East Pye Solar

Environmental Statement

Volume 1: Chapter 1 – Introduction

Revision 1

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APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)

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1 Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1.1 This Chapter of the ES provides an introduction to this Environmental Statement, the structure of the EIA and who has prepared it alongside an overview of the scheme. This Chapter is supported by the following figure included in **ES Volume 2**:

- **Figure 1.1**: **Site Location Plan [EN0110014/APP/6.2.1.1]**.

1.1.2 This Chapter is supported by the following appendices included in **ES Volume 3**:

- **Appendix 1.1**: **Location of Information [EN0110014/APP/6.3.1.1]**
- **Appendix 1.2**: **Statement of Expertise [EN0110014/APP/6.3.1.2]**

1.2 Overview

1.2.1 This Environmental Statement (ES) has been prepared on behalf of East Pye Solar Ltd (hereafter referred to as the 'Applicant') in relation to a Development Consent Order (DCO) application (the DCO Application) for the East Pye Solar Project (also referred to as the 'Scheme').

1.2.2 The Scheme comprises the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating station and associated development including a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), up to three 132 kV and up to three 400kV Project Substations, Grid Connection Infrastructure and a new National Grid Substation, with a total capacity exceeding 100 megawatts (MW). A complete description of the scheme can be found in **ES Volume 1, Chapter 4: The Scheme [EN0110014/APP/6.1.4]**

1.2.3 The PV electricity generating station and Project Substations would be contained within land parcels referred to as Sites 1 to 10 (with associated Sub-Sites A, B, C etc.) and the BESS Site, hereafter collectively referred to as the 'Sites'. The Cable Route Corridor is the area within which the export connection cables (hereafter referred to as the 'Grid Connection Cables') would be located to connect the Sites containing solar PV panels to the Point of Connection (PoC) at a new National Grid Substation situated within the Order Limits, connecting into the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) overhead line that passes through the Site.

1.2.4 As the Scheme comprises the construction of a generating station with a capacity of over 100MW, it is defined as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under sections 14(1)(a) and 15(2) of the Planning Act 2008 (Ref 1-2). It therefore must be consented by way of a DCO. The DCO Application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, with

the decision whether to grant the DCO being made by the Secretary of State for the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (hereafter referred to as the Secretary of State).

1.2.5 The Scheme is considered to be EIA Development as defined by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the 'EIA Regulations') (Ref 1-1), and as such requires an EIA to be undertaken. This ES forms part of the DCO Application and presents the findings of the EIA undertaken for the Scheme in accordance with the EIA Regulations and the Planning Act 2008.

The Site

1.2.6 The Scheme would be contained within the Order Limits which comprises the Sites, Highways Works and Cable Route Corridor. Sites 1 and 2 are located southeast of Great Moulton. Site 3 is located south of Lundy Green. Sites 4 and 5 are northeast of Long Stratton. Site 6 is west of Road Green. Site 7 is located between Tasburgh, Hempnall and Saxingham Nethergate. Sites 8 and 9 are southwest of Brooke. Site 10 is northeast of Woodton (see **ES: Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan [EN0110014/APP/6.2.1.1]**). A complete description of the Order Limits can be found in **ES: Chapter 3 The Order Limits [EN0110014/APP/6.1.4]**

1.3 The Scheme

1.3.1 Subject to being granted consent, the construction of the Scheme is anticipated to commence in 2028 for a period of approximately 24 months. On this basis, it is expected that the Scheme could be completed by 2030 and energised in 2031. However, the construction period will vary depending on detailed layout design and potential environmental constraints on the timing of construction activities.

1.3.2 The location of the Order Limits in which the Scheme would be located is shown in **ES: Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan [EN0110114/APP/6.2.1.1]**. The Order Limits comprises a total area of approximately 1,212.3 hectares (ha) of land, of which the Sites comprise 1,051.4 ha.

1.3.3 The Scheme would be operational for a period of up to 60 years with an assumed decommissioning date of 2091.

1.3.4 The land within the Order Limits and its surroundings is described in **ES: Chapter 3 The Order Limits [EN0110014/APP/6.1.3]**.

1.3.5 Further information on site design and infrastructure is provided in **ES: Chapter 4 The Scheme [EN0110014/APP/6.1.4]**. The consideration of alternatives and progression of the site layout is described in **ES: Chapter 5 Alternatives and Design Evolution [EN0110014/APP/6.1.5]**.

1.4 The Applicant

1.4.1 The Scheme is being developed by East Pye Solar Limited, a 100% owned subsidiary of Island Green Power (IGP) UK Projects Limited which in turn is a 100% owned subsidiary of IGP's UK group holding company, IGP Ltd. The Applicant is part of IGP, who are a leading international developer of utility scale solar projects and battery storage systems, established in 2013.

1.4.2 IGP has successfully delivered nearly 40 solar projects worldwide that have generated more than 3 GW of energy capacity. This includes 21 solar projects in the UK. These range in size from below 5 MW to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) such as Cottam Solar Project, currently the UK's largest consented solar project. Cottam will generate 600 MW of clean, renewable and secure electricity and includes 600 MW of Battery Storage that will store then release energy as needed.

1.4.3 IGP's mission is to deliver renewable energy solutions that create lasting value for the communities they serve, protecting the environment while fostering economic growth and energy independence.

1.5 The EIA Regulations

1.5.1 The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations) (Ref 1-1) provide the legislative framework that specifies which developments are required to undergo an EIA. The EIA Regulations categorises development relevant to the NSIP planning process as either *'Schedule 1 development' or 'Schedule 2 development'*. Those developments listed in Schedule 1 must be subject to EIA, while developments listed in Schedule 2 must only be subject to EIA if they are considered *'likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location'*. The criteria on which this judgement must be made are set out in Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations.

1.5.2 The Scheme falls under paragraph 3(a) of Schedule 2 to the EIA Regulations as it constitutes *'industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water…'.*

1.5.3 The Applicant considers that due to the Scheme's nature, size and location, it has the potential to have significant effects on the environment and therefore constitutes EIA development as defined by the EIA Regulations. In accordance with Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations, the Applicant gave notice at submission of the Scoping Opinion Request that an ES would be submitted in support of the DCO Application.

1.5.4 Environmental impacts arising from the Scheme have been assessed as part of the EIA process, with the results presented within this ES. The baseline for the assessment has been derived from surveys and studies within and around the Site.

1.5.5 The EIA assesses impacts and effects resulting from the construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning of the Scheme. It considers and identifies measures to avoid, reduce or mitigate significant adverse effects on the environment and, where practicable, measures to enhance the environment. It also identifies residual effects which remain following the implementation of the secured embedded and additional mitigation measures.

1.5.6 The assessment methodology is explained further in **ES: Chapter 2 EIA Methodology [EN0110014/APP/6.1.2]** and within the methodology of each technical chapter (**ES Chapters 6 – 18 [EN0110014/APP/6.1.6 to 6.1.18]**).

1.6 Structure of Environmental Statement

1.6.1 The ES comprises three separate volumes, namely:

- Volume 1: The ES main text which comprises 20 chapters, illustrated throughout by tables.
- Volume 2: A complete set of figures produced to support the ES chapters.
- Volume 3: Technical appendices including technical surveys and reports undertaken to inform the ES; and
- Volume 4: The Non-Technical Summary (NTS): The NTS provides a concise and straightforward summary of the Scheme, its likely significant environmental effects and the measures proposed to avoid or to mitigate these effects.

1.6.2 The Structure of this ES is outlined in **Table 1.1**. Location of information within the ES required by Schedule 4 of the 2017 EIA Regulations, as amended, is presented in **ES: Appendix 1.1 Location of information [EN0110014/APP/6.3.1.1]**.

Table 1.1: ES Structure

Chapter Number	Chapter Title	Description
Volume 1 – Chapters		
1	Introduction	Introduction to the ES, EIA Requirements and ES organisation.
2	EIA Methodology	Methods used to prepare each chapter, description of ES structure and content, generic significance criteria, legislation and policy, scoping and consultation.
3	The Order Limits	Site description.
4	The Scheme	Detail of the Scheme and anticipated programme for construction and decommissioning methodology.
5	Reasonable Alternatives and Design Evolution	Details of the main alternatives and design of the Scheme considered by the Applicant.

Chapter Number	Chapter Title	Description
Volume 1 – Chapters		
6	Climate Change	Chapter 6-17 report the EIA of identified environmental topics. Each topic is presented in a separate technical chapter and details the results of the assessment, likely significant effects (if any) arising from the Scheme, and proposed mitigation measures. The chapters also present information regarding cumulative effects resulting from other approved developments or reasonably foreseeable developments together within the Scheme.
7	Landscape and Visual	
8	Ecology and Biodiversity	
9	Water Environment	
10	Cultural Heritage	
11	Transport and Access	
12	Noise and Vibration	
13	Air Quality	
14	Socio-economics	
15	Soils and Agricultural Land	
16	Ground Conditions	
17	EMF	
18	Other Environmental Matters	Chapter 18 includes consideration of Major Accidents and Disasters; Telecommunications, Utilities and Television; Glint and Glare; Waste and Materials; and Human Health. These are chapters where the scope and significance of the anticipated effects are not sufficient to require a standalone chapter.
19	Cumulative and In-Combination Effects Assessment	Chapter 19 provides a summary of the cumulative effects assessment presented in the individual technical chapters.
20	Summary of Residual Effects	Chapter 20 provides a summary of the residual significant effects identified. These are the effects that remain following the implementation of mitigation.
Volume 2	Figures	Figures to support the chapters in Volume 1.
Volume 3	Appendices	Technical data and reports to support the chapters in Volume 1.
Volume 4	Non-Technical Summary	Summary of the ES in non-technical language.

1.6.3 In accordance with Regulation 14(4) of the EIA Regulations, the ES has been prepared by competent experts and the relevant expertise or qualifications of the experts as summarised in **ES: Appendix 1.2 Statement of Expertise [EN0110014/APP/6.3.1.2]** and **Table 1.2**.

Table 1.2: East Pye Solar Project Team

Chapter	Author
ES Chapter 1: Introduction	Stantec
ES Chapter 2: EIA Methodology	Stantec
ES Chapter 3: The Order Limits	Stantec
ES Chapter 4: The Scheme	Stantec
ES Chapter 5: Reasonable Alternatives and Design Evolution	Stantec
ES Chapter 6: Climate Change	Bureau Veritas
ES Chapter 7: Landscape and Visual	Stantec

Chapter	Author
ES Chapter 8: Ecology and Biodiversity	Stantec
ES Chapter 9: Water Environment	Stantec
ES Chapter 10: Cultural Heritage	GHC Heritage
ES Chapter 11: Transport and Access	Stantec
ES Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration	Stantec
ES Chapter 13: Air Quality	Stantec
ES Chapter 14: Socio-economics	Stantec
ES Chapter 15: Soils and Agricultural Land	Kernon Countryside Consultants Ltd
ES Chapter 16: Ground Conditions	Stantec
ES Chapter 17: Electromagnetic Fields	Pager Power
ES Chapter 18: Other Environmental Matters	Stantec, Lanpro & Pager Power
ES Chapter 19: Cumulative and In-Combination Effects Assessment	Stantec
ES Chapter 20: Summary of Residual Significant Effects	Stantec

1.7 Consultation

1.7.1 The process of consultation is key to the development of the Scheme design as well as informing the development of a comprehensive and balanced ES. Consultation alongside the EIA process is critical to the development of a comprehensive and proportionate ES. The views of statutory and non-statutory consultees are important to ensure that the EIA focuses on environmental studies from the outset and identifies specific issues where significant environmental effects are likely and where further investigations are required. As an ongoing process, consultation enables mitigation measures to be incorporated into the Scheme to reduce adverse environmental effects and optimise beneficial effects.

1.7.2 Consultation activities have been designed to engage stakeholders with different interests in the Scheme, including landowners, local communities, statutory consultees and specialist interest groups.

Scoping Consultation

1.7.3 A Scoping Report **ES: Appendix 2.1 Scoping Report [EN0110014/APP/6.3.2.1]** was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 15 January 2025. The EIA Scoping Report was developed following initial consultation with a number of statutory consultees, baseline survey studies and preliminary scheme development. The report presents the issues that the Applicant considers the EIA will need to address.

1.7.4 The Planning Inspectorate reviewed and consulted on the EIA Scoping Report and adopted a Scoping Opinion **ES: Appendix 2.2 Scoping Opinion [EN0110014/APP/6.3.2.2]** on 25 February 2025. The Scoping Opinion

included formal responses received by the Planning Inspectorate and from statutory consultees.

DCO Consultation Requirements

1.7.5 The Planning Act 2008 (Ref 1-2) sets out the statutory requirements for consultation when preparing an application for development consent. The Planning Act 2008 requires applicants to carry out statutory consultation on their proposals ahead of submission of a DCO application. The requirements are:

- Section 42 'Duty to consult' of the Planning Act 2008 requires the Applicant to consult with the 'prescribed persons' which includes consultation bodies such as Natural England, Environmental Agency, Historic England, host authorities, neighbouring authorities and persons with interest in the land and those who may be affected by the Scheme.
- Section 47 'Duty to consult local community' of the Planning Act 2008 requires the Applicant to prepare a statement, the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC), setting out how the local community will be consulted on the application.
- Section 48 'Duty to publicise' of the Planning Act 2008 requires the Applicant to publicise the Scheme in the 'prescribed manner'. The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 ('APFP Regulations') provide further guidance including the need to publicise a notice in a national newspaper and local newspapers which provides information regarding the statutory consultation being undertaken.
- Section 49 'Duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity' of the Planning Act 2008 requires the Applicant to have regard to any relevant responses received to the consultation and publicity that is required by Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008.

Stage 1 Consultation: Non-Statutory

1.7.6 The Applicant undertook a first stage of non-statutory consultation from 23 October 2024 to 6 December 2024. The aim of this consultation was to introduce the overall Scheme to stakeholders to acquire local knowledge and feedback to evolve the design of the Scheme. Consultation activities included:

- Engaging with parish, district and county councillors;
- Distributing Scheme information;
- Hosting online and in person events; and

- Collection consultation feedback.

1.7.7 The **Consultation Report [EN0110014/APP/5.1]** has been produced and provides a more detailed summary of the non-statutory consultation methodology and extent of engagement and participation over the consultation period. An overview of the issues raised in feedback submitted during consultation, as well as the Applicant's response to this feedback is also detailed.

Stage 2 Consultation: Statutory Consultation and Preliminary Environmental Information

1.7.8 A Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) was prepared and published in June 2025 to satisfy the requirement of the EIA Regulations (Ref 1-1) 'Preliminary environmental information' as defined in Regulation 12(2) of the EIA Regulations as information '*which (a) has been compiled by the applicant; and (b) is reasonably required for the consultation bodies to develop an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of the development (and of any associated development)*'.

1.7.9 In order to enable consultees to understand the likely significant environmental effects of the Scheme, the PEIR presented preliminary findings of the environmental assessments undertaken at the point of writing. Together with ongoing discussion and meetings, this allowed consultees to develop an informed view of the likely significant effects of the Scheme and provide a response prior to the finalisation of the DCO application and the EIA. The Applicant sought the views of consultees on the information contained within the PEIR, and there was an opportunity within the process up to submission of the DCO application for both the EIA and the scheme design to have regard to comments received.

Targeted Consultation

1.7.10 A further round of targeted consultation was undertaken between Wednesday 22 October and Wednesday 26 November 2025 following changes to the development boundary of the Scheme presented in PEIR and at Stage Two Statutory Consultation.

1.7.11 The targeted consultation focused on localised changes that were minor in their nature and were informed by further design work and due diligence, ongoing consideration of consultee feedback, and findings from the ongoing environmental impact assessment process. Changes included:

- Changes in the vicinity of Site 1, the National Grid Substation Site and Site 7D;
- Additional land added to the Site Boundary Area to accommodate localised changes;

- Changes and Updates in respect of AIL Routes; and
- Changes and Updates in respect of General Construction Traffic Routes.

1.7.12 All the changes are documented in full in the **Consultation Report [EN0110014/APP/5.1].** These changes did not give rise to any materially new or different likely significant environmental effects compared to those reported in the PEIR.

1.8 The Environmental Statement

1.8.1 Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations (Ref 1-1) sets out the information for inclusion in an ES. **Table 1.3** below summarises where the requirements of Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations have been addressed in the ES.

Table 1.3: Requirements of Regulation 14(2) of and Schedule 4 to the EIA Regulations

Requirement	Document(s)
6(2)(b)(ii): a description of the location of the development.	Chapter 3: The Order limits **[APP/6.1.3]**
6(2)(b)(i): a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development, including, where relevant, requisite demolition works, and the land-use requirements during the construction and operational phases.	Chapter 4: The Scheme **[APP/6.1.4]**
Schedule 4, 1(c): a description of the main characteristics of the operational phase of the development (in particular any production process), for instance, energy demand and energy used, nature and quantity of the materials and natural resources (including water, land, soil and biodiversity) used.	Chapter 4: The Scheme **[APP/6.1.4]**
Schedule 4, 1 (d): an estimate, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions (such as water, air, soil and subsoil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation and quantities and types of waste produced during the construction and operation phases.	Chapter 6: Climate Change **[APP/6.1.6]** Chapter 9: Water Environment **[APP/6.1.9]** Chapter 11: Transport and Access **[APP/6.1.11]** Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration **[APP/6.1.12]** Chapter 13: Air Quality **[APP/6.1.13]** Chapter 15: Soils and Agricultural Land **[APP/6.1.15]** Chapter 16: Ground Conditions **[APP/6.1.16]** Chapter 18: Other Environmental Matters **[APP/6.1.18]**
Schedule 4, 2: A description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of development design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects.	Chapter 5: Reasonable Alternatives and Design Evolution **[APP/6.1.5]**

Requirement	Document(s)
Schedule 4, 3: A description of the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment (baseline scenario) and an outline of the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the development as far as natural changes from the baseline scenario can be assessed with reasonable effort on the basis of the availability of environmental information and scientific knowledge.	Section 6: Baseline Conditions of Chapters 6 to 18 (technical assessments) **[APP/6.1]**
Schedule 4, 4: A description of the factors specified in Regulation 5(2) likely to be significantly affected by the development: population, human health, biodiversity (for example fauna and flora), land (for example land take), soil (for example organic matter, erosion, compaction, sealing), water (for example hydromorphological changes, quantity and quality), air, climate (for example greenhouse gas emissions, impacts relevant to adaptation), material assets, cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological aspects, and landscape.	Chapters 6 to 18 (technical assessments) **[APP/6.1]**
Schedule 4, 5: A description of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment resulting from, inter alia: a) the construction and existence of the development, including, where relevant, demolition works. b) the use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity, considering as far as possible the sustainable availability of these resources. c) the emission of pollutants, noise, vibration, light, heat and radiation, the creation of nuisances, and the disposal and recovery of waste. d) the risks to human health, cultural heritage or the environment (for example due to accidents or disasters). e) the cumulation of effects with other existing and/or approved projects, taking into account any existing environmental problems relating to areas of particular environmental importance likely to be affected or the use of natural resources. f) the impact of the project on climate (for example the nature and magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions) and the vulnerability of the project to climate change. g) the technologies and the substances used. The description of the likely significant effects on the factors specified in Regulation 5(2) should cover the direct effects and any indirect, secondary, cumulative, transboundary, short-term, medium-term and long term, permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects of the development.	Chapters 6 to 18 (technical assessments) **[APP/6.1]** ES Chapter 19: In-Combination Effects Assessment **[APP/6.1.19]**
Schedule 4, 6: A description of the forecasting methods or evidence, used to identify and assess the significant effects on the environment, including details of difficulties (for example technical deficiencies or lack of knowledge) encountered compiling the required information and the main uncertainties involved.	Chapters 6 to 18 (technical assessments) **[APP/6.1]**
Schedule 4, 7: A description of the measures envisaged to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any identified significant adverse effects on the environment and, where appropriate, of any proposed monitoring arrangements (for example the preparation of a post project analysis). That description should explain the extent, to which significant adverse effects on the environment are avoided, prevented, reduced or offset, and should cover both the construction and operational phases.	Chapters 6 to 18 (technical assessments) **[APP/6.1]**
Schedule 4, 8: A description of the expected significant adverse effects of the development on the environment deriving from the	If applicable, within Chapters 6 to 18 (technical assessments) **[APP/6.1]**

Requirement	Document(s)
vulnerability of the development to risks of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned.	
Schedule 4, 9. A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 8.	Non-Technical Summary **[APP/6.4]**
Schedule 4, 10. A reference list detailing the sources used for the descriptions and assessments included in the ES.	Chapters 6 to 18 (technical assessments) **[APP/6.1]**

References

Ref 1-1. UK Government (2017) *The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 No. 572.*

Ref 1-2. HM Government (2008) *The Planning Act 2008.*