	Other Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) in the North Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment during construction, operation and decommissioning	Although some distant visibility is indicated by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), the Scoping Report proposes to scope out this matter on the basis that the field work has established that there would be no intervisibility between the site and any other LCAs. The Inspectorate is content for these receptors to be scoped out, however the ZTV should be reviewed with the final scheme and presented in the ES to demonstrate that there is no intervisibility.
3.5.4	Paragraph 6.5.9	View from Villages/ hamlets of Metherringham, Bloxham, Digby, Dorrington, Ruskington,	The Scoping Report proposes to scope out this matter on the basis that it is highly unlikely there would be any views of the Proposed Development from these settlements when taking into account of

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed matters to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
		Leasingham, Cranwell, Royal Air Force (RAF) Cranwell, Wellingore and Navenby and other settlements along the A607 during construction, operation and decommissioning	intervening hedgerows and other vegetation, stating that any glimpses would be distant, filtered and negligible. The ES should demonstrate there is no intervisibility, otherwise the potential effects on views and visual amenity within the ZTV where significant effects are likely to occur should be assessed.
3.5.5	Paragraph 6.5.9	Assessment of impacts to PRow and local roads beyond 3km from the site during construction, operation and decommissioning	The Scoping Report proposes to scope out these receptors in the LVIA due to the distance and intervisibility. The Inspectorate considers that these matters may be scoped out on the basis of the relatively short duration of any potential effect.
3.5.6	Paragraph 6.5.9	Assessment of impacts to isolated residential properties over 1km from the site during construction, operation and decommissioning	The Scoping Report proposes to scope out this matter on the basis that it is a matter of private visual amenity which would not give rise to an overbearing effect on residential amenity. Insufficient information has been provided regarding the nature of these receptors and extent of visibility, therefore the Inspectorate is unable to scope out this matter out at this stage.
3.5.7	Paragraph 6.5.9	Assessment of impacts to users of the rail network, specifically the section between Metheringham and the level crossing on the B1191 during construction, operation and decommissioning	The Scoping Report proposes to scope out these receptors in the LVIA due to their sensitivity being medium/ low. The Inspectorate considers that these matters may be scoped out on the basis of the relatively short duration and intermittent nature of any potential effect.

ID	Ref	Description	Inspectorate's comments
3.5.8	Paragraphs 6.5.2 and 6.5.7	Study area	<p>The Scoping Report paragraph 6.5.2 proposes that the LVIA study area will be within 3km of the site boundary of the Proposed Development and extended to 5km for the National Grid and Project Substation and National Grid connecting towers. However, the full extent of potential visibility of the Proposed Development is not yet fully known and the ZTV mapping contained within Appendix F identified potential visibility beyond these extents.</p> <p>The ES should justify the extent of the study area/s with reference to recognised professional guidance and the extent of the likely impacts, informed by fieldwork and relevant models or approaches such as the ZTV. The Applicant should agree the study areas with relevant consultation bodies.</p>
3.5.9	Paragraph 6.5.6	Mitigation	<p>The Scoping Report states that an oLEMP will be developed to secure the long-term management of the landscape and biodiversity strategy. The ES should cover the establishment period of any Landscape Scheme. The Inspectorate draws the Applicant's attention to the comments of Lincolnshire County Council regarding the establishment period and content of the management plan (see Appendix 2 of this Opinion).</p>

### 3.6 Land, soils and groundwater

(Scoping Report Section 6.6)

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed matters to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
3.6.1	Paragraph 6.6.9	Land contamination and minerals (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report justifies scoping out impacts to land based on the findings of a Preliminary Risk Assessment (PRA), embedded mitigation measures and industry best practice procedures. The Scoping Report states that any negative implications for the Mineral Safeguarding Areas would be minimised and considered as part of the Proposed Development design.</p> <p>The findings of the PRA have not been presented in detail within the Scoping Report and paragraph 6.6.5 seems to suggest some risk of contamination. In light of this, there is insufficient evidence to scope this matter out at this stage. The ES should be supported by the findings of a PRA and where land contamination is identified, the ES should assess significant effects where they are likely to occur. Potential risks of soil and water contamination from leaks, improper storage, or spills during the construction phase, should be mitigated through implementation of standard best practice measures secured via the oCEMP.</p> <p>The Inspectorate considers that a Minerals Assessment should be undertaken to inform and influence the design and layout of the development and demonstrate how impacts to Mineral Safeguarding Areas have been minimised. The ES should also confirm if borrow pits are proposed, assess the impacts, and identify the location of these within the Order Limits. The ES should demonstrate that the Minerals Planning Authority has been consulted in respect of all of the proposals and that the proposed development does not impact on future ambitions for minerals extraction within the region.</p>

ID	Ref	Applicant's proposed matters to scope out	Inspectorate's comments
3.6.2	Paragraph 6.6.9	Groundwater (all phases)	<p>The Scoping Report argues that the quality of groundwater in Source Protection Zones (SPZs) would be appropriately protected by embedded mitigation measures, and the project surface water strategy would mirror the existing surface water regime, so having minimal effect on the existing groundwater conditions.</p> <p>The site overlies an SPZ and a Principal Aquifer of high vulnerability and construction activities may lead to a creation of contamination pathways e.g. piling, trenching, borrow pits. The ES should assess impacts from all phases of the development to groundwater where significant effects are likely to occur. Best practice measures should be employed and secured via the DCO to ensure any potential pollution impacts are minimised.</p>
3.6.3	Paragraph 6.6.9	Soils (operation)	<p>The Scoping Report proposes to scope out operational impacts to soils as significant vehicle movements within the Site during operation are not anticipated and therefore the potential for compaction is considered limited. The Inspectorate agrees that impacts from compaction could be scoped out of the operational phase.</p> <p>However, there is no reference in the Scoping Report as to whether or how agricultural land use would be continued across the site alongside the operation of the solar farm. Changes to the hydrogeological regime as a result of the Proposed Development may also affect the quality of soils within the Site and this should be assessed within the ES.</p>
3.6.4	Paragraph 6.6.9	Soils (decommissioning)	<p>The Scoping Report argues that any effects on soils during decommissioning would not be expected to be significant as the number of vehicle movements is anticipated to be less than during the construction phase, limiting the potential for compaction of soils to occur. Decommissioning works are also less likely than</p>

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed matters to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
			construction works to adversely impact on agricultural field drains as there would be no requirement for piling etc., so are less likely to result in deterioration of soil quality. The Inspectorate agrees with the rationale for scoping this matter out.

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.6.5	Paragraph 6.6.5	Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)	The Scoping Report explains that an ALC survey is currently underway. The scope of the survey should align with the Natural England 'Technical Information Note TIN049: Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile land, 2nd edition (2012)'.
3.6.6	Paragraph 6.6.5	Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)	The Scoping Report notes that the proximity of RAF Digby suggests that there is the potential for unexploded ordnance to have been present at the Site. The ES should assess the risk of disturbing UXO through piling and other works.
3.6.7	Paragraph 6.6.8	Agricultural land (operation)	The Report proposes to scope in the operational impacts of the proposed development in terms of the loss of agricultural and BMV land because of the removal of this land from productive use. The assessment should also include and detail mitigation measures to remove, reduce or minimise such impacts.

### 3.7 Noise and vibration

(Scoping Report Section 6.7)

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed matters to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.7.1	Paragraph 6.7.9	Operational vibration	The Scoping Report proposes to scope out this matter on the basis that fixed plant items or structures would not emit discernible levels of vibration during the operational phase. Based on the nature and characteristics of the Proposed Development, the Inspectorate agrees that operational vibration may be scoped out from further assessment. The ES project description should demonstrate that operational plant and equipment is of a type and to be used in locations unlikely to result in significant vibration impacts on sensitive receptors.
3.7.2	Paragraph 6.7.9	Operational road traffic noise	The Scoping Report proposes to scope out an assessment of noise associated with operational traffic on the basis that once operational the Proposed Development would generate minimal traffic. Considering the characteristics of the Proposed Development, the Inspectorate is content that this matter can be scoped out. The ES project description should confirm the anticipated trip generation (including number and type of vehicles) required for routine maintenance during operation to justify this.

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.7.3	Paragraph 6.7.2	Study area and sensitive receptors	Scoping Report paragraph 6.7.2 states that the study area will be defined based on the Applicant's experience of solar farm developments and proposed locations of operation equipment/ structures and construction/decommissioning pathways. The ES should explain how the study area and sensitive receptors have been

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
			selected with reference to relevant supporting evidence, such as noise modelling/ noise contour mapping.
3.7.4	Paragraph 6.7.4	Baseline survey	The Scoping Report proposes the baseline noise monitoring to be undertaken along the site boundary. The ES should explain how the baseline noise monitoring locations were chosen and how they are deemed to be representative of nearby receptors.
3.7.5	Paragraph 6.7.5	Sensitive receptors	The Scoping Report states that the receptors likely to be incorporated into the assessment are all residential in nature. The ES should also consider if there are any ecological receptors that require consideration in respect of noise related impacts.
3.7.6	n/a	Plans	The ES should provide a plan showing the location of all sensitive receptors identified for assessment overlaid with noise contour mapping to aid understanding of the potential for significant effects relating to noise.



### 3.8 Traffic and transport

(Scoping Report Section 6.8)

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed matters to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.8.1	Paragraph 6.8.9	Operational traffic	The Scoping Report states that the effect of operational traffic is likely to be minimal. The Inspectorate has considered the characteristics of the operational phase of the Proposed Development and based on the low levels of anticipated traffic generation is content that this matter can be scoped out. The ES description of development should clearly set out the operational vehicle types and numbers (with reference to thresholds within guidance) to justify this position.

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.8.2	Paragraph 6.8.2	Study area	The scoping report suggests a study area to include the B1189, B1188, B1191, and A15. The ES should also describe how the Proposed Development is likely to affect the Strategic Road Network; significant effects should be assessed where they are likely to occur.
3.8.3	Paragraph 6.8.6	Mitigation - highway improvements	If highways works/improvements are required as part of the mitigation for significant effects arising from construction transport, these should be fully explained within the ES and an assessment of any likely significant effects as a result of these works should also be presented, as relevant. This should include consideration of any potential impacts to railway assets, such as bridges and level crossings, located on HGV routes.
3.8.4	Paragraph 6.8.11	Impact assessment methodology	The impact assessment is proposed to be based on the methodology outlined in the Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic (1993). The Inspectorate understands that this guidance is

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
			planned to be updated by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). The ES should take account of future updates where relevant.

### 3.9 Cumulative Effects

(Scoping Report Chapter 7)

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Applicant's proposed matters to scope out</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.9.1	n/a	n/a	No matters have been proposed to be scoped out of the assessment.

<b>ID</b>	<b>Ref</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Inspectorate's comments</b>
3.9.2	n/a	Other projects	The study areas, methodologies (including other projects included in the assessment) particularly with respect to impacts on 'best and most versatile' agricultural land and landscape, should be agreed with the statutory consultation bodies and any exclusions should be clearly justified and explained with reference to PINS Advice Note 17: Cumulative effects assessment.

## APPENDIX 1: CONSULTATION BODIES FORMALLY CONSULTED

**TABLE A1: PRESCRIBED CONSULTATION BODIES<sup>1</sup>**

<b>SCHEDULE 1 DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>
The Health and Safety Executive	Health and Safety Executive
The National Health Service Commissioning Board	NHS England
The relevant Integrated Care Board	NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board
Natural England	Natural England
The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England	Historic England
The relevant fire and rescue authority	Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue services
The relevant police and crime commissioner	Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner
The relevant parish council(s) or, where the application relates to land [in] Wales or Scotland, the relevant community council	Blankley Parish Council
	Wellingore Parish Council
	Temple Bruer with Temple High Grange Parish Council
	Cranwell, Brauncewell and Byard's Leap Parish Council
	Scopwick and Kirkby Green Parish Council
	Rowston Parish Council
	Martin Parish Council
	Ashby De La Launde and Bloxholm Parish Council
The Environment Agency	Environment Agency (Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire and East Midlands)

<sup>1</sup> Schedule 1 of The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (the 'APFP Regulations')

<b>SCHEDULE 1 DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>
The Civil Aviation Authority	Civil Aviation Authority
The Relevant Highways Authority	Lincolnshire County Council
The relevant strategic highways company	National Highways
The relevant internal drainage board	Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board
	Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board
	Witham First Internal Drainage Board
	Witham Third Internal Drainage Board
The Canal and River Trust	Canal and River Trust
The Crown Estate Commissioners	The Crown Estate
The Forestry Commission	Forestry Commission (East and East Midlands)
The Secretary of State for Defence	Ministry of Defence

**TABLE A2: RELEVANT STATUTORY UNDERTAKERS<sup>2</sup>**

<b>STATUTORY UNDERTAKER</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>
The relevant Integrated Care Board	NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board
The National Health Service Commissioning Board	NHS England
The relevant NHS Trust	East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust
Railways	Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd
	National Highways Historical Railways Estate
Civil Aviation Authority	Civil Aviation Authority

<sup>2</sup> 'Statutory Undertaker' is defined in the APFP Regulations as having the same meaning as in Section 127 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008)

<b>STATUTORY UNDERTAKER</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>
Licence Holder (Chapter 1 Of Part 1 Of Transport Act 2000)	NATS En-route Safeguarding
Universal Service Provider	Royal Mail Group
The relevant Environment Agency	The Environment Agency (Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire and East Midlands)
The relevant water and sewage undertaker	Anglian Water
	Severn Trent
The relevant public gas transporter	Cadent Gas Limited
	Northern Gas Networks Limited
	Scotland Gas Networks Plc
	Southern Gas Networks Plc
	Wales and West Utilities Ltd
	Energy Assets Pipelines Limited
	ES Pipelines Ltd
	ESP Connections Ltd
	ESP Networks Ltd
	ESP Pipelines Ltd
	Fulcrum Pipelines Limited
	GTC Pipelines Limited
	Harlaxton Gas Networks Limited
	Independent Pipelines Limited
	Indigo Pipelines Limited
	Last Mile Gas Ltd
Leep Gas Networks Limited	
Quadrant Pipelines Limited	

STATUTORY UNDERTAKER	ORGANISATION
	Squire Energy Limited
	National Grid Gas Plc
The relevant electricity distributor with CPO Powers	Eclipse Power Network Limited
	Energy Assets Networks Limited
	ESP Electricity Limited
	Fulcrum Electricity Assets Limited
	Harlaxton Energy Networks Limited
	Independent Power Networks Limited
	Indigo Power Limited
	Last Mile Electricity Ltd
	Leep Electricity Networks Limited
	London Power Networks Plc
	Mua Electricity Limited
	Optimal Power Networks Limited
	The Electricity Network Company Limited
	UK Power Distribution Limited
	Utility Assets Limited
	Vattenfall Networks Limited
	Utility Assets Limited
	National Grid Electricity Distribution Midlands Limited
The relevant electricity transmitter with CPO Powers	National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc
	National Grid Electricity System Operator Limited

**TABLE A3: SECTION 43 LOCAL AUTHORITIES (FOR THE PURPOSES OF SECTION 42(1)(B))<sup>3</sup>**

<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY<sup>4</sup></b>
Boston District Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
City of Lincoln Council
East Lindsey District Council
Leicestershire County Council
Lincolnshire County Council
Newark and Sherwood District Council
Norfolk County Council
North East Lincolnshire Council
North Kesteven District Council
North Lincolnshire Council
North Northamptonshire Council
Nottinghamshire County Council
Peterborough City Council
Rutland Council
South Holland District Council
South Kesteven District Council
West Lindsey District Council

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<sup>3</sup> Sections 43 and 42(B) of the PA2008

<sup>4</sup> As defined in Section 43(3) of the PA2008



## APPENDIX 2: RESPONDENTS TO CONSULTATION AND COPIES OF REPLIES

<b>CONSULTATION BODIES WHO REPLIED BY THE STATUTORY DEADLINE:</b>
Anglian Water
Ashby de la Launde, Bloxholm with Temple Bruer and Temple High Grange Parish Council
Boston Borough Council
Canal and River Trust
City of Lincoln Council
East Lindsey District Council
Environmental Agency
Forestry Commission (East and East Midlands)
Health and Safety Executive
Historic England
Lincolnshire County Council
Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service
National Grid Gas Plc (National Gas Transmission) – two responses received (05 April and 18 April 2023)
National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc
National Highways
NATS En-route Safeguarding
Natural England
Newark and Sherwood District Council
NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board
Norfolk County Council
North East Lincolnshire Council

North Kesteven District Council
Nottinghamshire County Council
Peterborough City Council
Severn Trent
South Holland District Council
Scopwick and Kirkby Green Parish Council
West Lindsey District Council



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