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24th July 2023

National Infrastructure Planning
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MALLARD PASS SOLAR PROJECT REF: 01027

SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL – DEADLINE 4 SUBMISSION – 25.7.23

I write with reference to the above and in response to the action points arising following the issue specific hearings.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need clarification on any of the points raised in this response.

Yours sincerely

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SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Action point	SKDC Response
ISH2 – No 1	SKDC will continue to work with the applicant to update the SoCG throughout the Examination period. Refer to the latest version submitted by the applicant at Deadline 4.
ISH2 – No 6	<p>C1.1 – Could there be a scenario where improvements in technology coupled with limitations on grid capacity would result in a reduced area of land required for solar PV? If so, how would this be managed in terms of the final design of the scheme?</p> <p>C2.5 – Is the appointment of a flood warden secured through the DCO?</p> <p>C3.1 – To what extent is the use of sustainable transport modes likely in the context of the site location and the specialist nature of the construction workforce?</p> <p>PE4 – It would be useful to include stand-off distances from solar arrays to PROW and residential properties in this section. It would also be encouraged to include a stand-off distance from solar arrays to local roads, which also have amenity value for recreational users.</p> <p>PE4 – Could this section include design principles that will mitigate noise and lighting impacts on residential properties? Or is that the purpose of the proposed 250m stand-off distance?</p> <p>PE4.4. – What is the approval mechanism for the interpretation boards?</p> <p>PE4.7 – What is the maximum height of CCTV?</p> <p>PL3 – Could this section include height parameters for the solar arrays and associated infrastructure?</p> <p>PL3 – Could this section include more parameters and details of approach to levels for the substation?</p> <p>PL3 – Could this section include parameters for the general density and arrangement of solar arrays within the development?</p> <p>PL5.2 – How does this work in practice? Especially for areas where there is uncertainty regarding potential archaeology?</p> <p>V5.2 – Could this be extended to include any fields that are solely grade 3a?</p> <p>V5 – As above, could this section include a stand-off distance from roads?</p>



	<p>V5.6 – Should this include the minimum depth of cables below the watercourses?</p> <p>V5 – Should this section include detail of the proposed habitat management areas?</p>
<p>ISH2 – No 23</p>	<p>The key characteristics of the Kesteven Uplands landscape character area are noted as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A relatively unified, simple, medium-scale agricultural landscape, with a high proportion of historic woodland.</i> • <i>Undulating landform based around the valleys of the Rivers Witham and East and West Glen and the Welland to the south.</i> • <i>Picturesque villages built of local limestone, with collyweston slate roofs to the south, and pantiles to the north.</i> • <i>High concentration of houses and parks, with areas of farmland under estate management.</i> • <i>A dispersed, nucleated settlement pattern, mostly following the river valleys.</i> • <i>Enclosed mostly by hedgerows, with hedgerow trees.</i> • <i>Modern human influences include airfields and the A1, Great North Road.</i> <p>Whilst it is accepted that hedgerows and hedgerow trees are an existing characteristic of the landscape, existing hedges are typically well maintained, as is characteristic of the current agricultural practices. There are also existing PROW that enjoy open views across the landscape, that would be lost through the proposed planting. The 15m off-set and proposed planting, therefore, does provide some mitigation to the visual impacts of the solar arrays, but also has an impact on the open views that can currently be enjoyed by users of the PROW.</p>
<p>ISH3 – No 9</p>	<p>We previously commented that a period of 10 weeks should be adopted for approval of requirement details. That would be in-line with the recent Longfield DCO.</p> <p>Having considered that position it is requested that a period of 13 weeks be allowed for approval of the detailed design. This has potential to be similar in scale and complexity to a TCPA major development proposal, which has a 13 week timeframe for approval. Whilst a scheme of delegation has yet to be formalised for any potential DCO, the detailed design approval could also</p>



	require determination by Planning Committee, which would further justify this extended period for approval. This additional time should not have a significant impact on the overall timescale for the delivery of the project.
ISH3 – No 19	A 10-week period for determination of the other requirements is considered justified, given the scale, complexity and consultation requirements for the matters to be agreed.
Other DCO comments	<p>Article 2 – Interpretation - ‘Maintain’ – does this allow wholesale replacement of solar panels? If so, how are the potential construction management impacts of that phase controlled?</p> <p>Schedule 2, requirement 7f – update to include minimum 60% biodiversity net gain</p> <p>Schedule 2, requirement 10 – defer to LCC comments on archaeology</p> <p>Schedule 2, requirement 18 – Suggested amendment to ensure decommissioning commences no later than 40 years following the date of final commissioning.</p> <p>Schedule 16 – comments on timescales for approval, as above.</p> <p>Schedule 16 – Deemed approval should not apply to determination of requirements. A condition attached to planning permission which is EIA would be except from deemed approval under TCPA, so it is reasonable that the same should apply here.</p> <p>Schedule 16 – note on-going discussions with applicant regarding fee schedule</p> <p>General comment – is there provision for decommissioning if the scheme ceases to be operational?</p>
oCEMP	Refer to comments made a deadline 2 in relation to noise mitigation
oLEMP	Refer to comments made a deadline 3
oCTMP	Refer to comments made to ExA Q1 – Q1.0.19
oOMP	Need clarity on how largescale replacement of solar arrays is managed in the event an unlimited DCO is granted.

