

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

1. PROJECT DETAILS		
Case Reference		Brief description of the project / development
Applicant	Renewable Connections Developments Limited	
LPA	Chichester District Council	
2. EIA DETAILS		
Is the project Schedule 1 development according to Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations?		No
Is the project Schedule 2 development under the EIA Regulations?		Yes
If YES, under which description of development in Column 1 and Column 2?		3a) Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water (unless included in Schedule 1); The area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectare
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?		
Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in Column 2 exceeded?		Yes
If yes, which applicable threshold/criteria?		Site area is above 0.5ha
4. SCREENING MATRIX		

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION	RESPONSE AND REASONING		- IS A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT LIKELY?	
1. NATURAL RESOURCES				
1.1 Will construction, operation or decommissioning of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the topography of the area?	No	The proposal involves erection of solar panels which are positioned in response to the site's topography.	No	The site will be constructed in a phased manner in accordance with a Construction and Environmental Management Plan that will minimise the potential for impacts. The nature of the development involving the erection of the panels is not groundwork intensive.
1.2 Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources above or below ground such as land, soil, water, materials/minerals or energy which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes	The proposal involves the creation of temporary development on agricultural land. The site is underlain by brick clay, at depth.	No	The land is shown provisionally as Grade 4 and 3 agricultural land on the ALC Map. However, the Map does not differentiate between 3a (good quality) and 3b (moderate quality). The majority of the site is not anticipated to be best and most versatile agricultural land. An Agricultural Land Classification Survey has been undertaken to determine the detailed quantities of land grades across the site. It is provisionally showing the majority of the site as Grade 3b. An ALC Report will be submitted with the planning application.
1.3 Are there any areas on/around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources which could be affected by the project, e.g. forestry, agriculture, water/coastal, fisheries, minerals?	Yes	The proposed development is on agricultural land. Some adjoining land is also agricultural.	No	The land is shown provisionally as Grade 4 and 3 agricultural land on the ALC Map. However, the Map does not differentiate between 3a (good quality) and 3b (moderate quality). The majority of the site is not anticipated to be best and most versatile agricultural land. However, an Agricultural Land Classification Survey (as referred to above).
2. WASTE				
2.1 Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	No	Given the topography of the site it is not considered that the project will produce any significant amounts of waste. Soil material will be conserved and reused where appropriate under the guidance of a Landscape and Environmental Management Plan and Decommissioning Strategy.	No	N/A

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATION	RESPONSE AND REASONING		IS A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT LIKELY?	
3. POLLUTION AND NUISANCES				
3.1 Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air?	Yes	The construction phase of the development will generate traffic which has the potential to impact local air quality over a temporary period.	No	The anticipated construction period is limited to around 20-24 weeks. Movements to the northern parcels would be limited to a shorter 4-week window. Any impact would be temporary and only during construction. During operation traffic movements will be minimal and related to site maintenance.
3.2 Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat, energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes	<p>There is the potential for both noise and dust to emanate from construction activities.</p> <p>Electricity from solar panels and transmission to the power grid emits extremely weak electromagnetic fields.</p>	No	<p>There are properties near to the site, mainly consisting of farmhouses and other residential properties. Visual impact, including glint and glare may be a factor, depending on the topography of the land and local/distant views.</p> <p>The main impact on amenity is likely to occur at construction stage and this will be addressed at the outset as part of the application. An Environmental Noise Impact Assessment will be carried out and determine the nearest noise sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Noise and dust can both be adequately controlled through measures set out in an outline CEMP which would be submitted with the planning application. These measures will ensure that the proposals will not give rise to likely significant effects.</p> <p>Exposure to low-level electromagnetic fields has been studied extensively, and there is no evidence that it is harmful to human health, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).</p>

<p>3.3 Will the project lead to risks of contamination of land or water from releases of pollutants onto the ground or into surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea?</p>	No	The proposed development site is previously undisturbed agricultural land with no history of uses that would give rise to contamination release.	No	Site drainage will be constructed in accordance with the Drainage Strategy that will be submitted as part of the planning application.
<p>3.4 Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage, e.g. where existing legal environmental standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project?</p>	No	The proposed development site is previously undisturbed agricultural land with no history of uses on site or nearby that would give rise to contamination release.	No	N/A
<p>4. POPULATION AND HUMAN HEALTH</p>				
<p>4.1 Will there be any risk of major accidents (including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge) during construction, operation or decommissioning?</p>	No		No	N/A
<p>4.2 Will the project present a risk to the population (having regard to population density) and their human health during construction, operation or decommissioning? (for example, due to water contamination or air pollution)</p>	No		No	N/A

5. WATER RESOURCES

5.1 Are there any water resources including surface waters, e.g. rivers, lakes/ponds, coastal or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project, particularly in terms of their volume and flood risk?

No

The Site lies mainly within Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding). A small part of the Site, on the south eastern boundary, within the red line, lies within Flood Zones 2/3. This area is alongside the Wey and Arun Canal.

No

The Solar PV use at the site is categorised as 'less vulnerable' under the NPPF guidance. The site would also need to comply with the sequential test as required by the Local Planning Authority (LPA); giving priority to the development of sites with the lowest risk of flooding.

Given the location of the section of Flood Zone 2/3, the site layout can be designed to avoid it.

A full Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Drainage Strategy would accompany the planning application.

6. BIODIVERSITY (SPECIES AND HABITATS)

<p>6.1 Are there any protected areas which are designated or classified for their terrestrial, avian and marine ecological value, or any non-designated / non-classified areas which are 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>	No	<p>The site comprises agricultural land. The site is not near to any designated nature conservation designations. However, given that the site comprises open fields and hedgerows, there may be ecological interest within and/or adjoining the site.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>A Phase 1 Habitat Assessment (to inform a Preliminary Ecological Assessment) was carried out on 1st February 2024.</p> <p>Based on the evaluation, further surveys are recommended. These are currently being scheduled and will capture breeding birds and Great Crested Newt eDNA.</p> <p>The PEA and supporting surveys will be submitted with the planning application.</p> <p>The development would be carried out in accordance with any mitigation that the Ecological Consultants advise is necessary, including the presence of an Ecological Clerk of Works, should that be required.</p>
<p>6.2 Could any protected, important or sensitive species of flora or fauna which use areas on or around the site, e.g. for breeding, nesting, foraging, resting, over-wintering, or migration, be affected by the project?</p>	No	<p>The site has the potential to support the following Protected and Notable species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badger; • Breeding birds, and • Great Crested Newts. 	<p>No</p> <p>A Phase 1 Habitat Assessment (to inform a Preliminary Ecological Assessment) was carried out on 1st February 2024.</p> <p>Based on the evaluation carried out, a number of further surveys are recommended, other than pre-work checks.</p> <p>The PEA will be submitted with the planning application along with the additional survey outputs. This comprises the finding of the walkover survey, a detailed report considering species and habitats present, phase 1 habitat map (to JNCC standards), desk study including local records and recommendations for mitigation and biodiversity enhancement as required</p>

7. LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

<p>7.1 Are there any areas or features on or around the location which are protected for their landscape and scenic value, and/or any non-designated / non-classified areas or features of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?¹ Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional or local).</p>	No	<p>The Site is not within a special landscape area but is within open countryside. The site is not located with any area which is protected for its landscape or scenic value. Landscape and visual impact (including glint and glare) would be considered in detail in any planning application.</p>	No	<p>Landscape and visual impact (including glint and glare) would be considered in detail as part of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). This assessment work has been commissioned alongside mapping the Zone of Theoretical Visibility and consideration of representative viewpoints.</p> <p>A separated specialist Glint and Glare Assessment will also support the application.</p>
<p>7.2 Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people? (If so, from where, what direction, and what distance?)</p>	Yes	<p>There may be views of the development from the B2133 to the west as well as nearby properties</p> <p>There are also a number of public rights of way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridleway 1300 1 – This PROW runs east to west along the access track, this PROW runs parallel with the south western parcel, but does not enter it. • Bridleway 433 1 – This PROW runs east to west and runs parallel to the northern parcel. This PROW does not enter the Site. • Bridleway 433 2 – This PROW runs north to south and runs along the farm track that provides access to the south eastern parcel. This PROW enters the site. • Bridleway 805 1 – This PROW runs from the corner of the northernmost parcel to the B2133. This PROW crosses the access point only. • Footpath 804 – This PROW runs around the north eastern corner of the northernmost parcel. 	No	<p>The application will be supported by a LVIA. Visualisations will be included to demonstrate that the proposed solar farm will not give rise to significant effects on the setting of heritage assets and nearby residential areas or viewpoints. A Glint and Glare Assessment will also accompany any planning application to demonstrate that the proposal could be accommodated in the immediate and wider receiving environment, with reference to specific receptors.</p>

8. CULTURAL HERITAGE/ARCHAEOLOGY

<p>8.1 Are there any areas or features which are protected for their cultural heritage or archaeological value, or any non-designated / classified areas and/or features of cultural heritage or archaeological importance on or around the location which could be affected by the project (including potential impacts on setting, and views to, from and within)? Where designated indicate level of designation (international, national, regional, or local).</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>There are a number Grade II listed buildings within 1km of the Site, and one non-designated heritage asset (Wey and Arun Canal)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>As a consequence of the site's context, the application will be supported both by a Historic and Desk Based Assessment that addresses both above and below ground assets. Geophysical Survey work is currently being carried out.</p>
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9. TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

<p>9.1 Are there any routes on or around the location which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?</p>	No	<p>There are also a number of public rights of way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridleway 1300 1 – This PROW runs east to west along the access track, this PROW runs parallel with the south western parcel, but does not enter it. • Bridleway 433 1 – This PROW runs east to west and runs parallel to the northern parcel. This PROW does not enter the Site. • Bridleway 433 2 – This PROW runs north to south and runs along the farm track that provides access to the south eastern parcel. This PROW enters the site. • Bridleway 805 1 – This PROW runs from the corner of the northernmost parcel to the B2133. This PROW crosses the access point only. • Footpath 804 – This PROW runs around the north eastern corner of the northernmost parcel. 	No	<p>Impact on the public right of way network will be addressed in the LVIA and Landscape Strategy.</p>
<p>9.2 Are there any transport routes on or around the location which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?</p>	No	<p>There are no transport routes which would be affected once the development is operational. Any impact is likely to occur at construction stage and would be temporary in nature for circa 20-24 weeks.</p>	No	<p>The anticipated construction period is limited to around 20-24 weeks. Movements to the northern parcels would be limited to a shorter 4-week window. Any impact would be temporary and only during construction. During operation traffic movements will be minimal and related to site maintenance.</p> <p>The level of movements is not considered to be significant.</p> <p>Construction traffic would follow an enforced route to and from the south.</p> <p>Any highway impacts would be addressed and controlled through a Construction Traffic Management Plan, to include routeing.</p>

10. LAND USE

<p>10.1 Are there existing land uses or community facilities on or around the location which could be affected by the project? E.g. housing, densely populated areas, industry / commerce, farm/agricultural holdings, forestry, tourism, mining, quarrying, facilities relating to health, education, places of worship, leisure /sports / recreation.</p>	Yes	<p>The Site lies to the east of Roundstreet Common and to the north Newpound and Wisborough Green, which is approximately 500 metres in distance at its nearest point. The site is partially bounded to the west by B2133 Road. Newpound is located approximately 720m to the south of the nearest panelled area.</p> <p>The nearest residential properties to the development parcels area: Buthchett's Farm Cottages, Malham View, Malham Oak, Malham Lodge, Oakwood Farm, Trenchmore Farm, Durbans, Malkinsons Farm, The Lunsns.</p>	No	<p>There will be some loss of agricultural land, but any loss would be temporary and reversible. The extent to which this is best and most versatile agricultural land will be determined through an Agricultural Land Survey.</p> <p>The land is shown provisionally as Grade 4 and 3 agricultural land on the ALC Map. However, the Map does not differentiate between 3a (good quality) and 3b (moderate quality). The majority of the site is not anticipated to be best and most versatile agricultural land. An Agricultural Land Classification Survey has been undertaken to determine the detailed quantities of land grades across the site. It is provisionally showing the majority of the site as Grade 3b.</p> <p>It is not considered that the loss of agricultural land in this location will give rise to likely significant effects.</p>
<p>10.2 Are there any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project?</p>	No	None known.	No	<p>There are no known plans. However, cumulative effects would be considered in the planning submission.</p>

11. LAND STABILITY AND CLIMATE

<p>11.1 Is the location susceptible to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, or extreme /adverse climatic conditions, e.g. temperature inversions, fogs, severe winds, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?</p>	No	The proposed development site comprises mainly farm land with relatively gentle gradients. The site is not susceptible to issues arising from either land stability or climate change.	No	The Flood Risk Assessment will take into account appropriate guidance and allowance for climate change.
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12. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

<p>12.1 Could this project together with existing and/or approved development result in cumulation of impacts together during the construction/operation phase?</p>	No	There is an existing solar farm to the east. This could give rise to cumulative impacts. This would extend to landscape/visual impacts and glint and glare.	No	<p>Operational cumulative impacts/effects would be addressed in the landscape and visual impact assessment. There are belts of woodland and thick hedgerows that naturally minimise intervisibility between the two sites as well as significant distance (over 2km),</p> <p>Construction impacts would be dealt with in the planning statement/CEMP.</p> <p>Given the other solar site is operational, cumulative effects (if any) are considered likely to be insignificant.</p>
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13. TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS

<p>13.1 Is the project likely to lead to transboundary effects?²</p>	No		N/A	
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5. CONCLUSIONS – ACCORDING TO EIA REGULATIONS SCHEDULE 3

The nature, scale and characteristics of the development are not considered likely to give rise to significant effects.

The proposed location of the development does not have the potential to impact upon a defined sensitive area.

There is no potential for likely significant effects that would trigger the need for EIA.

6. ASSESSMENT (EIA REGS SCHEDULE 2 DEVELOPMENT)	OUTCOME	
Is likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES required	
Not likely to have significant effects on the environment	ES not required	✓

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DATE	March 2024