

Planning Act 2008 - application for a Development Consent Order for Mallard Pass Solar Farm: Action from Issue Specific Hearing 4 – Environmental Matters (Day 1)

We note the Action to the Applicant and the Environment Agency resulting from Issue Specific Hearing 4:

‘Results of further liaison between the Applicant and the Environment Agency regarding flood risk implications of the operational time limit.’

The Environment Agency has reviewed the recording from Issue Specific Hearing 4 and has considered the matter of the extension of the lifetime of the development to 60 years in relation to fluvial flood risk.

The current supporting flood risk assessment was based on modelling which included a climate change allowance of 20%; this is in excess of the allowance of 10% in the current guidance for the 2050s epoch. A potential decommissioning date of 60 years takes the development lifespan marginally into the 2080s epoch, which requires a 28% allowance in flows to be considered for the Welland Management Catchment.

We note that the Applicant proposed carrying out any additional assessment required at a later date, secured via the [outline Operational Environmental Management Plan](#), (page 23), which itself is secured in Requirement 12 to Schedule 2 in the Development Consent Order (DCO). The Applicant cited the Drax Bioenergy with Carbon Capture and Storage Order as taking this approach, albeit this Order is yet to be decided.

We suggested to the Applicant that, as an alternative, they consider undertaking a rerun of the existing model to include the 28% scenario and design the site accordingly. We would not anticipate a significant difference between the 20% and the 28% scenarios.

The Applicant has now informed us that they have analysed and applied the 1:200-year (0.5% annual probability) flood levels to the existing ground profile, as a proxy for the 1:100-year (1% annual probability) event plus a 28% climate change uplift. They have stated their intention to submit this analysis at Deadline 7.

We are happy with this proposed approach and will review the submitted analysis and results when published. Should the results indicate that any additional mitigation or amendments are required to the layout of the solar farm, these can then be discussed and agreed and the draft Development Consent Order updated accordingly.

Please note that our advice relates to fluvial flood risk only.