



Meeting note

Project name	Tillbridge Solar Project
File reference	EN010142
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	11 July 2023
Meeting with	Tillbridge Solar Limited
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Project Update Meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed, and advice given.

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

Project and Programme Update

Tillbridge Solar Limited (“the Applicant”) explained that they still intend to submit in Q4 2023.

The Applicant also explained that Statutory Consultation has closed on the 11 July 2023 explaining that the team were now considering the responses received to ensure that regard was had to them. The Applicant confirmed that requests had been received from Lincolnshire County Council and Bassetlaw District Council for additional time in which to submit a response back and that this had been agreed by the Applicant. The Applicant confirmed that no other parties had asked to respond later than the statutory time period.

The Inspectorate queried if the Applicant still intends to utilise the Inspectorate’s Draft Document Review service. The Applicant stated that its current programme is unable to accommodate this six-to-eight-week period. The Inspectorate stated that if the Applicant wishes it can ‘drip through’ documents at different times if they wish to get feedback on specific sections.

Feedback from Statutory Consultation

The Applicant explained it had conducted six in-person events and two webinars and stated that more than half of the events were well attended. It was explained by the Applicant that many attendees stayed at the venues for a considerable period of time with positive engagement with the project team.

The Applicant also explained that prior to the commencement of the statutory consultation events that it had held Member briefing sessions with Lincolnshire County Council, West Lindsey District Council and Bassetlaw District Council. Nottinghamshire County Council Members confirmed that they did not wish to attend a briefing session.

The Applicant confirmed that meetings were are scheduled with the Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority, and Internal Drainage Boards to discuss flood risk, drainage and surface water. Furthermore, email dialogue is taking place with the host authorities with respect to environmental health considerations and trees.

Environmental Update

The Applicant indicated that ecological surveys were on-going following on from the baseline surveys completed in 2022.

The Applicant summarised the progress of surveys to date confirming that trial trenching is to continue until September 2023 and confirmed that a meeting is scheduled with

Lincolnshire's County Archaeologist (who acts on behalf of Lincolnshire and Bassetlaw District, that falls within Nottinghamshire) and Historic England later in July 2023. The Applicant confirmed that the methodology for trial trenching was agreed prior to trenching starting and that weekly meetings are held with the Local Authority to amend this as works are progressed.

The Applicant also confirmed that on-going engagement continued with each of the host authorities every month and that several technical meetings had been held to explain the Project to stakeholders and the approach/methodology to environmental topics within the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). The Applicant confirmed that this had included a meeting with all Highway Authorities, continued engagement with heritage stakeholders including the County Archaeologist and Historic England, the Minerals Authorities, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Lincolnshire's landscape architect to agree on landscape methodology and viewpoints.

The Applicant discussed the progress to date with regards to collaboration between other NSIP solar farm Applicants within the vicinity of the Tillbridge scheme. The Applicant confirmed that it is in discussions with Island Green Power (IGP) and Low Carbon (LC) regarding how all the cable routes will share the cable corridor. The Inspectorate queried the scenarios to be assessed within the ES should the Applicant reach agreements with other developers, but one project is denied development consent.

The Applicant confirmed that it had read the Cottam Rule 6 letter and was aware of the request by PINS for Gate Burton to produce an Inter-dependency report illustrating the relationship of the project to the other NSIPs, including Tillbridge. The Applicant confirmed that it would produce a free-standing inter-dependency report as part of its submission and sought advice from the Inspectorate on the scope and approach to this document confirming that it would rather be proactive with respect to cumulative considerations.

The Inspectorate confirmed that it was positive to hear that the Applicant was cross referring to cumulative impacts with respect to the other Schemes and was proactively working on the inter-dependency aspect. The Inspectorate did ask the Applicant to consider how different construction phases might work in relation to all other projects and to ensure that a worst case was considered.

The Applicant confirmed that the issues related to setting out a post consenting strategy. The Applicant reiterated that regular meetings had taken place with IGP to consider how cables might be laid to ensure that all cables can be delivered within the corridor. The Applicant confirmed that it was working with IGP with respect to optioneering where the corridor was shared and was in dialogue with Low Carbon in a similar way.

The Applicant explained that all parties are sharing relevant data and survey information and that regular meetings had taken place with IGP to consider how cables might be laid to ensure that all cables can be delivered within the corridor. The Applicant confirmed that it was working with IGP with respect to optioneering where the corridor was shared and was in dialogue with Low Carbon in a similar way. The Inspectorate queried the scenarios to be assessed within the ES should the Applicant reach agreements with other developers, but one project is denied development consent.

With regards to information sharing between other solar applications, the Inspectorate advised the Applicant to ensure that the information contained within the ES is relevant and only cross references to other documents within the Tillbridge submission.

The Applicant explained it was cross referring to cumulative impacts with respect to the other Schemes and was proactively working on the inter-dependency aspect. The Inspectorate asked the Applicant to consider the construction phases in relation to the other local NSIP projects and to ensure that a worst case was considered.

Early Adopters Components Initiation

The Inspectorate thanked the Applicant for expressing interest in being involved in the Early Adopters Programme.

The Inspectorate confirmed with the Applicant that they have signed up for trialling three of the proposed components which are:

- Programme Plan
- Multiparty Meetings
- Advice Log

The Inspectorate explained that the Programme Plan component seeks to establish clear information and key milestones in the public domain to help statutory bodies and other stakeholders align resources and engage optimally. The Inspectorate requested for the Applicant to publish on its website a Programme Plan responding to this brief within two weeks.

The multiparty meetings component offer was explained by the Inspectorate. It would be for the Applicant and/ or relevant consultees to initiate the occurrence of multiparty meetings dealing with discrete topic areas, with potential for the Inspectorate to engage in a chairperson/ facilitatory role. The Applicant stated that a multiparty meeting could be helpful for this project, and it would confirm the initiation of this forum to the Inspectorate in due course. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to have a look at a recent [Solar Projects multiparty meeting note](#).

The Inspectorate explained the Advice Log component to the Applicant. The Advice Log would be updated by the Inspectorate after each pre-application interaction with the Applicant and published as a 'living document' on the National Infrastructure Planning website. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to look at the log developed for the [A66 Northern Trans-Pennine Project](#) as a similar example.