Springwell Solar Farm

Planning Statement Appendix 3 – Policy Compliance Tables

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

Planning Act 2008

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

EN010149/APP/7.2.4
October 2025 Springwell Energyfarm Ltd

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5.2 Air Quality and Emissions *Applicant Assessment*	5.2.8 Where the project is likely to have adverse effects on air quality the applicant should undertake an assessment of the impacts of the proposed project as part of the ES.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] assesses the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on local air quality. The assessment provides an overview of the existing baseline conditions for the study area, followed by an assessment of likely significant effects arising from the construction, operation (including maintenance), and decommissioning stages of the Proposed Development on air quality.
	5.2.9 The ES should describe: • existing air quality concentrations and the relative change in air quality from existing levels; • any significant air quality effects, mitigation action taken and any residual effects, distinguishing between the project stages and taking account of any significant emissions from any road traffic generated by the project; • the predicted absolute emissions, concentration change and absolute concentrations as a result of the proposed project, after mitigation methods have been applied; and • any potential eutrophication impacts.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] includes a desk-based review to determine the air quality baseline within the study area. The baseline data sources are sufficient to provide an assessment of potential air quality impacts arising from the Proposed Development and have been agreed upon with North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council during technical consultation. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] provides an assessment of the air quality impacts and potential for likely significant effects due to the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning stages of the Proposed Development, including those associated with road traffic exhaust emissions. The Applicant has committed to the following embedded mitigation measures, which are secured within the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] for this topic: • Built development will be offset at least 20m from Local Wildlife Sites except for highways improvement works; • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 15m from existing woodlands; and

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		• Springwell Substation, BESS, Collector Compounds, Standalone Inverter, Transformer and Switchgear and ITS will be offset at least 250m from residential properties. Based upon the outcomes of the assessment, Section 6.8 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] outlines additional mitigation measures to mitigate the air quality impacts of the Proposed Development. Including additional mitigation measures, no significant residual effects were identified. There will be no potential eutrophication impacts. Mitigation measures to be documented within and secured by the **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], the **Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033], the **Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] and the **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028].
	5.2.10 In addition, applicants should consider the Environment Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2022 and associated Defra guidance.	A qualitative assessment of the likely significant effects of construction and decommissioning phase dust and particulate matter at sensitive receptors have been undertaken following. The Environment Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2023 and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance. Three separate potential dust impacts have been considered in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1**] [APP-046]: • Annoyance due to dust soiling; • The risk of health effects due to an increase in exposure to PM_{10}; and • Harm to ecological receptors. The effect of construction dust and particulate matter from the Proposed Development on human receptors and designated sites is considered not significant with the implementation of site-specific mitigation measures, which are secured by the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**,** the **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] and the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028].

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	5.2.11 Defra publishes future national projections of air quality based on estimates of future levels of emissions, traffic, and vehicle fleet. Projections are updated as the evidence base changes and the applicant should ensure these are current at the point of an application. The applicant's assessment should be consistent with this but may include more detailed modelling and evaluation to demonstrate local and national impacts. If an applicant believes they have robust additional supporting evidence, to the extent they could affect the conclusions of the assessment, they should include this in their representations to the Examining Authority along with the source.	In 2023, the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) outlined updates to the $PM_{2.5}$ Air Quality Objective for future years. These are a long-term target of 10 µg/m^3 by 2040 and an interim target of 12 µg/m^3 by 2028. In 2028, the first anticipated year of operation, Defra predicted background concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ were between 7.9 – 8.2 µg/m^3 across the order limits, which is comfortably below the 12 µg/m^3 interim target. No future projections have been made by Defra past 2030, so it is not possible to consider concentrations up to 2040, when the long-term target of 10 µg/m^3 should be achieved. However, there are not expected to be significant sources of $PM_{2.5}$ when the solar farm is operational. At the time of writing there had been no further updates to relevant Air Quality Objectives for other pollutants considered in the Air Quality ES Chapter.
	5.2.12 Where a proposed development is likely to lead to a breach of any relevant statutory air quality limits, objectives or targets, or affect the ability of a non-compliant area to achieve compliance within the timescales set out in the most recent relevant air quality plan/strategy at the time of the decision, the applicant should work with the relevant authorities to secure appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that those statutory limits, objectives or targets are not breached.	The Proposed Development would not lead to a breach of any relevant statutory air quality thresholds or affect the ability of a non-compliant area to achieve compliance.
	5.2.13 The Secretary of State should consider whether mitigation measures are needed both for operational and construction emissions over and above any which may form part of the project application. A construction management plan may help codify mitigation at this stage. In doing so the Secretary of State should have regard to the Air Quality Strategy in England, or the Clean Air Plan	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] conducts a qualitative assessment of the likely significant effects of construction and decommissioning phase dust and particulate matter at sensitive receptors have been undertaken following the Defra Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance and $PM_{2.5}$ Target Guidance. The assessment concludes that there are no anticipated significant residual effects on air quality as a result of the Proposed Development.

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	for Wales in Wales, or any successors to these and should consider relevant advice within Local Air Quality Management guidance and PM2.5 targets guidance	Mitigation measures following IAQM guidance are presented in the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], the **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] and the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028].
	5.2.14 The mitigations identified in Section 5.14 on traffic and transport impacts will help mitigate the effects of air emissions from transport.	When the Proposed Development is operational, activities will be limited to maintenance and the associated transport to the infrastructure elements of the Proposed Development. As planned maintenance will be minimal and would comprise limited planned site visits, the effects associated with operational road traffic exhaust emissions are considered to be not significant in terms of the EIA Regulations. Any effects on air quality from traffic during the construction and decommissioning of the Proposed Development will be temporary (i.e. during the construction/decommissioning period only) and can be suitably controlled by the employment of mitigation measures. Documented within the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028]**,** which has been prepared and is submitted in support of the DCO Application. No specific operational phase mitigation measures are required for road traffic exhaust emissions during operation (including maintenance). Nevertheless, best practice mitigation measures can be considered to further reduce any residual effects on air quality. An **oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033], has been prepared and is submitted in support of the DCO Application.
Secretary of State decision making	5.2.15 Many activities involving air emissions are subject to pollution control. The considerations set out in Section 4.12 on the interface between planning and pollution control therefore apply. The Secretary of State must also consider duties under other legislation including duties under the Environment Act 2021 in relation to environmental targets and have regard to policies set out in the	Air quality impacts on human receptors during the construction phase have been assessed in full and are detailed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046]. This assesses potential significant effects from the Proposed Development during the construction phase on human receptors. The assessment has identified that the Proposed Development could have the potential to affect human receptors during the construction phase. Therefore, site-specific mitigation measures have been proposed to minimise the impacts of construction dust and exhaust emissions.

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	Government's Environmental Improvement Plan 2023.	Any effects on air quality and human receptors during the construction of the Proposed Development can be suitably controlled by the mitigation measures listed within the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028]. Therefore, the residual effects of the Proposed Development on air quality and human receptors during the construction phase following the implementation of additional mitigation measures are considered to be not significant. Embedded mitigation measures for air quality have been detailed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046]. This includes the function for each embedded mitigation measure together with the securing mechanism. Relevant embedded mitigation measures include: - Built development will be offset at least 20m from Local Wildlife Sites except for highways improvement works - Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 15m from existing woodlands. - Springwell substation, BESS, Collector Compounds, Standalone Inverter, Transformer and Switchgear and ITS will be offset at least 250m from residential properties. These embedded mitigation measures have been established based on the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) Guidance on the Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction v2.2 (2024) to minimise the dust and exhaust emission impacts from the Proposed Development. Mitigation measures following IAQM guidance are presented in the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], the **oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033], the **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] and the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028].
	5.2.16 The Secretary of State should give air quality considerations substantial weight where a project would lead to a deterioration in air quality. This could for example include where an area	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] concludes that there are no anticipated significant residual effects on air quality as a result of the Proposed Development.

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	breaches any national air quality limits or statutory air quality objectives. However, air quality considerations will also be important where substantial changes in air quality levels are expected, even if this does not lead to any breaches of statutory limits, objectives or targets.	Mitigation measures following IAQM guidance are presented in the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], the **oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033], the **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] and the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028].
	5.2.17 The Secretary of State should give air quality considerations substantial weight where a project is proposed near a sensitive receptor site, such as an education or healthcare facility, residential use or a sensitive or protected habitat.	As demonstrated through **ES Volume 2, Figure 6.4: Location of Sensitive Air Quality Receptors [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-063]**,** the Site is located in a rural area but close to a number of settlements, and as a consequence, there are a large number of high sensitivity receptors in proximity to the Site, such as residential properties, that may be impacted by works associated with the Proposed Development. Seven designated sites, being Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs), have been identified within or adjacent to the Order Limits, comprising: • Blankney Brick Pit 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; • Gorse Hill Lane LWS; and • Navenby Heath Road Verges LWS. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] concludes that the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development will not have a significant effect on air quality. The residual effects of dust and particulate matter emissions during construction and decommissioning and the road traffic exhaust emissions during construction, operation and decommissioning on human receptors and LWSs following the implementation of additional mitigation measures are considered to be not significant.

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	5.2.18 Where a project is proposed near to a sensitive receptor site for air quality, if the applicant cannot provide justification for this location, and a suitable mitigation plan, the Secretary of State should refuse consent.	As demonstrated through **ES Volume 2, Figure 6.4: Location of Sensitive Air Quality Receptors [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-063]**,** the Site is located in a rural area but close to a number of settlements, and as a consequence, there are a large number of high sensitivity receptors in proximity to the Site, such as residential properties, that may be impacted by works associated with the Proposed Development. However, the implementation of mitigation measures identified within the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], the **oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033], the **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] and the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] is expected to prevent any significant impacts on human health from occurring. Residual effects are therefore assessed as being not significant.
	5.2.19 In all cases, the Secretary of State must take account of any relevant statutory air quality limits, objectives and targets. If a project will lead to non-compliance with a statutory limit, objective or target the Secretary of State should refuse consent.	The Proposed Development would not lead to non-compliance with any statutory air quality limit, objective or target.

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5.3 Greenhouse Gas Emission *Applicant Assessment*	5.3.4 All proposals for energy infrastructure projects should include a GHG assessment as part of their ES (See Section 4.3). This should include: • A whole life GHG assessment showing construction, operational and decommissioning GHG impacts, including impacts from change of land use. • An explanation of the steps that have been taken to drive down the climate change impacts at each of those stages. • Measurement of embodied GHG impact from the construction stage. • How reduction in energy demand and consumption during operation has been prioritised in comparison with other measures. • How operational emissions have been reduced as much as possible through the application of best available techniques for that type of technology. • Calculation of operational energy consumption and associated carbon emissions. • Whether and how any residual GHG emissions will be (voluntarily) offset or removed using a recognised framework. • Where there are residual emissions, the level of emissions and the impact of those on national and international efforts to limit climate change, both alone and where relevant in combination with other developments at a regional or national	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008] presents a greenhouse gas (GHG) assessment over the lifetime of the Proposed Development. It concludes that renewable energy generation from the Proposed Development during the first year of operation is estimated to be between 840,000 – 1,090,000 MWh, and the total energy generation from the proposed 40-year operational life is approximately 35,736,262 MWh. Total operational emissions over the design life of the Proposed Development are estimated at 3,004,796 tCO2e, which gives a total lifecycle carbon intensity value of 84.1 gCO2e/kWh. The GHG impact during construction, operation and decommissioning is assessed as having a significant beneficial effect as it will contribute to achieving the rate of transition required by nationally set policy commitments and supporting the trajectory towards net zero. GHG savings as part of the operation of the Proposed Development and the displacement of fossil-fuel-derived electricity within the national electricity network are expected to be considerable. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008] conducted the GHG assessment of construction emissions by calculating the life cycle emissions for the building materials and systems, accounting for their embodied emissions, construction, maintenance, repair and replacement emissions. Measures have been taken to drive down the climate change at the construction, operation and decommissioning. Operational emissions have been reduced as much as possible through embedded mitigation measures. GHG mitigation measures are outlined in section 8.6 Embedded Mitigation of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008] which are secured within the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] and the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]. Embedded Mitigations include:

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	level, or sector level, if sectoral targets are developed.	• Any vegetation cleared for the Proposed Development will be compensated by a planting scheme that equals or exceeds the current levels of vegetation; and • Lean design to minimise use of concrete, steel, aggregates, etc. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008] sets out that the expected emissions of the change in land use from grassland to agriculture following decommissioning are expected to be less than 1% of total emissions and, therefore, are not considered further. Emissions from the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of the Proposed Development total 3,004,796tCO2e, and the operation of the Proposed Development displaces 12.7 million tCO2e that may have otherwise been emitted from gas-generated electricity. The net GHG savings, compared against equivalent gas-fired electricity generation, are therefore over 9.6 million tonnes of CO2e. There is an anticipated significant beneficial effect. An **oCEMP** [**EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] have been prepared to accompany the DCO application. These identify a range of mitigation measures that have been embedded into the Proposed Development to limit the GHG impact. Steps taken to minimise and offset emissions are demonstrated within the **Green Infrastructure Parameters** and **Vegetation Removal Parameters** appended to the **oLEMP [EN10149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**.**
Migration	5.3.5 A GHG assessment should be used to drive down GHG emissions at every stage of the proposed development and ensure that emissions are minimised as far as possible for the type of technology, taking into account the overall	

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	objectives of ensuring our supply of energy always remains secure, reliable and affordable, as we transition to net zero.	
	5.3.6 Applicants should look for opportunities within the proposed development to embed nature-based or technological solutions to mitigate or offset the emissions of construction and decommissioning	
	5.3.7 Steps taken to minimise and offset emissions should be set out in a GHG Reduction Strategy, secured under the Development Consent Order. The GHG Reduction Strategy should consider the creation and preservation of carbon stores and sinks including through woodland creation, hedgerow creation and restoration, peatland restoration and through other natural habitats.	
Secretary of State decision making	5.3.8 The Secretary of State must be satisfied that the applicant has as far as possible assessed the GHG emissions of all stages of the development.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008] presents a greenhouse gas (GHG) assessment over the lifetime of the Proposed Development. The GHG assessment of construction emissions has calculated the life cycle emissions for the building materials and systems, accounting for their embodied emissions, construction, maintenance, repair and replacement emissions. The total construction GHG emissions are 1,865,557 tCO2e, with 93% comprising those from the product stages and 7% from construction processes. GHG emissions from the decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development are estimated to total 184,765 tCO2e. This phase includes emissions from decommissioning fuel use, transport of materials to disposal sites and emissions associated with recycling and landfill. These emissions are subject to a high level of uncertainty, as the decommissioning conditions cannot be predicted with any confidence 40 years into the future.
	5.3.9 The Secretary of State should be content that the applicant has taken all reasonable steps to reduce the GHG emissions of the construction and decommissioning stage of the development.	
	5.3.10 The Secretary of State should give appropriate weight to projects that embed nature-based or technological processes to mitigate or offset the emissions of construction and decommissioning within the proposed development. However, in light of the vital role energy infrastructure plays in the process of economy wide decarbonisation, the Secretary of	

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	State must accept that there are likely to be some residual emissions from construction and decommissioning of energy infrastructure.	Renewable energy generation from the Proposed Development during the first year of operation is estimated to be between 840,000 – 1,090,000MWh, and the total energy generation from the proposed 40-year operational life is approximately 35,736,262MWh. Total operational emissions over the design life of the Proposed Development are estimated at 3,004,263tCO2e, which gives a total lifecycle carbon intensity value of 84.1gCO2e/kWh. A reasonable, worst-case scenario has been adopted throughout this assessment, including assumptions concerning source countries of components, method of component manufacture, and associated transportation. When assessed against operational emissions, the Proposed Development has an emissions payback period of three years. When assessed against whole lifecycle emissions, the Proposed Development has an emissions payback period of ten years. The payback period of the Proposed Development is included in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008]. The GHG impact during construction, operation and decommissioning is assessed as having a significant beneficial effect as it will play a part in achieving the rate of transition required by nationally set policy commitments and supporting the trajectory towards net zero.
	5.3.11 Operational GHG emissions are a significant adverse impact from some types of energy infrastructure which cannot be totally avoided (even with full deployment of CCS technology). Given the characteristics of these and other technologies, as noted in Part 3 of this NPS, and the range of non-planning policies that can be used to decarbonise electricity generation, such as the UK ETS (see Section 2.4), government has determined that operational GHG emissions are not reasons to prohibit the consenting of energy projects or to impose more restrictions on them in the planning policy framework than are set out in the energy	To assess the GHG savings of the Proposed Development, operational emissions from a Combined Cycle Gas Turbine have been used as a comparison, as it is currently the most carbon-efficient fossil-fueled technology available. The carbon intensity of a Combined Cycle Gas Turbine is 354 gCO2e/kWh. So the Proposed Development would emit 270 g fewer CO2e per kWh than if the same electricity were generated by a gas fired Combined Cycle Gas Turbine, representing savings of 76%. This is not a direct comparison, as the 84.1 gCO2e/kWh calculated here is a lifecycle carbon intensity value and the carbon intensity of the Combined Cycle Gas Turbine is assumed to represent operational emissions (not including maintenance, replacement and repair of components). As set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008] in the absence of any more appropriate identified methodology, this assessment considers that this approach, i.e. a comparison to Combined Cycle Gas Turbine emissions, is a robust and

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	NPSs (e.g. the CCR requirements). Any carbon assessment will include an assessment of operational GHG emissions, but the policies set out in Part 2, including the UK ETS, can be applied to these emissions.	appropriate method to understand the level of GHG savings from the Proposed Development.
	5.3.12 Operational emissions will be addressed in a managed, economy-wide manner, to ensure consistency with carbon budgets, net zero and our international climate commitments. The Secretary of State does not, therefore need to assess individual applications for planning consent against operational carbon emissions and their contribution to carbon budgets, net zero and our international climate commitments.	The Proposed Development will provide electricity to the national grid that may otherwise be generated by processes with higher carbon intensities, and the benefit of the Proposed Development, with regards to climate, is to replace the electricity generation from fossil fuels. Therefore, to assess the GHG savings of the Proposed Development, operational emissions from a Combined Cycle Gas Turbine have been used as a comparison, as it is currently the most carbon-efficient fossil-fuelled technology available. In the July 2024 Decision Letter for Gate Burton Energy Park the Secretary of State commented that it considered a Combined Cycle Gas Turbine an inappropriate baseline for these comparisons as "*2011 NPS EN-1 requires all combustion power stations with a capacity over 300MW to be constructed Carbon Capture Ready*". The future energy baseline is uncertain, and whilst there are requirements for all combustion power stations with a capacity over 300 MW to be constructed to be 'Carbon Capture Ready', this does not guarantee the application of carbon capture technology, nor the timeframes to which it may be applied. The need for carbon abatement is immediate and technologies that can do so in the short-term, such as the Proposed Development, play a vital role in the pathway to Net Zero. As such, and in the absence of any more appropriate identified methodology, this assessment maintains that a comparison to Combined Cycle Gas Turbine emissions is a robust and appropriate method to understand the level of GHG savings from the Proposed Development. The carbon intensity of a Combined Cycle Gas Turbine is 354 gCO2e/kWh, and so the Proposed Development would emit 270 g fewer CO2e per kWh than if the same electricity were generated by a gas fired Combined Cycle Gas Turbine, representing savings of 76%. This is not a direct comparison, as the 84.1 gCO2e/kWh calculated

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		here is a lifecycle carbon intensity value and the carbon intensity of the Combined Cycle Gas Turbine is assumed to represent operational emissions (not including maintenance, replacement and repair of components). This results in a conservative assessment of emissions savings for the Proposed Development
5.4 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation *Applicant Assessment*	5.4.17 Where the development is subject to EIA, the applicant should ensure that the ES clearly sets out any effects on internationally, nationally, and locally designated sites of ecological or geological conservation importance (including those outside England), on protected species and on habitats and other species identified as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity, including irreplaceable habitats.	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.1: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-019] sets out all the designated sites of ecological conservation importance; ancient woodland; habitats; protected and notable species; and important ecological features, within the relevant ecological Zone of Influence of the Proposed Development. Section 7.4 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] sets out the identified receptors, including Local Wildlife Sites, which could potentially be affected by the Proposed Development. Section 7.7 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] sets out the potential likely effects on the identified receptors during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. Following the application of mitigation measures set out in Section 7.9 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] no significant adverse effects are effects have been identified during the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Development. A significant beneficial impact has been identified on: • hedgerows and hedgerow trees; • notable arable (non-crop) flora; • county ground-nesting birds: habitat creation and improvement to compensate for habitat loss during construction and additional improvement measures to increase the amount of foraging habitat for birds; • wintering birds: habitat creation and improvement to increase foraging and roosting habitat, as well as provision of a variety of bird nest boxes; and • barn owl.

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		Mitigation measures are secured within the **oCEMP** [**EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030].
	5.4.19 The applicant should show how the project has taken advantage of opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geological conservation interests.	The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] sets out the Design Evolution of the Proposed Development and how the extent of the Order Limits and area proposed for the development has evolved and reduced over time to reduce impacts on biodiversity. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] and **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] explains that the Proposed Development has been designed to avoid all sites statutorily designated for their biodiversity importance and to avoid or minimise impacts on sites that are non-statutorily designated for their biodiversity importance. Measures embedded within the Proposed Development design will ensure that designated sites are not significantly adversely impacted during construction, operation or decommissioning, and are secured within the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030], **oCEMP** [**EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. The minimum offsets from the perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development as set out in Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description and secured within the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]. The offsets will apply to existing features within the Order Limits, with the exception of where access tracks, security fencing and/or cable routes are required to cross an existing feature. Based on best practices, these offsets have been established as a minimum distance. They will be used to deliver additional planting of diverse
	5.4.20 Applicants should consider wider ecosystem services and benefits of natural capital when designing enhancement measures.	
	5.4.21 As set out in Section 4.7, the design process should embed opportunities for nature inclusive design. Energy infrastructure projects have the potential to deliver significant benefits and enhancements beyond Biodiversity Net Gain, which result in wider environmental gains (see Section 4.6 on Environmental and Biodiversity Net Gain). The scope of potential gains will be dependent on the type, scale, and location of each project.	

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		habitats to either increase habitat connectivity and structural diversity through combinations of hedgerow, scrub, grass/wildflower planting. In addition to the above, **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] sets out that the Proposed Development has been designed to avoid key nature conservation and ecological features present within or adjacent to the Order limits. Accordingly, minimum buffers have been applied where practicable, which are secured through the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]. As set out in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**,** the Proposed Development would provide extensive new tree and hedgerow planting and improvement of existing hedgerows by bolstering with a diversity of appropriate native species and 'gapping-up' where required. These will provide a valuable habitat, forming important wildlife corridors and re-enforcing existing ones. The **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.3.4]** [REP4-030] ensures the provision of barn owl nest boxes and a variety of other bird boxes and bat boxes to be installed on trees in key locations to improve nesting and roosting opportunities. The **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] contains details of all ecological mitigation and enhancements. The Proposed Development will meet a minimum 10% BNG, consistent with the terms of **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] and aligned with the proposals in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] demonstrates that the Proposed Development is committed to achieving significant biodiversity net gain on-site. The Proposed Development has, therefore, taken advantage of opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity and accords with this policy.

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	5.4.22 The design of energy NSIP proposals will need to consider the movement of mobile/migratory species such as birds, fish and marine and terrestrial mammals and their potential to interact with infrastructure. As energy infrastructure could occur anywhere within England and Wales, both inland and onshore and offshore, the potential to affect mobile and migratory species across the UK and more widely across Europe (transboundary effects) requires consideration, depending on the location of development.	As set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012]**,** the Proposed Development has considered the impact on the movement of mobile species, such as birds and badgers. Breeding bird survey data, detailed in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.2: Breeding Bird Survey [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-083]**,** was used to estimate the number of skylark territories that would require compensation due to the placement of Solar PV modules. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] acknowledges that construction and operation of the Proposed Development will result in the loss of arable farmland used by breeding skylarks and other ground-nesting birds. The proposed mitigation and enhancement measures set out in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] include primary mitigation to compensate for habitat loss which would be the creation of c. 100 ha of calcareous or neutral grassland managed for the benefit of ground nesting birds, in key, open and connected areas. The area of land retained is smaller than the area which would be developed, however habitat creation and enhancement measures would enhance the quality of nesting and foraging habitat considered sufficient to support the existing number of skylark territories and the existing farmland bird assemblage. As well as primary mitigation to compensate for habitat loss, there will also be improvement measures to increase both invertebrate and seed biomass for foraging ground and other nesting bird species. As such, although there would be an adverse effect on birds from habitat loss and disturbance during construction this is anticipated to be relatively short-term and is not considered likely to be significant. Once created and enhanced habitats have established there is anticipated to be a significant beneficial effect on ground nesting and wintering birds at the local level. Overall, the assessment concludes that, due to the embedded design and mitigation measures, no significant adverse effects are anticipated to arise on any protected

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		species and habitats as a result of the construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Development.
Habitats Regulations	5.4.25 The applicant should seek the advice of the appropriate SNCB and provide the Secretary of State with such information as the Secretary of State may reasonably require, to determine whether an HRA Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required. Applicants can request and agree 'Evidence Plans' with SNCBs, which is a way to record upfront the information the applicant needs to supply with its application, so that the HRA can be efficiently carried out. If an AA is required, the applicant must provide the Secretary of State with such information as may reasonably be required to enable the Secretary of State to conduct the AA. This should include information on any mitigation measures that are proposed to minimise or avoid likely significant effects.	A **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) No Significant Effects Screening Report (NSER) [EN010149/APP/7.17]** [APP-0150] has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitats Regulations) to set out whether the Proposed Development is likely to have any significant effect on European designated sites. This report is submitted in support of the Development Consent Order (DCO) Application for the Proposed Development. The **HRA NSER [EN010149/APP/7.17]** [APP-0150] concludes there will be no significant effects to European Sites either from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development or in combination with other plans and projects, such that an appropriate assessment is not required.
	5.4.26 If, during the pre-application stage, the SNCB indicate that the proposed development is likely to adversely impact the integrity of habitat sites, the applicant must include with their application such information as may reasonably be required to assess a potential derogation under the Habitats Regulations	
	5.4.27 If the SNCB gives such an indication at a later stage in the development consent process, the applicant must provide this information as soon as is reasonably possible and before the close of the examination. This information must include assessment of alternative solutions, a case for	Should the SNCB later conclude that adverse effects on the integrity of European Site(s) cannot be avoided or mitigated, appropriate information will be provided to confirm that the Proposed Development meets the three derogation tests (No Reasonable Alternatives, Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest and adequate compensation).

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	Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) and appropriate environmental compensation.	
	5.4.28 Provision of such information will not be taken as an acceptance of adverse impacts and if an applicant disputes the likelihood of adverse impacts, it can provide this information as part of its application 'without prejudice' to the Secretary of State's final decision on the impacts of the potential development. If, in these circumstances, an applicant does not supply information required for the assessment of a potential derogation, there will be no expectation that the Secretary of State will allow the applicant the opportunity to provide such information following the examination.	
	5.4.29 It is vital that applicants consider the need for compensation as early as possible in the design process as 'retrofitting' compensatory measures will introduce delays and uncertainty to the consenting process.	The **HRA NSER [EN010149/APP/7.17]** [APP-0150] concluded that there will be no significant effects to European sites either from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development or in combination with other plans and projects. Therefore, there are no environmental compensation requirements to be considered.
	5.4.30 Applicants should work closely at an early stage in the pre-application process with SNCB and Defra/Welsh Government to develop a compensation plan for all protected sites adversely affected by the development. Applicants should engage with the relevant Local Planning Authority at an early stage regarding the proposed location of compensatory measures. Applicants should also take account of any strategic plan level compensation plans in developing project level compensation plans.	Natural England has been consulted during the pre-application process and does not consider that any internationally designated sites would be affected by the Proposed Development. Details of engagement with Natural England are presented in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012]. The Wash Special Area of Conservation (SAC)/Special Protection Area (SPA)/Ramsar is approximately 35km east of the Site. The Wash is a considerable distance from the Site but was considered due to the mobility of bird species for which the SPA/Ramsar is designated for. However no qualifying species of the Wash SPA/Ramsar were recorded using the Site during the bird surveys, with a

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	5.4.31 Before submitting an application, applicants should seek the views of the SNCB and Defra/Welsh Government as to the suitability, securability and effectiveness of the compensation plan to ensure the development will not hinder the achievement of the conservation objectives for the protected site. In cases where such views are provided, the applicant should include a copy of this information with the compensation plan in their application for further consideration by the Examining Authority.	single flyover Pink-footed goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*) flock being the only qualifying species observed. Natural England considered it 'highly unlikely that the Site is functionally linked to the Wash SPA/Ramsar' and agreed that the surveys carried out in November, December 2023 and January 2024 were sufficient and did not consider that an additional wintering bird survey in February 2024 would be necessary to inform the assessment of impacts of the Proposed Development on wintering birds. As a result, in conjunction with the large distance between the site and the SPA (c. 35km), it was not considered likely that the area within the Order Limits and surrounding area is functionally linked to the Wash SPA. Details are provided in the **HRA NSER [EN010149/APP/7.17]** [APP-0150] which supports the DCO Application.
Ancient woodland, ancient trees, veteran trees and other irreplaceable habitats	5.4.32 Applicants should include measures to mitigate fully the direct and indirect effects of development on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees or other irreplaceable habitats during both construction and operational phases.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] concludes there would be no loss of woodland or veteran trees as a result of the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.12: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-093] explains that the individual trees recorded many had habitat features that are valuable wildlife resources. Five had sufficient qualities and features to be considered veteran trees: T118, T119, T175, T180 (now outside the Order Limits) and T124 (a hedgerow tree within the revised Order Limits). Embedded design measures to be secured in the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] are proposed to ensure that hedgerows/hedgerow trees and woodlands will be protected through buffering and a minimum 10m and 15m offset, respectively. Although the design has sought to avoid impact to hedgerows, several sections of hedgerow would need to be removed to facilitate cable installation and access. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] considers that this hedgerow loss would be a temporary adverse effect that is not significant.

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		New hedgerow and tree planting proposals are considered likely to have a significant beneficial effect at the local level once established. Measures to protect retained trees and hedgerows will be put in place and secured through a detailed CEMP, DEMP and LEMP as Requirements of the DCO. These measures will need to be substantially in accordance with the measures set out in the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**, oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] and **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] to ensure that impacts are minimised and that the Proposed Development is implemented in accordance with the detailed management plans.
Protection and enhancement of habitats and species	5.4.33 Applicants should consider any reasonable opportunities to maximise the restoration, creation, and enhancement of wider biodiversity, and the protection and restoration of the ability of habitats to store or sequester carbon as set out under Section 4.6. 5.4.34 Consideration should be given to improvements to, and impacts on, habitats and species in, around and beyond developments, for wider ecosystem services and natural capital benefits, beyond those under protection and identified as being of principal importance. This may include considerations and opportunities identified through Local Nature Recovery Strategies, and national goals and targets set through the Environment Act 2021 and the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023.	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] will be informed by the detailed design of the Proposed Development, including landscape proposals, construction methods and the Proposed Development timescale. Based upon these parameters, the **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] will: • Result in an increase of 934.32 habitat units, which equates to a 30.6% biodiversity net gain; • Result in an increase of 108.04 hedgerow units, which equates to a 19.67% biodiversity net gain; and • Result in no change in watercourse units, which is equated to no net loss.
Mitigation	5.4.35 Applicants should include appropriate avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures as an integral part of the	Embedded design and mitigation measures are outlined in Section 7.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] and are set out within the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**, oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-

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	proposed development. In particular, the applicant should demonstrate that: • during construction, they will seek to ensure that activities will be confined to the minimum areas required for the works; • the timing of construction has been planned to avoid or limit disturbance; • during construction and operation best practice will be followed to ensure that risk of disturbance or damage to species or habitats is minimised, including as a consequence of transport access arrangements; • habitats will, where practicable, be restored after construction works have finished; • opportunities will be taken to enhance existing habitats rather than replace them, and where practicable, create new habitats of value within the site landscaping proposals. Where habitat creation is required as mitigation, compensation, or enhancement, the location and quality will be of key importance. In this regard habitat creation should be focused on areas where the most ecological and ecosystems benefits can be realized; and • mitigations required as a result of legal protection of habitats or species will be complied with.	030]**.** These include habitat avoidance, mitigation, creation and replacement measures; mitigation relating to protected and notable species; and standard mitigation measures that comply with industry good practice and environmental legislation. The design has been led by the mitigation hierarchy to avoid impact or at least mitigate where possible. Production of a final CEMP, OEMP and DEMP will be secured via a requirement within the DCO. Best practice monitoring requirements to avoid harm to for habitats and species, such as nesting bird checks, badger checks and pollution prevention control measures, are also documented and secured within the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**, oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]**.** Section 7.10 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] outlines mitigation measures pertaining to habitat avoidance, creation and replacement measures that comply with this part of the policy.

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	5.4.36 Applicants should produce and implement a Biodiversity Management Strategy as part of their development proposals. This could include provision for biodiversity awareness training to employees and contractors so as to avoid unnecessary adverse impacts on biodiversity during the construction and operation stages.	The **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] sets out a framework for the Applicant's approach to ensuring the successful establishment of landscape and ecological measures, both in the short term and during the operation of the Proposed Development. In addition, the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] includes the requirement for contractors to provide training on relevant matters which could include, for example, biodiversity awareness.
Secretary of State decision making	5.4.39 The government's 25 Year Environment Plan and the Environment Act 2021 mark a step change in ambition for wildlife and the natural environment. The Secretary of State should have regard to the aims and goals of the government's Environmental Improvement Plan 2023, and in Wales the objectives of the Nature Recovery Plan, and any relevant measures and targets, including statutory targets set under the Environment Act or elsewhere.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] has been produced with regard to the aims of the 25-Year Environment Plan, as evidenced by the extensive habitat to be provided pursuant to the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**.** The Applicant has also considered the Environment Act 2021, as evidenced by **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] and the Applicant's commitment to achieving BNG through the Proposed Development. It is therefore considered the Proposed Development is compliant with this aspect of the policy. The Proposed Development has the potential to deliver significant amounts of low-carbon electricity and make a material contribution to help meet the UK's commitments to decrease carbon emissions and reach net zero by 2050, which in turn is beneficial for biodiversity and geological conservation interests.
	5.4.41 The benefits of nationally significant low carbon energy infrastructure development may include benefits for biodiversity and geological conservation interests and these benefits may outweigh harm to these interests. The Secretary of State may take account of any such net benefit in cases where it can be demonstrated.	The Proposed Development has the potential to deliver biodiversity benefits as a result of its embedded mitigation and enhancement measures, as set out in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**, oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.** In addition, with these measures implemented, there are no significant adverse impacts expected on biodiversity features. The Proposed Development will meet a minimum 10% BNG, which is secured via the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021]

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		demonstrates that the Proposed Development has the potential to achieve significant biodiversity net gain on-site. The Proposed Development has, therefore, taken advantage of opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity and accords with this policy.
	5.4.42 As a general principle, and subject to the specific policies below, development should, in line with the mitigation hierarchy, aim to avoid significant harm to biodiversity and geological conservation interests, including through consideration of reasonable alternatives (as set out in Section 4.3 above). Where significant harm cannot be avoided, impacts should be mitigated and as a last resort, appropriate compensation measures should be sought.	As set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] with the application of embedded design and mitigation measures, no significant adverse effects have been identified on designated ecological sites, habitats or protected species during construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Development. Embedded mitigation measures are outlined in Section 7.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] and additional mitigation measures are set out in Section 7.8 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012].
	5.4.43 If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (for example through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then the Secretary of State will give significant weight to any residual harm.	Mitigation measures are also set out in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**, oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.** These include habitat avoidance, mitigation, creation and replacement measures; mitigation relating to protected and notable species; and standard mitigation measures that comply with industry good practice and environmental legislation. Production of a final CEMP, OEMP and DEMP will be secured via requirements within the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004].
	5.4.44 The Secretary of State should consider what appropriate requirements should be attached to any consent and/or in any planning obligations entered into, in order to ensure that any mitigation or biodiversity net gain measures, if offered, are delivered and maintained. Any habitat creation or enhancement delivered including linkages with existing habitats for compensation or biodiversity	The **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**, oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**, ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] and the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] set out measures to mitigate and habitat management for a period of at least 30 years to achieve biodiversity net gain. These will be developed into detailed documents and secured by a requirement in the DCO.

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	net gain should generally be maintained for a minimum period of 30 years, or for the lifetime of the project, if longer.	
	5.4.45 The Secretary of State will need to take account of what mitigation measures may have been agreed between the applicant and the SNCB and the MMO/NRW (where appropriate). The Secretary of State will also need to consider whether the SNCB or the MMO/NRW has granted or refused, or intends to grant or refuse, any relevant licences, including protected species mitigation licences.	Section 7.3 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] sets out the stakeholder engagement conducted in relation to biodiversity. **Appendix A-4** [APP-020]**, J-1** [APP-028]**, J-2** [APP-028] **and K-3** [APP-029] of the **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.2]** [APP-019], which is submitted in support of the DCO Application, sets out the feedback received during non-statutory, statutory and targeted consultation and how regard has been afforded by the Applicant to each matter raised. Natural England was consulted on mitigation measures on 15 January 2024. The biodiversity mitigation strategy was discussed and Natural England remained positive on the design and mitigation proposals and confirmed that the mitigation measures were appropriate for the Proposed Development. Natural England recommended tree sparrow boxes due to the presence of sparrows identified during the breeding bird surveys as secured in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030].
	5.4.46 Development proposals provide many opportunities for building-in beneficial biodiversity or geological features as part of good design. The Secretary of State should give appropriate weight to environmental and biodiversity enhancements, although any weight given to gains provided to meet a legal requirement (for example under the Environment Act 2021) is likely to be limited.	As detailed in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028], the Proposed Development has undergone an iterative design process which has resulted in the delivery of a functional and efficient design which will deliver a large amount of renewable and low carbon electricity while being sensitive to the local context and surrounding area, avoiding and minimising impacts on the environment as far as practicable.
	5.4.47 When considering proposals, the Secretary of State should maximise such reasonable opportunities in and around developments, using requirements or planning obligations where appropriate. This can help towards delivering	The design process and Project Principles are described in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.** The Proposed Development will meet a minimum 10% BNG, as secured in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**. Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net**

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	biodiversity net gain as part of or in addition to the approach set out at Section 4.6.	**Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3] [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] demonstrates that the Proposed Development is committed to achieving significant biodiversity net gain on-site. The Proposed Development has, therefore, taken advantage of opportunities to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
	5.4.48 In taking decisions, the Secretary of State should ensure that appropriate weight is attached to designated sites of international, national, and local importance; protected species; habitats and other species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity; and to biodiversity and geological interests within the wider environment.	Appropriate weight has been attached designated sites of international, national and local importance; protected species; habitats and other species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity; and to biodiversity and geological interests within the wider environment, with an assessment of the Proposed Development's impact on these set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012]**.**
Secretary of State decision making – Habitats Regulations	5.4.49 The Secretary of State must consider whether the project is likely to have a significant effect on a protected site which is part of the National Site Network (a habitat site), a protected marine site, or on any site to which the same protection is applied as a matter of policy, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.	A **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) No Significant Effects Screening Report (NSER) [EN010149/APP/7.17]** [APP-0150] has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of The Habitats Regulations to set out whether the Proposed Development is likely to have any significant effect on European designated sites. This report is submitted in support of the DCO Application for the Proposed Development. The HRA concludes there will be no significant effects to European Sites either from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development or in combination with other plans and projects, such that an appropriate assessment is not required.
Secretary of State decision making – Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	5.4.50 The Secretary of State should use requirements and/or planning obligations to mitigate the harmful aspects of the development and, where possible, to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the site's biodiversity or geological interest.	There are five statutory designated sites within 10km of the Order Limits boundary, including: Metheringham Heath Quarry SSSI, High Dyke SSSI, Tattershall Old Gravel Pits SSSI, Tattershall Carrs SSSI. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] justifies the decision to scope out the SSSIs as given the distance of the Proposed Development to statutory sites, the nature of the Proposed Development and lack of any direct hydrological connection or other obvious impact pathway, no significant effects are expected to arise from the Proposed Development.

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Secretary of State decision making – Regional and Local Sites	5.4.52 The Secretary of State should give due consideration to regional or local designations. However, given the need for new nationally significant infrastructure, these designations should not be used in themselves to refuse development consent.	**Figure 7.1: Local Wildlife Sites and Areas Proposed for Vegetation Removal** in **ES Volume 2 [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-060] shows the areas where four Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) will potentially be affected by the Proposed Development, which have been surveyed, as detailed in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.9: Local Wildlife Site Verges Survey [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-090]**.** These LWSs are all calcareous grassland road verges. The areas surveyed were up to c. 200 m lengths of these grassland road verges for each LWS, which were: • A15, Green Man Road to Cuckoo Lane LWS; • A15, Slate House Farm to Dunsby Pit Plantation LWS; • Temple Road Verges, Welbourn to Brauncewell; and • Navenby Heath Road Verges LWS. Sections of the four LWSs grassland road verges will need to be removed during the construction phase for highways access, either to create passing bays or to create highways access for internal access roads with visibility splays. There is anticipated to be a temporary, medium-term adverse effect from a small amount of habitat loss during the construction phase until the new calcareous grassland field margins, as compensation, become fully established. This is considered to be an adverse effect at the local level and not significant.
Secretary of State decision making – Ancient woodland, ancient trees, veteran trees and other irreplaceable habitats	5.4.53 The Secretary of State should not grant development consent for any development that would result in the loss or deterioration of any irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland, and ancient and veteran trees unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] concludes there would be no loss of ancient woodland or veteran trees as a result of the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.12: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-093] explains that of the individual trees recorded many had habitat features that are valuable wildlife resources. Five had sufficient qualities and features to be considered veteran trees: T118, T119, T175, T180 (now outside the Order Limits) and T124 (within the revised Order Limits). Mitigation measures to be secured in the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] are proposed to ensure that tree roots will be protected through buffering and a minimum 15m offset. Measures to protect retained trees and hedgerows will be put

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		in place and secured through a detailed CEMP, DEMP and LEMP as requirements of the DCO. These measures will need to be substantially in accordance with the measures set out in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**, oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] to ensure that impacts are minimised and that the Proposed Development is implemented in accordance with the detailed management plans.
Secretary of State decision making – Protection and enhancement of habitats and species	5.4.54 The Secretary of State should ensure that species and habitats identified as being of importance for the conservation of biodiversity are protected from the adverse effects of development by using requirements, planning obligations, or licence conditions where appropriate.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] sets out that there would be no residual significant adverse effects on any species and habitats as a result of the Proposed Development. From the surveys undertaken and avoidance in the design of the Proposed Development, no protected species licenses are anticipated to be required. However, should it be found that any protected species licences are required, i.e. following further update surveys for mobile species such as badgers and bats, then they would be protected by the appropriate methods and timings of works as per license conditions.
	5.4.55 The Secretary of State should refuse consent where harm to a protected species and relevant habitat would result, unless there is an overriding public interest and the other relevant legal tests are met. In this context the Secretary of State should give substantial weight to any such harm to the detriment of biodiversity features of national or regional importance or the climate resilience and the capacity of habitats to store carbon, which they consider may result from a proposed development.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] sets out that there would be no residual significant adverse effects on any species and habitats as a result of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development will meet a minimum 10% BNG, as secured in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**. ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] demonstrates that the Proposed Development is committed to achieving significant biodiversity net gain on site.

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5.5 - Civil and military aviation and defence interests ***Applicant Assessment***	5.5.37 Where the proposed development may affect the performance of civil or military aviation CNS, meteorological radars and/or other defence assets an assessment of potential effects should be set out in the ES (see Section 4.3).	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of the potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, PRoW, bridleways and aviation activity. The Applicant has considered all relevant guidance in relation to glint and glare and further detail on the guidance and methodology used for the assessment is set out below. Guidelines exist in the UK (produced by the Civil Aviation Authority) and in the USA (produced by the Federal Aviation Administration) with respect to solar developments and aviation activity. The UK CAA guidance is relatively high-level and does not prescribe a formal methodology. There is railway guidance with respect to signal sighting; however, no guidance with respect to glint and glare from solar developments upon railway operations and infrastructure has been specifically produced. Pager Power has, however, produced guidance for glint and glare and solar photovoltaic developments which was published in early 2017, with the fourth edition published in 2022. This methodology defines a comprehensive process for determining the impact upon railway infrastructure and operations, and aviation activity and this has been used to inform the glint and glare assessment provided **in ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028]**.** The following guidance is not relevant and has not informed the assessment. The BRE guidelines on daylight and sunlight provides guidance surrounding shadowing effects upon properties, this is not relevant to glint and glare. The CAA guidance documents explain that glare should be a safeguarding consideration for aerodromes and that the responsibility of safeguarding lies with the aerodrome. The glint and glare study has assessed the potential safety impacts upon surrounding aviation activities and operations, and consultation is ongoing with aerodromes where appropriate. The MOD have been consulted through the preparation of the Application. The Applicant received responses from the MOD at both Phase One and Phase Two Consultation and received feedback in relation to RAF Digby.
	5.5.38 The requirement for ATC and non-cooperative surveillance – i.e. radar/tracking technologies – forms part of the environmental baseline for proposed developments.	
	5.5.39 The applicant should consult the MOD, Met Office, Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), NATS and any aerodrome – licensed or otherwise – likely to be affected by the proposed development in preparing an assessment of the proposal on aviation, meteorological or other defence interests.	
	5.5.40 Any assessment of effects on aviation, meteorological or other defence interests should include potential impacts of the project upon the operation of CNS infrastructure, flight patterns (both civil and military), generation of weather warnings and forecasts, other defence assets (including radar) and aerodrome operational procedures. It should also assess the demonstratable cumulative effects201 of the project with other relevant projects in relation to aviation, meteorological and defence.	

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		The Applicant accepts the site partially falls within the MOD technical safeguarding zone. The Applicant is not aware of any adverse effect from the Proposed Development but will continue to work with the MOD in this respect. Further engagement continues in relation to RAF Air Command, for nearby airbase operations, and above ground design of lighting, fencing and CCTV in proximity to the RAF Digby boundary.
	5.5.41 In addition, consideration of developments near aerodromes should take into account the following factors: • Bird Strike Risk – Aircraft are vulnerable to wildlife strike, in particular bird strike. Birds and other wildlife may be attracted to the vicinity of an aerodrome by various types of development, for example, large buildings with perching/roosting opportunities for birds. It is therefore important that infrastructure, buildings and other elements from energy installations, as well as environmental mitigation are designed in such a way so as not to increase the bird strike risk to the airport for developments within 13km (this can vary). • Building Induced Turbulence – If a significant building or structure is proposed close to the airport/runways, there is potential for building induced turbulence/wind shear to be created which has the potential to impact on aircraft on take-off and landing. Studies may be required to identify the extent of any	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] considers the impacts to birds. There is not anticipated to be an increase in risk of bird strike due to the Proposed Development as there are no proposals to create wetland or significant areas of woodland or scrub which would attract significant assemblages of birds. The Proposed Development does not propose significant buildings or structures; therefore, turbulence has not been assessed. Thermal Plume Turbulence is not considered relevant as the Proposed Development does not propose dry cooling systems.

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	turbulence resulting from the energy infrastructure. • Thermal Plume Turbulence – This is caused under certain conditions by the release of hot air from a power plant equipped with a dry cooling system. The plumes generated by these facilities have the potential to create invisible turbulence that can affect the manoeuvrability of aircraft.	
	5.5.42 If any relevant changes are made to proposals during the pre-application and determination period, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the relevant aviation, meteorological and defence consultees are informed as soon as reasonably possible.	The **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.1]** [APP-019] sets out that the MOD have been consulted through the preparation of the DCO application. The MOD were consulted during Phase One Consultation, Phase Two Consultation and Section 42 Consultation. As a part of Section 42 Consultation, the Applicant received feedback from the Ministry of Defence relating to RAF Digby on Wednesday 15 May 2024. The Applicant has ongoing engagement with the MOD following Phase Two Consultation. And following further discussions, additional technical information has been provided to the MOD for further technical assessment by their SMEs. The Applicant has been advised the MOD is the only body able to undertake the relevant technical assessment, to ensure there is no impact to military operations or capability. Engagement with the MOD will continue through examination and post-consent.
Mitigation	5.5.43 The applicant should include appropriate mitigation measures as an integral part of the proposed development.	The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] sets out that Solar PV development was discounted from land to the north of Navenby Lane to respond to consultation feedback (including MOD Defence Infrastructure Organisation), technical requirements of the cable corridor study and to reduce potential impacts on residential properties and BMV agricultural land. This resulted in the removal of additional land from the Order Limits in line with design principle 1.2, providing appropriate offsets to local settlements and dwellings on a case-by-case basis, respecting their individual amenity.

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		The Applicant is not aware of any adverse effect from the Proposed Development but will continue to work with the MOD in this respect. Further engagement continues in relation to RAF Air Command, for nearby airbase operations, and above ground design of lighting, fencing and CCTV in proximity to the RAF Digby boundary.
	5.5.44 litigation for infringement of OLS may include: • agreed changes to operational procedures of the aerodromes in accordance with relevant guidance, provided that safety assurances can be provided by the operator that are acceptable to the CAA where the changes are proposed to a civilian aerodrome. Applicants should engage airport operators at an early stage of the planning process to understand the potential impacts of development on aviation operations and develop mitigations if appropriate; or • installation of obstacle lighting and/or by notification in Aeronautical Information Service publications	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of the potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, PRoW, bridleways and aviation activity. Based on the result of its technical assessment, the Applicant considers that the potential for yellow glare is operationally accommodatable at the identified airfields. Prior to submission of the DCO Application, the Applicant has engaged with the Ministry of Defence and the Civil Aviation Authority on the results of **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028]. This has also involved seeking engagement with three private airfields (of General Aviation use) to understand their operations and discuss the results of the assessment. The Applicant will continue to engage with these airfields following the submission of the Application. The Applicant is in ongoing engagement with the MOD regarding the outcomes noted at RAF Cranwell. While the potential for yellow glare occurs outside of its published hours of flying, the Applicant shared the results of its Glint and Glare Assessment in October 2024 and continues to welcome further engagement to discuss the assessment in more detail.
Secretary of State decision making	5.5.49 The Secretary of State should be satisfied that the effects on meteorological radars, civil and military aerodromes, aviation technical sites and other defence assets or operations have been addressed by the applicant and that any necessary assessment of the proposal on aviation, NSWWS or defence interests has been carried out.	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] assessment of the potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, PRoW, bridleways and aviation activity. As set out in **Appendix J1-J2** of the **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.2]** [APP-028] following consultation and engagement with the MoD, the requested receptors including the 2-mile approach path, ATC Tower and visual circuits have

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		been assessed within **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028]**.** RAF Cranwell: From the geometric assessment, solar reflections are geometrically possible towards the 2-mile approach path for threshold 19 and occur outside a pilot's primary field-of-view, therefore not considered significant. A low impact is predicted. Solar reflections with intensities 'potential for temporary after'-image' are predicted towards sections of the circuit for 01/19. Glare occurs outside the published hours of flying and therefore deemed operationally accommodatable and not significant. A low impact is predicted and mitigation is not required. Solar reflections are not geometrically possible towards the Air Traffic Control (ATC) Tower, or 2-mile approach paths for threshold 01, 08 and 26. No impact is predicted, and mitigation is not required RAF Waddington: Solar reflections towards the approach path for threshold 02 occur outside a pilot's field-of-view therefore not considered significant. A low impact is predicted. Solar reflections with intensities 'low potential for temporary after-image' are predicted towards sections of the circuit for runway 02/20. The glare intensity is considered acceptable and therefore not considered significant. A low impact is predicted. Solar reflections are not geometrically possible towards the ATC Tower and 2-mile approach paths for threshold 20. No impact is predicted.
	5.5.50 In particular, the Secretary of State should be satisfied that the proposal has been designed, where possible, to minimise adverse impacts on the operation and safety of aerodromes and that realistically achievable mitigation is carried out on existing surveillance systems such as radar/tracking technologies. It is incumbent on Operators of aerodromes to regularly review the possibility of agreeing to make reasonable changes to operational procedures.	**Appendix J-1-J2** of the **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.2]** [APP-028] sets out the MOD's comments pertaining to glint and glare. The MOD commented that the Proposed Development has the potential to produce glint and glare effects which could be hazardous to aircraft and air traffic control towers. The MOD requested for a geometric aviation glint and glare assessment to consider any effects upon air traffic control towers, aircraft using operational runways, circuit patterns and any other applicable air traffic procedures at RAF Cranwell and RAF Waddington. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of the potential impacts of glint and

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		glare. Following consultation and engagement with the MoD, the requested receptors including the 2-mile approach path, ATC Tower and visual circuits have been assessed within **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028]**.**
	5.5.51 When assessing the necessity, acceptability, and reasonableness of operational changes to aerodromes, the Secretary of State should be satisfied that they have the necessary information regarding the operational procedures along with any demonstrable risks or harm of such changes, taking into account the cases put forward by all parties. When making such a judgement in the case of military aerodromes, the Secretary of State should have regard to interests of defence and national security.	The Applicant is not aware of any adverse effect from the Proposed Development but will continue to work with the MOD in this respect. Further engagement continues in relation to RAF Air Command, for nearby airbase operations, and above ground design of lighting, fencing and CCTV in proximity to the RAF Digby boundary.
	5.5.53 If there are conflicts between the government's energy and transport policies and military interests in relation to the application, the Secretary of State should expect the relevant parties to have made appropriate efforts to work together to identify realistic and pragmatic solutions to the conflicts. In so doing, the parties should seek to protect the aims and interests of the other parties as far as possible, recognising simultaneously the evolving landscape in terms of the UK's energy security and the need to tackle climate change, which necessitates the installation of wind turbines and the need to maintain air safety and national defence and the national weather warning service.	**Appendix J-1-J2** of the **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.2]** [APP-028] sets out the MOD's comments pertaining to glint and glare. The MOD commented that the Proposed Development has the potential to produce glint and glare effects which could be hazardous to aircraft and air traffic control towers. The MOD requested for a geometric aviation glint and glare assessment to consider any effects upon air traffic control towers, aircraft using operational runways, circuit patterns and any other applicable air traffic procedures at RAF Cranwell and RAF Waddington. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of the potential impacts of glint and glare. Following consultation and engagement with the MoD, the requested receptors including the 2-mile approach path, ATC Tower and visual circuits have been assessed within **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028]**.**

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	5.5.54 There are statutory requirements concerning lighting to tall structures. Where lighting is requested on structures that goes beyond statutory requirements by any of the relevant aviation and defence consultees, the Secretary of State should be satisfied of the necessity of such lighting taking into account the case put forward by the consultees. The effect of such lighting on the landscape and ecology may be a relevant consideration.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] outlines the security measures, including lighting, incorporated in the design of the Proposed Development's design. The Proposed Development's security and lighting have been designed to respond sensitively to ecology and landscape features.
	5.5.55 Lighting must also be designed in such a way as to ensure that there is no glare or dazzle to pilots and/or ATC, aerodrome ground lighting is not obscured and that any lighting does not diminish the effectiveness of aeronautical ground lighting and cannot be confused with aeronautical lighting. Lighting may also need to be compatible with night vision devices for military low flying purposes.	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2] [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, PRoW, bridleways and aviation activity.
	5.5.57 Where suitable technological solutions have not yet been developed or proven, the Secretary of State will need to consider the likelihood of a solution becoming available within the time limit for implementation of the Development Consent Order.	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2] [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [REP1-028] assessment of the potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, PRoW, bridleways and aviation activity. The landscape planting proposals are secured within the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030], and further details on the glint and glare assessment is detailed in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028]. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken the assessment based on the technical assumption that the angle of the panels is set at 13 degrees above the horizontal. Changes to the angle within the parameters of 10 to 30 degrees are not expected to affect the

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		modelling results and would be comparable to the effects that have been identified. Therefore, variable angles of the solar panels have not been considered in the assessment.
	5.5.58 Where a proposed energy infrastructure development would significantly impede or compromise the safe and effective use of civil or military aviation, meteorological radars, defence assets and/or significantly limit military training, the Secretary of State may consider the use of 'Grampian conditions', or other forms of requirement which relate to the use of current or future technological solutions, to mitigate impacts on legacy CNS equipment.	**Appendix J-1-J2** of the **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.2]** [APP-028] sets out CAA's comments pertaining to glint and glare. CAA commented that: • glare from solar panels has the potential to cause disturbance to pilot's eyesight particularly on approach to land and departure from a runway; • regard should be had to Aviation 2050 and GA Strategy 2015 which sets out the need to protect a national network of airfields, as well as NPS EN-1 which highlights the need to develop renewable energy infrastructure in collaboration with aviation receptors; • Hill Top Farm Microlights was not considered in any assessment despite its proximity to the Proposed Development and this should be included as part of the ES; and • RAF Digby is not listed as an aviation receptor in the Glint and Glare Assessment. Engagement has been held with Hill Top Farm Microlights and the Civil Aviation Authority following the Phase Two Consultation and this receptor has been included within the Glint and Glare assessment. RAF Digby ceased flying in 1953 and the base is used by the tri-service Joint Service Signals Organisation, part of the Joint Forces Intelligence Group. This is not an active aviation base. Therefore, this receptor has not been included in the Glint and Glare assessment. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of the potential impacts of glint and glare. Aviation safety has been considered within the glint and glare study.
	5.5.59 Where, after reasonable mitigation, operational changes, obligations and requirements have been proposed, the Secretary of State should consider whether: • a development would prevent a licensed aerodrome from maintaining its licence and the defence, or result in substantial local/national economic loss, or emergency service needs • it would cause harm to aerodromes' training or emergency service needs • the development would impede or compromise the safe and effective use of defence assets or unacceptably limit military training • the development would have a negative impact on the safe and efficient provision of en-route air traffic control services for civil	

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	aviation, in particular through an adverse effect on CNS infrastructure • the development would compromise the effective provision of weather warnings by the NSWWS, or flood warnings by the UK's flood agencies	
	5.5.60 Provided that the Secretary of State is satisfied that the impacts of proposed energy developments do not present risks to national security and physical safety, and where they do, provided that the Secretary of State is satisfied that appropriate mitigation can be achieved, or appropriate requirements can be attached to any Development Consent Order to secure those mitigations, consent may be granted.	The Applicant is not aware of any matter in the Proposed Development that would present a safety or security related compromise to the MOD and its assets. However, engagement on specific matters, as set out above and within **Appendix J-1-J2** of the **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.2]** [APP-028], to the extent that information is available to be shared, will continue and will be reported to the Examining Authority, should the application be accepted, during Examination. To this end, the Application considers the Proposed Development is compliant with requirements.
5.7 - Dust, odour, artificial light, smoke, steam and insect infestation *Applicant Assessment*	5.7.5 The applicant should assess the potential for insect infestation and emissions of odour, dust, steam, smoke, and artificial light to have a detrimental impact on amenity, as part of the ES. 5.7.6 In particular, the assessment provided by the applicant should describe: • the type, quantity, and timing of emissions; • aspects of the development which may give rise to emissions; • premises or locations that may be affected by the emissions; • effects of the emission on identified premises or locations; • measures to be employed in preventing or mitigating the emissions.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on emissions of dust. An Air Quality Assessment is provided as **ES Volume 3 Appendix 6.2: Air Quality Assessment** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-081]**.** The **Plume Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.19.2]** [REP1-052] considers the potential impacts of a venting incident in relation to the BESS units. It concludes that the likelihood of an incident is once every 7,700 years. The **Outline Battery Safety Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.14.2]** [REP1-048] sets out the safety measures proposed to be installed to reduce fire risk as well as fire protection measures. The Proposed Development is not anticipated to cause any effects from insect infestation steam, smell or other effluvia. Construction and decommissioning activities will be undertaken using best practice measures to minimise air emissions, as set out in the **Statutory Nuisance Statement [EN010149/APP/7.5]** [APP-0139]**.** These good site practice mitigation measures are incorporated into the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**.** They are considered to be embedded mitigation and represent good industry practices that are part of the Proposed

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		Development. The mitigation measures proposed for implementation during construction will also be appropriate for decommissioning as set out in the **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] contains an assessment of the potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings and aviation activity.
	5.7.7 The applicant is advised to consult the relevant local planning authority and, where appropriate, the EA about the scope and methodology of the assessment.	As detailed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] and in the **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.1]** [APP-019]**,** the Applicant has been in consultation with the North Kesteven District Council Environmental Health Officer and Lincolnshire County Council Environmental Health Officer.
Mitigation	5.7.8 Mitigation measures may include one or more of the following: • engineering: prevention of a specific emission at the point of generation; control, containment and abatement of emissions if generated; • lay-out: adequate distance between source and sensitive receptors; reduced transport or handling of material; • administrative: limiting operating times; restricting activities allowed on the site; implementing management plans.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] considers the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on air quality and sets out measures for mitigation specific for each phase of the Proposed Development. These include but are not limited to, proper preparation and maintenance of the Site, sustainable travel, waste management, setbacks from woodlands, residential properties and Local Wildlife Sites, continued communication with the community and relevant stakeholders, site management and site monitoring/inspections. Mitigation measures are documented within and will be secured by the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and the **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]**. ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, PRoW, bridleways and aviation activity. The assessment concludes that no impact is predicted from glint and glare; therefore, no mitigation measures are proposed.
	5.7.9 Construction should be undertaken in a way that reduces emissions, for example the use of low emission mobile plant during the construction, and demolition phases as appropriate, and consideration should be given to making these	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] considers the likely significant effects of construction and decommissioning and from demolition works (during construction and decommissioning phases) of the Proposed Development. A detailed dust risk assessment for the construction and

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	mandatory in Development Consent Order requirements.	decommissioning phases is presented in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 6.2: Air Quality Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-081]**.**
	5.7.10 Demolition considerations should be embedded into designs at the outset to enable demolition techniques to be adopted that remove the need for explosive demolition.	Mitigation measures are documented within and will be secured by the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], the **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]**,** the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.**
	5.7.11 A construction management plan may help clarify and secure mitigation.	The **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] secures embedded mitigation measures and best practices related to air quality. More broadly, the DCO application includes an **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] to secure both additional and embedded mitigation, which will be further developed into a detailed CEMP prior to the commencement of the construction phase.
Secretary of State decision making	5.7.12 The Secretary of State should satisfy itself that: • an assessment of the potential for artificial light, dust, odour, smoke, steam and insect infestation to have a detrimental impact on amenity has been carried out • that all reasonable steps have been taken, and will be taken, to minimise any such detrimental impacts	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] assesses the effects of the Proposed Development on emissions of dust. An Air Quality Assessment is provided as **ES Volume 3, Appendix 6.2: Air Quality Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-081]**.** The Proposed Development will not emit any odour. Construction and decommissioning activities will be undertaken with the use of best practice measures applied, as set out in the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]. As set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028], the Applicant recognises the importance of new planting and bunding to mitigate the Proposed Development. All relevant assessments covering artificial light, dust, odour, smoke, steam and insect infestation have been considered across the **Environmental Statement [EN010149/APP/6.1].**
	5.7.13 If development consent is granted for a project, the Secretary of State should consider whether there is a justification for all of the authorised project (including any associated	The **Statutory Nuisance Statement [EN010149/APP/7.5]** [APP-0139] concludes that the only matters addressed by the EPA 1990 which have been assessed as potentially being significant for the Proposed Development are those associated with noise, dust, health, light and vibration. However, it is demonstrated in this

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	development) to be covered by a defence of statutory authority against nuisance claims. If the Secretary of State cannot conclude that this is justified, the Secretary of State should disapply in whole or in part the defence through a provision in the Development Consent Order.	Statement that the Proposed Development would not have significant effects following the implementation of the identified mitigation measures.
	5.7.14 Where the Secretary of State believes it appropriate, the Secretary of State may consider attaching requirements to the development consent, to secure certain mitigation measures.	The Applicant considers that all relevant mitigation has been secured via appropriate mechanisms within the **Draft Development Consent Order [EN010149/APP/3.1.3]** [REP3-004]**.**
	5.7.15 In particular, the Secretary of State should consider whether to require the applicant to abide by a scheme of management and mitigation concerning insect infestation and emissions of odour, dust, steam, smoke, and artificial light from the development. The Secretary of State should consider the need for such a scheme to reduce any loss to amenity which might arise during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the development. A construction management plan may help codify mitigation at that stage.	No such effects are anticipated within the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1].** The Applicant considers that all relevant mitigation has been secured via appropriate mechanisms within the **Draft Development Consent Order [EN010149/APP/3.1.3]** [REP3-004]**.**
Part 5.8 - Flood Risk	5.8.12 Development should be designed to ensure there is no increase in flood risk elsewhere, accounting for the predicted impacts of climate change throughout the lifetime of the development. There should be no net loss of floodplain storage and any deflection or constriction of flood flow routes should be safely managed within the site. Mitigation measures should make as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water** [**EN010149/APP/6.1**] [APP-055] confirms that flood risk during construction and at decommissioning will be managed through the CEMP and DEMP, which will be secured by the DCO and required to be in substantial accordance with the **oCEMP** [**EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and the **oDEMP** [**EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035], respectively. As the Site is predominantly low-risk from flooding from all sources, the reasonable 'worst case' is limited to the placement of Solar PV modules and string inverters mounted on the panels within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 towards the east of the Site.

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		The residual flood risk will be negligible once mitigation is included. This will include: • A minimum offset of 6 m from ditches/ watercourses; • Anglian Water potable mains water supplies for welfare facilities for domestic use only; • Private supply of non-potable water to the Springwell Substation, BESS and other compounds (either via rainwater harvesting, private irrigation supplies, or provided via a bowser); • Vegetation Management; and • Foul water drainage via package treatment works. The only operational elements of the Proposed Development in Flood Zones 3a and 3b are Solar PV modules. Once attached to the mounting structure, the minimum height of the lowest part of the Solar PV modules will be 0.8m above the existing ground level (AGL). This will be secured via the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] and as discussed and agreed with the Environmental Agency. Opportunities for environmental enhancement in relation to water are detailed in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028]. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] assesses flood risk and drainage in the context of EIA. This concludes that with the proposed mitigation measures to be implemented as part of the CEMP and DEMP, no significant effects will arise in relation to water. Given the design mitigation secured through the OEMP, no significant adverse effects will be predicted on receptors with regard to flood risk during the operation of the Proposed Development. **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] has been prepared setting out how surface water will be managed across the Proposed Development to avoid an increase in flood risk elsewhere. The Outline Surface Water Drainage Strategy concludes that runoff will be attenuated via the local ditch/watercourse network (subject to infiltration testing and ditch network connectivity survey) within the Order Limits as

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		per the existing conditions. A detailed Surface Water Drainage Strategy will be secured by a requirement of the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004].
Application Assessment	5.8.13 A site-specific flood risk assessment should be provided for all energy projects in Flood Zones 2 and 3 in England or Zones B and C in Wales. In Flood Zone 1 in England or Zone A in Wales, an assessment should accompany all proposals involving: • sites of 1 hectare or more • land which has been identified by the EA or NRW as having critical drainage problems • land identified (for example in a local authority strategic flood risk assessment) as being at increased flood risk in future • land that may be subject to other sources of flooding (for example surface water) • where the EA or NRW, Lead Local Flood Authority, Internal Drainage Board or other body have indicated that there may be drainage problems.	The **Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] provides an assessment of flood risk to and from the Proposed Development from all sources of flooding. The FRA demonstrates how residual flood risk will be managed during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. The FRA meets all requirements set out within the policy. The Applicant has applied the Exception Test to the proposed Solar PV Development within Flood Zones 3a and 3b. The Applicant considers it appropriate to apply the Exception Test as the Sequential test has demonstrated that, at a site-specific level, there are no reasonably available lower-risk sites to locate the required solar PV development that would deliver the same amount of renewable energy in the same time period.
	5.8.14 This assessment should identify and assess the risks of all forms of flooding to and from the project and demonstrate how these flood risks will be managed, taking climate change into account.	The **Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] assesses flood risk to and from the Proposed Development from all sources of flooding. The FRA demonstrates how residual flood risk will be managed during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development and how the requirements of the Sequential Test and Exceptions Test are satisfied.
	5.8.15 The minimum requirements for Flood Risk Assessments (FRA) are that they should: • be proportionate to the risk and appropriate to the scale, nature and location of the project;	The **Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] provides an assessment of flood risk to and from the Proposed Development from all sources of flooding. The FRA demonstrates how residual flood risk will be managed during construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development and how the requirements of the Sequential Test and Exceptions Test are satisfied. The FRA meets all requirements set out within the policy.

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	• consider the risk of flooding arising from the project in addition to the risk of flooding to the project; • take the impacts of climate change into account, across a range of climate scenarios, clearly stating the development lifetime over which the assessment has been made; • be undertaken by competent people, as early as possible in the process of preparing the proposal; • consider both the potential adverse and beneficial effects of flood risk management infrastructure, including raised defences, flow channels, flood storage areas and other artificial features, together with the consequences of their failure and exceedance; • consider the vulnerability of those using the site, including arrangements for safe access and escape; • consider and quantify the different types of flooding (whether from natural and human sources and including joint and cumulative effects) and include information on flood likelihood, speed-of-onset, depth, velocity, hazard and duration; • identify and secure opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding overall, making as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques as part of an	

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	integrated approach to flood risk management; • consider the effects of a range of flooding events including extreme events on people, property, the natural and historic environment and river and coastal processes; • include the assessment of the remaining (known as 'residual') risk after risk reduction measures have been taken into account and demonstrate that these risks can be safely managed, ensuring people will not be exposed to hazardous flooding; • consider how the ability of water to soak into the ground may change with development, along with how the proposed layout of the project may affect drainage systems. Information should include: i. Describe the existing surface water drainage arrangements for the site ii. Set out (approximately) the existing rates and volumes of surface water run-off generated by the site. Detail the proposals for restricting discharge rates iii. Set out proposals for managing and discharging surface water from the site using sustainable drainage systems and accounting for the predicted impacts of climate change. If sustainable drainage systems have been rejected,	

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		present clear evidence of why their inclusion would be inappropriate	
	iv.	Demonstrate how the hierarchy of drainage options has been followed.	
	v.	Explain and justify why the types of SuDS and method of discharge have been selected and why they are considered appropriate.	
	vi.	Explain how sustainable drainage systems have been integrated with other aspects of the development such as open space or green infrastructure, so as to ensure an efficient use of the site	
	vii.	Describe the multifunctional benefits the sustainable drainage system will provide	
	viii.	Set out which opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding have been identified and included as part of the proposed sustainable drainage system	
	ix.	Explain how run-off from the completed development will be prevented from causing an impact elsewhere	
	x.	Explain how the sustainable drainage system been designed to facilitate maintenance and, where relevant, adoption. Set out plans for ensuring an acceptable standard of operation and	

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	maintenance throughout the lifetime of the development • detail those measures that will be included to ensure the development will be safe and remain operational during a flooding event throughout the development's lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere; • identify and secure opportunities to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding overall during the period of construction; and • be supported by appropriate data and information, including historical information on previous events.	
	5.8.16 Further guidance can be found in the Planning Practice Guidance Flood Risk and Coastal Change section which accompanies the NPPF, TAN15 for Wales or successor documents.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] considers relevant sections of the Planning Practice Guidance, the NPPF, and the government's associated planning guidance on water.
	5.8.17 Development (including construction works) will need to account for any existing watercourses and flood and coastal erosion risk management structures or features, or any land likely to be needed for future structures or features so as to ensure: • Access, clearances and sufficient land are retained to enable their maintenance, repair, operation, and replacement, as necessary • Their standard of protection is not reduced • Their condition or structural integrity is not reduced	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] presents the assessment of the likely significant effects on surface water bodies (e.g. rivers, streams, ditches, canals, lakes and ponds) proposed mitigation measure to offset a minimum of 6 m from ditches/ watercourses to ensure no erosion of the banking of the watercourses which could result in degradation of water quality. The **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], **oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] include measures to protect watercourses. The submitted **Outline Surface Water Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] sets out the framework for the detailed drainage scheme to ensure that surface water runoff is attenuated to greenfield runoff rates and managed, including dealing with risk management associated with potentially contaminated water associated with fire water runoff. The **Outline Surface Water Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] also sets

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		out details with respect to future management and maintenance. It is predicted that there would be a negligible impact on any receiving water feature from surface water runoff or any land likely to be needed for future structures or features. The Proposed Development would not adversely impact any of these features.
	5.8.18 Applicants for projects which may be affected by, or may add to, flood risk should arrange pre-application discussions before the official pre-application stage of the NSIP process with the EA or NRW, and, where relevant, other bodies such as Lead Local Flood Authorities, Internal Drainage Boards, sewerage undertakers, navigation authorities, highways authorities and reservoir owners and operators.	In preparing the FRA and the ES, the Applicant has considered advice and taken account of feedback received through consultation with key bodies, including the Environment Agency (EA), the Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) and the Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs). Listed below are the statutory consultees and stakeholders that have provided comments in relation to the water environment: • Environment Agency; • Witham First Internal Drainage Board; • Lead Local Flood Authority (Lincolnshire County Council); and • North Kesteven District Council.
	5.8.19 Such discussions should identify the likelihood and possible extent and nature of the flood risk, help scope the FRA, and identify the information that will be required by the Secretary of State to reach a decision on the application when it is submitted. The Secretary of State should advise applicants to undertake these steps where they appear necessary but have not yet been addressed.	The **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.1]** [APP-019] sets out that a key changes made by the Applicant in response to feedback from Phase One consultation was the removal of fields in Springwell West located within area of Flood Zones 2 and 3. Changes to the Proposed Development following Phase Two consultation including deducing the maximum proposed height of the solar panels from 3.5 metres to 3 metres, with 3.5 metre panels proposed in areas of flood risk (from 4 metres). The only operational element of the Proposed Development in Flood Zone 3a and 3b is Solar PV development. Once attached to the mounting structure, the minimum height of the lowest part of the Solar PV modules will be 0.8m above the existing ground level (AGL). This will be secured via the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] and as discussed and agreed with the Environment Agency. The Applicant therefore considers that the Proposed Development complies with the Exception Test requirements set out in paragraph 5.8.11 of EN-1. It is considered also noteworthy that the areas of the Site which are in Flood Zones 2 and 3 benefit
	5.8.20 If the EA, NRW or another flood risk management authority has reasonable concerns about the proposal on flood risk grounds, the applicant should discuss these concerns with the EA or NRW and take all reasonable steps to agree ways in which the proposal might be amended, or additional information provided, which would satisfy the authority's concerns.	

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		from an extant permission for a solar farm (NKDC reference 14/0937/FUL) and no objection from the Environment Agency.
	5.8.21 The Sequential Test ensures that a sequential, risk-based approach is followed to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding, taking all sources of flood risk and climate change into account. Where it is not possible to locate development in low-risk areas, the Sequential Test should go on to compare reasonably available sites with medium risk areas and then, only where there are no reasonably available sites in low and medium risk areas, within high-risk areas.	The **Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] demonstrates that a sequential approach has been applied in selecting the land for the Proposed Development and to the subsequent layout and design of the solar infrastructure within the Site. The sequential approach has resulted in all electrical infrastructure and the majority of the solar PV development being located in Flood Zone 1. There is one area east of Springwell East within Flood Zones 2 and 3 where solar PV development is proposed. The Applicant has considered other locations within the available land within Flood Zone 1 to accommodate solar PV development; however, these land parcels were less suitable when other environmental, planning, and design factors were considered, for instance, proximity to communities and landscape and visual. The only operational element of the Proposed Development in Flood Zone 3a and 3b is Solar PV modules. Once attached to the mounting structure, the minimum height of the lowest part of the Solar PV modules will be 0.8m above the existing ground level (AGL). Whilst these parts could be excluded from solar development, this would not make the best use of land, or maximise the energy generation of the Site, in line with government policy. In understanding the extent to which flooding could impact this particular area of the Proposed Development, the Applicant committed to ensuring that only solar PV modules may be developed outside of Flood Zone 1, in accordance with Design Commitment F1 in the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]. The Site Selection Report in Appendix A of this document sets out the process and criteria through which the Applicant determined appropriate sites to deliver its objective. Site selection requires the balancing up of a number of different criteria, many of which are subject to their own policy tests within the NPS. None of the sites identified at the site selection stage were identified as showing high risk in relation to

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		flooding, i.e. the vast majority of all sites were shown to be in Flood Zone 1 with smaller areas of higher risk in each instance. In a similar scenario as the level of BMV across other considered sites, the characteristics of each site relating to flooding were even. So, flood risk was not a differentiating factor at the site selection stage. The Applicant considers that the Sequential Test has been properly applied in relation to site selection.
	5.8.22 The technology specific NPSs set out some exceptions to the application of the Sequential Test. However, when seeking development consent on a site allocated in a development plan through the application of the Sequential Test, informed by a strategic flood risk assessment, applicants need not apply the Sequential Test, provided the proposed development is consistent with the use for which the site was allocated and there is no new flood risk information that would have affected the outcome of the test.	The Applicant applied a sequential approach to the layout and design of the Proposed Development. Flood Zone 1 covers the vast majority of the Order Limits with a small area of a mixture of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the east of Springwell East. The Applicant therefore considers that the Proposed Development complies with the Exception Test requirements set out in paragraph 5.8.11 of EN-1. It is considered also noteworthy that the areas of the Site which are in Flood Zones 2 and 3 benefit from an extant permission for a solar farm (NKDC reference 14/0937/FUL) and no objection from the Environmental Agency, and therefore, in theory, that development could be carried out in this location.
	5.8.23 Consideration of alternative sites should take account of the policy on alternatives set out in Section 4.3 above. All projects should apply the Sequential Test to locating development within the site.	As part of the Design Evolution as set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] on the land which is available for development has been shaped by the Project Principles and has responded to the environmental assessment process, consultation feedback and engagement with stakeholders via an iterative design process. The Applicant undertook a systematic process to determine suitable sites for the Proposed Development, which was framed at a macro level using principles of good design. An area of Springwell West formerly included land in Flood Zones 2 and 3 at non-statutory consultation but was subsequently removed on the basis of a combination of its flood risk and BMV land status. The sequential approach has resulted in all electrical infrastructure and the majority of the solar PV development being located in Flood Zone 1. There is one area in the east of Springwell East within Flood Zones 2 and 3 where solar PV development is proposed. The Applicant has considered other locations within the available land within Flood Zone 1 to accommodate solar PV development, however, these land

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		parcels were less suitable when other environmental, planning and design factors were considered, for instance proximity to communities and landscape and visual. Whilst these parts could be excluded from solar development, this would not make the best use of land, or maximise the energy generation of the Site, in line with government policy. In understanding the extent to which flooding could impact this particular area of the Proposed Development the Applicant committed to ensure that only solar PV modules may be developed outside of Flood Zone 1, in accordance with Design Commitment F1 in the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.** In addition, and as set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] and secured in the **Project Parameters, Appendix 3.1 [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-074] the lowest height of any solar PV Modules would be above the maximum flood height level. This level is 0.8m above the existing ground level and above the calculated flood level for the maximum credible flooding scenario from all sources.
Mitigation	5.8.24 To satisfactorily manage flood risk, arrangements are required to manage surface water and the impact of the natural water cycle on people and property.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] considers the potential impacts on water quality of watercourses, water quality, Water Framework Directive waterbody – Metheringham Beck, and water resources. Section 15.6 of the Proposed Development sets out the mitigation measures set out to manage surface water and flood risk including: • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 6m either side from all existing ditches where crossing is not required, secured through the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]; • An Outline Drainage Strategy, secured through **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]**;** and • Vegetation Management, secured through **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030].
	5.8.25 In this NPS, the term SuDS refers to the whole range of sustainable approaches to surface	The proposed surface water drainage design set out in **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] demonstrates that sustainable drainage techniques have been designed into the

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	water drainage management including, where appropriate: • source control measures including rainwater recycling and drainage • infiltration devices to allow water to soak into the ground, that can include individual soakaways and communal facilities • filter strips and swales, which are vegetated features that hold and drain water downhill mimicking natural drainage patterns • filter drains and porous pavements to allow rainwater and run-off to infiltrate into permeable material below ground and provide storage if needed • basins, ponds and tanks to hold excess water after rain and allow controlled discharge that avoids flooding • flood routes to carry and direct excess water through developments to minimise the impact of severe rainfall flooding	Proposed Development and will be maintained by the Applicant, or another private operator to be confirmed and secured through the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.3]** [REP3-004]**.**
	5.8.26 Site layout and surface water drainage systems should cope with events that exceed the design capacity of the system, so that excess water can be safely stored on or conveyed from the site without adverse impacts.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] assesses flood risk and drainage in the context of EIA. This concludes that with the proposed mitigation measures to be implemented as part of the CEMP and DEMP, there will be no significant effects arising in relation to water. Given the design mitigation secured through the OEMP, there will be no significant adverse effects predicted upon receptors with regard to flood risk during the operation of the Proposed Development. **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy** [REP1-050] has been prepared, accounting for predicted impacts of climate change, setting out how surface water will be managed across the Proposed Development to avoid an
	5.8.27 The surface water drainage arrangements for any project should, accounting for the predicted impacts of climate change throughout the development's lifetime, be such that the volumes and peak flow rates of surface water leaving the	

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	site are no greater than the rates prior to the proposed project, unless specific off-site arrangements are made and result in the same net effect.	increase in flood risk elsewhere. The **Outline Drainage Strategy** concludes that runoff will be attenuated via local ditch / watercourse network (subject to infiltration testing and ditch network connectivity survey) within the Order Limits as per the existing conditions. A detailed Drainage Strategy will be secured by a requirement of the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004]. The proposed surface water drainage design set out in the **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] demonstrates that sustainable drainage techniques have been designed into the Proposed Development and will be maintained by the Applicant, or another private operator to be confirmed and secured through the DCO.
	5.8.28 It may be necessary to provide surface water storage and infiltration to limit and reduce both the peak rate of discharge from the site and the total volume discharged from the site. There may be circumstances where it is appropriate for infiltration facilities or attenuation storage to be provided outside the project site, if necessary through the use of a planning obligation.	**Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] has been prepared setting out how surface water will be managed across the Proposed Development to avoid an increase in flood risk elsewhere. The **Outline Drainage Strategy** concludes that runoff will be attenuated via local ditch / watercourse network (subject to infiltration testing and ditch network connectivity survey) within the Order Limits as per the existing conditions. A detailed Drainage Strategy will be secured by a requirement of the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.3.4]** [REP4-004]. The proposed surface water drainage design set out in the **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] demonstrates that sustainable drainage techniques have been designed into the Proposed Development and will be maintained by the Applicant, or another private operator to be confirmed and secured through the DCO.
	5.8.29 The sequential approach should be applied to the layout and design of the project. Vulnerable aspects of the development should be located on parts of the site at lower risk and residual risk of flooding. Applicants should seek opportunities to use open space for multiple purposes such as amenity, wildlife.	The Applicant applied a sequential approach to the layout and design of the Proposed Development. Flood Zone 1 covers the vast majority of the Order Limits with a small area of a mixture of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in the east of Springwell East. An area of Springwell West formerly included land in Flood Zones 2 and 3 at non-statutory consultation but was subsequently removed on the basis of a combination of its flood risk and BMV land status.

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		The sequential approach has resulted in all electrical infrastructure and the majority of the solar PV development being located in Flood Zone 1. There is one area in the east of Springwell East within Flood Zones 2 and 3 where solar PV development is proposed. The Applicant has considered other locations within the available land within Flood Zone 1 to accommodate solar PV development. However, these land parcels were less suitable when other environmental, planning and design factors were considered, for instance, proximity to communities and landscape and visual. Whilst these parts could be excluded from solar development, this would not make the best use of land, or maximise the energy generation of the Site, in line with government policy. In understanding the extent to which flooding could impact this particular area of the Proposed Development the Applicant committed to ensure that only solar PV modules may be developed outside of Flood Zone 1, in accordance with Design Commitment F1 in the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]. In addition, and as set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] and secured in the **ES Volume 3, Appendix 3.1: Project Parameters [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-074]**,** the lowest height of any solar PV Modules would be above the maximum flood height level. This level is 0.8m above the existing ground level and above the calculated flood level for the maximum credible flooding scenario from all sources.
	5.8.30 Where a development may result in an increase in flood risk elsewhere through the loss of flood storage, on-site level-for-level compensatory storage, accounting for the predicted impacts of climate change over the lifetime of the development, should be provided.	The Proposed Development would not result in an increase in flood risk elsewhere and will not materially remove floodplain volume and not require compensatory storage to be provided. A requirement of the DCO will ensure that the detailed design is substantially in accordance with the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.**
	5.8.31 Where it is not possible to provide compensatory storage on site, it may be acceptable to provide it off-site if it is hydraulically and hydrologically linked. Where development may cause the deflection or constriction of flood flow routes, these will need to be safely managed within the site.	

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	5.8.32 Where development may contribute to a cumulative increase in flood risk elsewhere, the provision of multifunctional sustainable drainage systems, natural flood management and green infrastructure can also make a valuable contribution to mitigating this risk whilst providing wider benefits.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] sets out that there is the potential for cumulative effects during construction. However, with the embedded mitigation measures in place, and considering there are no significant effects identified for the Site, it is considered that there are no significant cumulative overall effects on the water environment receptors.
	5.8.33 The receipt of and response to warnings of floods is an essential element in the management of the residual risk of flooding. Flood Warning and evacuation plans should be in place for those areas at an identified risk of flooding.	As set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] the Contractor and the Applicant will be required to produce an **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], **oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033], and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035], which ensure that site managers are registered with the Environment Agency's Flood Warning system to provide adequate forewarning in the event of a predicted flood for site personal within the northeastern region of the Site to evacuate to an area of safe refuge, upgradient, to the west.
	5.8.34 The applicant should take advice from the local authority emergency planning team, emergency services and, where appropriate, from the local resilience forum when producing an evacuation plan for a manned energy project as part of the FRA. Any emergency planning documents, flood warning and evacuation procedures that are required should be identified in the FRA.	
	5.8.35 Flood resistant and resilient materials and design should be adopted to minimise damage and speed recovery in the event of a flood.	The Proposed Development has been designed to safeguard the water environment through being resilient to flooding now and in the future, as set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and the **Design Commitment [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.**
Secretary of State decision making	5.8.36 In determining an application for development consent, the Secretary of State should be satisfied that where relevant: • the application is supported by an appropriate FRA	The **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] demonstrates how the Proposed Development meets the requirements of the Sequential Test and Exception Tests. It concludes that the Proposed Development would not result in any increase in flood risk from all sources to and from the Proposed Development.

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	• the Sequential Test has been applied and satisfied as part of site selection • a sequential approach has been applied at the site level to minimise risk by directing the most vulnerable uses to areas of lowest flood risk • the proposal is in line with any relevant national and local flood risk management strategy • SuDS (as required in the next paragraph on National Standards) have been used unless there is clear evidence that their use would be inappropriate • in flood risk areas the project is designed and constructed to remain safe and operational during its lifetime, without increasing flood risk elsewhere (subject to the exceptions set out in paragraph 5.8.42) • the project includes safe access and escape routes where required, as part of an agreed emergency plan, and that any residual risk can be safely managed over the lifetime of the development • land that is likely to be needed for present or future flood risk management infrastructure has been appropriately safeguarded from development to the extent that development would not prevent or hinder its construction, operation or maintenance	The **FRA [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] demonstrates that a sequential approach has been applied in selecting the land for the Proposed Development and to the subsequent layout and design of the solar infrastructure within the Site. This demonstrates that the Sequential Test has been met with respect to the Site, which is predominantly located in Flood Zone 1, with a region in the northeastern corner of the Site that lies within Flood Zone 2 and 3. The test is deemed to have been passed. The Exception Test has been passed in relation to the Site owing to the wider sustainability benefits that the Proposed Development will deliver and the fact that it will remain safe throughout its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere. The **FRA [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] has been undertaken in accordance with NPPF and the methodology and criteria provided for the application of the Sequential Test and Exception Test within the PPG. It is also consistent with the Local Planning Authority requirements with regard to flood risk. The **FRA [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] considers measures incorporated into the Proposed Development to allow for safe access and ensures that any residual risk can be managed over the lifetime of the Proposed Development. **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] sets out how surface water will be managed across the Proposed Development to avoid an increase in flood risk elsewhere. Surface water runoff generated by the Proposed Development will be attenuated and discharged to an appropriate location, using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and following the drainage hierarchy where possible. The **Outline Drainage Strategy** concludes that runoff will be attenuated via local ditch/watercourse network (subject to infiltration testing and ditch network connectivity survey) within the Order Limits as per the existing conditions. A detailed Surface Water Drainage Strategy will be secured by a requirement of the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.3.4]** [REP4-004].

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		The design evolution of the Proposed Development applied a sequential approach to the layout and design of infrastructure within the Principal Site, which involved locating vulnerable infrastructure that is critical to maintaining the supply of electricity in areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source. As the Site is at predominantly low risk from flooding from all sources, the reasonable 'worst case' that is assessed on **ES Volume 1 Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] is limited to the placement of Solar PV modules and string inverters mounted on the panels within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 towards the east of the Site. Given the above, the Sequential Test, has, where relevant, been met for site selection and design with the Proposed Development being in accordance with NPS EN-1, the NPPF and associated PPG with respect to flood risk. To the best of the Applicant's knowledge, there is no requirement for any of the land within the Order Limits to be safeguarded for future flood risk management.
	5.8.37 For energy projects which have drainage implications, approval for the project's drainage system, including during the construction period, will form part of the development consent issued by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State will therefore need to be satisfied that the proposed drainage system complies with any National Standards published by Ministers under paragraph 5(1) of Schedule 3 to the Flood and Water Management Act 2010.	**Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] sets out how surface water will be managed across the Proposed Development to avoid an increase in flood risk elsewhere. Surface water runoff generated by the Proposed Development will be attenuated and discharged to an appropriate location, using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and following the drainage hierarchy where possible. A detailed Drainage Strategy will be secured as DCO Requirement 10. **ES Volume 1 Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] has considered the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 in its assessment of the Proposed Development.
	5.8.38 In addition, the Development Consent Order, or any associated planning obligations, will need to make provision for appropriate operation and maintenance of any SuDS throughout the project's lifetime. Where this is secured through the adoption of any SuDS features, any necessary access rights to property will need to be granted.	**Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] sets out how surface water will be managed across the Proposed Development to avoid an increase in flood risk elsewhere. The **Outline Drainage Strategy** concludes that runoff will be attenuated via local ditch/watercourse network (subject to infiltration testing and ditch network connectivity survey) within the Order Limits as per the existing conditions. A detailed Drainage Strategy will be secured by a requirement of the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004]**.**

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	5.8.39 Where relevant, the Secretary of State should be satisfied that the most appropriate body is being given the responsibility for maintaining any SuDS, taking into account the nature and security of the infrastructure on the proposed site. Responsible bodies could include, for example the landowner, the relevant lead local flood authority or water and sewerage company (through the Ofwat approved Sewerage Sector Guidance), or another body, such as an Internal Drainage Board.	The recommendations set out in **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] include that all SuDS features to be designed in accordance with the CIRIA C753 SuDS Manual, to ensure that surface water runoff discharged from the Site will be of an acceptable standard by following best design practices.
	5.8.40 If the EA, NRW or another flood risk management authority continues to have concerns and objects to the grant of development consent on the grounds of flood risk, the Secretary of State can grant consent, but would need to be satisfied before deciding whether or not to do so that all reasonable steps have been taken by the applicant and the authority to try to resolve the concerns.	The Applicant considers that there is no flood risk related grounds that may trigger this clause.
	5.8.41 Energy projects should not normally be consented within Flood Zone 3b, or Zone C2 in Wales, or on land expected to fall within these zones within its predicted lifetime. This may also apply where land is subject to other sources of flooding (for example surface water). However, where essential energy infrastructure has to be located in such areas, for operational reasons, they should only be consented if the development will not result in a net loss of floodplain storage, and will not impede water flows.	The **FRA [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] and **ES Volume 1 Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] demonstrate that Site is at predominantly low risk from flooding from all sources, the reasonable 'worst case' is limited to the placement of Solar PV modules and string inverters mounted on the panels within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 towards the east of the Site. As shown in Plate 3.7 within Appendix B.7 of the Flood Risk Assessment. The Proposed Development includes 11.8ha of solar panels which fall within Flood Zone 3b. The Applicant notes the following in relation to this paragraph: The Environment Agency has confirmed that it is supportive of locating solar panels (but not built structures as noted above) within Flood Zone 3b provided that the minimum height of the lowest part of the Solar PV modules is 0.8m above the existing ground level (AGL). This will be secured via **ES Volume 3, Appendix 3.1:**

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		Project Parameters [EN010149/APP/6.3] [APP-074] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] (ref. F1). - The areas of Flood Zone 3b where solar is proposed fall within areas that have already been consented for solar development by virtue of the extant consent (ref: 14/0937/FUL). They could therefore be developed as a realistic fallback position under this extant consent. - As explained above for the rest of Flood Zone 3, areas outside of Flood Zone 3b were considered by the Applicant, but excluded on the basis that there were other planning and environmental considerations that made them less suitable than the areas in Flood Zone 3b. - The areas of Flood Zone 3b cover small portions of fields the majority of which fall within Flood Zone 1, including in some cases, small parts of the centre of fields which are very suitable for solar development. In this case, it would not be maximising the renewable energy generation of the Proposed Development, by excluding small areas of fields the rest of which fall outside areas at risk of flooding. This paragraph makes an allowance for some projects to be consented in Flood Zone 3b, on the basis that the wording is that they should not normally be consented. In this case, there are good reasons for including land in Flood Zone 3b, as explained above. The Proposed Development is also essential energy infrastructure which has to be located where it can be connected to the grid and will not result in a net loss of floodplain storage or impede water flows. On this basis, the Proposed Development is considered to comply with paragraph 5.8.41, as an acknowledged exception. The residual flood risk will be negligible once mitigation is included, and the Proposed Development will not result in a net loss of floodplain storage and will not impede water flows.

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	5.8.42 Exceptionally, where an increase in flood risk elsewhere cannot be avoided or wholly mitigated, the Secretary of State may grant consent if they are satisfied that the increase in present and future flood risk can be mitigated to an acceptable and safe level and taking account of the benefits of, including the need for, nationally significant energy infrastructure as set out in Part 3 above. In any such case the Secretary of State should make clear how, in reaching their decision, they have weighed up the increased flood risk against the benefits of the project, taking account of the nature and degree of the risk, the future impacts on climate change, and advice provided by the EA or NRW and other relevant bodies.	**ES Volume 1 Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] confirms that the Proposed Development would not result in an increase in flood risk elsewhere. The Proposed Development will provide wider sustainability benefits to the community, including job creation in the local area during construction and decommissioning, that outweigh its impacts on flood risk. Through the generation of renewable and low carbon electricity, the Proposed Development is considered nationally significant and will contribute to the critical and urgent need to decarbonise electricity generation and contribute to the UKs obligations for Net Zero. Appropriate mitigation measures have been considered to ensure the Proposed Development is safe for its lifetime.
Part 5.9 - Historic Environment *Applicant Assessment*	5.9.9 The applicant should undertake an assessment of any likely significant heritage impacts of the proposed development as part of the EIA, and describe these along with how the mitigation hierarchy has been applied in the ES (see Section 4.3). This should include consideration of heritage assets above, at, and below the surface of the ground. Consideration will also need to be given to the possible impacts, including cumulative, on the wider historic environment. The assessment should include reference to any historic landscape or seascape character assessment and associated studies as a means of assessing impacts relevant to the proposed project.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development on the historic environment, including above, at, and below ground assets. It concludes that there will be no significant impacts to any designated or non-designated heritage assets, including Listed Buildings or Historic Landscape Character as a result of the Proposed Development. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] concludes there would be no significant impacts to any designated or non-designated heritage assets as a result of the Proposed Development once embedded and additional mitigation measures are implemented. The significance of heritage assets within the study area (including the contribution made by setting) is set out in Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk-based Assessment and Stage 1 Setting Assessment.
	5.9.10 As part of the ES the applicant should provide a description of the significance of the	

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	heritage assets affected by the proposed development, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the heritage assets and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum, the applicant should have consulted the relevant Historic Environment Record (or, where the development is in English or Welsh waters, Historic England or Cadw) and assessed the heritage assets themselves using expertise where necessary according to the proposed development's impact.	
	5.9.11 Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or the available evidence suggests it has the potential to include, heritage assets with an archaeological interest, the applicant should carry out appropriate desk-based assessment and, where such desk-based research is insufficient to properly assess the interest, a field evaluation. Where proposed development will affect the setting of a heritage asset, accurate representative visualisations may be necessary to explain the impact.	An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment forms **ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk- Based Assessment and Stage 1 Setting Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.5]** [REP4-017] and [REP4-019]**.** Archaeological trial trench evaluation has been undertaken for the Proposed Development and potential impacts to buried archaeological features confirmed as being present within the Order limits is included within **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012]**.** The trial trench report is submitted alongside the application as **ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.5: Archaeological Trial Trenching Report [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-106]**.** Appendix 9.1 also includes a stage 1 setting assessment identifying the contribution of setting to the significance of heritage assets within the study area and those assets where the Proposed Development would result in changes to their setting that could lead to likely significant effects.
	5.9.12 The applicant should ensure that the extent of the impact of the proposed development on the significance of any heritage assets affected can be adequately understood from the application and	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development on the historic environment, including at and below ground assets. It concludes that there will be no significant impacts to any designated or non-designated heritage assets, including Listed

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	supporting documents. Studies will be required on those heritage assets affected by noise, vibration, light and indirect impacts, the extent and detail of these studies will be proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset affected.	Buildings or Historic Landscape Character as a result of the Proposed Development. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] concludes there would be no significant impacts to any designated or non-designated heritage assets as a result of the Proposed Development once embedded and additional mitigation measures are implemented. The assessment is supported by studies in **Volume 3 [EN010149/APP/6.3]** of the **ES**, including: • **ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk- Based Assessment and Stage 1 Setting Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.5]** [REP4-017] and [REP4-019]; • **Appendix 9.2: Geoarchaeological Deposit Modelling Report** [APP-098]; • **Appendix 9.3: Aerial Investigation Report** [APP-099]; • **Appendix 9.4: Geophysical Survey Report** [APP-100] to [APP-105]; • **Appendix 9.5: Archaeological Trial Trenching Report** [APP-106].
	5.9.13 The applicant is encouraged, where opportunities exist, to prepare proposals which can make a positive contribution to the historic environment, and to consider how their scheme takes account of the significance of heritage assets affected. This can include, where possible: • enhancing, through a range of measures such a sensitive design, the significance of heritage assets or setting affected • considering where required the development of archive capacity which could deliver significant public benefits • considering how visual or noise impacts can affect heritage assets, and whether there may be opportunities to enhance	Section 9.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] outlines the mitigation measures embedded within the Proposed Development design in relation to cultural heritage. It details that the Proposed Development design has been carefully considered to avoid, reduce or mitigate potentially significant effects on the cultural heritage and archaeological assets. Heritage mitigation measures which have been embedded into the design of the Proposed Development include avoidance, where possible, of heritage assets or archaeological remains. The construction and decommissioning of the Proposed Development has been designed to take into account the impacts of haulage and access, noise generation, dust generation and lighting on heritage assets.

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	access to, or interpretation, understanding and appreciation of, the heritage assets affected by the scheme	The Draft Order limits have been designed to avoid or minimise potential changes to the setting of designated heritage assets including Scheduled Monuments, Grade I, Grade II and Grade II* listed buildings. Mitigation measures have included avoiding areas with known or suspected below-ground archaeological deposits and avoiding changes to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets through amendments to the Proposed Development layout including exclusion of Solar PV modules from areas which contribute to the significance of heritage assets and proposed additional vegetation screening. As set out in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] the Proposed Development takes into consideration the surrounding landscape character to screen views to or from some heritage assets, respecting historic field boundaries and patterns. Section 9.10 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] outlines the opportunities for enhancement in relation to cultural heritage, as detailed in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028]**.** The following measures could be implemented as part of the Proposed Development to enhance the experience and appreciation of the cultural heritage resource of the Site: • Installation of information boards, particularly regarding the Scheduled remains of former villages of Brauncewell (NHLE 1018397) and Dunsby (NHLE 1013895) and non-designated heritage assets Hawker Hurricane crash site (Lincolnshire County Council HER Ref: MLI25417) and Avro Lancaster crash site (Lincolnshire County Council HER Ref: MLI25416) as well as the listed milepost on the A15 (NHLE); and • Instigating local community events, such as talks to local history societies, detailing the results of any archaeological fieldwork that is carried out in association with the Proposed Development.

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	5.9.14 Careful consideration in preparing the scheme will be required on whether the impacts on the historic environment will be direct or indirect, temporary, or permanent.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] assesses the likely impacts of the Proposed Development on cultural heritage, including direct and indirect, and temporary or permanent effects. There would be no significant adverse effects on designated or non-designated heritage assets. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument.
	5.9.15 Applicants should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.	There are no World Heritage Sites affected by the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] identifies the Scopwick and Blankney Conservation Areas as relevant cultural heritage receptors for the impacts of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. Mitigation measures documented within and secured by the **Works Plans [EN010149/APP/2.3]** [APP-007], **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] and the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] will ensure that construction phase impacts on the conservation areas will be avoided. Visibility of the Proposed Development within the wider rural surroundings of the conservation areas would result in a minor reduction in their significance this impact would be further reduced by proposed planting which is detailed in **ES Volume 2, Figure 3.3: Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan [EN010149/APP/6.2.4]** [REP4-015] and will be secured within the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. These potential effects are not considered to be significant. The Proposed Development would not lead to any significant adverse effects on any of these conservation areas. The Proposed Development, therefore, does not lead to significant adverse effects to a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area, in accordance with this policy
Mitigation	5.9.16 A documentary record of our past is not as valuable as retaining the heritage asset, and therefore the ability to record evidence of the asset	The archaeological investigation is secured by a DCO requirement and set out in the **Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [EN010149/APP/7.15.3]** [REP4-038] and is required to be agreed with Lincolnshire County Council. Where necessary

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	should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted, and whether or not consent should be given.	targeted areas of archaeological investigation and recording would be detailed in a task-specific WSI to off-set any likely pre-mitigation effects.
	5.9.17 Where the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, the Secretary of State will require the applicant to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost (wholly or in part). The extent of the requirement should be proportionate to the asset's importance and significance and the impact. The applicant should be required to publish this evidence and to deposit copies of the reports with the relevant Historic Environmental Record. They should also be required to deposit the archive generated in a local museum or other public repository willing to receive it.	A programme of further archaeological investigation secured by a DCO requirement and set out in the **Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [EN010149/APP/7.15.3]** [REP4-038] would ensure that areas of archaeological features not detected by the geophysical survey are identified at detailed design stage and appropriate mitigation measures (including non-intrusive construction methods where necessary; and targeted excavation or watching brief where preservation in situ is not necessary) will be put in place to avoid significant effects and to offset any residual effects. Following implementation of mitigation measures to be secured through a DCO requirement for further archaeological trial trenching and a CEMP, significant effects will be avoided through detailed design of the Proposed Development or will be offset through a programme of archaeological work.
	5.9.18 Where appropriate, the Secretary of State will impose requirements on the Development Consent Order to ensure that the work is undertaken in a timely manner, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation that complies with the policy in this NPS and which has been agreed in writing with the relevant local authority, and to ensure that the completion of the exercise is properly secured.	A written scheme of archaeological investigation, which must accord with the **Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [EN010149/APP/7.15.3]** [REP4-038] will be secured by DCO Requirement 11.
	5.9.19 Where the loss of significance of any heritage asset has been justified by the applicant on the merits of the new development and the significance of the asset in question, the Secretary of State should consider:	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] assesses the likely impacts of the Proposed Development on cultural heritage, including direct and indirect, and temporary or permanent effects. There would be no significant adverse effects on designated or non-designated heritage assets. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on

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	• imposing a requirement in the Development Consent Order • requiring the applicant to enter into an obligation	Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument. A written scheme of archaeological investigation, which must accord with the **Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [EN010149/APP/7.15.3]** [REP4-038] will be secured by DCO Requirement 11.
	5.9.20 That will prevent the loss occurring until the relevant part of the development has commenced, or it is reasonably certain that the relevant part of the development is to proceed.	
	5.9.21 Where there is a high probability (based on an adequate assessment) that a development site may include, as yet undiscovered heritage assets with archaeological interest, the Secretary of State will consider requirements to ensure appropriate procedures are in place for the identification and treatment of such assets discovered during construction.	There is a slight risk that further currently unknown archaeological remains may be present within the Site. Such remains are likely to be small, discrete features not detectable by geophysical survey, and are considered more likely in proximity to the known assets. The limited ground intrusion caused by foundations for the Solar PV modules means that the risk of the Solar PV module supports / frame interacting with such features is negligible. A programme of further archaeological investigation secured by a DCO requirement and set out in the **Outline Written Scheme of Investigation [EN010149/APP/7.15.3]** [REP4-038] would ensure that areas of archaeological features not detected by the geophysical survey are identified at detailed design stage and appropriate mitigation measures (including non-intrusive foundations and above ground cabling put in place) to avoid significant effects and to off-set any likely pre-mitigation effects.
Secretary of State decision making	5.9.22 In determining applications, the Secretary of State should seek to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by the proposed development, including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset (including assets whose setting may be affected by the proposed development), taking account of:	Table 9.5 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] sets out the criteria for assessing the importance of heritage assets. The importance of a heritage asset is the overall value assigned to it reflecting its statutory designation or, in the case of non-designated assets, the professional judgement of the assessor with reference to national and local guidance and the planning policy tests. Historic England guidance also refers to an asset's "level of significance" which in this usage has the same meaning as importance. The significance of heritage assets within the study area is detailed in **ES Volume 3,**

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	• relevant information provided with the application and, where applicable, relevant information submitted during the examination of the application • any designation records, including those on the National Heritage List for England, or included on Cof Cymru for Wales. • historic landscape character records • the relevant Historic Environment Record(s), and similar sources of information • representations made by interested parties during the examination process • expert advice, where appropriate, and when the need to understand the significance of the heritage asset demands it	**Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk- Based Assessment and Stage 1 Setting Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.5]** [REP4-017] and [REP4-019].
	5.9.23 The Secretary of State must also comply with the requirements on listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments, set out in Regulation 3 of the Infrastructure Planning (Decisions) Regulations 2010.	It has been demonstrated that a decision to grant a DCO for the Proposed Development would have regard to the matters prescribed by Regulation 3 and 7 of the Infrastructure Planning (Decisions) Regulations 2010 (as amended) (Ref 15). The Proposed Development has regard to preserving heritage assets and their setting as set out in Section 8 of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] and **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012]**.**
	5.9.25 The Secretary of State should consider the desirability of sustaining and, where appropriate, enhancing the significance of heritage assets, the contribution of their settings and the positive contribution that their conservation can make to sustainable communities, including to their quality	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] assesses the likely impacts of the Proposed Development on cultural heritage, including direct and indirect, and temporary or permanent effects. There would be no significant adverse effects on designated or non-designated heritage assets. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on

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	of life, their economic vitality, and to the public's enjoyment of these assets.	Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument. There will be a minor beneficial impact, compared to the 'Do Nothing' scenario, of recovering any remains of the crashes at the WWII aeroplane crash sites (non-designated heritage assets MLI25416 and MLI25417) within the Satellite Collector Compound area and preserving the remainder from further disturbance by ploughing during the operational period of the Proposed Development.
	5.9.26 The Secretary of State should also consider the desirability of the new development making a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of the historic environment. The consideration of design should include scale, height, massing, alignment, materials, use and landscaping (for example, screen planting).	
	5.9.27 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, the Secretary of State should give great weight to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss, or less than substantial harm to its significance.	The Proposed Development is not likely to result in any significant adverse effects on cultural heritage. The design development has sensitively considered the key receptors throughout, and appropriate mitigation measures are embedded into the design. By implementing Good Design at the early stages of the process, the Proposed Development has avoided and minimised conflict with designated and non-designated heritage assets. Through the implementation of mitigation measures, all residual effects are assessed as not significant and equate to less than substantial harm on all designated and non-designated heritage assets impacted by the Proposed Development as set out in **Planning Statement Appendix 5: Heritage Harm Statement [EN010149/APP/6.2.3]** [REP4-023]. The Proposed Development design has been carefully considered to avoid, reduce, or mitigate potentially significant effects on cultural heritage and archaeology assets as set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028]. This resulted in a Proposed Development that avoids direct physical impact on any designated heritage assets. Whilst there will be some residual impacts resulting from changes to the setting of some designated heritage assets, these have been assessed to result in 'less than substantial harm' as the assessment in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk- Based Assessment and Stage 1 Setting Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.5]** [REP4-017] and [REP4-019].
	5.9.28 The Secretary of State should give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving all heritage assets. Any harm or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.	
	5.9.29 Substantial harm to or loss of significance of a grade II Listed Building or a grade II Registered Park or Garden should be exceptional.	
	5.9.30 Substantial harm to or loss of significance of assets of the highest significance, including Scheduled Monuments; Protected Wreck Sites;	

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	Registered Battlefields; grade I and II* Listed Buildings; grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens; and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.	Impacts upon the setting of heritage assets have been minimised by design modifications, with additional vegetation planted in the screen panels, so any residual effect is not significant and the harm to significance is considered to be less than substantial. The Proposed Development would cause harm to designated heritage assets by introducing changes within their setting, which will affect how the asset is experienced and understanding of the archaeological assets below ground. However, it confirms that the identified harm would be less than substantial harm based on the assessment set out in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.1: Archaeological Desk- Based Assessment and Stage 1 Setting Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.5]** [REP4-017] and [REP4-019] The Proposed Development results in minor changes to the setting of the remains of the former village of Brauncewell and proposes additional vegetation planting to screen panels from view which results in a negligible adverse effect which is not significant. Given the temporary and limited nature of the potential effect, the Applicant considers that the substantial benefits of the Proposed Development outweigh the impact in this regard. In recognising that the Proposed Development will result in harm of a 'less than substantial' nature, the key policy test is that such harm is weighted against the public benefits. Given the clear and urgent need to deploy renewable energy at speed and scale, the Proposed Development demonstrably gives rise to substantial public benefits, which outweigh the less than substantial harm identified. Further, the substantial public benefits and need for the Proposed Development, as set out in the Planning Statement, including the delivery of Critical National Priority (CNP) infrastructure to contribute towards meeting national energy security objectives and carbon reduction commitments, clearly and demonstrably outweigh the less than significant harm to cultural heritage assets.
	5.9.31 Where the proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset the Secretary of State should refuse consent unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm to, or loss of, significance is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all the following apply: • the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site • no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation • conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible • the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use	
	5.9.32 Where the proposed development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate securing its optimum viable use.	
	5.9.33 In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a	

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	balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.	
	5.9.34 Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 5.9.30 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 5.9.32, as appropriate, considering the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.	There are no World Heritage Sites affected by the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] identifies the Scopwick and Blankney Conservation Areas as relevant cultural heritage receptors for the impacts of the construction and operation of the Proposed Development. Mitigation measures documented within and secured by the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] and the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] will ensure that construction phase impacts on the conservation areas will be avoided. Visibility of the Proposed Development within the wider rural surroundings of the conservation areas would result in a minor reduction in their significance this impact would be further reduced by proposed planting which is detailed in **ES Volume 2, Figure 3.3: Green Infrastructure Parameter Plan [EN010149/APP/6.2.4]** [REP4-015] and will be secured within the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. These potential effects (which would equate to less than substantial harm) are not considered to be significant. The Proposed Development would not lead to any significant adverse effects on any of these conservation areas. The Proposed Development therefore does not lead to significant adverse effects to a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area, in accordance with this policy
	5.9.35 Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the Secretary of State should not take its deteriorated state into account in any decision.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] concludes there would be no significant impacts to any designated or non-designated heritage assets as a result of the Proposed Development once embedded and additional mitigation measures are implemented. Further, the

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	5.9.36 When considering applications for development affecting the setting of a designated heritage asset, the Secretary of State should give appropriate weight to the desirability of preserving the setting such assets and treat favourably applications that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, the asset. When considering applications that do not do this, the Secretary of State should give great weight to any negative effects, when weighing them against the wider benefits of the application. The greater the negative impact on the significance of the designated heritage asset, the greater the benefits that will be needed to justify approval.	proposed planting, that is designed to preserve open views, would contribute to the significance of the conservation area. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument.
Part 5.10 - Landscape and Visual *Applicant Assessment*	5.10.5 Virtually all nationally significant energy infrastructure projects will have adverse effects on the landscape, but there may also be beneficial landscape character impacts arising from mitigation. 5.10.6 Projects need to be designed carefully, taking account of the potential impact on the landscape. Having regard to siting, operational and other relevant constraints the aim should be to minimise harm to the landscape, providing reasonable mitigation where possible and appropriate.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] assesses the visual impact of the Proposed Development and concludes that during construction, operation (year 1) and decommissioning, residual significant effects are anticipated on LCA 7: The Limestone Heath and LCA 11: Central Clays and Gravels. During operation (year 10), significant effects are anticipated on LCA 11: Central Clays and Gravels. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] also concludes that during operation (year 10) and decommissioning, significant beneficial impacts are expected on the landscape fabric. It is considered that the wider benefits of the Proposed Development, including the delivery of a significant level of low carbon energy generation and biodiversity net gain and the provision of permissive footpaths and outweigh these impacts and that the Proposed Development is considered acceptable in terms of overall landscape, visual and residential amenity impacts and the nature of the visual impacts are not considered to outweigh the benefits of the Proposed Development.

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	5.10.7 National Parks, the Broads and AONBs have been confirmed by the government as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and natural beauty. Each of these designated areas has specific statutory purposes. Projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints. For development proposals located within designated landscapes the Secretary of State should be satisfied that measures which seek to further purposes of the designation are sufficient, appropriate and proportionate to the type and scale of the development.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] concludes that no part of the Site or its immediately surrounding context falls within a statutorily designated landscape. The nearest National Park or National Landscape (formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) to the Site is the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, located more than 20km to the north-east and this would not be affected by the Proposed Development.
	5.10.8 The duty to seek to further the purposes of nationally designated landscapes also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas which may have impacts within them. In these locations, projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints. The Secretary of State should be satisfied that measures which seek to further the purposes of the designation are sufficient, appropriate and proportionate to the type and scale of the development.	
	5.10.11 Development within a Heritage Coast (that is not also a National Park, The Broads or an AONB) is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with the natural beauty and special character of the area.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] concludes that no part of the Site or its immediately surrounding context falls within a Heritage Coast.

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	5.10.12 Outside nationally designated areas, there are local landscapes that may be highly valued locally. Where a local development document in England or a local development plan in Wales has policies based on landscape or waterscape character assessment, these should be paid particular attention. However, locally valued landscapes should not be used in themselves to refuse consent, as this may unduly restrict acceptable development.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] identifies that there are no local landscape designations covering any part of the Site. The nearest local designation is the Lincoln Cliff Area of Great Landscape Value; an escarpment west of and parallel to the A607 between Grantham and Lincoln.
	5.10.13 All proposed energy infrastructure is likely to have visual effects for many receptors around proposed sites.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] assesses the visual impact of the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 2 Figures 10.3a-d: Visual Receptors [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-066] demonstrate the landscape and visual receptors of the Proposed Development.
	5.10.14 The Secretary of State will have to judge whether the visual effects on sensitive receptors, such as local residents, and other receptors, such as visitors to the local area, outweigh the benefits of the project.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] assesses the visual impact of the Proposed Development. It is considered that the wider benefits of the Proposed Development, including the delivery of a significant level of low carbon energy generation and biodiversity net gain and the provision of permissive footpaths and outweigh these impacts and that the Proposed Development is considered acceptable in terms of overall landscape, visual and residential amenity impacts and the nature of the visual impacts are not considered to outweigh the benefits of the Proposed Development.
Applicant assessment	5.10.16 The applicant should carry out a landscape and visual impact assessment and report it in the ES, including cumulative effects (see Section 4.3). Several guides have been produced to assist in addressing landscape issues.	A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been undertaken and included within **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] in accordance with paragraph 5.10.16. It also includes references to local and national landscape character assessments and associated studies as a means of assessing landscape impacts. The cumulative effects of the Proposed Development on landscape and visual are assessed within **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Cumulative Effects [EN010149/APP/6.1.5]** [REP4-013]**.**
	5.10.17 The landscape and visual assessment should include reference to any landscape character assessment and associated studies as a	

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	means of assessing landscape impacts relevant to the proposed project. The applicant's assessment should also take account of any relevant policies based on these assessments in local development documents in England and local development plans in Wales.	
	5.10.18 For seascapes, applicants should consult the Seascape Character Assessment and the Marine Plan Seascape Character Assessments, and any successors to them.	There are no Seascape Character Assessment and the Marine Plan Seascape Character Assessments relevant to the Proposed Development.
	5.10.19 The applicant should consider landscape and visual matters in the early stages of siting and design, where site choices and design principles are being established. This will allow the applicant to demonstrate in the ES how negative effects have been minimised and opportunities for creating positive benefits or enhancement have been recognised and incorporated into the design, delivery and operation of the scheme.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] assesses the visual impact of the Proposed Development. The study area for the LVIA has been informed through a combination of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) analysis and site work. A series of ZTVs for different elements of the Proposed Development are presented in **ES Volume 2, Figures 10.5a-10.9 [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-066]**.** Potential landscape and visual effects and mitigation measures have been considered from the outset of the Proposed Development. This included early landscape and visual feasibility appraisal which fed into the site selection. Options appraisals helped to avoid adverse landscape and visual effects where possible and appropriate. Landscape and visual considerations have been one of the critical drivers for design decisions at all stages of the project. Landscape and visual matters have been addressed in the design as set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028]**.** **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] concludes that during construction, operation (year 1) and decommissioning, significant effects are anticipated on LCA 7: The Limestone Heath and LCA 11: Central Clays and Gravels. During operation (year 10), significant effects are anticipated on LCA 11: Central Clays and Gravels. It is considered that the wider benefits of the Proposed Development, including the delivery of significant level of
	5.10.20 The assessment should include the effects on landscape components and character during construction and operation. For projects which may affect a National Park, The Broads or an AONBs the assessment should include effects on the natural beauty and special qualities of these areas.	

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		low carbon energy generation and biodiversity net gain and the provision of permissive footpaths and outweigh these impacts and that the Proposed Development is considered acceptable in terms of overall landscape, visual and residential amenity impacts and the nature of the visual impacts are not considered to outweigh the benefits of the Proposed Development.
	5.10.21 The assessment should include the visibility and conspicuousness of the project during construction and of the presence and operation of the project and potential impacts on views and visual amenity. This should include light pollution effects, including on dark skies, local amenity, and nature conservation.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] assesses the visual impact of the Proposed Development. Through consultation with the relevant stakeholders, 40 assessment viewpoints were selected. The assessment viewpoint locations were agreed with North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council to represent the main landscape and visual receptors found in the study area. The Site is not in a recognised dark sky landscape. A night time assessment of effects on views has not been undertaken as a lighting assessment is not available. These representative viewpoints are illustrated in **ES Volume 2, Figure 10.4: Assessment Viewpoint and Photomontage Locations [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-110].
	5.10.22 The assessment should also address the landscape and visual effects of noise and light pollution, and other emissions (see Section 5.2 and Section 5.7), from construction and operational activities on residential amenity and on sensitive locations, receptors and views, how these will be minimised.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] outlines the security measures incorporated in the design of the Proposed Development design. Efforts have been made to reduce the impact of security fencing and lighting, as set out in detail in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030], **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], **oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]. Final versions of these documents will be produced and secured as part of the DCO. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] considers the effects of the impact of noise and vibration of the Proposed Development.
	5.10.24 Applicants should consider how landscapes can be enhanced using landscape management plans, as this will help to enhance	The DCO will secure a detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan based on the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] which would be implemented, and this would cover the establishment and long-term management of all new structural planting as well as other habitats. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape**

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	environmental assets where they contribute to landscape and townscape quality.	**and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] concludes that during operation (year 10) and decommissioning, significant beneficial impacts are expected on the landscape fabric.
	5.10.25 In considering visual effects it may be helpful for applicants to draw attention, in the supporting evidence to their applications, to any examples of existing permitted infrastructure they are aware of with a similar magnitude of impact on equally sensitive receptors. This may assist the Secretary of State in judging the weight they should give to the assessed visual impacts of the proposed development.	Section 10.5 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] establishes an environmental baseline for the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment, including existing OHE lines, quarries and road infrastructure in the landscape.
Mitigation	5.10.26 Reducing the scale of a project can help to mitigate the visual and landscape effects of a proposed project. However, reducing the scale or otherwise amending the design of a proposed energy infrastructure project may result in a significant operational constraint and reduction in function – for example, electricity generation output. There may, however, be exceptional circumstances, where mitigation could have a very significant benefit and warrant a small reduction in function. In these circumstances, the Secretary of State may decide that the benefits of the mitigation to reduce the landscape and/or visual effects outweigh the marginal loss of function.	The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] demonstrates how the Applicant has developed the design of the Proposed Development in accordance with the criteria for good design. This has included the establishment of Project Principles from the early stages of Proposed Development to guide decision making, provide a sensitive response to the local environment and reduce potential impacts via an iterative design process. With regard to landscape and visual effects, the design of the Proposed Development has been informed by a broad range of Project Principles including: the provision of appropriate offsets to local settlements and dwellings on a case-by-case basis (Principle 1.2); considering the views and the experience of people using the local roads (Principle 1.3); responding to the distinctive and unique local character of the site (Principle 2.2); maintaining the rural separation between the villages of Ashby de la Launde, RAF Digby, Scopwick, Kirkby Green and Blankney (Principle 2.3); and considering the views and the experience of people using local footpaths (Principle 5.3). A full list of Project Principles is provided in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] together with a summary of how the operational design of the Proposed Development has responded to each of them.
	5.10.27 Adverse landscape and visual effects may be minimised through appropriate siting of infrastructure within its development site and wider setting. The careful consideration of colours and materials will support the delivery of a well-	

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	designed scheme, as will sympathetic landscaping and management of its immediate surroundings.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] describes how the design of the Proposed Development responds to policy requirements, published landscape character assessments, stakeholder consultation and fieldwork analysis. It provides a full assessment of the landscape and visual effects of the Proposed Development and describes the embedded mitigation that has been incorporated into the design to reduce potential impacts. This includes offsets to sensitive receptors, provision of visual screening (in the form of new planting and an Earth Bund), landscape management prescriptions, and design commitments (colours and materials) in relation to the detailed design of the Proposed Development. Embedded mitigation would be secured by control documents contained within the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004] including: the spatial extents shown on the **Works Plans [EN010149/APP/2.3]** [APP-007] and Green Infrastructure Parameters shown in **Appendix 1** of the **oLEMP [EN01049/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030], the management prescriptions set out within the **oLEMP [EN01049/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030], and the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2**] [REP3-030].
	5.10.28 Depending on the topography of the surrounding terrain and areas of population it may be appropriate to undertake landscaping off site. For example, filling in gaps in existing tree and hedge lines may mitigate the impact when viewed from a more distant vista.	The Proposed Development will not undertake any landscaping off site as this is not considered necessary to mitigate the impacts of the Proposed Development
Secretary of State decision making	5.10.29 The Secretary of State should take into consideration the level of detailed design which the applicant has provided and is secured in the Development Consent Order, and the extent to which design details are subject to future approvals.	The applicant wishes to retain flexibility regarding the design detail of certain components of the Proposed Development. The extent of flexibility required is described in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022**]** and set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]**[REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]. Good design outcomes will be secured in the detailed design of the Proposed Development, in accordance with the ES assessment, via Control Documents

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		contained within the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004]. Adherence to the Control Documents will secure good design outcomes, uphold the conclusions of the ES, and provide flexibility. A full list of Control Documents is set out in the **Guide to the Application [EN010149/APP/1.2.6]** [REP4-002].
	5.10.30 The Secretary of State should be satisfied that local authorities will have sufficient design content secured to ensure future consenting will meet landscape, visual and good design objectives.	Good design outcomes will be secured in the detailed design of the Proposed Development, in accordance with the ES assessment, via Control Documents contained within the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004]. These documents provide sufficient certainty about the size and scale of the Proposed Development. Adherence to the Control Documents will secure good design outcomes, uphold the conclusions of the ES and provide for flexibility. A full list of Control Documents is set out in the **Guide to the Application [EN010149/APP/1.2.6]** [REP4-002].
	5.10.31 When considering visual impacts of thermal combustion generating stations, the Secretary of State should presume that the adverse impacts would be less if a hybrid or direct cooling system is used. The Secretary of State should therefore expect information in the application justifying BAT for the use of a cooling system that involves visible steam plumes or has a high visible structure, such as a natural draught cooling tower, and be satisfied that the application of modern hybrid cooling technology or other technologies is not reasonably practicable before giving consent to a development with natural draught cooling towers.	The Proposed Development is not a thermal combustion generating station.

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	5.10.32 When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and AONBs the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty should be given substantial weight by the Secretary of State in deciding on applications for development consent in these areas. The Secretary of State may grant development consent in these areas in exceptional circumstances. Such development should be demonstrated to be in the public interest and consideration of such applications should include an assessment of: • the need for the development, including in terms of national considerations, and the impact of consenting or not consenting it upon the local economy; • the cost of, and scope for, developing all or part of the development elsewhere outside the designated area or meeting the need for it in some other way, taking account of the policy on alternatives set out in Section 4.3; and • any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.	No part of the Site or its immediate surrounding context falls within a statutory designated landscape. The nearest National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)) or National Park to the Site is the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape which is located more than 20km to the northeast. The Proposed Development will have no impact on these locations.
	5.10.33 For development proposals located within designated landscapes the Secretary of State should be satisfied that measures which seek to further purposes of the designation are sufficient, appropriate and proportionate to the type and scale of the development. The Secretary of State should	

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	ensure that any projects consented in these designated areas should be carried out to high environmental standards, including through the application of appropriate requirements where necessary.	
	5.10.34 The duty to seek to further the purposes of nationally designated landscapes also applies when considering applications for projects outside the boundaries of these areas, which may have impacts within them. The aim should be to avoid harming the purposes of designation or to minimise adverse effects on designated landscapes, and such projects should be designed sensitively given the various siting, operational, and other relevant constraints. The fact that a proposed project will be visible from within a designated area should not in itself be a reason for the Secretary of State to refuse consent.	
	5.10.35 The scale of energy projects means that they will often be visible across a very wide area. The Secretary of State should judge whether any adverse impact on the landscape would be so damaging that it is not offset by the benefits (including need) of the project.	It is considered that the wider benefits of the Proposed Development, including the delivery of a significant level of low carbon energy generation and biodiversity net gain and the provision of permissive footpaths and outweigh these impacts and that the Proposed Development is considered acceptable in terms of overall landscape, visual and residential amenity impacts and the nature of the visual impacts are not considered to outweigh the benefits of the Proposed Development.
	5.10.36 In reaching a judgement, the Secretary of State should consider whether any adverse impact is temporary, such as during construction, and/or whether any adverse impact on the landscape will be capable of being reversed in a timescale that the Secretary of State considers reasonable.	Construction and decommissioning stage impacts will be for a relatively short duration, and operational effects beginning at Year 1 will reduce over time as mitigation planting establishes. The change to the landscape character, via the introduction of solar panels and associated infrastructure is considered to be localised. The reduction of effects over time and the reversibility of effects should be taken into consideration when reaching a judgement on the Application.

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		All operational effects will be reversed following 40 years of operation which will be secured by the DCO, and all adverse landscape and visual effects identified during the construction and decommissioning phases are short term and temporary. The Proposed Development has sought to minimise impacts through design iteration. The substantial benefits and need for the Proposed Development as set out in Section 3 of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018], including the delivery of Critical National Priority (CNP) Infrastructure to contribute towards meeting national energy objectives outweighs the residual landscape effects when applying the planning balancing exercise to the Proposed Development with no requirement to demonstrate exceptional circumstances given that the presumption for allowing the DCO.
	5.10.37 The Secretary of State should consider whether the project has been designed carefully, taking account of environmental effects on the landscape and siting, operational and other relevant constraints, to minimise harm to the landscape, including by appropriate mitigation.	The Proposed Development has been designed taking into account the environmental effects on the landscape, siting, operational and other relevant constraints, to minimise adverse impacts on the landscape, including by appropriate mitigation. This is outlined in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] and the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030].
	5.10.38 The Secretary of State should consider whether requirements to the consent are needed requiring the incorporation of particular design details that are in keeping with the statutory and technical requirements for landscape and visual impacts.	The **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] and the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] will secure the design of the Proposed Development through the DCO, in line with statutory and technical requirements
Part 5.11 Land Use, Including Open Space, Green Infrastructure, and Green Belt *Applicant Assessment*	5.11.8 The ES (see Section 4.3) should identify existing and proposed land uses near the project, any effects of replacing an existing development or use of the site with the proposed project or preventing a development or use on a neighbouring site from continuing. Applicants should also assess any effects of precluding a new development or use proposed in the development plan. The	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] identifies the existing land uses within the Order limits, confirming that majority of the land is under agricultural use. The **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] identifies the Local Development Plan allocations and designations within and adjacent to the end Order limits. The site has been selected and designed to avoid designated areas. A proportion of the Site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) through a

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	assessment should be proportionate to the scale of the preferred scheme and its likely impacts on such receptors. For developments on previously developed land, the applicant should ensure that they have considered the risk posed by land contamination and how it is proposed to address this.	Local Plan Policy requirement. **Appendix 2** and **Appendix 3** of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] provide a comprehensive assessment, which should be read in conjunction with this section. The surrounding land is also predominantly agricultural. The Proposed Development is not considered to impact the continued use of this land for agricultural purposes. A community growing area is proposed north of Scopwick. The community growing area will improve access to green open space which has associated physical and mental health and wellbeing benefits. The area also has the potential to increase sense of place and community and reduce severance by bringing the community together over a mutual interest.
	5.11.9 Applicants will need to consult the local community on their proposals to build on existing open space, sports or recreational buildings and land. Taking account of the consultations, applicants should consider providing new or additional open space including green and blue infrastructure, sport or recreation facilities, to substitute for any losses as a result of their proposal. When considering proposals for green infrastructure, Applicant's should refer to the Green Infrastructure Framework.	The Proposed Development does not impact any open space, sports or recreational buildings or land.
	5.11.10 Applicants should use any up-to-date local authority assessment or, if there is none, provide an independent assessment to show whether the existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land is surplus to requirements.	
	5.11.11 During any pre-application discussions with the applicant the LPA should identify any concerns it has about the impacts of the application on land use, having regard to the development plan and	**Appendix J1-J2** of the **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.2]** [APP-028] sets out the discussions between the applicant and the LPA about land use.

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	relevant applications and including, where relevant, whether it agrees with any independent assessment that the land is surplus to requirements.	
	5.11.12 Applicants should seek to minimise impacts on the best and most versatile agricultural land (defined as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification) and preferably use land in areas of poorer quality (grades 3b, 4 and 5).	The Applicant has developed the design of the Proposed Development to prioritise the use of BMV land for arable production where practicable. This has been assessed through **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] and has included amendments to the Order Limits and potential areas for Solar Development. The **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] sets out how the Applicant has sought to avoid and reduce the amount of BMV land used for hard infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development. However, given the context of the quality of land locally and within the Order Limits it has not been practicable to remove all BMV. Within the Order limits, a total of 231.7ha of BMV land are proposed to accommodate Solar PV arrays or associated infrastructure. This is land which will not be available as an agricultural resource, aside from potential use as grazing land for a period of approximately (including construction and decommissioning) 40 years. As secured within the **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] all of this infrastructure would be removed at commissioning stage. The Applicant has also sought to reduce the amount of BMV land used for permanent green infrastructure (e.g. woodland planting, new hedgerows). The Proposed Development includes proposed green infrastructure on 77ha of BMV land. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] sets out that agricultural land quality was a key consideration in the Applicant's site selection process. The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] establish the agricultural land design principles that incorporate the following: • Fields comprising solely of Grade 1 or 2 land within the Site will remain available for arable production; • Prioritise the use of BMV land for arable production where practicable; and

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		• Prioritise the use on non-BMV land for habitat creation where practicable.
	5.11.13 Applicants should also identify any effects and seek to minimise impacts on soil health and protect and improve soil quality taking into account any mitigation measures proposed.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] identifies any effects on soil health and sets out the embedded mitigation measures which minimise impacts on soil health protect and improve soil quality.
	5.11.14 Applicants are encouraged to develop and implement a Soil Management Plan which could help minimise potential land contamination. The sustainable reuse of soils needs to be carefully considered in line with good practice guidance where large quantities of soils are surplus to requirements or are affected by contamination.	An **outline Soil Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042] has been prepared which sets out the measures to manage any potential impacts to the soil (and agricultural land) during the construction, operational (including maintenance) and decommissioning phases, and will be secured by DCO requirement. The **outline Soil Management Plan** [REP3-042] identifies those areas within the Site which may be more susceptible to damage, for example, the temporary access tracks, construction compounds and steep slopes and qualities of the soil, for example when it is wet or after periods of heavy rainfall or high winds and it will advise on when soils are suitable for being handled or trafficked. The **outline Soil Management Plan** [REP3-042] also details measures for soil management and follow the principles of best practice to maintain the physical properties of the soil, with the aim of restoring the land to its pre-construction condition following the temporary construction use and at the end of the lifetime of the Proposed Development.
	5.11.15 Developments should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing new and existing developments from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.	The effects of Proposed Development on the natural and local environment considered in the Chapters **6 to 16** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1].** The Proposed Development does not anticipate any adverse or beneficial significant effects in its own right or cumulatively with other developments on air quality, noise, water resources, land contamination or land instability.

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	5.11.16 Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans.	Opportunities for environmental enhancement are further detailed in the **Design Approach Document** [**EN010149/APP/7.3.3**] [REP3-028] and will be secured by the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030], **oCEMP [EN010149/APP7.7.5]** [REP4-025], **oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035].
	5.11.17 Applicants should ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use, taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] assesses the impact on ground conditions. There is not expected to be any likely significant effects associated with ground conditions. Best practice and bespoke mitigation measures will be carried out during construction, operation and decommissioning to reduce nuisance impacts from dust generation, soil removal and waste generation and avoid impact on ground conditions.
	5.11.18 For developments on previously developed land, applicants should ensure that they have considered the risk posed by land contamination, and where contamination is present, applicants should consider opportunities for remediation where possible. It is important to do this as early as possible as part of engagement with the relevant bodies before the official pre-application stage.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] outlines that the Site has largely remained undeveloped throughout its entire history, except for localised construction of minor structures, tracks, paths and access roads. Numerous stone pits, gravel pits and small quarries are shown to be distributed across the Site.
	5.11.19 Applicants should safeguard any mineral resources on the proposed site as far as possible, taking into account the long-term potential of the land use after any future decommissioning has taken place.	The **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] identifies that a proportion of the Site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA). A Mineral Safeguarding Report is provided as Appendix 4 to the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018]. The Proposed Development will be decommissioned after 40 years of operation, and any impacts caused by the Proposed Development related to land use are considered reversible and temporary. The minerals within the Order limits will not be permanently sterilised, and post-decommissioning, the land could be worked for minerals.

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Mitigation	5.11.23 Although in the case of most energy infrastructure there may be little that can be done to mitigate the direct effects of an energy project on the existing use of the proposed site (assuming that some of that use can still be retained post project construction) applicants should nevertheless seek to minimise these effects and the effects on existing or planned uses near the site by the application of good design principles, including the layout of the project and the protection of soils during construction.	The existing use of the site is mainly agricultural land. Agricultural land quality was a key consideration in the Applicant's site selection process. The Applicant has developed the design of the Proposed Development to prioritise the use of BMV land for arable production where practicable. This has been assessed through **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] and has included amendments to the Order Limits and potential areas for Solar Development. Agricultural land quality was a key consideration in the Applicant's site selection process as set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]. The agricultural land design principles incorporate the following: • All fields comprising solely of Grade 1 or 2 land within the site will remain in arable production; • Prioritise the use of BMV land for arable production where practicable. All Grade 1 land within the Order Limits has been discounted from Solar PV Development and would remain in arable production; and • Prioritise the use of non-BMV land for habitat creation where practicable. Although the Proposed Development is to be operational for a long term, it will be temporary with a Requirement in Schedule 2 of the **draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004] securing a time limited consent for 40 years.
	5.11.24 Where green infrastructure is affected, the Secretary of State should consider imposing requirements to ensure the functionality and connectivity of the green infrastructure network is maintained in the vicinity of the development and that any necessary works are undertaken, where possible, to mitigate any adverse impact and, where appropriate, to improve that network and other areas of open space including appropriate	The Proposed Development would incorporate a number of green infrastructure proposals, as set out in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. The green infrastructure proposed is illustrated in **ES Volume 2, Figure 3.3: Green Infrastructure Parameters Plan [EN010149/APP/6.2.4]** [REP4-015]. A number of existing PRoW traverse the Proposed Development and are presented in Table 14.18 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] and have been illustrated in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123] and **the**

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	access to National Trails and other public rights of way and new coastal access routes.	**Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044]. The **Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan** [REP3-044] sets out the mitigation, management, and monitoring measures for PRoW affected by construction which may require temporary diversion/closure, or alternative routing where the former is not possible. The Proposed Development includes opportunities for enhancement such as proposals to provide three new PRoW and four permissive paths, as well as improvements to existing PRoW.
	5.11.27 Existing trees and woodlands should be retained wherever possible. In the EIP, the Government committed to increase the tree canopy and woodland cover to 16.5% of total land area of England by 2050. The applicant should assess the impacts on, and loss of, all trees and woodlands within the project boundary and develop mitigation measures to minimise adverse impacts and any risk of net deforestation as a result of the scheme. Mitigation may include, but is not limited to, the use of buffers to enhance resilience, improvements to connectivity, and improved woodland management. Where woodland loss is unavoidable, compensation schemes will be required, and the long-term management and maintenance of newly planted trees should be secured	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] sets out that vegetation clearance will be limited as the Site has been designed to leave an offset from existing vegetation. The chapter confirms that woodland, tree and hedgerow vegetation within the Order Limits would be retained. The **oCEMP [EN010149/APP7.7.5]** [REP4-025] will ensure that all existing hedgerows, trees and woodland will be retained and protected during construction, except where removal is indicated on the vegetation removal plans shown in **ES Volume 3 Figure 3.11: Vegetation Removal Parameters [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [*APP-060*]**.** The **oDEMP [EN010149/APP7.13.5]** [REP4-035] will ensure that existing and established hedgerows, trees and woodland will be retained and protected during decommissioning (except where removal is required to facilitate decommissioning). **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] conducts an assessment of the visual impact of the Proposed Development, including assessing the impacts on, and loss of, all trees and woodlands. In terms of vegetation removal, a worst- case assumption has been made that all vegetation shown as in **ES Volume 3 Figure 3.11: Vegetation Removal Parameters [EN010149/APP/6.2.4]** [REP4-015] would be removed. It is assumed that all other woodland, tree and hedgerow vegetation within the Order Limits would be retained. The **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] sets out mitigation measures including that all internal access tracks and cable routes will use existing tracks,

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		crossings and / or gaps in the hedgerows wherever practicable and that the proposed development is committed to replacement of all trees that are lost post-construction. The **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] sets out mitigation measures including a minimum 15m offset from the Proposed Development to existing woodland and a minimum 10m offset from the Proposed Development to all retained existing hedgerows.
	5.11.28 Where a proposed development has an impact upon a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA), the Secretary of State should ensure that appropriate mitigation measures have been put in place to safeguard mineral resources.	The **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] identifies that a proportion of the Site is located within a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA). A **Mineral Safeguarding Report** is provided as **Appendix 2** to the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018].
	5.11.29 Where a project has a sterilising effect on land use (for example in some cases under transmission lines) there may be scope for this to be mitigated through, for example, using or incorporating the land for nature conservation or wildlife corridors or for parking and storage in employment areas.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] sets out that Minerals has been scoped out of the EIA. **Appendix 2: Minerals Safeguarding Assessment** forms a part of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] which has been submitted in support of the DCO. On the basis the Proposed Development has a lifespan of 40 years and due to the Proposed Development being decommissioned at the end of its operational life, any minerals would not be permanently sterilised and would be available to exploit if required at a future date. The minerals within the Order limits will not be permanently sterilised, and post-decommissioning, the land could be worked for minerals. The Proposed Development is reservable by nature.
	5.11.30 Public Rights of way, National Trails, and other rights of access to land are important recreational facilities for example for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. The Secretary of State should expect applicants to take appropriate mitigation measures to address adverse effects on coastal access, National Trails, other rights of way and open access land and, where appropriate, to consider what opportunities there may be to	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development's impact on public rights of way within the Order Limits, or that will be impacted by the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development includes opportunities for enhancement such as proposals to provide three new PRoW and four permissive paths, as well as improvements to existing PRoW.

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	improve or create new access. In considering revisions to an existing right of way, consideration should be given to the use, character, attractiveness, and convenience of the right of way.	A number of existing PRoW traverse the Proposed Development and are presented in Table 14.18 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] and have been illustrated in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123] and **the Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044]. The **Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan** [REP3-044] sets out the mitigation, management, and monitoring measures for PRoW affected by construction, which may require temporary diversion/closure or alternative routing where the former is not possible.
	5.11.31 The Secretary of State should consider whether the mitigation measures put forward by an applicant are acceptable and whether requirements or other	Section 14.7 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [AS-010] sets out the mitigation measures embedded in the Proposed Development, including that the Proposed Development seeks to protect and enhance the existing PRoW network and ensure the provision of new and improved multi-user routes. These PRoW are outlined in the **Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044].
Secretary of State Decision Making	5.11.32 The Secretary of State should not grant consent for development on existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land unless an assessment has been undertaken either by the local authority or independently, which has shown the open space or the buildings and land to be surplus to requirements or the Secretary of State determines that the benefits of the project (including need), outweigh the potential loss of such facilities, taking into account any positive proposals made by the applicant to provide new, improved or compensatory land or facilities.	The Proposed Development does not propose development on existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land.

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	5.11.33 The loss of playing fields should only be allowed where applicants can demonstrate that they will be replaced with facilities of equivalent or better quantity or quality in a suitable location.	The Proposed Development does not involve the loss of playing fields.
	5.11.34 The Secretary of State should ensure that applicants do not site their scheme on the best and most versatile agricultural land without justification. Where schemes are to be sited on best and most versatile agricultural land the Secretary of State should take into account the economic and other benefits of that land. Where development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.	Chapter 8 of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] sets out how the Applicant considered agricultural land, and particularly BMV land, in its site selection process, noting that of the sites identified which met the Applicant's objectives, all presented similar or higher quantities of BMV in comparison to the Proposed Development. It is also important to recognise that while ALC was an important consideration in site selection, it was one of several factors which were balanced to determine a favoured site. Given that the other sites identified by the Applicant during site selection displayed similar ALC qualities, this was not a determining factor in the choice of site location. During design development the Applicant set out Project Principles aimed to avoid and reduce the use of higher quality land within the Order Limits for development. As set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] **Project** Principles 7.1 and 7.2 relate to BMV land and state that: • 8.1: Fields comprising solely of Grade 1 or 2 land within the Site will remain in arable production. • Prioritise the use of BMV land for arable production where practicable. • Prioritise the use on non-BMV land for the habitat creation where practicable. In terms of the economic impact of BMV, the BMV used for hard infrastructure within the Proposed Development represents 4% of the total wider landholding within Blankney Estate. The Proposed Development has been designed so as not to conflict with the wider business functions, and the income generated from land rental will play an important part in securing the ongoing viability of the estate.

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Part 5.12 - Noise and Vibration *Applicant Assessment*	5.12.6 Where noise impacts are likely to arise from the proposed development, the applicant should include the following in the noise assessment:
	• a description of the noise generating aspects of the development proposal leading to noise impacts, including the identification of any distinctive tonal characteristics, if the noise is impulsive, whether the noise contains particular high or low frequency content or any temporal characteristics of the noise
	• identification of noise sensitive receptors and noise sensitive areas that may be affected
	• the characteristics of the existing noise environment
	• a prediction of how the noise environment will change with the proposed development
	  ○ in the shorter term, such as during the construction period
	  ○ in the longer term, during the operating life of the infrastructure
	  ○ at particular times of the day, evening and night (and weekends) as appropriate, and at different times of year
	• an assessment of the effect of predicted changes in the noise environment on any noise-sensitive receptors, including an assessment of any likely impact on health and quality of life / well-being where appropriate, particularly among those
		ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2] [REP3-010] presents a noise assessment in accordance with the requirements of this policy, including a description of the noise generating aspects of the development.
		
		Section 12.4 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] outlines the noise-sensitive receptors that have been identified through a desktop study of aerial imagery and mapping and are presented in **ES Volume 2, Figure 12.1: Receptors Assessed** of the **ES Volume 2 [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-068] and are summarised in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010]. The effect of noise and vibration on these receptors have been considered during the construction, decommissioning and operational phases of the Proposed Development.
		
		Section 12.5 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] describes the existing characteristics of the noise environment for the Proposed Development and surrounding areas.
		
		Section 12.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] describes the embedded design mitigation relevant to the Proposed Development with respect to noise and vibration, encompassing the construction, operational and decommissioning phases.
		
		Sections 12.7 and 12.9 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] assess the noise and vibration likely effects and residual effects, respectively, on receptors arising from the construction, decommissioning, and operating life of the infrastructure including at particular times of the day and at night on the noise environment.

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	disadvantaged by other factors who are often disproportionately affected by noise-sensitive areas • if likely to cause disturbance, an assessment of the effect of underwater or subterranean noise • all reasonable steps taken to mitigate and minimise potential adverse effects on health and quality of life	
	5.12.7 The nature and extent of the noise assessment should be proportionate to the likely noise impact.	The noise assessment is proportionate to the likely noise impact, which would be managed through the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] during construction and would be limited by the nature of the Proposed Development and very small amount of traffic generated during operation.
	5.12.8 Applicants should consider the noise impact of ancillary activities associated with the development, such as increased road and rail traffic movements, or other forms of transportation.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] considers the noise impact of ancillary activities associated with the development, such as increased road and rail traffic movements, or other forms of transportation. It concludes that with the implementation of mitigation measures significant adverse noise and vibration effects during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development will be avoided at sensitive receptors. Mitigation measures have been embedded into the Proposed Development's design and construction methodology to minimise adverse effects where practicable, as set out in Section 12.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010]**.** A number of measures which will be secured within the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**, oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] seek to mitigate the noise level impact from the construction and decommissioning phases.

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	5.12.9 Operational noise, with respect to human receptors, should be assessed using the principles of the relevant British Standards and other guidance. Further information on assessment of particular noise sources may be contained in the technology specific NPSs. In particular, for renewables (EN-3) and electricity networks (EN-5) there is assessment guidance for specific features of those technologies. For the prediction, assessment and management of construction noise, reference should be made to any relevant British Standards and other guidance which also give examples of mitigation strategies.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] assesses operational noise at the identified sensitive noise receptors following BS 4142 guidance, BS 8233:2014 and World Health Organisation guidance. Construction and decommissioning noise and vibration impacts have been assessed per Annex E of British Standards 5228-1.
	5.12.10 Some noise impacts will be controlled through environmental permits and parallel tracking is encouraged where noise impacts determined by an environmental permit interface with planning issues (i.e. physical design and location of development). The applicant should consult the EA and/or the SNCB, and other relevant bodies, such the MMO or NRW, as necessary, and in particular regarding assessment of noise on protected species or other wildlife. The results of any noise surveys and predictions may inform the ecological assessment. The seasonality of potentially affected species in nearby sites may also need to be considered.	The **Schedule of Other Consents and Licences [EN010149/APP/3.3]** [APP-014] has been prepared as part of the DCO application (DCO Application) and should be read in conjunction with the other documents submitted with the DCO Application. The purpose of this document is to provide information on the additional consents and licences potentially required for the Proposed Development, in addition to the DCO. The **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.1]** [APP-019] sets out the Natural England did not comment on noise during consultation.
	5.12.11 In the marine environment, applicants should consider noise impacts on protected species, as well as other noise sensitive receptors, both at the individual project level and in-combination with other marine activities.	The Proposed Development does not affect marine environment.

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	5.12.12 Applicants should submit a detailed impact assessment and mitigation plan as part of any development plan, including the use of noise mitigation and noise abatement technologies during construction and operation.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] provides a detailed impact assessment and proposed mitigations for noise and vibration impacts.
Mitigation	5.12.13 The Secretary of State should consider whether mitigation measures are needed both for operational and construction noise over and above any which may form part of the project application. In doing so the Secretary of State may wish to impose mitigation measures. Any such mitigation measures should take account of the NPPF or any successor to it and the Planning Practice Guidance on Noise. 5.12.14 Mitigation measures may include one or more of the following: engineering: reducing the noise generated at source and/or containing the noise generated lay-out: where possible, optimising the distance between the source and noise-sensitive receptors and/or incorporating good design to minimise noise transmission through the use of screening by natural or purpose-built barriers, or other buildings administrative: using planning conditions/obligations to restrict activities allowed on the site at certain times and/or specifying permissible noise limits/noise levels, differentiating as appropriate between different times of day, such as evenings and late at night, and taking into	Section 12.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] details the embedded mitigation measures that have been embedded into the Proposed Development's design and construction methodology to minimise adverse effects where practicable. The Applicant is specifically committing to noise related design principles including a minimum 250m offset from ITS, BESS, Project Substations and Collector Compounds to residential properties. The likely noise impact would be managed through the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] during construction and would be limited by the nature of the Proposed Development and very small amount of traffic generated during operation. In addition, consideration has been given to traffic routing, timing and access points to the Proposed Development to minimise noise impacts at existing receptors and the management of construction traffic on the highway network through the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028], which will inform a detailed CTMP to be secured through the DCO. These mitigation measures have taken account of the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance on Noise.

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	account seasonality of wildlife in nearby designated sites insulation: mitigating the impact on areas likely to be affected by noise including through noise insulation when the impact is on a building.	
	5.12.15 The project should demonstrate good design through selection of the quietest or most acceptable cost-effective plant available; containment of noise within buildings wherever possible, taking into account any other adverse impacts that such containment might cause (e.g. on landscape and visual impacts; optimisation of plant layout to minimise noise emissions; and, where possible, the use of landscaping, bunds or noise barriers to reduce noise transmission).	The Proposed Development has demonstrated good design through the inclusion of noise and vibration mitigation measures. Section 12.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] details the embedded mitigation measures for the operational phase. Embedded mitigation measures that will be applied includes (but is not limited to) consideration of • **ES Volume 3, Appendix 12.2: Construction Noise Plant Tables and Results [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-121] details the potential impacts of construction noise from the Proposed Development; and • Design layout of elements within the draft Order Limits to minimise noise at receptors. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] sets out an assessment of how the Proposed Development's design, which includes embedded mitigation measures, will have an effect on landscape and visual impacts, and sets out any necessary mitigation measures. A 4m high noise attenuation barrier would be erected around the BESS.
	5.12.16 A development must be undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements for noise. Due regard must be given to the relevant sections of the Noise Policy Statement for England, the NPPF, and the government's associated planning guidance on noise. In Wales the relevant policy will be PPW and the TANs, as well as the Welsh Government's Noise and Soundscape Action Plan	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] considers relevant sections of the Noise Policy Statement, the NPPF, and the government's associated planning guidance on noise, within its assessment.

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Secretary of State decision making	5.12.17 The Secretary of State should not grant development consent unless they are satisfied that the proposals will meet the following aims, through the effective management and control of noise: • avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise • mitigate and minimise other adverse impacts on health and quality of life from noise • where possible, contribute to improvements to health and quality of life through the effective management and control of noise.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] assesses the likely impacts of the Proposed Development of noise and vibration, including temporary and permanent effects. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration** [REP3-010] outlines that there are no significant effects associated with construction noise or construction traffic. Therefore, there will be no significant effects to human receptors as a result of noise and vibration.
	5.12.18 When preparing the Development Consent Order, the Secretary of State should consider including measurable requirements or specifying the mitigation measures to be put in place to ensure that noise levels do not exceed any limits specified in the development consent. These requirements or mitigation measures may apply to the construction, operation, and decommissioning of the energy infrastructure development.	Section 12.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] outlines the embedded mitigation measure included in the Proposed Development including: • A 4m high barrier has been included around the BESS Compound, with a 6m high absorbent barrier positioned around the west, north and east faces of the Springwell Substation transformers; • Springwell Substation, BESS, Collector Compounds, Standalone Inverter, Transformer and Switchgear and ITS (part of the balance of solar system plant comprised in Work No. 1) will be offset at least 250m from residential properties; • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 15m from existing woodlands; • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 10m either side from all existing hedgerows; • Built development above ground will be offset at least 20m from Local Wildlife Sites except for highways improvement works; • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 30m from main badger setts;

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		• Independent Outdoor Equipment (transformer, switchgear and central inverters) and ITS will be offset at least 50m from all existing and proposed statutory PRoW; and • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 15m from either side of existing and proposed statutory PRoW. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] ensures that by adopting the additional control measures outlined above, it is considered that noise levels from all construction activities would not exceed 65 dB LAeq,T at any of the receptors considered. Through inclusion of the embedded mitigation and optimisation of proposed operational plant items, predicted noise levels throughout daytime and night-time periods from the operational Proposed Development would not exceed 35 dB LAr at any receptors.
Part 5.13 - Socio-economic *Applicant Assessment*	5.13.2 Where the project is likely to have socio-economic impacts at local or regional levels, the applicant should undertake and include in their application an assessment of these impacts as part of the ES (see Section 4.3).	An assessment of these impacts is undertaken in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016]**.**
	5.13.3 The applicant is strongly encouraged to engage with relevant local authorities during early stages of project development so that the applicant can gain a better understanding of local or regional issues and opportunities.	The Applicant has engaged with North Kesteven District Council (NKDC) and Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), as outlined in Section 13.3 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016]**.** Details on the feedback received from statutory consultation and the response to each matter raised and how this has been addressed in detail are in **Appendix A-4, J-1, J-2 and K-3** of the **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.2]** [APP-020] [APP-028] [APP-029]**.**
	5.13.4 The applicant's assessment should consider all relevant socio-economic impacts, which may include: • the creation of jobs and training opportunities. Applicants may wish to	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] provides an assessment of all potential socio-economic impacts of the Proposed Development, in accordance with this policy.

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	provide information on the sustainability of the jobs created, including where they will help to develop the skills needed for the UK's transition to Net Zero • the contribution to the development of low-carbon industries at the local and regional level as well as nationally • the provision of additional local services and improvements to local infrastructure, including the provision of educational and visitor facilities • any indirect beneficial impacts for the region hosting the infrastructure, in particular in relation to use of local support services and supply chains • effects (positive and negative) on tourism and other users of the area impacted • the impact of a changing influx of workers during the different construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the energy infrastructure. This could change the local population dynamics and could alter the demand for services and facilities in the settlements nearest to the construction work (including community facilities and physical infrastructure such as energy, water, transport and waste). There could also be effects on social cohesion depending on how populations and service provision change as a result of the development	To help maximise the positive gain for the local economy from the beneficial effect arising from employment generation during the construction and operational (including maintenance) phase, an **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [EN010149/APP/7.20]** [APP-0153] supports the DCO Application. As set out in the **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [EN010149/APP/7.20]** [APP-0153]**,** The Proposed Development will provide construction job opportunities over the anticipated four-year construction programme. The (gross) peak number of approximately 650 workers refers to the number of workers that may be on site at any one time. The average is 400 workers over the four-year construction period. The jobs created will be in the renewable energy sector and will contribute to the development of skills needed for the UK's transition. This details commitments to work with partners and the local and regional construction supply chain to enhance the proportion of activities that can be accessed by local people (both in employment, unemployed and economically inactive or outside of the current labour market) and firms with relevant experience and competencies. The main objectives of the **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [EN010149/APP/7.20]** [APP-0153] are detailed below: • Demonstrate the use of local labour from within the lead contractor's organisation; • Where economically and practically feasible, procure goods and services from local contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers to support the employment of the local community; • Demonstrate recruitment and training opportunities within the lead contractor's organisation and provide opportunities for upskilling local people; • Provide opportunities for local residents to access employment opportunities created during the construction phase; and • Support the development of skills within the local community.

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	• cumulative effects - if development consent were to be granted for a number of projects within a region and these were developed in a similar timeframe, there could be some short-term negative effects, for example a potential shortage of construction workers to meet the needs of other industries and major projects within the region	The **Outline Employment, and Skills and Supply Chain Plan [EN010149/APP/7.20]** [APP-0153] would seek to promote local employment and supply chain activities such that leakage may be reduced, promoting more local and targeted opportunities for employment. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] assesses the impacts of the Proposed Development on Tourism. The assessment concludes that the construction phase may have effects on the tourist economy as a result of impacts to visitor experience and behaviours, and linked impacts to tourism business receptor performance, resulting from visual and noise construction effects. Adverse impacts to tourism will mostly be temporary and experienced by users of PRoW and the Stepping Out network within and closest to the Order Limits. The assessment concludes that there is a slight adverse likely impact of the Proposed Development on tourism, which is not significant in EIA terms. Section 5.9 of **Chapter 16: Cumulative Effects** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1.5]** [REP4-013] assesses the cumulative impact on population effects.
	5.13.5 Applicants should describe the existing socio-economic conditions in the areas surrounding the proposed development and should also refer to how the development's socio-economic impacts correlate with local planning policies.	Section 13.5 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Cumulative Effects [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] describes the existing socio-economic baseline conditions of the Study Area. The land use within the Order Limits comprises mostly land that is used for agricultural purposes. The farming operations are expected to remain operational through all stages of the Proposed Development. There are also various PRoW, permissive paths and routes of the Stepping Out network that traverse the Order Limits or run adjacent to the Order Limits. Many of these networks are used for tourist recreational activities and increase access to rural environments. The Stepping Out network appears to be of particular significance to the tourist economy and is heavily endorsed by the North Kesteven tourism office.

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		The majority of tourist receptors referenced within the North Kesteven Heart of Lincs Visitor Guide are beyond the study area and therefore impacts to amenity from these receptors during operation (including maintenance) and construction is likely to be minimal. The RAF Digby site is located adjacent to the Order Limits, which is a popular tourist attraction associated with the aviation heritage of North Kesteven. Due to the rural location of the Proposed Development, there are a number of small, privately run accommodation providers within the 20km radius study area. Accommodation providers with a large number of beds are located in the nearest major settlement of Lincoln, approximately 14 miles from the Order Limits. There are 12 solar farms and energy parks in the pre-application or decision phase located within Lincolnshire. 11 of the 12 solar farms are proposed to be built on land classed as BMV land. The Proposed Development's compliance with local policies is considered in Table 6 of **Appendix 3** of this **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018]**.**
	5.13.6 Socio-economic impacts may be linked to other impacts, for example visual impacts considered in Section 5.10 but may also have an impact on tourism and local businesses. Applicants are encouraged, where possible, to demonstrate that local suppliers have been considered in any supply chain.	An **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [EN010149/APP/7.20]** [APP-0153] has been prepared to help maximise the positive gain for the local economy from the beneficial effect arising from employment generation during the construction and operational phase. A detailed Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan will be secured by way of a DCO requirement. The jobs created by the Proposed Development will be in the renewable energy sector, specifically relating to solar installation, but also electricity transmission and supply chain. Where possible, there will be a preference for local staffing, and it is likely that the appointed contractors will employ trainees and apprentices as part of the construction workforce.
	5.13.7 Applicants should consider developing accommodation strategies where appropriate, especially during construction and decommissioning phases, that would include the need to provide temporary accommodation for construction workers if required.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] assesses the Proposed Development's impact on occupancy rates as a result of increased visitor numbers to the area. There are 112 accommodation providers available within the 20km study area. Given the rural location of the Proposed Development, the accommodation providers closest to the Order Limits are generally small scale, bed and breakfast

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		type facilities. Three of the accommodation providers located within the 20km study area are located in the larger urban centre of Lincoln and can be categorised as large, chain budget hotels. Table 13.12 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] shows that including the percentage of construction staff likely to require temporary accommodation, accommodation rates within the region will not reach maximum capacity during any months of the year, demonstrating that temporary accommodation providers are able to cater for the tourist population as well as any temporary construction staff. An accommodation strategy is not proposed for the Proposed Development as there is considered to be sufficient local supply to facilitate all construction workers.
Mitigation	5.13.8 The Secretary of State should consider whether mitigation measures are necessary to mitigate any adverse socio-economic impacts of the development. For example, high quality design can improve the visual and environmental experience for visitors and the local community alike.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] concludes that there would be no significant adverse effects in relation to socio-economics following the implementation of embedded mitigation measures as a part of the Proposed Development, including: • The existing PRoWs that cross the Site will be retained. Subject to the construction phasing and methodology, there may be a requirement to temporarily divert a PRoW during the construction phase, the detail of which will be sought to be agreed with relevant key stakeholders, with an appropriate temporary alternative provided; • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 15m from either side of existing and proposed permanent statutory PROW; and • Independent Outdoor Equipment (transformer, switchgear and central inverters) and ITS will be offset at least 50m from all existing and proposed statutory PRoW. These embedded mitigation measures are detailed further and will be secured through the **Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030].

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Secretary of State decision making	5.13.9 The Secretary of State should have regard to the potential socio-economic impacts of new energy infrastructure identified by the applicant and from any other sources that the Secretary of State considers to be both relevant and important to its decision.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] provides an assessment of all potential socio-economic impacts of the Proposed Development, in accordance with this policy. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] undertakes an assessment of the likely effects arising from the construction and operation (including maintenance) of the Proposed Development upon Population. The likely level of effect during decommissioning is expected to be similar to or less than that experienced during construction. Therefore the significance of effect during construction is expected to represent the level of effect during decommissioning. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] concludes that there would be no significant adverse effects in relation to socio-economics, following the implementation of embedded mitigation measures as a part of the Proposed Development. An **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [EN010149/APP/7.20]** [APP-0153] has been prepared to help maximise the positive gain for the local economy from the beneficial effect arising from employment generation during the construction and operational phase. A detailed Skills and Employment Plan will be secured by way of a DCO requirement. The **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [EN010149/APP/7.20]** [APP-0153] sets out that the economic benefits that the Proposed Development could generate are: • Access to employment, upskilling and re-skilling opportunities for people; and • Enhanced business growth and productivity and potential to increase capabilities and specialisms in green construction and manufacturing.
	5.13.10 The Secretary of State may conclude that limited weight is to be given to assertions of socio-economic impacts that are not supported by evidence (particularly in view of the need for energy infrastructure as set out in this NPS).	
	5.13.11 The Secretary of State should consider any relevant positive provisions the applicant has made or is proposing to make to mitigate impacts (for example through planning obligations) and any legacy benefits that may arise as well as any	The Proposed Development provides the following, economic, social and community benefits: • The delivery of a substantial Critical National Priority (CNP) infrastructure that will deliver large amounts of cheap, secure and low-carbon electricity

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	options for phasing development in relation to the socio-economic impacts. 5.13.12 The Secretary of State may wish to include a requirement that specifies the approval by the local authority of an employment and skills plan detailing arrangements to promote local employment and skills development opportunities, including apprenticeships, education, engagement with local schools and colleges and training programmes to be enacted.	both during and beyond the critical 2020s timeframe. Maximising the capacity of generation in the resource-rich, well-connected and technically deliverable proposed location for the Proposed Development represents a significant and economically rational step forwards in the fight against the global climate emergency; • The provision of four new permissive paths; • The existing PRoWs that cross the Site will be retained. Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 15m from either side of existing and proposed permanent statutory PROW. Independent Outdoor Equipment (transformer, switchgear and central inverters) and ITS will be offset at least 50m from all existing and proposed statutory PRoW; • The (gross) peak number of approximately 650 workers may be on site at any one time, or an average of 400 over the four year construction period. The jobs created will be in the renewable energy sector and will contribute to the development of skills needed for the UK's transition; and • A £83,143 Gross Value Added per construction worker. The **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [EN010149/APP/7.20]** [APP-0153] has been prepared to help maximise the positive gain for the local economy from the beneficial effect arising from employment generation during the construction and operational phase. A detailed Skills and Employment Plan will be secured by way of a DCO requirement. The jobs created by the Proposed Development will be in the renewable energy sector, specifically relating to solar installation, but also electricity transmission and supply chain. Where possible, there will be a preference for local staffing, and it is likely that the appointed contractors will employ trainees and apprentices as part of the construction workforce.
Part 5.14 - Traffic and Transport *Applicant Assessment*	5.14.5 If a project is likely to have significant transport implications, the applicant's ES (see Section 4.3) should include a transport appraisal. The DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) and Welsh Governments WelTAG provides guidance	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123] has been prepared in accordance with appropriate guidance including the Department for Transport's guidance on Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements in Decision Taking (2014). The applicant has consulted with the relevant Highways Authorities regarding the assessment. Comments from these

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	on modelling and assessing the impacts of transport schemes.	stakeholders are included in Section 14.3 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010]**.**
	5.14.6 National Highways and Highways Authorities are statutory consultees on NSIP applications including energy infrastructure where it is expected to affect the strategic road network and / or have an impact on the local road network. Applicants should consult with National Highways and Highways Authorities as appropriate on the assessment and mitigation to inform the application to be submitted.	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123] was submitted following consultation with the relevant Highways Authorities.
	5.14.7 The applicant should prepare a travel plan including demand management and monitoring measures to mitigate transport impacts. The applicant should also provide details of proposed measures to improve access by active, public and shared transport to: • reduce the need for parking associated with the proposal; • contribute to decarbonisation of the transport network; • improve user travel options by offering genuine modal choice.	**Appendix 1: Outline Travel Plan** to the **Outline CTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] has been prepared to mitigate transport impacts and reduce the volume of construction staff and employee trips to the Proposed Development requiring the Principal Contractor to: • Prepare staff travel information in advance of construction commencing promoting alternative modes of transport and car sharing to be distributed electronically to staff; • Provide suitable cycle parking spaces and associated facilities during mobilisation of Primary Construction Compounds, as demand necessitates; and • Undertake monthly reviews of the car and cycle parking demands to ensure that sufficient capacity is available. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] considers any possible disruption to services and infrastructure.
	5.14.8 The assessment should also consider any possible disruption to services and infrastructure (such as road, rail and airports).	
	5.14.9 If additional transport infrastructure is needed or proposed, it should always include good quality walking, wheeling and cycle routes, and	

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	associated facilities (changing/storage etc.) needed to enhance active transport provision.	
Mitigation	5.14.11 Where mitigation is needed, possible demand management measures must be considered. This could include identifying opportunities to: • reduce the need to travel by consolidating trips; • locate development in areas already accessible by active travel and public transport; • provide opportunities for shared mobility; • re-mode by shifting travel to a sustainable mode that is more beneficial to the network; • retime travel outside of the known peak times; • reroute to use parts of the network that are less busy.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] confirms that due to measures proposed for construction, the Proposed Development will not result in residual adverse effects upon highway safety or generate any highway capacity issues. Proposed mitigation measures include: • Upgrade of A15 / B1191 / Temple Road to provide improvement to existing conditions for all users inclusive of a non-motorised user crossing point; • A15/Gorse Hill Lane with improved junction infrastructure and surfacing for all users; • B1191 RAF Digby and Ashby-de-la-Launde widening for improved passing opportunities for all HGVs; and • Vehicle passing bays along Temple Road
	5.14.12 If feasible and operationally reasonable, such mitigation should be required, before considering requirements for the provision of new inland transport infrastructure to deal with remaining transport impacts. All stages of the project should support and encourage a modal shift of freight from road to more environmentally sustainable alternatives, such as rail, cargo bike, maritime and inland waterways, as well as making appropriate provision for and infrastructure needed to support the use of alternative fuels including charging for electric vehicles.	

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	5.14.13 Regard should always be given to the needs of freight at all stages in the construction and operation of the development including the need to provide appropriate facilities for HGV drivers as appropriate.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] confirms that due to measures proposed for construction, the Proposed Development will not result in residual adverse effects upon highway safety or generate any highway capacity issues. All construction traffic will utilise the existing local highway network, with HGVs limited to specific designated routes as set out in the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] Measures to enforce adherence to these routes is set out in the same document. The Contractor will prepare and implement the CTMP which will describe the traffic management, safety and control measures proposed during construction of the Proposed Development. The CTMP will include details of the parking arrangements. Traffic flow diagrams showing how the trips have been distributed on the road network can be found in as part of the appendices contained within **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123].
	5.14.14 The Secretary of State may attach requirements to a consent where there is likely to be substantial HGV traffic that: • control numbers of HGV movements to and from the site in a specified period during its construction and possibly on the routing of such movements; • make sufficient provision for HGV parking, and associated high quality drive facilities either on the site or at dedicated facilities elsewhere, to support driver welfare, avoid 'overspill' parking on public roads, prolonged queuing on approach roads and uncontrolled on-street HGV parking in normal operating conditions; • ensure satisfactory arrangements for reasonably foreseeable abnormal disruption, in consultation with network providers and the responsible police force.	
	5.14.15 The Secretary of State should have regard to the cost-effectiveness of demand management measures compared to new transport infrastructure, as well as the aim to secure more sustainable patterns of transport development when considering mitigation measures.	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123] and the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] outlines measures proposed to mitigate the traffic and transport impacts of the Proposed Development, including sustainable patterns of transport development. The oCTMP will be developed into a CTMP prior to commencement and will be secured by the DCO.

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	5.14.16 Applicants should consider the DfT policy guidance "Water Preferred Policy Guidelines for the movement of abnormal indivisible loads" when preparing their application.	The Strategic Road Network is considered in detail within **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123]**,** where impacts are expected to be limited. As the specific routes Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) will take during construction are not known at this time, HGVs are assumed to access/egress the Strategic Road Network as close to the Proposed Development as possible. The majority of construction vehicles accessing the Construction Compounds will be standard/normal size LGVs and HGVs. However, it is expected that the Proposed Development would require AIL delivery during the construction phase for the delivery of heavy transformer equipment from the Grimsby Docks/Immingham Port towards the Site associated with the Springwell Substation. The DCO application is supported by an **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] which sets out the Abnormal Indivisible Loads management plan**.** The construction works will involve the delivery of up to seven AILs which comprise the Springwell Substation transformer. This load will have a maximum width of 6.2m and a vehicle length of 64m. Other deliveries may be considered oversized loads, including three cranes and up to 18 cable drums, but would not fall into the category of requiring an escort vehicle or mitigation works to accommodate them. The **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] sets out that an access route survey feasibility report has been undertaken, which identifies that the preferred route would utilise the heavy load routes. The are no suitable waterways for AILs to be delivered to the Site.
	5.14.17 If an applicant suggests that the costs of meeting any obligations or requirements would make the proposal economically unviable this should not in itself justify the relaxation by the Secretary of State of any obligations or requirements needed to secure the mitigation.	Given the conclusions of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010], the mitigation measures embedded into the design of the Proposed Development and measures to minimise impacts out in the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028], it is considered that impacts related to traffic and transport are acceptable and development consent should not be withheld. These are secured by DCO Requirement so no separate planning obligation is required.

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Secretary of State decision making	5.14.18 A new energy NSIP may give rise to substantial impacts on the surrounding transport infrastructure and the Secretary of State should therefore ensure that the applicant has sought to mitigate these impacts, including during the construction phase of the development and by enhancing active, public and shared transport provision and accessibility.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] confirms that due to measures proposed for construction, the Proposed Development will not result in residual adverse effects upon highway safety or generate any highway capacity issues. As secured through the **Streets, Rights of Way and Access Plans [EN010149/APP/2.4.3]** [REP1-004], proposed mitigation measures include: • Upgrade of A15 / B1191 / Temple Road to provide improvement to existing conditions for all users inclusive of a non-motorised user crossing point; • A15/Gorse Hill Lane with improved junction infrastructure and surfacing for all users; • B1191 RAF Digby and Ashby-de-la-Launde widening for improved passing opportunities for all HGVs; and • Vehicle passing bays along Temple Road. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] concludes that overall, the effect on road safety is considered to be not significant.
	5.14.19 Where the proposed mitigation measures are insufficient to reduce the impact on the transport infrastructure to acceptable levels, the Secretary of State should consider requirements to mitigate adverse impacts on transport networks arising from the development, as set out below.	
	5.14.20 Development consent should not be withheld provided that the applicant is willing to enter into planning obligations for funding new infrastructure or requirements can be imposed to mitigate transport impacts. In this situation the Secretary of State should apply appropriately limited weight to residual effects on the surrounding transport infrastructure.	
	5.14.21 The Secretary of State should only consider refusing development on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, or it does not show how consideration has been given to the provision of adequate active public or shared transport access and provision.	

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Part	**EN-1 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
Part 5.15 – Resource and Waste Management ***Applicant Assessment***	5.15.6 Applicants must demonstrate that development proposals are in line with Defra's policy position on the role of energy from waste in treating residual waste.	The Proposed Development has been designed and will be constructed and operated to minimise the creation of waste, maximise the use of recycled materials and assist the collection, separation, sorting, recycling and recovery of waste arising from the development during its use. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] sets out the arrangements that are proposed for managing any waste produced by the Proposed Development, in accordance with the waste hierarchy, which are set out in the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**, oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] and **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**.** Measures include: • Any equipment that needs to be replaced during the operational period will be disposed of following the waste hierarchy, with materials being reused or recycled wherever possible; and • Electrical waste will be disposed of per the Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations, minimising the environmental impact of replacing any elements of the Proposed Development. During decommissioning, the Proposed Development will be subject to measures and procedures defined within a DEMP as secured through the DCO. An **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] is submitted with the DCO application.
	5.15.7 The proposed plant must not compete with greater waste prevention, re-use, or recycling, or result in over-capacity of EfW or similar processes for the treatment of residual waste at a national or local level.	
	5.15.8 The applicant should set out the arrangements that are proposed for managing any waste produced and prepare a report that sets out the sustainable management of waste and use of resources throughout any relevant demolition, excavation, and construction activities.	
	5.15.9 The arrangements described and a report setting out the sustainable management of waste and use of resources should include information on how re-use and recycling will be maximised in addition to the proposed waste recovery and disposal system for all waste generated by the development. They should also include an assessment of the impact of the waste arising from development on the capacity of waste management facilities to deal with other waste arising in the area for at least five years of operation.	

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	5.15.10 The applicant is encouraged to refer to the Waste Prevention Programme for England: Maximising Resources Minimising Waste and 'Towards Zero Waste: Our Waste Strategy for Wales' and should seek to minimise the volume of waste produced and the volume of waste sent for disposal unless it can be demonstrated that this is the best overall environmental outcome.	
	5.15.11 If the applicant's assessment includes dredged material, the assessment should also include other uses of such material before disposal to sea, for example through re-use in the construction process.	
	5.15.12 The UK is committed to moving towards a more 'circular economy'. Where possible, applicants are encouraged to source materials from recycled or reused sources and use low carbon materials, sustainable sources and local suppliers. Construction best practices should be used to ensure that material is reused or recycled onsite where possible.	
	5.15.13 Applicants are also encouraged to use construction best practices in relation to storing materials in an adequate and protected place on site to prevent waste, for example, from damage or vandalism. The use of Building Information Management tools (or similar) to record the materials used in construction can help to reduce waste in future decommissioning of facilities, by identifying materials that can be recycled or reused.	

Generic Impacts - Part 5 of EN-1		
Part	**EN-1 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
Secretary of State decision making	5.15.14 The Secretary of State should consider the extent to which the applicant has proposed an effective system for managing hazardous and non-hazardous waste arising from the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed development. 5.15.15 The Secretary of State should be satisfied that: • any such waste will be properly managed, both on-site and off-site. • the waste from the proposed facility can be dealt with appropriately by the waste infrastructure which is, or is likely to be, available. Such waste arisings should not have an adverse effect on the capacity of existing waste management facilities to deal with other waste arisings in the area. • adequate steps have been taken to minimise the volume of waste arisings, and of the volume of waste arisings sent for recovery or disposal, except where that is the best overall environmental outcome. 5.15.16 Where necessary, the Secretary of State should use requirements or obligations to ensure that appropriate measures for waste management are applied. 5.15.17 The Secretary of State may wish to include a condition on revision of waste management plans at reasonable intervals when giving consent.	The Proposed Development has been designed and will be constructed and operated to minimise the creation of waste, maximise the use of recycled materials and assist the collection, separation, sorting, recycling and recovery of waste arising from the development during its use. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] sets out the arrangements that are proposed for managing any waste produced by the Proposed Development, in accordance with the waste hierarchy, which are set out in the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**, oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] and **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**.** Measures include: • Any equipment that needs to be replaced during the operational period will be disposed of following the waste hierarchy, with materials being reused or recycled wherever possible; and • Electrical waste will be disposed of per the Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations, minimising the environmental impact of replacing any elements of the Proposed Development. Before the operation phase starts, the contractor will prepare a Site Waste Management Plan (SWMP) which will provide waste estimates and specify key responsibilities, reporting and auditing requirements and waste recovery targets. The SWMP will use, as a starting point, the measures detailed within the **oSWMP** which forms **Appendix 1** of the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] updated to reflect the circumstances prevailing during the period in which operational and maintenance activities are to be carried out.

Generic Impacts - Part 5 of EN-1		
Part	**EN-1 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
	5.15.18 Where the project will be subject to the Environmental Permitting regime, waste management arrangements during operations will be covered by the permit and the considerations set out in Section 4.12 will apply.	
	5.15.19 The Secretary of State should have regard to any potential impacts on the achievement of resource efficiency and waste reduction targets set under the Environment Act 2021 or wider goals set out in the government's Environmental Improvement Plan 2023.	
Part 5.16 - Water Quality and Resources *Applicant assessment*	5.16.3 Where the project is likely to have effects on the water environment, the applicant should undertake an assessment of the existing status of, and impacts of the proposed project on, water quality, water resources and physical characteristics of the water environment, and how this might change due to the impact of climate change on rainfall patterns and consequently water availability across the water environment, as part of the ES or equivalent (see Section 4.3 and 4.10).	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] presents an assessment of the likely significant effects on the water environment including surface water features such as rivers, streams, ditches, lakes, groundwater assets, and demand for water resources, taking into account impacts from climate change.
	5.16.5 Where possible, applicants are encouraged to manage surface water during construction by treating surface water runoff from exposed topsoil prior to discharging and to limit the discharge of suspended solids e.g. from car parks or other areas of hard standing, during operation.	The implementation of embedded mitigation measures and best practice control measures to manage surface water during the construction of the Proposed Development will be secured via a detailed CEMP which is to be substantially in accordance with the **Outline CEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], and a Surface Water Drainage Strategy, which is to be substantially in accordance with **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]**.** **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] set out that two landfills at Brauncewell and Longwood Quarry have
	5.16.6 Applicants are encouraged to consider protective measures to control the risk of pollution to groundwater beyond those outlined in River Basin Management Plans and Groundwater	

Generic Impacts - Part 5 of EN-1		
Part	**EN-1 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
	Protection Zones – this could include, for example, the use of protective barriers.	been identified as potential significant off-site point sources of contamination (the former being approximately 8 m to the south east of the Order Limits, and the latter approximately 321 m to the north west of the Order Limits). These landfills were licensed to accept inert and non-biodegradable waste. The permit for the landfill site at Longwood Quarry has been surrendered to confirm that actions had been completed to avoid a pollution risk.
	5.16.7 The ES should in particular describe: • the existing quality of waters affected by the proposed project and the impacts of the proposed project on water quality, noting any relevant existing discharges, proposed new discharges and proposed changes to discharges • existing water resources affected by the proposed project and the impacts of the proposed project on water resources, noting any relevant existing abstraction rates, proposed new abstraction rates and proposed changes to • abstraction rates (including any impact on or use of mains supplies and reference to Abstraction Licensing Strategies) and also demonstrate how proposals minimise the use of water resources and water consumption in the first instance • existing physical characteristics of the water environment (including quantity and dynamics of flow) affected by the proposed project and any impact of physical modifications to these characteristics • any impacts of the proposed project on water bodies or protected areas (including	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] considers the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on flood risk and water receptors. The Chapter provides an overview of the existing environment of the Site, followed by an assessment of likely significant effects for the construction, operation, and decommissioning stages of the Proposed Development. Potential impacts on water quality, water resources, and WFD are considered in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] as well as the **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]**.** The depth of flooding and reasonable assumptions for the impacts of climate change on flood depths have been assessed as part of a Flood Risk Assessment using the data available on flooding. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Cumulative Effects [EN010149/APP/6.1.5]** [REP4-013] considers the cumulative effects of the Proposed Development on Water. The Chapter concludes that no inter-project cumulative effects on flood risk and water quality during the operational (including maintenance) phase are anticipated, provided that the proposed National Grid Navenby Substation provide surface water management strategies and the appropriate management and mitigation plans are followed to prevent degradation of water quality for both the proposed National Grid Navenby Substation and the Proposed Development.

Generic Impacts - Part 5 of EN-1		
Part	**EN-1 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
	shellfish protected areas) under the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 and source protection zones (SPZs) around potable groundwater abstractions • how climate change could impact any of the above in the future • any cumulative effects	
Mitigation	5.16.8 The Secretary of State should consider whether mitigation measures are needed over and above any which may form part of the project application. A construction management plan may help codify mitigation at that stage. 5.16.9 The risk of impacts on the water environment can be reduced through careful design to facilitate adherence to good pollution control practice. For example, designated areas for storage and unloading, with appropriate drainage facilities, should be clearly marked. 5.16.10 The impact on local water resources can be minimised through planning and design for the efficient use of water, including water recycling. If a development needs new water infrastructure, significant supplies or impacts other water supplies, the applicant should consult with the local water company and the EA or NRW.	Mitigation measures during the construction phase of the Proposed Development will be according to best practice and implemented through the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] sets out the measures propped to mitigate adverse effects on the water environment including: • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 6m either side from all existing ditches where crossing is not required, secured through the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]; • An Outline Drainage Strategy, secured through the **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]**;** and • Vegetation Management, secured through the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030].
Secretary of State decision making	5.16.11 Activities that discharge to the water environment are subject to pollution control. The considerations set out in Section 4.12 on the interface between planning and pollution control	Following the application of mitigation measures set out in Section 15.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] no significant adverse effects on water have been identified during construction, operation or

Generic Impacts - Part 5 of EN-1		
Part	**EN-1 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
	therefore apply. These considerations will also apply in an analogous way to the abstraction licensing regime regulating activities that take water from the water environment, and to the control regimes relating to works to, and structures in, on, or under controlled waters.	decommissioning of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development includes mitigation measures: • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 6m either side from all existing ditches where crossing is not required, secured through the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]; • An **Outline Drainage Strategy,** secured through the **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]**;** and • Vegetation Management, secured through the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. Metheringham Beck is the only Water Framework Directive (WFD) classified watercourse waterbody within the study area. Following the implementation of mitigation measures, the anticipated impact on the WFD waterbody is negligible, which is not significant in EIA terms.
	5.16.12 The Secretary of State will need to give impacts on the water environment more weight where a project would have an adverse effect on the achievement of the environmental objectives established under the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017.	
	5.16.13 The Secretary of State must also consider duties under other legislation including duties under the Environment Act 2021 in relation to environmental targets and have regard to the policies set out in the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan 2023.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] undertakes assessment with regard to The Environment Act 2021.
	5.16.14 The Secretary of State should be satisfied that a proposal has regard to current River Basin Management Plans and meets the requirements of the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 (including regulation 19). The specific objectives for particular river basins are set out in River Basin Management Plans. The Secretary of State must refuse development consent where a project is likely to cause deterioration of a water body or its	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] sets out that Metheringham Beck is the only WFD classified watercourse within the study area. The classified extents of Metheringham Beck are located outside of the Site boundary, approximately 100 m north from Field By01, shown in **ES Volume 2, Figure 15.1: Watercourse and Water Receptor Mapping [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-071]. This watercourse is classified with a moderate ecological status under the WFD/River Basin Management Plan (Cycle 3 – 2022). Metheringham Beck, as a WFD classified watercourse with a moderate ecological status, is considered to be medium sensitivity. The magnitude of impact following

Generic Impacts - Part 5 of EN-1		
Part	**EN-1 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
	failure to achieve good status or good potential, unless the requirements set out in Regulation 19 are met. A project may be approved in the absence of a qualifying Overriding Public Interest test only if there is sufficient certainty that it will not cause deterioration or compromise the achievement of good status or good potential.	additional mitigation is considered to be negligible. Therefore, the significance of effect is considered to be negligible and not significant.
	5.16.15 The Secretary of State should also consider the interactions of the proposed project with other plans such as Water Resources Management Plans and Shoreline Management Plans.	The Proposed Development does not interact with any Water Resources Management Plans or Shoreline Management Plans.
	5.16.16 The Secretary of State should consider proposals to mitigate adverse effects on the water environment and any enhancement measures put forward by the applicant and whether appropriate requirements should be attached to any development consent and/or planning obligations are necessary	Mitigation measures during the construction phase of the Proposed Development will be according to best practice and implemented through the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] sets out the measures propped to mitigate adverse effects on the water environment, including: • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 6m on either side from all existing ditches where crossing is not required, secured through the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]; • An **Outline Drainage Strategy**, secured through the **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]**;** and • Vegetation Management, secured through the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030].

2. Table 2 National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) – Table of Compliance

Assessment and Technical Specific Information (Part 2 of EN-3)		
Part	**EN-3 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
Part 2.4 Climate change adaptation	2.4.11 Solar photovoltaic (PV) sites may also be proposed in low lying exposed sites. For these proposals, applicants should consider, in particular, how plant will be resilient to: • increased risk of flooding; and impact of higher temperatures	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] confirms that flood risk during construction and at decommissioning will be managed through the CEMP and DEMP, which will be secured by the DCO and required to be in accordance with the **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], and the **Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management (oDEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]**.** As the Site is at predominantly low risk from flooding from all sources, the reasonable 'worst case' is limited to the placement of Solar PV modules and string inverters mounted on the panels within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 towards the east of the Site. The residual flood risk will be negligible once mitigation is included. Embedded mitigation will include: • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 6m on either side from all existing ditches where crossing is not required, secured through the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]; • An **Outline Drainage Strategy**, secured through the **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]**;** and • Vegetation Management, secured through the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. The Proposed Development is based on a clean energy source. There are considered to be some limited opportunities for environmental enhancement specifically related to flood risk and water quality associated with the Proposed Development.

Assessment and Technical Specific Information (Part 2 of EN-3)		
Part	**EN-3 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
		Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3] [REP1-050]**,** sets out measures to ensure the: • proposed hard standing will capture surface water runoff from these areas and will be discharged back into the environment and limited to greenfield runoff rates; • provision of vegetation cover (for the duration of the operational (including maintenance) phase) below the Solar PV modules will help slow the rate of surface water runoff from the Site during high intensity rainfall events and promote the interception of surface water runoff; and • cessation of arable agricultural activities will also result in a reduction of the application of pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers within the Site. **Chapter 15: Water** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] assesses flood risk and drainage in the context of EIA. This concludes that with the proposed mitigation measures to be secured as part of the CEMP and DEMP, the risk of flooding from all sources will not change. Given the design mitigation secured through the OEMP, there will be no significant adverse effects predicted upon receptors regarding flood risk during the Proposed Development's operation. The proposed drainage design set out in **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] demonstrates that sustainable drainage techniques have been designed into the Proposed Development and will be maintained by the Applicant, or another private operator to be confirmed and secured through the DCO. The Scoping Opinion confirmed that climate resilience can be scoped out of further assessment, on the basis that **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] sufficiently explains how the Proposed Development has been designed to be resilient to the impacts of climate change (which, in the opinion of the Applicant, it does).

Assessment and Technical Specific Information (Part 2 of EN-3)		
Part	**EN-3 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
		The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] sets out design principle 9.1 Design for resilience and adaptation to future climate change and the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] demonstrates this through design commitments: • The Proposed Development will create new opportunities for education on climate change via way of interpretation boards; and Health and safety plans will be required to account for potential climate change impacts on workers, such as flooding and heatwaves.
Part 2.5 – Consideration of good design for energy infrastructure	2.5.1 Section 4.7 of EN-1 sets out the criteria for good design that should be applied to all energy infrastructure.	As detailed in section 2 of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018], good design has been a fundamental consideration from the outset of the Proposed Development. The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] demonstrates how the design of the Proposed Development has been developed in accordance with a clear design framework, based on the criteria for good design set out in EN-1. This has included the adoption of project level design principles (Project Principles) to guide decision making and embed good design outcomes to the Proposed Development. Project Principles have evolved throughout the design process, being informed and refined by stakeholder engagement, consultation feedback, technical studies and environmental assessments. They have been used to steer and influence the design of the Proposed Development to avoid and reduce adverse impacts wherever possible, make the most of opportunities for enhancement and balance the need for flexibility and certainty within the DCO Application. Throughout the design process, the Applicant maintained an interdisciplinary approach to design and considered both the opportunities and constraints of the Proposed Development. This included analysis of the existing physical, environmental, social and cultural context of the Site by a broad range of technical disciplines (including landscape and visual, noise, ecology and heritage) as set out and assessed by **Chapters 6 – 16** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1**]. This approach
	2.5.2 Proposals for renewable energy infrastructure should demonstrate good design, particularly in respect of landscape and visual amenity, opportunities for co-existence/co-location with other marine and terrestrial uses, and in the design of the project to mitigate impacts such as noise and effects on ecology and heritage.	

Assessment and Technical Specific Information (Part 2 of EN-3)		
Part	**EN-3 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
		has enabled the Applicant to understand the complexities of the Site and identify where multiple opportunities and constraints have the potential to stack up with one another to provide a good design response and allow for co-existence and co-location with other terrestrial uses. For example, creating green infrastructure corridors that mitigate the visual impact of the scheme and also provide biodiversity and recreational benefits to the local environment. Engagement with landowners and statutory consultees including North Kesteven District Council, Lincolnshire County Council, Natural England, Historic England, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and the Environment Agency has formed an important part of the design process and helped to identify opportunities for co-existence and co-location with other terrestrial uses. For example, working with landowners to reduce potential impacts on farming activities and secure the benefits provided by the Proposed Development. As a result of the design approach adopted by the Applicant, the Proposed Development would deliver a number of environmental, social and economic benefits in addition to the generation of secure, low cost, decarbonised, clean, renewable energy. These include significant areas of new habitats that respect and enhance features within the landscape, including over 100ha of grassland (including calcareous grassland), 15,563m of new hedgerows and 16ha of tree belt planting delivering a Biodiversity Net Gain and improvements in ecological connectivity. The Proposed Development would also provide benefits to the local community via an enhanced green infrastructure network including a better-connected footpath and cycle network and access to open space and recreational spaces. These would include the provision of 3.49km of new PRoW, 8.58km of permissive paths, improvements to the Spires and Steeples Trail and a new community growing area. If DCO consent is given, these design outcomes will be secured and implemented post-consent, in accordance with the **Environmental Statement [EN010149/APP/6.1]**, via Control Documents contained within the D**raft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004]. Adherence to the Control Documents will

Assessment and Technical Specific Information (Part 2 of EN-3)		
Part	**EN-3 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
		secure good design outcomes, uphold the conclusions of the Environmental Statement, and provide for flexibility.
2.6 Flexibility in the project details	2.6.1 Where details are still to be finalised, applicants should explain in the application which elements of the proposal have yet to be finalised, and the reason why this is the case. 2.6.2 Where flexibility is sought in the consent as a result, applicants should, to the best of their knowledge, assess the likely worst-case environmental, social and economic effects of the proposed development to ensure that the impacts of the project as it may be constructed have been properly assessed. 2.6.3 Full guidance on how applicants and the Secretary of State should manage flexibility is set out in Section 4.3 of EN-1.	The applicant wishes to retain flexibility regarding the design detail of certain components of the Proposed Development. The extent of flexibility required is described in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] and set out in the **Design Approach Document** [REP3-028] **[EN010149/APP/7.3]** and the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.** With the above need for flexibility in mind, the Applicant confirms that the ES has assessed the likely worst-case development scenario. Establishing the maximum parameters enables a robust assessment of likely significant environmental effects to be undertaken within this ES for topics where the nature of the assessment requires a specific level of detail, such as maximum heights, massing, or noise levels. Thus, the assessment parameters form the basis of the assessment. The assessment parameters are detailed in the works descriptions which are linked to Schedule 1 within the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004] and are in full in **ES Volume 3 Appendix 3.1: Project Parameters [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-074]**,** the **Works Plans [EN010149/APP/2.3]** [APP-007] and a number of Control Documents as listed within the **Guide to the Application [EN010149/APP/1.2.6]** [REP4-002] and supported by the following figures presented in **ES Volume 2 [EN010149/APP/6.2.4]** [REP3-016]**:** • **Figure 3.1: Zonal Masterplan** • **Figure 3.2: Height Parameters** • **Figure 3.3: Green Infrastructure Parameters** • **Figure 3.4: Construction and Operational Access**
Part 2.10 Solar Photovoltaic Generation		
Applicant Assessment – Irradiance and site topography	2.10.19 Irradiance will be a key consideration for the applicant in identifying a potential site as the amount of electricity generated on site is directly affected by irradiance levels. Irradiance of a site will	As detailed in **Appendix 1: Site Selection Report** to the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018]**,** the location of the Proposed Development was chosen partly because the characteristics of the land in this part of Lincolnshire are

Assessment and Technical Specific Information (Part 2 of EN-3)		
Part	**EN-3 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
	in turn be affected by surrounding topography, with an uncovered or exposed site of good elevation and favourable south-facing aspect more likely to increase year-round irradiance levels. This in turn affects the carbon emission savings and the commercial viability of the site.	optimal for the generation of renewable energy by solar PV. The land at this location has good levels of irradiation and large areas of flat land. Lincolnshire is generally flat, with a gently undulating topography, which is suitable and beneficial for solar. This increases the likelihood of being able to identify a suitable site capable of producing a large amount of electricity. Therefore, this influenced the location of the Order Limits within proximity to the overhead line capacity. In terms of the general topography of the area immediately surrounding the Order Limits it is relatively flat, with some areas of rolling hills. Due to the fast-evolving pace of solar PV technology, the Proposed Development allowed flexibility to be able to choose specific technology closer to the construction within the parameters defined in the D**raft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004] and the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.** They will enable the optimum production of renewable energy within the Proposed Development. As detailed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022], the mounting structure of the Solar PV modules will be designed to face southwards on a fixed platform. The Solar PV modules would be angled at a tilt of 10 to 30 degrees from horizontal to optimise daylight absorption. The **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1/6.2/6.3]** takes account of the impacts of Solar PV modules facing southwards on a fixed platform.
	2.10.20 In order to maximise irradiance, applicants may choose a site and design its layout with variable and diverse panel types and aspects, and panel arrays may also follow the movement of the sun in order further to maximise the solar resource.	
Applicant Assessment – Network Connection	2.10.21 Applicants should consider important issues relating to network connection at Section 4.11 of EN-1 and in EN-5. In particular, and where appropriate, applicants should proceed in a manner consistent with the regulatory regime for offshore transmission networks established by Ofgem, details of which are set out in EN-5.	The Applicant started engagement with the National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) as the point contact for new connection requests to discuss the potential opportunities for a connection offer within the target region identified above. Grid connections with spare capacity are finite, and no connection offers were provided that could deliver the output proposed by NGESO to the Applicant for already available capacity at already existing substations in the target region/geography. This is somewhat inevitable given the context of the urgent national need for renewable energy (specifically solar), as developments have already been proposed to make use of existing substation capacity where it occurs. The **Statement of Need [EN010149/APP/7.1]** [APP-0135] sets out that there is no
	2.10.22 Many solar farms are connected into the local distribution network. The capacity of the local grid network to accept the likely output from a	

Assessment and Technical Specific Information (Part 2 of EN-3)		
Part	**EN-3 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
	proposed solar farm is critical to the technical and commercial feasibility of a development proposal.	capacity at any existing NGESO infrastructure within 50km of the Site to accommodate new connections of the Proposed Development's magnitude before 2033. As detailed in **Appendix 1: Site Selection Report** of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018]**.** The Site was selected because it presents the physical characteristics which are highly supportive in terms of the ability to deliver a NSIP scale solar development. The Site: • has a grid connection offer which will see energy transported to the national transmission network by 2030; • lies within an area of suitable irradiance and favourable topography; • includes a proportion of BMV land which is characteristic of the predominating mix adjacent the OHL; • has sufficient land to enable the grid connection offer to be maximised while maintaining sufficient offsets to sensitive residential receptors; • is located away from key environmental and cultural heritage related designations; • is on land which is available and may be voluntarily acquired with a single landowner enabling efficiencies in delivery; and • is accessible from the road network and has suitable access to land not immediately adjacent the strategic road network. The Proposed Development has secured a grid connection agreement to allow export and import of electricity to and from the National Grid. The Springwell Substation would facilitate the export and import of electricity from the Proposed Development to the National Grid. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] and the **Grid Connection Statement [EN010149/APP/7.6.2]** [REP1-058] provides further discussion on the process of securing the agreed network connection.
	2.10.23 Larger developments may seek connection to the transmission network if there is available network capacity and/or supportive infrastructure.	
	2.10.24 In either case the connection voltage, availability of network capacity, and the distance from the solar farm to the existing network can have a significant effect on the commercial feasibility of a development proposal.	
	2.10.25 To maximise existing grid infrastructure, minimise disruption to existing local community infrastructure or biodiversity and reduce overall costs, applicants may choose a site based on nearby available grid export capacity.	
	2.10.26 Where this is the case, applicants should consider the cumulative impacts of situating a solar farm in proximity to other energy generating stations and infrastructure.	

Assessment and Technical Specific Information (Part 2 of EN-3)		
Part	**EN-3 Policy Text**	**Assessment**
		The cumulative impact of the Proposed Development and developments within the surrounding area is included in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Cumulative Effects [EN010149/APP/6.1.5]** [REP4-013]**.** The chapter sets out the short list of other existing development and/or approved development accounted for in the chapter's cumulative assessment. The short list includes energy generating stations and infrastructure: • Navenby Heath 400MW Battery Storage Development; • Beacon Fen Energy Park; • Fosse Green Energy; • Heckington Fen Solar Park; and • Mareham Lane Solar development.
Applicant Assessment – Proximity of site to dwellings	2.10.27 Utility-scale solar farms are large sites that may have a significant zone of visual influence. The two main impact issues that determine distances to sensitive receptors are therefore likely to be visual amenity and glint and glare. These are considered in Landscape, Visual and Residential Amenity (paragraphs 2.10.93-2.10.101) and Glint and Glare (paragraphs 2.10.102 – 2.10.106) impact sections below.	As set out in **Appendix 1: Site Selection Report** of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018]**,** the considerable landholding at Blankney Estate provides a mixture of highly rural land as well as land that encompasses local settlements such as Blankney, Scopwick, RAF and Ashby-de-la-Launde. Settlements are reasonably well dispersed with clear breaks between. There are also a relatively small number of individual dwellings/farmsteads in close proximity to the Order Limits. The Applicant considered that there was sufficient land available to be able to provide offsets to residential receptors through a combination of setbacks, natural screening as well as existing and proposed landscape improvements. During site selection a minimum offset of 100m was assumed from residential properties in the knowledge that once the Applicant understood more about the specific nature of the Site, bespoke mitigation could be provided. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] assesses the visual impact of the Proposed Development. Through consultation with the relevant stakeholders, 40 assessment viewpoints were selected. The assessment viewpoint locations were agreed with North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council to represent the main landscape and visual receptors found in the study area.

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		These assessment viewpoints are illustrated in **Figure 10.4** of the ES Volume 2 **[EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-066]. The mitigation embedded into the design which is outlined in section 10.6 of **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010]**,** as secured through the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] and the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**,** includes, but is not limited to, hedgerow planting along field boundaries, woodland planting along field boundaries, hedgerow infill planting, structural planting, establishment of wildflower rich grassland, offsets from existing woodlands and proposed or existing PRoWs, which has aimed to reduce visual impacts. Significant adverse effects are expected for receptors within proximity to areas of the Site with solar PV infrastructure during construction and early years of operation. It is assessed that the residents of 31 dwellings would experience significant visual effects during construction. It is assessed that in year 1 of operation, 13 residential properties would experience significant visual effects. By year 10 of operation only Scopwick Windmill would still have significant visual effects on account of its location within the landscape, the height of the building and the extent of Proposed Development. It is assessed that the residents of four properties would experience significant visual effects during decommissioning, namely Scopwick Low Field Farm, The Windmill and Scopwick Mill on Heath Road, Gorse Hill Farm. Residential properties referred to are shown on **ES Volume 2, Figure 10.10: RVAA Residential Property Location Plan [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-066]. At Year 10 of Operation, 16 of the viewpoints (2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 22, 23, and 24) are anticipated to experience significant adverse effects. It is considered that the wider benefits of the Proposed Development, including the delivery of significant level of low carbon energy generation and biodiversity net gain and the provision of permissive footpaths and outweigh these impacts and that the Proposed Development is considered acceptable in terms of overall landscape, visual and residential amenity impacts and the nature of the visual impacts are not considered to outweigh the benefits of the Proposed Development.

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		ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2] [REP1-028] assesses the potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, and aviation activity.
Applicant Assessment – Agriculture Land Classification and land type	2.10.28 Solar is a highly flexible technology and as such can be deployed on a wide variety of land types.	**Appendix 1: Site Selection Report** of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] explains the Applicant's approach to selection of an appropriate site to take forward as part of an application for a NSIP scale solar project. The report explains that initially there are three fundamental attributes required to develop NSIP scale solar: suitable irradiance and topography; a connection to the National Grid, and; available land. These three attributes identified locations which may be suitable for such solar development and focused the Applicant's search on sites within Lincolnshire, Rutland and Cambridgeshire along the West Burton to Bicker Fen and Cottam to Eaton Socon OHLs (where the Applicant was aware there was capacity in the National Grid infrastructure). Once the search area was determined, the Applicant applied specific environmental search criteria, including agricultural land grade to find appropriate land which would be able to deliver its objectives. The Applicant required a site with a minimum size of 1,000 acres but with a preference for a larger landholding under single ownership to maximise the potential energy generation and to assist with deliverability and management of potential impacts of a proposed solar development. The size of the land required and other factors (as set out in Section 3 of Appendix 1 to this Planning Statement), such as the proximity to potential connection points resulted in the Applicant identifying five potential sites adjacent both to Bicker Fen and Cottam to Eaton Socon OHL. The Applicant's initial assessment work identified that each of the five sites presented similar land type and ALC grading characteristics i.e. a mixture of ALC Grade 2 and 3 and therefore there was no obvious preference for a particular site on the basis of the ALC search criteria. The Applicant was equally aware that land quality was one of several important factors in the site selection exercise and had to be considered in the round with other environmental and technical considerations.
	2.10.29 While land type should not be a predominating factor in determining the suitability of the site location applicants should, where possible, utilise suitable previously developed land, brownfield land, contaminated land and industrial land. Where the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary, poorer quality land should be preferred to higher quality land avoiding the use of “Best and Most Versatile” agricultural land where possible. ‘Best and Most Versatile agricultural land is defined as land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification	
	2.10.30 Whilst the development of ground mounted solar arrays is not prohibited on Best and Most Versatile agricultural land, or sites designated for their natural beauty, or recognised for ecological or archaeological importance, the impacts of such are expected to be considered and are discussed under paragraphs 2.10.73 – 92 and 2.10.107 – 2.10.126.	
	2.10.31 It is recognised that at this scale, it is likely that applicants’ developments will use some agricultural land. Applicants should explain their choice of site, noting the preference for	

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	development to be on suitable brownfield, industrial and low and medium grade agricultural land.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] and the **outline Soil Management Plan (oSMP) [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042] set out how agricultural land was considered in the design of Proposed Development. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] sets out how fields that were identified as comprising solely of Grades 1 or 2 land were discounted from the area of Solar PV development to reduce the impact on BMV agricultural land. Section 11.2 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] assesses the impact of the Proposed Development on Land, Soils and Groundwater according to the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) in line with Defra Construction Code. **Appendix 1: Site Selection Report** of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] sets out how the Applicant considered whether sufficient previously developed land would be available to develop a utility scale solar development, however, as the North Kesteven District Council brownfield register illustrates, there are currently only 5 available sites, none of which would have the capability of meeting the project objectives. 4 of these sites have either full planning permission or outline planning permission for housing development. The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] establish the agricultural land design principles that incorporate the following: • Fields comprising solely of Grade 1 or 2 land within the Site will remain available for arable production; • Prioritise the use of BMV land for arable production where practicable; and • Prioritise the use on non-BMV land for habitat creation where practicable. The land beneath and around the Solar PV arrays will include a seed mix for ground cover. The mix has been selected to improve biodiversity value for pollinators which can support the productivity of surrounding agricultural land. The grown cover will allow continued agricultural use of land within the Solar PV area for grazing, which
	2.10.32 Where sited on agricultural land, consideration may be given as to whether the proposal allows for continued agricultural use and/or can be co-located with other functions (for example, onshore wind generation, storage, hydrogen electrolysers) to maximise the efficiency of land use.	
	2.10.33 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) is the only approved system for grading agricultural quality in England and Wales and, if necessary, field surveys should be used to establish the ALC grades in accordance with the current, or any successor to it, grading criteria and identify the soil types to inform soil management at the construction, operation, and decommissioning phases in line with the Defra Construction Code.	
	2.10.34 Applicants are encouraged to develop and implement a Soil Resources and Management Plan which could help to use and manage soils sustainably and minimise adverse impacts on soil health and potential land contamination. This should be in line with the ambition set out in the Environmental Improvement Plan to bring at least 40% of England's agricultural soils into sustainable management by 2028 and increase this up to 60% by 2030.	

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		is included in the landscape management prescriptions set out in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] and described below. An **oSMP [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042] has been prepared to: • ensure the protection and conservation of soil resources on Site; • identify best practice measures to maintain the physical properties of the soil on Site; and • provide measures for the management of the soil resource for Site operators. The **oSMP [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042] ensures that the Applicant manages the Soil sustainability and that damage to soil health is minimised by providing measures for soil handling, soil moisture content assessments and storage and trafficking of soils during the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development.
Applicant Assessment – Accessibility	2.10.35 Applicants will need to consider the suitability of the access routes to the proposed site for both the construction and operation of the solar farm with the former likely to raise more issues. 2.10.36 Given that potential solar farm sites are largely in rural areas, access for the delivery of solar arrays and associated infrastructure during construction can be a significant consideration for solar farm siting. 2.10.37 Developers will usually need to construct on-site access routes for operation and maintenance activities, such as footpaths, earthworks, or landscaping.	The suitability of the routes to be used during both construction and once operational vehicular access arrangements for the Proposed Development are presented in sections 2.5 and 2.7 of **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123] This confirms the use of several access points serving the Site. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] sets that a number of changes to the Proposed Development access design occurred as a result of consideration to the siting of the solar farm, and its impact on traffic and transport. The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] sets out design principles pertaining to accessibility including to: • Retain all PRoW in their existing alignment in the long term;

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	2.10.38 In addition, sometimes access routes will need to be constructed to connect solar farms to the public road network. 2.10.39 Applications should include the full extent of the access routes necessary for operation and maintenance and an assessment of their effects.	• Protect the amenity of the Spires and Steeples Trail, avoiding any Solar PV development between the route and the B1188; • Consider sequential views and the experience of people using the Stepping Out Walks and other local footpaths; and • Enhance the footpath and cycle network by providing new and improved routes to increase connectivity and link local settlements such as RAF Digby, Scopwick and Blankney. As illustrated in the **Streets, Rights of Way and Access Plans [EN010149/APP/2.4.3]** [REP1-004], construction accesses are located at B1188, B1191, Gorse Hill Lane, and Temple Road. The location of the proposed construction and operational access points is presented in ES Volume 2, **Figure 3.4: Construction and Operational Access Parameters Plan [EN010149/APP/6.2.4] [REP4-015].** The Proposed Development's design incorporates mitigation to reduce adverse effects and minimise impacts of traffic and transport. These are set out in section 15.12 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] and section 2.8 of **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123]. The DCO application is also supported by an **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] which sets out the Abnormal Indivisible Loads management plan**.** The construction works will involve the delivery of up to seven AILs which comprise the Springwell Substation transformers. This load will have a maximum width of 6.2m and a vehicle length of 64m. Other deliveries may be considered oversized loads, including three cranes and up to 18 cable drums, but would not fall into the category of requiring an escort vehicle or mitigation works to accommodate them. The **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] sets out that an access route survey feasibility report has been undertaken, which identifies that the preferred route would utilise the heavy load routes.

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		ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3] [APP-123] sets out the anticipated distribution of traffic associated with the Proposed Development upon the local highway network based upon the proposed access points described above and during construction. As set out in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123], several junctions have been modelled and assessed in detail within this transport assessment including A15/B1191/Temple Road priority staggered junction, A15/B1202 priority crossroads, A15/Navenby Lane priority T-junction, A15/Gorse Hill Lane priority T-junction, B1188/B1202 Metheringham Heath Lane priority T-junction, B1188/B1191 Heath Road priority T-junction, B1188/B1191 Main Street priority T-junction, and B1191/Navenby Lane/Main Street priority staggered junction. Access designs are included in the **Streets, Rights of Way and Access Plans [EN010149/APP/2.4.3]** [REP1-004] demonstrating the ability of the Proposed Development to create a safe and well-designed access with suitable geometry to allow safe manoeuvring in and out of the Site and with appropriate visibility splays informed by speed survey data for construction.
Applicant Assessment – Public Rights of Way	2.10.40 Proposed developments may affect the provision of public rights of way networks.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development's impact on public rights of way within the Order Limits, or that will be impacted by the Proposed Development. A number of existing PRoW traverse the Proposed Development and are presented in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] and have been illustrated in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123] and the **Outline Public Rights of Way** and **Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044]. The **Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan** [REP3-044] sets out the mitigation, management, and monitoring measures for
	2.10.41 Public rights of way may need to be temporarily closed or diverted to enable construction, however, applicants should keep, as far as is practicable and safe, all public rights of way that cross the proposed development site open during construction and protect users where a public right of way borders or crosses the site.	
	2.10.42 Applicants are encouraged to design the layout and appearance of the site to ensure continued recreational use of public rights of way	

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	where possible during construction, and in particular during operation of the site.	PRoW affected by construction which may require temporary diversion/closure, or alternative routing where the former is not possible. The Proposed Development includes opportunities for enhancement such as proposals to provide three new PRoW and four permissive paths, as well as improvements to existing PRoW. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] sets out embedded measures to mitigate the visual impacts of the Proposed Development for those using existing public rights of way, including: • New hedgerow planting along the western boundary of Fields By28 and Lf04, the southern boundary of Field Lf04 and the northern boundary of Field Lf11; • New hedgerow planting along the southern boundary of Field Lf08; • New hedgerow planting along the northern boundary of Fields Lf07 and Md01 and along the southern boundary of Fields By22 and By23; • New hedgerow planting along the eastern boundary of Field By03, the western boundary of By04 and the northern boundaries of Fields By10 and By11; • New hedgerow planting along the southern boundary of Field By11, the northern boundary of Field By24 and the northern and eastern boundaries of Field By23; • New hedgerow planting along the western boundaries of Fields C8 and C9 and the northern boundary of Field C6; • New hedgerow planting along the southern boundaries of Fields Rw01 and RW02; • 20m width belt of structural native woodland planting along the northern boundary of Field Bcd139 and new hedgerows along the eastern boundary of Bcd139 and along the northern boundary of Bcd139 with Heath Road; and
	2.10.43 Applicants are encouraged where possible to minimise the visual impacts of the development for those using existing public rights of way, considering the impacts this may have on any other visual amenities in the surrounding landscape.	
	2.10.44 Applicants should consider and maximise opportunities to facilitate enhancements to the public rights of way and the inclusion, through site layout and design of access, of new opportunities for the public to access and cross proposed solar development sites (whether via the adoption of new public rights of way or the creation of permissive paths), taking into account, where appropriate, the views of landowners.	

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		The Proposed Development (excluding new landscaping) will be set back at least 15m either side from existing or proposed PRoW, except where crossings are necessary.
	2.10.45 Applicants should set out detail on how public rights of way would be managed to ensure they are safe to use in an outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan.	An **Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044] has been submitted alongside the application which sets out detail on how PRoW will be managed to ensure they are safe to use.
Applicant Assessment – Security and Lighting	2.10.46 Security of the site is a key consideration for developers. Applicants may wish to consider not only the availability of natural defences such as steep gradients, hedging and rivers but also perimeter security measures such as fencing, electronic security, CCTV and lighting, with the measures proposed on a site-specific basis.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] outlines the security measures incorporated in the design of the Proposed Development design. Efforts have been made to reduce the impact of security fencing and lighting, as set out in detail in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**, oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**, oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]**.** Final versions of these documents will be produced and secured as part of the DCO. The **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] outlines the design commitments relating to security measures, including: • D4: CCTV system will include passive infra-red detectors around the Solar PV development to minimise reduce the use of lighting. • D5: CCTV will be deployed at regular intervals to provide a sufficient field of view within the boundaries of each field, typically every 50-60 metres. • D19: There will be no permanent (continuous) lighting for security purposes except for at emergency exits. • D20: Lighting sensors will be implemented around the Springwell Substation and BESS compound. • E3: CCTV will be mounted on wooden poles and face internally into the Solar PV development.
	2.10.47 Applicants should assess the visual impact of these security measures, as well as the impacts on local residents, including for example issues relating to intrusion from CCTV and light pollution in the vicinity of the site.	
Technical Considerations –	2.10.55 The installed generating capacity of a solar farm will decline over time in correlation with the reduction in panel array efficiency. There is a range	The Applicant's approach to EIA, including the use of the Rochdale envelope to assess effects, is set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development**

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Capacity of a site	of sources of degradation that developers need to consider when deciding on a solar panel technology to be used. Applicants may account for this by overplanting solar panel arrays. 2.10.56 AC installed export capacity should not be seen as an appropriate tool to constrain the impacts of a solar farm. Applicants should use other measurements, such as panel size, total area and percentage of ground cover to set the maximum extent of development when determining the planning impacts of an application.	**Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] and **ES Volume 1, Chapter 5: Approach to the EIA [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-045]**.**
Technical Considerations – Site layout design, and appearance	2.10.59 Applicants should consider the criteria for good design set out in EN-1 Section 4.7 at an early stage when developing projects. 2.10.60 As set out above applicants will consider several factors when considering the design and layout of sites, including proximity to available grid capacity to accommodate the scale of generation, orientation, topography, previous land–use, and ability to mitigate environmental impacts and flood risk. 2.10.61 For a solar farm to generate electricity efficiently the panel array spacing should seek to maximise the potential power output of the site. The type, spacing and aspect of panel arrays will depend on the physical characteristics of the site such as site elevation.	As detailed in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and section 5 of the Planning Statement, the location and design of the Proposed Development is the result of a comprehensive site selection process that was environmental, and planning led to avoid and minimise impacts as early as possible. Following this, the Proposed Development has undergone an iterative design process which has resulted in the delivery of a functional and efficient Proposed Development design which will deliver a large amount of renewable and low carbon electricity using solar PV modules, whilst also being sensitive to the local context and surrounding area within which it is located, avoiding and minimising impacts on the environment as far as practicable. The Applicant's site selection process (set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] demonstrates that land was identified for the Site within an area of good solar irradiance and relatively low and flat topography landscape to maximise energy generation. As set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044]**,** the starting point for the Applicant was to understand where capacity existed in existing substations or the transmission network that would be sufficient to enable the connection of a utility scale solar development. Capacity at existing substations is finite but there remains capacity in the transmission network notably in the East Midlands distribution network region. In

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		parallel to the search for grid capacity the Applicant also sought to align the search with general conditions that allow for the development of utility scale solar development, notably, suitable irradiance and topography. The Applicant started engagement with the National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) in November 2020 as the point contact for new connection requests to discuss the potential opportunities for a connection offer within the target region identified above. As set out in Section 7 of the **Statement of Need [EN010149/APP/7.1]** [APP-0135]**,** there is no capacity at any existing NGESO infrastructure within 50km of the Site to accommodate new connections of Springwell's magnitude before 2033. This is somewhat inevitable given the context of the urgent national need for renewable energy (specifically solar), as developments have already been proposed to make use of existing substation capacity where it occurs. The design process and basis of design are set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] and the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028], which sets out the design approach and evolution of the Proposed Development which has been shaped by the Project Principles and has responded to the environmental assessment process, consultation feedback and engagement with stakeholders via an iterative design process. Consider the ability to avoid, minimise and mitigate environmental impacts, such as flood risk or BMV land. As detailed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022]**,** the mounting structure of the Solar PV modules will be designed to face southwards on a fixed platform. The Solar PV modules would be angled at a tilt of 10 to 30 degrees from horizontal to optimise daylight absorption.
	2.10.62 In terms of design and layout, applicants may favour a south-facing arrangement of panels to maximise output although other orientations may be	As detailed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022]**,** the mounting structure of the Solar PV modules will be designed to face southwards on a fixed platform. The Solar PV

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	chosen. For example, an east-west layout, whilst likely to result in reduced output compared to south-facing panels on a panel-by-panel basis, may allow for a greater density of panels to compensate and therefore for generation to be spread more evenly throughout the day.	modules would be angled at a tilt of 10 to 30 degrees from horizontal to optimise daylight absorption. These details will be further developed through detailed design and engineering details to maximise the development area within Works No.1 to achieve the available capacity.
	2.10.63 It is likely that underground and overhead cabling will be required to connect the electrical assets of the site, such as from the substation to the panel arrays or storage facilities.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] sets out the works contained in Work No. 6 – Cables. Cabling will be laid underground, apart from cabling between the Solar PV modules and string inverters, typically located above ground level and fixed to the Mounting Structure**.** The electrical design of the Proposed Development will be fixed at the detailed design stage. It is anticipated that the 33kV cables will run alongside the internal access tracks where practical and then be located within the adopted highway and/or agricultural land within the extent of Work No. 6 in order to connect back to the Springwell Substation and Main Collector Compound. **Appendix 2: Cabling and Grid Connection Method Statement** to the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] describes the grid connection and internal cable corridor, cable trench design, installation methodology, equipment, and details of construction and operation.
	2.10.64 In the case of underground cabling, applicants are expected to provide a method statement describing cable trench design, installation methodology, as well as details of the operation and maintenance regime.	
Technical Considerations – Project Lifetime	2.10.65 Applicants should consider the design life of solar panel efficiency over time when determining the period for which consent is required. An upper limit of 40 years is typical, although applicants may seek consent without a time-period or for differing time-periods of operation.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] sets out the operational life of the Proposed Development is 40 years from the date of final commissioning. This will allow the land (that has previously been intensively farmed) to recover ultimately safeguarding the agricultural usage of this land for future generations. At the end of the operational (including maintenance) phase, any above-ground infrastructure will be dismantled and removed per industry best practices. The decommissioned materials will follow the waste hierarchy such that they will be reused where possible before recycling and disposal are considered. All concrete, hardstanding areas, foundations for the infrastructure and any internal tracks will be removed to a depth of up to 1 m. All the below-ground cables will be left in situ.
	2.10.66 Time limited consent, where granted, is described as temporary because there is a finite period for which it exists, after which the project would cease to have consent and therefore must	

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	seek to extend the period of consent or be decommissioned and removed.	The Solar PV Site will be reinstated in accordance with this **Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]. A Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) will be subject to the approval of the local planning authorities at the time of decommissioning. Decommissioning activities will involve the removal of all of the Solar PV infrastructure, including the Ground Mounted Solar PV Generating Stations, Collector Compounds, Springwell Substation, BESS and ancillary infrastructure, including any on-site compounds. Decommissioning is expected to take approximately 24 months and may be undertaken in phases.
	2.10.67 Solar panel efficiency deteriorates over time and applicants may elect to replace panels during the lifetime of the site.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] sets out that any equipment that needs to be replaced during the operational (including maintenance) phase will be disposed of following the waste hierarchy, with materials being reused or recycled wherever possible. Electrical waste will be disposed of per the Waste from Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013, minimising the environmental impact of replacing any elements of the Proposed Development. Table 8.5 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008] sets out the anticipated service life of the Proposed Development components. Assets with a service life of 40 years would not require any replacement.
Technical Considerations – Decommissioning	2.10.68 Solar panels can be decommissioned relatively easily and cheaply. The nature and extent of decommissioning of a site can vary. Generally, it is expected that the panel arrays and mounting structures will be decommissioned, and underground cabling dug out to ensure that prior use of the site can continue	The operational life of the Proposed Development is 40 years from the date of final commissioning. This will allow the land (that has previously been intensively farmed) to recover, ultimately safeguarding the agricultural usage of this land for future generations. At the end of the operational (including maintenance) phase, any above-ground infrastructure will be dismantled and removed per industry best practices. The decommissioned materials will follow the waste hierarchy such that they will be reused where possible before recycling and disposal are considered. All concrete,
	2.10.69 Applicants should set out what would be decommissioned and removed from the site at the	

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	end of the operational life of the generating station, considering instances where it may be less harmful for the ecology of the site to keep or retain certain types of infrastructure, for example underground cabling, and where there may be socio-economic benefits in retaining site infrastructure after the operational life, such as retaining pathways through the site or a site substation.	hardstanding areas, foundations for the infrastructure and any internal tracks will be removed to a depth of up to 1 m. All the below-ground cables will be left in situ. The Solar PV Site will be reinstated in accordance with this **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]. A Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) will be subject to the approval of the local planning authorities at the time of decommissioning. Decommissioning activities will involve the removal of all of the Solar PV infrastructure, including the Ground Mounted Solar PV Generating Stations, Collector Compounds, Springwell Substation, BESS and ancillary infrastructure, including any on-site compounds. Decommissioning would include removing any permissive paths and the land will be returned to the landowner. Landscape structural planting, including tree planting, hedgerows, scrub, etc., created to deliver biodiversity mitigation and enhancement associated with the Proposed Development would be left in situ when the Site is handed back to landowners, except for the planting within Tb2, which will be removed to facilitate the releveling and removal of the earth bund to allow the field to be returned to agricultural use. Otherwise, it is assumed that the landowner will return the land to agricultural use when it is handed back. The Proposed Development is proposing to create an enhanced and better-connected footpath and cycle network. This includes approximately 3.49km of additional PRoW, which will remain even once the Proposed Development has been decommissioned. Decommissioning is expected to take approximately 24 months and may be undertaken in phases.
Technical Considerations – Flexibility in the project details	2.10.70 In many cases, not all aspects of the proposal may have been settled in precise detail at the point of application. Such aspects may include: • the type, number and dimensions of the panels; • layout and spacing;	The Applicant wishes to retain flexibility regarding the design detail of certain components of the Proposed Development. The extent of the flexibility required is described in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] and set out in the **Design Approach Document** [REP3-028] **[EN010149/APP/7.3]** and the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.**

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	• the type of inverter or transformer; and whether storage will be installed (with the option to install further panels as a substitute).	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 5: Approach to the EIA [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-045] and **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] explain that the parameters for the Proposed Development are defined by the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] which have been informed by the assessments in the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1/6.2/6.3]** and reciprocally used for assessment purposes. Where there is uncertainty, the Applicant has assessed the worst-case scenario for the purposes of the ES.
	2.10.71 Applicants should set out a range of options based on different panel numbers, types and layout, with and without storage.	
Impacts – Biodiversity, ecological, geological conservation and water management	2.10.76 The applicant's ecological assessments should identify any ecological risk from developing on the proposed site.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development's impact on important ecological features and is supported by extensive survey work (see **Appendices 7.1 to 7.14** of the **ES Vol.3 [EN010149/APP/6.3]** to confirm the ecological habitats and species likely to be affected by the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] identifies ecological risks from developing the Proposed Development. It has assessed impacts on protected species, habitats, and other species identified as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity. The assessment has been carried out by competent ecologists, who have advised during the design process to ensure that impacts are avoided, minimised and mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy, and biodiversity enhancements are maximised, as set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044]. Section 7.7 and 7.9 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] sets out the likely significant effects and residual effects, respectively, on the above receptors during construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. It concludes that there are no potential significant adverse effects identified on any internationally, nationally, or locally designated sites during construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Development.
	2.10.77 Issues that need assessment may include habitats, ground nesting birds, wintering and migratory birds, bats, dormice, reptiles, great crested newts, water voles and badgers.	
	2.10.78 The applicant should use an advising ecologist during the design process to ensure that adverse impacts are avoided, minimised or mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy, and biodiversity enhancements are maximised.	
	2.10.79 The assessment may be informed by a 'desk study' of existing ecological records, an evaluation of the likely impacts of the solar farm upon ecological features, and should specify mitigation to avoid or minimise these impacts, and any further surveys required.	

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		The Proposed Development will meet a minimum 10% BNG as secured in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] demonstrates that the Proposed Development is committed to achieve significant biodiversity net gain on site. Section 7.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] sets embedded mitigation measures relevant to biodiversity, which is secured by the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030], **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] and **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025].
	2.10.80 Applicants should consider earthworks associated with construction compounds, access roads and cable trenching.	Section 3.9 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] describes the works required for construction of the Proposed Development, including installation of cables which will include earthworks. An **Outline Soil Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042] sets out the principles on how the soils will be managed and protected during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. This includes separating topsoil during stripping, appropriate storage of topsoil and management of storage stockpiles, as well as methods for reinstatement of subsoil and topsoil to retain existing soil horizons. A detailed soil resource management plan will be prepared prior to construction as secured by DCO Requirement 18. The soil management plan must be substantially in accordance with the outline Soil Management Plan, as set out in the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004].
	2.10.81 Where soil stripping occurs, topsoil and subsoil should be stripped, stored, and replaced separately to minimise soil damage and to provide optimal conditions for site restoration. Further details on minimising impacts on soil and soil handling are above at paragraphs 2.10.33 and 2.10.34.	
	2.10.82 Applicants should consider how security and lighting installations may impact on the local ecology. Where pole mounted CCTV facilities are proposed the location of these facilities should be carefully considered to minimise impact. If lighting is necessary, it should be minimised and directed away from areas of likely habitat.	The Proposed Development's security and lighting have been designed to respond sensitively to ecology and the landscape features. Embedded mitigation measures pertaining to biodiversity and security are discussed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] and include: • There will be no permanent (continuous) lighting for security purposes except for at emergency exits;

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		• CCTV system will include passive infra-red detectors around the Solar PV development to reduce the use of lighting; and • Lighting sensors will be implemented around the Springwell Substation and BESS compound. Security, lighting and CCTV required for the Proposed Development are described in detail in section 3.13 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022]**,** the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**, oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**, oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]**.**
	2.10.83 Applicants should consider how site boundaries are managed. If any hedges/scrub are to be removed, further surveys may be necessary to account for impacts. Buffer strips between perimeter fencing and hedges may be proposed, and the construction and design of any fencing should account for enabling mammal, reptile and other fauna access into the site if required to do so in the ecological report.	The **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1/6.2/6.3]** takes account of all works boundaries and hedgerows. Buffers to woodland and hedgerow are included, and proposals for fencing incorporate features to enable the movement of mammals, reptiles and other fauna. These are set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012]**.**
	2.10.84 Where a Flood Risk Assessment has been carried out this must be submitted alongside the applicant's ES. This will need to consider the impact of drainage. As solar PV panels will drain to the existing ground, the impact will not, in general, be significant.	The DCO application is supported by a **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] which considers the impacts of the Proposed Development on drainage.
	2.10.85 Where access tracks need to be provided, permeable tracks should be used, and localised Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), such as swales and infiltration trenches, should be used to control any run-off where recommended.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] considers the potential likely effects of the Proposed Development on Water, including the assessment of establishment of construction compounds and access tracks. The recommendations set out in t **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050], include that all SuDS

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	2.10.86 Given the temporary nature of solar PV farms, sites should be configured or selected to avoid the need to impact on existing drainage systems and watercourses.	features are to be designed in accordance with the CIRIA C753 SuDS Manual, to ensure that surface water runoff discharged from the Site will be of an acceptable standard by following best design practices. Access tracks are considered to be permeable as they are gravel bound, however as precautionary mitigation the access tracks are proposed to have parallel swales which will intercept surface water runoff and will promote attenuation and infiltration. Section 15.5 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] presents a summary of the existing baseline conditions for the receptors scoped into further assessment. The Proposed Development is assessed to have no more than a negligible impact on any water receptors, which is not significant in EIA terms.
	2.10.87 Culverting existing watercourses/drainage ditches should be avoided.	Section 15.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] sets out steps taken to ensure existing water assets are conserved through a sustainable drainage strategy, including embedded mitigation such as a perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 6m either side from all existing ditches where crossing is not required. The proposed offset provides a buffer for any sediment entrained within surface water runoff where sediment can deposit. The proposed offset ensures no erosion of the banking of the watercourses which could result in degradation of water quality. The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] sets out Project Principles which have influenced the design evolution to avoid and minimise effects on existing watercourses/drainage ditches.
	2.10.88 Where culverting for access is unavoidable, applicants should demonstrate that no reasonable alternatives exist and where necessary it will only be in place temporarily for the construction period.	
	2.10.89 Solar farms have the potential to increase the biodiversity value of a site, especially if the land was previously intensively managed. In some instances, this can result in significant benefits and enhancements beyond Biodiversity Net Gain, which result in wider environmental gains which is encouraged	The Proposed Development will meet a minimum 10% BNG, as secured in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] demonstrates that the Proposed Development is committed to achieve significant biodiversity net gain on site.

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	2.10.90 For projects in England, applicants should consider enhancement, management, and monitoring of biodiversity in line with the ambition set out in the Environmental Improvement Plan and any relevant measures and targets, including statutory targets set under the Environment Act or elsewhere.	
Impacts – Landscape, Visual and residential amenity	2.10.93 Generic landscape and visual impacts are covered in Section 5.10 of EN-1.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] includes an assessment of the potential landscape and visual impacts associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development on local amenity.
	2.10.94 The approach to assessing cumulative landscape and visual impact of large-scale solar farms is likely to be the same as assessing other onshore energy infrastructure. Solar farms are likely to be in low lying areas of good exposure and as such may have a wider zone of visual influence than other types of onshore energy infrastructure.	
	2.10.95 However, whilst it may be the case that the development covers a significant surface area, in the case of ground-mounted solar panels it should be noted that with effective screening and appropriate land topography, the area of a zone of visual influence could be appropriately minimised.	Photographs and visualisation have been included to support the descriptions of baseline views and visual effects in reference to the viewpoints, which have been agreed through consultation with the relevant local planning authority. Annotated photographs of the existing view at all assessment viewpoints as well as photomontages from a selection of viewpoints are provided in **ES Volume 4 [EN010149/APP/6.4].** The method of visualisation selected has been informed by Landscape Institute Technical Note 06/19, with annotated photographs being the most appropriate visualisation type.
	2.10.96 Landscape and visual impacts should be considered carefully pre-application. Potential impacts on the statutory purposes of nationally designated landscapes should form a part of the pre-application process.	
	2.10.97 Applicants should carry out a landscape and visual assessment and report it in the ES. Visualisations may be required to demonstrate the	

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	effects of a proposed solar farm on the setting of heritage assets and any nearby residential areas or viewpoints	
	2.10.98 Applicants should follow the criteria for good design set out in Section 4.7 of EN-1 when developing projects and will be expected to direct considerable effort towards minimising the landscape and visual impact of solar PV arrays especially within nationally designated landscapes.	While the appearance of solar panels is largely determined by their function, the site layout, landscaping and access have all been designed to reflect principles of good design. Good design has been a key consideration from the outset. The Proposed Development has undergone an iterative design process, informed by the LVIA, set out in section 2 of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] and the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028]**.** The Proposed Development layout has been developed in response to policy requirements, published landscape character assessment and fieldwork analysis. The design mitigation has been embedded into the Proposed Development to minimise effects on landscape character and visual amenity as outlined in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.** As set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028]**,** the landscape design principles incorporate the following: • Provide appropriate offsets to local settlements and dwellings on a case-by-case basis, respecting their individual amenity; • Consider sequential views and the experience of people using Heath Road and other local roads; • Work with Blankney Estates and other landowners to secure the long-term management of both the agricultural landscape and benefits provided by the Proposed Development; • Identify opportunities for wider community benefits in consultation with local stakeholders by leading with the landscape; • Retain existing vegetation wherever reasonably possible to retain the fabric of the Site and aid assimilation of development into its context;
	2.10.99 Whilst there is an acknowledged need to ensure solar PV installations are adequately secured, required security measures such as fencing should consider the need to minimise the impact on the landscape and visual impact (see paragraphs 2.10.46 – 2.10.48 above).	

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		• Design the Proposed Development to respond to the distinctive and unique local character of the Site, informed by relevant local studies such as North Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment; and • Maintain the rural separation between the villages of Ashby de la Launde, RAF Digby, Scopwick, Kirkby Green and Blankney.
	2.10.100 The applicant should consider as part of the design, layout, construction, and future maintenance plans how to protect and retain, wherever possible, the growth of vegetation on site boundaries, as well as the growth of existing hedges, established vegetation, including mature trees within boundaries. Applicants should also consider opportunities for individual trees within the boundaries to grow on to maturity.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] conducts an assessment of the visual impact of the Proposed Development, including assessing the impacts on, and loss of, all trees and woodlands. In terms of vegetation removal, a worst- case assumption has been made that all vegetation shown as in **ES Volume 2, Figure 3.11: Vegetation Removal Parameters [EN010149/APP/6.2.4]** [REP4-015] would be removed. It is assumed that all other woodland, tree and hedgerow vegetation within the Order Limits would be retained. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.12: Arboricultural Impact Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-093] considers all trees within the Order Limits and, and within at least 100m from the Order Limits has been undertaken.
	2.10.101 The impact of the proposed development on established trees and hedges should be informed by a tree survey and arboricultural/hedge assessment as appropriate.	
Impacts – Glint and Glare	2.10.104 When a quantitative glint and glare assessment is necessary, applicants are expected to consider the geometric possibility of glint and glare affecting nearby receptors, and provide an assessment of potential impact and impairment based on the angle and duration of incidence and the intensity of the reflection.	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, and aviation activity. The methodology used within the glint and glare study considers permanent addresses of residences (dwellings) within the surrounding area. Commercial properties are not considered with regard to glint and glare as residential amenity is not a significant concern. This methodology has been widely accepted in planning submission for UK projects, including NSIPs, and internationally. As detailed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022], the mounting structure of the Solar PV modules will be designed to face southwards on a fixed platform. The Solar PV modules would be angled at a tilt of 10 to 30 degrees from horizontal to optimise daylight
	2.10.105 The extent of reflectivity analysis required to assess potential impacts will depend on the specific project site and design. This may need to account for 'tracking' panels if they are proposed as these may cause differential diurnal and/or seasonal impacts.	

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	2.10.106 When a glint and glare assessment is undertaken, the potential for solar PV panels, frames and supports to have a combined reflective quality may need to be assessed, although the glint and glare of the frames and supports is likely to be significantly less than the panels.	absorption. The **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1/6.2/6.3]** takes account of the impacts of Solar PV modules facing southwards on a fixed platform.
Impacts – Cultural Heritage	2.10.107 The impacts of solar PV developments on the historic environment will require expert assessment in most cases and may have effect both above and below ground.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development on the historic environment, including above and below ground assets. It concludes that there will be no significant adverse impacts to any designated heritage assets, including Listed Buildings or Historic Landscape Character as a result of the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] concludes there would be no significant adverse impacts to any designated or non-designated heritage assets as a result of the Proposed Development once embedded and additional mitigation measures are implemented. Both crash sites (Avro Lancaster Crash Site (Lincolnshire County Council HER MLI25416) and Hawker Hurricane Crash Site (Lincolnshire County Council HER ref. MLI125417) will be preserved from further disturbance by ploughing during the operational (including maintenance) phase of the Proposed Development. This will result in a minor beneficial magnitude of impact which will result in an effect of moderate beneficial significance which is considered to be significant in EIA terms. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument.
	2.10.108 Above ground impacts may include the effects on the setting of Listed Buildings and other designated heritage assets as well as on Historic Landscape Character.	
	2.10.109 Below ground impacts, although generally limited, may include direct impacts on archaeological deposits through ground disturbance associated with trenching, cabling, foundations, fencing, temporary haul routes etc.	
	2.10.110 Equally, solar PV developments may have a positive effect, for example archaeological assets may be protected by a solar PV farm as the site is removed from regular ploughing and shoes or low-level piling is stipulated.	
	2.10.111 Generic historic environment impacts are covered in Section 5.9 of EN-1.	
	2.10.112 Applicant assessments should be informed by information from Historic Environment Records (HERs) or the local authority.	The assessment in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] has been informed by the HER.

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	2.10.113 Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, the applicant should submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation. These should be carried out using expertise where necessary and in consultation with the local planning authority, and should identify archaeological study areas and propose appropriate schemes of investigation, and design measures, to ensure the protection of relevant heritage assets.	A detailed baseline is set out in section 9.5 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012]. A **Geoarchaeological Deposit Modelling Report** is provided as **ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.2 [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-098]. The location of heritage assets used in the cultural heritage assessment, within the site, within the study area and those included in the EIA are provided in **ES Volume 2, Figures Chapter 9 [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-065]. Section 9.8 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] sets out additional mitigation measures incudes that methods for identifying currently unknown archaeological remains to inform detailed design and securing mitigation measures are agreement with Lincolnshire County Council. Further archaeological trial trenching will be secured as a requirement to the DCO which is outlined in Schedule 2 of the **Draft DCO [EN10149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004] and set out in the **outline Written Scheme of Investigation [EN010149/APP/7.15.3]** [REP4-038].
	2.10.114 In some instances, field studies may include investigative work (and may include trial trenching beyond the boundary of the proposed site) to assess the impacts of any ground disturbance, such as proposed cabling, substation foundations or mounting supports for solar panels on archaeological assets.	Archaeological trial trench evaluation has been undertaken for the Proposed Development and potential impacts to buried archaeological features confirmed as being present within the Order limits is included within **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012]. The trial trench report is submitted alongside the application as **ES Volume 3, Appendix 9.5: Archaeological Trial Trenching Report [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-106]. Further archaeological trial trenching will be secured as a requirement to the DCO which is outlined in Schedule 2 of the **Draft DCO [EN10149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004] and set out in the **outline Written Scheme of Investigation [EN010149/APP/7.15.3]** [REP4-038].
	2.10.115 The extent of investigative work should be proportionate to the sensitivity of, and extent of, proposed ground disturbance in the associated study area.	

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	2.10.116 Applicants should take account of the results of historic environment assessments in their design proposal.	The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] sets out how the Proposed Development has considered the results of historic assessment in its design. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] describes the heritage assets within the Study Area for the Proposed Development and their significance, and the contribution of their significance to the setting. Section 9.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] sets out steps taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including embedded mitigation such as avoiding areas with known or suspected below-ground archaeological deposits, changes to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets have been avoided, site access points from the A15 have been selected to avoid works in proximity to the listed milepost, non-intrusive construction methods will be used, and routeing of HGV traffic away from Blankney and Scopwick. Section 9.7 and 9.9 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] provides an assessment of the likely effects and residual effects, respectively, of the Proposed Development on cultural heritage. All effects, including dust, noise, vibration and indirect impacts are considered. Due to the limited effects from noise, vibration and dust, the majority of impacts are as a result of direct impacts on non-designated heritage assets and impacts to the setting of designated heritage assets, as demonstrated in **ES Volume 2, Figure 9.1: Cultural Heritage Study Area [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-065]**.**
	2.10.117 Applicants should consider what steps can be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting.	
	2.10.118 As the significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence but also from its setting, careful consideration should be given to the impact of large-scale solar farms which depending on their scale, design, and prominence, may cause substantial harm to the significance of the asset.	
	2.10.119 Applicants may need to include visualisations to demonstrate the effects of a proposed solar farm on the setting of heritage assets.	
Impacts – Construction including traffic and transport noise and vibration	2.10.123 Applicants should assess the various potential routes to the site for delivery of materials and components where the source of the materials is known at the time of the application, and select the route that is the most appropriate.	As set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022], highway improvements will be required to support construction HGVs travelling on the local highway network to/from the proposed site access on the B1191. These improvements are expected to comprise relatively minor verge clearance, hedge cutting or carriageway widening to achieve a minimum carriageway width of 7.3m at the compound entrance along Heath Road (B1191), Navenby lane, and Temple Road. Passing bays are proposed on Temple
	2.10.124 Where the exact location of the source of construction materials, such as crushed stone or	

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	concrete is not be known at the time of the application, applicants should assess the worst-case impact of additional vehicles on the likely potential routes.	Road to support two-way construction traffic. These works will be retained permanently for future use and benefit to future road users. Further widening at the A15/B1191 junction is required. This will increase the width of the B1191 to accommodate two lanes on the approach to the A15 junction to support the increase in construction traffic. On the A15 southbound approach to the B1191 junction, widening of the existing road will be required to bring this approach up to standard to achieve appropriate visibility splays; this will entail the addition of a longer diverge deceleration lane, which will improve the southbound turning movement into the B1191. The widening of the A15 will also facilitate a longer turning lane for Temple Road for southbound HGV vehicles. All proposed carriageway widening is within the public highway boundary and will be retained permanently for future use and benefit to future road users. Gorse Hill Lane will provide the main point of access for the main primary construction compound west of the A15 and for the Springwell Substation. Highway improvements will require the widening and reconstruction of Gorse Hill Lane up to the compound entrance. The A15 will be widened to accommodate a right-turn lane for A15 southbound traffic turning into Gorse Hill Lane. Widening into the west verge of the A15 will be required to provide merge and diverge facilities. The Proposed Development design incorporates mitigation to reduce adverse effects and minimise impacts of traffic, and transport noise and vibration. These are set out in section 14.7 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] and section 2.8 of **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123]. These measures will be secured by the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028]**,** the **Streets, Rights of Way and Access Plans [EN010149/APP/2.4.3]** [REP1-004] and the **Draft DCO [EN10149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004]**.** The **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] sets out the Abnormal Indivisible Loads management plan**.** The construction works will involve the delivery of up to seven AILs which comprise the Springwell Substation transformer. This load will have a maximum width of 6.2m and a vehicle length of 64m. Other deliveries may be considered oversized loads, including three
	2.10.125 Applicants should ensure all sections of roads and bridges on the proposed delivery route can accommodate the weight and volume of the loads and width of vehicles. Although unlikely, where modifications to roads and/or bridges are required, these should be identified, and potential effects addressed in the ES.	
	2.10.126 Where a cumulative impact is likely because multiple energy infrastructure developments are proposing to use a common port and/or access route and pass through the same towns and villages, applicants should include a cumulative transport assessment as part of the ES. This should consider the impacts of abnormal traffic movements relating to the project in question in combination with those from any other relevant development. Consultation with the relevant local highways authorities is likely to be necessary.	

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		cranes and up to 18 cable drums, but would not fall into the category of requiring an escort vehicle or mitigation works to accommodate them. The **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] sets out that an access route survey feasibility report has been undertaken, which identifies that the preferred route would utilise the heavy load routes. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Cumulative Effects [EN010149/APP/6.1.5]** [REP4-013] provides an assessment of the cumulative transport assessment and concludes that provided there is adequate mitigation for the proposed National Grid Navenby Substation development there should be no inter-project cumulative effect. It is assumed that appropriate mitigation would be in place for the proposed National Grid Navenby Substation development, as is good practice and standard for schemes of this nature.
Mitigations – Agriculture Land classification and land type	2.10.127 The Defra Construction code of practice for the sustainable use of soils on construction sites provides guidance on ensuring that damage to soil during construction is mitigated and minimised. Mitigation measures focus on minimising damage to soil that remains in place, and minimising damage to soil being excavated and stockpiled. The measures aim to preserve soil health and soil structure to minimise soil carbon loss and maintain water infiltration and soil biodiversity. Mitigation measures for agricultural soils include use of green cover, multispecies cover crops - especially during the winter minimising compaction and adding soil organic matter.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] and the **outline Soil Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042] set out how agricultural land was considered in the design of Proposed Development, the Proposed Development's embedded mitigation measures, and principles on how the soils will be managed and protected during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. Embedded mitigation measures secured through the **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]**, ES Volume 3, Appendix 3.1: Project Parameters [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-074]**,** and the **Works Plans [EN010149/APP/2.3]** [APP-007] include: • The design of the Proposed Development minimises where possible the use of grade 1 and grade 2 agricultural land. The design and layout seeks to minimise disturbance to agricultural land of BMV quality. Where possible, existing access tracks within the Order Limits will be used, and new access tracks will avoid BMV land as far as is practical; • Solar PV mounting structure foundations will be driven or helical piles or concrete footings; • The foundations for the Solar PV modules will be at a maximum depth of 3m, depending on the ground conditions; and • Areas of impermeable surfaces have been assessed in the **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]) and designed to ensure

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		adequate groundwater infiltration is maintained during construction works. The design to ensure adequate infiltration and flood mitigation will be secured by the **Flood Risk Assessment** and supporting **outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]
Mitigations – Biodiversity and ecological conservation	2.10.128 In England, proposed enhancements should take account of the above factors and as set out in Sections 4.6 and 5.4 of EN-1 aim to achieve environmental and biodiversity net gain in line with the ambition set out in the Environmental Improvement Plan and any relevant measures and targets, including statutory targets set under the Environment Act or elsewhere.	The Proposed Development will meet a minimum of 10% BNG, as secured in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] demonstrates that the Proposed Development is committed to achieve significant biodiversity net gain on site.
	2.10.129 This might include maintaining or extending existing habitats and potentially creating new important habitats, for example by installing cultivated strips/plots for rare arable plants, rough grassland margins, bumble bee plant mixes, and wild bird seed mixes.	The Proposed Development includes measures to extend existing habitats and create new important habitats. These are set out in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030].
	2.10.130 Applicants are advised to develop an ecological monitoring programme to monitor impacts upon the flora of the site and upon any particular ecological receptors (such as bats and wintering birds). Results of the monitoring will then inform any changes needed to the land management of the site, including, if appropriate, any livestock grazing regime.	Appropriate monitoring will be undertaken during construction, operation and decommissioning as set out in the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030], **oCEMP [EN010149/APP7.7.5]** [REP4-025], **oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035].
Mitigations – Landscape, Visual and Residential Amenity	2.10.131 Applicants should consider the potential to mitigate landscape and visual impacts through, for example, screening with native hedges, trees and woodlands.	The mitigation embedded into the design which is outlined in section 10.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050], the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] and the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] includes, but is not limited to, hedgerow

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		planting along field boundaries, woodland planting along field boundaries, hedgerow infill planting, structural planting, establishment of wildflower rich grassland, offsets from existing woodlands and proposed or existing PRoWs, which has aimed to reduce visual impacts.
	2.10.132 Applicants should aim to minimise the use and height of security fencing. Where possible applicants should utilise existing features, such as hedges or landscaping, to assist in site security, or screen security fencing.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] sets out embedded mitigations including that boundary fencing will not be constructed through retained existing hedgerows or across ditches. In response to consultations with NKDC and LCC, the height of fencing around the Solar PV generating stations will be 2.5m high and it is confirmed that this will be timber post and wire mesh 'deer-proof fencing'. Secure fencing is also required around the Springwell Substation, Main Collector Compound, BESS and Satellite Collector Compounds and this will be 2.75m high.
Mitigations – Glint and Glare	2.10.134 Applicants should consider using, and in some cases the Secretary of State may require, solar panels to comprise of (or be covered with) anti-glare/anti-reflective coating with a specified angle of maximum reflection attenuation for the lifetime of the permission.	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, and aviation activity.
	2.10.135 Applicants may consider using screening between potentially affected receptors and the reflecting panels to mitigate the effects.	
	2.10.136 Applicants may consider adjusting the azimuth alignment of, or changing the elevation tilt angle of, a solar panel within the economically viable range, to alter the angle of incidence. In practice this is unlikely to remove the potential impact altogether but in marginal cases may contribute to a mitigation strategy.	
	2.10.137 The ability of the applicants to microsite specific elements of the proposed development	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] concludes there would be no significant adverse impacts to any designated or non-

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Mitigations – Cultural Heritage	during the construction phase should be an important consideration by the Secretary of State when assessing the risk of damage to archaeology.	designated heritage assets as a result of the Proposed Development once embedded and additional mitigation measures are implemented. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument. The Proposed Development will be constructed in accordance with the parameters set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] providing flexibility to amend the design should significant archaeological finds be discovered as a result of the programme of further archaeological trial trenching in accordance with the outline Written Scheme of Investigation.
	2.10.138 Where requested by the applicant, the Secretary of State should consider granting consents which allow for the micrositing within a specified tolerance of elements of the permitted infrastructure, so that precise locations can be amended during the construction phase if unforeseen circumstances, such as the discovery of previously unknown archaeology, arise.	
Mitigation – Construction including traffic and transport noise and vibration	2.10.139 In some cases, the local highway authority may request that the Secretary of State impose controls on the number of vehicle movements to and from the solar farm site in a specified period during its construction and, possibly, on the routeing of such movements particularly by heavy vehicles.	Measures required to control any construction traffic impacts, including AIL Routing, and delivery routes and scheduling have been identified and are secured through the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028].
	2.10.140 Where the Secretary of State agrees that this is necessary, requirements could be imposed on development consent.	
	2.10.141 Where cumulative effects on the local road network or residential amenity are predicted from multiple solar farm developments, it may be appropriate for applicants for various projects to work together to ensure that the number of abnormal loads and deliveries are minimised, and the timings of deliveries are managed and coordinated to ensure that disruption to residents and other highway users is reasonably minimised.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Cumulative Effects [EN010149/APP/6.1.5]** [REP4-013] concludes that the in terms of transport and access cumulative impacts, the cumulative impacts of the Proposed Development will be temporary in nature and will occur on receptors with a low or very low sensitivity, as well as being managed by measures in the **oCTMP [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] and **oPROWPPMP [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044] to be secured by the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004], therefore there will be no significant cumulative effects on transport and access.

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	2.10.142 It may also be appropriate for the highway authority to set limits for, and coordinate these deliveries through, active management of the delivery schedules through the abnormal load approval process.	
	2.10.143 Once consent for a scheme has been granted, applicants should liaise with the relevant local highway authority (or other coordinating body) regarding the start of construction and the broad timing of deliveries. Applicants may need to agree a planning obligation to secure appropriate measures, including restoration of roads and verges.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] set out that the principal contractor will liaise with local highways authorities and other parties in the event of other events (e.g., road closures, changes). Section 3.11 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] sets out the works included in Works No 8: Highways Works, as secured through the **Works Plans [EN010149/APP/2.3]** [APP-007].
	2.10.144 Further, it may be appropriate for any non-permanent highway improvements carried out for the development (such as temporary road widening) to be made available for use by other subsequent solar farm developments.	
Secretary of State decision making* - Factors *influencing site selection and design – Agriculture land classification and land type	2.10.145 The Secretary of State should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land. The Secretary of State should ensure that the applicant has put forward appropriate mitigation measures to minimise impacts on soils or soil resources.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] and the **outline Soil Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042] set out how agricultural land was considered in the design of Proposed Development, the Proposed Development's embedded mitigation measures, and principles on how the soils will be managed and protected during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. The Order Limits comprise agricultural landholdings, with a mixture of arable output used for various purposes as set out above both on BMV and non-BMV land. The proposed extent of the Solar PV Development represents a proportion of the wider landholding. In fact, the amount of BMV which would be required to be used for hard infrastructure (231.7ha), represents just over 4% of the wider Blankney Estate's landholding (5665ha). No key infrastructure, such as main agricultural buildings, is impacted and the Proposed Development has been designed to ensure

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		that it does not conflict with the wider business functions. However, there will inevitably be changes in the day-to-day farm management and operation given the extent of the land required for the Proposed Development. The income the landholding would receive from the land rental will play an important role in securing the ongoing viability of the estate and a form of diversification which will help secure the estate's long-term future. The **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] sets out how the Applicant considered agricultural land, and particularly BMV land, in its site selection process, noting that of the sites identified which met the Applicant's objectives, all presented similar or higher quantities of BMV in comparison to the Proposed Development. It is also important to recognise that while ALC was an important consideration in site selection, it was one of several factors balanced to determine a favoured site. Given that the other sites identified by the Applicant during site selection displayed similar ALC qualities, this was not a determining factor in the choice of site location. As explained in the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018], the Applicant has developed robust measures to ensure impacts on soils or soil resources which are secured in the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] and **oSMP [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042]. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] has assessed that there will be temporary significant adverse impacts on soil and agricultural land by way of impacts during construction and the availability of agricultural land in areas of permanent land use.
Secretary of State decision making – Technical	2.10.146 The Secretary of State should ensure that the applicant has put forward outline plans for decommissioning the generating station when no longer in use and restoring the land to a suitable	The Solar PV Development will be reinstated in accordance with the **Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] which has been provided with the Application.

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Considerations – Project lifetime and decommissioning	use (taking into account paragraphs 2.10.68 and 2.10.69).	A Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) will be subject to the approval of the local planning authorities at the time of decommissioning. There is a DCO requirement included in Schedule 2 of the D**raft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004] securing the decommissioning of the Proposed Development 40 years after the date of final commissioning. The requirement requires the approval of the DEMP at that time and that the approved plan is thereafter implemented, thus securing the decommissioning. The effects of decommissioning are often similar to, or of a lesser magnitude than, construction effects are considered in **Chapters 6** to **16** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1].** An **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] has been produced as part of the ES to demonstrate how the mitigation measures will be implemented. It will also set out the monitoring and auditing activities designed to ensure that such mitigation measures are carried out, and that they are effective. This will be secured by a Requirement within the DCO. The potential impacts due to the decommissioning phase of the Proposed Development are considered short-term in duration in any given location for a maximum of two years. There would be intermittent periods of relatively intense human activity and decommissioning movements across the Site, and therefore, there would be a short period of relatively large impact similar to those of the construction phase. At the end of the operational lifetime, the decommissioning phase would include removing any permissive paths and the land will be returned to the landowner. Landscape structural planting, including tree planting, hedgerows, scrub, etc., created to deliver biodiversity mitigation and enhancement associated with the Proposed Development would be left in situ when the Site is handed back to landowners, except for the planting within Tb2, which will be removed to facilitate the releveling and removal of the earth bund to allow the field to be returned to agricultural use. It is assumed that the remaining land would be returned to agricultural use when handed back to the landowner.
	2.10.147 Where the consent for a solar farm is to be time-limited, the DCO should impose a requirement setting that time-limit from the date the solar farm starts to generate electricity.	
	2.10.148 Such a requirement should also secure the decommissioning of the generating station after the expiration of its permitted operation to ensure that inoperative plant is removed after its operational life.	
	2.10.149 An upper limit of 40 years is typical, although applicants may seek consent without a time period or for differing time-periods for operation.	
	2.10.150 The time limited nature of the solar farm, where a time limit is sought as a condition of consent, is likely to be an important consideration for the Secretary of State.	
	2.10.151 The Secretary of State should consider the period of time the applicant is seeking to operate the generating station, as well as the extent to which the site will return to its original state, when assessing impacts such as landscape and visual effects and potential effects on the settings of heritage assets and nationally designated landscapes.	

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		Effects on landscape and visual amenity and heritage assets during decommissioning would be temporary and short term. Following decommissioning the landscape will be largely restored to its pre-development state. There would be a slight beneficial impact on the landscape fabric and consequently the character of the landscape and the wider environment. This would arise as a result of the retention on decommissioning of most of the mitigation hedgerows and woodland planted as part of the development.
Secretary of State decision making - Impacts – Biodiversity, ecological, geological conservation and water management	2.10.154 Water management is a critical component of site design for ground mount solar plants. Where previous management of the site has involved intensive agricultural practice, solar sites can deliver significant ecosystem services value in the form of drainage, flood attenuation, natural wetland habitat, and water quality management.	The **Flood Risk Assessment: Appendix A - Outline Drainage Strategy [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] sets out how water and drainage will be managed as part of the Proposed Development. The cessation of arable agricultural activities will result in a reduction of the application of pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers within the Site. In turn, the vegetation cover will stabilise soils and reduce the mobilisation of these materials. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] confirms that flood risk during construction and at decommissioning will be managed through the CEMP and DEMP, which will be secured by the DCO and required to be in accordance with the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], and the **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]**.** As the Site is at predominantly low risk from flooding from all sources, the reasonable 'worst case' is limited to the placement of Solar PV modules and string inverters mounted on the panels within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 towards the east of the Site. The residual flood risk will be negligible once mitigation is included. Embedded mitigation will include: • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 6m either side from all existing ditches where crossing is not required, secured through the **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030];

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		• An **Outline Drainage Strategy**, secured through the **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]**;** and • Vegetation Management, secured through the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**.** **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-055] concludes that due to the nature of the Proposed Development, there is a low likelihood that during the operational (including maintenance) phase the water quality would be degraded at Metheringham Beck. Once vegetation is established below Solar PV modules this will support the stabilisation of soils which will be less prone to the erosional forces of rainfall runoff. Water quality during construction and decommissioning phases will be protected by appropriate control measures and any adverse effects will be greatly reduced or eliminated. Mitigation measures are documented within and will be secured by the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]**,** which are submitted in support of the DCO Application. Wetland habitats are not affected by the Proposed Development and are not considered in the assessment.
	2.10.155 The Secretary of State must consider the worst-case effects in its consideration of the application and consent.	The impact assessment within **Chapters 6** to **16** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1]** has been based on the worst-case parameters for each technical topic and justification is presented within the relevant technical chapter.
Secretary of State decision making - Impacts – Landscape, visual and residential amenity	2.10.157 The Secretary of State will consider the landscape and visual impact of any proposed solar PV farm, taking account of any sensitive visual receptors, and the effect of the development on landscape character, together with the possible cumulative effect with any existing or proposed development. Nationally designated landscapes (National Parks, The Broads and Areas of Outstanding Beauty) are afforded extra protection due their statutory purpose. Development in these	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] concludes that no part of the Site or its immediately surrounding context falls within a statutorily designated landscape. The nearest National Park or National Landscape (formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) to the Site is the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, located more than 20km to the north-east and this would not be affected by the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] concludes that during construction, operation (year 1) and decommissioning, significant effects are anticipated on LCA 7: The Limestone Heath and LCA 11:

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	areas needs to satisfy policy as set out in EN-1 Section 5.10.	Central Clays and Gravels. During operation (year 10), significant effects are anticipated on LCA 11: Central Clays and Gravels. Table 16.11 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Cumulative Effects [EN010149/APP/6.1.5]** [REP4-013] assesses the landscape and visual inter-project cumulative effects. The assessment concludes that no significant inter-project cumulative effects have been identified. It is considered that the wider benefits of the Proposed Development, including the delivery of a significant level of low carbon energy generation and biodiversity net gain and the provision of permissive footpaths and outweigh these impacts and that the Proposed Development is considered acceptable in terms of overall landscape, visual and residential amenity impacts and the nature of the visual impacts are not considered to outweigh the benefits of the Proposed Development.
Secretary of State decision making - Impacts – Glint and Glare	2.10.158 Solar PV panels are designed to absorb, not reflect, irradiation. However, the Secretary of State should assess the potential impact of glint and glare on nearby homes, motorists, public rights of way, and aviation infrastructure (including aircraft departure and arrival flight paths).	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, and aviation activity.
	2.10.159 Whilst there is some evidence that glint and glare from solar farms can be experienced by pilots and air traffic controllers in certain conditions, there is no evidence that glint and glare from solar farms results in significant impairment on aircraft safety. Therefore, unless a significant impairment can be demonstrated, the Secretary of State is unlikely to give any more than limited weight to claims of aviation interference because of glint and glare from solar farms.	

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Secretary of State decision making - Impacts – Cultural Heritage	2.10.160 Solar farms are generally consented on the basis that they will be time-limited in operation. The Secretary of State should therefore consider the length of time for which consent is sought when considering the impacts of any indirect effect on the historic environment, such as effects on the setting of designated heritage assets.	The design life of the Proposed Development is expected to be 40 years. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] concludes there would be no significant adverse impacts to any designated or non-designated heritage assets as a result of the Proposed Development once embedded and additional mitigation measures are implemented. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument.
Secretary of State decision making - Impacts – Construction including traffic and transport noise and vibration	2.10.161 Once solar farms are in operation, traffic movements to and from the site are generally very light, in some instances as little as a few visits each month by a light commercial vehicle or car. Should there be a need to replace machine components, this may generate heavier commercial vehicle movements, but these are likely to be infrequent.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] concludes that once the Proposed Development is operational, the effect on the local road system is expected to be minimal therefore there will be no significant adverse impacts.
	2.10.162 The Secretary of State is unlikely to give any more than limited weight to traffic and transport noise and vibration impacts from the operational phase of a project.	

3. Table 3 National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN5) – Table of Compliance

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Part 2.3 Climate change adaptation and resilience	2.3.2 As climate change is likely to increase risks to the resilience of some of this infrastructure, from flooding for example, or in situations where it is located near the coast or an estuary or is underground, applicants should in particular set out to what extent the proposed development is expected to be vulnerable, and, as appropriate, how it has been designed to be resilient to: • flooding, particularly for substations that are vital to the network; and especially in light of changes to groundwater levels resulting from climate change; • the effects of wind and storms on overhead lines; • higher average temperatures leading to increased transmission losses; • earth movement or subsidence caused by flooding or drought (for underground cables); and coastal erosion – for the landfall of offshore transmission cables and their associated substations in the inshore and coastal locations respectively.	The minimum height of the lowest part of the Solar PV modules will be 0.8m AGL (existing levels). The maximum height of the Solar PV modules will be 3.0m AGL (existing levels), except in areas of flood risk where the maximum height will be up to 3.5m AGL (existing levels) to ensure enough freeboard and climate resilience. To ensure climate resilience, all Balance of Solar System (BoSS) options would be located within fields suitable for the Solar PV Modules and outside Flood Zones 2 and 3. Solar PV mounting structures are designed to withstand the wind and snow loading and other environmental impacts expected for the operational life of the project. Solar PV modules are constructed and tested to withstand wind loading and temperature in some of the harshest environments. As outlined in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008] the Proposed Development takes account of the effects of climate change have been considered the design of the Proposed Development and its construction and decommissioning. As set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028], the Applicant adopted 10 Strategic Principles to guide the design of the Proposed Development at the early stages of the project, including to build resilience in a changing climate. This is demonstrated through Design Principle 9.1: • Design for resilience and adaptation to future climate change. Ensure responsible construction, ongoing maintenance and decommissioning. One of the major risks posed to new developments regarding climate change is flood risk. The Applicant has opted to site potentially vulnerable infrastructure (i.e., Substation and BESS Units) in the northwestern region of the Site, where flood risk

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		is considered to be 'very low'. This infrastructure will be situated on raised platforms above ground level, to further minimise the residual flood risk. Further information on the extent of design measures implemented to minimise flood risk can be found in the **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050]. As set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] areas of land underneath the Solar PV modules and within the field margins are expected to be used for ecological mitigation and enhancements, which would include planting and establishment of grassland, which would help to reduce soil degradation and erosion during the operational (including maintenance) phase, which could lead to potential benefits. The **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025] sets out measures to avoid, minimise or mitigate effects on the environment during construction works. This includes procedures to mitigate against erosion. There is potential that soil health could be enhanced over the assumed 40-year period of operation of the Proposed Development due to the implementation of the **outline Soil Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042] and due to the permanent cover of grassland which would reduce the impact of soil erosion.
	2.3.3 Section 4.10 of EN-1 advises that the resilience of the project to the effects of climate change must be assessed in the Environmental Statement (ES) accompanying an application. For example, future increased risk of flooding would be covered in any flood risk assessment (see Sections 5.8 in EN-1). Consideration should also be given to coastal change (see sections 5.6 in EN1)	The Scoping Opinion confirmed that climate resilience can be scoped out of further assessment, on the basis that **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] sufficiently explains how the Proposed Development has been designed to be resilient to the impacts of climate change (which, in the opinion of the Applicant, it does).
Part 2.4 – Consideration of good design	2.4.1 The Planning Act 2008 requires the Secretary of State to have regard, in designating an NPS, and in determining applications for development consent to the desirability of good design.	The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] demonstrates how the Proposed Development would fulfil the requirement for good design. It explains how good design has been embedded into the Proposed Development from the early stages of the project via a clear design framework, how

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for energy infrastructure	2.4.2 Applicants should consider the criteria for good design set out in EN1 Section 4.7 at an early stage when developing projects.	this has provided a shared understanding of desired outcomes for the project and informed decision making. It explains the way in which the design has evolved since inception, the rationale for the proposals contained within the DCO Application, and the mechanism by which good design would be secured post-consent. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] outlines how landscape and visual amenity have been considered in the preliminary site section and design of the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] details the embedded design mitigation developed for the Proposed Development, including the development of an **Outline Landscape and Ecology Mitigation Plan (oLEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030].
	2.4.3 However, the Secretary of State should bear in mind that electricity networks infrastructure must in the first instance be safe and secure, and that the functional design constraints of safety and security may limit an applicant's ability to influence the aesthetic appearance of that infrastructure.	Security is an important consideration during construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. Each area of the Site has been assessed against its function and requirements for security measures, focused on being safe and secure by design. This has led to mitigation measures being put in place such as fencing, security gates, CCTV and PIR lighting.
	2.4.4 While the above principles should govern the design of an electricity networks infrastructure application to the fullest possible extent – including in its avoidance and/or mitigation of potential adverse impacts (particularly those detailed in Sections 2.9 below) – the functional performance of the infrastructure in respect of security of supply and public and occupational safety must not thereby be threatened.	Details of proposed security provisions are provided in the **Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033], **ES Vol.2 Figure 3.12: Typical Security Details [EN010149/APP/6.2.4]** [REP4-015] and the **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]. The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] submitted as part of the Application contain design principles which focus on good design. An **Outline Battery Safety Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.14.2]** [REP1-048] sets out the approach to be taken to manage the safety of the BESS in

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		accordance with regulatory requirements, guidance, and good industry practice. The **Outline Battery Safety Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.14.2]** [REP1-048] will address aspects such as safe design, construction, operation, and disposal and the strategy for firefighting and emergency planning. **ES Volume 2, Figure 3.3: Green Infrastructure Parameters [EN010149/APP/6.2.4]** [REP4-015] illustrates the PRoW improvements and new PRoW and permissive path proposals. The **Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044] sets out details on how PRoW will be managed to ensure users safety.
Part 2.8 Strategic Network Planning	2.8.4 The Secretary of State should also take into account that Transmission Owners (TOs) and Distribution Network Operators (DNOs) are required under Section 9 of the Electricity Act 1989 to bring forward efficient and economical proposals in terms of network design.	The Applicant has secured a connection to the National Grid that allows the export and import of 800MW of electricity to the NETS via a connection to the Navenby Substation. The grid connection cables will consist of one or two 400kV cable circuits, each consisting of three cables, which will run from Springwell Substation to Navenby Substation. Further details are included in the **Grid Connection Statement [EN010149/APP/7.6.2]** [REP1-058]**.**
	2.8.5 TOs and DNOs are also required to facilitate competition in the generation and supply of electricity, and electricity distributors have a statutory duty to provide a connection where requested.	
Part 2.9 – Applicant Assessment	2.9.46 All overhead power lines produce EMFs. These tend to be highest directly under a line and decrease to the sides at increasing distance. Although putting cables underground eliminates the electric field, they still produce magnetic fields, which are highest directly above the cable. EMFs can have both direct and indirect effects on human health, aquatic and terrestrial organisms.	The Applicant does not anticipate any significant adverse EMF effects on any receptors. A high-level electromagnetic assessment has been undertaken and can be found within **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.5: High-level Electromagnetic Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-079]. The study sets out the proposed siting zone for the cabling and includes an assessment of EMF for underground cabling and transformer and substations. The assessment recommends a minimum clearance distance of 25m relative to public exposure limits for magnetic and electric fields and concludes that there would be no effects to sensitive receptors. This is secured in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 3.1: Project Parameters [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-074]**.**
	2.9.47 The direct effects occur in terms of impacts on the central nervous system resulting in its normal functioning being affected. Indirect effects occur	

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	through electric charges building up on the surface of the body producing a microshock on contact with a grounded object, or vice versa, which, depending on the field strength and other exposure factors, can range from barely perceptible to being an annoyance or even painful.	As set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022]**,** cabling will be laid underground, apart from cabling between the Solar PV modules and string inverters, typically located above ground level and fixed to the Mounting Structure. The dimensions of trenching will vary, subject to the number of underground cables and the number of ducts they contain. The width of cable trenches will vary depending on the detailed design.

4. Table 4 – National Planning Policy – Table of Compliance

Policy	Policy Text	Draft NPPF Text (July 2024)	Assessment
Section 2: Achieving sustainable development. **Paragraph 8**	Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives): A) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure; B) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and		The **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] and the **Statement of Need [EN010149/APP/7.1]** [APP-0135] sets out how the Proposed Development would contribute substantially to the need to supply low carbon energy, in order for the government to meet its objectives and commitments. By generating low carbon electricity at a low marginal cost, large-scale solar power reduces the energy generated by more expensive and more carbon intensive forms of generation. The Proposed Development will therefore help to decarbonise the electricity system and lowers the market price of electricity. The Applicant has developed the design of the Proposed Development to avoid, reduce or mitigate the requirement to use BMV land where possible. As set out in the Site Selection Report at Appendix 1 to the Planning Statement, the Applicant, from an early stage, sought to avoid land of higher agricultural quality. However, given the nature of the sites which were able to meet the Applicant's objectives, agricultural land formed part of each potential site identified. The general quality of the land across the sites considered was similar i.e. predominantly Grade 3 with some areas of Grade 2. Given the similarities, the land type did not represent a differentiating factor in the site selection process. This has been assessed through **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and**

Policy	Policy Text	Draft NPPF Text (July 2024)	Assessment
	support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and C) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.		**Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] and has included amendments to the Order Limits and potential areas for Solar Development. Agricultural land quality was a key consideration in the Applicant's site selection process as set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]. The agricultural land design principles incorporate the following: • All fields comprising solely of Grades 1 or 2 land within the site will remain in arable production; • Prioritise the use of BMV land for arable production where practicable; and • Prioritise the use of non-BMV land for habitat creation where practicable. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] assesses the impacts on the economic objectives of the NPPF. The assessment found that the Proposed Development will have a slight/moderate beneficial impact and therefore significant in EIA terms on employment during the construction phase. From a social perspective, **ES Volume 1, Chapters 6, 12 and 13 [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] [REP3-010] [REP1-016] assess the disturbance (air quality and noise) to social infrastructure and population and social infrastructure impacts arising from the residual effects of the Proposed

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			Development are both adverse and beneficial, but are no greater than negligible and so not significant in EIA terms. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] identifies major/moderate and moderate adverse impacts, which are significant in EIA terms, of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development also includes a new community growing area to the north of Scopwick. The community growing area would be located adjacent to existing community facilities along Vicarage Lane (including Scopwick Cemetery, park and play area) and is adjacent to the Spires and Steeples Trail and Stepping Out Scopwick Loop. The community growing area would be secured via the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**.** The Proposed Development includes opportunities for enhancement such as proposals to provide three new PRoW and four permissive paths, as well as improvements to existing PRoW. The **Outline Public Right of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044] sets out the mitigation, management, and monitoring measures for PRoW affected by construction which may require temporary diversion/closure, or alternative routing where the former is not possible. From an environmental perspective, **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] outlines how the Applicant has sought

Policy	Policy Text	Draft NPPF Text (July 2024)	Assessment
			to protect and enhance the natural environment as far as practical. The Applicant's assessment and application of the mitigation hierarchy for the Proposed Development has mitigated residual adverse effects to a level which is no greater than adverse at the local level but not significant in EIA terms. Section 8.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [[EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008] sets out the mitigation measures embedded into the Proposed Development to mitigate the impacts on and adapt to climate change. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development on the historic environment, including above and below ground assets. It concludes that there will be no significant impacts to the historic environment as a result of the Proposed Development. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to the monument.
Section 6: Building a strong, competitive economy. **Paragraph 85**	Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for	**Paragraph 83** Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] assesses the impacts on the economics of the Proposed Development. The assessment found that the Proposed Development will have a slight beneficial impact, which is not significant in EIA terms on employment during the construction phase.

Policy	Policy Text	Draft NPPF Text (July 2024)	Assessment
	development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.	need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.	The Site is mainly agricultural and there are no other businesses or land allocated for employment use (within a development plan) within the Order Limits; therefore, **ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] sets out that the development land and businesses receptor has been scoped out of the assessment. This is confirmed within **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.2: Scoping Opinion [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-076]**.** As set out in the **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [EN010149/APP/7.20]** [APP-0153]**,** the Proposed Development will provide construction job opportunities over the anticipated four-year construction programme. The (gross) peak number of approximately 650 workers may be on site at any one time, or an average of 400 over the four-year construction period. The jobs created will be in the renewable energy sector and will contribute to the development of skills needed for the UK's transition.
Supporting a prosperous rural economy Paragraph 88	Planning policies and decisions should enable: a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, beautiful new buildings; b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and the retention and development of accessible local services and community	**Paragraph 86** Planning policies and decisions should enable: a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, beautiful new buildings; b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments	

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	facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship	which respect the character of the countryside; and the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship	
Section 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities. **Paragraph 96**	Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages; b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space,		**ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016] includes an assessment which concludes that no residual effect is greater than minor adverse or beneficial for any impact, therefore not significant in EIA terms. As outlined throughout the ES, the Proposed Development will deliver significant social and economic benefits as outlined within **ES Volume 1, Chapter 13: Population [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-016]. This includes contributing to a skilled, diverse workforce and strengthening the existing manufacturing base which will be secured via the **Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [EN010149/APP/7.20]** [APP-0153]. The production of a detailed Skills and Employment Strategy is secured via Requirement 16 of the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004]. A number of existing PRoW traverse the Proposed Development and are presented in Table 14.19, **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] and have been

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	which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and c) enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.		illustrated in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123] and the **Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044]**.** The Proposed Development includes opportunities for enhancement such as proposals to provide three new PRoW and four permissive paths, as well as improvements to existing PRoW. No PRoW will be permanently closed as a result of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development would incorporate a number of green infrastructure proposals, as set out in the **Outline LEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] which would enhance the strategic green infrastructure network in the surrounding area. The green infrastructure proposed is illustrated in **ES Volume 2, Figure 3.3: Green Infrastructure Parameters [EN010149/APP/6.2.4]** [REP4-015]**.**
Paragraph 102	Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well- being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for		The Proposed Development includes the provision of enhancements and improvements to the local footpath and cycle network including the provision of new PRoWs, thereby offering potential for new recreational opportunities: • Linking RAF Digby to Scopwick. • Providing a connection between the existing PRoW west of the A15 to New England Lane.

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	new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.		• Providing a connection across the A15 by linking Temple Road to Bloxham Woods Car Park. The creation of four new permissive paths: • A new permissive path along the western edge of the Proposed Development linking New England Lane to Temple Road, north of Brauncewell (approx. length 4,130m). • A new permissive path connecting the B1191 (Heath Road) with the existing PRoW between RAF Digby and Rowston (Rows/5/1) (approx. length 1,610m). • A new permissive path linking Bloxholm Wood to Brauncewell Village (approx. length 1,120m). New permissive paths to provide a series of circular walking loops from Bloxholm Woods (approx. length 1,720m).
Paragraph 104	Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.		**ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development's impact on Public Rights of Way within the Order Limits, or that will be impacted by the Proposed Development. A number of existing PRoW traverse the Proposed Development and are presented in Table 14.19 **ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] and have been illustrated in **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123] and the **Outline Public Rights of Way**

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			and Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3] [REP3-044]. The **Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Path Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.12.3]** [REP3-044] sets out the mitigation, management, and monitoring measures for PRoW affected by construction which may require temporary diversion/closure, or alternative routing where the former is not possible. The Proposed Development includes opportunities for enhancement such as proposals to provide three new PRoW and four permissive paths, as well as improvements to existing PRoW. No PRoW will be permanently closed as a result of the Proposed Development. The **Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.1]** [APP-019] sets out that in response to the feedback received following Phase Two Consultation, the following changes were introduced: • Removal of a field closest to Scopwick to increase the distance between the village and the Proposed Development to provide a visual break and reduce visual impacts from public rights of way ("PRoW"). • Removal of fields located in Springwell East, including to the west of the Spires and Steeples PRoW, Blankney Circuit PRoW and Trundle Lane to reduce landscape and visual impacts on PRoW in this area.

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			• Refining the size and location of construction compounds and site access points, including the main construction compound proposed for Springwell East to reduce impacts on nearby properties, users of the B1188 and PRoW. In response to the feedback received following targeted consultation, changes included the additions to the proposed Order limits to connect the existing PRoW (Blan/737/1) with the B1188 to enhance walking routes to Blankney.
Section 9: Promoting sustainable transport. **Paragraph 108**	Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed; opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated; opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued; the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate	**Paragraph 106** Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: a. the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed; b. opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 14: Traffic and Transport [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-010] provides an assessment on traffic and transportation. The Assessment concludes that no construction, operation or decommissioning impact will result in a residual effect which is greater than minor adverse, not significant in EIA terms. To achieve this, the Applicant has submitted an **Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) [EN010149/APP/7.8.4]** [REP4-028] which is provided in support of the DCO application. The **oCTMP** includes outline travel plan measures, which would be developed further in consultation with the relevant highway authorities prior to the commencement of the Proposed Development. These measures include: • Facilitating the safe and efficient movement of people and materials during the

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	opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.	c. opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued; d. the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and e. patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.	construction phase as far as reasonably practicable; • Minimising freight and construction traffic, including HGVs and staff vehicles, during network peaks to reduce the impact on the highway network during the busy periods; • Minimising the impact and disruption to the local communities. The production of a final Construction Traffic Management Plan is secured by Requirement 14 of the **Draft DCO [EN010149/APP/3.1.4]** [REP4-004]. The Applicant has submitted **ES Volume 3, Appendix 14.1: Transport Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3] [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-123] which has been produced in accordance with current transport guidance. The **TA** demonstrates that the Proposed Development will not have a severe impact on the operation and safety of the surrounding highway network. The **TA** proposes mitigations including: • Junction improvements at the A15/B1192 and A15/Gorse Hill Lane junctions are proposed as embedded mitigation to support the Proposed Development, with benefits for all users likely; and • Mitigation for predicated capacity issues prior to the introduction of Proposed Development traffic. However, junction performance is expected to improve following junction improvements (currently
Paragraph 114	In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that: a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location; b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;	**Paragraph 112** In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that: a) A vision led approach to promoting sustainable transport modes is taken, taking account of the type	

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	c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.	of development and its location; b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code; and any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision led approach.	being explored by Lincolnshire County Council and LRSP) or alternatively through a commuter bus service for workers.
Paragraph 115	Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.	**Paragraph 113** Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, in all tested scenarios.	

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Paragraph 117	All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.	**Paragraph 115** All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.	
Section 11: Making effective use of land **Paragraph 124(a)**	Planning policies and decisions should 'encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through […] taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation […].'	**Paragraph 122(a)** Planning policies and decisions should 'encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through […] taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation […].'	The Proposed Development will meet a minimum 10% BNG, as secured within the proposals in the **Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (oLEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: BNG Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] demonstrates that the Proposed Development is committed to achieve a significant biodiversity net gain on site. Section 7.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] set out the proposed mitigation measures embedded in the Proposed Development, including the creation of approximately 100 hectares (ha) of grassland consisting of calcareous grassland to provide open nesting habitat for ground nesting birds to compensate for habitat lost due to placement of Solar PV modules and improve habitat and carrying capacity for ground nesting birds. Habitat creation and improvement measures for ground nesting and wintering birds are documented

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			within and secured by the **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**.**
Section 12: Achieving well-designed and beautiful places. **Paragraph 131**	The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.	**Section 12: Achieving well-designed places.** **Paragraph 128** The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.	As detailed in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] and section 5 of the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018], the location and design of the Proposed Development is the result of a comprehensive site selection process that was environmental, and planning led to avoid and minimise impacts as early as possible. Following this, the Proposed Development has undergone an iterative design process which has resulted in the delivery of a functional and efficient Proposed Development design which will deliver a large amount of renewable and low carbon electricity using solar PV arrays, whilst also being sensitive to the local context and surrounding area within which it is located, avoiding and minimising impacts on the environment as far as practicable. The Applicant's site selection process (set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] demonstrates that land was identified for the Site within an area of good solar irradiance and relatively low and flat topography landscape to maximise energy generation. As set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044]**,** the starting point for the Applicant was to understand where capacity
Paragraph 137	Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve	**Paragraph 134** Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations	

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	designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.	and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.	existed in existing substations or the transmission network that would be sufficient to enable the connection of a utility scale solar development. Capacity at existing substations is finite but there remains capacity in the transmission network notably in the East Midlands distribution network region. In parallel to the search for grid capacity the Applicant also sought to align the search with general conditions that allow for the development of utility scale solar development, notably, suitable irradiance and topography. The Applicant started engagement with the National Grid Electricity System Operator (NGESO) as the point contact for new connection requests to discuss the potential opportunities for a connection offer within the target region identified above. Grid connections with spare capacity are finite, and no connection offers were provided that could deliver the output proposed by NGESO to the Applicant for already available capacity at already existing substations in the target region/geography. This is somewhat inevitable given the context of the urgent national need for renewable energy (specifically solar), as developments have already been proposed to make use of existing substation capacity where it occurs. The **Statement of Need [EN010149/APP/7.1** [APP-0135] sets out that there is no capacity at any existing NGESO infrastructure within 50km of the Site to accommodate new connections of the Proposed Development's magnitude before 2033.
Paragraph 139	Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to: a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings	**Paragraph 136** Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to: a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or	

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		outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings	The design process and basis of design are set out in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044]**.** Refining the design and layout of the Proposed Development has been an iterative process, guided by a programme of pre-application consultation and engagement, as well as the outputs of environmental assessments and technical work. The key stages of design and how they relate to the stages of formal pre-application consultation are summarised in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028]**.** Engagement with key stakeholders, including the host authorities, near neighbours and community organisations has helped to inform the design of the Proposed Development and the Applicant's approach to assessing environmental effects. A summary of engagement by stakeholder type, and how engagement has influenced the Proposed Development is provided in sections 3.2-3.5 of **the Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.1]** [APP-019] Following Phase One Consultation, the Applicant conducted a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment ('RVAA') at 33 properties in proximity to the proposed Site boundary. Recognising that it was important to provide feedback on the outcome of these assessments and how they would help

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			inform the design of the Proposed Development, the Applicant invited all those offered an RVVA to attend a design workshop focused on the area of the Proposed Development likely to be of interest to them. The outputs of the workshops were taken into account to inform the ongoing design of the Proposed Development. The following changes were made as a result of the workshops: • Removal of a field from potential solar development in Springwell East in consideration of views from a neighbouring property. • Removal of half of a field from potential solar development in Springwell Central in consideration of views from neighbouring properties and the amenity of a footpath. • Removal of a field from potential solar development in Springwell West in consideration of views from neighbouring properties. • Extension of proposed tree belt planting along the northern edge of Heath Road to screen views from neighbouring properties.
Section 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change. **Paragraph 157**	The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of	**Paragraph 158** The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in	The Proposed Development would make a substantial contribution, both to the achievement of UK decarbonisation targets and to global commitments to mitigating climate change. By generating low carbon, renewable and low-cost electricity in the UK, the Proposed Development would also help to reduce the UK's reliance on imported energy and to improve energy security.

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	existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. Paragraph 154 states that new development should be planned for in ways that: a. avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards.	greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 8: Climate [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-008] includes a greenhouse gas (GHG) assessment. The assessment considers GHG emissions and in-combination climate change. The assessment concludes that no construction, operation or decommissioning impact will result in an adverse residual effect which is significant in EIA terms. There is an assessed significant beneficial effect on GHG emissions, as it is anticipated that 9.6 million tCO2e will be saved over lifespan of the Proposed Development.
Paragraph 159	New development should be planned for in ways that: a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks	**Paragraph 160** New development should be planned for in ways that: **a)** avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought	

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	can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards.	forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards.	
Paragraph 163	When determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should: a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to significant cutting greenhouse gas emissions; b) approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside	**Paragraph 164** Local planning authorities should support planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon development. When determining planning applications for these developments, local planning authorities should: a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the proposal's contribution to renewable energy generation and a net zero future;	The **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] and the **Statement of Need [EN010149/APP/7.1** [APP-0135] sets out how the Proposed Development would contribute substantially to the need to supply low carbon energy, in order for the government to meet its objectives and commitments as mentioned above. By generating low carbon electricity at a low marginal cost, large-scale solar power reduces the energy generated by more expensive and more carbon intensive forms of generation. The Proposed Development will therefore help to decarbonise the electricity system and lowers the market price of electricity.

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	these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas; and in the case of applications for the repowering and life-extension of existing renewable sites, give significant weight to the benefits of utilising an established site, and approve the proposal if its impacts are or can be made acceptable.	b) recognise that even small-scale and community-led projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; in the case of applications for the repowering and life-extension of existing renewable sites, give significant weight to the benefits of utilising an established site.	
Paragraph 164	In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights). Where the proposals would affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other relevant designated heritage assets, local planning authorities should also apply the policies set out in chapter 16 of this Framework.	**Paragraph 163** Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights). Where the proposals would affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other relevant designated heritage assets, local planning authorities should also apply the policies set out in chapter 16 of this Framework.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development on the historic environment, including above and below ground assets. It concludes that there will be no significant impacts to any designated heritage assets, including Listed Buildings or other designated heritage assets as a result of the Proposed Development. There would be a significant beneficial effect of the Proposed Development on Scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell as a result of the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument. The policies set out in Chapter 16 are addressed below in this document.
Paragraph 165	Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas,		**ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] confirms that flood risk during construction and at decommissioning will be managed through the CEMP and DEMP, which will be secured by the DCO and required to be in

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	the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.		accordance with the **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], and the **Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management (oDEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035].
Paragraph 173	When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that: a) within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location; b) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment; c) it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate; d) any residual risk can be safely managed; and safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan.		As the Site is at predominantly low risk from flooding from all sources, the reasonable 'worst case' is limited to the placement of Solar PV modules and string inverters mounted on the panels within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 towards the east of the Site. The residual flood risk will be negligible once mitigation is included. This will include: • A minimum offset of 6 m from ditches/ watercourses; • An Outline Drainage Strategy; and • Vegetation Management. Opportunities for environmental enhancement in relation to water are detailed in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018], particularly with the relatively few panels that will be located in Flood Zone 3. The only operational element of the Proposed Development in Flood Zone 3a and 3b is Solar PV modules and once attached to the mounting structure, the minimum height of the

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			lowest part of the Solar PV modules will be 0.8m above the existing ground level (AGL). A requirement of the DCO will ensure that the detailed design is substantially in accordance with the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 15: Water [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] assesses flood risk and drainage in the context of EIA. This concludes that with the proposed mitigation measures to be implemented as part of the CEMP and DEMP, the risk of flooding from all sources will not change. Given the design mitigation secured through the OEMP, there will be no significant adverse effects predicted upon receptors regarding flood risk during the Proposed Development's operation. The proposed surface water drainage design set out in the **Outline Drainage Strategy,** which serves as an appendix to the **Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] demonstrates that sustainable drainage techniques have been designed into the Proposed Development and will be maintained by the Applicant, or another private operator to be confirmed and secured through the DCO. The **FRA [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] provides an assessment of flood risk to and from

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			the Proposed Development from all sources of flooding. The FRA demonstrates how residual flood risk will be managed during construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development and how the requirements of the Sequential Test and Exceptions Test are satisfied.
Paragraph 175	Major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate. The systems used should: a) take account of advice from the lead local flood authority; b) have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards; c) have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development; and where possible, provide multifunctional benefits.		The proposed surface water drainage design set out in the **Outline Drainage Strategy** which serves as an appendix to the **Flood Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/7.16.3]** [REP1-050] demonstrates that sustainable drainage techniques have been designed into the Proposed Development and will be maintained by the Applicant, or another private operator to be confirmed and secured through the DCO.
Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment. **Paragraph 180**	Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan); b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services –	Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: h) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] identifies ecological risks from developing the Proposed Development. It has assessed impacts on protected species, habitats, and other species identified as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity. The assessment has been carried out by competent ecologists, who have advised during the design process to ensure that impacts are avoided, minimised and mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy, and biodiversity enhancements are maximised.

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	including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate; d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures; e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.	i) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; j) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate; k) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures; l) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local	Sections 7.7 and 7.9 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] sets out the expected likely effects and residual effects, respectively, on the above receptors during construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. It concludes that there are no potential significant adverse effects identified on any internationally, nationally, or locally designated sites during construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development will meet a minimum 10% BNG as secured by the **Outline Landscape and** Ecology **Management Plan (oLEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] demonstrates that the Proposed Development is committed to achieve significant biodiversity net gain on site. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] and the **outline Soil Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042] set out how agricultural land was considered in the design of Proposed Development, the Proposed Development's embedded mitigation measures, and principles on how the soils will be managed and protected during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development.

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		environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.	
Paragraph 181	Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.		**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] concludes that no part of the Site or its immediately surrounding context falls within a statutorily designated landscape. The nearest National Park or National Landscape (formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) to the Site is the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, located more than 20km to the north-east and this would not be affected by the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] concludes that during construction, operation (year 1) and decommissioning, significant effects are anticipated on LCA 7: The Limestone Heath and LCA 11: Central Clays and Gravels. During operation (year 10), significant effects are anticipated on LCA 7: The Limestone Heath. It is considered that the wider benefits of the Proposed Development, including the delivery of significant level of low carbon energy generation

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			and biodiversity net gain and the provision of permissive footpaths and PRoWs outweigh these impacts, and that the Proposed Development is considered acceptable in terms of overall landscape, visual and residential amenity impacts and the nature of the visual impacts are not considered to outweigh the benefits of the Proposed Development.
Paragraph 182	Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.		**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] concludes that no part of the Site or its immediately surrounding context falls within a statutorily designated landscape. The nearest National Park or National Landscape (formerly known as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) to the Site is the Lincolnshire Wolds National Landscape, located more than 20km to the north-east and this would not be affected by the Proposed Development.
Paragraph 186	When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles: a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately		**ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] identifies ecological risks from developing the Proposed Development. It has assessed impacts on protected species, habitats, and other species identified as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity. The assessment has been carried out by competent ecologists, who have advised during

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	mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused; b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest; c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or		the design process to ensure that impacts are avoided, minimised and mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy, and biodiversity enhancements are maximised. Sections 7.7 and 7.9 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] sets out the expected likely effects and residual effects, respectively, on the above receptors during construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. There are five statutory designated sites within 10km of the Order Limits boundary, including: Metheringham Heath Quarry SSSI, High Dyke SSSI, Tattershall Old Gravel Pits SSSI, Tattershall Carrs SSSI and Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] concludes that there are no potential significant adverse effects identified on any internationally, nationally, or locally designated sites during construction, operation or decommissioning of the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 7: Biodiversity [EN010149/APP/6.1.3]** [REP3-012] confirms that there are no ancient woodlands contained within the Order Limits. Six veteran trees have been identified near Scopwick only one of which is within the Order Limits. The tree in question is over 250m from any development and will not be directly affected and measures are outlined in the **oCEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025], **oLEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035] to ensure

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	enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.		protection of the tree (and other trees) during the lifetime of the Project. The Proposed Development will meet a minimum 10% BNG as secured by the **Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (oLEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.14: Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3.3]** [REP3-021] demonstrates that the Proposed Development is committed to achieve significant biodiversity net gain on site.
Paragraph 189	Planning policies and decisions should ensure that: a) a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards or former activities such as mining, and any proposals for mitigation including land remediation (as well as potential impacts on the natural environment arising from that remediation); b) after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and		The ES is supported by the findings of **ES Volume 3 Appendix 11.2: Preliminary Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-115] - [APP-118]. Where land contamination has been identified, this chapter has assessed the significant effects where they are likely to occur. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] sets out that that land contamination has been scoped into the EIA assessment. The baseline conditions have been established by **ES Volume 3 Appendix 11.2: Preliminary Risk Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-115] - [APP-118]. An assessment of the potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of the Proposed Development has been undertaken. Potential mitigation measures are also discussed within **ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014]

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	adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is available to inform these assessments.		and secured through the **Outline Soil Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042]. The Assessment concludes that all residual effects of the Proposed Development's construction, operation and decommissioning will result in effects which are no greater than minor adverse, not significant in EIA terms other than the loss of BMV land during the operation phase and decommissioning phases, which is slight to moderate adverse and therefore, significant in EIA terms. Agricultural land quality was a key consideration in the Applicant's site selection process as set out in the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030]**.** As set out in the Site Selection Report at Appendix 1 to the Planning Statement, the Applicant, from an early stage, sought to avoid land of higher agricultural quality. However, given the nature of the sites which were able to meet the Applicant's objectives, agricultural land formed part of each potential site identified. The general quality of the land across the sites considered was similar i.e. predominantly Grade 3 with some areas of Grade 2. Given the similarities, the land type did not represent a differentiating factor in the site selection process. It is also worth noting that there is a higher percentage of BMV land in Lincolnshire (71.2%) compared to the national average (42%) and

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			therefore a higher likelihood that higher quality grades of agricultural land will be encountered in locations that are more suited to NSIP scale solar development. The agricultural land design principles incorporate the following: • All fields comprising solely of Grade 1 or 2 land within the site will remain in arable production; • Prioritise the use of BMV land for arable production where practicable; and • Prioritise the use on non-BMV land for habitat creation where practicable.
Paragraph 191	Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should: a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life; b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are		**ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP3-010] considered the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on noise and vibration. The assessment includes mitigation measures embedded into the Proposed Development including: • A 4m high barrier has been included around the BESS Compound, with a 6m high absorbent barrier positioned around the west, north and east faces of the Springwell Substation transformers. • Springwell Substation, BESS, Collector Compounds, Standalone Inverter, Transformer and Switchgear and ITS (part of the balance of solar system plant comprised in Work No. 1) will be offset at least 250m from residential properties.

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	prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation		• Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 15m from existing woodland. • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 10m either side from all existing hedgerows. • Built development above ground will be offset at least 20m from Local Wildlife Sites except for highways improvement works. • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 30m from main badger setts. • Independent Outdoor Equipment (transformer, switchgear and central inverters) and ITS will be offset at least 50m from all existing and proposed statutory PRoW. • Perimeter fencing surrounding the Solar PV development will be offset at least 15m from either side of existing and proposed statutory PRoW. The Assessment concludes that no construction, operation or decommissioning impact will result in a residual effect of noise or vibration which is greater than minor adverse, not significant in EIA terms. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] outlines the security measures incorporated in the design of the Proposed Development design. Efforts have been made to reduce the impact of security fencing and lighting,

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			as set out in detail in the **Outline LEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**, Outline CEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**, Outline OEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033] and **Outline DEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]**. Final versions of these documents will be produced and secured as part of the DCO.
Paragraph 192	Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan.		**ES Volume 3, Appendix 6.2: Air Quality Assessment [EN010149/APP/6.3]** [APP-081] considers the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on local air quality. The Chapter provides an overview of the existing environment for the Proposed Development. North Kesteven District Council has not declared any Air Quality Management Areas. Therefore, the Proposed Development is not located within an Air Quality Management Area. The assessment concludes that no construction, operation or decommissioning impact leads to a residual or cumulative effect which is greater than not significant in EIA terms, where mitigation measures are implemented. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-046] assesses the impact of road traffic exhaust emissions on human receptors and Local Wildlife Sites and concludes that the impact on both receptors is not significant in EIA terms.

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Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. **Paragraph 200**	In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.		**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development on the historic environment, including above and below ground assets. It concludes that there will be no significant adverse impacts to any designated heritage assets, including Listed Buildings or Historic Landscape Character as a result of the Proposed Development. Table 9.7 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] sets out the criteria for classifying magnitude of impact upon heritage significance. The assessment of the Proposed Development on the historic environment, determined the magnitude of impact using the criteria set out in Table 9.7 and professional judgement with reference to the planning policy tests for "substantial harm" and "less than substantial harm". The Applicant considers the Proposed Development will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of designated heritage assets as set out in Appendix 5 – Heritage Harm Statement of this Statement. The Applicant considers the public benefits of the proposal, namely the substantial contribution the Proposed Development will make in: • meeting the demand for greater energy to be produced from renewable sources,
Paragraph 206	Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered		

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	parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.		• supporting to meeting the UK's decarbonisation targets, • supporting the UK's commitments to mitigating global climate change, Through the implementation of mitigation measures, all residual effects are assessed as less than substantial harm to the significance of all designated heritage assets impacted by the Proposed Development. In recognising that the Proposed Development will result in harm of a 'less than substantial' nature, the key policy test is that such harm is weighted against the public benefits. Given the clear and urgent need to deploy renewable energy at speed and scale, the Proposed Development demonstrably gives rise to substantial public benefits, which outweigh the less than substantial harm identified. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] concludes there would be no significant adverse impacts to any designated or non-designated heritage assets as a result of the Proposed Development once embedded and additional mitigation measures are implemented. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] concludes there would be a moderate beneficial impact of the Proposed Development on scheduled remains of
Paragraph 209	The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.		

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			former village of Brauncewell, which is significant in EIA terms, as there is the Proposed Development includes the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument. Section 9.6 of **Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage of** the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] sets out steps taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including embedded mitigation such as avoiding areas with known or suspected below-ground archaeological deposits, changes to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets have been avoided, site access points from the A15 have been selected to avoid works in proximity to the listed milepost, non-intrusive construction methods will be used, and routeing of HGV traffic away from Blankney and Scopwick. Section 9.7 and 9.9 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] provides an assessment of the likely effects and residual effects, respectively, of the Scheme on cultural heritage. All effects, including dust, noise, vibration and indirect impacts are considered. Due to the limited effects from noise, vibration and dust, the majority of impacts are as a result of direct impacts on non-designated heritage assets and impacts to the setting of designated heritage assets.

5. Table 5 - National Planning Practice Guidance Accordance

Policy	Policy Text	Assessment
Paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 5-013-20150327 **What are the particular planning considerations that relate to large-scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic farms?**	The deployment of large-scale solar farms can have a negative impact on the rural environment, particularly in undulating landscapes. However, the visual impact of a well-planned and well-screened solar farm can be properly addressed within the landscape if planned sensitively. Particular factors a local planning authority will need to consider include: encouraging the effective use of land by focusing large-scale solar farms on previously developed and non-agricultural land, provided that it is not of high environmental value;	The **Site Selection Report** which forms **Appendix 1** to the **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] explains the process for identifying the location of the Order Limits. Section 4 of the **Site Selection Report** sets out the assessment that was completed for the Site Selection. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: Reasonable Alternatives Considered [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-044] and the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] set out how fields that were identified as comprising solely of Grades 1 or 2 land were discounted from the area of Solar PV development to reduce the impact on BMV agricultural land. The land beneath and around the Solar PV arrays will include a seed mix for ground cover. The mix has been selected to improve biodiversity value for pollinators which can support the productivity of surrounding agricultural land. The grown cover will also allow continued agricultural use of land within the Solar PV area for grazing, which is included in the landscape management prescriptions set out in the **outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (oLEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]

Policy	Policy Text	Assessment
		The **Statement of Need [EN010149/APP/7.1** [APP-0135] is also submitted in support of the DCO Application and sets out a detailed and compelling case as to why the Proposed Development is urgently required and at the proposed scale. This assessment of alternatives is set in the context of the clear and urgent need for the Proposed Development.
	where a proposal involves greenfield land, whether (i) the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary and poorer quality land has been used in preference to higher quality land; and (ii) the proposal allows for continued agricultural use where applicable and/or encourages biodiversity improvements around arrays. See also a speech by the Minister for Energy and Climate Change, the Rt Hon Gregory Barker MP, to the solar PV industry on 25 April 2013 and a written ministerial statement on solar energy: protecting the local and global environment made on 25 March 2015.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 11: Land, Soil and Groundwater [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-014] and the **outline Soil Management Plan [EN010149/APP/7.11.3]** [REP3-042] set out how agricultural land was considered in the design of Proposed Development. The **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] sets out how fields that were identified as comprising solely of Grade 1 or 2 land were discounted from the area of Solar PV development to reduce the impact on BMV agricultural land. Fields that comprised a majority of BMV agricultural land were reviewed to identify whether those parts of the field that contained BMV could be discounted, whilst retaining the non-BMV parts of the field. In some cases, part of the field was discounted in combination with other environmental factors as identified in this table.
	that solar farms are normally temporary structures and planning conditions can be used to ensure	The Proposed Development will be decommissioned after approximately 40 years of operation (including maintenance).

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	that the installations are removed when no longer in use and the land is restored to its previous use;	Decommissioning is expected to take approximately 24 months and may be undertaken in phases. The Solar PV Site will be reinstated in accordance with this **Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]. A Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) will be subject to the approval of the local planning authorities at the time of decommissioning. Decommissioning activities will involve the removal of all of the Solar PV infrastructure, including the Ground Mounted Solar PV Generating Stations, Collector Compounds, Springwell Substation, BESS and ancillary infrastructure, including any on-site compounds.
	the proposal's visual impact, the effect on the landscape of glint and glare (see guidance on landscape assessment) and on neighbouring uses and aircraft safety;	**ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] has undertaken an assessment of potential impacts of glint and glare on surrounding road users, railway operations, dwellings, PRoW, bridleways and aviation activity. **ES Volume 3, Appendix 5.4: Glint and Glare Study [EN010149/APP/6.3.2]** [REP1-028] concludes that no significant impact is predicted upon road safety, residential amenity, and railway operations and infrastructure and mitigation is not recommended.

Policy	Policy Text	Assessment
	the extent to which there may be additional impacts if solar arrays follow the daily movement of the sun;	As detailed in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022]**,** the mounting structure of the Solar PV modules will be designed to face southwards on a fixed platform. The Solar PV modules would be angled at a tilt of 10 to 30 degrees from horizontal to optimise daylight absorption. The **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1/6.2/6.3]** takes account of the impacts of Solar PV modules facing southwards on a fixed platform.
	the need for, and impact of, security measures such as lights and fencing;	Section 3.13 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development Description [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [REP1-022] outlines the security measures incorporated in the design of the Proposed Development design. Efforts have been made to reduce the impact of security fencing and lighting, as set out in detail in the o**LEMP [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030]**,** o**CEMP [EN010149/APP/7.7.5]** [REP4-025]**, oOEMP [EN010149/APP/7.10.5]** [REP4-033] and **oDEMP [EN010149/APP/7.13.5]** [REP4-035]**.** Final versions of these documents will be produced and secured as part of the DCO. The Proposed Development's security and lighting have been designed to respond sensitively to ecology and landscape features. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP6.1]** [APP-050] sets out embedded mitigations including that boundary

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		fencing will not be constructed through retained existing hedgerows or across ditches. In response to consultations with NKDC and LCC, the height of fencing around the Solar PV generating stations will be 2.5m high and it is confirmed that this will be timber post and wire mesh 'deer-proof fencing'. Secure fencing is also required around the Springwell Substation, Main Collector Compound, BESS and Satellite Collector Compounds and this will be 2.75m in height with a pulse monitoring security system up to 3.4m height inside the mesh fence. A 4m high noise attenuation barrier would be erected around the BESS. Within the Springwell Substation compound (amongst taller structures) there would be 6m high absorbent barriers around the transformers.
	great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting. As the significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence but also from its setting, careful consideration should be given to the impact of large-scale solar farms on such assets. Depending on their scale, design and prominence, a large-scale solar farm within the setting of a heritage asset may cause substantial harm to the significance of the asset;	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] provides an assessment of the Proposed Development on the historic environment, including above and below ground assets. It concludes that there will be no significant adverse impacts to any designated heritage assets, including Listed Buildings or Historic Landscape Character as a result of the Proposed Development. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] concludes there would be no significant adverse impacts to any designated or non-designated heritage assets as

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		a result of the Proposed Development once embedded and additional mitigation measures are implemented. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] concludes there would be a moderate beneficial impact of the Proposed Development on scheduled remains of former village of Brauncewell, which is significant in EIA terms, as there is the Proposed Development includes the creation of permissive path to improve access to monument. Section 9.6 of **Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage of** the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] sets out steps taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including embedded mitigation such as avoiding areas with known or suspected below-ground archaeological deposits, changes to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets have been avoided, site access points from the A15 have been selected to avoid works in proximity to the listed milepost, non-intrusive construction methods will be used, and routeing of HGV traffic away from Blankney and Scopwick. Section 9.7 and 9.9 of **Chapter 9: Cultural Heritage** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1.2]** [AS-012] provides an assessment of the likely effects and residual effects, respectively, of the Scheme on cultural heritage. All effects, including dust,

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		noise, vibration and indirect impacts are considered. Due to the limited effects from noise, vibration and dust, the majority of impacts are as a result of direct impacts on non-designated heritage assets and impacts to the setting of designated heritage assets.
	the potential to mitigate landscape and visual impacts through, for example, screening with native hedges;	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] assesses the visual impact of the Proposed Development. The mitigation embedded into the design which is outlined in section 10.6 of **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050]**,** the **Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (oLEMP) [EN010149/APP/7.9.4]** [REP4-030] and the **Design Approach Document [EN010149/APP/7.3.3]** [REP3-028] and **Design Commitments [EN010149/APP/7.4.2]** [REP3-030] includes, but is not limited to, hedgerow planting along field boundaries, woodland planting along field boundaries, hedgerow infill planting, structural planting, establishment of wildflower rich grassland, offsets from existing woodlands and proposed or existing PRoWs, which has aimed to reduce visual impacts.
	the energy generating potential, which can vary for a number of reasons including latitude and aspect.	The **Planning Statement [EN010149/APP/7.2.2]** [AS-018] and the **Statement of Need [EN010149/APP/7.1** [APP-0135] sets out how the Proposed Development would contribute substantially to the need to supply low carbon

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		energy, in order for the government to meet its objectives and commitments as mentioned above. By generating low carbon electricity at a low marginal cost, large-scale solar power reduces the energy generated by more expensive and more carbon intensive forms of generation. The Proposed Development will therefore help to decarbonise the electricity system and lowers the market price of electricity.
	The approach to assessing the cumulative landscape and visual impact of large-scale solar farms is likely to be the same as assessing the impact of wind turbines. However, in the case of ground-mounted solar panels, it should be noted that with effective screening and appropriate land topography the area of a zone of visual influence could be zero.	**ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] includes a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) of the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development. The study area for the LVIA has been informed through a combination of Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) analysis and site work. A series of ZTVs for different elements of the Proposed Development are provided as **ES Volume 2, Figures 10.5-10.9 [EN010149/APP/6.2]** [APP-066]. **ES Volume 1, Chapter 10: Landscape and Visual [EN010149/APP/6.1]** [APP-050] includes an assessment of cumulative landscape and visual effects where the approach to the assessment is explained. In addition, **ES Volume 1, Chapter 16: Cumulative Effects [EN010149/APP/6.1.5]** [REP4-013] considers cumulative impacts of the Proposed Development across all topics

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		assessed in **Chapters 6-16** of the **ES [EN010149/APP/6.1]** conclude that no cumulative significant adverse effects will arise.

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