South Brooks Solar Farm

Preliminary Environmental Information
Non-Technical Summary

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Blue Planet Solar Limited

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Blue Planet Solar Limited ('the Applicant') is a joint venture between EDF power solutions UK and Ireland, and PS Renewables. The companies have worked together for over five years to develop ground-mounted solar farms, including Longfield Solar Farm which received government consent in 2023.

1.1.2 The Applicant is seeking to obtain development consent for the construction, operation and decommissioning of South Brooks Solar Farm ('the Project'), located in Kent and East Sussex.

1.1.3 As part of the Applicant's statutory pre-application consultation ('Phase Two Consultation), Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) has been prepared to provide the information reasonably required for interested parties, including the public, to understand the likely significant effects of the Project on the surrounding environment and residents, as understood at this stage.

1.2 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

1.2.1 EIA is a process which evaluates the potential for likely environmental effects associated with a project. EIA is inherently a planning process, and forms part of the evidence to which a planning application can be decided upon. In the case of the Project, EIA is a statutory process, which means that the assessment is mandatory as part of the DCO application process as established by the Planning Act 2008[1] and the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

1.3 Purpose of the Preliminary Environmental Information

1.3.1 The PEI outlines the environmental assessment work undertaken to date, the likely environmental effects identified to date, proposed mitigation measures and next steps for the overall assessment. The PEI is split into two volumes:

- Volume 1 – Project and Design Summary: This Volume sets out general details of the Project as well as the design evolution that has occurred since Phase One Consultation ('the period of consultation on the Project which took place between 18 September and 30 October 2025'); and
- Volume 2 – Environmental Summary: This Volume sets out the preliminary environmental assessment and reports on the preliminary likely significant

[1] HM Government (2008), Planning Act 2008 [Online] available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/29/contents

environmental effects of the Project. It also set out the next steps for the environmental work to be undertaken by the Applicant prior to the submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application.

1.3.2 Volume 2 is supported by technical appendices associated with preliminary environmental assessments at this stage. As part of PEI, early draft versions of outline environmental management plans have also been provided and include:

- Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP);
- Outline Construction Environment Management Plan (oCEMP);
- Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP); and
- Outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan (oESSCP).

1.3.3 The PEI has been prepared to enable interested parties (including members of the public, local planning authorities and statutory bodies) to develop an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of the Project and to help inform their consultation responses to Phase Two Consultation.

1.3.4 The current design of the Project has been informed by the ongoing environmental assessment process and responses to consultation and engagement to date. It does not represent the final design. Further survey and design work is currently being undertaken which, along with feedback received from the Phase Two Consultation, will inform the further development of the design of the Project. The final details of the Project, including the likely significant environmental effects, will be detailed in the Environmental Statement (ES) which will be submitted with the DCO application.

1.3.5 This document provides a non-technical summary of the environmental assessments presented in the PEI. Further details can be found within Volume 1 and Volume 2 of the PEI, alongside technical appendices and draft outline management plans. Below is an overview of where details on each environmental assessment can be found in Table 1-1 below.

Table 1-1: Environmental Assessment PEI Locations

Volume 2 Chapter	Environmental Assessment
Chapter 5	Biodiversity
Chapter 6	Hydrology
Chapter 7	Agricultural Soils
Chapter 8	Cultural Heritage
Chapter 9	Landscape and Visual

Volume 2 Chapter	Environmental Assessment
Chapter 10	Transport and Access
Chapter 11	Carbon and Climate Change
Chapter 12	Noise and Vibration
Chapter 13	Human Health
Chapter 14	Socioeconomics
Chapter 15	Air Quality
Chapter 16	Land and Groundwater
Chapter 17	Cumulative Effects
Chapter 18	Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.4 Purpose of this Non-Technical Summary (NTS)

1.4.1 This NTS provides a clear and simple summary of the key methodologies, baseline information, and preliminary findings of the EIA undertaken to date for the Proposed Development, using accessible (non-technical) language.

2 South Brooks Solar Farm

2.1 Location

2.1.1 The location of the Project is show in **Figure 1-1: Site Boundary**. The project is predominately located within the administrative boundary of Kent County Council, and also within East Sussex County Council. The settlements of Lydd, New Romney, Littlestone and Greatstone are located in proximity to parts of the Site boundary.

2.2 Project Description

2.2.1 The South Brooks Solar Farm comprises the construction, operation and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) array electricity generating facility across approximately 1,208 hectares (ha) of land (the 'Site').

2.2.2 The Project comprises five parcels of land (South Brooks A-E) as well as grid connection (GC1-GC4) and interconnecting cable routes (IC1-IC4) (See **Figure 1-2: Site Location Plan**). The Project would establish a grid connection to the National Grid Dungeness Substation, to transfer the electricity to and from the national electricity network.

2.2.3 **Figure 1-3: Indicative Components of South Brooks Solar Farm** sets out the key engineering parameters associated with each of the proposed infrastructure elements at this stage of the Project.

Drawing number
Figure 1-1

Project/Location
South Brooks Solar Farm

Drawing title
Site Boundary

Legend

Site Boundary

0 0.5 1 km

Drawing Notes: The site boundary is for indicative purposes only and requires confirmation on site.

Drawing number

Figure 1-2

Project/Location

South Brooks Solar Farm

Drawing title

Site Location Plan

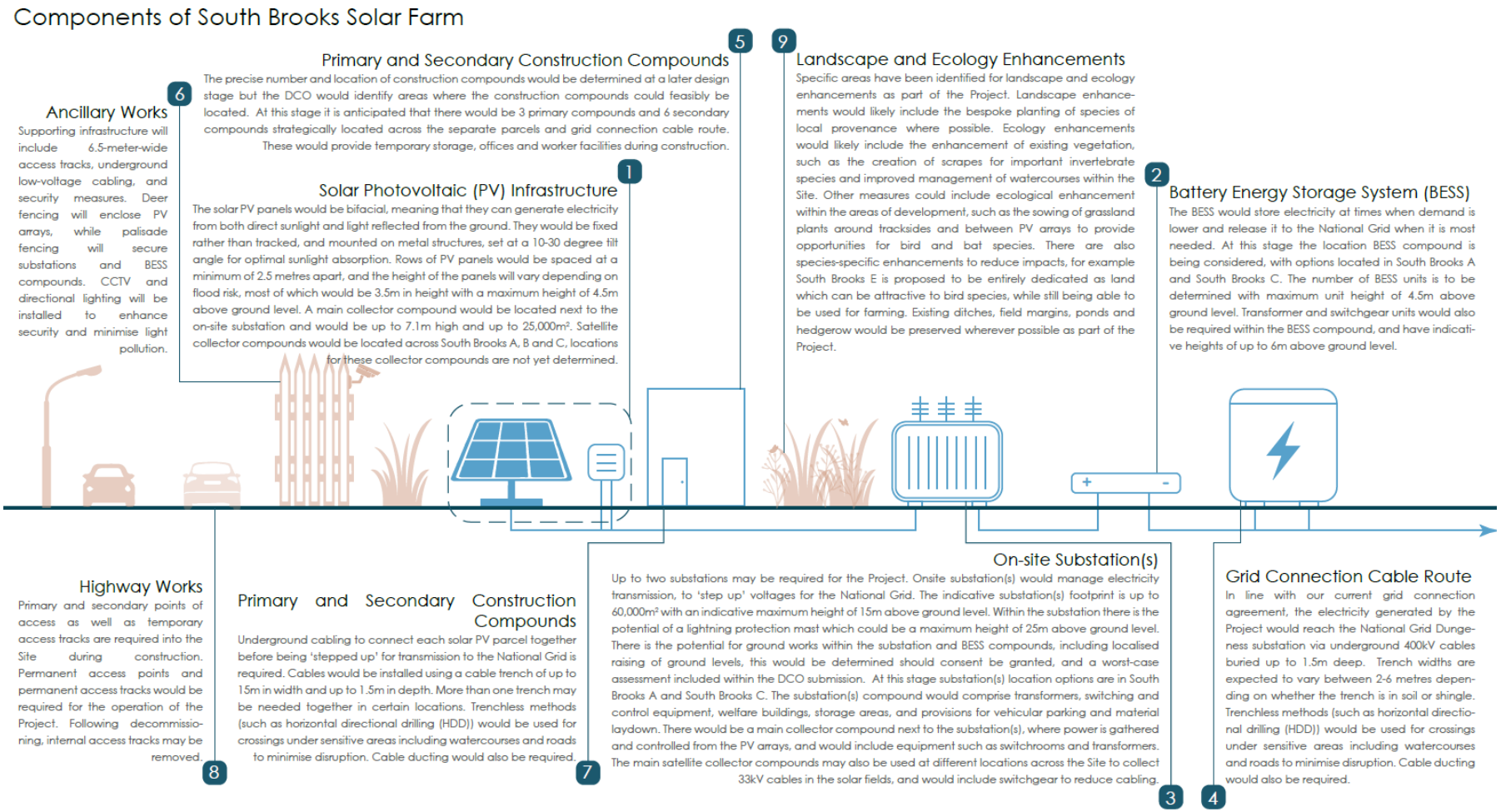
Legend

- Site Boundary
- Grid Connection Cable Routes
- Interconnecting Cable Routes
- Proposed solar PV, supporting solar infrastructure and landscape and ecological mitigation

0 0.5 1 km

Drawing Notes: The site boundary is for indicative purposes only and requires confirmation on site.

Figure 1-3: Indicative Components of South Brooks Solar Farm



Existing land use

2.2.4 The Site comprises approximately 1,208ha of land. The Site boundary is the anticipated maximum area of land that would be required to facilitate the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project. The land within the Site boundary predominately consists of agricultural fields interspersed with vegetation, scrub and limited trees and hedgerow, ditches and watercourses, as well as farm access tracks.

2.2.5 The PV parcels (South Brooks A-E) and areas of the interconnecting cable routes (IC1-IC4) are partially located within areas of ecological importance, including the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), to which there is a commitment as part of the Project to not propose any above ground infrastructure within areas of the SSSI. The grid connection cable routes partially intersect the Ramsar, (Special Protected Area) SPA and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

2.3 Need for South Brooks Solar Farm

2.3.1 To secure the UK's domestic supply of electricity, meet rising energy demand, and deliver on legally binding climate change commitments, older and more carbon-intensive forms of energy production need to be replaced with clean, homegrown renewable sources. Solar energy is a key component in meeting this challenge. Solar energy is reliable, low-carbon and can be deployed more rapidly than many other energy generation technologies. Therefore, the Project (which due to its scale is considered to be a NSIP) forms an important part of meeting wider national clean energy objectives.

2.3.2 Solar farms must connect efficiently into the National Grid to supply the electricity they generate to homes and businesses. This requirement is a primary factor in determining suitable locations. The Project is proposed in proximity to the existing National Grid Dungeness substation, a site with a long-established history of energy generation and associated grid infrastructure. The electricity generated by the Project would reach the National Grid Dungeness Substation via underground cables from the Project substation(s). The Project therefore aligns with the core design principle of maximising the delivery of clean, renewable electricity to the National Grid.

2.4 Site Selection and Alternatives Considered

2.4.1 A robust, multi-stage site selection and alternatives assessment has been undertaken for the Project in accordance with relevant national policy, including National Planning Statement EN-1 and EN-3. This process has considered a range of technical, environmental and planning factors to identify suitable land parcels, including site topography, proximity to grid connection, land availability, accessibility, and avoidance of built-up areas and key ecological designations such as SSSI, SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites.

2.4.2 Further constraints, including agricultural land quality, flood risk, heritage assets and policy designations, have also been taken into account. The current preferred site reflects the best balance between these considerations, although the assessment process remains ongoing. In addition, alternatives have been considered for the cable corridors and access routes, considering environmental and engineering constraints. A summary of the selection and optioneering of the cable corridors and access routes is explained in Section 3 of PEI Volume 1.

2.4.3 A full Site Selection Assessment, including the detailed consideration of alternative sites will be provided with the DCO application. Further details on the site selection process and key considerations, is detailed within Section 2.1 of PEI Volume 1.

3 Assessment Findings

3.1 Biodiversity

Key Impacts and Findings

3.1.1 The Project overlaps with approximately 51ha of the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SSSI. As part of the design response of the Project, no above-ground infrastructure is proposed in these areas.

3.1.2 Depending on the route chosen, there is potential for permanent loss or degradation of existing habitats along proposed cable routes within the Dungeness SAC and the SSSI, which is identified as a potentially significant effect given the long-term recovery period associated with areas of vegetated shingle.

3.1.3 Other potential effects identified including from construction impacts, lighting and habitat fragmentation are expected to not be significant following the implementation of appropriate mitigation.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 5 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- Minimum buffer zones around sensitive receptors including watercourses, hedgerow, trees, ponds and other habitat areas during the construction period;
- Construction works would be timed to avoid sensitive seasons for receptors including nesting and breeding birds;
- The outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) and outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) have been presented at PEI stage in an early draft format, to which detailed mitigation measures regarding biodiversity will be set out in updated plans at DCO submission; and
- Ongoing engagement with bodies such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and the RSPB, will inform the finalisation of mitigation measures, in-line with local conservation priorities.

Next Steps

3.1.4 Further ecological surveys will take place to inform the biodiversity baseline for the Project, which will in turn inform design refinement including for cable route options. As part of the Environmental Assessment (ES), the full Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) will be prepared and submitted as part of the DCO application.

3.1.5 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required for projects that could potentially affect internationally important nature conservation sites, such as SACs and SPAs. As the Project is located close to such sites, an HRA is being undertaken to identify whether there could be any likely significant effects. Initial screening has been completed, and a more detailed assessment is currently being prepared to consider potential impacts and identify any necessary mitigation measures. The findings of this assessment is being discussed with Natural England, and will be reported in the ES. The outcomes of the HRA will inform the final design of the Project.

3.2 Hydrology

Key Impacts and Findings

3.2.1 Through the hydrology assessment at this stage of the Project, flood risk to the Site from rivers, surface water and tidal sources have been identified, to which the extensive ditch network are key sensitive hydrology receptors. Because of the high groundwater, infiltration drainage is not proposed, and surface water would need to be managed through attenuation and controlled discharge to watercourses.

3.2.2 Through the PEI assessment of hydrology, it has been determined that at this stage there are no significant hydrological effects expected, once mitigation measures are put in place.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.2.3 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 6 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- Minimum stand-off distances from Main Rivers (16m) and ordinary watercourses (10m) are to be maintained within the design of the Project;
- Temporary construction and decommissioning measures to manage any silt and pollution run-off, would form part of the mitigation approach to which further details (as well as other specific flood management and water quality protocols) are included within the oCEMP and outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) to be submitted as part of the DCO application;
- Construction compounds and material stockpiles to be located outside of flood extents wherever possible; and
- Substation(s) and Batter Energy Storage System (BESS) areas would achieve greenfield run-off rates through the implementation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

Next Steps

3.2.4 As part of the hydrology assessment for the ES, a Water Framework Directive (WFD) Assessment will be prepared to evidence that the Project does not impact the status of water bodies in the area. A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be prepared to confirm design flood levels. Further drainage design work will also take place. Further engagement will also take place with the Environment Agency and the Romney Marsh Area Internal Drainage Board (RMAIDB) regarding the Project proposals, assessment approaches and watercourse easements.

3.3 Agricultural Soils

Key Impacts and Findings

3.3.1 At this stage of the Project, based on 812 hectares of survey, the majority of the Site has been identified as Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land, mainly Grades 2 (51%) and 3a (32%), which is sensitive to soil disturbance and compaction during construction. Further surveys across the remaining land are being undertaken in 2026 and will be reported in the ES as part of the DCO application.

3.3.2 Construction activities (topsoil stripping, cable excavation, machinery movement) are assessed as having a Moderate Adverse (Significant) residual effect on Grades 1, 2, and 3a soils. During operation, soil structure is expected to improve under vegetation cover beneath the PV panels. The effects will see a slight beneficial (Not Significant) effect for all soils, as they will all see an improvement in structure as the soil is left to rest. At decommissioning, with management in place, the Site would be reinstated to at least its pre-construction quality.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.3.3 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 7 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- Hard infrastructure (substation(s), BESS) would be located on lower-quality land wherever possible;
- An Outline Soil Management Plan will be developed in consultation with Natural England; which will be submitted as part of the DCO application; and
- A detailed Soil Management Plan (SMP) would be prepared by the Principal Contractor, covering controlled topsoil and subsoil stripping, storage, and reinstatement.

Next Steps

3.3.4 Going forward the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) survey will be fully completed across the Project, which will inform the assessment at ES stage.

Alongside this, a soil health assessment will be completed. An outline Soils Management Plan will be developed in consultation with Natural England.

3.4 Cultural Heritage

Key Impacts and Findings

3.4.1 Across the Project, there are 49 known non-designated archaeological assets of up to Medium importance located within the site parcels. The preliminary assessment at this stage identifies that the loss of buried archaeological remains during intrusive groundworks (foundation piling, cable trenching, topsoil stripping) could be significant without appropriate mitigation, but could be reduced through staged archaeological evaluation.

3.4.2 The Grade I All Saints Church is identified as a high-importance receptor. However, South Brooks E is now being developed for ecological mitigation only, with no above-ground solar infrastructure. In terms of further potentially significant effects, potential waterlogged archaeological deposits, which can preserve organic remains in excellent condition, could be affected by changes to hydrology.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.4.3 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 8 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- Staged archaeological evaluation is to be undertaken prior to construction to confirm the nature and significance of archaeological remains, subject to further consultation with relevant consultees including Historic England;
- A Mitigation strategy is to be agreed with Historic England, East Sussex County Council, and Kent County Council archaeologists; and
- Additional landscape screening and hedgerow enhancement has been proposed to reduce visual impact on the setting of listed building in the vicinity of the Project.

Next Steps

3.4.4 Going forward, the programme and scope of trial trenching for the Project is to be agreed with Historic England and county archaeologists. The heritage chapter for the ES will draw upon the completed fieldwork and consultation feedback, alongside the completion of the setting assessment for any affected heritage designated sites.

3.5 Landscape and Visual

Key Impacts and Findings

3.5.1 Potential significant adverse landscape and visual effects are reported at this stage during both construction and operation, for multiple landscape character areas, including the Brookland Farms, Dungeness Shingle, and Walland Marsh Farmlands Regional Landscape Character Areas.

3.5.2 Construction effects are assessed as Moderate to Major Adverse (Significant) across several landscape character areas. Operational effects are assessed as Significant for numerous receptors — including residents, PRoW users, and visitors — particularly in years immediately following completion, before new planting matures. Effects are expected to reduce over time, with some potentially remaining significant given the scale and open nature of the landscape.

3.5.3 Since Phase One Consultation, the removal of overhead line options for the grid connection corridors has led to a reduction in associated landscape and visual impacts.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.5.4 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 9 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- Retention of and stand-offs from existing landscape features;
- New planting including diverse grassland, meadows, hedgerows, and trees to provide screening and biodiversity enhancement over time;
- South Brooks E is now retained as ecological mitigation and landscape enhancement with no above-ground solar infrastructure; and
- Draft Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) has been submitted for consultation at PEI stage, with a detailed plan to be developed and secured through the DCO application.

Next Steps

3.5.5 Detailed assessments will continue to be developed as part of the ES. Regarding landscape, a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be submitted for all identified receptors across construction, Year 1, Year 15, and decommissioning for the Project.

3.6 Transport and Access

Key Impacts and Findings

3.6.1 At this stage of the assessment, HGV traffic during peak construction is predicted to exceed the 30% threshold on several routes, including the A2070 south of Ashford, A259 at Brookland, A259 south of Old Romney, and B2075, triggering the need for detailed assessment. Overall traffic flows (cars + HGVs combined) remain within the 10% and 30% thresholds on all links.

3.6.2 Public Rights of Way (PRoW) users within the Site boundary would be significantly affected during construction, as they are currently unused by construction traffic (an increase from zero). However, the effects will be temporary and will be manged under an outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy.

3.6.3 With a detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) and Abnormal Indivisible Load (AIL) management strategy, effects on road users are expected to be not significant.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.6.4 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 10 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- A draft Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) has been published as part of Phase Two Consultation, which will be refined and secured through the DCO application;
- An Outline Rights of Way and Access Strategy (oRoWAS) will be submitted as part of the DCO application to manage impacts on PRoW users;
- AIL management measures to control the movement of abnormal loads, including advance route surveys, timing restrictions, and escort vehicles; and
- Construction traffic would avoid peak periods where possible and to use routes that minimise passage through residential areas, as part of measures to be outlined as part of the oCTMP.

Next Steps

3.6.5 Once the final masterplan and other design parameters have been detailed, the traffic impact assessment will be confirmed. Engagement will take place with Kent and East Sussex highways authorities and Kent Police to agree AIL routing and management. As part of the DCO application, the oCTMP and oRoWAS will be submitted.

3.7 Carbon and Climate Change

Key Impacts and Findings

3.7.1 The Project's total lifecycle GHG emissions are estimated at approximately 2.83 million tonnes of CO_2 equivalent (tCO_2e), primarily from the manufacture of solar PV modules and battery storage systems. As a comparison, these emissions represent less than 0.05% of the UK's 5th Carbon Budget (2028–2032).

3.7.2 The Project is expected to generate approximately 680,000 MWh of electricity in its first year, with a lifecycle carbon intensity of 77 gCO_2e/kWh, less than 35% of the UK grid's current average of 222.9 gCO_2e/kWh. Over 60 years, the Project is estimated to save 5.4 million tCO_2e compared with the UK grid average, and 10.2 million tCO_2e compared with gas generation. Therefore, the Project will effectively 'pay back' its construction emissions with 7 years of operation compared to grid average.

3.7.3 The Project's GHG effects are assessed as Significant Beneficial.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.7.4 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 11 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- The primary climate mitigation measure is the Project itself — generating clean renewable energy to displace fossil fuels; and
- Infrastructure would be sited in areas of lower flood risk where possible, with minimum finished ground levels determined by the Flood Risk Assessment.

Next Steps

3.7.5 As the design for the Project develops, the GHG emissions calculations will be refined. As part of the carbon and climate change assessment, UK grid intensity values will be monitored to update the ES.

3.8 Noise and Vibration

Key Impacts and Findings

3.8.1 Background noise levels at all monitored locations are low to very low, meaning any project-related noise will need to be carefully managed.

3.8.2 Piling for solar panel mounts is a potential source of vibration. As a result, a study distance of 100m has been adopted beyond which vibration effects are unlikely. For on-site construction and operational noise, a 300m study distance has been adopted as the zone within which effects could be significant. Operational vibration

is not expected, as there are no vibration-emitting sources in a solar farm's operational phase.

3.8.3 With appropriate mitigation measures in place, no significant noise or vibration effects are currently anticipated at any phase.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.8.4 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 12 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- Minimum stand-off distances f(of 300m) rom residential properties to noise generated equipment (including inverters, substation(s) and BESS);
- The oCEMP would specify operational hours, vehicle and plant management, and working methods to control construction noise;
- Localised acoustic bunding (earth mounds) and barriers would be designed where required; and
- Quieter plant specification would be selected wherever practicable.

Next Steps

3.8.5 As part of the noise assessment for the ES, a detailed noise modelling for construction, operational, and decommissioning phases will be developed using baseline survey results. The associated assessment criteria will be agreed with local authorities. Noise mitigation measures will be developed for inclusion in the ES and DCO application following further design refinement.

3.9 Human Health

Key Impacts and Findings

3.9.1 The Project is expected to have positive health effects through its contribution to renewable energy, climate change mitigation, and local employment. Most specific health effects are assessed in the relevant technical chapters, with human health conclusions drawing on these findings.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.9.2 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 13 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- Landscape mitigation measures to reduce visual amenity impacts on residential properties;

- PRoW and access measures would be secured through the oRoWAS to be submitted as part of the DCO application;
- The BESS would have a self-contained design to control and contain firewater in the event of a fire. An outline Battery Safety Management Plan (oBSMP) is to be developed and submitted with the DCO application; and
- Best practice pollution control measures are to be included within the oCEMP to protect private water supplies from construction contamination.

Next Steps

3.9.3 The Human Health chapter for the ES will draw upon the findings of other ES assessments including Landscape and Visual, Noise, Air Quality, and Socioeconomics chapters. The assessment will also be updated following Phase Two Consultation feedback.

3.10 Socioeconomics

Key Impacts and Findings

3.10.1 The Project is expected to generate temporary employment during construction and permanent employment during operation, delivering positive economic benefits locally, regionally, and nationally. Some displacement of agricultural employment is anticipated as farmland is temporarily taken out of arable production.

3.10.2 The impact on local tourism and the visitor economy is a key consideration, particularly for communities such as Dungeness, Greatstone, New Romney, Lydd, and Rye — where tourism is a significant part of the local economy.

3.10.3 Overall, with appropriate mitigation, no significant adverse socioeconomic effects are expected. The net employment and Gross Value Added (GVA) effects are assessed as Minor Beneficial (Not Significant) at the local level.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.10.4 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 14 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- The draft outline Employment and Skills and Supply Chain Management Plan (oESSCMP) has been published as part of Phase Two Consultation, setting out how the Project is aiming to maximise local employment and supply chain opportunities; and
- Continued community engagement to understand and respond to socioeconomic concerns.

Next Steps

3.10.5 As part of the ES, the full socioeconomic assessment will provide further detail on net employment calculations (accounting for displacement and leakage), GVA estimates at local, regional, and national levels, and a tourism impact assessment. Engagement will continue with local businesses, parish councils, and community foundations.

3.11 Air Quality

Key Impacts and Findings

3.11.1 The PEI assessment outlines that the existing air quality in the study area is consider good, with air quality pollutant concentrations well below national objectives. Dust from construction and decommissioning activities is the primary concern, with potential to affect nearby sensitive receptors and ecological designated sites.

3.11.2 Operational emissions are expected to be negligible.

3.11.3 With appropriate dust control measures, no significant air quality effects are expected at any stage.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.11.4 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 15 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- Draft oCEMP includes measures to avoid, minimise, and control dust emissions in accordance with guidance from the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM);
- Construction equipment would be procured to meet current emission standards;
- Construction compounds would be positioned at least 250m from sensitive receptors to reduce potential impacts; and
- The oDEMP would include equivalent measures for the decommissioning phase.

Next Steps

3.11.5 As part of the ES, a detailed air quality assessment would be detailed once the Project boundary is finalised. Updates to the oCEMP following consultation will also reflect these findings. Impacts on nearby ecological designated sites from dust and nitrogen deposition where relevant are to be assessed at the ES stage.

3.12 Land and Groundwater

Key Impacts and Findings

3.12.1 Groundwater sensitivity varies across the Project boundary; areas along some cable route options are of Very High importance, meaning significant effects on groundwater quality are possible if contamination sources are introduced through earthworks or piling. The geological SSSI is a Very High sensitivity receptor; earthworks during construction could cause a slight adverse effect on geological deposits, though this is assessed as Not Significant following mitigation.

3.12.2 Groundwater-dependent terrestrial ecosystems within the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SSSI are at risk from contamination and changes to the groundwater regime.

3.12.3 Contamination risks and mineral resources have been scoped out of the detailed assessment, on the basis that a Preliminary Risk Assessment demonstrates minimal contamination risk and that a Battery Safety Management Plan is in place.

3.12.4 Potential significant effects are identified for groundwater receptors, particularly along the eastern cable route options.

Proposed Mitigation Measures

3.12.5 Proposed mitigation measures as outlined within Chapter 16 of PEI Volume 2 include:

- The oCEMP, oOEMP, and oDEMP would all include measures to protect land and groundwater from contamination from fuels, chemicals, and construction activities;
- The outline Battery Safety Management Plan (oBSMP) will address contamination risks from BESS units;
- Going forward, cable route selection will take into account lower-groundwater-sensitivity options where practicable; and
- Piling and earthworks techniques are to be managed to minimise changes to the groundwater regime.

Next Steps

3.12.6 As part of the ES, the Land and Groundwater chapter will present updated assessment findings following further design work on cable route selection. The Preliminary Risk Assessment will also be finalised following consultation feedback. The oBSMP will also feed into the assessment as part of the DCO application.

4 Next Steps

4.1 Overview of EIA Next Steps

4.1.1 The assessments presented within the PEI for South Brooks Solar Farm are preliminary at this stage. A full Environmental Statement (ES) will be submitted as part of the DCO application in early 2027. This will include finalised indicative design details, results from ongoing surveys (including further biodiversity survey results as well as other environmental data), and further outline management plans to secure the proposed mitigation as part of the Project.

4.2 Overview of Project Next Steps

4.2.1 Phase Two Consultation for South Brooks Solar Farm is running between Thursday 28th May and 11:59pm on Thursday 9th July 2026. More information can be found at the Project website (southbrookssolarfarm.co.uk). The PEI, to which this Non-Technical Summary relates, is intended to enable interested parties, including members of the public, to understand the likely significant environmental effects of South Brooks Solar Farm to help inform their consultation responses.

4.2.2 There are a number of ways to respond to the consultation, including:

- Completing a consultation questionnaire online at: southbrookssolarfarm.co.uk;
- Emailing a completed questionnaire to: info@southbrookssolarfarm.co.uk;
- Posting a questionnaire (no stamp required) to: South Brooks Solar Farm, FREEPOST SEC Newgate UK LOCAL;
- Submitting your comments by email to: info@southbrookssolarfarm.co.uk or in writing to the above Freepost address.

4.2.3 Any feedback that is received through the consultation process will be considered alongside further information gained through on-going technical work to inform the ongoing design of South Brooks Solar Farm

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www.southbrookssolarfarm.co.uk