



Peartree Hill Solar Farm

Written Summary of oral submissions at open floor hearing

Document Ref: EN010157/APP/8.6

August 2025

Peartree Hill Solar Farm - EN010157

Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at the Open Floor Hearing Held on Tuesday 22 July 2025

Introduction

This document summarises the oral submissions made on behalf of RWE Renewables UK Solar and Storage Limited (the “**Applicant**”) at the Open Floor Hearing on 22 July 2025 (“**OFH1**”) in relation to the Applicant's application for development consent for the Peartree Hill Solar Farm (the “**Proposed Development**”)

This document does not purport to summarise the oral submissions made by other parties at OFH1 and references to submissions made by other parties are only included to give context to the Applicant's submissions in response.

The Applicant acknowledges that various matters were raised at OFH1 by the Interested Party in attendance and that the Applicant had an opportunity to respond at the end of OFH1. This document summarises the Applicant's oral submissions at OFH1. Reflective of the Applicant's confirmation that a detailed response would be provided by Deadline 1, a full response has in fact been issued to the Interested Party in advance of Deadline 1 and is appended to this document for completeness.

Table 1-1: Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at OFH1

Agenda Item	Topic for Discussion	Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at OFH1
1. Welcome, opening remarks and introductions		
		1.1 The Applicant did not make submissions on this agenda point.
2. The purpose of the hearing and how it will be conducted		
		2.1 The Applicant did not make submissions on this agenda point.
3. Confirmation of those who have notified the Examining Authority (ExA) of a wish to be heard at the hearing		
		3.1 It was agreed that Mr. George McManus [RR-032] would speak on behalf of East Riding Against Solar Expansion.
4. Oral representations from interested parties (IPs) and any non-IPs		
		4.1 Mr. McManus made a number of submissions under agenda item 4, a response to which is set out in section 5 below.
5. Responses by the applicant		
		5.1 Mr Tom McNamara, Solicitor of TLT LLP, on behalf of the Applicant thanked Mr. McManus for his submissions and proposed to respond fully in writing, at Deadline 1, to the issues raised. <i>[Post-hearing note: The Applicant submits this written response with document reference EN010157/APP/8.6. As noted, a full response was provided in advance of Deadline 1 and is appended to this document for the sake of repeating points made in that email within this document.]</i>

		<p>5.2 The Applicant drew attention to documents that were relevant to Mr McManus' submissions expressing concern about impacts on agricultural land including best and most versatile ("BMV") land. In particular, the Applicant referred to Environmental Statement Volume 2, Chapter 10: Land Soil and Groundwater [APP-046] which set out the different categories and proportions of BMV land identified and assessed for the purposes of the Project's environmental impact assessment.</p> <p>5.3 In response to Mr McManus' submissions expressing concern about the impact of the Project on business interests and on the landscape, the Applicant referred to Environmental Statement Volume 2, Chapter 13: Population and Chapter 11: Landscape and Visual respectively [APP-049] and [APP-047], in which these impacts were considered and assessed.</p> <p>5.4 The Applicant acknowledged the lengthy and technical nature of the Environmental Statement but noted that this reflected the national significance of the Proposed Development and that the Environmental Statement included information that was required by legislation (and agreed as part of the EIA scoping process). The Applicant agreed with the ExA that the Environmental Statement Volume 2, Non-Technical Summary of the Environmental Statement [APP-094] was a user-friendly document, and in addition referred to the summary sections included at the end of each technical chapter which provided a useful precis of the conclusions relevant to a given chapter.</p> <p>5.5 In response to Mr McManus' assertion that there was limited scope for stakeholders to engage with the DCO examination process, the Applicant noted that the procedures applicable to the examination of the application and which had been observed in this case were set out in statute and regulations, which were designed to ensure that Interested Parties were able to make their views heard as part of an open and public process. <i>[Post-hearing note: the Applicant would note that OFH1 was the subject of prior publicity in advance as required by the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010.]</i></p> <p>5.6 The Applicant apologised for the cancellation of the meeting with Mr McManus on the topic of dark skies. The Applicant assured Mr. McManus that a meeting would be organised.</p> <p>5.7 The Applicant re-iterated that a detailed response to the concerns raised would be provided at Deadline 1. <i>[Post-hearing note: this is appended to this document].</i></p>
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6. Question from the ExA on the Applicant's proposed change application		
		<p>In response to the ExA's questions regarding the emerging request for changes to the Application highlighted at the preliminary hearing:</p> <p>6.1 The Applicant confirmed that the proposed changes to the Application affected persons with an existing interest in land and not any new persons with an interest in land. The Applicant confirmed it was discussing land agreements with all these parties.</p> <p>6.2 The Applicant acknowledged that the statutory process set out in the Infrastructure Planning (Compulsory Acquisition) Regulations 2010 only applied where the Applicant has not been able to obtain the consent of a person with an interest in land. The Applicant was hopeful that the necessary consents could be obtained but noted that there can often be some difficulty in obtaining consent from statutory undertakers and similar organisations.</p> <p>6.3 The Applicant confirmed that the changes to compulsory acquisition powers sought related only to compulsory acquisition of rights (i.e., blue land) and not outright acquisition of land (i.e., pink land)</p> <p>6.4 The Applicant was working to submit a change notification to the Planning Inspectorate within the next two weeks and noted that progressing this was a key priority in view of the proposed examination timetable.</p>

From: info@peartreehillsolar.co.uk
Sent: 01 August 2025 10:31
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Peartree Hill Solar Farm Examination - written response

Dear Mr McManus,

Thank you for your attendance at the Peartree Hill Solar Farm Examination and your detailed representation on behalf of East Riding Against Solar Expansion. We have set out a detailed written response to the points raised, which we will also be submitting to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the examination process.

Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land

We acknowledge the concern expressed by a number of residents regarding the use of agricultural land, and in particular the potential impacts on Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land. A full assessment of this issue is provided in the Environmental Statement (ES), [Chapter 10: Land Soil and Groundwater \[Application Document Reference: APP-046\]](#). This assessment was informed by detailed Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) surveys, which concluded that approximately 30% of the land within the site boundary falls into BMV categories (i.e. Grades 1, 2, and Subgrade 3a).

The planning policy position regarding the protection of BMV land, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), has been carefully considered and we also have to be very mindful of the National Policy Statement position on the matter which is the primary decision making tool against which our Application will be assessed. For reference Appendix 1 of the [Planning Statement \[Application Document Reference: APP-147\]](#) includes our response to relevant NPPF provisions. We have sought, wherever practicable, to minimise the use of BMV land through the layout and design of the Proposed Development. Specific attention is also drawn to section 8.15 of the Planning Statement, which sets out the Applicant's rationale for concluding that the Proposed Development complies with the relevant tests applicable to development affecting agricultural land.

Impact on local businesses and livelihoods

The concerns raised in relation to the effects on local farms, horticultural businesses, and tenant farmers are acknowledged. These matters have been considered in [Chapter 13: Population of the Environmental Statement \[Application Document Reference: APP-049\]](#). This chapter assesses the potential effects of the scheme on employment, land use, and the local rural economy, and identifies appropriate mitigation measures where significant effects may arise.

We have taken a proactive approach to engagement with impacted landowners as well as the wider community through consultation and briefings with parish councils. We remain open to further direct engagement with affected businesses and will continue to work collaboratively to understand site-specific concerns.

Accessibility of Information

The Applicant acknowledges that the environmental assessment is a substantial and technical document, as required under the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 for projects of this scale and as agreed with the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) as part of the EIA scoping process which preceded the submission of the application for development consent (see in this regard [ES Volume 4 Appendix 5.1: Scoping Report \[Application Document Reference: APP-097\]](#) and [ES Volume 4 Appendix 5.2: Scoping Opinion \[Application Document Reference: APP-098\]](#)).

To assist public engagement and accessibility, a Non-Technical Summary of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) was produced for the statutory consultation. For application submission a [Non-](#)

[Technical Summary of the Environmental Statement \[Application Document Reference: APP-094\]](#) has been prepared.

We would also draw your attention to the [Indicative Environmental Masterplan \[Application Document Reference: APP-058\]](#), which shows where proposed environmental mitigation will be located alongside the panel areas.

In addition, each chapter of the ES includes a dedicated 'Conclusion' section, which provides a clear summary of the key findings and the significance of any effects. These features are intended to support meaningful public participation and improve the user-friendliness of the application documentation. These documents are available on both the project website and Planning Inspectorate's website.

Landscape and Visual Impact

Concerns regarding the visual effects of the Proposed Development are addressed in [Chapter 11 of the Environmental Statement \[Application Document Reference: APP-043\]](#). The chapter includes a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which evaluates the potential effects on landscape character and views from key public locations.

The assessment includes visualisations and photomontages to illustrate likely changes to the landscape. The LVIA concludes that while there would be some localised visual effects, these are not considered to be significant in the wider context, and mitigation measures - such as planting and screening- have been proposed to further reduce impacts.

Public participation

The DCO process is designed to be open, transparent, and participatory. The Applicant has undertaken both statutory and non-statutory consultation, in line with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008. Alongside this, we held four webinar events, where we shared information about the Proposed Development and answered questions from the community; we issued newsletters to over 11,000 local addresses, held 24 briefings with local elected representatives and parish councils and held seven in-person events at local venues. Feedback received has informed the design and refinement of the scheme. Details of the changes to the scheme can be found in our [You Said, We Did](#) document.

The examination process is led by the Planning Inspectorate. All Interested Parties are invited to engage with the Examination via hearings, relevant representations and written submissions.

We remain committed to maintaining dialogue with communities and stakeholders throughout the Examination process.

Dark Skies and Light Pollution

Firstly, please accept our apologies that the arranged site meeting did not go ahead, due to a last-minute personal matter our project lead had to attend to. We would be happy to rearrange in autumn. Please can you suggest some dates and we can pencil a couple in, knowing the weather may impact timings.

Regarding concerns in relation to light pollution, the potential for such impacts has been assessed in the [ES Volume 2, Chapter 11: Landscape and Visual](#) and [ES Volume 1, Chapter 3: Proposed Development](#) Description [Application Document References: **APP-047** and **APP-039**].

The conclusion of the ES is that the Proposed Development would not result in significant effects in terms of artificial lighting or skyglow, either individually or cumulatively.

Ethical Supply Chains

We recognise and share the concerns raised in relation to ethical procurement and supply chain transparency. We are committed to upholding human rights and labour rights in accordance with both national and international law. We require our own teams as well as all its business partners and suppliers, to adhere to these laws and have a zero-tolerance policy to human rights violations.

RWE is a signatory of the United Nations Global Compact, and as such we are committed to upholding human rights and following international standards. We select PV modules suppliers carefully and target suppliers with a product qualification process, which includes selective manufacturing site visits.

Additionally, RWE is a member of the Solar Stewardship Initiative (SSI) and sources PV modules from SSI-aligned manufacturers. The SSI is the leading international audit and assurance scheme dedicated to raising standards throughout the global solar value chain by improving transparency, sustainability, and traceability. SSI performs on-site visits and certifies PV module manufacturing sites according to its ESG and Traceability standards.

We will continue to monitor developments in government policy in this area.

We would like to thank you again for taking part in the application process. We hope this written response provides clarity and reassurance on the matters raised.

Kind regards

Peartree Hill Communications Team

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