

West Burton Solar Project

The Applicant's Cover Letter

Prepared by: Lanpro Services
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The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010



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Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
3-8 Whitehall Place
London

19 December 2024

Dear Secretary of State,

West Burton Solar Project – Submissions to the Secretary of State
Application Ref: EN010132

Biodiversity Net Gain (“BNG”)

On 29 November 2024, in response to the third Request for Information (RfI3) dated 22 November 2024 made by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (‘the SoS’), the Applicant submitted an updated version of the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [DEC/WB6.3.9.12_B].

In its submission of 6 December 2024, Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) noted a discrepancy between the Proposed Habitats Plan in Appendix C of the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [DEC/WB6.3.9.12_B] and the plan Landscape and Ecology Mitigation and Enhancement Measures West Burton 3 [DEC/WB6.4.8.18.3_B] submitted on 17 October 2024.

The Applicant has reviewed the comments of Lincolnshire County Council and agrees that part of field P5 on the eastern edge of the Deer Park is showing in the BNG Report figures as land for solar arrays, battery storage and substations. This labelling is intended to distinguish areas of above-ground development from below-ground cable routing, with the latter not being included within the BNG calculation. The area within field P5 referred to could potentially be used for landscaping and, accordingly, was included in the revised calculations for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) presented in the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [DEC/WB6.3.9.12_B].

The Applicant notes that BNG figures submitted for the Scheme are indicative. The final figures will be included in the detailed biodiversity net gain strategy, which must be approved by the relevant planning authority under Requirement 9 of Schedule 2 to the draft Development

Consent Order (DCO) [DEC/WB3.1_I]. This Requirement sets out minimum percentages of biodiversity net gain units that must be achieved by the Scheme.

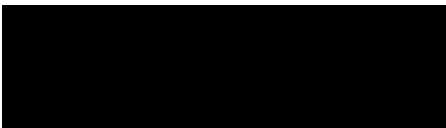
The Works Plan [DEC/WB2.3_F] provides the definitive extent of the works permitted in each area. Article 3(2) of the draft DCO [DEC/WB3.1_I] requires each numbered work to be situated within the corresponding numbered area as shown on the works plan. Sheet 6 of the Works Plan confirms that Work No. 6C, which includes landscaping and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures, and the electrical and communication cables (Work No. 1C(iv)) are the only works that may be located within this area of field P5.

The Applicant has, in response to LCC's concerns, reviewed the submitted BNG calculations. If the small area of land within the Deer Park and field P5, identified by LCC, was removed from the calculations (i.e. excluded from the baseline, and with no new biodiversity measures or landscaping placed in this area), the BNG percentages would all increase in comparison to those contained within the report submitted in November 2024 [DEC/WB6.3.9.12_B]. The net gain for habitat units increases from 100.82% to 104.28%; the net gain for hedgerow units increases from 51.1% to 51.41%; the net gain for river units increases from 38.01% to 41.48%.

The Applicant hopes that this is sufficient to clarify any confusion over the calculation of BNG within the BNG Report. The Applicant does not consider that it is necessary to update the BNG Report as those figures are indicative only, demonstrating that the minimum BNG units secured by Requirement 9 of the DCO can be provided by the Scheme. The final number of BNG units to be provided by the Scheme will be confirmed in the BNG Strategy submitted to the relevant planning authority for approval pursuant to Requirement 9.

Please do not hesitate to contact us using the details provided below if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



Eve Browning

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