Mr Jonathan James
Wiltshire Council
Development Services Central
County Hall Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Our ref: WX/2023/137670/01-L01
Your ref: PL/2023/10198

Date: 12 December 2023

Dear Mr James

EIA SCREENING AND SCOPING OPINION - PROPOSED SOLAR FARM WITH A 49.9MW OUTPUT FOR A TEMPORARY PERIOD OF 50 YEARS, ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE, PERMANENT GRID CONNECTION HUB AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENTS

LAND TO THE SOUTH OF POTTERNE PARK FARM, POTTERNE WICK, POTTERNE, DEVIZES

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above screening/scoping opinion.

We believe that the proposed development could be considered under Schedule 2 'Infrastructure projects' under the EIA Regulations. However, we do not believe that the scope of these works are likely to impact on a sensitive area that falls within our remit as defined under the Regulations.

Pollution Prevention
We note that the proposals do not include Battery Energy Storage which is the simplest option in terms of pollution prevention..

Flood Risk
The proposals include fencing. It is important that any fencing is kept outside the floodplain so as not to cause any obstruction to flood flow.

Biodiversity
The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that pursuing sustainable development includes moving from a net loss of biodiversity to achieving net gains for nature, and that a core principle for planning is that it should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution.

Information on biodiversity impacts and opportunities should inform all stages of development including, for instance, site selection and design including any pre-application consultation as well as the application itself.

Groundwater Protection / Contaminated Land
If historic use of the site may have caused contamination, then National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and

enhance the natural and local environment by preventing both new and existing development from contributing to, or being put at risk from unacceptable levels of water pollution. Government policy also states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is presented.

Further guidance on what should be contained in the assessment and issues associated with groundwater protection can be found in our Groundwater Protection Policy document (GP3) which can be found at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/groundwater-protection-principles-and-practice-gp3

GP3 is intended to be used by anyone interested in groundwater and in particular those wanting to undertake activities which have the potential to impact on groundwater.

Pollution Prevention during Construction
Safeguards should be implemented during the construction phase to minimise the risks of pollution from the development. Such safeguards should cover:
- the use of plant and machinery
- oils/chemicals and materials
- wheel washing and dirty water disposal
- the use and routing of plant and vehicles
- the location and form of work and storage areas and compounds
- the control and removal of spoil and wastes.

The applicant should refer to the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidelines at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/pollution-prevention-guidance-ppg

Waste
Should this proposal be granted planning permission, then in accordance with the waste hierarchy, we wish the applicant to consider reduction, reuse and recovery of waste in preference to offsite incineration and disposal to landfill during site construction. If you require more specific guidance it is available on our website www.environment-agency.gov.uk/subjects/waste/.

Yours sincerely

Ms Ellie Challans
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End