



May 2025

The Planning Inspectorate by email

PINS Reference: EN0110021

**INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT)**  
**REGULATIONS, 2017: HEDGEHOG GROVE SOLAR FARM SCOPING REPORT**

This document sets out the response of Babergh Mid Suffolk District Council (BDC) to the Scoping Report submitted on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 by Hedgehog Grove Solar Farm Limited in respect of the proposed Hedgehog Grove Solar Farm NSIP.

The comments have been set out using the headings and numbering contained within the report. In commenting upon the content of the Scoping Report BDC recognise the early stage of the project and the limitations of the report in respect of the indicative alignment.

These comments are therefore not exhaustive and BDC reserve the right to provide additional comments later in the engagement process.

It should also be noted any comments made here do not infer agreement with or acceptance of any or all of the supporting documents that is referred to in the Scoping Report.

### **Introduction**

Babergh District Council is part of the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership (SCCP) and declared a climate emergency in 2019. This proposal is one of many renewable and low carbon energy development projects coming forward, providing a source of energy that is less harmful than fossil fuels and contributing to the UK's clean power and net zero objectives. There are clearly wider environmental and social benefits of providing energy security but there are also challenges when considering these types of developments, including impacts on communities, landscapes and agricultural land.

### **Transboundary effects**

BDC accept the conclusion that the potential for trans boundary effects is low.

### **Main Alternatives Considered**

BDC note that a full assessment of alternatives will be included in the ES.



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## **The Rochdale Envelope**

BDC are satisfied that using 'The Rochdale Envelope' will provide guidance regarding the degree of flexibility that is to be considered acceptable with regard to the current proposal. With the EIA assessing potential issues on a worst case basis, this should provide scope to foresee any potential concerns as they arise with an appropriate method to handle such issues.

## **Cumulative Effects**

After reviewing sections 6.9 and 18, BDC are satisfied that the cumulative effects assessment would provide a comprehensive evaluation of the combined impacts of multiple developments on the environment and communities. This comprehensive approach helps identify potential cumulative effects that might not be apparent when assessing developments individually.

## **Landscape and Visual**

As set out in section 12, the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) will provide a summary of legislation, policy and guidance, an overview of baseline conditions, likely effects and mitigation measures, and a summary of the proposed EIA methodology.

Section 12 suggests that the proposed development will likely be most visible within the immediate surrounding of the site. However, BDC request that the LVIA takes into account any potential visibility of the proposal from Babergh District, primarily from any National Landscapes, Conservation Areas or Project Areas.

## **Socio-Economics and Land Use**

BDC acknowledges that the primary socio-economic and land use impacts will be on the local authority areas of Uttlesford District Council and Braintree District Council.

However, BDC are concerned at the lack of assessment of impacts on the economy of the wider region, especially having regard to the reliance of the tourism industry on a relatively limited highway network and also the cumulative impacts of the delivery of a number of projects in the area within a similar timeframe on workforce sourcing, accommodation and social integration and the highway network.

## **Traffic and Transport**

Whilst it is acknowledged that the main impact on traffic and transport will be within the immediate proximity of the proposed site, BDC would like to see the assessment broadened to include the A131 and A12 highways which are known to be susceptible to congestion and incidents.

## **EIA approach and method**

BDC have concerns that the recent proliferation of large-scale projects within the region and the expectation of further delivery of sites, including NSIPs, have the potential to have significant effects when considered together and cumulatively with this proposal. Areas of



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concern include, but are not limited to, the timing of construction, impacts on highway networks, impacts on commercial operations, amenity, skills, and tourism.

BDC welcome discussions to agree an appropriate study area for the consideration of cumulative effects and the identification of a long list of other reasonably foreseeable development, not just consented development.

### **Other Environmental Topics**

BDC have no comments at this stage.

Kind regards,

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Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils



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