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Our Ref: EA/2015/0002

Date: 17 September 2015

Dear Sir

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2011 (AS AMENDED): SCREENING REQUEST RELATING TO INSTALLATION OF A SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC FARM ON LAND NORTH OF THE CASTLE WAY WILLINGTON DERBY

I refer to the above Screening Request received complete by this Authority on 18 August 2015.

On the basis of information submitted and having regard to additional environmental information collected by the Local Planning Authority to inform this opinion, I can confirm that the development described within your Screening Request, and as summarised above, is captured by the criteria and thresholds set in paragraph 3(a) of Schedule 2 of the 2011 Regulations (as amended); but in the opinion of South Derbyshire District Council, having taken into account the criteria in Schedule 3 to the 2011 Regulations (as amended), the proposal would not likely give rise to significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size and location. In coming to the above view account has been taken of the advice contained in National Planning Practice Guidance at section 4 and in particular paragraphs 031 and 032 (screening Schedule 2 projects) and the evidence submitted alongside the proposal.

Accordingly the District Council does not consider the proposed scheme to be EIA development and will not require the submission of an Environmental Statement in support of the proposal.

A copy of this Screening Opinion has been placed on the planning register, in accordance with the Regulations. In addition a screening matrix setting out the issues considered by the District Council in making this screening decision has also been placed on the register and is available to view at the Council Offices during normal opening hours. I have appended a copy of the screening matrix for your information.

I trust this information is of assistance but should you require any clarification or further explanation of the issues considered within this opinion please do not hesitate to contact Steven Mott directly on 01283 595748.

Authorised Officer of the Council

Date: 17/09/2015

Enc. Screening Matrix



Screening Checklist

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT) REGULATIONS 2011 (AS AMENDED)**

**SCREENING REQUEST RELATING TO INSTALLATION OF A
SOLAR PHOTOVOLTAIC FARM ON LAND NORTH OF THE
CASTLE WAY WILLINGTON DERBY**

10 September 2015

SCREENING CHECKLIST	
1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEVELOPMENT	Briefly describe Significant effect likely? Yes/no
(a) Size of the development	
Will the development be out of scale with the existing environment?	No. The site is circa 15 ha. and comprises of five agricultural fields. The site is bounded by the A38 to the west and the Derby to Crewe railway line to the north. There are agricultural fields to the south and east.
Will it lead to further consequential development or works (e.g. new roads, extraction of aggregate, provision of new water supply, generation or transmission of power, increased housing and sewage disposal)?	No. The site is comprised of a number of agricultural fields which are reasonably contained (although the hedgerows appear relatively low on the southern edge of the site). No additional roads or other major infrastructure will be required although access improvements could be necessary. The scheme of works proposed will consist of solar panel modules which will be up to 3m in height, and will also likely consist of security fencing, a number of low level buildings or cabinets (for inverters and Substations etc.
(b) Cumulation with other development	
Are there potential cumulative impacts with other existing development or development not yet begun but for which planning permission exists?	No significant extant planning permissions identified. No identified large scale Solar PV is located close to this scheme the closest large scale solar PV installation being located at Toyota's Burnaston Plant. There is no intervisibility between the existing installation and proposed scheme.
Should the application for this development be regarded as an integral part of a more substantial project? If so, can related developments which are subject to separate applications proceed independently?	No.
(c) Use of natural resources	
Will construction or operation of the development use natural resources such as land, water, materials or energy, especially any resources which are non-renewable or in short supply? • land (especially undeveloped or agricultural land)? • water? • minerals? • aggregates? • forests and timber? • energy including electricity and fuels? • any other resources?	Development is likely to lead to the temporary (life of installation – usually 25- 30 years) loss of open fields. However whilst site is grade 3 agricultural land development would be result in the temporary/reversible loss of land only and could still allow for some agricultural uses. Additional resources will also be needed to implement scheme, energy, minerals etc. However these are not considered to be significant given the nature and scale of the proposal

(d) Production of waste	
Will the development produce wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning? • mining or quarrying wastes? • municipal waste (household and/or commercial)? • hazardous or toxic wastes (including radioactive)? • other industrial process wastes? • sewage sludge or other sludges from effluent treatment? • construction, demolition or excavation wastes? • redundant machinery or equipment? • agricultural wastes? • any other solid wastes? • liquid or solid wastes in suspension?	Waste generation likely during construction and decommissioning phases of development only The screening request indicates that construction will last 8-12 weeks and as such is temporary in nature. During the operational phase of development there is limited scope for waste generation. As such no significant impacts are identified.
(e) Pollution and nuisances	
Will the development release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air? Emissions from: • combustion of fossil fuels from stationary or mobile sources? • production processes? • materials handling including storage or transport? • construction activities including plant & equipment? • dust or odours from handling of materials including construction materials, sewage & waste? • incineration of waste? • burning of waste in open air (e.g. slash material, construction debris)? • any other sources	None identified.
Is there a potential risk from: • leachates? • escape of wastes or other products/by-products that may constitute a contaminant in the environment?	None identified.

Will the development cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation? • from operation of equipment eg. engines, ventilation plant, crushers? • from industrial or similar processes? • from blasting or piling? • from construction or operational traffic? • from lighting or cooling systems? • from sources of electromagnetic radiation (effects on nearby sensitive equipment as well as people)? • from any other sources?	The screening request is accompanied by limited information on glare. Solar panels are made from highly transparent, low iron glass which absorbs as much light as possible, thereby producing significantly smaller amounts of glare and reflectance than normal glass. Panels have a reflexivity rating close to black asphalt and would need to conform to all Government requirements In respect of noise, once in operation the panels are silent and generate no noise. There will be limited noise during the construction phase (likely to be 8-12 weeks). These effects would be temporary in nature. Main noise impacts will be from construction and vehicular movements to the site. Similarly there may be similar temporary noise impacts following the operational life of the panels during site decommissioning/clearance. Again effects would be temporary and could be controlled through condition.
Will the development 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? • from handling, storage, use or spillage of hazardous or toxic materials? • from discharge of sewage or other effluents (whether treated or untreated) to water or the land? • by deposition of pollutants emitted to air, onto the land or into water • from any other sources? • is there a risk of long term build-up of pollutants in the environment from these sources?	None Identified
(f) Risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used	
Will there be a risk of accidents during construction or operation of the development which could have effects on people or the environment? • from explosions, spillages, fires, etc. from storage, handling, use or production of hazardous or toxic substances? • from events beyond the limits of normal environmental protection (e.g. failure of pollution control systems)? • from any other causes? • could the development be affected by natural disasters causing environmental damage (e.g. floods, earthquakes, landslip, etc)?	Minor risks, which are likely to be greater during construction phase but are not considered significant. Security fencing and CCTV will be used to restrict access to the site during operation which would ensure public safety.

Will the development involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to people or the environment (flora, fauna, water supplies)? • use of hazardous or toxic substances ? • potential changes in occurrence of disease or effect on disease carriers (e.g. insect or water borne diseases)? • effect on people's living conditions	None identified.
(g) Other characteristics: potential physical changes (topography, land-use, changes in waterbodies, etc.) from construction, operation or decommissioning of the development	
permanent or temporary change in land use, land cover or topography including increases in intensity of land use?	Temporary (long-term 25-30 years) use of land.
clearance of existing land, vegetation & buildings?	Limited site clearance (ie vegetation) to accommodate solar panel arrays.
creation of new land uses?	Energy generation.
pre-construction investigations (e.g. boreholes, soil testing)?	None identified.
construction or demolition works?	Yes. Construction and decommissioning of installation.
temporary sites or housing for construction workers?	None identified.
above ground buildings, structures or earthworks including linear structures, cut & fill or excavations?	Yes. Solar panels, outbuildings/cabinets for switch gear, fencing and access.
underground works including mining or tunnelling?	Transmission cabling to connect to the DNOs distribution network.
reclamation works?	None identified.
dredging?	N/A
coastal structures (seawalls, piers)?	N/A
offshore structures?	N/A
production and manufacturing processes?	N/A
facilities for storage of goods or materials?	N/A
facilities for treatment or disposal of solid wastes or liquid effluents?	N/A
facilities for long term housing of operational workers?	N/A

new road, rail or sea traffic during construction or operation?	Some new traffic during construction and decommissioning phase. Based on previous submissions for developments of this nature and scale a scheme of this size could generate increased traffic movements during site construction (8-12 weeks of around 200 HGV movements as well as an increase in car and LGV. Moreover transport impacts during construction would be short lived and will be reduced by use of an existing access off the A38 or of the Castleway 500m from the site limiting the amount of vehicular traffic on local roads.
new road, rail, air, waterborne or other transport infrastructure including new or altered routes and stations, ports, airports, etc.?	None identified.
closure or diversion of existing transport routes or infrastructure leading to changes in traffic movements?	None identified.
new or diverted transmission lines or pipelines?	New transmission cabling to connect to the distribution network.
impounding, damming, culverting, realignment or other changes to the hydrology of watercourses or aquifers?	None identified.
stream crossings	N/A
abstraction or transfers of water from ground or surface waters?	None identified.
changes in waterbodies or the land surface affecting drainage or run-off?	None identified.
transport of personnel or materials for construction, operation or decommissioning?	Some transportation of materials during construction and decommissioning phases but on the basis of the information submitted this is likely to be limited. (see above and for a limited duration).
long term dismantling or decommissioning or restoration works?	No. Some short term decommissioning/restoration works post operation. Although applicants note that the development is reversible and equipment and infrastructure would have a maximum of 30 year life expectancy.
ongoing activity during decommissioning which could have an impact on the environment?	No
influx of people to an area either temporarily or permanently?	No. Following construction phase, maintenance visits will be likely to be limited and no personal will be on site permanently
introduction of alien species?	No
loss of native species or genetic diversity?	No
any other changes?	No

2. LOCATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT	Briefly describe Significant effect likely? Yes/no
(a) Existing land use	
Are there existing land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the development (e.g. residential, industry, commerce, recreation, public open space, community facilities, agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining or quarrying)?	Some residential, (around The Castleway). This proposal could have impacts in respect of visual amenity on nearby properties although given the nature of the proposed use and the characteristics of the site which benefits from existing hedgerows it is likely that further planting around the site periphery would ensure that significant effects sufficient to warrant EIA will not occur. The site is not located in a landscape which is protected by local or national designations.
Is the development located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	Yes, although loss is temporary (albeit long term (25-30 years) and reversible.
(b) Relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area	
Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the development? • groundwater resources • surface waters • forestry • agriculture • fisheries • tourism • minerals	Site would lead to the partial loss of agricultural land although this is not a scarce resource locally and some agricultural use of the site will still be possible post development.

(c) Absorption capacity of the natural environment	
Are there any areas on or around the location which are protected under international or national or local legislation for their ecological, landscape, cultural or other value, which could be affected by the development?	No Natura 2000 sites, SSSI or National or Local Nature Reserves within 2km There would be no physical loss to County Wildlife sites which are located beyond 500m from the site boundaries and the proposal by reason of its scale and nature would be unlikely to affect geology, flora, fauna, trees and bird/bat activity subject to appropriate mitigation. The site could have species of biodiversity value, nesting birds, bats, badger. However whilst significant impacts are not considered likely, the applicant should ensure that ecology assessments proportionate to the value of the site accompany any planning application and appropriate mitigation secured through design. It is recommended that the applicant contact Derbyshire wildlife trust regarding protected species records in the vicinity of the site Conservation Areas within 1km Trent Mersey Canal 500m Listed buildings within 500m. None identified Scheduled Ancient Monument Within 1 km none Hers Records: 2 within site: HERS 27914 (2 MBA Cinerary Urns) HERS 27925 Willington North Pit, Hand axe and Disc Core
Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology • wetlands, watercourses or other waterbodies • the coastal zone • mountains, forests or woodlands • nature reserves and parks	None Identified
Are there any areas on or around the location which are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or flora (e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over wintering, migration) which could be affected?	Ensure applicants are advised of need to undertake phase 1 habitat survey to support application. Also guide applicant to National Solar Centre Biodiversity Guidance for Solar Farms document which provides good advice on mitigation and biodiversity enhancement opportunities that are possible on solar farm developments
Are there any inland, coastal, marine or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected?	None Identified
Are there any groundwater source protection zones or areas that contribute to the recharge of groundwater resources?	No.
Are there any areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected?	None identified.

Are there any routes or facilities on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected?	PROW SD50/6 325m from the site and SD50/8 c. 500m
Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected?	None Identified
Is the development in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	Site is located on agricultural fields which are largely enclosed by existing hedgerows although these appear managed and of limited height particularly to the south. However given the nature of the proposal and the potential to mitigate landscape and visual impacts and having regard to landscape (which is not protected through national or local designations) landscape effects are unlikely to be significant. However there will be a number of public and private views into the site. As such and LVIA considering impacts from a number of locations around the site including the PROW
Are there any areas or features of historic or cultural importance on or around the location which could be affected?	HERS records within site. However these represent spot finds and of local rather national significance.
Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built up, which could be affected?	Homes located along The Castle Way although this is some distance from the site
Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage (e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded) which could be affected?	None Identified
Is the location of the development susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions (e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds) which could cause the development to present environmental problems?	None Identified

This checklist is designed to help users decide whether EIA is required based on the characteristics of the likely impacts of the project. It is to be used in case-by-case screening in conjunction with the Screening Checklist.

The Screening Checklist provides a list of questions to help identify where there is the potential for interactions between a project and its environment. This checklist is designed to help decide whether those interactions - effects - are likely to be significant.

Those responsible for making screening decisions often find difficulties in defining what is “significant”. A useful simple check is to ask whether the effect is one that ought to be considered and to have an influence on the development consent decision. At the early stage of Screening there is likely to be little information on which to base this decision but the following list of questions may be helpful. These questions can be asked for each “Yes” answer in the Screening Checklist and the conclusion and the reasons for it noted in the checklist. The questions are designed so that a “Yes” answer will generally point towards the need for EIA and a “No” answer to EIA not being required.

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|---|-----|
| 1. Will there be a large change in environmental conditions? | No. |
| 2. Will new features be out-of-scale with the existing environment? | No. |
| 3. Will the effect be unusual in the area or particularly complex? | No. |
| 4. Will the effect extend over a large area? | No. |

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| 5. Will there be any potential for transfrontier impact? | No. |
| 6. Will many people be affected? | No. |
| 7. Will many receptors of other types (fauna and flora, businesses, facilities) be affected? | No. |
| 8. Will valuable or scarce features or resources be affected? | No. |
| 9. Is there a risk that environmental standards will be breached? | No. |
| 10. Is there a risk that protected sites, areas, features will be affected? | No. |
| 11. Is there a high probability of the effect occurring? | No |
| 12. Will the effect continue for a long time? | Long term impact
(panels have 25-30yr
life) |
| 13. Will the effect be permanent rather than temporary? | Temporary, long term |
| 14. Will the impact be continuous rather than intermittent? | Yes. |
| 15. If it is intermittent will it be frequent rather than rare? | N/A |
| 16. Will the impact be irreversible? | No. |
| 17. Will it be difficult to avoid, or reduce or repair or compensate for the effect? | No. |