



High Grove Solar

Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) Non Technical Summary

April 2025

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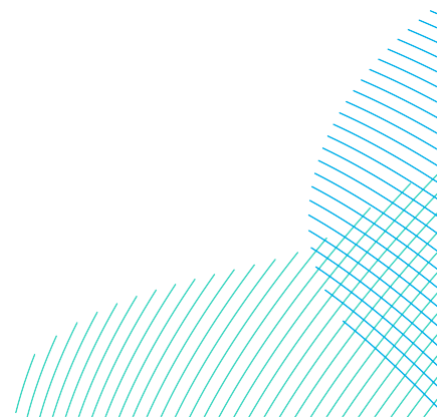
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1 Introduction

1.1 What is the context of this non-technical summary?

- 1.1.1.1 RWE Renewables UK Solar and Storage Limited (RWE) is seeking to obtain development consent for the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of High Grove Solar, located in Norfolk.
- 1.1.1.2 To inform statutory consultation as part of the planning process, a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) has been prepared to provide the information reasonably required for interested parties, including the public, to understand the likely significant effects of High Grove Solar on the surrounding environment and residents, as understood at this stage.

1.2 What is an environmental impact assessment?

- 1.2.1.1 An environmental impact assessment is a process that identifies the key environmental effects resulting from the construction, operation and, where relevant, decommissioning of a proposed development. It suggests ways that these effects can be avoided, reduced or managed. Environmental impact assessment is a requirement of United Kingdom law for certain developments that have the potential to cause significant environmental effects.

1.3 What is the purpose of this document?

- 1.3.1.1 The PEIR outlines the environmental assessment work undertaken to date, the likely significant environmental effects identified to date, proposed 'embedded' mitigation¹ and 'additional' mitigation² and likely residual significant environmental effects based on the environmental baseline information currently available and the current design of High Grove Solar. The PEIR is split into a series of documents that cross refer to each other where appropriate, including:
- Chapters of the main report (listed in Table 1).
 - Figures showing relevant information associated with each chapter of the main report numbered sequentially starting with the chapter number
 - Appendices – providing further technical information and numbered according to each of the chapters of the main report they are appendices to.

¹ Mitigation measures that are incorporated in the design of High Grove Solar Farm

² Mitigation measures to avoid, reduce or manage significant adverse effects that remain after embedded mitigation has been taken into consideration

- Non-Technical Summary (this document).

- 1.3.1.2 The PEIR 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 High Grove Solar and to help inform their consultation responses during this statutory consultation stage.
- 1.3.1.3 The design of High Grove Solar, as presented in the PEIR, has been informed by the ongoing environmental assessment process and responses to consultation and engagement to date. It does not represent the final design. Ongoing survey and design work is currently being undertaken which, along with feedback received from statutory consultation, will inform the design of High Grove Solar.
- 1.3.1.4 This document provides a non-technical summary of the environmental assessments presented in the PEIR. Further details can be found in other documents of the PEIR. Table 1 below is an overview of where details on each environmental assessment can be found in the PEIR:

Table 1 ***Overview of the chapters and appendices to the PEIR***

Chapters	Environmental assessment	Appendices
Chapter 1	Introduction	1.1 Competent Expert Evidence 1.2 Glossary and abbreviations
Chapter 2	The Proposed Development	n/a
Chapter 3	Alternatives and Design Iteration	n/a
Chapter 4	Approach to Environmental Impact Assessment	4.1 Scoping Report 4.2 Scoping Opinion
Chapter 5	Agricultural land and soils	5.1 Draft Agricultural land classification assessment
Chapter 6	Biodiversity	6.1 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal 6.2 Riparian mammal survey 6.3 Habitat Regulations Assessment - Screening 6.4 Breeding Bird Survey Report 6.5 Non-Breeding Bird Survey Report
Chapter 7	Climate change	7.1 Climate Change Supporting Evidence
Chapter 8	Cultural Heritage	8.1 Desk-based baseline assessment and setting assessment
Chapter 9	Glint and Glare	n/a
Chapter 10	Landscape and Visual	10.1 Legislation and planning policy 10.2 Landscape baseline and effects 10.3 Visual baseline and effects 10.4 Draft Arboricultural Impact Assessment

Chapters	Environmental assessment	Appendices
Chapter 11	Noise and Vibration	11.1 Noise Data 11.2 Noise Assessment Results
Chapter 12	Socioeconomics	n/a
Chapter 13	Traffic and Transport	13.1 Baseline and 2025 Baseline Traffic Flows 13.2 Future Year Traffic Flows with Construction Traffic 13.3 Personal Injury Accident Data Summary
Chapter 14	Water Resources and Flood Risk	14.1 Preliminary Flood risk assessment 14.2 Preliminary Drainage Strategy 14.3 Preliminary WER compliance assessment
Chapter 15	Cumulative Effects Assessment	15.1 Long list committed developments 15.2 Short list committed developments

2 High Grove Solar

2.1 What is High Grove Solar?

- 2.1.1.1 High Grove Solar is a solar farm with an electrical generating capacity of over 50 megawatts (MW), comprising a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating facility and other associated infrastructure discussed below.
- 2.1.1.2 It includes land required for the solar PV modules, Battery Energy Storage Systems, underground cables, on site substations and other supporting infrastructure.
- 2.1.1.3 The main elements of High Grove Solar comprise the following:
- Five Panel Areas (Western, Central, Northern, Eastern and Southern) which contain groups of solar PV modules (either fixed in position or will track the sun throughout the day);
 - Up to 7no. 132 kilovolt (kV) on site substations;
 - 33kV and 132kV underground cables to connect the Panel Areas to the 132kV substations;
 - Battery Energy Storage Systems to allow the energy from the solar PV modules to be stored then released when required;
 - Transformers and inverters for managing the electricity produced;
 - Storage containers to hold equipment;
 - Security measures such as fencing, closed circuit television (CCTV) and sensor triggered lighting;
 - Access tracks to facilitate access for vehicles;

- Drainage to provide sustainable drainage solutions at source to ensure surface water run-off is management appropriately; and
- Environmental mitigation and enhancement measures.

2.1.1.4 As High Grove Solar comprises the 'construction or extension of a generating station' and will have a 'capacity of more than 50 megawatts' it is considered to be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the Planning Act 2008. Therefore, High Grove Solar requires an application for a Development Consent Order to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate before being determined by the Secretary of State for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

2.1.1.5 To connect High Grove Solar to the grid and distribute the renewable energy generated, a new 400kV substation is required. The new substation is not just needed for High Grove Solar, however; other developments coming forward in the region will also require this new grid connection point. Consequently, National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) are responsible for choosing the location, size and design of the new 400kV substation. NGET have started on this work and anticipate that they will have a preferred location at the end of this year (2025). As there is still a lot of information to be confirmed about the size, location and design, RWE has not included this work in the Proposed Development, and it is therefore not considered in the preliminary assessment. The potential substation will be included within the cumulative schemes considered as part of Chapter 15 Cumulative Effects Assessment of the ES should sufficient information be available at the time of writing.

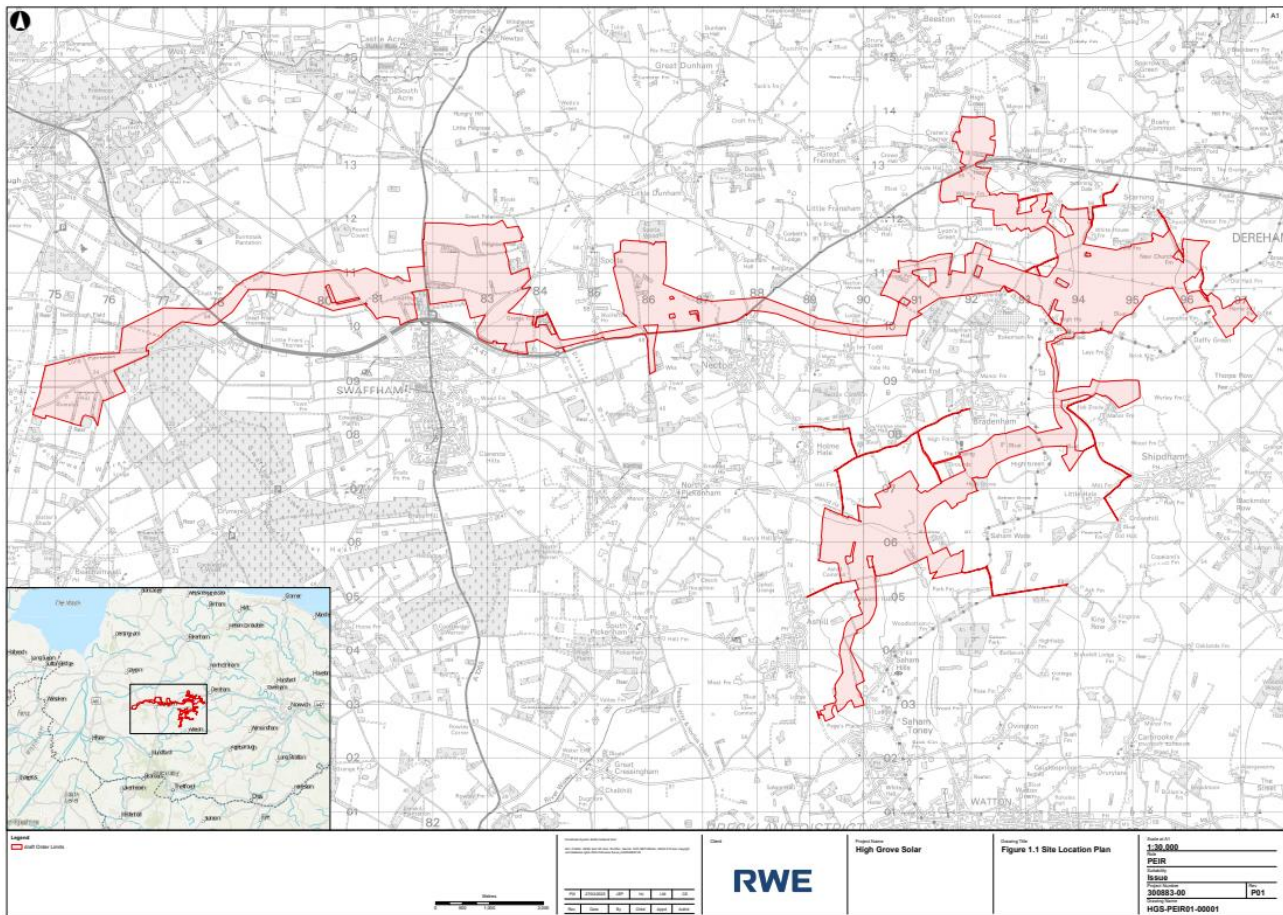
2.2 Where is High Grove Solar?

2.2.1.1 The entirety of High Grove Solar is located within the administrative boundary of Breckland Council, located between Narborough and Dereham in the county of Norfolk in the East of England.

2.2.1.2 The Panel Areas are located either side of a number of major roads and routes, including the A47 and the A1065 which runs north to south through the centre of Swaffham.

2.2.1.3 There are also various residential areas around Necton, Little Fransham, Bradenham, Ashill, Saham Hills, Wendling, Scarning and High Green. Royal Air Force Marham is located to the west of the Western Panel Area.

2.2.1.4 Inset 1 presents the location of High Grove Solar.



Inset 1 **Site Location Plan**

2.3 What is the existing use of the land?

- 2.3.1.1 High Grove Solar is predominantly set within agricultural land, which due to its existing use, is not in itself a key recreational attraction or destination. The land within the draft Order Limits³ does, however, play a role in providing a landscape context to recreational use of waterways and walking and cycling routes.
- 2.3.1.2 There are some small areas of broadleaved and mixed woodlands and plantations, along with hedgerows and lines of trees, generally these form the field boundaries. Small amounts of grassland are present, mainly as strips alongside hedgerows.

2.4 Are there any designations within or near High Grove Solar?

- 2.4.1.1 There is some variation in the environmental features and environmental designations immediately surrounding and within the draft Order Limits, as shown in Inset 2. A summary of the features and designations is included, but not limited to, the following:

³ The maximum area of land that would be required for the construction, operation and decommissioning of High Grove Solar

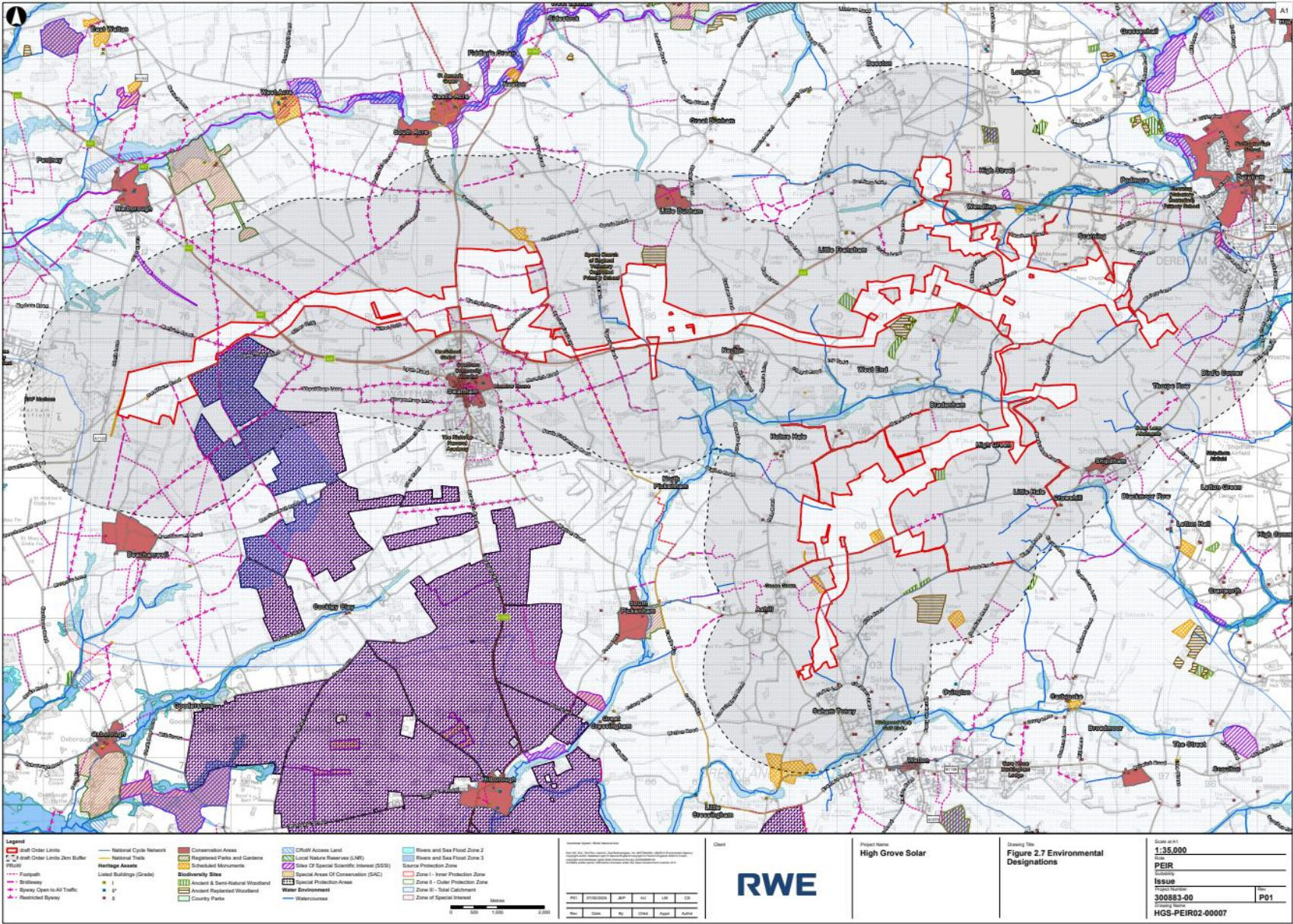
- 2.4.1.2 The Western Panel Area is located immediately adjacent to the Breckland Special Protection Area⁴ and Breckland Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest⁵. Ancient woodland⁶ is present along the boundary of the draft Order Limits.
- 2.4.1.3 There are three Scheduled Monuments⁷ within the draft Order Limits. These are Hangour Hill, a prehistorical burial mound, the earthworks of a Roman enclosure near Panworth Hall and a large linear earthwork at Devils Dyke, Beechamwell and Barton Bendish.
- 2.4.1.4 The draft Order Limits are also located within National Character Area, which is a location defined by its unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, historical and cultural features.
- 2.4.1.5 Wendling Beck runs just outside draft Order Limits, along the boundary of the Northern Panel Area. There are several unnamed tributaries to Wendling Beck, some of which are within the draft Order Limits. The River Wissey flows through the Southern Panel Area, and the River Tud is located just outside the Eastern Panel Area.
- 2.4.1.6 The majority of land within the draft Order Limits is located within Flood Zone 1, an area with a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea.

⁴ Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are protected areas for birds in the UK classified under: the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 2010 (as amended) in England, Scotland and Wales.

⁵ A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is a formal conservation designation. Usually, it describes an area that's of particular interest to science due to the rare species of fauna or flora it contains

⁶ An area of woodland that has been wooded continuously since 1600AD or earlier.

⁷ Nationally important historic sites, buildings or monuments identified by Historic England and designated by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. Any work affecting a scheduled monument must gain consent from Historic England under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979).



Inset 2 Environmental Designations

2.5 Why is High Grove Solar needed?

- 2.5.1.1 The need for High Grove Solar is built upon its contribution to the delivery of national policy targets for decarbonisation, including meeting Net Zero targets, energy security and ensuring affordability of energy supply.
- 2.5.1.2 This is in line with the National Policy Statements (NPS) for energy, which were produced by the UK Government and provide relevant technical matters which should be considered when preparing an application for development consent. Following their designation in January 2024, the 3 principal NPSs to consider are:
- Overarching NPS for energy (NPS EN-1)
 - NPS for renewable energy infrastructure (NPS EN-3)
 - NPS for electricity networks infrastructure (NPS EN-5)
- 2.5.1.3 Importantly, the policies define low carbon energy infrastructure as a critical national priority (CNP), which is integral to meeting legally binding Government decarbonisation targets and achieving net zero.
- 2.5.1.4 High Grove Solar would provide enough low-carbon energy to meet the equivalent annual needs of around 363,000 typical UK homes. It would therefore make a meaningful contribution to local and national climate commitments, responding to an established need for increased solar capacity and a decarbonised energy system.

2.6 What alternatives have been considered?

What alternative sites have been considered?

- 2.6.1.1 The location of High Grove Solar was selected through a staged process to ensure that a site could be identified which would be suitable for solar energy generation and feasible to deliver, whilst avoiding and minimising the potential for harm to the environment and communities.
- 2.6.1.2 The site is of a large enough scale to help deliver as much solar energy as possible to meet government targets.
- 2.6.1.3 The site selection process considered a number of factors including:
- **Irradiance and yield** - the amount of energy from the sun that reaches the surface of the earth and is measured by the amount of sunlight received per square metre (W/m^2). The amount of solar irradiance impacts on the potential yield of a solar farm, affecting the amount of sunlight falling on the solar PV modules to be converted to energy.
 - **Optimal locations for solar farms of a nationally significant scale** - the irradiance and subsequent yield of an area is influenced by factors such as its location, climate/weather patterns, altitude and topography. Whilst there are

clear differences in such factors globally, there are also national variations leading to some areas of the UK being more suited to solar energy than others.

- **Availability of grid connection capacity** - The grid connection capacity has informed both the site location and the overall size of the Proposed Development, as it has been sized for the availability of this connection capacity. In doing so, it seeks to ensure that the delivery of solar energy can be provided to the national grid when the construction of the solar farm is complete.
- **Land assembly** – the site selection process sought to agree sufficient areas of land for panel areas, mitigation and enhancement through voluntary agreements with landowners.
- **Aspect and topography**– preference was given to sites with a south facing aspect and flatter topography.
- **Proximity of site to dwellings**– the site selection process sought to avoid sites in close proximity to residential dwellings or where it would not be possible to appropriately mitigate visual impacts or glint and glare impacts.
- **Designated Sites** - The site selection process sought to avoid land designated by Government for its environmental importance, for example National Landscapes.
- **Agricultural land classification and land type**– the site selection process sought to minimise the impact on best and most versatile agricultural land. No brownfield land of an adequate area to accommodate a large-scale solar project was identified within the search area.
- **Accessibility**– the site is well serviced by the rural road network. Areas which could not be accessed by the existing road network were discounted.
- **Public Rights of Way**– the site selection process sought to avoid and minimise the visual impact on Public Rights of Way.
- **Security and lighting**– the site selection process sought to minimise the landscape and visual impact of security measures such as lighting.

What alternative solar technologies have been considered?

- 2.6.1.4 RWE has kept different solar technologies under review and consideration. The primary options available are a fixed panel or a tracking panel system, the latter meaning solar photovoltaic panels that track the sun's movement throughout the day. Assessments to date have been based on a worst-case scenario, depending on which type of panel system is likely to result in significant effects for each environmental discipline. The Applicant may seek to retain flexibility for the final technology to be selected at detailed design stage and will account for this in the ES.

What alternative layouts have been considered?

- 2.6.1.5 The current design and layout of High Grove Solar has resulted from an iterative process informed by environmental surveys and assessments. Taking into consideration the design principles, embedded mitigation measures, non-statutory

consultation feedback and stakeholder engagement; the layout will continue to be developed following the current consultation having regard to feedback received and ongoing assessment work.

- 2.6.1.6 A Landscape Concept Plan was also prepared in the pre-EIA Scoping stage to illustrate the intentions of use within the site area. This was developed in collaboration with ecologists and landscape architects to ensure a coherent design approach and avoid loss or damage to biodiversity, nature and communities as well as ensure a biodiversity net gain.
- 2.6.1.7 An Outline Environmental Masterplan, has been developed for this consultation to illustrate the potential use of the land within the draft Order Limits. This has been developed in collaboration with ecologists and landscape architects to ensure a coherent design approach, integration into existing environmental and green infrastructure, and avoid or minimise loss or damage to biodiversity, nature and communities as well as to ensure a biodiversity net gain. The Outline Environmental Masterplan can be viewed on the project website.: rwe.com/Highgrove.

2.7 How will High Grove Solar be built?

- 2.7.1.1 It is expected to take up to 2.5 years to construct the Proposed Development. A reasonable worst-case scenario for the construction programme has been used in this assessment and will be assessed and presented in the Environmental Statement, in accordance with the design parameter approach. The programme can be described in high level terms as follows:
- Each Panel Area is expected to take approximately 6-12 months to construct.
 - The Panel Areas would be constructed in phases, with up to two Panel Areas anticipated to be under construction at any one time.
 - Installation of the 33kV and 132kV underground cables within and between each Panel Area would take place in parallel with construction of the Panel Areas themselves. Cable installation would take place across the 2.5 year programme, with the cables associated with each Panel Area expected to take up to 8 months each to install.
 - The final programme will be dependent on the detailed layout design and potential environmental constraints on the timing of construction activities, which will be determined following the granting of the Development Consent Order.

2.8 How has the design considered environmental constraints and opportunities?

2.8.1.1 The table below outlines some of the ways in which the design has responded to environmental constraints and opportunities that have been identified up to this point. Further environmental constraints and opportunities are contained within PEIR Chapter 3 Alternatives and Design Evolution.

Table 2 *Design considerations*

Environmental constraint or opportunity	Design response
Potential effects on biodiversity	- The design is expected to incorporate a buffer⁸ of at least 5m from existing trees and hedgerows within the Panel Areas. - The design is expected to incorporate a buffer of at least 9m from watercourses. - The design is expected to incorporate mitigation and enhancement areas for ground nesting and wintering birds. - Existing habitat will be retained, and any access tracks, security fencing and cable routes will be designed to use existing agricultural tracks and breaks in hedgerows as much as is practicable. - The design of fencing is expected to incorporate animal gates to allow animals to continue to travel across the Panel Areas.
Potential impacts on climate	- The use of concrete would be minimised where reasonably practicable.
Potential impacts on designated heritage assets	- Avoidance of physical disturbance through design, including a 10m buffer between designated heritage assets and areas of construction activity..
Potential impacts of residential properties and uses of Public Rights of Way	- The design of the Panel Areas is expected to incorporate a minimum offset distance of 5 metres from all Public Rights of Way. - No public right of way is expected to require permanent closure. - The design is expected to incorporate planting around large infrastructure to provide screening.
Potential landscape and visual impacts	- Careful siting the Proposed Development in the landscape to avoid or reduce the loss of existing vegetation and siting solar PV modules and other above ground infrastructure to relate to existing landform and vegetation patterns to maximise landscape integration. -
Potential noise and vibration impacts	- Any sources of operational noise will be located as far as reasonably possible from existing sensitive receptors, and at a minimum distance of 200m, where practicable, from residential dwellings.

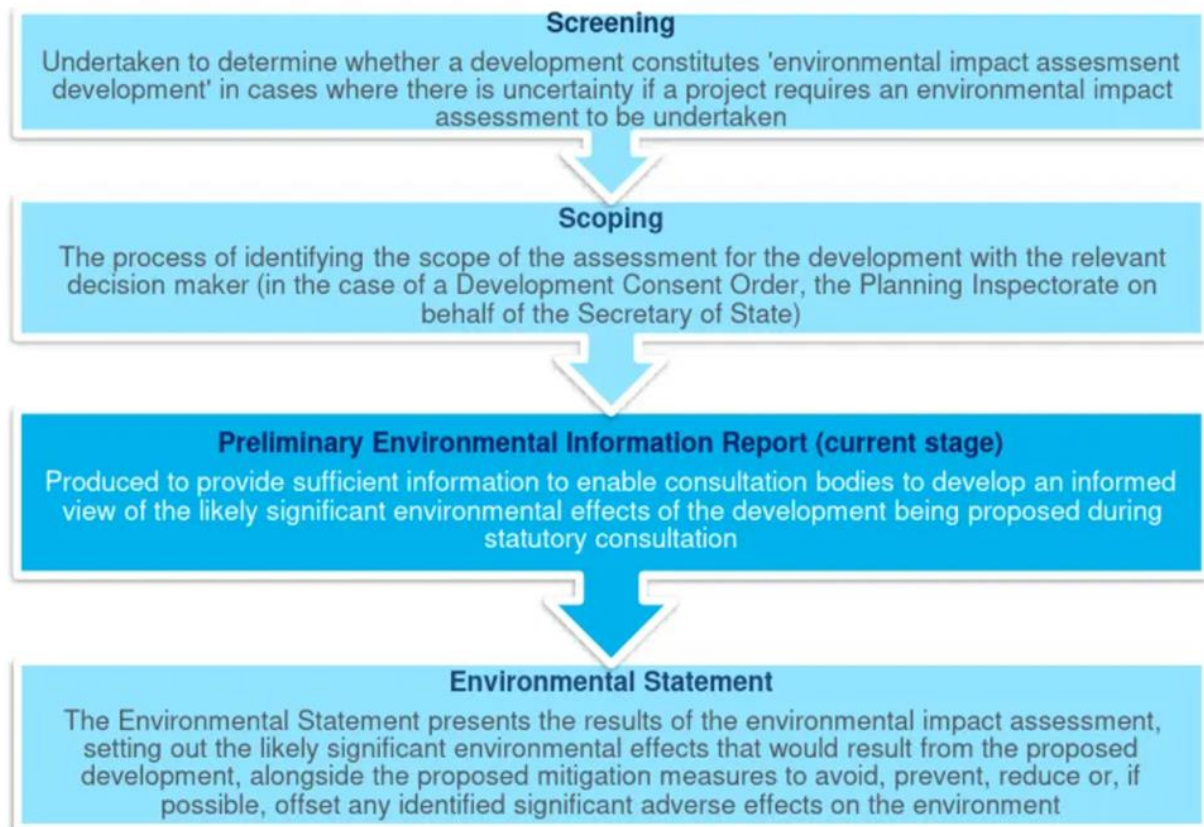
⁸ All buffers are from Solar PV modules, on-site substations, BESS, transformers and inverters unless otherwise noted

Potential impacts on transport and access	- Where necessary, passing places and/or traffic management are expected to be provided on some local roads for heavy goods vehicles to pass. - Construction works would be phased, which is intended to minimise the overall impact of construction vehicles on the local road network.
Potential impact on water (flood risk and water quality)	- Electrical infrastructure (e.g. substations, inverters) is expected to be sited in locations at low risk of flooding and/or set at the necessary minimum ground levels determined by the Flood Risk Assessment. - Access tracks will be permeable using compacted gravel to allow water to filtrate through and maintain greenfield runoff rates.
Potential glint and glare impacts	- The solar PV modules are designed to absorb rather than reflect light as much as possible. - New planting to provide visual screening, to break up the extent of development where required.
Opportunities for enhancement	- Wildflowers and meadow grassland are expected to be planted underneath suitable solar PV modules. - The design includes new permissive paths.

3 Environmental impact assessment process

3.1 What is the environmental impact assessment process?

- 3.1.1.1 Environmental impact assessment is a systematic process that examines the likely significant effects (beneficial or adverse) on the environment resulting from the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of a proposed development. The environmental impact assessment process is shown on Inset 3 The Preliminary Environmental Information Report is the third stage in this image.
- 3.1.1.2 The Environmental Statement, once it has been produced, will be submitted as part of an application for development consent and is used to report to decision makers, consultees and stakeholders on the likely significant environmental effects of a development and helps the decision maker (in the case of Development Consent Order, the Secretary of State) determine the application.



Inset 3 Main stages of the environmental impact assessment process

4 Assessment findings

4.1 Agricultural land and soils

How would soil and agricultural land be affected by High Grove Solar?

- 4.1.1.1 There is the potential for soil erosion, disturbance and damage to soil functions as a result of land use, management and handling as well as the loss of productive agricultural land area. The study area primarily consists of a mix of agricultural land quality grades, including Grade 2 or Subgrade Grade 3a quality which are identified as Best and Most Versatile agricultural land.
- 4.1.1.2 With embedded mitigation measures in place, impacts on land quality during the construction phase is temporary and reversible, and at the end of the construction phase, the Panel Areas may be returned to a form of agricultural use such as livestock grazing between Panel Areas. The installation of cables in the Cable Corridors will involve medium disturbance and temporary removal of land from agricultural use during the construction phase. The permanent land requirement will be the 132kV on-site substations and access tracks, which would be likely to be less than 20ha.

- 4.1.1.3 The design of High Grove Solar has sought to minimise the use of Best and Most Versatile land as far as reasonably possible. The effect on agricultural land and soils during construction is assessed considering the presence of very good quality agricultural land (Grade 2), good quality agricultural land (Subgrade Grade 3a) and moderate quality agricultural land (Subgrade 3b and below). The resulting effects are considered to be temporary, moderate adverse on Grade 2 and 3a quality land which is **Significant**. Resulting effects to Subgrade 3b land are considered temporary, Minor Adverse which is **Not Significant**, and permanent Minor - Moderate which is **Not Significant** where permanent land take is required.
- 4.1.1.4 Soil health during the 40 year operational life is assessed to improve as the arable land converted to pasture/grassland, which is considered to result in a temporary, Moderate Beneficial effect to soil resources which is **Significant**.
- 4.1.1.5 The effect on agricultural land quality at decommissioning would be influenced by the extent of disturbance caused by the removal of the solar panels. During decommissioning, it is assumed that below ground cabling would be left in situ, therefore limiting the disturbance and impact to soil quality. By leaving land undisturbed under long-term grassland, soil health, quality and structure would improve during the lifetime of High Grove Solar. This would result in a temporary, Minor Beneficial effect on soil resources in the decommissioning phase, which is **Not Significant**.
- 4.1.1.6 Construction impacts on soils relate to the potential damage from installing solar panels and damage to soils that need to be stripped and stored for access tracks, construction compounds and on-site infrastructure. Following the adherence of the Soil Resources Management Plan and best practice measures, High Grove Solar would have a temporary, minor adverse effect on the soil resource, this is considered Not Significant. There is the potential for a temporary, Moderate Adverse effects on the upper subsoils, which would be **Significant**.
- 4.1.1.7 Other embedded mitigation measures will include installing underground cables using a cable plough or trenching where possible as these are considered the most efficient and least invasive methods of cable installation which would cause minimal disruption to the ground. There will also be a focus on adopting and implementing good practice measures for all phases of High Grove Solar to minimise damage to soils that remain in place and those that are stripped and to minimise soil carbon losses; maintain water infiltration; and enhance soil biodiversity.

4.2 Biodiversity

Would High Grove Solar affect any designated sites?

- 4.2.1.1 There are six internationally designated sites within 10km of the draft Order Limits. 32 nationally designated sites within 10km and 10 non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the draft Order Limits.

- 4.2.1.2 Construction activities are not anticipated to have any direct impacts on internationally or nationally designated sites. However, construction activities could cause potential impacts to statutory designated sites, including Breckland Special Protection Area and Breckland Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest due to their close proximity, this includes visual and noise disturbance and the displacement of nesting and foraging birds. There is also the potential for indirect loss of functionally linked land (which are areas of a designated site which are critical for the ecology and behaviour of a species) and loss of foraging resource. Surveys are underway to determine the extent of any functional linkage and will be reported in the Environmental Statement. Following the implementation of mitigation such as a minimum 50m buffer from Breckland Special Protection Area and Breckland Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest and further mitigation to be determined within a Habitat Regulations Assessment⁹, temporary Minor Adverse effects are expected which would be **Not Significant**.
- 4.2.1.3 High Grove Solar could generate adverse impacts from waterborne contaminants during construction to the hydrologically connected sites such as River Wensum Special Protection Area and Site of Special Scientific Interest, and Norfolk Valley Fens Special Area of Conservation¹⁰. Following the implementation of mitigation such as a minimum 9m buffer from bank top riparian boundaries and watercourses, and the implementation of best practice measures such as safe storage of chemicals and prevention of sediment run off as set out in a Construction Environmental Management Plan, temporary Very Low adverse effects are expected which would be **Not Significant**.
- 4.2.1.4 There is also the possibility of impacts from increased construction traffic along the A47 and therefore changes in air quality as a result of High Grove Solar to the Potter & Scarning Fens Site of Special Scientific Interest (located within 200m). Owing to High Grove Solar's expected 2.5 year construction programme, methodology, construction routing and minimal construction traffic flows, impacts via air contamination to the Site of Special Scientific Interest is expected to result in a Very Low temporary adverse effect which would be **Not Significant**.
- 4.2.1.5 Although, appropriate buffers would be in place between the Proposed Development and a number of non-statutory designated sites such as the Disused Railway County Wildlife Site; given their close proximity, there is the potential for the construction phase to cause a temporary increase in dust and air pollutants which is expected to result in a temporary Very Low effect which is **Not Significant**.
- 4.2.1.6 The impacts during decommissioning will be similar to those identified during the construction phase stated above, with mitigation measures resulting in residual effect that are **Not Significant**.

⁹ A Habitats Regulations Assessment is carried out to test if a plan or project proposal could significantly harm the designated features of a European site, in line with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. An Applicant must consult the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Body at the appropriate assessment stage of the HRA process.

¹⁰ Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) are designated according to the Habitats Directive and are areas that require conservation measures to maintain ecological value.

- 4.2.1.7 During operation, there is the potential for continued disturbance of habitats during routine maintenance checks however these impacts are expected to be very minimal, with most of the impacts occurring during the construction phase. There is also the potential for the indirect loss of functionally linked land and loss of foraging resource continuing from the construction phase into the operational phase. Proposed mitigation measures will include buffers from key habitat features, the establishment of a sensitive site lighting scheme, measures to control vehicle movements and reduce sediment transfer. Following the implementation of mitigation measures, impacts to designated and non-designated sites are expected to result in temporary/permanent Minor Adverse effects which is **Not Significant**.

Would High Grove Solar affect any habitats or species?

- 4.2.1.8 The draft Order Limits are dominated by arable fields, with less frequent fields of grassland, mixed and broadleaved woodlands, hedgerows and watercourses. Species present within the draft Order Limits and surroundings include great crested newts, badgers, bats, reptiles, nesting and wintering birds, otters, water voles, fish, and small mammals such as hedgehogs.
- 4.2.1.9 The construction and decommissioning of High Grove Solar could cause disturbance through the deterioration of soil and vegetation, material release in waterbodies and lead to a short-term loss of foraging and/or breeding habitat for species present, with the potential of permanent habitat loss as well. However, it is expected that the majority of existing habitats will be retained, and mitigation measures will be implemented such as controlling indirect impacts such as accidental pollution and sediment transfer and maintaining buffers from sensitive habitats should retain foraging opportunities and connectivity. Although, the creation of new access routes and construction of the substations would involve permanent habitat loss, these would avoid key/priority habitats. Direct loss and deterioration of linear habitats such as watercourses will be avoided. Mitigation measures for species include secure fencing for areas which provide habitat for ground nesting birds, so they are protected from predators, watercourse avoidance using Horizontal Directional Drilling ¹¹ and limited nighttime construction activity to reduce impacts to foraging/commuting bats. Negligible-Minor Adverse effects are reported for habitats and the species they support during construction and decommissioning which is **Not Significant**.
- 4.2.1.10 The impacts from High Grove Solar during operation on retained habitats would be minimal, with on-site activities limited and restricted to routine maintenance activities, for example replacement of any components that fail, monitoring activities and vegetation management. The draft Order Limits will be taken out of its arable use as the area will not be accessible to farm machinery, this means there will be opportunities for the creation of more biodiverse habitats during the operational phase. The aim will be to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain on site with habitats appropriate for the local area and site use; the land will be enhanced to be grassland of increased value to wildlife. There is expected to be a long term (up to

¹¹ Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) is a trenchless method of installing underground cables below identified features

40 years) Beneficial effect for habitats and the species they support during operation which is **Significant**.

4.3 Climate change

What impact would High Grove Solar have on climate?

- 4.3.1.1 High Grove Solar has the potential to affect the global climate through the addition or avoidance of greenhouse gas emissions. Greenhouse gas emissions could occur directly from construction, operation and decommissioning activities (e.g. fuel consumption), but emissions occurring outside of the draft Order Limits must also be considered, such as those resulting from the extraction, manufacture and transportation of materials to the site during construction.
- 4.3.1.2 In its current condition, land within the draft Order Limits is predominately arable. Agricultural land typically emits emissions in the form of methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) from the soils. As a result of construction, there will be an increase in short-term (30 months) greenhouse gas emissions released from the associated construction activities, which has permanent and long term impact on the global climate.
- 4.3.1.3 The Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan will document measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the construction phase. Construction activities will be designed to minimise tree felling and vegetation clearance that may result in the further release of GHG emissions and the removal of sequestration potential and will also include the use of recycled materials wherever possible. A Travel Plan will also be implemented to reduce the volume of construction staff and employee trips to the draft Order Limits. the use of lower carbon modes of transport will also be encouraged.
- 4.3.1.4 Once operational significant greenhouse gas savings are anticipated due to the displacement of fossil-fuel derived electricity within the National Grid. Proposed planting could increase the carbon sequestration potential of the land. Further measures will also include energy-efficient lighting and durable construction materials to reduce maintenance and replacement. This reduction in the release of greenhouse gas emissions is long-term (over 40 years) and as such will result in long-term, beneficial effects on the global climate.
- 4.3.1.5 Although the decommissioning phase will result in the short-term (over 12-24 months) release of emissions into the atmosphere; overall, High Grove Solar is anticipated to have a Beneficial effect on the climate which is **Significant**.

4.4 Cultural heritage and Archaeology

Would High Grove Solar physically impact or indirectly impact the significance of heritage assets?

- 4.4.1.1 An archaeological desk based assessment has been undertaken and geophysical surveys are underway, therefore there remains some uncertainty about the

impacts on all heritage assets within the draft Order Limits. It has been identified there are 3 Scheduled Monuments within the draft Order Limits, 64 designated heritage assets within 1km of the draft Order Limits (55 of those are listed buildings), and 748 records of non-designated heritage assets, this includes buildings of post-medieval or later date, evidence of prehistoric settlement activity and Roman settlement activity and Bronze Age ditches/trenches.

- 4.4.1.2 Likely effects on cultural heritage assets may take the form of physical impacts to in situ archaeological remains pertaining to or associated with a heritage asset or changes to attributes of its setting which contribute to its significance. Physical impacts could include damage to below and/or above-ground archaeological remains pertaining to or associated with a heritage asset, particularly if it lies within the draft Order Limits. Such impacts could occur during construction due to groundworks phase due to changes in soil conditions (such as moisture levels).
- 4.4.1.3 Mitigation measures that would be included in the design of High Grove Solar are as follows, during construction, avoidance of physical disturbance through design, including 10m buffer between designated heritage assets and areas of construction activity. If below ground archaeology constraints arise through further site investigation, this would be addressed through further refinement to the design or appropriate mitigation agreed with the County Archaeologist. During operation, visible structures such as substations and fencing will be blended into the landscape through the careful selection of colours and/or cladding (protective and decorative layers). No significant lighting will be proposed, motion sense lights only, designed and installed in a manner which minimises impact. Large areas of panels will also be avoided where feasible, broken up by hedgerow planting along historic field boundaries to maximise landscape integration.
- 4.4.1.4 The layout of High Grove Solar has been designed to avoid directly impacting on heritage assets where reasonably practicable.
- 4.4.1.5 Three Scheduled Monuments are located within the draft Order Limits. Embedded mitigation including a 10m exclusion zone would result in the avoidance of impacts to these designated heritage assets. Therefore, no direct effects to designated heritage assets are likely, which is **Not Significant**.
- 4.4.1.6 No direct physical effects will occur to non-designated heritage assets outside the draft Order Limits. Therefore, no direct effects to non-designated heritage assets outside the draft Order Limits are likely, which is **Not Significant**.
- 4.4.1.7 19 heritage assets have been identified within and outside the draft Order Limits which could be impacted by the operation of High Grove Solar. The majority of identified heritage assets would result in negligible-minor adverse effects (without mitigation), which are **Not Significant**. However, two heritage assets: *Castle Acre Castle, town defences and Bailey Gate scheduled monument/ Castle Acre Castle Grade I listed building* and *Castle Acre Priory scheduled monument/ Remains of Cluniac Benedictine Priory of St Mary and St Peter and St Paul Grade I listed building* would experience Moderate Adverse effects (without mitigation), which are **Significant**.

- 4.4.1.8 Further assessment will be undertaken to understand the direct and indirect effects to the setting of designated and non-designated sites and will be confirmed within the Environmental Statement following the results of surveys and once the refined design of High Grove Solar has been confirmed following this consultation.

4.5 Glint and Glare

Would glint and glare caused by High Grove Solar adversely affect residential dwellings, major roads and aviation infrastructure?

- 4.5.1.1 Although solar panels are designed to absorb rather than reflect sunlight, they have potential to cause a brief flash of bright light typically received by moving receptors or from moving reflectors ('glint') or a continuous source of bright light typically received by stationary receptors or from large reflectors ('glare'). Glint and glare can only occur when direct sunlight can reach the solar panels. Diffused lighting, caused by weather conditions (e.g. cloud, fog and mist) cannot cause glint and glare due to the low energy intensity of the light incident on the panels.
- 4.5.1.2 The preliminary glint and glare assessment has considered these potential sensitive receptors:
- Fixed ground-based receptors including local residents;
 - Local transport receptors such as road and rail;
 - National Trails and Public Rights of Way; and
 - Aviation receptors.
- 4.5.1.3 Mitigation measures would include an appropriate buffer being maintained between properties and construction areas, the use of demand responsive motion sense lights only, using passive infra-red (PIR) technology, designed and installed in a manner which minimises impact, anti-reflective coating on solar panels that gives the panels a dark colour with a textured finish and new planting to provide visual screening, to break up the extent of development. Loss of woodland and hedgerow will be kept to a minimum and only to facilitate access points, cable routing and fencing. Where such loss is unavoidable, vegetation will be reinstated following construction wherever practical. Similarly, existing hedgerows in poor condition or gappy will be reinforced with planting and managed where feasible.
- 4.5.1.4 Following the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures for minimising glint and glare, the resulting effects during construction and decommissioning would be **Not Significant** to identified receptors.
- 4.5.1.5 During operation, effects and impacts of glint and glare will vary throughout the year as a result of changing daylight hours and weather patterns. Further assessment will be undertaken to understand the operational effects of High Grove Solar and will be reported within the Environmental Statement once the refined design layout of High Grove Solar is available following this consultation.

4.6 Landscape and Visual

How would High Grove Solar affect landscape character?

- 4.6.1.1 The landscape within the study area largely comprises agricultural land with small villages scattered between the market towns of Swaffham and Dereham. The topography is defined by underlying chalk bedrock and gravel and alluvial deposits crossed by watercourses including the River Nar to the north, the River Wissey to the south west and the River Wensum and Blackwater to the north east, with associated tributaries running through the study area. Flatter areas between tributaries comprise predominantly arable land use. Narrow valley landforms along tributaries support smaller scale fields of pasture with complex field patterns, linear woodland features and increased woodland cover overall and are sparsely populated. The western part of the study area includes substantial woodland cover coinciding with the forest plantations of the Breckland. The towns of Swaffham and Dereham are connected by the A47 trunk road, which runs east to west across the study area forming a corridor where there are lower levels of relative tranquillity. The A1065 runs north to south through the centre of Swaffham, impacting levels of tranquillity locally along its corridor.
- 4.6.1.2 The presence of construction works, solar PV modules and associated features, substations and other associated development could impact existing landscape features and increase the level of activity on the land within the draft Order Limits.
- 4.6.1.3 The potential impacts from High Grove Solar on landscape character comprise of the introduction of temporary compounds, lighting, stockpiles, machinery and associated fencing which will temporarily increase the extent of built development, excavations, topsoil stripping and temporary storage which could impact existing landscape features and the general construction activity and movement of plant and machinery which increases the level of activity on the land for High Grove Solar.
- 4.6.1.4 Following the implementation of mitigation measures such as: integration of solar PV modules within the existing pattern of fields and woodlands, introducing new patterns, colours and textures into the rural landscape, new planting, no resulting significant effects are identified for National Character Areas and District Landscape Character Areas, however Moderate Adverse effects which are **Significant** are identified for Local Landscape Character Areas for construction, operation and decommissioning of High Grove Solar.

Would High Grove Solar have a visual impact?

- 4.6.1.5 Visual receptors likely to experience views of the construction, operation or decommissioning of High Grove Solar include local residents, users of Public Rights of Way and users of the local road network.
- 4.6.1.6 The presence of solar PV modules, Battery Energy Storage Systems, CCTV poles and fencing, access tracks and substations will cause impacts to the visual amenity.

- 4.6.1.7 Mitigation measures include keeping construction lighting to the minimum luminosity necessary for safe working within construction compounds and working areas and where possible, fitting it with motion sensors to reduce the duration of potential light spill in night-time views, maintaining well-managed and tidy construction working areas and site compounds to reduce their appearance in the landscape and reinstating the existing landscape pattern following construction, returning the land to its original profile and condition and replanting vegetation removed to facilitate construction.
- 4.6.1.8 Moderate – Major Adverse effects which are **Significant** have been identified for visual receptors during construction, operation and decommissioning of High Grove Solar.

4.7 Noise and Vibration

Would noise generated during construction and decommissioning affect nearby properties and ecological receptors?

- 4.7.1.1 High Grove Solar is located in a rural area adjacent to the RAF Marham, where noise levels remain fairly low with the main source of noise affecting all receptors being road traffic which will be subject to increases in all phases.
- 4.7.1.2 Noise and vibration impacts during the construction phase of High Grove Solar would be caused by activities associated with site preparation, plant installation, cable laying, Horizontal Directional Drilling and similar activities for decommissioning. These activities have the potential to generate short term increases in noise levels.
- 4.7.1.3 High Grove Solar is being designed with regard to a set of design principles relevant to noise and vibration, these include retaining a reasonable buffer between residential dwellings and the nearest solar PV modules.
- 4.7.1.4 No construction activities that could generate vibration will take place within 10m of any nearby sensitive receptors, therefore vibration impacts from construction on buildings is scoped out of further assessment. In addition, best practicable means will be followed to manage noise and vibration emissions during construction and decommissioning. Therefore, the vibration impact from construction on human receptors is scoped out of further assessment.
- 4.7.1.5 Overall, with the implementation of an appropriate buffer from residential properties, the resulting effects to ecological and residential receptors is Negligible - Minor Adverse, which is **Not Significant**.

Would noise levels in the area worsen because of High Grove Solar?

- 4.7.1.6 During the operational phase, it is possible that noise could be generated by the operation of electrical plant and equipment, such as inverters or transformers that

would be installed. The noise levels have been modelled as a worst-case scenario with all equipment operating at 100% capacity.

- 4.7.1.7 Of the 70 receptors identified and assessed through noise modelling software against the proposed operational plant sources, with the application of embedded offsets in the design of High Grove Solar, all receptors are reported to have a Negligible Adverse effect (**Not Significant**), with the exception of two receptors which have a potentially likely **Significant** effect at New Church Farm and High House Farm near the Eastern Panel Area. RWE has committed to revise the current design and relocate electrical noise generating infrastructure away from these two receptors which would result in a **Not Significant** effect. This revised layout will be assessed within the Environmental Statement.

4.8 Socioeconomics

How will High Grove Solar impact the local economy?

- 4.8.1.1 Potential employment effects may be felt over a wide area given the somewhat specialist nature of some of the construction and operational tasks. The study area for consideration of economic effects would therefore be the districts within Norfolk County Council area, which are Breckland District, Broadland District, Great Yarmouth Borough, King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough, and Norwich City.
- 4.8.1.2 Due to the size of High Grove Solar and the total number of construction jobs created during the construction phase (approximately 265 workers, with a daily peak of 350 workers), an Outline Skills and Employment Plan will be proposed; this could lead on to training for roles at High Grove Solar. The resulting effect on skills and employment is Minor Beneficial, which is **Not Significant** during the construction phase.
- 4.8.1.3 The number of people directly employed during the operation of the Proposed Development would be limited, given the nature of the activities taking place on site during this stage. Permanent operational employees will be specially skilled electricians with training on solar PV maintenance. More irregular workers, such as those undertaking maintenance of landscaping measures and cleaning panels, will be trained appropriately in their relevant field. The resulting effect on skills and employment is considered to be Negligible due to the small proportion of jobs, which is **Not Significant**.

How will High Grove Solar affect Public Rights of Way?

- 4.8.1.4 The assessment considers the potential effects on the Public Rights of Way network, with focus on the draft Order Limits but extending beyond the draft Order Limits where indirect effects are identified. Mitigation measures are included in a range of management plans including the Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan and the Outline Public Rights of Way Management Plan.

- 4.8.1.5 It is anticipated that there will be a requirement for local management and/or short-term, temporary closures of some Public Rights of Way to facilitate the construction of High Grove Solar. There are also very few instances where the proposed construction access route interacts with or sits wholly within an existing Right of Way. Where this is the case, measures will be put in place to ensure that the route will remain accessible throughout the construction period, where it is safe and practicable to do so; or if these routes need to be removed entirely, a replacement or new route will be constructed, taking place in advance of construction. The resulting effect on Public Rights of Way is Negligible to Minor adverse, which is **Not Significant** during the construction phase.
- 4.8.1.6 A short section of Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail would require temporary stopping up with a located diversion in order to facilitate cable laying. The resulting effect is Moderate Adverse owing to the National Trail's high sensitivity, which is **Significant** during the construction phase.
- 4.8.1.7 The operation of the Proposed Development will not have any significant effects to Public Rights of Way. Opportunities will be sought to enhance existing Public Rights of Way and create new permissive paths, as presented on the Outline Environmental Masterplan.
- 4.8.1.8 During decommissioning, the intention is to, wherever possible, keep the Public Rights of Way network open, with appropriate management and safety measures put in place. Where this is not possible, any temporary closures will be carefully managed to minimise disruption. Underground cable will be left in situ during decommissioning, and therefore not require stopping up the National Trail. The resulting effect is Minor Adverse, which is **Not Significant**.

4.9 Traffic and Transport

Would construction, operation and decommissioning traffic adversely affect the transport network?

- 4.9.1.1 High Grove Solar is located in a rural area close to villages and towns including Swaffham, Dereham, and Shipdham. At this stage the study area is assumed to comprise the strategic road network (defined as 'A' roads) serving the study area (A47, A1075, A1065 and A1122) and 'local' roads used to serve access points during the construction and operational phase.
- 4.9.1.2 There are no operational national rail stations that exist in the vicinity of High Grove Solar. The closest national rail stations are 'Harling Road' which is 18km south of the Southern Panel Area and 'Downham Market', which is 18km west of the Western Panel Area. The Mid Norfolk Heritage Railway passes through Yaxham, 2.5km to the east of the draft Order Limits. There are various bus services that exist within the study area including routes; 6, 10, 11A, 13, 31, 32, 52, 60, 111, 113 and A, B, and C "Excel" services. Destinations served include Swaffham, Dereham, Shipdham, and Kings Lynn.

- 4.9.1.3 Public Rights of Way exist across the study area including Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path National Trail and the National Cycle Network Route 13.
- 4.9.1.4 High Grove Solar has potential to generate increased construction traffic flows within the study area and is likely to result in impacts on some of the 'local' roads. However, it should be noted that the local roads are likely to have relatively minimal construction traffic flows and are therefore unlikely to experience significant effects.
- 4.9.1.5 High Grove Solar could result in changes which could significantly affect perceptions of driver delay during construction because of increased vehicle travel demand on the local network. This will be reviewed once traffic flow forecasts and further assessment is undertaken. High Grove Solar may also result in changes which could significantly affect perceptions of pedestrian and other non-motorised user delay during construction because of increased vehicle travel demand on the local network. High Grove Solar is not expected to result in changes which could significantly affect accidents and safety during construction because it is an explicit requirement of the highway authorities that any planning application proposals do not unacceptably increase safety risks. High Grove Solar is not expected to generate or attract hazardous loads at any stage.
- 4.9.1.6 Mitigation measures for High Grove Solar will include the implementation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan, to include prescribed construction traffic routes for construction traffic, site management to schedule the arrival and departure times of deliveries to minimise the number of HGVs travelling to the Panel Areas during the network peak hours, , passing places and localised widening of the highway where required and car sharing will also be encouraged. These measures will similarly be taken into account during operation and decommissioning.
- 4.9.1.7 Following the implementation of the above mitigation measures, the resulting effect from construction traffic is Minor Adverse, which is **Not Significant**.
- 4.9.1.8 Operational traffic is expected to be minimal, with occasional visits taking place by a handful of operatives for maintenance and to facilitate the replacement of components when required. The resulting effect is **Not Significant** and not considered further.
- 4.9.1.9 Decommissioning is expected to take 12-24 months and could be undertaken in phases. Decommissioning of High Grove Solar could give rise to the same or lower levels of forecast trip generation as the construction phase; therefore, the construction assessment provides a worst-case scenario for potential effects, and decommissioning does not require further separate assessments.

4.10 Water Resources and Flood Risk

- 4.10.1.1 There is one main river within the draft Order Limits, Wendling Beck, which runs between two parts of the Northern Panel Area. There are a number of unnamed tributaries to Wendling Beck in the north of the study area, some of which are also

located within the draft Order Limits. Wendling Beck flows north-east to join Black Water, north of Dereham.

- 4.10.1.2 The draft Order Limits and study area fall within the Anglian River Basin District as defined under the Water Environment Regulations / Water Framework Directive.

Would High Grove Solar increase flood risk?

- 4.10.1.3 Flood risk from all sources (fluvial, surface water, groundwater, reservoirs and surrounding properties/infrastructure) in the study area is considered during the assessment of flood risk. The draft Order Limits include small areas within Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- 4.10.1.4 Surface water flood risk primarily corresponds to the smaller upstream tributaries of Wendling Beck and the River Wissey, Gadder and Watton brook which are not explicitly shown in fluvial flood maps. Outside the main channels, surface water flood risk is generally low. Within the study area, sources of fluvial flood risk (from rivers and seas) within the draft Order Limits are primarily from the River Wissey, near the Southern Panel Area, and Wendling Beck near the Northern Panel Area.
- 4.10.1.5 Infrastructure such as substations and Battery Energy Storage Systems will be located outside of Flood Zone 2 and 3 (medium and high fluvial flood risk) and the solar PV modules will be raised above the predicted maximum flood depth for a 100 year plus climate change scenario.
- 4.10.1.6 With embedded mitigation implemented, together with good practice flood management measures, it is considered there will be a Slight Adverse effect from flooding from other sources or to nearby receptors as a result of High Grove Solar, which is **Not Significant**.

Would High Grove Solar affect water quality?

- 4.10.1.7 This section considers impacts to surface water quality and ground water quality during construction, operation and decommissioning.
- 4.10.1.8 Due to the excavations proposed during constructions, there is the potential risk of accidental release of fine sediments or chemicals, resulting from accidental chemical spills from construction vehicles or leaks caused by damaged solar PV modules during their installation. Groundworks could also cause reductions in water quality of groundwater and exposure of underlying soils. Construction activities may also cause changes to surface water run-off and land drainage.
- 4.10.1.9 Mitigation measures include sediment control measures in the vicinity to watercourses where natural features do not provide adequate protection and the completion of tracks being completed as soon as possible and surfaced appropriately to protect soils from runoff. There would be no unapproved discharge of contaminated drainage from High Grove Solar either to groundwater or any surface waters, whether direct or via soakaway. Appropriate buffers from watercourses will also be put in place. The resulting effect to surface water and groundwater receptors is Slight Adverse / Neutral, which is **Not Significant**.

- 4.10.1.10 During operation, the risk of water quality being impacted by fuel or oil contamination will be significantly lower as there will be significantly decreased levels of activity, and most potential pollutants will be removed from the construction site. Accidental leaks as a result of operational and vehicle maintenance will be mitigated through limited vehicular access, equipment provided to contain and clean any spills and regular inspection of tracks to ensure no erosion is taking place. The resulting effect to surface water and groundwater receptors is Slight Adverse / Neutral, which is **Not Significant**.
- 4.10.1.11 In the absence of detailed information regarding decommissioning works, it is assumed that all above ground infrastructure (except the substations and associated infrastructure) will be removed and all in ground infrastructure will be left in situ. Therefore, the impacts during the decommissioning are considered comparable with, or likely less than, those of the construction stage.

4.11 Cumulative Effects Assessment

Will the different environmental effects from High Grove Solar be considered together?

- 4.11.1.1 Different environmental effects from High Grove Solar could occur concurrently on certain receptors including local residents, users of Public Rights of Way, ecological designated sites, protected species and heritage assets e.g. listed buildings and conservation areas. The interaction of two or more predicted environmental effects resulting from High Grove Solar may collectively cause a greater, or lesser, effect than each effect in isolation (in-combination).
- 4.11.1.2 The preliminary stages of an assessment of potential in-combination effects has been undertaken and potential interactions identified for two receptors groups: human residential receptors and users of transport links including users of highways, Public Rights of Way, National Trail and cycle network. A full assessment of such effects will be undertaken and detailed within the Environmental Statement.

Will the effects of High Grove Solar be considered together with other projects in the area?

- 4.11.1.3 There is potential for significant environmental effects of High Grove Solar to occur cumulatively with those of other approved developments.
- 4.11.1.4 Other projects to be included in the cumulative assessment have been selected based on identifying major developments that: have the same Zone of Influence (which refers to the spatial area over which an effect from a project is likely to be experienced) as High Grove Solar; have temporal crossover in the proposed dates for construction, operation and/or decommissioning and are of a scale and nature where a significant effect is likely. The other projects that have been identified for these cumulative effects assessment are:

- The Drovers Solar Farm (EN0110013),

- Hornsea Project THREE offshore wind farm (EN010080)
- Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Projects (EN010109)
- Land South of Rawhall Lane (FUL/2022/0021);
- Pentney Quarry (FUL/2023/0009);
- Solar Photovoltaic Farm 585790 314130 Palgrave Road(3PL/2022/1215/F);
- Development Site Off Sporle Road (3PL/2023/0441/F);
- Development Site 587943 310210 St Andrews Lane (3PL/2024/0321/O);
- Oakland Gardens (21/02392/OM); and
- Land opposite Flint Farm (21/02247/FM).

4.11.1.5 All potential cumulative effects from High Grove Solar and the above listed committed developments were assessed and no resulting cumulative effects have been identified - that is, where the preliminary effect of the Proposed Development has been identified for each environmental aspect, the consideration of the other developments in cumulation with the Proposed Development does not change the conclusion of the aspect assessment. This assessment will be updated in the ES when further information on the Proposed Development and the 'other developments' may be available.

5 What happens next?

5.1.1.1 The statutory consultation period for High Grove Solar runs from Thursday 24 April until Thursday 12 June 2025.

5.1.1.2 More information can be found at the consultation website (rwe.com/highgrove). As previously mentioned, the Preliminary Environmental Information Report, 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 High Grove Solar to help inform their consultation responses.

5.1.1.3 There are a number of ways to respond to the consultation:

- By returning a feedback form at the in-person consultation events (see the above website for details).
- By sending feedback to FREEPOST HIGH GROVE SOLAR (no stamp required).
- By completing the feedback form on the above website.
- By email (info@highgrovesolar.co.uk).

5.1.1.4 Any feedback that is received through the consultation process will help inform the ongoing design of High Grove Solar.

