

OH/P20-1118/PL

29th January 2021

Mr Rob McDonald,
Senior Planning Officer,
Dorset Council,
South Walks House,
South Walks Road,
Dorchester,
Dorset,
DT1 1UZ.
By email only.

Dear Mr McDonald,

**Request for Screening Opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended).
Proposed "Construction of an Electric Vehicle Charging Station (including Sui Generis and E class uses) with all associated development together with a Solar Farm and with Batteries, access from A354 and all associated equipment and necessary infrastructure".
At Land south of Blandford Hill (A354), Winterborne Whitechurch, Blandford Forum, Dorset, near DT11 0AA.**

We write on behalf of our clients Naturalis Energy Developments Ltd (the 'Applicant') to request a Screening Opinion to determine whether there is a requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to accompany a planning application for development at the above location. This request is made under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 (as amended).

In accordance with Regulation 6 (2) of the EIA Regulations we have provided the following information:

- (a) A plan sufficient to identify the land (see **Appendix A**);
- (b) A description of the development, including in particular:-
 - i. A description of the physical characteristics of the development and, where relevant, of demolition works;
 - ii. A description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of the geographic areas likely to be affected; (see **Appendix B**)

- (c) A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development (see **Appendix B**);
- (d) To the extent the information is available, a description of any likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment resulting from:-
 - i. The expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and
 - ii. The use of natural resources, in particular soil, land, water and biodiversity; and (see **Appendix B**)
- (e) Such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make, including any features of the proposed development or any measures to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment (see **Appendix B**).

We look forward to receiving the Screening Opinion within three weeks of receipt of this request as specified in the Regulations and confirmation that the Screening Opinion will be placed on the Public Register.

Yours sincerely,

pp. Owen Horrell

Gareth Roberts

Director

gareth.roberts@pegasusgroup.co.uk

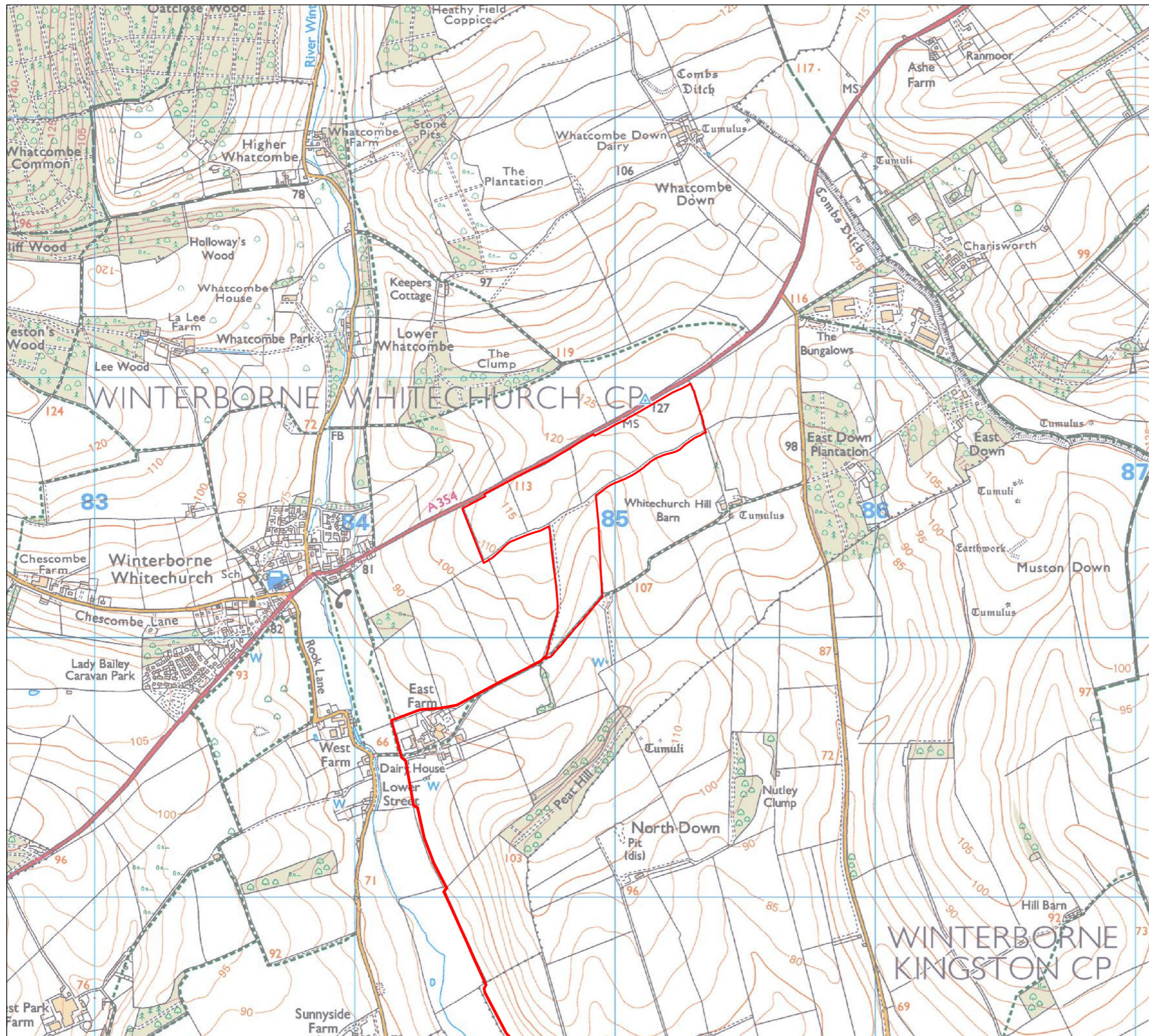
Enc:

- Drawing P20-1118_02 Sheet No: - Rev: B, 'Site Location Plan', prepared by Pegasus Group, dated 29th January 2021 and Drawing P20-1118_01 Sheet No: - Rev: C, 'Environmental Designations Plan', prepared by Pegasus Group, dated 29th January 2021.

Copy:

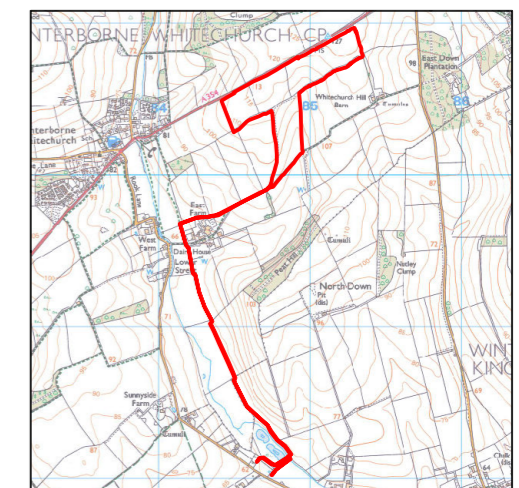
- Mr Matt Partridge, Development Director, REG Power Management.

APPENDIX A
PLAN SUFFICIENT TO IDENTIFY THE LAND



KEY

 Site Boundary



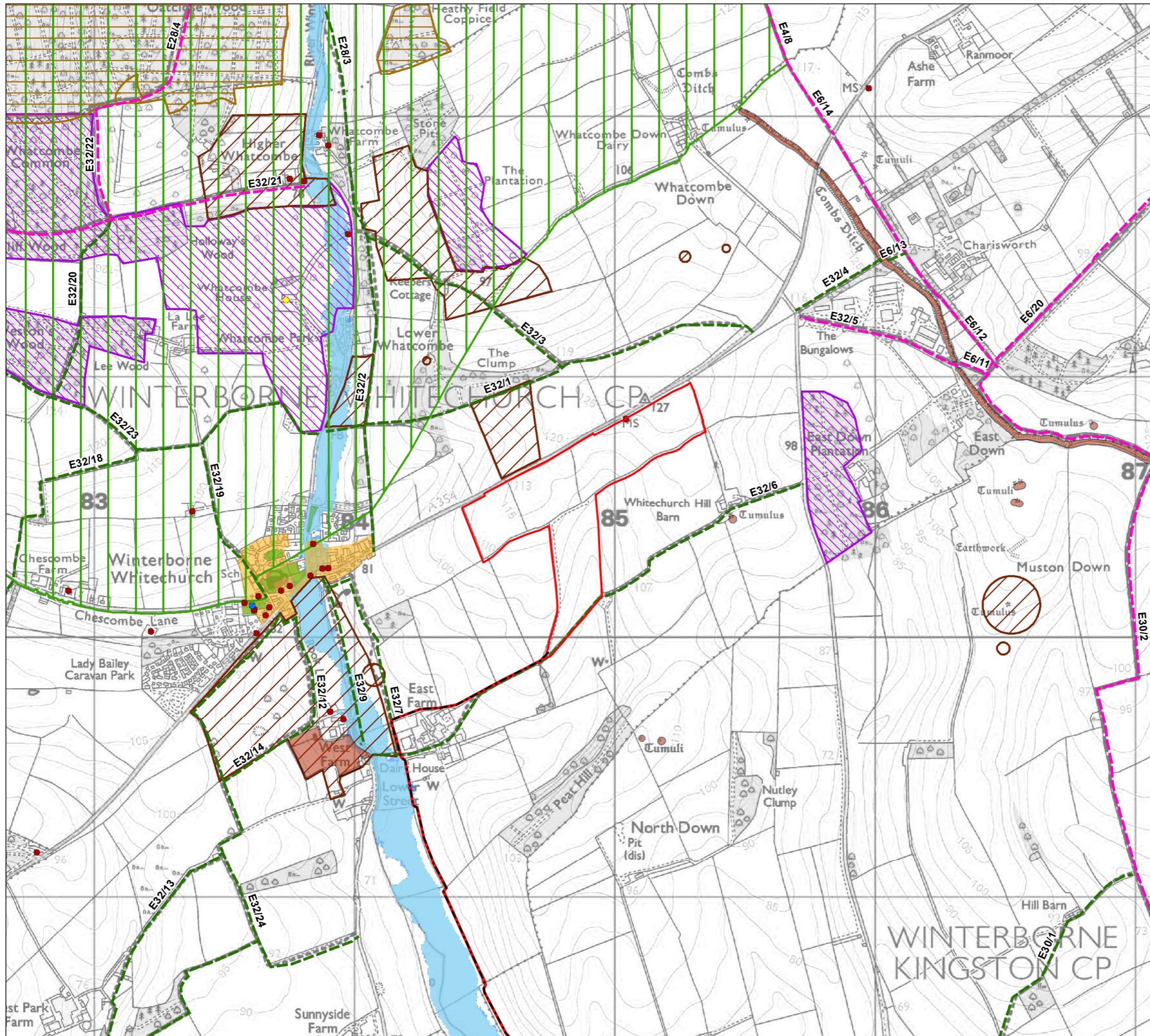
Site Boundary and Cable Route (1:50,000)

Revisions:
 First Issue- 11/08/2020 AD
 A - (12/01/2021 JS) Cable route and visibility area added
 B - (29/01/2021 JS) Revised boundary and cable route removed

Site Location Plan

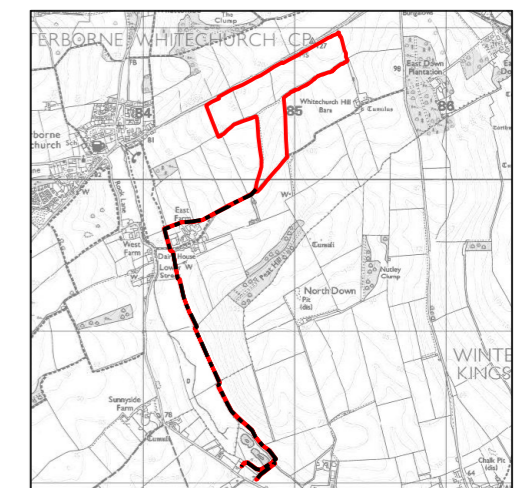
Blandford Hill Eco Hub

Client: Naturalis
 DRWG No: **P20-1118_02** Sheet No: - REV: **B**
 Drawn by: JS Approved by: OH
 Date: 29/01/2021
 Scale: 1:15,000 @ A3 **Pegasus**
 Environment



KEY

- Site Boundary
- Cable Route
- Grade I Listed Building
- Grade II* Listed Building
- Grade II Listed Building
- Footpath
- Bridleway
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
- Scheduled Monument
- Ancient Woodland
- Important Open or Wooded Areas North Dorset Local Plan (Jan 2003)
- Sites of Archaeological Importance North Dorset Local Plan (Jan 2003)
- Site of Nature Conservation Interest North Dorset Local Plan (Jan 2003)
- Conservation Area
- EA Flood Zone 3
- EA Flood Zone 2



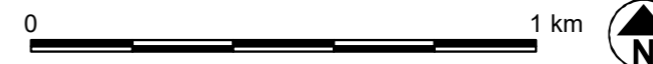
Site Boundary and Cable Route (1:50,000)

Revisions:
 First Issue- 21/05/2020 AD
 A - (11/08/2020 AD) Boundary amended
 B - (12/01/2021 JS) Cable route and visibility area added
 C - (29/01/2021 JS) Revised boundary and cable route

Environmental Designations Plan

Blandford Hill Eco Hub

Client: Naturalis
 DRWG No: **P20-1118_01** Sheet No: - REV: **C**
 Drawn by: JS Approved by: OH
 Date: 29/01/2021
 Scale: 1:15,000 @ A3



APPENDIX B
SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Regulation 6 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 (as amended) requires the Applicant to provide the following:

- (a) A plan sufficient to identify the land;*
- (b) A description of the development, including in particular:-*
 - i. A description of the physical characteristics of the development and, where relevant, of demolition works;*
 - ii. A description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of the geographic areas likely to be affected.*
- (c) A description of the aspects of the environment likely to be significantly affected by the development;*
- (d) To the extent the information is available, a description of any likely significant effects of the proposed development on the environment resulting from:-*
 - i. The expected residues and emissions and the production of waste, where relevant; and*
 - ii. The use of natural resources, in particular soil, land water and biodiversity; and*
- (e) Such other information or representations as the person making the request may wish to provide or make, including any features of the proposed development or any measures to avoid or prevent what might otherwise have been significant adverse effects on the environment.*



Application Site

The Application Site (**Appendix A**) comprises c.29.59 of agricultural land. The site is described as land south of Blandford Hill (A354), Winterborne Whitechurch, Blandford Forum, Dorset, near DT11 0AA. The site is centred on co-ordinates: X: 384364, Y: 100384. The site is wholly within the Dorset County Council administrative area and within the Winterborne Whitechurch Parish area.

The site lies c.375m to the east of Winterborne Whitechurch and is c.6km south west of Blandford Forum. Blandford Hill (A354) runs along the northern boundary and will form the means of access from an existing layby (co-ordinates: X: 384719, Y: 100654). The River Winterbourne runs parallel (north-south) c.650m from the western boundary of the site. Agricultural fields surround the site and form its immediate boundaries. East Farm lies to the south west of the site.

The site comprises four fields presently in agricultural use with mature and established boundary vegetation which would, alongside a scheme of landscaping to be developed, screen the development proposals from nearby public viewpoints. The proposed Electric Vehicle Charging Station and Batteries will be located to the central north of the site, adjacent to the A354. No demolition works are required.

The proposed development will connect with the existing Sottish and Southern Electricity Networks (SSE) Distribution Network Operator (DNO) Substation on West Street, Winterborne Kingston, DT11 9AT (co-ordinates: X: 384641, Y: 098110) located c.1.75km south of the site. A preliminary cable route is shown on the accompanying plans.

The site is situated close to two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) being Dorset AONB (c.380m north of the site) and Cranborne Chase AONB (c.6.8km east of the site). The site is within the South Blandford Downs (12B) Open Chalk Downland landscape character type and area of North Dorset.

There are no Public Rights of Way which cross the site, however Footpath E32/6 runs broadly east-west along the southern boundary of the site between the site and East Farm. The cable route crosses this Public Rights of Way. Public Rights of Way E32/7 and E32/9 lie c.650m west of the site. The Public Rights of Way will be retained in the development proposed.

The site itself forms Flood Zone 1 land (i.e. land with the least probability of flooding), land near River Winterborne (east and south of the site) forms the closest Flood Zone 2 and 3 land. The cable route crosses under the River Winterborn and the parts of the cable route south of the River are within Flood Zone 2 and 3 land.

Heritage Assets in close proximity to the site include the Scheduled Monuments of prehistoric bowl barrows (south and east of the site), a Scheduled Monument of deserted medieval village at West Farm (south west of the site), the Grade II Listed West Farmhouse and Grade II Listed milestone (immediately north of the site on the A354). While Winterborne Whitechurch, which forms a Conservation Area, includes the



Grade I Listed Church of St Mary (north-west of the site). Whatcombe House is Grade II* Listed (north of the site).

The nearest designated ecological site is Higher Houghton Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which lies c.4.5km to the north west. The Black Hill Heath SSSI, Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset Heathlands Ramsar site lies c.5.5km to the south of the site. A number of Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) are located adjacent and within close proximity to the site. According to the Natural England 1:250,000 scale Agricultural Land Classification Map for the south west region (2010) the site is identified as undifferentiated Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' land.

The Site is a refinement of the land included within the pre-application advice request (reference: PRE/2020/0179/PREAPP) made to Dorset Council in September 2020.

Nature and purpose of the Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises three main parts. First, an Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station. Second, a ground mounted Solar Farm together with all associated equipment and infrastructure. Third, Battery storage. It is anticipated the delivered capacity of the Solar Farm and Batteries would be up to 18MW (15MW and 3MW respectively). The inclusion of an EV Charging Station is an innovative form of technology with only a few other comparable such examples in the country and is in response to an identified regional 'gap' in charging infrastructure.

The EV Charging Station element of the scheme would comprise:

- Construction of a new access off the existing layby to the south of the A354 to modern highway standards (*Note*: This access will also be utilised for the construction and later operation of the Solar Farm (and batteries) as well as public access to the EV Charging Station);
- Under a covered (approximately two storeys in height) walkway and canopy up to 6 ultra-rapid (up to 350kW) and 6 rapid (43-100kW) charging points providing the ability to charge up to 12 EVs at any one time. These chargers would be suitable for many types of modern, light-duty EVs and would not be restricted to one EV manufacturer;
- Public rest facilities including public conveniences, a small café/shop and seating/rest area within an up to two storey building located to the west of the covered walkway and canopy. While the design and use of the specific components of the building are to be developed, comparable EV Charging Stations provide for c.800m² of development floorspace providing for a mix of Use Classes (2020 Use Classes 'E' and 'Sui Generis');
- Up to 27 parking spaces (without charging infrastructure) located to the south of the EV Charging Station. These spaces replace (and provided additional spaces) to those lost in creation of an access from the existing A354 layby. No HGV parking is provided;
- Hardstanding and vehicle manoeuvring space together with pavements for pedestrian use;
- Outdoor seating;
- Boards showing information about the Solar Farm and Batteries.



The Solar Farm element of the scheme would comprise:

- Photovoltaic (PV) modules based on a simple metal framework ('table') which is pile driven into the ground, avoiding the need for substantive foundations. Each table would have an overall height of up to 3m at the highest point depending on existing ground level which would be unaltered having an up to 40 year operational life;
- A Distribution Network Operator (DNO) Switching Station building would be located either to the south of the site (Option 1) or near to the proposed point of connection (Option 2). The building would be single storey in height and 4m (W) x 10m (L);
- A Client Switching Station building would be located near to the DNO Switching Station building and would also be single storey in height and 4m (W) x 10m (L);
- A number of inverter/transformers, of single storey height, would be located across the site with there likely being at least one in each field/parcel;
- A CCTV system, using cameras mounted on freestanding columns up to 4m in height, within the site boundary (looking inwards) would be installed around the site's perimeter;
- A storage container(s) for spare parts;
- Boundary fencing (e.g. deer fencing or stock fencing) around the edge of each development parcel, up to 2m in height;
- Associated access tracks, a minimum width of 3.5m across the site (connecting inverter/transformer units and the DNO/Client Switching Station buildings);
- Relevant communications and monitoring equipment, comprising a satellite disk, pyranometers, weather station and communications cabinets;
- Creation of a site access (see also EV Charging Station).

The Battery Station element of the scheme would comprise:

- Up to 6 containers located adjacent to the EV charging station within a fenced compound (for safety and security), each of c. L 40' (12.19m), W 8' (2.44m) and H 8' 6" (2.59m) within which electricity generated by the Solar Farm would be stored in a series of batteries and energy released as/when required to the local electricity grid for a period of up to 40 years. Within the proposed containers large battery cells convert electricity into electrochemical energy that is then stored before being converted back to electricity for export. The batteries proposed will be charged during periods of lower demand and increase the operational flexibility of the proposed Solar Farm;
- A CCTV system, using cameras mounted on freestanding columns, within the site boundary (looking inwards) would be installed around the site's perimeter;
- Erection of perimeter palisade fencing up to 2.5m in height;
- Associated access and hard standing within perimeter fencing;
- Creation of a site access (see also EV Charging Station).

In addition, up to 4 EV charging parking spaces may be provided within the farm yard to East Farm for private use by the landowners and also use by those visiting East Farm shop and café ¹ or staying at East Farm Campsite ². The ongoing operations of East Farm Campsite and East Farm Shop and Café are unaffected by the development proposals save for the prospect of EV charging facilities (in addition to those to be

¹ <http://www.eastfarmshop.co.uk/>

² <https://www.campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk/campsites/uk/dorset/blandford/eastfarm/>

provided within the EV charging station).

A grid connection will be made to allow for the Solar Farm and Batteries to be connected to the local electricity grid. The point of connection is c.1.75km south of the site.

Possible Effects on the Environment	
Section 1 – Applicable Thresholds	
Does the Proposed Development fall within Schedule 1 (Y/N)?	No
If yes what is the applicable description.	N/A
If yes, the project automatically requires EIA	
If no, does the Proposed Development fall within Schedule 2 (Y/N)?	Yes
If yes, what is the applicable description?	3 (a) Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water
Is the Project located in or adjacent to a 'Sensitive Area'?	No
If yes proceed to Section 2.	
If no, what is the corresponding applicable threshold in Schedule 2?	The area of the development exceeds 0.5 hectares
Does the Project exceed the applicable threshold (Y/N)?	Yes, the Site comprises c.29.59ha.
If yes, proceed to Section 2	
If no, and the project is not located within or adjacent to a defined 'Sensitive Area', the proposed development is unlikely to constitute EIA Development.	

Section 2 – Assessment of Possible Effects	
Topic	Analysis
Population	<p>During construction, it is considered unlikely that the proposal will result in a significant change in population as workers are unlikely to relocate to the area on a permanent basis. The construction of the EV Charging Station and Solar Farm will have a temporary effect on employment provision through the creation of construction jobs. A minor beneficial effect is therefore anticipated.</p> <p>Once operational, the proposed development does not provide any permanent residential accommodation and accordingly will not have a significant effect on population. The only vehicle movements to the Solar Farm will be from the occasional maintenance vehicle that would have negligible influence on the surrounding population. The operation of the EV Charging Station will create a small number of full and part time jobs in the services offered (EV Charging Station attendant, café baristas, cleaning staff, etc) as well those required for maintenance and upkeep of the site. These additional jobs, while a beneficial effect, are not considered to have a significant environmental effect.</p>
Human Health	<p>During the construction phase there would be some potential for minor pollution or nuisance consistent with typical construction works (i.e. lighting of temporary external works, dust/noise from vehicles/construction processes, surface water run-off from bare earth/stockpiles, plant noise, temporary highway works etc). However, construction activities would be appropriately controlled to an acceptable level through the adoption of construction best practice and appropriate safety measures.</p> <p>During operation there would be no unusual risk to human health. The development relies on well-established, safe modern technology and correct Health and Safety signage will be displayed on the site to inform of the potential risk from working near electrical equipment and to discourage trespass. The EV Charging Station, while an innovative technology, will adhere to all electrical standards and safety specifications applicable (as is the case for individual totem charging points which are available elsewhere in Dorset).</p> <p>There would therefore be no unusual risk to human health and significant effects are not anticipated.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>There are no International or European designated sites (Ramsar, Special Protection Area or Special Areas of Conservation) within the site or in close proximity of the site. The nearest (Higher Houghton SSSI) is over 4km away.</p>

	<p>Initial Site Walkover surveys have been completed by Avian Ecology for priority and protected species and while species are identified on the site and in close proximity environmental effects during construction and operation of the proposed development are not considered to be significant.</p> <p>Through the implementation of appropriate measures and best practice, effects can be managed and are unlikely to be unusually complex or significant. The location of the proposed Solar Farm and Batteries also provides an opportunity to enhance biodiversity and strengthen ecological networks, particularly in relation to the onsite grassland and hedgerow resource. Onsite habitat and biodiversity improvements would establish a beneficial effect, compared to the current agricultural use, it is anticipated.</p>
<p>Land</p>	<p>The Natural England Regional (1:250 000 scale) Agricultural Land Classification Maps detail that the site forms undefined Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' land.</p> <p>The solar panels, batteries and associated equipment within the Solar Farm are a temporary and reversible development, once decommissioned (after 40 years) the site's former agricultural use can be restored, with no significant lasting adverse impacts on the quality of the soil. Considering the nature of the construction and operation of a Solar Farm and Batteries, the development would lead to a limited loss of natural resources, thus significant impacts are not anticipated on the land.</p> <p>The EV Charging Station land agreement also requires that development to be removed after a 40 year period in the same timescales as the Solar Farm. It is not therefore a permanent development. After 40 years all development is removed and there is no long term loss of agricultural land.</p> <p>An Agricultural Land Classification Survey will be undertaken to inform the application.</p>
<p>Soil</p>	<p>Due to the nature of the proposed Solar Farm and Batteries development, it is unlikely that the construction of the proposed development would lead to the loss of soils as appropriate construction techniques will be implemented to reduce below ground works and as such significant effects are not considered likely.</p> <p>The soil has no known history to indicate there would be any form of contaminations present, yet if found, any contamination will be controlled during construction through the imposition of appropriate planning conditions to ensure any contamination risks are addressed.</p>

	<p>Furthermore, most of the soil will not be physically impacted from the development and therefore its degradation is considered unlikely. No significant effects are therefore anticipated.</p>
Water	<p>The majority of the site is located within Flood Zone 1, however part of land forming the cable route is located within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 of River Winterborne.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Para 163) requires all planning applications above certain thresholds to include a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA), including mitigation in the form of a drainage strategy. An FRA and drainage strategy will be provided as part of a planning application. The area of impermeable groundcover created by the development (the majority of which forms the EV Charging Station and access from the A354) will form a small portion of the overall site and is expected to be managed within a Sustainable Urban Drainage system (SUDs). As such the proposed development is unlikely to have a significant effect.</p>
Air	<p>Whilst there may be dust generated during construction, this can be reduced using construction management measures. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will have a significant effect on air quality during construction.</p> <p>The only vehicle movements during operation to the Solar Farm would be from the occasional maintenance vehicle that would not give rise to a significant effect on air quality. More frequent vehicle movements are to be expected in the operation of the EV Charging Station however due to the nature of vehicles charging at the site air quality emissions are limited to non-EV and the limited deliveries to the site.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the development, once operational there would be no emissions generated by the Solar Farm development and only limited emissions from non-EV at the EV Charging Station. No significant effects are therefore anticipated.</p>
Climate	<p>It is acknowledged that construction of the proposed development will result in the gaseous emissions associated with construction vehicles. Although, considering the temporary nature of construction it is considered that these emissions are unlikely to be complex or significant.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the development, once operational the facility will be generating energy from renewable sources (sunlight). Therefore, the development will contribute positively to the local climate through reducing the requirement for fossil fuel-based energy production facilities.</p>

	<p>The EV Charging Station will address an identified regional 'gap' in the provision of ultra-rapid (up to 350 Kilowatt (kW)) and rapid (43-100kW) EV charging in the area. Provision of charging infrastructure is widely acknowledged as the largest barrier to the take up of EVs. The availability of this EV Charging Station may increase the take up of EVs locally.</p> <p>A positive effect is therefore anticipated.</p>
<p>Material Assets</p>	<p>Construction would require the use of natural resources as is standard with construction works (i.e. power, water, construction materials, etc). This is not considered to be an unusual or complex operation and accordingly no significant effects are anticipated.</p> <p>Due to the nature of the Solar Farm and Batteries development, no resources would be required for the operation of the facility once constructed. Additional resources would be required in the operation of the EV Charging Station (i.e. paper coffee cups, cleaning products, etc). These are not considered unusual or complex. No significant effects are therefore anticipated.</p>
<p>Risk of Major Accidents and Disasters</p>	<p>Considering the nature, scale and location of the Proposed Development, it is not considered to be vulnerable to, or give rise to significant impacts, in relation to the Risk of Accidents and Major Disasters.</p>
<p>Cultural Heritage</p>	<p>There are no World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments or Listed Buildings within the application site, nor does the application site lie within a Conservation Area. Nearby to the site are a number of Listed Buildings (including a milestone on the A354 north of the site) and Scheduled Monuments.</p> <p>It is considered unlikely that the proposals will give rise to significant effects on the cultural heritage assets.</p>
<p>Landscape</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that whilst there will be views onto the site from some of the surrounding receptors and from the Public Rights of Way which lie to the south and west of the site, these impacts are unlikely to be significant due to a combination of the topography and natural vegetative screening provided by boundary vegetation (associated with established hedgerow field boundaries, trees and nearly woodland), which would limit the potential for significant effects. The grid connection will be made by underground cable.</p> <p>The site is situated close to two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) being Dorset AONB (c.380m north of the site) and Cranborne Chase AONB (c.6.8km east of the site). The site is within the South Blandford Downs (12B) Open Chalk Downland landscape character type and area of North Dorset.</p>

	<p>Full consideration of landscape impacts would be made as part of the application, however significant environmental effects are not anticipated.</p>
<p>Highways</p>	<p>A new vehicular access is proposed to be created from the A354 to access the proposed development from an existing layby. This access will be designed for use during both construction and operation. Pre-application discussions are taking place with Dorset Highways Officers.</p> <p>Construction traffic associated with the development is not considered to be significant and is capable of being appropriately managed through a Construction Traffic Management Plan. Details of the access and construction movements anticipated will be set out in the application. Construction deliveries will be spread across a typical 4 month construction period for the Solar Farm.</p> <p>The only vehicle movements in operation to the Solar Farm would be from the occasional maintenance vehicle that would not give rise to a significant effect on highways. More frequent vehicle movements are to be expected in the operation of the EV Charging Station from staff, deliveries and members of the public using the facilities.</p> <p>The A354 forms a major trunk road in Dorset and is considered to have sufficient capacity for any limited additional traffic created in EVs using the Charging Station once operational. It is possible that EV users may choose to use the A354, over other routes, given the availability of charging infrastructure which is not presently available in the region given the identified regional 'gap'.</p> <p>No significant effects are therefore anticipated. Parking will be provided within the EV Charging Station to offset the loss of the existing layby.</p> <p>Full consideration of highways impacts would be made as part of the application, however significant environmental effects are not anticipated.</p>
<p>Cumulative and Interactive Effects</p>	<p>The proposed development does not form part of a wider development proposal and as such it is considered unlikely that there will be any significant cumulative or interactive effects.</p> <p>The EV Charging Station is an innovative form of technology with only a few other comparable such examples in the country. There are no comparable examples in the locality given the identified 'regional gap'.</p> <p>The Applicant is aware of other nearby comparable developments for</p>



Solar Farms, some of which include Batteries, which would be assessed as part of the application documents.

Three Solar Farms are operational and connected to the National Grid nearby, which include:

- North Farm Solar Farm (Dorset Council reference: 2/2014/0825/FUL) lies to the east of the site (c.3.3km);
- Canada Farm Solar Farm (Dorset Council reference: 2/2013/0770/PLNG), east of Lady Caroline's Drive/south of Fair Mile Road lies c.4km to the north of the site; and
- The Down House Littleton Solar Farm (Dorset Council reference: 2/2014/1066/FUL) is south west of Blandford St Mary is c.5.2km to the north east of the site.

A fourth Solar Farm site, South Farm Solar Farm, has received Planning Permission (Dorset Council reference: 2/2019/0850/PAEIA) c.3.8km to the west of the site. Pegasus Group were the agent for this application and understands that Conditions attached are in the process of being discharged.

The Applicant is aware of the pre-application consultation being undertaken with the local community to extend the operational North Farm Solar Farm (<http://northfarmsolar.com/> also Dorset Council references: 2/2020/0665/SCREIA and 2/2020/0666/SCOEIA) which lies to the east of the site (c.2.5km).

The Applicant is not aware of any nearby proposals for EV Charging Stations.

Section 3 – Conclusion

It is considered that the proposals fall within the category of under Schedule 2 (3 a) as described in the EIA Regulations 2017. Development proposals described under Schedule 2 require an EIA if they are considered *likely to have significant effects on the environment* by virtue of factors such as nature, size or location. Given that the proposed development exceeds the screening threshold in Schedule 2 (3 a) of 0.5 hectares, it is appropriate to screen the proposals with the Local Planning Authority (Dorset Council) to determine if there are significant effects likely to arise from the proposals. These thresholds are detailed in Section 1.

The Screening process should consider the development proposals against the criteria and thresholds which are included within the EIA Regulations and accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in determining the requirement for an Environmental Statement to accompany an application for Planning Permission.

Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations provides selection criteria for Screening Schedule 2 development, which includes three broad categories for consideration: the characteristics of the development; the environmental sensitivity of the location; and the characteristics of the potential impacts.

The PPG, under the Environmental Impact Assessment section (Paragraph 057)³, provides further indicative criteria and thresholds, as well as key issues to consider, in the determination of likely significance of effects. For 3 (a) 'Energy Industry', the criteria and advice given are:

- "Indicative Criteria and Threshold – 'Thermal output more than 50 MW. Small stations using novel forms of generation should be considered carefully.'"
- "Key Issues to Consider – 'Level of emissions to air, arrangements for the transport of fuel and any visual impact.'"

The proposed Solar Farm and Batteries development is less than the 50MW threshold (at 18MW) and is unlikely to give rise to significant impacts relating to air, transport or visual impacts or any further wide-ranging effects for the reasons set out in Section 2.

No specific consideration is given to EV Charging Stations within the PPG. The construction and operation of EV Charging Station (with its supporting infrastructure), considered cumulatively, with the Solar Farm and batteries development, is not considered to give rise to significant impacts on any topic.

Given the nature of the development proposals, it is considered that whilst there may be some effects upon the environment as a consequence of the proposed development, none of these are considered to constitute 'significant effects' upon the environment, as set out in central government guidance. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposals do **not** constitute EIA development and would **not** require an Environmental Statement

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/environmental-impact-assessment>

to be submitted with a planning application for the proposed development in this location.