

Meeting note

Project name	East Yorkshire Solar Farm
File reference	EN010143
Status	Draft
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	11 November 2022
Meeting with	Boom Power ('The Applicant')
Venue	Virtual
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.

Introductions (including safety moment by AECOM)

Introductions were given by the representatives of the Inspectorate and the Applicant, Boom Power. The Applicant gave a short Safety Moment, presenting an overview of an approach to be taken with respect to mental and physical health.

Non statutory consultation feedback

The Applicant provided the Inspectorate with an overview of the feedback they had received as part of the non-statutory consultation held between Monday 3 October 2022 and Sunday 30 October 2022.

The Applicant outlined the approaches used for non-statutory consultation. A brochure was mailed out to people living within a 1 kilometre zone of the solar photovoltaic (PV) areas and the route cable corridor. This was extended to ensure parts of local communities or streets were not excluded as a result of the zone boundary. Members of the community were asked to respond to the consultation via email, the website, and the telephone line. The consultation had received 192 responses at the time of the meeting, the Applicant noted there were 20 in favour, 164 in objection and 8 neutral responses. The Applicant ran two virtual and two in person meetings at Boothferry Golf Club and Howden Shire Hall during non-statutory consultation. The Applicant confirmed that responses from these consultation methods are being used to inform the design of the project.

The Inspectorate asked the Applicant if it was aware of any hard-to-reach consultees such as members of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities. It responded saying that it had reached out to East Riding of Yorkshire Council, North Yorkshire County Council, and Selby District Council about whether they knew of hard-to-reach consultees, in an aim to develop a wider demographic breakdown to remove barriers to community consultation. It was

explained by the Applicant that a search had not identified any formal sites for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities near the site.

LPA and other statutory bodies consultation update

The Applicant gave an overview of the situation in relation to consultation with the local planning authorities and other statutory bodies.

The Inspectorate raised the imminent 2023 Local Government reorganisation in the Counties of North Yorkshire and Cumbria and stated that the Applicant may need to account for and reflect this within their application documents.

The Applicant confirmed that a Planning Performance Agreement has been agreed with East Riding of Yorkshire Council and agreements with Selby District Council and North Yorkshire County Council are currently in draft. The Applicant also noted that it is in the process of setting up advice agreements with Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency. A meeting was also held with the Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Trust.

The Inspectorate encouraged the progressing of Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs) so that these were as advanced as far as possible by submission of the application. It was also noted that Statements of Commonality were becoming more common and can be useful.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) update (including EIA Scoping Opinion queries)

The Applicant provided an update on EIA matters following the scoping process. The matters raised included:

- Automated Traffic Counts (ATC) were undertaken at 19 locations in September 2022. The locations and timings of ATCs were agreed with East Riding of Yorkshire Council, North Yorkshire County Council and Selby District Council. Preliminary access point studies were taken to inform this process. Condition surveys of local highways are ongoing and will be used to inform suitable traffic routes.
- Phase 1 habitat surveys are progressing well for the Solar PV Site. Phase 1 habitat survey of the Grid Connection was not possible due to access issues, this and the Interconnecting Cable routes are to be progressed in Spring 2023. The team has halted the surveying process of species such as bats, otter and water vole populations over the winter, the Applicant advised it was holding off on these surveys until the spring to gather the best information and complete surveys in optimum conditions. The Applicant confirmed that they still plan on scoping out widespread habitats of low sensitivity, such as species poor / monoculture amenity grassland and areas of ornamental landscaping, in line with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA).
- The Initial Red, Amber, Green (RAG) assessments have been undertaken with respect to landscape and visual impacts and are being refined for the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). A further analysis of the zones of theoretical visibility (ZTV) has also been undertaken to investigate varying panel heights and types of arrays. This will inform the selection of the best choice of technology. The Applicant established that it will be including green corridors and potential permissive paths in the design, as well

as carefully considering the siting of substations, Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) fire water and offset areas for landscape and biodiversity effects mitigation.

- The Applicant also mentioned it was undertaking surveys in relation to heritage assets, noise and vibration and glint and glare. It also pointed to its use of modelled Predictive Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) data sourced from Cranfield University to assess the area of BMV land along the grid connection in preference to the less accurate method proposed at scoping. The Inspectorate advised that this change of methodology following scoping, regarding the use of ALC data to update information on land quality and its distribution, needed to be clearly explained within the Environmental Statement (ES), including evidencing any consultation and agreement with Natural England.

The Applicant provided an update of the refinements to the project design since scoping. The Solar PV Panels will be East-West tracking panels, which have been selected due to their ability to maximise output throughout the day. The maximum height of the panels has been assumed to be 3.5m; the Applicant noted that the height of 4.8m previously indicated in the Scoping Report was a worst-case scenario and has since been discounted. The Inspectorate queried whether there is potential for the panel heights to exceed 3.5m following further refinement of the panel types to be used. The Applicant explained that this represents a worst-case scenario, and it is not anticipated that the maximum height of the solar panels will be realised on this project. The Inspectorate queried whether the rows of tracking panels would move in unison when they reset or row by row and questioned the implications for this in terms of noise impact. The Applicant advised that the panels would move independently based on the movement of the sun and impacts from cloud cover and assured that a worst-case scenario would be assessed within the noise and vibration assessment. The Inspectorate reminded the Applicant that a worst-case scenario should be assessed throughout the ES.

The Inspectorate asked the Applicant if it plans, as part of the statutory consultation, to include visual aids demonstrating operation of the tracking panels to provide a better understanding. The Applicant said that although it would not be able to provide a demonstration of a physical panel, it would explore the idea of videos and audio aids that can better explain the tracking motors and the technology behind them to consultees.

Both the Grid connection and interconnecting cables will be installed in trenches in the ground. The overhead line option discussed within the Scoping Report has therefore been discounted. The grid connection cable where possible is likely to be routed along the route of the public highway.

The lighting on the site will be a combination of task-specific and motion activated. The Applicant explained that this is a mitigation method to reduce the amount of artificial light as far as practicable while maintaining a safe working environment. Lighting will be designed to minimise light spill and any impacts to adjacent habitats and other receptors. The Applicant outlined in response to the Scoping Opinion (3.5.2) that they still proposed to scope this matter out and indicated that they will provide greater detail about lighting in the PEIR. The BESS forming part of the scheme is currently intended to be interspersed throughout the site rather than being fixed in one designated location.

Queries regarding the Scoping Opinion were raised by the Applicant in relation to the Human Health assessment methodology, the approach to scoping out an assessment of impacts on mineral safeguarding areas, and the need for water quality monitoring. The Inspectorate requested that the Applicant provide further detail of these in writing for consideration by the Inspectorate.

Programme update

The Applicant provided the Inspectorate with a programme update and answered queries arising from the update.

The Applicant confirmed that the statutory consultation will be targeted for February or March 2023, in preparation for submission in summer 2023. The Inspectorate also raised the timing of statutory consultation as being close to the implementation of the 2023 Local Government reorganisation and encouraged the Applicant to be mindful of potential consequences of the timing of the statutory consultation as outlined in the current project programme. The Inspectorate encouraged the Applicant to keep the Case Team updated on the likely submission date, to help inform the management of resources.

Any Other Business (AOB)

There were no separate topics of discussion under AOB that were not covered as part of other items of the agenda of the meeting.

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed:

- Organise more regular meetings after January 2023. It is envisaged that the next meeting would ideally take place around January 2023.
- The Applicant is to provide to the Inspectorate further detail in writing of the Scoping Opinion queries. Separate advice will be provided on this and attached to the Meeting Note.



BOOM POWER

East Yorkshire Solar Farm
PINS update meeting
11th November 2022

BUILD | OWN | OPERATE | MAINTAIN

AGENDA.

Introductions and health and wellbeing moment

Non statutory consultation feedback

LPA and other statutory bodies consultation update

Environment Impact Assessment update (including EIA scoping opinion queries and design assumptions)

Programme

AOB

Health and wellbeing moment: WellnessWednesday.

Workplace Wellbeing ບັນຸມ

Have a comfortable dedicated work area	Have a lunch break away from your work area	Leave 5-10 between meetings	Be mindful of working hours	Remain in regular contact with your Line Manager
Take regular micro breaks 40:20 rule	Set clear tasks for your working day Eat that Frog	Practice saying "No"	Remember social contact with colleagues	Pomodoro Technique

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Pomodoro Technique

- 1 Decide what task you need to complete
- 2 Set the timer for 25 minutes
- 3 Work on your task until the timer rings
- 4 Take a short, 5 minute break

Repeat 4 times

5
Take a longer, 15-30 minute break

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NON STATUTORY CONSULTATION

Public consultation ran from 3 to 30 October 2022

Brochure including feedback form delivered to all addresses, business and residential within an 1km radius of the project site and cable route, and further afield where appropriate – 1,268 addresses

Two in person events – at Boothferry Golf Course and Howden Shire Hall

Two online webinars

179 attendees across all four events (some may have attended multiple events)

Feedback online via website at www.boom-power.co.uk/east-yorkshire

Or by post to **Freepost EAST YORKSHIRE SOLAR FARM**

Or by email at EastYorkshireSolarFarm@Boom-Power.co.uk

191 responses across all feedback methods

OTHER CONSULTATION ACTIVITIES

Briefings to local MP (David Davis, Haltemprice & Howden)

Briefings offered to Leader of East Riding of Yorkshire Council, MP for Selby & Ainsty, local Parish Councils

Media appearance on BBC Radio Humberside Breakfast Show

Written to local businesses and educational institutions to publicise the consultation

Informal consultation on draft Statement of Community Consultation with East Riding of Yorkshire Council and North Yorkshire County Council in November.

Meeting with The Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group

LPA Consultation and other statutory bodies

- PPA agreed with ERYC
- PPA drafted with SDC and NYCC
- Holding joint meetings with the authorities
- Setting up technical officer working groups to discuss scope, method, design issues
- Setting up advice agreements with Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency
- Engaging with National Highways

EIA UPDATE – SURVEYS

HERITAGE:

- Geophysical surveys of Solar PV Site (as per agreed WSI) - approximately 60% complete.

TRAFFIC:

- Automated Traffic Counts (ATC) at 19 locations undertaken in September 2022. Locations and timings as agreed with East Riding of Yorkshire Council, North Yorkshire County Council and Selby District Council.
- Preliminary (desktop) access point studies undertaken (to inform ATC positions).
- Condition surveys to be undertaken to assist in development of suitable traffic routes - ongoing.

AGRICULTURAL LAND:

- Detailed Predictive ALC data purchased from Cranfield University.
- Surveys of Solar PV Site ongoing.

ECOLOGY:

- Phase 1 Habitat Survey (inc. Badger) of Solar PV Site - almost complete. The Solar PV Site 50m buffer and cable routes to be surveyed from Spring 2023, based on a more precise corridor.
- UK Habitat Classification and Condition Assessment (for Biodiversity Net Gain to Metric 3.1) - as above.
- Otter and Water Vole – weather/ temperature dependent and completed as far as possible in 2022 for Solar PV Site and some interconnecting cables. Further 1st/ 2nd surveys in spring and summer 2023.

EIA UPDATE - SURVEYS

ECOLOGY (continued):

- Breeding Bird surveys of Solar PV Site and Grid Connection (from publicly accessible areas) – completed 2022.
- Overwintering and Passage bird surveys of Solar PV Site and Grid Connection (from publicly accessible areas) – currently ongoing, started September 2022.
- Great Crested Newts: Habitat Suitability Index survey followed by eDNA (where required) of accessible/ suitable ponds within Solar PV Site and 50m buffer – started in Spring 2022 and potentially continuing in Spring 2023, depending on whether a District Level License is sought.
- Hedgerow survey of potentially Important hedgerows as identified by P1HS (May to September 2023).
- Bats – preliminary roost features identified through P1HS. Potentially affected buildings assessed. Further detailed assessment may be required should trees requiring removal/reduction be confirmed.
- Bats – Foraging / Commuting. Walked transects and static detectors in targeted suitable areas of affected habitats within the Solar PV Site. Summer and Autumn surveys completed in 2022, Spring surveys will be completed in 2023.
- Bats - Roosting. Where PRF identifies a requirement either a 'climb and check' (where safe to do so) and/or emergence surveys (where climb and check not possible or inspection identifies the requirement for further survey). Initial inspections can be undertaken any time of year. Dusk emergence surveys, if required, will be undertaken May to September 2023.

EIA UPDATE - SURVEYS

ECOLOGY (continued):

- Reptiles – Presence/absence surveys. Within Solar PV Site only (if required) and limited to areas where permanent loss of suitable habitat (identified through P1HS) cannot be avoided. April to middle of June and/or September 2023.
- Aquatic Ecology - Habitat Condition Assessment (Modular River Physical) survey of watercourses and drain/ ditches crossed by open cut methods (plus Rivers Ouse and Derwent) will be undertaken.

GLINT AND GLARE:

- Glint and Glare site visit undertaken in August 2022.

NOISE:

- Scope and methodology of baseline noise level surveys to be agreed with Environmental Health Officers at East Riding of Yorkshire Council and Selby District Council to ensure that they are representative of surrounding noise sensitive receptors.

EIA UPDATE – OTHER BASELINE AND DESIGN

LANDSCAPE:

- Initial RAG assessment undertaken. Currently being refined to aid PEIR design.
- Further analysis (zones of theoretical visibility – ZTV) was undertaken to investigate varying panel heights and array types to aid in choice of technology and design evolution.

DESIGN:

Design workshops undertaken and planned to identify potential permissive paths, green corridors, siting of substations, BESS fire water, and offset areas for landscape and biodiversity (high level to inform the PEIR design).

Design assumptions:

- East-West tracking panels (maximise output throughout the day) (video)
- Panel height c. 3.5m
- All cables to be undergrounded and routed in roadside where practicable.
- BESS likely to be co-located with field stations
- Lighting – task-specific and/or motion activated. Mitigated to prevent light spill / nuisance or impacts to habitats.

EIA UPDATE – SCOPING QUERIES

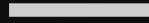
- Mineral safeguarding assessment and scoping out
- ALC / BMV determination for Grid Connection Corridor and Interconnecting Cables - Change to methodology (increased detail and accuracy)
- Human Health Assessment Methodology
- Ecology – Scoping out of common and widespread habitats of low sensitivity and/or conservation interest
- Lighting Assessment
- Water quality monitoring

PROGRAMME UPDATE

- Non statutory consultation complete
- Drafting Statement of Community Consultation – informal draft complete
- Environmental surveys, gathering constraints information underway
- Design work is being undertaken – working towards a masterplan
- Statutory consultation targeted for February/March 2023
- Submission expected summer 2023

AOB

THANK YOU



BOOM
POWER