



Botley West Solar Farm

Consultation Report Appendix 5.1.1

Phase One Consultation Materials

November 2024

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APFP Regulation 5(2)(g); Planning Act 2008; and Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations

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1 Statement of Compliance

1.1.1 This Appendix includes a Consultation Compliance Checklist, provided as Table 1.1, Table 1.2, Table 1.3 and Table 1.4.

1.1.2 These tables set out relevant legislation and guidance relevant to pre-application consultation for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

1.1.3 The legislation and guidance comprises:

- The Planning Act 2008 (Table 1.1);
- The Infrastructure Planning: (Application: Prescribed Form and Procedure) Regulation 2009 (Table 1.2);
- Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (Table 1.3);
- Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Planning Act 2008 guidance on the pre-application process (2015) (Withdrawn) (Table 1.4); and
- Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (April 2024) (Table 1.5).

1.1.4 This Appendix also includes the Applicant’s written statement on the adequacy of consultation undertaken, which was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 11 October 2024.

Table 1.1: Compliance checklist for the Planning Act 2008

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
The Planning Act 2008		
Section 42 (The applicant must consult the following about the proposed application:)	a) such persons as may be prescribed,	<p>The Applicant consulted all relevant prescribed consultees; defined in Regulation 11(1)(a) of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (“the EIA Regulations”) and the APFP Regulations.</p> <p>A Scoping Opinion was adopted by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) on 24 July 2023 and included the list of consultation bodies notified by the Planning Inspectorate under Regulation 11(1)(a) of the</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
		<p>EIA Regulations. The Applicant ensured consistency with this list of consultees.</p> <p>In addition to this, the Applicant included further 'non-prescribed' consultees in addition to this, such as the Wildlife Trust for Berks, Bucks and Oxon, the National Farmers Unions, CPRE Oxfordshire and ICOMOS UK.</p>
	<p>(b) each local authority that is within section 43</p>	<p>The Applicant consulted each local authority that is within section 43.</p> <p>These are listed below:</p> <p>'A' Authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxford City Council • Cotswold District Council • Stratford on Avon District Council • South Oxfordshire District Council <p>'B' Authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Oxfordshire District Council • Vale of White Horse District Council • Cherwell District Council <p>'C' Authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire County Council <p>'A' & 'D' Authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swindon Borough Council

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Berkshire Council • Gloucestershire County Council • Warwickshire County Council • West Northamptonshire Council • Buckinghamshire Council • Wiltshire Council <p>'D' Authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Borough Council • Wokingham Council
	(c) the Greater London Authority if the land is in Greater London, and	Not applicable.
	(d) each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in section 44	The Applicant consulted each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in Section 44.
Section 45 (Timetable for consultation under section 42)	(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.	The Applicant notified all those consulted under Section 42 of the deadline in writing by email and/or post.
	(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.	<p>All defined consultation periods (statutory and non-statutory) for the Project have exceeded 28 days.</p> <p>The Applicant undertook consultation on the PEIR from 30 November 2023 to 08 February 2024. Section 42 consultees were formally notified of the</p>

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		<p>commencement of statutory consultation on or before 30 November by written letter and/or email, depending on the availability of contact details to the Applicant. The deadline for responding to the Section 42 consultation was 08 February 2024 (at 70 days, and therefore exceeding the 28-day requirement).</p>
	<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>The consultation documents provided to Section 42 consultees comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter, including a link to the consultation materials; • A site plan showing the location of the Scheme; and • A copy of the notice publicising the application under Section 48 of the 2008 Act (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected free of charge). <p>A USB with all of the above materials was also available upon request, free of charge.</p>
<p>Section 46 (Duty to notify Commission 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</p>	<p>The Applicant notified the Secretary of State, via the Planning Inspectorate, in writing under Section 46 of the 2008 Act on 28 November 2023 that it was intending to commence consultation under Section 42 of the 2008 Act on the PEIR</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>required by that section to consult the Secretary of State about the proposed application.</p>	<p>commencing on 30 November 2023 and closing on 08 February 2024.</p> <p>The Applicant included the following consultation documents with this notification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a covering letter, • example copies of the Section 42 covering letters (one letter type being for prescribed consultees and the other one to landowners); • A site plan showing the location of the Project; and • A copy of the notice publicising the application under Section 48 of the 2008 Act (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected free of charge).
	<p>(2) The applicant must comply with subsection (1) on or before commencing consultation under section 42.</p>	<p>The Applicant notified the Secretary of State, via the Planning Inspectorate, in writing under Section 46 of the 2008 Act on 28 November 2023 that it was intending to commence consultation under Section 42 of the 2008 Act on the PEIR commencing on 30 November 2023 and closing on 08 February 2024.</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
Section 47 (Duty to consult the local community)	(1) 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.	The Applicant prepared and published a Statement of Community Consultation.
	(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.	To inform the preparation of the statement, the Applicant consulted each local authority that is within s.Section 43(1) on the content of the SoCC, being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Oxfordshire District Council • Vale of White Horse District Council • Cherwell District Council • Oxfordshire County Council
	(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.	Between 02 May 2023 and 26 May 2023, the Applicant sought feedback from host local authorities on an early working draft of the SoCC prior to commencing formal consultation on the SoCC later in the year. Feedback was also sought by the Applicant on a draft list of Section 42 statutory consultees. The Applicant then formally consulted with the Section 43(1) local authorities on the draft SoCC between 14 July and 14 August 2023.
	(4) In subsection (3) “the consultation documents” means the documents supplied	The consultation documents supplied by the Applicant

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	to the local authority by the applicant for the purpose of consulting the local authority under subsection (2).	included a covering letter and 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).	<p>The Applicant had regard to all relevant comments received on the draft SoCC.</p> <p>The Applicant shared a response table with each local authority to explain how their comments had been considered. This detail will also be included in the Consultation Report.</p>
	<p>6) Once the applicant has prepared the statement, the applicant must — 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,</p> <p>(a) publish, in a newspaper circulating in the vicinity of the land, a notice stating where and when the statement can be inspected, and</p> <p>(b) publish the statement in such manner as may be prescribed.</p>	<p>The final SoCC was publicised in accordance with Section 47 of the 2008 Act on 16 November 2023.</p> <p>The SoCC was uploaded to the document library on the Applicant’s website and made available to view and collect from the public venues (Community Access Points) listed in the document and accompanying notice.</p> <p>Notices were published in the Witney Gazette on 15 November 2023 and the Oxford Times on 16 November 2023 to publicise the SoCC and its availability.</p> <p>The publication of the SoCC was also communicated through emailing identified key stakeholders and any party that had registered to be kept informed of project updates.</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	(7) The applicant must carry out consultation in accordance with the proposals set out in the statement.	<p>The Applicant undertook consultation under Section s. 47 of the 2008 Act in accordance with the SoCC.</p> <p>This is evidenced in the accompanying table and will be further detailed in the Consultation Report.</p>
Section 48 (Duty to publicise)	(1) The applicant must publicise the proposed application in the prescribed manner.	<p>The Applicant prepared and publicised the application in the prescribed manner set out in the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 by publishing a Section 48 notice.</p> <p>The Section 48 Notice was published in the following publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Oxford Times (23 November 2023 and 30 November 2023) • The Witney Gazette (22 November 2023 and 29 November 2023) • The Guardian (29 November 2023) • The London Gazette (27 November 2023)
	(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>The Section 48 notice included a deadline of 08 February 2024 for receipt of responses to the publicity. The final notice was published on 30 November 2023, providing a total of 70 days for responses, therefore exceeding</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
		the 28 days statutory minimum response time.
Section 49 (Duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity)	<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 (whether or not in the same terms as the proposed application).</p> <p>(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.</p> <p>(3) In subsection (2) “relevant response” means—</p> <p>(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,</p> <p>(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</p>	<p>The Applicant has had regard to all relevant responses made pursuant to Section 42, Section 47 and Section 48 in accordance with Section 49.</p> <p>A summary of relevant responses received and how the Applicant has considered is provided in the Consultation Report.</p> <p>Further, targeted consultation has been undertaken on a specific instances of the proposed order limits changing between the Applicant's phase two consultation and submission of their DCO application.</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>(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.</p>	
<p>Section 50 (Guidance about pre-application procedure)</p>	<p>(1) Guidance may be issued about how to comply with the requirements of this Section.</p> <p>(2) Guidance under this section may be issued by the Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State.</p> <p>(3) The applicant must have regard to any guidance under this section.</p>	<p>The Applicant conducted its consultation when the former section 50 guidance “Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the pre-application process” was in force. The Applicant is aware that updated statutory guidance, the “Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant infrastructure Projects,” was issued in April 2024 under section 50.</p> <p>This Appendix [EN010147/APP/5.1.1] of the Consultation Report sets out how the Applicant carried out its consultation under the previous section 50 guidance (Table 1.4), but also how it has since reviewed the updated s.50 guidance and complied with its requirements as well (Table 1.5).</p> <p>Acknowledging that the government’s guidance “Introduction to National Infrastructure Planning Guidance” (April 2024) includes transitional arrangements to provide for where guidance is revised and applicants have (among other stages) commenced their statutory pre-application</p>

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		consultation, the guidance confirms that “It is not the intention for revisions to guidance to compromise the preparation or progress of applications which are already well underway.” The Applicant considers its approach to having regard to the section 50 guidance is demonstrated to be satisfactory and thorough.

Table 1.2: Compliance checklist for The Infrastructure Planning: (Application: Prescribed Form and Procedure) Regulation 2009

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
The Infrastructure Planning: (Application: Prescribed Form and Procedure) Regulation 2009		
Reg 3	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 person in column 2 of that table.	The Applicant consulted all persons prescribed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 1 who were deemed relevant to this application by the descriptions set out in column 2 of that table. A full list is provided in Appendix 5.1.6: Section 42 Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.6] .
Reg 4 (2)	The Applicant must publish a notice, which must include the matters prescribed by paragraph (3) of this regulation, of the proposed application – (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;	The Applicant published a notice which included all the matters set out in paragraph (3). Copies of the notice are provided in Appendix 5.1.7: Section 48 Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.6] . The Section 48 notice was published in local newspapers as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 November 2023 and 29 November 2023 in The Witney Gazette; and • 23 November 2023 and 30 November 2023 in The Oxford Times.
Reg 4 (2)	(b) once in a national newspaper;	The Section 48 notice was published in a national newspaper as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29 November 2023 in The Guardian.
Reg 4 (2)	(c) once in the London Gazette and, if land in Scotland is affected, the Edinburgh Gazette;	The Section 48 notice was published in the London Gazette 27 November 2023. The Project does not affect land in Scotland and therefore a notice was not placed in the London Gazette.
Reg 4 (2)	(d) where the proposed application relates to offshore development – (i) once in Lloyd’s List; and (ii) once in an appropriate fishing trade journal.	Not applicable.

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Reg 4 (3)	<p>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 Commission;</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 sub-paragraph);</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;</p> <p>(h) details of how to respond to the publicity; and</p> <p>(i) a deadline for receipt of those responses by the applicant, being not less than 28 days following the dates when the notice is last published.</p>	<p>The Applicant's section 48 notice included all matters required by this regulation, including stipulation of a deadline for responses being 04 August 2022.</p> <p>References below refer to the specific paragraph of the notice where the information was provided.</p> <p>(a) paragraph 1; (b) paragraph 1; (c) paragraph 5; (d) paragraphs 3, 4 and 5; (e) paragraphs 7, and 12; (f) paragraph 7; (g) paragraphs 13 and 14; (h) paragraphs 15 and 16; (i) paragraph 18.</p> <p>The published Section 48 Notices are included in Appendix 5.1.7: Section 48 Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.6].</p>

Table 1.3: Consultation compliance checklist for the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017		
Reg 8	<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) request 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>	<p>The Applicant submitted a Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State on 15 June 2023. Through this report, the Applicant notified the Planning Inspectorate that it intended to provide an Environmental Statement (ES) in respect of the Scheme pursuant to Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations.</p>
Reg 12	<p>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>	<p>The SoCC states that the Proposed Development is an EIA development in Section 10 (Environmental Information) and sets out how the Applicant intends to publicise and consult on the PEIR in Section 4 (Our Public Consultation Process), Section 5 (What Will We Consult On?), Section 7 (How will we consult?) and Section 10 (Environmental Information).</p> <p>A copy of the SoCC is provided in Appendix 5.1.4: Statement of Community Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.4].</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
Reg 13	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>The Applicant provided a copy of the notice publicised in accordance with Section 48 of the 2008 Act.</p> <p>The list of section 42 consultees is included in Appendix 5.1.6: Section 42 Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.6].</p> <p>A copy of the section 48 notice is included in Appendix 5.1.7: Section 48 Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.7].</p>

Table 1.4: Consultation compliance checklist for the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Planning Act 2008 guidance on the pre-application process (2015) (Withdrawn)

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Planning Act 2008 guidance on the pre-application process (2015)		
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 the purposes of consultation.	The Applicant strived to ensure that the status on any documents prepared to inform the consultation was clear throughout. For example, the PEIR was clearly marked “preliminary”, and this was reiterated in public documents. A clearly titled “Community Consultation Leaflet” was produced for two distinctly titled phases of consultation (“Phase One” and “Phase Two”).
18 and 20	<p>(18) Early involvement of local communities, local authorities and statutory consultees can bring about significant benefits for all parties.</p> <p>(20) Experience suggests that, to be of most value, consultation should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • based on accurate information that gives consultees a clear view of what is proposed including any options; • 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 engaging and accessible in style, encouraging consultees to react and offer their views 	<p>The Applicant has undertaken a series of defined phases of consultation during the pre-application period, to allow for iterative involvement, engagement and feedback throughout the development of proposals.</p> <p>This included a non-statutory phase one consultation on early-stage proposals, held for seven weeks between 03 November 2022 and 22 December 2022.</p> <p>The Applicant’s strategy of undertaking an iterative consultation process has allowed for feedback to inform the development of the Project in a timely manner, including reporting back to consultees at an interim stage.</p> <p>The Applicant has actively sought and taken due regard to feedback provided by stakeholders on its approach to community</p>

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		<p>consultation and has made changes where possible as documented in the Consultation Report.</p> <p>Consultation responses to each stage of consultation have been carefully documented and considered as part of the iterative development of the Project, with stakeholders playing a key role in the design of the proposals.</p> <p>The Applicant has prepared and published a range of consultation materials available in a various formats to cater for differing preferences and levels of interest and expertise. For example, this includes: a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR); a Non-Technical Summary of the PEIR; Community Consultation Leaflet; and a Feedback Form.</p>
23	<p>In brief, during the pre-application stage applicants are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • notify the Secretary of State of the proposed application; • identify whether the project requires an environmental impact assessment; where it does, confirm that they will be submitting an environmental statement along with the application, or that they will be seeking a screening opinion ahead of submitting the application; • produce a Statement of Community Consultation, in consultation with the relevant local authority or authorities, which describes how the Applicant proposes 	<p>As set out in this document as well as detailed in the Consultation Report, the Applicant has complied with all requirements listed under point 23 of the DCLG Guidance (2015).</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>to consult the local community about their project and then carry out consultation in accordance with that Statement;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make the Statement of Community Consultation available for inspection by the public in a way that is reasonably convenient for people living in the vicinity of the land where the development is proposed, as required by Section 47 of the Planning Act and Regulations; • identify and consult statutory consultees as required by Section 42 of the Planning Act and Regulations; • publicise the proposed application in accordance with Regulations; • set a deadline for consultation responses of not less than 28 days from the day after receipt/last publication; • • have regard to relevant responses to publicity and consultation; and • prepare a consultation report and submit it to the Secretary of State. 	
24 and 25	<p>The requirements of the Planning Act and associated Regulations form the framework for the pre-application consultation process. The Government recognises that major infrastructure projects and the communities and environment in which they are located will vary considerably. A 'one-size-</p>	<p>The Applicant carried out the pre-application consultation in accordance with the SoCC, which was informed through consultation with host local authorities. All responses received from local authorities were considered in the preparation of the SoCC. The comments received, alongside the Applicant's consideration,</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>fits-all' approach is not, therefore, appropriate. Instead, Applicants, who are best placed to understand the detail of their specific project, and the relevant local authorities, who have a unique knowledge of their local communities, should as far as possible work together to develop plans for consultation. The aim should be to ensure that consultation is appropriate to the scale and nature of the project and where its impacts will be experienced.</p> <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 industries protocols that can be adapted.</p> <p>Larger, more complex applications are likely to need to go beyond the statutory minimum timescales laid down in the Planning Act to ensure enough time for consultees to understand project proposals and formulate a response. Many proposals will require detailed technical input, especially regarding impacts, so sufficient time will need to be allowed for this.</p> <p>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,</p>	<p>are presented in Tables 6.1 – 6.6 of 6.1, Table 6.2 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p> <p>The SoCC included defining a core consultation zone within which all properties were issued with consultation notifications. The methodology for defining this zone involved extending an initial distance of 2km from the edge of the proposed solar development areas, and 500m from the proposed cable route. The core consultation zone extends beyond 2km in certain areas, for instance to incorporate the entire village of Kidlington so as to not bisect the village. It has been reduced in other areas where there are no property interests within a 2km distance from the boundary of the Project.</p> <p>The Applicant allowed for consultation periods exceeding the statutory minimum 28 days for the Section 47 and Section 42 consultation.</p> <p>The Applicant maintained a range of free-to-use communication channels (Freephone, Freepost and email) throughout the pre-application period.</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	this should be accommodated as far as possible.	
26 and 27	<p>(26) The Planning Act requires certain bodies and groups of people to be consulted at the pre-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. [...] 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>(27) Applicants are therefore encouraged to consult widely on project proposals.</p>	<p>In addition to statutory consultees identified under Section 42 of the 2008 Act, the Applicant sought to identify and consult with other bodies and individuals who may have an interest in the Project. A full list of all non-prescribed consultees identified by applicant and consulted with under Section 42 of the 2008 Act is provided in Appendix 5.1.6: Section 42 Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.6].</p> <p>The Applicant also strived to raise awareness of the application more widely. This included sharing press releases, advertisement in regional publications, and through hosting public information events.</p> <p>As detailed in Section X of this Report, the Applicant made documents available at Community Access Points (CAP) sites, and distributed posters with Local Information Points (LIPs) throughout the consultation zone. Along with advertisements and the publication of notices, in addition to directly distributing leaflets to over 23,000 properties, the Applicant ensured wide consultation on the Project.</p>
28	<p>From time to time a body may cease to exist but, for legislative timetabling reasons, may still be listed as a statutory consultee. In such situations the Secretary of State will not expect strict compliance with the statutory requirements. Applicants should identify any successor body and consult</p>	<p>The Applicant reviewed the consultee list on a regular basis to ensure that the contact details were up to date and that any successor body was consulted with.</p> <p>See the Consultation Report Appendix 5.1.6: Section 42 Consultation Materials</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>with them in the same manner as they would have with the original body.</p> <p>Where there is no obvious successor, applicants should seek the advice of the inspectorate, who may be able to identify an appropriate alternative consultee. Whether or not an alternative is identified, the consultation report should briefly note any cases where compliance with statutory requirements was impossible and the reasons why.</p>	<p>[EN010147/APP/5.1.6] for the list of section 42 consultees.</p> <p>The Applicant also had regard to any changes in contact details that it was made aware of via the information lines.</p>
29	<p>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 pre-application requirements. [...] Applicants are therefore advised to discuss and agree a timetable with consultees for the provision of such inputs.</p>	<p>The Applicant has undertaken extensive engagement with expert bodies and technical consultees throughout the pre-application process. This began in 2022, and continued through iterative phases of consultation, as described in the Consultation Report.</p>
34 and 35	<p>(34) Local authorities have considerable expertise in consulting local people. They will be able to draw on this expertise to provide advice to applicants on the makeup of the community and on how consultation might best be undertaken. In addition, many authorities will already have a register of local interest groups, and should be able to readily provide applicants with an appropriate list of such</p>	<p>The Applicant consulted each local authority that is within section 43(1) on the content of an early working draft of the SoCC and then formally on the draft SoCC, as detailed in Section 6 of the Consultation Report.</p> <p>The comments received, alongside the Applicant's consideration, are presented in Tables 6.1 – 6.6 of 6.1, Table 6.2 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>groups for the purposes of consultation.</p> <p>(35) The Applicant has a duty under Section 47 of the Planning Act to prepare a Statement of Community Consultation, and then to conduct its consultation in line with that statement. Before doing so, the applicant must consult on their Statement of Community Consultation with each local authority in whose area the proposed development is situated. This may require consultation with a number of different local authorities, particularly for long linear projects.</p>	<p>Table 6.7 describes how the Applicant has complied with commitments set out within the published SoCC.</p>
36	<p>Even where it is intended that a development would take place within a single local authority area, it is possible that its impacts could be significantly wider than just that local authority's area – for example if the development was located close to a neighbouring authority. Where an applicant decides to consult people living in a wider area who could be affected by the project (e.g. through visual or environmental impacts, or through increased traffic flow), that intention should be reflected in the Statement of Community Consultation.</p>	<p>Section 6 of the Applicant's SoCC (as provided in Appendix 5.1.4: Statement of Community Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1]) sets out who the Applicant intended to consult. This includes describing the methodology behind a defined Core Consultation Zone of over 23,000 properties, as well as the Applicant's methods for publicising consultation opportunities beyond the core consultation zone through advertising in local media, maintaining a register of interested individuals, publishing informative consultation materials online making them available to collect from defined Community Access Points.</p>
37	<p>...prior to submitting their draft Statement of Community Consultation applicants may wish to seek to resolve any disagreements or clarifications about the public consultation</p>	<p>The Applicant engaged relevant local authorities prior to undertaking a non-statutory phase of consultation, as described in Section 3 of the</p>

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	<p>design. An applicant is therefore likely to need to engage in discussions with local authorities over a longer period than the minimum requirements set out in the Act.</p>	<p>Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p> <p>The Applicant undertook a non-statutory phase of consultation on early-stage proposals between 03 November 2022 and 22 December 2022. This consultation included inviting feedback on the methods of consultation. The Applicant reflected on this feedback, alongside the level of engagement with the consultation when preparing the SoCC.</p> <p>The Applicant's preparation of the SoCC is described in Section 6 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p> <p>The Applicant sought feedback from host local authorities on an early working draft of the SoCC between 02 May 2023 and 26 May 2023, prior to commencing formal consultation on the SoCC later in the year. Feedback was also sought by the Applicant on a draft list of Section 42 statutory consultees.</p> <p>The Applicant formally consulted on a draft of the SoCC between 14 July and 14 August 2023.</p>
<p>38, 39, 40 and 41</p>	<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 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</p>	<p>The Applicant consulted each local authority that is within section 43(1) on the content of an early working draft of the SoCC and then formally on the draft SoCC, as detailed in Section 6 of the Consultation Report.</p> <p>The Applicant endeavoured to respond to all issues or concerns raised following consultation on the Draft Statement of</p>

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	<p>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 discussion 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>(39) Topics for consideration at such pre-consultation discussions might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size and coverage of the proposed consultation exercise (including, where appropriate, consultation which goes wider than one local authority area); • The appropriateness of various consultation techniques, including electronic based ones; • The design and format of consultation materials; • Issues which could be covered in consultation materials; • Suggestions for places/timings of public events as part of the consultation; • Local bodies and representative groups who should be consulted; and • Timescales for consultation. <p>(40) It is expected that in most cases applicants and local authorities will be able to work closely together and agree on the local consultation process.</p>	<p>Community Consultation. Where this was not possible the Applicant provided an explanation of the course of action.</p> <p>The comments received, alongside the Applicant's consideration, are presented in Tables 6.1 – 6.6 of 6.1, Table 6.2 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p>

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	<p>(41) 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>	
43	<p>Local authorities are also themselves statutory consultees for any proposed major infrastructure project which is in or adjacent to their area. Applicants should engage with [local authorities as statutory bodies] as early as possible to ensure that the impacts of the development on the local area are understood and considered prior to the application being submitted to the Secretary of State.</p>	<p>The Applicant commenced engagement with host local authorities in 2022, prior to undertaking any formal consultation on the Project, as described in Section 3 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p> <p>The Applicant consulted with 'B' and 'C' host Authorities (in which the Project is located), and neighbouring 'A' and 'D' authorities, in the pre-application stage. The identification of these local authorities is described in Section 8.5 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p>
49	<p>Applicants will also need to identify and consult people who own, occupy or have another interest in the land in question, or who could be affected by a project in such a way that they may be able to make a claim for compensation. This will give such parties early notice of projects, and an opportunity to express their views regarding them.</p>	<p>The Applicant has sought to identify and consult with those with an interest in the land.</p> <p>The Applicant sought to identify the section 42(1)(d) consultees by undertaking diligent inquiry before the statutory consultation commenced. This included reviewing publicly available data (for example at the Land Registry), sending out Land Interest Questionnaires, undertaking site visits and erecting site notices.</p> <p>The Applicant notified 231 identified Section 44 consultees</p>

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		<p>by letter on 28 November 2023 and by email on 29 November 2023, ahead of the statutory consultation period commencing on 30 November 2023. These consultees were informed of a response deadline of 08 February 2024, exceeding the statutory requirement of 28 days.</p> <p>The identification of Section 44 consultees is described in Section 8.6 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p>
52	<p>Applicants should explain in the consultation report how they have dealt with any new interests in land emerging after conclusion of their statutory consultation having regard to their duties to consult and take account of any responses.</p>	<p>The Applicant notified a further 17 Section 44 consultees following the start of the phase two statutory consultation period (30 November 2023). Each consultee was notified by letter and provided with a response deadline of at least 28 days.</p> <p>Where owners, lessees, tenants or occupiers were unknown, the Applicant placed notices detailing the consultation at the relevant locations around the Project site area.</p> <p>The list of all land interests consulted is presented in the Consultation Report Appendix 5.1.6: Section 42 Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.6]. This appendix details the date on which they were notified of consultation and the deadline provided to them for responding.</p> <p>All persons listed in the Book of Reference [EN010147/APP/4.3], which is up to date at the time of submitting the application for a DCO, were consulted under section 42(1)(d), apart from two recently identified parties that</p>

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		<p>have instead been provided with a proportionate opportunity to engage. It is noted that the list of persons with an interest in land is subject to change over time, as a result of changes in land ownership.</p> <p>This is described in Section 8.6 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p>
53	<p>Local people have a vital role to play at the pre-application stage. People should have as much influence as is realistic and possible over decisions which shape their lives and communities. It is therefore critical that they are engaged with project proposals at an early stage...</p>	<p>The Applicant has undertaken a series of defined phases of consultation during the pre-application period, to allow for iterative involvement, engagement and feedback throughout the development of proposals.</p> <p>This included a non-statutory phase one consultation on early-stage proposals, held for seven weeks between 03 November 2022 and 22 December 2022.</p> <p>The Applicant's strategy of undertaking an iterative consultation process has allowed for feedback to inform the development of the Project in a timely manner, including reporting back to consultees at an interim stage.</p> <p>The Applicant has actively sought and taken due regard to feedback provided by stakeholders on its approach to community consultation and has made changes where possible as documented in the Consultation Report.</p> <p>Consultation responses to each stage of consultation have been carefully documented and</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
		considered as part of the iterative development of the Project, with stakeholders playing a key role in the design of the proposals.
54	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.	<p>The Applicant's SoCC set out a range of methods to support an accessible and inclusive pre-application consultation.</p> <p>In seeking input from local authorities on the approach set out in the SoCC, the Applicant shared an early working draft of the SoCC on 02 May 2023 by email, alongside a database of organisations and contact details for prescribed Section 42 consultees, and non-prescribed consultees including gateway organisations representing potentially seldom heard groups and other community and interest groups.</p> <p>Through consultation, the Applicant has prepared and published a range of consultation materials available in a various formats to cater for differing preferences and levels of interest and expertise. For example, this includes: a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR); a Non-Technical Summary of the PEIR; Community Consultation Leaflet; and a Feedback Form.</p> <p>The Applicant also maintained a range of free-to-use communication channels (Freephone, Freepost and email) throughout the pre-application period.</p>
55	Applicants must set out clearly what is being consulted on. They must be careful to make	Section 5 (What Will We Consult On?) of the Applicant's SoCC set

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	<p>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. [...] Such documents should be written in clear, accessible, and non-technical language. Applicants should consider making it available in formats appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities if requested. There may be cases where documents may need to be bilingual...but it is not the policy of the Government to encourage documents to be translated into non-native languages.</p>	<p>out the intended scope of each phase of consultation.</p> <p>In support of this, a Community Consultation Leaflet of Information Change Note was published for each defined phase of consultation, to clearly set out the proposals and information being consulted on.</p> <p>The back page of these documents, including the SoCC, explained that materials could be provided in alternative formats upon request.</p>
56	<p>Applicants are required to set out in their Statement of Community Consultation how they propose to consult those living in the vicinity of the land. They are encouraged to consider consulting beyond this where they think doing so may provide more information on the impacts of their proposals...”</p>	<p>Section 6 (Who Will We Consult?) of the Applicant’s SoCC (as provided in Appendix 5.1.4: Statement of Community Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1]) sets out who the Applicant intended to consult. This includes describing the methodology behind a defined Core Consultation Zone of over 23,000 properties, as well as the Applicant’s methods for publicising consultation opportunities beyond the core consultation zone through advertising in local media, maintaining a register of interested individuals, publishing informative consultation materials online making them available to</p>

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		<p>collect from defined Community Access Points.</p> <p>The SoCC included defining a core consultation zone within which all properties were issued with consultation notifications. The methodology for defining this zone involved extending an initial distance of 2km from the edge of the proposed solar development areas, and 500m from the proposed cable route. The core consultation zone extends beyond 2km in certain areas, for instance to incorporate the entire village of Kidlington so as to not bisect the village. It has been reduced in other areas where there are no property interests within a 2km distance from the boundary of the Project.</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 send to local community groups as appropriate.</p>	<p>The SoCC was publicised in accordance with Section 47(6) of the 2008 Act on 16 November 2023.</p> <p>The SoCC was uploaded to the document library on the Applicant's Project website and made available to view and collect from the public venues (Community Access Points) listed in the document and accompanying notice. Evidence of the SoCC being hosted on the Project website is provided in Appendix 5.1.4: Statement of Community Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.4].</p> <p>Notices were published in the Witney Gazette on 15 November 2023 and the Oxford Times on 16 November 2023 to publicise the SoCC and its availability. Copies</p>

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		<p>of these notices are provided in Appendix 5.1.4: Statement of Community Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.4].</p> <p>The publication of the SoCC was also communicated through emailing identified key stakeholders and any party that had registered to be kept informed of project updates.</p> <p>The SoCC was available at statutory consultation public information events and available in hard copy format free of charge upon request.</p> <p>The SoCC outlined the consultation process for the Project and the details of the Stage Two Statutory consultation, including public information event dates, times and venues.</p>
58	<p>Applicants are required to publicise their proposed application under section 48 of the Planning Act and the Regulations and set out the detail of what this publicity must entail. [...] Where possible, the first two required local newspaper advertisements should coincide approximately with the beginning of the consultation with communities. However, given the detailed information 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>	<p>The Section 48 notice was published in local newspapers as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22 November 2023 and 29 November 2023 in The Witney Gazette; and • 23 November 2023 and 30 November 2023 in The Oxford Times. <p>This aligned with the commencement of statutory consultation on 30 November 2023.</p>
68, 69 and 70	(68) To realise the benefits of consultation on a project, it must take place at a sufficiently	The Applicant has undertaken a series of defined phases of consultation during the pre-

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>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>(69) Applicants will often require detailed technical advice from consultees, and it is likely that their input will be of the greatest value if they are consulted when the project proposals are fluid, followed up by confirmation of the approach as proposals become firmer. In principle, therefore applicants should undertake initial consultation as soon as there is sufficient detail to allow consultees to understand the nature of the project properly.</p> <p>(70) To manage the tension between consultation early, but also having project proposals that are firm enough to enable consultees to comment, applicants are encouraged to consider an iterative, phased consultation consisting of two (or more) stages, especially for larger projects with long development periods. For example, the applicant might wish to consider undertaking non-statutory early consultation at a stage where options still being considered. This will be helpful in informing the proposals and assisting the applicant in establishing a preferred option on which to undertake statutory consultation.</p>	<p>application period, to allow for iterative involvement, engagement and feedback throughout the development of proposals.</p> <p>This included a non-statutory phase one consultation on early-stage proposals, held for seven weeks between 03 November 2022 and 22 December 2022.</p> <p>The Applicant's strategy of undertaking an iterative consultation process has allowed for feedback to inform the development of the Project in a timely manner, including reporting back to consultees at an interim stage.</p> <p>The Applicant has actively sought and taken due regard to feedback provided by stakeholders on its approach to community consultation and has made changes where possible as documented in the Consultation Report.</p> <p>Consultation responses to each stage of consultation have been carefully documented and considered as part of the iterative development of the Project, with stakeholders playing a key role in the design of the proposals.</p> <p>Table 1.2 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1] sets out the pre-application stages and consultation undertaken.</p>

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72	<p>The Planning Act requires a consultation period of a minimum of 28 days from the day after receipt on 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 Applicant held a series of defined phases of consultation, each exceeding 28 days.</p>
73, 74, 75 and 76	<p>(73) Applicants are not expected to repeat consultation rounds set out in their Statement of Community Consultation unless the project proposals have changed very substantially. [...] 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> <p>(74) Where a proposed application changes to such a large degree that the proposal could be considered a new application, the legitimacy of the consultation already carried</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>In Section 4 (Our Public Consultation Process) of the SoCC, the Applicant states: <i>“This SoCC relates to the delivery of the Phase Two consultation. If there are any subsequent consultations (including any targeted consultations) following Phase Two that may be triggered by events such as a material change to the red line boundary, or as a result of feedback from the Phase Two consultation, they will be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC to the</i></p>

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	<p>out could be questioned. In such cases, applicants should undertake further re-consultation on the new proposals, and should supply consultees with sufficient information to enable them.</p> <p>(75) If the application only changes to a small degree [...] the applicant should ensure that all affected statutory consultees and local communities are informed of the changes.</p> <p>(76) In circumstances where a particular issue has arisen during the pre-application 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.</p>	<p><i>extent they are relevant to the subsequent consultation."</i></p> <p>Following the close of the phase two (statutory) consultation, the Applicant continued to refine the proposals for the Project in preparation for submitting a DCO application.</p> <p>This refinement was informed by further design work and due diligence, consideration of consultee feedback, and responding to the results and data from environmental assessments.</p> <p>This resulted in a series of specific amendments to the proposed Project site boundary (indicative order limits) – both increases and decreases – compared to the Project boundary presented in the PEIR and for phase two consultation.</p> <p>The Applicant undertook further statutory consultation targeted on these specific changes to ensure communities and consultees had an opportunity to comment on the full proposed Project boundary prior to a DCO application being submitted.</p> <p>This consultation is described in Sections 10 and 11 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p>
77	<p>Consultation should also be fair and reasonable for applicants as well as communities. To ensure that consultation is fair to all parties, applicants should be able to demonstrate that the</p>	<p>The pre-application consultation process that the Applicant held complied with its commitments as consulted on for the draft SoCC and set out in the final SoCC.</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>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 consultation reached widely across the community, welcoming over public attendees to the phase two (statutory) public information events and receiving over 1,000 submissions of feedback.</p> <p>The Applicant was able to undertake all methods of consultation and engagement it committed to in the SoCC.</p>
<p>78 and 80</p>	<p>(78) Applicants are required under section 37 of the Planning Act to produce a consultation report alongside their application, which details how they have complied with the consultation requirements set out in the Act.</p> <p>(79) Therefore, the consultation report should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a general description of the consultation process undertaken, which can helpfully include a timeline; • set out specifically what the applicant has done in compliance with the requirements of the Planning Act, relevant secondary legislation, this guidance, and any relevant policies, guidance or advice published by Government or the Inspectorate; • set out how the applicant has taken account of any responses to consultation with local authorities on what should be in the applicant's statement of community consultation; • set out a summary of relevant responses to 	<p>The Applicant has prepared a Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1] consistent with this guidance.</p> <p>Relevant sections of the Consultation Report include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1 (Introduction) sets out the Applicant's approach to consultation and includes Table 1.2 setting out the pre-application stages and consultation undertaken in chronological order. • Appendix 5.1.1: Statement of Compliance [EN010147/APP/5.1.1] sets out how the Applicant has complied with relevant legislation and guidance. • Section 6 (Preparation for Statutory Section 47 Consultation sets out how the Applicant consulted relevant local authorities to inform the SoCC, including comments received and consideration given to these. • Sections 12 and 13 provide a summary of responses received to Section 47 and Section 42 consultation and the

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	<p>consultation (but not a complete list of responses);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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; • provide an explanation as to why responses advising on major changes to the project were not followed, including advise from statutory consultees on impacts; • 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 the Inspectorate, provide an explanation for the action taken or not taken; and • be expressed in terms sufficient to enable the Secretary of State to understand fully how the consultation process has been undertaken and significant effects addressed. However, it need not include full technical explanations of these matters. 	<p>Applicant’s consideration of these responses. These sections are supported by Appendix 5.1.9: Section 47 Applicant Response [EN010147/APP/5.1.9] and Appendix 5.1.10: Section 42 Applicant Response [EN010147/APP/5.1.10].</p>
81	<p>It is good practice that those who have contributed to the consultation are informed of the results ...</p>	<p>The Applicant’s Project communications channels remained open following the close of the phase one consultation period. Through these channels, the Applicant continued to receive and respond to enquiries regarding the Project.</p>

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		<p>The Project website continued to be available for any interested parties to access Project information, including responses to Frequently Asked Questions responding to topics and themes raised through consultation.</p> <p>Following the review and consideration of feedback received, the Applicant prepared a phase one consultation summary report to share details of the level engagement, themes of responses received, and updates regarding the Applicant's consideration of feedback and next steps for the Project.</p> <p>The phase one consultation summary report was circulated to key stakeholders on 30 June 2023. It was circulated to those who had registered to be kept informed, the Stop Botley West campaign group, and other identified organisations on 04 July 2023. The document provided an overview of the feedback that we received.</p> <p>The phase one consultation summary report was published on the Project website and issued to over 22,000 properties within the vicinity of the Project, to help consultees understand how their feedback was being considered. A copy of the phase one consultation summary report is provided as Appendix 5.1.3: Phase One Consultation Summary Report [EN010147/APP/5.1.3].</p> <p>The Applicant intends to upload to the Project website a public</p>

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		summary of the DCO application proposals and how these have been informed by pre-application feedback and assessment.
93	<p>For the pre-application consultation process, applicants are advised to include sufficient preliminary environmental information to enable consultees to develop an informed view of the project.</p> <p>[...] The preliminary environmental information is not expected to replicate or be a draft of the environmental statement. [...] The key issue is that the information presented must provide clarity to all consultees. Applicants should be careful not to assume that non-specialist consultees would not be interested in any technical environmental information. It is therefore advisable to ensure access to such information is provided during all consultations. The applicant's Statement of Community Consultation must include a statement about how the applicant intends to consult on preliminary environmental information.</p>	<p>The Applicant set out in the SoCC how it would be publicising and consulting on the PEIR. This included making available a Non-technical summary of the PEIR.</p> <p>The PEIR and accompanying Non-Technical Summary was available to any interested party through the Project website, at phase two (statutory) consultation public information events, and at the identified Community Access Points.</p> <p>The availability of the PEIR was publicised through the section 48 notice.</p>

Table 1.5: Compliance checklist for Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (April 2024)

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (April 2024)		
Paragraph 020	<p>How can applicants ensure consultation is proportionate?</p> <p>The pre-application consultation undertaken should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the project and its effects. A 'one-size-fits-all' approach is not appropriate. For a straightforward and uncontroversial application, an applicant may choose to discharge the obligations of sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act concurrently in a single round of consultation, or in separate stages. For more complex proposals, an applicant may choose to conduct a non-statutory round of consultation (for example considering options) before undertaking a statutory round of consultation, or they may choose to run a multi-stage statutory consultation process.</p>	<p>The Applicant has undertaken a series of defined phases of consultation during the pre-application period, to allow for iterative involvement, engagement and feedback throughout the development of proposals.</p> <p>This included a non-statutory phase one consultation on early-stage proposals, held for seven weeks between 03 November 2022 and 22 December 2022.</p> <p>The Applicant's strategy of undertaking an iterative consultation process has allowed for feedback to inform the development of the Project in a timely manner, including reporting back to consultees at an interim stage.</p> <p>The Applicant has actively sought and taken due regard to feedback provided by stakeholders on its approach to community consultation and has made changes where possible as documented in the Consultation Report.</p> <p>Consultation responses to each stage of consultation have been carefully documented and considered as part of the iterative</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
		<p>development of the Project, with stakeholders playing a key role in the design of the proposals.</p> <p>The Applicant’s approach to consultation was set out in the SoCC, which in turn was informed through consultation with relevant local authorities, as described in Section 6 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p>
Paragraph 020	Larger, more complex applications are likely to warrant going beyond the statutory 28-day minimum timescales for consultation laid down in the Planning Act to ensure enough time for consultees to understand project proposals and formulate a response.	All defined consultation periods (statutory and non-statutory) for the Project have exceeded 28 days.
Paragraph 020	Once applicants have completed the consultation process set out in their SoCC, where a proposed application is amended in the light of responses to consultation then, unless those amendments materially and substantially change the proposed application or materially changes its effects as a whole, the amendments themselves should not trigger a need for further consultation. The amendments can be reported as part of the consultation	In Section 4 (Our Public Consultation Process) of the SoCC, the Applicant states: <i>“This SoCC relates to the delivery of the Phase Two consultation. If there are any subsequent consultations (including any targeted consultations) following Phase Two that may be triggered by events such as a material change to the red line boundary, or as a result of feedback from the Phase Two consultation, they will be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC to the extent they are relevant to the subsequent consultation.”</i>

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	<p>report submitted with the application.</p> <p>Only where the project taken as a whole changes very significantly, and to such a large degree that what is being taken forward is fundamentally different from what was previously consulted on, should re-consultation on the proposed application as a whole be considered.</p> <p>For any material change to a part of the proposed application where the project as a whole is not fundamentally changed, for example in the case of linear aspects where new information leads to a new alignment for a particular section of the proposal, a bespoke and targeted approach to further consultation can be adopted, which can address the specific consultation obligations arising proportionately.</p> <p>Targeted consultation can be statutory or non-statutory or a combination of the two depending on whether new persons needing to be consulted under section 42 of the Planning Act have been identified, but such targeted consultation will not require the production of PEI provided proportionate and appropriate</p>	<p>Following the close of the phase two (statutory) consultation, the Applicant continued to refine the proposals for the Project in preparation for submitting a DCO application.</p> <p>This refinement was informed by further design work and due diligence, consideration of consultee feedback, and responding to the results and data from environmental assessments.</p> <p>This resulted in a series of specific amendments to the proposed Project site boundary (indicative order limits) – both increases and decreases – compared to the Project boundary presented in the PEIR and for phase two consultation.</p> <p>The Applicant undertook further statutory consultation targeted on these specific changes to ensure communities and consultees had an opportunity to comment on the full proposed Project boundary prior to a DCO application being submitted.</p> <p>This consultation is described in Sections 10 and 11 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p>

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	<p>information on environmental implications of any changes, where necessary, is provided.</p>	
<p>Paragraph 021</p>	<p>Who should be consulted?</p> <p>Sections 42 to 44 of the Planning Act, Regulation 3 and Schedule 1 to the APFP Regulations 2009 set out details of who must be consulted...</p> <p>While the list of prescribed bodies who must be consulted was updated in April 2024, from time to time a body may cease to exist but may still be listed as a statutory consultee in the Regulations pending their updating. In such situations applicants should identify any successor body and consult with them in the same manner as they would have with the original body. Where there is no obvious successor, applicants should seek the advice of the Planning Inspectorate, who may be able to identify an appropriate alternative consultee. Whether or not an alternative is identified, the consultation report should briefly note any cases where compliance with statutory requirements was impossible and the reasons why.</p>	<p>The Applicant reviewed the consultee list on a regular basis to ensure that the contact details were up to date and that any successor body was consulted with.</p> <p>See the Consultation Report Appendix 5.1.6: Section 42 Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.6] for the list of section 42 consultees.</p> <p>The Applicant also had regard to any changes in contact details that it was made aware of via the information lines.</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
Paragraph 022	<p>How can applicants consult communities effectively?</p> <p>It is good practice for applicants to work with local stakeholders in the formative stages of the project, through early engagement. This can help inform the Programme Document that they later take to the Inception Meeting with the Planning Inspectorate. Early engagement with local authorities, parish and town councils can help applicants to ensure they find the best approach to engage the relevant communities in the most effective and proportionate way.</p>	<p>The Applicant engaged relevant local authorities prior to undertaking a non-statutory phase of consultation, as described in Section 3 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p> <p>The Applicant undertook a non-statutory phase of consultation on early-stage proposals between 03 November 2022 and 22 December 2022. This consultation included inviting feedback on the methods of consultation. The Applicant reflected on this feedback, alongside the level of engagement with the consultation when preparing the SoCC.</p>
Paragraph 022	<p>Under section 47 of the Planning Act, applicants are required to produce a SoCC, setting out how they intend to consult the local community on the proposed application. Applicants should consider how they can engage communities in a way that supports them to understand the necessary issues at an appropriate stage to support preparation of their application, and how they will show how they have responded to their issues of concern.</p>	<p>The Applicant's preparation of the SoCC is described in Section 6 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p> <p>The Applicant sought feedback from host local authorities on an early working draft of the SoCC between 02 May 2023 and 26 May 2023, prior to commencing formal consultation on the SoCC later in the year. Feedback was also sought by the Applicant on a draft list of Section 42 statutory consultees.</p> <p>The Applicant formally consulted on a draft of the SoCC between 14 July and 14 August 2023.</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
		The final SoCC was publicised in accordance with Section 47 of the 2008 Act on 16 November 2023.
Paragraph 022	Local communities may need support to help them to input to the NSIP consenting process. Independent community liaison chairs or forums can be used to provide support to local communities and non-statutory consultees to enable them to provide an effective input to the pre-application process. Applicants will want to consider whether these should be used, not least to assist an applicant's own assessment of potential examination issues in preparing their Programme Document and SoCC.	The Applicant notes this updated guidance. The Applicant has sought to ensure consultation activities are accessible and has been open to engagement requests.
Paragraph 024	<p>What do applicants have to do to consult people with an interest in land?</p> <p>Where an applicant proposes to compulsorily acquire an interest or take temporary possession of land it does not own in order to implement a proposed NSIP, under section 42 of the Planning Act they must identify and consult people, including those who own, occupy or have another interest in the land in question.</p> <p>It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate at submission of the application to the Planning Inspectorate that due diligence has been</p>	<p>The Applicant has sought to identify and consult with those with an interest in the land.</p> <p>The Applicant sought to identify the section 42(1)(d) consultees by undertaking diligent inquiry before the statutory consultation commenced. This included reviewing publicly available data (for example at the Land Registry), sending out Land Interest Questionnaires, undertaking site visits and erecting site notices.</p> <p>The Applicant notified 231 identified Section 44 consultees by letter on 28 November 2023 and by email on 29 November</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>undertaken in identifying all land interests. Applicants must ensure that the Book of Reference (which records and categorises those land interests) is sufficiently up to date at the time of submission (acknowledging the timescales for preparing and updating it) and fully meets the requirements of Regulations 5 and 7 of the APFP Regulations 2009.</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Applicants should explain in the consultation report how they have dealt with any new interests in land emerging after conclusion of their statutory consultation having regard to their duties to consult and take account of any responses.</p>	<p>2023, ahead of the statutory consultation period commencing on 30 November 2023. These consultees were informed of a response deadline of 08 February 2024, exceeding the statutory requirement of 28 days.</p> <p>The Applicant notified a further 17 Section 44 consultees following the start of the phase two statutory consultation period (30 November 2023). Each consultee was notified by letter and provided with a response deadline of at least 28 days.</p> <p>Where owners, lessees, tenants or occupiers were unknown, the Applicant placed notices detailing the consultation at the relevant locations around the Project site area.</p> <p>The list of all land interests consulted is presented in the Consultation Report Appendix 5.1.6: Section 42 Consultation Materials [EN010147/APP/5.1.6]. This appendix details the date on which they were notified of consultation and the deadline provided to them for responding.</p> <p>All persons listed in the Book of Reference [EN010147/APP/4.3], which is up to date at the time of submitting the application for a DCO, were consulted under section 42(1)(d), apart from two recently identified parties that have instead been provided with a proportionate opportunity to</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
		<p>engage. It is noted that the list of persons with an interest in land is subject to change over time, as a result of changes in land ownership.</p> <p>This is described in Section 8.6 of the Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1].</p>
<p>Paragraph 025</p>	<p>What is the early adequacy of consultation milestone?</p> <p>The Programme Document will enable the Planning Inspectorate to determine at the Inception Meeting that the proposed consultation arrangements are adequate for the level of complexity of the proposed project. The Programme Document should also identify an appropriate milestone during the pre-application stage to enable the Planning Inspectorate to test the progress of the consultation.</p>	<p>Given the introduction of this guidance relative to the Applicant's pre-application programme for the Project, the Applicant did not prepare a Programme Document for discussion with PINS as part of an inception meeting.</p> <p>However, following the Planning Inspectorate issuing an Expression of Interest Form to the Applicant, a Programme Document was prepared shared with the Planning Inspectorate in response on 10 July 2024.</p> <p>The Programme Document set out an appropriate time for an early adequacy of consultation milestone.</p> <p>The Applicant has since hosted the Programme Document on the Project website.</p>
<p>Paragraph 025</p>	<p>This adequacy of consultation milestone should be early enough to enable applicants to consider how to undertake any additional engagement that may be needed, but sufficiently towards the end of the pre-</p>	<p>Prior to submitting an application for a DCO, the Applicant prepared a written statement in response to the government's guidance regarding an early Adequacy of Consultation Milestone. A copy of this written</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>application stage to assess the adequacy of the consultation that has been done. It is likely therefore to be no later than around 3 months before the intended date of submission of the application.</p> <p>The adequacy of consultation milestone should be recorded by the applicant and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as a short statement of the elements of consultation which have been carried out compared with the components set out in the Programme Document and the SoCC. The statement should include the views and any relevant supporting material from local authorities if available.</p> <p>The adequacy of consultation milestone is an informal but nonetheless important opportunity to check that the pre-application programme is on track, and if it is seriously adrift the Planning Inspectorate will advise the applicant about the steps necessary to enable the application to be submitted having fulfilled the statutory requirements. Inevitably this could mean a renegotiation of the expected date of submission, with the objective of avoiding the prospect of an application not being accepted for examination</p>	<p>statement is provided in Appendix 5.1.1: Statement of Compliance [EN010147/APP/5.1.1].</p> <p>The Applicant discussed the preparation of this statement with the host local authorities for the Project. These authorities are Oxfordshire County Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, and Cherwell District Council.</p> <p>The Applicant submitted their written statement on the adequacy of consultation undertaken to the Planning Inspectorate on 11 October 2024. This was to give early consideration of the adequacy of consultation undertaken by the Applicant, prior to the acceptance stage of a DCO application.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that, given the timing of the guidance coming into effect relative to the programme for the Project, the written statement was submitted within three months of the intended DCO application submission date. While this period of time is less than suggested within the guidance, the Applicant still considered it useful to prepare and submit this document prior to submission. This approach was discussed with the Planning Inspectorate, and is referenced in the Applicant's Programme</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
		Document (which was published in July 2024).
Paragraph 026	<p>What is the consultation report and how should applicants respond to consultees?</p> <p>[The Consultation Report] should not include an excessively detailed description of every element of the consultation programme. The main objective should be to provide clarity not just on what consultation has been done but, crucially, how the applicant has taken it into account. It should therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a general description of the consultation process undertaken including the timeline; • set out specifically what the applicant has done to comply with the statutory requirements of the Planning Act, including advice issued under section 51 of the Planning Act, relevant secondary legislation and this guidance; • set out how the applicant has complied with the requirements to consult local communities described in the SoCC; 	<p>The Applicant has prepared a Consultation Report [EN010147/APP/5.1] consistent with this guidance.</p> <p>Relevant sections of the Consultation Report include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1 (Introduction) sets out the Applicant’s approach to consultation and includes Table 1.2 setting out the pre-application stages and consultation undertaken in chronological order. • Appendix 5.1.1: Statement of Compliance [EN010147/APP/5.1.1] sets out how the Applicant has complied with relevant legislation and guidance. • Section 6 (Preparation for Statutory Section 47 Consultation sets out how the Applicant consulted relevant local authorities to inform the SoCC, including comments received and consideration given to these. Table 6.7 sets out the commitments from the SoCC and describes how the Applicant has complied with these commitments; • Sections 12 and 13 provide a summary of responses received to

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out any relevant responses to consultation (but not a complete list of responses); • provide a description of how the proposed application for submission has been informed and influenced by taking account of those responses, showing any significant changes made as a result; • provide an explanation as to why any responses advising on changes to a proposed project, including advice from statutory consultees and local authorities on effects, were not followed; and • be expressed in terms sufficient to enable the Planning Inspectorate to understand fully how consultation has been undertaken, and how the issues raised through consultation have been addressed or responded to. 	<p>Section 47 and Section 42 consultation and the Applicant’s consideration of these responses. These sections are supported by Appendix 5.1.9: Section 47 Applicant Response [EN010147/APP/5.1.9] and Appendix 5.1.10: Section 42 Applicant Response [EN010147/APP/5.1.10].</p>
Paragraph 026	<p>It is good practice that those who have contributed to the consultation are informed of the results. The consultation report may not be the most appropriate format in which to respond to the points raised by various consultee groups and bodies. Applicants should</p>	<p>The Project website continued to be available for any interested parties to access Project information, including responses to Frequently Asked Questions responding to topics and themes raised through consultation.</p>

Ref	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>therefore consider producing a summary note in plain English for the local community setting out headline findings and how they have been addressed, together with a link to the full consultation report for those interested.</p>	<p>Following the review and consideration of feedback received, the Applicant prepared a phase one consultation summary report to share details of the level engagement, themes of responses received, and updates regarding the Applicant's consideration of feedback and next steps for the Project.</p> <p>The phase one consultation summary report was circulated to key stakeholders on 30 June 2023. It was circulated to those who had registered to be kept informed, the Stop Botley West campaign group, and other identified organisations on 04 July 2023. The document provided an overview of the feedback that we received.</p> <p>The phase one consultation summary report was published on the Project website and issued to over 22,000 properties within the vicinity of the Project, to help consultees understand how their feedback was being considered. A copy of the phase one consultation summary report is provided as Appendix 5.1.3: Phase One Consultation Summary Report [EN010147/APP/5.1.3].</p> <p>The Applicant intends to upload to the Project website a public summary of the DCO application proposals and how these have been informed by pre-application feedback and assessment.</p>

2 The Applicant's written statement on the adequacy of consultation undertaken (submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 11 October 2024)



Botley West Solar Farm

Early Adequacy of Consultation Milestone

Guidance: Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for
Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

October 2024

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1. Introduction

Overview

- 1.1. This early Adequacy of Consultation Milestone document has been prepared by Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd ('the Applicant') in preparation for the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for Botley West Solar Farm ('the Project').
- 1.2. In the first half of 2024, the Government introduced new guidance relevant to the application for a DCO:
 - Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects¹ ('the Guidance') (published 30 April 2024); and
 - Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus² ('the Prospectus') (published 16 May 2024).
- 1.3. In setting out the requirements and expectations for the preparation of an application for a DCO, both the updated Guidance and the Prospectus introduced an early adequacy of consultation milestone (AoCM).
- 1.4. The Applicant understands this to be aimed at providing them with an early opportunity to submit to the Planning Inspectorate a document setting out how the Applicant has complied with the consultation and publicity requirements prescribed by Sections 42, 46, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008, associated provisions of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ('the EIA Regulations') and The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 ('the APFP Regulations') (as amended) and how the Applicant has had regard to government guidance.
- 1.5. The early AoCM milestone should involve a written statement prepared by the Applicant and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. This is to give early consideration of the adequacy of consultation undertaken by the Applicant, prior to the acceptance stage of a DCO application.
- 1.6. The Guidance states: "*This adequacy of consultation milestone should be early enough to enable applicants to consider how to undertake any additional engagement that may be needed, but sufficiently towards the end of the pre-application stage to assess the adequacy of the consultation that*

¹ Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-act-2008-pre-application-stage-for-nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects>)

² Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-2024-pre-application-prospectus>)

has been done. It is likely therefore to be no later than around 3 months before the intended date of submission of the application.

- 1.7. *“The adequacy of consultation milestone should be recorded by the applicant and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate as a short statement of the elements of consultation which have been carried out compared with the components set out in the Programme Document and the SoCC. The statement should include the views and any relevant supporting material from local authorities if available.”*
- 1.8. The Applicant notes that, given the timing of the Guidance and the Prospectus coming into effect relative to the programme for the Project, this AoCM document is being submitted within three months of the intended DCO application submission date. While this period of time is less than suggested within the Guidance, the Applicant still considers it useful to prepare and submit this document prior to submission. This approach has been discussed with the Planning Inspectorate, and is referenced in the Applicant’s Programme Document³ (published July 2024).
- 1.9. The Applicant has discussed the early AoCM with the host local authorities for the Project. These authorities are Oxfordshire County Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, and Cherwell District Council (the ‘host authorities’).
- 1.10. This involved discussing the purpose of the AoCM as set out in the Guidance and the Prospectus, the Applicant’s intention to submit this document prior to the DCO application, and the opportunity for views and supporting material from the host authorities to be included in the document.
- 1.11. Views or supporting materials have not been provided by the host authorities for inclusion in this AoCM document. The Applicant understands host authorities intend to submit statements on the Applicant’s adequacy of consultation at the acceptance stage under section 55(4)(b) of the Planning Act, at which point they will have the opportunity to review application documents to more fully understand how consultation feedback has been considered when preparing the application.
- 1.12. The Applicant is grateful to have liaised with host local authorities throughout the pre-application phase, including on the approach to consultation undertaken.
- 1.13. The Applicant has carried out pre-application consultation for the Project in accordance with relevant legislation, as set out in Table 2.2. This will be further evidenced in the full Consultation Report to be submitted as part of the DCO application.

³ Botley West Solar Farm Programme Document:
(https://botleywest.co.uk/files/cto_layout/img/documents/Botley%20West%20Programme%20Document.pdf)

2. Pre-application consultation

Overview

- 2.1. The Applicant has consulted iteratively throughout the pre-application phase of the Project and in preparation of a DCO application. This has included a series of defined non-statutory and statutory periods of consultation, alongside ongoing engagement.
- 2.2. The Applicant has undertaken statutory consultation in accordance with the requirements set by the Planning Act 2008 (the ‘2008 Act’).
- 2.3. In accordance with Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the 2008 Act, the Applicant has undertaken pre-application consultation on the Project ahead of submission of the Application to the Secretary of State with the following consultees:
- Prescribed bodies (in accordance with Section 42(1)(a));
 - Local authorities (in accordance with Section 42(1)(b) and as set out in Section 43(1));
 - Those with an interest in the land (in accordance with Section 42(1)(d) and as set out in Section 44);
 - Community and other organisations in the “vicinity” of the Project who may be affected both directly and indirectly by the Project (in accordance with Section 47); and
 - Wider communities and organisations (local, national and regional) in order to seek their comments on the Project proposals (in accordance with Section 48).

Stages of consultation undertaken

- 2.4. The key stages of pre-application consultation undertaken by the Applicant are set out in Table 2.1 overleaf.

Table 2.1: Pre-application stages and consultation activities undertaken

	Date	Consultation Undertaken
1	Q3 2022 – onwards	<p>Project introduction and ongoing engagement and consultation with local authorities and political stakeholders.</p> <p>Prior to the start of non-statutory consultation in Q4 2022, the Applicant commenced early engagement with consultees including Oxfordshire County Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. This engagement was organised to introduce the Project, and engagement with these bodies has been ongoing throughout the pre-application period.</p> <p>The Applicant also commenced engagement with locally elected members and representatives including ward and parish councillors and Members of Parliament (MPs) through briefing meetings. For example, the Applicant introduced the proposals to parish councils and elected ward members by hosting online webinars the day before and on the day of non-statutory consultation commencing, on 2 and 3 November 2022.</p> <p>The Applicant approached MPs on 14th October 2022 to offer a briefing. The team met with Robert Courts, MP for Witney, during a phase of non-statutory consultation on 18 November 2022, and then following this phase of consultation on 27 January 2023, 6 February 2024, and 24 November 2024.</p>
2	03 November – 22 December 2022	<p>Phase one community consultation (non-statutory)</p> <p>The Applicant held a seven-week community consultation on early-stage proposals for the Project.</p> <p>The consultation period was initially scheduled for six weeks, with a seventh week added to allow additional time for communities and stakeholders to provide feedback. This extension was communicated via a consultation postcard that was sent to the Core Consultation Zone of over 22,000 addresses, as well as an email notification to key stakeholders.</p> <p>During this non-statutory consultation period, the Applicant held seven in-person information events and an online webinar. Five information events were organised prior to consultation starting, and two further events in Eynsham and Begbroke were organised during consultation, following further engagement with local stakeholders.</p>

	Date	Consultation Undertaken
		<p>The Applicant publicised the events and consultation information by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributing a community consultation leaflet to over 22,000 local homes and business; • Advertising the events across local media; • Distributing posters to identified local information points for them to display; • Providing details of the events on the Scheme website; and • Contacting identified stakeholders and individuals who had registered to be kept informed.
3	02 May – 26 May 2023	<p>Feedback sought on early working draft of Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) and list of stakeholders under Section 42 of the 2008 Act</p> <p>The Applicant sought feedback from host local authorities on an early working draft of the SoCC prior to commencing formal consultation on the SoCC later in the year. Feedback was also sought by the Applicant on a draft list of Section 42 statutory consultees.</p>
4	15 June 2023	<p>Scoping Report submitted</p> <p>The Applicant submitted a Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State on 15 June 2023. Through this report, the Applicant notified the Planning Inspectorate that it intended to provide an Environmental Statement (ES) in respect of the Scheme pursuant to Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations.</p>
5	4 July 2023	<p>Phase one Consultation Summary Report</p> <p>The Applicant published a Phase One Consultation Summary Report to summarise the feedback received during the phase one consultation and how this feedback was being considered to inform the Project.</p> <p>The Phase One Consultation Summary Report was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributed to over 22,000 local homes and business in the vicinity of the Scheme; • Shared by email with stakeholders and individuals who had registered to be kept informed; and • Uploaded to the Project website.

	Date	Consultation Undertaken
6	24 July 2023	<p>Scoping Opinion and receipt of Schedule 1</p> <p>A Scoping Opinion was adopted by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) on 24 July 2023 and included the list of consultation bodies notified by the Planning Inspectorate under Regulation 11(1)(a) of the EIA Regulations.</p>
7	14 July – 14 August 2023	<p>Consultation on draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) with local authorities under Section 47 of the 2008 Act</p> <p>The Applicant consulted with the Section 43(1) local authorities on the draft SoCC between 14 July and 14 August 2023.</p>
8	16 November 2023	<p>Publication of SoCC in accordance with Section 47 of the 2008 Act</p> <p>The final SoCC was publicised in accordance with Section 47 of the 2008 Act on 16 November 2023.</p>
9	28 November 2023	<p>Notification to the Planning Inspectorate under Section 46 of the 2008 Act</p> <p>The Applicant notified the Secretary of State, via the Planning Inspectorate, in writing under Section 46 of the 2008 Act on 28 November 2023 that it was intending to commence consultation under Section 42 of the 2008 Act on the PEIR commencing on 30 November 2023 and closing on 08 February 2024.</p> <p>The Applicant included the following consultation documents with this notification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a covering letter, • example copies of the Section 42 covering letters (one letter type being for prescribed consultees and the other one to landowners); • A site plan showing the location of the Scheme; and • A copy of the notice publicising the application under Section 48 of the 2008 Act (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected free of charge).



	Date	Consultation Undertaken
10	30 November 2023	<p>Publication of Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) (and Non-Technical Summary)</p> <p>The Applicant published a PEIR on 30 November 2023 to be consulted on as part of a statutory Section 42, 47 and 48 consultation with prescribed consultees and the community (phase two consultation), requesting responses by 08 February 2024 (providing a 70-day consultation response period).</p> <p>The Applicant undertook consultation on the PEIR from 30 November 2023 to 08 February 2024. Section 42 consultees were formally notified of the commencement of statutory consultation on or before 30 November by written letter and/or email, depending on the availability of contact details to the Applicant. The deadline for responding to the Section 42 consultation was 08 February 2024 (therefore exceeding the 28-day requirement).</p> <p>The consultation documents provided to Section 42 consultees comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter, including a link to the consultation materials; • A site plan showing the location of the Project; and • A copy of the notice publicising the application under Section 48 of the 2008 Act (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected free of charge). <p>The PEIR and PEIR Non-technical Summary (NTS) were made available to the community as part of the phase two Section 47 consultation via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Project website; • In hard copy form at the community information events; and • In hard copy form at the Community Access Point (CAP) sites. <p>Details of how to access the PEIR and PEIR NTS were provided via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Project website; • the community consultation leaflet; and • the Section 48 notice.

	Date	Consultation Undertaken
11	30 November 2023 – 08 February 2024	<p>Phase two community consultation (statutory under Section 47 of the 2008 Act)</p> <p>The Applicant held a ten-week community consultation on more detailed proposals for the Scheme, including the PEIR in accordance with the SoCC.</p> <p>During phase two consultation the Applicant held nine in-person information events and one online webinar.</p> <p>The Applicant publicised the events and consultation information by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributing a community consultation leaflet to over 22,000 local homes and business; • Publishing Section 48 notices in relevant newspapers; • Erecting Section 48 notices around the Scheme site; • Distributing a press release containing details of the consultation to regional media publications; • Distributing posters to identified local information points for them to display; • Distributing hard copies of consultation documents to five Community Access Point (CAP) sites; • Providing details of the events on the Project website; and • Contacting identified stakeholders and individuals who had registered to be kept informed. <p>The Applicant invited feedback from the community via a paper feedback form, an online feedback form, and feedback to the Scheme communication channels over a stated 70-day response period.</p>
12	14 June – 28 July 2024	<p>Targeted consultation on a series of proposed boundary changes</p> <p>The Applicant undertook further targeted consultation on specific changes to the project site boundary (Order Limits) following the phase two (Statutory) consultation.</p> <p>The Core Consultation Zone, as set out within the Statement of Community Consultation, was consulted during this consultation as the specific changes were located across the Project area.</p> <p>The Applicant publicised the consultation information and response deadline by:</p>

	Date	Consultation Undertaken
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributing a consultation postcard to over 22,000 local homes and business; • Publishing Section 48 notices in two newspapers, The Oxford Times and the Witney Gazette; • Publishing consultation adverts in relevant newspapers; • Distributing a press release containing details of the consultation to regional media publications; • Distributing posters to identified local information points for them to display; • Distributing hard copies of consultation documents to five CAP sites; • Providing the relevant consultation information documents on the Scheme website; and • Contacting identified stakeholders and individuals who had registered to be kept informed.
13	15th August – 15th September 2024	<p>Further targeted consultation on a single proposed boundary change</p> <p>The Applicant undertook consultation on a further specific proposed change to the project site boundary (Order Limits) following the phase two (Statutory) consultation.</p> <p>This consultation focused on an addition to the Order limit to include land around an established veteran tree, adding necessary flexibility to the existing cable corridor.</p> <p>The Applicant publicised the consultation information and response deadline by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifying consultees as defined by Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008; • Writing to properties within 500m of the proposed order limit change, consistent with the approach set out in the Applicant’s SoCC; • Publishing Section 48 notices in two newspapers, The Oxford Times and the Witney Gazette; • Distributing posters to identified local information points for them to display; • Distributing hard copies of consultation documents to five CAP sites; • Providing the relevant consultation information documents on the Scheme website; and • Contacting identified stakeholders and individuals who had registered to be kept informed.

Compliance with the 2008 Act

2.5. Table 2.2 describes how the Applicant’s pre-application consultation activities have complied with the relevant requirements set by the 2008 Act.

Table 2.2: Consultation compliance checklist with 2008 Act

Section	Requirement	Compliance
Section 42 (The applicant must consult the following about the proposed application:)	a) such persons as may be prescribed,	<p>The Applicant consulted all relevant prescribed consultees; defined in Regulation 11(1)(a) of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (“the EIA Regulations”) and the APFP Regulations.</p> <p>A Scoping Opinion was adopted by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) on 24 July 2023 and included the list of consultation bodies notified by the Planning Inspectorate under Regulation 11(1)(a) of the EIA Regulations. The Applicant ensured consistency with this list of consultees.</p> <p>In addition to this, the Applicant included further ‘non-prescribed’ consultees in addition to this, such as the Wildlife Trust for Berks, Bucks and Oxon, the National Farmers Union, and CPRE Oxfordshire.</p>
	(b) each local authority that is within section 43	<p>The Applicant consulted each relevant local authority as defined within Section 43 of the 2008 Act. These are listed below:</p> <p>‘A’ Authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxford City Council • Cotswold District Council • Stratford on Avon District Council • South Oxfordshire District Council <p>‘B’ Authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Oxfordshire District Council • Vale of White Horse District Council • Cherwell District Council <p>‘C’ Authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire County Council

Section	Requirement	Compliance
		<p>'A' & 'D' Authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swindon Borough Council • West Berkshire Council • Gloucestershire County Council • Warwickshire County Council • West Northamptonshire Council • Buckinghamshire Council • Wiltshire Council <p>'D' Authorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading Borough Council • Wokingham Council
	(c) the Greater London Authority if the land is in Greater London, and	Not applicable.
	(d) each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in section 44	The Applicant consulted each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in Section 44.
Section 45 (Timetable for consultation under section 42)	(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.	The Applicant notified all those consulted under Section 42 of the deadline in writing by email and/or post.
	(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.	<p>All defined consultation periods (statutory and non-statutory) for Botley West Solar Farm have exceeded 28 days.</p> <p>The Applicant undertook consultation on the PEIR from 30 November 2023 to 08 February 2024. Section 42 consultees were formally notified of the commencement of statutory consultation on or before 30 November by written letter and/or email, depending on the availability of contact details to the Applicant. The deadline for responding to the Section 42 consultation was 08 February 2024 (at 70 days, and therefore exceeding the 28-day requirement).</p>

Section	Requirement	Compliance
	<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>Subsequent targeted consultations have been held between 14 June and 28 July 2024 (44 days) and between 15 August and 15 September 2024 (31 days).</p> <p>The consultation documents provided to Section 42 consultees comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter, including a link to the consultation materials; • A site plan showing the location of the Project; and • A copy of the notice publicising the application under Section 48 of the 2008 Act (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected free of charge). <p>A USB drive with all of the above materials was also available upon request, free of charge.</p>
<p>Section 46 (Duty to notify Commission 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>The Applicant notified the Secretary of State, via the Planning Inspectorate, in writing under Section 46 of the 2008 Act on 28 November 2023 that it was intending to commence consultation under Section 42 of the 2008 Act on the PEIR commencing on 30 November 2023 and closing on 08 February 2024.</p> <p>The Applicant included the following consultation documents with this notification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a covering letter, • example copies of the Section 42 covering letters (one letter type being for prescribed consultees and the other one to landowners); • A site plan showing the location of the Project; and • A copy of the notice publicising the application under Section 48 of the 2008 Act (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation



Section	Requirement	Compliance
	(2) The applicant must comply with subsection (1) on or before commencing consultation under section 42.	documents could be inspected free of charge). The Applicant notified the Secretary of State, via the Planning Inspectorate, in writing under Section 46 of the 2008 Act on 28 November 2023 that it was intending to commence consultation under Section 42 of the 2008 Act on the PEIR commencing on 30 November 2023 and closing on 08 February 2024.
Section 47 (Duty to consult the local community)	(1) 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.	The Applicant prepared and published a Statement of Community Consultation.
	(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.	To inform the preparation of the statement, the Applicant consulted each local authority that is within Section 43(1) on the content of the SoCC, being: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Oxfordshire District Council • Vale of White Horse District Council • Cherwell District Council • Oxfordshire County Council
	(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.	Between 02 May 2023 and 26 May 2023, the Applicant sought feedback from host local authorities on an early working draft of the SoCC prior to commencing formal consultation on the SoCC later in the year. Feedback was also sought by the Applicant on a draft list of Section 42 statutory consultees. The Applicant then formally consulted with the Section 43(1) local authorities on the draft SoCC between 14 July and 14 August 2023.
	(4) In subsection (3) “the consultation documents” means the documents supplied to the local authority by the applicant for the purpose of	The consultation documents supplied by the Applicant included a covering letter and email, a summary of how feedback received to the early working draft SoCC had been considered by the Applicant, and the draft SoCC.

Section	Requirement	Compliance
	consulting the local authority under subsection (2).	
	(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).	<p>The Applicant had regard to all relevant comments received on the draft SoCC.</p> <p>The Applicant shared a response table with each local authority to explain how their comments had been considered. This detail is provided as Appendices 5.1 – 5.6.</p>
	<p>6) Once the applicant has prepared the statement, the applicant must — 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,</p> <p>(a) publish, in a newspaper circulating in the vicinity of the land, a notice stating where and when the statement can be inspected, and</p> <p>(b) publish the statement in such manner as may be prescribed.</p> <p>(7) The applicant must carry out consultation in accordance with the proposals set out in the statement.</p>	<p>The final SoCC was publicised in accordance with Section 47 of the 2008 Act on 16 November 2023.</p> <p>The SoCC was uploaded to the document library on the Applicant’s website and made available to view and collect from the public venues (Community Access Points) listed in the document and accompanying notice.</p> <p>Notices were published in the Witney Gazette on 15 November 2023 and the Oxford Times on 16 November 2023 to publicise the SoCC and its availability.</p> <p>The publication of the SoCC was also communicated through emailing identified key stakeholders and any party that had registered to be kept informed of project updates.</p> <p>The Applicant undertook consultation under Section s. 47 of the 2008 Act in accordance with the SoCC.</p> <p>This is evidenced in the accompanying table and will be further detailed in the Consultation Report.</p>
Section 48 (Duty to publicise)	(1) The applicant must publicise the proposed application in the prescribed manner.	The Applicant prepared and publicised the application in the prescribed manner set out in the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 by publishing a Section 48 notice.

Section	Requirement	Compliance
		<p>The Section 48 Notice was published in the following publications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Oxford Times (23 November 2023 and 30 November 2023) • The Witney Gazette (22 November 2023 and 29 November 2023) • The Guardian (29 November 2023) • The London Gazette (27 November 2023)
	<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>	<p>The Section 48 notice included a deadline of 08 February 2024 for receipt of responses to the publicity. The final notice was published on 30 November 2023, providing a total of 70 days for responses, therefore exceeding the 28 days statutory minimum response time.</p>
<p>Section 49 (Duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity)</p>	<p>(1) Subsection (2) applies where the applicant — (a) has complied with sections 42, 47 and 48, and (b) proposes to go ahead with making an application for an order granting development consent (whether or not in the same terms as the proposed application). (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. (3) In subsection (2) “relevant response” means— (a) a response from a person consulted under</p>	<p>The Applicant is reviewing all relevant responses made pursuant to Section 42, Section 47 and Section 48 in accordance with Section 49.</p> <p>A summary of relevant responses received and how the Applicant has considered these will be provided in the Consultation Report.</p> <p>Further targeted consultation has been undertaken on specific changes to the proposed order limits between the Applicant’s phase two consultation and submission of their DCO application.</p>

Section	Requirement	Compliance
	<p>section 42 that is received by the applicant before the deadline imposed by section 45 in that person's case,</p> <p>(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</p> <p>(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.</p>	
<p>Section 50 (Guidance about pre-application procedure)</p>	<p>(1) Guidance may be issued about how to comply with the requirements of this Section.</p> <p>(2) Guidance under this section may be issued by the Planning Inspectorate or the Secretary of State.</p> <p>(3) The applicant must have regard to any guidance under this section.</p>	<p>The Applicant has had regard to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG, 2015), Planning Act 2008: guidance on the pre-application process.</p> <p>The Applicant has also had regard to updated guidance published by the Planning Inspectorate in April 2024 and the updated Advice Note on the Consultation Report, published in August 2024.</p>

3. Statement of Community Consultation

Overview

- 3.1. In accordance with Section 47 of the 2008 Act, a draft Statement of Community Consultation ('SoCC') was prepared, consulted on with host authorities, finalised and published ahead of commencing statutory consultation on the Project.
- 3.2. The Applicant prepared a draft SoCC for consultation following undertaking a phase of non-statutory consultation and engaging host authorities on an early working draft of the SoCC. The experience of this initial non-statutory consultation, including feedback received on consultation methods, informed the content of the draft SoCC.
- 3.3. Section 47(2) of the 2008 Act states that before preparing the SoCC, the Applicant must consult each local authority that is within Section 43(1) in regard to the content of the SoCC.
- 3.4. The finalised SoCC was shared with each host authority prior to publication, alongside a table explaining how each of their comments on the draft had been considered and whether it informed a change to the document content.
- 3.5. The applicant consulted the following host authorities on the content of the SoCC:
 - Oxfordshire County Council;
 - West Oxfordshire District Council;
 - Vale of White Horse District Council; and
 - Cherwell District Council.
- 3.6. The Applicant considered comments made by these host authorities, before publishing the SoCC in accordance with Section 47(6) of the 2008 Act.
- 3.7. The Applicant has subsequently undertaken consultation consistent with the principles and commitments set out in the published SoCC, in accordance with Section 47(7) of the 2008 Act.

Consultation on an early working draft

- 3.8. In May 2023, the Applicant sought feedback from the host authorities on an early working draft of the SoCC prior to commencing formal consultation on the draft SoCC. This was to provide an additional opportunity to inform the content of the SoCC. At this time, feedback was also sought by the Applicant on a draft list of Section 42 statutory consultees.



- 3.9. West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, and Vale of White Horse District Council provided comments on the early working draft SoCC.
- 3.10. The feedback submitted to the early working draft SoCC, and how this was considered by the Applicant, is described in Appendix 5.1, Appendix 5.2 and Appendix 5.3.

Consultation on a draft SoCC

- 3.11. The Applicant formally provided a draft SoCC to host authorities for consultation on 14 July 2023. This was provided alongside the contents from Appendix 3.1 – 3.3 (explaining how the draft SoCC had been updated in response to comments on the working draft SoCC) and a covering email and letter to explain the purpose of the draft SoCC, the response process and deadline for comments.
- 3.12. The Applicant stated a response deadline of 14 August 2023. This provided a consultation period of 30 days, therefore exceed the requirement set in Section 47(3) to provide a period of 28 days.
- 3.13. West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, and Vale of White Horse District Council provided comments in response to consultation on the draft SoCC.
- 3.14. The responses received from host authorities to this consultation on the draft SoCC were considered by the Applicant when finalising the SoCC prior to publication.
- 3.15. A copy of the final SoCC, alongside a table explaining how comments received had been considered by the Applicant when finalising the SoCC, were shared with each host authority prior to publication.
- 3.16. The feedback submitted to the consultation on the draft SoCC, and how this was considered by the Applicant, is described in Appendix 3.4, Appendix 3.5 and Appendix 3.6.

Publication and publicity of the SoCC

- 3.17. The final SoCC was publicised in accordance with Section 47(6) of the 2008 Act on 16 November 2023.
- 3.18. The SoCC was uploaded to the document library on the Applicant's website and made available to view and collect from the public venues (Community Access Points) listed in the document and accompanying Section Notice.
- 3.19. Notices were published in the Witney Gazette on 15 November 2023 and the Oxford Times on 16 November 2023 to publicise the SoCC and its availability.



3.20. The publication of the SoCC was also communicated through emailing identified key stakeholders and any party that had registered to be kept informed of project updates.

Compliance with the SoCC

3.21. The Applicant undertook consultation consistent with the commitments established in the published SoCC, in accordance with Section 47(7) of the 2008 Act.

3.22. Table 3.1 describes how the Applicant has complied with commitments set out within the published SoCC.

Table 3.1: SoCC commitments and Applicant compliance

Section	Commitment	Compliance
4. Our Public Consultation Process	This SoCC relates to the delivery of the Phase Two consultation. If there are any subsequent consultations (including any targeted consultations) following Phase Two that may be triggered by events such as a material change to the red line boundary, or as a result of feedback from the Phase Two consultation, they will be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC to the extent they are relevant to the subsequent consultation.	<p>The Applicant has undertaken a further two rounds of targeted consultation following the phase two statutory consultation described in the SoCC.</p> <p>The approach to defining a core consultation zone, as set out in Section 6 of the SoCC, was applied to each of these subsequent phases of targeted consultation to determine properties to receive written notification of the consultations.</p> <p>The Applicant updated their the dedicated Project website to communicate information and receive feedback during each phase of consultation.</p> <p>The Applicant’s range of free-to-use communications lines remained open throughout each phase of consultation to provide information and receive feedback.</p>
	[Phase Two consultation:] We will consult on our developed proposals using the results from the ongoing environmental and technical surveys that have been carried out to date. This information will be published in our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).	The Applicant published a PEIR on 30 November 2023 to be consulted on as part of a statutory Section 42, 47 and 48 consultation with prescribed consultees and the community (phase two consultation), requesting responses by 08 February 2024 (providing a 70-day consultation response period).

Section	Commitment	Compliance
<p>5. What Will We Consult On?</p>	<p>The aim of our pre-application public consultations is to ensure that both community and technical consultees have a chance to understand and influence our proposals.</p> <p>At each phase of consultation, we will be seeking feedback to help refine our proposals. This will include producing plans and documents to understand and explore potential issues such as, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary impacts during construction. • Operational impacts. • Benefits, such as the opportunity for biodiversity and recreational improvements. <p>The description and proposed layout of the development of Botley West, will be set out in the consultation materials.</p>	<p>The Applicant undertook consultation with community and technical consultees in parallel under Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the 2008 Act.</p> <p>A suite of consultation materials was published on 30 November 2023 to provide information on the topics referred to in the SoCC.</p> <p>This involved publishing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a PEIR; • an accompanying Non-Technical Summary; • a Community Consultation Leaflet; • Site Location Plan; • Concept Plan; • Illustrative Masterplan; • Event Displays; and • A Feedback Form to encourage responses.
<p>6. Who Will We Consult?</p>	<p>We will consult anybody who is interested in taking part in the consultation.</p> <p>We will proactively contact individuals, groups and organisations within the CCZ (Core Consultation Zone). The properties within the CCZ will receive communications such as consultation leaflets from us in the post (as set out in section 7</p>	<p>The Applicant accepted all feedback submitted in response to consultation. Opportunities to provide feedback were publicised through a range of methods including national and local media.</p> <p>The Applicant issued a Community Consultation Leaflet to all properties (over 22,000) within the defined Core Consultation Zone) to publicise and encourage responses to the phase two consultation.</p> <p>Similarly, the Applicant issued a Consultation Postcard to all properties within the Core Consultation Zone to publicise and encourage responses to the</p>

Section	Commitment	Compliance
		subsequent targeted consultation on a series of proposed boundary changes.
	Information events will be held at locations within the Core Consultation Zone.	During the phase two consultation, the Applicant hosted nine in-person public information events at locations within and across the defined Core Consultation Zone.
	Relevant organisations, such as parish councils and community groups, will be notified of consultation opportunities	The Applicant maintained a register of prescribed and non-prescribed consultees and has notified them at the commencements of each phase of consultation.
	We recognise that there may be some interested individuals or parties who are not within the Core Consultation Zone. We are committed to ensuring that these interested parties still have an opportunity to view our proposals and have their say.	<p>The Applicant has publicised consultation opportunities to communities beyond the Core Consultation Zone by advertising in local media and maintaining a register of interested individuals.</p> <p>The Applicant published all consultation materials on the dedicated Project website to view online, as available on request via the Applicant’s free-to-use communications channels (Freephone, Freepost, and email) and collect from advertised Community Access Points.</p>
	<p>We will design the consultation and prepare the materials so that they are accessible and clear. Additionally, we will also carry out the activities below:</p> <p>1. Work with the host local authorities to identify a range of other groups and individuals, including representatives of local seldom heard groups and inform them of the consultation and to see if they need any further assistance to enable their participation and the individuals and groups that they represent.</p>	<p>The Applicant maintained a contact list of organisations representing community members and groups that may be seldom heard or less likely to take part in consultation. Comments and additions to an identified list were invited from host authorities as part of the SoCC development process. These organisations have been contacted throughout the pre-application process, including ahead of phases of consultation, to publicise opportunities to take part and invited suggestions for any further measures to increase accessibility.</p> <p>Public consultation materials, such as the Community Consultation Leaflet and Project website, clearly signposted to the Applicant’s free-to-use communications channels. They also encouraged anyone who might require consultation materials</p>

Section	Commitment	Compliance
	<p>2. Display the project contact information prominently on all materials to enable individuals to contact them with any questions or requests.</p> <p>3. Ensure that the consultation leaflet can be made available in alternative forms on request.</p>	<p>in alternative formats to contact the team to request this.</p>
	<p>Where possible we will aim to hold events at venues that are accessible and can be reached by public as well as private transport. For anyone with specific additional requirements please contact us our communications channels listed in this document.</p>	<p>The Applicant held public information events at venues across the Core Consultation Zone, to increase the proximity to various communities.</p> <p>Venues were identified based on the Applicant's research and assessment of suitability, and informed by feedback from host authorities. An online information event was held in addition to the in-person events to increase accessibility.</p> <p>The Applicant welcomed over 1,000 attendees to their series of information events during their phase two consultation.</p>
	<p>You can get in touch with us at any stage of the development process. Our contact details can be found in Section 12 of this SoCC.</p>	<p>The Applicant publicised their range of free-to-use communications channels ahead of their non-statutory consultation commencing in November 2022.</p> <p>These channels include a Freephone information line, Freepost address and email address, and have remained open throughout the pre-application phase.</p>
<p>7. How Will We Consult?</p>	<p>Our statutory Phase Two consultation is planned to take place from 30 November 2023 until 8 February 2024.</p>	<p>The Applicant undertook a ten-week community consultation on more detailed proposals for the Project between 30 November 2023 and 8 February 2024.</p>
	<p>In-person information events will be held at locations across the Core Consultation Zone.</p>	<p>The Applicant held the following events during their phase two consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bladon Methodist Church (Friday 8th December 2023, 3pm - 7:30pm)



Section	Commitment	Compliance
	<p>They will be advertised in consultation leaflets, across local media, at local information points and at Community Access Points (CAP) sites.</p> <p>We will hold at least seven in-person information events during our Phase Two consultation. Considering the feedback received during the first phase of consultation, we are committing to an extensive programme of events, including an event in Bladon. These events will be held on different days of the week including weekends, with varied hours to accommodate different availability within the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Woodstock Community Centre (Saturday 9th December 2023, 11am - 3pm) - Begbroke Village Hall (Tuesday 12th December 2023, 3pm - 7:30pm) - Hanborough Pavilion & Village Hall (Wednesday 13th December 2023, 1pm - 5pm) - Cassington Village Hall (Friday 12th January 2024, 3pm - 7:30pm) - Woodstock Community Centre (Saturday 13th January 2024, 11am - 3pm) - Cumnor Village Hall (Wednesday 17th January 2024, 3pm - 7:30pm) - Seacourt Hal (Thursday 18th January 2024, 1pm - 5pm) - Eynsham Village Hall (Friday 19th January 2024, 2pm - 6pm) - Community Webinar – Zoom (Tuesday 23rd January 2024, 5.30pm - 7pm) <p>These event details were published on the Applicant’s dedicated project website, Community Consultation Leaflet, Section 47 and Section 48 notices published in local and national media, press release, and posters at local information points.</p>
	<p>Members of the Botley West project team will be at these events to answer questions and discuss the proposals in more detail. Project materials setting out the developed proposals will be displayed and available to take away.</p>	<p>The events were attended by a range of relevant colleagues from the Applicant’s Project team.</p> <p>Attendees were able to take away copies of the Community Consultation Leaflet, Feedback Form, Concept Plan and Site Location Plan.</p>
	<p>A webinar will be held for any member of the public to join via telephone and internet. Participants will be invited to submit questions. Members of the Botley West</p>	<p>The Applicant hosted a Community Webinar on Zoom on Tuesday 23rd January 2024, 5.30pm - 7pm. This involved a presentation delivered by the Applicant followed by a questions and answer session.</p>



Section	Commitment	Compliance
	<p>Solar Farm project team will then respond to the questions on the webinar.</p> <p>We have noted the feedback received during the first phase of consultation regarding requests for more materials for the second phase of consultation. The text below details the increased number of materials that will be available at the second phase of consultation.</p> <p>Our communications lines are open throughout the entire pre-application stage. Outside of consultation period, through these channels you will be able to speak to a member of our consultation team to ask questions. You can provide written feedback during the consultation period in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By submitting an online feedback form through the project website 	<p>The Applicant posted a Consultation leaflet to all properties within the defined Core Consultation Zone ahead of Phase Two consultation. These leaflets were also available online, to collect from Community Access Points, and to take away from information events. The Applicant also offered to post leaflets by request to the Project Communications channels.</p> <p>The Applicant published a Feedback Form to encourage community members to respond to the consultation. These were available online and in hard copy at Community Access Points, information events, and by request. Feedback Forms could be returned free of charge using the Project Freepost address.</p> <p>The Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and Non-Technical Summary (NTS) were made available to read online, in hard copy at Community Access Points, information events, and available by request for a reasonable charge.</p> <p>You can get in touch with us at any stage of the development process. Our contact details can be found in Section 12 of this SoCC. The Applicant publicised their range of free-to-use communications channels ahead of their non-statutory consultation commencing in November 2022.</p> <p>These channels include a Freephone information line, Freepost address and email address, and have remained open throughout the pre-application phase.</p>

Section	Commitment	Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By completing a paper copy feedback form, which can be submitted at an in person event or returned via the project freepost address • By emailing: info@botleywest.co.uk • By writing, free of charge, to: FREEPOST BWSF 	
	<p>A dedicated project website is live and will be updated at the start of the second phase of consultation for you to find out more information and to provide your feedback through an online feedback form.</p> <p>Consultation material will be presented digitally, providing information consistent with that available at information events and Community Access Points through hard copy materials.</p>	<p>The Applicant has updated the dedicated Project website at every stage of consultation.</p> <p>All consultation materials remain available to view and download from the online Document Library hosted by the Applicant on the Project website.</p>
	<p>Local press adverts or statutory notices will be placed in suitable local publications such as the Oxford Times, the Banbury Guardian, the Herald Series, the Bicester Advertiser and the Witney Gazette to inform local communities of the forthcoming Phase Two consultation. Adverts will include contact information and consultation event dates, times and locations.</p>	<p>The Applicant has placed adverts and notices in the publications listed in the SoCC.</p> <p>Adverts and notices have clearly included contact details and response deadlines.</p>
	<p>Local information points such as village halls, places of worship, shops and civic buildings will be provided with posters containing consultation information. Parish councils will be provided with digital</p>	<p>The Applicant has issued display posters publicising consultation opportunities to identified public venues ahead of each phase of consultation.</p> <p>This information has been communicated by email to community organisations at</p>



Section	Commitment	Compliance
	<p>materials to enable them to advertise and promote the consultation via their own websites, social media and online community forums. Requests for hard copy materials will also be considered.</p>	<p>the start of each phase of consultation, for sharing with members and followers.</p>

4. Consideration of feedback

- 4.1. The Applicant recognises their duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity, in accordance with Section 49 of the 2008 Act.
- 4.2. The Applicant is preparing a full Consultation Report to be submitted as part of the DCO application. The Consultation Report will be in accordance with section 37(3)(c) of the 2008 Act.
- 4.3. In doing so, the Applicant's Consultation Report will demonstrate how consultation responses have been taken into account during the preparation of the application.
- 4.4. The Applicant has considered feedback received to consultation, alongside the results of environmental assessments, to inform design evolution of the Project. Changes arising in response to this consideration include, but are not limited to:
 - The removal of solar panels from specific areas of the Project site, including south of Bladon village, close to Church Hanborough Conservation Area, and from beyond the southern edge of the Oxford Airport runway.
 - Increasing minimum buffer zone distances between solar panels and all buildings, including a minimum of a 25 metre distance from the curtilage of any residential properties.
 - Enhancing the existing landscape structure and character, including reinforcing existing hedgerows and planting new hedgerows, and providing screening for the Project from public vantage points.
 - Refinement of cable corridors and cable laying techniques including by seeking to use the existing road network where possible, and to use open cut or Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) where cable routes were required to cross agricultural or other land or features. For example, HDD is proposed to be used extensively to avoid trees, hedgerows, sensitive ecology, and to cross roads and the railway. In targeted areas of important archaeology, DC cables are proposed to be laid on the surface, suitably protected.
 - Increasing recreational use, active travel and public access generally across the site through enhancing the existing network of public rights of way with new landscaping, where appropriate, and the creation of new footpaths and cycle paths.
 - Developing a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan to deliver a significant Biodiversity Net Gain. This is to be achieved through areas of habitat enhancement and planting of native species.



- Retention of agricultural use beneath the solar arrays, primarily through conservation grazing, and making land available for community food growing spaces in suitable areas identified with community food groups.
 - Progressing a dynamic and wide-ranging package of community benefits.
- 4.5. Many of the measures being adopted throughout the evolution of the scheme have been environmentally and landscape led, informed by survey, assessment and consultation processes. The project proposes a series of embedded mitigation measures, which will be delivered through a series of management plans. These include;
- a construction code of practice, including control measures for traffic, noise, dust, water quality and habitat, and protecting Public Rights of Way users;
 - stewardship measures during the operational phase, to manage soils, landscape, ecology, water and other environmental assets; and
 - a plan for decommissioning.
- 4.6. The Applicant notes that many consultation responses include broader concerns regarding the efficiency of solar technology, the need for solar generally and in this location, the scale of the project and agreed grid connection.
- 4.7. While many of these issues cannot be responded to through Project design changes, the Applicant will be seeking to provide reassurance in response to this feedback by summarising and cross-referencing to relevant sections of their DCO application as well as relevant policy and evidence. Interested parties will have the opportunity to engage with this throughout the Examination process.
- 4.8. The Applicant is continuing its engagement with stakeholders and will consider how the scheme design may evolve in consideration of responses received.

5. Appendices

Appendix 5.1: Applicant consideration of feedback received to the early working draft SoCC from West Oxfordshire District Council.

Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
<p>Section 4. Our public consultation process: Were there not lessons to be learned about the promotion of the events that could improve outreach for the formal stage?</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Overall, the first phase of consultation was successful in the level of feedback and engagement that we received, so therefore one lesson is to repeat a lot of these methods for Phase Two. This includes having a comprehensive series of events, both an online and paper feedback form, and publicising the consultation widely in newspapers and at local information points.</p> <p>In terms of activities to be built on from the first phase of consultation, the consultation period will be extended to a minimum of eight weeks, an additional event will be ran in Bladon as request by a number of stakeholders, and envelopes used to mail out consultation materials at the start of consultation will include a project logo to make the materials more identifiable.</p>
<p>Section 4. (Cont.): Suggests providing a link to the 2008 Planning Act.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The text has been amended to include a link to the Planning Inspectorate's website containing the 2008 Planning Act. This included at the bottom of section 4: Our Public Consultation Process</p> <p>Updated SoCC Text: Guidance on the DCO process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website at: https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice</p>
<p>Section 4. (Cont.): Suggests a diagrammatic format for how members of the public can submit to be relevant representatives.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>If the project is accepted, the Applicant will be required to promote the opportunities / process to become an Interested Party in line with Section 56 of the Planning Act 2008.</p>
<p>Section 4. (Cont.): Suggests adding to the text 'a minimum' to the length of consultation.</p>	<p>A text amendment has been made in the SoCC to say "no less than".</p> <p>Updated SoCC text: A statutory Phase Two community consultation, lasting no less than eight weeks, in Autumn 2023.</p>
<p>Section 4. (Cont.):</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
<p>Suggests adding to the text “Further consultation as necessary to ensure that all issues are addressed before making the DCO application”.</p>	<p>Ensuring 'all issues are addressed' could be interpreted as subjective, and therefore we have not incorporated this wording into the SoCC in order to minimise confusion. However, we have drafted the consultation to allow us to identify issues raised by stakeholders, and these will have to be considered and ultimately responded to in our Consultation Report. Should any changes be made that require further consultation, this would be carried out in line with the principles set out in this SoCC.</p> <p>Updated SoCC Text: This SoCC relates to the delivery of the Phase Two consultation. If there are any subsequent consultations following Phase Two that may be triggered by events such as a material change to the red line boundary, they will follow the methods of consultation as set out in this document.</p>
<p>Section 6. Who will we consult: Added: 'The pre application consultation is the best time to influence the Botley West project, whether you agree with it, disagree with it or believe it can be improved.'</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The text regarding the examination phase of the project has now been moved to a new section titled 'Examination' at the bottom of the section, and the headings set out the chronology of the consultation and DCO process. As this document focuses on the second phase of consultation for the project, our focus within the document wants to be on the pre-application phase of the project, rather than on the examination phase. This is to minimise confusion for stakeholders to ensure that any feedback is made during this phase, rather than people waiting until the examination phase to submit their feedback.</p> <p>Furthermore, within the 'Consultation reporting' subsection of Section 4: Our public consultation process, text has been amended to reflect that all feedback made during the consultation has been recorded and the Applicant has had regard to it within the DCO Application.</p> <p>Updated SoCC Text: Responds to the feedback we have received, including explaining how we have had regard to all feedback relevant to the project and how it has influenced our proposals.</p>
<p>Section 6. (Cont.): Added: 'The public can provide a summary of their views about the Botley West application to the Planning Inspectorate at the pre-examination stage. By submitting a 'Relevant</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The text regarding the examination phase of the project has now been moved to a new section titled 'Examination' at the bottom of the section, and the headings set out the chronology of the consultation and DCO process. As this document focuses on the second phase of consultation for the project, our focus within the document wants to be on the pre-application phase of the project, rather than on the examination phase. This is to minimise confusion for stakeholders to ensure that any feedback is made</p>

Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
Representation', a member of the public will become an Interested Party and will be able to participate in meetings relating to the examination of the proposals.	during this phase, rather than people waiting until the examination phase to submit their feedback.
<p>Section 7. How will we consult:</p> <p>Focus should be on evening meetings with as many Saturday meetings as possible to maximise community engagement.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>When arranging the events for Phase Two, it is the intention to arrange meeting across the variety of days and times, including weekends and evenings. The final event details will be within our published Statement of Community Consultation.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.):</p> <p>Suggestion for venues in West Oxfordshire:</p> <p>Bladon - Bladon Methodist Church, 28 Park Street, Bladon. OX20 1RW</p> <p>Cassington - Cassington Village Hall, The Green, Cassington. OX29 4AX</p> <p>Eynsham - Eynsham Village Hall, 46 Back Lane, Eynsham. OX29 4QW</p> <p>Hanborough - Hanborough Pavilion, Roosevelt Road, Long Hanborough. OX29 8JG</p> <p>Tackley - Tackley Memorial Hall, Medcroft</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>As the events during the first phase of consultation were well attended and covered location across the project's site, is the intention to use the same event venues as the first phase of consultation, with the inclusion of events in Bladon, Botley and Kidlington. The venues suggested in Woodstock, Hanborough, Eynsham, Tackley and Cassington are the same venues used at the first phase of consultation.</p> <p>The second phase of consultation will include an event in Bladon. Bladon Methodist Church will be considered as a potential location, however, Bladon C of E Primary School is also being considered as a venue for an event.</p> <p>The current event plan does not include an event in Wootton. Due to its proximity to other venues such as Woodstock and the number of events proposed, the Applicant believes that the current event offering is proportionate.</p> <p>Updated SoCC:</p> <p>Table of events included within the SoCC.</p>

Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
<p>Road, Tackley. OX5 3AH</p> <p>Woodstock - Woodstock Community Centre, 32 New Road, Woodstock. OX20 1PB</p> <p>Wootton - Wootton Village Hall, Church Street, Wootton. OX20 1DZ</p>	
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Potential for specialist officers such as OCC highways officers to attend the consultation events.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Prior to the second phase of consultation, briefings will be offered to officers and elected members. During these briefings, we will provide information on upcoming information events, and encourage any stakeholders interested to attend these events.</p> <p>Those attending on behalf of the Applicant will also include specialists on various environmental topics for members of the community and stakeholders to speak to and ask questions.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Which Parish Councils would appreciate a briefing session? Do we need to sound them out?</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Those parish councils that were notified and offered a briefing ahead of the first phase of consultation will be offered a briefing ahead of the second phase of consultation, and the Applicant will consider individual briefings for parish councils who would like a further briefing on the upcoming consultation. The parish councils notified included all parish councils that overlap with the consultation zone.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Notes that communities to the north of the core consultation zone in proximity to the Bartons might have appreciated a leaflet during phase one consultation.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The Applicant believes that the current core consultation zone that reaches over 22,000 properties is appropriate for a project of this size. However, during phase two consultation materials will be emailed to those who have registered to be on the 'keep informed' list.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Check how we advertise the Local Plan consultation – press notices – Which publications.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>We would be grateful for any detail in how West Oxfordshire's Local Plan consultation was publicised to see if any methods could be replicated within this project's SoCC?</p>

Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
<p>Section 8. Community access points: Asks about a Cassington Access Point.</p>	<p>Noted. Following your feedback regarding CAP site locations, Eynsham Library will be added as a CAP site. Due to Cassington's proximity to Eynsham, the Applicant believes that the updated list of CAP sites is appropriate for this area of the project.</p>
<p>Section 8. (Cont.): Asks about a Hanborough Access Point</p>	<p>Noted. Following your feedback regarding CAP site locations, Eynsham Library will be added as a CAP site. Due to Hanborough's proximity to Woodstock, Eynsham and Witney, the Applicant believes that the updated list of CAP sites is appropriate for this area of the project.</p>
<p>Section 8. (Cont.): Suggestions of a further access point: Eynsham Library, 30 Mill Street, Eynsham, OX29 4JS</p>	<p>Noted. Eynsham Library will be contacted about becoming a Community Access Point. The venue has now been added to the list of CAP sites in the SoCC. Updated SoCC: Eynsham Library has been added to the table showing the CAP site details.</p>
<p>Section 8. (Cont.): Suggestion of a further access point: North Leigh Library, Memorial Hall, Park Road, North Leigh. OX29 6SA</p>	<p>Noted. Following your feedback regarding CAP site locations, Eynsham Library will be added as a CAP site. Due to North Leigh's proximity to both Eynsham and Witney, the Applicant believes that the updated list of CAP sites are appropriate for this area of the project.</p>

Appendix 5.2: Applicant consideration of feedback received to the early working draft SoCC from Cherwell District Council.

Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
<p>Section 7. How will we consult: Suggestion for venues in Cherwell: Begbroke - Begbroke Village Hall, 3 Begbroke Lane, Begbroke, Oxford, OX5 1RN. Kidlington - Exeter Hall, Oxford Road, Kidlington, OX5 1AB Yarnton - The Paddocks, Yarnton, Kidlington, OX5 1TE.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>As the events during the first phase of consultation were well attended, we intend to facilitate nine events covering locations across the project's site and an online community webinar. It is the intention to use the same event venues as the first phase of consultation, with the inclusion of a venue in Bladon and Botley.</p> <p>However, in contrast to phase one consultation instead of holding an event in Begbroke we will instead hold one in Kidlington, a location in close proximity to both Begbroke and Yarnton. The details of these events will be included within the published SoCC and any written materials that are distributed to our consultation zone.</p> <p>Updated SoCC: Table of events included within the SoCC</p>
<p>Section 8. Community access points: Asks about a Begbroke Access Point</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Due to Begbroke's proximity to Kidlington, the Applicant believes that Kidlington Library provides an accessible venue for residents of Begbroke to access hard copy materials for the project. Furthermore, our CAP sites require consistent opening hours throughout the week to ensure that members of the community are able to access materials easily.</p> <p>However, the Applicant would be grateful on any detail on whether there any publicly accessible venues that are available to host materials within Begbroke that would be more appropriate than Kidlington Library?</p>

Appendix 5.3: Applicant consideration of feedback received to the early working draft SoCC from Vale of White Horse District Council.

Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
<p>Section 7. How will we consult: Suggestion for venues in the Vale: Botley - Seacourt Hall, 3 Church way, Botley, OX2 9TH</p>	<p>Noted. As the events during the first phase of consultation were well attended, we intend to facilitate 9 events covering locations across the project's site and an online community webinar. The intention is to use the same event venues as the first phase of consultation, with Kidlington to replace Begbroke and for Bladon to be added. Also, following your feedback we intend to hold an event at Seacourt Hall in Botley.</p>
<p>Section 8. Community access points: Suggests Parish council notice boards could be used as Local Information Points.</p>	<p>Noted. As seen within the first phase of consultation, the Applicant will send a PDF copy of an information poster to parish councils, publicising the second phase of consultation and our upcoming information events. Parish councils will also be asked whether they would like hard copies of the information poster to be posted to them so that they can display the poster at any appropriate locations, which could include notice boards.</p>

Appendix 5.4: Applicant consideration of feedback received to the draft SoCC from West Oxfordshire District Council.

Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
<p>Section 6: Who Will We Consult? WODC agrees with the suggested list of stakeholders to be consulted on the proposals and recognise that the list is not exhaustive. We would suggest engaging directly with the Distribution Network Operators with responsibility for managing the power distribution system in the area, which in the case of West Oxfordshire is Scottish and Southern Energy Networks (SSEN).</p>	<p>Noted. The Scottish and Southern Energy Networks (SSEN) are included in the S42 list as Statutory Undertakers and will therefore be formally consulted during our upcoming phase two consultation.</p>
<p>Section 7: How Will We Consult? Meetings and events: WODC welcomes the opportunity for meetings and events, for stakeholders to engage directly with the applicants and their representatives during the phase 2 consultation.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Meetings and events: The suggested venues and number of events within West Oxfordshire are considered to be satisfactory, but the timing of events should be organised to enable as many stakeholders to attend as possible.</p>	<p>Noted. The Applicant will arrange the event schedule to cover a range of times considering different working hours, school hours, and occur both on weekdays and weekends. This will be to accommodate different schedules and increase accessibility.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Meetings and events: It is noted that of the four weekday events proposed in West Oxfordshire, only two of these extend beyond 5pm. WODC considers that evening events are preferable, to enable the working population to attend in person at the end of the working day. It is recognised that a balance needs to be struck between daytime and evening events, to enable a broad cross section of the affected communities to attend however, extending events at Hanborough and Cassington until at least 7pm will be</p>	<p>Noted. The Applicant has arranged an event schedule that covers a wide range of timings, both in the daytime and the evening. Due to venue availability, the event in Hanborough could not be extended until 7pm. However, events are lasting until 7.30pm to accommodate for the working population. The event schedule is listed on page 15 of the SoCC.</p>

Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
<p>beneficial to the working population in those communities.</p>	
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Meetings and events: Two community webinars are proposed during the stage 2 consultation. Feedback during the stage 1 consultation indicated that there have been issues with stakeholders accessing previous webinars due to capacity constraints.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The Applicant hosts community webinars through Zoom, a widely used and well-recognised platform, with a professional account including a capacity constraint well in excess of the number of registrants during phase one consultation.</p> <p>The Applicant did not receive any comments that anyone was unable to access the community webinar during non-statutory phase one consultation and were pleased to see 56 people attend. However, the Applicant appreciates attendees may have different experiences of joining webinars and would encourage anyone to contact us via our communication lines if any support is required to access the webinars during statutory pre-application community consultation. This offer of support is detailed in the consultation materials.</p> <p>To ensure that different accessibility needs are met, in-person events are provided in addition to the webinars.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Literature: Consultation leaflets will be posted to all properties in the Core Consultation Zone at the start of the Phase 2 consultation. Leaflets should be posted with sufficient time, prior to the start of the consultation period, to provide communities with adequate time to familiarise themselves with timing and location of events and where to access consultation materials.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Consultation materials will be posted ahead of the start of the consultation period, and anticipated delivery times will be factored in to when materials are posted. The length of the consultation period has been planned to be well in excess of the statutory minimum to ensure sufficient time for local residents to access and engage with consultation materials.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that properties received the phase one community consultation leaflet the day before the start of the phase one consultation period. This was over two weeks before the first event. The SoCC (containing details of community consultation events) will be made available two weeks in advance of the</p>



Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
	pre-application community consultation commencing, three weeks before the first event in Bladon. The SoCC will be accessible at the CAP sites, on the project's website, and emailed to key stakeholders and the keep informed list.
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Literature: Feedback forms will be available via a range of channels. Online forms should be made available in a range of formats such as Word and PDF and should meet accessibility standards, to enable stakeholders to respond easily.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Feedback forms will be available via a range of channels. They will be uploaded to the project website as an online form, an interactive PDF, and as a PDF to print. Printed copies of the feedback form will also be available at the information events. Upon request the feedback form will be available for different accessibility needs. Feedback forms or alternative forms of written feedback can be returned either via the freepost (FREEPOST BWSF) or by email (info@botleywest.co.uk).</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Advertising and local notices: In addition to the channels and venues listed, it is recommended that the site promoters advertise all meetings, webinars, online feedback options and access points across social media platforms, including Facebook, X, Nextdoor, and Instagram.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The Applicant does not intend to establish a standalone social media profile for Botley West during the pre-application stage, but the Applicant will ensure that they notify organisations with an existing social media presence (such as Parish Councils) and that information is provided to them in a format that can be shared through their social media channels. For example, Section 5 of the SoCC notes how information will be provided to parish councils to allow them to publicise consultation opportunities through their existing social media channels.</p> <p>The Applicant also has a project website that is updated, when appropriate, with the relevant information and any key new queries that are raised are added to the project FAQs. As this webpage is familiar to the community, the Applicant feels that this is best location for project information.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that the Core Consultation Zone has been identified to capture likely interested communities in the vicinity of the project area, however the Applicant will provide</p>



Comment	Applicant response (as provided to host authority)
	<p>information beyond this area on request. Additionally, publicity adverts will be placed in newspapers that circulate beyond the Core Consultation Zone.</p>
<p>Section 8: Community Access Points Suggested CAP Site: North Leigh Library.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The Applicant is grateful for this suggestion. However, due to the proximity of this location to the CAP site in Witney (which has a wider variety of opening hours), the Applicant considers the proposed list of CAP sites to be appropriate for this area of the project.</p>



Appendix 5.5: Applicant consideration of feedback received to the draft SoCC from Cherwell District Council.

Comment	Applicant Response
<p>Section 6: Who Will We Consult? Other interested stakeholders: CDC are not aware of any community groups within our district who may be affected by the development but who have not already been identified as consultees.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 7: How Will We Consult? Meetings and events: It is noted that no additional venues with[in] Cherwell District are proposed to be utilised for public events in the draft SoCC and that only Kidlington is intended to be used in the second round. Whilst there is no objection to the use of Kidlington it is still considered that this should be in addition to separate events held at the village halls of Yarnton and Begbroke.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p> <p>The Applicant acknowledges communities from across the project area will likely be interested in attending an information event during the consultation period and is therefore working to hold a series of events across a range of venues and times.</p> <p>The Applicant is proposing nine in person events across the project area, accompanied by one online webinar. In addition to this, all event materials will be available to access from the project website and questions or comments can be submitted directly to the project team through the dedicated project communications channels (freephone, freepost and email).</p> <p>During statutory consultation, the Applicant will now hold an event in Begbroke. Venues in Kidlington were contacted for availability but have not been selected due to availability. Begbroke Village Hall is closer in proximity to the project area and is an appropriate venue in terms of accessibility. The event in Begbroke will be held into the evening, allowing for those who work during the day to attend. Begbroke is also in close proximity to Kidlington and Yarnton, and an event is also being held in Cassington, another venue in close proximity to Yarnton.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Advertising and local notices: In addition to local press adverts or statutory notices being placed in the Oxford Times, the Banbury Guardian, the Herald Series and the Witney Gazette, CDC recommends</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Local press advertisement of statutory pre-application community consultation will also be included in the Bicester Advertiser.</p>

Comment	Applicant Response
<p>that the Bicester Advertiser would also be an appropriate publication which covers an area equally close to the site as the Banbury Guardian.</p>	
<p>Section 8: Community Access Points: CDC notes that Kidlington Library will serve as a Community Access Point. CDC is not aware of any other suitable, publicly accessible venues within the district (with consistent opening hours throughout the week) that are available to host materials.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Section 8. (Cont.): Suggested CAP sites: Oxfordshire County Council Home Library Service could be provided with a number of hard copies of the documents for those who are housebound and unable to access the internet. Contact: homelibraryservice@oxfordshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Noted. An enquiry was made with the Oxfordshire County Council Home Library Service about providing them with some statutory pre-application community consultation materials. The service stated that due to capacity constraints they would be unable to facilitate this request.</p>
<p>Section 8. (Cont.): Suggested CAP sites: Parish Councils (e.g. Begbroke, Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp, Tackley, Hanborough, Cassington, Bladon and Cumnor) could be offered hard copies of the documents for local, public viewing.</p>	<p>Noted. Due to the proximity of the locations of these Parish Councils to other proposed CAP sites, the Applicant considers the list of CAP sites to be appropriate for this area of the project. The closest CAP sites to the locations identified are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begbroke – Kidlington • Tackley – Woodstock • Hanborough – Woodstock and Eynsham • Cassington – Eynsham • Bladon – Woodstock • Cumnor – Botley • Shipton-on Cherwell and Thrupp – Woodstock and Kidlington <p>In addition to this, and consistent with the first phase of consultation, the Applicant will notify parish councils of consultation activities, such as community consultation events and ways to provide feedback, and will be provided with consultation and publicity materials in hard</p>



Comment	Applicant Response
	copy upon request. As noted in the SoCC, a reasonable charge may be required for provision of the PEIR.

Appendix 5.6: Applicant consideration of feedback received to the draft SoCC from Vale of White Horse District Council.

Comment	Applicant Response
<p>Section 4. Our public consultation process: Phase One Consultation: Incorrect date, should be 2022</p>	<p>Noted. This text amendment has been made in the SoCC.</p>
<p>Section 4. (Con.): Phase One Consultation: Suggest adding more information: How many properties were included in the consultation zone and what proportion of the total did these 22,000 properties represent.</p>	<p>Noted. The Core Consultation Zone (CCZ) which has been designed based on a principle of extending 2km from the site and 500m from the cable route, and further refined where appropriate, includes approximately 22,000 properties. Ahead of each mail out, the list of addresses is updated from the Royal Mail database. Section 6 of the SoCC provides further detail on the CCZ.</p>
<p>Section 4. (Con.): Phase One Consultation: Suggest adding more information: How were the in-person events advertised.</p>	<p>Noted. The SoCC provides the opportunity for the methodology for future consultation to be set out. Section 7 provides more detail on the publicity methods that the Applicant intends to use for advertising the events. This will include press releases and adverts in local and regional newspapers, consultation materials at community access points and materials emailed to parish councils to enable them to promote consultation also. In addition to the SoCC, further information and evidence of how the consultations were publicised will be provided in the Consultation Summary Report (CSR) and the final Consultation Report.</p>
<p>Section 4. (Con.): Examination Process: Provide information on how members of the public can register as interested party and submit their views once the DCO application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. Where will this information be provided to members of the public? Will this be</p>	<p>Noted. Within the 'Examination' section of the SoCC (under Section 4 - page 12), we highlight that there will be the opportunity to register as an Interested Party and submit a Relevant Representation. Additionally, a link is provided to the Planning Inspectorate's website with more</p>

Comment	Applicant Response
<p>included in the comment form for Phase Two? Will the consultation report inform readers of this opportunity?</p>	<p>information on the examination process. As this document focusses on the second phase of consultation for the project, our focus within the SoCC document is the pre-application phase of the project, rather than on the examination phase. This is to minimise confusion for members of the community and to ensure that any feedback is made during this phase, rather than waiting until the examination phase to submit comments.</p> <p>As part of the planning process, there are prescribed ways in which the Applicant and the Planning Inspectorate will publicise, at the appropriate time, the opportunity for interested parties to register and attend hearings. This in line with Section 56 of the Planning Act 2008. The publicising of the examination will be through notices, letters and via both the project and Planning Inspectorate websites. Further information about how interested parties are able to get involved in the examination process can be found in the 'Participating in the process' section of the National Infrastructure Planning website [link provided].</p>
<p>Section 6. Who will we consult: Other interested stakeholders: Suggest that the consultation, the events, and the availability of informative consultation materials be also advertised on social media within the Core Consultation Zone (CCZ), and on social media and with the use of posters in areas outside the CCZ.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The Applicant does not intend to establish a standalone social media profile for Botley West during the pre-application stage but will ensure that organisations with an existing social media presence are notified (such as Parish Councils) and that information is provided to them in a format that can be shared through their social media channels. For example, Section 5 of the SoCC notes how information will be provided to parish councils to allow them to publicise consultation activities, such as community consultation events and ways to provide feedback, through their existing social media channels.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that the Core Consultation Zone has been identified to capture likely interested communities in the vicinity of the project area, however we will provide information beyond this area on request.</p>

Comment	Applicant Response
	<p>Additionally, publicity adverts will be placed in newspapers that circulate beyond the Core Consultation Zone.</p>
<p>Section 6. (Cont.): Other interested stakeholders: It is not clear how members of the public living outside the CCZ can register an interest and be added to the register of interested individuals. Where will this information be made available?</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The applicant has added to section 6 of the SoCC that those within or outside of the Core Consultation Zone are still able to engage with the project. Interested parties will be able to get in contact via our communication channels, engage with the statutory pre-application community consultation, and submit feedback.</p> <p>Since the launch of the pre-application phase during Phase One consultation held in late 2022, any interested parties have been able to register to be kept informed by contacting the communication team through a range of free-to-use communications channels and confirming they would like to receive updates when completing the phase one consultation feedback form. These opportunities to register for updates will continue throughout the pre-application phase.</p>
<p>Section 7: How Will We Consult? Meetings and events: Suggest asking parish councils to include publicity of the consultation in their local newsletters/magazines.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Building on the approach taken to publicise the first phase of non-statutory consultation held last year, the Applicant will notify parish councils of consultation opportunities and this information will be provided to them in a format that allows them to share this through their existing channels. Therefore, they will be able to publicise our statutory pre-application community consultation and our upcoming information events. Parish councils will also be asked whether they would like hard copies of the information poster to be posted to them so that they can display the poster at any appropriate locations, which could include notice boards.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Meetings and events: Suggest making meetings and briefing sessions with local parish councils essential and not just optional.</p>	<p>The Applicant notes that parish councils play an important role in the planning process, in particular as statutory consultees under the Planning Act 2008.</p> <p>Similar to the first phase of non-statutory</p>



Comment	Applicant Response
	<p>consultation, we are committing to continue notifying statutory parish councils of consultation opportunities and inviting their feedback. Ahead of statutory pre-application community consultation, this will include arranging a briefing webinar for parish councils.</p> <p>The Applicant will also offer to further meet with relevant parish councils, however, as any subsequent meetings would be beyond our sole control, we do not intend to update the SoCC wording to describe them as essential.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Meetings and events: Suggest noting rail strikes as a potential impact of in-person events and that events may be moved to ensure they'll be accessible via public transport. Similarly, awareness of any post strikes so that mailed materials arrive in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>As well as ensuring that all venues will be accessible via public transport, as all within a 10-minute walk or 0.5 miles of a bus stop, external factors such as rail strikes will be considered at the time of booking venues.</p> <p>Additionally, the length of the consultation period and the number of information events have been designed to be relatively extensive compared to statutory requirements and existing precedent, providing enhanced accessibility for those interested in attending.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Literature: Suggest that feedback forms be posted or emailed to those on the register of interested individuals.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p> <p>All parties that have registered to be kept informed will be notified via email of Phase Two Consultation and will be provided with consultation materials.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Literature: Will the leaflets include a QR code to materials online?</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p> <p>A QR code linking to the project website was provided during the Phase One events. This will also be provided during Phase Two in both the consultation materials and at the events.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Literature: Suggest that the feedback form and consultation material be available in alternative formats and that this is clearly communicated on the leaflet/posters/local media adverts and other promotional material.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed.</p> <p>Feedback forms and consultation materials will be available via a range of channels. It will be uploaded in various forms online and also be available at the information events. Upon</p>

Comment	Applicant Response
	request the feedback form will be available for different accessibility needs.
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Advertising and Local Notices: Suggest advertising Phase Two consultation with posters to hang on village notice boards.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>As undertaken during the non-statutory phase one consultation, the Applicant will send a PDF copy of an information poster to parish councils, publicising the statutory pre-application community consultation and our upcoming information events. Parish councils will also be asked whether they would like hard copies of the information poster to be posted to them so that they can display the poster at any appropriate locations, which could include notice boards.</p> <p>Additionally, a poster advertising statutory pre-application community consultation will be sent to Local Information Points (LIPs).</p> <p>Page 18 of the SoCC provides further information as to how the statutory pre-application community consultation will be advertised.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Advertising and Local Notices: Will the web address for the consultation be included in local press adverts?</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>The project website will be included within the local press adverts.</p>
<p>Section 7. (Cont.): Advertising and Local Notices: Suggest consideration of paid social media advertising targeting specific geographical groups (i.e. CCZ) and seldom-heard or under-represented groups.</p>	<p>Noted and agreed to paid social media advertising.</p> <p>The Applicant has engaged with local newspapers and will be carrying out paid social media and online advertising.</p> <p>Section 6 (page 12) of the draft SoCC sets out the Applicants approach to engaging a wide section of the community, including individuals or groups that may otherwise be seldom heard. This includes identifying and contacting representatives of local seldom heard groups and inform them of the consultation to see if they need any further assistance to enable their participation.</p>

Comment	Applicant Response
<p>Section 8: Community Access Points: Suggest finding a few more CAPs in other village locations. Currently there are no CAPs in Begbroke, Tackley, Hanborough, Cassington, Bladon and Cumnor.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Due to the proximity of these locations to the other CAP sites and as there are no suitable venues in these villages, in terms of opening times and public access, the Applicant believes that the list of CAP sites is appropriate for this area of the project.</p> <p>The closest CAP sites to the villages identified are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begbroke – Kidlington • Tackley – Woodstock • Hanborough – Woodstock and Eynsham • Cassington – Eynsham • Bladon – Woodstock • Cumnor – Botley