



HELIOS RENEWABLE
ENERGY
PROJECT

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Draft Statement of Common Ground with Carlton Parish Council

January 2025



Helios Renewable Energy Project

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Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN010140

January 2025

Prepared on behalf of Enso Green Holdings D Limited

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1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

- 1.1.1. This Statement of Common Ground ('SoCG') has been prepared on behalf of Enso Green Holdings D Limited (the 'Applicant') in conjunction with Carlton Parish Council in respect of the Helios Renewable Energy Project Development Consent Order (the 'Proposed Development').
- 1.1.2. The SoCG sets out the matters of agreement between the Applicant and Carlton Parish Council and also explains those matters which, at the time of writing, remain in progress, or where agreement has not been achieved.
- 1.1.3. This SoCG is based on Carlton Parish Council's Relevant Representation published on 10 October 2024 **[RR-050]**.
- 1.1.4. The SoCG will be amended as the examination progresses in order to enable a final version to be submitted to the Examining Authority.
- 1.1.5. This SoCG covers all the matters which are relevant to Carlton Parish Council.

2. Record of Engagement

2.1. Summary of consultation and engagement

2.1.1. The Consultation Report **[APP-181]** sets out the consultation between the Applicant and interested parties/stakeholders prior to the submission of the Application, including the engagement undertaken with Carlton Parish Council. Table 2.1 shows a summary of the engagement that has taken place between the Applicant (including consultants on its behalf) and Carlton Parish Council in relation to the Proposed Development.

Table 2.1: Schedule of Meetings and Correspondence

Date	Form of Correspondence	Summary
11/10/23	Email	SoCC announcement, dates of Statutory Consultation.
25/10/23	Email	Statutory Consultation announcement including formal notifications to host parishes.
02/11/23	Email	Parish Councillors advised that they have no comments to make on the Proposed Development.
15/11/23	Email	Update following consultation events – offer of hard copies of consultation documents which were then posted.
21/11/23	Email	Further opportunity to submit comments and questions.
21/11/23	Email	Parish Council asked for responses to a number of queries raised by the community.
27/11/23	Email	Applicant sent a detailed response to a number of queries raised by the Parish Councils. Details of the issues raised can be found in Chapter 14 of the Consultation Report [APP-181] .
05/12/23	Email	Extension to the consultation – opportunity to address outstanding queries.

Date	Form of Correspondence	Summary
06/12/23	Email	Consultation summary including responses received and encourage formal response.
14/12/23	Email	Feedback summary and final reminder to submit a formal response.
17/12/24	Email	Email from the Applicant to the Clerk of Carlton Parish Council providing advanced notice that a draft SoCG would be shared in early 2025 and welcoming further engagement regarding the SoCG.
10/01/25	Email	Applicant sent draft SoCG to Carlton Parish Council.
11/01/25	Email	Carlton Parish Council confirmed receipt and informed the Applicant that their next meeting would be on 25/02/25. It was requested that they respond to the SoCG following this meeting.
10/01/25	Email	Applicant clarified that the SOCG is a draft intended to facilitate discussions. The Applicant is required to submit a first draft at Deadline 2 (13/01/25). The Applicant confirmed that it was content to receive feedback after the Parish Council meeting on 25/02/25.

3. Current Position

3.1.1. Table 3.1 provides a schedule that summarises the position on key matters between the Applicant and Carlton Parish Council. Appendix A details the position between the Applicant and Carlton Parish Council on each matter raised in their relevant representation.

3.1.2. Each matter is attributed a status as follows:

Agreed	The matter is agreed between the parties, or there are no significant disagreement such that the matter is considered closed.
Under discussion	This matter is neither 'agreed' or 'not agreed'. Technical work is being undertaken with the aim of achieving agreement, though the risk of disagreement remains.
Not agreed	The matter is not agreed between the parties and the outcome of the approach taken by the Applicant or Carlton Parish Council is considered to result in a materially different impact to the assessment conclusions.

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Table 3.1: Key Matters

Matter	Status	Date
Principle of the Proposed Development		Jan 2025
Agricultural Land		Jan 2025
Land Contamination		Jan 2025
Waste		Jan 2025
Landscape and Visual		Jan 2025
Construction Traffic		Jan 2025
Biodiversity		Jan 2025

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4. Signatures

4.1.1. This Statement of Common Ground is agreed upon:

On behalf of Carlton Parish Council:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

On behalf of the Applicant:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

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Appendix A: Detailed Matters

Ref.	Description of Matter	Carlton Parish Council – Current Position (Relevant Representation)	Applicant – Current Position	Status
CPC-01	Principle of the Proposed Development	<p><i>Carlton Parish Council (North Yorkshire) oppose the proposed large scale Helios Solar Farm, the planning application for which is believed to be imminent. The Parish Council highlight our concerns and reservations about the proposed Helios project which is considerably bigger than other solar projects in the area to which planning permission has been granted. This will mean the villages of Carlton, Camblesforth, and Hirst Courtney will be become guinea pigs in the quest for more land taken up for larger solar farm projects.</i></p>	<p>As set out in the Planning Statement [APP-228], the Proposed Development will provide a significant amount of low carbon electricity over its lifetime, helping provide increased energy resilience, security and affordability. It will therefore be a critical part of the national portfolio of renewable energy generation that is required to decarbonise the country’s energy supply quickly whilst providing security and affordability of national energy supply. The Proposed Development has sought to reduce landscape impacts on receptors, through changes to the red line boundary as well as introducing new and reinforcing existing screen planting and areas of woodland.</p>	Under discussion
CPC-02	Agricultural Land	<p><i>During a time when the UK is struggling with Food Security (Government Food Strategy) this project will remove 476 hectares of high quality arable land. We are a</i></p>	<p>National planning policy does not explicitly rule out development on agricultural land. The NPPF states that “Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.” This is supported within NPS EN-3, paragraph 2.10.30 which states “Whilst the development of ground mounted solar arrays is not prohibited on Best</p>	Under discussion

proud farming community who would wish to maintain our local farming economy.

and Most Versatile agricultural land...the impacts of such are expected to be considered and are discussed under 2.10.73 - 92 and 2.10.107 - 2.10.126 which identifies a non-exhaustive list of specific impacts”.

As detailed in Planning Statement Appendix 2: Alternative Site Assessment [APP-227], paragraph 2.6.29, a search was conducted for suitable non-agricultural brownfield land within a 5km distance from the point of connection at Drax Power Station. Paragraph 2.6.21 to 2.6.25 of the Alternative Site Assessment (ASA) [APP-227] set out the justification for the use of provisional Grade 2 agricultural land. As shown in Figure 2.7 of the ASA, the majority of the land within a 5km radius of the point of connection is either Grade 1 or Grade 2. The Grade 3 land within the 5km radius is not available for development due to existing uses and planning applications in these areas.

Environmental Statement Chapter 14 - Soils and Agricultural Land [APP-034] discusses the impact on food security and impact to the local farming economy. Paragraph 14.5.85 states that a Government Statement (Food supply and Food Security, Defra) at the end of 2022 confirmed that there are no food security concerns at the present time.

The impacts on local farm businesses have been assessed in the same chapter [APP-034], paragraph 14.5.58 states that none of the five farm businesses will be significantly affected by the operational phase of the Proposed Development. Four of the affected farms are full-time farm businesses, and accordingly of medium sensitivity, none will be affected to the extent that a continued viable farm business cannot continue, notwithstanding the economic benefit of rental income from the panels.

			Further detail relating to farm business is found within Environmental Statement Appendix 14.2 - Farm Business Reports [APP-172] and further information regarding food security can be found in Environmental Statement Appendix 14.4 - Analysis of UK Food Security [APP-174].	
CPC-03	Land Contamination	<i>As a farming community, we value the ecology and sustainability of the land therefore we are concerned for the toxic metal components containing cadmium and lead in the solar panels and the use of hydrochloric acid, gallium arsenide, sulfuric acid and copper, indium, gallium, di-selenide, in their manufacture.</i>	There are limited potential pollution risks associated with the Proposed Development. The Preliminary Risk Assessment, referred to as the Phase 1 Ground Conditions Assessment, is provided at ES Appendix 2.4 [APP-114 – APP-116]. The Assessment identifies potential sources of contamination on-Site and off-Site, and their potential pathways to a receptor. The Assessment concludes that potential pollutant linkages identified on-Site are able to be mitigated through the implementation of standard mitigation measures which are set out within the oCEMP [APP-121] and the oOEMP [APP-124], to be secured via DCO requirement 4 and 7 respectively. Significant effects are not anticipated; therefore it has been agreed to scope this topic out of the Environmental Statement.	Under discussion
CPC-04	Waste	<i>We also question what happens to these large numbers of solar panels containing toxic elements at the end of their life span, or when requiring replacement during the next 40 years. There is insufficient infrastructure capacity to safely deal with the proposed levels of e-waste and the</i>	Decommissioning waste management will be carried out in accordance with the measures set out in Section 3.12, Littering and Waste, of the oDEMP [APP-123]. These measures will be implemented through the DEMP, which will be secured via DCO Requirement 5.	Under discussion

		<p><i>toxic elements.</i></p> <p><i>Although the company engaged with the community through seminars/ consultations, where you could examine the detail of the project, the scale of the project, and level of expertise, the hosts failed to alleviate our concerns. No detail of what percentage of components will be recycled, and what will have to go landfill or be buried.</i></p>		
CPC-05	Landscape and Visual	<p><i>The type of panel proposed have not been seen or tested in the UK before. These larger panels have a significant impact on the rural landscape. These new panels will sit over 2 metres from the ground, and will be visible when looking south from the A1041, next to residential properties, for a minimum of 15 years.</i></p>	<p>The type of solar panels proposed are widely used in other developments across the UK. The proposed mounting structure (Single Axis Tracker) are also operational across the UK. The height of the solar panels has been a consideration factored into the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment included in Chapter 7 (Landscape and Views) of the ES [APP-027]. The potential visibility of the Proposed Development has been a key consideration in the assessment process and has also influenced the proposed Landscape Strategy for the Site. It is considered that the Landscape Strategy would provide effective mitigation of the Proposed Development within 15 years.</p>	Under discussion
CPC-06	Construction Traffic	<p><i>The creation of the farm will cause significant disruption to the community for over 12 months. There is expected to be over 36 HGV</i></p>	<p>As set out in the oCTMP [AS-006], there are expected to be 18 HGV deliveries on average per day throughout the 260 working days of the construction period, which equates to 36 total movements (arrivals and departures). The assessment in ES Chapter 10 Transport and Access</p>	Under discussion

		<p><i>deliveries every day that will impact local traffic on the country lanes and cause significant increases in noise and air pollution locally.</i></p>	<p>[APP-030] concludes that the construction phase vehicle movements would have a negligible residual effect on road user and pedestrian safety, severance, road driver vehicle delay, non-motorised user delay and in terms of the effects of hazardous/large loads. The construction phase is assessed to have a minor adverse (not significant) residual effect on non-motorised user amenity (including fear and intimidation). ES Chapter 11 Noise and Vibration [APP-031] concludes that construction noise, road traffic and vibration will all have negligible residual effect. As set out in ES Chapter 2 EIA Methodology [APP-022], Air Quality has been scoped out of the assessment given that the anticipated vehicle movements during construction are below the relevant threshold criteria set out by the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM, 2017). It is therefore considered that the construction phase of the Proposed Development will not cause significant effects in terms of traffic, noise or air pollution.</p>	
CPC-07	Biodiversity	<p><i>The large area of land expected to be transformed is currently home to a wide variety of wildlife and nature, including free roaming deer, birds of prey, and small mammals. We are passionate about our local area and fear this natural beauty will be lost to a building site and then a huge canopy of sun blocking electrical</i></p>	<p>The impact of the Proposed Development on biodiversity is assessed in ES Chapter 8 Biodiversity [APP-028]. It is concluded that there will no significant adverse effects on biodiversity as a result of the Proposed Development. The Proposed Development includes significant habitat enhancement provisions; these will be managed for the benefit of wildlife over the long term and will provide biodiversity gains for a wide variety of species. Additionally, the proposed creation of diverse grasslands, tree planting and hedgerow planting will deliver a quantifiable biodiversity benefit. Measures to protect and enhance</p>	<p>Under discussion</p>

		cells.	biodiversity throughout the lifetime are set out in the oCEMP [APP-121], oOEMP [APP-124], oLEMP [APP-143] and oDEMP [APP-123], which will be secured via DCO Requirements as set out in the dDCO [AS-007].	
CPC-08	Landscape and Visual	<i>Lesser applications are being dismissed on the grounds that the introduction of panels and other infrastructure, including transformers, inverters and fencing will “inevitably introduce a fundamental change to agricultural land” and the major visual harm that would come with the project. The situation is no different in the case of our community. We strongly urge that when this planning proposal comes to you that you seriously consider the affects this will have on our community for generations to come, and recommend a rejection.</i>	<p>The visual impact of the Proposed Development has been assessed in ES Chapter 7 Landscape and Views [APP-027]. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment [APP-134] has been carried out as part of the application. The scale of change attributable to the Proposed Development will remain small/negligible, perceived over a medium extent, resulting in a slight effect magnitude. In combination with the low sensitivity of receptors, this will result in a minor/negligible and not significant effect, particularly in the context of the baseline large scale industrial built form at Drax Power Station.</p> <p>With regard to landscape, the Proposed Development will have a major to moderate, significant impact on the Site's landscape character, particularly in the early years of operation, due to the introduction of solar PV panels and associated infrastructure. While the landform will largely remain unaltered, except for minor modifications in the Substation and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Compound, the addition of these structures will change the Site's appearance and how it is perceived. Although a comprehensive landscape strategy has been designed to mitigate visual and landscape effects, the newly implemented planting will have limited immediate impact. By year 15, however, the planting is expected to be well-established, helping to restore fragmented hedgerows and enhance the Site's landscape</p>	Under discussion

			<p>character, biodiversity, and habitat connectivity. Despite the built elements remaining visible, this strategy is projected to reduce the impact to a moderate adverse level, which is not considered significant, especially given the reversible nature of the Proposed Development after its 40-year operational phase. A Landscape Strategy Plan [APP-054] has been submitted as part of the application.</p>	
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