



Great Harmeston Solar Farm

Environmental Statement

Chapter 1 Introduction



Table of Contents:

1.	Introduction	2
1.1.	Introduction	2
1.2.	The Applicant	2
1.3.	EIA Regulations and Procedures.....	3
1.4.	EIA Process.....	4
1.5.	Structure of Environmental Statement	5
1.6.	Environmental Statement Availability	7
1.7.	What Happened Next.....	7

List of Tables:

Table 1.1 – Structure of ES	5
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1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

1.1.1. This draft Environmental Statement ("ES") has been prepared on behalf of ASUK HoldCo 4 Ltd ("the Applicant", a subsidiary of Arise Renewable Energy UK Ltd (the "Applicant") and forms part of a suite of documents supporting the statutory-pre-application consultation for a Development of National Significance (DNS) application, under Section 62 (D) of the of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015¹ ("the Wales Act"). The Applicant is seeking to obtain outline planning permission for the construction, operation and decommissioning of Great Harmeston Solar Farm, a ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) farm with capacity of up to 65 Mega Watts (MWac) together with all associated works, equipment, infrastructure and onsite point of connection via underground cable (the "Proposed Development") on land at near Great Harmeston Buildings, Pembrokeshire, SA62 3HM (the "Application Site"). The Application Site extends to approximately 128 hectares (ha) and is located entirely within the administrative area of Pembrokeshire County Council ("PCC"). The location of the Application Site is shown on **Figure 1.1 – Site Location Plan**.

1.1.2. This draft ES Chapter focuses on identifying the Applicant, provides an overview of the Proposed Development, verifies the legislative framework it adheres to, sets out the structure of the draft ES, presents a summary of the informal consultation and engagement carried out to date, and names the expert entities that have conducted the EIA.

1.1.3. The draft ES will be updated to incorporate any relevant representations made during the consultation period prior to the submission of a formal DNS planning application to the Welsh Government.

1.1.4. This draft ES Chapter is supported by the following technical appendices as part of ES Volume 2:

- **Appendix 1.1 – EIA Screening Direction**

1.1.5. This draft ES Chapter is supported by the following figures as part of ES Volume 1:

- **Figure 1.1 – Site Location Plan**

1.2. The Applicant

1.2.1. Arise Renewable Energy UK Ltd is a leading independent renewable energy company operating across UK, Sweden, Finland, Norway and Ukraine. Arise manage the full value chain, from exploration and permitting to financing, construction, sales, and long-term management of renewable electricity production. Arise has a growing portfolio which exceeds 8,500 MW, including wind, solar, and battery storage projects. The company

¹ Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 62D, amended by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 Section 19

currently manages around 2,000 MW of wind power and own 11 wind farms in southern Sweden. Arise employs around 70 people across its markets.

1.3. EIA Regulations and Procedures

- 1.3.1. By virtue of its potential generating capacity of between 10MW–350MW, the Proposed Development constitutes a Development of National Significance (DNS) under section 4 of the Developments of National Significance (Specified Criteria and Prescribed Secondary Consents) (Wales) Regulations 2016, for the purposes of Section 62 (D) of the Wales Act.
- 1.3.2. . The process for applying for a Development of National Significance is set out by the Development of National Significance (Procedure) (Wales) Order 2016 and subsequent Regulations. Planning applications for onshore generating projects in Wales which have an installed generation capacity of between 10MW and 350MW (there is no upper limit for onshore wind generating stations) are made directly to the Welsh Ministers under the Developments of National Significance (DNS) process and considered under policies in Future Wales. The DNS application process is managed by Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) on behalf of the Welsh Ministers.
- 1.3.3. An Environmental Statement (ES) is a document that sets out the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). An EIA is a process for identifying the likely significance of environmental effects (beneficial or adverse) arising from a Proposed Development, by comparing the existing environmental conditions prior to development (the baseline) with the environmental conditions during/following the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of a development should it proceed. The EIA is carried out prior to the submission of the DNS application.
- 1.3.4. The statutory requirements for carrying out an EIA, the contents of the ES and the procedures for determining planning applications for 'EIA Development' are set out within The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 (hereafter referred to as the "EIA Regulations").

Screening Direction

- 1.3.5. In order to determine if it is necessary to undertake an EIA to accompany a planning application, Regulation 7 of the EIA Regulations makes provision for an applicant to request PEDW (on behalf of the Welsh Ministers) for a 'Screening Direction'; in the absence of a submitted EIA, Regulation 12 of the EIA Regulations provides for Welsh Ministers to screen a planning application on receipt if it appears to require a Screening Direction.
- 1.3.6. The EIA Regulations require that any proposed development falling within the categories set out within Schedule 2 of those regulations should be considered as 'EIA Development' where the development is considered likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of such factors as its nature, size or location (Regulation 2).

- 1.3.7. The Proposed Development falls within Category 3(a) 'Energy Industry' – Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam, and hot water (unless included in Schedule 1). Column 2 of the table within Schedule 2 sets out 'Applicable Thresholds and Criteria' for Schedule 2 developments.
- 1.3.8. The applicable thresholds for Category 3(a) 'Energy Industry' – Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam, and hot water (unless included in Schedule 1) are as follows:
- "The area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectare"*
- 1.3.9. The Application Site is approximately 128ha and therefore exceeds the relevant thresholds set out in the EIA Regulations. Given that the size of the Application Site exceeds the relevant thresholds set out in the EIA Regulations, it is of the assumption that the Proposed Development is considered to be Schedule 2 development of the EIA Regulations that may require the submission of an ES.
- 1.3.10. The Applicant submitted a request for an EIA Screening Direction which was issued to PEDW on the 27th August 2025 (reference: DNS CAS-04538-H9C9V8). A Screening Direction was adopted by PEDW, on behalf of the Welsh Ministers, on 3rd October 2025 (**Appendix 1.1 – EIA Screening Direction**) confirming the application was EIA development.

Scoping Direction

- 1.3.11. In order to determine the scope of an EIA, the EIA Regulations make provision for, but do not statutorily require, an applicant to request that PEDW provide a written Scoping Direction as to the information to be provided within the ES.
- 1.3.12. A request for an EIA Scoping Direction was issued to PEDW (on behalf of the Welsh Government) on 12th December 2025 (**Appendix 2.1 – EIA Scoping Report**) to seek agreement on the scope and methodology of the EIA. An EIA Scoping Direction is to be adopted by the Welsh Government and will be included in the final ES when the formal DNS planning application is submitted to the Welsh Government. In due course all issues raised in the Scoping Direction will be considered as part of refining the EIA process for the final ES and further detail discussed in the ES Chapters where relevant. Further information on the scoping exercise is provided in **Chapter 2 – EIA Assessment Scope & Methodology** of the ES.

1.4. EIA Process

- 1.4.1. An EIA is a process for identifying the likely significance of environmental effects (beneficial or adverse) arising from the Proposed Development, by comparing the existing environmental conditions prior to development (the baseline) with the environmental conditions during/following the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of a development, should it proceed. An ES is a document that sets out the findings of an EIA.
- 1.4.2. The baseline for the EIA assessment has been derived from surveys and studies within and around the red line boundary. The ES includes a range of embedded mitigation (design

measures incorporated into the Proposed Development) and has also considered measures to avoid, reduce, or additionally mitigate any significant adverse effects on the environment and, where possible, enhance the environment. An assessment of the likely significant environmental effects is made assuming embedded mitigation is delivered. It has then identified 'residual' effects, which are defined as the effects that remain on receptors following the implementation of additional mitigation measures.

1.4.3. The potential for cumulative effects from the Proposed Development and other developments are also considered, as well as in-combination effects (multiple environmental effects from the Proposed Development combined to affect the same receptor or resource). The EIA is carried out prior to the submission of the DNS application. The methodology and approach of the EIA process is explained in detail at **Chapter 2 – EIA Assessment Scope & Methodology** of the ES.

1.5. Structure of Environmental Statement

1.5.1. This ES comprises studies on each of the aspects of the environment identified as likely to be significantly affected by the Proposed Development (the 'technical chapters'), which are supported with figures and technical appendices where appropriate.

1.5.2. This ES is structured as follows:

- Environmental Statement– Main Text and Figures (Volume 1) – Comprises the main volume of the ES, including 'general chapters' and associated figures that describe the EIA context, provide a description of the Application Site and Proposed Development, and set out the scope of the ES, followed by the 'technical chapters' with the associated figures for each environmental discipline relevant to the proposals and concluding with a summary.
- Environmental Statement– Technical Appendices (Volume 2) – Comprises the technical appendices supporting each environmental topic within Volume 1.
- Environmental Statement: Non-Technical Summary (NTS) – this provides a concise non-technical summary of the ES identifying the likely significant environmental effects and the measures proposed to mitigate or to avoid adverse effects of the Proposed Development.

1.5.3. The ES includes a likely significant effect assessment across a range of technical ES Chapters and the structure of ES is detailed in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1 – Structure of ES

Chapter Number	Title	Responsible Author
0	Contents and Statement of Competence	Pegasus Group

1	Introduction	Pegasus Group
2	EIA Assessment Scope and Methodology	Pegasus Group
3	The Application Site	Pegasus Group
4	Proposed Development and Alternatives	Pegasus Group
5	Landscape and Visual	Pegasus Group
6	Cultural Heritage Assessment	Pegasus Group
7	Ecology	Tyler Grange
8	Glint and Glare	PagerPower
9	Socio-Economics	Pegasus Group
10	Summary	Pegasus Group

- 1.5.4. For continuity, the figures and appendices are arranged and presented using the same reference numbers as the chapters as a means of providing supportive background and technical information.

The EIA Consultant Team

- 1.5.5. The EIA Regulations set out the requirements for EIA applications to be accompanied by confirmation that the Environmental Statement has been prepared by competent experts.
- 1.5.6. The ES has been coordinated and managed by Pegasus Group. Pegasus is accredited under the Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP) 'Quality Mark' scheme, formerly known as the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) before changing its name in July 2025. The ISEP 'Quality Mark' scheme is a mark of excellence in EIA co-ordination and management. Pegasus Group have extensive experience of undertaking EIA work across a range of projects and development types including renewable energy developments.
- 1.5.7. The consultants who have contributed to the preparation of this ES are referenced in the Statement of Competence at **Chapter 0**, along with information demonstrating their expertise to ensure the completeness and quality of the ES in accordance with the EIA Regulations.

1.6. Environmental Statement Availability

1.6.1. Copies of this draft ES may be obtained from Pegasus Group, , the costs for which are set out below:

- The ES is freely available to view digitally on the project website, www.greatharmestonsolar.co.uk
- Paper copy of Main Text and Technical Appendices- £500
- Paper copy of Non-Technical Summary (NTS) - £40
- Digital copies of the above documents on a USB - £15

1.6.2. Postage is payable on all orders. For copies of any of the above please contact Pegasus Group (quoting reference P24-1037) at the following address:

Pegasus Group
33 Sheep Street,
Cirencester
GL7 1RQ
Email: Cirencester@pegasusgroup.co.uk
Tel: 01285 641717

1.7. What Happened Next

1.7.1. At the close of the statutory pre-application consultation, all responses received will be carefully considered and taken into account in the development of the project. If, as a result of the feedback, the project changes to such an extent that it is necessary to undertake further consultation, then this further consultation will be undertaken. If the Applicant is in position to finalise the application, then it is we aim to move forward and submit the application to PEDW by winter 2026.