



# Dean Moor Solar Farm

## Environmental Statement: Chapter 5 – Construction and Decommissioning Methodology and Phasing

on behalf of **FVS Dean Moor Limited**

---

March 2025

Prepared by: Stantec UK Ltd

PINS Ref: EN010155

Document Ref: 6.1

Revision: 1



**Firma Energy**

 **ib vogt**

**DEAN MOOR SOLAR FARM**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT**  
**CHAPTER 5 – CONSTRUCTION AND DECOMMISSIONING**  
**METHODOLOGY AND PHASING**  
**PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE EN010155**  
**PREPARED ON BEHALF OF FVS DEAN MOOR LIMITED**

**The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations  
2009, Regulation 5(2)(a)**

<b>Project Ref:</b>	<b>EN010155/ES/Chapter 5: CDMP</b>
<b>Status:</b>	Final
<b>Issue/ Rev:</b>	1
<b>Date:</b>	March 2025

## Contents

<b>5</b>	<b>Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 5: Construction and Decommissioning Methodology and Phasing .....</b>	<b>1</b>
5.2	Construction Phase .....	1
5.3	Decommissioning Phase.....	15

## 5 Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter 5: Construction and Decommissioning Methodology and Phasing

5.1.1 This chapter is supported by the following appendices [REF: 6.3]:

- Appendix 5.1: Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan ('OCEMP');
- Appendix 5.2: Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan ('OCTMP');
- Appendix 5.3: Outline Soil Management Plan ('OSMP'); and
- Appendix 5.4: Framework Decommissioning Management Plan ('FDMP').

### 5.2 Construction Phase

#### Construction Programme and Activity

5.2.1 The earliest construction of the Proposed Development could commence is 2026, and for the purpose of the ES assessment, the construction phase has been assessed as spanning 18 months. This is considered a reasonable worst-case (most intensive) scenario, by virtue of environmental considerations such as (but not limited to) traffic, soil management, surface water management, and noise.

5.2.2 On this basis, it is expected that the Proposed Development could be completed in 2027. However, it is considered reasonable that the construction phase could last for longer than the 18 months assessed within this ES, in the event Site conditions (e.g., waterlogging over an extended period) restrict construction progress. A longer construction phase will reduce the intensity of construction activities on-Site, therefore reducing the likelihood of negative environmental outcomes on considerations such as soil resources and traffic. Further information on Site conditions, such as its propensity to waterlogging are outlined in Chapter 3 – Site and the Proposed Development Description [REF: 6.1].

5.2.3 The activities on-Site during the construction phase are expected to include the following:

- Site establishment and enabling works for construction, including the erection of temporary barriers and perimeter fencing and implementing any additional ecological/environmental protection measures as required by the CEMP;
- Implementation of temporary construction facilities, temporary security measures, and temporary and permanent internal access tracks;
- Deliveries and construction of the solar farm including the installation of mounting framework solar panels, PCS units, and associated equipment;
- Deliveries and construction of the Grid Connection Infrastructure to establish the point of connection ('POC') to the grid;
- Cable trenching, ducting and backfilling to connect solar generating equipment within Work No. 1 and within Work No. 2 and connecting Work Nos.1 and 2 to one another;
- Testing commissioning<sup>1</sup> of the generating station equipment and Grid Connection Infrastructure; and
- Green infrastructure including landscaping and biodiversity enhancements (which will be implemented in full in the first planting season after the completion of construction but with some aspects that may be implemented concurrent with or even prior to construction, as required).

5.2.4 The plant and equipment anticipated to be used for the activities outlined includes:

- Digger;
- Tractor with trailer;
- Tractor with hedge cutter;
- Compactor;
- Piling rig;
- Mobile crane;
- Cement mixer; and
- A four-wheel drive vehicle with trailer.

5.2.5 The list above is not exhaustive and is indicative only. Full details of construction plant and equipment will be determined post-consent and

<sup>1</sup> Commissioning is a process that starts with cold testing and then "hot" once energised. The grid connection going live is also part of the process. After the commissioning phase, prior to the commercial operations date there is usually a period of testing before all equipment leaves the Site. A 3-6-month period is normally expected between the start of commissioning and the COD (Commercial Operations Date), with the latter representing the start of the Proposed Development's operational phase.

pre-construction with any relevant details to be provided in the CEMP as necessary.

- 5.2.6 To delineate different zones such as construction compounds and exclusion areas, mesh fencing, heras fencing, and stakes with flags may be used. Protective barriers will also be used around retained trees. Details of protective barriers (which are barriers other than permanent solar farm perimeter fencing) and their implementation and monitoring will be provided within the CEMP to be secured by a DCO Requirement and implemented prior to commencement.

### **Working Hours**

- 5.2.7 Core working hours will be as follows:
- 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday;
  - 08:00 to 13:00 on Saturdays; and
  - No work on Sundays or Bank Holidays.
- 5.2.8 The Applicant will require the Principal Contractor to comply with the core working hours, except for works to be undertaken in the additional working hours outlined below.
- 5.2.9 To maximise productivity within the core working hours, the Principal Contractor will require a period of up to hour before and one hour after core working hours for start-up and close-down of activities. This will include (but not be limited to) deliveries to/from the Site, unloading, maintenance and general preparatory work. This will not extend to the operation of plant or machinery likely to cause a disturbance to residents unless covered by an extension. These periods will not be considered an extension of the core working hours. The additional hour either side of construction activity core hours has been provided to allow traffic to avoid the local highway network peak periods during the morning and evening.
- 5.2.10 To allow for the safety of construction personnel or for reasons of engineering practicability, some activities may need to be conducted outside of the core working hours listed above.

- 5.2.11 The OCEMP (Appendix 5.1) includes more detailed information on core working hours as well as information on work conducted outside of core working hours plus general information on working practices. The Council will be consulted on the content of the CEMP and CTMP through the discharge of the DCO Requirement process.
- 5.2.12 Activities which may require working outside of the core working hours may include, but are not limited to:
- Horizontal Directional Drilling ('HDD');
  - Emergency works where there would be health / security / environmental risks from not taking action;
  - Concrete pours;
  - Ecological surveys;
  - Possible works to highways to minimise impacts.
- 5.2.13 The Council will be notified in advance of any proposed works occurring outside of the core working hours identified above. Further information is available from the OCEMP (Appendix 5.1).

### **Construction Traffic**

- 5.2.14 Based on professional judgement and the Applicant's experience of other solar developments it is expected that there would be an average of up to approximately 20 Heavy Goods Vehicle ('HGV') trips to the Site per day, or 40 two-way movements, over the 18-month construction period. However, this will vary over time, and it is noted that some periods during the construction phase would have fewer vehicle trips. Further details are set out in the Transport Statement ('TS') (Appendix 2.5) **[REF: 6.3]**.
- 5.2.15 Construction deliveries will likely be carried out Monday to Friday between 07:00 and 08:00 and between 18:00 and 19:00 and between 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays. No construction activities or deliveries will occur on Sundays or on Public Holidays. The OCTMP (Appendix 5.2) sets out measures to manage deliveries in a way that seeks to reduce local impacts, such as route planning and delivery scheduling to maximise the efficient movement of construction vehicles.

- 5.2.16 A Framework Construction Worker Travel Plan ('FCWTP') forms part of the OCTMP (Appendix 5.2) and will be developed into a CWTP within the CTMP prior to construction, secured by a DCO Requirement. Approximately up to 150 workers are anticipated to be required on-Site during the peak construction period although with the average much lower across most of the construction phase (between 50-80 per day). The location where staff will travel from is unknown at this stage as it will depend on the appointed contractor. However, it is envisaged that most of the non-local workforce will stay at local accommodation and be transported to the Site by minibuses to minimise the impact on the strategic and local highway network.

### **Soil Management**

- 5.2.17 Measures to manage the impact of the Proposed Development on soils (quantity and quality) are set out in the OSMP (Appendix 5.3). This also includes management of on-Site peat deposits during construction, as identified in the Peat Survey Report (Appendix 10.3) **[REF: 6.3]**.
- 5.2.18 During construction, where a peaty/organic layer is present, construction machinery, e.g., piling machines and telehandlers, will not travel directly over such land in any weather. Such areas will be demarcated with appropriate barriers put in place to prevent vehicle tracking. In the unlikely event that the use of such land is deemed necessary, the SMP will govern any such use and would stipulate the specifications of a temporary haul road system to prevent structural damage, shrinkage, or erosion of the peat/Soil Organic Matter ('SOM'). Further details of how sensitive soil areas should be managed are set out in the OSMP (Appendix 5.3).
- 5.2.19 The full presence and extent of peat is reported in the Peat Survey Report (Appendix 10.3). Where relevant, handling peaty/organic soils should aim to maintain peatland functionality and minimise risks to disturbing ecosystem services (such as the loss of habitat, water quality, carbon storage, or ground stability).
- 5.2.20 There will be no solar infrastructure (carried out for Work Nos. 1, 2, 2A, 4, and 5, as shown on the Works Plans) located on peat deposits. Impacts to

identified peat deposits have been managed through design, to avoid siting infrastructure in these locations as shown on Figure 3.4 (Parameter Plan) and Figure 3.5 (Exclusion Areas). Further information is available from the OSMP (Appendix 5.3) and OCEMP (Appendix 5.1), with the final design secured by DCO Requirement to comply with exclusion recommendations.

- 5.2.21 There are different methods for installing the mounting structures for the panels. Three options have been considered in the ES, outlined below.
- 5.2.22 Framework posts for solar PV arrays would be steel poles pile-driven into the ground to a typical depth of around 2.5m below ground level ('BGL'), depending on pre-construction geotechnical surveys, although the maximum depth that has been assessed is up to 4m BGL. This means no foundations are needed to secure the system and posts can be easily removed with no permanent effect after decommissioning.
- 5.2.23 Standard piles are impact driven; an alternative piling type to standard piles to which are impact-driven are screw piles. These are not expected to be required but are used where recommended to prevent uplift risks following lateral load and pull testing. Screw piles involve driving piles with helical screws into the ground, similar to turning a screw into wood, as opposed to the impact driven methodology where piles are driven in by force (like a hammer putting a nail into wood).
- 5.2.24 Non-intrusive 'no-dig' mounting are also available using a ballasted framework where required by ground conditions or below ground sensitivities. A ballasted framework may cause a disturbance to 150-300mm topsoil, although this depends on ground conditions and the reasons for the alternative solution.

### **The Water Environment and Flood Risk**

- 5.2.25 Baseline information on the water environment and flood risk pertaining to the Site is found in ES Chapter 3 – Site and Proposed Development Description [REF: 6.1]. Due to the nature of the Proposed Development, the construction, operation, and decommissioning are not considered to

be highly contaminative, and measures can be easily put in place to reduce risk of pollution and contamination during these phases. These measures are outlined within the OCEMP (Appendix 5.1) and the FDMP (Appendix 5.4) and will be further detailed within the CEMP and DMP document suite secured by DCO Requirement.

- 5.2.26 Section 12 of the OCEMP identifies general mitigation measures for surface water drainage, water quantity, and water quality that will be secured via a DCO Requirement and implemented via the CEMP.
- 5.2.27 The CEMP is targeted to the prevention of detrimental impacts on watercourses, both on and off Site. Water management in construction is important because it can have an impact on natural ecosystems resulting in the depletion of groundwater and surface water, nutrient runoff, pollution of aquifers, etc. These impacts can be mitigated with hydrological management tools and techniques.

### **Noise and Vibration Management**

- 5.2.28 The previously noted activities could generate noise and vibration during construction. The majority of these will be from the introduction of new noise emitting sources (the temporary construction activities) as opposed to these activities resulting in significant adverse noise effects.
- 5.2.29 Therefore, potential effects will be mitigated via measures as set out in the OCEMP (Appendix 5.1), which when implemented will govern the type of equipment used, operating hours, and general requirements that ensure construction activities are undertaken in a considerate manner with mechanisms in place to also change working practices in the event of any complaints being received. The phases of construction associated with potential noise impacts are:
- Site establishment, enabling works, and temporary construction facilities: The erection of perimeter fencing and other environmental protection measures along with construction compounds and internal access tracks are not expected to generate significant levels of noise.
    - While there will be some noise associated with the arrival of materials and the workers and machinery used to implement these features, these are low-intensity works that will occur during daytime periods with higher background noise levels and will be

undertaken in accordance with the OCEMP which provides for controls to ensure all construction activities proceed in a considerate manner.

- Deliveries for and construction of the Proposed Development including generating equipment, Grid Connection Infrastructure, and connective cabling. As with the early works to establish the Site and temporary construction facilities, the best practice requirements of the OCEMP will provide the required mitigation. The activities most associated with noise in this phase include:
  - Vehicle traffic - Noise will be generated by vehicles passing on the LRN to access the Site. Further information on construction routing and expected vehicle types and numbers is set out within the TS (Appendix 2.5). Controls to prevent impacts, including noise impacts, are provided by the OCTMP (Appendix 5.2). Measures that relate to noise are the routing requirements that avoid sensitive locations (villages), the delivery management booking system to avoid concentrated traffic flows, and the requirement for vehicles to be well maintained and for vehicles to be turned off (no idling) when not in use.
  - Construction works likely to generate substantial levels of noise, aside from trenchless works and HGV deliveries will be limited to the core working hours as set out in Section 5.2.7. Other construction works unlikely to generate high noise levels (e.g., Site access and inductions, LGV movements) may continue during other day-time periods.
  - Solar Array Piling - As identified within the EIA Scoping Report (Appendix 2.1) [REF: 6.3], installing the pile-driven array framework can generate high levels of noise, however the resultant noise impact is not expected to be significant due to the separation distance between piling and noise sensitive receptors ('NSR') and the time limited nature of these works. As set out in the OCEMP, piling in certain parts of the Site that are closer to NSR may be further restricted to start later and will be responsive to local feedback to avoid disturbance.
  - The Grid Connection Infrastructure (Work No. 2) is one of the few areas of the Site with concentrated development. However, no ground breaking or demolition work is needed and the location, central to the Site within Area C, is away from NSR and benefits from topographic and landscape structure (woodland) features that also provide barriers to noise.
  - The potential for noise associated with these works is by virtue of their concentration as opposed to anything known to have particularly high noise associations. Activities for implementing Work No. 2 will be undertaken in the same considerate manner governing the Site as a whole and where particularly noisy activities may occur appropriate additional measures would be implemented (e.g., temporary noise barriers or equipment with additional attenuation).

- The locations where primary and secondary construction compounds will be located are shown in Work No. 4 – Temporary Construction Compounds, and on the Parameter Plan (Figure 3.4), which will include welfare facilities, waste management and storage areas, and parking and turning areas for construction vehicles. The locations of these compounds have been chosen to with consideration of proximity to NSR and the locations of natural landscape buffers such as woodland.
  - Use of Plant and Machinery - Noise will be associated with any activities that require plant and machinery such as excavators for cable trenching, ducting, and backfilling. As per the OCEMP, the Principal Contractor will be required to specify lower-noise versions of equipment where possible, to provide additional attenuation for any particularly noisy activities, and to be responsive to public feedback.
- Testing & Commissioning - Noise impact from testing is not expected to be any more than during operation of the Proposed Development except from the additional noise associated with the presence of personnel conducting the testing and is therefore not expected to result in a significant effect.

5.2.30 Based on noise from the activities outlined above, the effects of construction noise would be adequately mitigated by standard mitigation measures set out within the OCEMP (Appendix 5.1) and OCTMP (Appendix 5.2). The CEMP, CTMP, and other control documents will be secured by DCO Requirements and implemented by the Principal Contractor.

5.2.31 The CEMP will set out a community liaison scheme for regular reporting of information to residents about construction activities associated with noise and sets outs commitments for the construction activities to be reasonably responsive to local feedback, particularly in the event of complaints being received.

5.2.32 The standard mitigation measures provided within the British Standard ('BS') BS5228: Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites – Noise, and summarised within the OCEMP (Appendix 5.1), are considered sufficient to mitigate any noise and vibration effects. These include the following:

- Generators may need to be enclosed in a noise mitigation wrapper during construction;

- Low vibration working methods would be used where reasonably practicable, as well as controlling vibration at source through methods such as through mechanical isolation;
- Regular monitoring of on-Site vibration levels;
- Vehicle engines would be switched off when standing for significant periods;
- Quieter plant units would be selected where possible; and
- Mobile and stationary plant would be located to maximise separation distances from noise-sensitive receptors where possible, accounting for Site-specific constraints.

### Construction Compounds

- 5.2.33 Secure temporary construction compounds will be used to store materials and provide welfare facilities during the construction period. There will be up to five temporary construction compounds consisting of up to two Primary Compounds and up to three Secondary Compounds, to be located immediately adjacent to Site access points within the areas defined by the Parameter Plan (Figure 3.4) and within Work No. 4 – Temporary Construction Compounds.
- 5.2.34 As set out in the Design Parameters Document **[REF: 5.7]** the total area of any single Primary Construction Compound is 6,400m<sup>2</sup> (0.64ha). This is the equivalent of 80 x 80m, or variations thereof, leading to a total footprint of no more than 0.64ha for any one Primary Construction Compound. The maximum area of any single Secondary Construction Compound is 1,600m<sup>2</sup> (0.16ha). This is the equivalent of 40 x 40m, or variations thereof, leading to a total footprint of no more than 0.16ha for any one Secondary Construction Compound. Heights within buildings in both primary and secondary compounds, for example the site management cabins, will not exceed 6.2m, although infrastructure such as temporary CCTV cameras will be limited to 7.0m in height.
- 5.2.35 The temporary compounds will be formed of a temporary permeable hardcore/gravel base atop a mesh membrane to facilitate ease of removal when construction is complete. Primary compounds will likely include:
- a. Site management cabins;
  - b. Temporary gated security fencing (e.g., heras fencing), security officer kiosk, and temporary CCTV cameras;

- c. Temporary portable buildings to be used for offices, welfare and toilet facilities;
- d. Materials and equipment storage areas;
- e. Waste management;
- f. Temporary internal access tracks;
- g. Parking and turning areas for delivery vehicles and workers' vehicles;
- h. Wheel washing facilities; and
- i. Generators (solar and hybrid (solar and fuel) generators).

5.2.36 Temporary staging areas, which would provide shorter term hubs for minor welfare facilities, storage areas for internal deliveries of materials from primary compounds, waste management facilities, and plant and machinery storage, will be moved across Work No. 3 – Associated Works **[REF: 2.3]** as construction progresses and will be proportionate in size to accommodate use. Any such staging areas would also be constructed of permeable aggregate over a geotextile membrane, which would be established once the top layer of vegetation is taken off, and the ground is compacted. These would be in place for shorter periods of time as required in a given area so would be mobilised as required and demobilised and reinstated thereafter.

5.2.37 Welfare and storage units will have internal and external access lighting. Temporary lighting would be used within construction compounds for specific construction activities within hours of darkness, during agreed construction hours. Where temporary lighting is used, it would be directional, cowled, and low intensity to minimise disturbance. Lighting would be switched off at night, when construction is not ongoing. No permanent night time lighting would be used, with the exception of motion-sensor security lighting, or lighting needed in the event of an emergency in times of darkness. Further details of the Site's sensitive lighting strategy in construction is found in the OCEMP (Appendix 5.1).

### **Construction Waste**

5.2.38 All reasonable actions will be taken by the Principal Contractor to minimise the volume of waste produced as a result of the construction of the Proposed Development. A lack of order and cleanliness on a construction

site increases the risk of adverse environmental effects, harm to amenity, and accidents in general. It is the Principal Contractor's responsibility to ensure the Site is operating in a healthy and safe manner for workers, off-Site receptors, and ecological receptors. General principles of order and cleanliness for construction are set out in section 9.3 of the OCEMP.

5.2.39 All Site waste material will be segregated to be put into skips and kept clean of any debris. Materials will be stored neatly in the designated storage areas on-Site. All waste generated, to be removed from the Site will be disposed of by a suitably licensed waste contractor. Food waste (from the welfare facilities) or other putrescible waste will be stored appropriately and regularly collected. Further details on waste is available from section 9 of the OCEMP.

5.2.40 The CEMP will reflect the additional information available in the pre-construction stage. This will include details of the waste management hubs on-Site and how they will be managed and monitored. The CEMP will adhere to the waste management principles set out in the OCEMP.

### **Construction Access**

5.2.41 Nine indicative Site access points from the LRN have been identified, as shown on Figure 3.4. All indicative access points are existing accesses of varying formality. It is not expected that all of the indicative access points would be required, or at least that all would be utilised for both construction and operations, however nine have been chosen to ensure flexibility. The final layout, to be secured by a DCO Requirement, will reflect details for all chosen accesses. The indicative access points from which final access will be selected are:

- a. Access 1 – located on Branthwaite Road and utilised as an access for the construction and operation of the Wind Farm. Existing internal tracks associated with the wind farm leads south providing access into Area A and connectivity into the north of Area B;
- b. Access 2 – located along Gilgarran Road and making use of an existing field access into the eastern area of Area C;
- c. Access 3 – is the existing access into the farmyard to the central eastern edge of Area C via Branthwaite Edge Road;

- d. Access 4 - located further west along Gilgarran Road making use of an existing field access into the western area of Area C;
- e. Access 5 – located opposite Access 4, providing access from Gilgarran Road to the north into Area B;
- f. Access 6 & 7 – located further south along Branthwaite Edge Road, providing access to the southeastern area of Area C; and
- g. Access 8 & 9 – located midway along Gilgarran Road between Accesses 2 and 5, making use of existing field accesses into the centre of Area C and providing access into the Grid Connection Infrastructure.

**Figure 5.1: Site Access Map (Extract of TS Figure 7.1)**



5.2.42 Based on the nine indicative accesses outlined, it is considered that access points 1 and 3 will be used during both the construction and operational phases, whereas access point 6 will not be used during construction, but potentially for operation.

- 5.2.43 The access proposals coupled with the construction compounds ensure that sufficient access and parking/turning area is available so that no vehicles would have to wait on the surrounding highway network. There would be sufficient space within the temporary construction compounds to ensure that all vehicles will be able to enter and leave the Site in a forward gear. All construction workers and delivery vehicles will park or offload in a temporary construction compound close to the access. On exiting the Site, vehicles will have to exit via the wheel wash area and a supplementary street sweeper will be available to avoid impacts on the LRN.
- 5.2.44 Existing accesses to the Site will be widened, where necessary, to provide safe access and egress which is appropriate to the vehicles which are needed during construction and / or operation. There will be different widening requirements depending on the vehicles and phase when access is needed. Vegetation in the vicinity of accesses will be managed to provide appropriate visibility splays in accordance with highways specifications for safe access.
- 5.2.45 Internal access tracks within the Site may be permanent or temporary. All tracks will be formed of a permeable aggregate. If a temporary track is only needed as a short-term haul route, matting may be used to avoid the need for topsoil disturbance in accordance with recommendations of the OSMP (Appendix 5.3) **[REF: 6.3]**. Any temporary tracks formed by aggregate would be removed when no longer required with any compacted soils disturbed (harrowed) to be receptive to re-seeding.
- 5.2.46 During construction, directional signage on the local road network and warning signs relating to construction will be provided, subject to highways consents where required. Within the Site signage will be provided to alert track users to sensitive features and to limit internal speeds within the Site to 10mph as standard.
- 5.2.47 Internal access tracks will be formed of permeable aggregate though a bound surface may be installed between 5m and 20m into the Site subject to detailed design engagement with the LHA. Where possible accesses will avoid over-formalisation and will retain an agricultural appearance with

permanent paving used only where justified for operations and maintenance ('O&M') activities.

- 5.2.48 Further information on construction access points is available from the OCTMP (Appendix 5.2).

### **Construction Control Documents**

- 5.2.49 The environmental management (or mitigation measures) to eliminate, reduce, or offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment during the construction phase is provided by the management plans outlined below:

- OCEMP (Appendix 5.1) outlines the holistic site and environmental management of matters beyond construction traffic (for example: ecology, arboriculture, water management, noise, lighting, waste management).
- OCTMP (Appendix 5.2) outlines measures for safe access / egress and traffic management to avoid or mitigate impact on the LRN. The OCTMP includes a FCWTP which includes measures to minimise worker traffic and promote sustainable transport.
- OSMP (Appendix 5.3) provides an outline of the measures which will be implemented during the construction phase to protect the soil as a resource. This management plan will also feed into measures to be taken forward into the LEMP and into a future DMP document suite.

- 5.2.50 These management plans are intended to supplement other governance arrangements that are applicable during construction, such as the health and safety regime and other environmental legislation, further information of which is outlined in Appendix A of the OCEMP (Appendix 5.1).

## **5.3 Decommissioning Phase**

- 5.3.1 It is anticipated that at the end of the 40-year operational lifespan, the Proposed Development including solar PV modules, mounting structures, cabling and ancillary buildings will be decommissioned, dismantled, and removed, and the Site reinstated and returned to the landowner.
- 5.3.2 Where possible, all equipment would be removed and recycled or disposed of in accordance with good practice at the time of decommissioning. Where this is not possible, any waste generated during decommissioning will be removed and transported by a certified and

licensed contractor. Further details on waste during decommissioning are available from the FDMP (Appendix 5.4).

- 5.3.3 The decommissioning phase has been assessed in the ES to last 12 months (assessed as a 'worst-case', most intensive scenario), although as with construction, allowances will be made for a longer period depending on Site conditions (e.g., waterlogging) so that the decommissioning works can be undertaken in a manner than minimises risk of environmental damage, particularly for the soil resources. It is therefore considered that the decommissioning phase could last longer than the 12 months that has been assessed for the ES.
- 5.3.4 During the decommissioning phase, one or more temporary compounds will be required, along with other temporary access tracks. The compounds will be located within the Site. All compounds and access tracks will be removed once decommissioning is complete except for those tracks which are aligned with existing agricultural use where the landowner intends to utilise the tracks on the re-commencement of agricultural activity.

### **Decommissioning Control Documents**

- 5.3.5 The environmental controls (or mitigation measures) that may be required to eliminate, reduce, or offset likely significant adverse effects on the environment during the decommissioning phase are considered within the in the FDMP (Appendix 5.4).
- 5.3.6 A DMP document suite will be agreed with the Council prior to the commencement of decommissioning, however, at this stage it is considered appropriate to provide only a framework document, which provides a degree of flexibility to adapt the requirements to suit planning, consenting requirements, and likely technological advancements.
- 5.3.7 The FDMP (Appendix 5.4) sets out the type of documents that are likely to be required for a DMP. At this stage, it is anticipated they would be decommissioning phase versions of those in place for construction and

would have a similar function for decommissioning as documents like the CEMP, CTMP, and SMP will have for the construction phase.

- 5.3.8 Topics likely to have expanded interest for decommissioning are in relation to the materials recycling plans (as distinct from Site waste management) and the agricultural land remediation and reinstatement works. Environmental protections for vegetation and soils in decommissioning are also likely to be more restrictive than in the construction phase to reflect the additional protections needed for the improved quality of the land from new planting and management in accordance with the LEMP for 40 years.
- 5.3.9 The objective of the FDMP (Appendix 5.4) is to secure an approach to the future management of environmental effects and the outcomes to be achieved from DMP management plans based on information available now, and to support flexibility regarding the methodology for decommissioning as Site environmental conditions, technical/engineering options, and best practice methodologies, will evolve over the 40-year operational lifespan of the Proposed Development.
- 5.3.10 The DMP document suite to be agreed will reflect the outcomes of up-to-date environmental assessments and best practice for the decommissioning of solar farms. Presently, there are no established methodologies nor facilities (in the UK) to support solar farm removal and recycling. However, by the mid to late 2030s, this part of the industry will become well developed as the 25-year Renewable Obligations Certificate ('ROC') schemes implemented across 2012-2017 are decommissioned, and later 2020 onward 40-year projects also coming to an end in advance of the Proposed Development's decommissioning phase.
- 5.3.11 A Decommissioning Management Plan suite will be secured as a DCO Requirement with further detail on how this will be provided set out in the FDMP (Appendix 5.4).