

**Tillbridge Solar Project
EN010142**

**Volume 9
Statement of Common Ground
with Bassetlaw District Council**

Draft

Document Reference: EN010142/APP/9.11

The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010

**October 2024
Revision Number: 00**

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Document

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to support the application (“the Application”) for the Tillbridge Solar Project (“the Scheme”) made by Tillbridge Solar Limited (“the Applicant”). The Application was submitted to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (“the Secretary of State”) for a Development Consent Order (DCO) (“the Order”) under section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (“PA 2008”) and was accepted for examination on 8 May 2024.
- 1.1.2 This SoCG does not seek to replicate information which is available elsewhere within the Application documents. All documents are available on the Planning Inspectorate’s website at <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN010142/documents>.
- 1.1.3 SoCGs are an established means in the planning process of allowing all parties to identify and focus on specific issues that may need to be addressed during the examination. This SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority (ExA) where agreement has been reached between the parties and where matters are under discussion or where agreement has not been reached. The SoCG will be progressed during the pre-examination and examination periods to reach a final position between the Parties and to clarify if any issues remain unresolved. This SoCG will be revised and updated as appropriate and/or required by the ExA at relevant examination deadlines.

1.2 Parties to this Statement of Common Ground

- 1.2.1 This SoCG has been prepared between (1) the Applicant and (2) Bassetlaw District Council (jointly referred to as the Parties).
- 1.2.2 The Applicant is a joint venture between Tribus Clean Energy Limited and Recurrent Energy, a subsidiary of Canadian Solar, who are both experienced developers of renewable energy projects.
- 1.2.3 Bassetlaw District Council (BDC) is a host local authority. Part of the Cable Route Corridor is located within BDC’s boundary. BDC is listed as a prescribed consultee in Schedule 1 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (Ref. 1) and so has been consulted during the preparation of the Application and following its acceptance.
- 1.2.4 Collectively, the Applicant and BDC are referred to as ‘the parties’

1.3 The Scheme

- 1.3.1 The Order, if granted, would authorise 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.

- 1.3.2 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.
- 1.3.3 The associated development element of the Scheme includes but is not limited to access provision; a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), to support the operation of the ground mounted solar PV arrays; the development of on-site substations; underground cabling between the different areas of solar PV arrays; and areas of landscaping and biodiversity enhancement.
- 1.3.4 The Scheme also includes a 400kV underground Cable Route Corridor of 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.

1.4 Terminology

- 1.4.1 Section 3 summarises the issues that are ‘agreed’, ‘not agreed’ or are ‘under discussion’.
- 1.4.2 These terms are used as follows:
- a. “Agreed” indicates where the issue has been resolved;
 - a. “Under discussion” indicates where these points will be the subject of on-going discussion wherever possible to resolve, or refine, the extent of disagreement between the parties;
 - b. “Not Agreed” indicates a final position where the Parties have agreed to disagree.

2. Record of Engagement

- 2.1.1 A summary of all meetings and correspondence that has taken place between the Parties in relation to the Application is outlined in **Table 1**. This includes email correspondence between the Parties to discuss sharing of information, arrangement of meetings and where appropriate to comment on draft documentation. **Table 1** reflects the key meetings and emails of note.

Table 1: Record of Engagement

Date	Form of Correspondence and attendees	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
15 June 2022	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	Introduction to the Scheme and overview of proposals and current activities including approach to engagement and environmental context of the Scheme.

Date	Form of Correspondence and attendees	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
14 July 2022	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	Following introductory meetings with planning officers, further briefings were held with members to introduce them to the Applicant and the Scheme.
27 October 2022	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Scoping Report; • Technical queries following receipt of the Scoping Opinion and leading up to statutory consultation; and • Communications update following collaboration workshops; subsequent engagement with neighbourhood planning team.
28 November 2022	Meeting (Teams meeting with BDC Officers)	Heritage Stakeholder Meeting – Introduction to the Scheme, discussion of deliverables and timeframes, extent of study areas, fieldwork update on the geophysical survey and expectations for trench evaluation.
20 December 2022	Email to Major Projects Manager	Email from the Applicant to BDC to provide a copy of the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) ahead of formal s47(2) consultation, inviting officers to informally provide any comments on the content and detail set out therein.
21 December 2022	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scheme update, including response to Scoping Opinion; • Presentation of Applicant's approach to engagement in draft SoCC; and • Discussion of Cable Route Corridor and potential for co-location with other schemes.
13 February 2023	Letter to Major Projects Manager	Letter from the Applicant to BDC including a copy for the draft SoCC for formal consultation, requesting comments back within 28 days.
4 April 2023	Email to Major Projects Manager	Email from the Applicant notifying BDC that the date for the Section 42 Statutory Consultation period had been amended.
27 April 2023	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	Meeting to confirm responses to draft SoCC and introduce an overview of the statutory consultation period
22 May 2023	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	Meeting to brief BDC in advance of consultation.

Date	Form of Correspondence and attendees	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
25 May 2023	Email to Major Projects Manager	Email from the Applicant issuing BDC a copy of the final SoCC and Section 47 notice, along with a table setting out 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.
26 May 2023	Letter to Major Projects Manager	Letter sent from the Applicant to to BDC as part of Statutory Consultation pursuant to Section 42, consulting BDC in their capacity as a prescribed consultee.
23 June 2023	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	Meeting to provide a general update on the current stage of the Scheme, including an overview of how the statutory consultation period was progressing.
15 September 2023	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	<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; and • Progress of considering statutory consultation and ongoing meetings with statutory bodies.
26 October 2023	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of the Applicant's programme, with a refreshed date for DCO application submission; • Confirmation of targeted consultation; and • Overview of status of collaboration with other solar developers.
10 November 2023	Email to Major Projects Manager	Email from the Applicant to BDC to outline a draft version of the targeted consultation methodology, detailing the changes and proposed length of the consultation period. A copy of the long-list of cumulative schemes was also circulated for comments.
28 November 2023	Email to Major Projects Manager	Email from BDC confirming agreement to the cumulative long-list subject to consideration of allocations within the Sturton Ward Neighbourhood Plan and the Treswell & Cottam Neighbourhood Plan.
11 December 2023	Letter to Major Projects Manager	Covering letter and targeted consultation materials from the Applicant to BDC ahead of the start of the targeted consultation period.
13 December 2023	Email to major Projects Manager	Electronic copy of covering letter and consultation material from the Applicant to BDC.

Date	Form of Correspondence and attendees	Key topics discussed and key outcomes
22 February 2024	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	<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; and • Updates related to other solar schemes.
28 March 2024	Email to Major Projects Manager	Email from the Applicant to BDC advising of a delay in the submission of the Application.
16 August 2024	Email to Major Projects Manager	Email from the Applicant providing BDC with the Change Request Consultation Brochure ahead of the beginning of consultation on proposed changes to the Scheme following acceptance of the Application.
28 August 2024	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General update on the current stage of the Scheme pre-examination; • Introductory conversations surrounding Statement of Common Ground; and • Introduction to the proposed Change Request.
8 October 2024	Meeting (Teams meeting with Major Projects Manager)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General update meeting on the current stage of the Scheme pre-examination; • Discussed submission of Change Request (non-material); • Discussed Procedural Deadline A – locations for Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) and notifications required to attending hearings; • Rule 6 – draft timetable including Local Impact Reports for deadline 1; and • SoCG progression and engagement with the need for regular meetings to reduce any areas of disagreement

3. Areas of Discussion between the Parties

3.1.1 Table 2 below details the areas of discussion and matters that are agreed, under discussion and not agreed between the Parties.

Table 2 Areas of Discussion with Bassetlaw District Council (BDC)

Ref.	Subject	Relevant Application Document	Applicants Position	BDC Position	Status	Likelihood of Resolution
1. Scheme Description						
1.1	Scheme Description	Chapter 3: Scheme Description of the Environmental Statement (ES) [AS-53]	The Site and Scheme description set out in Chapter 3: Scheme Description of the ES [AS-53] is accurate and agreed.	BDC agree the Scheme description set Chapter 3: Scheme Description of the ES [AS-53] is accurate.	Agreed	High
2. Alternatives and Design Evolution						
2.1	Site Selection	Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution of the ES [APP-035]	The methodology used in the site selection process as detailed in Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution of the ES [APP-035] is appropriate for the Scheme.	BDC agree the methodology used in the site selection process as detailed in Chapter 4: Alternatives and Design Evolution of the ES [APP-035] is appropriate for the Scheme.	Agreed	High
3. Legislation and Planning Policy						
3.1	Legislation and Planning Policy	Environmental Statement [APP-037 to APP-050]. Planning Statement [AS-029]	The ES [APP-037 to APP-050] has identified all relevant applicable legislation and national policy pertaining to the following assessments undertaken as part of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the Scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6: Air Quality [APP-037]; • Chapter 7: Climate Change [APP-038]; • Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage [APP-039]; • Chapter 9: Ecology and Nature Conservation [APP-040]; • Chapter 11: Human Health [APP-042]; • Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual Amenity [APP-043]; • Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration [AS-006]; • Chapter 14: Socioeconomics and Land Use [APP-045]; • Chapter 15: Soils and Agriculture [APP-046]; • Chapter 17: Other Environmental Topics [APP-048]; • Chapter 18: Cumulative Effects and Interactions [APP-049]. 	BDC agree that the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] and Planning Statement [AS-029] has identified all relevant applicable legislation and national policy pertaining to the assessments undertaken as part of the EIA.	Agreed	High

Ref.	Subject	Relevant Application Document	Applicants Position	BDC Position	Status	Likelihood of Resolution
			The Planning Statement [AS-029] also has identified all relevant application legislation and national policy.			
4. Cable Route Corridor Study Area Definition and Extents						
4.1	Cable route corridor study area definition and extents	Environmental Statement [APP-037 to APP-050]	The study areas adopted by the Applicant for the cable route corridor within the assessment of the environmental topics mentioned in the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] reflect current best practice and standards. The Parties agree that the geographical extents of the adopted study areas are appropriate to identify the likely direct and indirect effects of the Scheme on sensitive features and receptors.	BDC agree that the study areas for the cable route corridor and geographical extents of these mentioned in the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] are appropriate to identify the likely direct and indirect effects of the Scheme on sensitive features and receptors.	Agreed	High
5. Application of Expert and Professional Judgement						
5.1	Application of professional Judgement	Environmental Statement [APP-037 to APP-050]	The identification of likely significant effects on sensitive features and receptors has been informed by professional judgement and the views of the relevant technical specialists, where necessary. The application of professional judgement by specialists within the environmental topic assessments in outlined in the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] are appropriate and robust.	BDC agree the application of professional judgement by specialists within the environmental topic assessments outlined in the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] are appropriate and robust.	Agreed	High
6. Assessment Methodology						
6.1	Methodology	Environmental Statement [APP-037 to APP-050]	The assessment methodology adopted within the environmental topic assessments mentioned in the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] have been derived from the information obtained through consultation with stakeholders and by reviewing relevant guidance and studies and is considered acceptable.	BDC agree the assessment methodology adopted in within the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] is acceptable.	Agreed	High
7. Baseline Surveys						
7.1	Baseline	Environmental Statement [APP-037 to APP-050]	The baseline conditions have been collated using desk-based and field-based techniques, and through consultation with stakeholders including the local authorities. The scope, coverage and timing of surveys undertaken to establish the baseline conditions and sensitive features and receptors are in line with best practice and appropriate to inform the	BDC agree the scope, coverage and timing of surveys undertaken are appropriate and in line with best practice.	Agreed	High

Ref.	Subject	Relevant Application Document	Applicants Position	BDC Position	Status	Likelihood of Resolution
			assessment of direct and indirect effects reported in the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] .			
8. Assessment of Impacts and Effects						
8.1	Impacts and Effects	Environmental Statement [APP-037 to APP-050]	The assessment findings for the environmental topics mentioned in the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] are considered acceptable.	BDC agree the assessments findings for the environmental topics within the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] are considered acceptable	Agreed	High
9. Mitigation of Effects						
9.1	Mitigation	Environmental Statement [APP-037 to APP-050] Draft DCO [EN010142/APP/3.1(Rev03)]	The mitigation measures mentioned in the environmental topic chapters mentioned in the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] above are considered acceptable to mitigate potential impacts and manage potential effects during the construction, operation and decommissioning phases. The provision of mitigation is secured by specific requirements within the draft DCO [EN010142/APP/3.1(Rev03)] . These include the requirement for management plans that must be prepared and approved before commencement of development.	BDC agree that the mitigation measures mentioned in the technical chapters of the ES [APP-037 to APP-050] are considered acceptable to mitigate potential impacts during construction, operation and decommissioning.	Agreed	High
10. Draft Development Consent Order						
10.1	Draft DCO	Draft DCO [EN010142/APP/3.1(Rev03)]	The drafting of the DCO [EN010142/APP/3.1(Rev03)] is considered acceptable, including the scope and wording of the requirements in Schedule 2 to the draft DCO.	BDC agree the drafting of the DCO [EN010142/APP/3.1(Rev03)] is considered acceptable	Agreed	High

4. References

- Ref. 1 Stationary Office (2009). The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009. Accessed on 16/10/2024 at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/2264/contents/made>