

Date: 29 February 2024
Your Ref: EN010151
Our Ref: 16449



69 Carter Lane
London
EC4V 5EQ

The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

By e-mail only

Dear Sir or Madam

BEACON FEN ENERGY PARK – LAND 6.5 KM NORTHEAST OF SLEAFORD AND 2.5 KM NORTH OF HECKINGTON, LINCOLNSHIRE.

TARGETED CONSULTATION COMPRISING ADDITION OF CROWN ESTATE AND ECOTRICITY LAND INTERESTS AND EXTENSION OF CONSULTATION FOR CERTAIN EXISTING CONSULTEES

CONSULTATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 46 ‘DUTY TO NOTIFY SECRETARY OF STATE OF PROPOSED APPLICATION’ OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008

I write on behalf of Low Carbon Limited (the ‘Applicant’) in connection with Beacon Fen Energy Park (‘Beacon Fen’ or the ‘Project’).

The Applicant is proposing to submit an application (the ‘Proposed Application’) seeking development consent pursuant to Section 37 ‘Applications for orders granting development consent’ of the Planning Act 2008 (the ‘PA 2008’) from the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (the ‘SoS’) for the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (‘PV’) farm with a capacity of around 400 megawatts (‘MW’) and a Battery Energy Storage System (‘BESS’) with a capacity of approximately 600MW (together the ‘Beacon Fen Energy Park’ or ‘the Project’). The inclusion of the BESS will allow for the storage of energy on site which means that energy can still be outputted from the site, even when the solar farm is not operating at maximum efficiency.

The land required for Beacon Fen Energy Park (the ‘Project Site’) comprises land sited approximately 6.5 km northeast of the town of Sleaford and 2.5 km north of the village of Heckington forming a solar array area comprising solar PV panels and BESS facilities of approximately 517 hectares (‘ha’). The Project Site includes a bespoke access route corridor between the A17 and the solar array area, which comprises approximately 125 ha of land. It also includes an approximately 13-kilometre (‘km’) cable corridor between the solar array area and the existing Bicker Fen National Grid 400kV Substation lying 2.3 km west of Bicker, which comprises approximately 900 ha of land.

The land required for Beacon Fen (the ‘Project Site’) lies within the administrative boundaries of North Kesteven District Council (‘NKDC’) and Boston Borough Council (‘BBC’).

The applicant has carried out statutory consultation since January, as described in the applicant’s Section 46 notification dated 16 January 2024 and acknowledged by yourselves on 18 January 2024.

Recently, the Applicant has identified certain land interests held by the Crown in respect of some of the Project Site and therefore intends to consult the Crown Estate under Section 42. In addition, the Applicant has recently identified certain small extensions to the Project Site (or draft Order Limits) that will assist with the construction and maintenance of the Project, likely to be of interest to a targeted list (subset) of our existing Section 42 prescribed, local authority, and non-prescribed consultees, and affecting a small number of existing land interests previously consulted under Section 42 along with one new interest, Ecotricity (Heckington Fen) Limited.

Due to the two new land interests which are being consulted for the first time under section 42 (being the Crown Estate and Ecotricity (Heckington Fen) Limited), a Section 46 notification is required to be made to the SoS. For completeness, we also describe here the targeted consultation in respect of the small extensions to the draft Order Limits.

The Crown Estate consultation involves supplying a letter consistent with the land interest letter type supplied to you with our original Section 46 notification, with text describing the consultation documents and the PEIR, and the ways in which these can be viewed, including the same fileshare link and same feedback methods (e-mail, freepost, and web form). A 28 day period from anticipated date of receipt of the letter (31 March) is provided. We would clarify that Crown Estate were consulted as a prescribed body for our statutory consultation but this letter clarifies in relation to their land interests.

The Ecotricity (Heckington Fen) Limited consultation involves a similar letter, again with a date of 31 March.

The letter to the targeted (subset) list of Section 42 consultees, and the letter to the targeted list of affected existing land interests, in respect of the small extensions to the draft Order Limits, each provide a brief description of the land comprised in the small extensions, and an extended consultation date of 10th March (S42) and 17th March (existing land interests), and feedback methods comprising the same e-mail address, freepost address, and (for land interests) web form. The extended consultation date of 10th March was agreed in advance with the two host local authorities for the land affected (NKDC and LCC) in accordance with our published Statement of Community Consultation. The 17 March date has been determined by the Applicant to be suitable for affected land interests.

All letters described above will also have enclosed a revised Site Location Plan and a more detailed plan showing the small extensions.

Since the consultation follows on immediately from (extends) the statutory consultation no new Section 48 notice is published.

The additions to the draft Order Limits have been reviewed against the context of the Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) provided as part of the Project's statutory consultation. The changes are minor in nature and scale, and do not introduce any new or different potential environmental effects. Therefore, due to the lack of EIA effects, the current PEIR remains valid along with the other consultation documents previously provided and published.

I am attaching PDF sample copies of the letters and the two plans described above.

I look forward to receiving the SoS's acknowledgement of the Applicant's notification of the SoS of the Proposed Application pursuant to Section 46 'Duty to notify Secretary of State of proposed application' of the PA 2008. In the meantime, should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



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DWD

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