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Your contact for this matter is:
Russell Clarkson

[REDACTED]

27 January 2023

Planning Inspectorate
National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Dear Sir/Madam,

PROJECT REF: EN010133

APPLICATION REFERENCE NO: 146147

PROPOSAL: PINS consultation on Section 55 on adequacy of consultation request for application for an Order Granting Development Consent - Cottam Solar Project.

LOCATION: Cottam Solar Project

Thank you for your letter dated 13th January 2023, and invitation to advise whether the local authority considers that the applicant has complied with its duties under sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended).

Section 42 – Duty to Consult (WLDC ref 145102)

We can confirm that we were directly consulted by the developer in accordance with section 42(b), in writing via letter received 15th June 2022. A formal consultation period was set out running from 15th June – 27th July 2022. The Council formally responded via letter dated 27th July – a copy of which is enclosed.

It is also noted under appendix C5.8 that other consultees included all relevant Parish Councils were consulted in accordance with s42.

We consider that the developer has complied with section 42 of the Act.

Section 47 – Duty to consult local community

We can confirm that the applicant did directly consult West Lindsey District Council via email on Tuesday 19th April 2022, inviting comment on the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) by Wednesday 18th May 2022 (29 days). We responded on the 18th May 2022 (Copy enclosed).

For the purposes of section 47(5), the applicant's response to comments made are noted in table 7.1 of the Consultation Report. It is considered that the applicant did have regard to comments that were made (although it is disappointing to note that the recommendation

to hold two further consultation events in Sturton by Stow and Corringham were not followed).

We have reviewed table 7.3 within the Consultation Report and the developer's Statement of Compliance with the SoCC.

It is understood that the applicant directly notified 9,553 homes and businesses within the core consultation zone, and undertook the six consultation events.

We consider that the developer has complied with s47 of the Act.

Section 48 – Duty to publicise

We can advise that the applicant supplied us directly with a copy of their s48 Notice, at the time of their s42 consultation (letter received 15th June 2022).

It is noted that the applicant did circulate the notice within two local newspapers, The Lincolnshire Echo and The Retford Times, for two consecutive weeks as required by Reg.4 of the 2009 Regulations.

We consider the applicant has accorded with section 48 of the Act.

Other matters

We have been contacted by the community group '7000 Acres' that we understand has formed in response to the Cottam Solar project, along with the West Burton, Gate Burton and Tillbridge Solar Projects also being proposed within the District.

Whilst much of the Group's concerns are centred around the content of the developer's pre-application consultation documentation and seeks to challenge the developer's statements, they do make comment as to how accessible and comprehensible the information has been to the average local resident. They do also refer to low turnouts at events; suggest that the developer should have used other media (TV, radio, social media) to advertise; and concerns over "pre-populated feedback forms" (it is not clear if this is the same form in appendix C5.7 of the Consultation Report).

In accordance with paragraph 7.1 of Advice Note 2 (v1, February 2015)ⁱ on the National Infrastructure Planning website, we append "7000 Acres" correspondence as it may be a consideration in the Planning Inspectorate's decision on accepting the application.

Yours faithfully,

Russell Clarkson
On behalf of West Lindsey District Council

Enc.

- 145102 – WLDC s42 consultation response dated 27th July 2022.
- S47 Draft SoCC Consultation response dated 18th May 2022.
- '7000 Acres' letter, received 3rd January 2023

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ⁱ <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/advice-note-two-the-role-of-local-authorities-in-the-development-consent-process/#7>.