



BEACON FEN ENERGY PARK

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN010151

Statement of Commonality
Document Reference: 8.19
October 2025



Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
ED	JM	JM	Low Carbon

Glossary

Abbreviation	Description
AC	Alternating Current
AIS	Air Insulated Switchgear
Applicant	Beacon Fen Energy Park Ltd
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
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
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
SoS	Secretary of State

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1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This **Statement of Commonality (Document Ref: 8.19)** 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 ('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 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 cross 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 (**AS-008**).

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 On-Site Substation is included in the Proposed Development within the Solar Array Area. This will allow the electricity generated by the panels to be stored on site 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 a 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 Onsite Substation compound 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 large vehicles (including first responder access to the BESS and on site 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 requirement in the **Draft DCO (AS-008)**, but it is anticipated to run in a south easterly direction along Car Dyke and then heading south west on the north side of Hodge Dike. An undetermined number of footbridges (unlikely to be more than 8 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 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 will be re-instated where possible subject to easement restrictions.

Bespoke Access Road

- 1.4.14 A dedicated access from the A17 to the Solar Array Area is required. The Bespoke Access Road will be constructed in advance of material construction commencing on the Solar Array 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 for the Environmental Statement ('ES') (**APP-050 to APP-274**) 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 the 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 Electricity Transmission plc ('NGET') 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-274)** 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 (AS-008)**, and the areas in which each component (the 'Work Numbers') may be constructed are shown on the Works Plans (**AS-006**).
- 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 (**AS-008**) 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, via the Examining Authority ('ExA'), 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 provides the ExA with the position on Statements of Common Ground ('SoCG') between the Applicant and relevant statutory consultees and Interested Parties in relation to the Proposed Development. It will be updated throughout the course of the Examination.

1.6.2 As requested by the ExA in Annex E of the letter under Rule 6 of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 [PD-003], this document is being provided to the ExA in order to summarise the status of the key matters covered by the draft SoCGs submitted as part of the Application and identifies where there is a commonality in the key matters between the SoCG parties.

1.6.3 This document also summarises the status of each SoCG and notes when it is anticipated that any draft SoCGs will be finalised, and when the finalised signed and dated copies will be submitted to the examination.

1.6.4 Information on the main outstanding concerns held by each interested party, the reasons for those concerns, the next steps to be taken to address them and the progress anticipated by the next deadline and close of the examination can be found within each individual SoCG.

1.7 Role of Key Stakeholders

1.7.1 This Statement of Commonality refers to communications and correspondence between a number of key stakeholders. The role of each stakeholder is summarised Table 1 below.

Table 1: Role of key stakeholders

STAKEHOLDER	ROLE
Beacon Fen Energy Park Limited	The Applicant
DWD Property and Planning ('DWD')	Planning consultants for the Applicant
SLR Consulting ('SLR')	Environmental assessment consultants for the Applicant
Pier	Communication and stakeholder engagement consultants for the Applicant
Herbert Smith Freehills Kramer LLP	Solicitors for the Applicant
Ardent Management Limited	Land referencing consultants for the Applicant
Lincolnshire County Council	Local Planning Authority (County)
Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service	Statutory consultee and County Fire and Rescue Service
North Kesteven District Council	Local Planning Authority (District) for part of the Proposed Development, including Work Nos 1-3 and 6-8
Boston Borough Council	Local Planning Authority (District) for part of the Proposed Development, including Work No. 5
Anglian Water	Statutory consultee with existing land interest and statutory undertaker responsible for maintaining, operating and futureproofing the water supply and wastewater services.
National Gas	Statutory consultee
National Grid Viking Link	Statutory consultee with existing land interest
Network Rail Limited	Statutory consultee
Environment Agency	Statutory consultee
National Grid Electricity Transmission	Statutory consultee
National Grid Electricity Distribution	Statutory consultee with existing land interest
Ewerby and Evedon Parish Council	Local Parish Council
South Kyme Parish Council	Local Parish Council
Forestry Commission	Statutory consultee and Government expert on forestry and woodland.
Historic England	Statutory consultee responsible for protecting the historic environment within England.

Natural England	Statutory consultee and statutory nature conservation body.
Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board	Statutory consultee and authority to control water levels and reduce the risk of flooding.
National Highways	Statutory consultee and highway and traffic authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN).

1.8 Structure of this document

1.8.1 This Statement of Commonality is structured as follows:

- Section 2 details the structure of each SoCG document and provides a list of the SoCGs that are produced;
- Section 3 addresses the status of each SoCG; and
- Section 4 provides a summary of the main topics covered by the draft SoCGs submitted as part of the Application submission and identifies where there is a commonality in the topics between the SoCG parties.

2. Structure of the SoCGs

2.1.1 Following continuous ongoing engagement with relevant statutory consultees and Interested Parties, the Applicant has prepared a number of SoCGs prior to the acceptance of the Application.

2.1.2 The SoCGs are set out in the following structure:

- Introduction: an overview of the Proposed Development and SoCG, including:
 - the Applicant;
 - the Proposed Site;
 - the Proposed Development;
 - the Development Consent Order process;
 - the purpose of the document;
 - role of key stakeholders; and
 - status of the SoCG version.

Summary of Key Consultation: details the record of engagement between the Applicant and the relevant party.

- Matters agreed during pre-application and/or pre-examination: sets out the current position on different matters which are agreed between the Applicant and the relevant party.

Matters not yet agreed: sets out the matters currently still subject to discussion between the relevant party and the Applicant.

3. Status of the SoCGs

3.1 Summary of Current Position

- 3.1.1 This section confirms the current status of each SoCG as of Deadline 1.
- 3.1.2 Table 2 provides a high-level position on the status of each SoCG and where necessary includes further detail to aid the understanding of the status.
- 3.1.3 With respect to the terms used in Table 2, these are as follows:
- Final SoCG - the final SoCG has been confirmed by both parties, with no outstanding matters;
 - Draft SoCG - the SoCG has mainly been confirmed between both parties, but there are a number of issues still outstanding, and it is yet to be signed off by both parties;
 - Initial draft SoCG – the initial SoCG has been drafted by the Applicant (using matters identified from meetings with the party alongside responses to Statutory Consultation and Relevant Representations) and is with the relevant party for review, this has not had feedback by the party and is not signed off.
 - Not yet submitted – the Applicant is progressing these SoCGs with the intent to submit drafts at subsequent deadlines.

Table 2: Summary of current position of SoCGs

DOC. REF.	PARTY	POSITION AT DEADLINE 1	POSITION AT DEADLINE 2	POSITION AT DEADLINE 3	POSITION AT DEADLINE 4	POSITION AT DEADLINE 4	POSITION AT DEADLINE 5	POSITION AT DEADLINE 6	POSITION AT DEADLINE 7	POSITION AT DEADLINE 8
Document Ref 8.1 (APP-281)	Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service	Draft SoCG submitted into the Examination.								Finalisation expected by close of examination.
Document Ref 8.2 (APP-282)	North Kesteven District Council	Draft SoCG submitted into the Examination.								Finalisation expected by close of examination.
Document Ref 8.3 (APP-283)	Boston Borough Council	Draft SoCG submitted into the Examination.								Finalisation expected by close of examination.
Document Ref 8.4 (APP-284)	Anglian Water	Initial draft SoCG provided to Anglian Water. No comments received. No SoCG submitted into examination at this time.	Draft SoCG expected to be submitted into the Examination.							Finalisation expected by close of examination.
Document Ref 8.5	National Gas	Draft SoCG submitted into the Examination.								Finalisation expected by close of examination.

Document Ref 8.6	National Grid Viking Link	Draft SoCG submitted into the Examination.								Finalisation expected by close of examination.
Document Ref 8.8	Network Rail Limited	Initial draft SoCG provided to Network Rail. No comments received. No SoCG submitted into examination at this time.	Draft SoCG expected to be submitted into the Examination.							Finalisation expected by close of examination.
Document Ref 8.9	Environment Agency	Draft SoCG submitted into the Examination.								Finalisation expected by close of examination.
Document Ref 8.11	National Grid Electricity Distribution	Initial draft SoCG provided to NGED. No comments received. No SoCG submitted into examination at this time.	Draft SoCG expected to be submitted into the Examination.							Finalisation expected by close of examination.
Document Ref 8.12	Ewerby and Evedon Parish Council	Initial draft SoCG provided to the Parish Council. Awaiting comments. No SoCG submitted into examination at this time.				Draft SoCG expected to be submitted into the Examination.				Finalisation expected by close of examination.
Document Ref 8.13	South Kyme Parish Council	Draft SoCG agreed for								Finalisation expected by

		submission into the Examination.								close of examination.
Document Ref 8.14	Forestry Commission ('FC')	Initial draft SoCG provided to FC and discussions are ongoing. No SoCG submitted into examination at this time.	Draft SoCG expected to be submitted into the Examination.							Finalisation expected by close of examination.
Document Ref 8.15	Historic England ('HE')	Initial draft SoCG provided to HE. No comments received. No SoCG submitted into examination at this time.	Draft SoCG expected to be submitted into the Examination.							Finalisation expected by close of examination
Document Ref 8.16	Natural England ('NE')	Initial draft SoCG provided to NE. No comments received. No SoCG submitted into examination at this time.	Draft SoCG expected to be submitted into the Examination.							Finalisation expected by close of examination
Document Ref 8.17	Black Sluice Internal Drainage Board	Final SoCG submitted into examination.								
Document Ref 8.18	National Highways	Final SoCG submitted into examination.								

4. Summary of matters agreed and outstanding concerns

- 4.1.1 This section provides a summary of the main topics covered by the draft SoCGs submitted as part of the Application submission and identified where there is a commonality in the topics between the SoCG parties.
- 4.1.2 Table 3 has been produced to set out the topics covered across the SoCGs and the status of the matter at submission with the relevant part. The colour coding used within this table has been described below.
- 4.1.3 The colours of each cell correspond to the status of each matter in each individual SoCG. Where a cell is split and includes multiple colours, this indicates that there are multiple matters with different statuses related to the respective topic.

CELL	STATUS
	Agreed
	Subject to further discussions
	Currently subject to disagreement
	Not applicable

Table 3: Summary of matters agreed and outstanding concerns

DOC. REF.	PARTY	OTHER TOPICS										EIA TOPICS															
		Adequacy of Consultation	Design of Developments	DCO Requirements	EIA Methodology	Interaction with assets	Need for Development	Planning History	Protective Provisions	Policy and Legislation	Access and Traffic	Agricultural Land	Air Quality	Benefits	Biodiversity	Cumulative Impacts	Cultural Heritage	Climate Change	Ecology	Glint and Glare	Human Health/ Risk	Hydrology and Flood Risk	Landscape and Visual	Noise and Vibration	Socio-Economics	PRoW	Waste
Document Ref 8.1 (APP-281)	Lincolnshire County Council																										
Document Ref 8.1	Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service																										
Document Ref 8.2 (APP-282)	North Kesteven District Council																										
Document Ref 8.3 (APP-283)	Boston Borough Council																										
Document Ref 8.5	National Gas																										
Document Ref 8.6	National Grid Viking Link																										

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