



Oaklands Farm Solar Project Update

Project name	Oaklands Farm Solar Project
File reference	EN010122
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	27 January 2023
Meeting with	Oaklands Solar Farm Limited
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Project Update Meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Project Update

The Applicant confirmed it is carrying out a 6-week Targeted Consultation (TC) before they solidify the design and submit the Development Consent Order (DCO) application Q2 2023. The Inspectorate queried the reason for the TC. The Applicant advised that the TC is due to a route change, required following a weight limit imposed on a bridge they had planned to use. The red line has also been changed, resulting in the scope of the scheme being reduced. The councils are aware of the targeted consultation and have reviewed the Statement of Community Consultation in light of it.

The Applicant advised that they have had positive ongoing engagement with local authorities. The only outstanding issues with the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG), are with landscape and transport (due to the changes to the project) but they are working towards reaching a joint SoCG with Derbyshire County Council and South Derbyshire District Council.

The Inspectorate queried how land options are progressing. The Applicant advised that they have land secured under option for the solar site itself. Land for new access and cabling is under heads of terms and the Applicant hopes to have these secured ahead of submission.

The Applicant confirmed its land referencing team are determining how they will progress with consultation for the occupiers of the new Drakelow housing scheme. The Applicant confirmed that there is no crown land or special category land within the Order land.

The Applicant confirmed that it intends to submit a Book of Reference (BoR), Statement of Reasons, and Funding Statement with the application.

The Applicant has had feedback from National Grid and National Grid Energy Distribution regarding protective provisions. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to get as many agreements as possible in place ahead of submission of the application.

The Applicant advised that there are not experiencing any new challenges since the previous meeting in November 2022, nor are they aware of any official action groups opposing the project.

Draft Documents

The Applicant is preparing documents with the aim of sharing these by mid-late March 2023. Dates are to be provided as soon as practicably possible to account for the Inspectorate's resourcing.

The Inspectorate requested that the Applicant highlights anything novel in the documents and specify if there are any key areas that they would like comments on. Additionally, the

Inspectorate requested a plan that shows the red line boundary before and after scoping to help understand how the boundary has changed.

The Applicant advised that they are planning to submit,

- Environmental Statement (ES) chapters 1-5
- Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)
- Planning Statement
- Development Consent Order (DCO)
- Section 55 checklist

The Inspectorate suggested also submitting,

- Book of Reference (BoR)
- Land Plans
- Works Plans
- Consultation Report (CR)

The Applicant stated that there may be a delay to providing the Land and Work plans as the targeted consultation needs to be finalised and reviewed first.

The Inspectorate advised that the usual turnaround for draft documents is 6 to 8 weeks and also requested that the Applicant provides a document that confirms any technology that it intends to use.

The Applicant confirmed that they plan to make their draft document submission by file share, rather than email.

Scoping

The Applicant queried whether the reductions to the red line boundary would require any re-scoping.

The Inspectorate advised that they do not believe a re-scoping is required due to a reduction in the project red line boundary, rather than an increase. The scoping process allows for the refinement of the assessment and ultimately the information required to form the ES.

Submission

The Applicant advised that the submission date is expected to be Q2 2023. The Inspectorate requested that the Applicant keeps them updated on any changes to this submission date.

The Inspectorate requested that the Applicant prepares their Reg 5(5) responses, in preparation for the possibility that the Inspectorate may require them at short notice during the Acceptance period.