

**THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS
2017 SCREENING MATRIX**

1. CASE DETAILS			
Case Reference	Caudwell Farm, Holbeach St Matthew	Brief description of the project / development	49.9MW Solar PV Development
Appellant	Green Energy International Ltd		
LPA	SHDC		
2. EIA DETAILS			
Is the project Schedule 1 development according to Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations?		No	
If YES, which description of development (THEN GO TO Q4)		Click here to enter text.	
Is the project Schedule 2 development under the EIA Regulations?		Yes	
If YES, under which description of development in Column 1 and Column 2?		3a	
Is the development within, partly within, or near a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations?		Yes	
If YES, which area?		The Wash	
Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in Column 2 exceeded/met?		Yes	
If yes, which applicable threshold/criteria?		0.5	
3. LPA/SOS SCREENING			
Has the LPA or SoS issued a Screening Opinion (SO) or Screening Direction (SD)? (In the case of Enforcement appeals, has a Regulation 37 notice been issued)		No	
If yes, is a copy of the SO/SD on the file?		N/A	
If yes, is the SO/SD positive?		N/A	
4. ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT			
Has the appellant supplied an ES for the current or previous (if reserved matters or conditions) application?		N/A	

WHEN COMPLETING THIS DOCUMENT IN RELATION TO AN ENFORCEMENT APPEAL, THE UNDERSIGNED OFFICER HAS HAD REGARD TO THE PROJECT AS ALLEGED IN THE RELEVANT ENFORCEMENT NOTICE WHEN REFERRING TO THE PROJECT / DEVELOPMENT.

Question	(Part 2a) / (Part 2b) – Answer to the question and explanation of reasons (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) Briefly explain answer to Part 2a and, if applicable and/or known, include name of feature and proximity to site (If answer in Part 2a / 2b is 'No', the answer to Part 3a / 3b is 'N/A')		(Part 3a) / (Part 3b) (only if Yes in part 2a) – Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No or Not Known (?) or N/A) Is a significant effect likely, having regard particularly to the magnitude and spatial extent (including population size affected), nature, intensity and complexity, probability, expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact and the possibility to effectively reduce the impact? If the finding of no significant effect is reliant on specific features or measures of the project envisaged to avoid, or prevent what might otherwise have been, significant adverse effects on the environment these should be identified in bold.	
1. NATURAL RESOURCES				
1.1 Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	Yes	Elevation of electrically sensitive infrastructure and/or construction of a bund as a flood mitigation measure.	No	Land could be re-profiled as part of decommissioning.
1.2 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	No		N/A	
1.3 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?	Yes	Site comprises of Grade 1 agricultural land.	No	Higher grade agricultural land involved but there is the potential for grazing sheep, thereby allowing some agricultural activity to continue. Reversible after decommissioning and arguably more fertile.

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2. WASTE				
2.1 Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes		No	Waste production during construction phase would be limited as most components arrive at site ready-made/pre-assembled. During operation, only negligible waste will be created. During decommissioning, solar panels and the mounting structures can be recycled at the end of their operational life.
3. POLLUTION AND NUISANCES				
3.1 Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	No		N/A	
3.2 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes	Possible generation of vibration and noise	No	Vibration will be limited to the construction period (excavation). Noise will also be generated during this period. However, only low levels of noise will be generated by electrical systems such as transformers and the substation during the operational phase. Solar panels only generate electricity in daylight hours and so there will be negligible noise in the evening, at night and early morning.
3.3 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?	Yes	Possible raising of ground levels to elevate electrically sensitive infrastructure and/or construction of a bund as a flood mitigation measure.	No	Any issues may be controlled by condition.
3.4 Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental	No		N/A	

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standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?				
4. POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH				
4.1 Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?	No		N/A	
4.2 Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example due to water contamination or air pollution)	No		N/A	
5. WATER RESOURCES				
5.1 Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?	Yes	IDB and High Priority Watercourses adjoin and run through the site. The site is also approx. 2.8km from The Wash coastline.	No	Not likely to have a significant impact due to the nature of the development proposed and limited output/run-off.
6. BIODIVERSITY (SPECIES AND HABITATS)				
6.1 Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are	Yes	The Wash (SSSI, SPA, SAC, Ramsar site and NNR) is approx. 2.8km to the north.	Yes	Natural England have previously highlighted that the site is within 'functional land' for the SSSI. Functional land are areas of land outside of the boundary of a European site that may be important ecologically in supporting the

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<p>important or sensitive for reasons of their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project? (e.g. wetlands, watercourses or other water-bodies, the coastal zone, mountains, forests or woodlands, undesignated nature reserves or parks. (Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local))).</p>			<p>populations for which the site has been designated or classified. Impacts to functional land can potentially have a significant effect upon the species interest of such sites, where these habitats are considered to be functionally linked to the designation. Such land is therefore 'linked' to the European site in question because it provides an important role in maintaining or restoring the population of qualifying species at favourable conservation status.</p> <p>The site is within a zone marked as a feeding and roosting area for Pink Footed Geese and functionally linked with the Wash Special Protection Area. This agricultural and pasture land which borders the SPA also provides overspill foraging for curlew, oystercatcher, dunlin and black-tailed godwit during high tides (see SPA citation).</p> <p>Detailed bird surveys would therefore be required to enable an assessment of the potential impacts of the solar farm and whether it would result in a likely significant effect on the integrity of the European site. The assessment should include a strategy for mitigating any identified impacts on this species and provide sufficient information for the Council to undertake a Habitats Regulation Assessment of the proposal.</p> <p>The RSPB have also raised concerns about the potential for an effect on birds such as Pink-Footed Geese and Curlew.</p>

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				<p>Winter bird counts will be needed to determine bird usage in and around the proposed development. The RSPB advise that to capture the essential information counts would likely be required during each of the months between September and April as absolute limits, but more important between November and February.</p> <p>In summary, the proposal is in an area that is likely to be sensitive by virtue of the avian species located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project. Given that both the RSPB and Natural England have indicated that further surveys are required to determine the likely impacts of the proposal it must be assumed that a significant effect is possible.</p>
6.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?	Yes	See above	Yes	See above
7. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL				
7.1 Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around	No		No	

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the location which could be affected by the project? ¹ Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).				
7.2 Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?)	Yes	<p>There are a very small number of properties within a 1km radius of the site.</p> <p>The Holb/4/3 Public Right of Way (PROW) runs through the site, however introducing further planting/screening would reduce its prominence. Approximately half of the PROW is already screened by hedgerow which could be continued along the rest of its length within the site.</p>	No	Landscape mitigation can be incorporated to negate significant effects.
8. CULTURAL HERITAGE/ARCHAEOLOGY				
8.1 Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).	Yes	Although it is unlikely that there is any below ground archaeology in or around the site, Hartley House Farm is a historic farmstead and can be considered a non-designated heritage asset.	No	Effects not expected to be significant given the intervening screening (trees, hedgerows and buildings) and the farmstead is considered in the context of the modern obtrusive farm buildings within the farm complex, as well as the existing solar arrays and reservoir to the south.

¹ See question 8.1 for consideration of impacts on heritage designations and receptors, including on views to, within and from designated areas.

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9. TRANSPORT AND ACCESS				
9.1 Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	Yes	The Holb/4/3 Public Right of Way (PROW) runs through the site.	No	There is the potential for the proposed development to have an impact on views from the PROW. However, the impacts are localised and could be mitigated by introducing further planting/screening. Approximately half of the PROW is already screened by hedgerow which could be continued along the rest of its length within the site.
9.2 Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	No		N/A	
10. LAND USE				
10.1 Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.	Yes	The site is within the countryside and only a small number of residential properties lie within 1km of the site.	No	Disturbance during construction and decommissioning phases but Construction Management Plan may be secured via condition. Disturbance during operation phase likely to be minimal. In terms of visual impact, the majority of properties are either screened by on-plot planting or there is intervening screening that would minimise views of the proposed development.
10.2 Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No		N/A	

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11. LAND STABILITY AND CLIMATE				
11.1 Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	Yes	Site is located in Flood Zone 3.	No	It is considered that the matter can be dealt with adequately via a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment.
12. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS				
12.1 Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?	No	There are no existing or planned developments in the locality that, together with the proposed development, would result in a significant adverse cumulative impact during the construction/operation phase when taking into account the nature of the development proposed.	N/A	
13. TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS				
13.1 Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects? ²	N/A	Transboundary effects relate to possible effects on other nation states and this is not relevant to this proposal.	N/A	

² The Regulations require consideration of the transboundary nature of the impact. Due to the England's geographical location the vast majority of TCPA cases are unlikely to result in transboundary impacts.

5. CONCLUSIONS – ACCORDING TO EIA REGULATIONS SCHEDULE 3

From the information submitted it is not considered that a significant effect is likely on natural resources, residential amenity/human health, waste, water resources, transport routes, historic assets and, with mitigation measures, could have limited visual impact on the countryside landscape (no landscape designations present). This development is considered to be fully reversible and could return to agricultural use in the future.

However, the proposal is in an area that is likely to be sensitive by virtue of the avian species located on or around the location and which could be affected by the project. Given that both the RSPB and Natural England have indicated that further surveys are required to determine the likely impacts of the proposal it must be assumed that a significant effect is possible.

Accordingly, the Local Planning Authority, in line with Regulation 5 of the Regulations, has determined that the development proposed is Environmental Impact Assessment development and will require an Environmental Statement to be submitted.

6. SCREENING DECISION

If a SO/SD has been provided do you agree with it?	N/A
Is it necessary to issue a SD?	Yes
Is an ES required?	Yes

7. ASSESSMENT (EIA REGS SCHEDULE 2 DEVELOPMENT)

	OUTCOME	
Is likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES required	✓
<u>Not</u> likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES not required	
More information is required to inform direction	Request further info	

NAME	Lucy BATTERY – Principal Planning Officer
DATE	30 April 2021