



EAST PARK ENERGY

East Park Energy

EN010141

Environmental Statement

Volume 2 – Technical Appendices

Appendix 8-2: Water Framework Directive
Assessment

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Appendix 8-2: Water Framework Directive Assessment

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Wallingford HydroSolutions Ltd (WHS) has been commissioned by BSSL Cambsbed 1 Ltd (the 'Applicant') to complete this Water Framework Directive (WFD) Assessment for the proposed East Park Energy project (the 'Scheme').
- 1.1.2 The Site is located on land to the north-west of St Neots on the border between Bedford Borough and Huntingdonshire District.
- 1.1.3 The aim of this report is to identify the relevant WFD groundwater and surface water bodies located within the vicinity of the Site and to assess if the Scheme is compliant with the objectives of the WFD for the identified areas and whether the development would prevent the water bodies from reaching their objectives.

1.2 Legislation

- 1.2.1 The Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1)¹ requires in relation to water quality and resources, that the applicant assesses any impacts of proposed project on water bodies or protected areas, under the Water Environment Regulations 2017 (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales)².
- 1.2.2 The legislative framework for the WFD comprises the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017. The regulations seek to protect and enhance the ecological and chemical health of rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal waters and groundwaters. The aim of the WFD is for all water bodies to achieve "good status" by 2027. Water bodies

¹ Department of Energy and Climate Change (2023). *Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)*. Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a7864e96a5ec0013731a93/overarching-nps-for-energy-en1.pdf> [Last Accessed: 01/2/2025]

² EU (2000). *Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/eudr/2000/60> [Last Accessed: 12/09/2025]

are assessed within river basin management plans (RBMPs) which allow the water body to be managed as a natural, geographical and hydrological unit.

- 1.2.3 Each river basin has a RBMP which sets out the current status for each water body within the river basin. The RBMP also sets out the objectives required to achieve good status by 2027 in terms of ecological, chemical and protected areas. The status of each water body is reassessed in England under 6-year cycles with interim updates every 3 years as part of WFD cycles. The first cycle ended in 2015 and the second cycle in 2021. Cycle 3 (2021-2027) classifications were published in 2021 and have been used for this assessment. For those water bodies which did not originally (by the end of cycle 1) achieve good status the target date was extended to either 2021 (cycle 2) or 2027 (cycle 3).
- 1.2.4 Ecological, chemical and groundwater status (where applicable) are assessed based on several distinct quality elements. To achieve good ecological status (for natural water bodies) or potential ecological status (for heavily modified water bodies), good chemical status, or good groundwater status, each element must be assessed as having a good status or better. If a single element is below the threshold for good status, then the water body's status cannot be classed as good.

1.3 Surface Water Criteria

- 1.3.1 Surface water bodies can have an overall status classed as high, good, moderate, poor or bad, which is determined by a water body's ecological status and chemical status. The same classifications as above apply to the ecological status, which is assessed based on the following:
- Biological quality – fish, benthic invertebrates, aquatic flora;
 - Hydromorphological quality – riverbank structure, continuity of channel or substrate of the riverbed; and
 - Physico-chemical quality – temperature, oxygenation, and nutrient conditions.

- 1.3.2 The chemical status is classed as either good or fail. It is based on specific water pollutants detailed in the Environmental Quality Standards Directive³.

1.4 Groundwater Criteria

- 1.4.1 Groundwater bodies have an overall status which is assessed according to their “quantitative” and “chemical” status. The chemical status is assessed based on different elements than for surface water bodies, with an emphasis on preventing long-term pollution and protecting drinking water resources. This includes nitrates, pesticides, salts/ions, and pollutants of local concern.
- 1.4.2 Quantitative status is related to the availability of the groundwater resource and ensuring that it is not reduced by the long-term annual average rate of abstraction. The WFD’s Groundwater Directive requires that hazardous substances are prevented from entering groundwater. It is implemented in England by the Environment Agency (EA) under the Groundwater (Water Framework Directive) (England) Direction 2016⁴.

1.5 Guidance and Methodology

- 1.5.1 The Planning Inspectorate has provided guidance on the Water Framework Directive for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, published in September 2024 and updated in March 2025⁵. This guidance is based upon the guidance produced by the Environment Agency for completing WFD assessments for estuarine and coastal waters⁶. The guidance outlines a three-stage approach for completing the assessment:

³ Environment Agency (2016) *Environmental Quality Standards Directive (EQSD) list for WFD assessments* www.gov.uk/government/publications/list-of-chemicals-for-water-framework-directive-assessments/environmental-quality-standards-directive-eqsd-list-for-wfd-assessments

⁴ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), 2016. *The Groundwater (Water Framework Directive) (England) Direction 2016*. London: The Stationery Office.

⁵ Planning Inspectorate. *Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on the Water Framework Directive*, published September 2024. Available via: www.gov.uk/guidance/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-on-the-water-framework-directive

⁶ Environment Agency, *Water Framework Directive assessment: estuarine and coastal waters*, published December 2016. Available via: www.gov.uk/guidance/water-framework-directive-assessment-estuarine-and-coastal-waters

- **Screening:** Identify the zones of influence for the proposed development and any specific activities or characteristics of the development that have been screened out;
- **Scoping:** Identify the risks from the proposed development to receptors within the zone of influence; and
- **Impact Assessment:** Identify the extent to which the development will influence (positively or negatively) the waterbodies and their WFD elements. Identify where actions can be incorporated into the development to mitigate any negative effects of the development.

1.6 Site Description

- 1.6.1 The proposed Site covers an area of approximately 773 ha and is located on greenfield land to the north-west of St Neots, Cambridgeshire (NGR: TL082638). The Site is characterised by arable land, with small areas of improved grassland and broadleaved woodland.
- 1.6.2 A full description of The Scheme is provided in ES Vol 1 Chapter 2: The Scheme [EN010141/DR/6.1], which includes the following main components:
- Solar panels mounted on tables set out in arrays across the Scheme;
 - Associated inverters and transformers;
 - Battery storage units and transformers;
 - East Park substation;
 - 400 kV Grid Connection to the Eaton Socon Substation;
 - Internal Cabling;
 - Control and operations buildings;
 - Access tracks; and
 - Landscaping and habitat creation (green infrastructure).

2.0 SCREENING

2.1 Surface Water Body Catchments

- 2.1.1 The Site lies entirely within the Anglian River Basin District, within the Ouse Upper and Bedford Management Catchment. This section identifies the WFD surface water and groundwater bodies located within the draining catchments of the Site as determined by the surrounding topography. The land use of the Site and surrounding area is predominantly used for agriculture, which has the potential to contribute to a reduction in water quality of the water bodies due to leaching of pesticides, fertilisers and herbicides into the water.
- 2.1.2 The Site drains to four separate WFD water bodies. These water bodies are:
- Pertenhall Brook;
 - Colmworth Brook;
 - Duloe Brook; and
 - River Kym.
- 2.1.3 All the above water bodies except the Duloe Brook are classified as hydromorphologically heavily modified, meaning they have had their physical or hydromorphological conditions modified for the purposes of a specified use.
- 2.1.4 Both the River Kym and Pertenhall Brook contain sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) within their respective catchments. The Pertenhall Brook catchment contains Swineshead Wood SSSI. The River Kym catchment contains Perry Wood and Little Paxton Wood SSSI. In addition to this, the entire Site is within a nitrate vulnerable zone.
- 2.1.5 Figure 1 shows the location of the water bodies relative to the Site and Table 1 shows the WFD details of the four surface water bodies, indicating their status and objectives.

Table 1: WFD Water Body Baseline Characteristics

WFD Indicator	Pertenhall Brook	Colmworth Brook	Duloe Brook	River Kym
Water Body ID	GB105033042960	GB105033043220	GB105033043260	GB105033043270
Overall Status	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Ecological Status	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Chemical Status	Fail (2019) Does not require (2022)	Fail (2019) Does not require (2022)	Fail (2019) Does not require (2022)	Fail (2019) Does not require (2022)
Overall Objective	Moderate by 2027	Good by 2027	Good by 2027	Moderate by 2027

2.2 Groundwater Bodies

- 2.2.1 There are no WFD groundwater bodies within the Scheme Boundary, because of this, there is no significant risk to WFD groundwater objectives from the proposed development.

2.3 River Basin Management Plans

- 2.3.1 The Site lies within the Anglian RBMP which covers 27,900km². The RBMP extends from Lincolnshire to Essex, north to south, and from Northamptonshire to the East Anglia coast, east to west. The Anglian RBMP is divided into fourteen management catchments. The management catchment containing the Site (Ouse Upper and Bedford Management Catchment) is characterised by mainly agricultural and horticultural land use, with urban areas, improved grassland and broadleaved woodland scattered throughout. 86% of the water bodies present in this management catchment are heavily modified. The RBMP outlines water management issues and objectives with the aim of protecting and enhancing the water environment. The environmental objectives of the RBMP are:

- *‘to prevent deterioration of the status of surface waters and groundwater;*
- *to achieve objectives and standards for protected areas;*
- *to aim to achieve good status for all water bodies or, for heavily modified water bodies and artificial water bodies, good ecological potential and good surface water chemical status;*
- *to reverse any significant and sustained upward trends in pollutant concentrations in groundwater;*
- *the cessation of discharges, emissions and losses of priority hazardous substances into surface waters; and*
- *progressively reduce the pollution of groundwater and prevent or limit the entry of pollutants.’*

2.4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest

2.4.1 There are three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the borders of the assessed surface water body catchments, described in Section 2.1.4. All three SSSIs relate to ancient woodland habitats. There is only one management plan available for these SSSI (Swineshead Wood⁷). The objectives of this plan focus on enhancing biodiversity and the recreational value of the woodland. No specific targets relating to water quality are available.

⁷ Woodland Trust. 2023. Swineshead and Spanoak Woods woodland trust management plan. Available at: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/media/52974/4813-swineshead-spanoak-woods.pdf> [Accessed 18/07/2024]

3.0 SCOPING AND ASSESSMENT

3.1 WFD Water Body Objectives

- 3.1.1 This section presents the scoping and impact assessment of the Scheme upon the WFD surface water bodies and SSSI within the WFD surface water body catchments.
- 3.1.2 The assessment takes into consideration specific crossing points of the Scheme and the watercourses along with the wider draining catchment. Additionally, embedded mitigation measures incorporated into the design of the Scheme and additional mitigation measures are taken into consideration.
- 3.1.3 Figure 1 shows the WFD catchments and surface water bodies in relation to the Scheme and indicates the areas of crossing of the development and watercourses. The preliminary WFD assessment for each WFD component is presented in Table 2, Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 2: Pertenhall Brook Impact Assessment.

WFD Element and Current Status	Objective	WFD Assessment
Ecological Status <i>Moderate</i>	Moderate by 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reason for the moderate ecological status of the water body is poor phosphate and dissolved oxygen concentrations. The reasons given for these issues are poor livestock and land management practices. In replacing agricultural ground with solar panels (which will not require fertilising of the ground), there may be some beneficial impact on phosphate concentrations in watercourses. The outline Surface Water Management Plan (oSWMP) [EN010141/DR/7.13] includes on-site pollution prevention best practice methods. The residual effects on water quality from potential increased sediment loads within runoff from disturbed ground, soil heaps and excavations and as a result of potential accidental spillage/loss of chemicals and other construction materials are assessed as having no adverse impact on the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [EN010141/DR/7.3] and oSWMP [EN010141/DR/7.13] There are proposed water crossings within this catchment. These water crossings will be designed to maintain the

WFD Element and Current Status	Objective	WFD Assessment
		natural channel bed as far as possible by using bottomless culverts, buried culverts or bridge crossings, with indicative drawings given in the figures accompanying ES Vol 1 Chapter 2 , which are available in ES Vol 3 Figure 2-2: Indicative Engineering Drawings [EN010141/DR/6.3] . An assessment of each crossing location has been made and can be found in ES Vol 2 Appendix 8-3: Watercourse Crossing Assessment [EN010141/DR/6.2] .
Chemical Status <i>Fail</i>	Good by 2063	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The residual effects of potentially reduced water quality are assessed as having no adverse impact on the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3].
Hydrological Regime <i>Supports Good</i>	Supports good by 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solar panels cause a negligible increase in impermeable area. The residual effects of changes to runoff and peak flow due to increased impervious surfaces across the catchment is assessed as having no impact of the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oSWMP [EN010141/DR/7.13] and oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3]. Where water crossings are required the natural bed of the channel is to be maintained through use of buried culverts or open span bridge crossings, as set out in the Design Parameters and Principles Statement [EN010141/DR/7.1].
Other	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional classifications are distinguished for this water body.

Table 3: Colmworth Brook Impact Assessment.

WFD Element and Current Status	Objective	WFD Assessment
Ecological Status <i>Moderate</i>	Good by 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reason for the moderate ecological status of the water body is a moderate invertebrate classification. The reasons given for this classification ('moderate' for invertebrates) is land drainage in agricultural land and the flood protection measures in place. The Scheme is assessed to have a negligible impact on the invertebrates in Colmworth Brook. This is because no solar infrastructure will be constructed within this WFD water body catchment, with only a temporary access track and cable works proposed. The surface water generated will be managed by the oSWMP [EN010141/DR/7.13] which includes on-site pollution prevention best practice methods.

WFD Element and Current Status	Objective	WFD Assessment
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The residual effects on water quality from potential increased sediment loads within runoff from disturbed ground, soil heaps and excavations and as a result of potential accidental spillage/loss of chemicals and other construction materials are assessed as having no impact on the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3]. There are no proposed water crossings within this catchment.
Chemical Status <i>Fail</i>	Good by 2063	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The residual effects of potentially reduced water quality are assessed as having no impact on the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3].
Hydrological Regime <i>Supports Good</i>	Supports good by 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no proposed solar panels within the Colmworth Brook catchment, with only a temporary access track and cable works present, which is assessed to have negligible impact. Therefore, the residual effects of changes to runoff and peak flow due to increased impervious surfaces across the catchment is assessed as having no impact of the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oSWMP [EN010141/DR/7.13] and oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3].
Other	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional classifications are distinguished for this water body.

Table 4: Duloe Brook Impact Assessment.

WFD Element and Current Status	Objective	WFD Assessment
Ecological Status <i>Moderate</i>	Good by 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reason for the moderate ecological status of the water body is the poor phosphate concentrations of the river alongside moderate concentration of macrophytes and phytobenthos combined. The reasons given for poor phosphate concentration is sewage discharges and poor nutrient management. In replacing agricultural ground with solar panels (which will not require fertilising of the ground), there may be some beneficial impact on phosphate concentrations in watercourses. The residual effects on water quality from potential increased sediment loads within runoff from disturbed ground, soil heaps and excavations and as a result of potential accidental spillage/loss of chemicals and other construction materials

WFD Element and Current Status	Objective	WFD Assessment
		<p>are assessed as having no impact on the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3] and oSWMP [EN010141/DR/7.13], which include on-site pollution prevention best practice methods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are proposed water crossings within this catchment. These water crossings will be designed to maintain the natural channel bed as far as possible by using bottomless culverts, buried culverts or bridge crossings (as set out in the Design Parameters and Principles Statement [EN010141/DR/7.1]), with indicative drawings given in the figures accompanying ES Volume 1 Chapter 2, available in ES Vol 3 Figure 2-2: Indicative Engineering Drawings [EN010141/DR/6.3]. An assessment of each crossing location has been made, and can be found in the Watercourse Crossing Assessment [EN010141/DR/6.2].
Chemical Status <i>Fail</i>	Good by 2063	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reason for the failed chemical status of this water body is concentrations of perfluorooctane sulphonate and polybrominated diphenyl ethers, which either have been addressed and are awaiting recovery or are unknown. The residual effects of potentially reduced water quality are assessed as having no impact on the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3].
Hydrological Regime <i>Supports Good</i>	Supports good by 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed solar panels present in the Duloe Brook catchment would cause a negligible increase in impermeable area. Therefore, the residual effects of changes to runoff and peak flow due to increased impervious surfaces across the catchment is assessed as having no impact of the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oSWMP [EN010141/DR/7.13] and oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3]. Where water crossings are required the natural bed of the channel is to be maintained.
Other	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional classifications are distinguished for this water body.

Table 5: River Kym Impact Assessment.

WFD Element and Current Status	Objective	WFD Assessment
Ecological Status	Moderate by 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reason for the moderate ecological status of the water body is dissolved oxygen, phosphate and macrophytes. The

WFD Element and Current Status	Objective	WFD Assessment
<i>Moderate</i>		<p>reasons given for the high phosphate is poor nutrient management and sewage discharge, with low flows causing the poor dissolved oxygen. In replacing agricultural ground with solar panels (which will not require fertilising of the ground), there may be some beneficial impact on phosphate concentrations in watercourses. The residual effects on water quality from potential increased sediment loads within runoff from disturbed ground, soil heaps and excavations and as a result of potential accidental spillage/loss of chemicals and other construction materials are assessed as having no adverse impact on the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3] and oSWMP [EN010141/DR/7.13], which include on-site pollution prevention best practice methods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are proposed water crossings within this catchment. These water crossings will be designed to maintain the natural channel bed as far as possible by using bottomless culverts, buried culverts or bridge crossings (as set out in the Design Parameters and Principles Statement [EN010141/DR/7.1]), with indicative drawings given in the figures accompanying ES Volume 1 Chapter 2, available in ES Vol 3 Figure 2-2: Indicative Engineering Drawings [EN010141/DR/6.3]. An assessment of each crossing location has been made and can be found in the Watercourse Crossing Assessment [EN010141/DR/6.2].
Chemical Status <i>Fail</i>	Good by 2063	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reason for the failed chemical status of this water body is cited to be polybrominated diphenyl ethers, which has been addressed and is awaiting recovery. The residual effects of potentially reduced water quality are assessed as having no impact on the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3].
Hydrological Regime <i>Supports Good</i>	Supports good by 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed solar panels present in the catchment would cause a negligible increase in impermeable area. The proposed infrastructure will be managed by the oSWMP [EN010141/DR/7.13]. The residual effects of changes to runoff and peak flow due to increased impervious surfaces across the catchment is assessed as having no impact of the water body's current WFD status or its status objective due to the mitigation measures included within the oSWMP [EN010141/DR/7.13] and oCEMP [EN010141/DR/7.3]. Where water crossings are required the natural bed of the channel is to be maintained.
Other	N/A	No additional classifications are distinguished for this water body.

3.1.4 Table 6 contains a summary of the surface water body WFD assessment.

Table 6: Summary of Surface Water Body WFD Assessment

Water Body ID	Does the Development Comply with WFD Objectives?	Justification and Mitigation
GB105033042960 Pertenhall Brook	Yes	The Scheme is not expected to adversely impact upon the Chemical or Ecological Status of this WFD water body and may provide benefit to phosphate levels, due to a cessation of existing agricultural practices (in particular fertilisation). Therefore, no deterioration of the water body is expected and the development will not be detrimental to the water body maintaining its moderate status.
GB105033043220 Colmworth Brook	Yes	The Scheme is not expected to impact upon the Chemical or Ecological Status of this WFD water body. Therefore, no deterioration of the water body is expected and the development will not be detrimental to the water body in obtaining its good status by 2027.
GB105033043260 Duloe Brook	Yes	The Scheme is not expected to adversely impact upon the Chemical or Ecological Status of this WFD water body and may provide benefit to phosphate levels, due to a cessation of existing agricultural practices (in particular fertilisation). Therefore, no deterioration of the water body is expected and the development will not be detrimental to the water body in obtaining its good status by 2027.
GB105033043270 River Kym	Yes	The Scheme is not expected to adversely impact upon the Chemical or Ecological Status of this WFD water body and may in fact provide benefit to phosphate levels, due to a cessation of existing agricultural practices (in particular fertilisation). Therefore, no deterioration of the water body is expected and the development will not be detrimental to the water body maintaining its moderate status.

3.2 SSSI Site Objectives

3.2.1 The objectives of the SSSI sites within the catchments are outlined in Section 2.4. The assessment of the WFD surface water bodies draining the Site concluded that the Site will not have a negative impact upon the ecological, chemical or hydrological status of the water bodies, meaning that any potential knock-on impacts to the SSSIs will be negligible.

4.0 CONCLUSION








- 4.1.1 The WFD assessment has concluded that the Scheme will not be detrimental to the objectives of the WFD water bodies. The assessment of the WFD surface water bodies draining the Site concluded that the proposed development will not have a negative impact upon the ecological, chemical or hydrological status of the water bodies. Where there is large scale conversion of agricultural land to solar panelling, as in the Pertenhall Brook, River Kym and Duloe Brook catchments; there may be some beneficial impact on concentrations of nutrients in watercourses such as phosphate, affected by existing farming practices.

FIGURES

Project :
East Park Energy




Legend :

-  Site Boundary
-  WFD River Water Bodies Cycle 3
-  New Track Crossings
-  Colmworth Brook
-  Duloe Brook
-  Kym
-  Pertenhall Brook

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown
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Scale : 0 1,000 2,000 m



Title :
WFD Cycle 3 Water Body Catchments

Drawing :
WHS1967-T01-0001

Rev :
2

