



Meeting note

Project name	Helios Renewable Energy Project
File reference	EN010140
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	25 March 2022
Meeting with	Enso Energy
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Inception Meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

The Inspectorate explained that the publication of the meeting note could be delayed up to six months, or until a formal scoping request had been submitted (if requested by an Applicant for commercial reasons).

Proposed Development

The Applicant introduced itself as Enso Energy Ltd and outlined its project team. The Applicant explained that within the proposed project there is a potential for dual technology including solar and battery storage and it is currently considering an export capacity of approximately 250MW. The Applicant stated the land is located near the village of Camblesforth, North Yorkshire and located within the Selby District. The Applicant explained that the development will connect to the electricity network via the Drax National Grid Substation and its duration is circa 40 years.

The Applicant outlined details of the site. The Applicant stated the site comprises approximately 543 ha of agricultural land within a generally flat landscape and noted the majority of the site is Flood Zones one and two. The Applicant confirmed there are currently no statutory designations on the site.

The Applicant explained it is in early stages of design however it confirmed that single-axis tracker solar panels will be utilised and all associated cabling linking the parcels and the point of connection will be underground.

The Applicant noted its current anticipated submission date is May 2023.

EIA Update

The Applicant confirmed its request for an EIA Scoping Opinion from the Inspectorate is to be issued in April/May 2022. The Applicant explained its preliminary surveys for Noise, Ecology and Landscape have been completed and its Topographical survey is soon to be completed which will allow Arboricultural surveys to commence.

The Inspectorate queried what the current land use is. The Applicant confirmed it is currently mostly arable with a bit of grazing.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to consider what, if any regional impacts on food security might be as a result of the project and advised the Applicant to be prepared to evidence how it followed relevant guidance on the quantum of its surveys. Consultation with Local Authorities (LA) on this issue, and agreement on the approach taken, would be useful.

The Inspectorate stated the need for trial trenching is a topic it is seeing through other DCO applications, and the Applicant's approach on this should be agreed with the LA and should consider the desk study approach. The Inspectorate noted it is useful to receive updates on this as the Applicant proceeds through the pre-application stage. The Applicant agreed and confirmed initial survey work is underway.

The Inspectorate queried if the Applicant currently has access to all of the land and if it would need to use the PA2008 s53 process. The Applicant confirmed it has access to the land and it may not need Compulsory Acquisition powers, and this is currently being worked through. The Applicant confirmed it will update the Inspectorate accordingly as it progresses.

The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to consider its approach to a good design with screening/ mitigation measures considered to mitigate any potential effects of the land in terms of the visual appearance of the development.

Consultation

The Applicant stated its consultation on the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) will be June – August 2022 and its Statutory Consultation (including Draft ES) will be October 2022. The Applicant confirmed its Statutory Consultation will be a 6-week period.

The Applicant confirmed it is engaging in monthly meetings with Selby District Council and North Yorkshire County Council, and a draft Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) is being prepared (joint for Selby District Council and North Yorkshire County Council). The Applicant explained the councils are undergoing a government re-organisation and will be replaced by a new Unitary Authority by approx. 2022/23. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to note this in the SoCC/ consultation report so the Inspectorate can check the councils were consulted at the right time etc.