

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

1. CASE DETAILS			
Case Reference	21/0018/EIA	Brief description of the project / development	Installation of a ground mounted Photo Voltaic (PV) solar farm development
Appellant	Enzygo		
LPA	East Devon District Council		
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)			
Is the project Schedule 2 development under the EIA Regulations?			Yes
If YES, under which description of development in Column 1 and Column 2?			3 (a) - Industrial installation for the production of electricity, steam and hot water.
Is the development within, partly within, or near a 'sensitive area' as defined by Regulation 2 of the EIA Regulations?			No
If YES, which area?			N/A
Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in Column 2 exceeded/met?			Yes
If yes, which applicable threshold/criteria?			The area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectare
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)			N/A
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 REFERING TO THE PROJECT / DEVELOPMENT.

A Screening Criteria Question	B Response to the Screening Criteria Question in Column A (Yes/No and explanation of reasons) Briefly explain reasons and, if applicable and/or known, include name of feature(s) and proximity to site(s)		C Is a Significant Effect Likely? (Yes/No and explanation of reasons (nb if the answer in Column B is 'No', Column C is not applicable)) 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.	
5. NATURAL RESOURCES				
5.1 Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	No		N/A	Reasons
5.2 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	
5.3 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?	No		N/A	
6. WASTE				
6.1 Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	No	During construction some waste will be produced, however this can be appropriately managed through a waste management condition.	N/A	

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7. POLLUTION AND NUISANCES				
7.1 Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	No		N/A	
7.2 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes	<p>During construction there is potential for noise and disturbance from construction processes and vehicles.</p> <p>Potential low level noise arising from the operation of the transformer housings and associated PV equipment but very localised and can be acoustically minimised.</p>	No	<p>A significant effect is unlikely – the effect will be limited to the temporary construction period only and can be controlled through the submission of a Construction Environment Management Plan.</p> <p>During operation, effects associated with external lighting and noise would be unlikely to cause significant effects.</p>
7.3 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?	No	A small number of bunded fuel containers may be temporarily stored on the site during construction.	N/A	N/A
7.4 Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?	No		N/A	
8. POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH				
8.1 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	
8.2 Will the project present a risk to	No	The construction and operational phases will not	N/A	

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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)	generate risk to the local population or human health.	

9. WATER RESOURCES

<p>9.1 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?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The proposed development is located partially within flood zone 2 and 3, and as a proposal which is classed as essential infrastructure, would be subject to both the sequential test and exception test. The scheme proposes to develop land directly adjacent to a main river.</p> <p>The Environment Agency recommends that the applicant takes a sequential approach to the location of the proposal, including the ancillary equipment which is not yet shown on the submitted plans, to steer development away from the areas at flood risk.</p> <p>The applicant has identified the following water courses within the site:</p> <p>OS mapping shows an unnamed watercourse (Ford Stream) conveys flows north-west through the middle of the site.</p> <p>A second unnamed watercourse conveys flows north-west through land approximately 60m to the north-east of the site.</p> <p>A tributary of Watercourse 2 conveys flows north-west along the north-east boundary.</p> <p>A third unnamed watercourse conveys flows west, approximately 20m to the south of the</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Acceptability of the proposals in respect of siting development in the flood zone would be a matter for the sequential test and exceptions test that would be undertaken by the Council as part of its assessment of a planning application. The Environment Agency recommends that the applicant takes a sequential approach to the location of the proposal, including the ancillary equipment which is not yet shown on the submitted plans, to steer development away from the areas at flood risk.</p> <p>The applicant proposes a drainage strategy for a passive drainage system whereby water runs off the panels and into shallow swales and leaky dams which will slow the waters passage into the natural drainage channels. It is suggested that this system will reduce pressure on the existing drainage channels during peak rainfall and reduce the risk of flooding off site.</p> <p>The appropriate use of natural flood management such as the leaky dams to manage flood risk is supported in principle and it is accepted that these drainage measures may result in an overall betterment of the existing situation and would be assessed as part of any forthcoming planning application in consultation</p>
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	<p>south-west corner of the site.</p> <p>A fourth unnamed watercourse conveys flows north-west, west of the southwest boundary of the site.</p> <p>There are small ponds located throughout the site.</p> <p>The stream and existing culvert create small areas of flood risk within the proposed development boundary.</p> <p>The remainder of the site is outside areas of flood risk.</p>	<p>with the Environment Agency.</p>

10. BIODIVERSITY (SPECIES AND HABITATS)

<p>10.1 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 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>Yes</p>	<p>The southwestern extent of the site (parcel ref D1) lies immediately adjacent to the Beauport Farm County Wildlife Site.</p> <p>The southeastern boundary is adjacent to Withybed Copse County Wildlife Site designated as an ancient and semi natural woodland.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The proposed development includes an extensive network of ecological enhancements which include woodland, wetland enhancement, wildflower pastures and enhanced areas for pollinators.</p> <p>A wetland extension to Withybed Copse is proposed which includes extensive enhancements to the adjoining farmland.</p> <p>Field parcel D1 includes a buffer strip which would serve to enhance the existing biodiversity akin to that within the Beauport Farm CWS.</p> <p>Any forthcoming planning application should be accompanied by a protected species survey to identify the likely impact of ecology and biodiversity and the adjacent ecological</p>
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			designations or other ecological assets. A Landscape Ecological Management Plan would detail the aforementioned ecological and biodiversity enhancements.
<p>10.2 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?</p>	Yes	<p>The applicant has advised that the site has been the subject of extensive ecological surveys. These have concluded:</p> <p>Riparian Zone: The Ford Stream (watercourse 1) is currently heavily poached along most of its length with a limited plant diversity.</p> <p>A 30m stretch of stream has a small population of stickleback.</p> <p>Stream forms an important area for badgers - water source and foraging.</p> <p>Few riparian bird species have been identified along the stream.</p> <p>There is little bat activity associated with the stream.</p> <p>Extended Woodland:</p> <p>Nearby County Wildlife Site (CWS) Ancient Woodland.</p> <p>Annex II bat species associated nearby the CWS woodland.</p> <p>Hedgerows provide flight lines for at least 11 species of bat.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>The applicant's proposed mitigation and enhancements are as follows:</p> <p>Riparian Zone: Provision of a resilient floodplain including leaky dams and scrapes which will widen the riparian habitat.</p> <p>Natural regeneration with supplementary plug planting of native riparian plants of local provenance.</p> <p>Increase botanical species diversity and habitat for aquatic and amphibious species.</p> <p>Extended Woodland:</p> <p>Tree planting undertaken to extend and buffer CWS woodland in field immediately west, reflecting species present in the CWS.</p> <p>The western field will be an open mosaic of rush pasture and scrapes, grading into wet woodland and mature trees on the boundaries to enhance the area.</p> <p>Enhanced Hedgerows:</p> <p>Retention of the existing Hedgerows. Additional hedge infilling is proposed with native species to be undertaken to increase structural and species</p>

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	<p>Enhanced Grassland:</p> <p>Grassland provides foraging habitat for a maternity roost of serotine bats, with small areas of botanical interest identified. Overall, it is of limited value and floral diversity.</p>		<p>diversity and increase the strength of the hedgerow network for wildlife.</p> <p>The hedges will be managed on rotation and individual trees encouraged to grow out for biodiversity, landscape screening and heritage purposes.</p> <p>Enhanced Grassland: Buffering of County Wildlife Site and green hay/local provenance seeding to be undertaken to enhance wildflower diversity in the west of the site.</p> <p>Seeding of wildflower banks connecting through the landscape, cut on rotation to create a habitat mosaic of value to invertebrates (for nectar and overwintering) and insect-eating birds.</p> <p>Seasonal cutting/grazing to enhance species and structural diversity of grassland around solar arrays.</p> <p>It is accepted that the proposed ecological enhancements are likely to provide a betterment of the biodiversity in the area.</p>
11. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL			
<p>11.1 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</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The nearest designated assets is the East Devon AONB which is located approximately 1.5km to the south east.</p>	<p>The preliminary viewpoints provided by the applicant have found that the proposed development would not be visible from the nearby East Devon AONB. A detailed visual impact assessment would be undertaken as part of any forthcoming planning application and the</p>

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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).			applicant is expected to provide an LVIA.
11.2 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?)	No	<p>While development within much of the core of the site is likely to have limited visual impact from public vantage points, particular care will be required to ensure around the fringes that the visibility of solar arrays from publically accessible roads and viewpoints is limited.</p> <p>There are a limited number of publicly accessible vantage points that would have either a full, or partial views of the development site. The landscape impact of the proposal is likely to be localised to surrounding roads, rights of way and occupiers of residential dwellings</p>	<p>No</p> <p>This Screening Request is supported by a Preliminary Landscape Visual Impact Assessment and a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP).</p> <p>The applicants LVIA concludes that the visual amenity of the study area has an overall Minimal-Slight Adverse significance with expected Moderate Significance only to views from the short section (c.250 metres) of footpath through field D1.</p> <p>Whilst a solar PV farm of this size, scale and coverage has the potential to adversely affect the rural, largely un-developed and unspoilt local landscape character, this impact is likely to be localised and would not result in any significant effects. Any forthcoming planning application would be carefully considered in terms of its visual impact, taking into account any landscaping proposals that are put forward as part of the proposals,</p>
12. CULTURAL HERITAGE/ARCHAEOLOGY			
12.1 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	Yes	There are no designated heritage assets located on site however there are several designated heritage assets within a 2km buffer area surrounding the site which include the important cluster at Rockbeare Manor, which includes	Yes It is understood that a geo-physical survey of the area is currently underway by the applicant and that the scope of the assessment has been agreed with the County archaeologist and the results will confirm the presence/absence of

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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<p>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).</p>	<p>the grade I listed house, the grade II* listed stable and numerous other grade II* and grade II listed buildings as well as the grade II registered park and garden that covers the site and a number of grade II listed properties to the west of the site.</p> <p>The development has the potential to impact on the setting of these heritage assets.</p>		<p>below ground remains. If present, design and other mitigation measures will ensure that there is no significant harm to these assets.</p> <p>The impact of the proposal on the setting of heritage assets would form part of the assessment of any forthcoming planning application with the specialist advice of Historic England and Conservation Officers. A heritage impact assessment would accompany a planning application which should contain an examination of the potential impacts upon all heritage assets likely to be affected, including designated heritage assets and their settings together with potential impacts on non-designated features of historic, architectural, archaeological or artistic interest, since these can also be of national importance and make an important contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of an area and its sense of place. This covers buildings, historic open spaces, historic features and the wider historic landscape including below-ground archaeology.</p> <p>The impact of the proposal on the setting of heritage assets would be carefully considered as part of any planning application.</p>	
13. TRANSPORT AND ACCESS				
<p>13.1 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?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>A PRoW (Aylesbeare Footpath 7) runs along the south western boundary of field parcel D1.</p> <p>There are a number of PRoW located further afield, however the preliminary landscape and</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The inclusion of field parcel D1, through which Aylesbeare footpath 7 runs, will have an adverse impact on path users. The acceptability of this impact will form part of the assessment of a planning application.</p>

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		visual impact assessment provided by the applicant suggests that views from these PRoW of the development will not be possible.		
<p>13.2 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?</p>	No	<p>It is understood that a highway constraints study is currently underway to assess the routing for construction traffic. Construction traffic will be the subject of a strict management plan and will be temporary in nature.</p> <p>It is understood that the Church Commissioners for England have confirmed an In-Principle Agreement to collaborate regarding the temporary lease of land adjacent to the A30 for an Off-Site Reception Compound.</p> <p>When operational, the proposed development will generate very few vehicle movements associated with maintenance of the facility. This will be less than current traffic associated with farming.</p>	No	<p>Whilst traffic associated with the construction phase can be inconvenient and disruptive, the construction phase is temporary in nature.</p> <p>An appropriate traffic routing plan would be agreed with EDDC and the County Highway Authority as part of any forthcoming planning application which can be controlled through a condition to ensure that the impacts on local roads and users are minimal.</p> <p>The operation of the proposed development would generate very few vehicle movements associated with maintenance of the solar panels and would not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network.</p>
14. LAND USE				
<p>14.1 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.</p>	Yes	<p>There is a small hamlet of residential dwellings to the west of the site and the larger settlement of Marsh Green to the north east.</p> <p>There are no other land uses that would be affected by the proposal.</p> <p>The site itself is understood to be predominantly grade 3b agricultural land that will be used for solar development for the temporary period of 30 to 40 years</p>	No	

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14.2 Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	No		N/A	
15. LAND STABILITY AND CLIMATE				
15.1 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?	No		N/A	
16. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS				
16.1 Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?	Yes	<p>There are already a number of solar schemes constructed or consented to the north and east of Marsh Green.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strete Solar Farm located approximately 0.85km to the north. 2. Saundercroft Solar Farm located approximately 3.2km to the north west. 3. Houndsbeare Solar Farm located to the west of Furzy and Scarlet Wood Copse; and, 4. A recently consented Solar Farm to the east of Furzy and Scarlet Wood Copse. 	No	<p>The cumulative impact of the solar farms will need to be carefully assessed as part of any forthcoming planning application.</p> <p>An LVIA should accompany the application and consider the landscape and visual impacts of the proposal alongside the surrounding solar schemes.</p>

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17. TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS		
17.1 Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects? ²	No Solar Arrays do not create any transboundary effects with the exception of landscape.	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.

18. CONCLUSIONS – ACCORDING TO EIA REGULATIONS SCHEDULE 3

The proposal falls outside of the definition of development within Schedule 1 of the Regulations (where an EIA is mandatory) but within the definition of development within Schedule 2 of the Regulations where EIA may be required subject to the consideration by the Local Planning Authority of the characteristics of the development, the location of the development and the characteristics of its potential impact.

Whilst EIA Regulations Schedule 2 does not specifically include large scale solar PV developments, the proposal comprises the installation of a solar PV farm on a site of around 87ha in area. As such the development is considered to fall within Schedule 2, class 3(a), Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water (unless included within Schedule 1), of the Regulations. The threshold for development is where the area of the works exceeds 0.5ha and the proposal exceeds this threshold.

Having identified the proposal as Schedule 2 development, the Council has assessed the scheme in light of the criteria and guidance contained within the Regulations. The proposed solar farm has the potential to have a localised visual impact on the rural landscape and character and appearance of area. An assessment of the visual impact and cumulative impact with other solar farms in the area will be required as part of an assessment of any forthcoming planning application.

In undertaking this Screening Opinion the following criteria as set out in Schedule 3 of the EIA regulations has been considered:

- Characteristics of the proposed development (e.g. size, cumulative effects with existing/approved developments, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution nuisance, risk of accidents and risk to human health);
- Location of the proposed development (e.g. environmental sensitivity of the area); and
- Types and characteristics of the potential impacts (e.g. its magnitude, nature, probability and duration).

The conclusions of the applicant's own screening opinion are agreed insofar as:

- The site is not within a 'sensitive area' as defined by regulation 2(1) of the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- Although a major development, the environmental impact would be no more than of local significance.
- The development proposed is not, in itself, environmentally sensitive or located in an environmentally sensitive area.
- The development would not result in unusually complex or potentially hazardous environmental effects.
- The development would result in enhanced green infrastructure assets & habitats and wildlife corridors across 80 acres.

Whilst a solar PV farm of this size, scale and coverage has the potential to adversely affect the rural, largely un-developed and unspoilt local landscape character, it is not considered to have any environmental effects that would trigger a requirement for an EIA. There would be limited use of natural resources and production of waste and the development is considered unlikely to give rise to significant polluting effects or risk of accidents.

19. 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?	No	
20. ASSESSMENT (EIA REGS SCHEDULE 2 DEVELOPMENT)	OUTCOME	
Is likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES required	No
Not likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES not required	Not Likely
More information is required to inform direction	Request further info	N/A

NAME	Paul Golding
DATE	08.12.2021