

The Droves Solar Farm

Consultation Report Appendix F: Statutory Consultation Under Section 47 of the Act - Supporting Material - Part 3

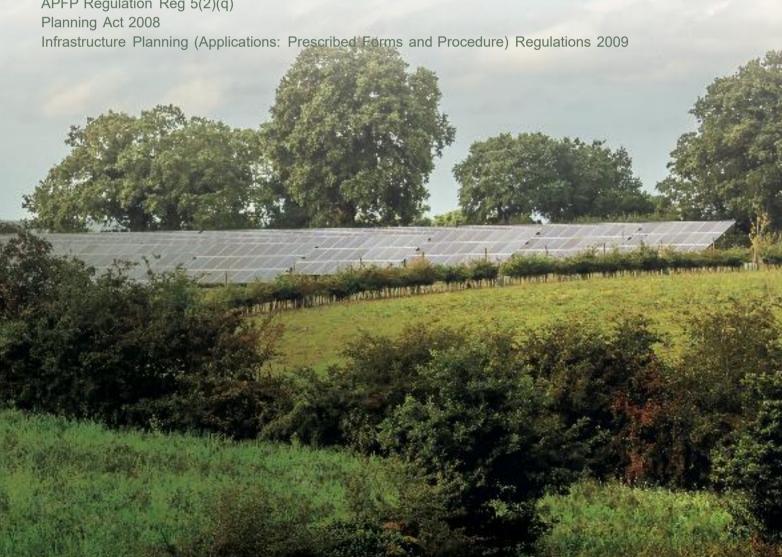
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Indicative Masterplan 2



Indicative Masterplan 3



The Droves: bringing the past back to life

The Droves Solar Farm is being developed to support the UK's transition to cleaner, low-cost energy. Alongside this ambition is a commitment to deliver a positive legacy for Breckland and the surrounding area. Nowhere is this more clearly reflected than in the treatment of the historic droves – the ancient livestock routes that cross the Site.

The illustrations that follow bring the story of the Site to life: how it has evolved and how it could be experienced in the future. They reflect the Project Level Design Principles and Masterplanning Strategies that have shaped the Project and show how The Droves Solar Farm could deliver meaningful benefits for the people, wildlife and environment in and around the Site.



A drove was a track or path traditionally used to move livestock across the countryside, between grazing areas, farms and markets. As part of the Project, we are exploring ways to celebrate and enhance these historic routes where they pass through the Site, reinforcing their connection with the landscape and local communities.

The story of the droves

Droves have been used since the Iron Age, with their use peaking in the 18th and 19th centuries as the growth of towns and cities led to an increasing demand for food from rural areas. Hundreds of thousands of sheep and cattle would be herded across the land each year, but as pastureland gave way to farmland and the rail network grew, these important routes slowly fell into disuse.

Their use for herding livestock has diminished over time but their use as routes connecting places for people remains.

As part of The Droves Solar Farm, we plan to renew and amplify these historic routes, providing paths for both people and wildlife.

We aim to transform the droves into key wildlife corridors by widening them and connecting them to new grassland habitats. These would provide safe routes for wildlife to move between important ecological areas. And for people, the paths would link towns and villages and serve as identifiable features in the landscape.

The droves would also offer opportunities to explore the area's history and learn about renewable energy from new signage, while the biodiversity improvements brought by the enhancement of the droves would allow local residents to observe seasonal changes along hedgerows and verges.

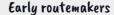
Layers and Margins

Our design approach for the droves focuses on their role as key routes through the Site. Their function as corridors for both people and wildlife will be supported through three main interventions:

- Broadening
- Protecting
- Strengthening.









Herding to pasture and market



Working farm in the modern era



A place to protect



Through the seasons: renewed and amplified for all creatures, great and small

Broadening the margins

Between the hedgerows that line the droves and the areas set aside for solar PV panels, we would create ecologically rich margins, made up of a variety of habitats.

Outside the fence

Outside the fence, between the solar PV panels and the hedgerows and trees lining the droves, we would create "biodiversity hotspots". This would involve encouraging ancient seeds in the soil to grow and establishing new wildflower and tussocky grassland. This would attract pollinators, while log piles would provide shelter and nesting sites for various animals, thereby supporting a variety of plant and animal life.

Inside the fence

Inside the fence, where the solar PV panels would be located, we would establish expansive grassland. While not as biodiverse as the areas outside the fence, this grassland would still provide important biodiversity benefits. It would help improve soil health, store carbon, slow rainwater run-off and provide grazing for livestock.

Ecosystem services: Healthy Soils, Storing carbon, Thriving Plants and Wildlife

AT THE MARGINS

Hardy species, a green foundation. Shelter for beetles and field mice. Bio-diverse hotspot, bustling community of insects and small mammals.

'Fresh lively scent, rustle of the breeze, beautiful'

Wildflower 1

Tussocky

grassland

Why Mhy Mark

Grassland Conservation Grazing

Stores carbon, stops erosion, cleans water

Protecting the droves

As important routes through the Site, the droves would be safeguarded by buffer zones protecting the existing hedgerows and trees that define these routes. Along the droves, there would be minimal crossing points to areas of solar PV panels, helping to maintain the droves' ecological and recreational value.

Strengthening the layers

Between the base of the hedgerows and the tops of the tree canopies, various layers would support a wide range of species throughout their lifecycles.

Mature hedgerow trees would be retained, and new trees would be planted replacing those lost over time. These trees would provide important habitats for wildlife, including bats, birds and squirrels, which would be central to the droves' character, and would act as natural waymarks in the landscape.

Below the tree canopy, a dense hedgerow or shrub layer would be established, and any gaps in the

existing hedgerow would be filled. This layer would offer habitats for animals such as birds, badgers and bees.

At ground level, alongside grass and flowers, marl pits (extensively dug in the 18th century in Britain to extract clay that was then used to improve soil structure for crops) would be managed to encourage wildlife. This enhances the variety of habitats connected to the droves and supporting wildlife such as mosses, lichens, fungi, frogs, beetles and snails.



Project description

To successfully generate and export approximately 500 MWac to the national grid, the Project would require the following components.

A full description of all the Project components can be found in the **PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 5: Scheme Description**. A more detailed summary can be found in the Non-Technical Summary (NTS).



Solar PV panels - these are made up of cells which convert sunlight into electrical energy. The solar PV panels would be attached to mounting structures and arranged in rows. We are currently considering two options for solar panels: fixed south-facing panels, which typically have a height of 3.5 m, and tracker panels which follow the sun's path during the day. Tracker panels reach a maximum height of 4.5 m over the course of the day.

Fencing and security - a deer fence

would enclose the solar PV panels,

and a metal palisade fence would

A closed-circuit television (CCTV)

system would be placed around

the perimeter of the Site and

National Grid Substation, and

would face towards the Project.

enclose other key infrastructure, such

as the BESS and Customer Substation.



Mounting structures - the solar PV panels would sit on metal frames, which would be placed in the ground for stability.



Conversion units, inverters, transformers and switchgear - these electrical components would be required to manage and transfer the electricity generated by the solar PV panels to the substations and national grid.



Substations - two types of substation would be required to export electricity to the national grid, comprising a Customer Substation and a National Grid Substation.



Access tracks - internal access tracks would allow access to the Site for ongoing maintenance.



Battery energy storage - the BESS component would store electricity generated from the solar PV panels on site and export it to the national grid when needed. The exact location of the BESS is still under consideration and will be determined through further assessments and consultation.



Lighting - motion-sensing lighting would be installed around the Customer Substation, National Grid Substation and BESS, to support maintenance and security. Lighting would not be required within areas of the Site containing solar PV panels during the operational phase.



Site access - the main point of access to the Site would be from the A1065. The point of access into the Site would include a security gate and would be designed to safely accommodate HGV traffic.



Temporary Construction Hub and Compounds - temporary parking and construction compounds would be required during the construction and decommissioning phase of the Project.



Underground cabling - on-site cables would be required to transfer the electricity generated by the Project. These cables would be placed underground into cable trenches, which are typically 1-7 m in width.



Grid Connection -

the Project would connect to the national electricity network at a new National Grid Substation, which is proposed to be located in the northern part of the Site. This substation would connect to the existing overhead power line that crosses the Site to the north.



How a solar farm works

Solar farms play a crucial role in the transition to renewable energy, by converting sunlight into usable electricity. Their operation involves several key components:

Components of a typical solar project

- 1. Solar energy

- 2. Fencing3. Solar panels
- 7. BESS
- 4. Inverter (DC to AC power converter)
- 8. Underground cable

6. Substation

5. Landscape area



- **1. Solar energy -** Solar farms harness sunlight as the earth's primary source of energy.
- **2. Fencing -** Fencing encloses the solar farm.
- **3. Solar panels -** Solar panels convert the sun's energy into electrical power.
- 4. Inverter (DC to AC power converter) Infrastructure, such as inverters,
 transformers and switchgear, are needed
 to convert power generated by the PV
 solar panels to allow onward transmission
 to the national grid.
- **5. Landscape area -** Planting within the solar farm includes measures to enhance biodiversity.

- **6. Substation -** Substations consist of equipment to facilitate the export/import of electricity from/to the solar farm and BESS to/from the national grid.
- 7. BESS BESS supports the operation of solar panels by storing electricity and releasing it to the national grid when needed. It is also able to import and store electricity from the national grid.
- **8. Underground cable -** Connection to the national grid is via underground cables which export electricity from the on-site substations.

Construction, operation and decommissioning

Construction phase

We are aiming to submit our application to PINS in autumn 2025, with construction expected to begin in 2031. The construction process is expected to take place in a single phase, lasting up to 24 months.

To minimise disruption, we would coordinate construction deliveries where possible to avoid heavy goods vehicle (HGV) movements during the traditional morning and evening peak hours. Although some construction activities may take place outside these times, we would ensure these are well managed and communicate with local planning authorities in advance.

We would also prepare a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to address the impacts of construction traffic on the local area. Alongside this, we would put in place a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to ensure all construction activities are managed responsibly and to an acceptable standard. These plans will be developed in close consultation with the local councils in Norfolk. An outline version of these documents will be shared as part of our final DCO application.

Operational phase

During the operational phase, we would aim to keep activities to a minimum, focusing primarily on maintenance and replacement activities and essential operational tasks.

The programme and methodology for solar PV panel and BESS maintenance and replacement will be defined in more detail as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process, more details of which can be found on pages 24-25.

Typical operational activities would include vegetation management, equipment upkeep, component replacements, and cleaning and monitoring of the solar PV panels. The Droves Solar Farm is designed to generate clean energy for up to 60 years, after which decommissioning will take place.

Decommissioning phase

The decommissioning of the Project is expected to take place over a 12- to 24-month period. During this time, all solar PV panels, BESS, the Customer Substation, mounting structures, foundations, inverters, cables and transformers would be removed. These would then be either recycled or disposed of following good industry practice.

Once the decommissioning process is complete, the land would be returned to the landowner.



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Overview of the EIA process

The Droves Solar Farm is classified as an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development, which means we are required to assess the likely environmental impacts of the Project.

The goal of the EIA process is to ensure that we:

- identify any likely significant environmental effects the Project may have
- implement measures to reduce or remove any negative impacts
- work to enhance positive effects.

The findings from the EIA will be presented in the Environmental Statement (ES), which will be submitted as part of our DCO application to PINS.

There are three main stages:

- 1. Scoping Report On 7 November 2024 we submitted an EIA Scoping Report to PINS. This document set out the proposed scope of the EIA process, which is how we proposed to identify and evaluate the likely significant effects of the Project. In response to the EIA Scoping Request, PINS issued a Scoping Opinion on 18 December 2024, providing their feedback and confirming the key areas to be considered as part of the EIA process.
- 2. Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) - The PEIR builds upon the previous documents and considers feedback received during our early-stage engagement. It is a core technical document which sets out our preliminary EIA findings and identifies the measures we are proposing to reduce, enhance and manage the effects the Project may have on the environment. We are consulting on the PEIR (and Non-Technical Summary, (NTS) of the PEIR) as part of this consultation so technical stakeholders,

local communities, individuals and interested parties can develop an informed view of the Project and provide us with their feedback.

3. Environmental Statement (ES) -

After statutory consultation we will produce the ES, which comprises the results of the EIA process. This will build on earlier stages of the EIA, reflect any design evolution and incorporate feedback received during statutory consultation.

The ES will describe any changes to the Project and the measures we are proposing to implement to reduce, enhance and manage the Project. The ES, along with an NTS of the ES, will form part of the DCO application we submit to PINS.

A summary of selected PEIR chapters is provided on pages 36-45. More detailed information from our environmental surveys and assessments is set out in the main report of the PEIR, which is summarised in the NTS.



Landscape and Visual

Preliminary assessments

We've identified receptors that could be impacted by the Project using visibility mapping and on-site surveys.

These areas can be categorised as follows:

- Viewpoints from key receptors, such as Castle Acre Priory, and receptor groups, to cover general areas
- Landscape character areas, like plateau farmland
- Visual amenity receptors, such as the Castle Acre Circular Walk.

We've looked at how the landscape will change both in winter, when visibility is greatest, and in summer.

We've assessed potential effects during construction, operation and decommissioning.

In addition to the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, we've also conducted a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment and an Amenity and Recreation Assessment.



The full assessment can be viewed in PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual.

Preliminary conclusions

Our assessments indicate that the visibility of the Project would be reduced by existing vegetation that exists as part of the wider landscape.

Views of the Project would generally be confined to open fields to the north and east of the Site, with visibility from the west and south well contained owing to the local topography.

Within the Site, the central area is visually enclosed by mature woodland, hedgerows and trees. The northern area is also well contained, with with plantation woodland and taller hedgerows.

During construction and decommissioning, temporary effects such as site clearance, vegetation removal and machinery would be visible in the short term.

During the operational phase, the impact on the landscape character would be mostly contained within the Site. There would be medium-scale effects in the surrounding landscape, but views from greater distances would have a lesser impact, with the overall character of the area remaining largely unchanged.

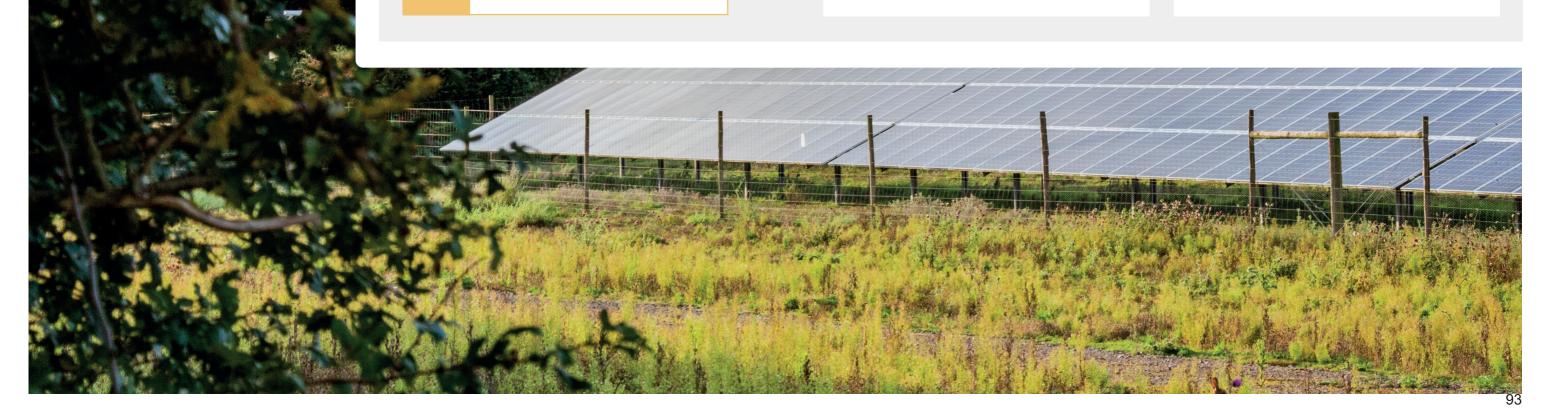
Mitigation measures

To reduce landscape and visual impacts, we have embedded a range of mitigation measures into the Project design, including:

- Retention of existing landscape features, such as hedgerows and trees
- New hedgerow and tree planting to reduce visibility
- Enhancing existing hedgerows with native species
- Setting the Project back from landscape features like trees, hedgerows and woodland
- Offsetting the Project by at least 15 m from existing PRoW to preserve recreational amenity
- Adding recreational enhancements, such as new amenity spaces and improved PRoW.

During the construction and decommissioning phases, visual screening, such as hoardings, would be used to protect views from PRoW and other sensitive receptors, including residential properties. Additional measures, such as maintaining a tidy and organised working environment, would also help minimise any visual effects.

Further steps to reduce the visual effects of the Project during these phases will be outlined in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).



Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

Preliminary assessments

We have assessed ground archaeology, designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets that may be physically affected by the Project, or impacted by changes to their setting.

This assessment has involved desk-based research, geophysical surveys, and the use of aerial technologies, such as drones and satellite imagery, to identify any archaeological features that may not be visible at ground level.

Given the size of the Project, the study area extends up to 5 km from the Site for higher-grade heritage assets, such as Scheduled Monuments and Grade I and II* Listed Buildings; 2 km for remaining designated heritage assets (e.g., Grade II Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas); and 1 km for non-designated heritage assets.

We have assessed the effects during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases within this study area.



The full assessment can be viewed in PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

Preliminary conclusions

Our assessments indicate that there are no designated heritage assets within the Project's boundary.

Within the 5-km Study Areas surrounding the Site, there are 151 designated heritage assets. This includes 3 Scheduled Monuments, 19 Grade I listed buildings, 7 Grade II* listed buildings, 108 Grade II listed buildings, one Grade II Registered Park and Garden (within a 2-km radius), and three Conservation Areas.

Our assessments have also identified several other archaeological features, including the Peddars Way (a Roman road to the east of the Site), early medieval artefacts in and around the Site, and a cemetery 1 km north of the Site within a Bronze Age burial mound, which was reused as a burial ground during the Saxon period.

During the construction phase, any effects on the settings of heritage assets, such as the remains of Castle Acre Castle and Castle Acre Priory, are expected to be short-term and reversible, such as the potential visibility of temporary construction compounds.

During the operational phase, some visibility of the Site from heritage assets such as Castle Acre Castle and Castle Acre Priory is expected. However, this would form only a small part of a much wider vista and is not expected to dominate or intrude on those views.

The Project is also expected to have beneficial effects during the operational phase, as the land would no longer be subject to agricultural activities such as ploughing, which has a detrimental impact on archaeological remains.

The decommissioning phase is expected to be similar to the operational phase in terms of vehicle movements and on-site activity. As such, it is not anticipated to have a greater impact. Any effects would be temporary, short-term, and reversible.

Mitigation measures

We expect that most impacts on the setting of heritage assets would be addressed through the Project design, with few additional measures needed.

For archaeological remains, the sensitivity of the Site can only be fully assessed once the trial trenching is complete. The results of this evaluation will determine the necessary mitigation measures.

Possible mitigation options include open area excavation, an archaeological watching brief, or preserving remains in situ.

During the construction phase, any negative impacts on archaeological remains would be managed through measures such as buffers, setbacks, using concrete blocks instead of piled foundations, or archaeological excavation.

Once the trial trenching is finished, a detailed mitigation strategy will be prepared as a Programme of Archaeological Works (PoAW), outlining the specific measures to be taken. This will be presented in the ES.



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Transport and Access

Preliminary assessments

During the operational phase of the Project, traffic impacts are expected to be minimal, with vehicle movements largely limited to replacement and maintenance activities.

Our assessments have focused on the construction phase as a robust worst-case scenario, with the understanding that the decommissioning phase would result in similar or lower levels of traffic and associated impacts.

As part of our assessment, we have considered a number of potential effects associated with construction traffic, including severance (a perceived reduction in community connectivity), driver delay, pedestrian delay, changes to the amenity experienced by nonmotorised users (NMU), fear and intimidation related to traffic presence, and overall road safety risks on the local network.

We conducted desk-based assessments and identified nine key junctions within a defined Study Area. These include the A1065 (South, Mid, and North), South Acre Road (North and South), West Acre Road, Narford Lane, and River Road (North and South).

At these locations, traffic levels were recorded using Automatic Traffic Counters (ATC), which measured vehicle flow, speed and classification over a continuous seven-day, 24-hour period.

We have assessed how these traffic impacts could affect a variety of users, including motorists and freight vehicles, public

Preliminary conclusions

During the peak, construction movements are expected to be 622 two-way movements per day, comprising both heavy and large goods vehicles (associated with staff and smaller deliveries).

The severance effect, which refers to a perceived reduction in community connectivity, is expected to be temporary, with no permanent closures to PRoW. Where temporary changes are required, appropriate signage and alternative routes would be provided.

Driver delay is expected to be minimal, as most vehicle movements would occur outside typical peak hours.

Some pedestrian delay may occur owing to temporary traffic management or short-term closures required to carry out works safely. These would be managed through clear signage and alternative provisions for NMUs to ensure continued access.

In terms of NMU amenity, which considers the experience of using local paths and routes, some short-term disruption may occur during construction. However, these effects are expected to be limited in both duration and impact, with no long-term changes to access or use of the local network.

Mitigation measures

A number of mitigation measures have been embedded into the design of the Project to minimise any potential adverse effects:

- Prioritising the use of existing access routes wherever practical, to reduce the environmental impacts associated with creating new access points
- Using internal construction compounds to enable deliveries to be made directly from the A1065, with smaller deliveries then distributed within the Site
- Providing internal access routes within the Site to reduce the need for construction traffic to use the local road network
- Making permanent improvements to routes within the Site
- Introducing a shuttle bus service for staff travelling to and from the Site, including from any temporary accommodation that may be provided.



The full assessment can be viewed in PEIR Volume 1, **Chapter 9: Transport** and Access



Ecology and Biodiversity

Preliminary assessments

To inform our assessments, we have defined a "Primary Zone of Influence" that includes habitats and species that would be directly affected by the footprint of the Project.

A "Secondary Zone of Influence" has also been established to assess any ecological features that could experience wider-scale effects, such as air pollution from traffic or water pollution within the surrounding river catchment.

Survey work within these zones began in 2024 and will continue through 2025.

Our surveys have included our desk-top studies, habitat surveys, and faunal surveys to assess the existing baseline conditions.

The surveys completed to date are:

- Extended Phase 1 Habitat and General Faunal Surveys (April and August 2024)
- Bat Surveys (April to October 2024)
- Badger Survey (April 2024)
- Breeding Bird Surveys (April to July 2024)
- Great Crested Newt Surveys (June 2024)
- Wintering Bird Surveys (October 2024 to March 2025) – analysis is ongoing, with final results to be incorporated into the ES once complete.

We have also assessed the Site's proximity to any statutory ecological designations.

Preliminary conclusions

The Site is not within, nor immediately next to, any statutory ecological designations. The closest designation is the River Nar Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located around 0.5 km to the north of the Site.

Habitat surveys

The Site mainly consists of large, intensively managed arable fields, with some areas used for pig grazing.

Field boundaries are marked by a variety of habitats, including:

- Arable land
- Improved and semi-improved grassland
- Hedgerows
- Tree lines
- Trees (including veteran trees)
- Dense and scattered scrub
- Dry ditches
- Woodlands
- Ponds.

Faunal surveys

Baseline surveys have confirmed the presence of bats, a small number of badger setts, and 14 priority bird species breeding on the Site.

Priority bird species recorded on the Site include Skylark, observed within the arable fields. Livestock units were found to support a number of other bird species, including two probable breeding pairs of Curlew. Brown Hare and Hedgehog have also been recorded at the Site.

Although several ponds are present on the Site, surveys did not indicate the presence of Great Crested Newts.

Mitigation measures

Habitat retention

The Project has been designed to retain valuable habitats and ecological features wherever possible. Hedgerows and trees would be preserved, with buffers to protect their root zones, creating opportunities for habitat enhancement. Veteran trees, considered irreplaceable, would also be protected throughout the lifetime of the Project. Similarly, ponds within the margins of the Site would be retained.

Habitat creation

As part of the Project, new habitats would be created.

This would include Skylark plots within arable land outside the Site and new open grassland areas. These enhancements would provide additional foraging and nesting opportunities for a range of farmland bird species.

Other habitat creation and enhancement measures would include:

- New grassland habitats, including wildflower meadows
- Gapping up of existing hedgerows and treelines with native species
- A management strategy for hedgerows, including rotational cutting to maintain their health
- Vegetation management around ponds and ditches.

Construction and decommissioning
During the construction and decommissioning
phases, additional measures would be
implemented to protect ecological features.

- Bats: Disturbance will be minimised by scheduling construction activities during daylight hours where practicable. New lighting would be limited to essential locations only, including substations, BESS and grid connection points.
- Brown Hare, Hedgehog and Badger:
 A construction safeguard and fencing strategy would be put in place to ensure the Site remains permeable for terrestrial mammals.

Contractors would also be briefed on the potential presence of protected and notable species before any work begins.

Operational phase

During the operational phase, the reduced use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers, along with less physical disturbance from ploughing, seeding and harvesting, would support ecological recovery and enhance biodiversity. This would also help reduce pollution and nutrient runoff into nearby areas.



The full assessment can be viewed in PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 7: Ecology and Biodiversity





Water Resources

Preliminary assessments

To inform our assessments, we have defined a "Core Study Area" which is defined by the Site boundary. We have also assessed a wider study area that extends 5 km from the Site boundary.

Our assessments included:

- A desk-based study, completed in September 2024 and updated in February 2025, to provide an overview of water resources and ground conditions in the Core Study Area
- Site walkovers conducted on 1 October 2024, with additional walkovers planned post-PEIR submission
- Hydraulic modelling of the River Nar upstream to Marham, considering climate change.

We have considered several potential effects in these assessments, including potential:

- Effects of chemical pollution on the water environment
- Erosion and sedimentation impacts on the water environment
- Impediments to stream flow
- Effects on private water supplies
- Changes to soil drainage patterns
- Soil compaction
- Increase in runoff and flood risk.

We have also assessed potential effects during the construction and decommissioning phases.



The full assessment can be viewed in PEIR Volume 1, Chapter 12: Water Resources

Preliminary conclusions

Our assessments indicate that the Site, or Core Study Area, is wholly within Flood Zone 1.

The majority of the Site is underlain by chalk with freely draining sandy soils, whereas the northern part of the Site is characterised by shallow lime-rich soils over chalk or limestone. There are also several inactive marl pits present, which are generally filled with standing water. The Site also sits above a high-productivity aquifer.

Construction and decommissioning
Although there are no natural watercourses
on the Site, we have identified several "dry
channel " pathways, such as Fincham Drove,
which could carry surface water offsite during
heavy or prolonged rain, potentially reaching
the River Nar.

To manage this, buffer zones and drainage ditches would be implemented during the construction and decommissioning phases to reduce the risk of chemical pollutants from construction reaching the water environment.

Our surveys indicate that the Site is situated above groundwater at a depth of more than 2 metres. As a result, the risk of contamination is considered low, with minimal risk to public water supplies. To further reduce this risk, safeguards such as watching briefs will be put in place in sensitive areas during construction.

During construction, traffic movement may cause some soil compaction. However, as the soil is already of low permeability and is used for agriculture, we do not expect this to noticeably increase surface water runoff.

Operational phase

The operational phase is expected to have fewer effects on the water environment compared with the construction and decommissioning phases, owing to a reduction in activity. We have considered:

Panel vandalism or breakage: In the unlikely event of panel damage, our surveys indicate that the composition of the panels limits the potential for chemicals to be released into the hydrological environment.

Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) fire: In the event of a fire, the affected BESS unit would be allowed to self-consume, with firefighting water being captured in a dedicated tank or managed through dualfunction Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) structures, which are designed to accommodate both surface water runoff and fire suppressant volumes.

Mitigation measures

We have integrated the following measures into the design and construction of the Project to protect water and manage runoff:

- 10-m buffer zones around watercourses would be maintained during construction, covering all works. The only exception would be for drainage crossings and access tracks.
- 10-m buffer zones around watercourses would be maintained by the Internal Drainage Board.
- We would use existing access roads and tracks where possible, reducing ground disturbance and the need for new drain crossings.
- New tracks would be made using graded, washed aggregate to minimise surface water runoff and sedimentation during rainfall events.
- The design ensures that all key infrastructure (such as substations, inverters and transformers) would be placed outside of Flood Zones 2 and 3 to avoid flood risks.

The Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) will detail how we would manage surface water runoff and drainage during construction, operation and decommissioning. A Pollution Prevention Plan (PPP) will also be included as part of the final CEMP.

Community benefit

We are a community-led developer and are focused on ensuring our Project delivers lasting benefits to the local area including through creating job opportunities, generating business rates, enhancing the natural environment, and direct funding for important causes through a Community Benefit Fund.

We will ensure, where practicable, local contractors and suppliers have the opportunity to become part of The Droves Solar Farm. Most of the employment and contractor opportunities will likely be available during the construction phase of the Project.

There will be multiple opportunities for local businesses and employees to register their interest in working with us.

In the past, we have successfully delivered a range of community benefits as part of our solar and energy storage projects.

As part of this consultation we are gathering ideas from the local community, community groups and elected representatives on how we can contribute funding to projects and initiatives in the area, including a potential Community Benefit Fund. If you have any ideas on how we can invest in your local community, complete our Feedback Form or contact us at: info@drovessolarfarm.co.uk.



How to take part in our Statutory Consultation

We are inviting you to take part in our seven-week statutory consultation that starts on 21 May and runs until 9 July 2025.

During this period, we encourage you to share your feedback on our design proposals, including our preliminary environmental assessments and measures being taken to reduce the Project's impact.

Our events

We are holding a series of events, as part of our statutory consultation, where people can view and discuss our plans for The Droves Solar Farm with members of the project team.

We encourage anyone with an interest in our Project to attend these events. We are also holding webinar events for those unable to attend in person.

The statutory consultation events will be held at the following times and locations.

In-person consultation events:

Date	Time	Location	
Saturday 31 May	11:00–17:00	Sporle Community Centre, 78 The Street, Sporle, King's Lynn, PE32 2DR	
Monday 2 June	10:00-14:00	Narborough Community Centre, Chalk Lane, Narborough, King's Lynn, PE32 1SR	
Wednesday 11 June	12:00-19:00	Swaffham Assembly Rooms, 1 Market Place, Swaffham, Norfolk, PE37 7AB	
Friday 20 June	10:00-14:00	West Acre Theatre, River Road, West Acre, Norfolk, PE32 1UD	

Online webinars:

Date	Time	Location
Thursday 5 June	12:30–13:30	Online
Wednesday 25 June	18:30–19:30	Online

Please note, you will need to register for our webinars in advance by visiting our website: www.drovessolarfarm.co.uk

If you are unable to attend our events but would like more information about the Project or have any questions, please contact our Community Relations Team. You can find our contact details on the final page.

Where to find consultation materials

We are following a consultation process on the development of our proposals for The Droves Solar Farm, which has been designed in accordance with the Act. To help you find out more and get support on how to provide feedback, we have prepared a range of documents and materials that explain our design proposals in more detail.

All consultation materials will be available to view and download free of charge on our website throughout the statutory consultation period: www.drovessolarfarm.co.uk/#documents.

Hard copies will also be available to view at our in-person events.

Copies in alternative formats, such as braille, are available upon request.

Printed copies of selected consultation materials can be provided free of charge upon request.

These are

- Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)
- Consultation Information Booklet
- Consultation Feedback Form
- Consultation Newsletter
- NTS.

A hard copy of the PEIR can also be provided upon request for a set charge of £750 to cover printing and postage costs.

Local information point

Alternatively, you can visit our local information point, where you can view (but not take away) a hard copy of the PEIR, NTS and SoCC. You can also collect a Consultation Information Booklet and Feedback Form.

Venue	Materials available to take away	Reference materials
Swaffham Library, The Pightle, Swaffham PE37 7DF	Consultation Information Booklet Feedback Form	PEIRNTSSoCC

Digital copies of the PEIR and NTS will be available to view and download using the library's computers. Please note that, although computer access at the library is free, a library membership is required. This can be obtained free of charge. We recommend contacting the library before visiting to check how they can assist you.

Community collection points

Hard copies of the Consultation Information Booklet and Feedback Form can also be collected from the following locations. Please note that these locations hold reference copies of the NTS and SoCC, but not the PEIR.

We recommend contacting these venues before travelling to confirm their opening times and availability of materials.

Venue	Materials available to take away	Reference materials
Narborough Community Centre	Consultation Information Booklet	• NTS
Chalk Lane, Narborough, PE32 1SR	Feedback Form	• Socc
West Acre Theatre	Consultation Information Booklet	• NTS
River Road, West Acre, PE32 1UD	Feedback Form	• SoCC

Have your say

Your feedback is important to us and will be used to help us develop and refine our proposals. You can share your feedback in the following ways:



Visit our website to access the latest information, including all statutory consultation documents, and complete our Feedback Form online at:

www.drovessolarfarm.co.uk.



Attend our consultation events to meet the project team, learn about our plans, and complete a Feedback Form. Return the completed form to: **FREEPOST THE DROVES SOLAR FARM**.



Visit our local information point or one of our community collection points to view hard copies of the consultation materials and pick up a Consultation Information Booklet and Feedback Form.



Contact us via phone, post or email, to request a form, share feedback, or ask questions about the consultation. If you require materials in an alternative format (for example, large print or braille) please let us know.

Navigating our consultation documents

To help you find out more and get support on how to provide feedback, we have prepared a range of documents and materials that explain our proposals in more detail.

All consultation materials will be available to view and download free of charge on our website throughout the statutory consultation period: www.drovessolarfarm.co.uk/#documents

Consultation Information Booklet -

This document provides detailed information about the Project, the planning process and how our plans have evolved, and a map of the proposed Site. This booklet will be available on our website, local information point, community collection points and in hard copy at our events.

Feedback Form - You can complete this questionnaire to ensure your feedback will be reviewed. This can be completed on our website. You can also collect it from our events or local information point, community collection points or by request, over email, post or the phone.

Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the PEIR -

This summary of the PEIR is available to view on our website, at our local information point, community collection points and at our consultation events.

Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

- The SoCC sets out how we intend to engage with local communities as we prepare our DCO application for the Project. The SoCC can be found on our website, at our local information point, community collection points, or in hard copy at our events.

Preliminary Environmental Information Report(**PEIR**) - This is a technical report which outlines the effects we believe the Project could have on the environment and what measures we are proposing to mitigate these. This includes the main report, figures, maps and plans. It can be accessed on our website, or as a reference copy at our local information point and events.

Maps and plans - A series of maps and plans for the Project are also available on our website and at our consultation events.

What happens next

Following statutory consultation, we will review our design proposals in light of the feedback received.

Your feedback, along with the results of ongoing assessments and design work, will help shape our final designs. We will submit our final designs as part of our DCO application.

After submission, PINS will determine whether the application meets the required standards for acceptance. If the application is accepted, you will have the opportunity to participate in the examination process by registering as an Interested Party, enabling you to submit your views in writing or present them orally at hearings.

Once the examination has concluded, PINS will make a recommendation to the SoS within three months. The SoS for Energy Security and Net Zero will then have a further three months to issue a final decision on the application. More information about the DCO process can be found on the PINS website.

Our application

In addition to our final designs, we will also submit a number of other documents to support our application.

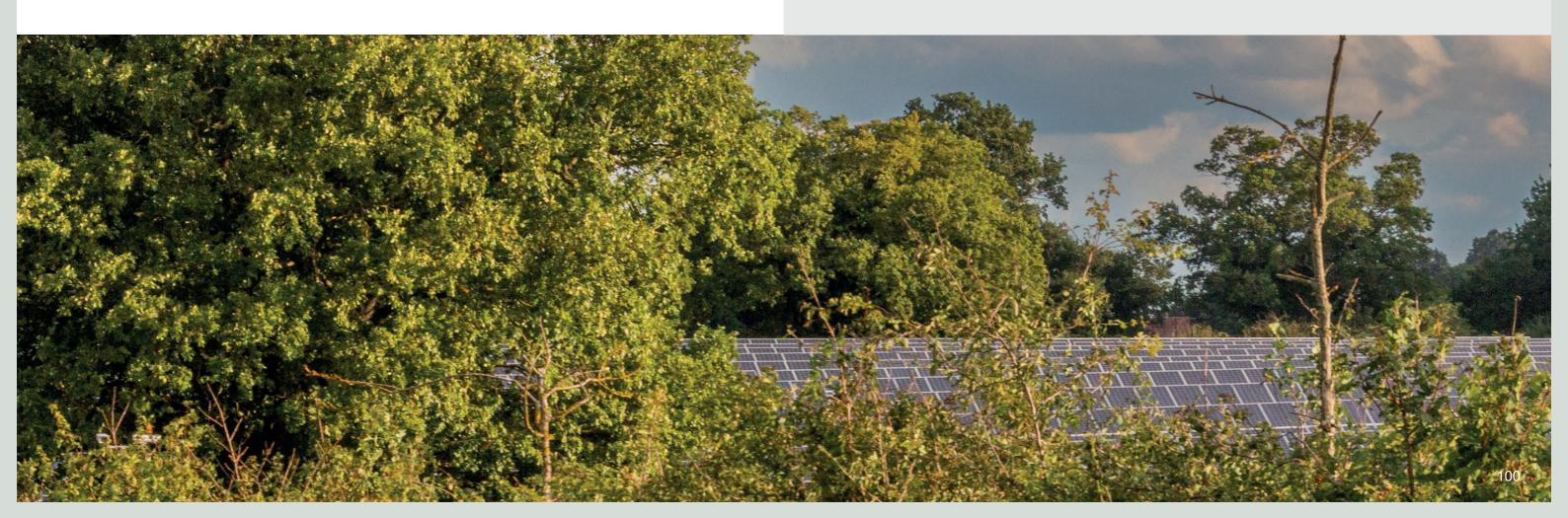
A Consultation Report - as the applicant, we have a duty to demonstrate how we have taken your views into account when developing our final designs for The Droves Solar Farm. The application we submit will include a Consultation Report summarising all the issues raised in the consultation feedback, along with an explanation of how we have taken these views into account.

An Environmental Statement - as the applicant, we have a duty to fulfil the EIA process and report what environmental effects we believe the Project would have, and how we propose to minimise them.

Both reports, along with all the other application documents, will be published on the PINS website should our application be accepted for examination.

Timeline







Contact us

If you have any questions or comments, or would like to be kept up to date on the Project, please contact our Community Relations Team using the details below.

- **Email us at:** info@drovessolarfarm.co.uk
- Community Relations Freephone: 0800 0129 154
 (Our phone lines are monitored 9:00–17:30 Monday to Friday, with an answerphone facility available outside of these hours)

Our communication lines will remain open during working hours (Monday-Friday 09:00-17:30) throughout the statutory consultation period, between 21 May and 9 July 2025.

It is important to complete the Feedback Form before the deadline.

More information



Scan the QR code to learn more about The Droves Solar Farm.

You can find the Feedback Form and our other documents on our website: **www.drovessolarfarm.co.uk**

13 Leaflet issued to Castle Acre Parish Council



Island Green Power (IGP) is a leading developer of utility-scale solar energy projects.

The Droves Solar Farm Limited, a subsidiary of IGP, is bringing forward proposed plans for a solar farm with battery storage.

If consented, The Droves Solar Farm ("the Project") could generate approximately 500 MWac (Megawatt Alternating Current) of renewable energy, enough to power approximately 115,000 homes, annually.

About The Droves Solar Farm

The Droves Solar Farm would cover approximately 825 hectares of land, situated north of Swaffham and south of Castle Acre, West Norfolk. As we are still in the early stages of design, survey work is ongoing to determine the exact areas within the Site that will be allocated for environmental mitigation, solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, and associated development.

Our vision is for The Droves Solar Farm to support the UK's transition to decarbonised, low-cost renewable energy while leaving a positive legacy for the people of Breckland and its natural environment.

Event information

Following consultation with key local stakeholders, we are holding a pop-up event at Castle Acre Village Hall on 12 June from 5:30–7:30pm.

Attendees will have the opportunity to view materials such as maps and plans, and collect a copy of the Consultation Information Booklet and Feedback Form. Members of the project team will also be on hand to answer any questions or address any concerns.



Scan the QR code to learn more about the Project and our statutory consultation.

We are inviting you to take part in our **Castle Acre Consultation Event,** as part of our seven-week statutory consultation.

