



Ecology and biodiversity

We have undertaken an assessment of the potential ecological effects and proposed mitigation measures required to address any impacts of our proposals on the local environment.

This has included undertaking site surveys and consultation with relevant specialist consultees to provide us with detailed information on a number of environmental considerations, which have been assessed within the PEIR.

During construction and operations mitigation measures will be put in place to protect the flora and fauna on site. The proposals will include a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan which will set out plans to improve the biodiversity at the site.

Opportunities to enhance the local environment biodiversity include the improved management of grassland and management of grassland margins for wildlife, reinforcement of hedgerows, creation of new habitats such as wild flower meadows and woodland planting. Improving the planting around the site will also benefit breeding birds, small mammals, reptiles, amphibians and insects by improving sources of food and shelter.

The planting will be designed to meet the objectives of the National Forest and other local initiatives. We welcome suggestions from the local community about planting and other environmental benefits we could implement on site.



Land use

We have undertaken an assessment of the land within the redline area of the proposed application and a detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) study has been carried out. This has shown that there is a range of agricultural land quality across the site.

The EIA will be required to assess the amount of agricultural land being impacted and consider the impacts in the wider context as part of this assessment we are required to consult Natural England.

One of the benefits of solar development is the protection and improvement of soil quality as it will no longer be subjected to intensive farming or use of pesticides and herbicides.

At the end of its operational life the solar panels will be removed and the land returned to agricultural use.

We intend to continue to use the land for grazing as part of the management of the grass within the sites, and the construction and decommissioning of the infrastructure will have little impact on the land quality due to the nature of the proposals and construction methods utilised.

Crucially, once the solar farm reaches the end of its operational life, the land designation does not change, meaning that it will be returned to agricultural use. It is therefore not deemed to be 'brownfield'.

