

Application for Development Consent by Mallard Pass Solar Farm Limited (the Applicant) for the Mallard Pass Solar Project

Case Reference: EN010127

Note of first unaccompanied site inspection on 1, 2 & 3 March 2023

Background

As Examining Authority (ExA), I undertook my first unaccompanied site inspection on 1, 2 & 3 March 2023 to support the examination of this application. In the interests of efficiency, I commenced my unaccompanied site inspection following my appointment, but before the Preliminary Meeting which is to be held on Tuesday 16 May 2023. At that stage as I was appointed as the single examiner of the application. Subsequently, a further Examining Inspector, Mark James, has been appointed to join me as part of the ExA. He will also be carrying out future unaccompanied, and where necessary accompanied, site inspections.

As my unaccompanied site inspection was undertaken from publicly accessible land, advance permission to enter land was not required and the inspection could consequently be undertaken without any other parties being present.

The purpose of this note is:

- to inform the Applicant and Interested Parties of actions already taken by the ExA; and
- to enable the Applicant and Interested Parties to consider which additional locations the ExA might need to inspect.

Further site inspections will be required. The site inspection programme will be discussed at the Preliminary Meeting. There will be an opportunity to nominate site inspection locations including to proposed inspections of private land on an accompanied basis.

Before agreeing to any additional site inspections at particular locations, the ExA will consider the degree to which it is necessary to visit a site that has been nominated for inspection to inform us about the application.

Further site inspection details will be published of future site inspections.

Particulars of site inspection on 1,2 & 3 March 2023

The Inspection was undertaken by David Cliff. Weather conditions were generally fine and dry with good visibility. The Inspection was carried out between 2.00pm and 5.00pm on 1 March, between 8.30am and 5.00pm on 2 March and between 9.00am and 12 noon on 3 March 2023.

The location of Representative Viewpoints (VP) and Illustrative Viewpoints (IL) visited as part of the site inspection is shown on Figure 6.6 of the Applicant's Environmental Statement [APP-138].

The following locations were visited:

- Village of Essendine and surrounds
- Essendine Castle, Church of St Mary and 'The Old School'
- Village of Carlby and surrounds
- Village of Braceborough and Greatford and surrounds
- Villages of Ryhall and Belmesthorpe and surrounds
- Northwest part of site including VPs 13, 14 & 15 and ILA
- Access point to south of VP14
- Castle Dyke next to VP15
- The Drift path/track (E123)
- VP12 and ILF
- Access points to north of VP12 (B1176)
- Proposed Ryhall highway works
- ILH (northeast of Ryhall)
- Footpath E169 towards Essendine
- VP02 (Essendine)
- VP0s01, 03 & 16 and ILB (near Carlby)
- VPs04 & 05 (Braceborough Wood)
- Footpath BrAW/11 (south of Carlby Road)
- VP17 (near Braceborough)
- Proposed highway works on approach to existing and proposed substation
- VP11 southwest of Essendine (including views of proposed substation)
- VP09 (northwest of existing and proposed substation)
- Existing Ryhall substation, proposed substation and VP 20 (including proposed access and construction compound site)
- ILE, VP19 & ILD (east of Belmesthorpe) including proposed access points to the SE of ILE and to SE of ILD
- VP06A, VP06B & ILC (adjacent to eastern edge of site) and Grade II listed building - Banthorpe Lodge
- Proposed access point to the south of VP06A
- Proposed access points to east of Seven Acres Wood
- VPs08,18 & 07 at southern part of the site
- Views from Uffington towards the southern part of the site
- Walk Macmillan Way from Stamford to east of Belmesthorpe
- Proposed highway/junction works at Great Casterton

Conclusion

My site inspection enabled me to view and familiarise myself with the application site and its surrounds from numerous public vantage points and from different directions. Further site inspections by the ExA will take place as the examination progresses.

David Cliff

Lead member of the Panel