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16<sup>th</sup> November 2023

National Infrastructure Planning  
Temple Quay House  
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BS1 6PN

**MALLARD PASS SOLAR PROJECT REF: 01027**

**SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL – DEADLINE 10 SUBMISSION – 16.11.23**

Please find enclosed, South Kesteven District Council's closing summary statement.

Yours sincerely

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## **Mallard Pass Solar Project – South Kesteven District Council closing summary statement**

South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) has declared a climate emergency recognising a commitment to contribute to the global efforts to tackle climate change. Renewable Energy proposals are supported by national and local policy, and solar photovoltaic generation, including Solar Farms are recognised as an established means of renewable electricity generation.

However, the proposed scheme would represent a solar development on an unparalleled scale in this rural context. Whilst the proposed development would make a positive contribution to reducing carbon emissions during its operational life, there would undoubtedly be adverse impacts that need to be balanced against the benefits of the scheme. The main concerns of the Council regarding the operational phase of the development remain as follows:

- The loss of agricultural land, including high quality Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land, both in isolation and cumulatively for a 60 year period.
- The scale and significance of the impact on the landscape and visual amenity of the area.
- The impacts on Public Rights of Way, their recreational value and consequential negative impacts on the visitor economy.

In addition to the positive contribution towards renewable energy generation, the permissive paths that would be created and the commitment to biodiversity net gain (now secured as 65% net gain for hedgerow units and 36% net gain for hedgerow units) are recognised as benefits of the scheme. However, the weight to be afforded to the benefits of the permissive paths should be limited when considering the impact of the Proposed Development on the proposed routes that would be created.

Taking account of above, SKDC maintain their position that the negative impacts of the scheme in this instance outweigh the benefits and therefore continue to object to the proposed development.

Despite the change to a proposed 60 year time for the operational lifetime of the development, SKDC remain of the view that this should be limited 40 years in the event the Development Consent Order is granted. This is precedent for other similar schemes and formed the basis of assessment for various elements of the Environmental Statement. This position is also supported by both County Councils in their capacity as lead local flood authorities.

In terms of the draft Development Consent Order, SKDC maintain their position that a 10-week period should be allowed for the determination of all requirement submissions. Regarding fees, it is noted that the Town and Country Planning fees have now been confirmed as increasing on December 6th and therefore the following amendments are requested to the stated fees in the draft DCO in-line with those confirmed increases:

Schedule 16, Fees, 5

(a) a fee of £2,535 for the first application for the discharge of each of the requirements 6, 7,



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8, 9, 11, 12 and 18;

(b) a fee of £578 for each subsequent application for the discharge of each of the requirements listed in paragraph (a) and any application under requirement 5 in respect of the requirements listed in paragraph (a); and

(c) a fee of £145 for any application for the discharge of—



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