

# Gate Burton Energy Park

## EN010131

Written Summary of the Applicant's Oral Submissions at the Open Floor Hearing (OFH2) on 22 August 2023  
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Planning Act 2008  
Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 An Open Floor Hearing was held at 18:00pm on 22 August 2023 as a blended event, with some parties in attendance at the Riseholme College, Showground Campus, Horncastle Lane, North Carlton, LN1 2ZR and others using the virtual platform of Microsoft Teams.
- 1.1.2 Oral submissions were made by multiple Parish Councils (including Knaith Parish Council, Marton and Gate Burton Parish Council, Sturton by Stow Parish Council and Fillingham Parish Meeting), 7000 Acres Action Group, various individual interested parties and other members of the public. Ms Amy Stirling (Senior Associate Solicitor at Pinsent Masons LLP – the Applicant's legal advisers for the Application) provided a response to the matters raised and it is her oral submissions that are summarised in this document.

# 2. Overview of Oral Submissions by the Applicant

- 2.1.1 In response to submissions made regarding Low Carbon's status in relation to the Scheme, Ms Stirling, on behalf of the Applicant, confirmed that Low Carbon is a developer of solar projects. The Applicant has submitted appropriately detailed plans for the proposed Gate Burton scheme, in accordance with the formal statutory procedures which it is required to follow. The environmental impact assessment of the likely significant effects of the Scheme has been carried out in accordance with environmental best practice by qualified experts in their topic area.
- 2.1.2 Ms Stirling also clarified that there are four separate schemes being developed by three different companies which have been the subject of submissions, namely Gate Burton Energy Park, Cottam Solar Project, West Burton Solar Project and Tillbridge Solar Project. Three of those schemes have been allocated a grid connection location at the Cottam National Grid Substation. Whilst the schemes are separate, the developers are collaborating to mitigate environmental and land effects between all four projects. Cumulative effects have been considered and assessed across all technical topic areas and those assessments are available in the Examination for consideration in determination of the Gate Burton application and in the overall planning balance.
- 2.1.3 Ms Stirling then flagged that there is an Issue Specific Hearing 2 being held on the draft DCO on Wednesday 23 August 2023, and an Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) being held across Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24 August 2023. This ISH3 will specifically deal with landscape and visual impact, agricultural land, the technology of generating station and battery, fire and flood risk and cumulative effects. As for other hearings, these will be streamed

online and recordings made available and these matters are being considered by the ExA and will in due course be considered by the Secretary of State.

2.1.4 Ms Stirling then made the following clarifications:

- (a) **Agricultural land.** The Applicant submitted a document at Deadline 2 referred to as Further Information on Agricultural Land [REP2-046] which demonstrates that the temporary loss of best and most versatile land in Lincolnshire from all DCO and TCPA solar scheme applications is 1.16%. It is a very small fraction of that which is permanent loss. With regards crop yield, Ms Stirling directed the community to the Applicant's response to Q1.12.11 [REP2-041] which provides information on crop yield for the solar and energy storage park site.
- (b) **Construction period.** A range of 24 to 36 months is the construction period assessed as part of the Scheme however whether it is shorter or longer depends on the topic under consideration. For example, some topics may consider a shorter more intensive period is more impactful than longer duration.
- (c) **Site waste management.** This is expressly referred to and secured in the wording in requirement 19(2) of Schedule 2 of the draft DCO [REP2-027] and in the Framework Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan [APP-226]. In due course site waste management proposals must be approved by the relevant local authority.
- (d) In response to a query raised by one local resident, Ms Stirling confirmed that the reference for the Vegetation Removal Plan is Figure 10-21 at [REP2-017].
- (e) **Community and social impacts.** This is assessed in chapter 12 of the Environmental Statement: Socio Economics and Land Use [APP-021].