



Longfield Solar Farm

Applicant Comments on Submissions Received at Deadline 5

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Deadline 6

Revision 1.0

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Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)
Planning Act 2008
Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure)
Regulations 2009

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide responses to matters raised by Interested Parties at Deadline 5, where they have not been responded to previously or are not covered by other documents.
- 1.1.2 Submissions at Deadline 5 were submitted by the following Interested Parties:
- Solar Campaign Alliance
 - Mr Williams
 - Essex County Council
 - GTC Infrastructure Limited
 - Ms Drury
 - Mr McKenna on behalf of Mr Bentley
- 1.1.3 Matters raised by Essex County Council are responded to within the Statement of Common Ground between the Applicant and the Council and are not covered within this document.
- 1.1.4 Not matters require a response to GTC Infrastructure Limited's response.
- 1.1.5 The Applicant is considering the submissions of Mr Bentley and will provide a response at Deadline 7.

2. Applicant's Comments on Matters Raised by Solar Campaign Alliance Submissions and Mr Williams

- 2.1.1 The Applicant's position on matters relating to best and most versatile land, and loss of land for food production, was set out in the Environmental Matters Hearing on 29th September 2022 and recorded in writing in its related Written Summary submitted at Deadline 3 [EN010118/EX/8.17].
- 2.1.2 This position is unchanged, and the Applicant is confident that the proposals put forward are fully compliant with best and most versatile land policy, as set out in the Planning Statement [REP4-010] and the draft National Policy Statement EN-3. However, the Applicant does understand that there is public interest over the use of agricultural land for solar development. The Applicant would like to ensure that public interest is responded to appropriately.
- 2.1.3 There are over 2,000 hectares of land remaining in the control of the Longfield estate outside of the proposed solar development, and the Applicant has explored ways in which it could support increased efficiencies and improved yield on the remaining land held by the estate, beyond the Order limits.
- 2.1.4 The Applicant has decided to fund the Longfield estate team's membership of a Yield Enhancement Network (YEN) (this is a scheme that has been run by Agronomy specialists ADAS for 10 years, under which previous participants have achieved on average 40% above the national average yields, and in general achieve closer to their biophysical yield potentials, over a 5 year period). The intention of funding the estate team's membership would be to support the ongoing agricultural use of the remaining 2,000 hectares of land, and to assist with it being farmed as productively and efficiently as possible. The Applicant has been in dialogue with the Longfield estate team over these proposals, and the farm management team are enthusiastic to participate and learn from YEN membership.
- 2.1.5 The Applicant proposes to secure this commitment within the legal agreement secured in connection with the Scheme, to demonstrate the Applicant's commitment to this proposal. However, it should be noted that it is the Applicant's opinion that this commitment is not required to mitigate the impacts of the Scheme. Therefore, it is the Applicant's opinion that the SoS should not apply any positive weight to the commitment when balancing the positives and negatives of the Scheme. However, we hope that this positive commitment will be welcomed by Interested Parties in demonstrating the Applicant's positive intent to the environment.