



Department for  
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By email:

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10 October 2025

Dear Alexis,

**THE LONGFIELD SOLAR FARM DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER 2023 ("THE ORDER"): APPROVAL OF THE DEED OF VARIATION TO MODIFY THE DEVELOPMENT CONSENT OBLIGATION**

1. Thank you for your email dated 25 September 2025 seeking the agreement of the Secretary of State to the Deed of Variation ("DoV"). The DoV pertains to the Deed of Development Consent Obligations and Other Covenants ("Development Consent Obligation") in connection with the Order, pursuant to section 106A(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("TCPA 1990"). The Secretary of State notes you are instructed by the named undertaker in the Order, Longfield Solar Energy Farm Limited ("LSEFL").
2. The Secretary of State notes that agreement is sought by LSEFL pursuant to section 106A(1) only in respect to the obligations contained within Schedule 1 of the Development Consent Obligation<sup>1</sup>, and that Schedule 2 falls outside of section 106 of TCPA 1990.
3. The Secretary of State notes that LSEFL has been working closely with National Grid and Essex County Council in connection with, respectively, the works on Bulls Lodge Substation Extension and the expansion of Wheelers Hill/Cranham Road for safety reasons. The Secretary of State notes LSEFL's concerns that these works will need to be approved or commence ahead of Longfield Solar Farm's ("the project") Final Investment Decision, expected in January 2026, to ensure the scheduled and expeditious delivery of the project. However, without the DoV, the Secretary of State understands the undertaking of these works would trigger a suite of financial obligations in the Development Consent Obligation which would likely be disproportionate for LSEFL to accord with ahead of the Final Investment Decision. The Secretary of State agrees with LSEFL that the timely delivery of the project is important and that, whilst the section 106 obligations were only necessary for these two works to a limited extent, there is still some necessity for elements of the obligations to occur as and when these two works commence. The Secretary of State notes LSEFL has therefore proposed a one-off contribution which is in line with the


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<sup>1</sup> [Development Consent Obligation - Part 1](#) and [Development Consent Obligation - Part 2](#)

justification for the contributions included in the decision but is proportionate to the scale of the works proposed.

4. The Secretary of State has reviewed the unsigned DoV, as well as the accompanying explanation. The Secretary of State notes the disassociation of the commencement of Work Nos. 5, 7A, 7B and 9 from the commencement of the remainder of the project through the new definition “Solar Farm Project” being introduced. He also notes the interlinked amendments to the Skills and Education Contribution, itself supplemented by the extra one-off payment of £50,000 for the Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Contribution. Overall, the Secretary of State is content with both the nature and application of the changes proposed to Schedule 1 of the Development Consent Obligation. The Secretary of State notes that amendments to Schedule 2 of the Development Consent Obligation have been provided for his awareness but he is nevertheless satisfied with the consistency of the amendments.
5. The Secretary of State notes that all the financial obligations within the Development Consent Obligation will still occur, except that they will be triggered when the remainder of the project commences, and that these obligations have been supplemented by the extra one-off payment corresponding with the signing of the DoV. The Secretary of State therefore agrees with LSEFL’s rationale that the proposed changes to the Development Consent Obligation outlined in the DoV would not alter the conclusions of the Examining Authority in its Recommendation Report, nor the Secretary of State’s conclusions in the Decision Letter.
6. The Secretary of State agrees with LSEFL that its proposed changes to the Development Consent Obligation through the DoV fall within section 106A(6)(c) of TCPA 1990, as the obligations in the Development Consent Obligation continue to serve a useful purpose but would serve that purpose equally well if they had effect subject to the modifications set out in the DoV. The Secretary of State notes that LSEFL states and provides evidence that the host local authorities of Braintree District Council, Chelmsford City Council and Essex County Council, as well as the affected freehold landowners, all agree to the proposed changes in the DoV. Therefore, pursuant to section 106A(1)(A) of TCPA 1990, the Secretary of State gives his agreement to the DoV and its amendments to the Development Consent Obligation. The Secretary of State condones finalising paragraph (K) of the DoV in line with the date of this approval letter.

Yours sincerely,



John Wheadon  
Head of Energy Infrastructure Planning Delivery and Innovation  
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On behalf of the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero