



BEACON FEN ENERGY PARK

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN010151

Statement of Common Ground (Draft) with South Kyme Parish Council

Document Reference: 8.13

October 2025



Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
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Abbreviation	Description
AC	Alternating Current
AIS	Air Insulated Switchgear
AMS	Archaeological Mitigation Strategy
Applicant	Beacon Fen Energy Park Ltd
BBC	Boston Borough Council
BESS	Battery energy storage system
CCTV	Closed circuit television
DC	Direct Current
DCO	Development Consent Order
EA	Environment Agency
GIS	Gas Insulated Switchgear
HV	High Voltage
IDB	Internal Drainage Board
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council
Low Carbon	Low Carbon Ltd
MW	Megawatts
NGR	National Grid Reference
NKDC	North Kesteven District Council
NPSs	National Policy Statements
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
OCEMP	Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan
ODEMP	Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan
Order	The Beacon Fen Energy Park Order
PCU	Power Conversion Unit
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
Proposed Development	The entire development to be constructed and operated within the Site, as set out in Schedule 1 of the draft DCO
PRoW	Public Right of Way
PV	Photovoltaic
Site	The entire Order Limits or red line boundary located approximately 6.5 km northeast of the village of Sleaford and 2.5 km north of Heckington
SLR	SLR Consulting, formerly Wardell Armstrong (WA)
SoCC	Statement of Community Consultation
SoCG	Statement of Common Ground
SoS	Secretary of State

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This Statement of Common Ground ('SoCG') with South Kyme Parish Council ('South Kyme PC') (**Document Ref. 8.13**) has been prepared on behalf of Beacon Fen Energy Park Ltd (the 'Applicant'). It relates to the application (the 'Application') for a Development Consent Order (a 'DCO'), that has been submitted to the Secretary of State (the 'SoS') for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (the '2008 Act').
- 1.1.2 The Applicant is seeking development consent for a ground-mounted solar photovoltaic ('PV') electricity generation and battery energy storage system ('BESS'), together with associated grid connection infrastructure (the 'Proposed Development'), at an area sited approximately 6.5 km northeast of the village of Sleaford and 2.5 km north of Heckington (the 'Site'). The Proposed Development would have a generation capacity of approximately 400 megawatts ('MW') of electricity, with a 600MW BESS.
- 1.1.3 The Site corresponds to the entire Order Limits and represents the entire land area required for construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development. It is made up of the Solar Array Area (comprising the solar PV and BESS infrastructure) the Cable Route Corridor (comprising an electrical connection from the Solar Array Area to the Bicker Fen National Grid 400kV substation) and the Bespoke Access Corridor (for a bespoke access from the A17 to the Solar Array Area). This is termed the Bespoke Access Road.
- 1.1.4 The Proposed Development falls within the definition of a 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project' ('NSIP') under Section 14(1)(a) and Sections 15(1) and (2) of the 2008 Act, as it is an onshore generating station in England that would have a generating capacity greater than 50MW electrical output. As such, a DCO application is required to authorise the Proposed Development in accordance with Section 31 of the 2008 Act.
- 1.1.5 The DCO, if made by the SoS, would be known as 'The Beacon Fen Energy Park Order 202' (the 'Order').

1.2 The Applicant

- 1.2.1 The Applicant is a subsidiary of Low Carbon Ltd ('Low Carbon'). Low Carbon is a privately-owned global renewable energy company.

1.3 The Proposed Site

- 1.3.1 The Site represents the entire Order Limits and is located east of Sleaford in Lincolnshire. It extends to approximately 758ha and comprises of three functional areas: the Solar Array Area, the Cable Route Corridor and the Bespoke Access Corridor.

Solar Array Area

- 1.3.2 The Solar Array Area is approximately 529ha in size and located to the north of Heckington, centred at the National Grid Reference ('NGR') 514682 347825. The Solar Array Area is located wholly within the administrative areas of North Kesteven District Council ('NKDC') and Lincolnshire County Council ('LCC').
- 1.3.3 The Solar Array Area predominantly comprises agricultural land in arable use, divided by ditches with sparse tree cover that is limited to small woodland blocks and scattered hedgerow trees. A small reservoir is located in the south-west of the Solar Array Area.
- 1.3.4 The Solar Array Area is bound to the south, west and north by local highways, and bound to the east by the Car Dyke. Public Right of Way ('PRoW') Ewer/12/1 extends across the north-eastern corner of the Site, close to the northern Site boundary. There are no other PRoW within the Solar Array Area.
- 1.3.5 Villages in proximity to the Solar Array Area include:
- Howell immediately to the south-west, with Heckington c. 1.7km beyond;
 - Ewerby Thorpe immediately to the west, with Ewerby c. 1.1km beyond;
 - Anwick c. 2.7km to the north-west;
 - North Kyme c. 2.4km to the north; and
 - South Kyme c. 1.5km to the east.

Cable Route Corridor

- 1.3.6 The Cable Route Corridor is approximately 183 ha in size and extends c. 13km south-east from the Solar Array Area to Bicker Fen substation, at NGR TF 19684 38599. The Cable Route Corridor is located wholly within the administrative area of LCC. The majority of the Cable Route Corridor is located within the administrative area of NKDC, however the southern section is located within BBC's administrative area.
- 1.3.7 Land use within the Cable Route Corridor is predominantly agricultural. A number of local highways cross the Cable Route Corridor, and the A17 crosses east to west within the north-west section of the Corridor. The railway linking Heckington west to Sleaford and east to Swineshead intersects the mid-section of the Corridor. There are a number of PRoW within the Cable Route Corridor, including one alongside the South Forty Foot Drain which also crosses the Cable Route Corridor.

Bespoke Access Corridor

- 1.3.8 The Bespoke Access Corridor is approximately 45.4 ha in size comprising predominantly agricultural land and extends approximately 3km south-west from the Solar Array Area to the A17. The Bespoke Access Corridor is located wholly within the administrative areas of LCC and NKDC.
- 1.3.9 The Bespoke Access Corridor has been refined during the pre-application stage, informed by results from environmental surveys and consultation feedback.
- 1.3.10 Asgarby Road and Heckington Road crosses the Bespoke Access Corridor and there are four PRoW located within the route.

1.4 The Proposed Development

- 1.4.1 The main components of the Proposed Development are summarised below and defined in Schedule 1 of the **Draft DCO (APP-039)**.

Solar Array Area

- 1.4.2 The Solar Array Area consists of solar PV panels and modular ground-mounting structures. The height of the panels considered will be up to 3.9m above ground level in fields to the east and 3.5m above ground level in fields to the west, south and an isolated field in the north. The proposal is for a fixed (i.e., static) panel orientation, facing due south which is commonly seen on existing UK solar farms, and angled 10° to 45° from horizontal. Supporting infrastructure includes inverters, combiner boxes, transformers and switchgear converting the Direct Current ('DC') to Alternating Current ('AC') and stepping up the voltage so it can be exported to the National Grid. An inverter, transformer and switchgear comprised together is termed a Power Conversion Unit (PCU).
- 1.4.3 A 600MW BESS adjacent to the onsite ('Solar Array Area') substation is included in the Proposed Development within the Solar Array Area. This will allow the electricity generated by the panels to be stored onsite at times when grid demand is low, then exported at times of higher demand. The BESS containers and switch rooms are anticipated to be up to 8m x 3m in size, with a height of up to 4.5m.
- 1.4.4 Low voltage onsite electrical cabling is required to connect the PV modules and BESS to the inverters, and the inverters to the onsite transformers. Higher voltage cables are required between the transformers and the switchgear and from switchgear to the substation.
- 1.4.5 A new Onsite Substation is proposed and would have up to four High Voltage (HV) transformers with a maximum footprint of no more than 40,000m² (e.g. 250m x 160m (or 200m x 200m)) and a height of up to 13m). The Onsite Substation will include a 33kV switchroom, control and storage buildings that would house office space and welfare facilities, as well as operational monitoring and maintenance equipment and equipment for reactive compensation and/or harmonic filtering. The design control building and office/welfare will be defined as part of detailed design.
- 1.4.6 The perimeter fence would likely comprise standard post and wire, deer fencing up to 3m tall around the Solar Array Area. Security fencing, up to 3.4m, will be installed around the substation compounds and, possibly, other infrastructure / compounds. Acoustic fencing, up to 4m tall, may be required around the BESS, subject to the detailed design and layout.
- 1.4.7 Mounted internal-facing closed circuit television (CCTV) systems will likely be deployed around the perimeter of the operational areas of the Site; anticipated to be 5m high. The CCTV cameras would have fixed view sheds and will be aligned to face along the fence. Motion detection security lighting will be used around the electrical infrastructure and potentially at other pieces of critical infrastructure.
- 1.4.8 During construction, temporary construction compounds will be required, as well as temporary roadways, to enable access to all the land within the Site.

Localised earthworks to form suitable development platform for the substation and BESS will also be required.

- 1.4.9 There will be one primary access on the western edge of the Solar Array Area and a secondary access to the north, both of which will allow larger vehicles to access the BESS and onsite substation. Tertiary operational access primarily for smaller vehicles is provided to the north west and south.
- 1.4.10 PRoW Ewer/12/1 is being extended in a south and westerly direction as a permissive path terminating in the vicinity of Ewerby Thorpe, and will be in place for the operational duration of the Proposed Development. The exact route of the permissive path will be determined via the discharge of a requirement in the **Draft DCO (APP-039)**, but is anticipated to run in a south easterly direction along Car Dyke then heading south west on the north side of Hodge Dike. An undetermined number of footbridges (unlikely to be more than eight in number) to cross existing watercourses will be required and will require the usual water course crossing agreements to be sought with the relevant Internal Drainage Board (IDB) in parallel with the discharge of the requirement.

Cable Route

- 1.4.11 The Cable Route running between the Solar Array Area and the Bicker Fen 400kV Substation will be constructed through trenched methods and, where required, trenchless methods.
- 1.4.12 During construction, temporary construction compounds will be required approximately every 1-3 km, as well as temporary roadways, to enable access to all land. It is anticipated that there will be 6 main compounds that are distributed at approximately equal distances along the cable route to facilitate proper construction management. Smaller temporary compounds may also be located anywhere within the final working area.
- 1.4.13 Vegetation and hedgerows lost during construction of the Cable Route and will be re-instated where possible subject to easement restrictions.

Bespoke Access Corridor

- 1.4.14 A dedicated access from the A17 to the Solar Array Area is required. It will be constructed in advance of material construction commencing on the Solar Array Area and will facilitate construction in that area. During construction, temporary construction compounds will be required which may be anywhere along the route.
- 1.4.15 The Bespoke Access Road will likely be the last component of the Proposed Development to be removed as it will be used to facilitate decommissioning of the Solar Array Area. Whilst it is assumed in the **Environmental Statement ('ES') (APP-050 to APP-285)** that the road will be removed (unless otherwise stated in the relevant chapter), it is possible that engagement with the landowners at that time will establish a preference for it to be retained. Optionality has been deliberately retained in the Application to facilitate such a scenario.
- 1.4.16 There will be no permanent lighting installed and access will be controlled through gates at all stages.

- 1.4.17 Vegetation and hedgerows lost during construction of the Bespoke Access Road will be re-instated.

In any or all of the above areas

- 1.4.18 Along with the above, in any or all of the three areas, the Proposed Development will include the following (subject to certain requirements):
- Access tracks of between 3.5m to 9m width for construction access and routine maintenance when operational. Access tracks located adjacent to drainage ditches will incorporate the necessary ecological, Environment Agency (EA) and/or Internal Drainage Board (IDB) buffers where required;
 - Boundary treatments, means of enclosure, security measures, and paths;
 - Landscaping and reinstatement planting and Biodiversity Net Gain related habitats;
 - Flood resilience measures including swales and storm water attenuation, and works to existing irrigation systems;
 - Utility diversions;
 - Bunds, embankments, protective works to buildings, maintenance and improvement of streets; and
 - Construction related (and decommissioning related) work sites.

Bicker Fen Substation Works

- 1.4.19 The extension of Bicker Fen substation will include a new generation bay, a new generation bay control room and a perimeter access road. A new generation bay will also include electrical equipment required for connection to the transmission system.
- 1.4.20 National Grid have requested that there be optionality within the design of the extension to Bicker Fen substation. The two design options that have been assessed in the **ES (APP-050 to APP-285)** and included in the Application are: Air Insulated Switchgear ('AIS') and Gas Insulated Switchgear ('GIS').

Draft Development Consent Order

- 1.4.21 The Proposed Development is described in detail in Schedule 1 to the **Draft DCO (APP-039)**, and the areas in which each component (the 'Work Numbers') may be constructed are shown on the **Works Plans (APP-010)**.
- 1.4.22 The Proposed Development is split into 10 Work Numbers as follows:
- Work No. 1 – a ground mounted solar photovoltaic generating station with a gross electrical output capacity of over 50 megawatts;
 - Work No. 2 — a battery energy storage system compound and associated works (including fire safety infrastructure);
 - Work No. 3 — development of an onsite substation and associated works;
 - Work No. 4 — works in connection with electrical cabling and associated compounds;
 - Work No. 5 — works to the existing Bicker Fen National Grid substation to create a new generation bay and substation extension;
 - Work No. 6 — various ancillary works relating to the Solar Array Area, including cabling, fencing, security features, access tracks, watercourse crossings and landscaping and biodiversity mitigation measures;

- Work No. 7 — construction and decommissioning compounds in connection with Work Nos. 1, 2 and 3;
- Work No. 8 — works to create the Bespoke Access Road;
- Work No. 9 — areas of habitat management; and
- Work No. 10 — works to facilitate access to Work Nos. 1 to 9.

1.4.23 In addition, Schedule 1 to the **Draft DCO (Document Ref: 3.1)** lists other associated works (referred to as "further associated development") which may be carried out in connection with the construction of Work Nos. 1 to 10.

1.5 The Development Consent Order Process

1.5.1 As a NSIP, the Applicant is required to seek a DCO to obtain planning and other powers to construct, operate and maintain the generating station, in accordance with Section 31 of the 2008 Act. Sections 42 to 48 of the 2008 Act govern the consultation that an applicant must carry out before submitting an application for a DCO and Section 37 of the 2008 Act governs the form, content and accompanying documents that are required as part of a DCO application.

1.5.2 An application for development consent for the Proposed Development has been submitted to and accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate ('PINS') acting on behalf of the SoS. PINS is now examining the Application and will make a recommendation to the SoS, who will then decide whether or not to make (grant) the DCO.

1.6 Purpose of this Document

1.6.1 This document is intended to summarise clearly the agreements reached between the Applicant and the parties on matters relevant to the examination of the Application, in order to assist the Examining Authority to understand the progress of negotiations between the parties. It has been prepared having regard to the guidance in *Planning Act 2008: Pre-examination stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects* and *Planning Act 2008: Examination stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects* (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, April 2024).

1.6.2 Once finalised, the SoCG will be submitted to the Examining Authority who will decide whether to accept it into the examination of the Application.

1.6.3 It is intended that the SoCG will provide information for the examination process, facilitating a smooth and efficient examination and managing the amount of material that needs to be submitted. Updates to this document will be made periodically (and on request) during the examination, with a view to submitting a final signed version of the SoCG at the end of the examination.

1.7 Role of key stakeholders

1.7.1 This SoCG refers to communications and correspondence between a number of key stakeholders. The role of each stakeholder is summarised in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 – Role of key stakeholders

STAKEHOLDER	ROLE
Beacon Fen Energy Park Limited	The Applicant
DWD Property and Planning ('DWD')	Planning consultants for Applicant
Pier	Communications consultants for the Applicant
South Kyme Parish Council ('South Kyme PC')	Local authority party to this SoCG

1.7.2 It can be taken that any matters not specifically referred to in the 'Matters Agreed during Pre-Examination Stage' or 'Matters not yet agreed during Pre-Examination Stage' sections of this SoCG are not of material interest or relevance to the EA representations and have, therefore, not been considered in this SoCG.

1.7.3 This SoCG has been produced to confirm to the Examining Authority where agreement has been reached between the parties, where agreement has not been reached (and that is the parties' final position) and where discussions are still ongoing.

1.8 Status of this Version

1.8.1 This SoCG is intended to be prepared in consultation with South Kyme Parish Council, and as such the Applicant is providing this draft version of the SoCG to the Parish Council for comment on the matters outlined in Section 3.

1.8.2 One or more further versions (revised drafts) are anticipated to be agreed between the parties during the examination period and submitted to the Examining Authority to assist the examination of the Application.

1.8.3 It is intended that the Applicant and South Kyme PC can agree on a final version of the document ahead of Deadline 8.

1.8.4 The document is structured as follows:

- Section 2 – summarises the consultation undertaken with South Kyme Parish Council and correspondence sent by both parties prior to examination;
- Section 3 – sets out the matters currently agreed between the parties; and
- Section 4 – sets out the matters still subject to discussions by the parties.

2. Summary of Consultation

2.1.1 The below **Table 2.1** contains a record of pertinent correspondence between the Applicant and South Kyme Parish Council.

Table 2.1 – Summary of Correspondence

DATE	FORM OF CORRESPONDENCE	NOTES
30 March 2023	Email from Applicant to South Kyme PC.	Introduction of Applicant and Beacon Fen Energy Park to the PC.
28 April 2023	Email from Applicant to South Kyme PC.	Request to attend an upcoming PC meeting to give a short briefing on the early project proposals.
12 July 2023	Email from Applicant to South Kyme PC.	Interim update on the project sent following the non-statutory consultation phase; removal of Beacon Fen South from the project announced.
7 December 2023	Email from Applicant to South Kyme PC.	Offer to provide project update at upcoming Parish Council meeting ahead of statutory consultation.
17 January 2024	Email from Applicant to South Kyme PC.	Section 42 letter sent containing details of upcoming statutory consultation and information on how to submit feedback.
18 January 2024	In-person statutory consultation project briefing.	Beacon Fen Energy Park project team members attended a PC meeting and gave a briefing on the project proposals during the statutory consultation.
8 February 2024	Email from Applicant to South Kyme PC.	Email sent containing copy of briefing presentation given on 18 January meeting. Information sent regarding the carbon payback of the Proposed Development.
1 March 2024	Email from Applicant to South Kyme PC.	Reminder of the closing date of the statutory consultation and request for written feedback from the PC.

3. Matters agreed during Pre-Examination Stage

3.1.1 The below **Table 3.1** contains a list of ‘matters agreed’ between the parties correct at the date of the submission of this SoCG into the Examination, along with a concise commentary of what the item refers to and how it came to be agreed between the two parties.

Table 3.1 – List of matters agreed during Pre-Examination Stage

MATTER	COMMENTARY
Adequacy of consultation	<p>The Applicant consulted with South Kyme PC informally and formally ahead of submitting its DCO application for Beacon Fen Energy Park.</p> <p>South Kyme PC feels it was adequately consulted with and that the Applicant made an effort to mitigate the issues raised by them during consultation.</p> <p>The Applicant has consulted with the PC throughout the pre-application process and undertaken statutory (and the second targeted statutory) consultation in accordance with the requirements as set out in Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Act.</p>

4. Matters not yet agreed during Examination Stage

4.1.1 The below **Table 4.1** contains a list of ‘matters not yet agreed’ correct at the date of the submission of this SoCG along with a concise commentary of what the item refers to.

Table 4.1 – List of matters not yet agreed during Examination Stage

MATTER	COMMENTARY
Loss of Farmland and Employment Opportunities	<p><u>South Kyme Parish Council response</u></p> <p>The residence of South Kyme Parish Council is concerned about the loss of prime agricultural land, the loss of home-produced crops, and decrease in employment opportunities.</p> <p><u>Applicant's response</u></p> <p>Chapter 14 Soils and Agricultural Land (APP-065) of the Environmental Statement sets out how the Applicant has sought to avoid and reduce the amount of best and most versatile (‘BMV;’) agricultural land used for hard infrastructure associated with the Proposed Development, and Appendix 14.4 Outline Soil Management Plan (oSMP) (APP-176) details the measures to mitigate impacts to the soil. Preparation of detailed Soil Management Plans is secured via a requirement in the Draft DCO (‘Development Consent Order’) (AS-008), implementing best practice guidance on soil handling.</p> <p>The temporary and reversible nature of the majority of the Proposed Development, along with the measures within the oSMP, will allow for reinstatement of the Site to agricultural production following decommissioning.</p> <p>The UK Food Security Report 2024 analyses land use change and concludes that “<i>food production levels could be maintained or moderately increased alongside the land use change required to meet our Net Zero and Environment Act targets and commitments.</i>” Footnote 62 of the National Planning Policy Framework was amended in December 2024 and now omits the consideration of the availability of land for food production. The Written Ministerial Statement of 15th May 2024 refers to food production and restates the Government’s objective of broadly maintaining current levels of production. The potential reduction of food production from the Site would be negligible when viewed in the context of UK food production.</p> <p>In relation to job loss and creation, as set out within Chapter 15 Socio-economics (APP-066) of the Environmental Statement, Beacon Fen Energy Park will result in the displacement of 1.3 full time jobs related to the change of use from agriculture. However, the Proposed Development will require 556 full time jobs for the 24-36 months of construction. In addition to the direct employment generated by the construction of the Proposed Development, there will be an increase in indirect local employment. Indirect employment will likely come from supply chain opportunities and increased spending from part of the income of the construction workers and suppliers in the area, in itself generating further employment.</p>

MATTER	COMMENTARY
	<p>It is estimated that 15 full time net direct and indirect jobs will be created during the operational phase. Appendix 15.3 Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (OSSCEP) (APP-179) enhances beneficial impacts from employment creation, aims at reducing influx of workers and mitigates impacts related to loss of employment.</p> <p>The OSSCEP is secured via Requirement 17 in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (AS-008).</p>
Visual impact	<p><u>South Kyme Parish Council response</u></p> <p>South Kyme Parish Council still have major concerns about the visual impact that a solar farm would bring to the area. They are concerned that the Proposed Development would produce the appearance of an ocean. Many of South Kyme residents have grown up in this agricultural area surrounded by fields, they have raised concerns about the loss of agricultural land and claimed Lincolnshire is becoming a dumping ground for solar panels. Heckington Fen Solar Park has been given planning permission and is a contributing factor to the loss of agricultural landscape. They are no longer are they looking out at farmland but will look over 500 ha of solar panels.</p> <p>The character of the rural landscape, including openness and tranquillity, will be fundamentally and permanently altered, due to this installation. Little mitigation is being made to reduce the view of the array or the battery storage areas from the commencement of the build, and it is felt that they are unlikely to be effectively screened.</p> <p>The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan at 11.3.3 states that key views within the landscape are valued by the local community and contribute to the distinctive local identity, and it is felt that this will be lost due to the construction of this solar array. It is felt that the planning authorities should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of our countryside, and we should be conserving and enhancing our natural environment.</p> <p><u>Applicant's response</u></p> <p>The Applicant has designed the project to minimise the visual impact. Screening or planting schemes will reduce the visual impact of the Site.</p> <p>Chapter 6 Landscape and Visual (APP-057) of the Environmental Statement reports the assessment of the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development on Landscape and Visual receptors. It comprises a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which considers the potential for likely significant effects during construction, operation and decommissioning of the Proposed Development on landscape character and visual amenity. It includes information on embedded mitigation measures. The embedded mitigation proposed (see Appendix 2.3 Embedded Mitigation (APP-076)) includes setting height restrictions (fencing ≤ 4.5m, substation ≤ 13m, lightning rod ≤ 20m) to reduce visual impact and preserve rural character.</p> <p>As set out in the Planning Statement (APP-277), there is a Critical National Priority for the Proposed Development and the benefits considerably outweigh the limited adverse impacts.</p> <p>The Applicant has responded to this concern in more detail in the Applicant's Responses to Relevant Representations (Document Ref. 9.3).</p>

MATTER	COMMENTARY
Loss of biodiversity	<p><u>South Kyme Parish Council response</u></p> <p>The Parish Council does not believe that the objectives of its Biodiversity policy would be met by this planning application. The Parish Council is concerned about the loss of biodiversity, habitat loss, fragmentation, disruption of migration/movement/routes, and the displacement of wildlife due to clearing and fencing. A major concern is the negative impact on pollinators, and the knock-on effect of these pollinators on flora, agriculture and fauna. The Parish Council is also concerned about the woodland loss for both fauna and flora; they state that they believe the disruption to the land will create stress and a negative impact on plant communities and harm to diversity.</p> <p>The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan states at 11.1.3 the Central Lincolnshire authorities have a duty to protect and enhance biodiversity. South Kyme Parish Council do not believe the requirements of this policy will be met.</p> <p><u>Applicant's response</u></p> <p>Chapter 7 Ecology (APP-058) of the Environmental Statement has been produced with regard to the aims of the 25-Year Environment Plan 2023 and the Environment Act 2021. This sets out the extensive habitat to be provided pursuant to Appendix 6.7 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) (APP-089), which strengthens green and blue corridors through the Solar Array Area and into the wider landscape.</p> <p>An assessment of the effects of the Proposed Development on Ecology including local ecosystems, waterbodies/watercourses, Local Wildlife Sites, habitats, protected and notable species is provided in Chapter 7 Ecology (APP-058) of the Environmental Statement. It outlines the survey work which has been undertaken to inform the assessment. This has been used to inform the design and mitigation measures, following which, the assessment has determined that no significant adverse residual effects are anticipated.</p> <p>The Proposed Development will deliver BNG of 30% for Habitat Units, 10% for Hedgerow Units and 10% for Watercourse Units which shall be in place for 30 years. This is part of a wider package of appropriate landscaping and habitat proposals and new and improved hedgerows, as set out in the Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy (APP-280), which will be suitably managed as set out in Appendix 6.7 Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) (APP-089) and secured by a Requirement in Schedule 2 of the Draft DCO (AS--008).</p> <p>Regarding the loss of woodland, the individual trees and tree groups to be removed to enable the Proposed Development are predominantly young to early-mature trees of low to moderate arboricultural quality. The two sections of woodland proposed for removal are semi-mature to early mature in age, of moderate arboricultural quality. As outlined in Figure 6.31 Landscape Strategy Plan (APP-233 to APP-235), the approach is to improve those left and improve connections. The total loss of canopy cover over the Solar Array Area, Bespoke Access Corridor and Cable Route Corridor will be 8,335m², with the vast majority of these losses being accounted for by the Bicker Fen substation extension. The total area to be planted with a native woodland mix is 39,630m², which is 4.75 times the canopy cover to be removed. Therefore, the Proposed Development will</p>

MATTER	COMMENTARY
	<p>result in a significantly greater area of canopy cover, providing a BNG on Site.</p> <p>The Applicant has responded to this concern in more detail in the Applicant's Responses to Relevant Representations (Document Ref. 9.3).</p>
Traffic and Transport	<p><u>South Kyme Parish Council response</u></p> <p>South Kyme Parish Council were consulted on their views regarding the bespoke access route to the Solar Array Area. The Parish Council are pleased to note that the intention is to build an access road onto the A17, but raise concerns that there is no confirmation that the B1395 will not be used for traffic accessing the site. They request that during the commissioning and decommissioning, local roads should not be used as they are not suitable for additional traffic.</p> <p>The Parish Council raises that South Kyme is a small village with the B1395 running through it, this road is used as a short-cut for traffic from the A153 coming from the North and East to access the Southeast. South Kyme already has around 300,000 vehicles travelling through it, the B1395 has tight corners and an uneven road surface which results in a restrictive speed limit, and HGVs are often seen in the ditches in winter. For these reasons, the Parish Council requests that there should not be an increase in HGVs accessing the village.</p> <p><u>Applicant's response</u></p> <p>The Applicant confirms that the primary means of access to the Solar Array Site during construction will be via the Bespoke Access Road from the A17. Chapter 9 Access and Traffic (APP-060) of the Environmental Statement notes that construction access to the Site will be from the A17, using the proposed new Bespoke Access Road to minimise impacts on local road users.</p> <p>Section 4.2 of Appendix 9.3 Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) (APP-159) outlines that all contractor and delivery traffic will be required to follow the prescribed construction traffic routes. Haulage contractors and contractor staff will be informed of the relevant routes by the site manager(s) or delegated representative(s) as part of delivery and joining instructions. The oCTMP is secured pursuant to Requirement 13 of Schedule 2 to the Draft DCO (AS-008).</p>
Community Benefit	<p><u>South Kyme Parish Council response</u></p> <p>South Kyme Parish Council is pleased to see the inclusion of permissive paths on the site, but an additional circular walk would be beneficial.</p> <p>However, from further discussion within the Parish Council, a permissive path does not satisfy the obligation of community benefit. To offset the damaging impact of the solar array on our community as a minimum South Kyme residents would expect to receive some financial recompense to be used for the benefit of residents. Additionally, the offer of educational visits to village groups, and apprenticeships/employment offered to the local community.</p> <p><u>Applicant's response</u></p> <p>Regarding permissive paths, in addition to the permissive path proposed in the north-east of the Site, the Applicant has included another, longer permissive path through the east and centre of the Solar Array Area, connecting these paths to the existing Public Right of Way network. The</p>

MATTER	COMMENTARY
	<p>permissive pathways will be for the duration of the operation of the Proposed Development only.</p> <p>The Applicant has engaged with local schools during the pre-application consultation process, delivering educational learning opportunities, and is open to continue to engage in this manner subject to DCO consent. The Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (OSSCEP) (APP-179) includes measures to prioritise local employment; and consider potential upskilling of local residents through apprenticeships.</p>
Additional Matters	<p><u>South Kyme Parish Council response</u></p> <p>South Kyme Parish Council are not satisfied that there is sufficient need for this solar array in this area, as there are other ways to generate electricity. The efficiency of solar panels is a concern, and that the Parish Council believe there are better locations for solar panels such as on roofs and above carparks., and that the Parish Council believe there are better locations for solar panels such as on roofs and above carparks.</p> <p>Beacon Fen Energy Park planning application refers to a proposed solar array generating 400MW, however, the battery storage planned can take up to 600MW, therefore South Kyme Parish Council are concerned that future solar arrays are planned in the area to take advantage of the additional battery storage capacity.</p> <p><u>Applicant's response</u></p> <p>National Policy Statements ('NPSs') and other UK national policy recognise that solar plays a key role in achieving the Government's carbon reduction targets. NPS EN-1 sets out the urgent need for new electricity generation capacity and the importance of decarbonising the power and industrial sectors in the UK to meet climate targets, and the NPS's require the Secretary of State to give significant weight to this needs case for renewable energy projects when considering an application. As per the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan, the Government expects at least a further 21.2GW in deployment of new renewable projects within just 6 years to reach their target of 45-47 GW, by 2030. To support this growth, an extra 23-27 GW of battery storage is needed by 2030 to provide flexible capacity. The Applicant begun to look for a Site in the vicinity upon the identification of capacity at the Bicker Fen Substation.</p> <p>The land take involved for the Proposed Development is minimal in the context of food production nationally and allows clean energy to be generated much more rapidly and at greater scale and efficiency than rooftop alternatives.</p> <p>If granted, the DCO would restrict the Applicant to the development that forms part of this application. The Applicant is not planning any future extensions to the Proposed Development. Any such works would require additional planning consents and any future developments in the area bought forward by other developers would also require planning consent.</p>

INSERT SIGNATURE

Signed: NAME

On behalf of: South Kyme Parish Council

Date:

INSERT SIGNATURE

Signed: NAME

On behalf of: Beacon Fen Energy Park Ltd

Date: