

# **Green Hill Solar Farm**

## **EN010170**

# **Outline Decommissioning Statement**

## **Revision B**

Prepared by: Lanpro Services

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APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)



## Schedule of Changes

Revision	Section Reference	Description of Changes	Reason for Revision
A	[cover]	Updated to Revision A	As required for submission at Deadline 1.
	[throughout]	Updates to document references	As required for submission at Deadline 1.
	p.6	Updates to description of decommissioning activities.	Updated in response to RRs.
B	[cover]	Updated to Revision B	As required for submission at Deadline 5.
	[throughout]	Updates to document references	As required for submission at Deadline 5.
	Table 3.1	Clarification added regarding foul water containment and licensed disposal during decommissioning.	As required for submission at Deadline 5.



## Contents

<u>1</u>	<u>Introduction</u>	<u>4</u>
1.1	Overview and Purpose of the Document	4
1.2	Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan	4
1.3	The Order Limits	4
1.4	The Scheme	5
<u>2</u>	<u>Principles of Decommissioning and Environmental Considerations</u>	<u>6</u>
2.1	Decommissioning Activities	6
2.2	Decommissioning Programme	7
<u>3</u>	<u>Mitigation and Management</u>	<u>8</u>
3.1	Purpose	8
3.2	Committed Mitigation and Management Measures	9
3.3	Responding to Environmental Incidents and Emergencies	24
3.4	Good Practice	24
<u>4</u>	<u>Implementation</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>5</u>	<u>Monitoring and Reporting</u>	<u>26</u>
	<u>References</u>	<u>27</u>

## List of Tables

Table 3.1: Decommissioning Mitigation and Management Measures	9
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## Issue Sheet

Report Prepared for: Green Hill Solar Farm

Examination Deadline 5

### Outline Decommissioning Statement Revision B

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Overview and Purpose of the Document

- 1.1.1 Green Hill Solar Farm Limited (the Applicant) has prepared this Outline Decommissioning Statement (ODS) in relation to an Application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning of the Green Hill Solar Farm (the Scheme).
- 1.1.2 The aim of this ODS is to provide a clear and consistent approach to the control of decommissioning activities within the Order limits. This document does not address construction or operational and maintenance activities, which are subject to separate environmental management plans and procedures. Please refer to the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP) [EX5/GH7.1\_B] and Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (OOEMP) [EX5/GH7.2\_C] for further information.
- 1.1.3 Once the Scheme ceases to operate, the development will be decommissioned. The operational life of the Scheme is anticipated to be up to 60 years. A 60-year period for the operational phase of the development has therefore been assessed in the Environmental Statement which accompanies the DCO application.

### 1.2 Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan

- 1.2.1 A Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) (or multiple DEMPs) and Decommissioning Traffic Management Plan (DTMP) will be produced and approved for the Scheme following the appointment of a contractor, prior to the commencement of the decommissioning phase of the Scheme. Approval and implementation of the DEMP and the DTMP will be secured through a Requirement of the DCO.
- 1.2.2 The nature of the decommissioning activities and potential for significant effects is anticipated to be similar to construction. The DEMPs and DTMP will therefore include similar measures to those included in the OCEMP [EX5/GH7.1\_B] and the detailed CEMPs, as well as the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) [REP3-064] submitted with the Application, covering issues such as transportation methods, pollution prevention, and noise management.
- 1.2.3 The DEMP(s) will adhere with regulations and guidance applicable at the time, but is expected to include:
- An overview of the Scheme, decommissioning activities, and programme;
  - Prior assessment of potential environmental impacts;
  - Mitigation measures to prevent or reduce potential adverse impacts;
  - Monitoring of effectiveness of mitigation measures; and
  - Links to other complementary plans and procedures.

### 1.3 The Order Limits

- 1.3.1 The Order limits comprise all land falling within the Application required for the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of the Scheme



and are shown on the Location Plan **[REP3-004]** and described in Volume 1 Chapter 3: The Development Site **[REP1-029]** of the ES.

- 1.3.2 The Order Limits cover an area of 1,441.4 hectares (ha) located within the administrative areas of the unitary authorities of North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council, and Milton Keynes City Council. The Scheme comprises nine distinct sites: Green Hill A, A.2, B, C, D, E, F, G, and BESS ('Site' or 'Sites') connected by the Cable Route Corridor to each other and to the Point of Connection (POC) at Grendon National Grid Substation.

## 1.4 The Scheme

- 1.4.1 The Scheme will comprise the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating facility and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with a total capacity exceeding 50 MW. The solar arrays, along with their associated substations and battery energy storage are to be connected to the National Grid at a substation at Grendon. Further details on the Scheme are provided in Volume 1 Chapter 4: Scheme Description **[REP1-0131]** of the ES.
- 1.4.2 The Sites accommodate ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) generating stations (incorporating the solar arrays); grid connection infrastructure and energy storage; and the Cable Route Corridor. The Scheme will comprise the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of a generating station (incorporating solar arrays) with a total capacity exceeding 50 megawatts (MW). The Scheme is defined as a NSIP under Sections 14(1)(a) and 15(2) of the Planning Act 2008 (Ref 1), as it is an onshore generating station in England with a capacity of more than 50 MW.
- 1.4.3 The Scheme currently has a grid connection date of 2029 although there is the potential that an earlier connection could be achieved. It is currently anticipated that construction works will commence, at the earliest, in Q4 2027 and will run to Q4 2029. The operational life of the Scheme will be no more than 60 years and decommissioning is estimated to commence no later than 2089.



## 2 Principles of Decommissioning and Environmental Considerations

### 2.1 Decommissioning Activities

- 2.1.1 Upon decommissioning, all above ground infrastructure will be carefully removed in accordance with the procedures and controls to be set out in the DEMP and DTMP. The land within the Sites will be returned to the respective landowners and to its original use after decommissioning. This will include the areas of agricultural land where the agricultural resource has been maintained (and potentially improved) during operation, and the established habitats. Post decommissioning, the landowners would choose how the land is to be used and managed, the landowner may return the land to arable use, although it is likely that established habitats such as hedgerows and woodland would be retained given their potential benefits to agricultural land and the wider farming estate.
- 2.1.2 Foundations and all other below ground infrastructure, which are not practicable to remove without major disturbances, will be cut to 1.2m below the surface to enable future ploughing. All piles are to be removed.
- 2.1.3 The underground cables (33kV, 132kV and 400kV) may be left in situ, depending on which method is likely to have the least environmental impact at the time. Currently, the most environmentally acceptable option is leaving the cables and any ducts in situ, as this avoids disturbance to overlying land and habitats and to neighbouring communities. Alternatively, the cables can be removed by opening the ground at regular intervals and pulling the cable through to the extraction point, avoiding the need to open up the entire length of the cable route. Any cabling removed will be taken to an appropriate facility for recycling.
- 2.1.4 All excavations are to be backfilled using soil sourced on the Sites, or with imported soil where required, using appropriate soil management techniques. Some soil profiling may be required, and the land will be contoured. Areas where grass does not exist because of the footprint of the previous infrastructure (e.g. the BESS and onsite substations) shall be reseeded with suitable native species, in liaison with the landowner, in order to integrate the newly restored soil into agricultural use.
- 2.1.5 Permissive paths would be removed during decommissioning, with the precise timing to be determined by the contractor(s) and communicated to the relevant local authority in accordance with the Decommissioning Plan approved under a Requirement in the draft DCO [EX5/GH3.1\_D].
- 2.1.6 To restore the land to its pre-construction condition at the end of operation, the soil resource within the Order Limits will need to be managed through construction, operation, and decommissioning. An Outline Soil Management Plan (OSMP) is included in the DCO Application [APP-550] and identifies measures to be implemented to:
- Ensure the protection and conservation of soil resources;
  - Maintain the physical properties of the soils through best practice; and



- Provide on-site reference on the management of soil resources for site operators undertaking the works.

2.1.7 The Agricultural Land Classification Reports within Volume 1 Chapter 20: Agriculture Land Classification **[APP-057]** of the ES were undertaken as part of the Application and will form the basis of how the land will be left at the end of the operational phase. The soil is anticipated to have undergone up to 60 years of recovery given that while the Scheme is operational, the land will be used for lower intensity farming practices, such as for sheep grazing or being left fallow. It is therefore expected to be of the same or better quality once decommissioned, as it is at present.

2.1.8 Where localised soil compaction occurs from the presence of structures such as the substations or the BESS; or the weight of mobile machinery used through construction, operation and decommissioning, management measures are identified to alleviate compaction (e.g., through ploughing and aeration), to maintain soil structure and enable reinstatement of the land to its original use.

2.1.9 Primary access tracks will be retained where requested by landowners and subject to obtaining any necessary consents. Permissive paths will be managed up to decommissioning, with the timing of their removal to be confirmed within the DEMP.

## **2.2 Decommissioning Programme**

2.2.1 The decommissioning of the Scheme is expected to take between 12 and 24 months to be completed.

2.2.2 The Scheme is assessed in the ES as being decommissioned after up to 60 years of operation, with decommissioning assumed to not commence any later than 2089.

2.2.3 More details on the decommissioning phase will be provided within the DEMP(s) in consultation with the local planning authorities, prior to decommissioning commencing.



### 3 Mitigation and Management

#### 3.1 Purpose

- 3.1.1 A summary of potential mitigation and management measures during decommissioning has been provided in Section 3.2 below. The nature of the decommissioning activities and potential for likely significant effects are anticipated to be similar to construction, and therefore the DEMP(s) and DTMP will include similar measures to those included in the OCEMP [EX5/GH7.1\_B] and OCTMP [REP3-064].



### 3.2 Committed Mitigation and Management Measures

**Table 3.1: Decommissioning Mitigation and Management Measures**

Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p><b>Climate Change</b></p> <p>Suitable measures will be implemented during decommissioning to manage the heightened risks posed by flooding and extreme weather events, due to climate change. The safety of all members of staff will be paramount during the decommissioning phase.</p> <p>Measures proposed for the construction phase (see Outline CEMP) will also be adopted for the decommissioning phase in respect of Climate Change.</p> <p>It is not considered appropriate to specify such requirements now as the decommissioning environment beyond 2089 is likely to be considerably different to today.</p>	<p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions from activities and vehicles during decommissioning (e.g., the use of electric vehicles and equipment where practicable).</p> <p>Increase resilience to heightening flood risks resulting from climate change, during decommissioning and ensure site personnel are protected and aware of potential risks.</p>
<p><b>Landscape and Visual</b></p> <p><i>Tree Protection Measures:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All decommissioning works to be in line with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (or equivalent);</li> <li>• Any hedgerow removal that may be required as part of decommissioning works are to be carried out in line with the provisions in the DCO and (where applicable) the latest regulations at the time of decommissioning (currently the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 and The Management of Hedgerows (England) Regulations 2024);</li> <li>• Any woodland felling that may be required as part of decommissioning works are to be done so in line with provisions in the DCO and (where applicable) Regulation 8a of the Forestry (Felling of Trees) Regulations 1979 (Ref 4) or subsequent updates. Where felling work exceeds the volume contained within</li> </ul>	<p>Protect trees and conserve landscape and biodiversity features.</p>



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p>the Regulations a licence must be obtained prior to felling to avoid enforcement and restocking requirements;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Tree Survey Report and Arboriculture Impact Assessment in line with BS 5837:2012 (Ref 5) or subsequent update, would be undertaken ahead of any decommissioning works;</li><li>• Additional surveys may be required prior to the decommissioning phase as advised as necessary by the Applicant’s arboricultural specialist, based on the findings of the Tree Survey Report and Arboriculture Impact Assessment;</li><li>• An Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) would be produced prior to decommissioning works, where decommissioning works are likely to affect trees. All works would be undertaken in line with the AMS;</li><li>• Where works in close proximity to retained trees cannot be practically avoided, these works will be undertaken in accordance with current best practice, defined in British Standard BS 5837:2012 Trees (or subsequent update) in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations (Ref 5) or subsequent updates;</li><li>• All necessary protective fencing will be installed prior to the commencement of any site clearance or decommissioning works; and</li><li>• All works affecting trees should be undertaken in accordance with best practice tree protection measures.</li></ul> <p><i>Lighting</i></p> <p>Standard good practice measures will be followed with regards to safe site lighting during decommissioning. For example, motion detection security lighting will be used to avoid the use of permanent lighting, therefore reducing unnecessary light pollution and spill.</p>	



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p><b>Ecology</b></p> <p>All decommissioning works will be carried out in line with the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (or equivalent legislation at the point of decommissioning).</p> <p>Standard management measures will be implemented to prevent pollution incidents, minimise effects on ecology from noise and vibration, and prevent and minimise dust creation and air pollution. These management measures are likely to be the same as those contained within the Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy [EX5/GH7.5_C] and referenced by the OCEMP [EX5/GH7.1_B], but will include restrictions on working in proximity to important habitats (by buffering and protective fencing), precautions to take during periods of prolonged dry or wet weather, restrictions on the use and storage of chemicals, oils and fuels, and the avoidance of sediment runoff and use of sediment barriers near to ditches and watercourses. Precautionary working method statements concerning the above actions would be produced and implemented.</p> <p>No more than twelve months prior to decommissioning commencing, the site will be visited by an appropriately qualified ecologist to characterise the new baseline for the site and identify any ecological constraints likely to arise from decommissioning activities. As a minimum, an extended UKHab Walkover survey (or equivalent, in accordance with best practice guidelines available at the point of decommissioning) will be required to identify the potential presence of protected species and important habitats. Further surveys may then be required for particular habitats or species.</p> <p>The ecological value of the Sites may change during the lifetime of the Scheme; in particular, changes in ecological conditions both within the Order Limits and on a national scale as a result of climate change (and other factors) may result in new ecological objectives that cannot at the current time be reasonably foreseen. As such, decommissioning activities will need to take account of changes in ecological</p>	<p>To minimise the loss of established habitats and minimise impact on biodiversity within the Order Limits.</p>



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p>objectives that have occurred over the operational phase and be in alignment with the legislation at the time of decommissioning. Examples of likely mitigation measures to be adopted during decommissioning include:</p> <p><i>Ecological Clerk of Works</i></p> <p>The method statements to be detailed in the DEMP would be controlled and monitored through the direction of an appointed Ecological Clerk of Works (EcoCoW) who will be present on site as required during decommissioning works. The EcoCoW would also ensure that pre-arranged mitigation is undertaken, and records are kept.</p> <p><i>Nesting and Breeding Birds</i></p> <p>Measures will be implemented to mitigate for impacts to nesting and breeding birds. Where reasonably practicable, vegetation clearance works would be undertaken outside the bird breeding season (taken to be March-August, although these timings may be different at the point of decommissioning as a result of climate change).</p> <p><i>Reptiles and Amphibians</i></p> <p>Reasonable avoidance measures would be used during habitat clearance suitable for reptiles, encouraging animals to move away from affected areas to adjacent suitable habitats.</p> <p><i>Badgers</i></p> <p>Implementation of an appropriate buffer of between 10 and 30m around a badger sett during decommissioning works.</p> <p><i>Bats</i></p> <p>Implementation of an appropriate buffer of between 8 and 25m around trees with bat roost potential or identified bat roosts during decommissioning works.</p>	



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p><i>Invasive Species</i></p> <p>Pre-decommissioning surveys will be undertaken to provide an update on the presence and location of any invasive species which will help to inform the production of a Biosecurity Management Plan, (if required). If any future infestations of invasive non-native species are identified prior to any decommissioning works, exclusion zones will be established around them, and the Ecological Clerk of Works (EcoCoW) contacted for advice as required.</p>	
<p><b>Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage</b></p> <p>Relevant Good Practice Guidance (GPGs) and Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPPs), as well as additional good practice guidance for the water environment including British Standards and key CIRIA documents, will be followed for the water environment and flood risk during decommissioning.</p> <p>Best practices will be incorporated into the safe storage of materials, including containment measures, bunding, drip trays installed as part of plant and machinery used and water suppression will be used to suppress dust emissions.</p> <p>A water management plan will be developed as part of the DEMP (if required). The plan would detail management measures including any water quality monitoring measures.</p> <p>Foul water generated during decommissioning, including from temporary welfare facilities, will be managed using sealed tanks or self contained units. Units will be emptied at defined intervals by a licensed waste contractor. No discharge of foul water to watercourses, surface water drainage systems or ground will be permitted. Waste transfer documentation will be retained in accordance with statutory requirements.</p> <p>If runoff from the decommissioning of the Sites is treated on-site, a Water Discharge Activity Permit will be acquired as necessary</p>	<p>Minimise the risk of flooding, runoff, and pollution to waterbodies.</p>



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p><b>Minerals</b></p> <p>Decommissioning and removal of plant and structures to restore the baseline condition for the identified mineral resources. Where infrastructure is left in the ground such as cable ducts after decommissioning these would not present any significant constraint to future mineral extraction.</p>	<p>To restore the baseline condition for the identified mineral resources.</p>
<p><b>Cultural Heritage</b></p> <p>Activities associated with the decommissioning phases are not considered to cause further impact to buried archaeological remains beyond that which will occur during the construction phase.</p> <p>Likewise, the decommissioning phase is not considered to cause additional indirect impacts to heritage assets to those caused during the commissioning or operational phases. Temporary fencing will be erected around Scheduled Monuments during decommissioning to ensure no works are undertaken within a buffer zone of the Scheduled area. Banksmen must be aware of scheduled area buffer zones and will be responsible for ensuring no vehicle/plant movement occurs in these areas. Following decommissioning and removal of plant and structures the baseline condition for the identified heritage assets will be restored.</p> <p>In line with the Archaeological Mitigation Strategy <b>[CR2-006]</b>, a Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan will be agreed with the Archaeological Advisor to the relevant Local Planning Authority prior to decommissioning, which will be sufficient to safeguard any archaeological remains during the decommissioning phase.</p>	<p>To restore the baseline landscape condition with consideration to the setting of identified heritage assets.</p> <p>Minimise / prevent harm to buried archaeological features.</p>
<p><b>Transport and Access</b></p> <p>A Decommissioning Traffic Management Plan will be prepared to manage traffic associated with decommissioning and will include measures to minimise the impact of construction traffic on surrounding roads, including disruption and risk of traffic</p>	<p>Minimise the impact of construction traffic on surrounding roads, including disruption and risk of traffic accidents along local access roads and along Public Rights of Way (PRoW).</p>



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p>accidents along local access roads and along Public Rights of Way (PRoW). Measures will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Restricting movement of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) to certain routes and time windows within the day.</li><li>• Use of temporary traffic management to construct, and where required, manage accesses.</li><li>• A monitoring system and Delivery Management System to record the route of HGVs to and from the Order Limits and regulate their arrival times to ensure compliance.</li><li>• Encouraging alternative travel arrangements for site personnel, including car sharing and shuttle bus services in order to reduce the volume of vehicle trips required.</li></ul>	
<p><b>Noise and Vibration</b></p> <p>Standards of good practice for noise and vibration will be followed to minimise noise and vibration impacts from activities and vehicles.</p> <p>Unnecessary revving of engines will be avoided, and equipment will be switched off when not in use.</p> <p>Appropriate routing of decommissioning traffic on public roads and along access tracks.</p> <p>Drop heights of materials will be minimised.</p> <p>Plant and vehicles will be sequentially started up rather than all together. Plant will always be used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions. Care will be taken to site equipment away from noise- sensitive areas. Where practicable, loading and unloading will also be carried out away from such areas.</p>	<p>Minimise noise and vibration from activities and vehicles during decommissioning and ensure levels of noise and vibration do not exceed relevant guidance.</p>



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p>Regular and effective maintenance by trained personnel will be undertaken to keep plant and equipment working to manufacturer’s specifications.</p> <p>During noisy activities, localised screening of noise generating sources, such as temporary site hoarding should be implemented to minimise any potential impacts on nearby noise sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Working hours onsite are likely to be Monday to Friday 07:00 – 18:00 and between 08:00 and 13:30 on Saturdays. However, some activities may be required outside of these times (such as abnormal loads).</p> <p>Requirements for monitoring during the decommissioning stages will be set out and agreed. The noise monitoring scheme is expected to be similar to that for the construction phase.</p> <p>Consideration will also be given to traffic routing, timing and access points to the Sites to minimise noise impacts at existing receptors.</p>	
<p><b>Air Quality</b></p> <p>Standards of good practice for air quality, as set out in the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) 'Guidance on the Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction', or relevant guidance will be followed during decommissioning to minimise dust from activities and vehicles.</p> <p>A dust management plan may be required as part of the DEMP and would detail any dust monitoring required prior to and during decommissioning, including any relevant baseline dust monitoring to be undertaken before activities commence.</p> <p>Records will be kept of all dust and air quality complaints, cause(s) will be identified and appropriate measures to reduce emissions will be taken in a timely manner. A further record will be kept of the measures taken.</p> <p>Measures proposed for the construction phase (see OCEMP <b>[EX5/GH7.1_B]</b>) will also be adopted for the decommissioning phase in respect of Air Quality.</p>	<p>Minimise emissions from activities and vehicles.</p>



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p><b>Socio Economics, Tourism and Recreation</b></p> <p>Measures proposed for the construction phase (see OCEMP [EX5/GH7.1_B]) will also be adopted for the decommissioning phase in respect of Socio economics.</p>	<p>Minimise impacts to the local community, tourism and recreation</p>
<p><b>Human Health</b></p> <p>Works are to be phased and staggered across the Site and Cable Corridor to reduce likely significant effects on environmental receptors, to reduce the peak number of construction workers requiring access to local amenities, and to reduce the peak intensity of onsite works</p> <p>Support for temporary and permanent workforce to be directed to primary healthcare facilities with greatest capacity.</p> <p>Provision of a dedicated Community Liaison Manager ahead of and during decommissioning, responsible for managing relationships with community groups, and elected members to ensure community concerns are being addressed and actioned by the construction contractors. This role should also be used as an intermediary between the construction contractors and members of the public for the provision of construction information, availability for consultation on construction activities, and for complaints or compliance issues to be raised.</p> <p>Pre-decommissioning identification of residential care homes and institutions that may be of specific vulnerability to impacts from decommissioning activities, with targeted mitigation measures as required agreed between the Scheme operator, facilities operators, and host local authority.</p> <p>Targeted works restrictions should be placed around Oakfield, Easton Maudit to minimise working hours within 100 m of the property boundary, avoiding storage of materials within this 100 m buffer. Maintain lines of communication between the operators of the Scheme and the care home to ensure any concerns can be addressed.</p>	<p>Minimise impacts to the local community including those in residential care facilities, access to general healthcare, and providing support for community influence and resilience.</p>



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p>Measures proposed for the construction phase (see Outline CEMP) will also be adopted for the decommissioning phase in respect of human health.</p>	
<p><b>Arboriculture</b></p> <p>Permanent Access Points and visibility splays for the Sites will be the same as those used for construction, ensuring no additional tree removal or pruning during decommissioning of the Sites;</p> <p>All tree pruning works will be undertaken by a professionally qualified and insured arborist working in accordance with British Standard 3998:2010 'Tree Work – Recommendations'.</p> <p>Decommissioning and removal of Solar PV Panels will take place using the existing Access Tracks installed at the construction stage, ensuring no additional tree root or canopy impacts to retained trees during decommissioning works; and</p> <p>Cabling will likely be left in situ after decommissioning which will avoid any future tree removal or root impacts from excavation to remove cables. Should cabling require removal, it may be practicable to remove cabling at the jointing bays and extracting it from the ducting to avoid the need for significant lengths of open cut trenching which may harm trees</p>	<p>Potential risk to tree roots and canopies.</p>
<p><b>Agricultural Circumstances</b></p> <p>The Soil Management Plan produced at the pre-construction stage will be further updated prior to decommissioning in accordance with the Outline Soil Management Plan <b>[APP-550]</b> to account for any changes to the construction approach, phasing and good practice at that time. The Soil Management Plan will cover soil handling, reconditioning and soil/land restoration during decommissioning and soil aftercare post decommissioning.</p> <p>Land used temporarily will be reinstated where practicable to its pre-construction condition and use (or a condition agreed with the landowner). Hedgerows, fences, and walls (including associated earthworks and boundary features) will be</p>	<p>Protect and conserve soil resources and land quality wherever feasibly practicable and maintain the physical properties of the soils through best practice for reinstatement.</p>



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p>reinstated to a similar style and quality to those that were removed, with landowner agreement.</p> <p>Earthwork mounds and stockpiled soil will be protected (to minimise erosion and dust generation) by covering, seeding, or using water suppression where appropriate (to be determined by the soil types and the likely storage duration).</p> <p>Soil management measures will include but not be limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Details of the soil resources present;</li><li>• How the topsoil and subsoil will be stripped and stockpiled;</li><li>• Suitable conditions for when soil handling will be undertaken, for example avoiding handling of waterlogged soil;</li><li>• Indicative soil storage locations;</li><li>• How soil stockpiles will be designed taking into consideration site conditions and the nature/composition of the soil;</li><li>• Specific measures for managing sensitive soils;</li><li>• Suitable protective surfacing where soil stripping can be avoided, based on sensitivity of the environment and proposed works;</li><li>• Approach to reinstating soil, including measures to remove compaction, where required; and</li><li>• Details of measures required for soil restoration.</li></ul> <p>It will be particularly important to avoid causing soil compaction during the decommissioning phase. To reduce ground pressure, tracked plant and machinery should be equipped with low ground pressure tyres.</p> <p>In areas where agricultural land and soil may need to be reinstated (e.g., where buildings are demolished, or tracks taken up) with the guidance in Defra's</p>	



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p>Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites or reference appropriate at the same time may provide useful guidance.</p>	
<p><b>Ground Conditions</b></p> <p>Ground investigation works will be undertaken prior to commencing decommissioning works. Results would be reviewed by the appointed contractor, including any additional investigation or mitigation measures beyond the impact avoidance measures stated here.</p> <p>Best practice avoidance and mitigation measures proposed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site workers will be made aware of the possibility of encountering localised contamination through toolbox talks. Good standards of personal hygiene, welfare facilities on-site and the use of appropriate levels of personal protective equipment (PPE), will be enforced. All personnel will be educated about the potential environmental impacts of their activities, ensuring that all workers are fully aware of the risks and the necessary precautions to take to minimise pollution.</li> <li>• Workers will adhere to health, safety and environmental precautions to reduce the potential for accidents and incidents.</li> <li>• A ‘Discovery Strategy’ protocol shall be implemented with specific focus on encountering suspected landfill materials within the vicinity of Sywell Range (Cable Route Corridor), Barton Plant Ltd (Cable Route Corridor) and Earls Barton Quarry (Green Hill BESS). This will include but not be limited to stopping works in the area and ensuring the identified materials / residual contamination does not pose a risk until an environmental specialist undertakes an assessment and a method is agreed to deal with the identified contamination. If required, the Local Planning Authority will be notified.</li> <li>• A Battery Storage Safety Management Plan (BSSMP) will be implemented throughout the Scheme to ensure the safe design, production, use,</li> </ul>	<p>Potential for risks to human health associated with waste generation, land contamination, airborne contamination, and groundwater contamination.</p> <p>The discovery of ground contamination during groundworks.</p> <p>Levelling of the Sites including the possible introduction of new fill materials.</p>



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p>transportation, storage, and disposal of batteries. This approach will minimise risks associated with batteries while ensuring compliance with relevant standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To mitigate the risk of airborne contamination, a dust suppression and management system will be implemented. This system will control dust emissions during decommissioning activities, preventing them from migrating off-site and impacting neighbouring environments. Methods include washing down of vehicle's wheels and dampening down materials.</li><li>• Topsoil displaced within the decommissioning of the cable route, should be appropriately stored and reused. Temporary stockpiles and/or excavated topsoil from the cable route is to be stored away from any Flood-Zone 3 areas where practicable. Site compounds and stockpiles will be located as far as possible (ideally at least 30 m) away from receptors.</li><li>• Bulk fuels or chemicals used on-site during the decommissioning phases should be stored appropriately, within an impervious bund of 110% of the volume of the container to reduce the potential for impact to the environment in the event of a container failure/leak of battery chemicals during a fire and/or associated fire suppressant foam and waters. Any spillages will be promptly addressed by appropriate measures, such as spill kits, and an Emergency Spillage Plan will be developed. The contractor will ensure immediate notification of the Environment Agency in the event of any suspected pollution incidents, facilitating response measures.</li><li>• All equipment and vehicles will be regularly maintained and inspected to prevent leaks, with refuelling activities occurring on impermeable surfaces. Biodegradable hydraulic oils will be prioritised for use in any identified sensitive areas.</li><li>• To prevent pollution from accidental leaks or spills of construction materials, the contractor will implement robust pollution prevention plans adhering to</li></ul>	



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p>established guidelines, such as the Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPP). Drainage systems, including Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), will be developed in line with hydrology requirements.</p>	
<p><b>Major Accidents and Disasters</b></p> <p>The risk of major accidents and disasters during decommissioning will be addressed through relevant risk assessments and management plans prior to undertaking the works.</p> <p>All works will be undertaken in accordance with relevant Health and Safety legislation and guidance with relevant emergency details publicised and communicated to all site personnel. Measures to mitigate the risks of major accidents and disasters are covered in the Climate Change, Ecology, Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage, Transport and Access and Waste sections.</p>	<p>Minimising the risk of major accidents and disasters and protecting site personnel.</p>
<p><b>Other Environmental Matters</b></p> <p><b>Waste</b></p> <p>Suitable measures for the sustainable use of resources and waste management will be implemented during decommissioning. The contractor will seek to use material resources efficiently, reduce waste at source, reduce waste that requires final disposal to landfill and apply the principles of the waste hierarchy.</p> <p>Infrastructure such as PV panels and battery storage units will be removed and recycled as far as practical and in accordance with legislation and guidance applicable at the time, or if more suitable at the time, sold for refurbishment and reuse.</p> <p>It is anticipated that waste products associated with the decommissioning process, would not need to be shipped as a result of decommissioning of the scheme.</p> <p>A Decommissioning Resource Management Plan (DRMP) setting out how measures to manage the disposal of waste from the Order Limits may be required</p>	<p>Minimising unnecessary use of resources and waste production during decommissioning.</p> <p>Minimising adverse impacts on waste handling facility capacity during decommissioning.</p>



Mitigation/ and Management Measure	Effect
<p>in accordance with relevant legislative and policy requirements at the time of decommissioning.</p> <p>The separation of the main waste streams on-site, prior to transport to approved, licensed third party waste facilities, including Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) reprocessors, for recycling or disposal will take place.</p> <p>The provision of prefabricated welfare units and construction site offices also allows for the reduction of construction and demolition waste generated by the Scheme.</p> <p>A Decommissioning Waste Management Strategy will be provided as part of the DRMP to ensure decommissioning waste streams are sent to waste recycling and handling facilities that have sufficient capacity to handle waste arisings from the Scheme without adversely impacting upon their capacity to handle waste arisings for all other waste streams in the authority area.</p>	



### **3.3 Responding to Environmental Incidents and Emergencies**

3.3.1 The Contractor(s) will designate an Environmental Manager who will be responsible for the implementation of the DEMP(s). This individual will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so following an environmental incident or emergency. A reporting procedure will be agreed with the local authorities and any other statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency. Staff will be informed of this process and made aware that it is everyone's responsibility to call the emergency services, should this be needed.

### **3.4 Good Practice**

3.4.1 The Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS), or equivalent scheme at the time, will be adopted to assist in reducing pollution and nuisance from the Scheme, by employing best practice measures which go beyond statutory compliance, where relevant to decommissioning.



## 4 Implementation

4.1.1 The DEMP(s) will set out all roles, responsibilities and actions required in respect of implementation of the mitigation measures, including:

- An organogram showing team roles, names, and responsibilities;
- Training requirements for relevant personnel on environmental topics;
- Information regarding on-site briefings and toolbox talks that will be used to equip relevant staff with the necessary level of knowledge to follow environmental control procedures;
- Measures to advise employees of changing circumstances as work progresses;
- Communication methods;
- Document control;
- Monitoring, inspections, and audits of site operations; and
- Environmental emergency procedures.



## **5 Monitoring and Reporting**

- 5.1.1 Environmental monitoring of the Scheme and its impacts will be undertaken throughout the decommissioning phase. Monitoring requirements will be detailed in the DEMP(s).
- 5.1.2 The Environmental Manager will observe site activities and report any deviations from the DEMP(s) in a logbook, along with the action taken and general conditions at the time. The Applicant will be informed by the contractor(s) of any deviations from the DEMP(s) as soon as practicable following identification of such issues. The Environmental Manager would also act as day-to-day contact with relevant local authorities and other regulatory agencies such as the Environment Agency.
- 5.1.3 During decommissioning, the Environmental Manager will conduct regular walkover inspections to ensure all requirements of the DEMP(s) are being met. Actions from these surveys will be documented on an Environmental Action Schedule for implementation.



## References

- Ref 1 Planning Act 2008, 2008 c.29. (*as amended*)
- Ref 2 Legislation (1981) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>
- Ref 3 Legislation (2025) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>
- Ref 4 Legislation (2011) The Forestry (Felling of Trees) Regulations 1979. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1979/791/made>
- Ref 5 BSI. Knowledge (2012) BS 5837: 2012: Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Available at: <https://knowledge.bsigroup.com/products/trees-in-relation-to-design-demolition-and-construction-recommendations>