

**Tillbridge Solar Project
EN010142**

**Volume 5
Consultation Report**
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**Regulation 5(2)(q)
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- Appendix I – Section 42 responses received and Applicant response

Glossary

Term or abbreviation	Definition
Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA)	Written assessment which determines the site-specific effect of planned development on the existing tree stock.
APFP Regulations	The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009.
The Applicant	Tillbridge Solar Limited.
The Application	The Development Consent Order application.
Bassetlaw District Council	Host authority for the Scheme.
Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)	Batteries with associated infrastructure to store, import and export electricity to the National Grid. The batteries are lithium iron phosphate batteries with a liquid cooling or HVAC system housed within a container. Associated infrastructure includes the DC / DC converter and Transformers, Inverter and Switchgear, which are shared with Solar Stations. The DC/DC converter will be installed alongside every BESS battery container to keep cabling as short as possible and losses low.
BMV agricultural land classification (ALC)	Agricultural land of excellent (ALC Grade 1), very good (Grade 2) and good (Subgrade 3 a) agricultural quality as defined under the National Planning Policy Framework.
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	Approach to development that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand.
Consultation Report	A report forming part of the DCO application, outlining the consultation undertaken on the Scheme.
Development Consent Order (DCO)	Development consent is required pursuant to the Planning Act 2008 for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects. A development consent order is the order which grants development

Term or abbreviation	Definition
	consent when an application is made to the Secretary of State.
Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	Department now superseded by DLUHC.
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)	Formerly the Ministry for Housing, Communities, and Local Government (DCLG); a department of Government responsible for housing, communities, and local government in England and the levelling up policy.
European Economic Area (EEA)	International agreement linking member states together.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	A process by which information about environmental effects of a proposed development is collected, assessed and used to inform decision making. The EIA for the Scheme has been undertaken in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended).
EIA Regulations	The EIA Regulations relevant to the Scheme are the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended). These transpose the requirement of an EIA for NSIP developments. The EIA Regulations specify which developments are required to undergo EIA and schemes relevant to the NSIP planning process are listed under either of 'Schedule 1' or 'Schedule 2'.
Environmental Statement (ES)	A document produced in accordance with the EIA Directive as transposed into UK law by the EIA Regulations to report the results of an EIA.
Examining Authority	The person(s) appointed by the Secretary of State (SoS) to assess the Application and make a recommendation on the decision to the SoS.
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	Document provided by the Applicant to provide answers to frequently asked questions.
Framework Construction Environmental	A site-specific plan developed to ensure that appropriate environmental management practices are followed during the construction phase of a project.

Term or abbreviation Definition

Management Plan (CEMP)	
Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)	A plan which sets out the Applicant's management practices for construction traffic and staff vehicles during the construction of the Scheme.
Gigawatt (GW)	Unit of power.
Gigawatt hours (GWh)	Unit of energy.
Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)	Assessment required on a development being carried out on a European site protected by Habitat Regulations.
Hectares (ha)	A metric unit of square measure.
Kilovolt (kV)	A unit of electromotive force.
Kilometre (km)	A metric unit of length equal to 1,000 metres.
Lincolnshire County Council	Host authority for the Scheme.
Local Planning Authority (LPA)	Local government body and consultee for the Scheme.
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)	A tool used to identify and assess the likely significance of the effects of change resulting from development both on the landscape as an environmental resource in its own right and on people's views and visual amenity.
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
Mitigation	Measures including any process, activity, or design to avoid, prevent, reduce, or, if possible, offset any identified significant adverse effects on the environment.
Member/s of Parliament (MP/s)	Elected representative and consultee for the Scheme.
Megawatt (MW)	Unit of power equal to one million watts.

Term or abbreviation **Definition**

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) NSIPs are large scale developments such as certain new harbours, power generating stations (including solar farms), highways developments and electricity transmission lines, which require a development consent under procedures governed by the Planning Act 2008 (and amended by the Localism Act 2011).

Non-technical summary (NTS) Document produced as a non-technical version of the PEI Report.

Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) Host authority for the Scheme.

On-site substation These increase (transform) the voltage from 33kV to 400kV. The Cable Route Corridor runs from the on-site substations to the National Grid Cottam Substation.

Order limits/'Indicative' Order limits Land shown on the Works Plans within which the Scheme can be constructed and operated. Presented as 'indicative' during pre-application stage.

PA 2008 The Planning Act 2008 (as amended).

Permissive Paths New recreational informal paths established as part of the Scheme signed as permissive that the landowner allows the public to use for the life of the Scheme.

Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) PEI is defined in the EIA Regulations as:
"information referred to in Regulation 14(2) which –
(a) has been compiled by the applicant; and
(b) is reasonably required for the consultation bodies to develop an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of the development (and of any associated development)."

PEI Report Boundary The Scheme area considered for the purposes of the PEI Report.

The Planning Inspectorate (PINS) Executive agency responsible for dealing with NSIPs.

Term or abbreviation	Definition
Primary Consultation Zone (PCZ)	Zone within vicinity.
Principal Site	The Principal Site comprises the Solar PV infrastructure, electrical substations, cabling and areas for landscaping and ecological enhancement.
Public Rights of Way (PRoW)	Rights across land exercisable by the public at all times.
Receptor	A component of the natural or man-made environment that is affected by an impact, including people.
Scheme	The Scheme is the collective term for the Principal Site and the Cable Route Corridor. The boundary of the Scheme is defined as the Order limits.
Scoping	The process of identifying the issues to be addressed by an EIA. It is a method of ensuring that an EIA focuses on the important issues and avoids those that are considered to be less significant.
Scoping Boundary	The area scoped on for the purpose of the EIA and included within the Scoping Report.
Scoping Report	Sets out the matters to be assessed in the EIA, to guide the EIA identification of likely significant effects from the development. This is provided in accordance with guidance provided by the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 7 'Environmental Impact Assessment: Process, Preliminary Environmental Information and Environmental Statements'. The EIA Scoping Report is included within Appendix 1-1 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.2] .
Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)	Document produced by the Applicant to establish the way it will consult with the local community at the Pre-application stage.
Solar Farm Control Centre	This comprises the operation and maintenance base for the Scheme comprising a central control room, CCTV and security control, welfare facilities for staff and parking.

Term or abbreviation **Definition**

Solar PV Areas	Areas of land within which the solar PV panels and associated solar PV and battery storage infrastructure, including substations, are to be located.
Solar PV Site	Describes the total area covered by all the Solar PV Areas.
Secretary of State (SoS)	Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	A formal conservation designation of particular interest to science due to rare species of fauna or flora it contains/important geological or physiological features.
The Cable Route Corridor	<p>The portion of the Order limits where the grid connection infrastructure (400kV cables) is routed from the Solar PV Site (excluding the on-site 400kV cabling that interconnects the two substations) to the national electricity transmission network.</p> <p>The proposed Cable Route Corridor is within the Order limits, connecting the on-site substations within the north and south of the Scheme to the National Grid Cottam Substation. Other works associated with cable laying will be located within this area.</p>
The Principal Site	The construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of ground-mounted PV arrays and associated development to generate electricity.
The Scheme	Tillbridge Solar - a new solar and energy storage scheme.
Tillbridge Solar Limited	Tillbridge Solar Limited is the Applicant. This is a joint venture between Tribus Clean Energy and Recurrent Energy, a subsidiary of Canadian Solar.
Visual Effects	Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.
Visual Receptors	People with views of the development or associated activities. These are located within the visual envelope and are typically residents,

Term or abbreviation	Definition
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	motorists, pedestrians, recreational users in residential areas on publicly accessible roads, footpaths and open spaces.
West Lindsay District Council (WLDC)	Host authority for the Scheme.
Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)	The zone within which views of a proposed development may be experienced, as determined by analysis of Ordnance Survey data and field survey. It is influenced by many factors including topography and intermediate visual intrusions, such as blocks of woodland and buildings.

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This Consultation Report has been prepared by Tillbridge Solar Limited (The Applicant) in relation to a new solar and energy storage scheme known as Tillbridge Solar (the Scheme).
- 1.1.2 The Applicant is seeking development consent for the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating facility and energy storage facility, and export connection to the national electricity transmission system. The land within the Order limits is located within the County Council areas of Nottinghamshire County Council and Lincolnshire County Council, within the districts of West Lindsey District Council and Bassetlaw District Council (the 'Host authorities').
- 1.1.3 This report forms part of the application (the Application) for a Development Consent Order (DCO), to be submitted to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (SoS), under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (hereby the "PA 2008" (Ref 4)). A DCO is required for the Scheme as it falls within the definition and thresholds for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under Sections 14 and 15(2) of the PA 2008.
- 1.1.4 The major infrastructure planning regime under the PA 2008 has an emphasis on pre-application consultation and publicity. Government guidance explains this is designed to ensure a more transparent and efficient examination process. In this way the planning of major infrastructure is a 'front-loaded' process whereby the main features of a proposed development are established through statutory engagement and technical studies before making an application.
- 1.1.5 Prior to the submission of an application for a DCO, the promoter (the Applicant) must carry out the consultation and publicity requirements prescribed by sections 42, 46, 47 and 48 of the PA 2008. The Applicant must also comply with associated provisions of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (hereby the "EIA Regulations") (Ref 3) and The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (hereby the "APFP Regulations" (Ref 5)) (as amended) and have regard to government guidance. This includes consulting with the local community; certain prescribed persons and bodies (prescribed by regulations, such as local authorities and technical consultees and affected and potentially affected land interests).
- 1.1.6 Section 37(3)(c) of the PA 2008 requires an application for a DCO to be accompanied by a 'consultation report' explaining how the promoter has complied with the statutory, regulatory and policy requirements. The report must also set out (in accordance with Section 49) how the Applicant has had regard to the responses received to the consultation. This document is the consultation report for the purposes of Section 37, providing details of the matters specified in Section 37(7).

- 1.1.7 This Consultation Report has been prepared in accordance with Section 37 of the PA 2008, government guidance and PINS' advice and provides information on the 'non-statutory' consultation, 'statutory' consultation, and additional 'targeted statutory' consultation. It also provides analysis of the responses and actions taken as a result, demonstrating how the Applicant has had regard to all of the responses received to its consultation activity.

1.2 The Applicant's consultation process

- 1.2.1 The Applicant adopted a two-stage approach to its pre-application consultation. This consisted of an initial non-statutory consultation exercise which informed the development of the Scheme, followed by a continued period of non-statutory engagement leading up to a second stage of consultation - statutory consultation - which was delivered in accordance with the requirements of the PA 2008. Non-statutory consultation engagement started with the initial introduction of the Scheme to stakeholders in July 2022, leading up to the statutory consultation, which commenced on 30 May 2023 and concluded on 11 July 2023.
- 1.2.2 The objectives of the non-statutory consultation were to introduce the Scheme and initial proposals to consultees (including indicative areas for the development of Principal Site infrastructure, along with a broad Cable Route Corridor search area (the early design for the Cable Route Corridor), within which the underground infrastructure to connect the Scheme to the national electricity transmission system at Cottam Substation would be sited), meaningfully engage with consultees and seek feedback on the Scheme.
- 1.2.3 The Applicant also used the non-statutory consultation exercise to gradually introduce the Scheme to the local community (including through 'collaboration workshops') and to initiate dialogue with key stakeholders, including by inviting views on the wider potential local impacts and suggestions for the Applicant to deliver wider benefits to the community.
- 1.2.4 The objective of the statutory consultation was to provide an update on and seek views on further developed proposals and the preliminary findings of the environmental assessment work. It also provided an opportunity for the Applicant to present more refined plans following the collaboration workshops in July 2022. The statutory consultation materials included a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEI Report) assembled in relation to the Scheme.
- 1.2.5 The Applicant conducted a further, targeted, round of statutory consultation held between 14 December 2023 and 25 January 2024 in relation to proposed changes to the Order limits.
- 1.2.6 Further information about each stage of consultation is provided below.

'Non-statutory' consultation and engagement

- 1.2.7 The non-statutory consultation took place in Summer 2022. It is covered in detail in **Chapter 5** of this report. The purpose was to introduce the Scheme to the local community and wider stakeholders and to meaningfully engage at an early stage to ensure technical advice and local knowledge was taken into account in the early development of the Scheme.

- 1.2.8 The Applicant sought to understand early consultee views and to allow stakeholders to shape the Scheme during the design process through holding a series of collaboration workshops in July 2022.
- 1.2.9 The collaboration workshops provided a forum for the following:
- a. to gain knowledge and understanding of the local area, including any existing constraints that the Applicant should be aware of;
 - b. to establish preferences of stakeholders for the Scheme that can be had regard to in the design process, and
 - c. to help stakeholders understand the site selection and refinement process undertaken to date, and to understand the rationale behind this.
- 1.2.10 The Applicant's early engagement continued up to the start of the statutory consultation in May 2023, which included providing updated information to local stakeholders, attending meetings (e.g. with parish councils and community groups) on request, and regular meetings with local authorities and technical stakeholders.

The Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

- 1.2.11 Section 47 places a duty on applicants for a DCO to consult the 'local community', i.e., those people living within the vicinity of the land to which the Application relates. Subsection (1) requires the Applicant to prepare a SoCC setting out how it proposes to consult people living within the vicinity of the land to which the application relates.
- 1.2.12 Following the non-statutory consultation, the Applicant used the experience and feedback, combined with ongoing engagement with the host authorities and best practice guidance from PINS to develop the SoCC (see **Appendix B-7**) under Section 47 of PA 2008. The SoCC is a statutory document which is used to define the methods and processes to be undertaken in consulting the public, local authorities, and technical consultees for the statutory consultation. The Applicant's approach to developing and consulting upon the SoCC is set out in **Chapter 6** of this report.
- 1.2.13 The Host Authorities were initially informally consulted on the proposed consultation methods in December 2022, including through the Applicant's regular monthly meetings. The Applicant also shared an initial draft of the SoCC for 'informal' comment from the Host Authorities. The Applicant then issued a revised SoCC for formal consultation with the Host Authorities pursuant to Section 47 on 13 February 2023 and requested comments by 23:59 on 14 March 2023 allowing for the statutory 28 days required. Copies of the responses from each of the host authorities are included in **Appendix B-5**.

Statutory Consultation

- 1.2.14 The statutory consultation took place between 30 May and 11 July 2023. It is covered in **Chapters 6 to 9** of this report. Each strand of consultation required (i.e., Section 42, Section 47, and Section 48) was carried out broadly in parallel but the specific dates are described under each subheading below along with a summary account of the activities carried out.

Section 42 ‘Duty to Consult’ (covered in Chapter 8 of this report)

- 1.2.15 Section 42 of the PA 2008 requires the Applicant to consult prescribed persons, relevant local authorities, and affected and potentially affected land ownership interests (the ‘Section 42 Consultees’). The Section 42 consultation was carried out in parallel with the Section 47 consultation.
- 1.2.16 Section 42 Consultees were identified in accordance with the following legislative requirements and other key considerations:
- a. Section 42 of the PA 2008;
 - b. Section 43 of the PA 2008 ‘Local authorities for the purposes of section 42(1)(b);
 - c. Section 44 of the PA 2008 ‘Categories for the purposes of section 42(1)(d);
 - d. Schedule 1 of the APFP Regulations (Ref 5) containing the ‘Prescribed Consultees’; and
 - e. Applying the relevance and circumstances tests, reviewing local authority boundaries, and identifying land ownership interests within and adjacent to the Order limits.
- 1.2.17 The Applicant appointed land referencing agents to assist in identifying land ownership and other interests and to compile a list of relevant consultees.
- 1.2.18 The Section 42 Consultees were sent correspondence by 1st class Royal Mail delivery on 26 May 2023. The letters explained why each consultee was being consulted, provided background information on the Scheme, summarised its main components and invited comments and feedback to be submitted until 23:59 on 11 July 2023. Copies of the correspondence issued to Section 42 Consultees are included in **Appendix E**. The total period of consultation (43 days) from the day after the day of receipt of the consultation documents exceeded the minimum period required pursuant to Section 45 of the PA 2008.
- 1.2.19 The letter also confirmed that these documents, alongside the PEI Report and its non-technical summary (NTS), were available electronically on a website maintained by the Applicant (‘the Scheme website’) (‘www.tillbridgesolar.com’) and the direct address to the documents library (as shown in **Appendix C-13.4**) was provided. The Applicant enclosed with the letter a copy of the section 48 notice (see **Appendix D-1**), and a consultation leaflet showing the location of the Scheme (see **Appendix C-13.1**).
- 1.2.20 The Applicant received a total of 51 responses to its consultation carried out under Section 42 of the PA 2008 between 30 May and 11 July 2023. This included 37 responses from s42(1)(a) consultees, 12 responses from s42(1)(b) consultees and two responses from s42(1)(d) consultees. The Applicant’s summary of feedback in response to the statutory consultation is summarised in **Chapter 10**.

Section 46 ‘Duty to Notify SoS of Proposed Application’ (Covered in Chapter 8, Section 8.6 of this report)

- 1.2.21 Section 46 of the PA 2008 requires the Applicant to notify the SoS (through PINS) of the Section 42 statutory consultation. This must be done either before or at the same time as commencing the Section 42 consultation and the SoS must be provided with the same information that is to be provided to the Section 42 consultees.
- 1.2.22 In accordance with Section 46 of the PA 2008, the Applicant notified PINS by email on 24 May 2023. The covering letter attached to the email set out the background to the Scheme, the Applicant’s intention to submit a DCO application, details of the documents included (the statutory consultation leaflet, section 48 notice and copy of the respective section 42 letters) and the fact they would be sent to consultees under Section 42 of the PA 2008, and a summary of the consultation process. The letter also provided a direct link to the documents library on the Scheme website where all of the consultation documents could be found.
- 1.2.23 The Applicant received an acknowledgement of the receipt of its notification under s46 of the PA 2008 from PINS on 25 May 2023. A copy of the letter sent to PINS and its subsequent acknowledgement of receipt of that letter is provided in **Appendix F-1** and **Appendix F-2**, respectively.

Section 47 ‘Duty to Consult Local Community’ (covered in Chapter 7 of this report)

- 1.2.24 The consultation was conducted in accordance with the SoCC and included a combination of in-person and online events. All community and technical materials were available online through the Scheme website, with selected materials available to view and take away at local information points. The Scheme website enabled stakeholders and communities to access information and submit their feedback online and included a dedicated documents library.
- 1.2.25 The consultation ran from 30 May to the 11 July 2023, therefore exceeding the statutory minimum time period of 28 days.
- 1.2.26 The Applicant identified a primary consultation zone (PCZ) to help determine the areas where the consultation would take place (see **section 5.5, paragraphs 5.5.40 to 5.5.44** for information on how the PCZ was defined). Approximately 5,000 properties and local businesses were consulted within this zone and the Applicant further identified a range of relevant local interest groups, community organisations and organisations representing the interests of seldom heard and underrepresented groups for inclusion at statutory consultation (as listed in **Appendix C-1**).
- 1.2.27 The Applicant sent the statutory consultation leaflet (see **Appendix C-13.1**) by direct mail to all addresses within the PCZ, along with electronic copies to local interest groups and community organisations with potential interests in the vicinity of the proposed Scheme, as well as gateway organisations representing the interest of seldom heard and under-represented groups. The leaflet invited the consultees to provide their feedback on the documents made available through the Scheme website and provided details of consultation events.

- 1.2.28 At the launch of statutory consultation, the Applicant updated the Scheme website and made available electronic copies of the consultation leaflet, feedback questionnaire and project information booklet to view and download from its document library. Printed copies of these documents were also made available at local information points situated in publicly accessible venues in the locality of the Scheme. The statutory consultation was also supported by several technical documents which were also published electronically on the Scheme website and made available to view at local information points from the launch of the consultation.
- 1.2.29 Public consultation events took place between 7 June and 10 July 2023, which provided an opportunity for local people to meet the project team, better understand the proposals and to ask any questions.
- 1.2.30 Two public consultation events were held online where the Applicant team gave a presentation and took questions from those in attendance. Six in-person events were held at selected key locations throughout the PCZ, and a range of technical documents were provided to help people better understand the scheme.
- 1.2.31 All of the materials and information on display and available to take away from in-person consultation events was available to view and download from the Scheme website (see **Table 7-4**). Details of the events that took place and attendance at them is set out in **Table 7-6**.
- 1.2.32 Emails were also sent to local political representatives including local councillors, parish councillors and relevant Members of Parliament (MPs).

Section 48 'Duty to Publicise' (covered in Chapter 8 of this report)

- 1.2.33 As part of the statutory consultation (and timed to coincide with the start of the Section 47 and the Section 42 consultation) the Applicant also published a notice in accordance with Section 48 of the PA 2008 and Regulation 4 of the APFP Regulations (Ref 5). This involved publishing a notice in:
- a. The Guardian (25 May 2023);
 - b. The London Gazette (25 May 2023);
 - c. The Lincolnshire Echo (25 May and 1 June 2023);
 - d. The Retford Times (25 May and 1 June 2023); and
 - e. The Gainsborough Standard (25 May and 1 June 2023);
- 1.2.34 The notice provided details of the Scheme and advised how the consultation documents could be accessed, as well as providing a deadline for receipt of comments, which was 23:59 on 11 July 2023. A copy of the Section 48 Notice is provided in **Appendix D-1** and copies of each of its placements in the above publications are provided in **Appendix D-2.1 to Appendix D-2.8**).

Targeted Consultation (covered in Chapter 11 of this report)

- 1.2.35 A targeted consultation was carried out following statutory consultation, in accordance with Section 42 'Duty to Consult' of the PA 2008.

- 1.2.36 Following statutory consultation, the Applicant identified a need to make revisions to the Order limits. These revisions were identified through feedback received in consultation to date, landowner discussions and additional engineering work. In total, 20 minor revisions were proposed to the Order limits.
- 1.2.37 The changes represented a localised, small degree of change and were not material in the context of the overall Scheme. The additional areas were subject to an environmental review, confirming that the minor changes were not considered likely to create any different environmental effects beyond those described in the PEI Report, as presented at the statutory consultation.
- 1.2.38 The targeted consultation took place from 14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024. All materials made available during the targeted consultation can be found in **Appendix G**.

Section 49 ‘Duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity’ (covered in Chapter 10 of this report)

- 1.2.39 Section 49 of the PA 2008 requires Applicants to have regard to any relevant responses received to the consultation and publicity carried out in accordance with sections 42, 47 and 48 PA 2008.
- 1.2.40 How the Applicant meets this requirement is covered in detail in **Chapter 10** of this report. A relevant response for the purposes of Section 49 is a response received by an Applicant before the deadlines set in relation to sections 42, 47 and 48.
- 1.2.41 The Applicant received three responses beyond the closing date (11 July 2023). These were included in the feedback analysis and were given equal weight to the feedback received by the statutory consultation deadline.
- 1.2.42 The issues raised by the local community in response to the consultation carried out under Section 47 of the PA 2008 covered a range of topics. The topics raised included:
- a. Landscape and visual impacts; including the scale of the Scheme and the change in the character and nature of the area.
 - b. Cumulative impacts; including the impacts of multiple solar DCOs on the character and nature of the area.
 - c. Battery and fire; including safety and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).
 - d. Community benefits; including local benefits flowing from the Scheme and suggestions for what benefits would be most appropriate.
 - e. Agricultural land; including the land’s agricultural use, especially in the context of the current geopolitical situation.
 - f. The Scheme’s location; including alternative locations for the Scheme on brownfield sites and installation of solar panels on rooftops.
- 1.2.43 **Section 10.6** of this report provides a summary of the comments and issues raised following the consultation under Section 47 and how the Applicant has had regard to them.

- 1.2.44 Issues raised by technical consultees, land ownership interests, statutory undertakers and local authorities following consultation under Section 42 of the PA 2008 covered topics relating to the design and technical aspects of the scheme including:
- a. Land use and agriculture; including the impact of the Scheme on farmland in the area, including its impact on food production.
 - b. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) methodology; including how the Scheme is assessed over the construction, operation and decommissioning phases.
 - c. Water environment; including the impact of the Scheme on watercourses and features in the area.
 - d. Environmental surveys; including which surveys had been carried out to date.
 - e. Transport and access; including queries regarding the anticipated traffic movements throughout the construction, operation and decommissioning phases.
 - f. Nature and ecology; including the impact of the Scheme on important ecological features and designated sites.
- 1.2.45 A summary of the issues raised, along with details on the response and indication of changes made are detailed in **section 10.4**.

Consultation under EIA Regulations

- 1.2.46 There are specific consultation requirements under the EIA Regulations (Ref 3) and PINS' Advice Note 14 (February 2021) (Ref 9), which set out that any consultation as part of the EIA is separate to that required under the PA 2008. The Applicant's approach to consultation under the EIA regulations is summarised in **Chapter 3** of this report.
- 1.2.47 The Applicant submitted its request for a Scoping Opinion under Regulation 10(1) of the EIA Regulations (Ref 3) on 30 September 2022 to PINS (on behalf of the Secretary of State). A copy of the final Scoping Report is provided in **Appendix 1-1** of the Environmental Statement (ES) **[EN010142/APP/6.2]**.
- 1.2.48 A copy of the letter submitted as a request for a Scoping Opinion on 30 September 2022 is provided as **Appendix B-12**.
- 1.2.49 A Scoping Opinion was adopted by the SoS on 4 November 2022. A copy of the Scoping Opinion is available as **Appendix 1-2** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.2]**. This included the formal responses received by PINS from consultees.
- 1.2.50 The Scoping Opinion comments from consultees are documented within each technical chapter of the ES as appropriate, **Chapters 6 to 17** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]** along with responses identifying how these comments have been responded to within the Application.
- 1.2.51 The Scoping Opinion was used to inform development of the PEI Report published for statutory consultation in May 2023. The Scoping Opinion also guided development of the ES submitted with the Application.

- 1.2.52 As set out in **Chapter 7** of this report, the Applicant carried out statutory consultation between 30 May and 11 July 2023. In accordance with Regulation 12 of the EIA Regulations (Ref 3), a SoCC outlining how the Applicant would consult the local community was developed. When identifying Prescribed Consultees to receive consultation letters under Section 42(a) of the PA 2008, the Applicant included consultation bodies and all persons notified to the Applicant in accordance with Regulation 11 of the EIA Regulations (Ref 3). The list of consultation bodies was provided by PINS on 4 November 2022 and is provided in **Appendix E-1** of this report. All consultation bodies were sent a copy of the Section 48 notice.
- 1.2.53 Following the statutory consultation, the Applicant's environmental consultants have continued to engage with the host local authorities and key technical consultees in respect of the preparation and finalisation of the ES submitted as part of the Application.

Ongoing Engagement

- 1.2.54 The Applicant was and remains committed to continued engagement with the local community, host local authorities, and other key stakeholders before, during and following the consultations outlined above.
- 1.2.55 The Applicant has continued to progress the preparation of Statements of Common Ground with the host authorities and statutory environmental bodies, which will continue beyond submission of the DCO application.
- 1.2.56 The Applicant has also frequently engaged with other solar DCO developers within the vicinity of the Scheme. This engagement is introduced in **section 2.3**, outlined in the context of non-statutory and statutory consultation in **section 5.3**, and in relation to engagement following statutory consultation in **Chapter 11**.

1.3 Outcomes and conclusion

- 1.3.1 **Chapter 13** concludes by detailing the relevant statutory requirements, guidance from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (now known as Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)) and Advice Notes from PINS and demonstrating the activities the Applicant has undertaken to comply with them.
- 1.3.2 The Applicant considers that it has complied with the PA 2008, DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6) and PINS' Advice Note 14: Compiling the Consultation Report (February 2021) (Ref 9). Detailed information on compliance with this guidance is included in **Chapter 13, Table 13-1, Table 13-2 and Table 13-3**.
- 1.3.3 The Applicant considers that it has met the statutory requirements of the pre-application process. As set out in **Chapter 2, Table 2-2**, the Applicant has undertaken non-statutory and statutory consultation.
- 1.3.4 At each stage, the Applicant has considered and complied with relevant advice and guidance. The information included in **Chapter 13** supports this through direct reference to guidance and advice provided by MHCLG and PINS on the pre-application process.

2. Introduction

2.1 The Scheme

Background to the Scheme

- 2.1.1 The Scheme will comprise the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of ground-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays. The Scheme will also include associated development to support the solar PV arrays.
- 2.1.2 The Scheme is located approximately 5km to the east of Gainsborough and approximately 13km to the north of Lincoln.
- 2.1.3 The Scheme is made up of the Principal Site, the Cable Route Corridor and works to the existing National Grid Cottam Substation. The Principal Site comprises the solar PV arrays, electrical substations, grid balancing infrastructure, cabling and areas for landscaping and ecological enhancement.
- 2.1.4 The Principal Site covers an area of approximately 1,350 hectares (ha) and is located to the south of Harpswell Lane (A631), to the west of Middle Street (B1398) and largely to the north of Kexby Road and to the east of Springthorpe.
- 2.1.5 The Scheme also includes a 400kV underground Cable Route Corridor approximately 18.5km in length connecting the Principal Site to the National Electricity Transmission System (NETS) at the existing National Grid Cottam Substation. The Scheme will export and import electricity to the NETS.
- 2.1.6 It is anticipated that the Scheme would be fully operational from 2028 and would generate clean energy for up to 60 years.
- 2.1.7 The Scheme would have a generating capacity in excess of 50 Megawatts (MW), providing enough clean energy to power approximately 300,000 UK homes.
- 2.1.8 A full description of the Scheme is included in **Chapter 3: Scheme Description** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. An overview of the Scheme and its environmental impacts is provided in the ES Non-Technical Summary [EN010142/APP/6.4].

Need for the Scheme

- 2.1.9 The UK has set ambitious climate change targets to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and to ensure that the energy supply remains secure, reliable, and affordable. Together with legally binding commitments such as these, the Government has further set out how the deployment of renewable technologies such as wind, solar, nuclear and hydrogen will be accelerated in its latest Energy Security Strategy (April 2022).
- 2.1.10 This strategy outlines that the UK's solar capacity needs to increase five-fold by 2035 to meet legally binding targets on net zero, which would increase

the total generation capacity from 14 gigawatts (GW) today to around 70GW in the future. The Scheme would make a significant contribution towards achieving these targets, helping to provide energy security and a reliable source of affordable energy.

- 2.1.11 The UK government's Overarching National Policy Statement (NPS) for Energy (EN-1) (November 2023) (Ref 1) outlined commitment by the Government to putting the UK on the path to meeting its net zero emissions target by 2050. EN-1 states that a secure, reliable, affordable, net zero consistent system in 2050 is likely to be composed predominantly of wind and solar, which are the lowest cost ways of generating electricity, helping reduce costs and providing a clean and secure source of electricity supply.
- 2.1.12 NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) (November 2023) (Ref 2) reinforces the UK government's commitment to sustained growth in solar capacity, which is a key part of the government's strategy to for low-cost decarbonisation of the energy sector.
- 2.1.13 The decommissioning of the previous coal-fired Cottam power station nearby has provided additional spare grid connection capacity and the opportunity for the region to play an important role in renewable energy generation in years to come.
- 2.1.14 A detailed summary of the needs case for the Scheme is provided in the Statement of Need [EN/010142/APP/7.1] that has been submitted as part of this DCO application.

Visions and objectives

- 2.1.15 The vision for the Scheme is to deliver cleaner, greener, and lower-cost energy, while also enhancing the local environment and ensuring the Applicant is a responsible developer.
- 2.1.16 The Applicant recognises the impacts associated with multiple projects being developed in the region. Given the proximity of the Scheme to Island Green Power's proposed Cottam (hereby 'Cottam Solar') and West Burton (hereby 'West Burton Solar') solar projects and Low Carbon's Gate Burton Energy Park (hereby 'Gate Burton'), the Applicant has sought opportunities to work constructively with other developers; particularly where there are common interests to reduce the potential impacts of the Scheme on local communities and the environment, including along the Cable Route Corridor. This cooperation has formed an important part of the Scheme's vision.
- 2.1.17 The objectives for the Scheme are to:
- a. Build a solar farm that will contribute to the UK's zero-carbon future and support Lincolnshire's transition to Net Zero;
 - b. Provide equivalent energy needs for around 300,000 households with low-cost energy, generated in the UK at a time of great uncertainty within the energy market;
 - c. Develop a Scheme in a responsible and considerate way;
 - d. Increase biodiversity and enhance existing ecology to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and maximise opportunities to create new habitats for wildlife;

- e. Ensure the local landscape is central to the Scheme's design; and
- f. Provide opportunities for local communities and the local economy.

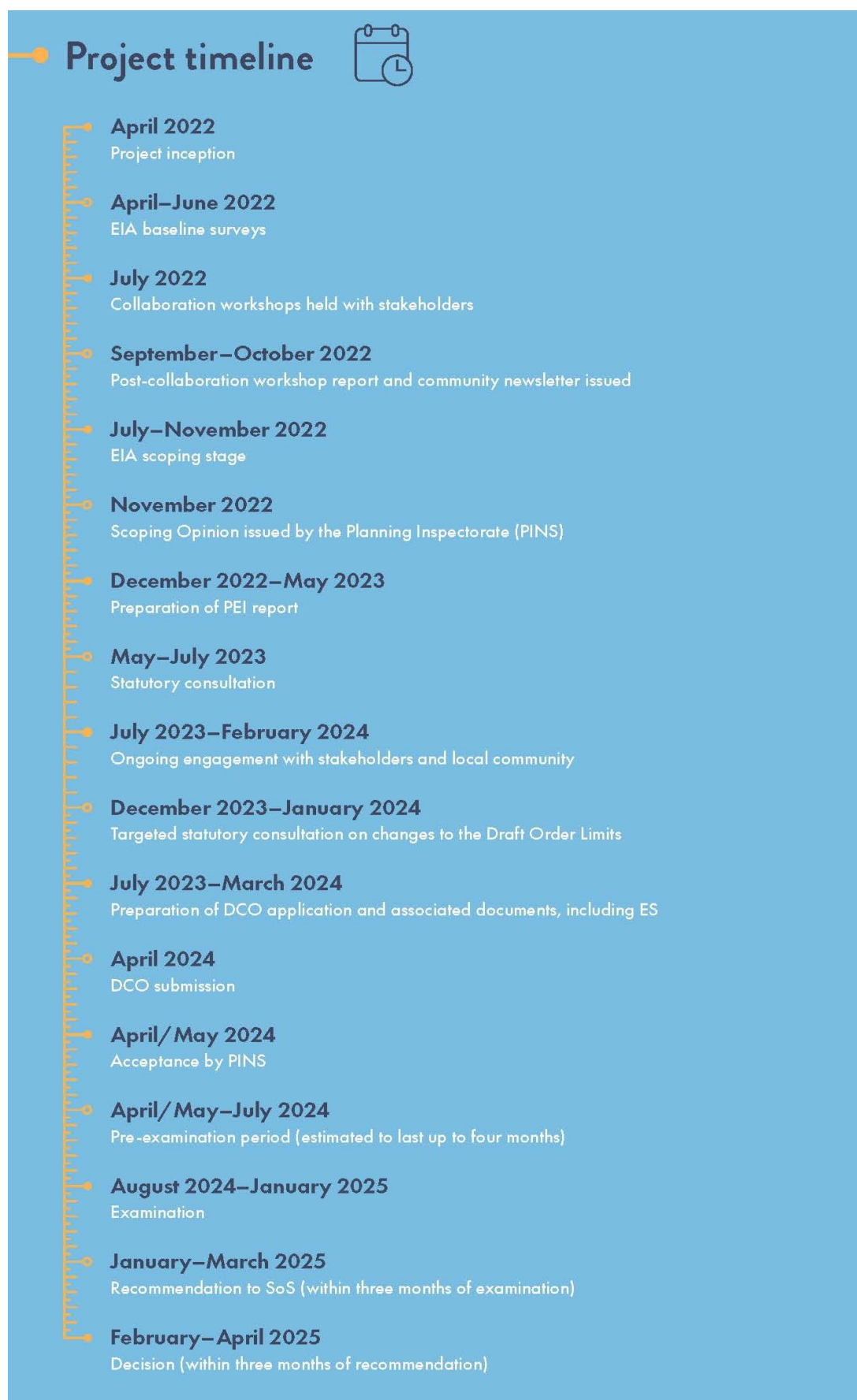
Next steps

- 2.1.18 The Applicant has submitted this Consultation Report to PINS, on behalf of the SoS, as part of the Scheme's DCO application.
- 2.1.19 If granted consent, the Scheme could begin generating affordable green energy from 2028, playing an important role in helping the UK achieve its ambition of generating up to 70GW of solar by 2035.

Timeline

- 2.1.20 **Figure 2-1** highlights key milestones for the Scheme, providing an indicative timeline for the next steps in the planning process.

Figure 2-1: Indicative Scheme timeline



2.1.21 This timeline is indicative and subject to change.

2.2 About the Applicant

- 2.2.1 The Applicant is a joint venture partnership between Tribus Clean Energy Limited and Recurrent Energy, who are both experienced developers of renewable energy projects. They are being supported by a team of technical specialists.
- 2.2.2 Tribus Clean Energy Limited specialises in the development of renewable energy projects and has a UK solar PV development pipeline of over 1.5GW and a pipeline of more than three gigawatt hours (GWh) of BESS.
- 2.2.3 Recurrent Energy was launched in April 2023 as the rebranded subsidiary development and services arm of parent company Canadian Solar, founded in 2001 and one of the world's largest solar technology and renewable energy companies. Recurrent Energy has developed, built and connected over nine gigawatt peak (GWp) across six continents, with 6GW of projects in operation, and an additional 25GWp of solar and 47GWh of battery storage projects in the pipeline.
- 2.2.4 Both developers are using their experience of developing similar size projects in the UK to help bring forward the plans for the Scheme.

2.3 Collaborative working with other developers

- 2.3.1 Given the proximity of the Scheme to Island Green Power's Cottam Solar and West Burton Solar projects and Low Carbon's Gate Burton project, the Applicant identified opportunities for collaborative working with these developers with regard to connecting to National Grid's Cottam Substation.
- 2.3.2 Through this collaboration the developers have built an understanding of the extent of the respective cable corridors of each project (including the Cable Route Corridor), and how they might sit alongside each other. This has included ensuring that all routes can be brought forward to minimise land take and environmental impacts, such as disruption during the construction phase.
- 2.3.3 The Applicant continues to work with Low Carbon and Island Green Power and this work, along with the comments received during the statutory consultation and ongoing studies and surveys, helped shape the final plans for the corridor submitted as part of the DCO application.
- 2.3.4 For further information on the inter-relationships between the Scheme and the neighbouring projects, please see the Report on the Interrelationship with other National Infrastructure Projects **[EN010142/APP/7.6]**.

2.4 Purpose of the Consultation Report

- 2.4.1 The Applicant recognises the importance of consulting on the Scheme from an early stage and the benefits this can bring in respect of delivering an improved scheme.
- 2.4.2 The NSIP regime under the PA 2008 places an emphasis on pre-application consultation and publicity. Guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG – now part of the DLUHC) – Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015)

(Ref 6) – explains that front-loading consultation is designed to ensure a more transparent and efficient examination process. In this way the planning of major infrastructure is a ‘front-loaded’ process whereby the Applicant’s proposals are the subject of statutory consultation and engagement before an application is submitted. This guidance is hereby referred to as ‘DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6).

- 2.4.3 Prior to the submission of an application for a DCO, the promoter must carry out consultation and publicity activities prescribed by sections 42, 46, 47 and 48 of the PA 2008, and associated provisions of the APFP Regulations (Ref 5) and the EIA Regulations (Ref 3). This requirement to carry out a process of pre-application consultation is outlined in Part 5, Chapter 2 of the PA 2008 (Ref 4).
- 2.4.4 Applicants should also have regard to the DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6) and PINS’ advice notes, specifically:
- a. PINS’ Advice Note 3 ‘EIA consultation and notification’ (August 2017) (hereby ‘PINS Advice Note 3’) (Ref 7);
 - b. PINS’ Advice Note 6: Preparation and submission of application documents (May 2012) (hereby ‘PINS Advice Note 6’) (Ref 8); and
 - c. PINS’ Advice Note 14: Compiling the Consultation Report (February 2021) (hereby ‘PINS Advice Note 14’) (Ref 9).
- 2.4.5 These documents require that the Applicant consults with the local community and certain prescribed persons and bodies such as local authorities, technical consultees and affected and potentially affected land interests.
- 2.4.6 Section 37 of the PA 2008 requires an application for a DCO to be accompanied by a ‘Consultation Report’ explaining how the promoter has complied with the statutory, regulatory and policy requirements. The report must also set out (in accordance with Section 49 of the PA 2008) how the Applicant has had regard to the responses received to the consultation. This document is the Consultation Report for the purposes of Section 37 of the PA 2008.
- 2.4.7 To fulfil the requirements set out in Section 37 of the PA 2008, the Consultation Report must give details of:
- a. What has been done in compliance with Sections 42, 47, and 48 of the PA 2008 (Ref 4) in relation to the application – as described in **Chapters 8,7 and 9** of this Consultation Report, respectively;
 - b. Any relevant responses received during the statutory consultation period – as described in **Chapter 10** of this Consultation Report; and
 - c. The regard that has been had to any relevant responses – as described throughout this Consultation Report, specifically in **Chapter 10** and provided in full in **Appendix H and I**.
- 2.4.8 In addition, Section 50 of the PA 2008 requires the Applicant to have regard to any guidance issued by the SoS. The Applicant has had regard to the DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6), which

sets out the requirements and procedures for the pre-application process and consultation.

2.4.9 This guidance outlines what the Consultation Report should contain (Ref 4). **Table 13-2** in **Chapter 13** of this Consultation Report describes how the Applicant has complied with this guidance.

2.4.10 As stated in the DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6), consultation reports should include the matters set out in **Table 2-1**. While this is not included as a comprehensive list of all consultation report requirements under all relevant legislation, regulation and guidance, **Table 2-1** has been provided to provide a summary of the location of the key elements of this Consultation Report for ease of reference.

Table 2-1: Key Consultation Report contents and where to find the information

Key Consultation Report contents	Where information can be found in this document
Provide a general description of the consultation process undertaken which can helpfully include a timeline.	A general description, along with a timeline of the consultation process can be found in Chapter 2 and Table 2-2 .
Set out specifically what the Applicant has done in compliance with the requirements of the PA 2008, relevant secondary legislation, this guidance, and any relevant policies, guidance or advice published by the Government or PINS.	An overview of how the Applicant has complied with the PA 2008, secondary legislation and relevant guidance is available in sections 6.6, 7.15, 8.8, and 9.4 .
Set out how the Applicant has taken account of any response to consultation with local authorities on what should be in the Applicant's SoCC.	Details of the SoCC consultation with the relevant local authorities can be found in section 6.2 of Chapter 6.
Set out a summary of relevant responses to consultation (but not a complete list of responses).	A summary of relevant responses to consultation can be found in Chapter 10 .
Provide a description of how the application was informed and influenced by those responses, outlining any changes made as a result and showing how significant relevant responses will be addressed.	A description of how the Applicant has had regard to and changed the proposed Scheme as a result of relevant responses is available in Chapter 10 .
Provide an explanation as to why responses advising major changes to a project were not followed, including advice from statutory consultees on impacts.	Where the Applicant has not followed advice on changes to the proposed Scheme, the reasons for these are set out in Chapter 10 .

Where the Applicant has not followed the advice of the local authority or not complied with this guidance or any relevant Advice Note published by PINS, provide an explanation for the action taken or not taken.

The engagement with host authorities regarding the development of the SoCC is set out in **Chapter 6** of this report. The Applicant considers it has followed the appropriate guidance and Advice Notes.

Be expressed in terms sufficient to enable the SoS to understand fully how the consultation process has been undertaken and significant effects addressed. However, it need not include full technical explanations on these matters.

The Applicant considers it has developed a Consultation Report that fully explains the consultation and how the Applicant has had regard to the responses received.

2.5 Summary of consultation activity

- 2.5.1 The Applicant engaged with consultees across five broad phases: non-statutory consultation, development of the SoCC (informal and formal engagement), Statutory Consultation, further targeted statutory consultation and ongoing engagement with consultees.
- 2.5.2 **Table 2-2** provides a summary of the activity undertaken over the course of the Applicant's pre-application consultation in each of these stages and sets out where more detail can be found within this report.

Table 2-2: Summary of pre-application consultation activity

Consultation activity	Date	Chapter of report
1. Non-statutory consultation		
Launch of Scheme website and lead up to collaboration workshops, including engagement with local authorities and elected representatives.	May to July 2022	See Chapter 5 and Table 5-1 .
Feedback reporting and issuing updates to workshop attendees and wider community	July to September 2022	
Interim engagement leading up to statutory consultation in May 2023, including engagement with local authorities, community representatives, parish councils and near neighbours.	October 2022 to May 2023	

2. Development of SoCC

Informal engagement with host local planning authorities (LPAs).	20 December 2022 to 13 January 2023	See Chapter 6 and sections 6.2 and 6.3 .
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Statutory consultation with Host authorities on the SoCC pursuant to Section 47(2) and (3) of the PA 2008	13 February 2023 to 14 March 2023	
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Notice of availability of SoCC in the vicinity of the proposals as prescribed by Section 47(6) of the PA 2008	25 May 2023	
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SoCC made available in vicinity of the proposal and online as prescribed by Section 47(6) of the PA 2008	25 May to 11 July 2023	
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3. Statutory consultation

Proposed application publicised as prescribed by Section 48 of the PA 2008 (for Prescribed Consultees only)	30 May to 11 July 2023	See Chapter 9 .
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Notification of PINS of proposed application as prescribed by Section 46 of the PA 2008	24 May 2023	See Chapter 8, section 8.6 .
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Consultation in accordance with the SoCC as prescribed under Section 47(7) of the PA 2008	30 May to 11 July 2023	See Chapter 7 .
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Consultation as prescribed under Section 42 of the PA 2008	30 May to 11 July 2023	See Chapter 8 .
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4. Further engagement after statutory consultation

Targeted statutory consultation on changes to Order limits	14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024	See Chapter 11 .
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5. Further engagement throughout preparation of the application

Ongoing non-statutory engagement prior to	July 2023 to April 2024	See Chapter 12 .
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submission of DCO
application

2.6 Covering letter and completed Section 55 checklist

- 2.6.1 Section 55 of the PA 2008 sets out the criteria used by PINS to decide if an application is of a satisfactory standard to be accepted for examination. The Covering Letter and Section 55 Checklist [EN010142/APP/1.3] provides cross references to where the evidence of compliance with the pre-application consultation requirements within the PA 2008, APFP Regulations (Ref 5), EIA Regulations (Ref 3), and DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6) can be found.

3. Legislative and Regulatory Context

3.1 The Applicant's commitment to engagement

- 3.1.1 Public consultation and stakeholder engagement are important aspects of the consenting regime for NSIPs.
- 3.1.2 Legislation, regulations and guidance (e.g. in the form of PINS' Advice Notes) aim to ensure that statutory and non-statutory consultees have opportunities to share their views and have them considered before an applicant submits their DCO application.
- 3.1.3 The Applicant attaches great importance to the effect that its work may have on local communities, as well as the environment. The Applicant is committed to responding to the needs, interests and concerns of local communities and stakeholders.

3.2 Consultation requirements - the Consultation Report

- 3.2.1 **Chapter 2, section 2.4** outlines the purpose of this Consultation Report, the necessary consultation requirements and how the Applicant has complied.

3.3 Relevant legislation and guidance

- 3.3.1 In developing its approach to consultation for the Scheme, The Applicant has given careful consideration to the requirements set out in the following legislation:
 - a. The PA 2008;
 - b. The Infrastructure Planning (Applications, Prescribed Forms and Procedures) Regulations 2009;
 - c. The EIA Regulations (as amended) (Ref 3);
 - d. Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/579).
- 3.3.2 In preparing this Consultation Report, the Applicant has also given attention to:
 - a. DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6) – as defined in **Chapter 2, section 2.4**;
 - b. PINS' Advice Note 6 (May 2012) (Ref 8) – as defined in **Chapter 2, section 2.4**; and
 - c. PINS' Advice Note 14 (February 2021) (Ref 9) – as defined in **Chapter 2, section 2.4**;
- 3.3.3 Further information on how the Applicant has had regard to the requirements of sections 42, 47, and 48 of the PA 2008 is provided in **Chapter 8** of this report.

3.4 Consultation under the EIA Regulations

- 3.4.1 The Applicant carried out consultation under the EIA Regulations (Ref 3), including the Scheme's request for Scoping and Transboundary Screening notifications. These key milestones are summarised below.

3.5 Scoping and screening for the EIA

Scoping

- 3.5.1 On 30 September 2022, the Applicant notified the SoS of its intention to:
- Undertake an EIA; and
 - Provide an ES with the DCO application for the Scheme.
- 3.5.2 In accordance with Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations (Ref 3), the Applicant submitted an EIA Scoping Request to PINS on behalf of the SoS on 30 September 2022. After reviewing the Scoping Report and consulting with the relevant bodies, PINS published a Scoping Opinion on 4 November 2022. This is included within **Appendix 1-2** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.2].
- 3.5.3 The Applicant has outlined the comments raised in the Scoping Opinion in the relevant technical **Chapters 6 to 17** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. Within each of these chapters, they provide detail on where the comments have been addressed.

Transboundary Screening

- 3.5.4 As required by Schedule 3 of the EIA Regulations (Ref 3), the Applicant considered the transboundary effects of the development, that is, the effects of the Scheme on the environment in the European Economic Area (EEA).
- 3.5.5 Additionally, Schedule 4 of the EIA Regulations (Ref 3) requires the Applicant to describe the likely significant effects of the development on the environment in the ES.
- 3.5.6 As confirmed in **Appendix A** to the Scoping Opinion (issued by PINS on 4 November 2022) [EN010142/APP/6.2], PINS on behalf of the SoS considered the proposed development and concluded that the Scheme is unlikely to have a significant impact (alone or cumulatively) on the environment in an EEA state. It also said they consider that the likelihood of transboundary effects resulting from the Scheme is so low that it does not warrant the issue of a detailed transboundary screening.

4. Approach to Consultation

4.1 Consultation strategy

- 4.1.1 The Applicant has sought to engage and consult with the local community and other key stakeholders from an early stage in the Scheme's progression, giving them multiple opportunities to inform the Scheme's design.
- 4.1.2 The Applicant aimed to go above and beyond the requirements of the PA 2008, undertaking early engagement work and a non-statutory consultation round ahead of statutory consultation. The Applicant also supplemented these efforts through ongoing engagement with a wide range of consultees, including various councils and local residents.
- 4.1.3 The Applicant carried out an iterative consultation for the Scheme, including an ongoing period of (non-statutory) engagement – beginning in Summer 2022 and running until the start of the statutory consultation in May 2023 – and a formal period of (statutory consultation) between 30 May and 11 July 2023.
- 4.1.4 The primary aim of the initial period of engagement, as described in **Chapter 5**, was to introduce the Applicant's early-stage proposals for the Scheme, including the early environmental assessments and site selection work carried out to date. By holding a series of collaboration workshops in July 2022, the Applicant sought to gather the views of a variety of representatives of groups with an interest in the area to help shape the Scheme at its formative stage.
- 4.1.5 The statutory consultation, as described in **Chapter 7**, ran for six weeks from 30 May to 11 July 2023 and was an opportunity for the Applicant to present more detailed proposals for the Scheme and key refinements made in response to ongoing design work and feedback during the previous stage of engagement.
- 4.1.6 The Applicant also held an additional period of targeted statutory consultation between 14 December 2023 and 25 January 2024, as described in **Chapter 11**. The subject of this consultation was 20 minor revisions to the Order limits, as a result of ongoing engineering and environmental review and landowner discussions following the initial statutory consultation in 2023. All changes represented a localised, small degree of change and were not material in the context of the overall Scheme or considered likely to create any different environmental effects beyond those described in the PEI Report, as presented at the statutory consultation.

4.2 Mechanisms for asking questions, making comments and providing feedback

- 4.2.1 Feedback on the Scheme was sought at both the non-statutory and statutory consultation stages. However, the Applicant welcomed comments and questions at any time. The Applicant sought to make it as easy as possible for people to respond to the statutory consultation by including multiple

methods for them to give their views and comments on, and ask questions about, the Scheme. To achieve this, they enabled consultees to provide their feedback to the statutory consultation in digital and hard copy form, through a variety of channels.

- 4.2.2 In July 2022 the Applicant set up a dedicated consultation email address (info@tillbridgesolar.com) to allow residents, stakeholders and interested parties to get in touch with the project team at any time. The email address was also used as a method to provide feedback during the statutory consultation. This inbox was monitored by members of the project team from when it was launched in July 2022; it continues to be monitored and will be throughout the determination process. Where questions or requests for further information are of a technical nature, these are passed on to relevant members of the project team to respond to.
- 4.2.3 During the statutory consultation, local residents, stakeholders, and other interested parties were also able to provide feedback and request further information via a dedicated freephone line (0800 046 9643), which was in operation from Monday to Friday between the hours of 9:00 and 17:30. People could leave voicemails outside of these hours, and were responded to at the earliest opportunity, ensuring information was readily available and queries or concerns addressed. Members of the project team gave information to callers where possible and if questions were of a technical nature, these were passed on to relevant members of the project team to respond to. The freephone line was also set up in July 2022 will remain open throughout the determination process.
- 4.2.4 During the statutory consultation, stakeholders and communities were encouraged to provide feedback through the online feedback questionnaire on the Scheme website (as shown in **Appendix C-13.4**). The Applicant clearly signposted the link to this form in a range of consultation materials, as well as on the Scheme website and at events.
- 4.2.5 If individuals preferred to complete hard copies, they could request them by contacting the project team via email info@tillbridgesolar.com, over the phone (0800 046 9643), or by a dedicated free postal address (FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR).
- 4.2.6 The freepost address was also set up in July 2022 as a means for local residents and stakeholder to get in touch, and it will continue to be in use throughout the determination period.
- 4.2.7 In addition to allowing stakeholders and local residents to learn more about the Scheme, the in-person and online events sought to gather verbal and written feedback from participants. At these sessions, the project team encouraged attendees to give their views on, and ask questions about, the proposals via direct conversations with them (at the public exhibitions) or the 'chat' box (during the webinars), as well as through feedback questionnaires.
- 4.2.8 The Applicant made sure copies of these forms (provided in **Appendix C-13.3**) were available at all the in-person events and online (see **Appendix C-13.4**). At the webinars, attendees were told that they could complete the feedback questionnaire online or on paper (by requesting a hard copy). The Applicant advertised the freepost address on all consultation materials to

allow attendees to complete the feedback questionnaire away from the event and send it back to the project team, free of charge.

4.3 Processing responses and correspondence

- 4.3.1 The Applicant considered all consultation feedback received during each stage of the consultation, as well as comments received from the local community and other key stakeholders throughout the pre-application process.
- 4.3.2 All of the responses that the Applicant received were carefully considered by members of the project team and any specific design requests, or requests relating to land acquisition or interests, were passed to the relevant members of the project team. Such requests were addressed or incorporated into the proposals where appropriate and feasible. **Chapter 10** provides a breakdown of the feedback received, summarises the content of this feedback and how the feedback has been taken into account in the refinement of the design for the Scheme.
- 4.3.3 To ensure all feedback was appropriately recorded and kept track of so that it could be appropriately responded to, the Applicant created and maintained a correspondence log, containing various details from phone and email enquiries.
- 4.3.4 The Applicant has sought to record and openly report on the feedback received and respond to it to show how local views have helped shape the Scheme, thereby giving people a greater appreciation of their contribution to the NSIP process. Responses received under s42 and s47 of the PA 2008, and how the Applicant has had regard to them, are provided in **Appendix I** and **Appendix H**, respectively.
- 4.3.5 During the statutory consultation, the Applicant responded to consultees within two weeks, where practicable.

4.4 Approach to analysis

- 4.4.1 After the statutory consultation closed, the Applicant analysed all the feedback received during that period and grouped it into key themes and issues. Individual pieces of feedback within each of these categories was then passed on to relevant members of the project team (which includes environmental, planning, and engineering specialists) for consideration.
- 4.4.2 **Chapter 10** summarises the key themes and issues that arose within the feedback received during the consultation periods, as well as the Applicant's responses to these issues and explanations of the regard had to them.

5. Non-statutory consultation (Summer 2022 to May 2023)

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 As advised within the DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (2015) (Ref 6) (specifically paragraphs 18, 20 and 68), the Applicant has sought to engage early, often and iteratively with consultees so that they had numerous and genuine opportunities to influence the Scheme's design.

5.1.2 This chapter outlines the approach taken by the Applicant to publicly launch the Scheme (in July 2022), and all subsequent engagement and communications activities leading up to statutory consultation (May to July 2023).

5.2 Introduction of the Scheme to consultees

5.2.1 The first phase of engagement aimed to:

- a. Introduce the Scheme to the local community and wider stakeholders;
- b. Engage with the community and stakeholders (including statutory consultees) at an early stage to ensure technical advice and local knowledge was taken into account in the early development of the Scheme;
- c. Brief local elected representatives and achieve buy-in on the approach to engagement;
- d. Understand the initial views of consultees and to allow stakeholders to shape the Scheme through the design process; and
- e. Provide an early indication of the Applicant's proposed approach to statutory consultation and of what aspects of the Scheme feedback was being sought on.

5.2.2 To achieve this, the Applicant carried out a number of (non-statutory) engagement and communications activities from the Scheme's launch (in July 2022) up to the start of the statutory consultation (in May 2023). These activities are summarised in **Table 5-1**.

Table 5-1: Summary of consultation activities leading up to statutory consultation in May 2023

Consultation phase	Timings	Summary of activities
Launch of Scheme website and lead up to collaboration workshops	May to July 2022	<p>During this period the Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced the Scheme to the Host authorities and held briefing sessions with their members (see section 5.2, Appendix A-2); • Sought feedback from the Host authorities on the Applicant's approach to early-stage engagement, and suggestions for groups to

Consultation phase	Timings	Summary of activities
		<p>attend subsequent collaboration workshops (see section 5.2);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged directly with representatives from the developers of other nearby solar sites (Island Green Power and Low Carbon), seeking to coordinate on timings around Scheme launch and subsequent engagement activities (see section 5.3); • Launched a Scheme website on 11 July 2022 (see section 5.2, Appendix C-13.4); • Engaged directly with near neighbours to the Principal Site (see section 5.4); and • Issued invites to local community representatives and key stakeholders to attend the subsequent collaboration workshops (see section 5.2, Appendix A-3)
Collaboration workshops	July 2022	<p>During this period the Applicant held three collaboration workshops with selected community representatives and key stakeholders (see section 5.5).</p>
Feedback reporting and issuing updates to workshop attendees and wider community	July to September 2022	<p>During this period the Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported on feedback received during the collaboration workshops, including feeding comments into the Scheme design process (see section 5.7); • Issued a post-collaboration workshop report to attendees (to the workshops) and wider stakeholders (see section 5.6, Appendix A-9); and • Attended regular meetings with the Host authorities (see section 5.6 for subsequent engagement).
Interim engagement	October 2022 to May 2023	<p>During this period the Applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issued a community newsletter to the PCZ and wider stakeholders (see section 5.6, Appendix A-10); • Attended stakeholder meetings on request, including with parish councils and with near neighbours/local residents (see section 5.6 and 7.5); • Attended regular meetings with the Host authorities (see sections 6.3); • Informally and formally engaged with the Host authorities on the SoCC (see Chapter 6 and Appendix B); and

Consultation phase	Timings	Summary of activities
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- Engaged with statutory consultees on an ongoing basis, including on relevant technical issues associated with development of the Scheme (see **section 5.6**).

Launch of Scheme website and lead up to collaboration workshops

- 5.2.3 On 11 July 2022, the Applicant launched the Scheme’s website (see **Appendix C-13.4**), which contained the following:
- a. An overview to the Scheme, its location and an introduction to Tribus Clean Energy and Recurrent Energy (referred to as parent company Canadian Solar in 2022, with Recurrent Energy being launched in April 2023);
 - b. An overview of the site selection work carried out (since 2020), including a map showing the latest proposals (as presented during the collaboration workshops – see **section 5.5**);
 - c. Vision and objectives for the Scheme;
 - d. An overview of the planning process;
 - e. An overview of the consultation process and opportunities for collaboration with other developers;
 - f. An indicative timeline for the Scheme – from launch in 2022, through to anticipated start of construction;
 - g. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs);
 - h. Information on how stakeholders can get in touch, including the Scheme’s communication channels and online form.

Applicant’s approach to engagement with MPs

- 5.2.4 Throughout the pre-application period for the Scheme, the Applicant sought to inform host MPs of the latest Scheme updates at regular intervals, including ahead of any consultation activities taking place.
- 5.2.5 The relevant MPs for the Scheme are:
- a. Sir Edward Leigh MP (Conservative, Gainsborough);
 - b. Mr Brendan Clarke-Smith MP (Conservative, Bassetlaw); and
 - c. Robert Jenrick MP (Conservative, Newark).
- 5.2.6 Ahead of public launch of the Scheme in mid-July 2022, the Applicant emailed the aforementioned MPs on 24 June 2022. The email (with a digital letter attached – see **Appendix A-1**) provided a short introduction to the Scheme, an overview of the upcoming engagement and an offer for a virtual meeting (over Microsoft Teams) or a face-to-face meeting at their constituency or Westminster office.

- 5.2.7 No responses or acceptances for individual briefings were received in response to the letters.
- 5.2.8 MPs were subsequently engaged at regular intervals throughout the pre-application consultation period, including before and during the statutory consultation (see **Chapter 7, section 7.6**) and following the statutory consultation (see **Chapter 12, section 12.4**).

Applicant's approach to engagement with LPAs

- 5.2.9 The Applicant sought to engage with the Host authorities from the earliest opportunity. As per definitions set out in Section 43(1) of the PA 2008 – which is provided in more detail in **Chapter 8, section 8.3** – the following host “B” authorities were initially engaged on the Scheme. Initial meetings were held as follows:
- a. Bassetlaw District Council on 15 June 2022;
 - b. West Lindsey District Council on 16 June 2022;
 - c. Lincolnshire County Council on 16 June 2022; and
 - d. Nottinghamshire County Council on 20 June 2022.
- 5.2.10 These meetings provided an opportunity for the relevant planning officers LPAs to meet the project team and agree ways of working moving forward. The following was discussed during the meetings:
- a. An introduction to the Tillbridge Solar project team, including the consultants supporting the Scheme;
 - b. An introduction to the Scheme and its key supporting infrastructure;
 - c. The context of the Scheme in relation to other solar NSIPs in the region (including Cottam Solar, Gate Burton and West Burton Solar), and opportunities for collaboration between the projects;
 - d. An overview of the desk-based site selection exercise carried out since 2020, including the different criteria and environmental and planning constraints considered;
 - e. An overview of the Applicant's targeted and collaborative approach to early engagement;
 - f. An overview of the opportunities for collaboration at an early stage in the Scheme's progression, including through collaboration workshops, direct engagement with near neighbours, and technical stakeholder engagement; and
 - g. An overview of the indicative programme for the Scheme from 2022 onwards, through to submission of the application for development consent.
- 5.2.11 During the meetings, the Applicant encouraged planning officers to share the presentation slides (see **Appendix A-2**) with their members as background information prior to the Scheme being launched into the public domain. As outlined in **section 5.2**, the Applicant also held briefings with members from each Host authority.

- 5.2.12 Following the initial meetings, the Applicant agreed to meet with the Host authorities on a monthly basis, allowing opportunities to discuss ongoing Scheme updates, engagement with respective officers from each authority and updates in relation to other solar NSIPs in the region.
- 5.2.13 As outlined in **Chapter 7**, the Applicant used the regular monthly meetings to proactively raise awareness of the statutory consultation from May to July 2023. A summary of meetings held on a regular basis with Host authorities and the issues discussed (leading up to statutory consultation in May 2023), is provided **section 5.6** and listed in **Table 5-7**.

Applicant's approach to engaging with Host authority members

- 5.2.14 In addition to the regular engagement with planning officers outlined above, the Applicant also sought to regularly engage with members representing the host county and district councils, either directly (through email/postal channels) and/or via planning officers.
- 5.2.15 Following introductory meetings with planning officers (outlined above in **section 5.2**), the Applicant held further briefings with members of the Host authorities, including with:
- a. Members of Nottinghamshire County Council on 4 July 2022;
 - b. Members of Lincolnshire County Council on 6 July 2022;
 - c. Members of West Lindsey District Council on 11 July 2022; and
 - d. Members of Bassetlaw District Council on 14 July 2022;
- 5.2.16 The following were discussed during the member briefings:
- a. An introduction to the Tillbridge Solar team, including the consultants supporting the Scheme;
 - b. An introduction to the Scheme and its key supporting infrastructure;
 - c. The context of the Scheme in relation to other solar NSIPs in the region (including Cottam Solar, Gate Burton and West Burton Solar), and opportunities for collaboration with the respective developments;
 - d. An overview of the desk-based site selection exercise carried out since 2020, including the different criteria and environmental and planning constraints considered;
 - e. An overview of the collaboration workshops, including dates, invitees and when members can expect to receive information;
 - f. An overview of the opportunities for collaboration at an early stage in the Scheme's design evolution, including through collaboration workshops, direct engagement with near neighbours, and technical stakeholder engagement; and
 - g. An overview of the indicative programme for the Scheme from 2022 onwards, through to submission of the application for development consent.
- 5.2.17 An example copy of presentation slides used during the initial briefings is provided in **Appendix A-2**. The Applicant encouraged each Host authority to

circulate the information to their respective members to provide background on the project.

- 5.2.18 As described in **section 5.5**, the Applicant issued invitations to the collaboration workshops to members of the Host authorities via email on 11 July 2022 (see **Appendix A-3**). The invitations included background to the Scheme, an overview of the consultation and engagement process, the format of the workshops and how members could sign-up to attend.

5.3 Applicant's approach to collaboration with other developers

- 5.3.1 The Applicant has sought opportunities to work constructively with other developers in the area. In particular, the Applicant has worked closely with the developers of the Gate Burton Energy Park, Cottam Solar Project and West Burton Solar Project.
- 5.3.2 The Applicant chose to engage with the project team of each respective project at an early stage given the proximity and timelines of the projects coming forward and connecting to the national electricity transmission system in close proximity to one another.
- 5.3.3 The Applicant held early discussions with representatives of Island Green Power and Low Carbon in May 2022. This included initial meetings to discuss timings and messaging around the public launch and scheduling of collaboration workshops for the Scheme. Through these discussions, the Applicant ensured that:
- a. The public launch of the Scheme, through the website and correspondence sent to consultees, would be scheduled so as not to overlap with the information being sent to consultees in relation to the stage two (statutory) consultations for Cottam Solar and West Burton Solar (held between 15 June and 27 July 2022) Gate Burton (held between 22 June and 05 August 2022);
 - b. The three collaboration workshops for the Scheme (see **section 5.5**) were scheduled on alternative days to the respective consultations of the other developments; and
 - c. Each developer had an understanding of the respective consultation exercise and when information would be sent externally. Messaging and lines to take in relation to each Scheme and consultation exercise, including the relevant channels for consultees to get in touch, was also provided.
- 5.3.4 In a project inception meeting that was held with the Planning Inspectorate on 11 July 2022, the Planning Inspectorate requested a discussion on collaboration with other developers who were also bringing forward NSIPs in the locality.
- 5.3.5 This was followed by a meeting held with the Planning Inspectorate, the Applicant and the developers of the other three projects to discuss collaboration. At the meeting, it was agreed that given that the Scheme was behind the programme of the other projects and that the other projects had already derived a preferred and shared Cable Route Corridor, that the

Tillbridge Solar Project will need to iterate its Cable Route Corridor to align with the other projects to minimise impacts. At this point, the Applicant agreed to collaborate with the other developers to consider how the Tillbridge Solar Project could interact with the projects within the already agreed shared corridor.

- 5.3.6 The Applicant has continued to have regard to other schemes in the following ways:
- a. Signing a cooperation agreement between the developers, with the purpose of mitigating adverse effects on persons with an interest in the land affected by the schemes and prompting information sharing and cooperation through the assessment and examination of their respective DCO applications;
 - b. Holding regular meetings/working groups with respective developers to understand progress of each scheme and where there may be opportunities for greater coordination;
 - c. Clear signposting at each stage of consultation how plans for the Scheme interact with the respective projects (see **section 5.5** (for the collaboration workshops) and **section 7.9** (for how refined plans were presented at statutory consultation));
 - d. Working with representatives from Island Green Power and Low Carbon to maximise opportunities for sharing common aspects of Cable Route Corridors;
 - e. Sharing data/survey results in relation to the cable route corridor in common locations to ensure intrusive/non-intrusive surveys and activities do not need to be repeated.
- 5.3.7 Further information on the Applicant's approach to joint working with the other developers in refining the Scheme's Cable Route Corridor can be found in the Design and Access Statement **[EN010142/APP/7.3]**.
- 5.3.8 For further information on the inter-relationships between the Scheme and the neighbouring projects, please see the Report on the Interrelationship with other National Infrastructure Projects **[EN010142/APP/7.6]**.
- 5.3.9 From an engagement and consultation perspective, the early engagement and cooperation with the other developers enabled the Applicant to ensure that:
- a. People could easily engage with each of the consultation processes and that materials clearly signposted to other consultations; and
 - b. The combined effects of the projects together, including potential environmental impacts or disruption to communities, were fully assessed and explained in the consultation materials where relevant.

5.4 The Applicant's approach to engagement with 'near neighbours'

- 5.4.1 Early-stage engagement also included meeting with near neighbours in close proximity to the Principal Site. The Applicant sought to engage with parties at various stages in the pre-application period, including prior to

Scheme launch (July 2022), statutory consultation (May 2023) and on an ongoing basis. Engagement with near neighbours has included:

- a. An initial 'door-knocking' exercise in July 2022 (see below);
- b. Distributing hard copy community newsletters and documentation, before and in between periods of consultation (see **section 5.6** and **Appendix A-10** (for community newsletter in October 2022), and **section 12.4** and **Appendix A-12.1** (for community newsletter in March 2024); and
- c. Face-to-face meetings with members of the project team, on request.

5.4.2 Near neighbours were defined as properties within or immediately adjacent to (less than 50 metres) to the red line boundary of the Principal Site, or where it was considered that they would be subject to potentially significant impacts from a landscape and visual perspective.

5.4.3 Through a mix of pre-arranged meetings and a 'door-knocking' exercise, a total of 19 properties/sets of interested parties were met with across three separate site visits - two in July 2022 and one in September 2022. The visits included return visits to follow up discussions in July. This enabled local comments and issues to be fed into the Scheme design at the non-statutory stage.

5.4.4 Site visits during this time included meeting with residents, farmers (who were operating in the area), and further interested parties. This included visits with:

- Glentworth Grange, Kexby Road, Gainsborough, DN21 5DP
- Orchard House, Kexby Road, Gainsborough, DN21 5DP
- Westlands Farm, Kexby Road, Gainsborough, DN21 5DP
- Low Farm, Kexby Road, Gainsborough, DN21 5DP
- East Cottage, Northlands Road, Gainsborough, DN21 5DW
- Hermitage Low Farm House, Gainsborough, DN21 5UZ
- Billyards Farm, Gainsborough, DN21 5XA
- Grange Farm, Common Lane, Gainsborough, DN21 5XD
- Heapham Cliff Farm, Common Lane, Gainsborough, DN21 5XD
- Grange Bungalow, Gainsborough, DN21 5UW (Interested Party)
- Harpswell Grange Farm, Gainsborough, DN21 5UW
- The Grange Cottage, Gainsborough, DN21 5UW
- Millfield, Middle Street, DN21 5TS

5.4.5 The Applicant used the site visits as an opportunity to introduce the Scheme to local residents, explain where their respective properties were located in relation to the red line boundary (at that point in time), and to discuss the likely landscape and visual impacts.

5.4.6 As reported in **section 5.7**, the Applicant also used these site visits to help shape the design of the Principal Site.

5.4.7 A summary of engagement with Principal Site landowners before, during and after the statutory consultation is provided in **Chapter 7**.

5.5 Collaboration workshops

Aims

5.5.1 The aims of holding collaboration workshops were to:

- a. Bring community representatives (i.e. local groups that represented community/resident interests, with specific groups listed and shared with the Host authorities – see below) and key stakeholders together in a workshop format;
- b. Share knowledge and understanding of the local area, including any existing constraints that the Applicant should be aware of;
- c. Understand preferences from stakeholders to be considered in the ongoing design process;
- d. Increase awareness of the site(s) in question and location of constraints in the area, including what stakeholders like and dislike about the area and priorities for future development;
- e. Help stakeholders understand the site selection and refinement process and rationale; and
- f. Identify preferred design features and help shape the Scheme's design ahead of statutory consultation.

5.5.2 As outlined in **section 5.2**, the Applicant sought to engage with the Host authorities on this approach to engagement through introductory meetings. During these meetings, the Applicant:

- a. Clarified the consultation exercise and its differences from a traditional (minimum of) 28-day non-statutory consultation period;
- b. Explained the reasoning for this approach to engagement, with the workshops;
- c. Enabled more meaningful and focused engagement, allowing the team to explain the story so far and local constraints identified in their desk-based site selection assessments thus far.
- d. Had regard to (the timings and approach taken to) statutory consultations for other schemes in the area – resulting in potential 'consultation fatigue';
- e. Explained engagement activities following the workshops, including a community newsletter (issued in October 2022 – see **section 5.6, Appendix A-10**);
- f. Asked planning officers for their support with engaging members and other representatives within their authorities, including communities and communications leads;
- g. Sought feedback from planning officers on the approach to engagement with the collaboration workshops, including additional stakeholders to be invited to each session; and

- h. Agreed with local authorities that a separate workshop with technical specialists (such as from a highways/cultural heritage perspective), would provide more meaningful feedback.

Workshop sessions

- 5.5.3 Workshop sessions provided an opportunity for the Applicant to introduce the early-stage plans and explain more about the proposals.
- 5.5.4 Engagement during the workshops also helped to shape the Scheme at this early stage and allow attendees to discuss in detail a number of key topics and aspects of the plans.
- 5.5.5 The Applicant organised each session in order to establish constructive dialogue with local stakeholders, including key community representatives (parish councils, ward councillors and local interest groups), representing interests in both the Principal Site and Cable Route Corridor, along with other general interests in the Scheme.
- 5.5.6 The Applicant also sought to establish constructive dialogue with technical stakeholders, including statutory consultees, relevant local authority officers and wider stakeholders with an interest in technical issues.
- 5.5.7 By inviting stakeholders to discuss the Scheme in a collective format, this would build on engagement carried out in the pre-scoping phase and encourage collaborative working between a range of stakeholders.
- 5.5.8 The Applicant held three workshops in July 2022, inviting stakeholders to attend one of three sessions, which were as follows:
 - a. 20 July 2022, from 13:00 to 17:00, at Glentworth Village Hall, Stoney Lane, Glentworth, Lincolnshire, DN21 5DF;
 - b. 21 July 2022, from 14:00 to 18:00, at Willingham Village Hall, High St, Willingham by Stow, Gainsborough, DN21 5JZ; and
 - c. 22 July 2022, from 10:00 to 14:00, at Sturton by Stow Village Hall, High St, Sturton by Stow, Lincoln, LN1 2AE.
- 5.5.9 Each workshop was chaired and facilitated by representatives of the project team and involved a series of presentations, question and answer sessions and opportunities for attendees to have their say during the session.
- 5.5.10 Information was presented using a PowerPoint presentation (see **Appendix A-4**) along with printed maps and plans and attendees were able to provide their comments throughout the session by engaging with the materials, including using printed comment sheets. See **Appendix A-4, A-5** and **A-6** for workshop materials.

Invites and attendees

- 5.5.11 As outlined in **section 5.5**, the applicant discussed the consultation and engagement approach with the Host authorities and worked with planning officers to agree a list of stakeholders (with the relevant interests) to be invited to the workshops. A total of 110 individual stakeholders and/or organisations were invited to attend one of the workshops (as listed above).

The list of stakeholders is provided in **Table 5-2**. A list of those who attended the workshop is outlined in **section 5.5**.

- 5.5.12 Stakeholder details, including specific councillors (and their positions/job titles), were correct at the time of invites being sent out. The 'host' parish councils were also correct according to the relevant draft Order limits presented during at the workshops and in briefing sessions.

Table 5-2: Stakeholders invited to attend collaboration workshops

List of stakeholders

County Council and District Council Members – Invitation to workshop on 20 July 2022

County Council Officers and Members

Lincolnshire County Council

Neil McBride (Head of Planning)

Marc Willis (Applications Manager)

Jan Allen (Historic Environment Officer – Historic Places Team)

Cllr Colin Davie (Conservative – Executive Councillor for Economy and Place; Ingoldmells Rural division)

Cllr Richard Butroid (Conservative – Gainsborough Rural South Division)

Cllr Richard Davies (Conservative – Executive Councillor for Highways, Transport and IT; Grantham West Division)

Cllr Clio Perraton-Williams (Conservative – Scotter Rural Ward)

Nottinghamshire County Council

Jonathan Smith (Team Manager, Development Management)

Cllr Richard Butler (Conservative – Cotgrave Division)

Cllr Neil Clarke (Conservative – Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment; Bingham West)

Cllr John Ogle (Conservative – Joint Committee on Strategic Planning and Transport; Tuxford Division)

District Council Officers and Members

West Lindsey District Council

Russell Clarkson (Development Management Team Manager)

Rachel Hughes (Head of Policy and Strategy)

Cllr Paul Howitt-Cowan (Independent – Hemswell Ward)

Cllr Roger Patterson (Conservative – Scampton Ward)

Cllr Tracey Coulson (Conservative – Stow Ward)

Cllr Jane Ellis (Conservative – Torksey Ward)

List of stakeholders

Cllr Jesse Milne (Conservative – Lea Ward)

Cllr Ian Fleetwood (Conservative – Chair of Planning Committee; Bardney and Cherry Willingham Division)

Bassetlaw District Council

John Krawczyk (Planning Development Manager)

Clare Cook (Major Projects Manager)

Daniel Galpin (Planning Officer)

Beverley Alderton-Sambrook (Head of Regeneration)

Cllr James Naish (Labour - Sturton Ward)

Cllr Ant Coultate (Conservative – Rampton Ward)

Local community representatives (Parish Councils and Community Organisations/Near Neighbour groups) – Invited to workshop on 21 July 2022

Parish Councils (Host)

Corringham Parish Council

Springthorpe Parish Meeting

Heapham Parish Meeting

Harpwell and Hemswell Parish Council

Glentworth Parish Council

Fillingham Parish Council

Kexby Parish Council

Willingham by Stow Parish Council

Stow Parish Council

Marton and Gate Burton Parish Council

Treswell with Cottam Parish Council

Rampton and Woodbeck Parish Council

Upton Parish Council

Torksey Parish Council

Brampton Parish Council

Community organisations

The Ramblers Association

Active Lincolnshire

Lincolnshire Gliding Club

List of stakeholders

North Lincs Riding Club
Lincoln & District Angling Association
Sport England
Cycling UK Lincolnshire
Gainsborough Aegir Cycling Club
Spalding Cycling Club
Cycling UK Nottinghamshire
Lincolnshire Walking Group
Sustrans (East Midlands)
Lincs Inspire
Federation of Small Businesses
Lincolnshire Rural Support Network
Lincs Rural
Rural Business Network
Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership
RAF Ingham Heritage Centre
RAF Scampton
Nottinghamshire Local Access Forum
Springline Parish
St Andrew's Church, Fillingham
Glentworth St Michael's Church
St Chad's Church, Harpswell
The Ramblers (Nottinghamshire Representative)
Nottinghamshire Footpaths Preservation Society
British Horse Society (Nottinghamshire representative)
Lincoln Aero Club
Willingham by Stow Horticultural Society
Millhaven Canine Rehabilitation
Lincolnshire Rescue Kennels
National Farmers Union
Lincoln Golf Club
Country Land and Business Association

Technical stakeholders – Invitation to workshop on 22 July 2022

Groups/Environmental bodies

List of stakeholders

Natural England

Historic England

The Environment Agency

Council for the Protection of Rural England

The Council for British Archaeology

Lincoln Archaeology Group

RSPB

Woodland Trust

The British Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership Society

Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology

National Trust

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

Lincolnshire Rivers Trust

Walking in England

North Lincolnshire Local Access Forum

Scunthorpe and Gainsborough Water Management Board

Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board

Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce

Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Lincolnshire Conservation Group

Technical officers (County level)

Nottinghamshire County Council

Graham Bowden

Heather Stokes

Jan Witko

Lincolnshire County Council

Richard Leonard

Kate Perceival

Ian George

Ian Field

Matthew Harrison

Chris Miller

List of stakeholders

Joanna Rhodes

- 5.5.13 To mark the public launch of the Scheme on 11 July 2022, invitations were sent out by email on the same day. Each email included a PDF attachment, which provided the following information:
- a. An introduction to the Scheme, its location and planning/consultation process;
 - b. An overview of the initial engagement on the Scheme, including explanation of the workshops and their format;
 - c. An invitation to a specific workshop session (20, 21, or 22 July 2022);
 - d. Further background information on the Scheme and the consultation and engagement process; and
 - e. Further background information on the workshop format, including their purpose, how the workshops will be chaired and facilitated, the information on display and what is expected of attendees (in relation to engagement and providing comments and feedback during the sessions).
- 5.5.14 A copy of the invite which included all the information mentioned above has been provided in **Appendix A-3**.
- 5.5.15 Additional reminder emails were sent out and telephone calls made to invitees across week commencing 11 July and 18 July 2022, prior to the workshops taking place.

Materials and information presented

- 5.5.16 Each workshop began a presentation by members of the team, including project managers and technical specialists, who were able to introduce and explain the Scheme in detail. The presentation is provided in **Appendix A-4** and summarised in **Table 5-3**.

Table 5-3: Information presented during the collaboration workshops

Information presented

Summary

Introduction to the collaboration workshops

The Tillbridge Solar team

An overview of the Tillbridge Solar team, including the joint venture partnership between Tribus Clean Energy and Recurrent Energy (referred to as parent company Canadian Solar in 2022, with Recurrent Energy being launched in April 2023) – along with the specialist team supporting the Scheme.

Information presented

Summary

Our approach to consultation	An overview of the approach to consultation and classification of Tillbridge Solar as a NSIP.
Key aims	An overview of the key aims and objectives of the Scheme and the opportunities presented by this early-stage engagement, including what the workshops were designed to achieve.

Introduction to Tillbridge Solar

About Tillbridge Solar	An overview of the elements of the Scheme, including the construction, operation and decommissioning of ground mounted solar PV arrays and supporting infrastructure.
Location and key facts	An overview of the location of the Scheme and initial identification of preferred areas for development (approximately 1,000ha), and preferred areas to be considered for mitigation and enhancement (approximately 700ha). These are hereby termed as 'developable' and 'non-developable' areas for development.
The needs case	An overview of the needs case for the Scheme, including the role that solar plays in the transition to net zero, and opportunity to develop Tillbridge Solar in a responsible way.

The story so far

Site search assessment	An overview of the initial high-level site search assessment completed to identify a location for a proposed solar energy farm in the east of England.
Environmental constraints and opportunities	<p>An overview of initial environmental constraints and opportunities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consideration of environmental features and designations• Consideration of planning designations• Landscape and visual analysis, including low, medium and high-risk areas for development
Preferred cable corridor	An overview of the location of the preferred cable corridor, including key constraints considered. This included reference to a series of alternative options that were explored and

Information presented

Summary

	assessed prior to the inclusion of the preferred option.
Extent of DCO following site selection process	An overview of the project being presented at this early stage, including indicative areas for development and enhancement (“developable” and “non-developable”) and preferred route of the Cable Route Corridor.

Key topic areas

Discussing the key issues and constraints	<p>A discussion around a number of key topic areas in relation to how the project is defined going forwards, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cumulative impact, including where the Scheme is located in relation to other solar developments, and how the project has, and will be continuing to, engage constructively with other developers• Site selection and consideration of alternatives, including the approach taken to date• Socioeconomics and land use, including consideration of community benefits <p>A number of other environmental topics were discussed, with an explanation provided around work carried out to date and identification of initial constraints and features. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ecology and biodiversity• Cultural heritage• Landscape and visual• Transport and access• Water environment <p>Other environmental topics (outside of the others listed) were also discussed.</p>
Next steps	An overview of next steps and project refinement following the collaboration workshops, along with the Scheme timeline and how attendees can continue to engage with the Scheme.

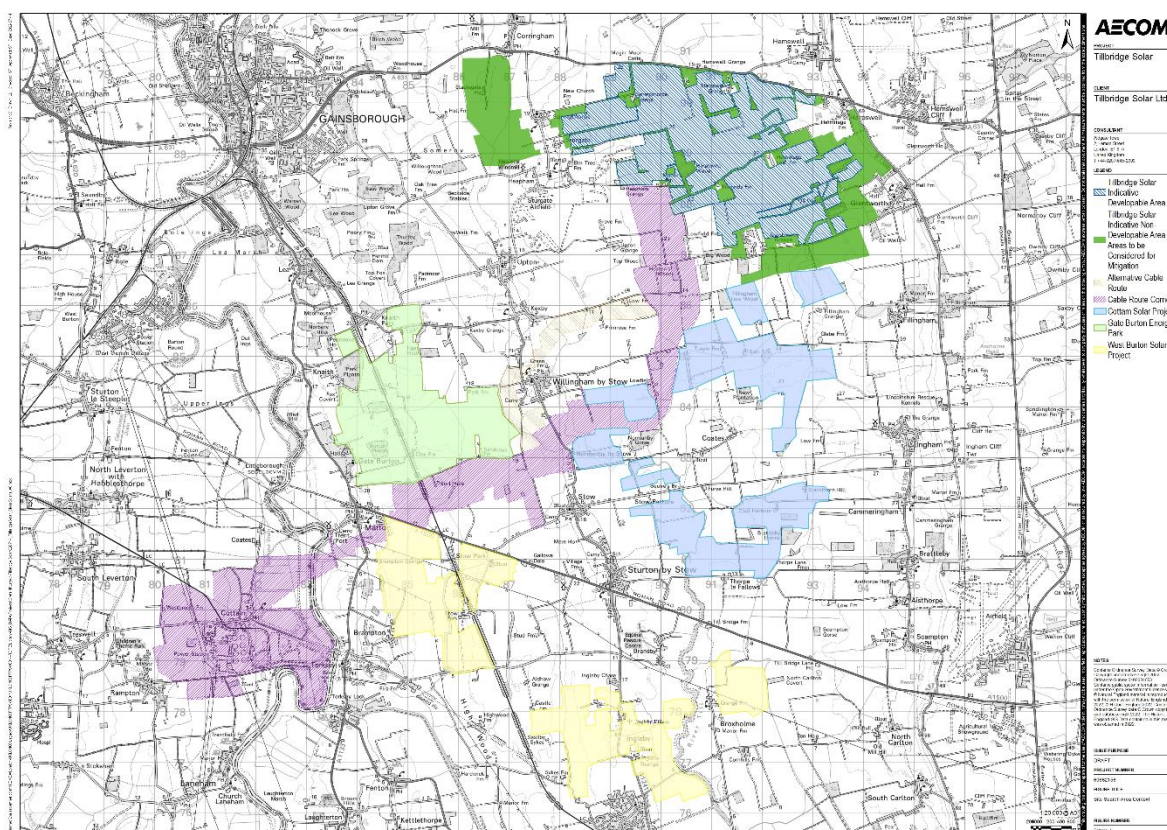
5.5.17 To aid presentation of this information and attendees’ understanding of the Scheme’s development, the Applicant also shared hard copy maps and plans, including:

- a. Environmental constraints and opportunities, including desk-based research on Agricultural Land Classification (ALC);
- b. Environmental and planning constraints, including indicative areas for higher, medium and low risk landscape and visual constraints;
- c. Central Lincolnshire Local Plan designations;
- d. The preferred Cable Route Corridor, including identification of an alternative route;
- e. The indicative Order limits, including developable and non-developable areas; and
- f. The wider site search area, in the context of other large-scale solar projects in the region.

5.5.18 Copies of the maps and plans presented are provided in **Appendix A-5**.

5.5.19 An example plan, showing the location of the Scheme (and its indicative developable and non-developable areas) in relation to other solar DCO schemes, is provided as **Figure 5-1**.

Figure 5-1: Example plan shown during collaboration workshops – solar NSIPs



Providing feedback and comments during the workshops

- 5.5.20 The Applicant welcomed the input of workshop attendees in relation to all issues raised, including in respect of local constraints and features.
- 5.5.21 Feedback and comments could be provided throughout the session by:

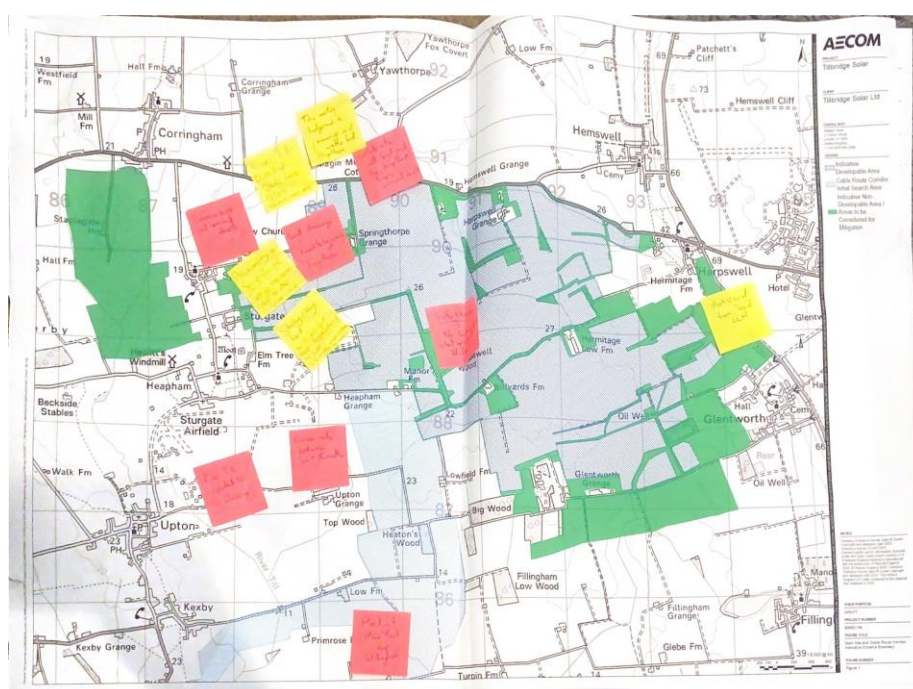
- a. Providing comments on post-it notes, which could be pinned on printed maps (showing the indicative developable and non-developable areas of the Scheme and Cable Route Corridor);
- b. Placing pins/stickers on maps to identify notable locations and constraints in the area;
- c. Writing directly onto maps;
- d. Using comment sheets (see **Appendix A-6**) – there was an opportunity to write down any final thoughts at the end of each workshop; and
- e. Noting down key issues during discussions with the project team, recorded by both attendees and the project team.

5.5.22 The Applicant also welcomed additional comments from attendees following the workshops, along with the opportunity to arrange follow-up meetings with stakeholders on an individual basis as part of the ongoing refinement of the Scheme's design.

5.5.23 An example of the printed maps provided during the sessions, and comments included on the plan, is shown in **Figure 5-1. Appendix A-7** provides additional images and examples of feedback from the workshops.

5.5.24 **Figure 5-2** shows an example of an annotated map during collaboration workshops.

Figure 5-2: Example of annotated map during collaboration workshops



Attendees

5.5.25 A total of 23 stakeholders attended across the three workshops, including representatives from:

- a. Bassetlaw District Council (officers and elected representatives);
- b. Glentworth Parish Council;
- c. Fillingham Parish Council;

- d. National Farmers Union;
- e. Hemswell and Harpswell Parish Council;
- f. Willingham by Stow Parish Council;
- g. Marton and Gate Burton Parish Council;
- h. Nottinghamshire Local Access Forum;
- i. Springthorpe Parish Meeting;
- j. Kexby Parish Council;
- k. Lincolnshire County Council (officers and elected representatives);
- l. Lincolnshire Rural Support Network;
- m. Country and Land Association;
- n. West Lindsey District Council (officers and elected representatives);
and
- o. Members of the public, including farmers.

5.5.26 Members of the public were not directly invited to the workshops, as their elected representatives were; however, some were informed of them through local representatives, and were welcomed to attend on arrival. In these instances, the Applicant clarified the format and purpose of the workshops and the expectation of attendees in relation to participation and comments.

5.5.27 An image taken from the workshop at Willingham by Stow village hall is shown in **Figure 5-3**.

Figure 5-3: Picture from collaboration workshop at Willingham by Stow village hall (21 July 2022)



Key themes

5.5.28 Key issues and themes, including local constraints and features, arising from the workshops included:

- a. Cable crossing of the River Trent, potentially using Torksey Viaduct;
- b. Importance of local land use and farming/food production locally;
- c. Water environment, particularly in villages such as Willingham, Springthorpe, Sturgate, Glentworth and Fillingham;
- d. Collaboration with local people on the future development of plans;
- e. Community benefits, including provision of EV charging points and broadband grants;
- f. Cumulative impact of all projects in the region;
- g. Grading of agricultural land, including differences in classifications;
- h. Visual impact of the project from local villages;
- i. Impacts on public rights of way and 'informal' routes, including potential permissive paths through the site;
- j. Local sensitive heritage assets;
- k. Local jobs, employment and benefits for the local economy;
- l. Importance of the River Till and the risk of flooding;

- m. Local nature and biodiversity, including deer and migrating birds and BNG; and
- n. Traffic and access, including a number of local roads with single-track access, such as Kexby Road and Grange Lane.

Summary of comments from engagement with near neighbours

- 5.5.29 As described in **section 5.4**, representatives from the Scheme carried out a 'door-knocking' exercise with near neighbours to the Principal Site across three separate visits.
- 5.5.30 A summary of comments received from these visits, along with the Applicant's response and subsequent changes to the Scheme between the non-statutory and statutory consultation phases, is provided in **Table 5-4** below.

Table 5-4: Summary of near neighbour comments

Summary of comments	Applicant response and relevant changes to the Scheme
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<p>Residents were concerned that the Scheme is being brought forward alongside other solar developments in the area. There was concern about the potential cumulative effect on the landscape and its visual impact, especially from residential properties.</p>	<p>Where the Scheme is nearest to other solar developments, plans have been refined to ensure relevant areas are to be used for mitigation planting such as woodland, rather than solar PV panels and infrastructure.</p> <p>The Applicant committed to tree planting and mitigation along routes (including Kexby Road), which will help limit or prevent views of multiple schemes in combination.</p>
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<p>Concerns were raised by some residents about proximity and visibility of the Scheme to properties, with the open, rural views being highly valued.</p>	<p>Following discussions and observations from residential properties, the indicative developable areas were setback further in a number of locations. Key views from such locations, along with consideration of the subtle local topography, has informed proposed mitigation buffers (ensuring a larger space between the developable areas and sensitive receptors), including woodland and hedgerows.</p> <p>The Scheme (as illustrated on Figure 3-1: Indicative Principal Site Layout Plan of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3]) continues to include both woodland planting and grassland/green space (now termed Biodiversity Zones) to the north of Kexby Road.</p>
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<p>Residents questioned whether planting that offers ecological value, including fruit trees, could be included in the plans for the Scheme.</p>	<p>Planting, as proposed for mitigation and enhancement, will be selected to be best adapted to the specific site conditions. The Scheme hopes to deliver maximum diversity and offer features that provide benefits to local people, such as the provision of orchard trees.</p>
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<p>Some residents raised concerns about the potential impacts on existing rural traffic routes (for construction traffic), along with where site access would be taken.</p>	<p>Plans are currently being refined in regard to how site is accessed both during construction and operation of the Scheme. Sensitive routes that are unsuitable for heavy or frequent vehicle movements will be avoided, where possible.</p>
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Questions were asked about which farm access tracks may be used, which could have a negative impact on the quiet

rural amenity along with the safety of families who use the routes adjacent to houses and gardens.

Some residents raised concerns about the impacts on the welfare of livestock, such as from noise and disruption arising during construction of the Scheme.	The Applicant is working to refine the location of the solar PV panels (within the developable area) to ensure minimal impact on livestock. Mitigation proposals are also being developed.
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Some residents questioned the proximity of the Scheme to local villages, along with potential impacts on amenity of local people who use recreational routes such as permissive paths.	Further buffers have been included between villages such as Springthorpe, to avoid visual impacts and allow opportunities for more extensive and focused mitigation in these areas.
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Queries were raised as to how much ecological mitigation would be incorporated, how it would be managed through the lifetime of the Scheme, and what would happen at decommissioning.	Management of features such as woodland, hedges and species-rich grassland will be clearly explained as the plans are developed in more detail. This will include clarity on the frequency on cutting, thinning and hedge height to ensure careful management during the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Scheme.
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Discussions with landowners provided opportunities to identify suitable areas for mitigation and enhancement, including areas of lower agricultural value.	The plans are now being developed in more detail to include specific fields and areas that would be suitable for tree planting or ecological enhancement.
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Reporting following the collaboration workshops

5.5.31 Following the collaboration workshops in July 2022 and initial exercise with near neighbours, the Applicant had regard to all comments and feedback received and factored these into the Scheme design, where possible. The key design changes in response to feedback from this phase is provided in **section 5.7**.

5.5.32 After factoring comments into Scheme's design, the Applicant issued a 'post-collaboration workshop report' in September 2022 to a number of stakeholders (listed in **Appendix A-11**). A copy of the report can be found in **Appendix A-9**. The report provided the following information:

- a. Overview of the Scheme, its location and objectives;
- b. The Applicant's approach to pre-application consultation;

- c. Summary of collaboration workshops, include attendees, format and information presented;
 - d. Feedback and comments from the workshops, including high-level key themes (as summarised in **section 5.5**) and key issues from comments and feedback raised (as summarised in **section 5.7**);
 - e. Summary of engagement with near neighbours, including a summary of comments received and the Applicant's regard to (as summarised in **section 5.7**);
 - f. Updated FAQs, in recognition of issues raised at the workshops;
 - g. Summary of next steps following the workshops, leading up to the statutory consultation in 2023; and
 - h. Information regarding communications channels for stakeholders to get in touch.
- 5.5.33 The workshop report was issued to all stakeholders invited to the workshops (as listed in **Table 5-2**) by email in September 2022. The Scheme website (as shown in **Appendix C-13.4**) was also updated with the latest information, including a PDF copy of the report.
- 5.5.34 In addition to the stakeholders invited to the workshops, wider stakeholders were sent the report by email, including additional neighbouring parish councils, community and seldom heard groups, County Council and District Council members (as listed in **Table 5-2**) along with MPs (namely, Sir Edward Leigh MP, Mr Brendan Clarke-Smith MP and Robert Jenrick MP. An example email is provided in **Appendix A-8**.

Community newsletter (October 2022)

- 5.5.35 Alongside issuing the workshop report (**Appendix A-9**), the Applicant produced a community newsletter, which was distributed to communities living in the vicinity of the Scheme. Hard copy newsletters were sent to the PCZ comprising approximately 5000 properties by Royal Mail 2nd class postage on 24 October 2022. The newsletter is provided as **Appendix A-10**.
- 5.5.36 The newsletter was also sent electronically via email to wider consultees, including parish councils, MPs, the Host authorities (members and elected representatives) and local interest groups, as listed in **Appendix A-11**.
- 5.5.37 The community newsletter aimed to introduce the Scheme to the wider community and presented more detailed information on the proposals. The information included details of how the Scheme design had taken into account technical work and assessments carried out to date, and the refinements made to it in response to collaboration with key stakeholders.
- 5.5.38 The newsletter included the following information:
- a. Introduction to the Scheme, its location and objectives;
 - b. Introduction to the joint venture partnership;
 - c. The location of the Scheme and its key elements, including developable and non-developable areas (comprising the Principal Site) and cable corridor search area, along with key statistics (such as

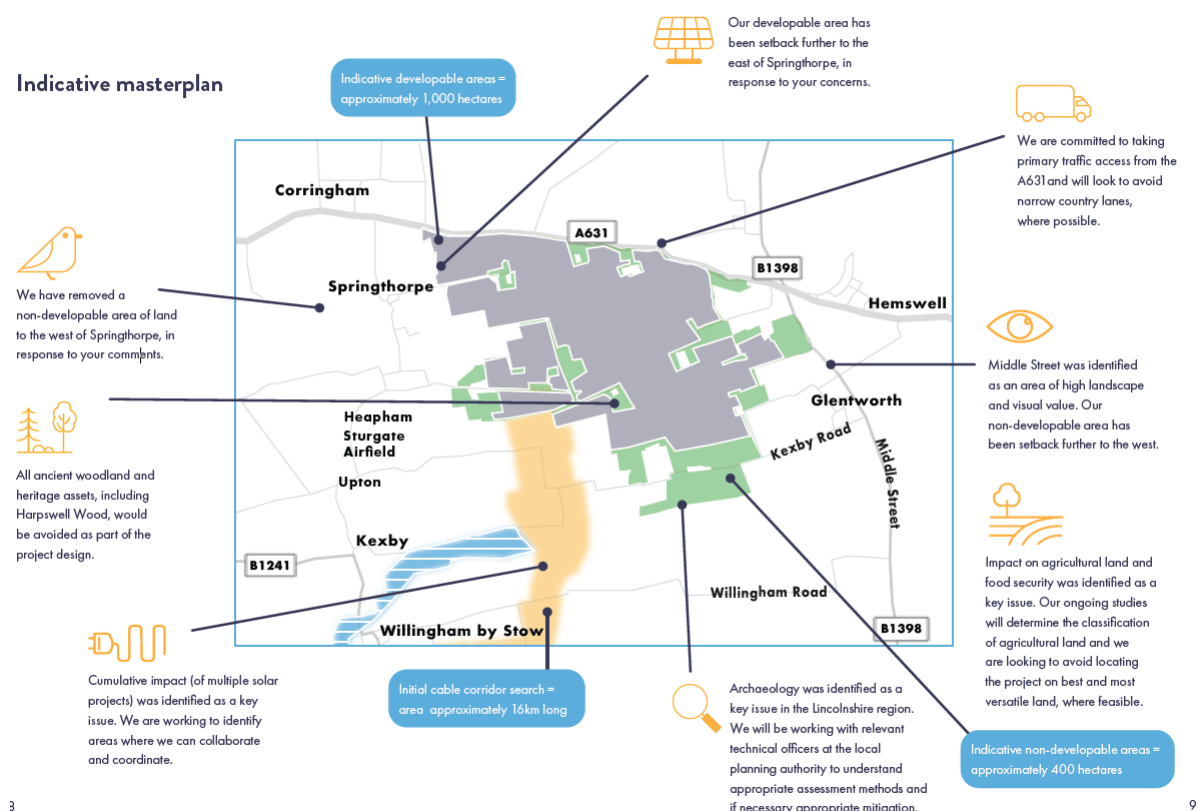
- current hectarage of the Principal Site and lengths and the final width of the corridor);
- d. A map showing the location of the Scheme;
 - e. Summary of the Scheme's development process and approach to public consultation;
 - f. Overview of the collaboration workshops, including an indicative masterplan (updated following regard had to workshop comments and feedback);
 - g. Recognition of the Scheme's location in relation to other solar NSIP schemes and how the Applicant was intending to work with the respective developers;
 - h. Next steps for the Scheme following the workshops, leading into the statutory consultation in 2023;
 - i. More information on the Scoping Report and EIA process;
 - j. Indicative Scheme timeline; and
 - k. Information on how to get in touch.

Indicative masterplan

5.5.39 The Indicative masterplan, as shown in **Figure 5-4**, indicated the key Scheme changes following the collaboration workshops in response to feedback. These changes included:

- a. Removal of an area of 'non-developable' land to the west of Springthorpe;
- b. Setting back the 'developable' land further to the east of Springthorpe;
- c. Setting back the 'non-developable' land further to the west from Middle Street, which was identified as an area of high landscape and visual value;
- d. A commitment to avoid all ancient woodland and heritage assets as part of the Scheme design, including Harpswell Wood;
- e. Addressing issues around the cumulative impacts of schemes and a commitment to working together to identify areas for coordination;
- f. Information on working with relevant technical officers at the Host authorities to understand appropriate assessment methods and appropriate mitigation, if necessary;
- g. Information on ongoing studies to determine the classification of agriculture and the Applicant's ambition to avoid locating the Scheme on BMV land, where feasible; and
- h. A commitment to take primary traffic access from the A631, avoiding narrow country lanes, where possible.

Figure 5-4: Indicative masterplan presented in community newsletter (October 2022)



3

9

Primary Consultation Zone

- 5.5.40 The Applicant identified a PCZ to help determine the areas where consultation would take place; taking into consideration where the Scheme may have a direct or indirect impact, either permanently or temporarily, as a result of construction, operation and maintenance or decommissioning.
- 5.5.41 Having considered these impacts, the Applicant identified an appropriate PCZ by initially extending a minimum distance of two kilometres from the boundary of the Principal Site – within which the solar PV panels, energy storage system, on-site substation and supporting infrastructure would be located. The PCZ also extended one kilometre from the edge of the Cable Route Corridor for the grid connection.
- 5.5.42 The PCZ was also extended in certain areas as considered proportionate. The Applicant considered:
- The zone of theoretical visibility for the Scheme, which assesses areas in vicinity of the Order limits which could experience a degree of visual impact;
 - Existing natural and human geographic boundaries, such as main roads;
 - Capturing entire communities, rather than excluding small numbers of properties;
 - Coverage of the host district council wards and parishes; and

- e. Where the Applicant proposes to undertake additional works to enable construction transport, equipment areas or road modifications.

5.5.43 The zone was extended further where proportionate and reasonable based on existing boundaries, which was also applied to the draft Order limits presented at statutory consultation. This zone was also extended at this point following consultation with the Host authorities on the draft SoCC (see **section 6.3**).

5.5.44 The PCZ adopted for this stage is shown in **Figure 7-1**.

5.6 Interim reporting

Ongoing stakeholder meetings

5.6.1 Following on from and building on relationships made during the collaboration workshops, the Applicant welcomed the opportunity to meet with stakeholders, on request.

5.6.2 The Applicant attended a series of parish council meetings to discuss early-stage plans for the Scheme in more detail. These are listed and summarised in **Table 5-5**.

Table 5-5: Summary of parish council meetings held between October 2022 and May 2023

Parish Council Meeting	Date location	Attendees	Summary of meeting
Springthorpe Parish Meeting	26 September 2022, Springthorpe Village Hall, School Lane, Springthorpe, DN21 5QD	Representatives from Springthorpe Parish Meeting, local residents, landowners and tenant farmers. Representatives from other parish councils/meetings and local councillors.	<p>The Applicant attended a meeting with Springthorpe Parish Meeting and provided an introduction and overview of the Scheme to representatives of the parish meeting and local residents/ landowners.</p> <p>The Applicant mirrored information presented during the collaboration workshops and fielded questions from attendees to the meeting.</p>
7000 acres meeting	15 March 2023, Pollyplatt Primary School, School Ln, Scampton, Lincoln LN1 2TP	Representatives from 7000 acres community group, local residents, landowners and tenant farmers. Representatives from parish councils/meetings and county/district local councillors.	<p>The Applicant received an invitation to attend a 7000 acres (community group) meeting in Scampton. The meeting invitation was extended to the other solar DCO developers in the area to discuss all schemes in more detail.</p> <p>The Applicant addressed questions in the room regarding the Scheme, and provided an update ahead of planned statutory consultation in 2023.</p>
Glentworth Parish Council	24 May 2023, 26 Church St, Glentworth, Gainsborough DN21 5DG	Representatives from Glentworth Parish Council, local residents, landowners and tenant farmers. Representatives from other parish councils/meetings and local councillors.	The Applicant provided briefing information ahead of the statutory consultation on 30 May 2023 (see section 7.5 for more detail).

Ongoing engagement with technical stakeholders

- 5.6.3 The Applicant also continued engagement with technical stakeholders following the collaboration workshops (through to the statutory consultation in May 2023), helping with the refinement of the Scheme design to be presented during the statutory consultation.
- 5.6.4 A list of engagements (including online meetings, in person site visits, email correspondence and technical notes) with stakeholders between August 2022 and May 2023, is provided in **Table 5-6**, including a summary of the key issues discussed.

Table 5-6: Applicant team meetings engagements with technical stakeholders (August 2022 to May 2023)

ES Topic	Date and location	Attendees	Summary of meeting
Cultural Heritage	23 August 2022; online meeting	Railway Paths, Sustrans	To discuss the use of Torksey Viaduct as a potential crossing point for the cable over the River Trent.
Landscape and Visual Amenity	20 October 2022; in person site visit	Lincolnshire County Council landscape consultant and Scheme's landscape architect	Visit to discuss and agree of viewpoints for the purpose of the LVIA.
Cultural Heritage	22 November 2022; online meeting	Series of heritage stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme update confirming that Scoping Report issued to SoS • Discussed Study Area for heritage assets with agreement for 1km and 3km Study Area • Discussed shared cable route to minimise impacts • Geophysics update • Heritage walkover with stakeholders to be arranged later in 2023

Landscap e and Visual Amenity	22 November 2022; online meeting	AAH (planning, landscape and environmental) consultants	Technical Note issued to Applicant with respect to viewpoints.
Transport and access	9 December 2022; email correspondence	Relevant highways authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction email setting out the scope of the Scheme and seeking a meeting to agree on. • Access and routing strategy for the Scheme. • The scope and methodology for the transport deliverables; • The Study Area for the collision review; • Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) requirements. • Cumulative schemes to be included as part of the assessment.
Cultural Heritage	20 December 2022; email correspondence	Range of heritage stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discuss the feasibility of crossing the River Trent via Torksey Viaduct, a Grade II* listed structure. • Agreement to not pursue due to heritage impacts and a diversion from the principal of creating a shared Cable Route Corridor with other developers.
Cultural Heritage	From 15 February 2023 to 6 March 2023; ongoing correspondence/engagemen t	AAH consultants and Applicant's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on baseline Winter photography and viewpoints of Principal Site to be

		landscape architects	included within the ES. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of agreed viewpoints and rationale
Transport and Access	19 January 2023; online meeting	Relevant highways authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory presentation setting out the Scheme • Discussion of trip generation, staff distribution and site access arrangements • Discussion of HGV routing and proposed approach • Discussion of traffic surveys and collision Study Area • Discussion of cumulative effects and potential overlap of construction with other Schemes. • Discussion of PRow management. • Discussion of permissive paths and potential inclusion within the Scheme • Discussion of shared Cable Route Corridor and confirmation that the Applicant had start to collaborate with other developers. • Discussion of Cable Route Corridor access.
Landscape and Visual Amenity	6 March 2023; technical note	AAH consultants and Applicant's landscape architects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue on viewpoints to feed into the ES.

Cultural
Heritage

21 March 2023; online
meeting

Range of
heritage
stakeholders

- Scheme update ahead of statutory consultation.
- Agreement to 2% trial trenching to the Principal Site.
- Agreement for one WSI to be produced with addendums for CRC and geo-archaeology.
- DBA to be issued to stakeholders.

Ongoing engagement with Host authorities

5.6.5 As outlined in **section 5.2**, the Applicant also continued engagement with Host authorities following the collaboration workshops (through to the statutory consultation in May 2023), helping to proactively discuss issues associated with the continued development of the Scheme. **Table 5-7** lists example meetings with Host authorities from June 2022 through to statutory consultation in May 2023.

Table 5-7: Applicant team example meetings with Host authorities (June 2022 to May 2023)

LPA	Meeting date/format	Summary of items discussed
Bassetlaw District Council; West Lindsey District Council; Lincolnshire County Council; Nottinghamshire County Council	Individual meetings across 15-20 June 2022 (as described in section 5.2, paragraph 5.2.9)	As described in section 5.2, paragraph 5.2.9 .
Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council (joint meeting); Lincolnshire County Council	Joint meeting on 27 October 2022 (Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council) 21 October 2022 (Lincolnshire County Council); both Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Scoping Report. • Technical queries following receipt of the Scoping Opinion and leading up to statutory consultation. • Communications update following collaboration workshops; subsequent engagement with neighbourhood planning team.
West Lindsey District Council	28 June 2022; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recap following introductory meeting on 16 June 2022. • Feedback on approach to non-statutory engagement. • Scheme's interaction with other solar schemes.
West Lindsey District Council	2 November 2022; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant's progress following collaboration workshops, including communication with wider stakeholders. • Upcoming programme for informal and formal consultation on draft SoCC. • Discussion of Host authority concerns prior to member briefing on wider solar schemes in November 2022.

Lincolnshire County Council	13 December 2022; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme update on Scoping Opinion. • Wider engagement with Lincolnshire County Council on technical disciplines and agreeing ways of working. • Introduction to principles in draft SoCC, including presentation and seeking initial comments from Lincolnshire County Council.
Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council (joint meeting); Lincolnshire County Council	Joint meeting on 21 December 2022 (Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council); 8 November 2022 (Lincolnshire County Council); both Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme update, including response to Scoping Opinion. • Presentation of Applicant's approach to engagement in draft SoCC. • Discussion of Cable Route Corridor and potential for co-location with other schemes.
Lincolnshire County Council	14 March 2023; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lincolnshire County Council informal feedback on SoCC and Applicant's regard to comments. • Ongoing stakeholder engagement, including with parish councils and '7000 acres' community group. • Lincolnshire County Council engagement with PINS regarding cumulative impacts/joint examination of schemes. • Upcoming statutory consultation and briefings with Host authority members.
Lincolnshire County Council	11 May 2023; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback following face-to-face briefing in Lincoln. • Discussion of PEI Report and key issues for statutory consultation. • Discussion of wider issues, including status of other solar schemes, status of RAF Scampton.
West Lindsey District Council	17 May 2023; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates for local elections, including new members. • Preparation ahead of Host authority briefings for statutory consultation. • Scheme updates and on-the-ground activities, including trial trenching and wider environmental work.

5.7 Feedback reporting and key design changes

5.7.1 A summary of key comments raised during the workshops, along with the Applicant's response and subsequent changes made by the Applicant to the Scheme between the non-statutory and statutory consultation phases, is provided in **Table 5-8**.

Table 5-8: Summary of changes made to the Scheme following collaboration workshops

Summary of issue	Applicant response and relevant changes to the Scheme
<p>Site selection</p> <p>Comments highlighted concern about the potential size of the Scheme, suggesting that the scale should be reduced to minimise impact on the local area.</p> <p>In particular, comments suggested that the Scheme should be moved further away from Springthorpe, which would currently be impacted by indicative developable and non-developable areas.</p>	<p>The Applicant recognised concerns regarding the size of the Scheme communicated during the collaboration workshops, which comprised 1,000ha of indicative developable areas and 700ha of non-developable areas.</p> <p>In response to concerns regarding the Scheme's proximity to Springthorpe, the Applicant subsequently removed approximately 200ha of land to the west of the village, which had originally been proposed for landscape enhancement and mitigation measures. The Scheme was also set back further to the east of the village, reducing the overall indicative non-developable areas to approximately 400ha (as was presented during the statutory consultation).</p> <p>Following ongoing design development throughout the pre-application period the Applicant refined the Order limits to approximately 1,350ha for the Principal Site and a Cable Route Corridor maintaining a 100m wide shared corridor where possible to allow space for several solar projects and allowing for micro-siting to avoid sensitive areas and site accesses.</p> <p>Full details can be found in Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1], including how the Scheme was refined from non-statutory consultation, through to statutory consultation and DCO application submission.</p>
<p>Land use and agriculture</p> <p>Feedback during the workshops highlighted the importance of agricultural land and that this land</p>	<p>The Applicant noted concerns about the impact on agricultural land during the collaboration workshops and the lack of detail provided at this stage. The Applicant published more detail on ALC surveys during the statutory consultation, including an interim ALC report, which noted that</p>

Summary of issue

should not be taken out of valuable food production.

People also expressed concern about how agricultural land was noted as 'lower quality' and how the land was classified.

Comments also suggested that solar panels should be sited on brownfield land, and rolled out on a larger scale on the roofs of houses and buildings

Applicant response and relevant changes to the Scheme

not all land within the Principal Site had been surveyed.

Following the conclusion of initial ALC surveys, the Applicant notes that the majority of the site is Grade 3b with smaller and isolated pockets of Best and Most Versatile land. Development of the Principal Site would be temporary with no loss of agricultural land extent or quality.

The effect of the Scheme on agricultural land with regards to food production has been considered in **Section 14.8** (Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects) in **Chapter 14: Socio-economics and Land Use** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

There are no likely significant effects across the construction and operational phases with regards to food production, considering that the Scheme area forms less than 1% of agricultural land available in Lincolnshire and that following operation, the land used for the Scheme can be reverted back to agricultural land.

Consideration in the initial site selection exercise was also given to the available brownfield land on the register. The brownfield land that was identified was less than 5ha in size or already allocated within the emerging local policy at the time of the search. Therefore it was concluded that there was no available or suitable brownfield land for the Scheme.

Flood risk and drainage

Comments during our workshops showed us that flood risk and drainage is an important issue with a history of flooding in villages such as Willingham, Springthorpe, Sturgate, Glentworth and Fillingham.

People questioned whether the project would worsen the quality of land in the area and increase the risk of flooding.

The Applicant noted concerns around drainage and flood risk at this stage, which included discussions during the collaboration workshops with the aid of a series of constraints maps and plans factoring in flood risk and other environmental concerns (see **Appendix A-5** for the series of plans).

The Applicant published preliminary environmental findings on flood risk and drainage in the PEI Report, which was published during the statutory consultation.

The Applicant provided a non-technical summary of this information in the project information booklet (see **Appendix C-13.2**), which clarified that construction works associated with the Scheme would be carried out in accordance with mitigation measures

Summary of issue

Applicant response and relevant changes to the Scheme

documented within the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), so that impacts on local watercourses are appropriately managed and prevented. The Applicant noted that the Scheme would also look to implement sustainable drainage systems (SuDS),

A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared within **Appendix 10-3** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.2]**. The FRA assesses flood risk from all sources and ensures that the Scheme does not increase flood risk, to the Scheme or elsewhere, in line with national and local planning requirements.

Landscape and visual impact

Comments highlighted the importance of the landscape and its overall character and helped us identify a number of locations where the project could be visible from. This included Middle Street and Springthorpe Village.

Workshop attendees also welcomed plans for all of the cable corridor to be underground, rather than pylons/other above-ground infrastructure.

The Applicant noted during the statutory consultation that landscape and visual effects would arise for the Scheme, including for some properties neighbouring the Principal Site and roads or footpaths where there are open views (such as Middle Street along The Cliff). However, the inclusion of mitigation screen planting is intended to limit the majority of these visual effects as vegetation matures over time.

As part of the Applicant's early-stage engagement, including with nearest neighbours to the project and key stakeholders, a series of changes to the project were made to help reduce visual impact from sensitive receptors. This includes setting the Scheme back further from Middle Street, moving the Scheme to the east from Springthorpe and pulling the Scheme further back westwards from Glentworth.

The Applicant received further comments regarding landscape and visual impacts during the statutory consultation stage (see **Chapter 10**) and sought to address comments in the final Scheme design.

This included opportunities for mitigation planting around the Principal Site, as was communicated in the indicative masterplan presented during the Statutory Consultation (see the project information booklet – **Appendix C-13.2**) and subsequently in the community newsletter prior to DCO application submission in Q1 2024 (see **Appendix A-12.1**).

Summary of issue

Applicant response and relevant changes to the Scheme

The full LVIA exercise included a comprehensive review of the existing (baseline) landscape, and receptors (people with views), and has been reported in detail in **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** and **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the **ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]**, with detail on long-term management and maintenance provided in a Framework Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) **[EN010142/APP/7.18]**.

Cumulative impacts

Feedback highlighted concerns about the cumulative impact of multiple projects in the region. Attendees questioned whether all developers will be working collaboratively, sharing the same infrastructure, and assessed together once the planning applications have been submitted.

The Applicant noted concerns about cumulative impacts of multiple projects during the collaboration workshops and discussed the matter in detail, including presentation of the Schemes together during the sessions (see **Appendix A-5.6**) and subsequently during the statutory consultation (including the project information booklet – see **Appendix C-13.2**).

Section 5.3 of this Consultation Report provides more detail on the Applicant's continued collaboration with other developers, which include:

- Jointly working with other developers in refining the Scheme's Cable Route Corridor, as reported in the Design and Access Statement as part of the final DCO application **[EN010142/APP/7.3]**.
- Providing further information on the inter-relationships between the Scheme and the neighbouring projects, as provided in the Report on the Interrelationship with other National Infrastructure Projects **[EN010142/APP/7.6]**.

From an engagement and consultation perspective, the early engagement and cooperation with the other developers enabled the Applicant to ensure that:

- People could easily engage with each of the consultation processes and that materials clearly signposted to other consultations.
- The combined effects of the projects together, including potential environmental impacts or disruption to communities, were fully assessed and explained in the consultation material where relevant.

Summary of issue

Applicant response and relevant changes to the Scheme

With regards to cumulative effects, more detail can be found in **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Archaeology

Feedback helped us better understand the importance of local archaeology to the community, including historical Roman settlements and Torksey Road (and its link to Viking times).

Workshop attendees also discussed potential opportunities for the project, including sharing archaeological data (with other developers), and creating educational initiatives for local people to understand more about Lincolnshire's heritage.

The Applicant recognised the importance of local archaeology to the community and noted during the statutory consultation that in most cases, the Scheme would have limited effects on the setting of built heritage assets as existing vegetation and ground level differences would obscure views of the Scheme from those assets.

As noted in the project information booklet (**Appendix C-13.2**), once operational, solar infrastructure may be visible from the Scheduled Monument of Harpswell Hall and the Grade I listed Church of St Chad. As the Scheme evolved – including the indicative Scheme masterplan – new planting has been included in the landscape design to mitigate effects and the potential for further landscaping will be investigated further.

The Applicant engaged with statutory and technical stakeholders on an ongoing basis, including representatives from Lincolnshire County Council and Historic England, and assessed cultural heritage factors according with appropriate mitigation by design. For example, the Applicant set back the Scheme further from Harpswell, reducing the significant of effect to the heritage assets.

A full assessment of archaeology and heritage assets has been carried out within **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Traffic and access

We received valuable feedback about the condition of local roads and examples of routes that would not be suitable for heavy goods vehicles during the construction phase. Particular roads included Grange Lane, School Lane and Dog Kennel Road. The A15 and A161 were suggested as more suitable routes.

The Applicant noted concerns regarding the specific traffic access routes and the condition of local roads. The indicative site layout plan presented during the statutory consultation clarified the four proposed access points to the Principal Site; three of which were off the A631 and one off the B1398 Middle Street, therefore avoiding Grange Lane, School Lane and Dog Kennel Road. Provisional findings from traffic surveys were also presented during the statutory consultation.

Summary of issue

Applicant response and relevant changes to the Scheme

Chapter 16: Transport and Access of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] includes a detailed assessment of the potential construction traffic impacts associated with the Scheme, including an HGV routing strategy both off the strategic road network and within the Principal Site itself. Further clarity on the traffic routes was also provided in the updated indicative site layout plan presented in the community newsletter (March 2023) prior to DCO submission (see **Appendix A-12.1**).

5.8 Key design changes between non-statutory and statutory consultation

5.8.1 Feedback from non-statutory engagement (including ongoing engagement with near neighbours, statutory consultees and landowners), along with the wider strategic Masterplanning process, environmental survey and assessment work helped to influence the Scheme design that was presented during the statutory consultation period in May 2023. These changes included:

- a. Four points of access, three located along the A631 Harpswell Lane and one located on B1398 Middle Street to remove the need for construction vehicles using minor and unclassified roads;
- b. Utilisation of existing farm tracks where possible for internal access tracks during construction of the Principal Site;
- c. The arrangement of BESS and Solar Stations decentralised rather than in a centralised location;
- d. The inclusion of two on-site sub-stations;
- e. Where practical locating structures such as BESS, Solar Stations and on-site substations on non-BMV agricultural land;
- f. Avoiding the location of BESS, Solar Stations and sub-stations within areas of highest flood risk (flood zones 2 and 3);
- g. A minimum of 250m radius separation distance provided between residential properties and indicative locations of BESS, Solar Stations and on-site substations;
- h. Incorporation of the principles of a Framework Fire Safety Management Plan [EN010142/APP/7.14] for BESS including access to water tanks in the event of a fire;
- i. East-west tracking panel proposed;
- j. Inclusion of areas of ecological enhancement retaining existing features and providing enhancements to retain and improve connectivity;
- k. The provision of landscape mitigation for screening offsets (undeveloped buffers) from watercourses and ditches of at least 10m;

- l. Provision of offsets (undeveloped buffers) from existing vegetation to ensure their retention of at least 10m from woodland, individual trees and hedgerows with trees and at least 5m from hedgerows without trees; and
- m. Providing buffers around residential properties from the Solar PV Areas, with woodland mitigation where appropriate, but also cognisant of residents' appreciation of open views. These buffers vary from around 30m (where existing dense screening is in place) or more generally a minimum of 50m, up to around 300m.

6. Preparation for statutory consultation

6.1 Statutory Overview – requirements and guidance

- 6.1.1 This chapter details how the Applicant consulted the local community on the Scheme as required by Section 47 of the PA 2008.
- 6.1.2 Section 47 of the PA 2008 sets out an Applicant's duty to consult the local community.
- 6.1.3 As required by the PA 2008, the Applicant published a Section 47 Notice publicising the SoCC (see **Appendix B-1**) and made the SoCC available for the public to view at local information points (see **Table 6-3**) and on the Scheme website. Consultation activities were carried out in line with the SoCC.
- 6.1.4 In developing the SoCC, regard was also had to the EIA Regulations (Ref 3) and relevant guidance relating to pre-application procedure. Regulation 12 of the EIA Regulations (Ref 3) stipulates that the SoCC must set out whether the proposal is EIA development and, if so, how the Applicant intends to publicise and consult on its PEI Report. Section 4.3 of the SoCC sets out that the Scheme is an EIA development and how the Applicant intended to publicise and consult on the PEI Report. See **Appendix B-7** for a copy of the SoCC.
- 6.1.5 The PEI Report was published as part of the formal Section 42 consultation which took place in parallel with the Section 47 statutory consultation between 30 May and 11 July 2023.
- 6.1.6 **Section 6.2** explains how the Applicant developed the SoCC; **section 6.3** sets out how consultation on the SoCC was carried out with the relevant local authorities; **section 6.4** confirms how the SoCC was publicised; and **Table 6-7** explains how the Applicant adhered to the commitments outlined in the SoCC.

6.2 Developing the SoCC

- 6.2.1 The SoCC describes how a developer will conduct its statutory consultation with the local community. To help a developer take advantage of local authorities' local knowledge, Section 47(2) of the PA 2008 states that the developer must consult each local authority that is within Section 43(1) about the content of the SoCC (the Host authorities).
- 6.2.2 The Applicant developed a SoCC that described statutory consultation in a way that allowed interested parties (particularly members of the community who may not have a detailed knowledge of major infrastructure development or NSIP consultations) to easily understand the Scheme; the consultation activities being undertaken; and how to take part in the consultation.
- 6.2.3 The SoCC also described the application process and how the Applicant was meeting the requirements of the PA 2008.

Identification of Local Authorities within Section 43(1) of the PA 2008

- 6.2.4 The relevant 'Host authorities' within Section 43(1) for the purposes of consultation on the SoCC under Section 47(2) of the PA 2008 were identified as:
- a. West Lindsey District Council;
 - b. Lincolnshire County Council;
 - c. Bassetlaw District Council; and
 - d. Nottinghamshire County Council.

Preparation of the SoCC

- 6.2.5 As prescribed by s47(1) of the PA 2008, the Applicant prepared a SoCC setting out how consultation would be undertaken with people living in vicinity of the land affected by the Scheme.
- 6.2.6 In preparing the draft SoCC, the Applicant considered best practice and guidance from PINS, early and ongoing engagement with host authorities, experience of, feedback to, and lessons learned from, the first stage of (non-statutory) consultation (see **Chapter 5**) and its knowledge of the area of the proposed Scheme. The Applicant also reviewed and considered published SoCCs for other solar NSIPs as well as those of NSIPs more broadly, in order to ensure consistency of approach and best practice was followed. This included Gate Burton, Cottam Solar and West Burton Solar, which are located in close proximity to the Scheme.
- 6.2.7 Before preparing the SoCC to reflect the requirements of Section 47 of the PA 2008, the Applicant consulted with each local authority within s43(1) of the PA 2008 on a draft version of the SoCC as required by s47(2) of the PA 2008.
- 6.2.8 A copy of the draft SoCC was supplied to local authorities on 20 December 2022 ahead of formal s47(2) consultation, with officers being invited to informally provide any comments on the content and detail set out therein, for consideration by the Applicant in advance of formal consultation (see **section 6.3**).
- 6.2.9 The Applicant requested comments back on the SoCC by 6 January 2023, which was subsequently extended to 13 January 2023 in recognition of the Christmas break and in response to a request by West Lindsey District Council.
- 6.2.10 The Applicant also used the regular meetings with local authorities to introduce the draft SoCC and the particular aspects on which the Applicant was seeking comment from the local authorities. A copy of the presentation used to explain the SoCC process to the local authorities and other stakeholders is provided in **Appendix B-2**.
- 6.2.11 A copy of the draft SoCC supplied for informal consultation with local authorities is provided in **Appendix B-3**.

- 6.2.12 Of those local authorities invited to informally comment on the draft SoCC, Bassetlaw District Council, West Lindsey District Council and Lincolnshire County Council responded.
- 6.2.13 Following informal consultation, the Applicant updated the draft SoCC, where appropriate, to respond to the comments from local authorities (as set out in **Table 6-1**). This updated version of the draft SoCC was then issued to host authorities for formal consultation on 13 February 2023, as explained in **section 6.3**.
- 6.2.14 **Table 6-1** provides a list of ‘informal’ comments provided on the draft SoCC and how the Applicant had regard to them when updating and re-issuing the SoCC for ‘formal’ consultation in February 2023. Where the formal SoCC could not be updated, this is also stated, for example, if final locations and timings for consultation activities were not confirmed at the time of issue.

Table 6-1: Informal comments on the draft SoCC and how these were addressed

LPA	Section of draft SoCC (dated December 2022)	Informal comment	How the comment was addressed
Bassetlaw District Council	5.2.1	<p><i>5.2.1 The aim of our pre-application consultation is to ensure that the community, landowners and tenants, stakeholders and technical consultees <u>have the opportunity to understand and influence our proposals.</u></i></p> <p>Bassetlaw District Council commented the wording underlined 'read well'.</p>	Comment noted.
Bassetlaw District Council	Figure 5.1: PCZ for Tillbridge Solar (to be refined for final document)	<p>The communities of North Leverton, South Leverton, and Treswell (in Bassetlaw) appear to be just outside the PCZ, and may benefit from being included. Elements of the three parishes are included already (hence the parish councils will likely be consulted), but the majority of households are currently outside the boundary.</p>	<p>The communities of North Leverton, South Leverton, and Treswell (in Bassetlaw) were added to the PCZ , and this was updated in the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023.</p>
Bassetlaw District Council	Table 5.1: Statutory consultation methods for Tillbridge Solar	<p>At least one event in Bassetlaw would be welcome, as although proximate 'as the crow flies', the proposed venues are a more significant distant from the impacted Bassetlaw communities when travelling by road, and particularly difficult to reach via public transport.</p>	<p>An additional event in Rampton Village Hall, Manor Grounds, Rampton, Retford was added to the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023, with final dates and locations included in the final SoCC (published May 2023).</p>

Bassetlaw District Council	Table 5.2: Methods for promoting the statutory consultation for Tillbridge Solar	Additional outlets of relevance to the Bassetlaw communities would include BBC East Midlands, BBC Look North (Yorkshire), ITV Calendar, Notts TV, and Retford Times.	These media outlets were added to the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023.
Bassetlaw District Council	8.1.1	<i>8.1.1 A map showing the location of the Scheme in relation to other solar developments will be available in the final version of this document, to be published before our statutory consultation.</i>	Comment noted. Bassetlaw District Council commented 'Yes, please; this will be really useful'.
Lincolnshire County Council	5.4	Reference is made to seldom heard groups, but strategies for reaching out to them are short on detail.	More detail on consultation with under-represented or seldom heard groups was added to the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023.
Lincolnshire County Council	5.4	Include more detail on specific local seldom heard groups or minority groups / bodies or organisations that represent them (e.g. traveller communities).	Local seldom heard groups, and organisations that represent them, were included in consultee lists, which was included in the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023.
Lincolnshire County Council	N/A	Consider referencing other groups e.g. working families and meeting their needs.	Local seldom heard groups were included in the consultee lists, which were included in Appendix A of the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023. The following text was added to the final SoCC dated 25 May 2023:

“Events will be held on different days of the week with varied hours to accommodate different availability, including on weekdays and at weekends, including hours running into the evening. This approach has been taken to ensure events are made available to range of stakeholders, such as working families.”

Lincolnshire County Council	4.4	Project timeline is present but could include more specific dates.	A detailed timeline was added to the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023.
Lincolnshire County Council	N/A	Consider including visual diagrammatic explanation of the scheme in this document (although reference is made to this being available at a later date)	An illustrative example of the Scheme was developed as part of the statutory consultation materials and added to the final SoCC published on 25 May 2023 (see Figure 4.2 in the document).
Lincolnshire County Council	N/A	Reference should be made to engagement with local businesses	The following text was added to the draft SoCC dated February 2023: <i>“Local businesses and representatives of business groups within the PCZ will be sent a consultation leaflet at the start of the consultation period, inviting them to attend one of our consultation events.”</i> Economic and Business groups were also included in the consultee lists, which were included in Appendix A of the draft SoCC dated February 2023.
Lincolnshire County Council	N/A	Consider including detail of statutory and non-statutory stakeholders (lists)	Appendix A - Consultee lists - was included in the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023.

Lincolnshire County Council N/A

Reference should be made to an Equality Impact Assessment being carried out, detailing the positive and negative impacts of the scheme on people with protected characteristics.

The following text was added to the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023:

“5.4.6 Whilst the completion of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a duty placed on the public sector under section 149 of the Equality Act, we will produce an EqIA to demonstrate how the public sector equality duty has been considered and taken into account as part of the application to support the Examining Authority and Secretary of State in its decision-making.”

Lincolnshire County Council N/A

Provision of a FAQ document.

A FAQs document was made available on the Scheme website at the start of the consultation period, alongside a specific list of FAQs on the website.

Lincolnshire County Council Table 5.1: Statutory consultation methods for Tillbridge Solar

Specific information on the locations / venues for public information events.

Confirmed times, dates and locations were not confirmed in time for the re-issue of the draft SoCC (February 2023) but were added to the final SoCC dated 25 May 2023.

Lincolnshire County Council Table 5.1: Statutory consultation methods for Tillbridge Solar

This information should include the locations themselves / their suitability (e.g., accessibility).

This comment was noted with specific event locations/timings still being organised at the time of re-issuing the SoCC for formal consultation in February 2023. Confirmed locations were added to the final SoCC (once events details had been organised) dated 25 May 2023, along with the following text:

“All venues have been selected based on their accessibility.”

Lincolnshire County Council	Table 5.1: Statutory consultation methods for Tillbridge Solar	Dates and times of events to be held (including how account has been taken to ensure that they are made available to range of stakeholders. E.g., working families may require events beyond the normal working hours).	This comment was noted with specific event locations/timings still being organised at the time of re-issuing the SoCC for formal consultation in February 2023. Confirmed locations, dates and times were added to the final SoCC dated 25 May 2023, along with the following text: <i>“Events will be held on different days of the week with varied hours to accommodate different availability, including on weekdays and at weekends, including hours running into the evening. This account has been taken to ensure events are made available to range of stakeholders, such as working families.”</i>
Lincolnshire County Council	Table 5.1: Statutory consultation methods for Tillbridge Solar	Possible telephone call back service to people who have questions and when this would be available (E.g., out of normal office hours when required to allow people to discuss the project at a suitable time for them).	The following text was added to the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023: <i>“The phone line will be operational 9:00 to 17:30 (Saturday)weekdays (with an answerphone facility to take messages outside these hours). People can arrange a call back at a time suitable to them.”</i>
Lincolnshire County Council	Table 5.1: Statutory consultation methods for Tillbridge Solar	Details of locations of where documents will be available including times of opening.	Details of the local information points were added to the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023.
Lincolnshire County Council	N/A	How social media will be used as a means to publicise the engagement; this should be an integral part of ensuring information is widely disseminated. This should include	Details regarding social media were added in to the final SoCC dated 25 May 2023 as follows:

how other organisations will be encouraged to share social media posts to increase their reach into communities.

“We will carry out social media advertising via Facebook targeted at postcodes within the PCZ. Digital versions of consultation materials will be sent directly to key stakeholders to enable them to advertise and promote the consultation through their own online channels, including their websites, forums and social media channels.

We will also contact groups and stakeholders, such as local planning authorities, to encourage them to share information on social media.”

Lincolnshire County Council	N/A	Consider listing the local interest groups to be engaged with (e.g., local Wildlife Trusts).	Appendix A - Consultee lists - was included in the draft SoCC dated 13 February 2023.
Lincolnshire County Council	Table 5.2: Methods for promoting the statutory consultation for Tillbridge Solar	Consider listing when newspaper / radio / tv / media will be used to publicise the engagement.	<p>This comment was noted, with final details for wider advertisements still being arranged at the time of re-issuing the SoCC for formal consultation (in February 2023). The final SoCC dated 25 May 2023 stated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>‘we will publish a press release at the start of the consultation.’</i> • <i>‘Two rounds of newspaper advertisements will be undertaken – one before and one during the consultation.’</i> <p>A publication schedule for section 47 and section 48 notices was also listed in Table 1.1.</p>
West Lindsey District Council	Paragraph 1.1.6	It would be helpful to name the newspaper(s).	Specific newspapers were listed in Table 5.2 of the draft SoCC (dated 13 February 2023) and a publication schedule for section 47 and section

			48 notices was listed in Table 1.1 in the final SoCC (dated 25 May 2023).
West Lindsey District Council	Paragraph 5.1.1	We welcome a six week consultation, over and above the statutory 28 days.	Comment noted. The statutory consultation ran for six weeks from 30 May to 11 July 2023.
West Lindsey District Council	Paragraph 5.3.4	We note the intended PCZ will be a minimum of 2km, and will be extended in order not to sever communities (5.3.6).	Comment noted.
West Lindsey District Council	Paragraph 5.3.7	<i>5.3.7 “Consultation events will be held within the PCZ, where possible” – will they, or won’t they?</i>	Table 5.1 in the final SoCC (dated 25 May 2023) clarified that the six consultations were all held within the PCZ.
West Lindsey District Council	Figure 5.1	Fig 5.1 is at quite a low scale – it would be more helpful to put a higher scale. It does however suggest that local settlements will be included in the PCZ.	Figure 5.1 was updated in the draft SoCC (dated 13 February 2023) and in the final SoCC (dated 25 May 2023).
West Lindsey District Council	Table 5.1	We’d expect the final SoCC to set out dates and venues for consultation. We would suggest adding Hemswell and/or Hemswell Cliff. We agree to using webinars to “book-end” the consultations.	Table 5.1 was updated in the final SoCC (dated May 2023) and included event dates and venues, including an event at Hemswell and Harpswell Village Hall. The webinar events were held at the beginning and end of the consultation period.
West Lindsey District Council	Paragraph 8.1.1	<i>8.1.1 “A map showing the location of the Scheme in relation to other solar developments will be available.”</i> We strongly encourage this.	Comment noted. A map showing the Scheme in relation to other solar DCO projects was provided in Appendix B in the final SoCC (dated 25 May 2023).

Content of the draft SoCC

- 6.2.15 The draft SoCC included the following information and proposals for consulting with the local community:
- a. An introduction to and summary of the purpose of the document;
 - b. A summary of the pre-application consultation and planning process relating to the Scheme;
 - c. An overview of the Applicant;
 - d. A summary of the Scheme, including its location and principal infrastructure;
 - e. A summary of the Applicant's vision and objectives for the Scheme;
 - f. Confirmation that the Scheme is EIA development and of the relevant statutory requirements under Section 47 and Section 42 of the PA 2008 in respect of consultation on PEI Report;
 - g. The objectives of the consultation being undertaken in accordance with Section 47;
 - h. An indicative consultation timeline for the Scheme;
 - i. An overview of non-statutory consultation and ongoing engagement already carried out, including the collaboration workshops in July 2022, and key information relating to the statutory consultation;
 - j. Scope of what is being consulted on including the proposed Scheme, the potential impacts of the Scheme during construction, operation and decommissioning and the PEI Report;
 - k. A definition of consultees under Section 47 of the PA 2008, including the PCZ, identifying consultees in vicinity of the Scheme, as well as wider consideration of consultation with people who have a potential interest in the Scheme who live outside the PCZ and/or approach to identifying under-represented or seldom heard groups;
 - l. Details of the methodology the Applicant proposed to engage with the local community including:
 - i. Publishing consultation information on the Scheme website;
 - ii. Sending a consultation leaflet by direct mail to all addresses within the PCZ to confirm the consultation dates (including deadline for submissions), details on in-person and online consultation events taking place, how to find out more about what was being consulted on and take part;
 - iii. Details of consultation overview and technical documents available and where they can be accessed;
 - iv. Details of in-person and online consultation events taking place including dates, times, venues and their format;
 - v. List of local information points in relation to public deposits;
 - vi. Publicising the consultation online and through local media;

- vii. Scheme information services available including details of how the Scheme community relations team can be contacted to request information, ask questions, or request copies of materials in alternative formats; and
- viii. Summary of how regard was had to other consultations taking place in developing the approach set out in the SoCC.
- m. Overview of how the Applicant will have regard to comments received and how it will progress the DCO application following statutory consultation, including approach to how further targeted consultation will be carried out should it be deemed necessary;
- n. Recognition of other solar DCO consultations in the area and an overview of how the Applicant will continue to work constructively with other developers; and
- o. A list of consultees to be engaged as part of the statutory consultation, including seldom heard groups.

6.3 Consultation with relevant local authorities on the draft SoCC and responses

- 6.3.1 The Applicant wrote to the local authorities identified as within s43(1) of the PA 2008, being West Lindsey District Council, Bassetlaw District Council, Lincolnshire County Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, on 13 February 2023, including a copy of the draft SoCC for formal consultation and requesting comments by 23:59 on 14 March 2023. In accordance with s47(3) of the PA 2008, the Host authorities were provided with 28 days to respond to the draft SoCC.
- 6.3.2 A copy of the consultation letters to each Host authority can be found in **Appendix B-4.1** and a copy of the draft SoCC for formal consultation can be found in **Appendix B-4.2**.
- 6.3.3 The Applicant received responses to the draft SoCC by the consultation deadline of 14 March 2023 from the host authorities as follows:
 - a. Lincolnshire County Council – comments in a covering email;
 - b. Bassetlaw District Council – a letter with comments included; and
 - c. West Lindsey District Council – a letter with comments included.
- 6.3.4 The Applicant received confirmation from Nottinghamshire County Council by email on 23 February 2023 that they had no comments on the draft SoCC.
- 6.3.5 Copies of the responses received from each of the host authorities are included in **Appendix B-5**. Detail on how the Applicant had regard to those responses in developing the final SoCC are set out in **Table 6-2** below.

Table 6-2: Formal comments on the draft SoCC and how these were addressed

LPA	Section of draft SoCC (dated 13 February 2023)	Formal comment	How the comment was addressed
Lincolnshire County Council	N/A	I am pleased to see that the revised SOCC has been extensively updated to include the recommendations made (as indicated in the letter).	Comment noted.
Lincolnshire County Council	Table 5.2	<p>They invited suggestions for local radio stations: They could consider the stations below - although these have only been sourced from Wikipedia.</p> <p>I am unable to verify the existence or the suitability of these stations other than Lincs FM which I am aware of: BBC Radio Humberside, BBC Radio Lincolnshire, Compass FM, Endeavor FM, Gravity FM, Lincs FM.</p>	<p>The following were included in the final SoCC dated 25 May 2023: BBC Radio Humberside, BBC Radio Lincolnshire, Endeavor FM, Gravity FM, Lincs FM and Siren Radio.</p> <p>Compass FM was an Independent Local Radio station serving Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Immingham but was subsumed by Greatest Hits Radio in 2020, so was not included as part of the final SoCC.</p>
Bassetlaw District Council	N/A	Overall, it is pleasing to see that our comments on the previous version of the document have helped to enhance the consultation strategy for the impacted communities in Bassetlaw. Specifically, the extension of the PCZ to now include the settlements of North Leverton with Hablesthorpe, South Leverton, and Treswell, as per our previous comments, is welcomed.	Comment noted.

Bassetlaw District Council	N/A	Alongside, the addition of a consultation event at Rampton Village Hall is a positive move, and will no doubt be appreciated by the local communities on the Bassetlaw side of the River Trent.	Comment noted.
Bassetlaw District Council	N/A	We have now sent you our consultation list that we use for planning application so this should be cross referenced with the draft document.	Stakeholders included on the consultation list (shared by Bassetlaw District Council) were added to the Scheme's wider consultee list and notified about the consultation.
West Lindsey District Council	Fig 4.1	Whilst labelled, it would be helpful if this clearly distinguishes (different colour?) between the "Principal Site Boundary" and "Cable Route Corridor" in order not to give the impression that solar PV could be located within the corridor	The map was updated and the elements clearly differentiated; this was included in the final SoCC dated 25 May 2023.
West Lindsey District Council	4.4.3	It is noted that an iterative process is in place, and that the consultation period will inform the final design of the scheme.	Comment noted.
West Lindsey District Council	Table 4.1	Whilst noted, this does not set out which properties are deemed as "near neighbours" and have been directly consulted.	The final SoCC dated 25 May 2023 was updated with the following text: <i>"Near neighbours were defined as properties within or immediately adjacent to (less than 50 metres) to the 'red line boundary' (as was previous defined)."</i>
West Lindsey District Council	5.1.1	It is noted that a six week consultation is proposed to run from 9th May 2023 until 20th June 2023. We do welcome a six week consultation period. However, we do have significant concerns with the proposal for it	The dates of the consultation were changed to 30 May to 11 July 2023 (see section 6.3 of this Consultation report).

to run in the period 9th May until 20th June. As you are aware from our discussions, local elections will be held on the 4 May 2023. At West Lindsey, all 36 seats will be contested. With Monday 8th May declared as a public bank holiday, this means that Tuesday 9th May will be the first day of business for a new Council. The Councillors will only on that day be attending their initial “Welcome to the Council” induction. The Councillors will then enter an intensive training period, with the first committees not scheduled until the week commencing 29th May.

Holding the statutory consultation between the dates proposed would place the Ward Councillors at a significant disadvantage in being able to actively participate and engage with the process, and be able to adequately represent their constituents.

This is a significant concern that we consider would affect the adequacy of the consultation. We would strongly recommend that the proposed consultation is pushed back by at least 3 weeks, and does not commence until the week commencing 29th May, at the earliest.

West Lindsey
District Council

5.3.4

It is recognised that the PCZ would extend at least 2km from the site boundary of the principal site (1km from the route corridor). We note in fig 5.1 that this would cover

Comment noted.

principal settlements in proximity to the proposed development (and has been extended to include Sturton by Stow). It is noted that all homes and businesses within the PCZ will be directly consulted.

West Lindsey District Council	5.4	We are encouraged to see that under-represented / seldom heard groups have been identified and that you will contact them in advance of the statutory consultation in order to understand how best to consult. We would advise that this should take place now, and the outcome of those discussions be recorded within the final published SoCC.	Under-represented / seldom heard groups were identified and contacted in advance of the statutory consultation, but not in time for these discussions to be recorded in the final SoCC – as reported in Chapter 7 .
West Lindsey District Council	Table 5.1	We are encouraged to note that six in-person consultations will be scheduled to take place, including in the nearby settlements of Glentworth, Hemswell, Corringham, Willingham by Stow and Sturton by Stow. It is noted that “Events will be held on different days of the week with varied hours to accommodate different availability, including on weekdays and at weekends.” All of the events should include time periods outside of normal working hours (Monday to Friday 9-5) to cater for those working people who are unable to attend during such times.	A variety and dates and times were proposed and five out of six included times outside of normal working hours. Due to availability of the venue, the exhibition at Corringham Village Hall on 30 June was held between 12:00 and 16:00.
West Lindsey District Council	Table 5.1	We consider that at least two scheduled webinars should be held...We would	Two webinars were held - one early within the consultation period on 7 June 2023 and

		suggest that one should be held early within the consultation period, and another towards the end of the consultation period.	the other at the end of the consultation period on 10 July 2023.
West Lindsey District Council	Table 5.1	We are agreeable to West Lindsey District Council offices being used as a Local Information Point. Hard copies of documentation should be supplied in advance of the start of the consultation, in order it is available to the public on day one.	Consultation materials were delivered to the local information points on 26 May 2023.
West Lindsey District Council	Table 5.1	It is noted that the consultation will be advertised in local newspapers. We would encourage that this is expanded to include advertising on local radio and through social media.	The Applicant sent press releases to local radio stations and carried out social media advertising via Facebook targeted at postcodes within the PCZ.
West Lindsey District Council	Table 5.1	It is noted that you intend to undertake stakeholder briefings, and issue emails and letters to “local political representatives (Councillors and MPs)”. As stated previously, you will not be in a position to do this at the start of the consultation period on Tuesday 9th May, as local elections will have only just taken place. The elected members will only have just been confirmed one working day prior to the commencement of the proposed consultation – their contact details will still be in the process of being set up.	The dates of the consultation were changed to 30 May to 11 July 2023 (see section 6.3 of this Consultation Report).
West Lindsey District Council	Table 5.1	Social media – whilst it is noted you will ask stakeholders to advertise your consultation on their media – it is recommended that you	The Applicant carried out social media advertising via Facebook targeted at postcodes within the PCZ.

consider advertising directly via social media.

West Lindsey District Council	7.1.1	In the event of material changes to the proposed development, we would expect further consultation to take place, applying “Wheatcroft principles”. This should be discussed with the LPA and will be taken into consideration with our adequacy of consultation response required under s55(4).	Comment noted.
West Lindsey District Council	8.1.1	We are encouraged to note that the consultation will take account of the three other known NSIP Solar project proposals in proximity of the site, and that a map will be provided showing all of the proposed schemes in the same context.	A map of all of the proposed schemes was included in the project information booklet and was displayed at the consultation events. This map was included as Appendix B to the final SoCC.
West Lindsey District Council	Appendix A	It is considered that local schools should be consulted.	Local schools were added to stakeholder list and notified of the consultation.

Revised statutory consultation dates

- 6.3.6 As noted in the feedback received by West Lindsey District Council (see **Table 6-2**), concerns were raised about holding a statutory consultation close to the local elections in the district, and the ability of ward councillors to adequately represent their constituents in the consultation process.
- 6.3.7 After considering all comments received by local authorities, the Applicant agreed to delay the start of the statutory consultation from 9 May 2023 to 30 May 2023, agreeing to the request from West Lindsey to push back the start date by at least three weeks. The consultation close date was also pushed back to 11 July 2023, ensuring a six-week consultation period.
- 6.3.8 The Applicant also issued email correspondence to all local authorities, communicating the change in statutory consultation dates (see **Appendix B-6**). The email reaffirmed the Applicant's commitment to provide information to and offer briefings with (returning and newly elected) representatives and LPA members, ensuring that members could actively participate and engage with the statutory consultation process.
- 6.3.9 The Applicant also welcomed the opportunity to attend any relevant committee meetings and training/induction sessions held by local authorities, including meetings with Lincolnshire County Council, Bassetlaw District Council and West Lindsey District Council, as reported in **section 7.4**.

6.4 Publicity under Section 47 of the PA 2008

- 6.4.1 The SoCC was published on 25 May 2023. Printed copies of the SoCC were available for inspection at local information points (see **Table 6-3**), and a digital version was available on the Scheme website. A copy of the published SoCC can be found in **Appendix B-7**.

Table 6-3: List of local information points where hard copy SoCC was available for inspection

Local information point	Opening times (correct at time of publication)
West Lindsey County Council, Guildhall Marshall's Yard, Marshalls Yard, 13b Beaumont St, Gainsborough DN21 2NA	9:00 to 17:00 (Monday to Friday)
Lincoln Central Library, Free School Lane, Lincolnshire, LN2 1EZ	9:00 to 17:00 (Monday to Wednesday and Friday), 9:00 to 18:00 (Thursday) and 9:00 to 16:00 (Saturday)
Gainsborough Library, Gainsborough Cobden St, Gainsborough DN21 2NG	9:00 to 17:00 (Monday to Friday) and 9:00 to 13:00 (Saturday)
Saxilby Library, St Andrews Centre, William St, Saxilby LN1 2LP	10:30 to 15:30 (Tuesday to Wednesday) and 10:30 to 13:00 (Friday)

Retford Library, Churchgate,
Retford, Nottinghamshire DN22
6PE

9:00 to 18:00 (Monday to Friday) and 9:00 to
15:00 (Saturday)

- 6.4.2 As prescribed by s47(6) of the PA 2008, the Applicant also publicised details of the locations where and when the SoCC could be viewed in newspapers circulated in the vicinity of the land. Details of the publication of the Section 47 Notice are included in **Table 6-4**.
- 6.4.3 Copies of the final SoCC (see **Appendix B-7**) and notices as published (confirming the name of the publication and the date) are provided in **Appendix B-1** and **Appendix B-8**. A digital copy of the Section 47 Notice was also made available on the Scheme website on 25 May 2023.

Table 6-4: Section 47 Notice newspaper publication schedule

Date published	Newspaper
Thursday 25 May 2023	Lincolnshire Echo
Thursday 25 May 2023	Retford Times
Thursday 25 May 2023	Gainsborough Standard

- 6.4.4 On publishing the SoCC on 25 May 2023, the Applicant issued a copy of the final published SoCC to the host authorities, alongside a copy of the Section 47 Notice, and a table setting out all the issues raised by host authorities in response to the draft SoCC consultation and regard had to those responses by the Applicant in developing the final SoCC. Copies of the communications issued to host authorities are set out in **Appendix B-9**.
- 6.4.5 The Applicant also issued a copy of the final SoCC and Section 47 Notice on 25 May 2023 to the neighbouring authorities set out in **Table 6-5**. Copies of the communications issued to neighbouring authorities are set out in **Appendix B-10**.

Table 6-5: List of neighbouring authorities issued with final SoCC and Section 47 Notice on 25 May 2023

Neighbouring authorities

Bolsover District Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
City of Lincoln Council
Derbyshire County Council
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
East Lindsey District Council
Leicestershire County Council
Mansfield District Council
Newark and Sherwood District Council
Norfolk County Council
North East Lincolnshire Council

North Kesteven District Council
North Lincolnshire Council
North Northamptonshire Council
Nottingham City Council
Peterborough City Council
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Rutland County Council

6.4.6 The Applicant also issued a copy of the final SoCC and Section 47 Notice on 25 May 2023 to the clerks of the host and neighbouring parish councils/meetings listed in **Table 6-6**. Stakeholder information packs and information posters were also sent to parish councils/meetings, designed as a resource to help groups to share information about the Applicant's consultation process (see **section 7.5**).

6.4.7 Copies of the communications issued to parish council clerks are set out in **Appendix B-11**.

Table 6-6: List of parish councils/meetings issued with final SoCC and Section 47 Notice on 25 May 2023

Host and neighbouring parish councils/meetings

Corringham Parish Council
Springthorpe Parish Meeting
Heapham Parish Council
Harpswell and Hemswell Parish Council
Glentworth Parish Council
Fillingham Parish Council
Upton Parish Council
Kexby Parish Council
Willingham by Stow Parish Council
Stow Parish Council
Marton and Gate Burton Parish Council
North Leverton with Habbleshthorpe Parish Council
Treswell with Cottam Parish Council
Rampton and Woodbeck Parish Council
South Leverton Parish Council
Gainsborough Town Council
Northorpe Parish Council
Blyton (including Thonock, Pilham and Blyborough) Parish Council
Hemswell Cliff Parish Council
Normandy by Spital Parish Council
Owmbly-by-Spital (and Saxby) Parish Council
Ingham Parish Council
Lea Parish Council
Knaith Parish Council
Sturton Le Steeple Parish Council
Clarborough and Welham Parish Council

Headon cum Upton, Grove and Stokeham Parish Council
Fenton and Torksey Lock Parish Council
Torksey Parish Council
Sturton by Stow Parish Council
Cammeringham Parish Council

6.5 Adherence to contents of the SoCC

6.5.1 **Table 6-7** below sets out the commitments the Applicant made for its statutory consultation with people living in vicinity of the land in accordance with Section 47 of the PA 2008 and summarises how the Applicant fulfilled these commitments.

Table 6-7: Summary of commitments made in SoCC and how the Applicant fulfilled these

Page	SoCC Commitment	How fulfilled
7	<p>1.1.5 In accordance with section 47 paragraphs (2) to (5) of the PA 2008, in developing this SoCC, we consulted with and have had regard to comments from the following section 43(1) LPAs:</p> <p>West Lindsey District Council;</p> <p>Bassetlaw District Council;</p> <p>Lincolnshire County Council; and</p> <p>Nottinghamshire County Council.</p>	<p>The Applicant consulted with the listed planning authorities on a draft SoCC and had regard to their comments (see section 6.3).</p>
7	<p>1.1.6 In accordance with section 47, paragraph (6) of the Act, the Applicant will be publishing a notice in a newspaper circulating in the vicinity of the land, providing details of where the statement can be inspected.</p>	<p>Section 47 notices were placed in the Lincolnshire Echo, Retford Times and Gainsborough Standard (see section 6.4).</p>
7	<p>1.1.7 ... It will also be shared with neighbouring LPAs upon publication.</p>	<p>The SoCC was shared with the with neighbouring LPAs upon publication (see section 6.4).</p>
9	<p>2.1.4 Before submitting an application, the Act requires us to carry out consultation with people living in the vicinity of the land, prescribed consultation bodies, such as Natural England and relevant parish councils, relevant statutory undertakers, such as the Environment Agency and Local Authorities, and those with an interest in the land.</p>	<p>The Applicant consulted with people living in the vicinity of the land and prescribed stakeholders.</p>
16	<p>4.3.4 A PEI Report will be produced and publicised and consulted upon as part of the statutory pre-application consultation obligations under s42 of the PA 2008</p>	<p>The Applicant published a PEI Report as part of the statutory consultation (see Chapter 7).</p>

16	4.3.4 An NTS will also be available, which will summarise the contents of the PEI Report in a non-technical manner.	The Applicant published an NTS as part of the statutory consultation (see Chapter 7).
16	4.3.6 We will be inviting feedback and comments on the information presented in the PEI Report as part of the statutory consultation. Feedback received will be considered before the DCO application and EIA are finalised for submission.	The Applicant invited feedback on the PEI Report and consider feedback received before the DCO application and EIA were finalised for submission (see Chapter 7 and Chapter 10).
16	4.4.1 The Applicant is committed to engaging and consulting with communities and stakeholders giving people the opportunity to provide feedback and insight at a formative stage ahead of more detailed design work being carried out.	The Applicant undertook consultation at an early stage (see Chapter 7).
16	4.4.2 The Applicant is committed to being a good, long-term neighbour and wants to ensure that we can build a solar Scheme that benefits the local area.	The Applicant invited suggestions on what benefits local stakeholders would like to see as part of the Scheme, including the potential introduction of a long-term community benefit fund.
21	5.1.1 The statutory consultation will run for six weeks from 30 May 2023 until 11 July 2023	A six-week consultation was held from 30 May 2023 until 11 July 2023 (see Chapter 7).
22	5.2.2 We will be seeking feedback on all aspects of our plans for the Scheme.	The Applicant welcomed feedback on all aspects through a number of channels during the consultation, including a questionnaire (printed and hard copy), by email and in writing seeking feedback on all aspects of the Scheme, during the consultation (see Chapter 7).
22	5.2.3 The full PEI Report, together with the NTS, will be made available electronically on the Scheme website.	The Applicant made the full PEI Report and NTS available on the Scheme website, and on a USB on request. One

	One copy will also be available for inspection only (and not to take away) at each of the local information points.	printed copy was also made available for inspection only at each of the local information points.
22	5.2.3 ...We will publicise as part of our statutory notices a service for requesting individual hard copies of technical documents, such as the PEI Report and the process and charge for supplying these.	The section 48 notice outlined how people could obtain copies of the technical documents and the charge for supplying these.
22	5.3.2 In accordance with section 42 of the Act, the Applicant will be consulting with a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees, such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and relevant LPAs.	The Applicant consulted with a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees (see Chapter 8).
22	5.3.3 We are seeking to consult with people who live in the vicinity of the Scheme, including people in areas where the Scheme may have a direct or indirect impact, either permanently or temporarily, as a result of construction, operation and maintenance or decommissioning of the Scheme.	The Applicant consulted with people living within the PCZ of two kilometres of the Principal Site Order limits. The PCZ also extends one kilometre from the edge of the Cable Route Corridor for the grid connection. The PCZ was also extended in certain areas as considered proportionate (see section 5.5).
23	5.3.7 All homes and businesses within the PCZ will directly receive consultation leaflets in the post at the start of the consultation period. Consultation events will be held within the PCZ, where possible, and relevant groups and organisations such as parish councils and local interest groups will be notified of consultation opportunities.	The Applicant sent consultation leaflets to the PCZ, held consultation events within the PCZ and notified relevant groups and organisations of consultation opportunities (see Chapter 7).
23	5.3.8 ...We are committed to making sure that individuals and organisations are given the opportunity to participate and will attempt to raise awareness of the consultation using a number of methods such as advertising and direct communication with organisations located in the wider consultation zone.	The Applicant used a number of methods such as advertising and direct communication with organisations located in the wider consultation zone (see Chapter 7).

24	<p>5.4.2 'Under-represented' or 'seldom heard' groups: These organisations will be contacted, by email and/or post, ahead of consultation to ensure that our approach best meets the needs of their members, including whether any consultation materials are required in a specific format.</p> <p>We will also contact these organisations and invite suggestions for any additional groups that should be contacted as part of the consultation</p>	<p>The Applicant contacted 'under-represented' or 'seldom heard' groups ahead of consultation to ensure that the approach best met the needs of members (see Chapter 7).</p> <p>The Applicant also invited suggestions for any additional groups that should be contacted as part of the consultation (see Chapter 7).</p>
25	<p>5.4.3 We are hosting different formats of free-to-use communications channels to ensure our consultation is as accessible as possible, including include email, phone and post. We will also be using a combination of in-person and digital formats such as in person events and webinars. We will also continue to notify them of consultation opportunities.</p>	<p>The Applicant hosted different formats of free-to-use communications channels and used a combination of in-person and digital formats. The Applicant continued to notify under-represented' or 'seldom heard' groups of consultation opportunities throughout the consultation period (see Chapter 7).</p>
25	<p>5.4.6... we will produce an EqIA to demonstrate how the public sector equality duty has been considered and taken into account as part of the application to support the Examining Authority and SoS in its decision-making.</p>	<p>The Applicant has commissioned an EqIA to demonstrate how the public sector equality duty has been considered and taken into account as part of the application.</p>
25	<p>5.5.1 During this statutory consultation, we will use a range of methods to ensure an inclusive, meaningful and open consultation. We will use a range of digital and non-digital methods of communication to ensure that our consultation can be accessed by all members of the community.</p>	<p>The Applicant used a range of digital and non-digital methods of communication to ensure the consultation could be accessed by all members of the community (see Chapter 7).</p>
26	<p>Table 5.1 – Consultation events</p> <p>We will be holding six consultation events at locations across the PCZ. They will be advertised in consultation leaflets, across the local media</p>	<p>The Applicant held six consultation events at locations across the PCZ. These were advertised in consultation leaflets, across the local media and at local information</p>

	and at local information points and through wider publicity for local community groups.	points and through wider publicity for local community groups (see Chapter 7).
26	<p>Table 5.1 – Consultation events</p> <p>All venues are located within the PCZ and have full disabled access, ensuring accessibility for all attendees.</p>	All venues were located within the PCZ and had full disabled access.
26	<p>Table 5.1 – Consultation events</p> <p>Events will be held on different days of the week with varied hours to accommodate different availability, including on weekdays and at weekends, including hours running into the evening. This account has been taken to ensure events are made available to a range of stakeholders, such as working families.</p>	Events were held on different days of the week with varied hours (see Chapter 7).
27	<p>Table 5.1 – Consultation events</p> <p>Members of the Tillbridge Solar project team will be at these events to discuss the proposals in more detail and answer any questions.</p>	Members of the project team were at the events to discuss the proposals and answer questions (see Chapter 7).
27	<p>Table 5.1 – Consultation events</p> <p>Hard copies of selected materials will also be available to view and take away, with all materials available in digital format via the Scheme website from 30 May 2023.</p>	Hard copies of selected materials were available to view and take away at the events, with all materials available in digital format via the Scheme website from 30 May 2023, or on USB by request (see Chapter 7).
27	<p>Table 5.1 – Consultation events</p> <p>Some events will be running later in the evenings to cater to working families or other individuals who cannot attend during normal working hours.</p>	Events were run later in the evenings (see Chapter 7).

27 Table 5.1 – Webinars Webinars will be held for any member of the public to join via telephone or online.	Webinars were held on 7 June and 10 July 2023, and members of the public and stakeholders were able to join via telephone or online (see Chapter 7).
27 Table 5.1 – Telephone call backs Members of the public will be able to request a call back from a member of the project team (subject to availability) on 0800 046 9643 or info@tillbridgesolar.com. The phone line will be operational 9:00 to 17:30 weekdays (with an answerphone facility to take messages outside these hours). People can arrange a call back at a time suitable to them, including outside of office hours. This information will be advertised in the consultation leaflet and on the Scheme website.	Members of the public were able to request a call back from a member of the project team, by phone or email. A free phone line was operational 9:00 to 17:30 weekdays (with an answerphone facility to take messages outside these hours). This information was provided in the consultation leaflet and in more detail in the project information booklet and on the Scheme website.
27 Table 5.1 – Local information points Hard copies of consultation leaflets and feedback questionnaires, will be available to collect from a number of local information points located in the vicinity of the Scheme, including libraries and council offices. These documents will be available to collect from the start of the consultation period.	Hard copies of consultation leaflets, project information booklets and feedback questionnaires were available to collect from the local information points (see Chapter 7).
28 Table 5.1 – Local information points A full copy of the PEI Report and the NTS and the more detailed project information booklet will be available for inspection only (and not to take away) at the local information points listed above and via the project website (tillbridgesolar.com/documents-library), with USBs also available free of charge, by request. USBs will be limited to one per household. A copy of this SoCC will also be able to inspect at these locations.	A full copy of the PEI Report and the NTS was made available for inspection at each local information point and via the project website, with USBs also available free of charge, by request. A copy of the SoCC was also available to inspect (and not take away) at the local information points (see Chapter 7).

28 Table 5.1 – Local information points We will check, by telephone, that consultation documentation remains at the information points throughout the consultation period.	The Applicant checked, by telephone and email, that consultation documentation remained at the information points throughout the consultation period. Initially this was done weekly, but some venues suggested they would make contact if they were running out.
28 Table 5.1 – Scheme website All consultation documents will be presented digitally and available for download, free of charge, from a specific consultation section on the website. Information will be consistent with materials available at the consultation events. The latest plans, including the Principal Site boundary and Cable Route Corridor, will be presented on an Interactive Map, which can be accessed through the Scheme website.	All of the consultation documents were added to the Scheme website, to download free of charge, at the Documents Library (see Appendix C-13.4 for screenshots of the website). An interactive map including the Principal Site boundary and Cable Route Corridor was also added to ‘the Scheme’ page (see Appendix C-13.4 for screenshots of the website).
28-29 Table 5.1 - Project information booklet A project information booklet will be published at the start of the consultation, providing a summary of the proposals we are consulting on, details of how people can take part, how feedback will be considered and how their feedback will be used to influence and shape the proposals. The booklet will also include the indicative site layout plan (of the Principal Site).	A project information booklet was published at the start of the consultation, providing a summary of the proposals being consulted on, details of how people could take part, how feedback would be considered and how their feedback would be used to influence and shape the proposals (see Chapter 7).
29 Table 5.1 - Statutory consultation leaflet Consultation leaflets will be prepared to provide a high-level overview of the Scheme, the consultation and how people can get involved. The leaflet will indicate where the relevant Scheme information can be	A consultation leaflet was prepared that provided a high-level overview of the Scheme, the consultation and how people could get involved. The leaflet indicated where the relevant Scheme information could be found and publicise

	found and publicise the consultation events, including locations, dates and timings.	the consultation events, including locations, dates and timings (see Chapter 7).
29	<p>Table 5.1 - Feedback questionnaire</p> <p>A feedback questionnaire will be prepared to allow people to provide feedback on the proposals. The questionnaire will ask people to provide feedback on all aspects of the Scheme, including particular issues we are seeking comment.</p> <p>The questionnaire can be completed online or downloaded if required and is also available in hard copy.</p>	<p>A feedback questionnaire was prepared to allow people to provide feedback on the proposals.</p> <p>The questionnaire asked people to provide feedback on all aspects of the Scheme, including particular issues on which the Applicant was seeking comment.</p> <p>The questionnaire could be completed online or downloaded if required and was also available in hard copy (see Chapter 7).</p>
29	<p>Table 5.1 - FAQs</p> <p>A FAQs document will be available on the Scheme website at the start of the consultation period.</p>	<p>A FAQs document was made available on the Scheme website at the start of the consultation period via the Documents Library (see Appendix C-13.4 for screenshots of the website).</p>
29	<p>Table 5.1 – PEI Report and NTS</p> <p>An NTS of the PEI Report can also be downloaded from the Scheme website and will be available in printed format free of charge on request from the community relations team and at the consultation events.</p>	<p>A NTS of the PEI Report was made available to download from the Scheme website and was available in printed format free of charge on request from the community relations team and at the consultation events.</p>
30	<p>Table 5.1 - Technical Scheme documentation, including maps and plans of the Scheme</p> <p>We will be producing plans for the Scheme, which will be available to view at the consultation events and on the Scheme website.</p> <p>Plans showing the location and aspects of the Scheme will be available at all times during and following the consultation period.</p>	<p>The Applicant produced technical maps and plans for the Scheme, which were available to view at the consultation events and on the Scheme website.</p> <p>The plans showing the location and aspects of the Scheme were made available at all times during and following the consultation period.</p>

30	<p>Table 5.1 - Materials in alternative formats</p> <p>Upon request, all documents will be available in alternative accessible formats, such as braille, speaking text and alternative languages.</p>	<p>All documents were made available in alternative accessible formats, upon request, and this was publicised in the consultation materials. The project team did not receive any requests for materials in alternative formats.</p>
30	<p>5.5.4 All consultation documents can be downloaded free of charge from the Scheme website from 30 May 2023 (tillbridgesolar.com/documents-library), with hard copy documents also available at the consultation events.</p>	<p>All consultation documents were available to be downloaded free of charge from the Scheme website's Documents Library (as shown in Appendix C-13.4) from 30 May 2023, and hard copy documents were available at the consultation events. See Appendix C-13.4 for screenshots of the website.</p>
30	<p>5.5.5 We will publicise as part of our statutory notices a service for requesting individual hard copies of technical documents, such as the PEI Report, and the process and charge for supplying these. A USB containing all Scheme documentation can be requested free of charge from the community relations team. USBs will be limited to one per household.</p>	<p>As part of the statutory notices, the Applicant publicised a service for requesting individual hard copies of technical documents, such as the PEI Report, and the process and charge for supplying these.</p> <p>A USB containing all Scheme documentation could be requested free of charge from the community relations team.</p>
30	<p>5.5.6 In the event of changing Government guidelines due to COVID-19, or other unforeseen circumstances meaning the consultation events must be cancelled, or the display of materials prevented, the Applicant will inform people as early as possible of the cancellation or expected change via the project website and electronic communication with key stakeholders.</p>	<p>There were no unforeseen circumstances, so the consultation events were not cancelled or changed and proceeded as planned and set out in the SoCC.</p>
30	<p>5.5.7 In the event of face-to-face consultation events being cancelled, replacement online events will be organised, which will provide the same information as presented at the in-person events.</p>	<p>The face-to-face consultation events were not cancelled and proceeded as planned and set out in the SoCC.</p>

30	5.6.1 We will use a variety of methods to make people aware of the Scheme and advertise the statutory consultation.	A variety of methods were used to make people aware of the Scheme and advertise the statutory consultation (see Chapter 7).
31	Table 5.2 - Consultation leaflet Consultation leaflets will be posted to all homes and businesses in the PCZ at the start of the statutory consultation period. The leaflet will also be issued to wider consultees by email, including the non-statutory consultees listed in Appendix A.	Consultation leaflets were posted to all homes and businesses in the PCZ at the start of the statutory consultation period. The leaflet was also issued to wider consultees by email, including the Host authorities, parish councils, local interest groups and technical consultees (see Chapter 7).
31	Table 5.2 – Press releases We will publish a press release at the start of the consultation. This will be sent to the following local and regional media outlets: BBC Look North BBC Radio Lincolnshire BBC Radio Nottingham BBC East Midlands BBC Look North (Yorkshire) ITV Calendar Nots TV Retford Times The Gainsborough Standard The Grantham Journal The Lincolnite Lincolnshire Echo	Press releases were issued to the local and regional media outlets to publicise the Section 47 consultation at the start of consultation on 30 May 2023, as well as trade media outlets. A further press release was issued on 23 June 2023 to remind people of the consultation and pending deadline for submission of comments (see section 7.13).

Lincolnshire Free Press

Lincolnshire in Focus

Lincolnshire Life

Lincolnshire Live

Lincolnshire Reporter

Lincolnshire Today

Lincolnshire World

Lincs FM

Endeavour FM

Gravity FM

Siren Radio

Market Rasen Mail

Nottinghamshire in Focus

Nottinghamshire Live

Nottingham Local News

Nottingham Post

32 Table 5.2 – Newspaper advertisements

Two rounds of newspaper advertisements will be undertaken – one before and one during the consultation. Advertisements will provide details of the consultation, where more information can be found, how to respond, and the dates of the engagement activities.

The Applicant placed adverts in the publications listed to publicise the consultation (see **Chapter 7**).

Advertisements will be placed in both print and digital publications to ensure wider coverage within and beyond the core and wider consultation zones. The publications will include:

Lincolnshire Echo

Retford Times

Lincolnshire Live

Gainsborough Standard

Market Rasen Mail

Lincolnshire World

The Lincolnlite

Lincolnshire Life

Retford Life

32-33 Table 5.2 - Stakeholder briefings

We will issue communications to key stakeholders, including local political representatives (Councillors and MPs) and LPA members and Parish Council clerks representing wards, constituencies, and parishes within the consultation zone to provide information about the proposals we are consulting on and invite them to take part in the consultation.

We will arrange briefings directly with relevant planning officers at Lincolnshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, West Lindsey District Council and Bassetlaw District Council at convenient dates and times to accommodate the May 2023 local elections.

We will also offer briefings and organise online webinars with these stakeholders to provide information about the consultation. We will

The Applicant issued communications to key stakeholders, including local political representatives (Councillors and MPs) and LPA members and Parish Council clerks representing wards, constituencies, and parishes within the consultation zone to provide information about the proposals and invite them to take part in the consultation.

The Applicant offered briefings and organised online webinars with relevant planning officer and stakeholders to provide information about the consultation (see **Chapter 7**).

consider invitations to, or requests for, meetings with other local groups or special interest organisations on a case-by-case basis.

33 Table 5.2 - Emails and letters

We will send either emails or hard copy letters about the consultation and how to get involved to the following:

host constituency and neighbouring constituency area MPs;

elected representatives at West Lindsey District Council, Bassetlaw District Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Lincolnshire County Council;

host parish councils;

neighbouring local authorities;

neighbouring parish councils; and

local interest groups, such as community and environmental groups.

Formal notifications will be issued to stakeholders as required in accordance with section 42 of the Act.

Emails or hard copy letters about the consultation and how to get involved were sent to the stakeholders listed (see **Chapter 7**).

Formal notifications were issued to stakeholders as required in accordance with section 42 of the Act (see **Chapter 8**).

33 Table 5.2 – Statutory notices

Statutory notices to publicise the consultation in accordance with section 48 of the Act will be published once in a national newspaper (The Guardian) and the London Gazette and twice (across two successive weeks) in local circulating papers (Lincolnshire Echo, Retford Times and Gainsborough Standard).

Statutory notices to publicise the consultation were published in accordance with section 48 of the Act (see **Chapter 7**).

34 Table 5.2 - SoCC

This SoCC document will be made available online as part of the consultation and in hard copy at the consultation events. Copies will also be available for inspection only (and not to take away) at the local information points.

The SoCC was made available online and in hard copy at the consultation events. Copies were also available for inspection only at the local information points.

34 Table 5.2 - Information posters

Posters including details of the consultation, how to access Scheme information, and how to get involved, will be displayed at well-used public locations within and outside of the PCZ, including libraries, shops and civic buildings. These will be hosted in agreement with relevant groups and venues, including where consultation events will take place.

Display posters, including details of the consultation, how to access Scheme information, and how to get involved – alongside a covering letter asking each location to display the posters – were sent to 23 addresses within the PCZ on 25 May 2023, including shops, post offices and civic buildings (see **Chapter 7**).

34 Table 5.2 - Information posters

Information posters will also be sent to all host and neighbouring parish councils to help raise awareness of the consultation. Parish Councils will be encouraged to post details of the consultation on their social media channels.

Hard copy posters were sent to all 31 host and neighbouring parish councils/meetings by first class mail on 25 May 2023 to help raise awareness of the consultation, and parish councils were encouraged to post details of the consultation on their social media channels (see **Chapter 7**).

Parish councils were also provided with digital versions of the poster alongside information packs (alongside the final SoCC) by email on 25 May 2023. The information packs were designed as a resource to introduce and share information about the Scheme's consultation process.

34 Table 5.2 - Social media

We will carry out social media advertising via Facebook targeted at postcodes within the PCZ.

The Applicant carried out social media advertising via Facebook targeted at postcodes within the PCZ.

Digital versions of consultation materials will be sent directly to key stakeholders to enable them to advertise and promote the consultation through their own online channels, including their websites, forums and social media channels.

We will also contact groups and stakeholders, such as LPAs, to encourage them to share information on social media.

Stakeholder Packs were sent directly to stakeholders so they could promote the consultation through their own online and social media channels.

Each pack included links to the consultation page and materials, a map of the proposed solar farm area, suggested text advertising the consultation to add to stakeholders' newsletters/magazines/websites, consultation poster including event schedule and social media posts (see **Chapter 7**).

34	5.7.1 Ongoing engagement with stakeholders will be undertaken ahead of the launch of the statutory consultation, including local authorities, MPs, the Environment Agency, Natural England, and Historic England (where possible) and with local interest groups, residents, and landowners who get in touch.	Ongoing engagement with relevant stakeholders and landowners was undertaken ahead of the launch of the statutory consultation (see Chapter 7 and 8).
34	5.7.2 Local businesses and representatives of business groups within the PCZ will be sent a consultation leaflet at the start of the consultation period, inviting them to attend one of our consultation events.	Local businesses and representatives of business groups within the PCZ were sent a consultation leaflet at the start of the consultation period, inviting them to attend the consultation events. Economic and business groups were also included in the consultee list and notified about the consultation by email.
34	5.7.3 Businesses identified as 'near neighbours' (i.e. within 50 metres of the Principal Site), will also be sent letters for the start of the consultation, offering an opportunity for an individual meeting.	Letters were sent to a total of 31 residential and business addresses identified within 50 metres of the Principal Site. Letters were sent by first class mail on 25 May 2023 and included information about the Scheme, consultation (and how to get involved), along with an offer for an individual meeting. In addition, the Applicant also visited a number of near neighbours on 26 May 2023 (see Chapter 7).

35 5.8.2 Consultation methods used to engage with [seldom heard] groups are set out below. We will continue to liaise with local groups representing seldom heard organisations to ensure accessibility to the consultation and that materials can be made available in the appropriate format.

Providing details about how information on the Scheme can be accessed, including online and hard copy.

Providing materials in alternative formats, including dementia friendly, Braille and large print (upon request).

Assisting with providing feedback where possible, including via the communications lines and at face-to-face consultation events.

The Applicant undertook engagement with seldom heard groups, as set out in **Chapter 7**.

35-36 5.9.1 The following enquiry channels will continue to be available throughout the consultation for members of the community and other stakeholders to get in touch with the project team, ask questions, request further information or request printed copies of consultation materials and documents. These communication channels will continue to be active throughout the pre-application period.

Online

Website enquiries available via www.tillbridgesolar.com

Enquiries can be submitted 24 hours a day. We will aim to issue a response within five working days of receipt.

Telephone

0800 046 9643

9:00 to 17:30 weekdays (with an answerphone facility to take messages outside these hours).

The following enquiry channels were made available throughout the consultation and they continue to be active throughout the pre-application period:

- Online: Enquiries via the Scheme website (see **Appendix C-13.4** for screenshots)
- Telephone: [0800 046 9643](tel:08000469643)
- Email: info@tillbridgesolar.com
- Post: FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR

Email

info@tillbridgesolar.com

People can email 24 hours a day, with emails being monitored between 9:00 and 17:30 weekdays. We will aim to issue a responses within five working days of receipt.

Post

FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR (please note that you do not need a stamp)

Should enquiries received via post require a response, this will be issued within five working days of receipt. Urgent enquiries should be directed to the Scheme's email address.

36	6.2.1 When our statutory consultation closes, we will have regard to all comments received. All feedback, including ongoing engagement with communities and stakeholders, is important to us and will help influence our designs for the Scheme.	Following closure of statutory consultation, the Applicant has had regard to all comments received in developing and updating elements of the Scheme (see Chapter 10).
36	6.2.2 Once we have reviewed and finalised our proposed application, we will produce a Consultation Report, which set out how the feedback from the pre-application consultation has shaped and influenced our proposed application	The Applicant has produced this Consultation Report, which sets out how the feedback from the pre-application consultation has shaped and influenced the proposed application.
36	6.2.3 This Consultation Report will be submitted to the SoS as part of the DCO application.	This Consultation Report has been submitted to the SoS as part of the DCO application.
36	6.2.4 Any comments received could be made public, but no personal information will be published. Any personal data received as part of the Consultation will be stored and protected in accordance with the	No personal information has been published and any personal data received as part of the statutory consultation

requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The privacy notice for those visiting the Scheme website is available at:

www.tillbridgesolar.com

is stored and protected in accordance with the requirements of the GDPR.

37 7.1.1 If, following the statutory consultation, we consider it is necessary to undertake further targeted or supplementary consultation, this would be undertaken, so far as relevant and proportionate, in accordance with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC.

Targeted consultation was undertaken between 14 December 2023 and 25 January 2024 (see **Chapter 11**). This was undertaken, so far as relevant and proportionate, in accordance with the principles and methods set out in the SoCC.

37 8.1.1 We are aware there are a number of other proposed solar developments in the area and understand the need to ensure that communities in the area are aware of the other proposals, notably Low Carbon's plans for Gate Burton and Island Green Power's plans for Cottam Solar and West Burton Solar.

The Applicant has and continues to work with the other developers in the area (see **section 5.3**).

8.1.2 We have been and will continue to work constructively with these other developers to ensure:

- People are easily able to engage with our consultation processes and have opportunities to get involved, including ensuring that consultation periods are distinct and do not clash.
- All environmental effects are fully assessed, including any cumulative impacts.
- A common-sense approach to construction is taken in order to minimise disruption, including sharing infrastructure and construction timelines, where feasible.
- Shared infrastructure is used where possible, such as a Cable Route Corridor

37 8.1.4 At our statutory consultation events, we will indicate how the Scheme relates geographically to the other developments, with

At the statutory consultation events, the Applicant displayed a map showing how the Scheme relates to

information up to date and correct at the time of finalisation and publication of the Scheme's PEI Report (May 2023).

Cottam Solar, West Burton Solar and Gate Burton (see **Chapter 7**). This map was also included in the final SoCC.

6.6 Conclusion / Statement of compliance

- 6.6.1 The Applicant considers that, in developing the SoCC and publishing the Section 47 Notice publicising the SoCC, it fully complied with the requirements of the PA 2008 and the EIA Regulations (Ref 3) and relevant guidance relating to pre-application procedure.
- 6.6.2 As set out in this chapter and the following **Chapter 7**, the Applicant published a Section 47 Notice publicising the SoCC (see **Appendix B-1**) and made the SoCC available for the public to view at local information points (see **Table 6-3**) and on the Scheme website. Consultation activities were carried out in line with the SoCC, as set out in **Table 6-7** and **Chapter 7**.

7. Statutory Consultation Under Section 47 of the PA 2008 (30 May to 11 July 2023)

7.1 Overview – requirements and guidance

- 7.1.1 This chapter of the Consultation Report sets out the consultation activities carried out by the Applicant with the people living in vicinity of the land ('the community') to which the Scheme relates under Section 47 of the PA 2008.
- 7.1.2 As required under Section 47(7) of the PA 2008, the Applicant carried out statutory consultation in accordance with the proposals set out in the SoCC provided in **Appendix B-7**. A summary of how the Applicant adhered to Section 47(7) of the PA 2008 through commitments placed in the SoCC is set out in **section 6.5**. This chapter sets out the Section 47 statutory consultation carried out in line with the commitments set out in the SoCC covering the period 30 May 2023 to 11 July 2023.

7.2 Summary of Section 47 Statutory Consultation

- 7.2.1 Statutory consultation in respect of the Scheme launched on 30 May 2023 and closed on 11 July 2023.
- 7.2.2 The purpose of this consultation was to seek the views of statutory consultees, the public and wider consultees on the Scheme, the potential environmental effects of the Scheme during construction, operation and decommissioning and proposed mitigation, and the PEI Report.
- 7.2.3 The Applicant consulted during a period when the coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions had been lifted in the UK. However, in acknowledgement of the impact COVID-19 has had on the way people travel, and their working habits and patterns, as well as remaining health concerns among the elderly and 'high risk' groups, the Applicant sought to ensure that consultation was accessible to all even if they could not attend an in-person event.
- 7.2.4 To achieve this, a combination of in-person and online events were programmed to take place during the consultation period; all community and technical materials were available online and at local information points; and a freephone information line and email was open throughout the consultation.
- 7.2.5 The Applicant also provided the full suite of consultation information on the Scheme website and provided the opportunity for stakeholders to submit their feedback online. Offers of update briefings (either in person or online) to key stakeholders (MPs, local authority officers, elected representatives and parish councils) were made.
- 7.2.6 During (and immediately prior to) the defined statutory consultation period the Applicant carried out the following consultation activities as set out in the SoCC:
- a. Elected member briefings/meetings – the Applicant met with those parish councils and locally elected members who responded to the offer to meet, presenting information about the Scheme and consultation, and answering key questions and receiving feedback;

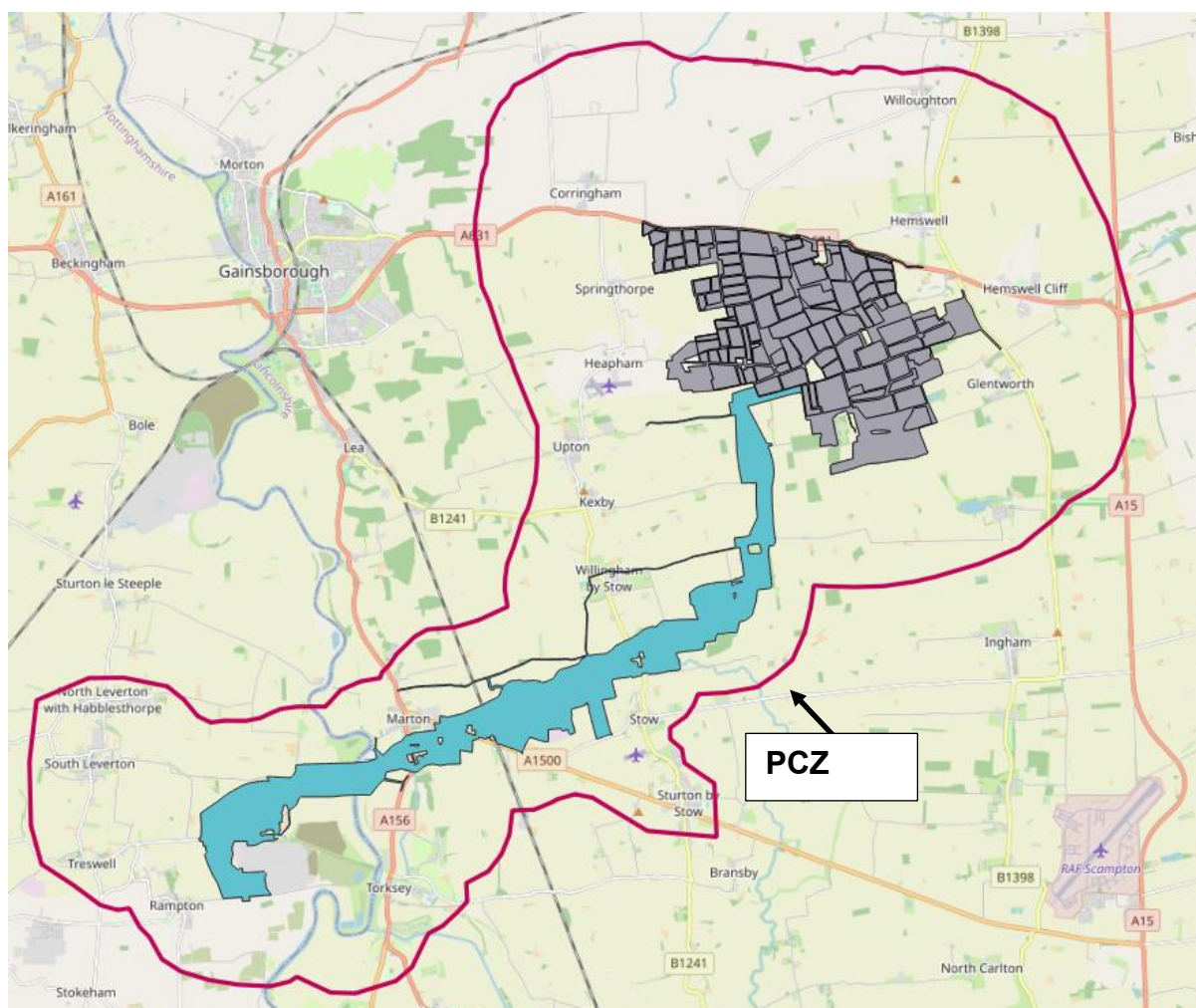
- b. Community meetings/site visits – the Applicant met with sensitive individuals/groups, including local residents and near neighbours, to discuss the Scheme and receive feedback;
- c. Consultation materials – the Applicant published and distributed a range of information across the consultation zone and key stakeholders, including consultation leaflets, project information booklets and feedback questionnaires;
- d. Scheme website – updated to provide updated information about the Scheme, copies of all the consultation materials (including technical documents) and information as well as facilities to provide feedback online;
- e. Local information points – the Applicant put in place hard copies of all the consultation materials and technical documents to identified local information points from the day of statutory consultation launch to make them available for members of the public to read or collect;
- f. Consultation events – the Applicant delivered a programme of six face-to-face consultation events and two online webinars from 7 June to 10 July 2023; and
- g. Publicity – engagement with regional and local media, and placement of advertisements over the statutory consultation period to inform the wider area beyond the core consultation zone about the Scheme and the consultation.

7.3 Section 47 Statutory Consultation activity

Section 47 Primary Consultation Zone

- 7.3.1 Section 47(1) of the PA 2008 requires the Applicant to prepare a statement setting out how it proposes to consult on the proposed application with people living in ‘vicinity’ of the land to which the Scheme relates.
- 7.3.2 As outlined in **section 5.6**, the Applicant identified a PCZ to help determine the areas where consultation would take place; taking into consideration where the Scheme may have a direct or indirect impact, either permanently or temporarily, as a result of construction, operation and maintenance or decommissioning.
- 7.3.3 The PCZ was previously defined and utilised to circulate initial communications to local communities in October 2022 via a community newsletter. The PCZ was reviewed and refined as a result of ongoing design refinement following the initial non-statutory engagement activities and Scheme refinement.
- 7.3.4 The definition of the PCZ was included in the draft SoCC and commented on by local authorities (see **Chapter 6**). In response to feedback submitted by Bassetlaw District Council as part of the informal consultation undertaken on the draft SoCC, the Applicant updated the proposed PCZ to accommodate the request that the communities of North Leverton, South Leverton, and Treswell were included.
- 7.3.5 A map illustrating the PCZ used at the statutory stage of consultation is shown in **Figure 7-1**.

Figure 7-1: PCZ for the Scheme (post-SoCC feedback)



7.3.6 Consultation activity was broadly focused within the PCZ, which included a total of 4,898 addresses. The following activities took place:

- a. Direct mail of the consultation leaflet to all addresses lying within the area defined;
- b. Programme of public consultation events;
- c. Stakeholder communication updates;
- d. Distributing posters to a number of addresses (including shops, post offices and community hubs) and host/neighbouring parish councils;
- e. Ongoing near neighbour and stakeholder meetings; and
- f. Making all consultation materials available to view and download from the Scheme website.

7.3.7 Recognising that people who live and work beyond the PCZ may also have an interest in the Scheme or may have taken part in non-statutory consultation, the Applicant engaged with individuals and organisations outside the PCZ, including by keeping host authorities informed of the proposals as part of the Applicant's Scheme updates.

7.3.8 In addition to consultation activity carried out in the PCZ, the following activity took place to engage those outside the core area:

- a. Publicising the consultation across regional media;
- b. Displaying all consultation material on the Scheme website;
- c. Section 48 Notice published in regional and national media;
- d. Directly notifying people who register(ed) their interest in receiving updates in relation to the Scheme about the consultation;
- e. Engaging with regional media, as well as trade media, through press releases;
- f. Making hard copies of the consultation materials available at five local information points; and
- g. Using online and social media techniques; including the dedicated Scheme website, and advertising on Facebook.

7.3.9 In addition to the approximately 5,000 properties and local businesses consulted within the PCZ, the Applicant identified a range of relevant local interest groups and community organisations in vicinity of the Scheme, as well as gateway organisations representing the interests of seldom heard and underrepresented groups identified, and business groups. These consultees were identified through desktop research, suggestions made by local authorities and other stakeholders, and non-statutory consultation. A list of these organisations is included in **Appendix C-1**.

7.3.10 Specific information about how the Applicant shared consultation information with these groups is available later in this section (**Chapter 7, section 5.2**), and the email issued to these groups on 30 May 2023 is available in **Appendix C-2**.

7.4 Elected member engagement and meetings

Briefing sessions and advance notice of Section 47 consultation dates

7.4.1 As described in **Chapter 6**, the Applicant engaged with local authorities informally and formally on the draft SoCC and recognised the opportunity to brief district and county council elected representatives at their convenience in advance of and/or during the statutory consultation period. These briefing sessions provided information on the statutory consultation, how it would be publicised, how to get involved and how their constituents could potentially be affected.

7.4.2 In light of the comments received by local authorities (as described in **Chapter 6**) in relation to the local elections held in May 2023, the Applicant pushed back the start of the statutory consultation period to 30 May 2023, provided further opportunities to brief (newly elected and returning) elected representatives.

7.4.3 As stated in the final SoCC, the Applicant worked with relevant planning officers at Lincolnshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, West Lindsey District Council and Bassetlaw District Council to arrange briefings in advance of the consultation. These sessions were held as listed in **Table 7-1**.

Table 7-1: Briefing sessions held with LPAs

LPA	Date and location
Lincolnshire County Council (attendance at Planning Committee meeting)	9 May 2023, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL
Bassetlaw District Council (held jointly with Nottinghamshire County Council)	22 May 2023, Microsoft Teams
West Lindsey District Council	13 June 2023, Microsoft Teams

- 7.4.4 Sessions were attended (in person/online) by members of the project team and included presentation of the following information:
- a. An introduction to the Tillbridge Solar team;
 - b. Overview of the Scheme, including its location, principal infrastructure and need case;
 - c. Overview of consultation and engagement to date;
 - d. Overview of the Applicant's updated proposals for statutory consultation, including:
 - ix. The updated Principal Site and Cable Route Corridor proposals;
 - x. Principal infrastructure;
 - xi. Illustrative site layout;
 - xii. Overview of proposals for construction, operation and decommissioning;
 - xiii. Overview of collaborative working to date (with other solar developers);
 - xiv. Overview of the EIA process and PEI Report structure;
 - xv. Overview of proposals for community benefits; and
 - xvi. Indicative Scheme timeline.
 - e. Further information about the statutory consultation activities, including the public consultation events and webinars, printed and hard copy information available, and how to provide feedback;
 - f. Explanation of how feedback will be used following the close of the statutory consultation;
 - g. Next steps and how to get in touch; and
 - h. Question and answer session.
- 7.4.5 A copy of the briefing presentation for local authorities is provided in **Appendix C-3**. The presentation was circulated to the Host authorities following each briefing to share more widely and inform members who could not attend the relevant session.
- 7.4.6 In addition to this, the Applicant also issued draft emails to circulate internally with members and colleagues at each local authority. The email included as attachments a number of documents to help inform members and help

publicise the Scheme as widely as possible. In this email (as shown in **Appendix C-4**), the Applicant:

- a. Shared a draft email for officers to shared more widely within their colleagues, including the final SoCC, stakeholder pack, section 47 notice, information poster, consultation leaflet and PDF letters as attachments;
- b. Welcomed officers to share information more widely with their social media and community engagement teams, along with uploading information about the consultation on their websites; and
- c. Welcomed community engagement teams to forward information to seldom heard groups, including any Traveller communities that reside in the county/district.

7.4.7 The Applicant also issued the email directly to local authority members and elected representatives on 25 May 2023, which included all of the aforementioned attachments. This email was issued to all councillors listed in **Appendix C-5**.

7.5 Briefing information provided to parish councils/meetings

- 7.5.1 The Applicant also invited all host parish councils/meetings to meet at a date and time convenient to them, either before or during the statutory consultation period.
- 7.5.2 The Applicant also provided information about the upcoming consultation by email to all host parish councils/meetings across the PCZ (as listed in **Table 7-2**).

Table 7-2: Host parish councils/meetings issued with pre-consultation briefing information in May 2023

Host parish councils/meetings

Corringham Parish Council – Clerk
Springthorpe Parish Meeting – Clerk
Heapham Parish Council – Clerk
Hemswell and Harpswell Parish Council – Clerk
Glentworth Parish Council – Clerk
Fillingham Parish Council – Clerk
Kexby Parish Council – Clerk
Willingham by Stow Parish Council – Clerk
Stow Parish Council – Clerk
Marton and Gate Burton Parish Council – Clerk
North Leverton with Hablesthorpe Parish Council – Clerk
Treswell with Cottam Parish Council – Clerk
Rampton and Woodbeck Parish Council – Clerk
South Leverton Parish Council – Clerk

- 7.5.3 The emails (which included a PDF letter as an attachment) included the following information:
- a. Notification that the Applicant is approaching the statutory consultation and confirmation of the start date and closing date;
 - b. An invitation for an initial briefing (either online or in person) on a convenient date;
 - c. An overview of the upcoming consultation activities, including face-to-face events, online webinars, publication of the SoCC and wider information; and
 - d. Information on wider publicity of the consultation, including encouragement for parish councils/meetings to help raise awareness through their communication channels;
 - e. An opportunity for groups to get in touch and request printed/additional copies of consultation materials.
- 7.5.4 The Applicant also issued hard copy letters to 31 host and neighbouring parish councils/meetings (as listed in **Table 7-2**) by Royal Mail 1st Class post on 25 May 2023. The letters included introductory information about the consultation and included copies of the consultation poster, inviting each parish to display copies at convenient locations. See **Appendix C-6** for copies of the poster and outreach letters.
- 7.5.5 In response to the letters, the Applicant attended a series of briefing sessions before and during the consultation period, as listed in **Table 7-3** below. An example of the presentation provided during the sessions is provided in **Appendix C-7**.
- 7.5.6 Sessions were attended by members of the project team and included presentation of the following information:
- a. An introduction to the Tillbridge Solar team;
 - b. Overview of the Scheme, including its location, principal infrastructure and needs case;
 - c. Overview of the Applicant's updated proposals following initial non-statutory engagement, including presentation of the indicative site layout plan;
 - d. Overview of the location of the Scheme in relation to the respective village/parish;
 - e. More information about the statutory consultation activities, including the public consultation events and webinars, printed and hard copy information available, and how to provide feedback;
 - f. Explanation of how feedback will be used following the close of the statutory consultation;
 - g. Next steps and how to get in touch; and
 - h. Question and answer session.

Table 7-3: List of parish council/meeting briefing sessions

Parish council/meeting	Date and location	Attendees	Overview of issues discussed
Glentworth Parish Council	24 May 2023, 26 Church St, Glentworth, Gainsborough DN21 5DG	Representatives from Glentworth Parish Council, local residents, landowners and tenant farmers. Representatives from other parish councils/meetings and local councillors.	<p>The Applicant provided an update on the Scheme following the collaboration workshops.</p> <p>The Applicant also provided a summary of upcoming engagement activities during the statutory consultation, where the Scheme was located in relation to Glentworth, and how feedback could be provided. The Applicant also provided hard copy information for attendees to takeaway.</p>
Springthorpe Parish Meeting	3 July 2023, Springthorpe Village Hall, School Lane, Springthorpe, DN21 5QD	Representatives from Springthorpe Parish Meeting and other parishes. Representatives from 7000 acres group. Local residents, landowners and tenant farmers.	<p>The Applicant also spoke through the statutory consultation information and how people could get involved/provide feedback.</p> <p>The Applicant also provided hard copy information for attendees to takeaway and encouraged attendees to provide feedback.</p>
Sturton by Stow Parish Council	5 July 2023, The Old Schoolroom, Tillbridge Road,	Representatives from Sturton by Stow Parish	The Applicant spoke through the statutory consultation

Sturton by Stow,
LN1 2BP

Council. Local
residents.

activities and encouraged the council to get involved. The Applicant addressed a number of questions from the parish, which were submitted formally as consultation feedback.

7.5.7 On the day of the SoCC being published (on 25 May 2023), the Applicant provided follow up emails to host and neighbouring parish councils/meetings (as listed and described in **Chapter 6**).

7.5.8 The emails provided an outline of the SoCC (and explained that the Applicant had taken into consideration comments from the Host authorities) and included the following attachments:

- a. Final SoCC, as published on the Scheme's website and in hard copy for reference at the local information events (as described in **Chapter 6**);
- b. Stakeholder Pack, which introduced the consultation, shared draft messaging for groups to use in their wider printed, online and social communications, and shared useful links to the Scheme's website and consultation information;
- c. Copy of the Section 47 Notice, as publicised in local newspapers and on the Scheme's website; and
- d. A digital copy of the statutory consultation poster to share digitally, upload to their website or print out and display in their parish.

7.5.9 Copies of the emails and attachments are provided in **Appendix C-8**.

7.6 Briefing information provided to MPs

7.6.1 As with briefing information provided for elected representatives, the Applicant also issued emails to MPs in advance of the statutory consultation.

7.6.2 Initial emails were sent to Brendan Clarke Smith MP, Robert Jenrick MP and Sir Edward Leigh MP on 18 May 2023, which included introductory consultation information about the Scheme and offered an individual meeting on a suitable date during, or outside of, the consultation period. The email also included a PDF attachment which:

- a. Outlined the upcoming consultation activities, including face-to-face events and online webinars;
- b. Provided further background on the Scheme; and
- c. Provided an overview of the upcoming publicity and launch of consultation on 30 May 2023.

- 7.6.3 Emails and attachments sent to MPs are provided in **Appendix C-9**.
- 7.6.4 Follow up emails were sent on 30 May 2023 to officially announce the launch of the statutory consultation. Emails provided details about the consultation, including all activities, documents/materials, and explained how feedback could be provided. Copies of the consultation leaflet, project information booklet and individual letters were attached to each email (see **Appendix C-10**).
- 7.6.5 Emails were sent to the aforementioned MPs, along with Gareth Davies MP, John Hayes MP, and Alician Kearns MP (whose constituencies neighbour where the Scheme would be located).
- 7.6.6 Every piece of correspondence sent to MPs (at all intervals throughout the pre-application period) included an offer for individual briefings, however no requests were received for such a briefing.
- 7.6.7 One piece of feedback was received by Sir Edward Leigh MP on 5 July 2023, which was acknowledged by the Applicant on 25 July 2023 with a further offer for an individual briefing. This feedback is summarised in **Chapter 10, section 10.5**.

7.7 Section 47 Consultation Launch

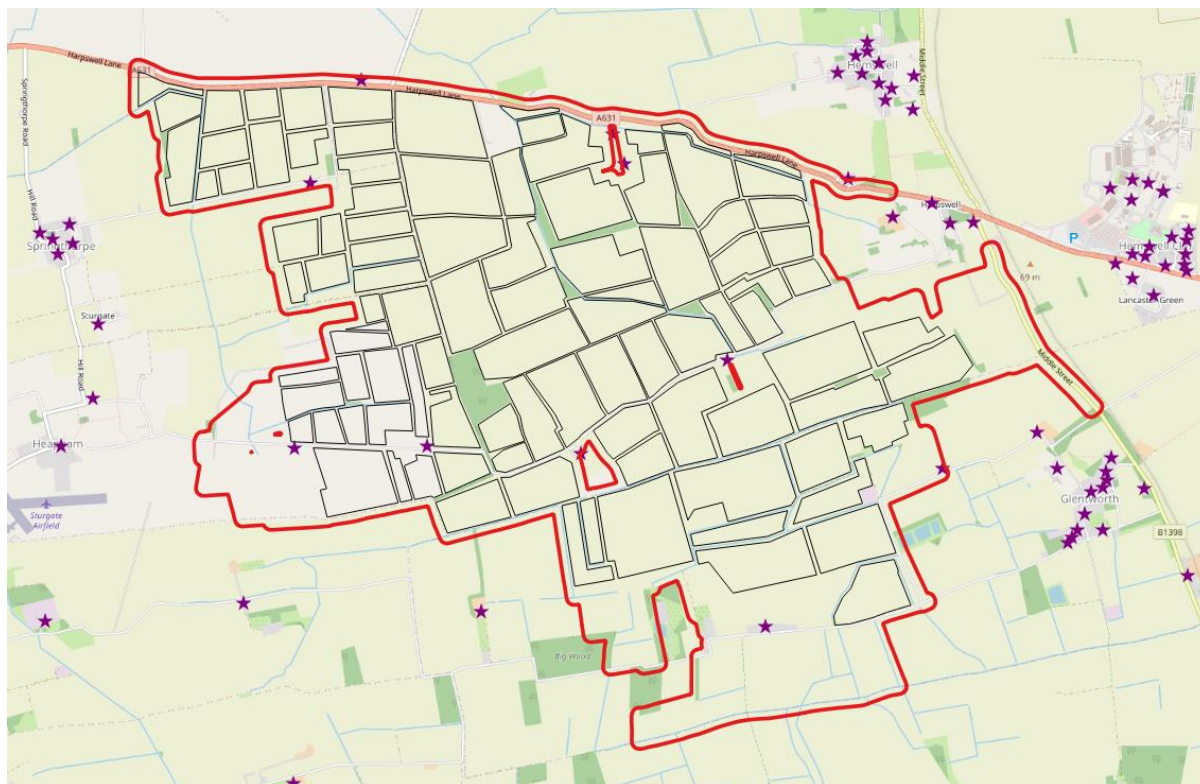
- 7.7.1 As outlined in the previous section, communications were issued to the relevant county and district council elected representatives and parish councils/meetings across the PCZ to notify them that Section 47 consultation had launched.
- 7.7.2 In addition to the engagement with the aforementioned stakeholders, the Applicant issued emails to 121 'non-statutory' consultees on 30 May 2023, which included environmental and energy groups, economic and business groups, local groups and 'near neighbours', charitable organisations and religious groups, local business groups/wider representation and seldom heard groups. This list included people who signed up for email updates during the initial period of non-statutory engagement, including collaboration workshops in July 2022.
- 7.7.3 The Applicant welcomed suggestions for other consultees from local authorities when inviting comments on the draft SoCC. The list of consultees (as appended to the final SoCC) is provided in **Appendix C-1** to this report.
- 7.7.4 The emails sent at the launch of the consultation provided the following information:
- a. An introduction to the Scheme;
 - b. A summary of engagement to date, including the collaboration workshops in July 2022;
 - c. An explanation of how to get involved in the consultation, including all events and webinars, and how to provide feedback;
 - d. A list of consultation materials produced as part of the consultation, along with a direct link to the online documents library;
 - e. A request by the Applicant for groups/stakeholders to share information about the consultation more widely; and

- f. An offer to receive hard copies of the consultation materials and the printing and postage costs for requesting a printed copy of the PEI Report.
- 7.7.5 Emails also included PDF copies of the consultation leaflet, project information booklet and stakeholder packs. See **Appendix C-2** for the emails and attachments.
- 7.7.6 The Applicant issued printed copies of the consultation leaflet to the PCZ (comprising approximately 5,000 addresses), by Royal Mail 1st Class on 25 May 2023.
- 7.7.7 Prior to Section 47 consultation closing on 11 July 2023, the Applicant issued further email communications as reminders about the consultation, including:
 - a. An email to the same local authority members and elected representatives, MPs, parishes councils, and 121 non-statutory consultees on 6 June 2023, reminding them of the first webinar taking place on 7 June 2023 and how to register;
 - b. An email to the above stakeholders on 4 July 2023, reminding them of the consultation close date on 11 July 2023, the next face-to-face consultation event on 6 July 2023 at Hemswell and Harpswell Village Hall, including a PDF consultation leaflet attached to the email; and
 - c. An email to the above stakeholders on 10 July 2023, inviting them to join the final webinar on 10 July 2023 and confirmation that the consultation would be closing the following day.
- 7.7.8 Copies of reminder emails are provided in **Appendix C-11**.

7.8 Near neighbours

- 7.8.1 As outlined in **section 5.4**, the Applicant sought to engage with 'near neighbours' at various stages in the pre-application period, including before the launch of the statutory consultation on 30 May 2023.
- 7.8.2 As previously stated, near neighbours were defined as properties within or immediately adjacent to (less than 50 metres from) the 'red line boundary' (as defined at the time of statutory consultation).
- 7.8.3 Consistent with commitments made in the final SoCC, businesses and residents within this area were sent letters at the start of the consultation, offering an opportunity for an individual meeting.
- 7.8.4 The mailing zone for near neighbours in relation to the Principal Site, comprising 70 addresses, is shown in **Figure 7-2**, which identifies individual postcodes.

Figure 7-2: Mailing zone for near neighbour communications (stars represent each postcode)



7.8.5 Letters were sent by Royal Mail 1st class postage on 25 May 2023 and included the following information:

- a. An introduction to the Scheme, its location and main components;
- b. Notification of the start of the statutory consultation on 30 May 2023, including an overview of the statutory consultation leaflet (which was sent via a separate mailing);
- c. An invitation to attend the upcoming face-to-face consultation events and online webinars to meet with the project team and discuss the proposals in more detail; and
- d. An invitation for an individual meeting and a convenient time.

7.8.6 Copies of the letters are provided in **Appendix C-12**.

7.8.7 Members of the project team carried out an additional ‘door-knocking’ exercise on 26 May 2023 ahead of the consultation start date. The purpose of the exercise was to explain the updated proposals (in relation to each respective resident, business or landowner), how to get involved and address any specific questions before the consultation started. The Applicant also provided printed copies of the project information leaflet, feedback questionnaires and took away requests for additional printed information, where required.

7.8.8 The Applicant met with a number of properties in the vicinity of the Principal Site, including a number located along the A631, and met with additional parties throughout the consultation period, on request.

7.9 Consultation materials

- 7.9.1 At the launch of statutory consultation, the Applicant published a statutory consultation leaflet, a feedback questionnaire and project information booklet and updated the Scheme website.
- 7.9.2 The statutory consultation was also supported by several technical documents, reference copies of which were made available at local information points across the Scheme area from consultation launch (see **Table 6-3**). Details of these documents are provided below and were clearly set out in the final SoCC. The availability of consultation materials during the consultation is outlined in **Table 7-4**.

Table 7-4: Availability of consultation materials during statutory consultation

Consultation material	Available at local information points to take away?	Available at local information points for reference only?	Available at Scheme website?	Available on printed format for free on request?
PEI Report	No	Yes	Yes	No (for a set charge, as advertised)
NTS	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes
Final SoCC	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Statutory Consultation Leaflet	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes
Project Information Booklet	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes
Feedback Questionnaire	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes
FAQs document	No	No	Yes	Yes

- 7.9.3 In recognition of the fact that people might need some help in understanding the nature of the content and information available in the different materials published at consultation launch, the Applicant produced a 'Navigating our Consultation Plans' booklet.
- 7.9.4 This listed out all the documents and materials available to explain the proposed Scheme being consulted on and help people provide their feedback; provided a summary of the information in each, and where they could be accessed. The 'Navigating our Consultation Plans' booklet was

available in hard copy at the events to take away and electronically on the Scheme website.

7.9.5 A copy of all consultation materials can be found in **Appendix C-13**.

Statutory consultation leaflet

7.9.6 The Applicant directly mailed a statutory consultation leaflet by Royal Mail 1st class to the 4,898 addresses identified as lying within the PCZ (as described in **section 7.7**). A copy of the leaflet can be found in **Appendix C-13.1**.

7.9.7 In addition to the addresses lying within the PCZ, the leaflet was also sent electronically to local interest and business groups and community organisations with potential interests in the vicinity of the Scheme, as well as gateway organisations representing the interest of seldom heard and under-represented groups.

7.9.8 The consultation leaflet was an important part of informing people about, and inviting them to take part in, the statutory consultation. The leaflet made clear that the proposals being consulted on had been updated further from that first stage of non-statutory consultation taking place in Summer 2022 and included details of consultation events taking place, and how consultees could access more detailed information. Contact details for the community relations team were available so members of the public could request further information if needed.

Project information booklet

7.9.9 The Applicant produced a project information booklet providing an overview of the Scheme, the purpose of the consultation and a summary of those areas on which feedback was being sought, as well as details of how people could take part in the consultation and what would happen once the consultation period ended.

7.9.10 The project information booklet provided a high-level overview of all aspects of the Scheme, making it clear where greater detail could be found (i.e. relevant technical documents). It also included schematic maps setting out:

- a. The location of the Principal Site and Cable Route Corridor;
- b. An indicative site layout plan; and
- c. A map showing the location of the other DCO solar projects in the vicinity.

7.9.11 Printed copies of the project information booklet were made available for people to take away from in-person consultation events (see **Table 7-6**), at each of the local information points (see **Table 6-3**) and on request. A digital version was available to download from the Scheme website, with a direct link provided in letters and emails sent to consultees.

7.9.12 A copy of the project information booklet can be found in **Appendix C-13.2**.

Feedback questionnaire

7.9.13 The feedback questionnaire was developed to provide an easy way for consultees to give feedback to the Applicant and respond to the consultation.

It presented questions that were written to encourage consultees to comment on key aspects of the Scheme on which the Applicant was seeking feedback, while also giving them the opportunity to provide any general views. One question invited any other comments consultees may have about the Scheme. This structured approach helped the Applicant in reviewing and considering the feedback provided (see **Chapter 10**).

- 7.9.14 The feedback questionnaire included where to find more information, directing consultees to the Scheme website, the project information booklet and the relevant technical materials.
- 7.9.15 The feedback questionnaire was available in hard copy and in digital format to view and download from the Scheme website. Hard copy versions were made freely available at in-person consultation events for people to take away, and on request. Copies were also made available at local information points (see **Table 6-3**).
- 7.9.16 A copy of the feedback questionnaire can be found in **Appendix C-13.3**.
- 7.9.17 The Scheme website featured an online feedback questionnaire including the same questions and requests for information as the hard copy feedback questionnaire, which enabled consultees to directly submit their feedback via the website. Screenshots of the website, including the online questionnaire, can be found in **Appendix C-13.4**.

FAQs

- 7.9.18 To address some of the issues and questions most frequently raised about the proposed Scheme and the development process, the Applicant produced a 'Frequently Asked Questions' document. This was published on the Scheme website and made available in hard copy at consultation events.
- 7.9.19 A copy of the 'Frequently Asked Questions' document can be found in **Appendix C-13.5**.

Technical documents, maps, plans and NTS

- 7.9.20 The Applicant published technical documents to support the consultation at consultation launch. These provided additional detail to the information contained in the project information booklet.
- 7.9.21 These were as follows:
 - a. PEI Report - Volume 1: Main Report;
 - b. PEI Report - Volume 2: Appendices;
 - c. PEI Report - Volume 3: Figures; and
 - d. NTS providing an overview of the information and findings set out in the PEI Report.
- 7.9.22 One copy of the full PEI Report was made available at each local information point and at the face-to-face consultation events. One additional copy was provided to Glentworth Parish Council, on request, during the consultation event at Glentworth Village Hall on 14 June 2023, which enabled interested local residents and parties to view the printed document at their convenience.

7.9.23 The PEI Report and NTS were available to view in the documents library on the Scheme website. See **Appendix C-13.4** for screenshots.

Scheme website

7.9.24 The Scheme website – as shown in **Appendix C-13.4** – was updated on the first day of statutory consultation (30 May 2023) providing information about the statutory consultation, what was being consulted on, and the development process. The updated website provided people with access to all the consultation overview and technical documents produced to inform the consultation, an online feedback questionnaire and access to register to attend the online consultation events.

7.9.25 Information regarding the upcoming consultation and final SoCC was also uploaded on 25 May 2023, in line with publication of the Section 47 Notice.

7.9.26 The Scheme website address was publicised across all the consultation and publicity materials, and public notices that were produced to support the statutory consultation. Copies of these materials are set out in **Appendix D-15**.

7.9.27 Screenshots of the updated website can be found in **Appendix C-13.4**.

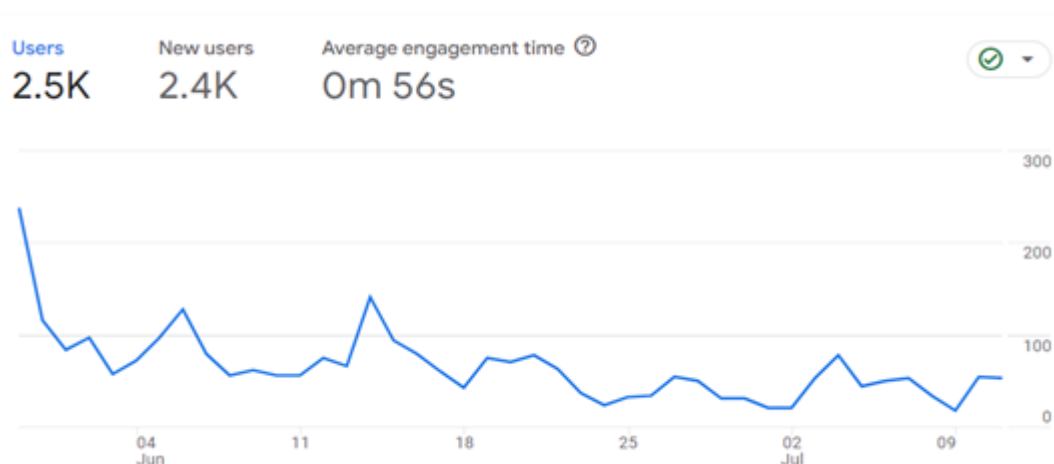
7.9.28 The website was visited consistently throughout the statutory consultation period; with an average of 225 daily visits. The day-by-day analysis of daily visits can be viewed in **Appendix C-14**.

7.9.29 A peak in visitors occurred within the first days of the consultation launching, when information communicating details of where information could be found went live and the statutory consultation leaflet was delivered. Site traffic levelled off through the consultation period, peaking again towards the end when the communications reminding people of the closing date for submissions were issued. The all-time high was 1,109 visits on 6 July, which was the day of the last in-person event.

7.9.30 Over the statutory consultation period the website has been viewed a total of 9,690 times, with just over 225 daily visits. 21,237 clicks were made through to links / pages, with a daily average of 494.

7.9.31 Visitor numbers to, and users of, the Scheme website over the period of the statutory consultation can be seen in the graphics below.

Figure 7-3: website user traffic during the statutory consultation period (30 May – 11 July 2023)



Documents Library

7.9.32 In recognition of the volume of new information made available during the statutory consultation, the Applicant established a Documents Library on the Scheme website, which acted as a central point of information for all documents. The uploaded documents for the statutory consultation included:

- a. Documents published during the non-statutory engagement stage, including the collaboration workshop presentation (July 2022), post-collaboration workshop report (September 2022) and community newsletter (October 2022);
- b. Statutory consultation documents, including consultation leaflet, exhibition boards, FAQs document, project information booklet, final SoCC, navigating our consultation plans document, feedback questionnaire, Section 47 Notice, and Section 48 Notice; and
- c. PEI Report and NTS.

7.9.33 The Documents Library remained active beyond the statutory consultation and the Applicant uploaded additional documents to the website leading up to DCO submission in April 2024.

Interactive map

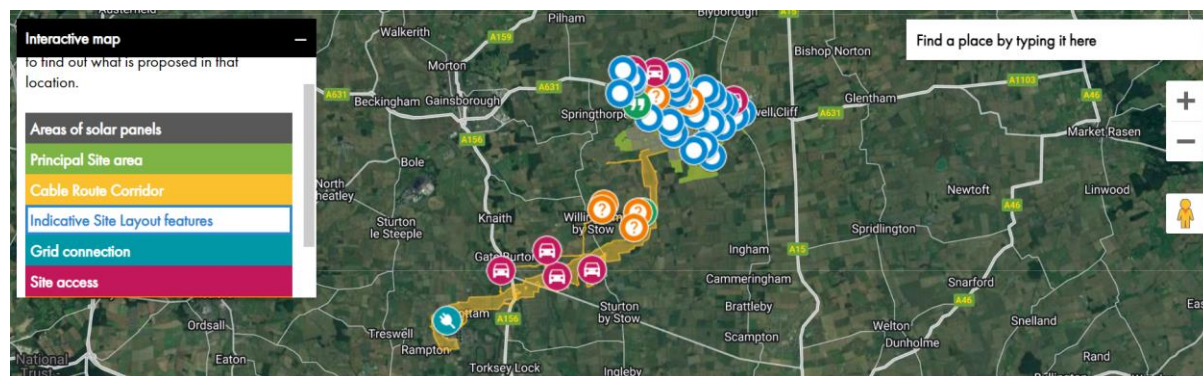
7.9.34 The Applicant also published an online interactive map at the start of the consultation period which reflected the updated proposals for the Scheme. The interactive map clearly signposted the Principal Site area, Cable Route Corridor, Grid connection (at National Grid's Cottam Substation), indicative site accesses (to the Principal Site and Cable Route Corridor). The map also included more detailed information on specific elements and highlighted particular aspects on which the Applicant was inviting comments.

7.9.35 The map also included a postcode search bar and a Google map 'street view' tool, allowing users to identify their location in relation to the Scheme.

7.9.36 For users with limited digital access, the Applicant welcomed consultees to get in touch via the community relations phone line or email. The Applicant also provided hard copy maps, on request.

7.9.37 Screenshots from the website and interactive map can be found in **Appendix C-13.4**. An example is also shown in **Figure 7-4**.

Figure 7-4: Screenshot from the interactive map (taken 30 May 2023)



7.10 Collection of responses

7.10.1 Consultees were able to respond to the statutory consultation using a number of methods:

- Going to the 'Consultation' page of the Scheme website (see **Appendix C-13.4**) and completing an online feedback questionnaire;
- Collecting a questionnaire from one of the consultation events, local information points (listed on the Scheme website), or on request (by contacting the community relations team by email, phone or post);
- Returning a completed questionnaire to the Applicant at one of the events, by email or by post (by writing 'FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR' on a blank envelope); and
- Providing free form comments by email or post.

7.10.2 Guidance on how to provide feedback was clearly communicated in correspondence sent to consultees, including all consultation materials (see **Appendix C-13**).

7.11 Local information points

7.11.1 In line with the Government's confirmation that placing materials on a website maintained by or on behalf of the Applicant meets the requirement to make information publicly accessible, all consultation materials were made available online at the Scheme website (see **Appendix C-13.4**) from the start of the statutory consultation on 30 May 2023 for the duration of the consultation period.

7.11.2 In addition, hard copies of all the technical documents including the full PEI Report and NTS produced were made available to view at five local information points (see **Table 7-5** below). Copies of the statutory consultation leaflet, project information booklet, feedback questionnaire, information posters and NTS were made available at the local information points from consultation launch in sufficient quantities for people to take copies away if

they wished. One copy of the SoCC was also made available at each information point (to inspect but not take away).

7.11.3 An example image showing the materials at Lincoln Central Library is shown in **Figure 7-5**.

Figure 7-5: Image showing materials on display at Lincoln Central Library (photograph taken 25 May 2023)



7.11.4 To ensure there was sufficient stock available throughout the consultation period, contact was maintained with venue managers to check whether stock needed replenishing. Initially this was on a weekly basis, but the venues subsequently said they would make contact if they required more materials. Photographs of the materials in the local information points are available in **Appendix C-15**.

7.11.5 The five local information points were selected on the basis of being easily accessible and spread across the wider consultation zone. Consultation materials were available at these locations for the full length of the statutory consultation period.

7.11.6 Placing reference copies of consultation documents in the five public locations allowed people to view hardcopy versions of the technical information which could be difficult to access for those without internet or

poor internet connections or, simply, if people preferred to read materials in hard copy format.

Table 7-5: Local information points

Venue	Address	Opening hours (correct at time of publication in May 2023)
West Lindsey District Council Office	Guildhall Marshall's Yard, Marshalls Yard, 13b Beaumont St, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA	9:00 to 17:00 (Monday to Friday)
Lincoln Central Library	Free School Lane, Lincoln, LN2 1EZ	9:00 to 17:00 (Monday to Wednesday and Friday) 9:00 to 18:00 (Thursday), and 9:00 to 16:00 (Saturday)
Gainsborough Library	Cobden St, Gainsborough, DN21 2NG	9:00 to 17:00 (Monday to Wednesday and Friday), 9:00 to 18:00 (Thursday), and 9:00 to 13:00 (Saturday)
Saxilby Library	St Andrews Centre, William St, Saxilby, LN1 2LP	10:30 to 15:30 (Tuesday), 10:30 to 16:00 (Wednesday) and 10:30 to 13:00 (Friday)
Retford Library	Churchgate, Retford, DN22 6PE	9:00 to 18:00 (Monday to Friday) and 9:00 to 15:00 (Saturday)

7.12 Public consultation events

- 7.12.1 Statutory consultation started on 30 May 2023 with a response deadline of 23:59 on the 11 July 2023.
- 7.12.2 In compliance with the SoCC, six face-to-face consultation events, held at selected key locations throughout the PCZ, and two online webinars held using Livestorm (a webinar platform), took place between 7 June and 10 July 2023, as detailed in **Table 7-6**, to give local people the opportunity to meet the Tillbridge Solar project team, better understand the proposals and ask any questions they may have.
- 7.12.3 Details of these public consultation events were included in the SoCC, the Scheme website, the statutory consultation leaflet, social media, press advertising and press releases issued to regional media. In total 175 people attended the events.

Table 7-6: Attendance at statutory consultation public consultation events

Event date/time	Location	Venue	Attendees
7 June 2023 6:30pm to 8pm	Online event	Livestorm (webinar platform)	5
14 June 2023 14:30 to 19:00	Glentworth	Glentworth Village Hall, Stoney Lane, Glentworth, DN21 5DF	68
17 June 2023 10:00 to 14:00	Willingham	Willingham Village Hall, High St, Willingham by Stow, Gainsborough, DN21 5JZ	14
22 June 2023 13:30 to 17:30	Sturton by Stow	Sturton by Stow Village Hall, High St, Sturton by Stow, Lincoln, LN1 2AE	31
30 June 2023 12:00 to 16:00	Corringham	Corringham Village Hall, 10 Middle St, Corringham, Gainsborough, DN21 5QR	8
1 July 2023 10:00 to 14:00	Rampton	Rampton Village Hall, Manor Grounds, Rampton, Retford, DN22 0JU	2
6 July 2023 14:30 to 18:30	Hemswell and Harpswell	Hemswell and Harpswell Village Hall, Maypole Street, Hemswell, DN21 5UL	41
Mon 10 July 2023 18:30 to 20:00	Online event	Livestorm (webinar platform)	4

Online public consultation events

- 7.12.4 The Applicant scheduled two online consultation events (webinars) to take place on different days of the week, and published a recording of the first webinar, and the presentation slides, on the Scheme website.
- 7.12.5 The webinars were the first and last public consultation events to take place in the programme of events held over the consultation period; taking place on 7 June 2023 and 10 July 2023.
- 7.12.6 Individuals wishing to attend were able to register in advance via the Scheme website or by contacting the community relations team by email, with information on how to register being included in all the materials providing details of the events being held.

7.12.7 Each of the webinars included a presentation by the Applicant and the project team covering a variety of topics, followed by a question-and-answer session. A copy of the presentation slide deck can be found in **Appendix C-16**, and a list of the questions submitted by attendees and verbally responded to by the project team at each webinar can be found in **Appendix C-17**.

7.12.8 A recording of the first webinar (excluding the live question and answer session) was uploaded to the Scheme website on 8 June 2023.

In-person public consultation events

7.12.9 The Applicant held six in-person consultation events at community venues located within the PCZ and familiar to people living in proximity to the Scheme, at a variety of times to give people a greater chance of being able to attend. Venues were selected on the basis of being well known to local communities and having easy access (including disabled access), including taking into consideration suggestions from local authorities following consultation on the draft SoCC.

7.12.10 Consultation overviews and technical documents were available at events, along with a selection of large-scale maps and plans to help people better understand the proposed Scheme. Display panels providing a high-level summary and introduction to what was being consulted on and how to take part were also used at events (see **Appendix C-13.7**). **Table 7-7** lists all the Scheme collateral presented at each in-person consultation event and its availability to individuals.

7.12.11 All of the materials and information on display and available to take away from in-person consultation events were available to view and download from the Scheme website.

Table 7-7: Scheme collateral available at in-person consultation events

Collateral	Availability at in-person events
Consultation overview documents	
Navigating our Consultation Plans booklet (Appendix C-13.6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantities of printed copies displayed for people to take away
Statutory consultation leaflet (Appendix C-13.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to view and download from the Scheme website
Project information booklet (Appendix C-13.2)	
Feedback questionnaire (Appendix C-13.3)	

Project FAQs (**Appendix C-13.5**)

- Available to view and download from the Scheme website

Exhibition boards (**Appendix C-13.7**)

- Reference copies only – for display at in-person events

SoCC (Appendix B-7)

- Available to view and download from the Scheme website

Technical documents

PEI Report

- Printed reference copy only
- Maps and plans printed in A0 format for display and reference
- Available to view and download from the Scheme website

PEI Report NTS

- Printed reference copy
- Printed copies available to take away
- Available to view and download from the Scheme website

7.12.12 All of the documents were also available on a USB device, free of charge on request, which was limited to one per household. People could also request a hard copy of the PEI Report subject to a reasonable charge to cover printing and postage costs of £0.35 per page.

7.12.13 The Applicant's project team, including specialists from key environmental disciplines, land specialists and community relations, were on hand to explain the proposed Scheme and answer any questions. An image taken from the consultation event at Glentworth Village Hall on 14 June 2023 is shown in **Figure 7-6**.

Figure 7-6: Consultation event at Glentworth Village Hall (photograph taken 14 June 2023)



7.12.14 A Consultation Community Newsletter summarising the statutory consultation, key consultation themes, outcomes and next steps was published in March 2024 and sent to the PCZ (of approximately 5,000 properties), along with additional stakeholders by email (as reported in **Chapter 12, section 12.4**). A copy of the Consultation Community Newsletter (March 2024) can be found in **Appendix A-12.1**.

7.13 Publicising the Section 47 Statutory Consultation

Press releases

7.13.1 A press release was issued to local, regional and trade media outlets to publicise the Section 47 consultation at the start of consultation on 25 May 2023 (with an embargo until 30 May 2023). A further press release was issued on 23 June 2023 to remind people of the consultation and pending deadline for submission of comments.

7.13.2 **Table 7-8** below lists those local, regional and trade media outlets to whom press releases were issued. Copies of the press releases issued are set out in **Appendix C-18**.

Table 7-8: List of media outlets to which press releases were issued

Media outlet

TV

BBC Radio Lincolnshire
BBC Radio Nottingham
BBC East Midlands

BBC Look North

ITV Calendar

Notts TV

Print

Retford Times

The Gainsborough Standard

The Grantham Journal

The Lincolnite

Lincolnshire Echo

Lincolnshire Free Press

Lincolnshire in Focus

Lincolnshire Life

Lincolnshire Live

Lincolnshire Reporter

Lincolnshire Today

Lincolnshire World

Market Rasen Mail

Nottinghamshire in Focus

Nottinghamshire Live

Nottingham Local News

Nottingham Post

Retford Life

Gainsborough Life

Radio

Endeavour FM

Gravity FM

Siren Radio

Trade

Renews

Solar Power Portal

Energy Storage News

Energy Voice

Renewable Energy World

Energy Now

Energy Manager

Energy Monitor

Energy Focus

The Energyst

Energy Live News

Renewables Now

Planning Resource

Insider Media Limited

Business Link

7.13.3 The press releases issued generated editorial coverage before and during consultation. **Table 7-9** below itemises coverage which the Applicant was aware of relating to the Scheme further to information about the Section 47 consultation being made available to the media.

Table 7-9: Media coverage regarding Section 47 consultation

Title of article	Media outlet	Date
Consultation to open on major solar farm project near Gainsborough which could power 300k homes	Lincolnshire Live	26 May 2023
Lincolnshire solar farm plans on display	BBC News	14 June 2023

7.13.4 Copies of the media coverage can be found in **Appendix C-19**.

Public notices

7.13.5 The Applicant publicised the consultation and the Scheme as required by the PA 2008. The Section 47 Notice publicising the SoCC appeared in the following local newspapers on 25 May 2023 for one week:

- a. Lincolnshire Echo;
- b. Retford Times; and
- c. Gainsborough Standard.

7.13.6 The consultation details were also publicised in the Section 48 notices published in local newspapers for two consecutive weeks, and a national newspaper and the London Gazette for one week as set out in **Table 7-10**.

Table 7-10: Section 48 Notice schedule

Newspaper outlet	1st Publication date	2nd Publication date
The Guardian	Thursday 25 May 2023	N/A
London Gazette	Thursday 25 May 2023	N/A
Lincolnshire Echo	Thursday 25 May 2023	Thursday 1 June 2023
Retford Times	Thursday 25 May 2023	Thursday 1 June 2023
Gainsborough Standard	Thursday 25 May 2023	Thursday 1 June 2023

7.13.7 Copies of the Section 47 and Section 48 notices as they appeared in the required publications are set out in **Appendix B-8** and **Appendix D-2**, respectively.

Media advertising

7.13.8 In addition to publishing a formal Section 48 Notice in regional and national newspapers, the Applicant also placed adverts across regional media outlets to publicise the consultation and programme of public consultation events as set out in **Table 7-11** below.

Table 7-11: Media advertising schedule

Newspaper outlet	1st Publication date	2nd Publication date
Lincolnshire Echo	Thursday 25 May 2023	Thursday 15 June 2023
Retford Times	Thursday 25 May 2023	Thursday 15 June 2023
Gainsborough Standard	Thursday 25 May 2023	Thursday 15 June 2023
Market Rasen Mail	Thursday 25 May 2023	Thursday 15 June 2023
Lincolnshire Life	June edition	N/A
Retford Life	June edition	N/A
Lincolnshire Live (online)	Online banner advert ran from 25 May 2023 - 200,000 impressions	
'Lincolnshire World' website [REDACTED] (online)	Online banner advert ran from 25 May 2023 - 40,000 impressions	
The Lincolnite website https://mylocal.co.uk/lincolnshire	- Monday 5 June 2023 for one week	
Lincolnshire Life (online)	A digital skyscraper advertisement ran in June	
Retford Life (online)	Consultation events were added to the website	
Gainsborough Life (online)	Consultation events were added to the website	

7.13.9 The advertisements were designed to provide a simple visual guide to highlight the dates of the statutory consultation period and events taking place along with clear signposts to where/how people could access information.

7.13.10 Online advertisements promoted the consultation and included a link to the Scheme website.

7.13.11 Copies of the adverts can be found in **Appendix C-20**.

Consultation poster

7.13.12 As outlined in previous sections, the Applicant produced posters to advertise the statutory consultation. The poster was designed to provide a simple guide to when events were taking place and where more information could be found. A copy of the poster can be found in **Appendix C-6.1**.

7.13.13 The poster was:

- a. Included in the stakeholder information pack for consultees to use in their wider communications (see **Appendix C-21**) and issued by email to councillors, parish councils/meeting and wider stakeholders (see **Appendix C-8**);
- b. Issued in hard copy to 31 host and neighbouring parish councils/meetings (as listed in **Table 7-2**) on 25 May 2023, welcoming each parish to display information in convenient locations (see **Appendix C-6.3**); and
- c. Issued in hard copy to 23 community and/or public venues including libraries, shops and civic buildings within and outside the core consultation zone (see **Appendix C-6.4** for a list of locations).

7.13.14 An image showing the information poster on display at Corringham Village Hall is shown in **Figure 7-7**.

Figure 7-7: Image of information poster on display at Corringham Village Hall (photograph taken 30 June 2023)



Social media

7.13.15 In the lead up to consultation launch and throughout the consultation period, paid-for posts were issued via a dedicated Tillbridge Solar Facebook account. These publicised consultation events, encouraged feedback, and shared a link to the Scheme website. The posts targeted people in the PCZ.

7.13.16 During the consultation period, five posts were shared on Facebook from 1 June to 10 July promoting the consultation and local information events (see

Appendix C-22 for a copy of the posts). The posts reached a total of 11,175 people, creating 65,377 impressions, meaning the number of times the posts were displayed to users. Details of the individual posts are shown in **Figure 7-7** and statistics from the posts are provided in **Table 7-12**.

Table 7-12: Details of the social media posts

Advert	Dates	Link clicks	Reach	Impressions
Consultation is live	02/06 – 18/06	253	8,621	33,983
Halfway through consultation – have your say	20/06 – 02/07	136	5,076	18,167
Promoting in-person events	10/06 – 06/07	561	11,175	65,337
Promoting webinars	09/06 – 06/07	62	3,528	11,906
Consultation ending – invitation to provide feedback	06/07 – 10/07	89	3,824	13,181

7.13.17 An example post in shown as **Figure 7-8**.

Figure 7-8: Example social media post (from 2 June 2023)



7.13.18 The posts shared information about the Scheme, the start and end of the consultation period and ways to give feedback, directing people to the Scheme website to find out more.

7.13.19 When comments were posted on Facebook, a response was issued, directing people to the community relations contact information, 'Dear [stakeholder's name], thank you for your comments. Please direct all comments and feedback through our communications channels. You can get in touch by email (info@tillbridgesolar.com), freephone (0800 046 9643) or by visiting our website (see **Appendix C-13.4**).

Wider publicity via social media and wider channels

7.13.20 As previously stated, the Applicant also encouraged wider stakeholders (including parish councils and non-statutory consultees) to share information about the consultation more widely.

7.13.21 Example posts from wider consultees are listed in **Table 7-13** and provided in **Appendix C-23**, including from parish councils, local authorities and community groups.

Table 7-13: Example posts from social media

Group/user	Platform	Date	Summary of post
Glentworth Parish Council	Website	25 May 2023	Information shared about consultation and materials/documentation.
7000 Acres group	Facebook page	1 June 2023	Post reminding people about the remaining consultation events for the Scheme (14 June to 10 July 2023)
West Lindsey District Council	Twitter/X	2 June 2023	Post introducing consultation and sharing website URL.
Retford Life	Twitter/X	6 June 2023	Post inviting residents to attend public consultation invites, including a copy of the advertisement.
Gainsborough Life	Twitter/X	6 June 2023	Post inviting residents to attend public consultation invites, including a copy of the advertisement.
West Lindsey District Council	Twitter/X	8 June and 13 June 2023	Post reminding people to attending the face-to-face event at Glentworth Village Hall on 14 June 2023.
West Lindsey District Council	Twitter/X	16 June 2023	Post reminding people to attending the face-to-face event at Willingham Village Hall on 17 June 2023.
West Lindsey District Council	Twitter/X	20 June 2023	Post reminding people to attending the face-to-face event at Sturton by Stow Village Hall on 22 June 2023.
West Lindsey District Council	Twitter/X	28 June 2023	Post reminding people to attending the face-to-face event at

Group/user	Platform	Date	Summary of post
			Corringham Village Hall on 30 June 2023.
West Lindsey District Council	Twitter/X	30 June 2023	Post reminding people to attending the face-to-face event at Rampton Village Hall on 1 July 2023.
West Lindsey District Council	Twitter/X	5 July 2023	Post reminding people to attending the face-to-face event at Hemswell and Harpswell Village Hall on 6 July 2023.
West Lindsey District Council	Twitter/X	8 July 2023	Post reminding people to attending the online webinar on 10 July 2023.
7000 Acres group	Facebook page	10 July 2023	Post reminding people to complete the feedback questionnaire by the consultation deadline.

7.13.22 An example post from West Lindsey District Council on 13 June 2023 is shown as **Figure 7-9**.

Figure 7-9: Example post from West Lindsey District Council (from 13 June 2023)



Seldom heard groups

7.13.23 In addition to the properties and local businesses consulted with through the PCZ the Applicant identified additional seldom heard groups. These consultees were identified by desk-based research and through discussions with local authorities through regular monthly meetings and informal/formal consultation on the SoCC.

7.13.24 These groups and individuals were identified as less likely to participate in or respond to traditional consultation techniques. The groups and individuals that may find it harder to get involved in consultation and/or need additional support to access materials include:

- a. Geographically isolated communities;
- b. Economically inactive individuals and socially deprived communities;
- c. Young people;
- d. Older people;
- e. Disabled people and those with learning disabilities;
- f. Ethnic minorities; and
- g. Time poor, busy working people.

7.13.25 These consultees are listed in **Appendix C-1**.

7.13.26 The Applicant issued communications to seldom heard groups to notify them about the statutory consultation:

- 25 May 2023: the Applicant issued an email to identified organisations (**Appendix C-2**) to provide them with advance notice of the dates for Section 47 Consultation and to encourage them to circulate the enclosed information and register for updates. The Applicant also called each

group to talk them through the Scheme, the upcoming consultation, and whether any specific requests for documentation were required.

- Seldom heard groups were also included in the Applicant's mailings on 30 May 2023 and 4 July 2023. This included a notification on the launch and close of statutory consultation, including reminders throughout the consultation to get involved.

7.13.27 Through engagement with local authorities, the Applicant also encouraged planning officers to contact local engagement leads within each authority who may have networks for engaging seldom heard groups. This included an email to local authorities before the start of the consultation.

Requests for documents in alternative formats

7.13.28 Consultation documents in large-scale or alternative formats were available on request by contacting the Applicant's community relations team. Hard-copy versions of documents were also available by request. No request for alternative formats were made during the statutory consultation period.

7.14 Consultation response

7.14.1 The Applicant received 67 feedback responses to the Section 47 statutory consultation. All comments were taken into consideration by the Applicant. The comments received are summarised in **Chapter 10** - and presented in detail in **Appendix H** - along with how the Applicant has had regard to the feedback when finalising the DCO application.

7.15 Conclusion / Statement of compliance

7.15.1 The Applicant considers that it fully complied with Section 47 of the PA 2008. As set out in **Chapter 6** and this chapter (**Chapter 7**), the consultation was compliant with its published SoCC and met all statutory requirements under the PA 2008 as well as Government guidance and relevant PINS advice notes:

- a. The Applicant prepared the SoCC under Section 47(1);
- b. The Applicant consulted on the SoCC with all relevant host authorities as defined within Section 43(1) of the PA 2008, giving each at least 28 days to respond (in accordance with section 47(2) and (3) (see **Appendix B-4**);
- c. In preparing the SoCC, the Applicant had regard to any responses received from the relevant host authorities during consultation on the draft SoCC under Section 47(5);
- d. The Applicant advertised the SoCC in the publications listed in **Table 6-4**;
- e. The Applicant published the SoCC on 25 May 2023. In accordance with Section 47 (6), from 30 May 2023 printed copies of the SoCC were lodged and made available for inspection at the local information points set out in **Table 6-3**, and a digital version was made available on the Scheme website.

- f. The Applicant commenced statutory consultation with the community on 30 May 2023 in accordance with the SoCC further to publishing the SoCC on 25 May 2023;
- g. The Applicant offered and coordinated briefings to update elected members and parish councils;
- h. The Applicant consulted with the community – i.e. those persons defined under Section 47 of the PA as living in vicinity of the land where the Scheme is – over a core and wider consultation area; The Applicant met with individuals living in vicinity of the solar and energy storage elements of the Scheme as part of ongoing community engagement.
- i. The Applicant held a series of public consultation events (two online and six in-person) over the 43-day period of statutory consultation and welcomed 175 people to its in-person and online events;
- j. The Applicant purposely ran statutory consultation in parallel to Section 42 consultation to invite responses from the community to the PEI Report and PEI Report NTS; and,
- k. A total response period of 43-days was provided for Section 47 consultation, exceeding the 28-day statutory requirement.

8. Statutory Consultation Under Section 42 Of the PA 2008

8.1 Overview – requirements and guidance

- 8.1.1 Section 42 of the PA 2008 states that the Applicant must consult the following ‘Section 42 Consultees’ about a proposed application for a DCO:
- a. Section 42(1)(a) – such persons as may be prescribed;
 - b. Section 42(1)(b) – each local authority that is within Section 43;
 - c. Section 42(1)(c) – the Greater London Authority if the land is in Greater London. This is not relevant to the Scheme and;
 - d. Section 42(1)(aa) – the Marine Management Organisation, in any case where the project would affect, or would be likely to affect, any of the areas specific in subsection 2 of Section 42 of the PA 2008 (e.g., tidal, or offshore areas) – therefore not considered further in this section; and
 - e. Section 42(1)(d) – each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in Section 44.

8.2 Identification Of Consultees Under S42(1)(a) and (aa)

- 8.2.1 Such persons as may be prescribed’ (hereafter referred to as ‘Prescribe Consultees’) were identified by reference to Schedule 1 of the APFP Regulations (as amended) (Ref 5), which lists all Prescribed Consultees and the circumstances when they must be consulted about a proposed application for a DCO. **Appendix E-1** sets out each consultee prescribed in Schedule 1 of the APFP Regulations (Ref 5), whether they were included in the consultation and justification for that inclusion.
- 8.2.2 In addition, the Applicant had regard to PINS’ Advice Note 3 (Ref 7), which provides advice and guidance on the identification of Prescribed Consultees. In identifying those to consult, the Applicant applied the ‘Circumstances Test’ set out in Annex 1 of Advice Note 3 (Ref 7). Where there was uncertainty or doubt as whether or not to include a consultee, the Applicant erred on the side of caution and included that consultee on the list of those to be consulted.
- 8.2.3 In identifying Prescribed Consultees, the Applicant also reviewed the list provided by PINS under EIA Regulation 11(1)(c) to identify any additional parties.
- 8.2.4 The Applicant also consulted the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), thereby fulfilling S42(aa). The MMO was included because the Order limits include a section of the River Trent which is tidal in nature.

8.3 Identification Of Consultees Under S42(1)(b)

- 8.3.1 Section 42(1)(b) of the PA 2008 requires that the Applicant consults with the local authorities identified in s43 of the PA 2008, which sets out four categories of authority:

- a. A is a neighbouring local authority (s43(2)) that shares a boundary with a unitary council or lower-tier district 'B' council within whose area development is situated;
- b. B is either a unitary council or a lower-tier district council in which the development is situated – a host local authority;
- c. C is an upper-tier county council in which the development is situated – a host local authority; and,
- d. D is either a unitary council or an upper tier county council which shares a boundary with a host 'C' authority – a neighbouring local authority (s43(2A)).

8.3.2 Details of the identification of relevant local authorities, including whether they are an A, B, C or D authority, and the criteria for their identification, are included in **Table 8-1**. The relationship between the A and B authorities is illustrated in **Figure 8-1** below, and the relationship between the C and D authorities is illustrated in **Figure 8-2**.

Table 8-1: Identification of consultees under s42(1)(b)

Name	Category	Criteria for identification
West Lindsey District Council	B	West Lindsey District Council is a lower tier district authority in which part of the Scheme is located.
Bassetlaw District Council	B	Bassetlaw District Council is a lower tier district authority in which part of the Scheme is located.
Nottinghamshire County Council	C	Nottinghamshire County Council is an upper tier county authority which part of the Scheme is located.
Lincolnshire County Council	C	Lincolnshire County Council is an upper tier county authority which part of the Scheme is located.
North Kesteven District Council	A	North Kesteven District Council is a lower tier district authority which shares a boundary with a B authority, West Lindsey District Council.
Lincoln City Council	A	Lincoln City Council is a lower tier district authority which shares a boundary with a B authority, West Lindsey District Council.
Newark and Sherwood District Council	A	Newark and Sherwood District Council is a lower tier district authority which shares a boundary with two B

		authorities, Bassetlaw District Council and West Lindsey District Council.
Mansfield District Council	A	Mansfield District Council is a lower tier district authority which shares a boundary with a B authority, Bassetlaw District Council.
Bolsover District Council	A	Bolsover District Council is a lower tier district authority which shares a boundary with a B authority, Bassetlaw District Council.
East Lindsey District Council	A	East Lindsey District Council is a lower tier district authority which shares a boundary with a B authority, West Lindsey District Council.
North East Lincolnshire Council	A and D	North East Lincolnshire Council is a unitary authority which shares a boundary with a B authority, West Lindsey District Council and a C authority, Lincolnshire County Council.
North Lincolnshire Council	A and D	North Lincolnshire Council is a unitary authority which shares a boundary with a B authority, West Lindsey District Council and a C authority, Lincolnshire County Council.
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	A and D	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council is a lower tier district authority which shares a boundary with a B authority, Bassetlaw District Council and a C authority, Nottinghamshire County Council.
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council	A and D	Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council is a lower tier district authority which shares a boundary with a B authority, Bassetlaw District Council and a C authority, Nottinghamshire County Council.
Rutland County Council	D	Rutland County Council is a unitary authority which shares a boundary with a C authority, Lincolnshire County Council.
North Northamptonshire Council	D	North Northamptonshire Council is a unitary authority which shares a

boundary with a C authority,
Lincolnshire County Council.

Nottingham City Council	D	Nottingham City Council is a unitary authority which shares a boundary with a C authority, Nottinghamshire County Council.
Peterborough City Council	D	Peterborough City Council is a unitary authority which shares a boundary with a C authority, Lincolnshire County Council.
Cambridgeshire County Council	D	Cambridgeshire County Council is an upper tier county authority which shares a boundary with a C authority, Lincolnshire County Council.
Norfolk County Council	D	Norfolk County Council is an upper tier county authority which shares a boundary with a C authority, Lincolnshire County Council.
Derbyshire County Council	D	Derbyshire County Council is an upper tier county authority which shares a boundary with a C authority, Nottinghamshire County Council.
Leicestershire County Council	D	Leicestershire County Council is an upper tier county authority which shares a boundary with two C authorities, Nottingham County Council and Lincolnshire County Council.

Figure 8-1: The relationship between A and B Authorities



Figure 8-2: The relationship between C and D Authorities



8.4 Identification Of Consultees Under S42(1)(c)

- 8.4.1 S42(1)(c) of the PA 2008 is not relevant as no land element of the Scheme is within Greater London.

8.5 Identification Of Consultees Under S42(1)(d)

- 8.5.1 S42(1)(d) of the PA 2008 requires the Applicant to consult each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in s44 of the PA 2008. This requires the Applicant to consult with landowners, lessees, tenants or occupiers (Category 1 persons, as per s44(1)); those with an interest in the land or have a power to sell and convey the land or release the land (Category 2 persons, s44(2)); and those who the Applicant thinks would or might be entitled to make a relevant claim under s44(4) (Category 3 persons).
- 8.5.2 The Category 1 interests were identified via a diligent inquiry process covering six research methods: HM Land Registry, land interest questionnaire, EIA information, host and Companies House searches, site investigations and unknown owner site requests for information, and internet-based research.
- 8.5.3 Once the proposed Order limits were established Land Registry data was used to create land ownership parcels and obtain title information. All land within the identified limits was parcelled and each parcel was given a unique reference number. This was also supplemented by desktop referencing and the use of publicly available information. Details for registered companies were checked through the use of company registers such as Companies House.
- 8.5.4 Title information was verified using 'land interest questionnaires.' These were issued to all land interests within the Order limits and asked landowners to confirm the information taken from the Land Registry was correct and to obtain any additional information from those not identified through the Land Registry.
- 8.5.5 Where land interest questionnaires were not returned, direct contact was sought with the owner or occupier of the property, this included phone calls, an email and a follow-up site visit.
- 8.5.6 Where land interests could not be identified, site notices were erected on the land to request ownership information and to signpost to contact details for the project team. These were left in place and monitored for a minimum of six weeks unless the land interest was confirmed. A total of 30 site notices were erected.
- 8.5.7 The Category 2 interests were identified using the same methodology via: title information, requests for information, site visits, and collaboration with the wider project team to identify any interests not identified through the land referencing process.
- 8.5.8 As part of the diligent inquiry process, Land Registry data was refreshed at regular intervals to identify new interests. Where new interests were found, land interest questionnaires were issued and the process outlined above was followed to verify their details.

- 8.5.9 Through diligent inquiry, the Applicant confirmed that there are no persons who might be entitled to make a relevant claim as a Category 3 interest in relation to noise, vibration, smells, smoke or light emissions.
- 8.5.10 Through diligent inquiry, the Applicant considers that there are no persons who might be entitled to make a relevant claim as a Category 3 interest pursuant to Part 1 of the Land Compensation Act 1973.
- 8.5.11 The Applicant has taken a conservative approach to identifying interests who may be impacted by noise – based on the outcome of noise assessments carried out as part of the ES for the Application, the Applicant has included a number of Category 3 land interests in part 2 of the Book of Reference **[EN010142/APP/4.3]**. Further information on these noise assessments is provided in **Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]**.
- 8.5.12 The Applicant considers that there are no interests that have a relevant claim under Part 1 of the Land Compensation Act 1973 in relation to each of the following factors:
- a. Vibration – the results of an assessment of vibration carried out as part of the ES for the Application is included in **Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]**;
 - b. Fumes – the results of an assessment of the proposed Scheme’s impact on air quality and the emission of fumes is included in **Chapter 7: Air Quality** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]**; and
 - c. Light emissions – the results of an assessment of the proposed Scheme’s impact on visual amenity, are included in **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]**.
- 8.5.13 All relevant interests with the potential to make a claim under Section 10 (s10) of the Compulsory Purchase Act 1965 because they are in benefit of a restrictive right or covenant over land within the Order limits, have been included within the Book of Reference **[EN010142/APP/4.3]**.
- 8.5.14 All relevant interests with the potential to make a claim under Section 152(3) of the PA 2008 because they are in benefit of a restrictive right or covenant over land within the Order limits, have been included within the Book of Reference **[EN010142/APP/4.3]**.
- 8.5.15 A list of land interests consulted during the statutory consultation phase is provided in **Appendix E-4.1**.
- 8.5.16 As a result of ongoing due diligence following completion of statutory consultation activities, an additional 23 land interests have been identified (who had not previously been consulted under S42(1)(d)), and therefore not included in **Appendix E-4**. The 23 known interests will be displayed in the Book of Reference **[EN010142/APP/4.3]** and will also be notified as part of the acceptance process under S56 of the PA 2008.

8.6 Duty to notify the SoS of the Proposed Application under Section 46

- 8.6.1 Pursuant to s46 of the PA 2008, the Applicant must send PINS (on behalf of the Secretary of State) the s42 consultation documents on or before commencing the s42 consultation. The Applicant electronically wrote to PINS on 24 May 2023 setting out the background to the Scheme, the Applicant's intention to submit a DCO application, details of the documents to be sent in advance of statutory consultation and a summary of the consultation process.
- 8.6.2 The email included the PDF letter along with electronic copies of the following statutory consultation documents:
- Copy of section 42(1)(a) letter (prescribed consultees);
 - Copy of section 42(1)(aa) letter (Marine Management Organisation);
 - Copy of section 42(1)(b) letter (local authorities);
 - Copy of section 42(1)(d) letter (land interests); and
 - Copy of section 48 notice.
- 8.6.3 The letter also included a full list of statutory consultation documents and direct link to the documents library where they could be downloaded and viewed.
- 8.6.4 On 25 May 2023 a letter was received from PINS confirming that all documentation had been received and stating that: 'I acknowledge that you have notified the Planning Inspectorate of the proposed application for an Order granting development consent for the purposes of section 46 of the PA 2008 and supplied the information for consultation under section 42'.
- 8.6.5 Copies of the letter issued on 24 May 2023, an example email sending documentation and the letter from PINS received on 25 May 2023 are provided in **Appendix F-1** and **Appendix F-2**. The consultation started on 30 May 2023.

8.7 Undertaking Consultation S42 of the PA 2008

- 8.7.1 The Applicant wrote formally to all consultees identified under s42 of the PA 2008 to notify them of the consultation.
- 8.7.2 The Applicant wrote by 1st class Royal Mail delivery to consultees under s42(1)(a), s42(1)(aa) and s42(1)(b) of the PA 2008 on 26 May 2023, setting out the background to the Scheme, the Applicant's intention to submit a DCO application, the fact that the Applicant had identified them as a consultee under for the purposes of the PA 2008, the documents being provided as part of the consultation, how to respond to the consultation, and when the consultation period started and ended (giving a response period of 43 days) and cross referencing to s45 of the PA 2008. An email was also issued to all consultees ensuring they also had digital versions of the materials.
- 8.7.3 The Applicant enclosed with the letter printed copies of the section 48 notice and statutory consultation leaflet showing the location of the Scheme. The letter also confirmed that all consultation documents, including the project

- information booklet, feedback questionnaire, exhibition banners, FAQ document, maps and plans showing the overall location of the Scheme, SoCC and PEI Report and NTS, were available electronically on a website maintained by the Applicant, and the website address was provided. The letters also provided detail on how to get involved in the consultation and provide feedback.
- 8.7.4 Electronic copies of the S42 letters were sent via email (where an email address was accessible) on 30 May 2023. Emails included PDF copies of the respective letters, consultation leaflet and section 48, including direct links in the body of the email to the Documents Library, where all consultation documents could be found.
- 8.7.5 The Applicant wrote by recorded delivery to consultees under s42(1)(d) of the PA 2008 on 26 May 2023 setting out the background to the Scheme, the Applicant's intention to submit a DCO application, the fact that the Applicant had identified them as a consultee under s42(1)(d) of the PA 2008, the documents being provided as part of the consultation, how to respond to the consultation, and when the consultation period started and ended (giving a response period of 43 days) and cross referencing to s45 of the PA 2008.
- 8.7.6 The letter also confirmed that a project information booklet, feedback questionnaire, the PEI Report and its NTS were available electronically on a website maintained by the Applicant, and the website address was provided.
- 8.7.7 Copies of the letters sent to consultees under s42 of the PA 2008 are included in **Appendix E-3**. Consultation materials sent to consultees under s42 of the PA 2008 are available to view in **Appendix D-1** (Section 48 Notice) and **Appendix C-13.1** (statutory consultation leaflet).
- 8.7.8 A number of new land interests were identified during the statutory consultation period through ongoing diligent inquiry. The Applicant wrote to these consultees by recorded delivery setting out the background to the Scheme, the Applicant's intention to submit a DCO application, the fact that the Applicant had identified them as a consultee under s42(1)(d) of the PA 2008, the documents being provided as part of the consultation and how to respond to the consultation. In line with s45 of the PA 2008, these land interests were each provided with a date by which they must respond which was more than the required minimum of 28 days. Details of these land interests are included in **Appendix E-4.2**.
- 8.7.9 The total number of responses received from each group of s42 consultees is available in **Table 10-2**. **Chapter 10** also includes a summary of responses received, issues raised, and changes made, with **section 10.4** detailing s42 consultee issues raised and Applicant response.
- 8.7.10 In recognition of Active Travel England becoming a statutory consultee on 1 June 2023 on all major planning applications (Ref 10), the Applicant contacted the group to seek comment on the statutory consultation. Active Travel England confirmed in writing on 22 June 2023 that they are not a statutory consultee under the PA 2008 and would not be providing feedback on the Scheme.

8.8 Conclusion / Statement of compliance

8.8.1 In summary, the Applicant considers that it fully complied with Section 42 of the PA 2008. As set out in this chapter (**Chapter 8**), the consultation met all statutory requirements under the PA 2008 as well as Government guidance and PINS advice notes. All prescribed bodies relevant to the proposed development were consulted under s42 of the PA 2008:

- a. Section 42(a) as identified by reference to Schedule 1 of the APFP Regulations (Ref 5), included in **Appendix E**;
- b. Section 42 (aa) – including the Marine Management Organisation because the Order limits includes a section of the River Trent;
- c. Section 42(b) – each local authority that is within Section 43, shown in **Figure 8-1** and **Figure 8-2**;
- d. Section 42(c) – not relevant to the Scheme;
- e. Section 42(d) – each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in Section 44, with persons identified included within the Book of Reference [**EN010142/APP/4.3**].

9. Publicity Under Section 48 of the PA 2008

9.1 Overview – requirements and guidance

- 9.1.1 Section 48 of the PA 2008 imposes a duty on the Applicant to publish a notice of the proposed application in accordance with Regulation 4 of the APFP Regulations (Ref 5).
- 9.1.2 Regulation 4 of the APFP Regulations (Ref 5) sets out what the publicity under Section 48 of the PA 2008 should entail, which requires the publication of a notice in given publications, with requirements on the contents of such notice. Specifically, Regulation 4 requires an applicant to publish the notice for at least two successive weeks in one or more local newspapers and once in a national newspaper. The Applicant placed notices in the London Gazette and The Guardian in addition to local publications.

9.2 Section 48 Notice

- 9.2.1 **Table 9-1** includes details of the newspapers used to publicise the proposed application. The notice published under s48 of the PA 2008 gave the deadline of 11 July 2023 for responses (more than 28 clear days from the date when the last notice was published).

Table 9-1: Section 48 Notice schedule

Newspaper outlet	1st Publication date	2nd Publication date
The Guardian	Thursday 25 May 2023	N/A
London Gazette	Thursday 25 May 2023	N/A
Lincolnshire Echo	Thursday 25 May 2023	Thursday 1 June 2023
Retford Times	Thursday 25 May 2023	Thursday 1 June 2023
Gainsborough Standard	Thursday 25 May 2023	Thursday 1 June 2023

- 9.2.2 Copies of the newspaper notices as noted in **Table 9-1** are provided within **Appendix D**.
- 9.2.3 In accordance with DCLG guidance, the Applicant aligned the publication of the Section 48 notice and Section 47 notice, reflecting s48 consultation was held in parallel with s42 and s47 consultation. More information about the Section 47 publication schedule can be found in **Table 6-4**.
- 9.2.4 The EIA consultation bodies (as defined in the EIA Regulations (Ref 3)) were sent a copy of the Section 48 notice alongside the s42 letters (as described in **Chapter 8**).

9.3 Feedback in response to publicity under Section 48

- 9.3.1 The Applicant did not receive any feedback that could be identified as being specifically submitted as a result of the publicity it carried out as required by s48 of the PA 2008. This is not unusual given that the Section 48 notices were issued in parallel with the activities undertaken under Section 42 and Section 47 of the PA 2008 and all information in the Section 48 notices was also included in Section 42 letters.

9.4 Conclusion / Statement of compliance

- 9.4.1 The Applicant published its s48 notice as set out in the PA 2008 (Ref 4) and the APFP Regulations (Ref 5). The notice contained the required information including a deadline for comments on the proposals which coincided with other statutory dates given. s48 consultation was held in parallel with s42 and s47 consultation.

10. Responses received, issues raised, and changes made

10.1 Overview

- 10.1.1 This chapter of the Consultation Report explains the process the Applicant undertook to analyse the feedback received to the statutory consultation under section 42 and section 47 of the PA 2008.
- 10.1.2 It provides a breakdown of the feedback received, summarises the content of this feedback and how the feedback has been taken into account in the refinement of the design for the Scheme. This demonstrates how the Applicant fulfilled its statutory duty to have regard to responses to consultation and publicity, pursuant to section 49 of the PA 2008.
- 10.1.3 An explanation of who the Applicant consulted, how the Applicant identified these groups and how it consulted with these groups during the statutory consultation can be found in **Chapter 7** (section 47) and **Chapter 8** (section 42).
- 10.1.4 **Chapter 9** outlines the Applicant's approach to publicise the consultation under section 48. The Applicant did not receive any feedback that could be identified as being specifically submitted as a result of the publicity carried out as required by section 48.
- 10.1.5 As advised in paragraph 80 of the DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6), the Consultation Report should "provide an explanation as to why responses advising on major changes to a project were not followed". However, as the Applicant received no responses which advised such major changes, this element of the guidance is not relevant.
- 10.1.6 As detailed in **section 10.4** and **section 10.5**, the Applicant has addressed responses where changes have been proposed or objections made and has provided responses to how they have had regard to them.

10.2 Feedback analysis methodology

- 10.2.1 This section sets out the approach taken to receiving and recording feedback at the statutory stage of consultation. Consultation feedback was received through a range of channels:
- a. Hard copy feedback questionnaires – available on request, at face-to-face consultation events and at local information points;
 - b. Online feedback questionnaires – available via the 'Consultation' page of the website: see **Appendix C-13.4**;
 - c. Email – promoted on all consultation materials and promotion information: info@tillbridgesolar.com ; and
 - d. Post – received via the Scheme's Freepost address: FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR (no stamp required), which was promoted on all consultation materials and promotion information.
- 10.2.2 Feedback received through these channels was logged and securely recorded by the project team.

10.2.3 Details of how feedback could be submitted were included in the community consultation materials and on the Scheme’s website.

Feedback received

10.2.4 Feedback (to both the section 47 and section 42) was received through the following channels, as set out in **Table 10-1**.

Table 10-1: Methods of response during the statutory consultation

Type	Number of responses
Hard copy feedback questionnaire	9
Online feedback questionnaire	48
Email	67
Total	124

10.2.5 All respondents were assigned a unique ID number and their feedback received logged against this number.

10.2.6 All hard copy feedback questionnaires and letters were scanned and recorded against the respondent’s unique ID number.

10.2.7 When a response was received, the Applicant identified who had submitted it and whether that response has been submitted by an individual or organisation under s42 or s47.

10.2.8 The total number of responses from each group is set out in **Table 10-2**.

Table 10-2: Responses received in respect of the PA 2008

Category in respect of the PA 2008	Number of responses
Prescribed bodies (s42(1)(a)) and s42(1)(aa))	37
LPAs (s42(1)(b))	12
Land interests (i.e. each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in section 44) (s42(1)(d))	2
Local community, local interest groups, wider consultees (s47)	73
Total	124

10.3 Framework for recording section 42 and section 47 responses

- 10.3.1 The DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6) paragraph 80 advises that a consultation report should ‘set out a summary of relevant responses to consultation (but not a complete list of responses)’.
- 10.3.2 The responses to statutory consultation ranged from observations and suggestions to more detailed responses that raised a number of themes.
- 10.3.3 For the purposes of this report, the Applicant has undertaken a process of review and analysis to summarise the responses received. This helps identify the key themes and issues that were raised during consultation and allows the Applicant to explain how it has had regard to these, which is in accordance with DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6) – see **Chapter 13, Table 13-2**.
- 10.3.4 The Applicant developed an approach to recording and summarising responses received to the statutory consultation based on the themes and issues that emerged from feedback, alongside issues identified following review of the EIA Scoping Opinion.
- 10.3.5 This exercise is also in compliance with PINS’ Advice Note 14 (February 2021) (Ref 9), specifically paragraphs 4.3, 4.5 and 4.6, which states that:
- a. A summary of the individual responses received should be provided and categorised in an appropriate way;
 - b. The summary of the responses should identify comments that are relevant (directly or indirectly) to changes made to the project during the Pre-application stage; and
 - c. It is also necessary to explain why responses have led to no change, including where responses have been received after deadlines set by the Applicant.
- 10.3.6 A full summary of how the Applicant has complied with DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6) and PINS’ Advice Note 14 (February 2021) (Ref 9), is provided in **Chapter 13, Table 13-2** and **Table 13-3**, respectively.
- 10.3.7 For the purpose of grouping and analysing feedback, the Applicant grouped consultation responses into the following broad categories (in line with EIA topic areas):
- a. Scheme Location;
 - b. Scheme Description;
 - c. Alternatives and Design Evolution;
 - d. EIA Methodology;
 - e. Air Quality;
 - f. Climate Change;
 - g. Cultural Heritage;
 - h. Cumulative Effects;
 - i. Ecology and Nature Conservation;
 - j. Water Environment;
 - k. Human Health;
 - l. Landscape and Visual Amenity;
 - m. Noise and Vibration;

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| n. Socio-Economics and Land Use; | r. Ground Conditions; |
| o. Transport and Access; | s. Telecommunications, Television Receptors and Utilities; and |
| p. Glint and Glare; | t. Minerals and Waste; |
| q. Major accidents; | |

10.3.8 Outside of these specific EIA topic areas, the Applicant has also grouped responses by four further topic areas, including general comments (about the Scheme), construction and operation, comments about the consultation exercise and decommissioning.

10.3.9 In seeing if there were ways to improve the Scheme as a result of feedback, the Applicant has had regard to each individual response received.

10.3.10 In accordance with PINS' Advice Note 14 (February 2021) (Ref 9), specifically paragraph 4.2, the Applicant has adopted an 'issues-led' approach and has grouped responses under headline issues. The Applicant has also appropriately grouped responses under different strands of consultation, notably s42 and s47. The Applicant did not receive responses under s48, so has no responses to group.

10.3.11 All personal data received as part of the consultation was processed in accordance with GDPR 2018.

10.4 Section 42 Statutory Consultation: Responses received, issues raised and changes made

10.4.1 This section of the Consultation Report provides a high-level summary of key themes raised by s42 consultees. Copies of individual responses (grouped by key themes), together with the Applicant's response, has been provided in **Appendix I**.

10.4.2 The sections below summarise the key comments received and changes made in relation to all topic areas.

Response received by prescribed consultees

10.4.3 The Applicant received feedback from the following prescribed bodies (s42(1)(a)) and LPAs (s42(1)(b)). The Applicant also received feedback from two land interests (s42(1)(d)):

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| • Anglian Water | • Eclipse Power Networks |
| • Bassetlaw District Council | • EDF Energy |
| • Bolsover District Council | • Environment Agency |
| • Brampton Parish Meeting | • Environmental Health, Bassetlaw District Council |
| • Cadent Gas | • Exolum Pipeline System Ltd |
| • Canal and River Trust | • Fillingham Parish Council |
| • City of Doncaster Council | • Forestry Commission |
| • Deutsche Bank AG | |

- Glentworth Parish Council
- Health and Safety Executive
- Historic England
- Ingham Parish Council
- Lincolnshire County Council
- Marine Management Organisation
- Ministry of Defence
- National Grid Electricity Transmission
- National Highways
- NATS
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- Newark and Sherwood District Council
- NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board
- Norfolk County Council
- Northern Gas
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- Severn Trent Water
- Springthorpe Parish Meeting
- Sturton by Stow Parish Council
- The Crown Estate Commissioners
- Toft Newton Parish Council
- Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board
- UK Health Security Agency
- Uniper UK Limited
- Via East Midlands (on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council)
- West Lindsey District Council
- Willingham by Stow Parish Council
- Witham First District Internal Drainage Board, Witham Third District Internal Drainage Board, Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board, North East Lindsey Drainage Board

Summary of section 42 consultee comments

- 10.4.4 The key themes that were raised in response to the statutory consultation included:
- a. Air quality – including any mitigation measure implemented regarding air pollution and dust;
 - b. Alternatives and design evolution – including whether solar deployed on rooftops (as opposed to on agricultural land) had been considered and how alternative large-scale sites had been considered;
 - c. Climate change – including associated carbon emissions from production, manufacture and transportation of the solar PV panels;
 - d. Construction and operation – including likely disturbance during the construction and operation phases, such as traffic movements, noise, damage to local road networks;

- e. Consultation – including comments regarding the reach and awareness of the consultation;
- f. Cultural heritage – including comments on the Study Area for designated heritage assets and concerns around impacts on scheduled monuments;
- g. Cumulative effects – including thorough consideration of all DCO schemes in the area (such as Cottam Solar, Gate Burton and West Burton Solar), and opportunities for collaborative working;
- h. Decommissioning – including questions around the operational lifespan of the Scheme and how the Scheme would be decommissioned;
- i. Ecology and nature conservation – including promotion of BNG, and concerns around damaging local habitats;
- j. EIA methodology – including suggestions to include more detail in the final DCO application and visualisations in relation to the LVIA;
- k. General comments – including general opposition to the Scheme;
- l. Human Health – including concerns regarding mental health and the impacts of electromagnetic fields;
- m. Major accidents – including queries around risk assessments of the impact of accidental fires from the Scheme;
- n. Ground conditions – including concerns around potential damage caused during the construction phases;
- o. Water Environment – including the Scheme’s interaction with river crossings/watercourses and trenchless construction techniques;
- p. Scheme Description – including questions around the operational lifespan of the Scheme, how many households the Scheme would power and information on a shared Cable Route Corridor with other solar schemes;
- q. Landscape and Visual Amenity – including comments on the Scheme’s selected viewpoints (such as the A631 and B1398 Middle Street) and the cumulative impacts of multiple solar DCO schemes;
- r. Noise and Vibration – including comments regarding construction impacts surrounding the River Trent and associated noise and vibration impacts;
- s. Scheme location – including questions about whether brownfield sites were considered for the Scheme and the extent of the area of search for the Scheme;
- t. Socio-economics and land use – including comments emphasising the importance of local community and economic benefits, along with opportunities for local employment;
- u. Telecommunications, Television Receptors and Utilities – including the Applicant’s ongoing engagement with the respective undertakers, along with the Scheme’s location to assets;
- v. Transport and access – including concerns around the local road network (such as Kexby Road) and shared construction accesses with other solar schemes; and

- w. Minerals and Waste – including sharing information for the Scheme on relevant policies and local plans.

Air Quality

- 10.4.5 Comments related to Air Quality were received by Sturton by Stow Parish Council, UK Health Security Agency and West Lindsey District Council.
- 10.4.6 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Air Quality were:
 - a. Whether monitoring locations had been agreed and monitoring carried out for Nitrogen Dioxide and other pollutants; and
 - b. What mitigation measures will be implemented regarding air pollution and dust.
- 10.4.7 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-3**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.1, Table 1-1**.

Table 10-3: Regard had to comments relating to Air Quality received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
<p>Whether monitoring locations had been agreed and monitoring carried out for Nitrogen Dioxide and other pollutants</p>	<p>Diffusion tube monitoring for nitrogen dioxide has been undertaken. Monitoring for other pollutants is not required in line with guidance and standard practice. It is standard practice not to monitor for particulate matter as monitoring is logistically challenging (it requires power and secure locations) and is expensive. Model adjustment factors derived for nitrogen dioxide are applied to particulate matter following DEFRA guidance (LAQM.TG(22)).</p> <p>Locations were selected for model verification purposes and used a very restricted number of locations that met technical requirements and could be accessed safely. The locations were not agreed in advance with stakeholders due to a lack of viable alternatives. The locations and the use of the data for dispersion verification is included in full within the assessment. Modelling will be used to determine the concentrations and change at sensitive receptors. Monitoring results are presented in Chapter 6: Air Quality of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].</p>

Question of what mitigation measures will be implemented regarding air pollution and dust.

Chapter 6: Air Quality of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] sets out the mitigation measures for air pollution and dust that are to be required as part of the CEMP.

These include stabilising and revegetating exposed areas and soil stockpiles as soon as practicable, appropriate storage of sand and other aggregates in bunded areas and not allowed to dry out, and ensuring vehicles entering and leaving sites are covered to prevent escape of materials during transport. These are based on Institute of Air Quality Management guidance.

Alternatives and Design Evolution

- 10.4.8 Comments related to the consideration of Alternatives and Design Evolution were received by Ingham Parish Council and Glentworth Parish Council regarding the site selection of the Scheme and the preference for solar to be deployed on brownfield sites, including on rooftops. Responses suggested that the Scheme would have adverse consequences.
- 10.4.9 In considering these responses, the Applicant recognised the Government's legal commitment to achieve Net Zero by 2050, and the drive this places on accelerating renewable energy production. The ambition recognises the urgent need to decarbonise the UK electricity system, with the Government's 2020 Energy White Paper stating that a low-cost, net zero consistent system is likely to be composed predominantly of wind and solar.
- 10.4.10 Specifically regarding siting solar on rooftops, while the Applicant supports the use of brownfield sites where feasible and included brownfield sites within its site selection search, insufficient brownfield land was available in proximity to the available grid connection.
- 10.4.11 Further, the Applicant recognises that constraining solar development to rooftops and brownfield sites will not meet the growing energy demands alongside the decarbonisation of the energy sector. The Powering up Britain Strategy concludes that an acceleration of the delivery of renewables is necessary to achieve net zero including a quintuple of our solar power by 2035. Large scale solar developments such as the Scheme are needed to meet these targets.
- 10.4.12 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 1.2, Table 1-2**.

Climate Change

- 10.4.13 Comments related to climate change were received from Sturton by Stow Parish Council, West Lindsey District Council and Bassetlaw District Council.

10.4.14 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Climate Change were:

- a. Comment on potential microclimate impacts due to heat generated by solar PV panels, along with potential shading and potential cooling of the ground;
- b. Comment about the manufacturing of PV panels outside of the UK or Europe, along with the associated carbon production during manufacture and transportation. Question of what mitigation will be used to offset these impacts; and
- c. Comment about the carbon emissions created by the Scheme and the efforts to reduce these.

10.4.15 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-4**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.3, Table 1-3**.

Table 10-4: Regard had to comments relating to Climate Change received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
<p>Comment on potential microclimate impacts due to heat generated by solar PV panels, along with potential shading and potential cooling of the ground.</p>	<p>There are not expected to be microclimate affects for the Scheme that would be anticipated to impact the outcomes of the greenhouse gas or climate change risk assessment.</p>
<p>Comment about the manufacturing of PV panels outside of the UK or Europe, along with the associated carbon production during manufacture and transportation. Question of what mitigation will be used to offset these impacts.</p>	<p>GHG emissions associated with the construction and transport of solar panels to the Scheme have been considered in the GHG impact assessment within Chapter 7: Climate Change of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. GHG savings from the Scheme have been compared to emissions associated with fossil fuel energy production over the intended design life of the Scheme (60 years). The assessment concluded no significant effects, and the benefits of the operational phase in terms of carbon savings are considered to offset emissions that occur during construction and decommissioning and represent a significant benefit of the Scheme.</p>
<p>Comment about the carbon emissions created by the Scheme and the efforts to reduce these.</p>	<p>Carbon emissions associated with the construction, operation and decommissioning of the Scheme are considered in the GHG impact assessment contained within Chapter 7:</p>

Climate Change of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Further options to reduce the carbon impact of the Scheme will be actively considered throughout the detailed design and construction phases of the development. The benefits of the operational phase of the Scheme in terms of carbon savings are considered to offset emissions that occur during construction and decommissioning and represent a significant benefit of the Scheme.

Cultural Heritage

10.4.16 Comments related to cultural heritage were received from Historic England, West Lindsey District Council Lincolnshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council.

10.4.17 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Cultural Heritage were:

- a. Comment regarding the categorisation of designated and undesignated heritage assets identified within the Scheme's assessments and impacts on these, including consideration of setting;
- b. Comment regarding categorisation of archaeological remains and impacts on these ahead of full assessments being carried out;
- c. Comment on geo-physical surveys, deposit modelling and trial trenching; including referring the Applicant to the expertise of county archaeologists;
- d. Concerns regarding the impacts upon designated heritage assets in Harpswell;
- e. Comment on extent of Study Area for assessment; and
- f. Comment on the need to undertake further archaeological investigations in relation to the Cable Route Corridor.

10.4.18 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-5**, with full responses provided in full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.4, Table 1-4**.

Table 10-5: Regard had to comments relating to Cultural Heritage received from s42 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Comment regarding the categorisation of designated and undesignated heritage assets identified within the Scheme's

The value of heritage assets has been assessed in **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1], taking into account advice from statutory consultees as

assessments and impacts on these, including consideration of setting, well as considered professional judgement with peer review.

Likewise with archaeological remains, including those identified during the archaeological fieldwork. Setting effects are assessed and identified where applicable using professional judgement within the 3km Study Area and against the wider Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) for assets within the 3-5km Study Area around the Principal Site (refer to **Figure 8-2** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3]),

Comment regarding categorisation of archaeological remains and impacts on these ahead of full assessments being carried out.

The Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) Report assessment was preliminary and indicative. Following an extensive fieldwork programme for the Principal Site and further fieldwork for the Cable Route Corridor, a revised assessment of the value for known archaeological remains has been made within **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Comment on geo-physical surveys, deposit modelling and trial trenching; referring the Applicant to the expertise of county archaeologists.

The Applicant has been consulting with Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Officers (the county heritage curators) throughout the fieldwork programme and has also contacted the Nottinghamshire County Archaeologist for comment. A summary of the technical engagement undertaken to date is provided within **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Concerns regarding the impacts upon designated heritage assets in Harpswell

These assets and their settings have been discussed with Historic England. The discussions involved reviewing the associated impacts upon the heritage assets and opportunities for mitigation of the impacts embedded within the design of the Scheme.

Since these discussions, the Scheme has been set back further from Harpswell, reducing the significance of effect to the heritage assets (refer to **Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]). The cultural heritage assessment is reported in **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Comment on extent of Study Area for assessment. The 3km Study Area for the assessment of setting has been determined using professional judgement and the assessment has been carried out in consultation with statutory consultees as appropriate. Setting assessment for heritage assets of the highest value outside of the 3km Study Area, extending up to 5km, has been considered as appropriate using professional judgement.

Comment on the need to undertake further archaeological investigations in relation to the Cable Route Corridor. Further fieldwork has been undertaken in respect of the Cable Route Corridor following the PEI Report stage, which included a programme of geophysical survey and geoarchaeology.

The results of the evaluation undertaken to date are reported in **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. Further trench evaluation is proposed post submission of the DCO Application.

Construction and Operation

10.4.19 Comments related to the construction and operation of the Scheme were provided by the following consultees:

- a. Sturton by Stow Parish Council;
- b. Willingham by Stow Parish Council;
- c. Ingham Parish Council;
- d. Natural England; and
- e. Lincolnshire County Council.

10.4.20 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Construction and Operation were:

- a. Question of how grass will be kept under solar PV panels during the operation of the Scheme. Comments also about opportunity for sheep grazing;
- b. Question of where solar PV panels will be manufactured;
- c. Question of whether unforeseen impacts (during the post-construction and operation phases) had been considered;
- d. Question of whether the Scheme would be sold, if consented; and
- e. Concern regarding disturbance during construction, including related to traffic during the construction and decommissioning phases, along with road safety, noise, disruption and damage to roads.

10.4.21 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-6**, with full responses provided in full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.5, Table 1-5**.

Table 10-6: Regard had to comments relating to Construction and Operation received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
<p>Question of how grass will be kept under solar PV panels during the operation of the Scheme. Comments also about opportunity for sheep grazing.</p>	<p>There are three options depending on the availability and preference of the operator: sheep grazing (although it is acknowledged that demand is limited), mowing and/or strimming.</p> <p>We are exploring possibilities of grazing parts of the Scheme Principal Site with sheep and/or chickens during the solar farm's operating life. This forms part of the discussions that we are having with Scheme landowners. In the event that grazing is used on site during the solar farm's operating life, it would likely not apply to the entire area of the solar farm as not all of the land is appropriate for grazing livestock.</p> <p>Further information on management and maintenance of landscaping is presented within the Framework Landscape and Ecology Management Plan [EN010142/APP/7.8].</p>
<p>Question of where solar PV panels will be manufactured.</p>	<p>The make of solar PV that will be used for the Scheme has not yet been chosen. This approach is common for developments of this kind as solar PV technology is constantly evolving and new efficiencies are developed regularly.</p> <p>If we were to receive development consent for the Scheme, we would carry out a comprehensive audit to identify the right solar PV panels. For the purpose of our environmental assessment, we have assumed that the panels would be sourced from abroad as the largest solar manufacturers are based outside of the UK.</p> <p>Further information on our climate change assessment is available in Chapter 7: Climate Change of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].</p>

Question of whether unforeseen impacts (during the post-construction and operation phases) had been considered.

As developers of multiple large scale projects in the UK and abroad, our experience means that project impacts are not unforeseen. The Environmental Impact Assessment process that we are required to undertake prior to submitting a Development Consent Order application for the Scheme is comprehensive and is undertaken by experienced specialists. Where we have identified impacts through these assessments, we have sought to mitigate them where possible through the design of the solar farm or through measures included in the framework management plans.

We have submitted a Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan **[EN010142/APP/7.8]**, Framework Operational Environmental Management Plan (OEMP) **[EN010142/APP/7.9]** and a Framework Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (DEMP) **[EN010142/APP/7.10]** as part of our DCO Application. These will be updated should we receive development consent to reflect a detailed project design and will ultimately require approval from the local planning authorities.

The Examination process for DCO applications applies a high degree of scrutiny to our assessments and ensures that relevant issues are considered and summarised in the recommendation that the Examining Authority will make to the Secretary of State. Taken together, all of this should give confidence that the impacts of the Scheme have been considered and will be mitigated appropriately.

Question of whether the Scheme would be sold, if consented.

Tillbridge Solar Limited (the Applicant) will remain the owner of the Tillbridge Solar Project. As stated within the Funding Statement **[EN010142/APP/4.2]** (**section 2.3**), the costs of constructing and maintaining the Scheme will be funded by Recurrent Energy (which is the majority shareholder in the Applicant as outlined in **section 2.1** of the Funding

Statement). Recurrent Energy has sufficient funds to implement the Scheme (including compulsory acquisition compensation costs).

Concern regarding disturbance during construction, including related to traffic during the construction and decommissioning phases, along with road safety, noise, disruption and damage to roads.

As detailed in the Framework CTMP [EN010142/APP/7.11], highway condition surveys will be undertaken before, during and after the construction to identify any impacts which are as a result of the development that need to be remediated.

Where the pre-condition survey identifies that measures should be put in place to protect and maintain the road surface, the Local Highways Authorities (LHAs) will be consulted.

Chapter 16: Transport and Access of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] includes a detailed assessment of the potential construction traffic impacts associated with the Scheme in terms of severance of communities, road vehicle driver and passenger delay, non-motorised user delay, non-motorised amenity, fear and intimidation on and by road users, road user and pedestrian safety and hazardous/large loads.

In addition, **Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] provides an assessment of construction noise and vibration effects and operational noise effects on residents of identified sensitive receptors. No significant noise or vibration effects are identified.

Consultation

10.4.22 Comments related to scope and nature of consultation were raised by the following consultees:

- a. Brampton Parish Meeting;
- b. Fillingham Parish Council;
- c. Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service;
- d. Lincolnshire County Council;
- e. Bassetlaw District Council; and

f. Health and Safety Executive.

10.4.23 Comments from the above consultees included concerns about the exclusion of residents' views as a result of decisions taken outside the usual planning procedures. Consultees were also concerned about the reach of the consultation and general lack of awareness of solar schemes locally.

10.4.24 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-7**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.6, Table 1-6**.

10.4.25 Additional comments were provided by two landowners, as provided in full in **Table 1-7** of this Appendix.

Table 10-7: Regard had to comments relating to Consultation received from 42 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Comment regarding exclusion of residents' views as a result of decisions taken outside the usual planning procedures.

The Applicant has complied with the PA 2008 in carrying out Statutory Consultation, ensuring that consultees had an opportunity to comment on the proposals. The Applicant has carefully considered those comments during the Scheme's development before the application for development consent in accordance with the obligations outlined under Section 49 of the PA 2008.

Views expressed by consultees have made a difference to the Scheme, with a summary of all comments received and changes presented in this report.

The Applicant clearly set out its undertaking to consult and use feedback to inform the design process within a published Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) (see **Appendix B-7** to the **Consultation Report**).

The Applicant has responded to all feedback received during consultation on the Scheme in accordance with Section 49 - Duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity. Following receipt of feedback from consultees design changes have been made to the Scheme (as evidenced in this Consultation Report).

The Applicant disagrees with the assertion made with regard to the local population/residents. The Scheme

stands to create local benefits. Within the Framework Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan [EN010142/APP/7.18], several opportunities are identified. These include skills and employment opportunities which the Applicant will aim to pursue through local partnerships and recruitment initiatives.

The Applicant will also explore opportunities to promote opportunities for purchasing and contracts arising from the Scheme to local businesses. In addition to the above, the Applicant will bring forward a dedicated community benefit package in the event that the Scheme is approved. We are working with the Lincolnshire Community Foundation and Nottinghamshire Community Foundation to help define how a fund could best work for local people.

Comment regarding the reach of the consultation and general lack awareness of solar schemes locally.

The Applicant's efforts to make the public and stakeholders aware of the Statutory Consultation were substantial. The promotional activities used were decided on having consulted with the relevant local authorities via the Draft Statement of Community Consultation (Draft SoCC) in accordance with the requirements of the PA 2008.

Publicity included the use of a wide-area leaflet distribution to approximately 5,000 addresses, social media activities, coverage by online and print media, paid-for advertising, posters, local information points, and a campaign of stakeholder engagement, including meeting elected representatives, businesses and organisations.

Information about the promotional activities that were carried out are presented in **Chapter 7** of this report [EN010142/APP/5.1].

Ecology and Nature Conservation

10.4.26 Comments related to ecology and nature conservation were raised by the following consultees:

- a. Brampton Parish Meeting;
- b. Fillingham Parish Council;
- c. Sturton by Stow Parish Council;
- d. Environment Agency;
- e. Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust;
- f. Bassetlaw District Council;
- g. Glentworth Parish Council;
- h. Ingham Parish Council;
- i. Willingham by Stow Parish Council;
- j. West Lindsey District Council;
- k. Canal and River Trust; and
- l. Natural England.

10.4.27 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Ecology and Nature Conservation were:

- a. Comment regarding the installation of panels and the negative impact on wildlife welfare and diversity;
- b. Comment on extent and effectiveness of mitigation proposed, including buffer zones;
- c. Comment regarding anticipated biodiversity net gain (BNG) for the Scheme and how this will be achieved;
- d. Comment on potential to create nature reserves or corridors throughout the Order limits;
- e. Comment on mitigation for the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and BNG, encouraging improvements in the river and ditch network. May include floodplain reconnection and in-channel enhancements;
- f. Concern regarding impacts on designated sites including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs); and
- g. Concern regarding breeding birds and potential loss in arable farmland used by breeding skylark; seeking effective mitigation for the species.

10.4.28 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-8**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.7, Table 1-8**.

10.4.29 One comment was provided by one landowner, as provided in **Table 1-9** of this Appendix.

Table 10-8: Regard had to comments relating to Ecology and Nature Conservation received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
Comment regarding the installation of panels and the negative impact on wildlife welfare and diversity.	The Scheme has been designed to avoid significant adverse effects on ecology. No significant residual

effects on ecology are predicted during construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Scheme lifetime. The impact assessment on habitats/species is set out alongside the Applicant's proposed mitigation in **Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Comment on extent and effectiveness of mitigation proposed, including buffer zones.

Undeveloped buffers throughout the Scheme are minimum buffers that have been embedded within the Scheme design to avoid potential impacts to retained habitats and species using them. The buffers that are proposed follow good practice and industry guidance and were presented to the relevant stakeholders, including Natural England.

No responses were received to suggest that the extent of buffer zones proposed are not appropriate. Further information on the buffers is provided in **section 9.8** of **Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Comment regarding proposed BNG for the Scheme.

The Applicant has undertaken a BNG assessment that has been submitted as part of the DCO Application. Full details of this assessment are set out in the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [EN010142/APP/7.14].

Habitat data, required to calculate the BNG delivered by the Scheme, has been collected during the original Phase 1 Habitat surveys and updated, as necessary, through subsequent surveys (such as arable flora and hedgerow surveys). This has ensured a comprehensive baseline of data for the BNG assessment has been collected.

The results of the assessment indicate that the current illustrative design for the Scheme is predicted to result in a net gain of 64.55% for

area-based habitat units, 17.33% for hedgerow units, and 22.94% for watercourse units.

Achievement of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is not yet a statutory requirement for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) under the Environment Act 2021.

Nonetheless, Nonetheless, the Scheme will meet a minimum 10% BNG, consistent with the terms of the Biodiversity Net Gain Report **[EN010142/APP/7.14]** and aligned with the proposals in the Framework LEMP **[EN010142/APP/7.17]**.

Comment on potential to create nature reserves or corridors throughout the site.

The landscape design has sought to create green corridors across the Scheme to enhance ecological connectivity, linking areas outside of the Order limits. For more detail, refer to the Framework LEMP **[EN010142/APP/7.17]** including Appendix A of the Framework LEMP which includes the Landscape masterplans for the Scheme. Permissive paths have been designed into the Scheme creating recreational benefits as shown on **Figure 3.1** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.3]**.

Comment on mitigation for the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and BNG, encouraging improvements in the river and ditch network. May include floodplain reconnection and in-channel enhancements.

Reinstatement of trenched watercourse crossings will aim to provide an improved channel form with enhancement works to be carried out (where relevant and appropriate to do so) between 5 and 10m upstream and downstream of the open trench to ensure the reinstated improved channel form merges into the existing channel form.

It is anticipated that enhancements will consist of soft engineering techniques and improvements to the riparian corridor to improve channel diversity and biodiversity.

Proposed reinstatement proposals will be set out in a WFD Mitigation

and Enhancement Strategy secured through the Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) **[EN010142/APP/7.8]**.

In addition, in line with the Framework CEMP **[EN010142/APP/7.8]**, a Biosecurity Management Plan will be produced which will set out procedures to ensure that no invasive species are brought onto the Order limits.

Concern regarding impacts on designated sites including SSSIs and LWSs.

Designated sites relevant to the Scheme are set out in within **Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]**. Specifically, **Table 9-9** identifies the relevant non-statutory sites, with embedded avoidance and mitigation measures included in **Table 9-13**. An assessment of the potential impacts and effects of the Scheme on these sites is included in **Table 9-14**.

Concern regarding breeding birds and potential loss in arable farmland used by breeding skylark; seeking effective mitigation for the species.

Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]** addresses the loss of arable farmland and embedded mitigation for skylark, concluding a minor adverse to negligible effect which is not significant to the skylark population.

In line with the Works Plans **[EN010142/APP/2.3]**, areas of undeveloped land have been embedded within the Scheme. These biodiversity zones will provide permanent habitat for ground-nesting birds such as skylark.

Cumulative effects

10.4.30 Comments related to cumulative effects were raised by the following consultees:

- a. Brampton Parish Meeting;
- b. Willingham by Stow Parish Council;
- c. UK Health Security Agency;
- d. West Lindsey District Council;

- e. Nottinghamshire County Council;
- f. Glentworth Parish Council;
- g. Lincolnshire County Council; and
- h. Bassetlaw District Council.

10.4.31 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Cumulative effects were:

- a. Concerns regarding the scale of all Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire solar schemes combined;
- b. Comment regarding the cumulative effects assessments and the peak numbers of construction workers; and
- c. Request for the cumulative effects of all four NSIP schemes to be thoroughly considered within any assessment.

10.4.32 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-9**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.8, Table 1-10**.

Table 10-9: Regard had to comments relating to Cumulative Effects received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
<p>Concerns regarding the scale of all Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire solar schemes combined.</p>	<p>The ES [EN01042//APP/6.1] assesses the environmental impacts of the Scheme. Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] explains the site selection process carried out to identify a suitable site for a large scale solar project and explains the design evolution that has taken place to reduce impacts. Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] sets out the impacts of the Scheme with respect to landscape and visual matters.</p> <p>The Planning Statement [EN01042/APP/7.2] sets out how the Scheme accords with planning policy applying the planning balance to the Scheme when taken as whole and the Design and Access Statement [EN01042/APP/7.3] further explains the design evolution of the Scheme, and sets out how the Scheme has responded to the local and surrounding environment through its design.</p> <p>Whilst there will be impacts associated with the Scheme, these are considered to be limited relative to the large scale</p>

nature of the Scheme, and are considered to be outweighed by the significant national benefits that the Scheme will provide, as supported by the general presumption in favour of granting consent for 'critical national priority' (CNP) infrastructure set out in national policy.

This is further supported by policies within each local authority's development plan where the presumption in favour of development also applies. The need for the Scheme to contribute towards meeting legally binding Net Zero targets by 2050 overrides impacts.

Cumulative effects and interactions between the Scheme and other solar DCOs is assessed in **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects and Interactions** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

The Scheme and other solar DCOs have worked collaboratively during design development and environmental assessments, including identification of a shared Cable Route Corridor, sharing baseline environment information and identification of shared mitigation measures.

Consideration has also been given as to how habitat creations link with other proposed developments and more widely across the landscape. The Scheme also mostly avoids Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, as set out in **Chapter 15: Soils and Agriculture** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Further information on cumulative effects, mitigation and the approach taken to coordinate with the other solar DCOs is provided in the Joint Report on the Interrelationships with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects [EN010142/APP/7.6].

Comment regarding the cumulative effects assessments and the peak numbers of construction workers.

The cumulative employment and accommodation effects of the Scheme are considered in **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects and Interactions** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. Cumulative effects have been assessed using the

data on construction workers numbers available for the Scheme and the other nearby cumulative schemes. The assessment found there to be no likely significant cumulative effect on accommodation or on local services.

Request for the cumulative effects of all four NSIP schemes to be thoroughly considered within any assessment.

Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] addresses the potential for effect interactions and cumulative effects to occur as a result of the Scheme with the other large Schemes in the area.

A Joint Report on the Interrelationships with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects [EN010142/APP/7.6] has been prepared and submitted with the application. This document outlines the interrelationships between all four schemes as well as providing a summary of the cumulative effects.

Decommissioning

- 10.4.33 Comments related to decommissioning were provided by Sturton by Stow Parish Council, who asked which provisions have been made for the recycling panels once the Scheme has been decommissioned.
- 10.4.34 When the Scheme is decommissioned at the end of its operating life, it will be done so in accordance with a DEMP. This is a legally enforceable requirement secured by the Draft DCO [EN010142/APP/3.1]. We have prepared a Framework version of this document as part of our DCO Application [EN010142/APP/7.10]. Within this, we commit to recycling as many of the parts of the Scheme as possible by making use of the technologies available at that time (up to 60 years in the future).
- 10.4.35 Indeed, we are already able to recycle most of the elements of a solar panel using existing technologies. Given the lapse in time between any development consent being granted and the eventual decommissioning date, the Scheme operator will need to update the DEMP closer to the time of decommissioning. This would ensure that it best reflects the realities and technologies available at the time of decommissioning. This final document will require the approval of the local planning authorities to confirm that it is appropriate.
- 10.4.36 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 1.9, Table 1-11**.

EIA methodology

10.4.37 Comments related to EIA methodology were provided by:

- a. Fillingham Parish Council;
- b. UK Health Security Agency;
- c. Natural England;
- d. West Lindsey District Council; and
- e. Lincolnshire County Council.

10.4.38 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of EIA methodology were:

- a. Comment regarding lack of detail, with a number of issues yet to be assessed, such as Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions, net socio-economic effects and expected visual impacts;
- b. Query regarding air quality modelling;
- c. Suggestion that the final ES will exclude the Consideration of Alternatives chapter;
- d. Request for full evaluation work to be completed to inform the mitigation strategy, for example, for impact on archaeology; and
- e. Comments noted the evolving nature of the Indicative Site Layout Plan and request for additional meetings/workshops to be held with Lincolnshire County Council and its consultants.

10.4.39 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-10**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.10, Table 1-12**.

Table 10-10: Regard had to comments relating to EIA methodology received from s42 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Comment regarding lack of detail, with a number of issues yet to be assessed, such as GHG Emissions, net socio-economic effects and expected visual impacts.

The assessment provided within the PEI Report was at an earlier stage of the Scheme design process. It provided an assessment of the likely significant effects of the Scheme at a point in time. The design of the Scheme has evolved since the PEI Report and Statutory Consultation.

This has been driven by the feedback received through the consultation (as outlined in this Consultation Report and its accompanying appendices) and through the results of additional surveys carried out by the Applicant.

More detailed climate, landscape and visual amenity and socio-economics assessments are provided in **Chapter 7:**

**Climate Change, Chapter 12:
Landscape and Visual Amenity and
Chapter 14: Socio-economics and
Land Use of the ES
[EN010142/APP/6.1], respectively.**

Query regarding air quality modelling and whether particular receptors had been considered.

Air quality modelling for the construction phase has been undertaken as part of the ES. A full air quality assessment in line with Institute for Air Quality Management (IAQM, 2024) has been undertaken and is reported in **Chapter 6: Air Quality of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]**.

Within the assessment, a quantitative impact is measured in terms of change at the receptor locations identified (which are residential properties or businesses). The chapter is supported by **Figure 6-1 Air Quality Baseline Monitoring Locations and Receptors [EN010142/APP/6.3]**. This sets out the receptors identified for the assessment.

Concern that the final ES will exclude the Consideration of Alternatives chapter.

Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] discusses the alternatives considered and the reasons for choosing preferred options. It explores layouts considered as well as different technologies applied. This is consistent with the requirements of the EIA Regulations (Ref 3).

Request for full evaluation work to be completed to inform the mitigation strategy, for example, for impact on archaeology.

A comprehensive programme of Aerial Photographic and LiDAR assessment, geophysical survey has been completed. In addition, wherever possible and practicable, trial trench evaluation and geoarchaeological borehole survey has also been undertaken.

The results of the non-intrusive and intrusive evaluations have informed the evidence base of the Environmental Impact Assessment and accompanying Archaeological Mitigation Strategy. This has been reported in **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]** and its associated appendices.

Water Environment

10.4.40 Comments related to Water Environment were provided by the following consultees:

- a. Environment Agency;
- b. Trent Valley IDB;
- c. Bassetlaw District Council (Environmental Health);
- d. Natural England;
- e. West Lindsey District Council;
- f. Nottinghamshire County Council;
- g. Witham First District IDB, Witham Third District IDB, Upper Witham IDB, North East Lindsey IDB;
- h. Lincolnshire County Council;
- i. Bassetlaw District Council; and
- j. Anglian Water.

10.4.41 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Water Environment were:

- a. Comment regarding agreed methodology for the development works associated with the Cable Route Corridor, which passes underneath the River Trent and River Till;
- b. Comment regarding Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) practices near watercourses;
- c. Comment noting that a large section of the Cable Route Corridor is within the district of the Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board;
- d. Query about whether there is expected to be an increase in impermeable area in Nottinghamshire; and
- e. Query regarding Protective Provisions and specific assets.

10.4.42 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-11**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.11, Table 1-13**.

Table 10-11: Regard had to comments relating to Water Environment received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
Comment regarding agreed methodology for the development works associated with the Cable Route Corridor, which passes underneath the River Trent and River Till.	Consultation has taken place, including discussion of trenchless river crossings with the Environment Agency. Crossing of WFD monitored reaches (including the River Trent and River Till) using non-intrusive methods (trenchless Horizontal Directional Drilling complying with relevant standards) has been agreed. Engagement undertaken is summarised

within **Chapter 10: Water Environment**
of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]**.

Comments regarding the interests of Internal Drainage Boards (IDB) and other water statutory undertakers

Consultation with IDBs and other statutory undertakers have been undertaken over the proposals, including regarding methodologies for crossing watercourses and protection of existing assets within the Order limits. General protective provisions have been included for drainage undertakers in the DCO, alongside specific protective provisions for Anglian Water. The Applicant is ready to discuss specific protective provisions for IDBs as required.

Query about whether there is expected to be an increase in impermeable area in Nottinghamshire.

No drainage design is proposed for the Cable Route Corridor, which is within Nottinghamshire County Council, during operation as this is deemed to not contribute any additional runoff as the cables will be buried below ground, and the above ground routes will be restored to greenfield conditions, i.e. no permanent above ground infrastructure.

The Framework CEMP **[EN010142/APP/7.8]** provides detail on management of surface water runoff during the construction phase, including for the Cable Route Corridor. During decommissioning, measures for the management of surface water runoff are set out within the Framework DEMP **[EN010142/APP/7.10]**.

Comment regarding the area being under “serious water stress” and query regarding the Scheme approach to water supply requirements

Chapter 10: Water Environment of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]** considers water stress.

During operation there will be welfare facilities for only 10-12 staff during working hours. This represents a small volume water use, which will utilise mains supply.

The provision of water supply for all other construction and operational uses (e.g. panel cleaning during operation, dust suppression during construction) will be imported from local commercial water suppliers and will not be obtained from onsite water supply. Therefore, the effect

within **Chapter 10 [EN010142/APP/6.1]**
is assessed as not significant.

General comments

10.4.43 General comments (categorised as falling outside of aforementioned EIA topic areas) were also received by a number of consultees, including:

- a. Brampton Parish Meeting;
- b. Willingham by Stow Parish Council;
- c. Ingham Parish Council;
- d. Glentworth Parish Council;
- e. Toft Newton Parish Council; and
- f. Ministry of Defence.

10.4.44 General comments in relation to the Scheme included consultees registering their opposition to the Scheme, along with the Scheme's alleged limited contribution to decarbonisation and adverse consequences on farmland.

10.4.45 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-12**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.12, Table 1-14**.

10.4.46 Additional comments were also received by one landowner, as provided in **Table 1-15** of this Appendix.

Table 10-12: Regard had to general comments from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
General opposition to the Scheme.	<p>The Applicant recognises that some people are opposed to the Scheme. We have reviewed all of the responses that we have received to our consultations and had regard to them as evidenced by this appendix and within this Consultation Report [EN010142/APP/5.1].</p> <p>Where appropriate, we have made changes to our design which includes siting away from neighbouring properties and employing enhanced mitigation to screen views.</p> <p>Within our Application, we have included an assessment of alternatives within Chapter 4 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] which sets out our rationale for choosing this site and why we think it is suitable for solar energy generation.</p>

Opposition in relation to the Scheme's alleged limited contribution to decarbonisation and adverse consequences on farmland.

We disagree with this characterisation. Ground mounted large scale solar is recognised as being an important source of renewable energy, one that will play a crucial role in the decarbonisation of the UK electricity system. This is supported by planning policy, including the National Policy Statement (NPS) for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) (Ref 2) which states: "solar is a key part of the government's strategy for low-cost decarbonisation of the energy sector".

The British Energy Security Strategy (2022) notes that the government expects a 'five-fold increase' in solar deployment by 2050. This would amount to up to 70GW of generating capacity. The Tillbridge Solar Project stands to play an important role in this.

The benefits of renewable energy generation are significant and important to the UK's attainment of greater energy security and its climate change obligations. We have identified this area as having suitable irradiance for solar energy generation. Across the UK, solar farms generate electricity all year round.

We do however acknowledge that the energy generated by solar PV panels is intermittent in nature. By co-locating battery energy storage systems (BESS) with solar PV we are able to maximise the benefits of the renewable energy generated by the Scheme. The BESS releases the energy generated to the grid at times when it is most needed. With regards to the temporary loss of farm land, the 60 year operating life of the Scheme would allow for the existing land use to be restored once the Scheme has been decommissioned.

Human Health

10.4.47 Comments related to Human Health were provided by the following consultees:

- a. Brampton Parish Meeting;
- b. UK Health Security Agency;
- c. West Lindsey District Council;

- d. NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board;
- e. Lincolnshire County Council;
- f. Bassetlaw District Council; and
- g. Health and Safety Executive.

10.4.48 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Human Health were:

- a. Concern regarding the human impact of the Scheme, such as mental health;
- b. Concern regarding electromagnetic fields; and
- c. Comment regarding assessments into major accidents and risk assessments.

10.4.49 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-13**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.13, Table 1-16**.

Table 10-13: Regard had to comments relating to Human Health received from 42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
Concern regarding the human impact of the Scheme, such as mental health.	Consideration of mental health has been made as part of Chapter 11: Human Health of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. This assessment concludes that no significant effects are anticipated.
Concern regarding electromagnetic fields.	Electromagnetic fields are considered as part of Chapter 17: Other Environmental Topics of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. No significant effects are envisaged.
Comment regarding assessments into major accidents and risk assessments.	Major accidents and disasters are considered as part of Chapter 17: Other Environmental Topics of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. No likely significant effects are envisaged. All relevant guidance related to major accidents and disasters has been adhered to as part of the assessment presented in Section 17.6 of Chapter 17 . A summary of guidance considered, including the PINS Advice Note 11 Annex G, can be found in Appendix 17-1: Other Environmental Topics Legislation, Policy and Guidance of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.2].

Major accidents

10.4.50 Comments related to Major Accidents were provided by the UK Health Security Agency, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Health and Safety Executive.

10.4.51 Matters raised by consultees included:

- a. Query around risk assessments of the impact of accidental fires from the Scheme;
- b. Note that the Scheme falls within the boundaries of Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service; and
- c. Note that the Scheme falls into the consultation zones of a Major Accident Hazard Site ('MAHS') and a Major Accident Hazard Pipeline ('MAHP').

10.4.52 In relation to the risk assessment of the impact of accidental fires, the Applicant has provided an assessment of the effects of an unplanned fire relating to the proposed battery energy storage system (BESS). This can be found in **Appendix 17-5: Unplanned Emissions from BESS** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.2]**.

10.4.53 The assessment has found that in the unlikely event that a fire was to break out in a single cell or module, it is very unlikely, given the control measures, that the fire would spread to the rest of the BESS. Even should all the systems fail, and a large-scale fire break out within enclosures, then the resultant hydrogen fluoride concentration at the closest receptors would be below the level that UKHSA has identified as resulting in notable discomfort to members of the general population.

10.4.54 The Framework Battery Safety Management Plan (BSMP) **[EN010142/APP/7.13]** details risk assessment tools that will be utilised together with detailed consequence modelling to provide a comprehensive site operations and emergency response safety audit at the detailed design stage

10.4.55 The Applicant also notes the comment from Nottinghamshire FRS and has engaged with Lincolnshire FRS through the Statutory Consultation and during the wider pre-application period, and will continue to do so post-submission of the DCO Application.

10.4.56 The Applicant also notes the comment regarding the Scheme's location within the zone of a MAHS; notably Cottam Power Station. Major accidents and disasters are considered as part of **Chapter 17: Other Environmental Topics** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]**. No likely significant effects are envisaged.

10.4.57 The Applicant has been in contact with the owner of the site since August 2023 and has been working collaboratively with them and Uniper. Meetings with all parties have taken place frequently since September 2023 and discussions regarding an Option Agreement for Easement continue.

10.4.58 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 1.14, Table 1-17**.

Ground Conditions

- 10.4.59 Comments related to Ground Conditions were provided by the Environment Agency, Bassetlaw District Council and Lincolnshire County Council.
- 10.4.60 Comments included queries around the potential significant damage caused during the construction phases, such as by vehicles on heavy clay soils. To minimise impacts, consultees suggested a basic Soil Management Plan be submitted with the DCO Application.
- 10.4.61 The Applicant has had regard to these responses and can confirm that a Framework Soil Management Plan (SMP) [EN010142/APP/7.13] has been provided within the DCO Application, with the aim of reducing impact on soils resource. A detailed SMP will be prepared at the detailed design stage, the adherence to which will be secured via a requirement in the DCO. This SMP must be prepared substantially in accordance with the Framework SMP.
- 10.4.62 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 1.15, Table 1-18**.

Scheme Description

- 10.4.63 Comments related to Ground Conditions were provided by the following consultees:
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| a. Fillingham Parish Council; | h. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council; |
| b. Sturton by Stow Parish Council; | i. Newark and Sherwood District Council; |
| c. Willingham by Stow Parish Council; | j. Norfolk County Council; |
| d. UK Health Security Agency; | k. City of Doncaster Council; |
| e. Springthorpe Parish Meeting; | l. Bolsover District Council; |
| f. West Lindsey District Council; | m. Ingham Parish Council; and |
| g. Bassetlaw District Council; | n. Glentworth Parish Council. |
- 10.4.64 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Scheme Description were:
- Question regarding the low load-factor supply of electricity and effectiveness of the technology;
 - Question regarding the 60-year operational life of the Scheme and whether this constitutes a 'temporary' loss;
 - Question regarding the number of homes the Scheme would power, stated as 300,000 UK households;
 - Query regarding the draft NPS and need to use 'previously developed land...avoiding BMV cropland where possible';

- e. Concern about information presented on the industrialisation of the local landscape;
- f. Query about information presented on a shared Cable Route Corridor with other solar schemes, with the EIA needing to be clear on anticipated impacts; and
- g. Concern regarding the parameters of the solar stations, stated as 10 metres in height.

10.4.65 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-14**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.16, Table 1-19**.

Table 10-14: Regard had to comments relating to Scheme Description received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
Question regarding the low load-factor supply of electricity and effectiveness of the technology.	<p>The load factor referring to the peak installed PV DC capacity is 13.68%.</p> <p>The load factor referring to the grid capacity - and assuming the Scheme can use the batteries to store the surplus PV generation at peak times: 25.8%.</p> <p>Examining the grid reveals that even in summer, it relies heavily on fossil fuels. Therefore, deploying solar panels can make the grid greener, aligning with the country's goals.</p>
Question regarding the 60-year operational life of the Scheme and whether this constitutes a 'temporary' loss.	<p>Chapter 5: EIA Methodology of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] describes reversible effects as long-term effects, which endure throughout the lifetime of the Scheme, but which cease once the Scheme has been decommissioned.</p> <p>The reference to temporary is correct in planning terms as although the infrastructure will remain for 60 years it will be removed at decommissioning. The ES is clear throughout as to the anticipated duration of the scheme by reference to 60 years.</p>
Question regarding the number of homes the Scheme would power, stated as 300,000 UK households.	<p>The figure was calculated based on average annual household energy usage and the Scheme's generating capacity. The Applicant is proposing storage infrastructure (BESS) as associated development to the solar PV. The BESS will have a direct relationship with the solar PV panels and it will support their</p>

operation by storing electricity produced during times of peak capacity until it needs to be released.

Query regarding the draft NPS and need to use 'previously developed land...avoiding BMV cropland where possible'.

The Applicant has considered all available brownfield land within the area of search from the point of connection. The review for the brownfield register did not identify any brownfield land of the size required to achieve the scale of solar farm proposed.

All of the brownfield land identified was less than five hectares with the exception of Cottam Power Station site, however this has been allocated within the Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan 2020 as priority regeneration area under Policy ST5. This area is therefore not suitable for the Scheme.

The Applicant has sought to avoid the use of BMV land as much as possible in the design and layout. Whilst the Scheme will be in situ for 60 years, the land will be returned to its former use on decommissioning and the Scheme will not affect the soil quality.

Concern about information presented on the industrialisation of the local landscape.

As with any large scale infrastructure / energy project, the LVIA in **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity [EN010142/APP/6.1]** acknowledges that there will be significant effects and that these need to be weighed in the overall / planning balance against harm, including the aspects in the comment.

Query about information presented on a shared Cable Route Corridor with other solar schemes, with the EIA needing to be clear on anticipated impacts.

The cumulative scenarios considered within **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]** are as follows:

- **Scenario 1:** All four projects' ducts and cables are installed within a construction programme of 24-36 months. It is assumed all the ducts will be installed at once and launch and reception pits and trenches will be backfilled so the area can then be reinstated. The sequence and schedule for each project is not confirmed, therefore, as a worst case, three lots

of separate cable-pulling activities are assumed. The access points, haul routes and compounds will remain in place for 24-36 months to enable the cable pulls.

- **Scenario 2:** The sequential installation of all four projects' ducts and cables over a maximum 5-year period. The access points, haul routes and compounds would remain in place for up to 5 years.

Concern regarding the parameters of the solar stations, stated as 10 metres in height.

The maximum height of the Solar Stations is expected to be around 4m. The visibility of the Solar Stations is illustrated by a Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) and is acknowledged as an additional source of visual impact within the LVIA and at certain viewpoints.

Assumptions regarding rates of woodland growth and establishment are provided in **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] and in most cases mitigation will be effective by Year 15, including for the Solar Stations.

Landscape and Visual Amenity

10.4.66 Comments related to Landscape and Visual Amenity were provided by the following consultees:

- Fillingham Parish Council;
- Willingham by Stow Parish Council;
- Springthorpe Parish Meeting;
- Natural England;
- Canal and River Trust;
- West Lindsey District Council;
- Ingham Parish Council;
- Glentworth Parish Council;
- Lincolnshire County Council;
- Toft Newton Parish Council; and
- Bassetlaw District Council.

10.4.67 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Landscape and Visual Amenity were:

- a. Concerns regarding impacts on landscape character and scale of the Scheme;
- b. Comments regarding receptors using the River Trent, both recreationally and commercially;
- c. Comments regarding visual impact on sensitive receptors, such as the A631 and B1398 Middle Street; and
- d. Comment regarding impacts on important views outlined in local Neighbourhood Plans.
- e. Comments regarding visual impact of BESS, conversion units and inverters given the maximum parameters for these elements.
- f. Concerns regarding extent of vegetation loss.
- g. Comments on rationale/justification for the extent of the Study Area.

10.4.68 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-15**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.17, Table 1-20**.

Table 10-15: Regard had to comments relating to Landscape and Visual Amenity received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
Concerns regarding impacts on landscape character and scale of the Scheme.	<p>The LVIA (refer to Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]) assesses effects on landscape character in construction, Year 1, Year 15 and during decommissioning at Year 60. Any effects at Year 15 are assumed to persist throughout the period Year 15 to Year 60 unless specifically stated to be mitigated.</p> <p>This would apply to significant effects. The 50-60 year time scale is considered as part of the assessment, in terms of the magnitude of change. As with any large scale infrastructure project, significant effects are likely. Any significant landscape and visual effects require weighing in the planning balance against benefits of the scheme. This is specifically recognised in NPS EN-1 (Ref 1).</p>
Comments regarding receptors using the River Trent, both recreationally and commercially.	<p>Navigational safety has been considered in Chapter 17: Other Environmental Topics of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] under Glint and Glare. The assessment concluded there would be no significant effects.</p>

Landform and distance limit any potential visibility of panels or other solar infrastructure from the River Trent as evidenced by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) (refer to the **Figure 12-4** series of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.2]**).

The design of the Cable Route Corridor considers sensitive elements (e.g. riparian planting) along the River Trent and the assessment of this section is supported by a representative viewpoint on the Trent Valley Way.

Request for the LIVA to fully consider visual impact on sensitive receptors, such as the A631 and B1398 Middle Street.

The LVIA (refer to **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]**) considers sequential views along the A631 and B1398 Middle Street. Two reference views have been included along the A631; and four from Middle Street. These locations have been subject to review and agreement with the Lincolnshire County Council Landscape Officer.

Comment regarding important views outlined in local Neighbourhood Plans.

Neighbourhood Plans and supporting documents are an important evidence base, which has helped to determine the value of both landscape and views to communities.

These have informed the overall, moderated assessments of value (and, by extension, sensitivity) in line with guidance such as TGN 02-21, produced by the Landscape Institute.

Glentworth also includes areas that are designated through Local Plan policy as Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). This designation has also been considered as part of the baseline value/sensitivity for both landscape and visual receptors.

Comments regarding visual impact of BESS, conversion units and inverters.

The LVIA presented in **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]** adopts a Rochdale Envelope approach and is assessed based on the maximum parameters for the Scheme set out within **Chapter 3: Scheme Description** of the

ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. This ensures that the worst-case scenario has been considered in terms of the visual impacts of these elements of the Scheme.

Concerns regarding extent of vegetation loss. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been carried out for the Scheme and is provided in **Appendix 12-7** of the ES [EN-010142/APP/6.2]. This includes a Tree Protection Plan which illustrates trees to be retained or removed.

Comments on rationale/justification for the extent of the Study Area. The LVIA (refer to **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]) considers that no significant effects are likely beyond 5km for the Principal Site and 1km for the Cable Route Corridor.

Noise and Vibration

- 10.4.69 Comments related to Noise and Vibration were provided by Canal and Rivers Trust, West Lindsey District Council and Bassetlaw District Council.
- 10.4.70 Comments related to the potential for installing the cable beneath the River Trent to generate noise and vibration. The Applicant can confirm that construction of the cable across the River Trent will be achieved by a trenchless crossing in compliance with appropriate standards. **Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] provides an assessment of construction noise and vibration effects on residents of identified sensitive receptors. No significant residual noise or vibration effects are identified.
- 10.4.71 Specifically in relation to potential effects on aquatic habitats, fish and mammals, including where relevant from noise and vibration as a result of trenchless construction methods at watercourse crossings, these are assessed **Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. Provided implementation of proposed mitigation measures, no significant adverse effects for ecological receptors were identified.
- 10.4.72 Comments were also received in relation to the shared impacts/disturbances caused by the connection of several projects into National Grid's Cottam Substation. The Applicant can confirm that it is working closely with Low Carbon and Island Green Power and has met with them regularly to design a cable corridor that is shared where practicable in order to minimise disruption during the construction period.
- 10.4.73 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 1.18, Table 1-21**.

Scheme Location

- 10.4.74 Comments related to Scheme Location were provided by Fillingham Parish Council, West Lindsey District Council and Ingham Parish Council.

10.4.75 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Scheme Location were:

- a. Query about why areas of brownfield land were not included in the Scheme;
- b. Query about why the initial area of search was only limited to an area of 2,700ha to the south-east of Gainsborough; and
- c. Comment that the specific contents in the PEI Report on site selection/location were very generic.

10.4.76 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-16**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.19, Table 1-22**.

Table 10-16: Regard had to comments relating to Scheme Location received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
Query regarding the location of grid connection at National Grid's Cottam Substation and whether other connection options were explored.	<p>The NPS provides that there is not a general requirement to consider alternatives and such assessments should be proportionate to the CNP of delivering renewable energy schemes. The NPS also recognises an available grid connection is a critical locational criterion for site selection. There is no policy requirement to consider alternative points of connection.</p> <p>The Applicant considered alternatives where there was a policy requirement to do so (for example flood risk) and applied a rational site selection process based on operational requirements and environmental and planning considerations. For more information on the site selection process, refer to Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].</p>
Query about why areas of brownfield land and rooftop solar were not included in the Scheme.	<p>The Applicant has considered all available brownfield land within the area of search from the point of connection. The review for the brownfield register did not identify any brownfield land of the size required to achieve the scale of solar farm proposed.</p> <p>All of the brownfield land identified was less than 5ha with the exception of Cottam Power Station site however this has been allocated within the Draft</p>

Bassetlaw Local Plan 2020 as a priority regeneration area under Policy ST5. This area is therefore not suitable for the Scheme.

Specifically regarding siting solar on rooftops, while the Applicant supports the importance of rooftop solar development it recognises that constraining solar development to rooftops and brownfield sites will not meet the growing energy demands alongside the decarbonisation of the energy sector.

The Powering up Britain Strategy concludes that an acceleration of the delivery of renewables is necessary to achieve net zero including a quintuple of our solar power by 2035. Large scale solar developments such as the Scheme are needed alongside rooftop solar to meet these targets.

Query about why the initial area of search was only limited to an area of 2,700ha to the south-east of Gainsborough.

The initial area of search for the site selection began with a 15km radius from the Point of Connection established at National Grid's Cottam Substation.

This was then further refined through the application of environmental and planning designations and constraints as well as technical considerations which led to a refined area to the south east of Gainsborough. Refer to **Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] for further detail.

Comment that the specific contents in the PEI Report on site selection/location were very generic.

The site selection process was informed by National and Local planning policy requirements, in particular the considerations set out in draft NPS EN-3 (Ref 2) (which is now published) with regard to site selection for solar development. initial area of search for the site selection began with a 15km radius from the Point of Connection established at National Grid's Cottam Substation.

This was then further refined through the application of environmental and planning designations and constraints as well as technical considerations which

led to a refined area to the south east of Gainsborough. Refer to **Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] for further detail.

The factors used in determining the site selection has been discussed in **Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Socio-economics and Land Use

10.4.77 Comments related to Socio-economics and Land Use were provided by the following consultees:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| a. Fillingham Parish Council; | h. Glentworth Parish Council; |
| b. Sturton by Stow Parish Council; | i. Lincolnshire County Council; |
| c. Willingham by Stow Parish Council; | j. Toft Newton Parish Council; |
| d. Natural England; | k. Via East Midlands (on behalf of Nottinghamshire County Council); and |
| e. Canal and River Trust; | l. Bassetlaw District Council. |
| f. West Lindsey District Council; | |
| g. Ingham Parish Council; | |

10.4.78 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Socio-economics and Land Use were:

- Concern regarding the impact on property value and demand;
- Comments regarding the benefits for the local economy, including opportunities for employment;
- Concerns regarding impact on agricultural land use.
- Comments about the impact of the Cable Route Corridor on PRow ;
- Comments stating that limited information is included on tourism.

10.4.79 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-17**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.20, Table 1-23**.

Table 10-17: Regard had to comments relating to Socio-economics and Land Use received from s42 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Concern regarding the impact on property value and demand.

The Scheme has, where possible, aimed to be set back from residential dwellings and incorporate landscape mitigation and layout design measures to reduce the

impact on residential dwellings. For more information, please refer to **Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution** and **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1], the Design and Access Statement [EN010142/APP/7.3] and **Design Principles Statement** [EN010142/APP/7.4].

Query regarding the benefits for the local economy, including opportunities for employment.

Employment effects are considered within **Chapter 14: Socio-economics and Land Use** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. The assessment concludes that effects of the Scheme on employment are not significant in the construction, operational or decommissioning phases.

More details regarding the employment opportunities for the local community have been provided in the Framework Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan [EN010142/APP/7.18].

Concerns regarding impact on agricultural land use.

The effects of the Scheme are long term but reversible. The Applicant is applying for development consent for a period of up to 60 years. Following this, it will be a requirement of the DCO that the Scheme be decommissioned at the end of its operating life, and the land returned to its current use.

Comments about the impact of the Cable Route Corridor on PRoW.

No permanent closures are expected within the Cable Route Corridor during the construction (or operation or decommissioning phases) of the Scheme.

During the construction period, PRoWs will be managed with a banksman (or similar) as set out within the Framework Public Rights of Way Management Plan (PRoW) Management Plan submitted alongside the DCO Application [EN010142/APP/7.16].

Comment stating that limited information is included on tourism,

While the Scoping Opinion response received from PINS did not request that an assessment of effects on tourism was required in respect of the Scheme [EN010142/APP/6.2], potential effects

on tourists were assessed in the ES in so much that effects on views and use of PRowS were set out which comprise the main matters of potential impact.

The assessment concluded that there would be no significant effects. Refer to **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] and **Chapter 14: Socio-economics and Land Use** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Telecommunications, Television Receptors and Utilities

10.4.80 Comments related to Telecommunications, Television Receptors and Utilities were received by a number of statutory undertakers, including Cadent Gas, Uniper UK Limited, National Grid Electricity Transmission, Northern Gas, Exolum Pipeline System Ltd, and NATS.

10.4.81 The comments related to the Applicant's ongoing engagement with the respective undertakers, along with the Scheme's location to assets. The Applicant is in discussions with all statutory undertakers and will continue to liaise regarding the potential inclusion of protective provisions in the draft DCO [EN010142/APP/3.1].

10.4.82 Comments were also in relation to the Scheme's draft Order limits and ongoing optioneering work, including connection into National Grid's Cottam Substation. Since the PEI Report, the design of the Cable Route Corridor has been refined. The updated design is shown on the various figures through the DCO Application.

10.4.83 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 1.21, Table 1-24**.

Transport and Access

10.4.84 Comments related to Transport and Access were received by a number of consultees, including:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. National Highways; | g. Ingham Parish Council; |
| b. Springthorpe Parish Meeting; | h. Glentworth Parish Council; |
| c. Natural England; | i. Lincolnshire County Council; |
| d. Canal and River Trust; | j. Bassetlaw District Council; and |
| e. West Lindsey District Council; | k. Toft Newton Parish Council. |
| f. Nottinghamshire County Council; | |

10.4.85 The matters raised most commonly by the above consultees in respect of Transport and Access were:

- a. Concern regarding the use of the eastern egress of Springthorpe Village for construction traffic and use of the main road through the village;
- b. General comments regarding condition of the local road network, which would be worsened by the Scheme;
- c. Request for mandatory and permanent 20mph speed limits through villages to reduce risk of pedestrian injury;
- d. Comment regarding the use of the River Trent for freight; and
- e. Comments regarding the opportunity to combine construction accesses with the West Burton Solar Farm, Cottam Solar Farm and Gate Burton Solar Farm.

10.4.86 Matters are summarised in **Table 10-18**, with full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.22, Table 1-25**.

10.4.87 One comment was also received by one landowner, as provided **Table 1-26** of the same Appendix.

Table 10-18: Regard had to comments relating to Transport and Access received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
Concern regarding the use of the eastern egress of Springthorpe Village for construction traffic and use of the main road through the village.	<p>As detailed in the Transport Assessment within Appendix 16-2 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.2], the peak number of daily two-way vehicle movements (comprising local construction staff only) utilising Springthorpe Road is 10. No HGVs are proposed to be routed via Springthorpe Road or Hill Road. This low number of vehicle trips is therefore not expected to have a significant impact on the road.</p> <p>Public road improvements works are proposed for School Lane to facilitate access to the proposed substation and Cable Route Corridor. Details of public road improvement proposals can be found on AECOM drawing 60682158-ACM-XX-00-DR-CE-1059 which will be made available shortly after DCO submission on the planning inspectorate website.</p>
General comments regarding condition of the local road network, which would be worsened by the Scheme.	<p>As detailed in the Framework CTMP [EN010142/APP/7.11], highway condition surveys will be undertaken before, during and after the construction to identify any impacts which are as a</p>

result of the Scheme that need to be remediated.

Where the pre-condition survey identifies that measures should be put in place to protect and maintain the road surface, the LHAs will be consulted, ahead of works being undertaken by the Scheme.

Request for mandatory and permanent 20mph speed limits through villages to reduce risk of pedestrian injury

No permanent speed limits are being applied as part of the Scheme; on the basis this is not required to address the effects of the Scheme. However, other mitigation and management measures are being applied.

A Framework CTMP **[EN010142/APP/7.11]** has been prepared to support the DCO submission detailing the management and mitigation measures to be put in place during the construction phase. An HGV routing plan details the key routes to be utilised by HGVs during the construction phase.

Comment regarding the use of the River Trent or the Cottam railway line for freight.

Potential use of the river was excluded as an option due to a lack of suitable jetty facilities in the vicinity of the Order limits.

Further it was agreed with reference to heavy haulage contracts that there are currently no suitable offload points south of the main ports of entry for the type of equipment and volume of materials required for the Scheme.

Making the Cottam railway track usable again for construction was considered but excluded as an option following consultation with Network Rail, who explained the level of additional works required to return the track to a useable condition. Network Rail would require the Applicant to assume the costs for these works. These costs were not feasible in the context of the Scheme and the temporary nature of any proposed use of this railway line.

Comments regarding the opportunity to combine construction accesses with the

Cable Route Corridor access points have been rationalised to coincide with other solar schemes as far as possible.

West Burton Solar Farm, Cottam Solar Farm and Gate Burton Solar Farm.

Discussions are ongoing regarding possible shared use. **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects and Interactions** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] includes a detailed cumulative assessment of other schemes in the area.

A Joint Report on the Interrelationships with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects [EN010142/APP/7.6] is also submitted with the DCO application.

Minerals and Waste

10.4.88 Comments related to Minerals and Waste were received from Lincolnshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council.

10.4.89 Comments pointed the Applicant in the direction of relevant policies and local plans, along with more detailed information for the Applicant to consider in the subsequent refinement of the Scheme. These policies and plans have been considered as appropriate in the preparation of the ES and other Application documents. Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs)/Mineral Consultation Areas (MCAs) and sites are outlined in the Planning Statement [EN010142/APP/7.2].

10.4.90 Full responses provided in **Appendix I, section 1.23, Table 1-27**.

10.5 Section 47 community consultation: Responses received, issues raised and changes made

10.5.1 This section outlines the responses received to the section 47 consultation and the Applicant's regard to these in refinement of the Scheme's design.

10.5.2 Section 47 consultation involved engagement with communities (living in the vicinity of the Scheme), including local residents, near neighbours, and additional non-prescribed consultees (such as community and seldom heard groups).

10.5.3 As outlined in **section 7.10**, consultees could provide their feedback using the hard copy feedback questionnaire, online feedback questionnaire or in writing (by email or via the Scheme's Freepost address).

10.6 Section 47 Consultee comments and the Applicant responses

Consultation analysis

10.6.1 As with section 42 comments (as outlined in **section 10.5**), the Applicant grouped all responses using the EIA topic areas, allowing open-ended responses (including feedback in response to specific questions in the

feedback questionnaire) to be analysed and responded to in a consistent manner.

- 10.6.2 All comments received were reviewed and assessed by the project team. Every comment received through online feedback questionnaires, hard copy feedback questionnaires, emails and letters was considered by the team and determined how/where refinements to the Scheme design could be made.
- 10.6.3 Relevant comments considered to contain feedback on the Scheme and the process were assigned to a relevant topic area to help categorisation and an appropriate Applicant response. As shown in **Appendix H**, comments have been grouped and responded to, noting where a Scheme change has been made. All comments grouped were provided with a unique ID, indicating where multiple comments had been received in relation to a particular topic area.
- 10.6.4 The following sections provide a (quantitative and qualitative) summary of comments received and the regard had to feedback from the Applicant in the Scheme's refinement.

Source of community responses

- 10.6.5 During the Section 47 consultation period, the Applicant received 74 responses, including:
- a. 54 completed feedback questionnaires; and
 - b. 20 pieces of feedback via email
- 10.6.6 Of the completed feedback questionnaires, 45 were completed online and nine were completed in hard copy and returned to the Applicant.
- 10.6.7 Three additional feedback questionnaires were completed by parish councils (s42(1)(a) consultees) – Glentworth Parish Council, Ingham Parish Council and Toft Newton Parish Council. For the purpose of analysis for the feedback questionnaire responses, the Applicant has analysed responses in this section, with issues raised broken down and responded to within the section 42 responses.
- 10.6.8 A number of non-prescribed consultees provided comments, including:
- a. National Trust;
 - b. Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust;
 - c. Treswell Village Hall Committee;
 - d. Via East Midlands;
 - e. Gainsborough Town Tennis Club;
 - f. British Horse Society;
 - g. Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust;
 - h. Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust
 - i. Sport England; and
 - j. Sir Edward Leigh MP.

Analysis of respondents

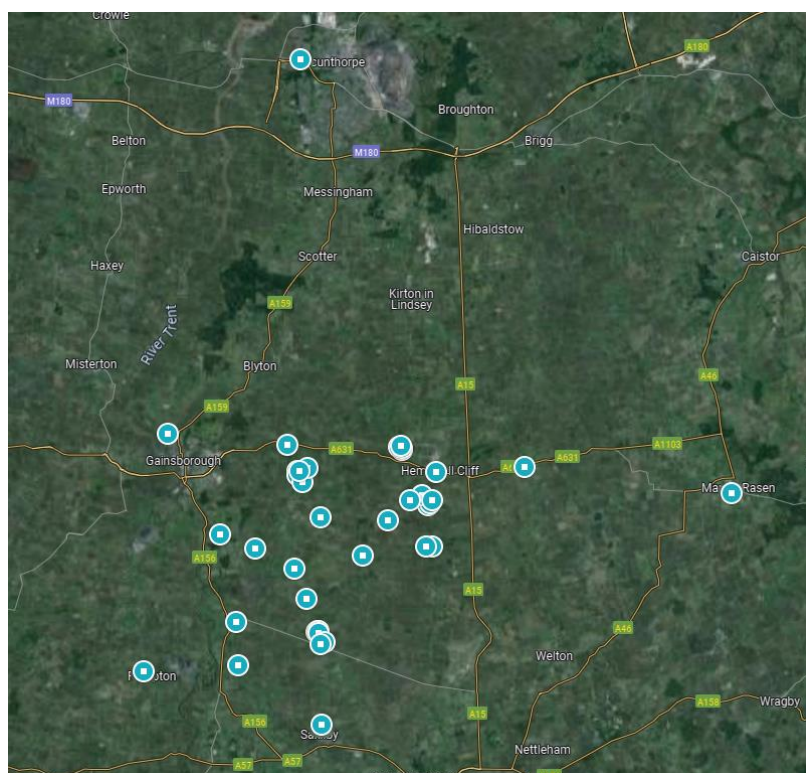
10.6.9 The feedback questionnaire included (optional) questions for respondents to complete in relation to demographics, such as age, postcode (of their address), and how they would classify their interest in the Scheme.

Location

10.6.10 Respondents using the feedback questionnaire could also provide details of their postcode, allow the Applicant to identify the location of respondents in relation to the Scheme.

10.6.11 **Figure 10-1** shows the breadth of the consultation responses in the region. All respondents (who provided their postcode) were located in the local authority area of West Lindsey.

Figure 10-1: Breadth of postcodes provided in questionnaire responses



(Source: Google maps)

10.6.12 Further breakdown of questionnaire responses is shown in **Table 10-19**, showing the greatest number of respondents from the parishes of Springthorpe (12 responses) and Glentworth (11 responses).

Table 10-19: Community consultation responses received by address provided

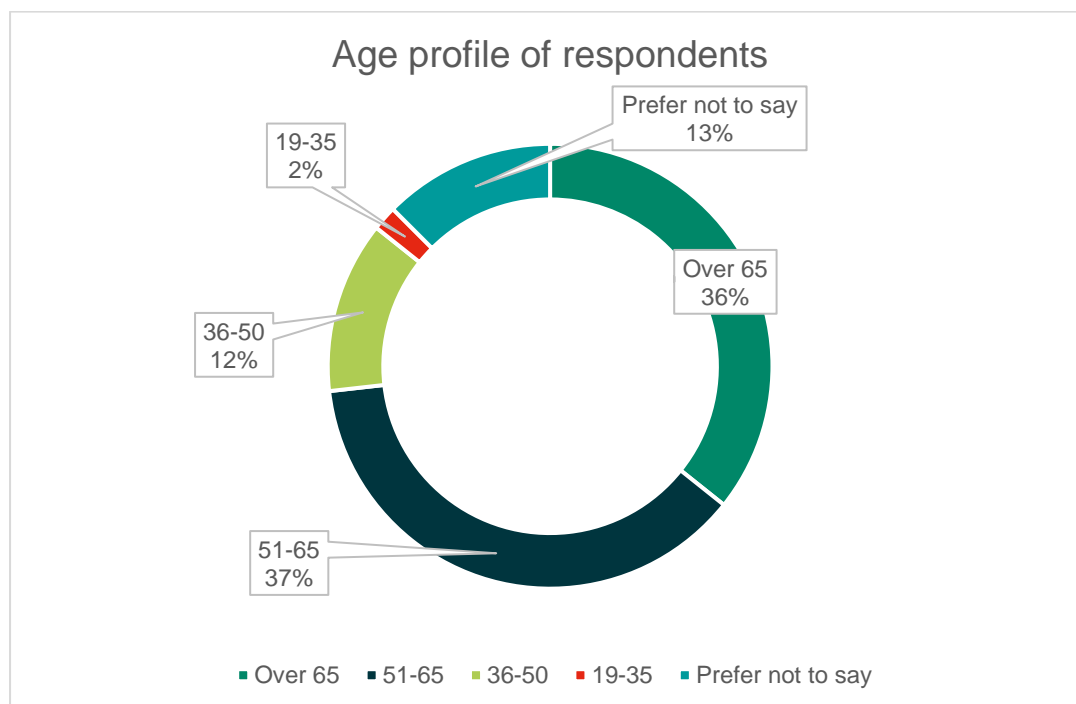
Location	Number of responses
Springthorpe	12
Glentworth	11
Sturton by Stow	3

Willingham by Stow	3
Fillingham	2
Kexby	1
Marton	1
Hemswell	1
Harpwell	1
Hemswell Cliff	1
Stow	1
Scunthorpe (unparished)	1

Age and profile

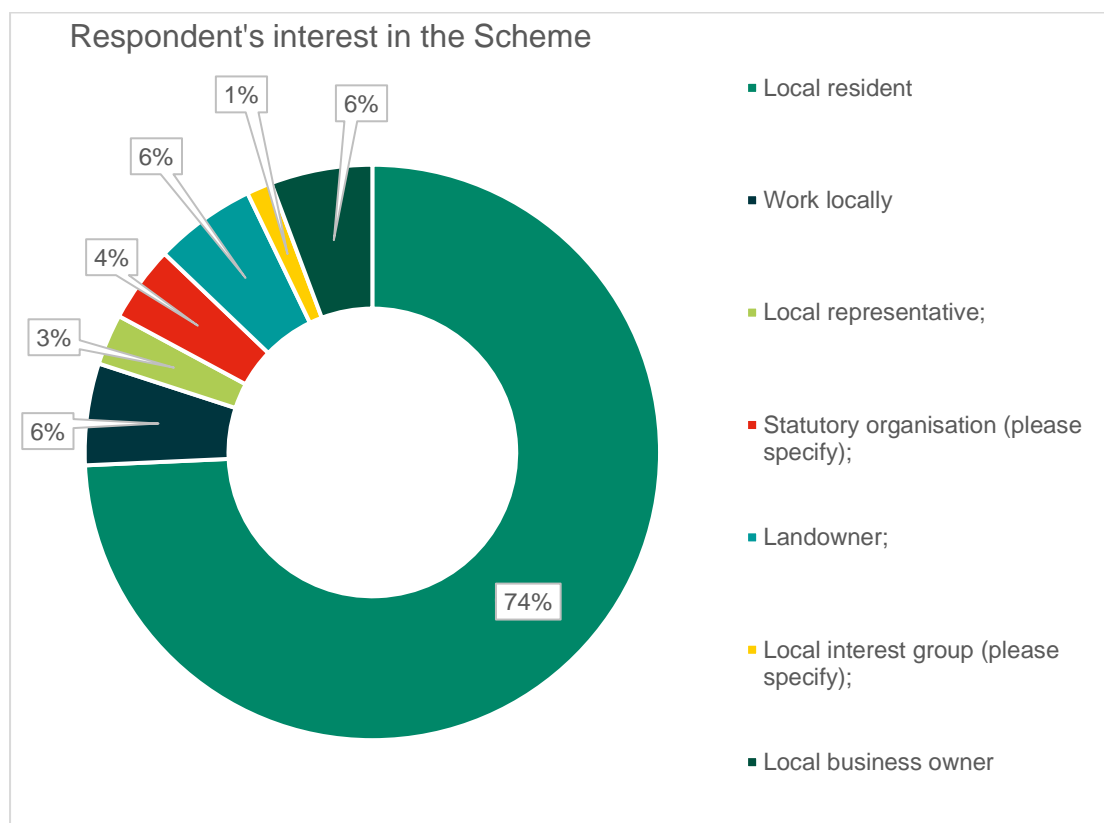
10.6.13 Of the 52 respondents who provided their age range on the feedback questionnaire, 36% were aged over 65 and 37% were aged between 51 and 65, as shown in **Figure 10-2**.

Figure 10-2: Age range of respondents who specified an age



10.6.14 74% of respondents identified themselves as local residents with an interest in the Scheme, with 6% classifying themselves as landowners, local businesses owners or working locally, as shown in **Figure 10-3**.

Figure 10-3: Respondent's interest in the Scheme



10.6.15 With this specific question, it was noted that respondents could select/state multiple options regarding their interest in the Scheme, as broken down in **Table 10-20** with the number of instances each interest noted.

Table 10-20: Respondent's interest in the Scheme

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
Local resident	52
Work locally	4
Local business owner	4
Landowner	4
Statutory organisation	3
Local representative	2
Local interest group	1

Analysis of responses

10.6.16 Respondents could answer any number of questions included in the feedback questionnaire.

Closed questions

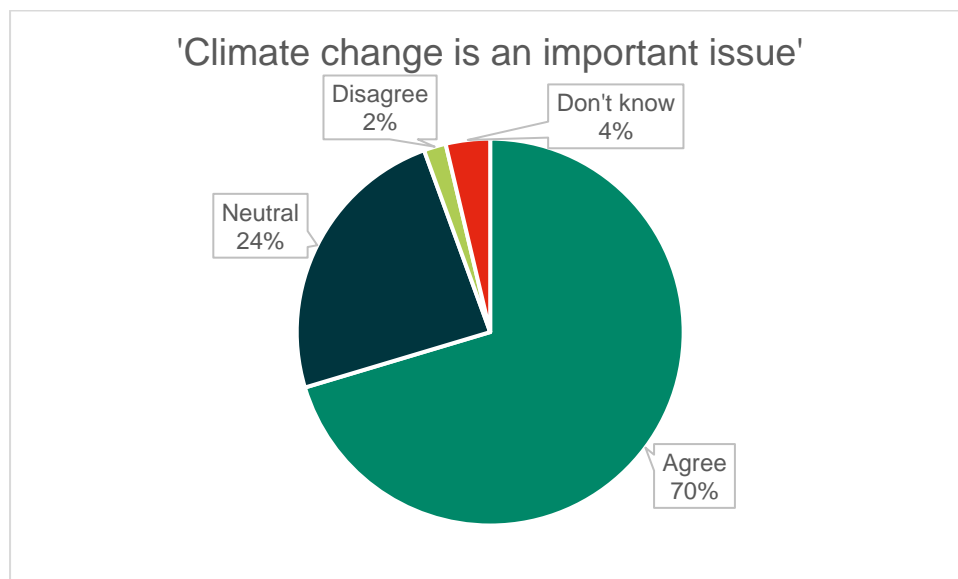
10.6.17 The questionnaire provided the opportunity for respondents to answer 'closed' questions, including:

- a. Question 2) Whether people agree or disagree with the following statements:
 - i. 2a) Climate change is an important issue
 - ii. 2b) Energy security is an important issue
 - iii. 2c) Moving away from fossil fuel use for electricity generation is important
 - iv. 2d) The UK needs more renewable energy
 - v. 2e) The UK needs more energy storage
- b. Question 3) People's views on solar energy (agree or disagree)
- c. Question 4) Based on the information presented as part of our statutory consultation, how supportive are you of our proposals for Tillbridge Solar?
- d. Question 5) Based on the key elements of the Principal Site, as shown on the site layout plan, do you have any comments on the following areas (please tick all boxes for areas you would like to comment on)
- e. Question 6) Based on the proposed routing of the Cable Route Corridor, what is your view on our proposals?
- f. Question 14) Please let us know how you heard about the consultation by ticking one or more of the following boxes.
- g. Question 15) Did you attend our face-to-face or online consultation events?
- h. Question 16) How informative did you find our consultation events and/or our consultation materials?
- i. Question 17) Please rate the information included as part of this consultation in terms of how clearly it was presented and how easy it was to understand.
- j. Responses received to the questions is provided below.

Question 2a) Climate change is an important issue

10.6.18 Of the 57 completed questionnaires, this question was answered by 54 respondents. 70% (38 responses) of respondents agreed that climate change is an important issue, 24% (13 responses) of respondents were neutral, 4% (2 responses) of respondents selected 'don't know' and 2% (1 response) of respondents disagreed.

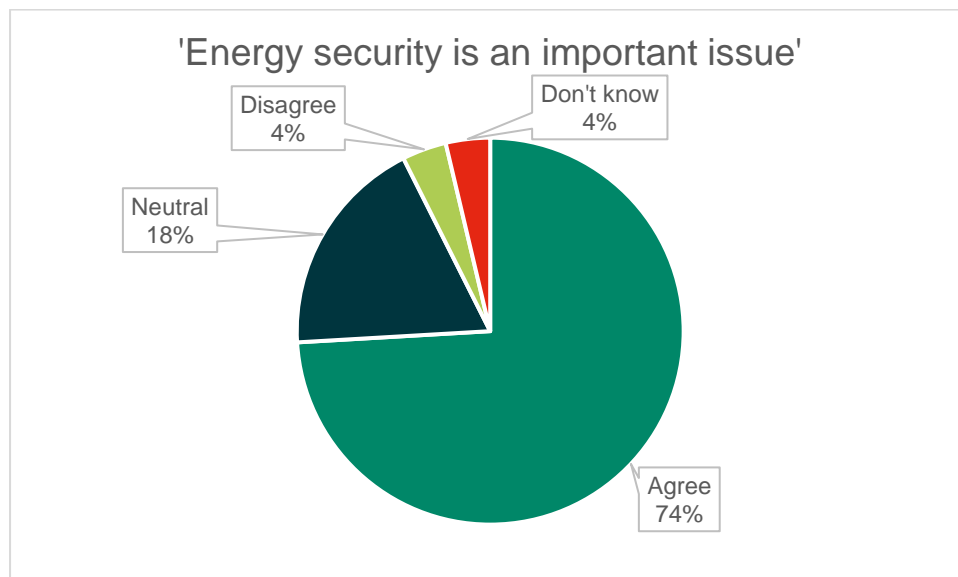
Figure 10-4: Responses to question: 'Climate change is an important issue'



Question 2b) Energy security is an important issue

10.6.19 Of the 57 completed questionnaires, this question was answered by 54 respondents. 74% (40 responses) of respondents agreed that energy security is an important issue, 18% (10 responses) of respondents were neutral, 4% (2 responses) of respondents selected 'don't know' and 4% (2 responses) of respondents disagreed.

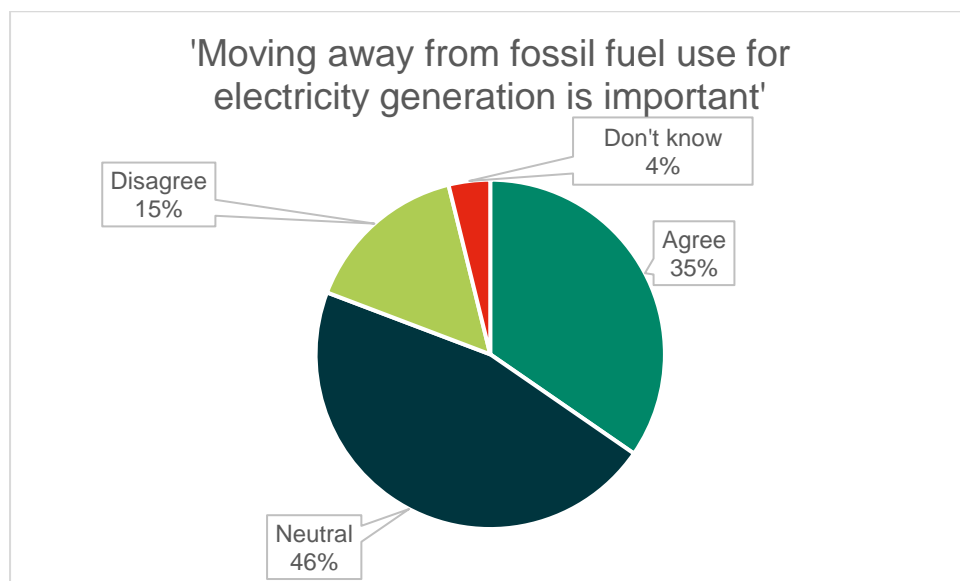
Figure 10-5: Responses to question: 'Energy security is an important issue'



Question 2c) Moving away from fossil fuel use for electricity generation is important

10.6.20 Of the 57 completed questionnaires, this question was answered by 52 respondents. 35% (18 responses) of respondents agreed that moving away from fossil fuel use for electricity generation is important, 46% (25 responses) of respondents were neutral, 4% (2 responses) of respondents selected 'don't know' and 15% (8 responses) of respondents disagreed.

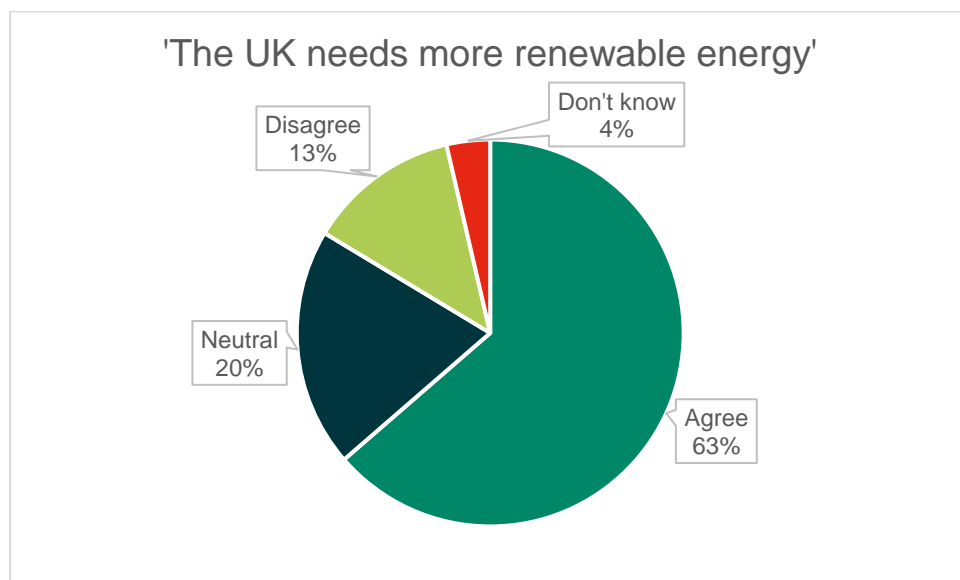
Figure 10-6: Response to the question: 'Moving away from fossil fuel use for electricity generation is important'



Question 2d) The UK needs more renewable energy

10.6.21 Of the 57 completed questionnaires, this question was answered by 55 respondents. 63% (35 responses) of respondents agreed that the UK needs more renewable energy, 20% (11 responses) of respondents were neutral, 4% (two responses) of respondents selected 'don't know' and 13% (7 responses) of respondents disagreed.

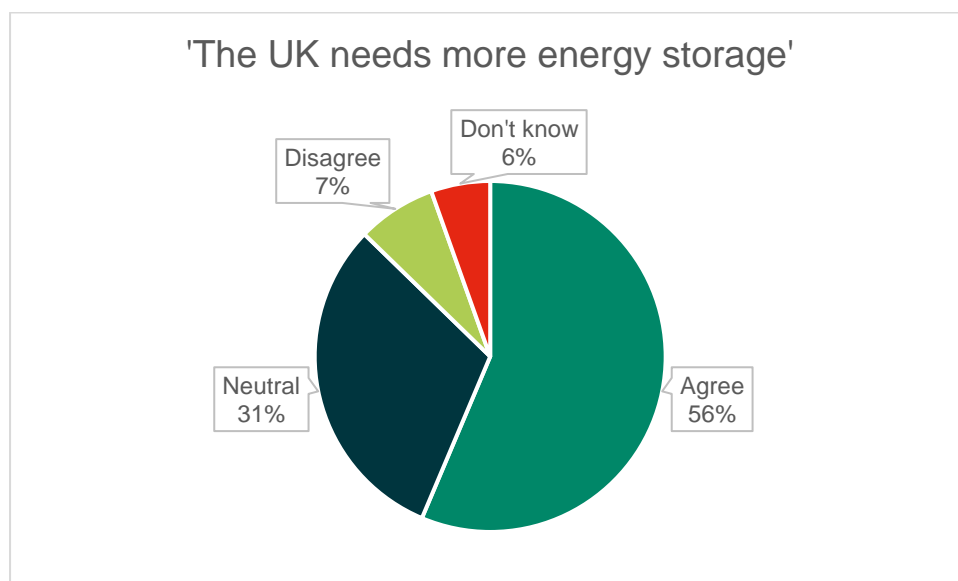
Figure 10-7: Responses to question: 'The UK needs more renewable energy'



Question 2e) The UK needs more energy storage

10.6.22 Of the 57 completed questionnaires, this question was answered by 55 respondents. 56% (31 responses) of respondents agreed that the UK needs more energy storage, 31% (17 responses) of respondents were neutral, 7% (two responses) of respondents selected 'don't know' and 7% (4 responses) of respondents disagreed.

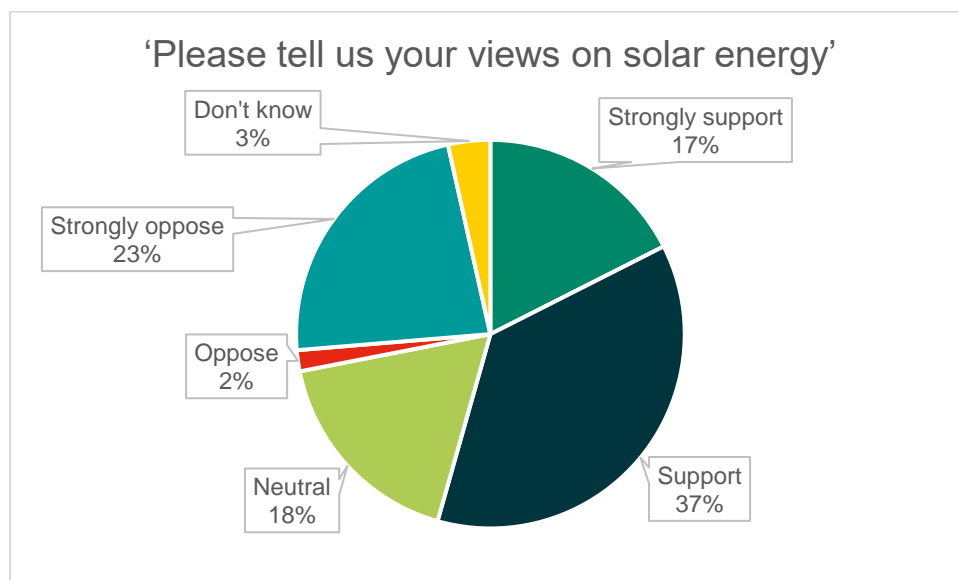
Figure 10-8: Responses to question: 'The UK needs more energy storage'



Question 3) 'Please tell us your views on solar energy'

10.6.23 All 57 respondents answered this question, with 17% (10 responses) of respondents in strong support of solar energy, 37% (21 responses) in support, 23% (13 responses) of respondents in strong opposition, 2% (1 response) of respondents in opposition, and 3% (2 responses) unsure.

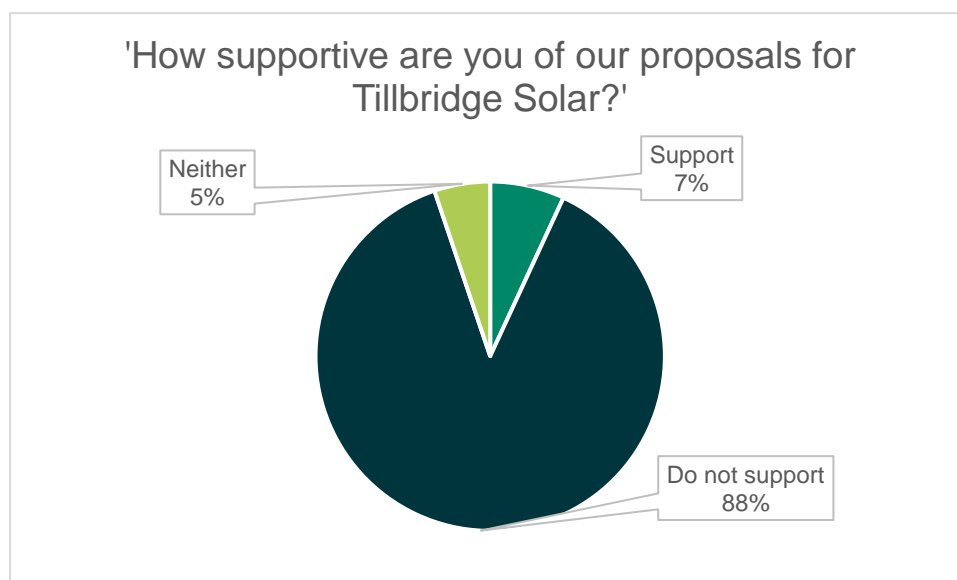
Figure 10-9: Responses to question: 'Please tell us your views on solar energy'



Question 4) Based on the information presented as part of our statutory consultation, how supportive are you of our proposals for Tillbridge Solar?

10.6.24 This question was answered by all respondents, with 88% (51 responses) of respondents saying they did not support the Scheme, 7% (4 responses) of respondents saying they supported the Scheme, and 5% (3 responses) of respondents neither supporting nor not supporting the Scheme.

Figure 10-10: Responses to question 'How supportive are you of our proposals for Tillbridge Solar?'



Question 5) Based on the key elements of the Principal Site, as shown on the site layout plan, do you have any comments on the following areas (please tick all boxes for areas you would like to comment on)

10.6.25 Respondents also had the opportunity to select multiple areas of interest in relation to the Principal Site, including the illustrative site layout plan, which was clearly signposted to and reference in the Project Information Booklet (see **Appendix C-13.2**).

10.6.26 Of the 57 feedback questionnaires completed, 45 respondents chose select areas of interest. **Table 10-21** provides a list of the number of times each option was selected.

Table 10-21: Frequency of options selected in relation to the Principal Site (Question 5)

Elements of the Principal Site	Number of times selected
Areas of solar panels	39
Energy storage facilities	32
Proposed substation sites	28
Proposed water tank sites	24
Main site access locations	26
Maintenance access tracks (within the 24 Principal Site)	
Construction compounds	24

Potential areas of woodland (primary as 28 screening)

Additional elements (such as site offices 22 and storage)

Potential areas for ecological 26 enhancement and other areas of grassland

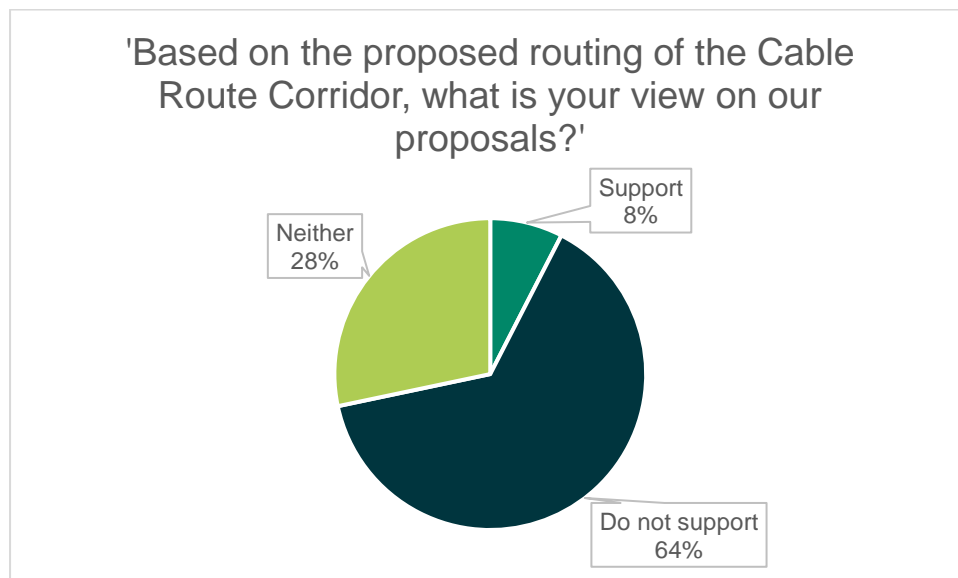
Other 11

10.6.27 Respondents were able to provide open-ended questions using a text box below. Responses to these are provided in under 'open question' (see paragraph 10.6.39).

Question 6) 'Based on the proposed routing of the Cable Route Corridor, what is your view on our proposals?'

10.6.28 Of the 57 feedback questionnaires completed, 53 responded to this question. 8% (4 responses) of respondents said that they supported the routing of the Cable Route Corridor, 65% (34 responses) of respondents did not support, and 28% (15 responses) of respondents were unsure.

Figure 10-11: Responses to question: 'Based on the proposed routing of the Cable Route Corridor, what is your view on our proposals?'



Question 14) Please let us know how you heard about the consultation by ticking one or more of the following boxes.

10.6.29 54 respondents chose to answer the question on how they heard about the consultation. People were able to select multiple options, **Table 10-22** provides a summary of the most commonly selected options.

Table 10-22: Methods how respondents heard about consultation

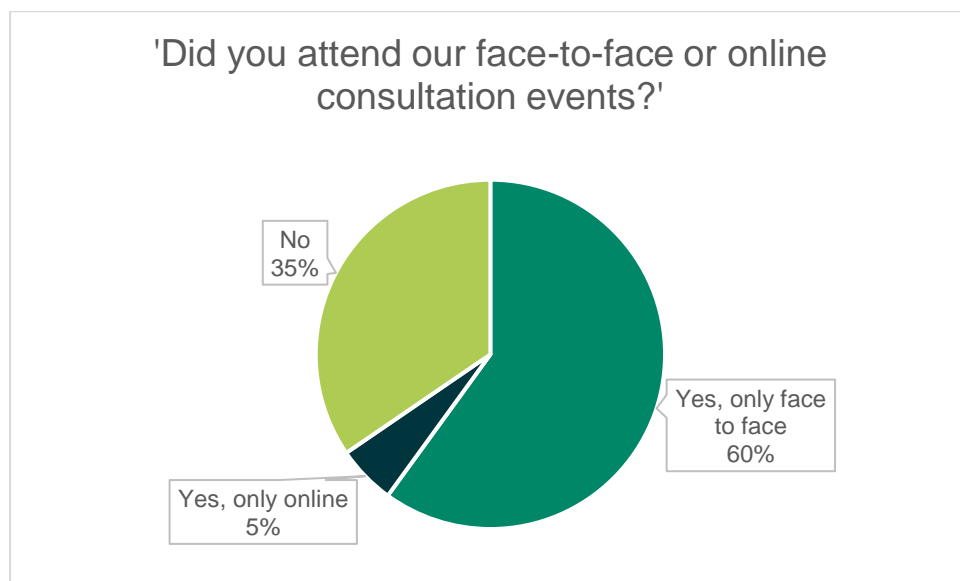
Method for hearing about consultation	Number of times selected
Received a consultation leaflet	31
Received a letter from Tillbridge Solar	21
Received an email from Tillbridge Solar	5
Saw it advertised in a local newspaper	3
Saw social media coverage	16
Saw it on the Scheme website	3
Word of mouth	20
Other	4

10.6.30 Of those who selected 'other', respondents said they heard about the consultation via BBC Radio Lincolnshire, a notice/poster on the village noticeboards, and a link shared by a local environmental group.

Question 15) Did you attend our face-to-face or online consultation events?

10.6.31 55 people chose to answer this question with 60% (33 responses) of respondents saying they only attended the face-to-face events, 5% (3 responses) of respondents saying they only attended online events and 35% (19 responses) of respondents saying they attended neither.

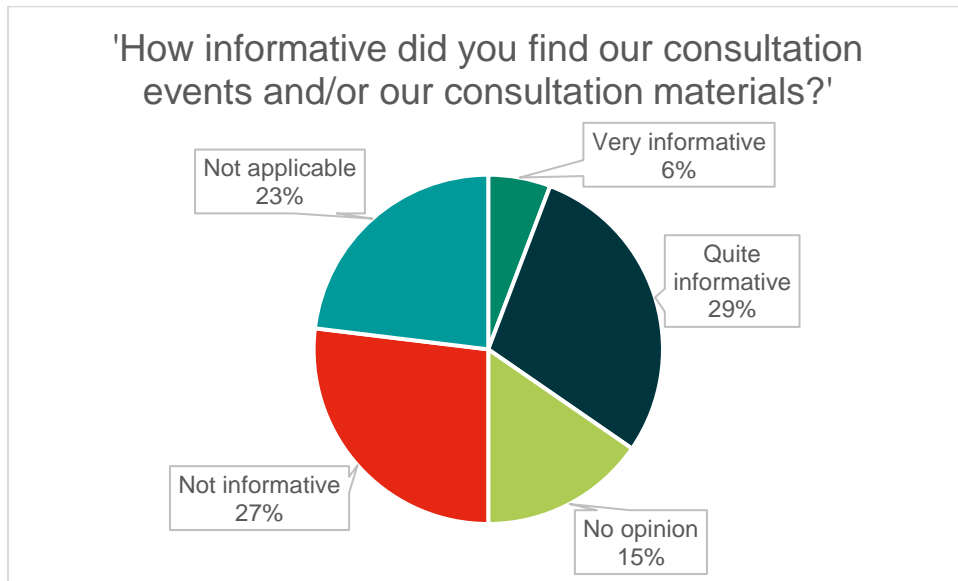
Figure 10-12: Breakdown of whether respondents attended consultation events



Question 16) How informative did you find our consultation events and/or our consultation materials?

10.6.32 52 respondents chose to answer the question on how informative they found the events and/or materials. 6% (3 responses) of respondents found them very informative, 29% (15 responses) of respondents found them quite informative, 15% (8 responses) of respondents had no opinion, 27% (14 responses) of respondents did not find them informative, and 23% (12 responses) of respondents selected 'not applicable'.

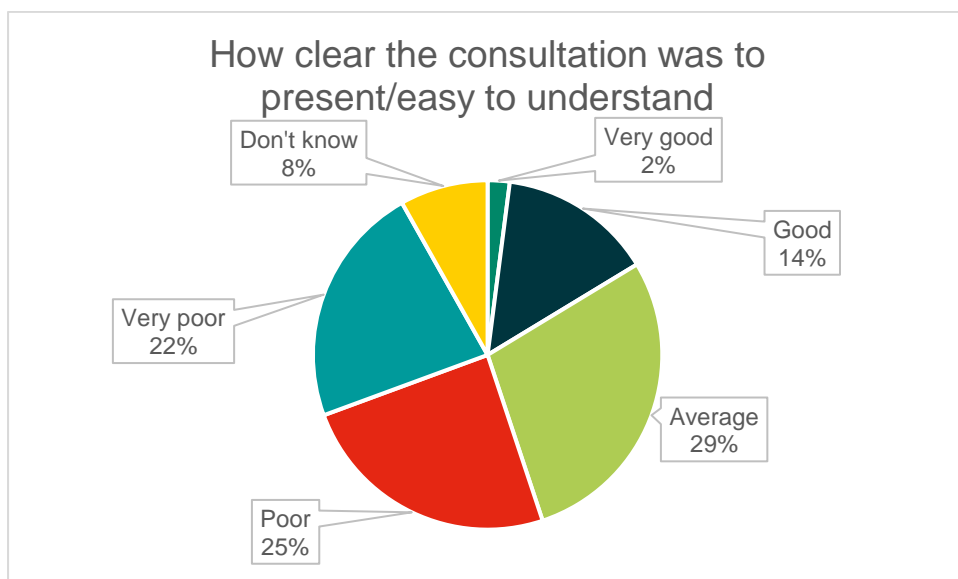
Figure 10-13: Breakdown of responses on how informative respondents found events/materials



Question 17) Please rate the information included as part of this consultation in terms of how clearly it was presented and how easy it was to understand.

10.6.33 49 respondents chose to answer this question on how clearly information was presented/easy it was to understand. 2% (1 responses) of respondents said it was 'very good', 14% (7 responses) of respondents said it was 'good', 29% (14 responses) of respondents said it was 'average', 25% (12 responses) of respondents said it was 'poor', 22% (11 responses) of respondents said it was 'very poor', and 8% (4 responses) of respondents said 'don't know'.

Figure 10-14: Breakdown of responses on presentation of consultation



Open-ended questions

10.6.34 Respondents also had the opportunity to answer open-ended questions and also to provide explanations for their responses to closed questions. The breakdown of responses to each of the open-ended questions is provided in **Table 10-23**.

Table 10-23: Number of responses to open-ended questions in feedback questionnaire

Method for hearing about consultation	Number of times selected
2a) Please let us know the reasons for your responses to question 2 and any other comments you have. (i.e. set of agreements/disagreements with particular statements)	45
3a) Please let us know the reasons for your responses to question 3 and any other comments you have. (i.e. views on solar energy)	50
4a) Please let us know the reasons for your response to question 4 (i.e. whether respondents support/do not support the proposals)	53
5) Comments on key elements of the Principal Site	44
6a) Please provide the reasons for your answer to question 6 and any comments you have on the proposed routing of the Cable Route Corridor, including any local features we should seek to avoid. (i.e. whether people support/do not support the routing of the Cable Route Corridor).	34
7) Please provide your comments on our assessments relating to the potential effects during the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phase of the Scheme	32
8) Please provide your comments on our proposed accesses to the Principal Site	30
9) Are there any sensitivities along the local road network that we should be aware of as we refine our plans further?	28
10) Please provide any comments you have on our assessment of the potential effects the solar farm could have on the landscape and views, and the measures we are proposing to mitigate those impacts.	43
11) Do you have any other comments on the information presented in the PEI Report or NTS?	23

12) Do you have any comments or suggestions on our community benefits plans, including any specific groups or initiatives that could be supported by the Scheme? 39

13) We would welcome any other comments you would like to make about our proposals for Tillbridge Solar. 34

18) Do you have any other further comments on the delivery of this consultation? 31

Overview of key issues raised

10.6.35 This section provides a summary of key issues in the feedback questionnaire. A summary of key themes, and how issues have been addressed by the Applicant, is provided in the sections that follow.

10.6.36 A full breakdown of the open questions is provided in **Appendix H**.

Question 2a) Please let us know the reasons for your responses to question 2 (i.e. set of agreements/disagreements with particular statements)

Table 10-24: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 2a

Theme	Incidence
Solar should not be placed on farmland	9
Climate change is a challenge	11
Support for reducing burning of fossil fuels	12
Need for renewables	3
Need for solar on rooftops	4
Solar should be built in a better place	5
Other technologies	4

Question 3a) Please let us know the reasons for your responses to question 3 (i.e. views on solar energy)

10.6.37 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-25: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 3a

Theme	Incidence
Solar should be on brownfield sites	5
Solar, but not at the expense of farmland/food production	8

Significance of climate change	6
Alternative technologies, such as wind or tidal	6
Food production	5
Importance of nature, protecting and enhancing biodiversity	4
Inefficiency of solar	3

Question 4a) Please let us know the reasons for your response to question 4 (i.e. whether respondents support/do not support the proposals)

10.6.38 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-26: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 4a

Theme	Incidence
Food production	20
Scheme is 'too large'	14
Agricultural land	11
Lack of joined-up thinking/cumulative effects	7
Importance of renewables	4
Well-being	3
Visual impacts/amenity	3
Preference for solar on brownfield sites	2
Proximity of the Scheme to neighbouring properties	2
10,000 acres of solar	2
Reference to Hemswell and Harpswell Local Plan	1

Question 5a) Comments on key elements of the Principal Site

10.6.39 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-27: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 5a

Theme	Incidence
Size, height and panels on an industrial scale	20
Concerns regarding size of the Scheme/individual elements	19

Negative impact on wildlife and biodiversity	12
Food production	11
Opportunity to rewild/replant trees and concerns about ecology	8
Substation concerns	7
Concerns regarding traffic through local villages (e.g. Springthorpe)	5
Impacts on Harpswell, including visual amenity	4
Comments battery, BESS and fire safety	4
Substation, including noise issues	3
Concerns regarding B1398	2
10,000 acres of solar	2

Question 6a) Please provide the reasons for your answer to question 6 ('Based on the proposed routing of the Cable Route Corridor, what is your view on our proposals?') and any comments you have on the proposed routing of the Cable Route Corridor, including any local features we should seek to avoid.

10.6.40 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-28: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 6a

Theme	Incidence
Shared cabling across solar schemes	5
Length of cabling between Principal Site and Cottam	3
Food production	2
Destruction of habitats/concerns around ecology	2

Question 7) Please provide your comments on our assessments relating to the potential effects during the construction, operation and maintenance, and decommissioning phase of the Scheme

10.6.41 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-29: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 7

Theme	Incidence
Traffic concerns	9
Concerns around noise impacts during construction	6
Concerns with the 60 year lifespan of the Scheme in conjunction with other schemes	5
Health and safety concerns	3
Importance/concerns around suitability of A631	3
Preference for solar on brownfield sites	3
Importance/concerns around suitability of B1398 Middle Street	2
Concerns around solar on farmland	2

Question 8) Please provide your comments on our proposed accesses to the Principal Site

10.6.42 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-30: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 8

Theme	Incidence
Local roads unable to cope with traffic/concerns	6
Unsuitability of A631 for access	5
Construction activity/length concerns	5
Unsuitability of B1398 Middle Street for access	3
Visual impacts from road network	2
Local roads unable to cope with traffic/concerns	6

Question 9) Are there any sensitivities along the local road network that we should be aware of as we refine our plans further?

10.6.43 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-31: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 9

Theme	Incidence
Concerns about local roads and high volume of traffic	6

Concerns about A631 2

Kexby Road, Common Lane concerns 2

Visual impacts from road network, e.g. 2
from Harpswell and Heapham

Question 10) Please provide any comments you have on our assessment of the potential effects the solar farm could have on the landscape and views, and the measures we are proposing to mitigate those impacts.

10.6.44 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-32: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 10

Theme	Incidence
Importance of local views	19
Importance of Lincolnshire Edge	5
10,000 acres of solar/multiple schemes across landscape	3
Importance of wildlife and opportunity for enhancement	3
Lasting views from B1398	2
View across Trent Valley	2
Views from Harpswell and Hemswell	2

Question 11) Do you have any other comments on the information presented in the PEI Report or NTS?

10.6.45 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-33: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 11

Theme	Incidence
Concerns about destruction/damage of habitats	4
Importance of farmland/food production	3
Information poorly presented	1

Question 12) Do you have any comments or suggestions on our community benefits plans, including any specific groups or initiatives that could be supported by the Scheme?

10.6.46 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-34: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 12

Theme	Incidence
No benefits provided at all	6
Discounted/cheaper energy bills	5
Best benefit to 'abandon plans'	2
Importance of local views	2

Question 13) We would welcome any other comments you would like to make about our proposals for Tillbridge Solar.

10.6.47 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-35: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 13

Theme	Incidence
Solar on farmland	7
Scheme is 'too large'/industrialisation of landscape	5
Solar on brownfield sites/industrial units	3
Visibility of the Scheme/local views	2

Question 18) Do you have any other further comments on the delivery of this consultation?

10.6.48 Key themes relating to this question included:

Table 10-36: Breakdown of most common responses to Question 18

Theme	Incidence
Biased, one-sided and vague information	6
Applicant putting a positive spin on information	3
Information being difficult to read	3

10.7 Summary of issues raised by s47 consultees and regard had to them by the Applicant

- 10.7.1 This section provided a further analysis of the themes raised across the feedback questionnaires, as well as incorporating written responses received that did not follow the format of the questionnaires.
- 10.7.2 This section will discuss the feedback received based around the key themes, as set out per EIA topics area (as listed in **section 10.3**).

Alternatives and Design Evolution

- 10.7.3 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:
- Solar panels should be installed on brownfield sites, includes factories and warehouses, which would not impact existing farmland, and food supply;
 - Opinion that the installation of solar panels on brownfield sites should be enforced by planning regulations;
 - There are better ways to produce energy and in more appropriate places, such as offshore wind, tidal and nuclear energy; and
 - In relation to alternatives, the preference to site the Scheme on brownfield sites, and more specifically on factories and warehouses, was commonly raised 11 times, with an additional five consultees questioning whether alternative energy sources could be considered.
- 10.7.4 **Table 10-37** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.
- 10.7.5 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.1, Table 1-1**.

Table 10-37: Regard had to comments relating to Alternatives and Design Evolution received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Solar panels should be installed on brownfield sites, includes factories and warehouses, which would not impact existing farmland, woodland and food supply.

In order to achieve net zero, the use of rooftops is not sufficient to meet the growing energy demands alongside the decarbonisation of the energy sector. Powering up Britain Strategy concludes that an acceleration of the delivery of renewables is necessary to achieve net zero including a quintuple of our solar power by 2035. Therefore large scale solar developments are needed such as the Scheme alongside deployment rooftop solar.

The Applicant has considered many factors in determining the site selection

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

for the Scheme including environmental and planning considerations and designations. The site selection was initially driven from an established point of connection and consideration has been given to minimise the use of BMV agricultural land (grade 1, 2 or 3a). This has been minimised where possible within the Scheme.

The Scheme seeks to protect existing woodland from development. **Table 9-15 of Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation** of this ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]** sets out how the Scheme will retain and avoid areas of woodland within the Order limits.

Consideration was also given to the availability of brownfield land within range of the point of connection. The brownfield land that was identified was less than 5ha in size or already allocated for other uses within the adopted or emerging local plan at the time of the search. Therefore it was concluded that there was no available or suitable brownfield land for the Scheme.

The Statement of Need submitted as part of this DCO application **[EN010142/APP/7.1]** sets out the need for the Scheme, and explains how both rooftop solar and large-scale solar alongside other technologies is required to diversify the UK's low-carbon portfolio to meet its legal obligations to achieve net zero by 2050.

The UK Government has made a legal commitment to achieve Net Zero by 2050. There is an urgent need to decarbonise the UK electricity system and the Government is aiming to achieve this by 2035. The Government's 2020 Energy White Paper states that a low-cost, net zero consistent system is likely to be composed of predominantly wind and solar.

The Government has targeted 70GW of UK solar by 2035, up from a baseline of

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>c.15GW today supported by NPS EN-1 (Ref 1) which sets out the critical national priority (CNP) for the provision of low carbon infrastructure, which includes electricity generation from renewable sources such as solar. Rooftop solar alone will not meet the urgent need for solar in the UK. For example, not all households have roof space which is suitable for solar installation.</p> <p>Whilst rooftop solar is likely to contribute to decarbonisation, large-scale solar is still an essential part of the future electricity system, that must be deployed where there is the natural resource, where land is available and suitable, and in proximity to available grid connection locations, such as the area local to the Scheme.</p>
<p>Opinion that the installation of solar panels on brownfield sites should be enforced by planning regulations</p>	<p>The use of planning regulations and planning policy to direct development is outside the control of the Scheme and a matter for National and Local Governments and policy makers. The Applicant has followed relevant current planning policy and guidance in the design and assessment of the Scheme, including that those policies included in NPS EN-1 and EN-3 (Ref 2) which support of the development of largescale solar schemes.</p>
<p>There are better ways to produce energy and in more appropriate places, such as offshore wind, tidal and nuclear energy.</p>	<p>The Statement of Need submitted as part of this DCO application [EN010142/APP/7.1] NPS EN-1 (Ref 1) and EN-3 (Ref 2) confirms that there is an urgent need to deliver low carbon energy infrastructure with this urgent need to be given substantial weight when considering applications for development consent such as this Scheme. Paragraph 4.2.4 of NPS EN-1 states that “government has therefore concluded that there is a critical national priority (CNP) for the provision of nationally significant low carbon infrastructure.” To meet this CNP and urgent need it will require the deployment of different types</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

of technologies to deliver a secure, reliable and affordable energy system. This includes the need for solar, wind, and nuclear power.

The need for new electricity infrastructure to store energy is also recognised and forms part of government's energy plans. The Scheme includes BESS. This would enable the Scheme to store energy created by the solar PV. This would maximise the output from the solar PV and support balancing services. This would subsequently help reduce constraints on the network through exporting the energy created at times of peak demand.

Nuclear power does form part of the energy strategy for the country, but it will take a long time to deploy. The strategy to deliver nuclear power is in its infancy, which will be informed by a Nuclear National Planning Statement is understood will be designated after 2025.

Hydropower is a potential source of new energy, but its capacity is limited by the topography of the UK. Similarly, tidal power capacity is also limited due to its establishment costs currently preventing this technology being commercially viable and due to its total capacity being limited (paragraph 3.3.54 of NPS EN-1 (Ref 1)).

While offshore wind developments are a viable and important part of the UK's renewable energy generation future, they are also not intended to be the only form of energy generation utilised. Paragraph 3.3.20 of NPS EN-1 states that "a secure, reliable, affordable, net zero consistent system in 2050 is likely to be composed predominantly of wind and solar."

At present there is not the capacity to store energy beyond fossil fuel generation, which is required to meet periods of high demand.

To address the storage of energy generated and support the facilitation for the network the Scheme also includes the use of Battery Energy Storage Systems, which are able to store the

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

renewable energy produced by the Scheme to release to the Grid in periods of high demand when required.

Climate Change

10.7.6 Climate change was a commonly raised topic by community consultees, both on a general level and specific to the Scheme.

10.7.7 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:

- a. General concern about the climate change and the challenge the world faces;
- b. Views that climate change is normal and that there is no 'emergency';
- c. Concerns about the carbon emissions associated with the manufacture and installation of the Scheme, particularly the GHG emissions associated with construction and transport;
- d. Recognition that climate change is an issue, but not at the expense of farmland; panels should be built on new build properties and warehouses; and

10.7.8 **Table 10-38** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.9 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.2, Table 1-2**.

Table 10-38: Regard had to comments relating to Climate Change received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

General concern about the climate change and the challenge the world faces.

The Applicant agrees with the concern expressed as to the impacts of climate change. This Scheme, and other renewable energy projects across the UK, comprise a tangible effort to assist the UK government in achieving its stated goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050. The decarbonisation of the electricity grid is a vital part of this commitment, which can only be realised through the development of projects such as the Scheme. This is explained in more detail in the Statement of Need **[EN010142/APP/7.1]**.

Views that climate change is normal and that there is no 'emergency'.

Climate change is widely accepted as a significant and real challenge to global stability and our existing way of life. The development of this Scheme will assist the Government in delivering its legal

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>commitment to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. More details on the severity and the supporting scientific evidence for climate change can be found in the IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report.</p>
<p>Concerns about the carbon emissions associated with the manufacture and installation of the Scheme, particularly the GHG emissions associated with construction and transport.</p>	<p>The GHG impact of the construction of solar PV panels has been considered in the GHG impact assessment within Chapter 7: Climate Change of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. Similar projects have demonstrated a significant improvement in lifetime GHG emissions for solar installations when compared to traditional fossil fuel energy sources. Additionally, diversifying the electricity grid will benefit energy security.</p> <p>The effects of the Scheme on local communities and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are considered within Chapter 14: Socio-Economics and Land Use of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].</p> <p>The Applicant recognises that construction activity can be disruptive and has the potential to impact upon local communities. The Applicant has assessed the likely impacts of construction of the Scheme within the technical chapters of the ES submitted as part of the Applicant's DCO Application. Where significant impacts have been identified, the Applicant is proposing mitigation which is outlined in the Framework CEMP [EN010142/APP/7.8].</p>
<p>Recognition that climate change is an issue, but not at the expense of farmland; panels should be built on new build properties and warehouses.</p>	<p>The Applicant has considered many factors in determining the site selection for the Scheme including environmental and planning considerations and designations. The site selection was initially driven from an established point of connection and consideration has been given to minimise the use of any BMV Land. This has been minimised where possible within the Scheme.</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Consideration was also given to the available brownfield land. The brownfield land that was identified was less than 5ha in size or already allocated within the emerging local policy at the time of the search.

Therefore, it was concluded that there was no available or suitable brownfield land for the Scheme. Further detail on alternatives is provided in **Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

In order to achieve net zero, the use of rooftops is also not sufficient to meet the growing energy demands alongside the decarbonisation of the energy sector. Large scale solar developments are needed such as the Scheme. This is discussed in more detail in the Statement of Need [EN010142/APP/7.1].

The Applicant recognises that there is concern at the temporary halt to agricultural production on some of the land within the Order limits and has assessed impacts relating to agriculture and soils within **Chapter 15: Soils and Agriculture** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

This has identified significant beneficial effects in terms of the recovery of soil health and new diversified enterprise for local farm businesses (by hosting the Scheme).

Cultural Heritage

10.7.10 Individual comments from s47 consultees included:

- a. Comments asking how the Applicant would ensure that heritage assets would not be diminished;
- b. Comments regarding impact on specific heritage assets, including Grade 1 Church of St Chad and Harpswell Hall Parkland and Moat;
- c. Concerns regarding impacts on the cultural heritage of Lincolnshire; and
- d. Comments relating to impacts on local views of the area that are considered to be of cultural importance.

10.7.11 **Table 10-39** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.12 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.3, Table 1-3**.

Table 10-39: Regard had to comments relating to Cultural Heritage received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Comments asking how the Applicant would ensure that heritage assets would not be diminished.

A full assessment of archaeology and heritage assets has been carried out within **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]** accompanied by an appropriate programme of heritage and landscape mitigation measures.

The mitigation includes, but is not limited to the inclusion of Sensitive Archaeology Sites and specification of landscape screening within the Principal Site (refer to the Framework Landscape and Ecology Management Plan **[EN010142/APP/7.17]**), use of trenchless crossings along the Cable Route Corridor, the implementation of management measures set out within the Framework CEMP **[EN010142/APP/7.8]** and Framework DEMP **[EN010142/APP/7.10]**, and an archaeological programme of works in accordance with an Archaeological Mitigation Strategy, to be agreed following submission of the DCO Application.

Comments regarding impact on specific heritage assets, including Grade 1 Church of St Chad and Harpswell Hall Parkland and Moat.

The scheduled monument, Harpswell Hall, has been discussed in consultation with Historic England and assessed accordingly with appropriate mitigation by design. The Scheme has been pushed back from the scheduled monument, reducing the significance of effect to the heritage asset (refer to **Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]**).

Comments regarding impacts on the cultural heritage of Lincolnshire.

The National Policy Statements (NPSs) outline the need for urgent development of low carbon electricity generation, and sets out the need for a rapid increase in low carbon electricity generation capacity

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>in Great Britain to meet decarbonisation obligations, and the critical role that large-scale solar schemes will play in meeting that need.</p> <p>A full assessment of archaeology and heritage asset has been carried out within Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]</p>
<p>Comments relating to impacts on local views of the area that are considered to be of cultural importance.</p>	<p>A full assessment of archaeology and heritage, including relevant views has been carried out within Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1], along with an ecological assessment in Chapter 9 - Ecology and Nature Conservation of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].</p> <p>These assessments have identified potential impacts and have proposed a programme of heritage, ecological and landscape mitigation measures to reduce potential impacts.</p>

Construction and Operation

10.7.13 Comments from s47 comments relating to the construction and operation of the Scheme included:

- a. Question of the estimated construction period for the Scheme;
- b. Consideration of how solar PV panels would be recycled;
- c. Concern around the construction of the solar PV panels and BESS, with manufacturing of panels in China seen as a contradiction to the credentials of the Scheme. Question of whether workforce could be utilised locally;
- d. Queries regarding the working hours during construction;
- e. Question regarding the possibility of sheep grazing within the Scheme;
- f. Concerns regarding the cumulative effects of the Scheme and cross-over during the construction phases;
- g. Concern about the Scheme's solar PV panels and associated equipment needing to be replaced; and
- h. Concern that the Applicant has not considered 'industrialisation' of the Scheme and how living near the Scheme could impact residents' health.

10.7.14 **Table 10-40** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.15 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.4, Table 1-4**.

Table 10-40: Regard had to comments relating to Construction and Operation received from s47 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
<p>Question of the estimated construction period for the Scheme.</p>	<p>The construction phase is anticipated to be a minimum of 24 months and a maximum of 36 months. The peak construction year for the purpose of the EIA is anticipated to be 2026; this assumes commencement of construction in 2025 and that the Scheme is built out rapidly over a 24-month period, with all sites constructed concurrently.</p> <p>A construction period of 24-months is considered to be the likely worst case from an environmental assessment perspective for the majority of the environmental topics because it compresses the potential impacts into a shorter duration and represents the greatest impact on sensitive receptors.</p> <p>A lengthened construction phase would likely result in a lower magnitude of environmental impacts on sensitive receptors.</p> <p>However, where a longer duration of the construction period is deemed to represent a worse effect, this is stated in the relevant technical ES chapters and the assessment presented in those chapters assumes a longer duration (as appropriate).</p>
<p>Consideration of how solar PV panels would be recycled.</p>	<p>The Applicant has considered this in Chapter 17: Other Environmental Topics of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].</p> <p>The company “Recycle Solar”, based nearby in North Lincolnshire, reports that 90% of the glass and 95% of the semiconductor materials in end-of-life solar panels can be extracted for use in new PV panels. Companies like this one are already coming to market to provide recycling services for solar PV. It is likely that there will be even greater opportunities for recycling in the future, not least because the market will have</p>

Matter raised

Concern around the construction of the solar PV panels and BESS, with manufacturing of panels in China seen as a contradiction to the credentials of the Scheme. Question of whether workforce could be utilised locally.

Regard had to comment by Applicant

expanded to meet demand as solar PV installations increase.

The make of solar PV and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) that will be used for the Scheme has not yet been chosen. This approach is common for developments of this kind as solar PV and battery technologies are constantly evolving and new efficiencies are developed regularly. Should the Applicant receive development consent, it would carry out a comprehensive audit to identify the right solar PV and BESS for the Scheme.

When doing so, the Applicant will treat the need to ensure an ethical supply chain with the utmost importance. An assumption for the Environmental Impact Assessment, is that the PV panels will be sourced from China as this will increase the embodied carbon in materials and transport emissions compared to panels being sourced from Europe. Given that China is an established global centre of solar PV manufacturing, the Applicant feels that this is a reasonable assumption.

This is discussed further in **Chapter 7: Climate Change** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. GHG emissions savings are expected to be achieved throughout the lifetime of the Scheme compared to other fossil fuel energy generation types.

Therefore, the GHG emissions during construction, operation and decommissioning of the Scheme can be considered to be 'offset' by the net positive impact of the Scheme on GHG emissions. With regard to the workforce, the Applicant is exploring opportunities to maximise uptake of jobs associated with the Scheme by local people. Further information is provided in the Framework Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan [EN010142/APP/7.18].

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Queries regarding the working hours during construction.

As stated in **Chapter 3: Scheme Description** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1], working hours on-site will run from 7am until 7pm Monday to Friday, and 7am to 1pm on Saturday. Construction staff will travel to the site pre-07:00 and depart the site post-19:00 (for weekdays). No work will take place on Sundays or public holidays.

Question regarding the possibility of sheep grazing within the Scheme.

The Applicant is exploring possibilities of grazing parts of the Scheme Principal Site with sheep and/or chickens during the solar farm's operating life. This forms part of the discussions that we are having with the local landowners. In the event that grazing is used on site during the solar farm's operating life, it would likely not apply to the entire area of the solar farm as not all of the land is appropriate for grazing livestock.

Concerns regarding the cumulative effects of the Scheme and cross-over during the construction phases.

The cumulative scenarios considered within **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects and Interactions** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] are as follows:

- Scenario 1: All four projects' ducts and cables are installed within a construction programme of 24-36 months. It is assumed all the ducts will be installed at once and launch and reception pits and trenches will be backfilled so the area can then be re-instated. The sequence and schedule for each project is not confirmed, therefore, as a worst case, three lots of separate cable-pulling activities are assumed. The access points, haul routes and compounds will remain in place for 24-36 months to enable the cable pulls.
- Scenario 2: The sequential installation of all four projects' ducts and cables over a maximum 5-year period. The access points, haul routes and compounds would remain in place for up to 5 years.

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects and Interactions of the ES

[EN010142/APP/6.1] concludes that some significant cumulative adverse effects could arise, specifically with regards to landscape and visual effects. Significant cumulative beneficial effects are also identified with regards to the provision of employment during the construction period.

The Applicant is committed to working collaboratively with the other solar DCO developers to reduce any adverse cumulative effects from the schemes. Further information is set out within the Joint Report on the Interrelationships with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects **[EN010142/APP/7.6]**.

Concern about the Scheme's solar PV panels and associated equipment needing to be replaced.

The Development Consent Order Application that the Applicant has submitted includes details of how we will manage the Site during construction, operation and decommissioning in order to mitigate environmental impacts. Further information on this can be found in the Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan **[EN010142/APP/7.8]**, Framework OEMP **[EN010142/APP/7.9]** and Framework DEMP **[EN010142/APP/7.10]**.

Chapter 3: Scheme Description of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]** provides a list of the indicative design life of Scheme components. The effect of the replacement of Scheme components would be no worse than during the construction phase, in particular the consideration of vehicle movements. However, mitigation measures, if necessary, would be agreed with the Host authorities based on the schedule of proposed maintenance and replacement.

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Concern that the Applicant has not considered 'industrialisation' of the Scheme and how living near the Scheme could impact residents' health.

The Human Health effects of the Scheme are considered within **Chapter 11: Human Health** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. This has considered the potential positive and negative outcomes of the Scheme in respect of several determinants of well-being.

These includes air quality, noise and vibration, landscape and visual amenity, climate change, community connectivity, prioritisation of walking and cycling, road and route safety, employment and income. The assessment is based on best practice guidance including from Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU) / NHS England and the Government's Good Practice Guide for Environmental Impact Assessment and are considered to reflect best practice. No significant effects to human health receptors and resources are predicted in the ES.

Consultation

10.7.16 Key themes raised by community consultees included:

- a. Consultation exercise being 'disingenuous', 'biased', 'inadequate', 'not in good faith', 'tick box exercise', 'one-sided', 'lacking in information';
- b. The Feedback questionnaire being designed in a 'biased' way, asking 'slanted' questions;
- c. Consultation materials appearing 'vague', 'lacking depth' and 'failing to answer' the valid concerns of local residents;
- d. The Scheme's representatives at events appearing 'insincere' and providing 'inadequate answers';
- e. Consultation event timings, working hours and not enough weekend events; and
- f. Criticism of the DCO and NSIP process, with the decision not being made locally.

10.7.17 There was a range of feedback from community consultees on the consultation process, with ten respondents critiquing the consultation, nine respondents critiquing the consultation materials, accusing them of lacking detail/clarity, and a further nine respondents providing comments about the project team at the consultation events.

10.7.18 A further three respondents provided comments about the timings and locations of the consultation events, and two respondents provided comments about the overall DCO/NSIP process.

10.7.19 **Table 10-41** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.20 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.5, Table 1-5**.

Table 10-41: Regard had to comments relating to Consultation received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Consultation exercise being 'disingenuous', 'biased', 'inadequate', 'not in good faith', 'tick box exercise', 'one-sided', 'lacking in information'.

The Applicant has complied with the PA 2008 in carrying out the Statutory Consultation, ensuring that consultees had an opportunity to comment on the proposals. The Applicant has carefully considered those comments during the Scheme's development before the application for development consent in accordance with the obligations outlined under section 49 of the PA 2008.

Views expressed by consultees have made a difference to the Scheme, with a summary of all comments received and changes presented in this appendix and the wider Consultation Report.

The Applicant believes that the consultation materials were of a good quality and of suitable detail to enable consultees to provide feedback on the Scheme proposals at multiple points in the development of the Scheme design. The Applicant has included copies of these materials in the appendices to the Consultation Report (see **Appendix C-13** for the series of materials).

The consultation process will be subject to scrutiny by an independent inspector (or panel of inspectors) from the Planning Inspectorate, which will decide whether the Tillbridge Solar application meets the criteria to be accepted for Examination. As part of this, they will look at whether the Applicant has complied with the requirements for pre-application consultation.

The Host authorities will also make an Adequacy of Consultation response as part of this process which will appraise

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

The Feedback questionnaire being designed in a 'biased' way, asking 'slanted' questions.

whether or not the Applicant has complied with the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC).

The Applicant's consultation will therefore be subject to significant independent scrutiny to ensure that it meets the standard required by the PA 2008. As set out in this report, the Applicant considers that it has met this standard.

The feedback questionnaire was designed to encourage consultees to comment on different aspects of the proposals and care was taken to follow best practice and avoid phrasing questions in a leading way.

The questions were written in deliberately neutral terms and, in the case of multiple-choice questions, there were always an equal number of positive and negative options to choose from.

A copy of the questionnaire is included in **Appendix C-13.3** of this Consultation Report. It is important to note that the feedback questionnaire was not the only way in which the Applicant invited feedback during the Statutory Consultation. Consultees were also encouraged to submit freeform text responses to the project communication channels (email, in-person and freepost). Many such responses were received and the Applicant has had regard to them in this appendix.

Consultation materials appearing 'vague', 'lacking depth' and 'failing to answer' the valid concerns of local residents.

The statutory consultation materials provided a detailed and fair summary of the proposals. The consultation materials were produced in a way that allowed a wide range of consultees to take an informed view of the proposals.

A selection of large-scale maps and plans were available at events to help people better understand the proposed Scheme, and maps and plans were printed in A2 format. All of the materials on display were available to view and

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

download from the Scheme website.

The Consultation booklet was the main document describing the Scheme and its potential impacts. It included maps, photos, timelines, infographics, illustrations and tables intended to make the complex proposals more easily understood.

The Applicant has included copies of these materials in the appendices to the Consultation Report (see **Appendix C-13**).

Other documents, such as the PEI Report which described the potential traffic, environmental or construction impacts of the Scheme, were also designed to be clear and readable, but by necessity contained more technical language as they described complex topics at an appropriate level of detail. The Applicant produced a non-technical summary of the PEI Report to make it easier to explain the environmental and traffic impacts.

The consultation website included links to both technical and non-technical documents, and these were available to view at the in-person events and local information points.

During the consultation period (and throughout the full pre-application stage), the Applicant responded to general queries and concerns which would help inform consultee feedback.

The Scheme's representatives at events appearing 'insincere' and providing 'inadequate answers'.

The Applicant ensured that consultation events had an appropriate number of well-trained staff to ensure that attendees could engage productively with staff in a safe environment and respond to the consultation at the event if they wanted.

Events included staff that had a detailed level of knowledge about the Scheme, with representatives from disciplines

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	including consultation, environment, design, traffic and land and property. All staff received training before the events to ensure they had a strong knowledge of the proposals.
Consultation event timings, working hours and not enough weekend events.	<p>The hours chosen for the Statutory Consultation events were decided on after consulting with the relevant local authorities via the Draft SoCC in accordance with the requirements of the PA 2008.</p> <p>Events were held on different days of the week with varied hours to accommodate different availability, including on weekdays and at weekends, including hours running into the evening. This approach was taken to ensure events are made available to a range of stakeholders, such as working families.</p>
Criticism of the DCO and NSIP process, with the decision not being made locally.	<p>This Scheme is recognised as being of national importance, having been designated a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project.</p> <p>As outlined in the SoCC, the Statutory Consultation involved targeted local engagement. The Applicant considered all feedback and paid attention to responses commenting on local impacts and benefits.</p>

Ecology and Nature Conservation

10.7.21 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:

- a. Comments regarding mitigation measures
- b. Comments about the negative impact on wildlife;
- c. Concerns regarding anticipated impacts on skylarks and other ground nesting birds;
- d. Comments seeking confirmation on the increase in biodiversity, specifically BNG;
- e. Concerns regarding the impact of the loss of farmland on local biodiversity; and
- f. Comments relating to the installation of boxes for bird and owls and contact with respective nature organisations.

- 10.7.22 The Applicant also received comments from Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (LWT), who noted concerns about three roadside LWS within the Cable Route Corridor. The Applicant noted this and has considered LWS in **Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].
- 10.7.23 LWT also noted concerns regarding impacts on the local skylark population and noted that “the magnitude of this impact is provisionally assessed to be high”. **Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] addresses the loss of arable farmland and embedded mitigation for skylark, concluding a minor adverse to negligible effect which is not significant to the skylark population. Following the establishment of proposed landscaping, long-term beneficial effects will be provided by the Scheme. Proposed landscaping measures are secured through the Framework LEMP [EN010142/APP/7.17].
- 10.7.24 LWT also noted that they expect the Scheme to maximise the biodiversity gains achieve on site. A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment [EN010142/APP/7.14] has been submitted as part of the DCO Application. DEFRA’s Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been used to quantify gains and demonstrate developmental benefits. The approach to delivering BNG at the Site has been guided by the mitigation hierarchy that seeks to avoid impacts in the first instance and then minimise and offset residual impacts and the BNG Best Practice Principles.
- 10.7.25 LWT also strongly encouraged embedded mitigation measures within the scheme, specifically in relation to ground nesting birds. Where areas of undeveloped land are included within the Scheme for ground nesting birds, measures such as minimising access by ground predators have been incorporated.
- 10.7.26 A cumulative effects assessment with other schemes is presented within **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects and Interactions** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] and concluded no likely significant effects on wildlife or habitats.
- 10.7.27 **Table 10-42** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.
- 10.7.28 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.6, Table 1-6** (community consultees) and **Table 1-7** (wider consultees).

Table 10-42: Regard had to comments relating to Ecology and Nature Conservation received from s47 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
Comments regarding mitigation measures.	All landscape elements (including proposed semi-improved grassland under the panels and counted in the 'developable area') will be subject to management regimes outlined in the adopted Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. This plan will be agreed with Lincolnshire County Council and is

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>intended to enhance and increase biodiversity value across the Site.</p> <p>This will include management of the existing hedgerows (including additional planting where appropriate) and management for wildlife.</p> <p>The assessment in in Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] has found that the mitigation proposed by the Applicant stands to result in significant beneficial effects to broad-leaved woodland, running water, hedgerows and breeding birds, particularly farmland birds associated with hedgerows and field margins.</p>
<p>Comments about the negative impact on wildlife.</p>	<p>The Applicant has carried out a full assessment of the impacts that the Scheme will have on ecological receptors. The results of this assessment are set out in Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].</p> <p>The assessment found that with the application of the proposed mitigation measures, no significant adverse effects have been identified during construction, operation or decommissioning of the Scheme. In fact, the assessment has found that the mitigation proposed by the Applicant stands to result in significant beneficial effects to broad-leaved woodland, running water, hedgerows and breeding birds, particularly farmland birds associated with hedgerows and field margins.</p>
<p>Comments regarding anticipated impacts on skylarks and other ground nesting birds.</p>	<p>Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] addresses the loss of arable farmland and embedded mitigation for skylark, concluding a minor adverse to negligible effect which is not significant to the skylark population. Following the establishment of proposed landscaping, long-term beneficial effects will be provided by the Scheme. Proposed landscaping</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	measures are secured through the Framework LEMP [EN010142/APP/7.17] .
Comments seeking confirmation on the increase in biodiversity, specifically BNG.	<p>A BNG assessment has been submitted as part of the DCO Application (refer to the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [EN010142/APP/7.14]). Habitat data, required to calculate the BNG delivered by the Scheme has been collected during the original Phase 1 Habitat surveys and updated, as necessary, through subsequent surveys (such as arable flora and hedgerow surveys). This has ensured a comprehensive baseline of data for the BNG assessment has been collected.</p> <p>DEFRA's Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been used to quantify gains and demonstrate developmental benefits.</p> <p>The approach to delivering BNG through the Scheme has been guided by the mitigation hierarchy that seeks to avoid impacts in the first instance and then minimise and offset residual impacts and the BNG Best Practice Principles. The Applicant is committed to achieving a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain in habitat units.</p> <p>The results of the assessment indicate that the current illustrative design for the Scheme is predicted to result in a net gain of 64.55% for area-based habitat units, 17.33% for hedgerow units, and 22.94% for watercourse units.</p> <p>Achievement of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is not yet a statutory requirement for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) under the Environment Act 2021.</p> <p>The Scheme will meet a minimum 10% BNG, consistent with the terms of the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [EN010142/APP/7.14] and aligned with the proposals in the Framework LEMP [EN010142/APP/7.17].</p>
Concerns regarding loss of farmland on local biodiversity.	A cumulative effects assessment with other schemes is presented within Chapter 18 :

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Cumulative Effects and Interactions of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

The Scheme and other cumulative solar projects (Gate Burton, Cottam and West Burton) have all been designed to avoid, mitigate and compensate for ecological effects, as well as deliver ecological enhancements across the sites.

The four schemes are all predicted to deliver a large biodiversity net gain as individual projects, which will be combined to deliver even greater biodiversity net gain across the area.

Biodiversity Net Gain associated with the Scheme is set out within the Biodiversity Net Gain Report submitted with the DCO Application [EN010142/APP/7.14].

Comments relating to the installation of erection of boxes for bird and owls any contact with respective nature organisations.

Boxes for wildlife will be installed, where appropriate. The details for this are provided in the Framework LEMP [EN010142/APP/7.17].

The Scheme will meet a minimum 10% BNG, consistent with the terms of the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [EN010142/APP/7.14] and aligned with the proposals in the Framework LEMP [EN010142/APP/7.17].

The Biodiversity Net Gain Report [EN010142/APP/7.14] outlines the degree to which the Applicant expects to achieve a biodiversity net gain through the enhancements that it is proposing.

Cumulative effects

10.7.29 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:

- a. Changing the landscape and local environment, industrialising the local area, adverse effects on the local communities and lack of benefits;
- b. Comments relating to the cumulative visual impact assessment;
- c. Recognition that the schemes would take valuable, productive farmland out of production; and
- d. Concern that operational life of 40-60 years does not evidence any collaboration.

10.7.30 Throughout feedback from community consultees, 22 responses were related to cumulative effects, specifically noting the joint impacts of multiple schemes in the local area. Five responses specifically noted the changing landscape of the local environment, noting the adverse impacts of local communities and 'industrialisation' of the landscape.

10.7.31 Three responses noted the figure of '10,000' acres of solar across West Lindsey, with a number of comments also noting the importance of views across the Trent Valley that would be impacted by multiple solar schemes in the region.

10.7.32 **Table 10.43** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.33 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.7, Table 1-8**.

Table 10-43: Regard had to comments relating to Cumulative effects received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Changing the landscape and local environment, industrialising the local area, adverse effects on the local communities and lack of benefits.

Effects on landscape and visual amenity are set out in detail in **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. Further assessment of cumulative landscape and visual amenity effects is included in **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

The assessment of cumulative visual effects is supported by visualisations for selected viewpoints, including key locations on Lincoln Cliff; as well as consideration of sequential views when travelling through the wider area. It is acknowledged that significant landscape and visual effects (including cumulative) will arise; such significant effects require weighing in the planning balance against benefits of the Scheme.

Embedded mitigation has been provided where practicable and appropriate in the design of the Scheme to minimise these effects.

An assessment of potential socio-economic effects of the Scheme is provided in **Chapter 14: Socio-economics and Land Use** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] and identifies minor beneficial effects from employment generated and net additional GVA generated by construction activity from the Scheme, as well as beneficial effects

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>for the local community from additional permissive pathways introduced as a result of the scheme during operation.</p>
<p>Comments relating to the cumulative visual impact assessment.</p>	<p>Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] addresses the potential for effect interactions and cumulative effects to occur as a result of the Scheme.</p> <p>This includes assessment of cumulative effects on ecological features and follows the relevant guidance as set out by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), including the identification of Important Ecological Features.</p> <p>Full details of the method for determining these is described in Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].</p> <p>The assessment did not identify significant cumulative effects for ecology and nature conservation during construction, operation or decommissioning.</p>
<p>Recognition that the schemes would take valuable, productive farmland out of production.</p>	<p>The Applicant recognises that the project will involve a pause in agricultural production during construction, operations and decommissioning but this needs to be balanced against the need for renewable energy generation.</p> <p>There is an urgent need to decarbonise the UK electricity system and the UK Government is aiming to achieve this by 2035. Large scale solar is essential to achieving this, it must be deployed where there is the natural resource (i.e. appropriate levels of solar radiation), where land is available and suitable, and in proximity to available grid connection locations, such as the area local to the Proposed Development.</p> <p>Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects and Interactions of the ES [EN010142/APP/6/1] concludes that cumulative land-take of the solar DCOs</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>is approximately 2.2% of all agricultural land in Lincolnshire.</p> <p>Hence, the effect on agricultural food production is not considered to be significant. Furthermore, the solar development does not permanently alter or remove the Scheme land from agricultural production and rather will allow for the soil resource to recover from agricultural uses to date such that soil quality will remain at a high quality for future agricultural use.</p>
<p>Concern that operational life of 40-60 years does not evidence any collaboration.</p>	<p>Collaboration has been focused on where there is interaction between the sites as set out within the Joint Report on the Interrelationships with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects submitted with the DCO application [EN010142/APP/7.6].</p> <p>The operational life of the Scheme is a commercial decision taken independently by each developer.</p>

Decommissioning

- 10.7.34 One response was received in relation to decommissioning/following the operational life of the Scheme, nothing concern around the state of the local area after 60 years.
- 10.7.35 The Applicant notes that the Scheme will be well-managed throughout its construction, operating life and decommissioning. The Applicant notes that the Scheme will be well-managed throughout its construction, operating life and decommissioning.
- 10.7.36 The measures outlined in our Framework CEMP [EN010142/APP/7.8], Framework OEMP [EN010142/APP/7.9] and Framework DEMP [EN010142/APP/7.10] should give confidence that the Site will be well-managed and that any impacts on the surrounding area will be mitigated. These plans will be secured by our DCO.
- 10.7.37 Further information can be found in the Draft DCO [EN010142/APP/3.1]. In our experience, solar farms do not disturb those living around them. The design that we are proposing for the Scheme incorporates offsets from neighbouring properties and visual screening for those using local public rights of way. We would therefore expect that the communities in the area will continue to live and work in the area in much the same way as they do today.
- 10.7.38 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.8, Table 1-9.**

EIA methodology

10.7.39 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:

- a. The relevant EIA information ‘not showing the true environmental impact’;
- b. Information being poorly presented and proof-read, with conclusions reached by people ‘behind a desk’ rather than who lived or stayed in the area; and
- c. Sense that important issues (such as cumulative impacts) had not yet been addressed in the PEI Report.

10.7.40 The Applicant noted that information presented at this stage was indicative, with more detailed assessments of environmental effects made within the Environmental Statement [EN010142/APP/6.1]. This has incorporated both further physical surveys and the further context provided by local communities through the statutory consultation process.

10.7.41 In relation to the quality and accuracy of environmental information, the Applicant ensured that documents shared during the statutory consultation had been thoroughly reviewed by the project team and proofread.

10.7.42 Furthermore, in relation to the sense that important issues had not yet been addressed, particularly in relation to joint impacts, **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] addresses the potential for effect interactions and cumulative effects to occur as a result of the Scheme. A Joint Report on the Interrelationships with other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects [EN010142/APP/7.6] has also been included within the DCO application which considers the four large solar schemes within the local area.

10.7.43 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.9, Table 1-10**.

Water Environment

10.7.44 In relation to Water Environment, the Applicant received one comment in relation to how the Scheme may affect demand for water in the area, given existing stress on water sources.

10.7.45 The Scheme has committed to importing all water required for the construction period. The only connection to mains water sought for the operational period is to service the Solar Centre where the small number of operational staff (10-12) will be located. Greater quantities of water required for either maintenance works like panel cleaning, or to supplement firewater storage for BESS will be imported onto the site. On the basis of these measures, the effect within **Chapter 10: Water Environment** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] is assessed as not significant.

10.7.46 Comments from Anglian Water on this approach confirm that the quantum of demand for the Scheme is small and would likely constitute a ‘domestic’ demand’ of which they have no concerns with.

10.7.47 The Applicant also received a response in relation to the potential danger of flooding in the area. A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared within **Appendix 10-3** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.2]. The FRA assesses flood

risk from all sources and ensures that the Scheme does not increase flood risk, to the Scheme or elsewhere, in line with National and Local planning requirements.

10.7.48 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.10, Table 1-11**.

General comments

10.7.49 The Applicant also received a range of general comments in relation to the Scheme, which did not fall within specific topic areas.

10.7.50 Key themes from community consultees included:

- a. General opposition to the Scheme;
- b. General issues with renewable energy, including the alleged inefficiency and intermittency of solar as opposed to other technologies;
- c. Concerns regarding how 'independent' the project team are, who were unable to address concerns;
- d. Support for the Scheme, including in relation to encouraging nature to thrive alongside the Scheme; and
- e. General opposition and preference for solar to be on rooftops.

10.7.51 Within the consultation responses, general opposition/concern with the scheme was referenced 38 times, with 16 responses expressing concerns about the general effectiveness of solar as opposed to other technologies, such as wind.

10.7.52 Four responses provided supportive comments regarding the Scheme, including encouraging nature to thrive alongside the Scheme.

10.7.53 General comments were also provided by non-prescribed/community groups, including Active Travel England and Sir Edward Leigh MP.

10.7.54 Active Travel England clarified that they are not a statutory consultee for NSIPs under the PA 2008 and that they had no comments to make.

10.7.55 Sir Edward Leigh MP provided a response on behalf of his constituents and strongly objected to the Scheme. This point is addressed in the table below.

10.7.56 **Table 10-44** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.57 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.11, Table 1-12** (community consultees) and **Table 1-13** (wider consultees).

Table 10-44: Regard had to general comments received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

General opposition to the Scheme.

The Applicant recognises that some people are opposed to the Scheme. The Applicant has reviewed all of the responses that have received to our consultations and had regard to them as evidenced by this document and the

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>wider Consultation Report [EN010142/APP/5.1].</p> <p>Where appropriate, the Applicant has made changes to the design which includes siting away from neighbouring properties and employing mitigation to screen views.</p>
<p>General issues with renewable energy, including the alleged inefficiency and intermittency of solar as opposed to other technologies.</p>	<p>Government has made a legal commitment to achieve Net Zero by 2050. There is an urgent need to decarbonise the UK electricity system and Government is aiming to achieve this by 2035.</p> <p>Government's 2020 Energy White Paper states that a low-cost, net zero consistent system is likely to be composed predominantly of wind and solar. Government has targeted 70GW of UK solar by 2035, up from a base of c.15GW today.</p> <p>Large scale solar, alongside other renewables is an essential part of the future electricity system, it must be deployed where there is the natural resource, where land is available and suitable, and in proximity to available grid connection locations, such as the area local to the Scheme.</p> <p>Solar is more efficient in terms of energy generated per hectare per year than biofuels and produces similar amounts of energy per ha per year as onshore wind. This Scheme will play an important role in contributing to the achievement of Government's targets.</p>
<p>Concerns regarding how 'independent' the project team are, who were unable to address concerns.</p>	<p>The Applicant disagrees with these comments. The Scheme is being brought forward by an experienced team of professionals. In developing the proposals, the Applicant has sought the advice of companies and individuals that are well-respected in the infrastructure profession.</p> <p>These include engineering consultants, planning consultants, legal advisors,</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

stakeholder engagement professionals and environmental professionals. It is not always possible to answer questions during the pre-application phase as certain information about the Scheme will only be available at the detailed design phase should we receive development consent.

This approach is common in the development of infrastructure projects and does not constitute an attempt to avoid questions. The process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects guarantees a high-degree of scrutiny of an applicant's proposals.

Should our Development Consent Order Application be accepted by the Planning Inspectorate, anyone who is interested in the proposals will be able to register to take part in the examination.

The Scheme is being brought forward by the Applicant at its own risk and without public funding. Again, this is not unusual and is common to many energy projects throughout the UK.

The Applicant has confidence in the benefits that the Scheme will bring in terms of new renewable energy generation and as a source of UK energy security. Further information on why projects like the Scheme are required in the UK is provided in the Statement of Need **[EN010142/APP/7.1]**.

General opposition and preference for solar to be on rooftops.

Whilst Rooftop solar installation goes someway in order to meet domestic individual dwelling energy requirements, this is not sufficient in order to achieve decarbonisation for the whole energy sector and for 100% energy generation to be renewable. Therefore large scale solar schemes alongside other renewable energy types are required as recognised across national policy on energy security and the NPS.

Government has made a legal commitment to achieve Net Zero by

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

2050. There is an urgent need to decarbonise the UK electricity system and Government is aiming to achieve this by 2035.

Government's 2020 Energy White Paper states that a low-cost, net zero consistent system is likely to be composed predominantly of wind and solar. Government has targeted 70GW of UK solar by 2035, up from a base of c.15GW today.

Further deployment of rooftop solar will help to decarbonise the electricity sector, however rooftop solar alone will not meet the urgent need for solar in the UK.

Large scale solar is therefore an essential part of the future electricity system, it must be deployed where there is the natural resource, where land is available and suitable, and in proximity to available grid connection locations, such as the area local to the Scheme.

Glint and Glare

10.7.58 The Applicant received one comment from community consultees specifically in relation to Glint and Glare, citing concerns in relation to the solar PV panels alongside the A631. The Glint and Glare assessment undertaken concluded there would be no adverse effects for nearby receptors close to the Scheme. This report is provided in **Appendix 17-2** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.2].

10.7.59 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.12, Table 1-14**.

Human Health

10.7.60 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:

- a. Concern about the long term issues arising from the Scheme, specifically the deterioration of mental health, along with stress and worry;
- b. High value placed on the local area and the benefits this provides for local people and their well-being, such as looking out onto open fields;
- c. Danger to local communities, notably pollution and heavy traffic;
- d. Query into research on electromagnetic sensitivity;
- e. Impact on quality of life, specifically in relation to impacts on residents with protected characteristics (e.g. disabilities); and

- f. Site selection of solar PV panels and BESS in close proximity to local properties.

10.7.61 **Table 10-45** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.62 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.13, Table 1-15**.

Table 10-45: Regard had to comments relating to Human Health received from s47 consultees

Matter raised	Regard had to comment by Applicant
Concern about the long term issues arising from the Scheme, specifically the deterioration of mental health, along with stress and worry.	Consideration of mental health has been made as part of Chapter 11: Human Health of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. No significant effects are envisaged.
High value placed on the local area and the benefits this provides for local people and their well-being, such as looking out onto open fields, commuting, walking and cycling.	Consideration of mental health has been made as part of Chapter 11: Human Health of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. Potential minor adverse (not significant) effects on mental health and wellbeing from landscape and visual and noise and vibration impacts were identified during construction, decommissioning and operation of the Scheme. Effects would be minimised and mitigated through implementation of the framework environmental management plans, including the Framework CEMP [EN010142/APP/7.8], Framework OEMP [EN010142/APP/7.9], Framework DEMP [EN010142/APP/7.10].
Danger to local communities, notably pollution and heavy traffic.	Chapter 6: Air Quality, Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration and Chapter 16: Transport and Access of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] include proposed mitigation measures intended to reduce such effects to local communities. These all conclude that there are no likely significant effects to local communities, air quality, pollution, noise and traffic.
Query into research on electromagnetic sensitivity.	Electromagnetic fields are assessed as part of Chapter 17: Other Environmental Topics of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. No significant effects are anticipated due to the distance from receptors and the

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>low level of exposure. The presence of the public either directly above or adjacent to underground cables associated with the Scheme would be transient, with the individuals using the PRow exposed to electro-magnetic fields from the cables for only very short periods of time.</p> <p>It is considered that the level of exposure to users of PRow would be similar to that associated with general household appliances (and noticeably less than associated with the exposure when using a vacuum cleaner).</p>
<p>Impact on quality of life, specifically in relation to impacts on residents with protected characteristics (e.g. disabilities)</p>	<p>The differential impacts of the construction and operation of the solar farm on a range of protected characteristics, including disability, has been assessed through the Equality Impact Assessment [EN010142/APP/7.15] and inform the mitigation measures embedded in the Scheme.</p> <p>This includes those which are developed in relation to noise and vibration impacts, to ensure ongoing levels of amenity.</p>
<p>Site selection of solar PV panels and BESS in close proximity to local properties.</p>	<p>The selection of the location for BESS has been based on several factors including wider environmental conditions and other potential sources of fire hazard in the surrounding area. The distance of BESS to residential areas and commercial properties has also be carefully considered to minimise operational or incident impacts on receptors, where spacing allows BESS areas will not be located within 500 metres of receptors.</p> <p>A Framework BSMP has been prepared with input from the Fire & Rescue Service (FRS) alongside this DCO application [EN010142/APP/7.13] which includes mitigation and management measures for fire safety risks posed by the BESS in the Scheme.</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

On installation, the Applicant will work closely with the FRS to provide all relevant information on BESS and site design features to inform all necessary hazard and risk analysis studies and assist in the development of comprehensive Risk Management (RM) and Emergency Response Plans (ERP). This will include embedded design features to manage emergency scenarios such as fires should they arise, including dedicated fire water storage tanks.

Major accidents

- 10.7.63 The Applicant received two comments in relation to major accidents, particularly in relation to mitigation around danger that could arise from fires in remote areas.
- 10.7.64 In relation to this, Consultation with Lincolnshire FRS (LFR) took place during the statutory consultation and will continue as relevant, and the Detailed Battery Safety Management Plan will be submitted to and approved in consultation with LFR.
- 10.7.65 The Framework BSMP **[EN010142/APP/7.13]** details risk assessment tools that will be utilised together with detailed consequence modelling to provide a comprehensive site operations and emergency response safety audit at the detailed design stage. Indicative Site designs will be shared with LFR .
- 10.7.66 Consultation will continue with the local FRS throughout the post-consent and detailed design stage, to ensure all key stakeholders are satisfied that mitigation and safety requirements are agreed prior to construction. Information will be supplied as early as possible in the detailed design stage to allow an initial appraisal of the BESS to be made. This information will be provided to the FRS, with appropriate evidence provided to support any claims made on performance, and with appropriate standards cited for installation.
- 10.7.67 One comment also questioned water sources on site. Firefighting water will be provided on-site in line with National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) guidelines. Detail of the firefighting water measures to be incorporated within the Scheme design are set out in **Table 2-1** of the FBSMP **[EN010142/APP/7.13]**. NFCC guidance has been applied in the creation of the FBSMP. At the detailed design stage, site water supply for internal Fire Suppression Systems and external boundary cooling will be verified by an independent Fire Protection Engineer and agreed with the local FRS, as per NFCC 2023 guidelines. These measures are also included in the FBSMP.
- 10.7.68 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.14, Table 1-16**.

Scheme Description

10.7.69 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:

- a. Concern that energy produced by the Scheme will not improve broader Lincolnshire/UK energy supply or result in a better cost for consumers;
- b. Requests to reconsider siting of infrastructure, particularly the siting of the water tank and grassland habitat, in relation to specific properties along Kexby Road;
- c. Requests for screening and mitigation to be reconsidered to the south of Kexby Road;
- d. Lack of information on specific dimensions of the Scheme, such as panel heights, battery storage and generation capabilities;
- e. Questions as to the function of the BESS across seasons;
- f. Concerns about the amenity impacts of secured boundaries and CCTV; and
- g. Questions regarding the operational lifespan of the Scheme of 60 years, with solar PV panels having a lifespan of 30-40 years.

10.7.70 The Applicant also received comments from Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, who felt it was worth highlighting the point made in the PEI Report that solar PV panels will be mounted to axes that track the sun throughout the day, noting that it will improve overall energy capture and efficiency. The Applicant noted this comment and has included this reference in the final DCO application documents.

10.7.71 **Table 10-46** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.72 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.15, Table 1-17** (community consultees) and **Table 1-18** (wider consultees).

Table 10-46: Regard had to comments relating to Scheme Description received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Concern that energy produced by the Scheme will not improve broader Lincolnshire/UK energy supply or result in a better cost for consumers

The purpose of the Scheme is to provide a new source of renewable energy generation to the national electricity transmission system. The need for a project like the Scheme is established through National Policy Statements (NPSs). The relevant NPSs for Tillbridge Solar are EN-1 (Ref 1) and EN-3 (Ref 2), both of which promote renewable energy projects and solar energy projects specifically.

The methods for the distribution of the energy through the national electricity transmission system is outside the scope of this Scheme and is the domain of

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>National Grid Electricity System Operator (ESO).</p> <p>As set out in the Statement of Need [EN/010142/APP/7.1], projects like the Scheme provide a domestic source of energy generation that help to reduce the UK's exposure to volatile energy prices. The Government's Net Zero Strategy (2021) states that new renewable energy projects, collectively, have the potential to exert downward pressure on wholesale electricity prices.</p> <p>The energy storage technology (BESS) proposed as part of the Scheme is tested and proven in the UK at scale.</p> <p>The Applicant does not feel it appropriate to comment on the ownership of energy generating stations across the country as a whole but can say that the Scheme is being brought forward by Tillbridge Solar Ltd which is a joint venture between Recurrent Energy (a Canadian Solar company) and Tribus Clean Energy. Each of the partners has a portfolio of energy projects in the UK.</p>
<p>Requests to reconsider siting of infrastructure, particularly the siting of the water tank and grassland habitat, in relation to specific properties along Kexby Road.</p>	<p>The locations of the water tanks on the Indicative Masterplan submitted with the PEI Report were indicative and it is accepted that this was not suitable, given proximity to the respondent's property location and the open location on Kexby Road. The water tanks will be relocated through design development.</p>
<p>Requests for screening and mitigation to be reconsidered to the south of Kexby Road.</p>	<p>The area to the south of Kexby Road is identified for ecological mitigation, and has been subject to further design development since the PEI Report submission. The updated Site Layout Plan is provided in Figure 3-1 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].</p>
<p>Lack of information on specific dimensions of the Scheme, such as panel heights, battery storage, generation capabilities, and potential flood risks.</p>	<p>Chapter 3: Scheme Description of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] provides a description of the Scheme and its components. A Flood Risk Assessment is</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	provided within Appendix 10-3 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.2] .
Questions as to the function of the BESS across seasons	<p>The proposed design does not envisage BESS will be charged by Solar PV operating only in summer, and then be discharged to the grid in winter. Rather, in winter, the PV panels remain active but are less productive due to shorter daylight hours.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the BESS can still charge (even if not at the same levels as in summer) from excess energy generated in these productive periods and discharge to the grid during peak periods. Even with reduced grid demand in peak sunlight hours, winter BESS charging remains feasible from the PV.</p>
Concerns about the amenity impacts of secured boundaries and CCTV	<p>Security fencing would take the form of a deer fence up to 2.5m in height. It is important to note that this will be within the Site with landscape planting visual effects where possible. CCTV would be inward facing only and mounted up to a height of 3m.</p> <p>Neither of these features have been identified as generating adverse effects in the landscape and visual assessment presented Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].</p>
Questions regarding the operational lifespan of the Scheme of 60 years, with solar PV panels having a lifespan of 30-40 years.	<p>The lifespan of 60 years has been identified as being a suitable period of time during which the Scheme can provide energy to the national electricity grid. The Applicant is not expecting the wholesale replacement of parts during the Scheme's operating life.</p> <p>During the operational phase, as components approach its design life there will be an evaluation to determine if the components require maintenance and/or replacing. Any replacement would be programmed in stages to maintain the electrical export to the National Grid. A requirement of the Framework OEMP</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

[EN010142/APP/7.9] sets out that an annual schedule of proposed maintenance and replacement will be presented to the Host authorities.

Landscape and Visual Amenity

10.7.73 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:

- a. Comments regarding the impact of the Scheme on the local landscape;
- b. Comments regarding the lack of visualisations being available;
- c. Concerns around the loss of trees/woodland;
- d. Concern about the ability to mitigate visual impacts;
- e. Queries about the impact of the Scheme on AGLV;
- f. Comments regarding the relevance of the Hemswell and Harpswell Neighbourhood Plan;
- g. Comments regarding the importance of the landscape of the Lincolnshire Edge, offering considerable visual amenity;
- h. Comments relating to the importance of an ancient trackway between Glentworth and Harpswell, which local communities have tried to get reinstated;
- i. Comments regarding visual impacts on the site of a scheduled monument, as identified in the Hemswell and Harpswell Neighbourhood Plan;
- j. Concern about unbroken views from Common Lane;
- k. Suggestions to have areas around solar PV panels as wildflower meadows;
- l. Concern that any conservation areas would be isolated and not have easy access;
- m. Concern regarding mitigation along Middle Road, which would not reduce environmental impact;
- n. Concern around the use of the farm track from Middle Street which will have significant negative visual impact;
- o. Concern regarding screening at the substation sites; and
- p. Critique of how the section on Visual Amenity 'de-humanises' the effects.

10.7.74 Throughout the feedback, community consultees were concerned about the Scheme's negative impact on the landscape, citing a 'sea of solar panels' and 'lost views', of which 26 comments of this nature were received.

10.7.75 Four comments were received in relation to the lack of photomontages/visualisations and three comments were received in relation

to the loss of trees/woodland. 15 comments were also received about the lack of mitigation.

10.7.76 Community consultees cited a number of important views in the local area, including the designated ‘Lincoln Cliff’, B1398 Middle Street, Common Lane, Glentworth Hall, and from the villages of Glentworth, Harpswell, Hemswell. The Hemswell and Harpswell Neighbourhood Plan was also referenced.

10.7.77 The Applicant also received responses from non-prescribed/community groups, including the National Trust and Sir Edward Leigh MP.

10.7.78 National Trust provided comments in relation to Gainsborough Old Hall, which is approximately 6km to the west of the Scheme. They requested to extend the extent of the ZTV assessments outside of the 5km buffer to identify and assess any sensitive receptors for visual impact.

10.7.79 Consultation has taken place with stakeholders in respect of the heritage Study Areas, with the ZTV applied to the wider area for assessing high designation heritage assets where these have the potential to be impacted by the Scheme. A site visit was made to Gainsborough Old Hall from the outside only, in light of this comment by the National Trust. There is no intervisibility with this asset and the Scheme. The asset is located in an urban environment surrounded by residential buildings and light industrial properties. There is no known historical connectivity to the area where the Scheme is proposed with this asset. Therefore no impacts are anticipated and this asset has been scoped out of assessment.

10.7.80 National Trust also provided comments regarding the Cable Route Corridor and the need to undertake a full assessment of impacts. The Applicant has agreed a strategy to assess the archaeological impacts in consultation with the heritage stakeholders for the Cable Route Corridor.

10.7.81 Sir Edward Leigh MP provided a response on behalf of his constituents, citing concerns regarding visual impact of all solar NSIP developments. These points are addressed in the table below.

10.7.82 **Table 10-47** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.83 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.16, Table 1-19** (community consultees) and **Table 1-20** (wider consultees).

Table 10-47: Regard had to comments relating to Landscape and Visual Amenity received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

The impact of the Scheme on the landscape

The LVIA (refer to **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]) includes a comprehensive review of the existing (baseline) landscape, and receptors (people with views).

This includes information from Neighbourhood Plans and supporting

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>documents (including 'key views'), numerous site visits and consideration of the AGLV. As with any large scale infrastructure project, significant effects are likely (this is specifically recognised in NPS-EN-1 (Ref 1), for example).</p> <p>It is acknowledged that screening the Scheme from Middle Street will result in the loss of views appreciated by many residents.</p> <p>Any significant landscape and visual effects require weighing in the planning balance against benefits of the Scheme, but the design process has limited visibility from important locations where possible (refer to Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] and the Design and Access Statement [EN010142/APP/7.3]), especially once vegetation has established; and included benefits for green infrastructure such as new and enhanced planting/ecological areas that can locally benefit the landscape.</p>
<p>Comments regarding lack of visualisations being available.</p>	<p>It is accepted that photomontages are a very useful tool in demonstrating potential changes in view and visual effects, but at the time of PEI Report preparation, a sufficiently finalised and/or detailed design was not yet available.</p> <p>This, and the absence of accurate topographic data, meant that any visualisations produced may not have been sufficiently accurate to be of use in the assessment process. Visualisations have been produced at the ES stage within Figure 12-14 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3] as the design has progressed since the PEI Report stage.</p>
<p>Concern about ability to mitigate visual impact</p>	<p>The location and layout of the Scheme has been developed to try and minimise impacts on sensitive views; for example, there are no existing PRow through the panel areas.</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Consultation with local residents has taken place to understand where planting may be of the greatest benefit in reducing visibility of the Scheme. However, it is accepted that there is a difficult balance in terms of screening but not blocking the valued, long-range views that help define the local landscape character.

Planting and allowing existing hedges to remain and/or grow taller will limit views, although some localised significant visual effects may remain in the long term, from certain locations along Lincoln Cliff.

Queries about the impact of the Scheme on Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV)

No solar development (e.g. panels and infrastructure) will be located with the AGLV. An existing farm access track will be used during the construction period and some localised works may be required along Middle Street to ensure safe traffic access.

However, any proposals for mitigation and enhancement within the AGLV are not considered to be contrary to Policy S62, in that the intention would be to provide landscape and visual benefits, e.g. through enhancing ecological value, landscape condition and creating improved biodiversity corridors.

It is acknowledged that this mitigation needs to be sensitivity designed, as the introduction of extensive woodland and/or hedgerows may not be in keeping with typical landscape qualities, although there is some localised historical precedent. It is also accepted that landscape impacts may arise through the 'setting' of the AGLV (although this setting is not defined in policy terms).

This has been considered within the LVIA, including through the definition of Local Landscape Character Areas (LLCA) to provide a greater level of detail than the existing published West Lindsey Character Assessment.

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Relevance of the Hemswell and Harpswell Neighbourhood Plan

The Hemswell and Harpswell Neighbourhood Plan, alongside the supporting Character Assessment, has been considered in detail within the LVIA baseline and in the Cultural Heritage baseline (refer to **Section 12.6 of Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]), particularly with reference to identify views and landscapes such as the site of the scheduled monument, Harpswell Hall.

Those associated with the latter have been afforded a 'high' heritage, landscape and visual value which will inform the final assessment of effects. The Applicant acknowledges the importance of this particular landscape and have taken a coordinated approach between LVIA and Heritage assessments (refer to **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]), as well as placing a priority on relevant stakeholder consultation.

Comments regarding the importance of the landscape of the Lincolnshire Edge, offering considerable visual amenity

There is a difficult balance to be maintained in terms of intentional screening of the Scheme against loss of locally important views that inform the AGLV designation.

It is acknowledged that the loss of such views through introduction of vegetation would be adverse, but this visual effect is not considered to be 'significant'. Refer to **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

Comments relating to the importance of an ancient trackway between Glentworth and Harpswell, which local communities have tried to get reinstated

The importance of this PRoW 'missing link' has been highlighted through the consultation process and the proposed PRoW forms part of the 'future baseline' within the ES (refer to **Section 12.6 of Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]).

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>The route does not run through an area identified for panels, although it crosses a proposed construction access route.</p> <p>For the majority of this route, an existing tree belt will provide screening of the Scheme to the west. As shown on the Indicative Principal Site Layout Plan within Figure 3-1 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3], further woodland and hedgerow screening is proposed along the western boundary of the Principal Site, which will also limit views.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that some views of the Scheme will be available, particularly prior to vegetation being established, and further design development will be undertaken.</p>
<p>Comments regarding the visual impact on the site of a scheduled monument, as identified in the Hemswell and Harpswell Neighbourhood Plan</p>	<p>A photomontage has been provided from the western (most open) edge of the moat (refer to Viewpoint 14 within Figure 12-14 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3]), with this location chosen as it reflects the sensitivity of the Scheduled Monument and the important (designed) relationship with the wider landscape.</p> <p>Following consultation comments and review by the design team, the Applicant has removed the proposed solar panels and infrastructure from the fields nearest this Scheduled Monument and moat. This will also allow further appropriate mitigation and reduce landscape, visual and heritage impacts.</p>
<p>Concern about unbroken views from Common Lane; a road from Harpswell to Heapham</p>	<p>The presence of open views is noted in the LVIA (refer to Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]) and it is acknowledged that the introduction of new hedging will change the open character of Common Lane, limiting the long-range and panoramic views.</p> <p>It is also accepted that the route may be attractive to recreational users, although observations have suggested that use of Common Lane by recreational users is more limited than Kexby Road and</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>beyond the 'Z' bend west of Harpswell. Hedges may have historic precedent, in that some may have been previously removed through agricultural intensification.</p> <p>As noted above, the enclosure of views by native hedgerows that are arguably not entirely out of character with respect to the wider area would be an adverse impact, but not necessarily a significant one.</p> <p>A visualisation has been produced from Common Lane to illustrate likely impacts (refer to Figure 12-14 of the ES to Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3]).</p>
<p>Suggestions to have areas around solar PV panels as wildflower meadows</p>	<p>Areas under the panels will be sown and managed as semi-improved grassland, which will have a greater diversity of native species than the existing intensive farmland.</p> <p>Areas identified for ecological mitigation and enhancement, including field margins, will be managed as a variety of habitats for biodiversity, including woodland, wood pasture, grassland (as a priority for ground nesting birds) and wetlands, where conditions allow.</p> <p>Further details, including long-term management and maintenance, are set out in the Framework LEMP [EN010142/APP/7.17].</p>
<p>Concern that any conservation areas would be isolated and not have easy access</p>	<p>It is the intention to link existing woodland and provide new and enhanced corridors (e.g. woodland, hedgerows and field margins) to improve connectivity across the Site (refer to Figure 3-1 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3] and the Framework LEMP [EN010142/APP/7.17]).</p> <p>The majority of these internal will allow free movement of species, although some fencing will be required to prevent browsing by deer and predation of ground-nesting birds.</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Concern regarding mitigation along Middle Street, which would not reduce environmental impact

Impacts on the view from Middle Street are described in the LVIA (refer to **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]), including the loss of seasonal field pattern changes.

It is acknowledged that significant visual effects will arise from viewpoints along Middle Street at the construction and Year 1 operation stages, reducing to non-significant as proposed hedgerow planting along Middle Street matures.

As with any large scale infrastructure project, significant effects are likely. Any significant landscape and visual effects require weighing in the planning balance against benefits of the Scheme, as provided for under NPS EN-1 (Ref 1).

Concern around the use of the farm track from Middle Street which will have significant negative visual impact

The access on Middle Street will utilise an existing access track which will be upgraded, and therefore is not a completely new feature. Utilisation during construction will be temporary and within the context of wider, long-term ecological enhancements to the rising ground of the Cliff, such as the creation of grasslands as opposed to intensive farmland.

Concern regarding screening at the substation sites

Screening for the western proposed substation has been focused on the area to the south, in order to limit views from Grange Cottages. Views from the A631 to the north area are not considered to be as sensitive and the presence of the substation does not warrant, in the Applicant's opinion, further screening beyond the existing hedgerow (managed to allow it to grow taller) in this direction.

Screening to the eastern substation is largely to the east, to limit views from Northlands Road. Refer to **Figure 3-1** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] and the Framework LEMP [EN010142/APP/7.17].

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Critique of how the section on Visual Amenity 'de-humanises' the effects

The LVIA (refer to **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]) has been prepared in line with industry standard guidance (GLVIA3) which includes perceptual influences as part of both the landscape and visual baseline and assessments; and considers residential receptors (people) as part of the latter.

The broad methodology and approach has been agreed with the Lincolnshire County Council landscape officer. Consideration is given to people (receptors) that use the rural lanes, including for recreational use such as walking and cycling, within and around the Scheme; as well as Public Rights of Way, such as those on the Cliff, where views of the Scheme will be available.

The type of user informs the 'sensitivity' of viewers/receptors, with recreational users being afforded a higher degree of sensitivity, in line with guidance.

Noise and Vibration

10.7.84 Comments from community consultees in relation to Noise and Vibration included concerns over possible noise from the on-site substation (affecting nearby properties), along with audible noise from additional infrastructure within the Scheme.

10.7.85 **Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] provides an assessment of operational noise effects from solar farm infrastructure on residents of sensitive receptors within 500m of the Order limits. No significant operational noise effects are identified.

10.7.86 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.17, Table 1-21**.

Scheme Location

10.7.87 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:

- a. Concern that the proximity of the Scheme to the National Grid Cottam Substation does not mean projects should locate in the area;
- b. The Scheme being too close to local communities;
- c. The Scheme is 'too big';
- d. Concerns with the distance of one of the Scheme's substations to neighbouring properties; and

e. Scheme's proximity to the A631 and village of Springthorpe.

10.7.88 Community consultees provided a number of comments related to the Scheme's location, including four comments in relation to the Scheme's location to National Grid's Cottam Substation in Nottinghamshire, three comments relating to the Scheme's proximity to local communities and additional comments stating that the Scheme is 'too big'.

10.7.89 **Table 10-48** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.90 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.18, Table 1-22**.

Table 10-48: Regard had to comments relating to Scheme Location received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Proximity of the Scheme to the National Grid Cottam Substation

The location of the Scheme is largely as a result of the availability of a point of connection where there is capacity (refer to **Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution** of the ES **[EN010142/APP/6.1]** for the factors considered in the site selection of the Scheme).

This is recognised within the NPS EN-3 paragraph 3.10.35 (Ref 3) which states that the "*capacity of the local grid network to accept the likely output from a proposed solar farm is critical to the technical feasibility of a development*". As such the connection to the relevant electricity network is a critical factor in site selection for solar development.

National Grid Cottam Substation has capacity for export to the national grid and therefore enables the use of existing grid infrastructure whilst minimising the disruption to local community infrastructure or biodiversity (NPS EN-3 paragraph 3.10.38 (Ref 2)).

The distance from the point of connection is also a determining factor on the location with a reduction in efficiency and viability as the distance from the point of connection increases. Therefore, for these reasons the Scheme has chosen to locate near National Grid's Cottam Substation.

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

The Scheme being too close to local communities

The Scheme has sought to avoid proximity to villages and residential properties in line with the provisions of NPS EN-3 (Ref 2). Buffers from residential properties of at least 30m were incorporated into the Scheme and the landscape design has sought to minimise any potential impacts on residential amenity as a result of the Scheme.

More extensive buffers have been used within key views from properties. The Principal Site has been moved further east from Springthorpe during the early design stages; and lies at a minimum of 500m from Hall Farm, Harpswell. Refer to **Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1], the Design and Access Statement [EN010142/APP/7.3] and the Design Principles Statement [EN010142/APP/7.4].

The Scheme is 'too big'

The Scheme has an agreed network connection. It has been designed to ensure that an efficient and effective use is made of the grid connection capacity.

This will be alongside an ancillary BESS system supporting the electricity generation plant to store energy in times of low demand and to provide electricity when demand is higher.

In this regard, reducing the size of the Scheme would result in an inefficient use of the available and secured grid connection capacity at a time when there is a critical national priority to deploy renewable and low-carbon energy generating infrastructure.

Concerns with the distance of one of the Scheme's on-site substations to neighbouring properties

The proposed woodland (as shown on the Indicative Principal Site Layout within **Figure 3-1** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3]) is intended to provide a high level of screening of the Scheme from the property.

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>The key concern with the distance relates to noise effects. The Applicant has met with the landowner and their representatives and has carried out additional work to identify noise mitigation measures for any noise generated by the substation or other scheme components. Consultation is ongoing to determine how the best practicable acoustic environment can be provided to mitigate potential human health risks from noise and vibration.</p>
<p>Scheme's proximity to the A631 and specific properties</p>	<p>No solar panels are proposed in the field closest to the A631 at this location. This field will be used for ecological enhancements and mitigation only (refer to the Indicative Principal Site Layout Plan in Figure 3-1 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3] and set out in the Framework LEMP [EN010142/APP/7.17]).</p> <p>A belt of woodland is proposed alongside the A631, whilst the detail of the mitigation and enhancements (shown as a 'Biodiversity Zone') will be subject to further design, but likely to include further tree planting and areas of grassland. The panels will be approximately 90m from the property, and 70m from the garden boundary along the A631.</p>

Socio-economics and Land Use

10.7.91 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:

- a. Concerns about agricultural land and land use, food production and food security;
- b. Concerns regarding house prices and compensation and inability to sell properties as a result of the Scheme;
- c. Comments about community benefits and being 'insufficient' and only beneficial for people who live outside of Lincolnshire; free electricity should be provided;
- d. Suggestions to provide community funds for village halls;
- e. Impacts on PRowS and bridleways;
- f. Suggestion for non-developable areas to provide community benefit by providing dedicated or permissive bridleways; and

- g. Concern regarding the interaction of construction traffic with equestrian users.
- 10.7.92 Community consultees had particular concern regarding the impact on agricultural land and food production, with 61 mentions of these concerns within the feedback.
- 10.7.93 Five comments were received in relation to house prices and compensation and 20 comments were received in relation to community benefits.
- 10.7.94 The Applicant received responses from non-prescribed/community groups, including British Horse Society, Gainsborough Town Tennis Club, Sport England and Sir Edward Leigh MP.
- 10.7.95 British Horse Society provided comments in relation to public access and multi-road users, including equestrian interaction with the local road network.
- 10.7.96 Gainsborough Town Tennis Club provided comments regarding community benefits, especially relating to whether the Scheme could provide sponsorship. Sport England enquired whether the Scheme would impact any playing field land and/or sports facilities, in which Applicant confirm there are not expected to be any impacts.
- 10.7.97 Sir Edward Leigh MP provided a response on behalf of his constituents, noting that the Scheme would take highly graded land out of agricultural use, emphasising the importance of food production in the region. These matters are addressed in the table below.
- 10.7.98 **Table 10-49** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.
- 10.7.99 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.19, Table 1-23** (community consultees) and **Table 1-24** (wider consultees).

Table 10-49: Regard had to comments relating to Socio-economics and Land Use received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Concerns about agricultural land and land use, food production and food security.

The Applicant recognises that there are concerns relating to the potential for the Scheme to impact upon agricultural production. This is considered in **Chapter 15: Soils and Agriculture** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. The Applicant has sought to minimise the use of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land within the Scheme. The Scheme is not considered to have an impact on food security.

Further detail on how the Scheme has been sited and how its design has evolved to avoid use of BMV land is provided in **Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. It is important to note that any loss of agricultural production on the land would only be temporary. The Applicant is applying for a 60-year limit to its DCO which

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>would require that the Scheme is decommissioned at the end of its operating life and the land returned to its current use.</p>
<p>Concerns regarding house prices and compensation and inability to sell properties as a result of the visual impacts.</p>	<p>The visual impact of the Scheme is assessed within Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. The Scheme has, where possible, aimed to be set back from residential dwellings and incorporated landscape mitigation and layout design measures to reduce the impact on residential dwellings.</p>
<p>Comments about community benefits and being 'insufficient' and only beneficial for people who live outside of Lincolnshire; free electricity should be provided.</p>	<p>The effects of the Scheme on the local community in terms of socio-economic and health effects are assessed within Chapter 14: Socio-Economics and Land Use and Chapter 11: Human Health of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. At this stage, there are no plans to provide free electricity or allotment land for local residents.</p> <p>The Applicant is proposing a community benefit fund as part of the Scheme. The Applicant has explored other opportunities for the Scheme to benefit the local area and has set these out in the Framework Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (OSSCEP) [EN010142/APP/7.18] submitted as part of this DCO Application.</p> <p>The Scheme will also provide local benefits, for example enhancing local biodiversity and providing additional Permissive Paths embedded in the Scheme design. Refer to the Biodiversity Net Gain Report [EN010142/APP/7.14] and the Indicative Site Layout Plan in Figure 3-1 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3].</p>
<p>Suggestions to provide community funds for village halls.</p>	<p>The Applicant is proposing a community benefit fund as part of the Scheme. Should the Scheme receive development consent, this would be independently administered by a local foundation and would be available for local initiatives to provide services to the community.</p> <p>The Applicant does not envisage an energy discount scheme operating as part of a community benefits package as the energy from the Scheme will be exported to the national electricity system rather than to a local network.</p> <p>In addition to a community benefit fund, the Applicant has also explored other opportunities for the Scheme to benefit the local area and has</p>

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	<p>set these out in the Framework Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan [EN010142/APP/7.18] submitted as part of this DCO Application.</p>
<p>Impacts on PRowS and bridleways</p>	<p>There will be no PRowS closures as a result of the Scheme, however there will be temporary diversions during construction. These will be managed to ensure continuous access.</p> <p>A Framework PRowS Management Plan [EN010142/APP/7.16] has been prepared in support of the DCO Application to demonstrate how PRowS will be managed safely during the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning phases.</p>
<p>Suggestion for non-developable areas to provide community benefit by providing dedicated or permissive bridleways</p>	<p>Two permissive paths will be provided between Kexby Road and Common Lane as part of the Scheme (refer to Figure 3-1 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]).</p> <p>These will create 'missing links' where no recreational access exist at present. It is acknowledged that there is a lack of recreational routes in this area: these new paths will run through 25m wide corridors that will allow the inclusion of new features such as hedgerows that will screen solar infrastructure and create visual interest to users as wildlife and habitat corridors.</p> <p>The 'temporary voluntary bridleway' referred to is an existing permissive route east of Sturgate.</p>
<p>Concern regarding the interaction of construction traffic with equestrian users</p>	<p>Chapter 16: Transport and Access of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] includes an assessment of the potential construction impacts on PRowS in terms of severance of communities, non-motorised user delay, non-motorised amenity and fear and intimidation on and by road users.</p> <p>HGVs during the construction phase will be required to follow the proposed HGV routes (refer to Figure 16-3 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3]) and trips will be staggered across the working day within an 8-hour window.</p> <p>Any mitigation (where required) will be identified within the Framework CTMP [EN010142/APP/7.11] and/or Framework PRowS Management Plan [EN010142/APP/7.16].</p>

Transport and Access

10.7.100 Key themes that were raised by community consultees included:

- a. Concerns about the suitability of the road network for the traffic of the Scheme;
- b. Requests for the removal of mud from construction vehicles from roads;
- c. Concerns around Kexby Road and its 'narrow and blind corners'; being unsuitable for access;
- d. Concerns about the impact of site traffic on local people, particularly road safety;
- e. Concerns about the A631 and the possibility for accidents with cyclists/walkers;
- f. Request for the careful management of access from B1398 Middle Street including in respect of impacts on cyclists;
- g. Concerns related to the access from Middle Street and the A631 and the potential for delays/diversions for local people;
- h. Concern regarding re-routing traffic through Springthorpe and other smaller villages; and
- i. Concerns regarding the quoted daily traffic movements for construction staff and the risk of accidents off main roads.

10.7.101 Community consultees provide valuable feedback about the local road network and particular sensitivities, including concerns regarding the suitability of Kexby Road (referenced in seven responses), the A631 (referenced in eight responses), and Middle Street (referenced in six responses).

10.7.102 30 responses provided comments regarding the effect on local people, particularly in relation to road safety, maintenance and upkeep of local roads. Respondents were also concerned about proposed accesses and the likelihood of local disruption for a lengthy period of construction.

10.7.103 **Table 10-50** lists these issues and the regard had to them by the Applicant.

10.7.104 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 1.20, Table 1-25**.

Table 10-50: Regard had to comments relating to Transport and Access received from s47 consultees

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Concerns about the suitability of the road network for the traffic of the Scheme

As detailed in the Framework CTMP **[EN010142/APP/7.11]**, highway condition surveys will be undertaken before, during and after the construction to identify any impacts which are as a result of the Scheme that need to be remediated.

Where the pre-condition survey identifies that measures should be put in place to protect and

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

	maintain the road surface, the LHAs will be consulted, prior to improvement works being undertaken by the Scheme.
Requests for the removal of mud from construction vehicles from roads	As detailed in the Framework CTMP [EN010142/APP/7.11], wheel washing facilities will be provided at every access to minimise mud from being trafficked onto the highway network.
Concerns around Kexby Road and its 'narrow and blind corners'; being unsuitable for access.	No HGVs are proposed to utilise Kexby Road to access the Principal Site. Chapter 16: Transport and Access of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] includes details of the includes details of the HGV routing strategy for the Cable Route Corridor accesses and provide confirmation that no HGVs are proposed to utilise Kexby Road.
Concerns about the impact of site traffic on local people, particularly road safety	Chapter 16: Transport and Access of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] includes a detailed assessment of the potential construction traffic impacts associated with the Scheme in terms of severance of communities, road vehicle driver and passenger delay, non-motorised user delay, non-motorised amenity, fear and intimidation on and by road users, road user and pedestrian safety and hazardous/large loads. Only two significant effects were identified, comprising one road and a public right of way.
Concerns about the A631 and the possibility for accidents with cyclists/walkers	Chapter 16: Transport and Access of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] includes a detailed assessment of the potential construction traffic impacts associated with the Scheme in terms of severance of communities, road vehicle driver and passenger delay, non-motorised user delay, non-motorised amenity, fear and intimidation on and by road users, road user and pedestrian safety and hazardous/large loads. Only two significant effects were identified, comprising one road and a public right of way.
Request for the careful management of access from B1398 Middle Street, including in respect of impacts on cyclists	As detailed in the Transport Assessment within Appendix 16-2 of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.2], HGVs (excluding abnormal loads) will only utilise the B1398 Middle Street to the north of Principal Site Access four, with no HGVs routed to the south through the village of Glentworth.

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

Chapter 16: Transport and Access of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] includes details of the HGV routing strategy for the Cable Route Corridor access points and will follow the same approach along the B1398 Middle Street.

There will be a limited number of abnormal loads as set out in the AIL Management Plan which is an appendix to the Framework CTMP [EN010142/APP/7.11]. The Framework CTMP outlines how construction traffic (such as for workers, which will use typical light vehicles) will be appropriately managed to minimise any impacts resulting from the Scheme.

Concern regarding re-routing traffic through Springthorpe and other smaller villages

As detailed in the Transport Assessment [EN010142/APP/6.2], HGVs (excluding abnormal loads) will travel to the four Principal Site accesses via the A15, A631 and B1398, thereby avoiding any villages.

There will be a limited number of abnormal loads which will be escorted by the Police with supporting road closures.

The Framework CTMP [EN010142/APP/7.11] outlines how construction traffic will otherwise be appropriately managed to minimise any impacts resulting from the Scheme.

Concerns regarding the quoted daily traffic movements for construction staff and the risk of accidents off main roads

As detailed within the Transport Assessment within **Appendix 18-2** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.2], the peak of construction traffic trips will occur outside of the highway network peak hours and will only occur for a short period of the works. Throughout the majority of the construction phase, the number of workers required is expected to be much lower (average of 500 construction staff per day).

There will be a limited number of abnormal loads with an AIL Management Plan supporting the Framework CTMP [EN010142/APP/7.11] to manage and minimise the effect of these loads.

Additionally, **Chapter 16: Transport and Access** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] includes a detailed assessment of the potential construction traffic impacts associated with the Scheme in terms of severance of communities, road vehicle driver and passenger delay, non-motorised user delay, non-

Matter raised

Regard had to comment by Applicant

motorised amenity, fear and intimidation on and by road users, road user and pedestrian safety and hazardous/large loads. No additional impact was identified in terms of road safety.

10.8 Conclusion

- 10.8.1 As detailed in this chapter, the Applicant considers that it has fulfilled its statutory duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity, pursuant to s49 of the PA 2008. This chapter explains the process the Applicant undertook to analyse the feedback received to the statutory consultation under s42 and s47 of the PA 2008. The Applicant did not receive any feedback that could be identified as being specifically submitted as a result of the publicity carried out as required by s48.
- 10.8.2 **Chapter 13, Table 13-2 and Table 13-3** demonstrate how the Applicant has considered and complied with the DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6) and PINS' Advice Note 14 (February 2021) (Ref 9). As well as preparing this report, the Applicant has set out how it has complied with guidance and advice on consultation in the s55 checklist **[EN010142/APP/1.3]** that is also part of the DCO application.

11. Targeted consultation

11.1 Overview

- 11.1.1 This chapter of the Consultation Report summarises the targeted statutory consultation carried out by the Applicant in accordance with section 42 of the Act between 14 December 2023 and 25 January 2024.
- 11.1.2 Following statutory consultation from May to July 2023, the Applicant made a number of localised changes to the indicative Order limits as a result of ongoing design evolution informed by engineering reviews and working collaboratively with other developers in the area.
- 11.1.3 Following statutory consultation, revisions have been identified through Statutory Consultation feedback, landowner discussions and additional engineering work, including making small additions to the indicative Order limits.
- 11.1.4 The changes represented a localised, small degree of change and were not material in the context of the overall Scheme. The additional areas were subject to an environmental review, confirming that the minor changes were not considered likely to create any different environmental effects beyond those described in the PEI Report, as presented at the statutory consultation.
- 11.1.5 A total of 20 revisions were made to the Order limits, which were limited to:
- The inclusion of additional land within adopted highways to enable access for construction vehicles;
 - The inclusion of additional land to ensure the delivery of a shared Cable Route Corridor to minimise impacts with other developers; and
 - The adjustment of the indicative Order limits to align with land ownership information.
- 11.1.6 The changes are listed and described in **Table 11-1** and shown in **Figure 11-1**.

Table 11-1: Description of the localised changes to the indicative Order limits

Change number	Location of the proposed change	Summary of the change
1	Land to the south of Torksey Ferry Road.	The Order limits have been increased to allow sufficient working room for the laying of the Cable Route Corridor to the south of National Grid's Cottam Substation, having regard to existing infrastructure assets.
2	Land to the east of Cottam Power Station comprising highway extents associated with Torksey Ferry Road (East) and land to the north	The Order limits have been increased to include Torksey Ferry Road and additional land within Cottam Power Station to allow for a suitable access to the Cable Route

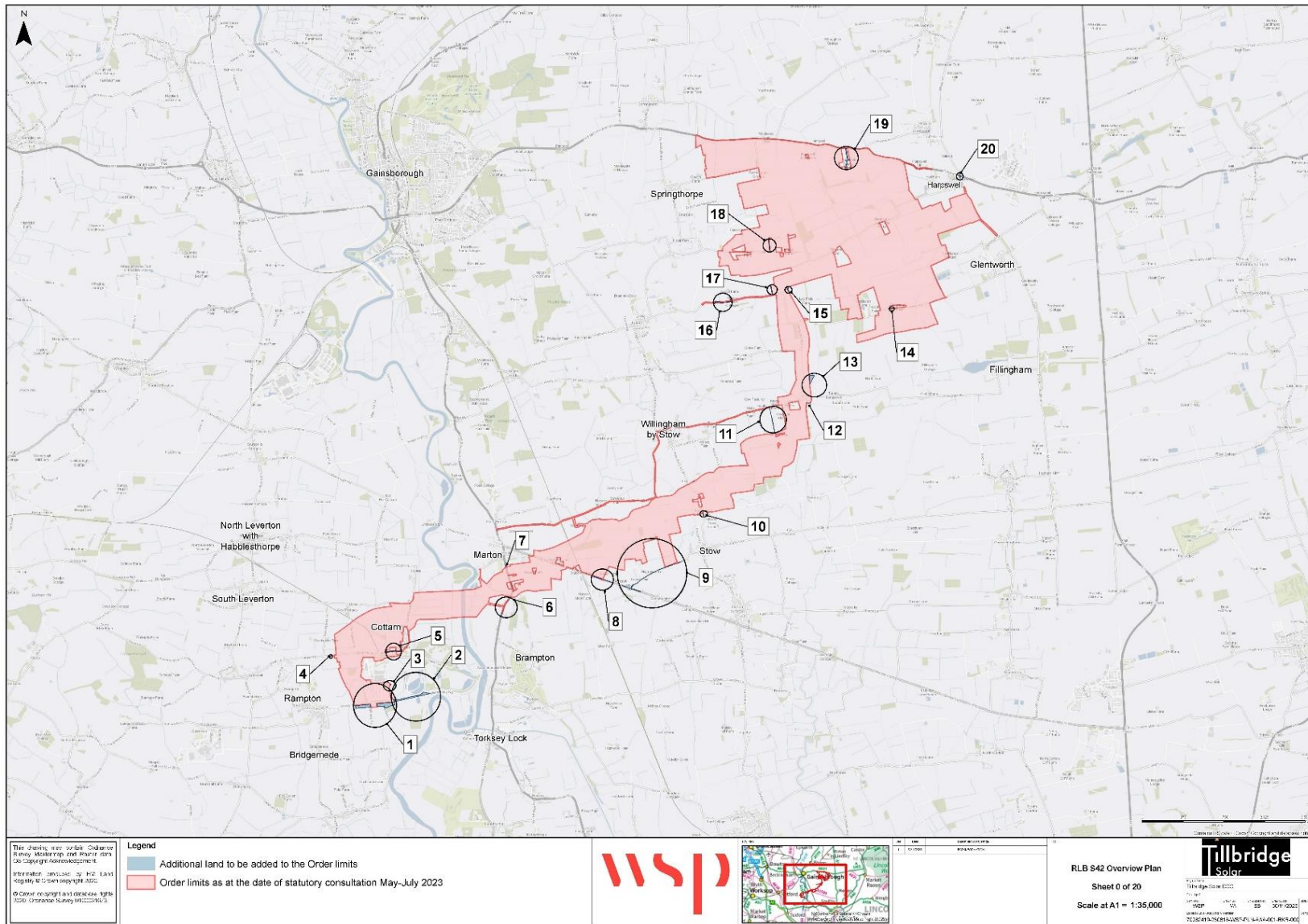
Change number	Location of the proposed change	Summary of the change
	of Torksey Ferry Road within the Cottam Substation site.	Corridor to facilitate its use by construction vehicles.
3	Inclusion of additional land at National Grid's Cottam Substation.	The Order limits have been increased slightly at National Grid's Cottam Substation to reflect land ownership boundaries.
4	Extension of the Order limits to include additional extent of Cottam Road.	The Order limits have been increased to include a further extent of Outgang Lane/Cottam Road to allow for required visibility splay associated with proposed access associated with the construction of the Cable Route Corridor.
5	A strip of additional land to be included within the Order limits north-east of Cottam village (Cottam Road/Town Street).	The Order limits have been increased slightly to ensure that only land required for the Scheme falls within the Order limits to facilitate access for construction of the Cable Route Corridor.
6	Inclusion of additional highway extents north and south of the A156 (High Street).	The Order limits have been increased to include a further extent of the A156 to allow for potential public road improvements associated with the construction of the Cable Route Corridor. This change utilises an existing access through Cottam Power station.
7	Increasing the extent of land falling along the A156 (High Street) to the south of Marton within the Order limits.	The Order limits have been increased to include a further extent of the A156 (High Street) to allow for required visibility splay associated with proposed access associated with the construction of the Cable Route Corridor.
8	Increasing the extent of the Order limits falling within Till Bridge Lane (A1500) to the east of Marton.	The Order limits have been increased to include highway land within Till Bridge Lane (A1500) to allow for potential public road improvements associated with the construction of the Cable Route Corridor.
9	Increasing the extent of the Order limits falling within Till Bridge Lane (West and	The Order limits have been increased to include highway land to allow for potential public road improvements associated with

Change number	Location of the proposed change	Summary of the change
	East) (A1500) to the east of Marton.	the construction of the Cable Route Corridor.
10	Increasing the extent of Order limits to include additional land within Normanby Road to the south-west of Stow and to the east of Marton.	The Order limits have been increased to include highway land to allow for potential public road improvements associated with the construction of the Cable Route Corridor.
11	Inclusion of additional highway land for access (South Lane) from Fillingham Lane located to the east of Willingham by Stow.	The Order limits have been increased to include South Lane to access for construction traffic for installation of the Cable Route Corridor.
12	Inclusion of small parcel of land south of Willingham Road to ensure that the Order limits relates to land ownership boundaries.	The Order limits have been increased slightly to reflect land ownership boundaries.
13	Inclusion of additional land located to the north of Willingham Road and within the highway extents of Willingham Road.	The Order limits have been increased for the purpose of a temporary storage compound and to allow for the creation of a suitable visibility splay aiding access during construction of the Cable Route Corridor.
14	Land adjusted slightly to match the curtilage of an agricultural unit within the Principal Site (Kexby Road).	The Order limits have been increased to match the extents of the public highway.
15	Inclusion of small parcel of land located to the north-east of Cow Lane.	The Order limits have been increased to allow for flexibility to instal the Cable Route Corridor in this area (via cable pulling), located to the north-east of Cow Lane.
16	Inclusion of small parcel of land to ensure that the Order limits relates to land ownership boundaries (Cow Lane).	The Order limits have been increased slightly to reflect land ownership boundaries.
17	Inclusion of a small strip of land to the north of Cow Lane and along the western	The Order limits have been increased to reflect land ownership boundaries.

Change number	Location of the proposed change	Summary of the change
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	boundary of the existing Order limits in this location.	
18	Land included in the Order limits north of Common Lane.	The Order limits have been increased to reflect land ownership boundaries.
19	Inclusion of additional land associated with Harpswell Grange (located to the south of Harpswell Lane(A631)) to allow access for construction vehicles.	The Order limits have been increased to allow for the creation of an internal access road during construction via an existing access off Harpswell Lane (A631) into the Principal Site.
16	Inclusion of small parcel of land to ensure that the Order limits relates to land ownership boundaries (Cow Lane).	The Order limits have been increased slightly to reflect land ownership boundaries.
20	Inclusion of roundabout at the junction with Middle Street and A631.	The Order limits have increased to include the roundabout at the junction with Middle Street and A631 to accommodate works associated with abnormal indivisible load movements.

Figure 11-1: Locations of targeted consultation changes



11.2 Approach to Targeted Consultation

- 11.2.1 In light of the minor localised changes described in section 11.1, the Applicant considered how best to consult on the additional areas.
- 11.2.2 In determining how to consult on the localised changes, the Applicant had regard to paragraphs 73-77 of the PA 2008 and the DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6). Paragraph 73 sets out guidance as follows:
- “Applicants are not expected to repeat consultation rounds set out in their Statement of Community Consultation unless the project proposals have changed very substantially. However, where proposals change to such a large degree that what is being taken forward is fundamentally different from what was consulted on, further consultation may well be needed. This may be necessary if, for example, new information arises which renders all previous options unworkable or invalid for some reason. When considering the need for additional consultation, applicants should use the degree of change, the effect on the local community and the level of public interest as guiding factors.”*
- 11.2.3 The Applicant considered the proposed changes (as set out in **Table 11-1**) to be minor as the Scheme has not changed “very substantially”, so therefore decided that there was no requirement to repeat the statutory consultation, as set out in the SoCC (see **Appendix B-7**). As per the SoCC, the Applicant included the following information to allow for further targeted consultation to be held in a proportionate manner.
- 7.1.1 If, following the statutory consultation, we consider it is necessary to undertake further targeted or supplementary consultation, this would be undertaken, so far as relevant and proportionate, in accordance with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC.*
- 11.2.4 Given the wording above included in the SoCC, no supplement to the SoCC was considered necessary as the original SoCC accounted for the potential for targeted consultation which was being undertaken.
- 11.2.5 The localised changes were minor, therefore paragraphs 75 and 76 of the Guidance are relevant:

If the application only changes to a small degree, or if the change only affects part of the development, then it is not necessary for an applicant to undertake a full re-consultation. Where a proposed application is amended in light of consultation responses then, unless those amendments materially change the application or materially changes its impacts, the amendments themselves should not trigger a need for further consultation. Instead, the applicant should ensure that all affected statutory consultees and local communities are informed of the changes.

In circumstances where a particular issue has arisen during the preapplication consultation, or where it is localised in nature, it may be appropriate to hold a non-statutory, targeted consultation. A developer’s Statement of Community Consultation should be drafted so that it does not preclude this approach. A more bespoke approach can be adopted, which may allow developers to respond with more agility to the issue at hand. If

adopting this approach, the emphasis should be on ensuring that relevant individuals and organisations are included.

- 11.2.6 Given the nature of the minor changes, and in context of the Guidance, the Applicant did not consider that ‘proposed application changes to such a large degree that the proposals could be considered a new application’, or that it ‘materially change[s] the application or materially changes its impacts’.
- 11.2.7 The changes represented a localised, small degree of change, and were not material in the context of the overall Scheme. Furthermore, the additional areas were subject to an environmental review, confirming that the minor changes were not considered likely to create any different environmental effects beyond those described in the PEI Report, as presented at the statutory consultation.
- 11.2.8 The Applicant carried out a diligent enquiry process to identify the relevant prescribed consultees under S42(1)(a), S42(1)(aa), S43(1) and community interests (in the vicinity of the changes).

Identification of prescribed consultees under S42 and S43

- 11.2.9 Having noted the nature of the proposed changes to the indicative Order limits, the Applicant sought to engaged with persons as may be prescribed (s42(1)(a) of the PA 2008), as was undertaken during the statutory consultation in May-July 2023. As described in **section 11.3**, this involved engaging with stakeholders that responded to the previous statutory consultation, and who may therefore have an ongoing interest in the Scheme.
- 11.2.10 The Applicant also sought to engage with the MMO (s42(1)(a) of the PA 2008) and Host authorities for the purposes of s42(1)(b) i.e. s43 of the PA 2008. As described in **section 11.3**, this involved engaging with all previously engaged Host authorities – Lincolnshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, West Lindsey District Council and Bassetlaw District Council.

Identification of land interests

- 11.2.11 Whilst the Applicant did not consider full re-consultation with the local community necessary, the changes did involve an extension to the indicative Order limits and additional compulsory acquisition powers/rights to use the land permanently over those areas.
- 11.2.12 The Applicant carried out a diligent enquiry process to identify the land interests potentially affected by the additional areas identified and a strategy to undertake a targeted consultation with those S42(1)(d) consultees identified through the land referencing process associated with the proposed minor changes to the indicative Order limits.

Engagement with local planning authorities

- 11.2.13 Prior to carrying out the targeted consultation, the Applicant engaged with host local planning authorities regarding the approach to consultation with the local community.

11.2.14 The Applicant produced a draft ‘Targeted consultation methodology’ (see **Appendix G-1**), which introduced the consultation, the nature of the proposed changes, when, who and how the Applicant would be consulting, and how stakeholders could provide feedback.

11.2.15 In the covering email, the Applicant confirmed that the consultation would run for at least 28 days, therefore exceeding the statutory period as required by the PA 2008. As the localised changes were still to be confirmed, the Applicant stated that the consultation would either run:

- a. For six weeks (42 days) between December 2023 and January 2024, providing sufficient time to account for the festive period; or
- b. For four weeks (28 days) between January 2024 and February 2024.

11.2.16 In addition to explaining the consultation during the Applicant’s regular meetings with each Host authority, the Applicant issued the draft methodology for comment on 10 November 2023, requesting comments by 24 November 2023 – providing 14 days for comments (see **Appendix G-2** for emails sent to the Host authorities).

11.2.17 Comments on the draft methodology and how the Applicant addressed these are provided in **Table 11-2**.

Table 11-2: Comments on draft targeted consultation methodology from LPAs

LPA	Date of response	Comment	Applicant’s response
Lincolnshire County Council	14 November 2023	<p>Thanks for this no particular comments on the methodology which all seems to be in order.</p> <p>In terms of the timing I would request you avoid December as this is a particular busy time for the other 3 projects with deadlines and hearings all over December but by end of January and certainly February much of the intensive work for deadlines will have passed and whilst there is certainly a danger of community fatigue at least there will be fewer deadlines to meet by then.</p>	<p>The Applicant acknowledged the ongoing engagement with Lincolnshire County Council and comments regarding the consultation methodology.</p> <p>When deciding the final dates for the consultation, the Applicant noted that the six-week period across December 2023 to January 2024 would allow respondents more time to provide feedback; therefore addressing Lincolnshire County Council concerns about responding in December 2023 (with deadlines for other schemes).</p> <p>In accordance with the PA 2008, the consultation period exceeded the statutory minimum of 28</p>

LPA	Date of response	Comment	Applicant's response
		So my advice is to go for the January to February consultation window.	days. This period also enabled the Applicant to advertise the consultation for local communities (see section 11.6) and address any return to sender letters within the six week window.
Nottinghamshire County Council		No comments received.	
West Lindsey District Council		No comments received.	
Bassetlaw District Council		No comments received.	

11.2.18 The Applicant provided the final methodology to each Host authority on 13 December 2023, confirming a consultation running from 14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024 (see **Appendix G-3**).

11.3 Stakeholders consulted

11.3.1 As outlined in **section 11.2**, the Applicant deemed full re-consultation under section 47 of the Act unnecessary. The Applicant consulted with the following stakeholder groups:

- a. Section 42(1)(a) and (aa) – persons that responded to the statutory consultation process from May to July 2023;
- b. Section 42 (1) (b) – in relation to the host authorities where changes to the indicative Order limits are proposed (as listed above);
- c. Section 42(1)(d) consultees – persons having an interest in land affected by the additions to the indicative Order limits (as shown by the individual changes in **Figure 11-1**), including interests previously consulted and new land interests not previously consulted;
- d. Section 42 (1) (a) all Parish Councils representing local community communities (located in the vicinity of the changes), as consulted at statutory consultation; and
- e. Section 47 consultees – people living in the vicinity of the land, along with non-prescribed consultees, such as Members of Parliament and relevant district and county ward members/officers representing local communities (located in the vicinity of the changes), and groups who have previously responded to the statutory consultation – as explained in **section 11.6.4**).

11.3.2 Stakeholders consulted (that fall within these categories) are provided in **Appendix G-4**.

- 11.3.3 Section 45 of the PA 2008 requires the Applicant, when consulting a person under section 42, to notify the person of the deadline for receipt by the Applicant of the persons response to the consultation. The deadline must not be earlier than the end of the period of 28 days, beginning with the day after the day on which the person received the consultation documents.
- 11.3.4 The targeted consultation ran from 14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024 – a consultation period of 42 days, exceeding the minimum period of 28 days as required by the PA 2008.
- 11.3.5 As described in **section 11.6** the Applicant provided information on localised changes by writing to the consultees identified above, providing them with information on each of the areas additional to the indicative Order limits as set out in **Table 11-1**; also advising them where the same information could be viewed online on the Scheme website.
- 11.3.6 Comments on the localised changes detailed in the written communication issued were invited either by submitting feedback email to info@tillbridgesolar.com or in writing to the Applicant at FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR.
- 11.3.7 The activity carried out to deliver this further stage of targeted consultation and a summary of the feedback received and how the Applicant has had regard to the feedback is set out in the following sections of this chapter.

11.4 Targeted Consultation materials

- 11.4.1 As set out in the Targeted Consultation Methodology (see **Appendix G-1**), the Applicant produced a suite of materials in digital and print format providing information on the localised changes to the indicative Order limits being consulted on.
- 11.4.2 Materials were made available from the launch of the targeted consultation on 14 December 2023, when the Applicant updated the Scheme website to provide information about the localised changes being consulted on. A copy of the Targeted Statutory Consultation Brochure (see **Appendix G-5**) and respective location plans (see **Appendix G-6.1** and **G-6.2** for the previous and new draft Order limits and **Appendix G-6.3** to **G-6.22** for the individual plans) were uploaded to the website and enclosed in printed format in communications directly mailed to consultees.

Targeted Statutory Consultation Brochure

- 11.4.3 The Applicant produced a Targeted Statutory Consultation Brochure which included information on:
- a. The context of the targeted consultation and explanation of why changes were being proposed;
 - b. Description of the 20 individual revisions to the draft Order limits and snapshot showing extent of change;
 - c. Overview map showing the location of the localised changes;
 - d. Confirmation that no additional environmental effects have been identified (beyond what was presented in the PEI Report); and

e. Details of how to provide feedback to the consultation.

11.4.4 The brochure was enclosed with the letters issued to all consultees, and a digital version was available to download from the Scheme website. The Applicant also issued digital versions by email with the letters (where email addresses were available), and print and digital copies were made available on request.

11.4.5 A copy of the brochure can be found in **Appendix G-5**.

Scheme website

11.4.6 The Scheme website (see **Appendix C-13.4**) was updated on the first day of the consultation (14 December 2023) to include information about the targeted consultation and the localised changes being consulted on.

11.4.7 The website homepage – along with other pages on the website – were updated to clearly describe the targeted consultation and signpost people to the information on which feedback was being sought. The Applicant also uploaded the relevant documents to the ‘Documents Library’ (see **Appendix C-13.4**) and continued to make available previous consultation materials, including the PEI Report.

11.4.8 Screenshots of the updated Scheme website can be found in **Appendix G-7**.

11.4.9 The website address was publicised across all the communications issued to notify people about the targeted consultation and provide information of the localised changes being consulted on, as well as the public notice published in local publications (see **Appendix G-11.1**).

11.4.10 Across the targeted consultation period, the website had a total of 7,645 visits and was visited by a total of 562 unique users. The targeted consultation documents (uploaded as PDFs to the Scheme website) were downloaded/viewed a total of 204 times.

Figure 11-2: Number of website users across targeted consultation period (December 2023 to January 2024)



Collection of responses

11.4.11 The Applicant requests comments in writing by email (info@tillbridgesolar.com) or FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR by 11.59pm on 25 January 2024.

11.5 Targeted Consultation – S42(1)(d) Consultation

Identification of Section 42(1)(d) interests

11.5.1 In advance of the targeted consultation the Applicant carried out diligent inquiries to identify persons with an interest in land in the additional areas identified in **Table 11-1** above. This process was consistent with the process undertaken prior to the statutory consultation, as outlined in **Chapter 8**.

11.5.2 Persons with an interest in land were identified as follows:

- a. Those previously consulted during the statutory consultation (May to July 2023) which had interests in the additional areas;
- b. Those who had a subsoil interest only in the additional areas; and
- c. Those who had not been consulted previously in relation to the Scheme.

11.5.3 The Applicant prepared the following materials to carry out the section 42(1)(d) targeted consultation:

- a. A covering letter providing an overview of the Scheme, the localised changes (as part of the targeted consultation) and the consultation process. Different versions of the letter were sent to the following categories of consultee;
 - i. Persons identified as having an interest in the land in the additional areas identified in **Table 11-1** above who had not previously been consulted. The letters for these consultees also directed them to the statutory consultation materials (May to July 2023), which were still available to view on the Scheme website – see **Appendix G-8.1** for copies of the letter.
 - ii. Persons identified as being presumed to own the subsoil under the highway surface within the indicative Order limits in the additional areas identified in **Table 11-1** above, on the basis they have an interest in the land adjacent to the highway up to the highway point in those areas and who had not previously been consulted. These letters also directed them to the statutory consultation materials (May to July 2023), which were still available to view on the Scheme website – see **Appendix G-8.2** for copies of the letter.
 - iii. Persons identified as having an interest in the land in the additional areas who were previously consulted during the statutory consultation (May to July 2023). Given these persons had previously received statutory consultation materials, these letters did not point people in the direction of the statutory consultation materials – see **Appendix G-8.3** for copies of the letter.

- iv. Persons identified as having an interest in the land adjacent to the highway up to the highway point and presumed to own the subsoil under the highway surface within the indicative Order limits soil who were previously consulted during the statutory consultation (May to July 2023). As above, these letters did not point people in the direction of the statutory consultation materials, as they had already had the opportunity to review these – see **Appendix G-8.4** for copies of the letter.
 - v. Persons identified as having an interest in the land not affected by the proposed changes to the indicative Order limits but hadn't previously been consulted (during the statutory consultation) – see **Appendix G-8.5** for copies of the letter.
 - b. A printed plan showing the indicative Order limits presented during statutory consultation and a separate plan showing the revised Order limits, with the additional areas indicated (see **Appendix G-6**);
 - c. A printed plan showing the individual's land interest (see **Appendix G-6.3 to G-6.22** for the separate change plans);
 - d. A copy of the targeted statutory consultation brochure, explaining each individual change to the indicative Order limits with additional maps (see **Appendix G-5**); and
 - e. A copy of the statutory consultation leaflet (see **Appendix C-13.1**) and Section 48 Notice (see **Appendix D-1**) – which were enclosed to land interests in May 2023.
- 11.5.4 The Applicant issued the relevant covering letters and targeted consultation materials to all the identified section 42(1)(d) consultees by Recorded Delivery on 11 December 2023 in advance of targeted consultation starting on 14 December 2023.
- 11.5.5 All covering letters (as described above) clearly stated that the deadline for responses to be received was 11.59pm on 25 January 2024.
- 11.5.6 The Applicant tracked the status of the delivery of letters using Royal Mail recorded delivery. Where original letters (sent on 11 December 2023) were not delivered (for example, through return to sender) the Applicant re-issued consultation packs to alternative addresses, either via Royal Mail recorded delivery or hand delivery by the Applicant to confirm receipt. All letters included an extension to the targeted consultation response deadline, ensuring at least 28 days, as required under the PA 2008.
- 11.5.7 A total of 244 land interests were issued information packs on 11 December 2023, with an additional 23 packs issued across 20-22 December 2023 after being identified as interests in relation to the proposed changes.
- 11.5.8 Packs were reissued on 20 December 2023 after the Applicant identified errors in the stated issue dates on selected letters. Packs re-issued on 21 and 22 December 2023 were in response to non-delivered packs and those that were returned back to the Applicant from the mailing company.
- 11.5.9 Of the interests that were issued packs on 11 December 2023, 52 interests were re-issued a letter across 20-22 December 2023, in response to

addressing packs that were not delivered previously. The closing date for responses remained as 25 January 2024.

11.5.10 Upon identification of additional interests during the consultation period, the Applicant identified an additional eight interests, who were all issued letters by recorded delivery on 10 January 2024 with an extended deadline of 9 February 2024, providing more than 28 days to respond.

11.6 Targeted consultation – Section 42(1)(a), (b) and local communities in vicinity of localised changes

11.6.1 The Applicant carried out targeted consultation relating to the localised changes to the indicative Order limits for the scheme as set out in **Table 11-1** during the defined consultation period 14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024 with section (1)(a) and (b) consultees, and the local communities in vicinity of the localised changes.

Section 42(1)(a), 42(1)(aa) and 42(1)(b) parties

11.6.2 The Applicant prepared the following materials to provide for interested parties:

- a. A covering letter providing an overview of the localised changes being consulted on and the consultation process (see **Appendix G-9**), including:
 - i. A letter to prescribed consultees (s42(1)(a)) and the MMO (s42(a)(aa) (see **Appendix G-9.1**); and
 - ii. A letter to each Host authority (s42(1)(b)) (Lincolnshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, West Lindsey District Council and Bassetlaw District Council) (see **Appendix G-9.2**).
- b. A printed plan showing the indicative Order limits being consulted on as part of the targeted consultation (see **Appendix G-6.2**); and
- c. A copy of the targeted statutory consultation brochure, explaining each individual change to the indicative Order limits with additional maps (see **Appendix G-5**).

11.6.3 The Applicant issued covering letters and targeted consultation materials to all the identified section 42(1)(a) and (b) consultees by Royal Mail with recorded delivery on 11 December 2023 in advance of the targeted consultation starting on 14 December 2023. Letters and materials were also sent electronically via email on 13 December 2023 (where emails were available). Copies of the letters and emails sent in advance of the targeted consultation can be found in **Appendix G-9**.

11.6.4 Covering letters clearly stated that the deadline for responses to be received was 25 January 2024.

Local communities in the vicinity of the localised changes

- 11.6.5 The Applicant undertook targeted consultation on the additional areas to the indicative Order limits with selected local communities in vicinity of the localised changes, as shown in **Figure 11-1**.
- 11.6.6 As stated in **section 11.2**, given the minor nature of the localised changes, the Applicant deemed it unnecessary to carry out full re-consultation with local communities, so therefore did not undertake the same engagement activities as during the statutory consultation. The intention was for the local community in the vicinity of the proposed change would be consulted.
- 11.6.7 The Applicant prepared and issued the following materials to parish councils, elected members and bodies representing the communities identified:
- a. A covering letter providing an overview of the localised changes being consulted on and the targeted consultation process including details of how it was being communicated, as well as the offer to meet and brief representatives in person. Different versions of this letter were prepared and sent to the following stakeholders;
 - i. County Council and District Council ward members whose electoral divisions/wards were identified as being in the vicinity of the localised changes (see **Appendix G-10.1**);
 - ii. The clerks for parish councils/meetings whose parish boundaries were identified as being the vicinity of the localised changes (see **Appendix G-10.2**); and
 - iii. Members of parliament whose Westminster constituency was identified as being in the vicinity of the localised changes (see **Appendix G-10.3** and **Appendix G-10.4**).
 - b. A printed plan showing the indicative Order limits being consulted on as part of the targeted consultation (see **Appendix G-6.2**);
 - c. A copy of the targeted statutory consultation brochure, explaining each individual change to the indicative Order limits with additional maps (see **Appendix G-5**); and
 - d. Printed plan(s) showing the parties' relevant interests (e.g. the relevant change plan(s) in relation to the respective county/district/parish boundaries) see **Appendix G-6.3** to **G-6.22** for the separate change plans).
- 11.6.8 All covering letters and targeted consultation materials were sent to the stakeholders listed in **Table 11-3** by Royal Mail with recorded delivery on 11 December 2023. Emails were also issued on 13 December 2023 ahead of the consultation starting on 14 December 2023, when the website was also updated.

Table 11-3: List of parties identified as representing the interest of communities in the vicinity of the localised changes

Members of Parliament

Brendon Clarke-Smith MP (CON – Bassetlaw)

Rt Hon. Sir Edward Leigh (CON – Gainsborough)

Lincolnshire County Council Member

Cllr Richard Butroid (CON – Gainsborough Rural South)

Nottinghamshire County Council Member

Cllr John Ogle (CON – Tuxford)

West Lindsey District Council Members

Cllr Roger Pilgrim (CON – Torksey Ward)
Cllr Lynda Mulally (LIB – Stow Ward)
Cllr Roger Patterson (CON – Scampton Ward)
Cllr Emma Bailey (LIB – Lea Ward)
Cllr Paul Howitt-Cowan (IND – Hemswell Ward)

Bassetlaw District Council Members

Cllr Ant Coultate (CON – Rampton Ward)
Cllr James Naish (LAB – Sturton Ward)

Parish Councils

Bassetlaw

Rampton and Woodbeck Parish Council (Clerk – Mrs Claire Challener)
Treswell with Cottam Parish Council (Clerk – Mrs M Papworth)
South Leverton Parish Council (Clerk)

West Lindsey

Brampton Parish Council (Clerk – Mr G Turner)
Marton and Gate Burton Parish Council (Clerk – Mrs Gillian Martin)
Stow Parish Council (Clerk – Mrs M Cotterill)
Willingham by Stow Parish Council (Clerk – Ms L Brooks-Sleight)
Fillingham Parish Council (Clerk – Mrs Margaret O’Grady)
Upton Parish Council (Clerk – Elizabeth Raymond)
Glentworth Parish Council (Clerk – Gavin Monks)
Heapham Parish Council (Clerk)
Harpswell and Hemswell Parish Council (Clerk – Elizabeth Raymond)
Hemswell Cliff Parish Council (Clerk – Helen Reek)

Additional local planning authority contacts (also classified as S42(1)(b))

Lincolnshire County Council

Neil McBride (Head of Planning)
Head of Highways

Nottinghamshire County Council

Stephen Pointer (Planning Policy)
Head of Highways

West Lindsey District Council

Russell Clarkson (Planning Development Manager)

Bassetlaw District Council

John Krawczyk (Planning Development Manager)

Public Notice

11.6.9 As set out in the consultation methodology, one of the methods to consult local communities in the vicinity of the changes was to place public notices in local newspapers circulating in the vicinity of the land. Consistent with the publication of notices at statutory consultation (under section 47 and section 48 of the Act), notices were placed in the Lincolnshire Echo, Gainsborough Standard and Retford Times on 14 December 2023. The notice was also uploaded to the Scheme website on the same day.

11.6.10 The public notice provided the following information:

- a. Introduction to the Scheme and its location;
- b. Overview of the targeted consultation and reasoning for localised changes;
- c. Information on where consultation information could be found; a link to the Scheme website; and how people could request consultation materials free of charge; and
- d. Description of how people could provide feedback, with a clear indication of the close date of the consultation (25 January 2024).

11.6.11 Copies of the final notice and notices published on 14 December 2023 can be found in **Appendix G-11-1** and **Appendix G-11.2 to G-11.4**, respectively.

Site Notices

11.6.12 As part of the Applicant's consultation with section 42(1)(d) consultees – along with communities in the vicinity of the localised changes – the Applicant produced a generic Targeted Consultation Site Notice which was erected in a number of locations to inform those interests whom the Applicant was unable to identify through an initial land referencing exercise in relation to the refined draft Order limits.

11.6.13 The Site Notice mirrored the information provided in consultation letters, including a general overview of the Scheme, the purpose of the targeted consultation, what information/materials were available and where they could be found, and how feedback could be provided. A copy of the Site Notice is provided in **Appendix G-12.1**.

11.6.14 The Applicant erected notices in 32 locations, which were printed double-sided, laminated and attached to markers in publicly accessible locations alongside copies of the location plan (showing the revised Order limits) and targeted statutory consultation brochure. A map showing the locations of each of the Site Notices in the vicinity of the Scheme can be found in **Appendix G-12.2**. Example pictures of the notices can be found in **Appendix G-12.3**.

11.6.15 The Applicant conducted checks on a weekly basis to inspect to status and condition of each notice, and subsequently replaced any notices that had been displaced/deemed to be in poor condition.

- 11.6.16 Following a period of adverse weather conditions in December 2023, the Applicant was alerted about the displacement of notices in the Cottam area (in the vicinity of the entrance of National Grid's Cottam Substation). This was rectified within a few days of being notified. The Applicant continued to ensure each notice remained accessible as part of regular weekly checks.
- 11.6.17 Consistent with the engagement with host local planning authorities in relation to the consultation methodology prior to the consultation, the Applicant informed the Host authorities of the management of the notices. The Applicant also notified the Host authorities of the extensions provided to section 42(1)(d) consultees in relation to the re-issuing of consultation letters.

11.7 Summary of responses to targeted consultation and regard had to them

- 11.7.1 The framework for grouping and analysis targeted consultation feedback is consistent with the exercise carried out for statutory consultation feedback (s42 and s47), as stated in **section 10.3**.
- 11.7.2 The sections below summarise the key comments received and changes made in relation to all topic areas.
- 11.7.3 In total, 40 consultees responded to the targeted consultation, of which 32 were from s42 consultees and 18 were from s47 consultees. Full responses from the targeted consultation from s42 and s47 consultees can be found in **Appendix I** and **Appendix H**, respectively.

Summary of feedback from s42 consultees

- 11.7.4 Feedback from s42 consultees related to the following EIA topic areas, with additional comments also provided by s47 consultees:
- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| a. Construction and Operation; | h. Noise and Vibration; |
| b. Consultation; | i. Scheme Description; |
| c. Cultural Heritage; | j. Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives; |
| d. Cumulative Impacts; | k. Socio-economics and Land Use; |
| e. Water Environment; | l. Transport and Access; and |
| f. Landscape and Visual Amenity; | m. Minerals and Waste. |
| g. Major Accidents; | |
- 11.7.5 A summary of comments in relation to these topics are provided in the sections that follow.
- 11.7.6 Specifically, 21 responses were received from s42(1)(a) prescribed consultees, five responses were received from s42(1)(b) consultees and six were received from s42(1)(d) land interests.
- 11.7.7 Feedback was received by the following consultees:

- National Highways
- MMO
- NATS
- Environment Agency
- NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board
- Vodafone
- Springthorpe Parish Meeting
- Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue
- Natural England
- Severn Trent Water
- Ministry of Defence
- Northern Powergrid
- Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Canal and River Trust
- Northern Gas Networks
- Health and Safety Executive
- National Grid Electricity Transmission
- Historic England
- Bassetlaw District Council, Flood Risk Management
- Coal Authority Planning Team
- Environmental Health Manager, Bassetlaw District Council
- UK Health Security Agency
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Lincolnshire County Council
- Network Rail
- Six landowners

Construction and Operation

- 11.7.8 Two comments from one landowner were received in relation to Construction and Operation. One comment related the use of access during the construction of Scheme, in which the landowner confirmed that the private lane could not be used by any construction traffic. The Applicant can confirm that it is not proposing to make use of the driveway off School Lane during construction, operations or decommissioning. As outlined in the Streets, Rights of Way and Access Plans [EN010142/APP/2.4], the Applicant is proposing to stop up two access points from the eastern side of this driveway into the Order limits. This will ensure that vehicles are kept away from the driveway when accessing this part of the Principal Site.
- 11.7.9 The second comment noted that two fields to the south of the property were not in the Order limits of the Scheme, also noting permissions for archaeological trenching in the landowner's fields had been refused. The Applicant notes these comments, with the final Order limits for the Scheme are shown in **Figure 2-1** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3] and the description of the Scheme is detailed within **Chapter 3: Scheme Description** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] sets out the Study Area for the heritage assessment and mitigation proposed.
- 11.7.10 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.1, Table 2-1**.

Consultation

- 11.7.11 Comments relating to the process and scope of consultation were received from one landowner, National Highways, MMO, Environment Agency, NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board, Natural England, Severn Trent Water, Ministry of Defence Northern Gas Networks, National Grid Electricity Transmission, Coal Authority Planning Team, Bassetlaw District Council, UK Health Security Agency and NATS.
- 11.7.12 Several of these consultees confirmed that they had no additional comments to make (beyond those submitted as part of the statutory consultation in 2023).
- 11.7.13 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.2, Table 2-2**.

Cultural Heritage

- 11.7.14 Comments relating to Cultural Heritage were received from Historic England, Bassetlaw District Council and Lincolnshire County Council.
- 11.7.15 Comments included archaeology impacts associated with the proposed changes, including within Stow Park Road/Till Bridge Lane (A1500), along with heritage assets listed within the jurisdictions of Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council. The Applicant notes that **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] includes an assessment of impacts on all heritage assets likely to be affected within the heritage Study Areas of the Scheme and outlines mitigation proposed. An Archaeological Mitigation Strategy will be submitted following consultation with Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Officers.
- 11.7.16 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.3, Table 2-3**.

Cumulative effects

- 11.7.17 Comments relating to Cumulative effects were received from Bassetlaw District Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, which noted the proximity of the Scheme to Cottam and West Burton solar projects and Gate Burton Energy Park, including the extent of the Applicant's collaborative working with the respective developers.
- 11.7.18 The Applicant discussed the issue of cumulative effects with the Host Authorities on an ongoing basis. Therefore, no specific Applicant response was provided on this matter.
- 11.7.19 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.4, Table 2-4**.

Water Environment

- 11.7.20 Comments relating to Water Environment were received from Canal and Rivers Trust, Bassetlaw District Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and one landowner.
- 11.7.21 Comments related to:
- a. The Applicant's engagement with other solar developers, in relation to the respective draft DCOs;

- b. Interaction of the refined Cable Route Corridor with watercourses, including the River Trent; and
- c. Request for full drainage surveys to be carried on land to ensure it is not adversely affected.

11.7.22 These are summarised below in **Table 11-4** and provided in full in **Appendix I, section 2.5, Table 2-5**.

Table 11-4: Regard had to comments relating to Water Environment received from s42 consultees

Matter raised	Applicant response to comments
The Applicant's engagement with other solar developers, in relation to the respective draft DCOs.	The Applicant has sought to disapply the Trent (Burton-upon-Trent and Humber) Navigation Act 1887 at Schedule 3 of the draft DCO, the same approach undertaken in the Gate Burton draft DCO.
Interaction of the refined Cable Route Corridor with watercourses, including the River Trent	<p>A pre-works morphology survey will be carried out for each watercourse, with a tidal river bed survey being required for the River Trent to ensure the correct depth for passing under the River channel.</p> <p>The following statement is included within Chapter 3: Scheme Description of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]: 'A minimum depth of 2m below the bed of watercourses is required, to avoid any impacts, excluding the River Trent and River Till where cables will be installed by trenchless methods at a minimum of 5m below the bed to prevent disturbance to fish species.</p> <p>The cable depth below the bed of River Trent and River Till is expected to be a maximum of 25m (depending on the final ground investigation, and subject to appropriate consents being obtained).' This is secured within the Framework CEMP [EN010142/APP/7.8].</p>
Request for full drainage surveys to be carried on land to ensure it is not adversely affected.	<p>Item 10 on the plan referenced involves the Cable Route Corridor where there is no permanent drainage strategy proposed, given the works will be undergrounded.</p> <p>Drainage management during construction of the cable infrastructure is</p>

Matter raised

Applicant response to comments

covered within the Framework CEMP [EN010142/APP/7.8] and will manage existing drainage, where found, to ensure no increase in flood risk during construction of the corridor.

Landscape and Visual Amenity

- 11.7.23 Comments relating to Landscape and Visual Amenity were received from Lincolnshire County Council.
- 11.7.24 Specifically, they queried whether change in the Order limits around Cottam Power Station and along the Cable Route Corridor are unique to the Scheme or to coordinate with other schemes utilising the route. The Applicant noted that targeted consultation changes 1 and 2 (near Cottam Power Station) – as shown in **Table 11-1** – were undertaken as a result of addressing comments from EDF at the statutory consultation stage ensuring the protection of EDF assets, having regard to the safeguarded land for future development within the emerging Bassetlaw Local Plan being promoted by EDF and as a result of collaboration with the other NSIP projects to ensure that Order limits with respect to the cable route corridor were aligned. Change 3 (the other change near Cottam Power Station) was as a result of land referencing ensuring that the Order limits relates to ownership boundaries.
- 11.7.25 Comments were also concerned with construction access and the need for mitigation to be in place, including in close proximity to Grange Cottage, Grange Bungalow and Harpswell Grange. An assessment of impacts on visual amenity is presented within **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. A Residential Visual Amenity Assessment has not been undertaken as part of the LVIA, as it is not considered that the significant effects that remain at operation beyond 15 years would reach thresholds where this would be required. Existing trees along the access road in question will be retained. **Appendix 12-7: Arboricultural Impact Assessment** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.2] sets out measures for the protection of trees where Root Protection Area incursions of access tracks occur.
- 11.7.26 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.6, Table 2-6**.

Major Accidents

- 11.7.27 Comments related to Major Accidents were received by LFRS and the Health and Safety Executive. LFRS provided a series of guidance and advice in relation to the subject, including a risk reduction strategy.
- 11.7.28 Consultation with LFRS will continue as relevant, and the Detailed FBSMP will be submitted to and approved in consultation with LFR.
- 11.7.29 The FBSMP [EN010142/APP/7.13] details risk assessment tools that will be utilised together with detailed consequence modelling to provide a comprehensive site operations and emergency response safety audit at the detailed design stage. Risk assessment tools and detailed site specific

consequence modelling will provide a comprehensive site operations and emergency response safety audit to ensure the highest levels of safety are secured during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Scheme. The battery system mitigation measures adopted in a final Battery Safety Management Plan, will reflect the latest BESS safety codes and standards applicable at that stage. Mitigation measures will be discussed and coordinated with LFR.

11.7.30 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.7, Table 2-7**.

Noise and Vibration

11.7.31 Comments relating to Noise and Vibration were received by Bassetlaw District Council, who welcomed the commitment to sharing cabling routes with other schemes. Bassetlaw District Council also requested further details of the likely impact from noise to individual residents, together with appropriate attenuation measures, once the final route has been established.

11.7.32 A commitment is made in the Framework CEMP submitted alongside this DCO Application **[EN010142/APP/7.8]** that the Applicant will continue to engage with other schemes within 500 m and adopt collaborative working approach wherever practicable.

11.7.33 The final location of the cabling without the Cable Route Corridor will be determined at the time of detailed design. There is a commitment within the Framework CEMP submitted alongside this DCO Application **[EN010142/APP/7.8]** for the Applicant to engage with communities prior to any works taking place where adverse levels of construction noise are expected.

11.7.34 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.8, Table 2-8**.

Scheme Description

11.7.35 Comments relating to Scheme Description were received by three landowners, Vodafone, Northern Powergrid, Canal and River Trust, Bassetlaw District Council and Network Rail.

11.7.36 These are summarised below in **Table 11-5** and provided in full in **Appendix I, section 2.9, Table 2-9**.

Table 11-5: Regard had to comments relating to Scheme Description received from s42 consultees

Matter raised

Applicant response to comments

Concerns regarding width of the Cable Route Corridor, which potentially is located near the ancient Saxon Cathedral Church at Stow.

The extent of the Order limits for the Cable Route Corridor provides for a working width of 40m along the cable alignment, space for temporary construction compounds, material storage laydown areas and a haul route. The Cable Route Corridor will be further refined during detailed design post

Matter raised

Applicant response to comments

	<p>consent of the DCO to take account of any unexpected, localised issues, including but not limited to archaeological finds and heritage assets, implications with respect to protected species and reducing impacts upon trees and hedgerows.</p>
<p>Query whether stakeholder could utilise the Scheme's grid connection.</p>	<p>The Applicant clarified with the stakeholder about the location of the Scheme in relation to the stakeholder's unused land, which was situated in the vicinity of the Cable Route Corridor.</p> <p>Given the nature of the Scheme's connection to the national grid network at Cottam, the Applicant also confirmed with the stakeholder that they could not utilise/buy into the grid connection without an appropriate agreement from National Grid, which the stakeholder would need to pursue directly.</p>
<p>Comment regarding the evolving Bassetlaw Local Plan (2020-2038) and its relevance for the Scheme</p>	<p>Section 2 of the Planning Statement [EN010142/APP/7.2] sets out the legislative and policy context of the Scheme. This section sets out all national and local policy that is considered important and relevant to the Secretary of State's decision making.</p> <p>The Bassetlaw Local Plan 2020-2038 is identified in this section, and an appraisal of how the Scheme accords with the policies within this plan is set out in Section 6 of the Planning Statement, and Appendix C: Local Policy Accordance Tables of the Planning Statement [EN010142/APP/7.2]. The Applicant will continue to review the Plans status throughout the DCO process.</p>

Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives

- 11.7.37 Comments related to Site Selection and Consideration of Alternatives were received by one landowner.
- 11.7.38 This comment suggested cooperation with Cottam Solar regarding the movement of their proposed cable route southwards to avoid damaging the remains of the deserted medieval village of Normanby.

11.7.39 The Applicant notes that the Cable Route Corridor will be further refined in consultation with the other solar developers during detailed design post consent of the DCO to take account of any unexpected, localised issues, including but not limited to archaeological finds, implications with respect to protected species and reducing impacts upon trees and hedgerows, for example.

11.7.40 Impacts on heritage assets on the basis of a worst-case assessment scenario are presented within **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

11.7.41 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.10, Table 2-10**.

Socio-economics and Land Use

11.7.42 Comments related to Socio-economics and Land Use were received two landowners.

11.7.43 Both comments registered opposition to the use of food producing land, which should be sited on rooftops instead. The two responses specifically referenced solar PV panels on farmland which would remove good quality farmland from production.

11.7.44 The Applicant has considered the effect of the Scheme on agricultural land with regards to food production in **Section 14.8** (Assessment of Likely Impacts and Effects) in **Chapter 14: Socio-economics and Land Use** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. There are no likely significant effects across the construction and operational phases with regards to food production, considering that the Scheme area forms less than 1% of agricultural land available in Lincolnshire and that following operation, the land used for the Scheme can be reverted back to agricultural land.

11.7.45 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.11, Table 2-11**.

Transport and Access

11.7.46 Comments related to Transport and Access were received from Nottinghamshire County Council and Lincolnshire County Council.

11.7.47 Nottinghamshire County Council noted that they were unable to make any further meaningful comments until it receives more detailed proposals with the supporting technical notes/assessments.

11.7.48 Lincolnshire County Council also noted that they were unable to provide and further comments, given that the Scheme was still in the pre-application stage and the Applicant had not yet provided a draft DCO.

11.7.49 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.12, Table 2-12**.

Minerals and Waste

11.7.50 One comment was received in relation to Minerals and Waste from Nottinghamshire County Council.

11.7.51 Nottinghamshire County Council noted the relatively small land take for the proposed Cable Route Corridor and had no further comments to make, including in relation to the Waste Core Strategy.

11.7.52 Full responses are provided in **Appendix I, section 2.13, Table 2.13**.

Summary of feedback from s47 consultees

11.7.53 The Applicant received eight responses from community consultees, including six responses from local residents/near neighbours to the Principal Site and two responses from non-prescribed/community groups – Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and Sport England.

11.7.54 A summary of feedback, grouped by the following key themes, which are expanded upon in the sections below:

- a. Consultation;
- b. Cumulative effects
- c. Ecology and Nature Conservation
- d. Landscape and Visual Amenity
- e. Noise and Vibration
- f. Socio-economics and Land Use

Consultation

11.7.55 Key themes related to the scope and nature of consultation included:

- a. Issues associated with the display of notices in vicinity of the Scheme;
- b. General objection to the Scheme in response to revised plans, specifically in relation to not addressing concerns raised during the previous statutory consultation; and
- c. Request to receive a targeted consultation brochure;

11.7.56 As noted in **paragraph 11.6.15**, the Applicant noted that the notices on-site had blown away due to adverse weather conditions in December 2023. The Applicant visited site to inspect and replace any notices, where required, ensuring all site notices were in place for more than the 28-day period (as stated in the consultation methodology). The Applicant engaged directly with the relevant stakeholder to confirm this action, and also notified the Host authorities of the situation and how it was rectified.

11.7.57 The Applicant also noted the comment regarding objection to the Scheme, and clarified the purpose of the targeted consultation with the stakeholders. The Applicant noted that it would have full regard to comments during the statutory consultation (May to July 2023), in the DCO Consultation Report.

11.7.58 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 2.1, Table 2-1** (community consultees) and **Table 2-2** (wider consultees).

Cumulative effects

11.7.59 One response was received in respect of cumulative effects, which noted concern about the four solar DCO schemes in the area, including the impact on visibility in the area, especially from the Lincoln Cliff ALGV.

11.7.60 The layout of the Scheme was developed to minimise, as far as possible, impacts on sensitive views, including those associated with the AGLV. The

Applicant accepts that there is a difficult balance in that screening the Scheme from Middle Street and Common Lane will result in a reduction or loss of views to and from the Cliff. **Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] acknowledges that localised significant visual effects may remain in the long term from certain locations. Impacts on views may be balanced against the reinstatement of hedgerows that have been lost from the landscape through intensive farming.

11.7.61 The Applicant also notes that significant effects are likely with multiple schemes. The Applicant accepts that screening the Scheme from Middle Street will result in a change of views along Lincoln Cliff, but any significant landscape and visual effects require weighing in the planning balance against the benefits of the Scheme. The assessment is supported by visualisations (refer to **Figure 12-14** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3]), including three from locations along The Cliff, which will also demonstrate cumulative visual effects with other solar schemes. These locations, along with the overall approach and methodology for our assessment, have been agreed upon with the Lincolnshire County Council Landscape Officer. See **Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects and Interactions** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].

11.7.62 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 2.2, Table 2-3**.

Ecology and Nature Conservation

11.7.63 One response in relation to Ecology and Nature Conservation was received by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. They requested to be informed of mitigation measures implemented for Cottam Wetlands Local Wildlife Site.

11.7.64 An assessment of the potential impacts of the Scheme on non-designated sites is included within this chapter, which concludes there will be no adverse effects to Cottam Wetlands LWS during construction. Further details about the protection of LWS during construction are set out in the Framework CEMP [EN010142/APP/7.8].

11.7.65 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 2.3, Table 2-4**.

Landscape and Visual Amenity

11.7.66 Key themes relating to Landscape and Visual Amenity included:

- a. Impact on the Lincoln Cliff AGLV, which has preserved and protected views, particularly in the area between Glentworth and Harpswell; and
- b. Concerns regarding proposed landscaping arrangements adjacent to properties neighbouring the Principal Site, particularly in the vicinity of Kexby Road.

11.7.67 Matters raised and the Applicant's regard to these is provided in **Table 11-6**.

11.7.68 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 2.4, Table 2-5**.

Table 11-6: Regard had to comments relating to Landscape and Visual Amenity received from s42 consultees

Matter raised

Applicant response to comments

Impact on the Lincoln Cliff AGLV, which has preserved and protected views, particularly in the area between Glentworth and Harpswell

The layout of the Scheme was developed to minimize, as far as possible, impacts on sensitive views, including those associated with the AGLV. The Applicant acknowledges that there is a difficult balance in that screening the Scheme from Middle Street and Common Lane will result in a reduction or loss of views to and from the Cliff.

Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] recognises that localised significant visual effects may remain in the long term from certain locations along the latter. Impacts on views may be balanced against the reinstatement of hedgerows that have been lost from the landscape through intensive farming.

As with any large-scale infrastructure project, significant effects are likely. We accept that screening the Scheme from Middle Street will result in a change of views along Lincoln Cliff, but any significant landscape and visual effects require weighing in the planning balance against the benefits of the Scheme.

The assessment is supported by visualisations, including three from locations along The Cliff (refer to **Figure 12-14** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3]), which also demonstrate cumulative visual effects with other solar schemes. These locations, along with the overall approach and methodology for the assessment, have been agreed upon with the Lincolnshire County Council Landscape Officer.

Concerns regarding proposed landscaping arrangements adjacent to properties neighbouring the Principal Site, particularly in the vicinity of Kexby Road.

The Scheme (as illustrated on **Figure 3-1: Indicative Principal Site Layout Plan** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.3]) continues to include both woodland planting and grassland/green space (now termed Biodiversity Zones) to the north of Kexby Road.

Some minor alterations to the alignment of these areas have been required to accommodate a zone of archaeological

Matter raised

Applicant response to comments

sensitivity, where tree planting cannot be undertaken; and the layout of the panels.

The fields to the south of Kexby Road and within the Scheme also continue to be proposed for 'Biodiversity Zones', which in this case will largely be meadow. The southern boundary to these fields will comprise a belt of screening woodland to supplement the existing hedge line. No additional planting has been proposed to the southern boundary of Kexby Road in the vicinity of Glentworth Grange and Grange Court.

This mitigation will be secured through the Framework LEMP [EN010142/APP/7.17]), which includes a specification for larger trees (12-14cm girth and up to around 3.5m in height) where more rapid vegetation screening is a priority.

Noise and Vibration

- 11.7.69 Comments related to Noise and Vibration were received from one property neighbouring the Principal Site, particularly in relation to the substation located within 500 metres of the property. Concerns include potential impacts on protected characteristics, especially from noise emitted from the solar farm.
- 11.7.70 The property in question was concerned about the location of the substation, where a formal request to re-locate the substation was received.
- 11.7.71 The Applicant has met with the respective noise consultants of the property owner, Clarke-Saunders Associates, and has carried out additional work to identify and update the Scheme with noise mitigation measures for the property.. The Scheme description is presented within **Chapter 3: Scheme Description** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1] and noise mitigation measures are summarised within **Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1].
- 11.7.72 Consultation with representatives of the residents is ongoing to determine how the best practicable acoustic environment can be provided to mitigate potential human health risks from noise and vibration. Details of the consultation and measures adopted to control noise at the property will be submitted during the examination.
- 11.7.73 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 2.5, Table 2-6**.

Socio-economics and Land Use

- 11.7.74 One comment was received in relation to Socio-economics and Land Use, which related to reinstating the ancient PRow between Glentworth and Harpswell.

11.7.75 The effect of the Scheme on claimed PRoW, including for this route has been considered in **Chapter 14: Socio-economics and Land Use** of the ES [EN010142/APP/6.1]. This specific claimed PRoW will not require a diversion, but will be managed by banksmen during the construction works to ensure it remains open. Therefore, there will be some disruption, but this is not considered a significant effect.

11.7.76 Full responses are provided in **Appendix H, section 2.6, Table 2-7**.

11.8 Summary of key design changes following statutory consultation and targeted statutory consultation

11.8.1 Following statutory consultation (May to July 2023) and targeted statutory consultation (December 2023 to January 2024), the Applicant considered the feedback provided, together with feedback provided through ongoing engagement with key consultees.

11.8.2 The following changes were made to the Scheme's Principal Site:

- a. Removal of solar and BESS stations were from Field 92 (off Northlands Road) to help reduce noise impacts at nearby properties;
- b. Removal of field parcels within the north-eastern part of the Principal Site from the Order limits due to their proximity to designated heritage assets (Harpswell Hall Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) and St Chad's church);
- c. Removal of 11ha of Grade 3a BMV agricultural land from the Scheme;
- d. Change to field parcel located within the south-east of the Principal Site from PV to ecological mitigation having regard to the setting of a designated heritage asset (Glentworth Hall);
- e. Adjustments to the Order limits to reflect land referencing and landowner discussions;
- f. Inclusion of two permissive paths to enhance recreational routes within the area;
- g. Introduction of special archaeological areas to retain potential archaeology in situ and to exclude development;
- h. Changes to ecological mitigation areas to address the potential presence of great crested newts;
- i. The protection of existing utility assets within the Solar PV Site – this involved providing a buffer where no development would exist;
- j. The inclusion of additional landscape and ecological enhancement areas to provide connectivity for wildlife and to soften the Scheme between the solar PV areas and the adjoining agricultural fields. This also serves to preserve the setting of designated heritage assets to the east of the Principal Site (Harpswell Hall and St Chad's church); and
- k. Removal of land from the Order limits within the western extent of the Principal Site following landowner discussions.

11.8.3 The following changes were made to the Scheme's Cable Route Corridor:

- a. Reduction of the Cable Route Corridor to a 100m width where possible;
- b. Optionality retained at three locations due to constraints associated with crossing Network Rail assets, utilities, the inter-relationship of the Cable Route Corridor with Solar PV associated with other developments (Cottam Solar Project) and landownership constraints;
- c. The Order limits have been increased to the south of Torksey Ferry Road to allow sufficient working room for the laying of the Cable Route Corridor to the south of National Grid's Cottam Substation, having regard to existing utility assets and to address EDF's response to statutory consultation as a landowner; and
- d. Inclusion of additional land to the north of Willingham Road to allow sufficient working width for the construction of the cable.

12. Ongoing Consultation Activities and Statements of Common Ground

12.1 Overview

- 12.1.1 Throughout the development process, the Applicant has engaged with stakeholders outside of the non-statutory and statutory consultation.
- 12.1.2 This included the direct engagement with a number of stakeholders to discuss their responses to the statutory consultation and the drafting of Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) to develop agreement on key issues.

12.2 Ongoing areas of agreement and SoCGs

- 12.2.1 As summarised in **Table 12-1**, the Applicant sought to reach agreement on a series of issues with a range of stakeholders prior to DCO application submission in April 2024.

SoCGs with host local planning authorities

- 12.2.2 As introduced in **Chapter 5, section 5.2**, the Applicant held meetings with host LPAs on an ongoing basis, which included discussion on a range of Scheme specific issues, including SoCGs.
- 12.2.3 As the Applicant approached DCO application submission in April 2024, the Applicant agreed with each LPA that SoCGs would be progressed and agreed post-submission upon receipt of the full DCO application and once specific issues (such as localised impacts) had been considered.

SoCGs with statutory consultees

- 12.2.4 As with LPAs – and as summarised in **Table 12-1** – the Applicant also held regular meetings with statutory consultees to discuss and agree on particular issues.
- 12.2.5 The Applicant progressed SoCGs with the relevant statutory consultees ahead of DCO application submission, which will continue in the post-submission period.

12.3 Other engagement

- 12.3.1 Beyond the discussion of SoCGs, the Applicant engaged with technical stakeholders on an ongoing basis, including through email correspondence, online meetings/workshops, technical notes and in person meetings/site visits. A summary of this engagement is provided in **Table 12-1**.

Table 12-1: Applicant team engagements with technical stakeholders (May 2023 to April 2024)

ES Topic	Date and location	Attendees	Summary of meeting
Ground Conditions	13 June 2023; online meeting	Local Minerals Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting to agree on scope and approach to minerals safeguarding areas given that Scheme will be time limited and the works to the Cable Route Corridor are underground. • Agreement between parties that a Minerals Safeguarding Report was not required and that a proportionate assessment of the potential impact of the Scheme upon minerals safeguarding areas could be dealt with as part of the planning statement. • All agreed of the need to consider existing mineral sites with respect to the indicative layout of the Scheme.
Ecology and Nature Conservation	14 June 2023; online meeting	Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the Scheme and ecological baseline • Summary of PEI Report conclusions, including purpose of the ES – seeking to avoid significant effects where possible. • Summary of design refinement of Cable Route Corridor to minimise impacts. • Preparation of a mitigation package for ground nesting birds. • Clarification on potential impacts on LWSs as the Scheme progressed, with suitable mitigation/compensation will be proposed.
Landscape and Visual Amenity	10 July 2023 and 28 July 2023; email correspondence	Relevant local authority Tree Officer and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion and agreement of scope and methodology of Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA).

ES Topic	Date and location	Attendees	Summary of meeting
Ecology and Nature Conservation	13 July 2023; online meeting	Applicant's arboricultural consultant Natural England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Scheme provided and proposed methodology to assess ecology and soils. • Confirmation of full ALC survey for the Principal Site, but not the Cable Route Corridor. • Discussion of Natural England's statutory consultation comments • Agreement for no further Habitat Regulations Assessment due to distance of site from designated sites • Discussion of potential impacts to Ashton's Meadow Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and confirmation of coverage in final ES. • Discussion of embedded mitigation, including hedgerows • Discussion of BNG measures to be connected with local biodiversity opportunity mapping.
Cultural Heritage	8 August 2023; online meeting	Historic Environment Officers (Lincolnshire County Council) and Historic England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on programme and trial trenching (TT) activities including identification of areas of high archaeological potential within the Principal Site. • Agreement that areas of preservation would be for the duration of the Scheme. • Agreement that fencing would be required to protect the archaeological exclusion zones. • Agreement to engage stakeholders with a Framework Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (AMS).

ES Topic	Date and location	Attendees	Summary of meeting
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement that the Cable Route Corridor could be subject to trench evaluation post DCO submission. • Agreement to share the TT reports with stakeholders ahead of submission to inform the AMS. • Arrangement of site visit with Historic England to discuss potential impacts upon heritage assets.
Major Accidents and Disasters	16 August 2023; online meeting	Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting to agree to a Framework Fire Safety Management Plan (FSMP) for BESS • Initial discussions around fire suppression measures, compartmentation, and the indicative Principal Site layout.
Cultural Heritage	24 August 2023; online meeting	Historic England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion and agreement that a considered and coherent significance approach has been made in relation to the indicative site layout.
Landscape and Visual Amenity	21 August 2023; email correspondence	Lincolnshire County Council landscape consultant and Applicant's landscape architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjustments to viewpoints and photomontage locations for the Principal Site.
Landscape and Visual Amenity	22 August 2023; email correspondence	West Lindsey District Council head of DM and Applicant's landscape architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To address comments raised at statutory consultation and to agree on viewpoints and baseline photography.
Landscape and Visual Amenity	21 August 2023 and 24 August 2023; email correspondence	AAH Consultants and Applicant's landscape architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued dialogue with respect to viewpoints along the Cable Route Corridor.

ES Topic	Date and location	Attendees	Summary of meeting
Flood Risk, Drainage and Surface Water	4 September 2023; online meeting	Range of water environment stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement for channels in Trent Valley IDB to be non-intrusively crossed. • Agreement on point of measurement for buffer zones on watercourses. • Agreement on crossings of WFD monitored reaches by trenchless crossing. • Agreement of Sea Level Assessment for FRA – no further work required. • Agreement on Drainage Strategy Approach. • Agreement on Flood Risk Tech Note assessment approach – agreed fluvial modelling not required for FRA.
Landscape and Visual Amenity	21 September 2023; technical note	AAH Consultants and Applicant's landscape architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on representative views and photomontage locations for Principal Site and Cable Route Corridor; and confirmation of methodology.
Human Health	25 October 2023; email correspondence	Environment Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement to discuss the effects of EMF on fish within the ecology chapter of the ES.
Ground Conditions	12 October 2023; online meeting	Natural England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To address statutory consultation comments • Agreement that a full ALC survey was not required for the Cable Route Corridor • Confirmation of no permanent loss of BMV due to time limited consent • Agreement to Framework Soil Management Plan as part of submission. • Confirmation that SoCG were normally done post submission.

ES Topic	Date and location	Attendees	Summary of meeting
Ecology and Nature Conservation	16 October 2023; online meeting/workshop	Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop to explore a strategic approach to addressing biodiversity requirements from Solar Farms in Greater Lincolnshire, from the Humber to the Wash.
Transport and Access	14 December 2023; online meeting	Representatives of highways authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting to discuss Cable Route Corridor access and construction strategy. • Explanation temporary access locations, design parameters, temporary compounds, ALLs. • Discussion of shared corridor with other developers and its design iteration.
Ecology and Nature Conservation	15 December 2023; online meeting	Natural England (Species Licensing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of background surveys – EclA, HRA Screening and ecological surveys and Scheme design of avoidance and mitigation where possible. • Summarised outcomes of survey work, confirming no need for licences with species avoided or pre-commencement checks proposed. • Discussion of Great Crested Newts with licensing possibly not needed due to the low quality habitats. • Discussion pre-commencement surveys to take a 50m buffer to support licence requirements.
General	17 January 2024; in person meeting/site visit	Near neighbour to the Principal Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting to discuss concerns relating to potential impacts upon residential amenity. • Agreement to produce a SoCG. • Agreement to continue collaboration/information sharing on the Scheme.

ES Topic	Date and location	Attendees	Summary of meeting
Noise and Vibration	24 January 2024; online meeting	Noise consultants (for near neighbour property and Applicant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement for the Applicant to produce a technical note setting out baseline noise/ambient noise levels. • Discussion of noise modelling, subject to future agreement.
Ecology and Nature Conservation	15 December 2023; online meeting	Natural England (Species Licensing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of background surveys – EclA, HRA Screening and ecological surveys and Scheme design of avoidance and mitigation where possible. • Summarised outcomes of survey work, confirming no need for licences with species avoided or pre-commencement checks proposed. • Discussion of Great Crested Newts with licensing possibly not needed due to the low quality habitats. • Discussion of pre-commencement surveys to take a 50m buffer to support licence requirements.
Major Accidents and Disasters	2 February 2024; online meeting	Lincolnshire Fire Service and battery safety and testing consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulation of FSMP ahead of meeting to reach agreement, especially regarding the fire safety strategy for the Principal Site. • Agreement OFSMP with the fire service and to form part of the submission
Cultural Heritage	08 August 2023	Historic England Lincolnshire County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the findings of the PEI Report assessments and trial trenching works completed. • Discussion of further work to be completed, buffer zones, mitigation strategies and programme going forward to the ES assessments.

12.4 Interim reporting

12.4.1 Following the close of the statutory consultation in July 2023 and subsequent targeted statutory consultation in January 2024 – and as a result of ongoing design development and engagement with consultees – the Applicant issued a Community Newsletter in March 2024, ahead of DCO application submission. This followed a similar format to the Community Newsletter issued following the collaboration workshops in 2022 (see **Appendix A-10**).

12.4.2 In accordance with the MHCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6), the Applicant sought to ensure that consultation is ‘thorough, effective and proportionate’. Both newsletters aimed to update stakeholders on consultation feedback and how the Applicant continued to have regard in the ongoing design refinement process, and ahead of DCO application submission.

12.4.3 The newsletter included the following information:

- a. An introduction to the Scheme and what it is needed;
- b. A description of the Scheme’s location, including a map showing the updated plans, including revised Principal Site and Cable Route Corridor (following statutory consultation);
- c. A summary of the consultation undertaken to date, including the statutory consultation from May to July 2023;
- d. A summary of the findings of the statutory consultation, including quantitative and qualitative feedback;
- e. A more detailed breakdown of key consultation themes by key topic areas, including visual impacts, cumulative impacts, battery and fire, community benefits, agricultural land, Scheme location – including an overview of what the Applicant was doing in response to comments prior to DCO application submission in April 2024;
- f. An updated indicative masterplan, which had evolved following statutory consultation as a result of ongoing design refinement, stakeholder feedback and ongoing landowner and stakeholder discussions (see **Figure 12-1** for a screenshot of the updated masterplan);
- g. An overview of next steps ahead of DCO application submission in April 2024 and what happens next following this milestone;
- h. A summary of the targeted consultation held from 14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024;
- i. An updated Scheme timeline; and
- j. Contact details for stakeholders to get in touch.

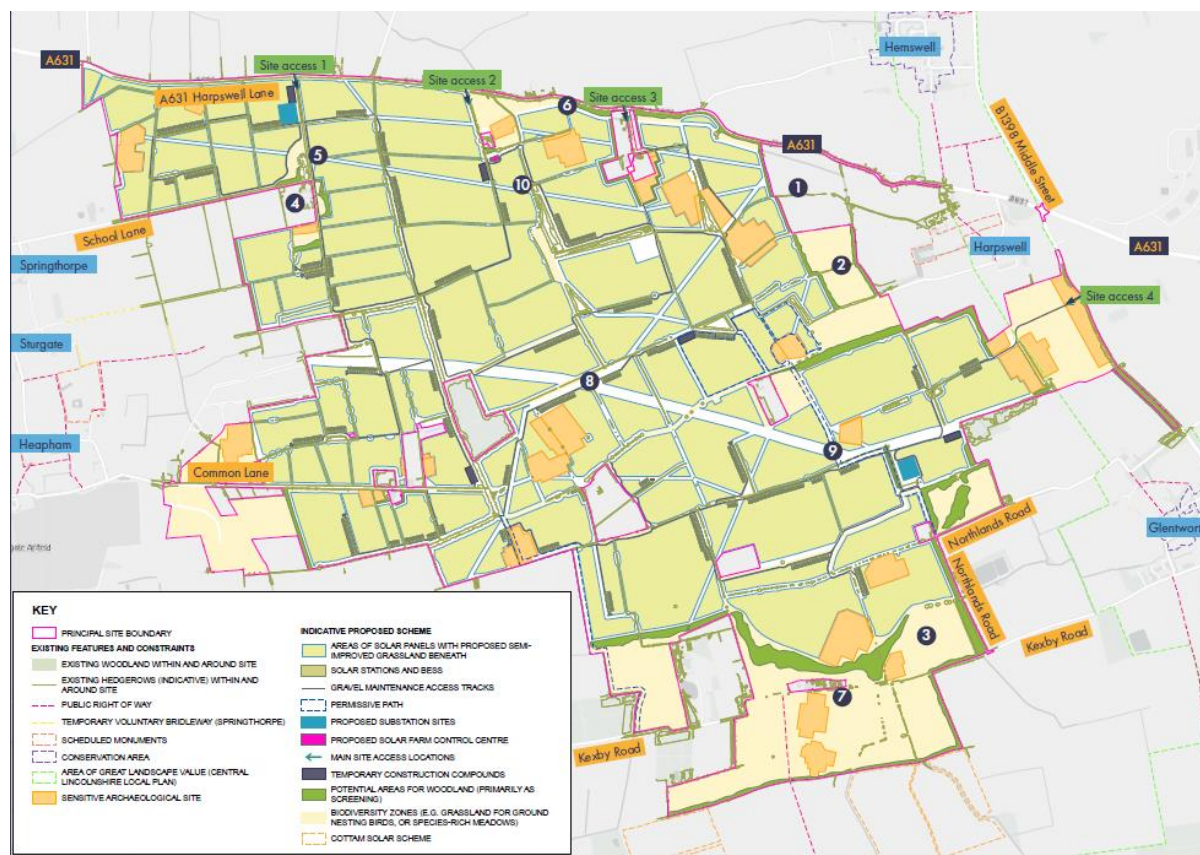
12.4.4 A copy of newsletter is provided in **Appendix A-12.1**.

12.4.5 A copy of the updated site layout plan is provided as **Figure 12-1**. The masterplan highlighted a number of key changes to the Principal Site following (and as a result) of statutory consultation, including:

- a. Removal of solar and BESS stations were from Field 92 (off Northlands Road) to help reduce noise impacts at nearby properties;

- b. Removal of panels from three fields at the northeastern corner of the Principal Site to mitigate heritage and landscape impacts;
- c. Removal of solar infrastructure from the two fields immediately east of the Scheduled Monument to reduce impacts and reduce the presence of solar infrastructure close to permissive paths west of Harpswell;
- d. Removal of solar infrastructure from a field north of Kexby Road, mitigating heritage impacts and reducing visibility along Kexby Road. The area is now proposed for biodiversity mitigation and enhancement;
- e. Provision of woodland screening and an area of biodiversity enhancement south of Springthorpe Grange;
- f. Amendments to the proposed woodland and biodiversity enhancement around the former orchard area north of Grange Cottages on School Lane, mainly to reflect great crested newts within the pond;
- g. Extension to the biodiversity enhancement area into the field south of Hemswell Grange and Grange Cottage on the A631, to create a wider buffer with tree planting to limit residential view of panels;
- h. Changes to proposed tree and hedge planting south of Kexby Road, in response to concerns from residents about loss of open views;
- i. Enhancements to existing hedgerows running east west through the site, to create more robust and continuous green infrastructure corridors, such as east of Harpswell Wood;
- j. Provision of two permissive paths connecting Common Lane and Kexby Road, offering recreational access in an area where PRow are limited and also improving north-south off-road links; and
- k. Relocation of the operational site office and stores to a location south of Hemswell Grange.

Figure 12-1: Updated indicative site layout plan included in Community Newsletter (March 2024)



- 12.4.6 This newsletter was sent to the PCZ by Royal Mail 2nd class mail on 11 March 2024, as was established in 2022 and developed in response to LPA comments on the draft SoCC (see **Chapter 6**). The PCZ comprised approximately 5,000 properties.
- 12.4.7 As with previous communications, near neighbours to the Principal Site (who also received previous newsletters and statutory consultation information) were also sent a copy of the newsletter (as addresses were within the PCZ).
- 12.4.8 The newsletter was also sent electronically via email to wider consultees, including parish councils, MPs, LPAs (members and elected representatives) and local interest groups, as listed in **Appendix A-12.2**. It was also emailed to a number of individuals (including community members, land interests/tenants and local interest groups) who had previously signed up for email updates. Emails sent to the relevant groups are provided in **Appendix A-12.3 to Appendix A-12.7**.
- 12.4.9 The newsletter was also uploaded to the Scheme website, with the site also updated to provide the latest information on the Scheme prior to DCO application submission in April 2024.

12.5 Other engagement

- 12.5.1 The Applicant has continued to engage with a range of stakeholders, including with land interests.
- 12.5.2 The Applicant also continued to engage and meet with Host authorities on an ongoing basis to discuss ongoing issues and discuss ongoing Scheme

developments. A summary of example meetings between the end of statutory consultation (in July 2023) and DCO application submission (in April 2024) is provided in **Table 12-2**.

Table 12-2: Summary of engagements with Host authorities (July 2023 to April 2024)

LPA	Meeting date/format	Summary of items discussed
Lincolnshire County Council	12 September 2023; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates on Applicant's programme and discussion with PINS; status of other solar schemes. • Discussion of targeted statutory consultation and nature of changes following statutory consultation. • Wider stakeholder engagement with Lincolnshire County Council technical officers, e.g. landscape officers.
West Lindsey District Council	13 September 2023; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of targeted statutory consultation and nature of changes following statutory consultation. • Progress of considering statutory consultation and ongoing meetings with statutory bodies. • Summary of the Applicant's role in the Early Adopters Programme.
Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council (joint meeting)	Joint meeting on 15 September 2023; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of targeted statutory consultation and nature of changes following statutory consultation. • Proposed method for consultation, including forthcoming consultation methodology. • Progress of considering statutory consultation and ongoing meetings with statutory bodies.
Lincolnshire County Council	13 October 2023; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing stakeholder engagement with wider bodies, such as Historic England and Natural England. • Applicant's ongoing regard to consultation responses, including changes to indicative site layout plan. • Further detail on targeted statutory consultation.
West Lindsey District Council	13 October 2023; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the Applicant's programme, with a refreshed date for DCO application submission.

LPA	Meeting date/format	Summary of items discussed
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant's ongoing regard to consultation responses, including changes to indicative site layout plan. • Ongoing stakeholder engagement with wider bodies, such as Historic England and Natural England.
Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council (joint meeting)	Joint meeting on 26 October 2023; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the Applicant's programme, with a refreshed date for DCO application submission. • Confirmation of targeted statutory consultation. • Overview of status of collaboration with other solar developers.
West Lindsey District Council	14 February 2024; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of latest proposals for Scheme ahead of DCO application submission. • Briefing of Scheme updates ahead of publication of Community Newsletter. • Updates related to other solar schemes.
Lincolnshire County Council	22 February 2024; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of latest proposals for Scheme ahead of DCO application submission. • Briefing of Scheme updates ahead of publication of Community Newsletter. • Updates related to other solar schemes.
Nottinghamshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council (joint meeting)	Joint meeting on 22 February 2024; Microsoft Teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of latest proposals for Scheme ahead of DCO application submission. • Briefing of Scheme updates ahead of publication of Community Newsletter. • Updates related to other solar schemes.

12.5.3 In addition, the Applicant had frequent engagement with other solar DCO developers to discuss collaboration and how developers (Tillbridge Solar, Island Green Power and Low Carbon) could work together across the solar schemes.

12.5.4 More detail on the Applicant ongoing engagement with other developers can be found in **Chapter 5, section 5.3**. For further information on the inter-

relationships between the Scheme and the neighbouring projects, please see the Report on the Interrelationship with other National Infrastructure Projects [EN010142/APP/7.6].

- 12.5.5 Between the close of the statutory consultation in July 2023 and DCO application submission in April 2024, the Scheme's communication channels – including Freephone information line (0800 046 9643), email (info@tillbridgesolar.com), Freepost (FREEPOST TILLBRIDGE SOLAR), and website enquiry form (see **Appendix C-13.4**) – remained open.
- 12.5.6 The Applicant also remained open to accepting meeting invitations, on request, and directly responded to questions regarding the Scheme.

13. Conclusion

13.1 Compliance with advice and governance

13.1.1 The Applicant has undertaken an iterative consultation process which complies with, and exceeds, the requirements of the PA 2008, the DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (2015) (Ref 6), as well as relevant advice from PINS (including PINS' Advice Note 6 (May 2012) (Ref 8), and PINS' Advice Note 14 (February 2021) (Ref 9)).

13.1.2 **Table 13-1** sets out how the Applicant has complied with the PA 2008 and associated regulations.

Table 13-1: Compliance with PA 2008 and associated regulations

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)	Response
Planning Act 2008			
	Duty to consult (1) The applicant must consult the following about the proposed application (a) Such persons as may be prescribed	Y	The Applicant consulted all persons listed as a prescribed consultee notified by the 'the EIA Regulations' (Ref 3). All s42 consultees are listed in Appendix E-2 .
	(b) Each local authority that is within Section 43	Y	As noted in Chapter 8 , the Applicant consulted each local authority that is within s43, which included "A", "B", "C" and "D" authorities, as classified under s43.
Section 42			<p><u>"B" Authorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Lindsey District Council; and • Bassetlaw District Council. <p><u>"C" Authorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nottinghamshire County Council; and • Lincolnshire County Council <p><u>"A" Authorities</u></p>

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• North Kesteven District Council;• Lincoln City Council;• Newark and Sherwood District Council;• Mansfield District Council;• Bolsover District Council; and• East Lindsey District Council.
		<p><u>“A” and “D” Authorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• North East Lincolnshire Council;• North Lincolnshire Council;• Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council; and• Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council.
		<p><u>“D” Authorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rutland County Council;• North Northamptonshire Council;• Nottingham City Council;• Peterborough City Council;• Cambridgeshire County Council;• Norfolk County Council;• Derbyshire County Council; and• Leicestershire County Council

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
	(c) each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in Section 44.	Y The Applicant consulted each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in Section 44. This is described in Chapter 8 . A list of land interests consulted is provided in Appendix E-4.1 .
	<p>Timetable for consultation under Section 42</p> <p>(1) The applicant must, when consulting a person under section 42, notify the person of the deadline for the receipt by the applicant of the person's response to the consultation.</p>	Y As noted in Chapter 8, section 8.7 , the Applicant wrote to section 42 consultees on 26 May 2023 notifying them of the commencement of the Section 42 consultation. The deadline given was 11 July 2023. The consultation process therefore ran for a period of 43 days (which is longer than the statutory 28-day minimum as per s45(2)).
Section 45	2) A deadline notified under subsection (1) must not be earlier than the end of the period of 28 days that begins with the day after the day on which the person receives the consultation documents.	Y The Applicant undertook consultation on the PEI Report between 30 May and 11 July 2023. Section 42 consultees were formally notified in writing of the commencement of statutory consultation on 26 May 2023. The deadline for responding to the s42 consultation was 11 July 2023 (therefore giving consultees 43 days in total to respond). The consultation ran in parallel to consultation under sections 47 and 48 of the 2008 Act.

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
	<p>(3) In subsection (2) “the consultation documents” means the documents supplied to the person by the applicant for the purpose of consulting the person.</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>The consultation documents provided to all s42 consultees comprised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter (see Appendix E-3); • A web link to page containing the full PEI Report, including an NTS. An offer for a USB stick was made if web link was inaccessible; • A hard copy of the notice publicised in accordance with s48 of the 2008 Act (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected free of charge) (see Appendix D-1); and • A statutory consultation leaflet showing the location of the Scheme (see Appendix C-13.1).
<p>Section 46</p>	<p>Duty to notify Secretary of State of proposed application</p> <p>(1) The applicant must supply the Secretary of State with such information in relation to the proposed application as the applicant would supply to the Secretary of State for the purpose of complying with section 42 if the applicant were required by that section to consult the Secretary of State about the proposed application.</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>The Applicant notified PINS in writing under Section 46 of the 2008 Act on 24 May 2023 that it was intending to commence consultation under s42 of the 2008 Act commencing on 30 May and closing on 11 July 2023.</p> <p>The Applicant wrote to PINS electronically,</p>

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
	<p>(2) The applicant must comply with subsection (1) on or before commencing consultation under section 42.</p>	<p>which included the following consultation documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter (see Appendix F-1); • Example copies of s42 covering letters sent to various stakeholders, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – S42(1)(a) consultees (see Appendix E-3.1); – S42(1)(aa) – MMO (see Appendix E-3.2); – S42(1)(b) consultees (see Appendix E-3.3); and – S42(d) consultees – land interests (see Appendix E-3.4); • A copy of the notice publicised in accordance with s48 of the 2008 Act (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected free of charge) (see Appendix D-1); and • A statutory consultation leaflet showing the location of the Scheme (see Appendix C-13.1).
<p>Section 47</p>	<p>Duty to consult local community (1)</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>As outlined in Chapter 6, the prepared a SoCC. This chapter explains</p>

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
	<p>The applicant must prepare a statement setting out how the applicant proposes to consult, about the proposed application, people living in the vicinity of the land.</p>	<p>how the SoCC was developed including consultation with the local authorities within s43(1). The final SoCC can be found in Appendix B-7.</p>
	<p>(2) Before preparing the statement, the applicant must consult each local authority that is within section 43(1) about what is to be in the statement.</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>Before preparing the statement, the Applicant consulted each local authority that is within s43(1), being: West Lindsey District Council, Bassetlaw District Council, Lincolnshire County Council and Nottinghamshire County Council on the content of the statement.</p>
	<p>(3) The deadline for the receipt by the applicant of a local authority's response to consultation under subsection (2) is the end of the period of 28 days that begins with the day after the day on which the local authority receives the consultation documents.</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>The Applicant wrote to Host authorities on 13 February 2023, requesting comments by 23:59 on 14 March 2023 ((allowing a 28-day response period from the day after the day on which the document was received).</p> <p>As reported in Chapter 6, section 6.2, this followed a period of 'informal' consultation on the draft SoCC with host Authorities. Table 6-1 and Table 6-2 list comments on the draft SoCC during the informal and formal consultations, respectively, including how the Applicant responded to the comments.</p>

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
	(4) In subsection (3) “the consultation documents” means the documents supplied to the local authority by the applicant for the purpose of consulting the local authority under subsection (2).	Y The consultation documents supplied by the Applicant included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an explanatory cover email; and • the draft SoCC.
	(5) In preparing the statement, the applicant must have regard to any response to consultation under subsection (2) that is received by the applicant before the deadline imposed by subsection (3).	Y The Applicant had regard to all relevant comments received on the draft SoCC. Details of the comments received and how the Applicant responded are provided in Chapter 6 , specifically Table 6-2 .
	(6) Once the applicant has prepared the statement, the applicant must— (a) make the statement available for inspection by the public in a way that is reasonably convenient for people living in the vicinity of the land, (b) publish in a newspaper circulating in the vicinity of the land, a notice stating where and when the statement can be inspected, and (c) publish the statement in such manner as may be prescribed.	Y The SoCC was publicised across the consultation area as detailed in Chapter 6, Table 6-4 . Notices publicising the SoCC in accordance with Section 47(6) were placed in the Lincolnshire Echo, Gainsborough Standard and Retford Times on 25 May 2023.
	(7) The applicant must carry out consultation in accordance with the proposals set out in the statement	Y The Applicant undertook consultation under Section 47 of the 2008 Act in accordance with the SoCC. See Chapter 6 for a summary of the actions undertaken by the Applicant to meet the obligations outlined in the SoCC.
	Duty to publicise	Y The Applicant publicised the application in the

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
	(1) The applicant must publicise the proposed application in the prescribed manner.	<p>prescribed manner set out in regulation 4 of the APFP Regulations (Ref 5) in accordance with s48 of the 2008 Act on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Guardian and London Gazette on 25 May 2023; and • Lincolnshire Echo, Retford Times and Gainsborough Standard on 25 May 2023 and 1 June 2023.
Section 48		<p>Consultation under Section 48 of the 2008 Act ran in parallel with statutory consultation on the PEI Report between 30 May and 11 July 2023. The published notices can be found in Appendix D-2.</p>
	(2) Regulations made for the purposes of subsection (1) must, in particular, make provision for publicity under subsection (1) to include a deadline for receipt by the applicant of responses to the publicity.	<p>Y</p> <p>The Section 48 notice included a deadline of 11 July 2023 for receipt of responses to the publicity, meaning a total of 43 days and therefore exceeding the 28 days statutory minimum response time.</p>
Section 49	<p>Duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity</p> <p>(1) Subsection (2) applies where the applicant—</p> <p>(a) has complied with sections 42, 47 and 48, and</p> <p>(b) proposes to go ahead with making an application for an order granting development consent</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>The Applicant has had regard to all relevant responses in accordance with Section 49 and has acted upon them where possible.</p>

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
	(whether or not in the same terms as the proposed application).	Compliance with Section 49 (2) is demonstrated in Chapter 10 .
	(2) The applicant must, when deciding whether the application that the applicant is actually to make should be in the same terms as the proposed application, have regard to any relevant responses.	All feedback received under s42 and s47 and the Applicant regard to these can be found in Appendix H and Appendix I , respectively. No responses were identified as being received under Section 48.
	(3) In subsection (2) “relevant response” means— (a) a response from a person consulted under section 42 that is received by the applicant before the deadline imposed by section 45 in that person's case, (b) a response to consultation under section 47(7) that is received by the applicant before any applicable deadline imposed in accordance with the statement prepared under section 47, or (c) a response to publicity under section 48 that is received by the applicant before the deadline imposed in accordance with section 48(2) in relation to that publicity.	All responses received and recorded in these appendices have been prepared following guidance set out in PINS’ Advice Note 14 (February 2021) (Ref 9).

Section 50	Guidance about pre-application procedure	Y	The Applicant has had regard to DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6) (as set out in this Table).
	(1) Guidance may be issued about how to comply with the requirements of this Chapter.		
	(2) Guidance under this section may be issued by the Secretary of State.	Y	The Applicant has also had regard to Advice Notes prepared by the Planning Inspectorate (as set out in this Table).
	(3) The applicant must have regard to any guidance under this section.	Y	

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
Reg 3	<p>Prescribed consultees</p> <p>The persons prescribed for the purposes of section 42(a) (duty to consult) are those listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 1 to these Regulations, who must be consulted in the circumstances specified in relation to each such person in column 2 of that table.</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>The Applicant consulted all persons prescribed in the EIA Regulations (Ref 3) who were deemed relevant to this Application. In addition, a number of groups were scoped in by the Applicant for the purposes of formally consulting with – referred to as ‘Section 42 consultees’ in this report.</p> <p>Appendix E-1 and Appendix E-2 provide lists of bodies consulted during the consultation.</p>
Reg 4	<p>Publicising a proposed application</p> <p>(1) This regulation prescribes for the purpose of section 48(1) (duty to publicise), the manner in which an applicant must publicise a proposed application.</p> <hr/> <p>(2) The applicant must publish a notice, which must include the matters prescribed by paragraph (3) of this regulation, of the proposed application—</p> <p>(a) for at least two successive weeks in one or more local newspapers circulating in the vicinity in which the proposed development would be situated;</p> <p>(b) once in a national newspaper;</p> <p>(c) once in the London Gazette and, if land in Scotland is affected, the Edinburgh Gazette; and</p> <p>(d) where the proposed application relates to offshore development—</p> <p>(i) once in Lloyd’s List; and (ii)</p>	<p>The Applicant published a notice which included all the matters set out in paragraph (3). A copy of the Section 48 notice is provided in Appendix D-1.</p> <p>The Section 48 notice was publicised in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Guardian and London Gazette on 25 May 2023; and • Lincolnshire Echo, Retford Times and Gainsborough Standard on 25 May 2023 and 1 June 2023.

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
	once in an appropriate fishing trade journal.	
	<p>(3) The matters which the notice must include are—</p> <p>(a) the name and address of the applicant;</p> <p>(b) a statement that the applicant intends to make an application for development consent to the Secretary of State;</p> <p>(c) a statement as to whether the application is EIA development;</p> <p>(d) a summary of the main proposals, specifying the location or route of the proposed development;</p> <p>(e) a statement that the documents, plans and maps showing the nature and location of the proposed development are available for inspection free of charge at the places (including at least one address in the vicinity of the proposed development) and times set out in the notice;</p> <p>(f) the latest date on which those documents, plans and maps will be available for inspection (being a date not earlier than the deadline in subparagraph (i));</p> <p>(g) whether a charge will be made for copies of any of the documents, plans or maps and the amount of any charge; (h) details of how to respond to the publicity; and (i) a deadline for receipt of those responses by the applicant, being not less than 28 days following the date when the notice is last published.</p>	<p>Y</p> <p>The Section 48 notice included all of the elements listed under Regulation 4(3) including stipulation of a deadline for responses being 11 July 2023.</p> <p>The published Section 48 Notices are included in Appendix D-2.</p>

Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)	Response
Reg 8	<p>Procedure for establishing whether environmental impact assessment is required</p> <p>(1) A person who proposes to make an application for an order granting development consent must, before carrying out consultation under section 42 (duty to consult) either—</p> <p>(a) ask the Secretary of State to adopt a screening opinion in respect of the development to which the application relates; or</p> <p>(b) notify the Secretary of State in writing that the person proposes to provide an environmental statement in respect of that development.</p>	Y	<p>The Applicant submitted a scoping report to the Planning Inspectorate on 30 September 2022, confirming that it intended to provide an Environmental Statement in respect of Tillbridge Solar pursuant to Regulation 8(1)(b) and requested a scoping opinion, pursuant to Regulation 10(1).</p>
	<p>(3) A request or notification under paragraph (1)(a) must be accompanied by—</p> <p>(a) a plan sufficient to identify the land;</p> <p>(b) a description of the development including in particular—</p> <p>(i) a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development and, where relevant, of demolition works;</p> <p>(ii) a description of the location of the development, with particular regard to the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected;</p>	Y	<p>A plan sufficient to identify the land was provided as Figure 1-1 in Chapter 1 of the Scoping Report, with all other figures (1-2 to 16-6) also identifying the Scheme.</p> <p>A Scoping Report was produced and issued to SoS, which provided a description of the nature and purpose of the Scheme and an explanation of the possible effects of the Scheme identified at that stage.</p>
	<p>(3A) A person notifying the Secretary of State under paragraph (1)(b) must provide, at the same time as giving notification, the information listed in paragraph (3)(a) and (b).</p>	Y	<p>This was complied with in complying with regulation 8(3) above.</p>

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)	Response
Reg 12	<p>Consultation statement requirements</p> <p>(1) The consultation statement prepared under section 47 (duty to consult local community) must set out —</p> <p>(a) whether the development for which the applicant proposes to make an application for an order granting development consent is EIA development; and</p> <p>(b) if that development is EIA development, how the applicant intends to publicise and consult on the preliminary environmental information.</p>	Y	<p>The Applicant stated in the SoCC that the proposed application is EIA development and that a PEI Report would be available on the Scheme website and as hard copies at the consultation events and at local information points specified in the contact information.</p> <p>The published SoCC can be found in Appendix B-7.</p>
Reg 13	<p>Pre-application publicity under section 48 (duty to publicise)</p> <p>Where the proposed application for an order granting development consent is an application for EIA development, the applicant must, at the same time as publishing notice of the proposed application under section 48(1), send a copy of that notice to the consultation bodies and to any person notified to the applicant in accordance with regulation 11(1)(c).</p>	Y	<p>The consultation documents provided to all s42 consultees comprised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter (see Appendix E-3); • A web link to page containing the full PEI Report, including an NTS. An offer for a USB stick was made if web link was inaccessible; • A hard copy of the notice publicised in accordance with s48 of the 2008 Act (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected free of charge) (see Appendix D-1); and

Ref	Legislation/Guidance/Advice	Compliance Response (Y/N)
		A statutory consultation leaflet showing the location of the Scheme (see Appendix C-13.1).
13.1.3	Table 13-2 sets out how the Applicant has complied with the DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015) (Ref 6).	

Table 13-2: Compliance with DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015)

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
17	When circulating consultation documents, developers should be clear about their status, for example ensuring it is clear to the public if a document is purely for purposes of consultation.	<p>The Applicant produced documents at various stages of the Scheme, clearly stating their status. Communications issued to consultees as part of the s42 and s47 consultations clearly set out details of the statutory consultation.</p> <p>For example, the Applicant issued a statutory consultation leaflet outlining the purpose of the consultation (see Appendix C-13.1), an introduction to the statutory consultation on page 3 of the project information booklet (see Appendix C-13.2) and on page 2 of the Feedback Questionnaire (see Appendix C-13.3).</p> <p>A 'Navigating our consultation plans' document was also produced to guide consultees (see Appendix C-13.6).</p>
18	Early involvement of local communities, local authorities and statutory consultees can bring about significant benefits for all parties.	The Applicant engaged early with local communities, local authorities, and statutory consultees, as outlined in Chapter 5 .
19	The pre-application consultation process is crucial to the effectiveness of the major infrastructure consenting regime. A thorough process can give the Secretary of State confidence that issues that will arise during the 6 months examination period have been identified, considered,	<p>The Applicant has conducted a thorough pre-application consultation process which has allowed it to identify, consider and, as far as possible, seek to reach agreement on issues likely to arise during the examination.</p> <p>Chapter 5 outlines the early engagement and non-statutory engagement with consultees which provided the opportunity to identify and consider issues early in the development of the Scheme.</p>

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
	<p>and – as far as possible – that applicants have sought to reach agreement on those issues.</p>	<p>Chapters 6 and 7 outline the preparation for and undertaking of statutory consultation, building on previous engagement and understanding of issues likely to arise.</p> <p>Chapter 10 of the Consultation Report provide accounts of the feedback received during statutory consultation and gives evidence on how the issues raised have been taken into account by the Applicant – see section 10.4 and section 10.5 for regard had to s42 and s47 responses, respectively.</p> <p>The Applicant also undertook a period of targeted statutory consultation on changes to the Scheme made and addressed following the statutory consultation. Where more persons were identified as having an interest, these were diligently consulted, as reported in Chapter 11.</p> <p>Where appropriate, the Applicant is progressing SoCGs with relevant statutory consultees to demonstrate areas of agreement and matters under discussion, which will continue beyond DCO application submission.</p>
18	<p>Early involvement of local communities, local authorities and statutory consultees can bring about significant benefits for all parties.</p>	<p>The Applicant engaged early with local communities, local authorities, and statutory consultees, as outlined in Chapter 5.</p>
20	<p>Experience suggests that to be of most value, consultation should be:</p> <p>Based on accurate information that gives consultees a clear view of what is proposed including any options;</p> <p>Shared at an early enough stage so that the proposal can still be influenced, while being sufficiently developed to provide some detail on what is being proposed; and</p>	<p>The Applicant shared information at an early enough stage to allow the proposals to be influenced, including during the non-statutory consultation exercise and statutory consultation period.</p> <p>During each stage, the Applicant set clear parameters for what elements of the Scheme could be influenced by input from consultees. The non-statutory collaboration workshops supported early-stage design development and process of environmental impact assessment, as reported in Chapter 5.</p> <p>During the statutory consultation, consultees were encouraged to feed back on the more</p>

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
	<p>Engaging and accessible in style, encouraging consultees to react and offer their views.</p>	<p>detailed Scheme design and the initial outcomes of the EIA, as set out in the PEI Report. The Applicant published a project information booklet (see Appendix C-13.2), which was written in an engaging and accessible style, translating more technical information. Information gave consultees a clear view of what was proposed and what could be influenced.</p>
25	<p>Consultation should be thorough, effective and proportionate. Some applicants may have their own distinct approaches to consultation, perhaps drawing on their own or relevant sector experience, for example if there are industry protocols that can be adapted. Larger, more complex applications are likely to need to go beyond the statutory minimum timescales laid down in the PA 2008 to ensure enough time for consultees to understand project proposals and formulate a response.</p> <p>Many proposals will require detailed technical input, especially regarding impacts, so sufficient time will need to be allowed for this. Consultation should also be sufficiently flexible to respond to the needs and requirements of consultees, for example where a consultee has indicated that they would prefer to be consulted via email only, this should be accommodated as far as possible</p>	<p>The Applicant has conducted a thorough, effective and proportionate consultation. The period provided to comment for consultation under s42, s47, and s48 of the PA 2008 was greater than the 28 calendar days required to be provided for comments as prescribed by s45(2) of the PA 2008.</p> <p>The Applicant has also been conscious of the need to be sufficiently flexible to respond to the needs and requirements of consultees. For example, during engagement of the SoCC (see section 6.3) the Applicant agreed to move the statutory consultation to a suitable date in response to comments from the Host authorities.</p> <p>As reported in section 7.10, the Applicant also provided a variety of means to respond to the statutory consultation, including completing a hard copy feedback questionnaire, an online form, or submitting comments by email/letter.</p> <p>The Applicant also provided a variety of means of finding out about the proposals, including in-person and online public consultation events, and accepting enquiries by Freephone, email or Freepost. Details of this are set out in Chapter 7.</p>
26	<p>The PA 2008 requires certain bodies and groups of people to be consulted at the pre-</p>	<p>The Applicant has identified and consulted with parties prescribed by s42, s43, and s44 of the PA 2008, as well as the local</p>

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
	<p>application stage, but allows for flexibility in the precise form that consultation may take depending on local circumstances and the needs of the project itself. Sections 42 – 44 of the PA 2008 and Regulations set out details of who should be consulted, including local authorities, the Marine Management Organisation (where appropriate), other statutory bodies, and persons having an interest in the land to be developed. Section 47 in the PA 2008 sets out the applicant’s statutory duty to consult local communities. In addition, applicants may also wish to strengthen their case by seeking the views of other people who are not statutory consultees, but who may be significantly affected by the project.</p>	<p>community as prescribed in s47 of the PA 2008 and defined in the SoCC.</p> <p>Details of how the Applicant consulted in accordance with each of these sections of the PA 2008 are set out in Chapters 7 and 8.</p> <p>In addition, the Applicant sought the views of a range of groups which were not statutory consultees but were deemed to have a potential interest. Details of these groups are set out in section 7.3 of this report and Appendix C-1.</p>
27	<p>The PA 2008 and Regulations set out the statutory consultees and prescribed people who must be consulted during the pre-application process. Many statutory consultees are responsible for consent regimes where, under section 120 of the PA 2008, decisions on those consents can be included within the decision on a Development Consent Order. Where an applicant proposes to include non-planning consents within their Development Consent Order, the bodies that would normally be responsible for granting these consents should make every effort to facilitate this. They should only object to the inclusion of</p>	<p>Statutory consultees were engaged with early in the development of the Scheme. Early engagement is set out in Table 2-2 of this report. These bodies continued to be engaged in the period between this and the statutory consultation as set out in Chapter 12 of this report.</p> <p>They were then consulted under s42 of the PA 2008 as set out in Chapter 8.</p> <p>In addition, the Applicant sought the views of a range of groups which were not statutory consultees but were deemed to have a potential interest. Details of these groups are set out in section 7.3 of this report and Appendix C-1.</p>

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
	such non-planning consents with good reason, and after careful consideration of reasonable alternatives. It is therefore important that such bodies are consulted at an early stage. In addition, there will be a range of national and other interest groups who could be make an important contribution during consultation. Applicants are therefore encouraged to consult widely on project proposals.	
29	Applicants will often need detailed technical input from expert bodies to assist with identifying and mitigating the social, environmental, design and economic impacts of projects, and other important matters. Technical expert input will often be needed in advance of formal compliance with the preapplication requirements. Early engagement with these bodies can help avoid unnecessary delays and the costs of having to make changes at later stages of the process. It is equally important that statutory consultees respond to a request for technical input in a timely manner. Applicants are therefore advised to discuss and agree a timetable with consultees for the provision of such inputs.	<p>The Applicant sought technical input from relevant expert bodies at each stage of the Scheme development.</p> <p>This included through the early engagement set out in Table 2-2 and the ongoing engagement set out in Chapter 12, as well as during the statutory consultation as detailed in Chapter 8.</p> <p>For example, the Applicant continued to engage with LFRS on technical issues, and also sought (and received) its feedback during the Targeted consultation (see Chapter 11).</p>
38	The role of the local authority in such discussions should be to provide expertise about the make-up of its area, including whether people in the area might have	The Applicant engaged early with host local authorities to seek expertise on these issues. This included through the early engagement set out in Table 2-2 and the ongoing engagement set out in Chapter 5, section 5.2 .

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
	<p>particular needs or requirements, whether the authority has identified any groups as difficult to reach and what techniques might be appropriate to overcome barriers to communication. The local authority should also provide advice on the appropriateness of the applicant's suggested consultation techniques and methods. The local authority's aim in such discussions should be to ensure that the people affected by the development can take part in a thorough, accessible and effective consultation exercise about the proposed project.</p>	<p>The Applicant met regularly with the Host authorities to provide Scheme updates, including initial engagement on community consultation methods, informal and formal engagement on the draft SoCC (as set out in Chapter 6, section 6.2) as prescribed by s47 of the PA 2008.</p> <p>The SoCC – as agreed with the Host authorities – set out how the Applicant proposed to consult, about the proposed Scheme, people living in the vicinity of the land.</p> <p>As reported in section 6.2, the Applicant consulted with each local authority that is within s43(1) of the PA 2008 on the SoCC. The regard that the Applicant had to responses received as part of the informal and formal consultations is set out in Table 6-1 and Table 6-2, respectively.</p>
41	<p>Where a local authority raises an issue or concern on the Statement of Community Consultation which the applicant feels unable to address, the applicant is advised to explain in their consultation report their course of action to the Secretary of State when they submit their application.</p>	<p>The regard that the Applicant had to 'informal' responses received from the Host authorities is set out in Table 6-1 and the regard had to 'formal' responses on the draft SoCC is set out in Table 6-2.</p>
50	<p>It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate at submission of the application that due diligence has been undertaken in identifying all land interests and applicants should make every reasonable effort to ensure that the Book of Reference (which records and categorises those land interests) is up to date at the time of submission.</p>	<p>The Applicant has diligently sought to identify all land interests and ensure that the Book of Reference [EN010142/APP/4.3] remains up to date. Details of this are set out in Chapter 8, section 8.5 of the Consultation Report and the Book of Reference.</p>

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
54	<p>In consulting on project proposals, an inclusive approach is needed to ensure that different groups have the opportunity to participate and are not disadvantaged in the process. Applicants should use a range of methods and techniques to ensure that they access all sections of the community in question. Local authorities will be able to provide advice on what works best in terms of consulting their local communities given their experience of carrying out consultation in their area.</p>	<p>The Applicant has adopted an inclusive approach to consultation to ensure that different groups have the opportunity to participate and are not disadvantaged in the process. The SoCC included proposals to support the participation of underrepresented and marginalised groups in the consultation, and the Applicant incorporated local authority feedback on this subject into the SoCC.</p> <p>Details of compliance with the approach set out in the SoCC are included in Table 6-7, and details of the regard the Applicant had to local authority comments on this area are included in Table 6-2.</p>
55	<p>Applicants must set out clearly what is being consulted on. They must be careful to make it clear to local communities what is settled and why, and what remains to be decided, so that expectations of local communities are properly managed. Applicants could prepare a short document specifically for local communities, summarising the project proposals and outlining the matters on which the view of the local community is sought. This can describe core elements of the project and explain what the potential benefits and impacts may be. Such documents should be written in clear, accessible, and nontechnical language. Applicants should consider making it available in formats appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities if requested. There may be</p>	<p>The Applicant published consultation materials written in an engaging and accessible style, setting out what was possible to influence at that stage.</p> <p>This information was clearly set out during the non-statutory collaboration workshops (see section 5.5 of Chapter 5) and as part of the statutory consultation, including the project information booklet (see Appendix C-13.2).</p> <p>Information was also clearly presented during the targeted statutory consultation, including the Targeted Statutory Consultation Brochure (see Appendix G-5).</p> <p>This information was supplemented by consultation materials designed to present consultation information in other, interactive formats, include an online interactive map and webinars during statutory consultation. Copies of consultation materials were available in alternative formats on request.</p>

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
	<p>cases where documents may need to be bilingual (for example, Welsh and English in some areas), but it is not the policy of the Government to encourage documents to be translated into non-native languages.</p>	
57	<p>The Statement of Community Consultation should act as a framework for the community consultation generally, for example, setting out where details and dates of any events will be published. The Statement of Community Consultation should be made available online, at any exhibitions or other events held by applicants. It should be placed at appropriate local deposit points (e.g. libraries, council offices) and sent to local community groups as appropriate.</p>	<p>As set out in Chapter 6 the Applicant included a framework for community consultation in the SoCC, including where details and dates of events would be published.</p> <p>The SoCC was made available on the Scheme website from 25 May 2023. Printed copies of the document were also lodged and available at document inspection locations set out in Table 6-3 from 25 May 2023.</p>
58	<p>Applicants are required to publicise their proposed application under section 48 of the PA 2008 and Regulation 4(2) of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 ('the Regulations') and set out the detail of what this publicity must entail. This publicity is an integral part of the public consultation process. Where possible, the first of the 2 required local newspaper advertisements should coincide approximately with the beginning of the consultation with communities. However, given the detailed information</p>	<p>The Applicant publicised the proposed application under s48 of the PA 2008, and in compliance with the Regulations, as set out in Table 7-10. The dates of these insertions coincided as closely as possible with the start of consultation given the publication schedules of the relevant local newspapers.</p>

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
	<p>required for the publicity in the Regulations, aligning publicity with consultation may not always be possible, especially where a multi-stage consultation is intended.</p>	
68	<p>To realise the benefits of consultation on a project, it must take place at a sufficiently early stage to allow consultees a real opportunity to influence the proposals. At the same time consultees will need sufficient information on a project to be able to recognise and understand the impacts.</p>	<p>For both the non-statutory public consultation stage and statutory consultation period, the Applicant shared information at an early enough stage to allow the proposal to be influenced, while being sufficiently developed to provide sufficient information on what is being proposed to enable consultees to recognise and understand its impacts.</p> <p>Appendices H and I provide a report on the s47 and s42 consultee feedback and Chapter 10, sections 10.4 and 10.5 summarise issues raised under s42 and s47, respectively.</p> <p>For both stages of consultation, the Applicant developed a clear scope for what could be influenced by consultees. For the non-statutory consultation (including the collaboration workshops), this was to support design development and the process of environmental impact assessment.</p> <p>For the statutory consultation, the purpose of the consultation was to seek the views of statutory consultees and the public on the Scheme; the potential short and long-term impacts of the Scheme during construction, operations, and decommissioning; the contribution the Scheme could make to the local community; and the initial outcomes of the EIA as set out in the PEI Report.</p> <p>Consultation materials during both stages were written in an engaging and accessible style, setting out what it was possible to influence at that stage, providing accurate information that gave consultees a clear view of what was proposed, and encouraging them to offer their views. Copies of the non-statutory consultation and statutory consultation materials can be found in Appendix A and C, respectively.</p>

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
72	<p>The timing and duration of consultation will be likely to vary from project to project, depending on size and complexity, and the range and scale of the impacts. The PA 2008 requires a consultation period of a minimum of 28 days from the day after receipt of the consultation documents. It is expected that this may be sufficient for projects which are straightforward and uncontroversial in nature. But many projects, particularly larger or more controversial ones, may require longer consultation periods than this. Applicants should therefore set consultation deadlines that are realistic and proportionate to the proposed project. It is also important that consultees do not withhold information that might affect a project, and that they respond in good time to applicants. Where responses are not received by the deadline, the applicant is not obliged to take those responses into account.</p>	<p>The period provided to comment for consultation under s42, s47, and s48 of the PA 2008 was 43 days, significantly greater than the 28 calendar days required to be provided for comments as prescribed by s45(2) of the PA 2008.</p>
73	<p>Applicants are not expected to repeat consultation rounds set out in their Statement of Community Consultation unless the project proposals have changed very substantially. However, where proposals change to such a large degree that what is being taken forward is fundamentally different from what was consulted on, further consultation may well be needed. This may be necessary if, for example,</p>	<p>The Applicant conducted targeted statutory consultation in relation to 20 minor changes to the Order limits from 14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024 as set out in Chapter 11.</p>

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
	<p>new information arises which renders all previous options unworkable or invalid for some reason. When considering the need for additional consultation, applicants should use the degree of change, the effect on the local community and the level of public interest as guiding factors.</p>	
77	<p>Consultation should also be fair and reasonable for applicants as well as communities. To ensure that consultations is fair to all parties, applicants should be able to demonstrate that the consultation process is proportionate to the impacts of the project in the area that it affects, takes account of the anticipated level of local interest, and takes account of the views of the relevant local authorities.</p>	<p>The Applicant has sought to ensure that the consultation process is proportionate to the impacts of the project in the area that it affects, takes account of the anticipated level of local interest, and takes account of the views of the relevant local authorities.</p> <p>The Applicant engaged with relevant local authorities prior to the non-statutory and statutory consultation stages to seek their views on whether its proposals for consultation were proportionate and took into account the likely level of local interest. Details on the regard the Applicant had to local authorities on the informal and formal SoCC can be found in Table 6-1 and Table 6-2, respectively.</p>
84	<p>A response to points raised by consultees with technical information is likely to need to focus on the specific impacts for which the body has expertise. The applicant should make a judgement as to whether the consultation report provides sufficient detail on the relevant impacts, or whether a targeted response would be more appropriate. Applicants are also likely to have identified a number of key additional bodies for consultation and may need to continue engagement with these bodies on an individual basis.</p>	<p>As set out in Chapter 12, the Applicant continued to engage with a number of stakeholders following the close of consultation, including ongoing discussions around SoCG, which will continue beyond submission of the DCO application.</p>

Para	Requirement	Evidence of compliance
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| 13.1.4 | The Applicant has also considered the advice given in PINS' Advice Note 14 (February 2021) (Ref 9). Details of compliance with this text is included in Table 13-3 . | |
| 13.1.5 | The 'Evidence of compliance' column signposts to where evidence of compliance can be found in the respective chapters of this Consultation Report. | |

Table 13-3: Compliance with PINS' Advice Note 14 (February 2021) .

Para	Advice	Evidence of compliance
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Format and content of the Consultation Report: Introductory text

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| 3.2 | Introductory text should provide an overview including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary of the consultation – activities undertaken; and • a table or timeline summarising – both statutory and non-statutory – consultation in chronological order. | This is provided in section 2.4 , with a summary of pre-application consultation activity set out in chronological order in Table 2-2 . |
| 3.3 | This section should explain the relationship between any initial strategic options stage, any subsequent non-statutory consultation that may have taken place, and the statutory consultation carried out under the PA 2008. | Chapter 3 outlines the EIA consultation, Chapter 4 non-statutory consultation and Chapters 7 and 8 the statutory consultation. |
| 3.4 | Many Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) evolve over an extended period of time with previous proposals that may have been consulted on then abandoned; in which case, a brief description of any historic consultation activity, including any information available about the scale and nature of the response at that time, would be of interest. A detailed planning history of the site is not necessary in this report. | Chapter 3 outlines the EIA consultation, Chapter 4 non-statutory consultation and Chapters 7 and 8 the statutory consultation. |

Format and content of the Consultation Report: Multi-stage consultations

Para Advice

Evidence of compliance

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- 3.5 Where the pre-application consultation included more than one stage of statutory consultation then it is usually helpful to reflect this in the structure of the report. In this way, each stage of consultation can be presented and explained chronologically in a separate chapter or section of the report, including any non-statutory consultation that took place. This can also include separate summary schedules of consultation responses

Chapter 4 outlines the non-statutory consultation and **Chapters 7 and 8** the statutory consultation.

Chapter 11 provides a summary of the targeted consultation.

Format and content of the Consultation Report: Duty to consult (s42)

- 3.6 The report should include a list of all persons and bodies that were consulted, and when they were consulted.
- A list of persons and bodies consulted under s42(1)(a) and (b) is provided in **Appendix E-2**.
- A full list of land interests consulted under s42(1)(d) during the statutory consultation which took place from 30 May to 11 July 2023 can be found in **Appendix E-2**.
- All those consulted as part of the targeted consultation which took place from 14 December to 2023 to 25 January 2024 are listed in **Appendix G-4**.
- 3.8 The list of the prescribed organisations should follow the order they are presented in Schedule 1 of The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (the APFP Regulations). Any variations between the Applicant's list of Prescribed Consultees and the list of organisations set out in Schedule 1 of the APFP Regulations (Ref 5) should be robustly justified.
- This has been adhered to as set out in **Appendix E-1**.
- 3.10 A short description of how s43 of the PA 2008 has been applied in order to identify the relevant local
- This is set out in section **8.3** of the Consultation Report, in **Table 8-1** and in **Figure 8-1** and **Figure 8-2**.

Para Advice

Evidence of compliance

	authorities should be included. This could be supported by a map showing the site and identifying the boundaries of the relevant local authorities.	
3.11	The Applicant must demonstrate that diligent enquiry was undertaken to identify persons under s44 of the PA 2008 and to ensure that an up to date Book of Reference is submitted. In that context, it is useful to set out the methodology for identifying persons in Category 3 (those who may make a relevant claim).	The Applicant has diligently sought to identify all land interests and ensure that the Book of Reference [EN010142/APP/4.3] remains up to date. Details of this are set out in Chapter 8, section 8.5 of the Consultation Report and the Book of Reference.
3.12	The Consultation Report should explain how many persons with an interest in land were consulted, under which category and when.	A full list of land interests consulted under s42(1)(d) during the statutory consultation period of 30 May to 11 July 2023 can be found in Appendix E-1 , as well as those consulted in subsequent targeted statutory consultation from 14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024 can be found in Appendix G-4 .

Format and content of the Consultation Report: Duty to consult the local community (s47)

	The Secretary of State needs to be satisfied that the Applicant has complied with the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) preparation process. Evidence should be submitted as part of the Consultation Report which shows:	This is provided in Chapter 6:
3.14	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Which local authorities were consulted about the content of the draft SoCC;• what the local authorities' — comments were;• confirmation that the local — authorities were given 28 days to provide their comments; and• a description about how the Applicant had regard to the local authorities' comments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Section 6.3 sets out which local authorities were consulted about the content of the draft SoCC;• Table 6-2 lists local authority comments (with copies provided in Appendix B-5);• Section 6.3: confirmation that the local authorities were given 28 days to provide their comments (see Appendix B-4.1 for letters sent to Host authorities); and• Table 6-2 provides a summary of how the Applicant had regard to the local authorities' comments.

Para Advice

Evidence of compliance

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| 3.15 | Applicants should make the SoCC available for inspection online. Evidence that this has been done should be provided in the Consultation Report, for example, a screen shot of the relevant webpage showing the published SoCC (including the full website address and relevant telephone number for enquiries as required by the 2020 Regulations) and confirmation that the public could access the webpage free of charge. | The SoCC was made available on the consultation website as set out in Chapter 6, section 6.4 . |
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| 3.16 | Copies of the published SoCC notice as it appeared in the local press should be provided along with confirmation of which local newspapers it was published in and when. | A copy of the published SoCC (see Appendix B-7) as it appeared in local newspapers (as a section 47 notice) is included in Appendix B-1 and Appendix B-8 . |
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Format and content of the Consultation Report: Duty to publicise (s48)

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| 3.19 | A scanned copy of the s48 notice as it appeared in the local and national newspapers and journals, clearly showing the publication's name and date of publication, should be included in the report. | Table 9-1 summarises the publication of s48 notices. Copies of the s48 notices showing the publication's name and date of publication are in Appendix D . |
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| 3.21 | Applicants should provide confirmation that the s48 notice was sent to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) consultation bodies at the same time as the notice was published. | Chapter 9, section 9.2 confirms the s48 notice was sent to the EIA consultation bodies. These bodies are set out in Appendix E-1 . |
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Format and content of the Consultation Report: Non-statutory consultation and engagement

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| 3.22 | Applicants may have been engaged in non-statutory consultation e.g. early consultation with statutory bodies may have been undertaken when identifying options and in advance of statutory consultation under the provisions of the PA 2008. Applicants may | The Applicant undertook pre-consultation engagement as outlined in Chapter 5 .

The Applicant also conducted targeted statutory consultation from 14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024, as summarised in Chapter 11 . |
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Para Advice

Evidence of compliance

	also have been engaged in non-statutory consultation that takes place after the statutory consultation following changes made to the project.	Non-statutory consultation following the close of the statutory consultation in July 2023 is summarised in Chapter 12 .
3.23	In circumstances where statutory consultees were informed of non-material changes to the project, this should also be reported. It would also be helpful to provide a brief rationale about why the changes were considered to be nonmaterial and an explanation of how consultees were informed. Where only some consultees were selected to be informed about a change, please justify the approach taken.	The Applicant conducted targeted statutory consultation on 20 minor changes to the Order limits from 14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024. This is summarised in Chapter 11 .
3.24	Any consultation not carried out under the provisions of the PA 2008 should be clearly indicated and identified separately. Applicants should describe the non-statutory consultation that took place to the same level of detail as the statutory consultation.	The Applicant conducted non-statutory consultation activities commencing in Summer 2022 until the start of the statutory consultation period in May 2023. All non-statutory consultation activities are summarised in Chapter 5 .
3.25	If targeted consultation takes place, please explain the nature and purpose of the consultation.	The targeted consultation, as held between 14 December 2023 and 25 January 2024, is summarised in Chapter 11 .

Format and content of the Consultation Report: EIA Regulations consultation

3.26	Consultation undertaken as part of the EIA process is separate to that required under the PA 2008 e.g. statutory consultation on a Scoping Report following a Scoping Request to the Secretary of State. Applicants may wish to draw attention to consultation responses received under the EIA process, but any reference to that consultation should be addressed separately from the statutory	The consultation which the Applicant undertook under EIA Regulations (Ref 3) is set out in Chapter 3 .
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Para Advice

Evidence of compliance

consultation carried out under the provisions of the PA 2008.

Format and content of the Consultation Report: Report appendices

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| 3.27 | Appendices should be used to provide evidence that demonstrates compliance with the requirements of the PA 2008. Careful consideration should be given to the structure and logic of the appendices so that they can be clearly signposted in the main body of the report. A helpful approach is to have separate appendices for each element of statutory consultation and publicity. Where multiple stages of consultation took place then it may be helpful to have a separate appendix for each stage, subdivided into the different strands of consultation. | The appendices for the report have been structured logically and clearly and they are signposted at the beginning of the Consultation Report and then throughout the text. This includes splitting the appendices by elements of statutory consultation and publicity, and by stage of consultation. |
| 3.28 | Evidence of non-statutory consultation should be assembled chronologically in a separate appendix. | Evidence of the non-statutory consultation is included chronologically within Appendix A . |
| 3.30 | If a large volume of consultation responses were received and reported on, then it usually makes sense to include the summary response tables in an appendix or appendices. A chronological approach which demonstrates the journey through the consultation is usually easier for the reader to understand and navigate. | Chapter 10 provides a summary of issues raised by s42 and s47 consultation responses, each broken down by topic area.
Appendix H provides all s42 responses and the Applicant's regard.
Appendix I provides s47 responses grouped by key themes. |
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Reporting statutory consultation responses

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| 4.1 | It is necessary to demonstrate compliance with section 49 of the PA 2008 by providing evidence that consultation responses have been taken into account during the preparation of the application. | Chapter 10, sections 10.4 and 10.5 report on s42 and s47 feedback, respectively, and demonstrate how the Applicant has complied to s49 of the PA 2008 by providing an account of issues raised and the Applicant's response to them. |
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Para Advice

Evidence of compliance

Reporting statutory consultation responses: Issues-led approach

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| 4.2 | If the level of response was significant it may be appropriate to group responses under headline issues. Care must be taken to ensure that in doing this the responses are not presented in a misleading way or out of context from the original views of the consultee. | Chapter 10, sections 10.4 and 10.5 summarise the key themes identified through the consultation feedback, grouping together responses about similar topics. |
| 4.2 | An explanation of the process by which consultation responses were grouped and organised (coded) is helpful, including any safeguards and cross checking that took place to ensure that the responses were grouped appropriately. | Chapter 10, section 10.3 sets out the Applicant's framework for recording responses from s42 and s47 consultees, which are summarised in sections 10.4 and 10.5. |

Reporting statutory consultation responses: Summary of responses

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| 4.3 | A summary of the individual responses received should be provided and categorised in an appropriate way. | Chapter 10, sections 10.4 and 10.5 provide a summary of individual responses received during statutory consultation. |
| 4.5 | The summary of the responses should identify comments that are relevant (directly or indirectly) to changes made to the project during the Pre-application stage. | Chapter 10, sections 10.4 and 10.5 identify comments that are relevant to changes made during the Pre-application stage. Coverage of changes made following non-statutory consultation is also provided in Chapter 5, section 5.8. |
| 4.6 | It is also necessary to explain why responses have led to no change, including where responses have been received after deadlines set by the Applicant. | Where applicable, Chapter 10, sections 10.4 and 10.5 explain why responses have led to no change. |

Virtual consultation methods

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| 5.1 | If virtual consultation methods were planned, then this should be reflected in the SoCC. In the usual way, the relevant local authorities will have been consulted about this | The SoCC, as shown in Appendix B-7, clearly reflects that virtual/online consultation methods would be utilised during statutory consultation.

The relevant local authorities' feedback is summarised in Chapter 6, section |
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Para Advice

Evidence of compliance

	and their feedback reported in the Consultation Report.	6.3. Copies of the local authorities' responses are included in Appendix B-5 .
5.2	Where virtual consultation methods were deployed as a reaction to external circumstances then it is important that the views of the relevant local authorities are captured in the Consultation Report. If no review and update of the SoCC took place under the provisions of the PA 2008, then this should be justified in the Consultation Report with reference to the views of the relevant local authorities about the approach adopted.	The SoCC, as shown in Appendix B-7 , clearly reflects that virtual/online consultation methods would be utilised during statutory consultation. The relevant local authorities' feedback is summarised in Chapter 6, section 6.3 . Copies of the local authorities' responses are included in Appendix B-5 .
5.3	In general, where virtual consultation methods are planned then the SoCC should explain any mitigation measures put in place for digitally disadvantaged members of the community e.g. the use of telephone surgeries.	The SoCC, as shown in Appendix B-7 , clearly reflects that virtual consultation methods would be utilised during statutory consultation. The SoCC also states that in-person events and alternatives, including the phonline and deposit inspection locations, would be available for digitally disadvantaged members of the community.

Data protection and redaction guidance

7.1	Applicants must ensure that the Consultation Report complies with data protection legislation e.g personal data of individuals is treated appropriately.	Table 6-7 summarises the commitments made in the SoCC, how the Applicant fulfilled them and provides confirmation that all data was managed within GDPR guidelines.
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13.2 Conclusion

- 13.2.1 In conclusion, the Applicant considers that it has met the statutory requirements of the pre-application process. This report describes the phased consultation process undertaken by the Applicant in accordance with the PA 2008 and the SoCC issued for the statutory consultation stage.
- 13.2.2 At each stage of consultation, the Applicant has considered and complied with relevant advice and guidance. The information included in **Table 13-2** and **Table 13-3** supports this through direct reference to the DCLG guidance on the pre-application process (2015) (Ref 6) and PINS' guidance on the

pre-application process, specifically PINS' Advice Note 14 (February 2021) (Ref 9). **Table 13-1** notes how the Applicant has complied with the PA 2008 and its associated regulations.

- 13.2.3 The Applicant carried out an iterative consultation process across two stages of consultation and a targeted consultation, with key changes summarised in **Chapter 10, sections 10.4 and 10.5**.
- 13.2.4 Consultation responses to each stage of consultation have been carefully documented and considered as part of the iterative development of the Scheme, with stakeholders playing a key role in the design of the proposals.
- 13.2.5 During the consultation period, the Applicant actively sought and had regard for feedback provided by stakeholders, and has made changes where possible as documented in this Consultation Report. A summary of the changes made to the Scheme as a result of consultation is set out in **Chapter 10, sections 10.4 and 10.5** of this report.
- 13.2.6 As well as preparing this report, the Applicant has set out how it has complied with guidance and advice on consultation in the Section 55 Checklist **[EN010142/APP/1.3]** that is also part of the DCO application.

14. References

- Ref 1 Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (November 2023). Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overarching-national-policy-statement-for-energy-en-1> (Accessed: 21 March 2024)
- Ref 2 National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3). Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-policy-statement-for-renewable-energy-infrastructure-en-3> (Accessed: 21 March 2024)
- Ref 3 Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO) (2011) The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended by The Town and Country Planning and Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2018). Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/572/pdfs/ukxi_20170572_en.pdf and http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2018/695/pdfs/ukxi_20180695_en.pdf
- Ref 4 HMSO (2008), The Planning Act 2008, Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/29/pdfs/ukpga_20080029_en.pdf
- Ref 5 HMSO (2009), Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (APFP Regulations). Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2009/2264/contents/made>
- Ref 6 Department for Communities and Local Government, Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the pre-application process (March 2015). Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-the-pre-application-process-for-major-infrastructure-projects> (Accessed: 21 March 2024)
- Ref 7 Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note Three: EIA notification and consultation (republished August 2017). Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-note-three-eia-notification-and-consultation> (Accessed: 21 March 2024)
- Ref 8 Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note Six: Preparation and submission of application documents (May 2012). Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-note-six-preparation-and-submission-of-application-documents> (Accessed: 21 March 2024)
- Ref 9 Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note Fourteen: Compiling the Consultation Report (republished February 2021). Available at <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/advice-note-fourteen-compiling-the-consultation-report/> (Accessed: 21 March 2024)
- Ref 10 Active Travel England (June 2023). Available at: [Active Travel England to be consulted on all large planning applications - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/active-travel-england-to-be-consulted-on-all-large-planning-applications) (Accessed: 21 March 2024)