APPENDIX 1B

Solar Arrays in West Devon

Interim Planning Guidance for Prospective Developers

(Outside of the Dartmoor National Park)

West Devon Borough Council

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1 Introduction

1.1 Renewable Energy Guidance

The Government has committed the UK to achieving at least 30% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2020. The planning system plays an important role in delivering this target and Local Planning Authorities are expected to play a positive role in bringing renewable energy development forward. Decision making at the local level is complemented by planning processes at the national level for larger scale schemes, set out in the National Planning Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3). This guidance note is one of a series that amplifies current planning policies for renewable energy in West Devon. The series comprises:

- On Shore Wind Turbines in West Devon: Interim Planning Guidance for Prospective Developers
- Micro Scale Wind Turbines and Permitted Development: A Guide for Property Owners in West Devon
- Solar Arrays in West Devon: Interim Planning Guidance for Prospective Developers
- SolarPV or Solar Thermal Panels and Permitted Development : A Guide for Property Owners in West Devon

Other guidance notes may be added to the series as necessary.

This guidance note addresses free standing solar PV installations that require planning permission. It may be accessed electronically on www.westdevon.gov.uk

1.2 The Role and Status of This Document

This guidance has been prepared to fulfill a number of roles.

- To provide background information relating to use of solar PV, of use to prospective developers and the public – a "walk through guide"

- To set out the type of information, level of detail and requirements associated with making a planning application

- To describe the tools, methodologies and best practice that can be used to provide necessary information and which will be used by planning officers to judge the acceptability of proposals

This guidance is set against the background of fundamental changes to the planning system. The Council will therefore keep this guidance under review and update it as Government policy evolves and our own Local Plan work advances.

This guidance has no statutory weight in the planning process. The adopted policies of the Development Plan have full weight in the planning process and planning applications must be decided in accordance with them unless there are over-riding material considerations. The weight to be given to this guidance in the planning decision making process will therefore be limited, but it has a positive role as an

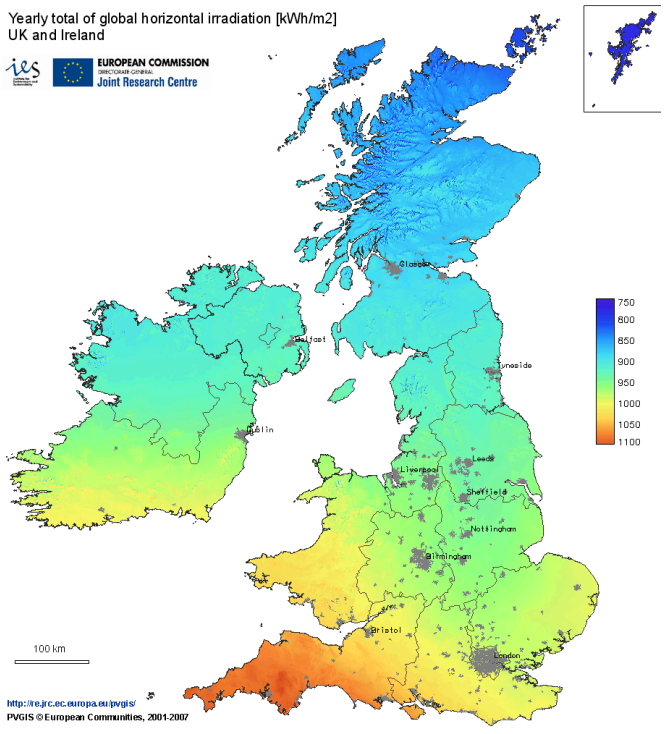
engagement tool and in providing information about the nature of supporting information and methodologies to be employed in assessing impacts, required to enable the Council to make good decisions. It is anticipated that the contents of the guidance will be kept under review as a new Local Plan Renewable Energy Strategy is developed, so that it remains up to date and linked to appropriate policy.

2 Solar PV Technology

2.1 Types of Solar Technology

The South West has the best solar resource in the United Kingdom; solar PV cells convert this solar energy into electricity.

Solar PV cells are made from two or more layers of semi-conducting material, usually silicon. When the silicon is exposed to light, electrical charges are generated and this can be conducted away as direct current. The energy generated by individual cells is small, so cells are linked together into panels. Multiple panels can be bolted together to generate the desired electrical output. Panels are most efficient in direct sunlight, but will continue to generate even at lower light levels. The efficiency of energy generation is dependent on the orientation and pitch of the solar PV installation.



TILT degrees	West										South								East
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
0	87	88	90	91	92	92	93	93	93	93	93	93	92	92	91	90	89	87	86
10	84	87	90	92	94	95	95	96	96	97	97	96	95	94	93	91	89	87	84
20	82	85	90	93	94	96	97	98	99	99	98	97	96	95	93	91	88	84	81
30	78	83	87	91	93	96	97	98	99	100	98	97	96	95	93	89	85	81	78
40	75	79	84	87	92	94	95	96	96	96	96	95	94	92	90	86	82	77	72
50	70	74	79	83	87	90	91	93	94	94	94	93	91	88	83	80	76	73	70
60	65	69	73	77	80	83	86	87	87	87	88	87	85	82	78	74	71	67	63
70	59	63	66	70	72	75	78	79	79	79	79	79	78	75	72	68	64	61	56
80	50	56	60	64	66	68	69	70	71	72	72	71	70	67	66	60	57	54	50
90	41	49	54	58	59	60	61	61	63	65	65	63	62	59	60	52	50	47	44

Solar installations can take a number of forms:

- Integrated into buildings and other structures. South facing sloping roofs are ideal, with panels mounted on frames that sit on the roof structure. Photovoltaic systems can also be integrated into the fabric of the building, in the form of photovoltaic roof tiles or as part of a building

façade. As technology advances the use of solar films and coatings may also become more commonplace.

Small scale solar installations for dwellings can usually be fitted without the need for planning permission. A separate information leaflet for householders gives guidance on the need for planning permission and other consents.

Large scale arrays can also be fitted to buildings. Examples exist of installations on the roofs of commercial, agricultural, community and school buildings.

- Arrays of solar panels erected where the energy generation shares land with another use eg panels erected over car parks

- Arrays of solar panels erected on open land, which is either previously developed eg a redundant air field or industrial land, or a green field site – usually agricultural land.

The availability of sunlight in Devon, plus the financial incentive of the feed in tariff, means free standing arrays, or solar farms, are becoming more common in rural settings and an attractive investment for farmers wishing to diversify their sources of income.

2.2 Installation Size and Components

A free standing solar array will comprise the solar panels themselves and other ancillary technology such as inverters (to convert direct current into alternating current for the grid), substations, transformers and a control room. There may also be a requirement for security fencing, lighting and measures to secure good access for construction and occasional servicing. The panels will be mounted on frames, typically 3-4m above ground, to maximize solar capture. Some arrays are designed to include tracking systems that keep the panels orientated to the sun during daylight hours.

This guidance note is mainly aimed at those solar PV installations that require planning permission and where the level of energy generation is likely to be above 4kW. As a rule of thumb a ground mounted solar PV array of 5MW will require approximately 12-15Ha of open land.

In terms of scale, guidance commissioned by the Devon Landscape Policy Officers Group[1] makes the following distinctions:

Very small arrays	<1 Ha
Small	>1-5Ha
Medium	>5-10Ha
Large	>10-15Ha
Very large	15Ha+

[1] http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/environmentplanning/natural_environment/landscape/landscape-policy-guidance.htm

2.3 Feed in Tariffs and ROCs

To stimulate renewable energy generation the Energy Act 2008 paved the way for the introduction of Feed in Tariffs (FITs). Payments are made for each kWh of energy generated over a 20 year period and are index linked, giving a financial incentive for developers of renewable energy. Tariff levels are subject to change, depending on the uptake of the technology. Tariff tables and eligibility dates for applications to the scheme are published on the ofgem web site.

Developers may use the Renewables Obligation to aid financing of large scale solar installations. The RO requires licensed UK electricity suppliers to source a specified proportion of the electricity they provide to customers from eligible renewable sources. This proportion (known as the 'obligation') is set each year and has increased annually. More information can be found on this link

3 The Location of Solar PV Arrays: Initial Site Selection

3.1 The Importance of Early Discussions

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that Councils should approve planning applications for renewable energy development (unless there are over-riding material considerations) if the impacts can be made acceptable.

Sections 3 and 4 of the guidance set out many of the issues a planning application will need to address. The Council is keen to pro-actively engage with developers; each planning application will need to be treated on a site by site basis, as well as conforming to planning policy. The Council emphasises the importance of early discussions to give an opportunity to identify the likely issues and factors relevant to a proposal, set out how impacts should be evidenced, the way in which evidence can be drawn together into reports (a design and access statement for example) and how it should be presented.

Further information and links to the Council's pre-application process, and a table setting out the type of information likely to be required can be found in section 6 of the guidance.

3.2 Grid Connection

Solar development will need to be located within reach of a grid connection with sufficient capacity to accept the exported energy from the installation. The capacity of the grid to accept the energy generated will depend on the existing network infrastructure and the current use of the system. Early discussion with the Distribution Network Owner (DNO) is recommended as the necessary steps for grid connection may take as long as twelve months for more complex schemes. Information on the application process for connection to the National Grid can be found on the National Grid website.

3.3 Road Access and Rail Infrastructure

Much of West Devon is very rural in nature and the road network is characterised by numerous small roads and lanes where carriageway width, gradient and the twisty nature of roads may combine to make access to sites extremely difficult for HGVs. Access to fields for construction, maintenance and de-

commissioning of facilities may require the creation or widening of new accesses to accommodate large vehicles and plant. The closer a site is to the principal route network the less likely it is that additional costs will be incurred improving site access. A Construction Management Plan may be required to manage potential impacts, if road access is an issue.

The transport of solar panels to a location may require heavily loaded, large vehicles. Before abnormal loads can be moved, prior notification must be sought from the Highway Authority and permission given. The County Council, as Highway Authority, defines abnormal loads as those exceeding a gross weight of 40 tonnes. Notification can be given using the on-line notification form

The movement of construction traffic can have consequences for other infrastructure, such as railway corridors and associated bridges, crossings and structures. Where proposed sites are close to railway corridors and/or routes cross railway infrastructure, developers should consult Network Rail for a view about likely impacts and whether permission is required to cross bridges and other infrastructure.

3.4 Flood Risk

The Environment Agency is the main body with responsibility for managing flood risk from main rivers, the sea and large raised reservoirs. The County Council has responsibility for managing local flood risk from ordinary watercourses, surface run-off and groundwater. Developers are advised to consult with agencies at an early stage and use published maps and resources, such as strategic flood risk assessments to initially screen proposed sites for flood risk.

Paragraph 103 of the NPPF requires that a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment should be submitted with planning applications for all sites greater than 1 ha in Flood Zone 1 or for sites of any size within Flood Zones 2 or 3. Guidance on the content of Flood Risk Assessments is contained in the Technical Guidance to the NPPF (March 2012)

3.5 Agricultural Land

Agricultural land is a resource of national importance recognising the need for flexibility to respond to changing markets(eg for biofuels, new crops) and the issue of food security . The National Planning Policy Framework asks Local Authorities to take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1, 2 and 3a) when making decisions. In view of this, renewable energy development on the best and most versatile land should be avoided where possible. Where proposals on land holdings with good quality land come forward, preference should be given to developing land of lower quality where this is possible, provided this does not result in other unacceptable environmental impacts (on wildlife habitat, for example).

Further information about the agricultural land classification system can be found in the Natural England technical advice note TIN049

3.6 Other Strategic Environmental Assets

Initial site selection will be conditioned by the nature of topography and the availability of roofs or slopes that have the best solar intensity. The best roofs and slopes will generally be south facing.

The environment of West Devon is an important asset underpinning the unique character of the District and supporting the tourism economy. While planning policy guidance does not completely rule out solar development in environmentally sensitive areas, proposals are likely to be less contentious if they can avoid them. The magic interactive map service brings together environmental information from across Government and provides a useful screening tool.

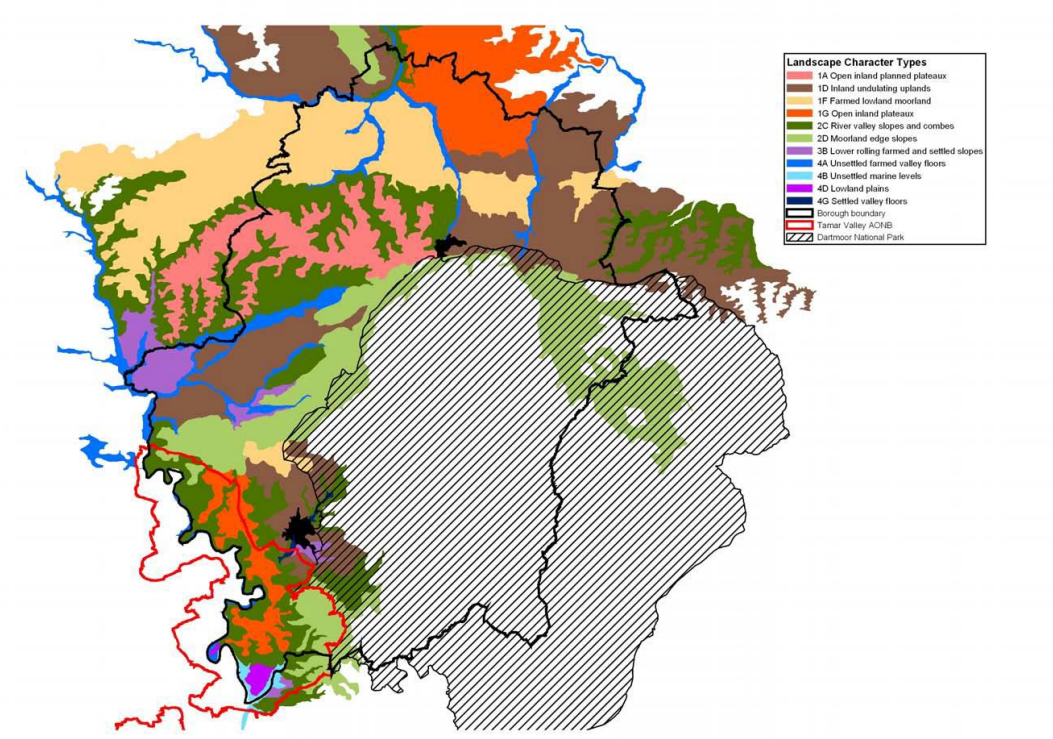
West Devon has a number of sites designated for their importance for habitats and protected species. These comprise:

- Areas of international importance: The Culm Special Area of Conservation; the Plymouth Sound and Estuaries Special Area of Conservation; and the Tamar Estuaries Complex Special Protection Area
- 36 nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (22 in the Dartmoor National Park)
- Numerous locally important County Wildlife Sites and Nature Reserves

Certain species and their habitats are legally protected. Details of protected species and relevant legislation can be found on the Natural England web site.

To help with the targeting of landscape scale conservation, the South West Nature Map has been developed by Biodiversity South West in liaison with many regional and local experts. This map highlights Strategic Nature Areas, which are important for both the conservation and expansion of important habitat types. The map can be used to target large-scale projects within the wider countryside.

Landscape character is a factual description of the features of a landscape and its overall appearance. It also describes the quality and condition of that landscape (eg “undisturbed” or “heavily influenced by development”). An understanding of landscape character and condition informs the sensitivity of the area to different forms of development. The map below shows the Landscape Character Types in West Devon and description and further information is available on the Devon County Council website. Further information about County wide work to assess landscape character, evaluate its significance and guidelines for management can be found on the Devon County Council website



Different Landscape Character Types will have different sensitivities to development. Natural England has highlighted the following landscape character sensitivities:

Factor	Increased chance that solar parks can be accommodated in the landscape	Reduced chance that solar parks can be accommodated in the landscape
Landform (also related to visual factors such as elevation and viewing angle)	Absence of strong topographical variety. Featureless, convex or flat	Presence of strong topographical variety or distinctive landform features
Landscape pattern and complexity	Simple, regular or uniform	Complex, rugged and irregular
Settlement and man made influence	Presence of contemporary structures, for example, utility, infrastructure or industrial elements. Presence of roads and tracks in the landscape	Absence of modern development, presence of small scale, historic or vernacular settlement, roads and tracks
Inter-visibility with adjacent landscapes	Little inter-visibility with adjacent sensitive landscapes or viewpoints	Strong inter-visibility with sensitive landscapes. Forms an important part of a view from sensitive viewpoints
Perceptual aspects (sense of remoteness, tranquility)	Close to visible signs of human activity and development	Physically or perceptually remote, peaceful or tranquil

Source: Natural England Technical Information Note TIN101 'Solar parks: maximizing environmental benefits

Further information on landscape sensitivity is included in the Devon Landscape Policy Group landscape guidance

More information on areas designated for their environmental value is given in the sections on Biodiversity and Landscape, with links to relevant maps.

In addition to landscape character areas there are a number of statutory landscape designations in West Devon. They are Dartmoor National Park and the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). These designations are made for specific purposes, as set out below. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that great weight should be given to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks and AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The NPPF also states that planning permission should be refused for major development in these designated areas except in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Proposals outside of those areas, but which also impact on them, should also be given careful consideration, following the principles set out in the overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1). Core Strategy Strategic Policy 17 makes it clear that planning decisions in these areas (and for proposals outside of them which potentially impact on them) will need to be compatible with the purposes of designation.

The pursuit of sustainable forms of development that secure the economic and social needs of residents within the AONB may be consistent with the purposes of designation. The Tamar Valley AONB partnership has management plan policy that is supportive of appropriate renewable energy projects.

The Purposes of National Park Designation:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area; and
- To promote opportunities for understanding and enjoyment by the public of the area's special qualities.

When National Parks carry out these purposes they also have a duty to:

- Seek to foster the economic and social well being of local communities within the National Park

The Purposes of AONB Designation:

- The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty
- In pursuing the primary purpose, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry and other rural industries, and of the economic and social need of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment
- Recreation is an objective of the designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses

Development Management Principles: Initial Site Selection

Developers should:

- Demonstrate they have addressed the issues set out in paragraphs 3.1-3.6, above
- Undertaken preliminary consultation with relevant agencies where appropriate
- Engage in pre-application discussions with the Development Management team at an early stage

The Development Management Team will:

- Advise on the availability of published resources and information
- Provide relevant contact details where available

4 Assessing the Impacts of Development

4.1 Sustainable Development

The West Devon Core Strategy promotes sustainable development, using a set of overarching principles set out in Strategic Policy 1, Sustainable Development. The Strategic Policy demonstrates the integrated nature of outcomes sought for the Borough. Prospective developers should reflect this policy in their proposals, as well as responding to the more detailed, issue specific policies cross referenced elsewhere in this document.

4.2 Environmental Screening

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is an important procedure for ensuring that the likely effects of significant new development on the environment are fully understood and taken into account before the development is allowed to go ahead. The process is governed by Regulations which prescribe the types of development for which an EIA is required. SolarPV development falls within Schedule 2 of the Regulations, where an EIA must be carried out if the development is likely to have a significant impact on the environment by virtue of its nature. The majority of proposals for solarPV development will not be of sufficient scale or impact to require a formal Environmental Impact Assessment. Developers are advised to consult the Council well in advance of a planning application on the need for an assessment (a 'screening opinion'). A request for a screening opinion must be accompanied by:

- a plan on which the site of the proposed development is identified,;
- a brief description is given of its nature and purpose and of its possible effects on the environment (particularly ecology; visual impact; landscape character and any cumulative effects arising from other existing or planned development).

Regardless of the need for a formal Environmental Impact Assessment, the Council will still require robust information about the environmental impacts of the proposal and appropriate evidence and information to support a planning application. The range of impacts to be addressed and the nature of the information required is set out in more detail below.

The Development Management team can be contacted for advice on 01822 813600 or by email

4.3 Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

The presence of wildlife, protected species and/or important habitats on and around prospective development sites means special care needs to be taken when selecting sites and positioning solar panels. With care opportunities can usually be found to conserve significant wildlife already on site and restore or create habitats. Natural England's publication Solar parks: maximising environmental benefits offers advice on integrating a range of environmental benefits into solar development and early discussion with the organization is advised. The RSPB has also published guidance on solar farms and issues relating to birds and wildlife setting out likely impacts, issues and possible mitigation measures.

Site promoters will need to assess the impact of their proposals on wildlife and habitats. Natural England and other specialist agencies can offer guidance on the scope and content of wildlife and habitat surveys and the optimal time of year for them to be carried out. Early consultation with Natural England's Discretionary Advice Service is advised. Sites features such as hedges, trees and ground cover that provide important habitat should be managed as part of the development process so that they remain as healthy and viable habitat assets for species associated with the site.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) should be completed as early as possible. A PEA can be completed at any time of the year, and will identify the requirement for any further surveys, some of which can only be undertaken effectively at particular times of the year, and this must be factored in to any plans or proposals for development. The table below is reproduced from Natural England's guidance.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Badgers												
Bats (hibernation roosts)												
Bats (summer roosts)												
Bats (foraging/commuting)												
Birds (breeding)												
Birds (overwintering)												
Dormice												
Great Crested Newts Terrestrial												
Great Crested Newts Aquatic												
Invertebrates												
Natterjack Toads												
Otters												
Reptiles												
Water Voles												
White Clawed Crayfish												
Habitats/Vegetation												

Source: Taken by Natural England from the Templates for Biodiversity and Geological Conservation Validation checklists, (Pilot draft), 2007 produced by the Association of Local Government Ecologists

Development Management Principles: Biodiversity

Most relevant adopted Local Development Plan policies:

Core Strategy Strategic Policy 19: Biodiversity

Developers should:

- Identify any impacts on wildlife and habitats arising from their proposals, initially through a PEA supplemented by further surveys as required
- Check information held at the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre
- Seek the agreement of Natural England regarding the nature, timing and design of any work to assess impacts
- Identify the presence of species, the potential impacts from the proposal and potential mitigation measures prior to submitting a planning application

The **Development Management** team will:

- Seek opportunities to conserve, enhance and restore habitats where possible, regardless of the designation of sites.

4.4 Landscape

Landscape Character and Landscape Designations

The unique character of West Devon is directly related to the nature and quality of its natural environment and landscape. This acts as an important economic driver for the area and is an asset the Council is committed to protecting. Solar PV development has the potential to cause harm to the landscape and a judgement is required on whether or not such impacts are acceptable.

The Devon Landscape and Renewable Energy

The Devon Landscape Policy Officer Group has published Advice Note 2 'Accommodating Wind and Solar PV Developments in Devon's Landscape'. This provides guidance on minimising harm to the distinctive character and special qualities of Devon's landscape through sensitive siting and design. It offers examples of landscape sensitivity and generic guidance to assessing the suitability of the landscape to accommodate renewable energy development.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Regardless of whether proposals are located in designated landscape areas, or deemed to require a full EIA, all solar development will require some level of landscape and visual impact assessment, using a methodology that is compatible with that promoted by the Landscape Institute. The Landscape Institute draws a distinction between:

- **Landscape effects assessment**: This deals with changes to the landscape as a resource. It is concerned with issues like protected landscapes, the contribution of landscape character to sense of place and quality of life and the way that change may affect individual components of the landscape; and
- **Visual effects assessment**: This is concerned with how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be specifically affected by change in the landscape. This means assessing changes in specific views and in the general visual amenity experienced by particular people in particular places

Landscape and Visual Impacts Assessment will need to take into account all phases of the development: construction (including the impact assessment of any supporting development such as cabling, trackways, plant, ancillary structures); design and colour of turbines; operation; decommissioning and restoration in order to identify the full range of impacts and appropriate mitigating measures if required. The level and detail of assessment will vary, depending on the scale of the proposal, its location, the relationship of the proposal to other development nearby. Further detail of what will be required to support planning decisions is outlined in Section 6 below.

Cumulative Impact

Wherever several proposals come forward in a given area (or are experienced in succession when travelling through an area), even if small in scale, there is the potential for cumulative landscape and visual impact to occur. Cumulative impact is not restricted to large scale commercial solar developments. It may equally occur through the proliferation of small scale schemes, particularly where development appears to be randomly located in the landscape. It is important to consider how a scheme fits with other existing, consented and proposed schemes – including any in neighbouring Local Authorities. While the advice on cumulative impact assessment requirements contained in the Companion Guide to PPS22 is focused on wind turbine development, the information required to make an assessment of cumulative impact will be very similar.

The following advice on designing for multiple developments is drawn from generic guidelines for Devon prepared by Land Use Consultants:

- Aim for similarity of design between schemes that fall in the same type of landscape (in terms of siting, layout, scale, form and relationship to key characteristics) to maintain a simple image and reinforce links between landscape characteristics and design response.
- Ensure the overall 'green hills' character remains in Devon – ensuring PV developments do not dominate.
- If two or more solar PV developments are clearly visible in the same view and appear in the same Landscape Character Type they should appear of similar scale (unless the first development is considered too large for its landscape context) and their design should relate to the underlying landscape in the same way
- Ensure any solar PV development takes account of landscape sensitivity as well as any landscape strategies for solar PV development that may be available.
- It will be important to ensure that solar PV developments do not have a defining influence on the overall experience of the landscape and that some open views devoid of PV developments are maintained within Devon.
- Consider views from settlements when designing multiple solar PV developments – avoid 'surrounding' a settlement.
- Individual solar PV developments should generally appear visually separate unless specifically designed to create the appearance of a single combined development.
- When designing extensions it will be important that scale and appearance of panels are compatible

Development Management Principles: Landscape and Visual Impact

Most relevant adopted Local Development Plan policies:
Core Strategy Strategic Policy 17: Landscape Character; Strategic Policy 18: The Heritage and Historical Character of West Devon
Saved Policy NE10: Protection of the Countryside and Other Open Spaces; Policy PS9: Transmission and Distribution of Electricity

The Developer will undertake an assessment of the landscape and visual impacts of their proposal(s) using the following principles:

- Proposals should respect the sensitivity of the Landscape Character Area of which the site is a part using appropriate design, colour and structures sympathetic to it
- Proposals will be accompanied by details outlining the landscape and visual impact of proposals (see table of information requirements in Section 6).
- Natural features that contribute to the landscape character, historic or cultural pattern of land use, and the natural elements that underpin it (such as field boundaries, hedgerows, trees) will be retained wherever possible, and any mitigation measures (such as planting and screening) designed to complement them.

The **Development Management** team will:

- Require information proportionate to the nature of the proposal and the sensitivity of its location
- Plot screening requests and development proposals so that the cumulative effects of development can be identified at an early stage

In undertaking landscape and visual impact assessment, all parties will have regard to:

- Guidance and good practice promoted by the Landscape Institute
- Devon Landscape Policy Group Advice Note 2 , guidance on landscape sensitivity and siting of solar PV developments

4.5 Local Amenity

The presence of solar panels may impact on other land uses and users close by. The significance of this will vary, but assessment of local visual impact may be necessary.

Key factors developers will need to consider include:

- Proximity – how far the solar panels are from the property in question
- Screening – where solar panels are screened by vegetation or other buildings their impact is lessened
- Orientation – direct views are considered more likely to cause harm than oblique ones (includes the orientation of the windows of the house, the location and orientation of external amenity areas and the orientation of the approach to the house)
- Spread of development – where the solar panels occupy a significant proportion of the view, this increases impact

- Potential impacts from glint and glare

Development Management Principles: Visual Amenity

Most relevant adopted Local Development Plan policies:

Core Strategy Strategic Policy 3: Renewable Energy; Strategic Policy 20: Promoting High Quality Design
Saved Policy BE17: Potentially polluting activity

Developers will be required to identify likely visual impacts on nearby properties, with special reference to dwellings. Where a visual impact assessment (VIA) is required it should consider all aspects of the development including the impact of the panels; ancillary structures; lighting and security measures where relevant. The assessment should:

- Identify those properties within a zone of theoretical visibility where a potential impact on visual amenity may materially affect living conditions
- Provide evidence of a field survey to gather information on the orientation of each property; location of gardens and opportunities for views
- The nature of existing views from the property and its garden
- Views experienced when approaching or departing from the property
- Where there is more than one array consider the interaction between them and the impact on views

The Development Management team will:

- Plot EIA screening requests and planning applications for renewable energy development in order to identify possible conflicts with other land users/potential land users

4.6 Historic and Cultural Environment

West Devon has a valuable and varied historic and cultural heritage, known collectively as heritage assets. There are over 2,200 listed buildings, 25 conservation areas, 172Ha of listed parks and gardens as well as a host of scheduled ancient monuments and sites of value for their archaeology. A small area of the Tamar Valley World Heritage Site also falls within West Devon, where the mining heritage and cultural landscape is unique.

Assessing the sensitivity of historic landscapes to solar energy development is covered in Devon Landscape Policy Group Advice Note 2

Solar development can have impacts of two types: direct site related impacts, usually the result of ground and construction work associated with activities such as trenching, drainage, drilling foundations, access arrangements and heavy plant movements; and, impacts on the setting of historic

and cultural assets, for example, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens and historic field and hedge patterns.

Promoters of development will need to consider the impacts of their proposals on:

- Listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments
- Conservation Areas
- Archaeological remains – whether scheduled or not
- Historic Parks and Gardens
- Effects on cultural landscapes such as the Tamar Valley, and other traditional features identified through landscape character assessment
- The historic character of towns and villages and their setting within the landscape

Information about the location and nature of historic assets can be found on the historic environment gateway and from the key contacts listed in Appendix 1.

Development Management Principles: Historic and Cultural Heritage

Most relevant adopted Local Development Plan policies:

Core Strategy Strategic Policy 17: Landscape Character; Strategic Policy 18: The Heritage and Historical Character of West Devon
Saved Policy NE10: Protection of the Countryside and Other Open Spaces; BE5 Important Open Space Within Settlements; Policies BE7-10 Archaeology

Developers will need to assess the impact of development on heritage assets, whether formally designated or not.

- Proposals should clearly indicate the location of known heritage assets within the zone of theoretical visibility of the proposal; proposals should respect the heritage sensitivity of the site and its setting using appropriate design, colour and structures sympathetic to it
- Where archaeological remains exist or are suspected, or where there are nearby listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, world heritage site or listed park or garden, assessment of impact will be required
- Where impacts are acceptable and development proceeds, care should be taken to screen and protect heritage assets during construction, maintenance and decommissioning activities
- Natural features that contribute to the landscape character, historic or cultural pattern of land use, and the natural elements that underpin it (such as field boundaries, hedgerows, trees) will be retained wherever possible, and any mitigation measures (such as planting and screening) designed to complement them.

Early consultation with the Local Authority Conservation Officer is advised

The **Development Management** team will:

- Plot wind solar PV screening requests and development proposals so that the effects of development (including any cumulative effects) can be identified at an early stage

4.7 Site Detail

Solar Panels

To fully judge the impact arising from a solar array, the Local Planning Authority requires detail concerning the nature of the technology to be installed and its properties.

- The size and specification of the panels to be erected
- The nature and design of supporting structures (including colour and finish)
- The total height of panel and supporting frame
- The orientation angle of the panels
- Details of any tracking mechanisms to be utilised
- An assessment of potential glint and glare from panels and supporting structures and the likely lines of reflection, in relation to the trajectory of the sun

Soils, Ground Works and Drainage

Disturbance to soils and ground works associated with construction (for example, trenching, cable laying, movement of construction traffic) can disrupt the ecology of the site, affect drainage and alter the appearance in a way that is detrimental to landscape character. Site leveling and ground works should be kept to a minimum.

Following de-commissioning of a solar array former farm land should be restored to agricultural use or where previously a brownfield or commercial site, restored to enable some acceptable alternative use. Measures taken to secure the frames supporting the panels will need to take account of this, using fixtures that enable the ground to be fully restored. Pile driven or screw anchored bases are likely to be more appropriate than concrete, unless there are archaeologically sensitive assets below the surface.

Large scale solar PV arrays and ancillary development can affect site drainage and surface water run off. Buildings, hard standings and rainfall draining from solar panels can also speed up the rate of surface water run-off and concentrate it on particular areas. There is the potential for new drainage patterns to be established and for soil erosion to occur. Many drainage issues can be overcome by use of swales\ infiltration trenches. The Environment Agency normally recommends a swale (of approximately 2m wide and 0.3m deep) is built half way down a site (in each field) and at the bottom of the site to collect and store surface water run off. Swales should follow natural site contours.

The impact of development on existing streams and watercourses should be carefully evaluated. All streams, watercourses, wells and bore holes on the site should be identified prior to development, and an assessment made of the likely impact on them. Culverting existing watercourses and/or drainage ditches should be avoided. Where culverting is for access is unavoidable it should be demonstrated that

no reasonable alternatives exist and the culverting should be a temporary measure during the construction period..

The Local Planning Authority will support the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDS) where additional drainage infrastructure is required. Devon County Council is responsible for managing local flood risk in Devon from surface water, ordinary watercourses and groundwater. Further information can be found on the County Council's local flood risk management web site pages.

Development Management Principles: Soils, Ground Works and Drainage

Most relevant Local Development Plan policies:

Core Strategy Strategic Policy 21: Flooding

Saved Policy NE10: Protection of the Countryside and Other Open Spaces; Policy BE17: Potentially Polluting Activity

Developers will be required to:

- Minimise disturbance to soils during construction, operation and maintenance of solar arrays
- Undertake early survey work to identify all water sources, wells, boreholes, streams etc. and assess their vulnerability to development. Measures to protect and/or enhance water sources and drainage systems should be included with any planning application.
- Seek to minimise the creation of permanent tracks and hard standing; the installation should be capable of being serviced by agricultural vehicles or 4WD
- Manage operations that require the movement and/or storage of soil within the site so that the resources can be re-used in site restoration following construction. Details of soil movement and storage and proposals for restoration of the site should be included with any planning application
- Use pile or screw driven anchorages for panels, unless circumstances indicate otherwise
- Provide an assessment of potential impacts on drainage and surface water run off. Advice should be sought from the Environment Agency regarding the need for flood risk assessment.

Land Management

Ideally, land developed for solar arrays should be retained in some form of active agricultural use, or use that fits the landscape character of the area. This will necessitate attention to the density, spacing and height of solar panels, so that land between rows can be successfully managed and sufficient height is given to enable some continuing agricultural use to occur eg grazing by sheep or poultry. This will help prevent vegetation between the panels from becoming overgrown and is a more sustainable alternative to mulching or plastic to suppress growth. Existing pasture and ground cover should be retained wherever possible, to minimize disturbance to the site. Where solar panels are de-commissioned,

attention should be given to measures to conserve and enhance its environmental value as part of restoration.

The existing vegetation cover of the site is important for wildlife, hydrology, agriculture and ground cover. Care will need to be taken to ensure hedgerows and trees do not grow to sufficient size during the lifetime of the development to overshadow the solar panels and reduce their efficiency. Panels should not be located where they are likely to require the felling of trees and hedgerows, either at the start of development or during the operational lifetime of the scheme. Panels will therefore need to be set back from hedgerows and trees so that this does not happen. A buffer zone will also provide access for hedgerow management.

Existing hedges, trees and woodlands can be enhanced to improve screening and security.

Development Management Principles: Land Management

Most relevant Local Development Plan policies:

Core Strategy Strategic Policy 21: Flooding

Saved Policy NE10: Protection of the Countryside and Other Open Spaces; Policy BE17: Potentially Polluting Activity

Developers will:

- Design for some form of continuing agricultural use as part of solar array development, unless the nature of the site precludes this. Where the use of land beneath panels cannot be secured for agriculture, biodiversity/habitat enhancement will be the primary objective.
- Avoid loss of vegetation and important field boundaries, hedges, trees etc. and put in place a management plan to control vegetation growth in a manner sympathetic to landscape character
- Identify a buffer zone between hedge rows and solar panels, to allow access for hedgerow management.

The **Development Management** Team will:

- Ensure through appropriate planning conditions that the site will be restored to agricultural use (if formally farm land) or other appropriate use following de-commissioning

Fencing and Security Measures

Some form of fencing is likely to be required to secure and insure the site. It is important that the visual impact of fencing is kept to a minimum and respects the field pattern and rural context of which it is a part, for example, by avoiding sub division of fields. It should be designed to take advantage of natural features such as hedgerows that can both screen fencing and re-inforce security. The opportunity to create new hedgerow and natural boundary features as part of security arrangements should be explored, using native species and local materials. Where new fencing is required, open link fencing is preferred, so that views across the landscape can be maintained. The height of fencing should be minimized, to a level consistent with security and compatible with other natural features in and around the site. The aim will be to avoid introducing fencing that protrudes above other landscape features.

The design and permeability of fencing will need to be sensitive to wildlife movement and installation of special features such as badger gates may be necessary.

The use of permanent security lighting and CCTV is discouraged, particularly in those "dark sky" areas that are characteristic of rural areas. Lighting that is deemed necessary should be located to minimize light pollution and should use passive infra red technology that triggers lighting only when required.

Development Management Principles: Security and Fencing

Most relevant Development Plan policies:

Core Strategy: Strategic Policy 20: Promoting High Quality Design

Saved Policy: NE10: Protection of the Countryside and Other Open Spaces; Policy BE10: Potentially Polluting Activity

Developers will:

- Ensure that the impact of fencing and security measures on landscape and wildlife is minimized, both as part of construction (eg site compounds for plant, machinery) and operation.
- Provide elevations and sufficient detail to determine the impact of fencing and security measures on the landscape and visual amenity.
- Provide an inventory of lighting and surveillance equipment , including details of the technology employed and proposed mode of operation.

Ancillary Development

It is important that housing for invertors and other buildings, such as control rooms is kept to a minimum and is sensitively located. Buildings should be located in a manner that respects the topography of the site, avoiding locations with undue prominence and taking advantage of existing screening and site features. Ancillary buildings should be designed to reflect their (usually) rural location and landscape setting, making use of natural materials in construction.

Development Management Principles: Ancillary Development

Most relevant Development Plan policies:

Core Strategy: Strategic Policy 20: Promoting High Quality Design

Saved Policy: NE10: Protection of the Countryside and Other Open Spaces

Developers should ensure the scale and design of ancillary development reflects the landscape character of the location and is unobtrusively located within the site. Natural materials should be used in construction wherever possible.

5 Community Issues

5.1 Community Engagement

The 'community' is likely to be made up of many different interest groups, which will come together for a whole variety of reasons. There will be community groups representative of small towns and villages, as well as community groups brought together by shared interests in a topic or issue. Community groups will also vary in their organisation, capacity and knowledge of formal decision making processes. The Council is keen to ensure that all types of group are able to make their views known effectively and good opportunities are provided for this. As a matter of good practice the community should be engaged before a planning application is submitted

Effective dialogue about solar PV proposals between developers, the local authority, stakeholders, local communities, interest groups and statutory consultees is essential to tease out issues of concern and discuss options for mitigation and provision of any benefits to the local area. The scale of public engagement required will vary according to the scale of the proposal and the controversy any proposal is likely to generate. Prospective developers of commercial scale schemes need to be aware of the time required for effective engagement and allow sufficient time in their project planning to allow for responses.

5.2 Community Benefits

The Government is currently consulting on the nature of community engagement and community benefits. This section of the guidance will be updated once the Government's response is available.

Solar PV development has an impact on the local environment and communities. Schemes should be acceptable not only in land use terms but also have clear and direct benefits for those who live and work in the area. The Council will seek to secure benefits for communities affected by large scale renewable energy development. Local benefits can take a number of forms, from goodwill funding (lump sum payments; annual revenue payments) to agreed actions (benefits in kind; community equity stakeholding; local contracting). Other community benefits may be negotiated as part of the planning application process, for example, site conservation and habitat creation; improved footpath or bridleway access; educational visits; planting and woodland enhancement. In order to establish appropriate local benefits, the developer needs to be able to identify community representatives with whom to undertake discussions and negotiations. The Council will facilitate this dialogue where possible and will encourage all prospective renewable energy developers to enter into an agreement with the local community early in the process. It is for the community to decide on the appropriate benefits it wishes to pursue and to ensure that arrangements are in place to safeguard the management and disbursement of any financial contribution(s).

Development Management Principles: Community Engagement and Community Benefits

The **developer** will:

- Identify the community(ies) affected by proposals
- Plan for effective community engagement to address community concerns, identify mitigation measures and the nature of community benefits

The **Development Management** team will:

- Facilitate negotiation to secure benefits for communities affected by commercial solar PV development
- Where proposals are likely to generate local controversy seek the commitment of developers to prepare a community engagement plan, identifying key stages in the development and the steps to be taken at each stage to engage those affected

5.3 Community Schemes

There is the opportunity for communities to bring forward their own renewable energy generating proposals and there is considerable interest in renewable energy schemes. Community owned generation can extend the benefits of renewable energy to households in the form of cheaper energy; revenue streams; employment and has the benefit of retaining the wealth generated by the investment within the local community. Many community groups are already working on energy related activities, pursuing behaviour change, demand reduction and energy efficiency measures in addition to promoting renewable energy.

Community Ownership Models

Cooperative Share Offers

A developer offers the project for cooperative investment at the construction stage. The offer could be for the entire project , a share of the entire project, or for 1 or more panels in a larger project. Investors receive a rate of return over the project's life, plus the return of their capital at the end of the project. This model only benefits those able to invest.

Social Enterprise Models

The project is community initiated and involved in the development process. If a small project it may be owned and managed by the community. A larger project is likely to be managed and owned by a specialist social enterprise company for the benefit of the community. Profits must be allocated to a stated social cause such a carbon reduction and sustainability initiatives. The project can be funded by grants, cooperative share offer, commercial loans or a combination of these

The Authority is keen to assist community renewable energy and demand reduction schemes wherever possible, particularly in the context of Neighbourhood Plans and Community Plans. These plans are a vehicle for local discussion and involvement in projects and can be used to find sites for renewable energy development acceptable to most of the community. The Council and other partners are working through the South West Devon Community Energy Partnership to help support, coordinate and promote local energy related community projects . Case studies, advice and links to community organisations can be found on the South West Devon Community Energy Partnership web site and the web site for the SEACS[2] project.

[2] Sustainable Energy Across the Common Space: A European funded project bringing together partners in Devon, Dorset, Wiltshire and France to address energy issues

6 The Planning Application Process

6.1 Pre Application Discussions

Potential developers are strongly advised to discuss their proposals with the Local Planning Authority before submitting a planning application. Pre-application enquiries and discussions will require a location plan, an indication of the scale of the proposal, the estimated generating capacity, the height of the panels and the boundary treatment. This will enable planning officers to:

- Indicate if there are any sensitive site features that need to be taken into account
- Provide information on the supporting material that will be required with any planning application
- Identify what consultation will be required; and
- Discuss how the application will be managed, and the likely length of time to reach a decision

Pre-application discussions can avoid delay to planning applications, clarify matters that will need to be considered and advise on sources of information, for example:

- By giving an informal opinion on the likelihood of an EIA being required.
- Advice on the up to date policy context
- Key contacts and consultees; information the Local Authority holds
- Flush out important issues at an early stage

Prospective developers should read the pre-application advice located on the Local Authority's web site. There is no charge for an initial scoping meeting with officers . If a prospective applicant decides to continue with the pre-application service then the relevant fee must be submitted, along with any plans or information agreed with officers at the scoping meeting.

6.2 Decision Making

Planning decisions are made in one of two ways:

- Planning officers will prepare reports setting out the positive and negative impacts arising from development, with a recommendation for granting, or refusing, planning permission. This is then taken before the Development Management Committee for Councillors to determine.
- A decision is delegated to a Planning Officer, in accordance with a scheme of delegation.

Both decision making routes will include extensive consultation with stakeholders, statutory consultees and other interested parties.

In some circumstances individual may address the Development Management Committee. The arrangements for this are set out on the Council's web site.

6.3 Making a Planning Application

Planning applications can be made either in person at the Local Planning Authority, or on line via the planning portal. Registration of the planning application will depend on whether all the information required by the planning authority is submitted with it. This checking of submitted information will occur during the validation process.

The assessment processes that are required for most free standing solar PV development means that the Local Planning Authority will only accept full planning applications for this type of development.

6.4 Planning Application Fees

A planning application for a small domestic solar PV array in a garden or on a house will be treated as householder application falling within Category 6 - *The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of existing dwellinghouses* or 7 - *The carrying out of operations (including the erection of a building) within the curtilage of an existing dwellinghouse, for the purposes ancillary to the dwellinghouse* of the Fees Regulations. In these cases the fee for the submission of a planning application will be a flat rate of £172.

Larger non domestic solar PV arrays will normally be regarded as category 5 operations for fee purposes -*The erection, alteration or replacement of plant or machinery* . The planning application fee for a single non domestic solar array, or multiple solar arrays, can be calculated by combining the area of land over which the panels relate with the area of the footprint of any ancillary structures and associated engineering works (such as underground cable).

On a site of no more than five hectares, for example, a planning application fee of £385 would be charged for each 0.1 hectare of land (or part thereof) Using land within the perimeter of a solar array for agriculture would not require planning permission for change to a mixed use.

On sites larger than 5 hectares a fixed planning application fee of £19,049 is payable with an additional £115 for each 0.1 hectares (or part thereof) in excess of the first 5 hectares, subject to a maximum total of £250,000.

Planning application fees are subject to change. While efforts will be made to ensure the content of this guidance is up to date, applicants are advised to check relevant fees on the planning portal.

6.5 Planning Application: Accompanying Information

The information that must accompany the planning application is set out below. This information is necessary to allow the Local Planning Authority to fully and effectively assess the likely impact of the development during construction, operation and de-commissioning.

The lifespan of solar panels and the fact that feed in tariff is payable for 20 years means the Local Planning Authority will treat applications for solar arrays as temporary development and will use planning conditions to limit the duration of the permission and to secure site restoration after de-commissioning.

A planning application must be accompanied by the following core information:

- A location plan (1:1250) The area(s) of land requiring planning permission should be outlined in a red line. Land within the control or ownership of the applicant should be outlined in blue.
- A site plan (1:500): Details of: the make of panels, generating capacity, physical size, supporting structures and any tracking devices used to orientate panels to the sun.
- Elevation(s) of panel(s) and details of their levels
- Details of any ancillary works (access, construction details) or buildings proposed, including elevations
- Design and access statement (where required)
- A supporting statement
- Fencing specification and details (where applicable); details of security lighting and any other measures
- Details of grid connection
- When an EIA is required, an Environmental Statement with necessary information shall be submitted. Where an EIA is not required, any information identified as part of the screening decision
- An ecological assessment
- A landscape and visual impact assessment
- A historic environment statement
- Transport and construction management plan
- A vegetation management plan
- Surface water management plan (where required)

Minimum Information Requirements: Assessment of Impacts

This table is included for general guidance only. The precise detail of information required may differ according to the siting and location of solar panels; for example, if EIA is deemed necessary for relatively small scale development by virtue of likely impacts.

Impact	Very Small Less than 1Ha	Small 1-5Ha	Medium >5-10Ha	Large >10-15Ha	Very Large 15Ha+
Residential Visual Amenity	Grid reference of location. The number, make and design of panel; height of proposed supporting frame and security measures; distance of array to curtilage of nearest properties and location of those properties May require assessment of potential glint and glare	Grid reference of location. The number, make and design of panel; height of proposed supporting frame and security measures; distance of array to curtilage of nearest properties and location of those properties May require assessment of potential glint and glare	Grid reference of location. The number, make and design of panel; height of proposed supporting frame and security measures; distance of array to curtilage of nearest properties and location of those properties; orientation of properties and aspects from which the panels can be viewed Assessment of potential glint and glare	Grid reference of location. The number, make and design of panel; height of proposed supporting frame and security measures; distance of array to curtilage of nearest properties and location of those properties; orientation of properties and aspects from which the panels can be viewed Assessment of potential glint and glare	Grid reference of location. The number, make and design of panel; height of proposed supporting frame and security measures; distance of array to curtilage of nearest properties and location of those properties; orientation of properties and aspects from which the panels can be viewed Assessment of potential glint and glare
Biodiversity/Habitat	Identification of natural site features and protected habitats and species present. May require a PEA to establish biodiversity impacts of proposal if site sensitive Potential impacts and mitigation/enhancement measures to be supplied with application	A PEA required and further surveys as necessary Potential impacts and mitigation/enhancement measures to be supplied with application	A PEA required and further surveys as necessary Potential impacts and mitigation/enhancement measures to be supplied with application	A PEA required and further surveys as necessary Potential impacts and mitigation/enhancement measures to be supplied with application	A PEA required and further surveys as necessary Potential impacts and mitigation/enhancement measures to be supplied with application
Landscape and Visual Impact	Information on the landscape character area and the impact of the proposal and any ancillary development on the key characteristics of it Details of design, mountings	Information on the landscape character area and the impact of the proposal and any ancillary development on the key characteristics of it (including assessment of the cumulative impact of	Information on the landscape character area and the impact of the proposal and any ancillary development on the key characteristics of it (including assessment of the cumulative impact of	Information on the landscape character area and the impact of the proposal and any ancillary development on the key characteristics of it (including assessment of the cumulative impact of	Information on the landscape character area and the impact of the proposal and any ancillary development on the key characteristics of it (including assessment of the cumulative impact of

Impact	Very Small Less than 1Ha	Small 1-5Ha	Medium >5-10Ha	Large >10-15Ha	Very Large 15Ha+
	and colour (of both) Elevations and materials for ancillary structures	development) Identification of a zone of theoretical visibility and photomontages from agreed viewpoints may be necessary Details of design and colour of, mountings and support structures Elevations and materials for ancillary structures	development); identification of a zone of theoretical visibility; photomontages from agreed viewpoints Details of design, and colour of mountings and support structures. Elevations and materials for ancillary structures	development); identification of a zone of theoretical visibility; photomontages from agreed viewpoints Details of design, and colour of mountings and support structures. Elevations and materials for ancillary structures	development); identification of a zone of theoretical visibility; photomontages from agreed viewpoints Details of design, and colour of mountings and support structures. Elevations and materials for ancillary structures
Soils, Hydrology & Land Management	Search to indicate if site in a flood risk zone. Identification of key water sources, bore holes etc Assessment of impact on surface water run-off and mitigation/management measures Vegetation management plan	Search to indicate if site in a flood risk zone. Identification of key water sources, bore holes etc Assessment of impact on surface water run-off and mitigation/management measures Vegetation management plan	Search to indicate if site in a flood risk zone. Identification of key water sources, bore holes etc and measures to protect them Outline of management processes for movement and/or storage of soils on site Assessment of impact on surface water run-off and mitigation/management measures Vegetation management plan	Search to indicate if site in a flood risk zone. Identification of key water sources, bore holes etc and measures to protect them Outline of management processes for movement and/or storage of soils on site Assessment of impact on surface water run-off and mitigation/management measures Vegetation management plan	Search to indicate if site in a flood risk zone. Identification of key water sources, bore holes etc and measures to protect them Outline of management processes for movement and/or storage of soils on site Assessment of impact on surface water run-off and mitigation/management measures Vegetation management plan
Historic and Cultural Heritage	The site location map to identify known heritage assets and identify likely impacts Desktop archaeological assessment may be required where deposits are known or suspected.	The site location map to identify known heritage assets and identify likely impacts Desktop archaeological assessment may be required where deposits are known or suspected.	The site location map to identify known heritage assets and identify likely impacts Desktop archaeological assessment may be required where deposits are known or suspected.	The site location map to identify known heritage assets and identify likely impacts Desktop archaeological assessment may be required where deposits are known or suspected.	The site location map to identify known heritage assets and identify likely impacts Desktop archaeological assessment may be required where deposits are known or suspected.
Highway Access	Details of site access, routes and types/numbers of vehicle movements to install, construct and maintain panels	Details of site access, routes and types/numbers of vehicle movements to install, construct and maintain panels	Details of site access, routes and types/numbers of vehicle movements to install, construct and maintain panels Traffic management plan showing delivery routes to reach site	Details of site access, routes and types/numbers of vehicle movements to install, construct and maintain panels Traffic management plan showing delivery routes to reach site	Details of site access, routes and types/numbers of vehicle movements to install, construct and maintain panels Traffic management plan showing delivery routes to reach site

Key Contacts

Advice on improving energy efficiency in the home	http://www.westdevon.gov.uk/article/2974/Energy-Efficiency--Renewable-Energy	01822 813600
Development Management	http://www.westdevon.gov.uk/article/3548/Planning	01822 813600
Planning Policy	Sw-strategicplanning@swdevon.gov.uk	01822 813600
Building Control	http://www.teignbridge.gov.uk/dbcp/index.aspx?articleid=11686	01626 215793

Glossary of Terms

Amenity	Quality that makes living conditions pleasant or agreeable
Biodiversity	Term used to describe the variety of life on earth – a convenient contraction of 'biology' and 'diversity'
Cumulative impact	Additional changes caused by a proposed development in conjunction with other similar developments or as the combined effect of a set of developments, taken together
Development Management	The Local Authority service that manages development through advice on proposals and planning applications
Kilowatt (kW)	One thousand Watts of electricity
Kilowatt-hour (kWh)	One thousand Watt-hours
Landscape Assessment	An assessment that examines changes to the landscape as a resource and the way in which change affects different components of the landscape
Local Plan	A plan that sets out where development can happen in the District(for the area outside of the Dartmoor National Park, which has its own plan)
National Planning Policy Framework	A document published in March 2012 setting out the Government's policies for planning, which Local Authorities must follow
Megawatt (MW)	One million Watts of electricity
Photovoltaic Panel/Cell	Device formed of materials capable of converting sunlight directly into electricity (direct current)
Renewable Energy	Energy generated from sources that are naturally replenished, such as wind and solar power, geothermal, hydropower and biomass
Supplementary Planning Document	A document that gives more detailed interpretation of a policy in a Local Plan
Sustainable	Term used to describe decisions or actions that meet the needs of today without compromising resources for the future
Visual Impact Assessment	Assessment that makes a judgement about the how the surroundings of individuals or groups of people may be affected by change in the landscape
Watt	The electrical unit of power
Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI)	The ZVI is shown on a map and indicates the locations from which installations can be seen