

Horsham District Council Screening Assessment

HDC Reference: Scr/AW/02

Applicant Reference: EIA/21/0003

Development Proposal: Proposed installation of a solar farm and battery storage facility with associated infrastructure on land at Huddlestone Farm, Horsham Road Steyning, West Sussex

EIA Regulations	
Is the proposed development listed in Schedule 1?	No
Is the proposed development listed in Schedule 2? (Note 'wide of scope, broad of purpose' legal judgement)	Yes – Item 3 (a) industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water. The site extends to approximately 85 ha, exceeding 0.5ha threshold set under 2017 EIA Regulations. This means the proposal could constitute Schedule 2 development subject to the selection criteria as identified in Schedule 3 of the Regulations.
Is the proposed development in a sensitive area as defined in Regulation 2? (SSSI, National Park, property on World Heritage List, Scheduled monuments, AONB, SPA or SAC)	No

Schedule 3 – Selection Criteria for Screening Schedule 2 Development

1. Characteristics of Development	Description (include permanent / temporary impacts, positive and / or negative impacts / likelihood of impact as applicable)	Significance
a) Size of development (e.g. site area, scale)	The Site is located south of Ashurst, beyond this is the larger built-up residential areas of Steyning to the south and Henfield to the north east. The site measures approximately 85ha the existing arable land use with a Grade 2, 3, and 4 classification under the agricultural land classification system. The land is wholly rural with specific views from the Downs link and bridleway to the south which forms part of the guided circular walk from Steyning, The site has strong natural qualities with no existing intrusive urban features with the exception of overhead electricity lines. The site is accessed via existing access points from the B2135. The current proposal is for the construction, operation, maintenance and de-commissioning of a ground mounted solar farm with an export capacity of up to 49.9 MW for distribution to the national grid via an underground cable to the nearest point of connection. Provision is also provided for a battery storage facility which would be utilised to reinforce the power generation of the solar farm. The proposal would operate for a	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development.</p> <p>Further details required with</p>

	<p>temporary time period of approximately 40 years.</p> <p>The main components of the proposal comprise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar photovoltaic panels, ground mounted to a piled anti-reflective frame made of galvanized steel or aluminium. The posts would be pile-driven (like a fence post) into the ground; Maximum height of panels 3m. • Inverter/transformer stations distributed evenly across the solar arrays housed within green metal containers; • Battery storage facility comprising battery containers housed in shipping containers or similar; • A security-fenced enclosed substation and switchgear compound; • Underground cabling to connect the panels, inverters/transformer stations and battery storage facility to the proposed on-site substation and control room; • Underground cabling to link the proposed substation to the existing Bolney National Grid Substation; • Security deer type fencing and gates to enclose the Site; • Security and monitoring CCTV/infra-red cameras mounted on fence posts along the internal perimeter of the Site; • Site access from the public highway; • Compacted internal crushed stone tracks to allow vehicular access between fields; and • Landscape planting, biodiversity enhancements and surface water attenuation measures (to be designed as part of the evolving design). <p>The overall extent of ground disturbance is advised as being limited to excavation for cabling and access roads, inverter / transformer stations, panel frames; and proposed on site substation and battery storage facility.</p>	<p>application: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)</p>
<p>b) cumulation with other development</p>	<p>The site lies outside of the Built up Area Boundaries of Steyning to the south and Henfield to the north east. It is therefore located within the countryside. The surrounding area is rural in character with sporadic residential development accessed by public rights of way intersecting the site including ROW 2600 and ROW 2602. It is advised that there are other solar developments approved in the area, the location of these should be shown on a plan for completeness. An interrogation of the Councils own planning records indicate solar farms in Ashington and Partridge Green but these are considered to be sufficiently separated so as not to be considered as cumulative development.</p> <p>It is advised that a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which considers cumulative impact will be submitted identifying existing and / or other committed development with any forthcoming application.</p>	

<p>c) the use of natural resources (e.g. land, water, materials, energy – non renewable or in short supply?)</p>	<p>The development will require the use of resources such as energy and water. It would also make use of sunlight as a renewable resource to generate electricity rather than fossil fuels. The agricultural land between the solar array panels can still be used for grazing during the life of the solar farm and the land is capable of reversion to its wholly original use as agricultural land after the 40 year proposed period of use and de commissioning of the solar farm on site. The use of natural resources should not be significant and would not result in the use of resources which are considered to be in short supply.</p> <p>A Sustainability/ Energy Statement has not been submitted at this stage. This should set out how the development will be in accordance with the energy hierarchy and limit water use. The level of resources used will depend on the energy and sustainable construction standards for the proposed use.</p>	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development.</p> <p>Further details required with application:</p> <p>A Sustainability/ Energy Statement</p>
<p>d) the production of waste (demolition, construction, operation and decommissioning?)</p>	<p>The site is on green field land and there are no built structures requiring demolition. Notwithstanding this, any construction waste should be reused and recycled where possible. Significant quantities of construction waste are not anticipated as a result of the development. Waste should be disposed of in line with HDC requirements and managed in accordance with all applicable legislation and in line with best practice.</p> <p>During the construction and operational phases measures should be put in place to reduce the amount of packaging sent to landfill. Waste contractors will need to visit the site to dispose of the waste; some of which could be recycled.</p>	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Further details required with application:</p> <p>Site Waste Management Plan may be required</p>
<p>e) pollution and nuisances (e.g. potential for noise, dust, vibration, light, odours, production of substances / emissions which may damage environment -construction, operation and decommissioning t)</p>	<p>During construction phase there is potential for some noise and dust both from the construction of solar panels on the site as well as from traffic, any impact will be local to the site area and its immediately locality. Any impact will be short-term and temporary and can be mitigated through adherence to a Construction Management Plan providing for noise and dust suppression measures (the submission, approval and implementation of which can be secured by a planning condition).</p> <p>The applicants advise that the noise impacts arising from the inverter /transformer stations, on site substation and batteries are not considered likely to be perceptible to sensitive receptors above background noise levels.</p>	<p>No significance and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development.</p>

	<p>No noise report has been submitted therefore potential impacts are unknown at this stage but could potentially be managed via imposition of appropriate conditions should it be considered necessary.</p> <p>The PPG (EIA section) Para 057 provides indicative criteria and thresholds to consider in the determination of likely significance of effects for 3 (a) Energy Industry and advises that Thermal output of more than 50MW, advising that small stations using novel forms of generation should be considered carefully. Additionally it advises that levels of emissions of air, arrangements for the transport of fuel and any visual impact are all key areas to consider. It is advised that the operational development is less than the 50MW threshold, and is unlikely to give rise to significant impacts relating to air, transport or other wide ranging impacts.</p>	<p>Further details required with application</p> <p>Noise Report Transport Assessment Environmental Risk Assessments Phase 1 (desktop study) Phase 2 (Intrusive Investigation) contaminated land reports Construction Management Plan Air and dust pollution Assessment Noise and Vibration Assessment</p>
f) the risk of accidents, having regard in particular to substances or technologies used	<p>The proposal is for use as a solar uses. From the information submitted there appear to be no hazardous substances or products which will be used or stored on the site. There will be potential for accidents during the construction phase of the development but these are normal risks associated with construction and managed in an appropriate way under the Construction, Design and Management Regulations 2015. Accident risks associated with the maintenance of the solar array panels, and use of surrounding land for grazing of animals, along with grass cutting and equipment maintenance would be managed through good agricultural and commercial practices. The development is therefore unlikely to lead to an increase in accidents.</p>	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p>

2. Location of Development: the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by development must be considered having regard, in particular to	Description (include permanent / temporary impacts, positive and / or negative impacts / likelihood of impact as applicable)	Significance
a) the existing land use	<p>The site lies within the countryside, and is agricultural land (mix of Grades 2, 3 and 4 classification (Natural England Regional Agricultural Land Classification Maps). The development would amount to 85ha of land being taken out from arable production for the lifetime of the</p>	<p>No significance and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p>
b) the relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area (common land use? Quality of land / designations / protected species – would development lead to irreversible loss of key qualities or resources)		

<p>in the area?)</p>	<p>development (40 years). The nature of the development would not however have the same long term impact as other forms of development such as residential or commercial development. The surrounding area comprises a wider network of farmland in arable cultivation or for the grazing of livestock divided by a regular framework of hedges, trees and ditches.</p> <p>No Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken at this stage to support the screening opinion request.</p>	<p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development:</p> <p>Further information required with application</p> <p>Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)</p>
<p>c) the absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to</p>		
<p>i) wetlands (e.g. floodplains, impacts on drainage, aquifers)</p>	<p>The Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning indicates that the majority of the Site is Flood Zone 1 with some areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 along the northern boundary. The River Adur is approximately 340m at its closest point.</p> <p>The site is located in Flood Zone 1 which indicates a low probability (less than 0.1%) of flooding. There would be an increase in hard standing areas from access tracks and containers. The construction method for the panel frames are piled straight into the ground, as such surrounding land remains permeable for surface water drainage.</p> <p>If an EIA is not required any subsequent planning application should include a surface water drainage strategy and a site specific FRA to ensure that any negative impacts are reduced.</p>	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development:</p> <p>Further information required with application:</p> <p>Surface water drainage strategy Site specific FRA</p>
<p>ii) coastal zones (any potential for the scheme to impact on coastal areas e.g. runoff etc)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>iii) mountain and forest areas (impacts on wooded areas, including any designated areas of ancient woodland / TPOs).</p>	<p>An area of Ancient Woodland known as Huddleston Wood (ANCWOO1812141 - confirmed 8 Feb 2010) is identified and enveloped within the north east and north west boundaries of the site to the north of the site. There are no TPOs identified on the site.</p>	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p>

<p>iv) nature reserves and parks (e.g. any impacts on designated nature conservation sites / other areas of nature conservation importance?)</p>	<p>There are no designated nature reserves or parks adjoining the site and the site is not located within an environmentally sensitive area as defined by the EIA Regulations. However, from the information provided the South Downs National Park is approximately 1.3 km south, the Brighton and Lewes Downs Biosphere Reserve is approximately 2.2 km east. The nearest Special Scientific Interest is Horton Clay Pit Site of is approximately 2.3 km east and is designated for the thickest and the stratigraphically most important Lower Gault sequence in the country. The Tottington Wood Local Nature Reserve is approximately 2.4 km east. The River Adur Water Meadows and Wyckham Wood Site of Nature Conservation Importance, designated for its floodplain woodland with notable rarity and heronry, neutral grassland water meadows with ornithological interest and ditches with botanical interest, is adjacent to the northern and eastern boundaries. The ancient woodlands of Wyckham Wood, Huddleston Wood and Six Acre Copse about the site boundary.</p>	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development:</p> <p>Further information required with application:</p>
<p>v) areas classified or protected under Member States' legislation; areas designated by Member states pursuant to Directive 79/409/EEC (conservation of wild birds) and Directive 92/43/EEC (conservation of habitats and fauna) (In particular the Arun valley SPA and The Mens -Barbastelle bat flightlines are a key consideration here. Any other European protected species present that could be affected?)</p>	<p>The application site does not constitute a 'sensitive area' as defined by the EIA Regulations.</p> <p>The closest SPA to the site is the Arun Valley and the nearest SACs are Kingsley Vale; Duncton to Bignor Escarpment; and Arun Valley within the Surrey, East and West Sussex District, however development in this location is not considered to adversely impact these sites.</p> <p>The site is located outside of any identified Bat Sustenance Zone</p>	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p>
<p>vi) areas in which the environmental quality standards laid down in Community legislation have already been exceeded (any areas already subject to pollution or damage – include impact on any AQMAs).</p>	<p>There are no areas of the site where quality standards such as AQMA's have been exceeded.</p>	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p>
<p>vii) densely populated areas (size of population affected, changes to demography, lifestyles, employment etc)</p>	<p>The proposal will have a very limited effect on the local population through generating jobs; however the impact is unlikely to be significant. There would be some impact on visual amenity arising from the introduction of the solar array panels on open land where none previously existed.</p>	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p>

<p>viii) landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance</p>	<p>The site is not designated as being of particular landscape importance in that it is not designated AONB or National Park. However the site is located within 1km at its closest point to the north of the South Downs National Park Boundary to the north east of Steyning.</p> <p>Long views from elevated strategic points along the South Downs Way as well as nearby PROWs of the site are visible. Mitigation measures would be required although it is considered that it is unlikely this could be achieved from elevated long distance views from within the National Park given the 3m height of the panels and the extent of the proposals.</p> <p>It is noted that the proposed site is located directly north of an archaeological notification area (Roman Road). There may therefore be potential for archaeological remains on this site. Overall impacts are generally assessed to be low.</p> <p>No Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Arboricultural Survey & Report or Planting Plans have been submitted in support of the screening enquiry.</p> <p>The site is not within a Conservation Area nor does it contain any Listed Buildings or Ancient Structures. The nearest listed buildings (Grade II) are Huddleston Farmhouse (1-2) 300m to the east of the nearest west boundary of the site; Wappington Farm, approximately 670m south west of the site and Calcot Farm 368m west of the nearest western boundary of the site. No Heritage Statement has been provided.</p> <p>The Councils Landscape Officer advises that it is anticipated the proposals would have a significant negative affect on the landscape character and amenity of the area and although the impact could be capable of being fully reversible at the end of the operation, the effects if the change experienced during the 40 years proposed duration will likely be permanent.</p> <p>The SDNP have been consulted and have advised that the visual impacts on the National Park and its setting should be considered as it is considered that the site will be visible from PROW within the National Park, including the South Downs Way and Monarchs Way (nationally promoted long distance routes) and possible from key landmarks such as Chanctonbury Ring. Any assessment of the visual impacts of the</p>	<p>Significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms.</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development, however at this stage it is not clear whether such condition could suitably mitigate the extent of development proposed.</p> <p>Further information required with application:</p> <p>Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; ZTV assessments; Glint and Glare Assessments from relevant viewpoints along the South Downs Way; Arboricultural Survey & Report Planting Plan Biodiversity Net Gain measures Heritage Statement Archaeology Statement</p>
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	<p>proposed development should provide a ZTV as well as Glint and Glare Assessments that includes these areas of the National Park alongside the other solar developments in the locality that are within the setting of the National Park. It is advised that the applicant may find it helpful to reference the Viewshed Analysis evidence available on the SDNPA website https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-policy/south-downs-local-plan/local-plan-evidence-base/evidence-and-supporting-documents/viewshed-analysis/</p>	
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3. Characteristics of the potential impact: The potential significant effects of development must be considered in relation to criteria set out under 1 & 2, having particular regard to:	Description	Significance
<p>a) the extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population)</p>	<p>Overall, the total area of the development is 85ha comprising agricultural; land (mix of Grades 2,3 and 4). The site is surrounded by open countryside and sporadic residential and farm properties. The population that would be impacted by the development are primarily residents located along the B2135 and by passers-by from public vantage points along the South Downs Way and PROWs.</p> <p>It is advised by the applicants that a Construction Transport Management Plan and a Landscape Visual Assessment is to be submitted with any application put forward. This will be considered against adopted planning policies within the HDPF and the NPPF.</p> <p>Alterations including internal access tracks are proposed between fields.</p>	<p>Significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development, however at this stage it is not clear whether such conditions could suitably mitigate the extent of development proposed.</p> <p>Further information required with application:</p> <p>Transport Assessment Travel Plan Landscape and Visual</p>

		<p>Impact Assessment; ZTV assessments; Glint and Glare Assessments from relevant viewpoints along the South Downs Way Air & Dust Pollution Assessment</p>
<p>b) the nature of the impact</p>	<p>The main impacts are on the landscape (given the rural nature of the site), ecology and biodiversity, and archaeology, as well as potential impacts from lighting, noise and traffic generation and possible impacts to heritage assets.</p>	<p>Significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development, however at this stage it is not clear whether such conditions could suitably mitigate the extent of development proposed.</p> <p>Further information required with application</p> <p>Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)</p> <p>Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; ZTV assessments; Glint and Glare Assessments from relevant viewpoints along the South Downs Way; Air & Dust Pollution</p>

		Assessment
c) the transfrontier nature of the impact (any international impacts?)	The effects of the scheme would contribute to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and local climate targets by 2030 and 2050.	No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms
d) the intensity and complexity of the impact (e.g. overall size, scale, combination of impacts)	<p>Whilst the magnitude and complexity of the impacts are likely to be minimal due to the type of passive development proposed, it is considered that the scale and location of the development may result in landscape visual impact and impact on protected species within the surrounding habitats. Further work is necessary to ascertain the significance of this impact and it is considered that an Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping is required,</p> <p>There is also likely to be some impact in terms of additional traffic generation arising from visits for maintenance of equipment to landscaping maintenance as well as from site security. Further details regarding the anticipated traffic movements and numbers to and from the site each day / week will be required to assess this impact. Impacts arising this aspect could be managed through the provision of appropriate mitigation.</p>	<p>Significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development:</p> <p>Further information required with application:</p> <p>Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) Transport Assessment Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Arboricultural Survey & Report and Planting Plan</p>
e) the probability of the impact (e.g. overall probability of impacts identified above)	Loss of greenfield land and associated landscape impacts are highly probable in the event that development takes place. During the operational and decommissioning phase lighting and noise impacts are possible, as well as air and dust pollution.. It is advised that construction would likely take place over a period of 7 months with construction vehicles accessing the site from the existing access from the B2135. It is advised that a Construction Traffic Management Plan setting out the effect of the construction phase on the highway network, and relevant	<p>Significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and</p>

	<p>information to allow further consideration of any future application will be submitted with any forthcoming application. Mitigation measures are anticipated and would need to be agreed by the applicants. Cumulative impacts from traffic generation are also highly likely.</p> <p>Other impacts such as impacts on protected species or the level of traffic increase are less certain and some may be managed through appropriate controls exercised through the imposition of conditions as required.</p> <p>Significant negative landscape impacts are likely to arise from the cumulative impact of solar panels on the setting of the SDNP and key views.</p>	<p>mitigate against any impacts arising from the development, however at this stage it is not clear whether such conditions could suitably mitigate the extent of development proposed.</p> <p>Further information required with application:</p> <p>Transport Assessment Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Arboricultural Survey & Report and Planting Plan Air & Dust Pollution Assessment Noise and vibration Assessment.</p>
<p>f) the duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact (demolition, construction, operation and decommissioning)</p>	<p>Many impacts such as construction noise would be temporary. Other impacts such as the loss of greenfield land would in broad terms be considered as relatively permanent, given the proposed 40 year lifetime of the proposed development. Whilst the development would be reversible, it is considered that the long term impacts on the landscape would not be so reversible albeit that the site would be decommissioned after 40 years (as sought), with all electricity generating equipment and built structures with the development removed from the area and the land returned to agricultural use. The classification of land is mixed with some areas of good quality Grade 2 and 3 agricultural land which would be lost for this period of time.</p> <p>The main impact of noise and disruption from traffic to and from the site would be during the construction and de commissioning time. Once operational there would be limited vehicle visits each month by a transit style van accessing the site from the B2135.</p> <p>It is advised that a LEMP would be submitted with any application to</p>	<p>Significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development, however at this stage it is not clear whether such conditions could suitably mitigate the extent of development proposed.</p>

	<p>demonstrate how the land would be managed throughout the operational phase of the development, in a way that would deliver significant biodiversity net gains.</p> <p>Given the proposed uses there could be regular noise impacts from the construction phase. Operational traffic impacts are likely to be relatively limited regular particularly when combined with neighbouring uses. Other impacts such as potential impacts on protected species in the surrounding habitats are unknown and still require further investigation.</p>	<p>Further information required with application:</p> <p>Noise Report Construction Management Plan Transport Assessment Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Arboricultural Survey & Report and Planting Plan Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) Air & Dust Pollution Assessment Noise and vibration Assessment</p>
<p>g) the accumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development</p>	<p>The cumulative highway effects of the proposed solar farm development alongside activities relating to the existing and nearby residential and farm properties is yet to be completed, but could be considered as part of any future Transport Assessment.</p> <p>Significant negative landscape impacts are likely to arise from the cumulative impact of solar panels resulting in an impact of the setting of the SDNP and key views.</p>	<p>Significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development, however at this stage it is not clear whether such conditions could suitably mitigate the extent of development proposed.</p> <p>Further information required with application:</p> <p>Transport Assessment ZTV assessments;</p>

		Glint and Glare Assessments from relevant viewpoints along the South Downs Way;
h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact	<p>During the construction phase, adverse effects would be temporary and minimised through the implementation of a CEMP and best practice measures.</p> <p>Various assessments and statements will be submitted with the planning application to ensure the provision of appropriate controls and mitigation on site. The Environmental Impacts of turning to Solar Energy which can provide clean, non-polluting and sustainable electricity resulting in no global warming emissions is recognised.</p> <p>A Legal agreement and / or conditions can be entered into to ensure that the solar farm is decommissioned after 40 years and the land returned to its former agricultural state.</p>	<p>No significant and/or residual environmental impacts anticipated in EIA terms</p> <p>Imposition of appropriate conditions may be required to control and mitigate against any impacts arising from the development, however at this stage it is not clear whether such conditions could suitably mitigate the extent of development proposed.</p> <p>Further information required with application:</p> <p>Construction Management Plan</p>

Results of any relevant EU environmental assessment that is reasonably available	None applicable	
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Conclusion

EIA Required?	Yes
Statement of reasons	<p>The proposal development involves the redevelopment of 85ha of greenfield agricultural arable land. There is likely to be some significant negative landscape impact arising from the impact of the development on the South Downs National Park and its setting and on the countryside surrounding the development site arising from the introduction of the solar array panels. The significantly rising ground levels to the south (within the National Park) as well as the network of PROWs within the area would likely result in the site being visible from public rights of way within the National Park, including the South Downs Way and Monarchs Way which are nationally promoted long distance routes, as well as possible views form key landmarks such as Chantonbury Ring. Whilst mitigation measures have been proposed by the applicant to protect the landscape through enhanced screening, it is unlikely that this could be achieved from elevated views from within the National Park, given the 3m height of the solar panels and the extent of the proposals in the landscape.</p> <p>Some additional traffic would be generated from the proposed development, however the impact is not deemed to be significant and all impacts could be considered through the usual planning application process. There may be some impact on other areas such as ecology, archaeology and heritage however these can be suitably mitigated and would not likely be significant. There are protected species present that could be affected by the development; there is a roman road close by and as such archaeological impacts could arise; there are a number of listed buildings close by, and their setting could be impacted by the proposals. Further information is required in terms of these aspects but this is not considered to be significant enough to trigger an EIA.</p> <p>Overall in terms of the EIA Regulations and the current information that is available the effects of the proposed development in terms of its visual impact alone are considered significant and sufficient to require an EIA.</p>
Date	AW – 19/07/2021