



**THE DROVES**  
SOLAR FARM

# **The Droves Solar Farm**

## **Preliminary Environmental Information Report**

### **Volume I, Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology**

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## 8 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology

### 8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 This chapter of the PEIR presents the preliminary information of the potential for significant effects in relation to Cultural Heritage and Archaeology. The information presented within this chapter has been informed by the design information of the Scheme provided in **Volume 1, Chapter 5: Scheme Description**.
- 8.1.2 Information considered in this chapter includes relevant cultural heritage and archaeology policy and guidance, baseline cultural heritage and archaeology, sets out the methodologies and approaches intended to be used to inform the Cultural Heritage and Archaeology chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) for the Scheme. This is realised through a description of the cultural heritage and archaeology Baseline Conditions. This chapter details the findings of work undertaken to date and presents a preliminary assessment of the likely significant effects arising from the Construction, Operational and Decommissioning Phases of the Scheme upon cultural heritage and archaeology. The chapter also considers proposed avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures and any residual effects following the implementation of such measures.
- 8.1.3 Embedded mitigation measures are presented, where necessary, and discussed to minimise the impacts of the Scheme to an acceptable level (i.e. to a residual minor or negligible effect), during the Construction, Operational and Decommissioning Phases.
- 8.1.4 This chapter should be viewed as a preliminary assessment that will be updated and refined as necessary, particularly as the results of further evaluation become available and as the Scheme design evolves. Initial assumptions have been made based on the survey and background information available to date and professional judgement. The PEIR does not replicate or act as a draft ES but rather aims to enable consultees to understand the likely environmental effects of the Scheme and helps to inform consultation responses during the pre-application stage.

#### Consultation

- 8.1.5 The content and assessment methodology contained within this chapter has been informed by the Scoping Opinion from the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) dated 18 December 2024 (**Volume III, Appendix 2.2**) as well as further updated and informed following consultation with key stakeholders in relation to cultural heritage and archaeological matters.
- 8.1.6 Consultation feedback received throughout the pre-application phase of the Scheme has been considered in preparing this PEIR chapter. Further detail on consultation undertaken is included at **Volume III, Appendix 8.1**.

#### Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

- 8.1.7 A review of the Legislation, Policy and Guidance that is relevant to the cultural heritage and archaeology assessment of the Scheme is included at **Volume III, Appendix 8.1**. The review demonstrates that the Scheme has been developed in accordance with the requirements identified in the **Appendix 8.1**.



## 8.2 Assessment Methodology

### Assessment Scope

8.2.0 **Table 8.1** presents a summary of the aspects agreed to be scoped in to the PEIR, as set out respectively in the EIA Scoping Report, PINS’ Scoping Opinion, and the Scoping Opinion Response (**Volume III, Appendix 2.1, 2.2, 2.3**), which includes those aspects proposed to be scoped out of the ES but included in the PEIR to further justify the lack of potential for significant effects (e.g. decommissioning effects).

8.2.1 These will be amended as necessary for the ES as the design of the Scheme evolves. The final assessment of likely significant effects will be reported in the ES.

**Table 8.1 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology PEIR Scoping Summary**

Aspect	Construction	Operational	Decommissioning
Direct impacts to below ground archaeology	Scoped in	Scoped in	Scoped Out
Direct impacts to designated heritage assets	Scoped in (in response to PINS Scoping Opinion)	Scoped out	Scoped out
Indirect impacts to designated heritage assets	Scoped in	Scoped in	Scoped in (in response to PINS Scoping Opinion)
Direct Impacts to non-designated heritage assets	Scoped in (in response to PINS Scoping Opinion)	Scoped out	Scoped out
Indirect impacts to non-designated heritage assets	Scoped in (in response to PINS Scoping Opinion)	Scoped in (in response to PINS Scoping Opinion)	Scoped in (in response to PINS Scoping Opinion)

### Receptor Sensitivity

8.2.2 The sensitivity of a receptor refers to its importance, namely its environmental value/attributes. The value of a heritage asset (its heritage significance) is guided by its designated status but is derived also from its heritage interest which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic (NPPF Annex 2, Glossary). Each identified heritage asset can be assigned a value in accordance with the criteria set out in **Table 8.5**.



8.2.3 Using professional judgement and the results of consultation, heritage assets are also assessed on an individual basis and regional variations and individual qualities are taken into account where applicable.

**Table 8.2 Criteria for the Assessment of the Value of Heritage Assets**

Value	Designation
Very High (International)	World Heritage Sites
High (National)	Scheduled Monuments Grade I and II* Listed Buildings Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens Registered Battlefields Archaeological sites of schedulable quality and significance
Medium (Regional)	Grade II Listed Buildings Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens Conservation Areas Archaeological sites that can be shown to have demonstrable regional importance
Low (Local)	Locally listed buildings Archaeological sites that can be shown to have demonstrable local importance Assets where the significance is limited by poor preservation and poor survival of contextual associations

### Magnitude of Impact

8.2.4 Once the value of heritage assets with the potential to be impacted by the Scheme are assessed, the next step will be to appraise the magnitude of any possible impacts arising from the Scheme. Impacts can potentially be caused during the Construction, Operational and Decommissioning Phases and can be direct (affecting the physical fabric of a heritage asset) or indirect (affecting the significance of a heritage asset through the contribution made by its setting).



**Table 8.3 Criteria for Assessing the Magnitude of Development Impacts on Cultural Heritage**

Impact Magnitude	Example
Major	<p>Total or substantial loss of the significance of a heritage asset.</p> <p>Substantial harm to a heritage asset’s setting, such that the significance of the asset would be totally lost or substantially reduced (e.g. the significance of a designated heritage asset would be reduced to such a degree that its designation would be questionable or the significance of a non-designated heritage asset would be reduced to such a degree that its categorisation as a heritage asset would be questionable).</p>
Moderate	<p>Partial loss or alteration of the significance of a heritage asset.</p> <p>Considerable harm to a heritage asset’s setting, such that the asset’s significance would be materially affected/considerably devalued, but not totally or substantially lost.</p> <p>This equates to less than substantial harm in terms of the National Policy Statements (NPSs) EN-1 and EN-3.</p>
Minor	<p>Slight loss of the significance of a heritage asset. This could include the removal of fabric that forms part of the heritage asset, but that is not integral to its significance (e.g. the demolition of later extensions/additions of little intrinsic value).</p> <p>Some harm to the heritage asset’s setting, but not to a degree that it would materially compromise the significance of the heritage asset.</p> <p>Perceivable level of harm, but insubstantial relative to the overall interest of the heritage asset.</p>
Negligible	<p>A very slight change to a heritage asset. This could include a change to a part of a heritage asset that does not materially contribute to its significance.</p>



Impact Magnitude	Example
	Very minor change to a heritage asset’s setting such that there is a slight impact but not materially affecting the heritage asset’s significance.

### Significance of Effect

- 8.2.5 In order to determine the significance of effects, the predicted magnitude of change is combined with the sensitivity (value) of the receptor (heritage asset) as set out in **Table 8.2**, below.
- 8.2.6 The matrix is not intended to ‘mechanise’ judgement of the significance of effect but acts as a check to ensure that judgements regarding value, magnitude of impact and significance of effect are reasonable and balanced in order to allow for professional judgement.
- 8.2.7 In some cases, the matrix allows a choice of significance of effect when a magnitude of impact and a value are combined. In these cases, the individual attributes of a specific asset, along with any relevant site specific factors and consideration of other influencing elements, will be taken into account when considered which is the most appropriate significance of effect to apply.
- 8.2.8 Based on professional judgement, a ‘significant’ effect in terms of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process is considered to be one of Moderate significance or above.

**Table 8.4 Criteria for Assessing the Significance of Development Impacts on Cultural Heritage**

Magnitude of Impact		Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Value of Heritage Asset	Very High	Major	Major	Major	Neutral
	High	Major	Major	Moderate	Neutral
	Medium	Major	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Neutral
	Low	Major	Moderate	Minor	Neutral

## 8.3 Study Area

- 8.3.0 Good practice guidance does not suggest a specific radius for assessing the effects resulting from a proposed development on the historic environment, and therefore, professional judgement has been used.
- 8.3.1 It is reasonably common practice for a 1km search area to be employed in evidence to support planning applications. However, given the scale of the Scheme, a wider Study Area is proposed in order to ensure a rigorous approach, with a wider area for higher grade assets,



which have a higher sensitivity. A flexible approach will be adopted for heritage assets located beyond these extents, where necessary, in consideration of their physical and historical relationships with other monuments and the wider landscape.

8.3.2 The Cultural Heritage Study Area extends to 5km from the Site for higher grade heritage assets (i.e. World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Grade I and Grade II\* Listed Buildings); 2km for remaining designated heritage assets (i.e. Grade II Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas); and 1km for non-designated heritage assets and Historic Environment Record (HER) entries. The Study Area will be reviewed as appropriate for the preparation of the Environmental Statement (ES). As per the Planning Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion (**Volume III, Appendix 2.2**), this includes a consideration of possible effects on heritage assets outside of the above radii indicated by models showing Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTVs) and ground-truthed by walkover surveys.

## 8.4 Baseline Conditions

8.4.0 In line with section 5.9 of NPS EN-1 [Ref 8-1], sections 2.10.107-2.10.119 of NPS EN-3 [Ref 8-2], section 2.9.25 of NPS EN-5 [Ref 8-3] and professional guidance (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) 2020 [Ref 8-4]; Historic England (HE) 2017 [Ref 8-5]), the following information sources have been consulted to inform the heritage assessment of the Baseline Conditions within the Study Area and will be consulted to inform the Cultural Heritage chapter of the ES:

- Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER)
- National Heritage List for England (NHLE)
- The Breckland Council and the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk websites for information on Conservation Areas
- Relevant and accessible archives along with online repositories for historical maps, LiDAR data, aerial photographs, plans and relevant documentary sources, including published and unpublished documentary sources
- The Regional Archaeological Research Framework for Norfolk includes 'Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England' [Ref 8-6];
- British Geological Survey borehole data
- Site visit
- Walkover surveys (undertaken in Summer 2024) undertaken in sunny, dry conditions to provide an assessment of the character of the Site and appraise the likely significant effects of the Scheme on heritage assets
- Archaeological field evaluation
- A geophysical survey was conducted across Summer and Autumn 2024 [Ref 8-7]. The geophysical survey was undertaken to inform the initial appraisal of the Site. Several fields could not be surveyed at the time due to the presence of livestock. The results of the completed geophysical survey will be set out in the ES. The baseline provided in this PEIR chapter is informed by results obtained as of the end of September 2024; and



- An assessment of airborne remote sensing and satellite imagery data for archaeology [Ref 8-8].

- 8.4.1 Additional surveys will be undertaken to inform the baseline for the ES. A full cartographic regression is underway at the time of submission this PEIR chapter (May 2025).
- 8.4.2 Consultation with Norfolk Historic Environment Services (NHES) is currently ongoing with regards to the need for and scope of any intrusive evaluation (archaeological trial trenching).
- 8.4.3 Results of all remaining evaluation stages will be utilised in further assessment work as part of the ES.

### Designated Heritage Assets

- 8.4.4 There are no designated heritage assets within the Site.
- 8.4.5 Within the respective 5km and 2km Study Areas surrounding the Site there are 151 designated heritage assets, comprising three Scheduled Monuments, nineteen Grade I listed buildings, seven Grade II\* listed buildings, one hundred and eight Grade II listed buildings, one Grade II Registered Park and Garden within a 2km radius, and three Conservation Areas. The details of the designated heritage assets are listed in a gazetteer in **Volume III, Appendix 8.2** and locations of assets within the Study Area are illustrated on **Volume III, Appendix 8.4, Figure 3**.
- 8.4.6 There are numerous designated heritage assets and archaeological monuments of medieval origin focused within and immediately surrounding the settlement of Castle Acre, to the north-east of the Site. This includes the remains of Castle Acre Castle, a Scheduled Monument and Grade I listed building (NHLE 1171480, 1017909; circa (c).1.3km north-east of the Site). The castle originated as an 11th century unfortified house built by William de Warrene. The house was converted into a shell keep in the mid-12th century and was abandoned by the 14th century. The bailey gate of the castle is 13th century in origin and is also a Grade I listed building (NHLE 1077681).
- 8.4.7 The substantial remains of Castle Acre Priory (NHLE 1015870), a Scheduled Monument with Grade I listed elements (NHLE 1342389), is situated c.950m north-east of the Site. This Cluniac priory was founded in 1089 by the son of the founder of Castle Acre Castle and was dissolved in 1537, although the surviving parts largely date to the 12th century, including an impressive Romanesque façade and claustral buildings.
- 8.4.8 Between Castle Acre Castle and Castle Acre Priory is the Church of St James, a Grade I listed building (NHLE 1342386) situated c.1.4km north-east of the Site. To the south-west of Castle Acre Priory is a second Grade I listed church, St George's (NHLE 1306357), situated within South Acre c.400m north of the Site. The oldest parts (the nave and font) of this building are Norman in date.
- 8.4.9 Also situated within the village of South Acre is the Scheduled Monument of a double moated site at Old Hall (NHLE 1015269). There are numerous Grade II listed buildings situated within the neighbouring villages of Castle Acre and South Acre, both of which are Conservation Areas, including South Acre Hall (NHLE 1077277, c.85m from the Site Boundary).
- 8.4.10 West Acre, as the name suggests, is situated c.2.4km west of South Acre and incorporates the Scheduled Monument of West Acre Priory, and square barrow within the precinct (NHLE 1008352). The square barrow is encompassed by the later priory precinct and comprises a



well-preserved earthwork relating to a Middle Bronze Age funerary monument. The priory is medieval in origin and forms one of the larger monastic complexes in the county. Multiple listed buildings are situated in and around the former priory precinct including two designated as Grade I (the Priory Gatehouse (NHLE 1077660) and Church of All Saints (NHLE 1342409)).

- 8.4.11 An 18th century landscape park designated as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden, is situated c.380m west of the Site (NHLE 1000337). The park forms the grounds of Narford Hall, a Grade I Listed Building (NHLE 1342564), the construction of which was started by Sir Andrew Fountaine in 1702, and was completed by his son, of the same name, following his death in 1706.
- 8.4.12 Little Palgrave Hall, a 17th century farmhouse designated as a Grade II listed building (NHLE 1169833) is situated c.1.5km east of the Site. It is part of a historic farmstead with the hall, comprising the farmhouse, situated to the south of a regular U-plan arrangement of agricultural buildings surrounding a central courtyard.

### Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- 8.4.13 In accordance with Planning Practice Guidance (2021) [Ref 8-9] and Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage, HE Advice Note 7 (HE 2021a) [Ref 8-10], non-designated heritage assets can only be identified by planning bodies when they justifiably have a degree of heritage significance and their status as non-designated heritage assets is made clear through their inclusion in local heritage lists, local & neighbourhood plans, Conservation Area appraisals and decision making on planning applications.
- 8.4.14 Consultation undertaken on the Scheme to date of this PEIR (May 2025), including the Scoping Opinion issued in November 2024 (**Volume III, Appendix 2.2**), has elucidated that both Historic England and the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk consider that the inclusion of a monument within the Norfolk Historic Environment Record is generally sufficient to classify it as a non-designated heritage asset. However, not all HER records are non-designated heritage assets; but rather are an indication of archaeological potential (for example, the recording of possible cropmarks and isolated findspots). This is reflected in Historic England's consultation response included with the Scoping Opinion (**Volume III, Appendix 2.2**), in which it is stated that although archaeological remains as well as built heritage can be considered as non-designated heritage assets, HER monuments recorded within the Site are not considered as such. This will be further clarified through consultation with Historic England Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Norfolk Historic Environment Service.

### Archaeological and Historical Context of the Site and the Study Area

- 8.4.15 A detailed archaeological and historical context of the Site has been presented in an archaeological desk-based assessment (**Volume III, Appendix 8.3**). The following information has been summarised from that appraisal.
- 8.4.16 The Norfolk Historic Environment Record (HER) contains 145 records within a 1km search area, consisting of 136 'monuments' and nine 'events'. The details of all HER records are listed in a gazetteer in **Volume III, Appendix 8.2** and locations within the Study Area are illustrated within **Volume II, at Figures 8.2 and 8.3**.
- 8.4.17 Limited prehistoric activity has been recorded within the Site, most notably relating to three concentrations of 'pot-boilers' thought to represent burnt mounds situated in a cluster towards its centre (within Fields 16 and 23 of the Site, see **Field Numbering of Site boundary at**



**Appendix 3.1, Figure 3.3).** Burnt mounds are prehistoric monuments relatively common across the UK and Ireland and are usually represented by spreads of stones that have been fractured from intense and repeated exposure to fire, commonly found associated with large vats or troughs where water would have been heated. These monuments are generally artefact poor, but radiocarbon dating indicates that they were formed in the Neolithic to Iron Age periods, with the majority dating to the Bronze Age. Interpretations of burnt mounds are numerous and include brewing or cooking, sweat lodges or saunas and industrial processing.

- 8.4.18 There are several HER entries relating to prehistoric findspots primarily recovered during metal-detecting and fieldwalking within and in the immediate environs of the Site, including pottery, lithics and metal items dating from the Neolithic to the Iron Age. Of note is a hoard of four Bronze Age copper alloy rivetted rapier blades, recovered in 1939 at the southern boundary of the Site. However, it is possible that the recorded location of this hoard is inaccurate, and may have been identified further south, within Swaffham Parish.
- 8.4.19 Across the wider 1km Study Area, there are scattered Prehistoric finds and features dating from the Palaeolithic to the Iron Age, with a large proportion relating to Bronze Age activity including up to ten barrows.
- 8.4.20 The projected route of the Fen Causeway, a potentially Roman road thought to have prehistoric origins (although this has recently been called into question), is recorded by the HER as extending into the western part of the Site followed by the current route of Fincham Drove. A second Roman road, the Peddars Way, is purported to extend c.1km to the east of the Site on a perpendicular alignment (orientated north-west to south-east) to the Fen Causeway.
- 8.4.21 Early medieval artefacts have been recovered during fieldwalking and metal-detecting within the Site itself and throughout the 1km Study Area. The most extensive evidence of early medieval activity relates to a cemetery c.1km north of the Site situated within a Bronze Age barrow. Excavations prior to gravel extraction identified that it was re-used as a burial ground for a considerable time throughout the Saxon period and may have been used to inter the remains of executed criminals or others who were denied more formal Christian burial elsewhere. A second early medieval inhumation cemetery may be located c.1km north-east of the Site, where metal-detecting recovered a notable group of Early Saxon finds from a relatively small area, including brooch fragments, a strap fitting, wrist clasp, copper alloy rings and the copper alloy handle from a stave-built bucket (MNF69676).
- 8.4.22 Around the time of the Conquest (AD 1066), the Site would have been situated in the hinterland between several settlements, all of which would presumably have been established either by the Late Saxon period or very soon following the invasion, including Swaffham to the south, Palgrave to the east and Castle Acre, South Acre, Cuthorpe and Narford to the north. Further, there are several known deserted medieval villages (DMV) in the surrounding area. Of most interest is Stow DMV which incorporates the site of St Guthlac's Chapel, located c.180m from the southern boundary of the Site. The Site does not appear to have been heavily utilised in this period, although the HER records a small number of findspots recovered from within its boundaries. Post-medieval activity from the Site itself is similarly sparse.
- 8.4.23 In the 20th century, the Site was used as the location for a World War Two bombing decoy designed to divert enemy bombers away from the real airfield, situated at Marham c.7.5km to the west. No evidence of this monument survives at surface level, but the HER entry records that the Site's bunker remains, although does not elaborate on the source of this information.



## Geophysical Survey Results

- 8.4.24 The report on a geophysical survey (magnetometry) of the Site, undertaken in Autumn 2024 is included under **Volume III, Appendix 8.4**. The only anomalies correlating with the locations of potential burnt mounds within the Site were identified by the geophysical survey were identified within the southern part of field 23 (**Field Numbering of Site boundary at Appendix 3.1, Figure 3.3**). Several other anomalies present that may be representative of other Prehistoric activity. A double ring-ditched feature positioned within a square enclosure was identified in field 15, which could be morphologically consistent with a Bronze Age date, although further evidence would be required to confirm this. A large polygonal enclosure identified to the north of Fincham Drove within field 9 is also of likely prehistoric date and potentially dates to the Bronze Age or Iron Age. There were also several anomalies identified in fields 8, 9, 10, 15, 18, 23, 27 and 32 that could potentially relate to Iron Age and/or Roman activity representing settlement and stock enclosures.
- 8.4.25 The purported route of the Fen Causeway (followed by Fincham Drove) crosses the Site and the geophysical survey identified a possible area of activity to the north (field 9) closely aligned to the droveway. However, enclosures which could be Roman in origin (on morphological grounds) further to the east within fields 15 and 23 do not align with the droveway and there is no indication of any continuation of the droveway (or earlier track/road) to the east of where the current drove turns to the north. The purported date of this feature as Roman has, therefore, been called into question, and these features hold substantial potential to elucidate this.
- 8.4.26 No anomalies of clearly medieval origin have been identified by the geophysical survey undertaken so far and there is no evidence to suggest that the Site contains any particularly intensive activity during this period.

## Aerial Photography Assessment

- 8.4.27 An assessment of airborne remote sensing and satellite imagery data was carried out in December 2024 (**Volume III, Appendix 8.5**) to inform the baseline for assessment to be included in the ES. However, very few traces of buried archaeological features were recorded by the survey, and there were no visible microtopographic features beyond residual small chalk and gravel pits. An undated ditch and two ditched enclosures, shown in greater detail as anomalies identified by the geophysical survey, were recorded. As with the geophysical survey, no evidence was present of the prehistoric burnt mounds and World War II bombing decoy recorded by the HER as within the Site. There was further no evidence for medieval ploughing.

## Archaeological Trial Trenching

- 8.4.28 A programme of archaeological trial trenching will be undertaken to inform the assessment within the ES. The scope of that trenching is currently at the time of PEIR submission (May 2025) being discussed with Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Team.

## 8.5 Embedded Mitigation

- 8.5.0 For indirect impacts to heritage assets through changes to their settings, embedded mitigation involves the incorporation of appropriate setbacks, buffers and landscaping to minimise infringement on any views.



- 8.5.1 For direct impacts to archaeological remains that may be present within the Site, embedded mitigation would be based on their level of significance and potential contribution to regional research frameworks but could involve avoidance of sensitive archaeological remains, the option to install concrete blocks as ballast avoiding the need for driven and screw anchored installation of Ground Mounted Photovoltaic (PV) Modules, therefore minimising ground disturbance in archaeologically sensitive areas. Historic England will be consulted on embedded mitigation measures with regards to the setting of heritage assets within the Study Area, which will be included in **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage and Archaeology** of the ES and detailed in the Landscape Environmental Management Plan (LEMP).
- 8.5.2 Baseline data included and set out in this PEIR chapter above combined with the results of the geophysical survey have demonstrated the potential for the Site to contain previously unrecorded archaeological remains. Construction of the Scheme will involve the installation of the Ground Mounted PV Modules and Associated Development (Customer Substation, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), Grid Connection Infrastructure) as well as trenches for cabling and the establishment of Access Tracks and Temporary Construction Compounds, all of which could potentially affect the Site's archaeological resource. A suitable evaluation, to be developed in consultation with the Norfolk Historic Environment, will, if required, be undertaken prior to ES submission to determine the character and significance of any such remains present. Suitable mitigation measures will be embedded into the design such as removal of panels from sensitive areas of the Scheme in response to this. Details of these mitigation measures will be provided in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).
- 8.5.3 Embedded mitigation measures, such as the location of decommissioning compounds, methodology for removing piles etc., will be set out within the outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP), such mitigation measures will ensure protections put in place during the Construction and Operational Phase will apply during the Decommissioning Phase.

## 8.6 Preliminary Likely Significant Effects

- 8.6.0 This chapter of the PEIR contains a preliminary assessment of likely significant effects based on the principle that mitigation measures have been embedded in the design of the Scheme to limit significant effects.

### Overview of Receptor Sensitivity

- 8.6.1 As detailed in the accompanying Setting Assessment (**Volume III, Appendix 8.6**) of the 151 designated heritage assets within the 5km Study Area a combination of viewshed analysis and walkover surveys have confirmed that only 15 designated heritage assets share (or potentially share) intervisibility with the Site, which may, therefore, to be considered as a part of their setting. These assets comprise four Scheduled Monuments (Castle Acre Castle, Castle Acre Priory, Moated Site 230m and 110m north of All Saints Church and Deserted Medieval Village, Great Palgrave); seven Grade I listed buildings (Castle Acre Castle, Castle Acre Priory, Church of St James, Church of St George, Church of All Saints, High House, High House Stable Court); one Grade II listed building (Little Palgrave Hall); one Grade II Registered Park and Garden (Narford Hall); and two Conservation Areas (Castle Acre and South Acre).

### Very High Value Assets

- 8.6.2 There are no Very High Value heritage assets within the Site or Study Area.



### High Value Assets

- 8.6.3 Castle Acre Castle (Scheduled Monument (NHLE 1017909) with Grade I Listed elements (NHLE 1171480)) is located c.1.7km to the north-east of the Site. It is considered to be of High Value due to it being a relatively well-preserved example of a Shell Keep castle. Where surviving, these monuments hold all three heritage interests: archaeological interest for their potential to yield evidence of past human activities; architectural interest as both great feats of engineering and places of high aesthetic value; and historical interest in their nature as physical remnants of key historic events. Castle Acre Castle is also significant in its association with the de Warenne family, who were heavily involved in the Conquest of 1066 and continued to be prominent local figures in the centuries following.
- 8.6.4 Castle Acre Priory (Scheduled Monument (NHLE 1015870) with Grade I Listed elements (NHLE 1342389)) (located c.1.2km north of the Site) is also considered to be of High Value, vested in its architectural interest as a building with impressive appearance and scale, which is a factor of its intentional design as a collection of buildings with undeniably high aesthetic value; historic interest as a medieval priory and in its association with the de Warenne family; and archaeological interest in the surviving below ground elements that have the potential to further elucidate our understanding of this monument.
- 8.6.5 The setting of both the Castle and Priory is formed by the village of Castle Acre itself, which has largely retained the street layout of the planned Norman town. The two structures have been intangibly linked from their shared founding by the de Warenne family in the 11th century throughout their subsequent development to the present day, and their retained physical and visual connection remains an important element of both monuments' setting. The wider setting of both encapsulates the surrounding countryside, which serves as a visual representation behind some of the reasonings behind both monuments' intentional design and siting at this location, aiding their aesthetic value.
- 8.6.6 The Churches of St James (NHLE 1342386) (c.1.4km north-east of the Site) and St George (NHLE 1306357) (c.490m north of the Site) and the Church of All Saints (NHLE 1077266) (c.2.6km north-east of the Site), all Grade I Listed Buildings, can be said to hold all three heritage interests as much restored churches of medieval origin. The important elements of both churches' settings are formed by the historic plots in which they are sited, their village locations and the rural environs of the wider parishes that they have and continue to serve.
- 8.6.7 High House (NHLE 1305453) and High House Stable Court and Curtain Wall Attached at East of High House (NHLE 1342411), both Grade I listed buildings principally derive their significance from their architectural interest as notable examples of 18th and 19th century Greek Revival architecture, with features including a unique piano nobile arrangement. There is further historical interest in the connection with W. J Donthorn, a notable 19th century architect born in Swaffham. The important elements of their setting are linked to their interrelationship and the parkland setting within which they are situated.
- 8.6.8 Moated Site 230m and 110m north of All Saints Church, a Scheduled Monument (NHLE 1019668) hold significance in its archaeological interest as a medieval moated site, with significant potential for evidence to be present that could shed light on settlement activity here during the medieval period. The historical relationship between the two moated sites and the Grade I Listed All Saints Church also confers historic interest, as it displays the closely related secular and ecclesiastical power structures of the medieval period.
- 8.6.9 Deserted Medieval Village of Great Palgrave (NHLE 1002894), is a Scheduled Monument whose significance is derived from its archaeological interest as a shrunken medieval village.



Extensive field walking and metal detecting have demonstrated the Site's potential to reveal evidence of past occupation across the scheduled area.

### Medium Value Assets

- 8.6.10 Little Palgrave Hall (a Grade II listed building (NHLE 1169833) (c.1.5km east of the Site) appears to have been designed along utilitarian lines, although the combination of its 17th century form with the later 18th to 19th century façade have made it an aesthetically pleasing and elegant country house. Externally, it is a good example of the rural vernacular architectural style of the local area, which informs its significance. It is positioned within the Norfolk countryside and much of the topography of this area comprises gently undulating fields, with Little Palgrave Hall positioned at a high point in the landscape. This rural setting serves to enhance the agricultural nature of the listed farmhouse and enhance its traditional character.
- 8.6.11 Narford Hall (Grade II Registered Park and Garden (NHLE 1000337) (c.400m west of the Site) holds significance in its illustration of early landscape design and association with the renowned 18th century architect, Colen Campbell, a pioneering figure in the establishment of Georgian design. The current layout of the registered park predominantly represents its transition to a landscape park in the 18th and 19th centuries and remains a good illustration of the changing fashions of the period in the shift towards a more naturalistic, romantic aesthetic. This interest is furthered by its physical and historic association with the Grade I listed Narford Hall, a 17th century grand country residence (c.1.5km north-west of the Site). The enclosed nature of the park's borders combined with the relatively level topography greatly restrict views from and to this heritage asset and where afforded, these tend to be short, channelled views of particular elements of the listed building and its park. The surrounding landscape of Narford Hall park comprises agricultural land predominantly used for arable farming.
- 8.6.12 Castle Acre (c.1.5km north-east of the Site) and South Acre (c.400m north of the Site) are neighbouring villages, the historic cores of which are designated as Conservation Areas. Although a settlement is known to have existed at Castle Acre from at least the Roman period, it is Castle Acre's medieval phase from which its significance is principally drawn. It is nationally recognised for the importance of the two ruinous medieval complexes that bookend the settlement (the castle and the priory) and holds historic interest in the largely preserved layout of the 12th century town, formed by the de Warenne family. Castle Acre Conservation Area can also be said to hold architectural interest in the high proportion of historic buildings that make up its fabric.
- 8.6.13 The significance of South Acre Conservation Area is predominantly vested in its architectural interest, and specifically the group of historic buildings that comprise the village centre. There is also archaeological interest inherent both in the village as a much-shrunken settlement of medieval origin and in its focal point, the Grade I Listed Church of St George. Both Castle Acre and South Acre are sited in the steep-sided valley of the River Nar, and the setting is dominated by farmland, mostly arable with some smaller areas of pasture.

### Low Value Assets

- 8.6.14 The Site has been assessed as having potential to contain archaeological remains specifically relating to the Prehistoric, Roman and Modern periods. The significance of any such remains would be vested in their evidential value and their relative importance linked to their potential to add to national and regional research agendas. Available evidence at this time would suggest that any surviving remains would make only limited contributions to regional research importance and as such are considered to be of Low (local) sensitivity.



### Assessment of likely significant effects

8.6.15 It is considered that there is the potential for likely significant effects upon the historic environment resulting from the Scheme, which may include:

- Direct impacts upon heritage assets resulting in their partial/total loss during the Construction Phase of the Scheme
- Indirect impacts on the significance of designated heritage assets through changes to their settings during all Phases of the Scheme; and
- Indirect impacts on the significance of non-designated heritage assets through changes to their settings during all Phases of the Scheme.

8.6.16 A full heritage impact assessment will be included in ES once the results of all remaining evaluation has been completed and the final Scheme design has been produced. However, a preliminary list of potential impacts is provided in **Table 8.5**, as is a proposed further evaluation strategy required to inform the mitigation approach.

### Construction Phase

8.6.17 The PINS Scoping Opinion received in December 2024 (**Volume III, Appendix 2.2**) in response to the Scoping Opinion Request (**Volume III, Appendix 2.1**) stated that direct impacts to heritage assets during the Construction Phase should be scoped into the assessment due to activities such as driving piles for the Ground Mounted PV Modules and vehicle movement having potential to cause physical damage to heritage assets in the proximity of the Site. Whilst the Scoping Opinion stated ‘Heritage Assets’ the Scoping Opinion Request considered only Designated Heritage Assets.

8.6.18 The Scoping Opinion made reference to heritage assets beyond the Scheme, but in close proximity, potentially being susceptible to direct impacts during the Construction Phase. Following changes to the Site boundary since submission of the Scoping Opinion Request there are no designated heritage assets in what could be described as ‘close proximity’ (no designated heritage assets within c.475m of the Site and no high grade assets within c.500m), there are also no non archaeological heritage assets in the vicinity that could be considered sensitive to such impacts. Therefore, direct impact upon any heritage asset beyond the Site boundary, from activities undertaken during the Construction Phase, including vibration from piling will not occur. Details on the potential vibration effects of piling for the Ground Mounted PV Modules are set out within **Volume 1, Chapter 10: Noise and Vibration**.

8.6.19 Detail of the proposed transport routes for construction traffic to be used during the Construction Phase are set out within **Volume 1, Chapter 9: Transport and Access**. As set out within **Volume 1, Chapter 9: Transport and Access** the proposed access routes to the Scheme from the Strategic Road Network (SRN shown at **Volume II, Figure 9.1**). There are no designated heritage assets along proposed access Route A. Access Route B lies immediately adjacent to the Scheduled Monument Moated Site north of All Saints Church (NHLE 1019668) and within c.30m of the Grade I listed All Saints Church (NHLE 1077266). Access Route B is, however, a well-used main road (the A1065) and there is no potential for any swipes and strikes to heritage assets along the route and there is no reason to believe that additional traffic movements could have any direct impact upon these heritage assets. Access Route C does pass through a Conservation Area and Narford Hall Registered Park, is adjacent to one scheduled monument, West Acre Priory and Square Barrow within the precinct, and has five listed buildings within c.50m of the route (the closest being c.10m from the road) and, partly for these reasons, the route will be confined to use of staff vehicles and



Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs), although these limitations relate more to setting issues than any realistic potential for any direct impact. No non-designated heritage assets with potential to be sensitive to movement of construction traffic have been identified. Therefore, there is not considered to be any potential for direct impact upon heritage assets from construction traffic as part of the Scheme.

- 8.6.20 Impacts to archaeological assets within the Site would largely occur during the construction phase through activities such as the installation of Solar PV Arrays, BESS, Substations (both Customer and National Grid), Cabling, Access Tracks and Temporary Construction Compounds all have the potential to have an adverse, permanent, and irreversible impact upon buried archaeology.
- 8.6.21 On current understanding, based upon the geophysical survey and recorded archaeology in the area, the archaeological remains within the Site are considered likely to be of Low sensitivity, although the exact nature and sensitivity of the remains will be further assessed by trial trench evaluation prior to production of the ES. The degree to which the archaeological remains will be able to absorb the impact from the Construction Phase without compromising their integrity would be dependent upon a number of factors such as the nature of the remains, i.e. field systems (agricultural/stock enclosures) with few, if any, related internal features could easily absorb the impact of piling and cable runs within the Solar PV Site, but would be more sensitive to the greater impacts generated by the BESS and Substations. Settlement remains, depending upon their density and survival, would be more sensitive to construction impact but may still be able to absorb the impact of piling and cable runs without compromising their integrity. The trial trench evaluation, to be conducted prior to production of the ES will clarify the sensitivity of the archaeological remains.
- 8.6.22 A worst-case effect of construction activities associated with the Solar PV Site upon the archaeological resource following the implementation of embedded mitigation measures would be of minor magnitude. Prior to additional mitigation measures being put in place archaeological remains of Low sensitivity (e.g. field systems, stock enclosures, poorly preserved settlement) this magnitude of impact would result in an effect of minor significance, which is not significant in EIA terms. For remains of medium sensitivity (e.g. well-preserved settlement activity, burials, ritual deposits) this would result in an effect of moderate significance, which is **significant** in EIA terms.
- 8.6.23 A worst-case effect of construction activities associated with the areas of greater below ground disturbance (i.e. Customer and National Grid Stations, BESS) upon the archaeological resource following the implementation of embedded mitigation measures would be of major magnitude. Prior to additional mitigation measures being put in place archaeological remains of low sensitivity (e.g. field systems, stock enclosures, poorly preserved settlement) this magnitude of impact would result in an effect of major significance. For remains of medium sensitivity (e.g. well-preserved settlement activity, burials, ritual deposits) this would result in an effect of major significance. In both cases this would be **significant** in EIA terms.
- 8.6.24 During the Construction Phase there is potential for indirect impacts to heritage assets within the Study Area but beyond the boundary of the Site through changes to their setting. These changes would be most evident during the Operational Phase and would commence during construction but are most closely linked to the Operational Phase and indirect impacts that might occur during the Construction Phase would be of no greater magnitude than those experienced during the Operational Phase and would be of a short-term duration and reversible. They would, however, be of a different nature, for example including the possible visibility of plant and the presence of Temporary Construction Compounds. These might result in very localised indirect impacts that could be of a different nature than what would occur



during the Operational Phase, but the reversibility and short-term duration of these impacts would mean that the significance of the effects would soon return to Neutral. As set out in **Volume 1, Chapter 5: Scheme Description**, the Construction Phase is anticipated to take place over up to 24 months, although the final programme will be dependent on the detailed layout design and potential environmental constraints on the timing of construction activities. As the indirect impacts would be at their greatest in terms of magnitude and duration during the Operational Phase, this is the main focus of the assessment of impacts to designated and non-designated heritage assets that will be detailed in the ES.

- 8.6.25 The impacts to buried archaeological features during the Operational Phase would be of a beneficial nature, due to these remains being taken out of the agricultural cycle of regular ploughing which most of the field parcels within the Site are currently subject to. Ploughing is recognised as having a widespread detrimental impact upon archaeological remains. As with potential construction impacts the magnitude of beneficial impact is dependent upon the nature of the archaeological with some types of archaeology being more sensitive to ploughing than others, and further archaeological evaluation is needed to define the sensitivity of the archaeology. For the purposes of this PEIR, a moderate beneficial impact has been identified for solar array areas following the Construction Phase. The benefits will not apply to areas where archaeology has been subject to higher levels of impact (e.g. BESS and Substations). This will result in a moderate beneficial effect, which is **significant** in EIA terms.
- 8.6.26 Whilst it is noted that the Operational Phase of the Scheme will see replacement of panels and batteries, it is not anticipated that there will be additional piling or ground disturbance beyond that caused during the operational phase. For example, it is assumed that in areas where there is a potential for archaeological impact, panels will be replaced using the same frames, and vehicles will only use Access Tracks installed during the Construction Phase. As such no additional impacts to archaeological sites have been identified during the Operational Phase.
- 8.6.27 There are potential indirect impacts on heritage assets within the Study Area during the Operational Phase of the Scheme, which will be fully appraised by the ES. These impacts lie in the contribution that the setting of heritage assets makes to their significance and could include changes in land use altering the character of heritage landscapes and the surrounding environs of heritage assets, visual intrusion affecting the dominance/prominence of heritage assets within their settings, glare and shadowing caused by the reflection of sunlight off solar arrays and noise pollution.
- 8.6.28 At this stage (as detailed in **Volume III, Appendix 8.6**) there are 15 heritage assets within the Study Area that are considered sensitive to the Scheme. These assets are discussed below:
- Castle Acre Castle (both the Scheduled Monument and Grade I Listed Building) are assets of High sensitivity. There is some visibility of the Site from the Castle, though this is quite limited (See **Appendix 8.6** Figure 8) and any visibility of the Scheme from the Castle will form a very small part of a much wider vista. As such it is not considered that it would dominate or intrude into such views but would be visible. This is considered to be a minor magnitude impact resulting in a Moderate effect which is **significant** in EIA terms
  - Castle Acre Priory (both the Scheduled Monument and Grade I Listed Building) are assets of High sensitivity. There is some visibility of the Site from the Castle, though this is quite limited (See **Appendix 8.6** Figure 9) and any visibility of the Scheme from the Priory will form a very small part of a much wider vista. As such it is not considered that it would



dominate or intrude into such views, but would be visible. This is considered to be a Minor magnitude impact resulting in a Moderate effect, which is **significant** in EIA terms

- The Church of St George (Grade I Listed Building) is an asset of High sensitivity. There is some visibility of the Site from the Church, but this is confined to the area north of Field 33 which may see some temporary works during the Construction Phase but will otherwise not be subject to any change (See **Appendix 8.6** Figure 12), however, should sub-station structures be constructed in Field 33 there is potential for the upper parts of those structures to be visible, these would, however, only be visible behind the existing pylons, in views north from the church, which would represent a Negligible impact. There are some occasional views of the tower of the church available from Washpit Drove which passes along the northern boundary of the Site, however, as the Scheme will be behind the viewer these views will not be changed. Any impact upon the Church of St George is, therefore, considered to be Negligible resulting in a Neutral effect, which is not significant in EIA terms
- The Moated site 230m and 110m north of All Saints Church (Scheduled Monument) and All Saints Church itself (Grade I Listed Building) are assets of High sensitivity. Viewshed analysis suggests that there may be some slight visibility of the northeastern edge of the Scheme from these assets (**Appendix 8.6** Figure 10), however, no such visibility was noted during the Site visit. Any impact upon these assets is, therefore, considered to be Negligible resulting in a Neutral effect, which is not significant in EIA terms
- The Church of St James (Grade I Listed Building) is an asset of High sensitivity. There is some limited visibility of the Site from the Church, (See **Appendix 8.6** Figure 13) and any visibility of the Scheme from the Church will be heavily filtered by extant development and at some considerable distance. As such it is not considered that it would dominate or intrude into such views but would be visible. This is considered to be a Negligible magnitude impact resulting in a Neutral effect, which is not significant in EIA terms
- High House and Stable Court and Curtain Wall (Grade I Listed Buildings) are assets of High sensitivity. Viewshed analysis suggests that there may be some slight visibility of the northern part of the Scheme from these assets (**Appendix 8.6** Figure 14), however, no such visibility was noted during the Site visit. Should any visibility be available it would be at a distance of over 4.5km and would merely form a small part of a much wider vista. Any impact upon these assets is, therefore, considered to be Minor/Negligible resulting in a Minor/Neutral effect, which is not significant in EIA term
- Little Palgrave Hall (Grade II Listed Building) is an asset of Medium sensitivity. Viewshed analysis suggests that there may be some slight visibility of the eastern edge of the Scheme from this asset (**Appendix 8.6** Figure 15), however, no such visibility was noted during the Site visit. Any impact upon this asset is, therefore, considered to be Negligible resulting in a Neutral effect, which is not significant in EIA terms
- The Deserted medieval village, Great Palgrave (Scheduled Monument) is an asset of High sensitivity. Viewshed analysis suggests that there may be some partial, filtered visibility of the eastern part of the Scheme from this asset (**Appendix 8.6** Figure 11), however, no such visibility was noted during the Site visit. Any impact upon these assets is, therefore,



considered to be minor/Negligible resulting in a Minor/Neutral effect, which is not significant in EIA term

- Narford Hall (Grade II Registered Park and Garden) is an asset of Medium sensitivity. Viewshed analysis suggests that there may be some slight visibility of the extreme western edge of the Scheme from this asset (**Appendix 8.6** Figure 16). Any impact upon these assets is, therefore, considered to be minor resulting in a Minor/Moderate effect, which is not significant in EIA term
- Castle Acre Conservation Area is an asset of medium sensitivity. Viewshed analysis (**Appendix 8.6** Figures 6 & 7) and a site visit have confirmed that there is some visibility of the Site from the Conservation Area, however, these are largely confined to ones from St James Church, the priory and the castle (as described above) and it tends to be those individual assets that are being experienced rather than the Conservation Area as a whole. Any impact upon the Conservation Area is, therefore, considered to be minor resulting in a Moderate/Minor effect, which is not significant in EIA term; and
- South Acre Conservation Area is an asset of medium sensitivity. Viewshed analysis (**Appendix 8.6** Figures 6 & 7) and a site visit have confirmed that there is some visibility of the Site from the Conservation Area, however, this is confined to that described for St Georges Church above. As with St Georges Church the level of impact would be dependant upon the siting of the sub-station, which has yet to be confirmed but a worst-case is considered to be a minor impact resulting in a Moderate/Minor effect, which is not significant in EIA term.

### Decommissioning Phase

8.6.29 Plant movement and other activities during decommissioning, similar to those employed during the Construction Phase, could have an adverse impact upon the settings of nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets.

8.6.30 It is considered that these decommissioning impacts would be of no greater magnitude than the operational impacts that would already be occurring, and the decommissioning impacts would be temporary, short term and reversible in nature, and would ultimately result in the reversal of the operational phase impacts leading to Neutral effects at the end of the Decommissioning Phase. Consequently, it can be concluded that the likely decommissioning effects would not be 'significant'.

## 8.7 Additional Mitigation

8.7.1 It is possible that as the Scheme assessment and design develops, further additional mitigation strategies might also be identified. These will be included in the ES.

8.7.2 Where significant adverse effects are identified by the forthcoming heritage impact assessment, after considering embedded measures, additional mitigation measures may be identified in the cultural heritage and archaeology chapter of the ES.

8.7.3 In relation to potential setting impacts these will likely all form part of the embedded mitigation and there is unlikely to be any additional mitigation that could be implemented With regards to the archaeological resource, until the trial trench evaluation has been completed it is not



possible to identify how sensitive the archaeological remains are to the various impacts and, therefore, the extent of mitigation that will be required. The type of mitigation required may comprise open area excavation, archaeological watching brief and/or preservation in situ. It is, however, proposed that a full mitigation strategy is presented with the ES once the trial trench evaluation has been completed. The mitigation Strategy will be presented as a Programme of Archaeological Works (PoAW) detailing the measures to be taken.

- 8.7.4 These will be taken into account in the assessment of residual effects. A preliminary list of potential additional mitigation measures is included in Table 8.5 below.

## 8.8 Residual Effects

- 8.8.1 This section of the chapter summarises the residual significant effects of the Scheme following the implementation of embedded and additional mitigation as outlined above in this chapter.
- 8.8.2 There are no designated heritage assets within the Site boundary, therefore, will be no direct impact upon any designated heritage assets. Any potential indirect residual impacts to the setting of designated heritage assets during the Construction Phase would be temporary and at a negligible magnitude. It is considered there will be no significant residual adverse effects.
- 8.8.3 Any negative effects upon buried archaeology will be mitigated during the Construction Phase, either through embedded mitigation such as buffers, setbacks and the use of concrete blocks to Ground Mounted PV Modules instead of piled or screwed foundations, or through archaeological excavation. Further, the Operational Phase, will, have no negative impact upon buried archaeology. Thus, it is anticipated that through the use of additional mitigation measures, such as those outlined above, there will be no significant residual adverse effects upon the archaeological resource during the Operational Phase.
- 8.8.4 Impacts to buried archaeology during the Operational Phase will be beneficial in removing the land from agricultural activities, such as ploughing, which has a widespread impact upon below ground archaeological remains.
- 8.8.5 Operational Phase impacts to designated heritage assets through changes in their setting will be mitigated as far as possible by embedded mitigation measures and it is unlikely that any additional mitigation could be implemented. Preliminary assessment suggests that there could be Moderate adverse effects to Castle Acre Castle and Castle Acre Priory (both assets of High sensitivity) which would be **Significant**. On current understanding the residual effect would remain as Moderate (**Significant**). It is, however, possible that once landscaping proposals and layout of the Scheme have been further assessed the level of impact may reduce.
- 8.8.6 It is considered that there will be no significant residual adverse effects that would arise from the Decommissioning Phase of the Scheme than those that arise during the Construction Phase, as the infrastructure is removed, and the Site returned to the landowner.

## 8.9 Cumulative and In-Combination Effects

- 8.9.1 The ES will consider potential cumulative and in-combination effects upon designated and non-designated heritage assets and below ground archaeological remains. A list of cumulative projects can be found in **Volume II, Figure 3-4** of the PEIR, the list will be reviewed and refined in preparation of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application submission through further consultation and will be presented and assessed in the ES.



- 8.9.2 There are currently two schemes located in proximity to the Site boundary where there is potential for cumulative effects. These include:
- High Grove Solar (EN0110010); and
  - Land at Great Friars Farm, proposed development of a 400,000 bird broiler farm (3SO/2024/0002/SCO).
- 8.9.3 The Applicant is actively engaging with the developer of the adjacent High Grove Solar DCO scheme (which is currently at the pre-application stage) proposed to the south of the Scheme. It is intended that ongoing collaboration and information sharing between the two projects will ensure that both assessments are cognisant of each other and minimise likely significant effects arising in-combination as far as reasonably practicable. This will be crucial to the impact assessment included in the ES, reflected in Historic England's consultation response within the PINS Scoping Opinion (**Volume III, Appendix 2.2**).
- 8.9.4 Initial findings would suggest that the only designated heritage assets likely to be sensitive to both schemes are Castle Acre Castle (Scheduled Monument with Grade I Listed Elements); Castle Acre Priory (Scheduled Monument with Grade I Listed elements); Church of St James (Grade I Listed Building); Little Palgrave Hall (Grade II Listed Building) and Great Palgrave Deserted Medieval Village (Scheduled Monument, NHLE 1002894).
- 8.9.5 In archaeological terms it is not yet known what archaeology has been identified within the High Grove scheme or how the archaeology across both High Grove and The Drovers relate, however, it is clear that the works undertaken to date, and those to come, will add greatly to the understanding of the archaeology across a large section of the county.
- 8.9.6 The proposals for Land at Great Friars Farm are currently at an early stage with scoping opinion issued in August 2024. The scoping opinion has stated that proposals should be subject to EIA, however, archaeology and heritage are not included in the scope of assessment suggesting that any cumulative effects would not be significant. The status of Land at Great Friars Farm will be reviewed during preparation of the ES, to review the potential for cumulative effects.

## 8.10 Assumptions and Limitations

- 8.10.1 Whilst the extent and nature of piling for the metal frames upon which the PV panels will be mounted is reasonably well understood, and its impact is recognised as being extremely low, the details of the amount and location of associated Cabling is not yet available. It is, however, recognised that during the Construction and Decommissioning Phases of the Scheme results in relatively low levels of below ground disturbance, depending upon the exact layout and construction methods utilised (typically in the region of 5%-7% of site area).



**Table 8.5 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology Significance of Effects**

Receptor/ Feature	Activity	Embedded Mitigation Measures	Nature Duration Effect	and of	Sensitivity of Receptor	Magnitude of Impact	Preliminary Likely Significant Effects	Additional Mitigation Measures	Residual Effect Significa nce
<b>Construction Phase</b>									
Possible burnt mound (HER MNF3986)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent		Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor
Possible burnt mound (HER MNF4111)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent		Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor



Possible burnt mound (HER MNF4154)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor
Fen Causeway (MNF2796)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor



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World War Two bombing decoy (MNF29538)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor
Double ring-ditched feature positioned within a square enclosure, Field 15 (Geophysical Survey)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor
Polygonal enclosure to the north of Fincham	Piling activity and/or excavations	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching	Minor



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Drove, Field 9 (Geophysical Survey)	for site infrastructure	potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)					Details to be provided within PoAW	
Potential archaeological remains, Field 8 (Geophysical Survey)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor
Potential archaeological remains, Field 9 (Geophysical Survey)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided	Minor



		warranted (PoAW)					within PoAW	
Potential archaeological remains, Field 10 (Geophysical Survey)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor
Potential archaeological remains, Field 15 (Geophysical Survey)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor



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Potential archaeological remains, Field 18 (Geophysical Survey)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor
Potential archaeological remains, Field 23 (Geophysical Survey)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor



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Potential archaeological remains, Field 27 (Geophysical Survey)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor
Potential archaeological remains, Field 32 (Geophysical Survey)	Piling activity and/or excavations for site infrastructure	Mitigation by design, if warranted (CEMP) or potentially by archaeological investigation if warranted (PoAW)	Adverse, permanent	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Targeted evaluation trenching  Details to be provided within PoAW	Minor
Heritage Assets	Visual and audible	Working hours and access routes to be agreed to	Adverse, temporary	Low to High	Minor	Minor	NA	Minor



beyond Site boundary	intrusion to setting	minimise impact and detailed in CEMP						
Operational Phase								
Castle Acre Castle (Scheduled Monument NHLE 1171480, Grade I Listed Building NHLE 1017909; c.1.3km north-east of the Site)	Presence of proposed development within the setting of the heritage asset;	Siting of more visually intrusive elements of the Scheme (e.g. substation) in visually inconspicuous areas; incorporation of appropriate set backs, buffers and landscaping  Details to be provided within LEMP	Adverse; throughout lifetime operational phase of	High	Minor	Moderate	NA	Moderate (Significant)
Castle Acre Priory (Scheduled Monument NHLE 1015870;	Presence of proposed development within the setting of the	Siting of more visually intrusive elements of the Scheme (e.g. substation) in	Adverse; throughout lifetime operational phase of	High	Minor	Moderate	N/A	Moderate (Significant)



<p>Grade Listed Building NHLE 1342389; c.1.2km north of the Site)</p>	<p>heritage asset;</p>	<p>visually inconspicuous areas; incorporation of appropriate set backs, buffers and landscaping</p> <p>Details to be provided within LEMP</p>						
<p>Church of St James (Grade I Listed Building NHLE 1342386, c.1.4km north-east of the Site)</p>	<p>Presence of proposed development within the setting of the heritage asset;</p>	<p>Siting of more visually intrusive elements of the Scheme (e.g. substation) in visually inconspicuous areas; incorporation of appropriate set backs, buffers and landscaping</p>	<p>Adverse; throughout lifetime operational phase of</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Negligible</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Neutral</p>



		Details to be provided within LEMP						
Church of St George (Grade I Listed Building, NHLE 1306357; c.490m north of the Site)	Presence of proposed development within the setting of the heritage asset;	Siting of more visually intrusive elements of the Scheme (e.g. substation) in visually inconspicuous areas; incorporation of appropriate set backs, buffers and landscaping  Details to be provided within LEMP	Adverse; throughout lifetime operational phase of	High	Negligible	Neutral	N/A N/A	Neutral
Narford Hall (Grade II Registered Park & Garden, NHLE	Presence of proposed development within the setting of the	Siting of more visually intrusive elements of the Scheme (e.g. substation) in	Adverse; throughout lifetime operational phase of	Medium	Negligible	Neutral	N/A	Neutral



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<p>1000337; c.400m west of the Site)</p>	<p>heritage asset;</p>	<p>visually inconspicuous areas; incorporation of appropriate set backs, buffers and landscaping</p> <p>Details to be provided within LEMP</p>						
<p>Little Palgrave Hall (Grade II Listed Building, NHLE1169 833; c.1.5km east of the Site)</p>	<p>Presence of proposed development within the setting of the heritage asset;</p>	<p>Siting of more visually intrusive elements of the Scheme (e.g. substation) in visually inconspicuous areas; incorporation of appropriate set backs, buffers and landscaping</p>	<p>Adverse; throughout lifetime operational phase of</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Negligible</p>	<p>Neutral</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Neutral</p>



		Details to be provided within LEMP						
Castle Acre Conservation Area	Presence of proposed development within the setting of the heritage asset;	Siting of more visually intrusive elements of the Scheme (e.g. substation) in visually inconspicuous areas; incorporation of appropriate set backs, buffers and landscaping  Details to be provided within LEMP	Adverse; throughout lifetime operational phase of	Medium	Negligible	Neutral	N/A	Neutral
South Acre Conservation Area	Presence of proposed development within the setting of the	Siting of more visually intrusive elements of the Scheme (e.g. substation) in	Adverse; throughout lifetime operational phase of	Medium	Negligible	Neutral	N/A	Neutral



	heritage asset;	visually inconspicuous areas; incorporation of appropriate set backs, buffers and landscaping  Details to be provided within LEMP						
Decommissioning Phase								
Heritage Assets beyond site boundary	Decommissioning Activity on Site	As per operational phase  Details to be provided in DEMP	Adverse, temporary	Low to High	Negligible	Neutral	N/A	Neutral



## References

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