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Environmental Statement

Interim Environmental Report (IER), Volume 4: Executive Summary

Document Reference
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Executive summary

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 This Interim Environmental Report (IER) has been prepared on behalf of Arrow Valley Solar Limited (the Applicant) in support of an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Arrow Valley Solar and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Scheme (hereafter referred to as the Scheme), which comprises a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating station with associated battery energy storage, substations, ancillary infrastructure and grid connection infrastructure connecting into the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS).

1.1.2 Section 5 of the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 introduced amendments to the Planning Act 2008, removing the statutory requirement for applicants to undertake pre-application consultation and to prepare a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). The Act is implemented by The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 (Commencement No. 4 and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2026 (SI 2026/641), specifically Regulation 3 implements Section 5.

1.1.3 Notwithstanding these changes, the Applicant is formally consulting on the Scheme prior to submission of its application to gain local knowledge and to better understand the issues that are important to the communities and stakeholders that will be affected by the Scheme. This IER has been prepared by the Applicant and is being provided as part of the formal consultation process to assist stakeholders in understanding the environmental technical work undertaken to date, and to inform their consideration of the Scheme.

1.1.4 As part of the formal consultation, all stakeholders are invited to provide their views on the IER, which comprises the introductory chapters of the Environmental Statement (ES) that will be submitted in support of the DCO application, as well as the initial sections of each environmental topic chapter that will comprise the ES. It should be noted that, much of the content of the IER has been written in the style of the ES at the point of submission.

1.1.5 Table 1-1 below sets out the contents of the IER, including the subsections of each chapter and the supporting figures and appendices. It should be noted that the contents of the ES (including supporting figures and appendices) will be developed further prior to submission of the DCO application to include the full ES of the final Scheme design, ensuring full adherence to the relevant EIA Regulations (The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017). The final Scheme design will incorporate any changes made in response to consultation.

1.2 Structure

1.2.1 The IER consists of 4 Volumes:

- Volume 1 – Main Report
- Volume 2 – Figures
- Volume 3 – Appendices
- Volume 4 – Executive Summary (this document)

Table 0-1 Volume 1 IER contents

Chapters	Subsections	Supporting figures	Supporting appendices
Chapter 1. Introduction	▪ Background ▪ Need for the Scheme ▪ Consenting ▪ Consultation ▪ Purpose of this report ▪ Structure of the Environmental Statement ▪ Report authors	▪ 1.1 Scheme location	▪ A1.1 Statement of Competence

Chapters	Subsections	Supporting figures	Supporting appendices
Chapter 2. Scheme description	▪ Introduction ▪ Description of the Scheme ▪ Design ▪ Construction ▪ Operation and maintenance ▪ Decommissioning ▪ Embedded mitigation.	▪ 2.1 Key construction phase features ▪ 2.2 Location of temporary construction compounds ▪ 2.3 Parameter plans ▪ 2.4 Environmental masterplan	▪ A2.1 Cable Route Corridor construction method Statement ▪ A2.2 Illustrative drawings ▪ A2.2 Commitments Register
Chapter 3. Site and surrounding environment	▪ Introduction ▪ Wider Context ▪ Order Limits (draft)	▪ 3.1 Environmental constraints ▪ 3.2 Order limits	▪ No supporting appendices
Chapter 4. Consideration of alternatives	▪ Introduction ▪ Legislation, policy and advice notes ▪ Stakeholder engagement ▪ Need for the Scheme ▪ Alternative sites ▪ Alternative technologies ▪ Alternative layout for solar sites ▪ Alternative substation location ▪ Alternative cable routes	▪ No supporting figures	▪ No supporting appendices
Chapter 5. Approach to the assessment	▪ The EIA process ▪ Screening ▪ Scoping ▪ Introduction to the assessment chapters ▪ Consultation ▪ Uncertainties, limitations and assumptions	▪ No supporting figures	▪ No supporting appendices
Chapter 6. Ground conditions and contamination	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ 6.1 Potential contaminant sources ▪ 6.2 Geology – superficial deposits ▪ 6.3 Geology – bedrock	▪ A6.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the ground conditions chapter ▪ A6.2 Ground conditions baseline data report ▪ A6.3 Unexploded ordnance report
Chapter 7. Soils and agriculture	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ 7.1 Soil association ▪ 7.2 Predictive agricultural land classification ▪ 7.3 Agricultural land classification survey ▪ 7.4 Landowners and tenant farmers	▪ A7.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the soils and agriculture assessment. ▪ A7.2 Agricultural land classification survey report

Chapters	Subsections	Supporting figures	Supporting appendices
Chapter 8. Ecology and biodiversity	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ 8.1 Designated sites and other important ecological features ▪ 8.2 Priority habitats and veteran trees ▪ 8.3 Static bat detector locations	▪ A8.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the biodiversity assessment ▪ A8.2 Non-breeding birds survey report
Chapter 9. Historic environment	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ 9.1 Designated heritage assets ▪ 9.2 Non-designated heritage assets ▪ 9.3 Events ▪ 9.4 Historic landscape character	▪ A9.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the historic environment assessment ▪ A9.2 Desk Based Assessment ▪ A9.3 Geophysical survey report ▪ A9.4 Full list of historic environment receptors
Chapter 10. Landscape and visual	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ 10.1 Topography ▪ 10.2 Designations of relevance to landscape ▪ 10.3 Landscape character areas ▪ 10.4 Visual receptors and viewpoints ▪ 10.5 Designations and viewpoints ▪ 10.6 Zone of Theoretical Visibility.	▪ A10.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the landscape and visual assessment ▪ A10.2 Viewpoint Photographs ▪ A10.3 Photomontages
Chapter 11. Climate change	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ No supporting figures	▪ A11.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the climate change assessment
Chapter 12. Transport and access	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment Baseline conditions	▪ 12.1 Study area ▪ 12.2 Sensitivity of links/receptors ▪ 12.3 Public rights of way ▪ 12.4 Traffic count locations ▪ 12.5 Personal injury collision data ▪ 12.6 Zone of Theoretical Visibility	▪ A12.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the transport and access assessment
Chapter 13. Noise and vibration	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ 13.1 Noise sensitive receptors and baseline noise monitoring locations	▪ A13.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the noise and vibration assessment ▪ A13.2 Baseline noise monitoring report
Chapter 14. Glint and glare	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment Baseline conditions	▪ No supporting figures	▪ A14.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the glint and glare assessment. ▪ A14.2 Glint and Glare Scoping and Methodology

Chapters	Subsections	Supporting figures	Supporting appendices
Chapter 15. Population and human health	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ 15.1 Human health residential receptor locations ▪ 15.2 Human health asset receptor locations	▪ A15.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the population and human health assessment
Chapter 16. Water environment	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ 16.1 Discharge and abstractions within the study area ▪ 16.2 Water Framework Directive waterbodies and watercourses	▪ A16.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the water environment assessment ▪ A16.2 Surface water discharge and abstraction consents, ▪ A16.3 Ground water abstractions and lithological descriptions ▪ A16.4 Water Framework Directive assessment
Chapter 17. Materials and waste	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ 17.1 Order Limits interactions with peat resources ▪ 17.2 Mineral safeguarding areas	▪ A17.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the waste and resources assessment
Chapter 18. Air quality	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ 18.1 Air quality constraints	▪ A18.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the air quality assessment
Chapter 19. Other matters	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment ▪ Baseline conditions	▪ No supporting figures.	▪ A19.1 Legislation and policy relevant to the other matters assessments
Chapter 20. Cumulative effects	▪ Scope of the assessment ▪ Consultation ▪ Legislation and policy ▪ Method of assessment	▪ 20.1 RFFP long list of development locations	▪ A20.1 Reasonably Foreseeable Future Projects (RFFP) long list ▪ A20.2 Zone of Influence (ZoI) Extents for Cumulative effects assessment

1.3 Next Steps

Surveys

1.3.1 Many of the surveys required to inform the EIA have concluded and have been used to inform the baseline for each of the environmental topics within the IER. However, some surveys and technical studies are still ongoing and therefore have not been included within this IER. Once concluded, the survey results will be used to inform the final baseline and subsequent impact assessment within the ES.

Scheme design

1.3.2 Alongside the results of ongoing surveys, responses to the formal public consultation will inform amendments to the design of the Scheme.

Impact assessment

1.3.3 Following amendments to the design of the Scheme and the associated Rochdale Envelope, a full impact assessment will be undertaken for the Scheme which will also take into consideration any embedded mitigation. The impact assessment will follow the method set out in the methodology section of each specialist chapter. This will identify all likely significant effects on sensitive receptors as a result of the Scheme.

Identification of mitigation

1.3.4 Once this impact assessment has been completed and likely significant effects identified, a review will be undertaken to identify if there are additional mitigation measures, following the mitigation hierarchy as presented in Chapter 5, to avoid, reduce and mitigate identified likely significant effects. This additional mitigation will then be accounted for in the final impact assessment presented in the ES, that will determine the final, residual likely significant effects for the Scheme.

1.3.5 This ES will be submitted in support of the DCO application, alongside its figures and appendices.

Arrow Valley Solar