



Meridian Solar Farm

EN010169

Volume 6

Environmental Statement

6.3 ES Appendix 1-3: EIA
Statement of Competence

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)

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

March 2026

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1. Statement of Competence

1.1. Background

1.1.1. The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017¹ state that *'the applicant must ensure that the environmental statement is prepared by competent experts'* and *'the environmental statement must be accompanied by a statement from the applicant outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts'*. As such, this Statement of Competence has been prepared by AECOM Limited, as lead EIA Coordinator for the Meridian Solar Farm (hereafter referred to as the 'Scheme'), to outline the capability of the company and the competency of the individuals responsible for undertaking and reporting the EIA.

1.2. AECOM Limited

1.2.1. AECOM Limited is a leading provider of environmental services to a wide range of clients and development sectors in the UK. AECOM has a large and highly experienced team of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) practitioners (approximately 160 staff), who have managed hundreds of EIAs and prepared Environmental Statements and other technical reports to accompany applications under various consenting regimes. AECOM also provides specialist EIA review services and EIA training to a range of organisations, including government agencies. The EIA team is supported by more than 400 technical environmental specialists, covering a wide range of technical disciplines.

1.3. ISEP EIA Quality Mark

1.3.1. AECOM is a registrant to the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) EIA Quality Mark and undertakes all EIA work in line with the EIA Quality Mark Commitments. The EIA Quality Mark is a voluntary scheme through which EIA activity is independently reviewed, on an annual basis, to ensure it delivers excellence in: EIA management, EIA team capabilities, EIA regulatory compliance, EIA context and influence, EIA content, EIA presentation and improving EIA practice.



1 The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/572/contents> [Accessed 18/09/2025]

- 1.3.2. Many of AECOM's EIA Coordinators hold Practitioner or Full (Chartered) Membership status with ISEP or are members of other appropriate professional institutions.

1.4. Competent Experts

- 1.4.1. Summaries of the qualifications and experience of the EIA Project Director, responsible for the checking and review of the Environmental Statement, and the EIA Project Manager, responsible for the coordination of the EIA, are presented below.

EIA Project Director, BSc (Hons), MSc, MEnvSc, CEnv

- 1.4.2. The AECOM EIA Project Director is a Technical Director with 25 years' experience delivering environmental assessments in the energy sector. They are a Chartered Environmentalist and qualified EIA Practitioner, with experience having led over 10 energy Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), including the EIAs for 7 previous solar NSIPs, including Sunnica Energy Farm, Longfield Solar Farm, Gate Burton Energy Park, East Yorkshire Solar Farm, Tillbridge Solar Farm, Fenwick Solar Farm, and Fosse Green Energy, all of which are either now consented, completed examination, or have been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate. They are currently overseeing the EIA work on Leoda Solar and Shepway Solar, as well as this Scheme.
- 1.4.3. In total, they have worked on and delivered over 30 solar projects in the UK, along with EIAs for the largest solar projects in Eastern Europe and the Caribbean. Other experience includes having contributed to or led the environmental work for NSIPs for two energy from waste facilities, two gas fired CCGT DCOs, and contribution to a tidal lagoon DCO.

EIA Project Manager, BSc (Hons), MPhil, CEnv, MEnvSc, PISEP

- 1.4.4. The AECOM EIA Project Manager is an Associate Director with 14 years' of experience in EIA coordination and project management for infrastructure and urban regeneration projects, environmental due diligence, compliance and auditing. Their DCO project experience includes Tillbridge Solar Farm, Grand Union Canal Transfer, Luton Airport Expansion and Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station.

Environmental Statement Technical Chapter Leads

- 1.4.5. This Environmental Statement brings together the technical studies presented in **ES Chapters 5 to 16** (Doc Ref. 6.1). These have been prepared and approved by competent experts, both within and external to AECOM, who hold professional memberships and are committed to undertaking continued professional development within their respective fields, as set out within Table 1-1.

Table 1-1: Technical Leads

EIA Technical Discipline	Company	Qualifications / Professional Memberships / Accreditations	Years of Experience	Summary of Previous Experience
Agriculture and Soils	AECOM	BSc (Hons), PhD, MICFor	35	Technical Lead for Agriculture, Forestry and Soils for AECOM in the UK. Specialises in integrated environmental land management and has peer reviewed publications in soil biology and nutrient cycling. Experience of undertaking EIA for large-scale infrastructure, including energy, road, and rail. Recent relevant experience includes East Yorkshire Solar Farm, Fenwick Solar Farm, Longfield Solar Farm post consent, and Pentir Trawsfynedd Grid Reinforcement.
Air Quality	AECOM	MIAQM MIEnvSc	34	AECOM's technical lead for Air Quality has experience of leading assessments of air quality impacts for renewable power, conventional power and linear infrastructure projects, including 20 years' experience as an expert witness. Relevant project experience includes Sunnica Energy Farm, Gate Burton Energy Park, Sizewell C, H2Teesside, and Fenwick Solar Farm.
Climate Change	AECOM	MEng, PhD, MISEP	11	AECOM's technical lead for Climate Change and Greenhouse Gases has over 11 years of experience in the field of climate and carbon management. They have worked on a wide range of DCO applications, including Fosse Greene Solar Farm, Tillbridge Solar Farm, Maen Hir Solar Farm, and H2Teesside.
Cultural Heritage	JBA Consulting	BSc (Hons), MSc, MCIfA	20	JBA Consulting's Discipline Lead for Cultural Heritage with experience in undertaking assessments for, and supporting on, major infrastructure project including solar farms and highways projects.

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				Relevant experience includes Gate Burton Energy Park, Sunnica Energy Farm, A428 Blackcat to Caxton Gibbet, M54/M6 Link, M42 Junction 6 Improvement.
Ecology	Ramboll	MPhys (Hons), MSc, MCIIEEM	22	Ramboll's ecology technical lead has over 20 years' experience in consultancy, specialising in habitat ecology, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and ornithology. They have extensive experience providing technical leadership on NSIPs, including HS2 Phase 2b (Ornithology Lead) and East-West Rail (Habitats Lead), and coordination of ecological inputs to the Norwich to Tilbury Great Grid Upgrade. David is highly experienced in Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and EIA, with particular expertise in ornithological assessments for internationally designated sites, which is specifically relevant to the project which is within the vicinity of The Wash SPA and proposes use of overhead cables.
Human Health	AECOM	BSc, MSc, MA	11	AECOM's technical lead for Human Health, with experience producing chapters for major infrastructure projects in England, including energy and solar farm projects. Relevant experience includes Gate Burton Energy Park, Tarchon Interconnector Project, Grand Union Canal Transfer, A4 Bath-Bristol Corridor, and A39 Atlantic Highway.
Hydrology	AECOM	BSc (Hons), MSc MCIWEM, CEnv	21	AECOM's technical lead for Water Environment has 21 years' carrying out impact assessments of new infrastructure projects

EIA Technical Discipline	Company	Qualifications / Professional Memberships / Accreditations	Years of Experience	Summary of Previous Experience
				including numerous solar projects such as East Yorkshire Solar Farm, Gate Burton Energy Park, Tillbridge Solar Farm, Longfield Solar Farm and Sunnica Solar Farm.
Flood Risk and Drainage	AECOM	BSc	24	Civil engineer with over 24 years' experience and works within the field of civil infrastructure, flood risk, and sustainable drainage. The technical lead has extensive experience working in the renewable energy sector, including solar farm and battery energy storage system (BESS) schemes, from small scale planning applications to larger scale NSIPs. The technical lead has undertaken the expert witness role for flood risk and drainage for several solar and BESS Schemes at planning hearings, including Sunnica Energy Farm, Longfield Solar Farm and Tillbridge Solar Farm.
Landscape and Visual	AECOM	Dipl.-Ing. (FH) LA, MILI	22	The Landscape and Visual technical lead is an Associate Landscape Architect with 22 years' experience in Landscape Architecture and 16 years in Landscape and Townscape Assessments covering renewable energy, industrial and commercial schemes, NSIPs, expert witness duties at public inquiries / oral hearings and preparation of affidavits. Relevant project experience includes Gate Burton Energy Park, Flaxlands Solar Farm, Kilroot Multifuel Power Station as well as CCGT, OCGT developments, BESS FlexGen Substation, Transmission Line Projects across UK and Ireland and North-South 400kV Interconnector in Ireland.

EIA Technical Discipline	Company	Qualifications / Professional Memberships / Accreditations	Years of Experience	Summary of Previous Experience
Noise and Vibration	AECOM	BSc, Diploma in Acoustics and Noise Control, MIOA	20	The Noise and Vibration technical lead is a member of the Institute of Acoustics with over 20 years' experience, including considerable experience of DCOs. Recent project experience includes Sunnica Energy Farm, Fenwick Solar Farm, Longfield Solar Farm and Gate Burton Energy Park.
Socio-economics and Land Use	AECOM	MA (Oxon), MRTPI, MIED.	21	AECOM's technical lead for Socio-economics and Land Use has wide-ranging experience of assessing the impacts of infrastructure schemes on the economy and local community. Relevant experience includes East Yorkshire Solar Farm, Fenwick Solar Farm, Pentir to Trawsfynedd Connections, Viking CCS Project and Cym Taf Water Supply Strategy.
Traffic and Access	AECOM	BA (Oxon), MCIHT	20	AECOM's technical lead for traffic and access has experience of leading Transport impacts for solar DCO schemes producing Environmental Statements, Construction Traffic Management Plans, Transport Assessments, Travel Plans and Public Rights of Way Management Plans. This includes leading traffic and transport inputs to Examination for five Solar NSIPs, including Sunnica Energy Farm, Tillbridge Solar Farm, Gate Burton Solar Farm, East Yorkshire Solar Farm and Fenwick Solar Farm.
Other Environmental Topics -	Pager Power	BSc (Hons) Business Analytics	6	The EMF technical lead is experienced in environmental impact assessments for infrastructure, renewable energy, and building developments across the UK and internationally. They have

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Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF)				undertaken EMF assessments for solar developments in the UK and Ireland in the context of human health, interference to surrounding electrical equipment. The technical lead has also completed a number of EMF assessments for solar projects, including NSIPs such as Green Hill and Lime Down.
Other Environmental Topics – Glint and Glare	Neo-Environmental	BEng (Hons) MSc	5	<p>The technical lead for the Glint and Glare Assessment is a Principal Environmental Engineer who leads the Glint and Glare department at Neo Environmental. This includes the modelling and assessment of potential glint and glare impacts on residential, road, rail, aviation and bridleway receptors from small scale residential solar arrays to NSIP and EIA scale solar farms, glint and glare assessment reviews, report writing, responding to further information requests, objections and appeals.</p> <p>NSIP project experience includes completing the glint and glare assessments for the following: Fenwick Solar Farm, East Yorkshire Solar Farm, Longfield Solar Farm, Tillbridge Solar Farm and Gate Burton Solar Farm.</p>
Other Environmental Topics – Major Accidents and Disasters	AECOM	BSc (Hons), MPhil, CEnv, MIEnvSc, PISEP	14	AECOM’s technical lead for Major Accidents and Disasters has experience of leading Major Accidents and Disasters assessments for Tillbridge Solar Farm, Luton Airport Expansion and Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station.

EIA Technical Discipline	Company	Qualifications / Professional Memberships / Accreditations	Years of Experience	Summary of Previous Experience
Other Environmental Topics – Materials and Waste	AECOM	BSc (Hons), MSc, MCIWM, CRWM, CEnv	18	AECOM’s technical lead for Materials and Waste has experience of leading Materials and Waste assessments for solar DCO schemes including for Fosse Green, One Earth Solar, Lime Down, East Yorkshire, Fenwick, Tillbridge, Leoda and Shepway Solar Farms. They have also supported on Longfield Solar Farm, and Gate Burton Energy Park.

