1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Environmental Statement (ES) reports on the findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process and accompanies the planning application for a solar energy generation proposal on land near the village of Redwick, south east of Newport, Wales on the Gwent Levels. The proposal is classed as a Development of National Significance (DNS) and will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for determination.

1.2 The proposed solar park would export renewable energy to the local electricity network.

PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

1.3 EIA is a process that identifies the likely significant environmental effects (both beneficial and adverse) of a proposed development. The process aims to prevent, reduce and mitigate any significant adverse environmental effects, where these are identified, and to enhance any beneficial effects. Proposed developments to which EIA is applied are those that are likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as their nature, size or location.

1.4 The process and outcomes of the EIA are presented in a single document known as an environmental statement (ES). The contents of the ES are prescribed by the EIA Regulations and should be a clear and concise summary of the proposed development and its likely environmental effects - including direct, indirect and cumulative effects - on the natural, built and human environments.

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

1.5 EIA legislation was first implemented in the UK in 1988 following the adoption of the 1985 European Commission (EC) Directive (No. 85/337/EEC) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. Subsequently, legislation was introduced in 1999, following the adoption of the amended 1997 EC Directive (No. 97/11/EEC).

1.6 In England, the 1997 Directive was transposed into law through the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/293). These regulations were amended several times and from 16 May 2017, EIA in Wales in respect of town and country planning matters is governed by:

1.7 The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 as amended, referred to hereafter as the 'EIA Regulations'.

1.8 The EIA Regulations transpose into law the changes made by EU Directive 2014/52/EC to EU Directive 2011/92/EU on the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, in so far as they govern town and country planning matters.

1.9 Proposed developments to which EIA is applied are those that are likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as their nature, size or location. The proposed development falls within the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations as 'Schedule 2 development' in the context of Energy Industry - Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water, the area of which exceeds 0.5 hectares. In order to trigger an EIA, Schedule 2 projects must also be examined in accordance with further specific tests set out in the EIA Regulations in order to define if likely significant effects on the environment at likely.

STRUCTURE OF THE ES

1.10 The ES has been structured to allow relevant environmental information to be easily accessible. This volume of the ES (Volume 1) includes the main text of the ES. The description of the project is provided in Chapter 2. Information relating to the main alternatives considered during the evolution of the project and the reasons for the choices made is also found within Chapter 2. Chapter 3 outlines the approach and methodology adopted for the EIA and the consultation carried out related to the EIA. The remainder of Volume 1 contains topic by topic environmental information as shown in Table 1.1.

1.11 Figures, such as maps, charts, images and photographs, are provided within the ES chapters in Volume 1. Volume 2 provides the appendices to the ES and includes specialist reports providing relevant background and technical information. A Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the ES is available as a separate summary document.

Table 1-1: Structure of the Environmental Statement

Structure of the ES	
Non Technical Summary	Summary of the ES using non-technical terminology
Volume 1: Text and Figures	Chapter 1 Introduction
	Chapter 2 Alternatives, Project Design and Project Description
	Chapter 3 Environmental Assessment Methodology and Consultation
	Chapter 4 Climate Change
	Chapter 5 Ecology
	Chapter 6 Ornithology
	Chapter 7 Hydrology, Water Quality and Flood Risk
	Chapter 8 Landscape and Visual
	Chapter 9 Heritage
	Chapter 10 Transport (Road Users)
	Chapter 11 Noise and Vibration
	Chapter 12 Glint and Glare
	Chapter 13 Human Health
	Chapter 14 Conclusions
Volume 2: Appendices	Including specialist reports forming technical appendices to the main text

THE APPLICANT

1.12 The Applicant is Rush Wall Solar Park Ltd. The company was set up by BSR Energy Ltd (http://britishrenewables.com/). BSR Energy is a leading renewable energy developer taking projects from inception, through delivery, to operation.

THE PROJECT TEAM

1.13 The EIA has been managed by Rebecca Chiazzese, Director of JCTR Ltd, taking into account information provided by the client and design team. Rebecca has a postgraduate Master of Science degree in Environmental Technology, is a Chartered Water and Environmental Manager (C.WEM) and a Practitioner Member of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (PIEMA). She has over 10 years' experience in managing EIAs for both small scale schemes and nationally significant infrastructure projects.

1.14 The table below provides details of the specialisms and experience of all other competent experts that have contributed to the Environmental Statement:

Table 1-2 Environmental Statement Authors

ES Chapter	Main Author/Contributor	Relevant Experience
Chapters 1-4	Rebecca Chiazzese EIA Management and ES review	Rebecca has 15 years' experience of managing EIAs and preparing ESs. She is a Chartered Water and Environmental Manager, a Practitioner of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and a Member of the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management (CIWEM).
Chapter 5	Colin Hicks, Ecology assessment and LEMP author and manager of ecology surveys	Colin has 20 years of professional ecological experience and is a full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).
Chapter 6	Colin Hicks (above) and Martin Rule, Ornithological surveyor .	Martin has more than 30 years of ornithological survey experience that includes a number of renewable energy sites in Wales including the Gwent Levels
Chapter 7	Gareth Owen, Flood Consequences Assessment and water quality	Gareth is a Chartered Geologist of over 18 years' professional experience, which includes experience in the environmental assessment of large-scale renewable energy infrastructure, with respect to both ground conditions and water resources.
Chapter 8	Angela Watts, Landscape and Visual assessment, LEMP input	Angela is a Chartered Landscape Architect (CMLI) with over 25 years' experience. She has had extensive landscape design and planning experience with particular expertise in landscape and visual appraisals and landscape and visual impact assessments (LVIAs) for renewable energy schemes. Angela has recently completed LVIAs for renewable energy developments in Newport, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Carmarthenshire and Merthyr Tydfil.
Chapter 9	Rowena Hart, Assessment of effects on heritage	Rowena is a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists with over 10 years of professional experience in archaeology in Wales.
Chapter 10	Alun Rees, Assessment of effects on road users, construction traffic management	Alun has over 25 years of experience as a highways and transportation engineer, holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Hons) degree in Civil Engineering and is a Chartered Member of the Institute of Logistics and Transportation and a Member of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation.
Chapter 11	Neil Morgan, Sound and vibration assessment	Neil is a Member of the Institute of Acoustics with over 10 years of professional experience in acoustics.
Chapter 12	Kai Frolic, Glint and Glare assessment	Kai is a Member of the Institute of Physics (MInstP) with over 10 years of experience in glint and glare studies.
Chapter 13 and 14	Rebecca Chiazzese EIA Management and ES review	Rebecca has 15 years' experience of managing EIAs and preparing ESs. She is a Chartered Water and Environmental Manager, a Practitioner of the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and a Member of the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management.