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Planning Statement

Erection of Solar Park and associated infrastructure at the site between Nether Southbar and East Fulwood, Greenock Road, Inchinnan.

Iceni Projects Limited on behalf of
Mactaggart & Mickel Investments
Ltd

August 2022

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ON BEHALF OF
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Planning Statement
ERECTION OF SOLAR PARK AND ASSOCIATED
INFRASTRUCTURE AT THE SITE BETWEEN NETHER
SOUTHBAR AND EAST FULWOOD, GREENOCK ROAD,
INCHINNAN.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement (“the Statement”) has been prepared by Icen Projects Ltd on behalf of Mactaggart & Mickel Investments Ltd (“the Applicant”) to support an application for Planning Permission for a solar park development (“the proposed development”) at the site between Nether Southbar and East Fulwood, Greenock Road, Inchinnan.

1.2 The full description of development is as follows:

Erection of solar park and associated infrastructure.

1.3 The project is also referred to by the Applicant and the design team as ‘Inchinnan Solar Park’.

1.4 The proposed development constitutes “Local” development under the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 due to the scale and generating capacity of the proposed development. There is no statutory requirement to undertake pre-application consultation, however, a project website has been created in order to share the proposals for the development of the site with stakeholders and members of the public.

1.5 A request for a Screening Opinion pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Scotland) Regulations 2017 (“the EIA Regulations”) was submitted to Renfrewshire Council on 20th October 2021. A Screening Opinion was received on 8th December 2021 which confirmed that an Environmental Impact Assessment would **not** be required to accompany the application.

1.6 Two pre-application meetings have been held with Sharon Marklow, Gwen McCracken and James Weir of Renfrewshire Council's planning department to discuss the proposed development. These were held on 20th August 2021 and 1st July 2022.

1.7 The application for planning permission is accompanied by the following reports which should be read alongside this Planning Statement:

- Planning Statement (this document) – Icen Projects;
- Architectural Plans – The Greenspan Agency;
- Technical Description Report – The Greenspan Agency;
- Construction and Access Report – The Greenspan Agency;

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- Climate Change and Renewable Energy Report – The Greenspan Agency;
 - Glint and Glare Assessment – The Greenspan Agency;
 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment – Brindley Associates;
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal – Brindley Associates;
 - Landscape Plans – Brindley Associates;
 - Socio-Economic Benefits Infographic – Icen Projects Ltd.
 - Desktop Study Report – Bayne Stevenson Associates Ltd;
 - Existing Public Utility Review – Bayne Stevenson Associates Ltd;
 - Flood Risk Assessment – Kaya Consulting;
 - Noise Impact Assessment – Bureau Veritas;
 - Desktop Archaeological Study – Icen Projects.

1.8 This Statement sets out the supporting context for the redevelopment of the site to deliver a solar park development which would generate up to 14.3MW of renewable energy to feed directly into the local electricity grid. This document comprises the following sections:

Section 2: Site Context: outlines the characteristics of the site and wider surroundings;

Section 3: Proposed Development: outlines the key aspects of the proposed development, and summarises the outcome of the non-statutory pre-application consultation undertaken by the Applicant;

Section 4: Development Plan Assessment: assesses the proposal against the statutory development plan;

Section 6: Material Considerations: reviews and assesses the material considerations which are relevant to the proposed development;

Section 7: Conclusions: presents the key conclusions of the Planning Statement, presenting the overall case for the proposed development.

2. SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1 The site extends to approximately 41 ha of farmland located at North Commonside Farm. The site is located wholly within the Renfrewshire Council administrative boundary. The site location is shown on the location plan in Appendix A1.
- 2.2 The site is primarily agricultural in nature, comprising arable farmland with relatively flat lying fields. Hedgerows surround the field boundaries and a cluster of trees are located along one of the north-western boundaries of the site. Greenock Road forms the northern boundary of the site, and Houston Road forms the southern boundary of the site. Barnsford Road is located beyond the site to the east, and the M8 motorway is located beyond the site to the west.
- 2.3 Two watercourses are present within the site boundary; Lin Burn and Wheel Burn. The Wheel Burn flows north-west to south east and crosses the centre of the site, where it flows into the Lin Burn at National Grid Reference (NGR) NS 45648 68421. The Linn Burn flows north to south along the western boundary of the site before it outflows into the Black Cart water, approximately 200m south-west of the site at NGR NS 45691 67468.
- 2.4 There is an existing access point to the site located on Greenock Road, which provides access to a residential dwelling and various outbuildings associated with North Commonside Farm. These buildings are located out with the site boundary. Access to the proposed solar farm will be taken from Houston Road.
- 2.5 The wider site context comprises a mix of primarily agricultural fields, commercial and industrial uses. Inchinnan Business Park is located approximately 400m to the south-east of the site, with Glasgow International Airport located beyond this. The settlement of Inchinnan is located beyond the site to the north-west.

Proximity to Grid Connection

- 2.6 The development team have worked closely with Scottish Power Energy Networks during the last year to review options for connecting to the electricity grid. The application process is at an advanced stage and the connection can be delivered, and three grid connection points have been agreed with the district network operator, Scottish Power Energy Networks.

3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The proposed development will involve the installation of ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels with associated infrastructure to generate up to 14.3 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy which will feed directly into the local electricity grid network. The proposed development will include photovoltaic panels, associated frames and ground mounting, access tracks, substations, communications room and inverters.

3.2 The following details confirm the type and scale of development:

- The solar panels will occupy around 51% of the site. The panels will be arranged in south facing rows, and inclined at an angle of approximately 30°. The proposed development has been positioned to maximise exposure to sunlight.
- Panels will be fixed to mounting frames, and arranged in rows facing south. The proposed development will be low-lying. The panels on top of the mounting frame will rise 0.5m from the ground at their lowest edge (south elevation) up to 3.3m from the ground at their highest point (northern elevation). These are approximate heights at this stage.
- Other components of the development include inverters, perimeter security fencing, access tracks and CCTV cameras. Two small substations of around 12m x 4m will be required.
- The main vehicular access to the site will be taken from the southern boundary of the site, on Houston Road.
- The site layout has been developed following a review of the site constraints and incorporates appropriate buffers into the proposed layout.

3.3 The image below shows an indicative design for the PV array.

Figure 1 – Indicative PV Array – Designed by The Greenspan Agency



- 3.4 The output of the proposal would be up to 14.3 MW. Inchinnan Solar Park would provide a significant environmental benefit by generating a large amount of clean, renewable, zero carbon electricity. The quantity of electricity generated each year could meet the annual demand of around 5184 medium usage homes per year or 8351 low usage homes.
- 3.5 There will be minimal ground-breaking work involved as part of the development.
- 3.6 Construction of the proposed development would take approximately 6 months. During this time, construction vehicles and deliveries would be visiting the site. Thereafter, during the operational phase, there would be very limited vehicular movements associated with the proposed development. Approximately 1-2 vehicle trips per month would be made relating to maintenance of the proposed solar park.
- 3.7 For a full review of the proposed development, including details on the construction of the Proposed Development, please refer to the Technical Description Report and the Construction and Access Report prepared by The Greenspan Agency which accompanies the application for planning permission.

Public and Stakeholder Consultation

- 3.8 The proposed development constitutes “Local” development under the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 due to the scale and generating capacity of the proposed development. There is no statutory requirement to undertake pre-application

consultation, however, a project website has been created in order to share the proposals for the development of the site with stakeholders and members of the public.

- 3.9 A project website has been set up (www.inchinnansolarpark.co.uk) to display details about the site and the proposal development as well as an opportunity for viewers to provide feedback, or to contact Icen Projects for further information about the proposals. A dedicated email address has also been provided (inchinnansolarpark@iceniprojects.com) so that any queries can be directed to Icen Projects for a response.
- 3.10 A link containing the full planning submission package is also available on the website, to allow visitor to the website to download each of the supporting reports which have been submitted to comprise the application for planning permission.
- 3.11 Correspondence will also be sent to all Renfrewshire ward Councillors, the MP for Paisley and Renfrewshire North, the MSP for Renfrewshire North and West as well as the Regional MSPs, and Inchinnan Community Council informing them of the project website. Emails will also be sent to Renfrewshire Council's Climate Emergency Officer and Energy Team Leader, Renfrewshire Council's Housing, Regeneration and Development Manager, and Newbuild Housing Programme Manager.
- 3.12 Two pre-application meeting have also been held with Sharon Marklow, Gwen McCracken and James Weir of Renfrewshire Council's planning department to discuss the proposed development. These were held on 20th August 2021 and 1st July 2022.

4. DEVELOPMENT PLAN ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 states that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The Development Plan in respect of the site comprises the Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan (approved July 2017) and the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2 (adopted December 2021).

Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan (2017)

- 4.3 The Clydeplan Strategic Development Plan ('the SDP') was approved by Scottish Ministers on 24th July 2017 and focuses on creating a resilient city region which emphasises participative place making, delivers high quality places where people wish to live, work and invest and which supports healthy living through a strategy which is both realistic and deliverable.
- 4.4 The vision for ClydePlan is by 2036 for Glasgow and the Clyde Valley to be a resilient, sustainable compact city region attracting and retaining investment, improving the quality of life for people and reducing inequalities through the creation of a place which maximises its economic, social and environmental assets ensuring it fulfils its potential as Scotland's foremost city region.
- 4.5 The Spatial Development Strategy outlined within the Plan supports a presumption in favour of sustainable development that contributes to economic growth. This recognises the city region's legacy of development and infrastructure whilst acknowledging that maximising the benefit of those resources is fundamental to ensuring the long-term success of the city-region.
- 4.6 ClydePlan outlines 20 related policies, and the policies considered relevant to the proposals are assessed below:

Policy 10 – Delivering Heat and Electricity

- 4.7 Policy 10 states that in support of the transition to a low carbon economy and realisation of the Vision and Spatial Development Strategy, consideration should be given to alternative renewable technologies and associated infrastructure.
- 4.8 In support of the transition to a low carbon economy and realisation of the Vision and Spatial Development Strategy, support should be given to the development of alternative renewable technologies and associated infrastructure. A low carbon city also contributes to the sustainable economy and lifestyles within the Clyde region.

4.9 The proposed development at Greenock Road, Inchinnan will involve the installation of ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels with associated infrastructure to generate up to 14.3 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy which will feed directly into the local electricity grid network, to increase renewable electricity generation and energy resiliency.

4.10 The proposed development would have a beneficial effect on climate change by contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Policy 14 – Green Belt

4.11 In terms of the sustainability and low carbon focus of the Vision, the Green Belt is an important strategic tool which has a significant role to play in supporting the delivery of the Spatial Development Strategy and in meeting requirements for the sustainable location of rural industries including renewable energy, biomass mineral extraction and timber production.

4.12 The proposed development would bring a greenfield site into sustainable use by generating renewable energy, and supporting the delivery of the Spatial Development Strategy. In addition, this proposal supports and promotes the low carbon focus of the Clydeplan Vision.

4.13 The proposed development is in accordance with the SDP vision and spatial strategy as it will provide low carbon technologies and generates renewable energy which promotes a greener, more sustainable Clyde region.. The proposed use is compatible with surrounding land uses. The proposed development is not considered a strategic development proposal within Schedule 14 of the SDP (electricity generation where the capacity is < 20 MW) and therefore the policies contained within the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2 (2021) will be most relevant in assessing the proposed development.

Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2 (2021)

4.14 The Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) was adopted in December 2021. The LDP2 (2021) aims to assist the delivery of sustainable and inclusive economic growth alongside protecting and enhancing Renfrewshire's cultural and heritage assets, continuing to make it a successful place.

4.15 The Renfrewshire LDP2 sets out an ambitious Spatial Strategy that provides a framework for the protection and enhancement of Renfrewshire's diverse natural environment and built and cultural heritage assets, the delivery of economic and infrastructure investment and it guides the future use of land to assist in creating strong communities and attractive places.

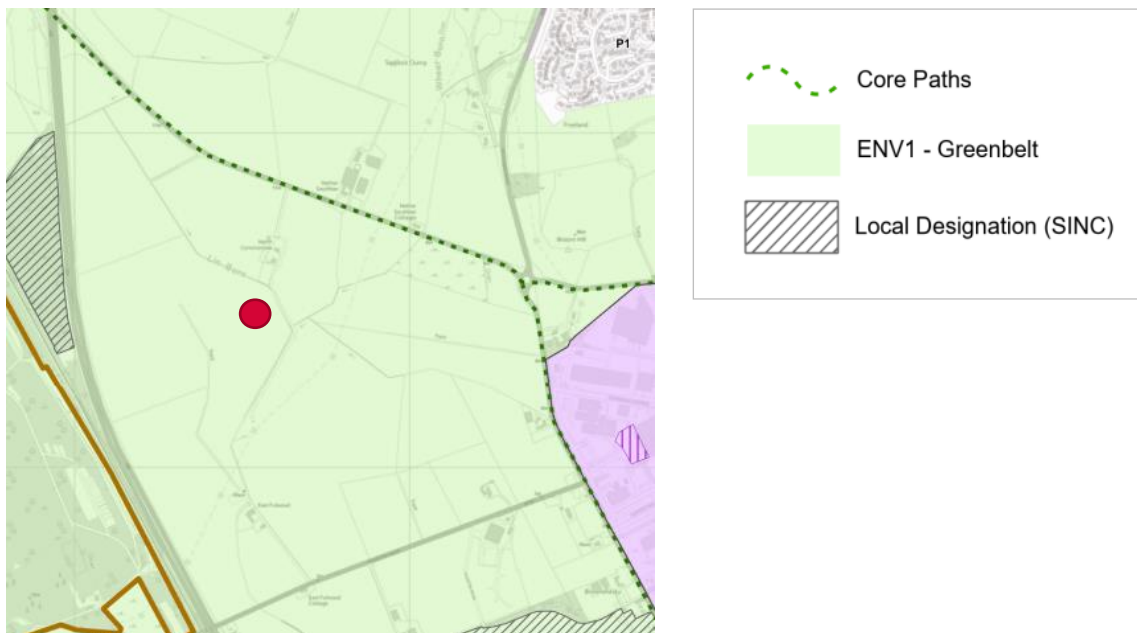
4.16 The Renfrewshire LDP2 sets out the overall Spatial Strategy for Renfrewshire with a detailed policy framework and placemaking proposals structured around five themes:

- Economy;
- Centres;
- Infrastructure;
- Places; and
- Environment.

Site Allocation

4.17 An extract of the LDP2 Proposals map can be found below, with the indicative site location plan highlighted in red.

Extract from Renfrewshire LDP2 Proposal Map C



4.18 Within the Proposal map, the site is allocated as Green Belt (Policy ENV1). The northern boundary of the site, Greenock Road, is identified as a Core Path. A Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) is located beyond the site to the west.

4.19 An assessment of the proposed development against the relevant aspects of the LDP2 Policies and accompanying Supplementary Guidance is set out below.

Infrastructure Considerations

4.20 **Policy 14 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development** states that development proposals which deliver increased energy efficiency and the recovery of energy that would otherwise be lost will be supported. Proposals should incorporate climate change mitigation and adaptation into the design of new development through the integration of renewable or low carbon energy technologies.

4.21 Policy 14 states that renewable and low carbon energy developments, including the delivery of heat networks, and wind energy developments will be considered against the relevant criteria set out in paragraph 169 of Scottish Planning Policy, and in relation to the scale of the contribution towards renewable energy generation targets and will be supported in principle where they are appropriate in terms of the location, siting and design having regard to any individual or cumulative significant effects on:

- Local environment, landscape character, built, natural or cultural heritage and water environment;

The proposed development will involve the installation of ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels with associated infrastructure to generate up to 14.3 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy which will feed directly into the local electricity grid network. The site selection, design and site layout have been carefully considered to minimise landscape and visual impacts while delivering green energy.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been undertaken by Brindley Associates to accompany the application for planning permission. With regard to the effects of the proposed solar development on the landscape resource within the site boundary, the LVIA notes that the site comprises an area of arable land, primarily bound by hawthorn hedgerows with occasional mature boundary trees. The proposed development would result in some minor loss of agricultural land, however prime agricultural land is regarded as being plentiful across the rural expanses Glasgow & Clyde Valley, and any loss can be considered temporary owing to the fully reversible nature of the development proposals. Construction effects on the landscape resources are therefore considered to be temporary and therefore negligible and not significant.

The LVIA also notes that over time it is possible that the landscape between the module will return to a form of agriculture once the solar park is operational, which would in turn minimise long-term impacts upon resources within the site boundary. Furthermore, the proposed development would provide an increase in the prevalence of native hedgerows, riparian habitats, and hedgerow tree planting.

The LVIA includes an assessment on the effects of the proposed development on landscape fabric and character, and found that there would be moderate adverse and significant effects on the site itself and moderate adverse and not significant effects on its immediate surrounding area. Residual effects on Landscape Character Type (LCT) 198: Agricultural Plan – Glasgow & Clyde Valley, and LCT 202: Rugged Upland Farmland were found to be minor adverse and not significant within the site boundary and immediate surrounding area but negligible within the wider LCT context.

The LVIA includes a mitigation strategy which has been designed to improve and contribute to the local landscape character of the area, whilst also screening or filtering views towards the proposed development, providing an attractive, robust and defensible landscape boundary treatment that increases overall biodiversity value. The introduction of the proposed mitigation measures would provide a measure of beneficial aspects, in the form of additional native tree, hedgerow and riparian shrub planting, increasing biodiversity and value to the wider green network. Please refer to the LVIA for full details.

There are no landscape or cultural heritage designations located within the site boundary, and it is therefore there will be no individual or cumulative impact in this respect.

- A Flood Risk Assessment been undertaken by Kaya Consulting Ltd to support the application for planning permission. The FRA notes that the site has been sequentially planned such that both critical infrastructure and solar panels will be set out with, or raised above, the relevant design flood. The FRA concludes that the proposal meets planning criteria and the site is suitable for development. Please refer to paragraph 4.24 of this Statement for our assessment of the proposed development against 4.24 Policy I3 – Flooding and Drainage, and to the FRA for full details.

- Amenity of existing or allocated uses;

There are limited existing or allocated uses surrounding the application site. The application site comprises approximately 41 ha of agricultural land, and surrounding uses are limited to residential dwelling and various outbuildings associated with North Commonside Farm. A full review on effects of the proposed solar development on visual amenity of the site and surroundings is included below, however, It is not considered the proposed solar development would result in any individual or cumulative significant effects on the amenity of these uses.

- Visual amenity, air quality, noise, glare and shadow flicker;

The site is well screened from neighbouring roads, commercial buildings and dwellings by existing mature trees and hedgerows.

The LVIA which accompanies the planning application assesses the visual impact of the proposed solar development on visual receptors. With regard to residual visual effects of the proposed development, several recreational and transport routes with the potential to experience significant effects as a result of the proposals were assessed within the LVIA. The assessment found that residual effects upon road users of the M8, A8 and B790 were considered to be negligible along the wider route. Within close proximity of the proposed

development, residual effects were considered to be minor adverse, and not significant, upon road users of the A8 and A726, whilst moderate/minor adverse and not significant upon road users of the B790. Effects upon the existing Core Paths were considered to be negligible, whilst effects upon the aspirational Core Paths along the A8 and A726 were considered to be moderate adverse and not significant.

Seven viewpoints were formally assessed as part of the LVIA, with significant effects only predicted upon Viewpoint 01 (entrance to Barnhill) and Viewpoint 02 during the construction and early operational stages. Both viewpoints are located in relatively close proximity to the proposed development, and significant effects at Viewpoint 02 (A8 Greenock Road) were only predicted for local residents at the properties to the east of the proposed development site. No significant residual effects were predicted at Year 10, owing to the screening effect of the proposed mitigation planting measures.

The LVIA notes that the nature of the proposed development is considered to be fully reversible due to the minimal intervention required to install the solar PV modules, and the potential for the land surrounding the modules to remain in agricultural use following installation. It is considered that the level of effects experienced would lessen substantially over time as the proposed development integrates into the surroundings and is seen as part of the surrounding landscape.

The LVIA notes that the layout of the proposed development has been carefully considered, and to minimise significant visual effects. Initial LVIA findings, visibility analysis and digital modelling have been used to determine the optimal developable areas and mitigation planting proposals in visual terms, resulting in measures such as; setting development back from the highest point of the site and locating new structure and boundary tree planting along the proposed development boundaries. As a result of these measures, landscape effects would be limited to an area within close proximity to the site boundary, which would occur regardless of the type of development proposed.

Further, the LVIA concludes that the proposed development site is suitable for solar development providing the mitigation measures outlined are adhered to. The proposed measures would ensure that significant effects would be limited to the immediate surrounding landscape only, particularly during the summer months.

A Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) has been undertaken by Bureau Veritas to accompany the planning submission, which assesses the noise impact of the inverters, transformers and substations required as part of the proposed solar development at the 5 nearest sensitive receptors established within proximity of the site.

Using the results of the noise modelling study, an assessment of the operational solar park was undertaken with respect to the guidance contained within BS 4142. The results showed that during daytime hours, noise levels would be between -4 and -27 dB below the background (LA90,t) at the identified nearest receptors. This would therefore indicate a low adverse impact due to the dominance of background noise. During night-time hours, the mitigated BS 4142 assessment shows that the rating levels are predicted to be between -3 and -13 dB below the background (LA90,t) at the identified nearest receptors. This would also represent a low adverse impact.

The noise from the operational solar park was also assessed with respect to internal noise. The NIA concludes that internal levels would not exceed 35 dB during the daytime and 30 dB during the night-time with windows partially open, therefore meeting the design limits. Please refer to the NIA for full details of the assessment.

Solar parks are passive systems which do not have moving parts or create significant air quality issues.

A Glint and Glare Assessment has been undertaken by The Greenspan Agency to assess the likely impact of solar reflection from the proposed development on a number of local receptors including residential and commercial buildings, major transport corridors and Glasgow Airport.

This analysis has found that there are no significant glare impacts on nearby dwellings, commercial buildings, transport links (roads and railways) or the nearby Glasgow Airport. The orientation of an array in the site has been altered to ensure that there is no glare on the airport's Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT).

The site is well screened from neighbouring roads, commercial buildings and dwellings by existing mature trees and hedgerows. New species will be planted to soften the development and achieve further screening. Additionally, the assessment found no glare impacts were for road users of the M8 nor for train operators of the railway line. Please refer to the Glint and Glare Assessment full details of the assessment.

- Outdoor sport and recreation interest;

N/A to the proposed development.

- Transport infrastructure, including road traffic and the safety of local and trunk roads and the railway network; and

The Construction and Access Report prepared by The Greenspan Agency includes an overview of construction traffic, transport routes and traffic numbers associated with the proposed solar park during the construction and operational phases of the development.

The report notes that the road network within proximity of the site appears to experience a steady volume of traffic such that it is considered that the temporary addition of the vehicle numbers during the construction phase can be accommodated without a significant percentage increase.

The proposed development has been designed specifically to limit its impact on the environment. During the operational phase of the proposed development, it is anticipated that approximately 1-2 trips per month would be made over the lifetime of the solar park. This weekly vehicular trip would be made in order to fulfil the maintenance requirements of the proposed development. For this reason, no mitigation has been proposed to offset development traffic which is considered will have no adverse impact on the surrounding road network. Please refer to the Construction and Access Report for full details.

- The safe and efficient use of the Glasgow Airport, flight activity, navigation, flight paths and Ministry of Defence surveillance system.

The Glint and Glare Assessment has been undertaken in consultation with Glasgow Airport safeguarding officers, and notes that the orientation of part of the solar park has been amended to ensure that no glare is experienced by the Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) at Glasgow Airport.

The assessment confirms that there will be no glare on pilots approaching the runway from the south-west via Flight Path FP1. Whilst the assessment suggests that there may be green glare experienced by pilots on approach from the north-east via Flight Path FP2, the duration of the glare is <25 mins. The glare is expected to be similar to the level routinely experienced by pilots from other reflective surfaces, and is therefore not considered to be significant with no mitigation for this glare is required. Please refer to the Glint and Glare Assessment for further details.

- 4.22 The New Development Supplementary Guidance (NDSG) provides additional information in relation to Policy 14. In relation to renewable and low carbon energy developments, the NDSG states that all proposals will be considered against Policy 14 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments of the Local Development Plan having regard to any individual or cumulative significant effects of the development proposal. Additionally, all proposals requires to ensure that:

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- Significant visual intrusion within the landscape in terms of siting, scale, location, design, etc. has been minimised;

As detailed within this Statement, the site selection, design and site layout have been carefully considered to minimise landscape and visual impacts while delivering green energy.

- There will be no significant unacceptable adverse impact on the natural or historic environment or water environment within the area;

There are no landscape or cultural heritage designations located within the site boundary, and it is therefore it is not considered there will be any significant unacceptable adverse impact in this respect.

A Flood Risk Assessment been undertaken by Kaya Consulting Ltd to support the application for planning permission. The FRA notes that the site has been sequentially planned such that both critical infrastructure and solar panels will be set out with, or raised above, the relevant design flood. The FRA concludes that the proposal meets planning criteria and the site is suitable for development. Please refer to paragraph 4.24 of this Statement for our assessment of the proposed development against 4.24 Policy I3 – Flooding and Drainage, and to the FRA for full details.

- During the process leading to the site selection, consideration must be given to suitable alternative sites, with the selection of the proposed site justified;

The site has been selected as the preferred location for the proposed solar development due to the proximity to the grid connection and following a review of potential site constraints and opportunities. The site is primarily agricultural in nature, comprising arable farmland with relatively flat lying fields. The flat topography of the site aids efficient construction and exposure to sunlight. Locations with suitable grid connections options are difficult to identify and renewable energy development must be located where technically feasible.

A formal grid connection application has been submitted to Scottish Power Energy Networks, to export the power from the solar panels to the electricity grid. The application process is at an advanced stage three grid connection points have been agreed with the district network operator to export the electricity to the grid.

- Development proposals for renewable or low carbon energy developments to include proposals for energy storage on site wherever possible;

There is no proposal to include energy storage within the site at present

- There is no significant unacceptable impact on the amenity of nearby residents or other existing/allocated uses, in terms of statutory air quality objectives, noise or other nuisances including glare and shadow flicker;

As mentioned above, a Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) has been undertaken. The assessment of the operational solar park showed that during daytime hours, noise levels would be between -4 and -27 dB below the background (LA90,t) at the identified nearest receptors. This would therefore indicate a low adverse impact due to the dominance of background noise. During night-time hours, the mitigated BS 4142 assessment shows that the rating levels are predicted to be between -3 and -13 dB below the background (LA90,t) at the identified nearest receptors. This would also represent a low adverse impact.

With regards to the noise from the operational solar park, the NIA concludes that internal levels would not exceed 35 dB during the daytime and 30 dB during the night-time with windows partially open, therefore meeting the design limits. Please refer to the NIA for full details of the assessment.

It should also be noted that solar parks are passive systems which do not have moving parts or create significant air quality issues.

As mentioned above, a Glint and Glare Assessment has been to assess the likely impact of solar reflection from the proposed development on a number of local receptors including residential and commercial buildings, major transport corridors and Glasgow Airport.

This analysis has found that there are no significant glare impacts on nearby dwellings, commercial buildings, transport links (roads and railways) or the nearby Glasgow Airport. The orientation of an array in the site has been altered to ensure that there is no glare on the airport's Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT).

The Glint and Glare assessment also notes that the site is well screened from neighbouring roads, commercial buildings and dwellings by existing mature trees and hedgerows. New species will be planted to soften the development and achieve further screening. Additionally, the assessment found no glare impacts were for road users of the M8 nor for train operators of the railway line. Please refer to the Glint and Glare Assessment which accompanies the application for planning application for full details of the assessment.

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- There will be no significant unacceptable impacts on the transport network including Glasgow Airport, additional traffic generation and/or road safety. Proposals must demonstrate that any additional impacts can be mitigated;

The Construction and Access Report prepared by The Greenspan Agency includes an overview of construction traffic, transport routes and traffic numbers associated with the proposed solar park during the construction and operational phases.

The report notes that the road network within proximity of the site appears to experience a steady volume of traffic such that it is considered that the temporary addition of the vehicle numbers during the construction phase can be accommodated without a significant percentage increase.

The proposed development has been designed specifically to limit its impact on the environment. During the operational phase of the proposed development, it is anticipated that approximately 1-2 trips per month would be made over the lifetime of the solar park. This weekly vehicular trip would be made in order to fulfil the maintenance requirements of the proposed development. For this reason, no mitigation has been proposed to offset development traffic which is considered will have no adverse impact on the surrounding road network. Please refer to the Construction and Access Report for full details.

- The individual or cumulative impact of the proposed development, including any other existing and approved similar developments; will not lead to an unacceptable impact on the environment, amenity, community, or recreational interest;

It is not considered that the proposed development will result in any cumulative or unacceptable impacts on the environment, amenity, community, or recreational interest. Additionally, the absence of nearby utility scale ground-mounted solar developments means that there is no current cumulative impact caused by ground mounted solar in the vicinity.

Following the implementation of suitable mitigation measures, no significant adverse cumulative effects are anticipated during either the construction or operational phases of the proposed development

- There will be no loss of public access routes, open space or recreational facilities. If proposals do have an impact, then alternatives or mitigating measures must be provided;

There are no long distance walking or cycling routes within the site and the proposed development. Greenock Road to the north of the site is an identified Core Path within the proposals map which accompanies the LDP2. The primary access to the site will be from the

south, on Houston Road. This will be the primary access point for construction and delivery traffic. The existing access point on Greenock Road to the north will be maintained, to ensure the core path on Greenock Road is maintained.

- Arrangements are in place to restore the site to an acceptable standard after the operation has ceased;
- SEPA's Thermal Treatment of Waste Guidelines must be followed where development involves recovering energy from waste;

N/A to the proposed development.

- Where technically feasible and financially viable, development with a high heat demand should seek to be co-located with and make use of heat supply sources;

N/A to the proposed development.

- All Major Development planning applications require to consider the feasibility of meeting the development's heat demand through a district heating network which could serve, or could easily be adapted to connect to a wider network if and when required to give greater energy efficiency;

N/A to the proposed development,

- Where suitable, the potential to connect new projects to off-grid areas are considered; and

N/A to the proposed development.

- The scale of contribution from the development to renewable energy generation targets and the effect on greenhouse gas and carbon emissions is fully demonstrated.

The proposed development would involve the installation of ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels with associated infrastructure to generate up to 14.3 MW of renewable energy which will feed directly into the local electricity grid network. The proposed solar development would provide a significant environmental benefit by generating a large amount of clean, renewable, zero carbon electricity. Inchinnan Solar Park can play an important part in making a direct contribution to the renewable energy generation targets. Once operational, the solar park will generate enough electricity to meet the annual demand of around 8,351 lower consumption dwellings such as flats or energy efficient homes, or around 5,184 dwellings with median electrical consumption.

A Climate Change and Renewable Energy Report has been prepared by The Greenspan Agency which highlights the key environmental benefit of the Inchinnan Solar Park; the generation of clean renewable energy for export to the national grid. Please refer to this for further details on the scale of contribution from the development to renewable energy targets.

4.23 In addition to the guidance on Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments, the NDSG notes that all development proposals for Solar PV Farms will be considered against the following criteria:

- Development requires to be sited to minimise the visual effect on landscapes and provisions will be made to screen the development using natural features such as hedges and/or trees;

The site selection, design and site layout have been carefully considered to minimise landscape and visual impacts while delivering green energy. Section 6.0 of the LVIA which accompanies the application for planning permission sets out the landscape design principles that have shaped the development on the site, and the mitigation measures proposed to reduce or mitigate any potentially adverse effects during the construction phase. These respond to existing baseline conditions, and take account of key local landscape features and characteristics as well as the potential effects of the proposed development on views and visual amenity within the study area.

Specific mitigation measure necessary during construction include the re-grading of disturbed areas of topsoil or subsoil to blend with the surrounding landform to encourage regeneration with native species; and landscape boundary treatment planning to be implemented during the first phase of development, to allow the vegetation to establish early to optimise screening where possible.

Additionally, section 6.2 of the LVIA includes proposed mitigation and enhancement measures to the design of the proposed development. Embedded mitigation proposals include retention of the existing mature deciduous trees which are present on the site boundaries, and the riparian scrub along the Wheel Burn and Lin Burn where possible. Further embedded mitigation measures seek to minimise potentially significant effects by considering layout, siting, and design of the proposed development. Please refer to the LVIA for full details of the proposed mitigation measures.

- Where a development is proposed on prime quality agricultural land, on land with an environmental designation, or of historical significance, applicants must provide sufficient information on the potential impact on this existing land use and the mitigation that will be provided;

The site is designated as having a land value of 3.2 on Scotland's Soli Map. Land designated a value of 3.2 is defined as capable of average production though high yields of barley, oats and grass can be obtained, where grass leys are common.

The proposed development would result in some minor loss of agricultural land, however the LVIA confirms that prime agricultural land is regarded as being plentiful across the rural expanses Glasgow & Clyde Valley, and it is considered that any loss can be considered temporary, owing to the fully reversible nature of the development proposals. Furthermore, the proposed development would provide an increase in the prevalence of native hedgerows, riparian habitats, and hedgerow tree planting.

- There is no significant impact on landscape/visual amenity, aircraft, rail and road safety in terms of glint and glare;

Please refer to earlier paragraphs of this Statement which addresses the impact of the proposed development in terms of landscape, visual amenity, aircraft and road safety in terms of glint and glare.

- Any lighting and security fencing requires to be kept to a minimum. Natural features must be used where possible to assist in site security and screen security fencing;

The proposed development includes the associated electrical infrastructure, security fence and CCTV cameras. The lighting or security fencing on site will be kept to a minimum where possible.

- Access tracks to the solar farm requires to be kept to a minimum to better enable the site to be returned to its previous condition;

The Construction and Access Report prepared by The Greenspan Agency confirms that the primary site access will be taken from the south on Houston Road, which will be used by construction and delivery traffic. No abnormal vehicle sizes are expected to be required for construction phase deliveries and as such, the primary access point is expected to be suitable for all vehicle types required to construct and operate the proposed development. There is also a pre-existing access point on the northern boundary of the site. Please refer to the technical drawings which accompany the application for full details of the proposed access.

The proposed development has been designed specifically to limit its impact on the environment. During the operational phase of the proposed development, it is anticipated that approximately 1-2 two-way trips per month would be made over the lifetime of the solar

park. This weekly vehicular trip would be made in order to fulfil the maintenance requirements of the proposed development. For this reason, no mitigation has been proposed to offset development traffic which is considered will have no adverse impact on the surrounding road network.

- Construction compounds needed to enable the development require to be located to minimise its environmental and amenity impact. Details of the size and location of the site office, machinery, plant and construction materials requires to be provided;

Any details of construction compounds that are required on site will be confirmed prior to the commencement of development.

For full details relating to the construction of the proposed development, please refer to the Construction and Access Report prepared by The Greenspan Agency which accompanies the application for planning permission.

- Foundations which enable the ground to be returned to its previous use will be preferred. Trenching and foundations require to be kept to a minimum;

The Technical Description Report prepared by The Greenspan Agency confirms that the panels will be fixed to a ground mounted structure, and arranged in rows of various lengths. As the panel mounting system will be pile driven, and will not use concrete foundations. Therefore, impacts on the land will be temporary and reversible

the maximum height of the highest part of the panels on the frame will not exceed 3.3 m.

- An appropriate ground maintenance programme will be required,. This would require panels to be positioned at least 70cm above ground level and cabling to be suitably protected;

The applicant will prepare an appropriate ground maintenance programme in accordance with this requirement following the grant of planning permission.

- On completion of the construction works, a Post Construction Road Survey will require to be undertaken by the applicant and any remediation works required will be agreed in writing with Renfrewshire Council. Any remediation works will require to be funded by the applicant; and

The applicant will undertake a post construction road survey on completion of the construction works, and any future remediation works will be agreed in writing with Renfrewshire Council as required.

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- Solar PV Farms are considered to be a temporary use of land and will require to be returned to its previous use on expiry of planning consent. Any decommissioning works will be agreed with Renfrewshire Council and funded by the applicant.

Any future decommissioning works will be agreed in advance with Renfrewshire Council in accordance with this requirement.

- 4.24 **Policy 13 – Flooding and Drainage** states that new development is required to avoid areas susceptible to flooding and developers will be required to demonstrate promotion of sustainable flood risk management measures by implementing suitable drainage infrastructure. All development proposals must demonstrate the sustainable management of water providing suitable drainage infrastructure, including green infrastructure, and ensuring that there will be no unacceptable flood risk associated with the development.
- 4.25 Lin Burn flows south along the western site boundary and Wheel Burn flows into the site at the northeast boundary, converging with Lin Burn in the centre of the site. Lin Burn converges with the River Gryfe downstream of the site. The SEPA flood map indicates that small areas across the site were likely to be at high to medium risk of surface water flooding. A medium to high risk of river water flooding was noted for the site, associated with the Lin Burn which forms the western boundary and the Wheel Burn, which was present on the eastern boundary, crossing the site to join the Lin Burn. The site is not at risk of surface water flooding.
- 4.26 A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been undertaken by Kaya Consulting Ltd to support the application for planning permission. The FRA includes a hydraulic modelling assessment, which indicates that flood waters are predicted to inundate lower lying areas of the site adjacent to Lin and Wheel Burn. Based on the results of the modelling exercise, the FRA advises that all critical infrastructure has been located out with the 1 in 1000-year plus climate change uplift flood extent. In addition, the panel infrastructure has also been designed so that, during the 1 in 200-year event, solar panels are located in areas of shallow (<0.55m) flooding and will remain operational.
- 4.27 The FRA notes that based on Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), and in line with the SEPA 'Land Use Vulnerability' criteria, solar developments are considered as an 'essential infrastructure' land use. Such developments can be located in the 200-year functional floodplain if they are considered to remain operational during floods, and not impede the water flow. Based on this guidance, the FRA notes that the site has been sequentially planned such that both critical infrastructure and solar panels will be set outwith or raised above the relevant design flood. Therefore, in terms of flooding, the FRA concludes that the proposal meets planning criteria and the site is suitable for development. A development buffer of at least 6m along the watercourses to allow for maintenance is recommended within the FRA.

4.28 A detailed watershed analysis has also been undertaken to determine the route of overland flows, and the FRA recommends that finished ground levels allow shallow surface water flows entering the site boundary to drain to Lin Burn as they would pre-development.

4.29 For full details, please refer to the Flood Risk Assessment which accompanies the application for planning permission. Based on the above, it is considered the proposed development complies with Policy I3 Flooding and Drainage.

Environmental Considerations

4.30 **Policy ENV1 – Green Belt** sets out the range of uses which could be considered acceptable in principle within the green belt. The policy states that development within the green belt will be considered appropriate in principle where it is a housing land shortfall remedy which satisfies Policy 8 of Clydeplan or where the development is for essential infrastructure: such as digital communications infrastructure, electricity grid connections, new active travel and transport routes, and renewable energy developments.

4.31 The proposed development would promote and increase renewable energy generation within Renfrewshire Council area and in turn, contribute towards the Scottish Government's energy and emission reduction targets. The proposed design and site layout has been informed by an iterative design process which imbeds appropriate mitigation measures.

4.32 The New Development Supplementary Guidance provides additional criteria for which development in the green belt will be assessed against, as follows:

- There will be no loss of prime quality agricultural land or agricultural land of lesser quality that is locally important in line with Scottish Government Policy;

The site is designated as having a land value of 3.2 on Scotland's Soli Map. Land designated a value of 3.2 is defined as capable of average production though high yields of barley, oats and grass can be obtained, where grass leys are common.

The proposed development would result in some minor loss of agricultural land, however the LVIA confirms that prime agricultural land is regarded as being plentiful across the rural expanses Glasgow & Clyde Valley, and it is considered that any loss can be considered temporary, owing to the fully reversible nature of the development proposals. Furthermore, the proposed development would provide an increase in the prevalence of native hedgerows, riparian habitats, and hedgerow tree planting.

It should also be noted that the proposed development will not have long-term impact on the green belt, and it is not considered the proposed solar park will adversely affect the function or integrity of the green belt.

- Any adverse impacts on the qualities of wild land are overcome by siting, design or other mitigation;

N/A to the proposed development.

- Traffic and access infrastructure can be sensitively accommodated;

The Construction and Access Report prepared by The Greenspan Agency confirms that the primary site access will be taken from the south on Houston Road, which will be used by construction and delivery traffic. No abnormal vehicle sizes are expected to be required for construction phase deliveries and as such, the primary access point is expected to be suitable for all vehicle types required to construct and operate the proposed development. There is also a pre-existing access point on the northern boundary of the site. Please refer to the technical drawings which accompany the application for full details of the proposed access.

The proposed development has been designed specifically to limit its impact on the environment. During the operational phase of the proposed development, it is anticipated that approximately 1-2 two-way trips per month would be made over the lifetime of the solar park. This weekly vehicular trip would be made in order to fulfil the maintenance requirements of the proposed development. For this reason, no mitigation has been proposed to offset development traffic which is considered will have no adverse impact on the surrounding road network.

- No significant effects on public water supply and water environment from any pollution risk;

N/A to the proposed development.

- The development links to the existing green network and active travel routes or provides new enhanced routes, where appropriate;

N/A to the proposed development.

- Proposals to protect and provide access to open space have been incorporated;

N/A to the proposed development.

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- Development will not have a significant detrimental impact on the local landscape character. Development layout, design and siting must reflect local landscape character and respect and incorporate important landscape features such as traditional field enclosures, water courses, woodlands and skyline;

As mentioned previously in this Statement, the LVIA which accompanies the application includes an assessment on the effects of the proposed development on landscape fabric and character, and found that there would be moderate adverse and significant effects on the site itself and moderate adverse and not significant effects on its immediate surrounding area. Residual effects on Landscape Character Type (LCT) 198: Agricultural Plan – Glasgow & Clyde Valley, and LCT 202: Rugged Upland Farmland were found to be minor adverse and not significant within the site boundary and immediate surrounding area but negligible within the wider LCT context. Therefore, it is not considered the proposed development will have a significant detrimental impact on the local landscape character.

The site is well screened from neighbouring roads, commercial buildings and dwellings by existing mature trees and hedgerows. The layout of the proposed development has been carefully considered, and to minimise significant visual and landscape effects. Initial LVIA findings, visibility analysis and digital modelling have been used to determine the optimal developable areas and mitigation planting proposals in visual terms, resulting in measures such as; setting development back from the highest point of the site and locating new structure and boundary tree planting along the proposed development boundaries. As a result of these measures, landscape effects would be limited to an area within close proximity to the site boundary, which would occur regardless of the type of development proposed.

- It can be demonstrated that there is careful consideration of the siting, design, scale and grouping of any buildings and infrastructure;

N/A to the proposed development.

- Appropriate landscaping proposals have been incorporated including the provision of well-designed boundary treatment;

The LVIA includes a mitigation strategy which has been designed to improve and contribute to the local landscape character of the area, whilst also screening or filtering views towards the proposed development, providing an attractive, robust and defensible landscape boundary treatment that increases overall biodiversity value. Embedded mitigation proposals include measures to retain the existing mature deciduous trees which are present on the site boundaries, as well as the retention of the existing riparian scrub along the Wheel Burn and Lin Burn where possible. Further embedded mitigation measures seek to minimise

potentially significant effects by considering layout, siting and design of the proposed development. The introduction of the proposed mitigation measures would provide a measure of beneficial aspects, in the form of additional native tree, hedgerow and riparian shrub planting, increasing biodiversity and value to the wider green network.

Please refer to Section 6.1 and 6.2 of the LVIA for full details of the proposed measures to mitigate construction effects, and enhancements measures to the design of the proposed development.

- There are adequate services available for the development, or this can be provided;

N/A to the proposed development.

- There is no significant detrimental effect on identified nature conservation interests, including species and habitats; and,

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been undertaken by Brindley Associates, to identify all broad habitat types within the site boundary and included a search for suitable habitat for protected species and provide recommendations for further survey, where appropriate.

The PEA includes an ecological assessment of the habitat's suitability to support protected and notable species of flora and fauna, undertaken within the site boundary and its outer zone of influence, safe public access permitting. The habitats and plant species recorded within the survey area are considered widespread and common throughout the local region, and therefore no further habitat assessment is currently recommended. Measures to provide features of biodiversity value within the site boundary are also included within the PEA, which notes that the incorporation of the suggested measures within the development, where appropriate, has the potential to encourage wildlife to, and support wildlife within, the site. These include grassland management measures, and recommendations for the required lighting to reduce potential negative impacts on wildlife at the site.

For a full overview of the PEA, please refer to the assessment of Policy ENV2 below.

- All buildings for conversion are to be structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial rebuilding.

N/A to the proposed development.

-
- 4.33 Overall, the proposed development is not considered to adversely affect the function and integrity of the green belt and therefore is in accordance with Policy ENV1 and the guidance contained within the New Development Supplementary Guidance.
- 4.34 **Policy ENV2 – Natural Heritage** states that development proposals should protect and restore degraded habitats, enhance, and promote access to Renfrewshire’s natural environment and minimise any adverse impacts on habitats, species, network connectivity or landscape character.
- 4.35 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken by Brindley Associates, to identify all broad habitat types within the site boundary and included a search for suitable habitat for protected species and provide recommendations for further survey, where appropriate.
- 4.36 The PEA notes that the mature scattered trees along the field boundaries displayed features that may have the potential to support roosting bats and recommends that these trees are retained as part of the proposed development. The PEA notes that if any trees require to be felled or disturbed by the proposed development, then further bat assessment may be required, as detailed in Table 1 of the PEA.
- 4.37 No designated or notable sites are present within the site. The Black Cart water SSSI and SPA lies approximately 0.8km south of the site boundary, at its closest point. The site is designated for its international and European importance as a roosting and foraging area for a population of wintering Icelandic whooper swans. The swan population are also known to use the agriculturally improved areas of the surrounding floodplain, in which the proposed development site is located, as a foraging resource. However, the PEA notes that the site occupies a relatively small proportion over the overall feeding area and is located on the outer edges of the feeding area. It is therefore considered unlikely that the proposed solar farm development is unlikely to negatively impact the present population of whooper swans, and no further assessment is currently considered necessary.
- 4.38 The PEA includes an ecological assessment of the habitat’s suitability to support protected and notable species of flora and fauna, undertaken within the site boundary and its outer zone of influence, safe public access permitting. The habitats and plant species recorded within the survey area are considered widespread and common throughout the local region. No further habitat assessment is currently recommended.
- 4.39 With regards to bats, the PEA notes that features which have the potential to be used by roosting bats were observed on the mature trees scattered along the field boundaries. The PEA recommends that these trees are retained as part of the future development at the site. The buildings associated with North Commonsides Farm also displayed features which have the potential to be used by roosting bats. If any works are proposed on these buildings as part of the proposed development, the PEA advises further assessment for bats is recommended. Suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat

is present in the form of the hedgerows, tree lines and open grassland and watercourses within the site. Where these features would be lost as part of future development, the PEA recommends that proposals should seek to maintain connectivity across the site through structural planting using locally sourced native species where possible. Good practice recommendations and biodiversity measures have been provided to reduce the potential negative impacts on foraging and commuting success for bat species.

- 4.40 As mentioned previously within this Statement, the PEA includes an ecological assessment of the habitat's suitability to support protected and notable species of flora and fauna, undertaken within the site boundary and its outer zone of influence, safe public access permitting. The habitats and plant species recorded within the survey area are considered widespread and common throughout the local region, and therefore no further habitat assessment is currently recommended. Measures to provide features of biodiversity value within the site boundary are also included within the PEA, which notes that the incorporation of the suggested measures within the development, where appropriate, has the potential to encourage wildlife to, and support wildlife within, the site. These include grassland management measures, and recommendations for the required lighting to reduce potential negative impacts on wildlife at the site.
- 4.41 For full details, please refer to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal which accompanies the planning application.

Other Considerations

Socio-Economic Benefits

- 4.42 In terms of Supporting Sustainable Economic Growth, the LDP2 notes that the Economy Section aims to support the delivery of high quality development that will result in employment creation and bring economic benefit to the area, without causing significant environmental impacts, including an overall loss of amenity within the surrounding area and/or a significant adverse effect on neighbouring properties, in terms of use, scale, noise, disturbance and statutory air quality objectives.
- 4.43 A Socio-Economic Benefits Infographic has been prepared by Icen Projects to accompany the application for planning permission. The operation of the proposed development will support around 10 net additional FTE jobs (direct, indirect, and induced) in area. It will also generate a total of £312,000 GVA per annum (direct, indirect, and induced). The operational phase will also increase worker spending and business rates revenue locally. Moreover, there will be wider social impacts linked to reduced consumer electricity bills and education of the public, the potential for supply chain employment opportunities within the local community and the diversification of agricultural use to support rural business.
- 4.44 As noted within our assessment of the proposed development in this Section, it is considered that the proposed development will bring economic benefit to the area without causing significant

environmental impacts, including an overall loss of amenity within the surrounding area and/or a significant adverse effect on neighbouring properties, in terms of use, scale, noise, disturbance and statutory air quality objectives.

Archaeology

- 4.45 An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment is also being prepared, which will be submitted as part of the planning application once completed.

Summary

- 4.46 In summary, the proposed development would involve the installation of ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels with associated infrastructure to generate up to 14.3 MW of renewable energy which will feed directly into the local electricity grid network. As discussed above, it is considered that the proposed development complies with the aims of the relevant policies within Renfrewshire's LDP 2 and New Development Supplementary Guidance.

5. MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 This Section sets out material considerations in the determination of this application for planning permissions and considers the weight to be afforded to these. The Climate Change and Renewable Energy Report prepared by The Greenspan Agency should be read in conjunction with this Section.

National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) (2014)

- 5.2 The National Planning Framework 3 (NPF 3) is a long-term strategy for Scotland. NPF3 sets the context for development planning in Scotland and a framework for the spatial development of Scotland as a whole. It outlines the Scottish Government's development priorities over the next 20 - 30 years, focusing on supporting sustainable economic growth and the transition to a low carbon economy.
- 5.3 NPF3 sets the context for development planning in Scotland and a framework for the spatial development of Scotland as a whole. It is accompanied by an Action Programme which identifies how we expect it to be implemented, by whom, and when.
- 5.4 The Plan's vision is a Scotland which is a successful, sustainable place; a low carbon place; a natural, resilient place; a connected place.
- 5.5 NPF3 promotes 'A low carbon place' which aims to enhance the opportunities arising from on-shore and off-shore low carbon energy generation to create a more energy-efficient built environment and produce less waste. NPF3 reiterates the ambition to achieve at least an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, where planning plays a key role in delivery of this target
- 5.6 In line with the aims of the NPF3, the proposed development will involve the installation of ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels with associated infrastructure to generate up to 14.3 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy which will feed directly in to the local electricity grid network, which will have a beneficial effect on climate change by contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) (2014)

- 5.7 Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) was published on 23 June 2014 and sets out the national planning policies which reflect Scottish Minister's priorities for the operation of the planning system and for the development and use of land. The SPP sits alongside the National Planning Framework (NPF) which provides statutory framework for Scotland's long-term spatial development.

5.8 SPP notes that in order to promote 'A Low Carbon Place', the planning system should:

- Support the transformational change to a low carbon economy, consistent with national objectives and targets;
- Support the development of a diverse range of electricity generation from renewable energy technologies – including the expansion of renewable energy generation capacity – and the development of heat networks;
- Guide development to appropriate locations and advise on the issues that will be taken into account when specific proposals are being assessed; and
- Help to reduce emissions and energy use in new buildings and from new infrastructure by enabling development at appropriate locations that contributes to electricity and heat from renewable sources.

5.9 The planning system should support the development of a diverse range of electricity generation from renewable energy technologies, including the expansion of renewable energy generation capacity, and help reduce emissions and energy use by enabling development at appropriate locations that contributes to efficient energy supply and storage.

5.10 In line with the provisions of SPP, the proposed development would generate up to 14.3 MW of renewable energy which contributes to creating a low carbon place, making a direct contribution to the renewable energy targets. Inchinnan Solar Park would provide a significant environmental benefit by generating a large amount of clean, renewable, zero carbon electricity. SPP sets out that renewable energy generating development should be supported in appropriate locations. The location of the proposed development has been carefully selected, and as set out in the Development Plan assessment above, is considered to be an appropriate site for the proposal.

National Energy Policy

5.11 The following legislation sets out the Scottish Government's commitment to cut carbon emissions through the deployment of renewable energy, and sets out the national energy strategy.

Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) Act 2019

5.12 The Scottish Government declared a climate emergency in 2019; in response, the target date for net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045 was set in the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) Act 2019 which is an amendment of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act (2009). The June 2021 report released by the Scottish Government greenhouse gas emissions for 2019

shows that the emissions are 51.5% down from the baseline of 1990 emissions but did not achieve the annual target of 55%.

- 5.13 As legislation, the Act sets targets for the reduction of greenhouse gases emissions and provides advice, plans and reports in relation to those targets, with the objective of Scotland contributing appropriately to the world's efforts to deliver on the Paris Agreement reached at the 21st Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
- 5.14 The Act legislates a legally binding target of Net-Zero Emissions by the year 2045. Emissions must be at least 100% lower than the baseline (the target is known as the “net -zero emissions target”).
- 5.15 As a proposal for renewable energy generation, this remains an important component in meeting net-zero targets.

Other Material Considerations

Climate Change Act 2008

- 5.16 The Climate Change Act 2008 set a target date of 2050 to reduce the UK carbon budget to 80% lower than the 1990 baseline and established the Climate Change Committee to advise on emission targets. The target was amended to 100% by 2050 in 2019 by The Climate Change Act 2009 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019. The Climate Change Committee have recently reported that: “the UK is currently on track to meet its target of a 37% reduction by 2022, but it is not on track to meet its targets outlined in the fourth and fifth carbon budgets - a 51% reduction compared to 1990 levels by 2025.”

Summary

- 5.17 In summary, renewable energy projects such as the proposed development are required to assist in meeting legally binding UK and Scottish decarbonisation targets.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Icen Projects Ltd, in support of an application for planning permission for the following development at Greenock Road, Inchinnan:

“Erection of solar park and associated infrastructure.”

6.2 The proposed development will involve the installation of ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels with associated infrastructure to generate up to 14.3 megawatts (M) of renewable energy which will feed directly into the local electricity grid network.

6.3 The proposed development in combatting climate change should be considered in the context of the significant contribution that the proposed development could make to the Council’s target of increasing the amount of renewable energy within the region.

6.4 The proposed development is in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan, and is supported by a number of material considerations of significant weight. Of particular relevance is the support and encouragement offered by Scottish Government for renewable energy developments which help to achieve the net-zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by 2045.

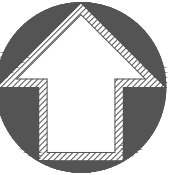
6.5 The overall conclusions of the proposed development can be summarised as follows:

- The proposed development will involve the installation of ground mounted photovoltaic (PV) panels with associated infrastructure to generate up to 14.3 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy which will feed directly into the local electricity grid network. The site selection, design and site layout have been carefully considered to minimise landscape and visual impacts while delivering green energy.
- Inchinnan Solar Park would provide a significant environmental benefit by generating a large amount of clean, renewable, zero carbon electricity. The quantity of electricity generated each year could meet the annual demand of around 5184 medium usage homes per year or 8351 low usage homes.
- The proposed mitigation strategy has been designed to improve and contribute to the local landscape character of the area, whilst also screening or filtering views towards the proposed development, providing an attractive, robust and defensible landscape boundary treatment that increases overall biodiversity value.

-
- The proposed development would bring socio-economic benefits including job opportunities, increase in local worker spending, increase in energy security and dual use of the site for agriculture and energy generation.




6.6 The proposals are compliant overall with the development plan and will assist in meeting the renewable energy targets set out by Scottish Government by generating a large amount of clean, renewable, zero carbon electricity. It is therefore respectfully requested that Renfrewshire City Council grant planning permission for the proposed development.

A1. SITE LOCATION PLAN



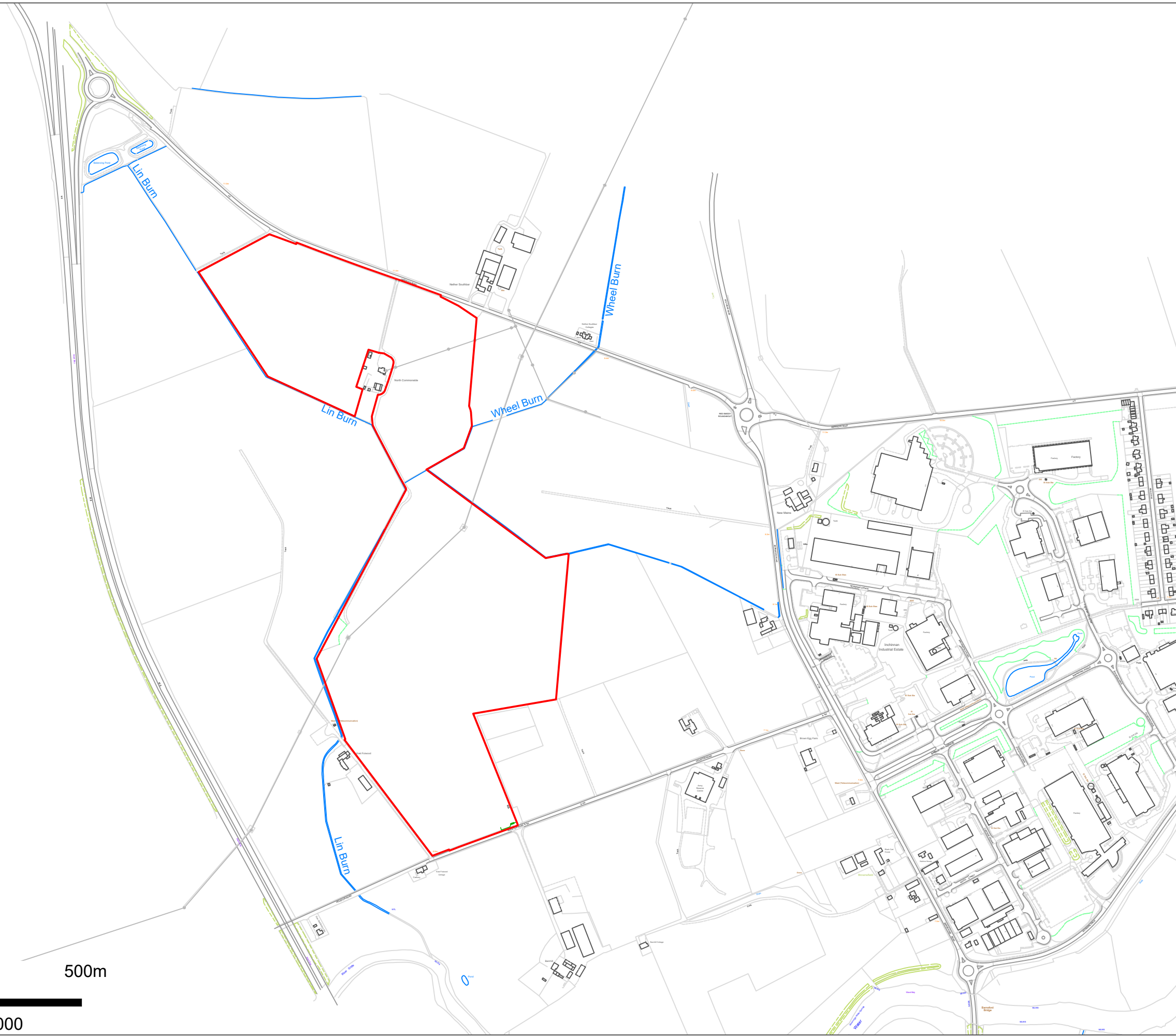
North

LEGEND:

-  400kV Overhead Line
-  11kV Overhead Line
-  Application Boundary

NOTES:

AREA OF APPLICATION BOUNDARY
39.26 HA



0m 250m 500m

SCALE: 1=8,000

AMENDMENTS

Rev.	Date	Detail
6	11/08/22	Checked Version
5	09/08/22	Update application boundary
4	14/07/22	Update title
3	12/07/22	Update application boundary
2	29/06/22	Minor corrections to application boundary
1	27/06/22	Added detailed map data

Rev.	Date	Detail
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The Greenspan Agency 

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Project
Inchinnan Solar Park

Drawing
Location Plan and Existing Site Layout

Scale	Drawn By	Checked
1:8000 @A3	MJ	MB

Date	Drawing No	Revision
11/08/2022	21-003-P-01	6