

Springwell Solar Farm

Consultation Report

Appendices C-1 to C-4

EN010149/APP/5.2
November 2024
Springwell Energyfarm Ltd

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)
Planning Act 2008
Infrastructure Planning
(Applications: Prescribed Forms
and Procedure) Regulations 2009

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Appendix C-1.1

Covering email for informal consultation on the draft SoCC



From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Springwell Solar Farm - draft SoCC for informal review
Date: 04 August 2023 14:18:18
Attachments: [230803 Springwell SoCC DRAFT 1.docx](#)

Hello both,

As discussed yesterday, please find attached the draft SoCC for your review.

This is the informal draft in advance of the formal draft to hopefully resolve any matters ahead of the formal statutory period.

Look forward to speaking on the 16th but do get in touch before then if there is anything you'd like clarification on.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

Appendix C-1.2

Draft SoCC for informal consultation



Springwell Solar Farm

DRAFT: Statement of Community
Consultation

04 August 2023



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1. Introduction

- 1.1.1. Climate change is a challenge we must all play our part in addressing – from the small changes we need to make in our everyday lives to the transformational changes we need to make across our whole economy, including how we power our homes, businesses, and transport systems.
- 1.1.2. Over the next decade, the fossil fuels that once powered our economy need to be replaced with sources of low-carbon electricity. Solar is an important part of the way we can meet this challenge – it is affordable, reliable and can be built quickly.
- 1.1.3. Springwell Solar Farm ('Springwell') is a proposed new solar farm with battery storage (also known as an 'Energy Storage System' or ESS) located in North Kesteven. Backed by EDF Renewables and Luminous Energy, Springwell would make an important contribution to our future energy network by producing enough clean, secure and affordable energy to power over 180,000 homes every year*.
- 1.1.4. Springwell is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ('NSIP') under the Planning Act 2008 because the amount of electricity it would generate is over 50 megawatts ('MW'). This means that a type of planning consent called a Development Consent Order ('DCO') is needed to build and operate it.
- 1.1.5. Unlike planning applications which are determined by local planning authorities, we must apply to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero for a DCO for our proposals.
- 1.1.6. Applying for a DCO is a fixed, legal process, which is illustrated in Figure 1. A key part of this process is the requirement for consultation with the local community and other stakeholders, including statutory consultees, before the DCO application is submitted. This is known as a 'statutory consultation.'
- 1.1.7. We held an initial stage of consultation (called a 'non-statutory consultation') between January and March 2023 on our early plans for Springwell. This was to introduce our early proposals for Springwell and gain feedback on them while they were still being developed.
- 1.1.8. The feedback we received from the community at this first stage, as well as the environmental surveys we have carried out since, have helped us to develop our plans to the extent that we are now ready to carry out our statutory consultation.
- 1.1.9. The feedback we receive at this stage will help inform our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm before we submit our DCO application.
- 1.1.10. Before we carry out this consultation, we must publish a statement of how we will consult with the local community – known as a Statement of Community Consultation ('SoCC'). This SoCC has been prepared and publicised in accordance with Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008, Regulation 12 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and relevant guidance from the Planning Inspectorate (Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the pre-application process).

* Based upon the average domestic electricity consumption per home (temperature corrected) per the Energy Consumption in the UK (published September 2021, Table C9 of ECUK: Consumption data tables)

1.1.11. It also reflects feedback we have received from the host local authorities for Springwell – North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council – which we have consulted in the preparation of this document.

1.1.12. As part of our DCO application, we will submit a Consultation Report, detailing how we have consulted, the feedback that we received during our statutory consultation and how we have had regard to it. When considering our DCO application, the Secretary of State must consider whether the consultation that we have undertaken has been adequate.

1.1.13. This SoCC sets out how we will consult with the local community. It includes:

- A brief summary of the Springwell Solar Farm proposal
- When consultation will be carried out
- Who will be consulted
- Where people can find out more about Springwell Solar Farm
- How we will consult (including on Preliminary Environmental Information)
- How feedback will be collected and used to inform our proposals

1.2. Environmental Impact Assessment

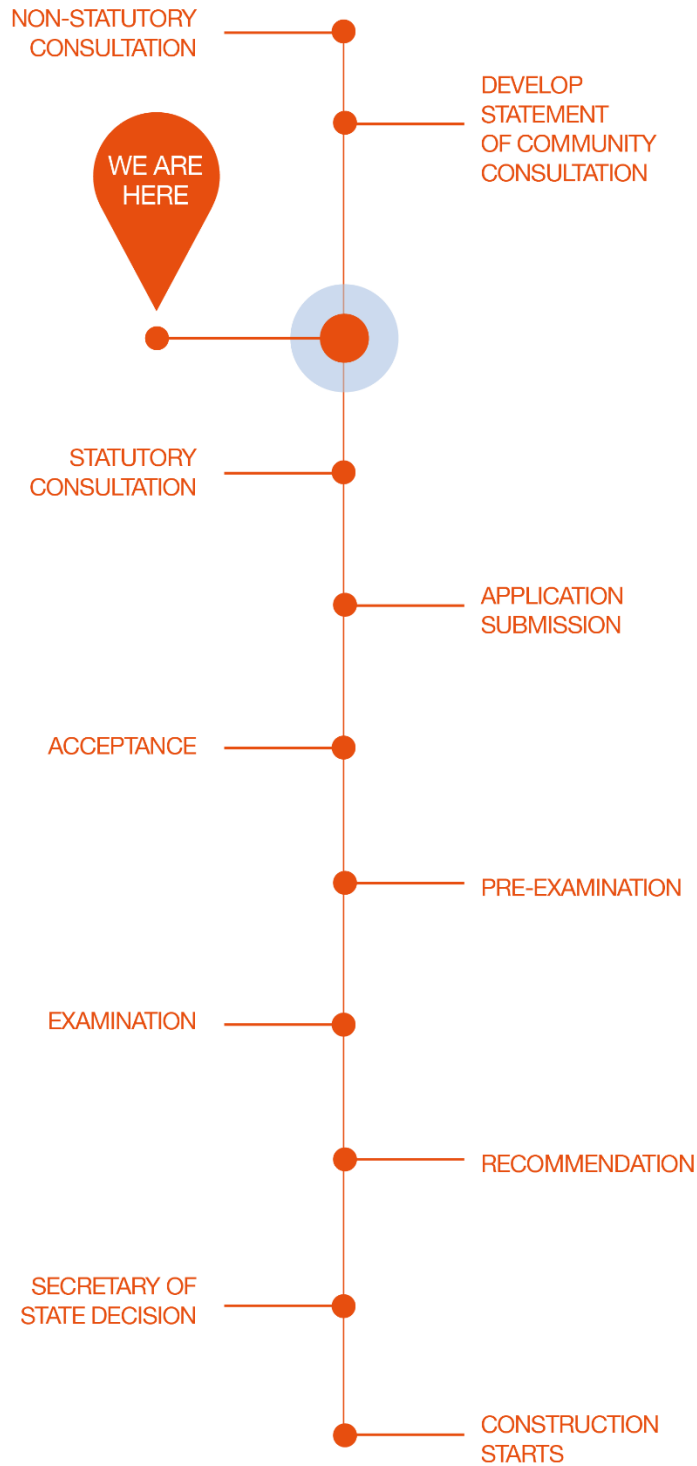
1.2.1. Springwell Solar Farm is classed as an Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') development requiring an assessment of its likely significant effects on the environment under The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. Where appropriate, we will also describe mitigation that is proposed to avoid, reduce, or mitigate any significant adverse effects. We will report on this process in a document called an Environmental Statement ('ES') when we submit our DCO application.

1.2.2. At the statutory consultation, we will be sharing the initial results of our environmental assessments as well as the preliminary mitigation measures that we may need to introduce to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any potentially significant adverse effects. We will do so in a Preliminary Environmental Information Report ('PEIR') document.

1.3. More information

1.3.1. You can find more information about the Planning Act 2008, the Planning Inspectorate and its role, as well as how to participate in the DCO process on the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>, or by calling the Planning Inspectorate on 0303 444 5000.

Figure 1: Planning process for NSIPs



2. Springwell Solar Farm

2.1. About Springwell Solar Farm

- 2.1.1. Springwell Solar Farm is a proposed new solar energy farm, with battery storage. The proposals also include infrastructure to connect Springwell Solar Farm to the National Grid and any necessary supporting site infrastructure and environmental mitigation, including landscaping.
- 2.1.2. It is located in the local authority areas of North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council. Figure 2 shows the boundary of the proposed Springwell Solar Farm.
- 2.1.3. We have secured a grid connection agreement with National Grid which would allow us to export up to 800MW of clean, secure and affordable electricity to this network, through a new substation owned by National Grid. There would also be capacity to import power from the network.
- 2.1.4. Further details of the proposed Springwell Solar Farm will be included in materials published during the consultation. Details of the materials we will publish are in the 'How we will consult' section below.
- 2.1.5. More information can also be found on our project website: www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk.

2.2. About us

- 2.2.1. Springwell Solar Farm is being developed by Springwell Energyfarm Ltd - a joint venture between EDF Renewables and Luminous Energy.
- 2.2.2. EDF Renewables has over 25 years' experience delivering renewable energy projects in more than 20 countries worldwide. In the UK, it has 38 operating sites providing much needed affordable, low carbon electricity across all renewable technologies.
- 2.2.3. Luminous Energy is an established UK-based renewable energy developer with projects in the UK, US, Chile and Australia. The company was set up in 2013 to provide people around the world with affordable, renewable energy. Luminous Energy is now regarded as a leading player in the market, having delivered 1GW of projects globally, and the company's core values remain firmly at the heart of the business.
- 2.2.4. You can find out more about both organisations at: www.edf-re.uk and www.luminous.energy

Figure 2: Indicative Springwell Solar Farm boundary



3. Developing our approach to consultation

- 3.1.1. Our approach to consultation has been informed by our early engagement with key stakeholders, as well as the non-statutory consultation we carried out earlier this year.
- 3.1.2. The non-statutory consultation was held between 24 January 2023 and 7 March 2023 to introduce our early proposals and gain initial feedback on them, including our early design for Springwell Solar Farm, our approach to assessing environmental effects, and community benefit.
- 3.1.3. We consulted using a range of techniques to ensure that everyone with an interest in our plans could find out more and share their feedback.
- 3.1.4. This included:
- Sending a newsletter to 3,126 local addresses around the proposed site.
 - Holding four in-person events.
 - Hosting a virtual exhibition on our project website.
 - Publishing a consultation booklet and questionnaire, which were available online, at public events, in hard-copy at local community buildings and on request.
 - Offering to meet with stakeholders, community organisations and close neighbours to brief them on our proposals.
- 3.1.5. Feedback could be provided by completing our hard-copy questionnaire and returning it at our public events or via our Freepost, completing the online questionnaire accessed through our project website and virtual exhibition, emailing us, or writing to us using our Freepost address.
- 3.1.6. Anyone could get in touch with the consultation team via email, Freepost and our freephone to find out more about our proposals and ask questions to the consultation team.
- 3.1.7. Feedback from this consultation has helped us refine our proposals and informed the contents of this SoCC and our ongoing approach to consultation and engagement. For example, we received feedback on the timings of our public events (to go past 7pm to accommodate different working schedules) and on the content that should be included at the next stage of consultation – such as visualisations of the proposals. This has informed our approach, which is set out in more detail in the next section.
- 3.1.8. We have continued to engage with the community and stakeholders since the consultation. The key activities, detailed in Table 1 overleaf, reflect our commitment to keeping the community informed and engaged as our plans for Springwell evolve.
- This includes holding workshops with residents closest to the site to show them how our design has evolved to consider the results of our surveys and the feedback from our non-statutory consultation.

Table 1: On-going engagement following our non-statutory consultation

Activity	Summary
Near neighbour engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We sought to conduct a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) at 49 properties around the proposed Springwell site. • Following the completion of the assessment, we invited the residents of these properties to a workshop with members of the project team to show them how our design is evolving to consider the results of our surveys - including the RVAA – as well as the feedback we received from the non-statutory consultation. • We have continued to accommodate requests for site visits and meetings from near neighbours where practicable.
Wider community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have created an on-site surveys page on our project website to ensure that the community is being kept up to date with on-site activity: www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk/category/surveys. • We have written to residents to give advance notice where survey work has been expected to be disruptive. • We have offered and held meetings with community organisations and representatives, including ward councillors, primary schools, the local MP, landowners and local businesses. We have also held meetings with residents on request. • We have sent an update newsletter setting out how our plans are evolving and next steps to properties around the site. • We are continuing to answer enquiries through our communication channels.
On-going engagement with host authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have held regular meetings with host local planning authorities since the close of our non-statutory consultation (March 2023). The purpose of these meetings is to share updates on Springwell Solar Farm, including discussions on our approach to consultation and engagement.
Ongoing engagement with statutory consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have offered and held meetings with statutory/technical consultees to assist with the EIA process and the evolution of our design. This includes relevant statutory bodies such as

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Environment Agency, Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue Services and Historic England.

- 3.1.9. *In accordance with Section 47 of the Planning Act, we have consulted on the contents of the SoCC with our host authorities– North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council.*

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4. Consulting the community

4.1. Our approach to statutory consultation

- 4.1.1. Our statutory consultation will be open to anyone with an interest in Springwell Solar Farm who considers that they may be directly, or indirectly affected by the proposals, or has a view that they would like to be considered.
- 4.1.2. Our multi-stage approach to consultation has ensured that community input has already helped to shape the plans we are presenting. The feedback we receive from this stage of consultation will help us to further refine our proposals and inform our assessments before we submit our DCO application.
- 4.1.3. We are committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to understand, provide feedback on and further influence our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm. Our key objectives for achieving this through pre-application consultation include:
- Ensuring thorough, open, and transparent engagement and consultation on our proposals.
 - Ensuring proposals are clearly presented, and issues easily understood.
 - Providing sufficient opportunities for interested parties to understand and influence our plans.
 - Gathering high quality responses to, and feedback on, our plans to help inform proposals.
 - Delivering consultation that meets the legal requirements and best practice for a DCO application.

4.2. Timing

- 4.2.1. The statutory consultation will run for six weeks, between [October / November 2023]. All responses must be received by 11:59pm on [X].

4.3. What will we consult on?

- 4.3.1. During the statutory consultation, we will be asking for views on:
- The proposals for Springwell Solar Farm, including the preferred locations of its key elements, including proposed environmental enhancements and mitigation.
 - The likely effects of the proposals, including during construction, operation and decommissioning as well as potential mitigation measures where appropriate.
 - The contribution that Springwell Solar Farm could make to the local community.
 - The PEIR, which will present a preliminary account of the likely significant environmental effects that have been identified to date for Springwell Solar Farm as well as the potential mitigation measures that we may need to introduce to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any potentially significant adverse effects.

4.4. Who will we consult?

- 4.4.1. We have defined two geographic zones – an inner zone and an outer zone - for the purpose of consulting with the local community. This recognises the fact that levels of potential impact and interest are likely to vary with distance to the site. These zones have informed how we will publicise the consultation and are set out below, with further detail about the consultation information detailed in Section 4.6.
- 4.4.2. We will publicise the consultation in both zones using our project website, by placing adverts in local newspapers and on social media and by issuing press releases to local media outlets.

Inner zone

- 4.4.3. The inner zone covers people who live and work close to the proposed Springwell Solar Farm and may be directly affected by the proposals. The consultation will also involve their political representatives. Our consultation activity will be particularly focused in this zone.
- 4.4.4. This zone includes all residential properties within one kilometre of the proposed site boundary, extending in some areas to consider the potential wider effects of the proposal (such as construction) and natural and human geographic boundaries. All homes within communities or settlements on the boundary of the zone will be included in the inner zone. A map of this zone is shown in Figure 3 below.
- 4.4.5. A newsletter will be sent to all homes and businesses within the inner zone at the beginning of consultation. Where possible, it is intended that public events and deposit points will be focused within or close to this area.
- 4.4.6. We will also write to political representatives and community groups within this zone to offer a briefing and support them to promote community involvement in the consultation process using their existing communication channels.

Outer zone

- 4.4.7. The outer zone covers those living and working in the area outside of the inner zone, who may be affected by or have an interest in our proposals due to the proposals being brought forward in their local authority. This zone follows the local authority boundary of North Kesteven District Council.
- 4.4.8. Alongside the measures set out in section 4.4.2 to publicise the consultation in this zone, we will write to political representatives within this zone to offer a briefing and support them to promote community involvement in the consultation process using their existing communication channels.

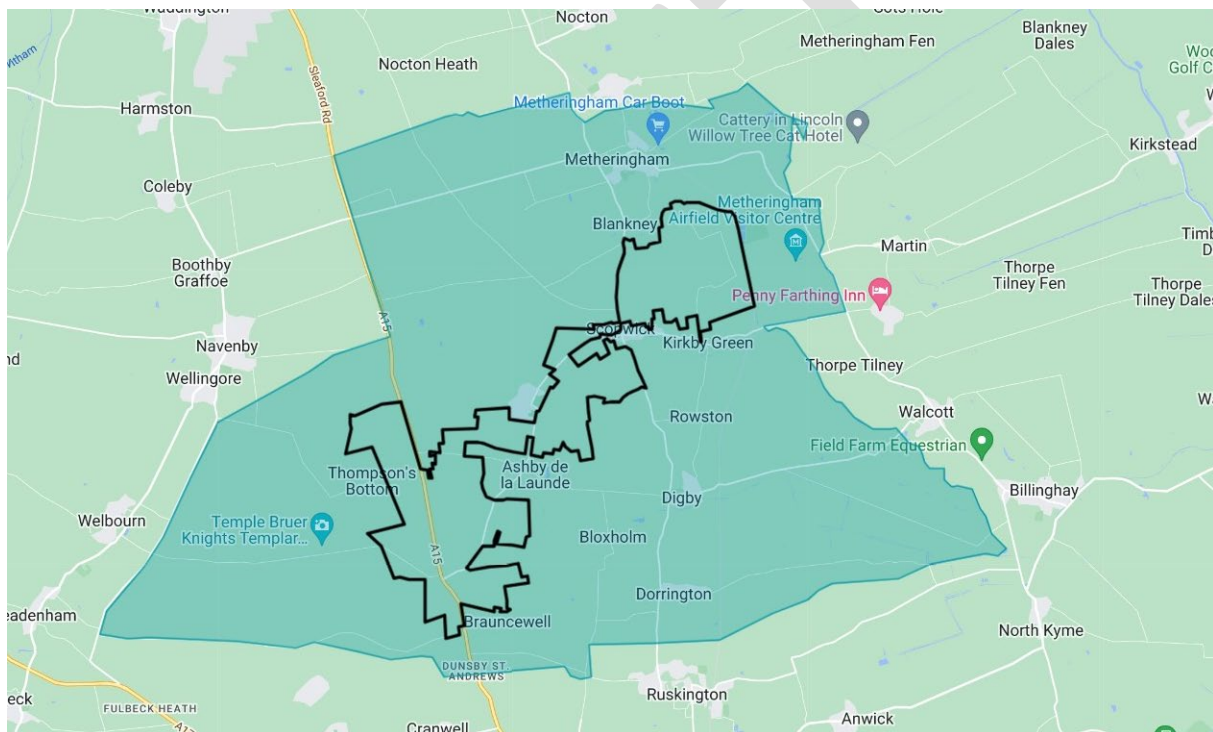
Statutory consultees and community organisations

- 4.4.9. At the same time as consulting the local community, we will also consult a range of statutory consultees as set out by Section 42 and Section 48 of the Planning Act 2008 and Regulation 13 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, and additional organisations that we recognise to have an interest in the proposed Springwell Solar Farm. These groups include:

- The host and neighbouring local authorities.
- Statutory bodies (such as the Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England and others).
- Other community groups and organisations that may have an interest in the proposals (such as Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Boston, Lincolnshire Ramblers and others).
- People with an interest in land (eg, owners or tenants) that may be affected by the proposals.

4.4.10. The proposed application will also be publicised as required by Section 48 of the Planning Act 2008.

Figure 3: Inner zone. The indicative site boundary is shown in black.



4.5. How will we consult?

- 4.5.1. This section sets out how we intend to consult during the consultation, which will run from [October / November 2023].
- 4.5.2. We will encourage participation in the consultation by providing a number of in-person and online opportunities. More detail on these opportunities is provided in sections 4.7-4.14.
- 4.5.3. Should we carry out any further stages of consultation prior to submission of the DCO application, we will use some, but not necessarily all, of the means of consultation set out in this document. We will work with the host authorities to assist us in deciding the most appropriate activities for any further stages of consultation.

4.6. Consultation information

- 4.6.1. Information about our proposals will be published for consultation in the following documents:
- **A consultation newsletter:** a newsletter issued to addresses within the inner zone setting out how to find out more about the proposals and participate in the consultation; including information on accessing materials, the locations and timings of the public events, and how people can share their feedback. This will be published on the project website to view and download.
 - **A consultation booklet:** an accessible summary of our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm, the EIA process, the consultation and planning process, approach to community benefit and next steps. This will be available in hard copy at deposit points and the public events, posted on request, and published on the project website to view and download.
 - **A questionnaire:** the main way we will collect feedback from the community. It will include easy to understand questions on our proposals, the answers to which will be considered as we refine our plans. This will be available in hard copy at deposit points and the public events, posted on request and published on the project website to view and download.
 - **A 3D model:** a virtual model of the proposed Springwell Solar Farm site available at the public events.
 - **A virtual exhibition:** containing the exhibition banners on display at the public events and a link to the online questionnaire and project website.
 - **Exhibition banners:** an accessible summary of our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm, the EIA process, the consultation and planning process, approach to community benefit and next steps which will be displayed at the public events. The exhibition banners will also be available in the virtual exhibition and as PDFs to download from the project website.
 - **The Preliminary Environment Information Report (PEIR):** containing the initial results of our environmental assessments as well as preliminary measures to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any potentially significant adverse effects.
- 4.6.2. Printed copies of the SoCC and consultation documents – including the PEIR - will be deposited in local libraries ('deposit points') close to the proposed site for Springwell Solar Farm and maintained throughout the consultation period.
- 4.6.3. Deposit points have been selected to ensure they are close to or within the inner zone, are accessible and have opening times to accommodate people with different time commitments.
- 4.6.4. The locations of the deposit points, which are listed in Table 2 below, will be publicised in the consultation material, including the newsletter, consultation booklet and on the project website.
- 4.6.5. We will provide hard copies of the consultation booklet, questionnaire and SoCC available free of charge on request. A charge of £0.45 per page will be applicable for hard copies of the PEIR.

- 4.6.6. Requests for consultation information in alternative formats will be considered on a case-by-case basis so we can establish how best to provide the information required.

Table 2: Deposit points

Location	Opening hours
Metheringham Library, High St, Metheringham, Lincoln LN4 3EA	Monday: Closed Tuesday: 3–5 pm Wednesday: 10 am–12 pm Thursday: 10 am–12 pm Friday: 2–5 pm Saturday: 10 am–1 pm Sunday: Closed
Sleaford Library, 13 - 16 Market Place, Sleaford NG34 7SR	Monday: 9 am–5 pm Tuesday: 9 am–5 pm Wednesday: 9 am–5 pm Thursday: 9 am–6 pm Friday: 9 am–5 pm Saturday: 9 am–1 pm Sunday: Closed
Waddington Library, Bar Ln, Waddington, Lincoln LN5 9SA	Monday: 9am–1pm, 2–6pm Tuesday: 9am–1pm, 2–6pm Wednesday: 9am–1pm, 2–6pm Thursday: 9am–1pm, 2–6pm Friday: 9 am–1pm, 2–6pm Saturday: 9am–12:30pm Sunday: Closed

4.7. Website and virtual exhibition

- 4.7.1. From the start of consultation, the project website (www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk) will host all of the consultation documents, including the PEIR, as well as links to the virtual exhibition and online questionnaire. It will also include details of the deposit points and public events as well as hosting contact information for people to get in touch with the team.
- 4.7.2. The interactive virtual exhibition will be accessed through the website and will provide an alternative format for people to learn about the proposals. It will

include information boards which will be on display at the public events, links to documents and the online questionnaire.

4.8. Public events

- 4.8.1. We will hold in-person public events during the consultation period to enable anyone with an interest in the proposals to find out more about them and ask questions to members of the team. Printed copies of the consultation booklet, SoCC and questionnaire will be available at these events for members of the public to take away. Completed questionnaires will be able to be returned at the events.
- 4.8.2. The dates and times of these events are listed in Table 3 below. The events are being held in accessible venues around the proposed Springwell site and have been organised at a range of dates and times to ensure that people with different schedules are able to attend. This includes events after normal working hours as well as weekend events.
- 4.8.3. Details about the dates and times of the public events will be published on the project website and in the consultation newsletter and booklet. The schedule will also be included on supporting publicity such as newspaper and social media adverts.

Table 3: Public events

Location	Date and time
Scopwick Village Hall, Brookside, Scopwick, LN4 3PA	Week 2 Weekday 4pm-8pm
Ashby de la Launde Village Hall, Church Avenue, Ashby de la Launde, LN4 3JQ	Week 2 Weekday 11am-3pm
Metheringham Village Hall, Fen Road, Metheringham, LN4 3AA	Week 2 Weekend 11am-3pm
Blankney Old School, Drury St, Blankney, LN4 3AZ	Week 5 Weekday 3pm-7pm

4.9. Presentations and stakeholder meetings

- 4.9.1. We will seek to accommodate reasonable requests for presentations and briefings from stakeholder groups, for example: local authorities, parish councils, and local community groups, during the consultation period.
- 4.9.2. Other activities will be carried out, if considered necessary and appropriate, to engage specific interests or seldom heard groups. This could include, for example, further meetings with residents who are closest to the proposed site.
- 4.9.3. Details of all our consultation activity will be included in a Consultation Report which we will submit as part of our DCO application.

4.10. Publicity and advertising

- 4.10.1. We will publicise the consultation and associated activities in local media ahead of the start of the consultation period and will update local broadcast and print media channels on our activity during the consultation.
- 4.10.2. Where publication timings allow, we will seek to use local newsletters to further engage with local communities.
- 4.10.3. Statutory notices will be published in line with Section 47 and Section 48 of the Planning Act.

4.11. Social media

- 4.11.1. We will use social media to help publicise the consultation and encourage those with an interest in our proposals to submit their feedback. We are unable to accept feedback via social media.

4.12. Consultation hotline and email address

- 4.12.1. To find out more information or request copies of the consultation materials, anyone can contact the consultation team by freephone (0800 038 3486) during normal business hours (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5:30pm). Outside of these hours, callers will be able to leave a message requesting a callback.
- 4.12.2. Alternatively, people can email info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk or write to the team via Freepost (no stamp required): Springwell Solar Farm, FREEPOST SEC Newgate UK LOCAL.

4.13. Collection of responses

- 4.13.1. We will produce a questionnaire inviting feedback on different elements of the proposed Springwell Solar Farm. The questionnaire will be available to download on the project website: www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk, in hard-copy at public events, at deposit points around the local area and on request using the project contact details.
- 4.13.2. The completed hard-copy questionnaire can be returned using the Freepost address set out in this document during the consultation period, or at the public events.
- 4.13.3. Respondents will also be able to complete the questionnaire online using an online questionnaire, which will be made available through the project website: www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk as well as the virtual exhibition.
- 4.13.4. Alternatively, respondents can write to us via email or Freepost using the details set out in this document. All written feedback will be accepted.

4.14. Seldom heard audiences

- 4.14.1. It is important to ensure that everyone with an interest in the proposals has the opportunity to comment on our proposals as part of the consultation. We want our consultation to be inclusive and gather feedback from a wide range of audiences, including those who are seldom heard in public consultations such as

people without internet access, seasonal workers, younger people and socially isolated people. We will do this by:

- Working with local authorities and organisations representing seldom heard individuals and groups to ensure our consultation activity and materials are appropriate and remove barriers to engagement.
- Choosing accessible venues for deposit points and public events.
- Holding public events at a variety of times, including evenings and weekends to enable participation by people with different time commitments.
- Making provision for people without internet access through the consultation programme. This includes sending a consultation newsletter to every address within the inner zone, holding public events in the area, publicising the consultation in print editions of local newspapers and making hard copies of consultation materials available on-request and at deposit points.
- Providing materials in alternative formats on request. Contact details to request materials in alternative formats will be published on the project website and in our consultation booklet and newsletter.
- Contacting community and voluntary organisations including parish councils and schools within consultation zone 1 to offer direct engagement and support them in promoting the consultation through their own existing communication channels, such as social media feeds.
- Providing a variety of communication channels including a Freephone number, email address and Freepost for those seeking further information.

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5. Consultation arrangements

5.1. How to take part in the consultation

5.1.1. Anyone can find out more by:

- Contacting us on 0800 038 3486 or info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk or by Freepost (Springwell Solar Farm, FREEPOST SEC Newgate UK LOCAL).
- Attending a public event which we will hold in locations around the proposed Springwell site.
- Viewing the virtual exhibition on our website: www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk/
- Reading the consultation booklet which will be available online or in hard copy on request, at deposit points around the area and at the public events.
- Reviewing the PEIR and our consultation booklet by going to www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk or visiting a deposit point.

5.2. Responding to the consultation

5.2.1. We welcome feedback on our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm. Anyone can share their views by:

- Completing the consultation questionnaire online at www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk.
- Returning a questionnaire by Freepost (no stamp required) to the following address: Springwell Solar Farm, FREEPOST SEC Newgate UK LOCAL.
- Returning a questionnaire by email: info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk.
- Submitting comments by email to info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk or in writing to the above Freepost address.

5.2.2. Responses must be received by the consultation deadline of 23:59 on [X].

5.2.3. Responses must be individual. Petitions will be treated as a single response for the purpose of the Consultation Report.

5.3. How we will consider the responses

5.3.1. Following this consultation, we will consider all of the feedback we receive and continue refining our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm before submitting a DCO application. The DCO application will include a Consultation Report, which will set out how we have consulted, summarise the responses received and explain how we have had regard to them.

5.3.2. Any comments received will be analysed by Springwell Energyfarm Ltd and any of its appointed agents. Copies may be made available to the Secretary of State, the Planning Inspectorate and other relevant statutory authorities so that feedback can be considered part of the DCO process. We will request that any personal details are not placed on the public record and will be held securely by Springwell Energyfarm Ltd and its agents in accordance with the data protection law and will be used solely in connection with the consultation process and

subsequent DCO application and, except as noted above, will not be passed to third parties.

- 5.3.3. The Planning Inspectorate has also published details of how it manages comments received in a Privacy Notice available on its website:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-inspectorate-privacy-notices/customer-privacy-notice>.

5.4. Further information

- 5.4.1. For further information, please contact us by:

- Calling 0800 038 3486 (9:00am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday)
- Emailing info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk
- Writing to the team at Springwell Solar Farm FREEPOST SEC Newgate UK Local

DRAFT



springwellsolarfarm.co.uk

Appendix C-2 – Regard had to host authority informal feedback on draft SoCC



Appendix C-2: Regard had to host authority informal feedback on draft SoCC

Table C-1: Informal feedback from host authorities regarding the draft SoCC and the Applicant's response

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
NKDC	<i>"Heckington Fen (non-stat) issued engagement newsletter to just under 6000 addresses including all properties within 5km of the proposed solar park site and 2km of the proposed grid connection search area. On that basis the min 1km zone proposed at Springwell needs to be enlarged and to set the buffer from the site boundary rather than running up to roads. Reiterates suggest 5km consultation zone."</i>	Y	The inner zone was revised to follow a two kilometre buffer around the proposed Site boundary, extending in some areas to consider the wider effects of the Proposed Development. The revised inner zone totalled c. 5,400 properties (roughly the same as Heckington Fen) and was 13km at its widest point. This was felt to be proportionate to the potential effects of the Proposed Development at this stage, considering the more distributed nature of the proposed Site and relatively short cable route corridor compared to other proposed to solar NSIPs within the local area.
NKDC	<i>'Paragraph 4.2.1 agree that 6 weeks is sufficient. Heckington Fen 9 weeks spanned June to September i.e. summer holiday period so 6 is deemed appropriate.'</i>	N	The Applicant agrees with this comment.
NKDC	<i>'Paragraph 4.6.1 – presume that website and social media will be used to publicise.'</i>	Y	The Applicant updated the SoCC to reflect that the project website and social media would be used to publicise the consultation.

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
NKDC	<i>“Paragraph 4.6.6 (Table 2 deposit points) – NKDC agree just one location in Sleaford and preference for Sleaford Library not the NKDC offices. Waddington Bar Lane library is distant to the site; NKDC suggest to also use Navenby ‘The Venue’.”</i>	Y	Waddington Library was originally selected due to its consistent opening hours. This was changed to The Venue, Navenby in response to comments from the host authorities.
NKDC	<i>“Table 3 (public events) - suggest consideration to additional event in Navenby owing to proximity/overlap with Order limits.”</i>	Y	An additional event at The Venue, Navenby was added to the public events programme in response to comments from host authorities.
NKDC	<i>“Table 3 (public events) - suggest events held for longer periods e.g. midday to 8pm in each location; previous proposal was for limited time periods in each location.”</i>	N	<p>The public events covered a range of times and dates to accommodate different schedules.</p> <p>Timings at four public events held during Phase One Consultation were deemed sufficient to allow most people to attend. In response to feedback from Phase One Consultation, the Applicant adjusted the timings of an event to go later into the evening to accommodate people with different working schedules.</p> <p>In addition to the public events, there were a number of ways for people to find out more about the Proposed Development and respond to the consultation. This included a virtual exhibition, which hosted the exhibition banners available at the public events. These could also</p>

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
NKDC	<i>“Suggest considering 2 or 3 programmed online presentation webinars that people can pre-register for general Q&A in addition to proposed virtual exhibitions which presumably don't have the option of in-person engagement.”</i>	N	<p>be viewed and downloaded on the project website, which hosted all of the consultation documents available at the public events. The project team was contactable by email, freephone or freepost.</p> <p>The Applicant did not receive any community feedback during its Phase One Consultation that indicated a preference for more virtual methods of consultation.</p> <p>The Applicant employed a variety of virtual methods of consultation as part of its consultation programme. This included a virtual exhibition, which hosted the exhibition banners available at the public events. These could also be viewed and downloaded on the project website, which hosted all of the consultation documents available at the public events. The project team was contactable by email, freephone or freepost.</p>
NKDC	<i>“They've stated that the Outer Zone for consultation will be the district boundary. I'd suggest this is unnecessary and they focus on a similar area to the Heckington one, which I think was a five mile radius.”</i>	N	<p>The outer zone of consultation reflects the Proposed Development's status as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project.</p>

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
NKDC	<i>"If they are using the district boundary as their scope, then they are missing some schools off of the consultation list, and have included others that are outside of NK."</i>	N	The Applicant continued to review the list of community and voluntary organisations contacted as part of its Phase Two Consultation. A list of these organisations can be found in Appendix H-1: List of non-prescribed consultees and community organisations consulted during Phase Two Consultation [EN010149/APP/5.2] .
NKDC	<i>"I'd question their use of the term "seldom heard", as the list given includes several groups (or movements, even) that wouldn't be classified as that, and in my opinion it dilutes the relevance of the list. Instead, I'd suggest making a clear distinction between particular groups. They've already identified education facilities as a separate part of this list, I would also split the list into genuinely seldom heard, which would include some of those on page one and most of the ones listed on page two, community interest groups, and then something like "other stakeholder groups" or community focused organisations, or similar that the likes of the Chamber of Commerce and Lincolnshire Food Partnership could be listed in. Being really picky I'd also put</i>	N	The Applicant continued to review the list of community and voluntary organisations contacted as part of its Phase Two Consultation. A list of these organisations can be found in Appendix H-1: List of non-prescribed consultees and community organisations consulted during Phase Two Consultation [EN010149/APP/5.2] . The Applicant did not append a list of community and voluntary organisations that were contacted to the SoCC, and therefore no change was formally made to the contents of the SoCC. However, where relevant suggested groups were included in the list of community organisations contacted.

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
	<i>each of the separate parts of the list in alphabetical order once it is complete. “</i>		
NKDC	<i>“I have attached a list of community interest groups in the area. It doesn't include all interest groups in NK, but they can pick and choose which ones to add in, if any.”</i>	N	The Applicant considered the list of community interest groups within the district provided by NKDC as part of its review of the list of community and voluntary organisations contacted as part of the Phase Two Consultation. A list of these organisations can be found in Appendix H-1: List of non-prescribed consultees and community organisations consulted during Phase Two Consultation [EN010149/APP/5.2] .
LCC	<i>“I passed on the SOCC to our Comms team and they haven't really raised any issues/comments with regard its content, proposed methods to be employed or venue choices etc.”</i>	N	The Applicant notes this comment.
LCC	<i>“The only specific addition/comment they have asked is that the Volunteer Centre Services (VCS, Sleaford) be included within the seldom heard groups list as they can help reach out to community groups in the area.”</i>	N	The Applicant continued to review the list of community and voluntary organisations contacted as part of the Phase Two Consultation. A list of these organisations can be found in Appendix H-1: List of non-prescribed consultees and community

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
			<p>organisations consulted during Phase Two Consultation [EN010149/APP/5.2].</p> <p>The Applicant did not append a list of community and voluntary organisations that were contacted to the SoCC, and therefore no change was formally made to the contents of the SoCC. However, where relevant suggested groups were included in the list of community organisations contacted.</p>
LCC	<p><i>“They have also suggested local Facebook groups potentially be used.”</i></p>	N	<p>The Applicant used social media advertising to publicise the consultation. More details about how the Applicant publicised the consultation can be found in Chapter 5 of the Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.1].</p>
LCC	<p><i>“Ensure you adhere to what you have said you will do.”</i></p>	N	<p>The Applicant has set out how it has complied with its commitments set out in the SoCC in Appendix D-4: Compliance with the SoCC [EN010149/APP/5.2]. In short, the Applicant believes it has met all of the commitments set out in the final SoCC.</p>
LCC	<p><i>“Ensure that the venues must be accessible.”</i></p>	N	<p>The Applicant ensured that all venues chosen were accessible and did not receive any</p>

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
			feedback during the consultation period on the accessibility of the venues.
LCC	<i>“Ensure that it is clear how feedback will be given.”</i>	N	The Applicant set out the ways that feedback could be given in the final SoCC (see Appendix D-1: Final SoCC [EN010149/APP/5.2]). This was also set out clearly on publicity material, including the letter sent to the inner zone of consultation on 11 December 2023 and newsletter on 11 January 2024. Methods of feedback were also listed on the project website, as well as in the consultation booklet and on the exhibition banners.

Appendix C-3 – Formal consultation on the draft SoCC



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Appendix C-3.1 – Letters inviting host authority feedback on draft SoCC

Appendix C-3.2 – Draft SoCC for formal consultation

Appendix C-3.1

Letters inviting host authority feedback on draft SoCC



By email only: [REDACTED]

Thursday 14 September 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Springwell Solar Farm: Consultation on the draft Statement of Community Consultation

Planning Act 2008 Section 47: Duty to consult local community

I am writing to you regarding Springwell Solar Farm - a proposed new solar farm and battery storage facility located in North Kesteven, Lincolnshire. The proposals also include infrastructure to connect Springwell Solar Farm to the National Grid and any necessary supporting site infrastructure and environmental mitigation, including landscaping.

Springwell Solar Farm is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ('NSIP') under the Planning Act 2008 because the amount of electricity it would generate is over 50 megawatts ('MW'). This means we need to apply for a Development Consent Order ('DCO') to build and operate it.

As part of the DCO process, we must consult with the host local authorities on the contents of our draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC), which sets out our approach to engagement, how we will carry out our statutory consultation and details how interested parties can share their feedback.

This letter gives notice of a request for comments on our draft SoCC from Lincolnshire County Council in accordance with Section 47(2) of the Planning Act 2008.

We would very much welcome your feedback on our draft SoCC, which includes changes made in response to informal consultation with both North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council. We are grateful for the comments that we have received to date which has particularly helped us to develop our approach to our statutory consultation, as detailed in Chapter 4.

The feedback we receive will be used to help us develop and finalise our SoCC before it is published. We will set out how we have considered all the comments that we have received in our Consultation Report which will form part of our DCO application.

In accordance with Section 47(3) of the Planning Act 2008, this consultation will last for 28 days commencing from Friday 15 September 2023. Please do respond to this email with your comments on the draft SoCC by 11:59pm on **Friday 13 October 2023**.



We would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this letter and the accompanying draft SoCC and do get in touch in the meantime should you have any questions.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Development Project Manager,

Springwell Solar Farm



By email only: [REDACTED]

Thursday 14 September 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Springwell Solar Farm: Consultation on the draft Statement of Community Consultation

Planning Act 2008 Section 47: Duty to consult local community

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We would be grateful if you could confirm receipt of this letter and the accompanying draft SoCC and do get in touch in the meantime should you have any questions.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Development Project Manager

Springwell Solar Farm



Appendix C-3.2

Draft SoCC for formal consultation



Springwell Solar Farm

DRAFT: Statement of Community
Consultation

14 September 2023



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1. Introduction

- 1.1.1. Climate change is a challenge we must all play our part in addressing – from the small changes we need to make in our everyday lives to the transformational changes we need to make across our whole economy, including how we power our homes, businesses, and transport systems.
- 1.1.2. Over the next decade, the fossil fuels that once powered our economy need to be replaced with sources of low-carbon electricity. Solar is an important part of the way we can meet this challenge – it is affordable, reliable and can be built quickly.
- 1.1.3. Springwell Solar Farm ('Springwell') is a proposed new solar farm with battery storage located in North Kesteven. Backed by EDF Renewables and Luminous Energy, Springwell would make an important contribution to our future energy network by producing enough clean, secure and affordable energy to power over 180,000 homes every year*.
- 1.1.4. Springwell is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ('NSIP') under the Planning Act 2008 because the amount of electricity it would generate is over 50 megawatts ('MW'). This means that a type of planning consent called a Development Consent Order ('DCO') is needed to build and operate it.
- 1.1.5. Unlike planning applications which are determined by local councils, we must apply to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero for a DCO for our proposals.
- 1.1.6. Applying for a DCO is a fixed, legal process, which is illustrated in Figure 1. A key part of this process is the requirement for consultation with the local community and other stakeholders, including statutory consultees, before the DCO application is submitted. This is known as a 'statutory consultation.'
- 1.1.7. We held an initial stage of consultation (called a 'non-statutory consultation') between January and March 2023 on our early plans for Springwell. This was to introduce our early proposals for Springwell and gain feedback on them while they were still being developed.
- 1.1.8. The feedback we received from the community at this first stage, as well as the environmental surveys we have carried out since, have helped us to develop our plans to the extent that we are now ready to carry out our statutory consultation.
- 1.1.9. The feedback we receive at this stage will help inform our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm before we submit our DCO application.
- 1.1.10. Before we carry out this consultation, we must publish a statement of how we will consult with the local community – known as a Statement of Community Consultation ('SoCC'). This SoCC has been prepared and publicised in accordance with Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008, Regulation 12 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and relevant guidance from the Planning Inspectorate (Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the pre-application process).

* Based upon the average domestic electricity consumption per home (temperature corrected) per the Energy Consumption in the UK (published September 2021, Table C9 of ECUK: Consumption data tables)

- 1.1.11. It also reflects feedback we have received from the host local authorities for Springwell – North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council – which we have consulted in the preparation of this document.
- 1.1.12. As part of our DCO application we will submit a Consultation Report, detailing how we have consulted, the feedback that we received during our statutory consultation and how we have had regard to it. When considering our DCO application, the Secretary of State must consider whether the consultation that we have undertaken has been adequate.
- 1.1.13. This SoCC sets out how we will consult with the local community. It includes:
- A brief summary of the Springwell Solar Farm proposal
 - When consultation will be carried out
 - Who will be consulted
 - Where people can find out more about Springwell Solar Farm
 - How we will consult (including on Preliminary Environmental Information)
 - How feedback will be collected and used to inform our proposals

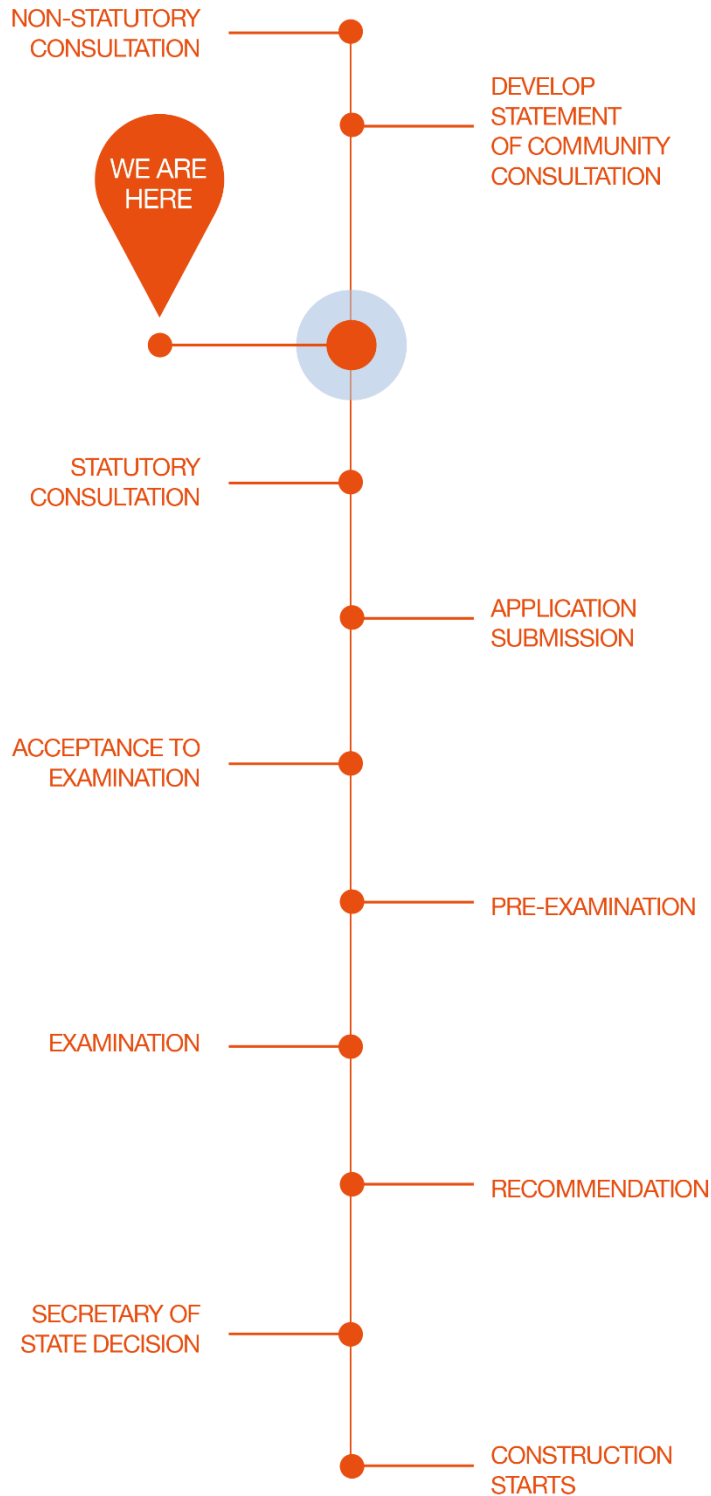
1.2. Environmental Impact Assessment

- 1.2.1. Springwell Solar Farm is classed as an Environmental Impact Assessment ('EIA') development requiring an assessment of its likely significant effects on the environment under The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. Where appropriate, we will also describe mitigation that is proposed to avoid, reduce, or mitigate any significant adverse effects. We will report on this process in a document called an Environmental Statement ('ES') when we submit our DCO application.
- 1.2.2. At the statutory consultation, we will be sharing the initial results of our ongoing environmental assessments as well as preliminary information on mitigation measures that we may need to introduce to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any likely significant adverse effects. We will do so in a Preliminary Environmental Information Report ('PEIR') document.

1.3. More information

- 1.3.1. You can find more information about the Planning Act 2008, the Planning Inspectorate and its role, as well as how to participate in the DCO process on the Planning Inspectorate's National Infrastructure Planning website <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>, or by calling the Planning Inspectorate on 0303 444 5000.

Figure 1: Planning process for NSIPs



2. Springwell Solar Farm

2.1. About Springwell Solar Farm

- 2.1.1. Springwell Solar Farm is a proposed new solar energy farm with battery storage. The proposals also include infrastructure to connect Springwell Solar Farm to the National Grid and any necessary supporting site infrastructure and environmental mitigation, including landscaping.
- 2.1.2. It is located in the local authority areas of North Kesteven District Council and Lincolnshire County Council (the host authorities). Figure 2 shows the location of the proposed Springwell Solar Farm.
- 2.1.3. We have secured a grid connection agreement with National Grid which would allow us to export up to 800MW of clean, secure and affordable electricity to this network, through a new substation owned by National Grid. There would also be capacity to import power from the network.
- 2.1.4. Further details of the proposed Springwell Solar Farm will be included in materials published during the consultation. Details of the materials we will publish are in the 'How we will consult' section below.
- 2.1.5. More information can also be found on our project website: www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk.

2.2. About us

- 2.2.1. Springwell Solar Farm is backed by Springwell Energyfarm Ltd - a joint venture between EDF Renewables and Luminous Energy.
- 2.2.2. EDF Renewables has over 25 years' experience delivering renewable energy projects in more than 20 countries worldwide. In the UK, it has 41 operating sites providing much needed affordable, low carbon electricity across all renewable technologies.
- 2.2.3. Luminous Energy is an established UK-based renewable energy developer with projects in the UK, US, Chile and Australia. The company was set up in 2013 to provide people around the world with affordable, renewable energy. Luminous Energy is now regarded as a leading player in the market, having delivered 1GW of projects globally, and the company's core values remain firmly at the heart of the business.
- 2.2.4. You can find out more about both organisations at: www.edf-re.uk and www.luminous.energy

Figure 2: Location of Springwell Solar Farm



3. Developing our approach to consultation

- 3.1.1. Our approach to consultation has been informed by our early engagement with key stakeholders, as well as the non-statutory consultation we carried out earlier this year.
- 3.1.2. The non-statutory consultation was held between 24 January 2023 and 7 March 2023 to introduce our early proposals and gain initial feedback on them, including our early design for Springwell Solar Farm, our approach to assessing environmental effects, and community benefit.
- 3.1.3. We consulted using a range of techniques to ensure that everyone with an interest in our plans could find out more and share their feedback.
- 3.1.4. This included:
- Sending a newsletter to 3,126 local addresses around the proposed site.
 - Holding four in-person events.
 - Hosting a virtual exhibition on our project website.
 - Publishing a consultation booklet and questionnaire, which were available online, at public events, in hard copy at local community buildings and on request.
 - Offering to meet with stakeholders, community organisations and close neighbours to brief them on our proposals.
- 3.1.5. Feedback could be provided by completing our hard-copy questionnaire and returning it at our public events or via our Freepost address, completing the online questionnaire accessed through our project website and virtual exhibition, emailing us, or writing to us using our Freepost address.
- 3.1.6. Anyone could get in touch with the consultation team via email, Freepost and our freephone to find out more about our proposals and ask questions to the consultation team.
- 3.1.7. Feedback from this consultation has helped us refine our proposals and informed the contents of this SoCC and our ongoing approach to consultation and engagement. For example, we received feedback on the timings of our public events (to go past 7pm to accommodate different working schedules) and on the content that should be included at the next stage of consultation – such as visualisations of the proposals. This has informed our approach, which is set out in more detail in chapter 4.
- 3.1.8. We have continued to engage with the community and stakeholders since the consultation. The key activities, detailed in Table 1, reflect our commitment to keeping the community informed and engaged as our plans for Springwell evolve.

Table 1: On-going engagement following non-statutory consultation

Activity	Summary
Near neighbour engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We sought to conduct a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) at 49 properties around the proposed Springwell site. • Following the completion of the RVAA, we invited the residents of these properties to a workshop with members of the project team to show them how our design is evolving to consider the results of our surveys - including the RVAA – as well as the feedback we received from the non-statutory consultation. • We have continued to accommodate requests for site visits and meetings from near neighbours where practicable.
Wider community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have created an on-site surveys page on our project website to ensure that the community is being kept up to date with on-site activity: www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk/category/surveys. • We have written to residents to give advance notice where survey work has been expected to be disruptive. • We have offered and held meetings with community organisations and representatives, including ward councillors, primary schools, the local MP, landowners, and local businesses. We have also held meetings with residents on request. • We are continuing to answer enquiries through our communication channels.
Engagement with host authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have continued to hold regular meetings with host local planning authorities since the close of our non-statutory consultation. The purpose of these meetings is to share updates on Springwell Solar Farm, including discussions on our approach to consultation and engagement.
Engagement with statutory consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have offered and held meetings with statutory/technical consultees to assist with the EIA process and the evolution of our design. This includes relevant statutory bodies such as Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Environment Agency, Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue Services and Historic England.

4. Consulting the community

4.1. Our approach to statutory consultation

- 4.1.1. Our statutory consultation will be open to anyone with an interest in Springwell Solar Farm who considers that they may be directly, or indirectly affected by the proposals, or has a view that they would like to be considered.
- 4.1.2. Our multi-stage approach to consultation has ensured that community input has already helped to shape the plans we are presenting. The feedback that we receive from this stage of consultation will help us to further refine our proposals and inform our assessments before we submit our DCO application.
- 4.1.3. We are committed to making sure that everybody has the opportunity to understand and provide their feedback on our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm. Our key objectives for achieving this through our pre-application consultation include:
- Ensuring thorough, open, and transparent engagement and consultation on our proposals.
 - Ensuring proposals are clearly presented, and issues easily understood.
 - Providing sufficient opportunities for interested parties to understand and influence our plans.
 - Gathering high quality responses to, and feedback on, our plans to help inform proposals.
 - Delivering consultation that meets the legal requirements and best practice for a DCO application.

4.2. Timing

- 4.2.1. The statutory consultation will run for six weeks, between [XX – XX 2023]. All responses must be received by 11:59pm on [X].

4.3. What will we consult on?

- 4.3.1. During the statutory consultation, we will be asking for views on:
- The proposals for Springwell Solar Farm, including the preferred locations of each of its elements and our proposed environmental enhancements and mitigation.
 - How Springwell Solar Farm could contribute to the local community.
 - The PEIR, which will present an initial account of the likely significant environmental effects of Springwell Solar Farm during construction, operation and decommissioning, as well as preliminary details on mitigation measures that we may need to introduce to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any potentially significant adverse effects.

4.4. Who will we consult?

- 4.4.1. We have defined two geographic zones – an inner zone and an outer zone - for the purpose of consulting with the local community. This recognises the fact that levels of potential impact and interest are likely to vary with distance to the site. These zones have informed how we will publicise the consultation and are set out below, with further detail about the consultation information detailed in section 4.6.
- 4.4.2. We will publicise the consultation in both zones using our project website, by placing adverts in local newspapers and on social media, and by issuing press releases to local media outlets.

Inner zone

- 4.4.3. The inner zone covers people who live and work close to the proposed Springwell Solar Farm who are likely to be directly affected by the proposals and their political representatives. Our consultation activity will be most intensive within this zone.
- 4.4.4. This zone includes all residential properties within two kilometres of the proposed site boundary, extending in some areas to consider the potential wider effects of the proposal and human geographic boundaries e.g., ensuring all homes within a settlement have been included. A map of this zone is shown in Figure 3.
- 4.4.5. A newsletter will be sent to all homes and businesses within the inner zone at the beginning of consultation. Where possible, it is intended that public events and deposit points will be focused in or close to this area.
- 4.4.6. We will write to political representatives and community groups within this zone to offer them a briefing and support them to promote the consultation using their existing communication channels.

Outer zone

- 4.4.7. The outer zone covers those living and working in the area outside of the inner zone, who may be affected by or have an interest in our proposals due to the proposals being brought forward in their local authority. This zone follows the local authority boundary of North Kesteven District Council.
- 4.4.8. As well as the methods set out in section 4.4.2, we will write to district and county political representatives within this zone to support them to promote the consultation using their existing communication channels.

Statutory consultees and community organisations

- 4.4.9. At the same time as consulting the local community, we will also consult a range of statutory consultees as set out by Section 42 and Section 48 of the Planning Act 2008 and Regulation 13 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, and additional organisations that we recognise to have an interest in the proposed Springwell Solar Farm.
- 4.4.10. The proposed application will also be publicised as required by Section 48 of the Planning Act 2008.

Figure 3: Inner zone. The location of the site is shown in black.



4.5. How will we consult?

- 4.5.1. This section sets out how we intend to consult during the consultation, which will run from [XX – XX 2023].
- 4.5.2. We will use a range of techniques to encourage participation in the consultation. More detail on the consultation techniques we will use is provided sections 4.7-4.14.
- 4.5.3. Should we carry out any further stages of consultation prior to submission of the DCO application, we will use some, but not necessarily all, of the means of consultation set out in this document. We will work with the host authorities to assist us in deciding the most appropriate activities for any further stages of consultation.

4.6. Consultation information

4.6.1. Information about our proposals will be published for consultation in the following formats:

- **A consultation newsletter:** a newsletter issued to addresses within the inner zone setting out how to find out more about the proposals and participate in the consultation; including information on accessing materials, the locations and timings of the public events, and how people can share their feedback. This will additionally be published on the project website to view and download.
- **A consultation booklet:** an accessible summary of our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm, the EIA process, the consultation and planning process, approach to community benefit and next steps. This will be available in hard copy at deposit points and the public events, posted on request, and published on the project website to view and download.
- **A questionnaire:** the main way we will collect feedback from the community. It will include easy to understand questions on our proposals, the answers to which will be considered as we refine our plans. This will be available in hard copy at deposit points and the public events, posted on request and published on the project website to view and download.
- **A 3D model:** a virtual model of the proposed Springwell Solar Farm site available at the public events
- **A website:** the project website (www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk) will host all of the consultation documents, including the PEIR, as well as links to the virtual exhibition and online questionnaire. It will also include details of the deposit points and public events as well as hosting contact information for people to get in touch with the team.
- **A virtual exhibition:** containing the exhibition banners on display at the public events and a link to the online questionnaire and project website. It will host contact information for people to get in touch with the team.
- **Exhibition banners:** an accessible summary of our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm, the EIA process, the consultation and planning process, approach to community benefit and next steps which will be displayed at the public events. The exhibition banners will also be available in the virtual exhibition and as PDFs to download from the project website.
- **The Preliminary Environment Information Report (PEIR):** containing the initial results of our ongoing environmental assessments as well as preliminary information on measures to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any likely significant adverse effects.

4.6.2. Printed copies of the SoCC and consultation documents – including the PEIR - will be available in local libraries and community venues ('deposit points') close to the proposed site for Springwell Solar Farm and maintained throughout the consultation period.

4.6.3. Deposit points have been selected to ensure they are close to or within the inner zone, are accessible and have opening times to accommodate people with different time commitments.

- 4.6.4. The locations of the deposit points, which are listed in Table 2 below, will be publicised in the consultation material, including the newsletter, consultation booklet and on the project website.
- 4.6.5. We will provide hard copies of the consultation booklet, questionnaire and SoCC available free of charge on request. A charge of £0.45 per page will be applicable for hard copies of the PEIR.
- 4.6.6. Requests for consultation information in alternative formats will be considered on a case-by-case basis so we can establish how best to provide the information required.

Table 2: Deposit points

Location	Opening hours*
Metheringham Library, High St, Metheringham, Lincoln LN4 3EA	Monday: Closed Tuesday: 3–5 pm Wednesday: 10 am–12 pm Thursday: 10 am–12 pm Friday: 2–5 pm Saturday: 10 am–1 pm Sunday: Closed
Sleaford Library, 13 - 16 Market Place, Sleaford NG34 7SR	Monday: 9 am–5 pm Tuesday: 9 am–5 pm Wednesday: 9 am–5 pm Thursday: 9 am–6 pm Friday: 9 am–5 pm Saturday: 9 am–1 pm Sunday: Closed
Navenby Community Library, The Venue, Navenby LN5 0JJ	Opening times may vary, please contact venue to arrange access. Monday: 10am to 12pm Tuesday: Closed Wednesday: 3pm to 5pm Thursday: Closed Friday: 2pm to 4pm Saturday: Closed Sunday: Closed

**please check opening times before travelling*

4.7. Website and virtual exhibition

- 4.7.1. From the start of consultation, the project website (www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk) will host all of the consultation documents, including the PEIR, as well as links to the virtual exhibition and online questionnaire. It will also include details of the deposit points and public events as well as hosting contact information for people to get in touch with the team.
- 4.7.2. The interactive virtual exhibition will be accessed through the website and will provide an alternative format for people to learn about the proposals. It will include information boards which will be on display at the public events, links to documents and the online questionnaire.

4.8. Public events

- 4.8.1. We will hold in-person public events during the consultation period to enable anyone with an interest in the proposals to find out more about them and ask questions to members of the team. Printed copies of the consultation booklet, SoCC and questionnaire will be available at these events for members of the public to take away. Completed questionnaires will be able to be returned at the events.
- 4.8.2. The dates and times of these events are listed in Table 3 below. The events are being held in accessible venues around the proposed Springwell site and have been organised at a range of dates and times to ensure that people with different schedules are able to attend. This includes events after normal working hours as well as weekend events.
- 4.8.3. Details about the dates and times of the public events will be published on the project website and in the consultation newsletter and booklet. The schedule will also be included on supporting publicity such as newspaper and social media adverts. We will consider requests for additional events throughout the consultation period on a case-by-case basis. Any further events would be publicised on the project website, using social media adverts and if possible, at the venue.

Table 3: Public events

Location	Date and time
Scopwick Village Hall, Brookside, Scopwick, LN4 3PA	Week 3 Weekday 4pm-8pm
Ashby de la Launde Village Hall, Church Avenue, Ashby de la Launde, LN4 3JQ	Week 3 Weekday 11am-3pm
The Venue, Navenby, LN5 0JJ	Week 3 Weekday 3pm – 7pm
Metheringham Village Hall, Fen Road, Metheringham, LN4 3AA	Week 3 Weekend 11am-3pm

**Blankney Old School, Drury St,
Blankney, LN4 3AZ**

Week 5
Weekday 3pm-7pm

4.9. Presentations and stakeholder meetings

- 4.9.1. We will seek to accommodate reasonable requests for presentations and briefings from stakeholder groups, for example: local authorities, parish councils, and local community groups, during the consultation period.
- 4.9.2. Other activities will be carried out, if considered necessary and appropriate, to engage specific interests or seldom heard groups. This could include, for example, further meetings with residents who are closest to the proposed site.
- 4.9.3. Details of all our consultation activity will be included in a Consultation Report which we will submit as part of our DCO application.

4.10. Publicity and advertising

- 4.10.1. We will publicise the consultation and associated activities in local media ahead of the start of the consultation period and will update local broadcast and print media channels on our activity during the consultation.
- 4.10.2. Where publication timings allow, we will seek to use local newsletters to further engage with local communities. For example, the Limespring Hundred.
- 4.10.3. Statutory notices will be published in line with Section 47 and Section 48 of the Planning Act.

4.11. Social media

- 4.11.1. We will use social media to help publicise the consultation and encourage those with an interest in our proposals to get involved. We are unable to accept feedback via social media.

4.12. Consultation hotline and email address

- 4.12.1. To find out more information or request copies of the consultation materials, anyone can contact the consultation team by freephone (0800 038 3486) during normal business hours (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5:30pm). Outside of these hours, callers will be able to leave a message requesting a callback.
- 4.12.2. Alternatively, people can email info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk or write to the team via Freepost (no stamp required): Springwell Solar Farm, FREEPOST SEC Newgate UK LOCAL.

4.13. Collection of responses

- 4.13.1. We will produce a questionnaire inviting feedback on different elements of the proposed Springwell Solar Farm. The questionnaire will be available to download on the project website: www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk, in hard-copy at public events, at deposit points around the local area and on request using the project contact details.

- 4.13.2. The completed hard-copy questionnaire can be returned using the Freepost address set out in this document during the consultation period, or at the public events.
- 4.13.3. Respondents will also be able to complete the questionnaire online, which will be made available through the project website: www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk as well as the virtual exhibition.
- 4.13.4. Alternatively, respondents can write to us via email or Freepost using the details set out in this document. All written feedback will be accepted.

4.14. Seldom heard audiences

- 4.14.1. It is important to ensure that everyone with an interest in the proposals has the opportunity to comment on our proposals as part of the consultation. We want our consultation to be inclusive and gather feedback from a wide range of audiences, including those who are seldom heard in public consultations such as people without internet access, seasonal workers, younger people and socially isolated people. We will do this by:
- Working with local authorities and organisations representing seldom heard individuals and groups to ensure our consultation activity and materials are appropriate and remove barriers to engagement.
 - Choosing accessible venues for deposit points and public events.
 - Holding public events at a variety of times, including evenings and weekends to enable participation by people with different time commitments.
 - Making provision for people without internet access through the consultation programme. This includes sending a consultation newsletter to every address within the inner zone, holding public events in the area, publicising the consultation in print editions of local newspapers and making hard copies of consultation materials available on-request and at deposit points.
 - Providing materials in alternative formats on request. Contact details to request materials in alternative formats will be published on the project website and in our consultation booklet and newsletter.
 - Contacting community and voluntary organisations including parish councils and schools within the inner zone to offer direct engagement and support them in promoting the consultation through their own existing communication channels, such as social media feeds.
 - Providing a variety of communication channels including a freephone number, email address and Freepost for those seeking further information.

5. Consultation arrangements

5.1. How to take part in the consultation

5.1.1. Anyone can find out more by:

- Contacting us on 0800 038 3486 or info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk or by Freepost (Springwell Solar Farm, FREEPOST SEC Newgate UK LOCAL).
- Attending a public event which we will hold in locations around the proposed Springwell site.
- Viewing the virtual exhibition on our website: www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk/
- Reading the consultation booklet which will be available online or in hard copy on request, at deposit points around the area and at the public events.
- Reviewing the PEIR by going to www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk or visiting a deposit point.

5.2. Responding to the consultation

5.2.1. We welcome feedback on our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm. Anyone can share their views by:

- Completing the consultation questionnaire online at www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk.
- Returning a questionnaire by Freepost (no stamp required) to the following address: Springwell Solar Farm, FREEPOST SEC Newgate UK LOCAL.
- Returning a questionnaire by email: info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk.
- Submitting comments by email to info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk or in writing to the above Freepost address.

5.2.2. Responses must be received by the consultation deadline of 23:59 on [X].

5.2.3. Responses must be individual. Petitions will be treated as a single response for the purpose of the Consultation Report.

5.3. How we will consider the responses

5.3.1. Following this consultation, we will consider all of the feedback we receive as we continue refining our proposals for Springwell Solar Farm before submitting a DCO application. The DCO application will include a Consultation Report, which will set out how we have consulted, summarise the responses received and explain how we have had regard to them.

5.3.2. Any comments received will be analysed by Springwell Energyfarm Ltd and any of its appointed agents. Copies may be made available to the Secretary of State, the Planning Inspectorate and other relevant statutory authorities so that feedback can be considered part of the DCO process. We will request that any personal details are not placed on the public record and will be held securely by Springwell Energyfarm Ltd and its agents in accordance with the data protection law. Any personal details will be used solely in connection with the consultation

process and subsequent DCO application and, except as noted above, will not be passed to third parties.

- 5.3.3. The Planning Inspectorate has also published details of how it manages comments received in a Privacy Notice available on its website:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-inspectorate-privacy-notices/customer-privacy-notice>.

5.4. Further information

- 5.4.1. For further information, please contact us by:

- Calling 0800 038 3486 (9:00am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday)
- Emailing info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk
- Writing to the team at Springwell Solar Farm FREEPOST SEC Newgate UK Local

DRAFT



springwellsolarfarm.co.uk

Appendix C-4 – Regard had to host authority formal feedback on draft SoCC



Appendix C-4: Regard had to host authority feedback on draft SoCC

Table C-2: Formal feedback from host authorities regarding the draft SoCC and the Applicant's response

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
NKDC	<p><i>“Paragraph 4.4.4. confirms inner zone consultation of 2km. 4.4.7 and 4.4.8 confirm outer zone consultation to NKDC boundary and commitment to publicise the consultation in both zones using project website, adverts in local newspapers and on social media, and by issuing press releases to local media outlets.</i></p> <p><i>NKDC supports proposals for outer zone publicity but would reiterate previous position. We accept though that Fig 3 includes the developed footprint of all settlements surrounding the site including Navenby and Wellingore. We also accept 5km zone at Heckington Fen reflected more sparsely developed rural area. It would have been helpful for the draft/appendix to have summarised consultation zones associated with other solar NSIPs by way of comparison and evidence of adopted/best practice. The Consultation Report should also refer. “</i></p>	N	<p>The Applicant recognises that each consultation zone uniquely applies to the likely effects of the proposed development and the unique geography of the area, and therefore considers that comparisons to other developments is not considered to be appropriate. The Applicant believes that the inner zone of consultation is proportionate to the likely effects of the Proposed Development and includes all properties likely to be indirectly or directly affected by the Proposed Development, equating to c. 5,400 addresses (roughly the same as Heckington Fen) and spanning 13km at its widest point.</p> <p>Moreover, all properties within the district boundary were included within the outer zone of consultation. Methods used to publicise the consultation in the outer zone are summarised in Chapter 5 of the Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.1].</p>

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
NKDC	<i>"No objection to The Venue Navenby replacing Waddington Library."</i>	N	The Applicant notes this comment.
NKDC	<i>"We note variation in timings across weekday and weekend days; no further comments."</i>	N	The Applicant notes this comment.
NKDC	<i>"We assume that 'week 3' means that the events will be held 3 weeks into the 6-week consultation period; i.e. half way through (or further depending on the precise day held in 'week 3'). This seems late given that half of the consultation will have passed and we therefore suggest bringing all forward at the latest to week 2."</i>	Y	The Applicant brought forward four of the proposed public events to week 2 of the consultation period, with the first event taking place on the 24 January 2024.
NKDC, LCC	<i>"Paragraph 4.3.1 – we note that this section has been amended from the version of the SoCC which the Council was consulted upon in August 2023. Although the first bullet point confirms you are inviting views on the proposals and more specifically the enhancements and mitigation measures, you have removed the section that had indicated that you would also be seeking views on "The likely effects of the proposals, including during construction, operation and decommissioning as well as potential mitigation measures where appropriate". It is unclear why this has paragraph has been deleted and</i>	N	The Applicant made clear in the SoCC that it was seeking feedback on the PEIR, which 'will present an initial account of the likely significant environmental effects of Springwell Solar Farm during construction, operation and decommissioning, as well as preliminary details on mitigation measures that we may need to introduce to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any potentially significant adverse effects.'

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
	<i>therefore we would request this be explained and/or reinstated in order to make it clear you are also inviting comments and views on what the community feel could be likely effects; rather than focussing purely on enhancements and mitigation measures.</i>		
NKDC, LCC	<i>“In addition we recommend that bullet 2 is expanded to confirm that this will inform the development of a Community Benefit Agreement.”</i>	Y	The Applicant updated the text to include reference to the development of the Community Fund.
NKDC	<i>“Para 4.4.9 – this section has been revised to remove the bulleted list of the types of bodies that would be consultees. We would recommend reinsertion or ideally a table or list (appendix) included in the document which sets out what these actual bodies and consultees are.”</i>	Y	The Applicant reinserted the bulleted list of the types of bodies that would be consulted as part of Phase Two Consultation.
NKDC, LCC	<i>“Paragraph 4.6.1 – please can you ensure that a copy of the newsletter is issued to the each of the host authorities and political representatives so that they are aware what has been issued to their constituents.”</i>	Y	The Applicant included a copy of the newsletter in correspondence to the host authorities and political representatives.
NKDC	<i>“Paragraph 4.9.1/4.9.2 vs 4.14 – section 4.14 suggests it will be more accommodating of</i>	N	The Applicant sought to carry out an inclusive consultation that accommodated all requests for

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
	<p><i>requests from HTR audiences whereas 4.9.1/4.9.2 refers to offers of presentations and briefings only if 'reasonable requests' are made that are 'necessary and appropriate'. We would recommend altering the language in 4.9.1/4.9.2 to align with the more inclusive approach in 4.14."</i></p>		<p>meetings where practicable, recognising that there are sometimes constraints outside of the Applicant's control that may prevent the Applicant from attending a requested meeting.</p> <p>The Applicant met with all stakeholders that requested meetings within the consultation period. A summary of the consultation activity undertaken by the Applicant is available in Chapter 5 of the Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.1].</p>
NKDC	<p><i>"Paragraph 4.10.1 – it would be helpful to list as an appendix the media outlets receiving press releases – see the NKDC list previously supplied."</i></p>	N	<p>The Applicant did not feel it was necessary to append a list of media outlets who received a press release to the SoCC, as media outlets are not obliged to publicise the consultation. The Applicant contacted a number of different trade and local news outlets and received coverage of the consultation as detailed in Chapter 5 of the Consultation Report [EN010149/APP/5.1].</p>
NKDC	<p><i>"Paragraph 4.14.1 – NKDC has previously supplied an HTR list and it would be helpful to include this as an appendix with all personal data etc withheld. The paragraph does not expressly confirm that you will proactively contact the HTR groups (where email/postal addresses etc are</i></p>	N	<p>The Applicant did not feel it was necessary to append a list of seldom heard groups and community organisations to the SoCC. The Applicant wrote to a number of community and voluntary organisations that were within proximity to the Proposed Development at the</p>

Stakeholder	Summary of comment	Change Y/N	Applicant's response
	<p><i>available) at the start of the 6 week consultation and suggests a reliance on the HTR groups finding out from elsewhere. This is particularly important for the HTR groups outside of the Inner Zone who will not receive postal notification. Can you please confirm that where contact details are available you will be proactively contacting the HTR groups on the NKDC list?"</i></p>		<p>start of the consultation period. A list of these organisations can be found in Appendix H-1: List of non-prescribed consultees and community organisations consulted during Phase Two Consultation [EN010149/APP/5.2].</p>
<p>NKDC, LCC</p>	<p><i>"We consider the document to be comprehensive and the overall content of the SoCC in terms of who and how you propose to publicise and consult the public on the project as being acceptable."</i></p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The Applicant notes this comment and thanks the host authorities for their engagement on the draft SoCC.</p>



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