



One Earth Solar Farm

Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions at the Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1)

Document Reference : EN010159/APP/9.4

July 2025

One Earth Solar Farm Ltd

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Written summary of the Applicant's oral submissions at OFH1 on Tuesday 8 July 2025	3
2.2 Agricultural land and food security _____	3
2.3 Drinking water protected area, runoff and ground conditions _____	4
2.4 Operational noise _____	4
2.5 Approach to consultation _____	6
2.6 Cumulative effects _____	6
2.7 Decommissioning plans _____	7
2.8 Glint and glare _____	7
2.9 Summary of specific issues raised by Interested Parties at OFH1 and the Applicant's response _____	8

1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 This note summarises the oral submissions made by One Earth Solar Farm Ltd (the Applicant) at Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1) held on Tuesday, 8 July 2025 in relation to the application for development consent (the Application) for the One Earth Solar Farm (the Proposed Development).
- 1.1.2 Where the Applicant undertook to provide further information during the course of OFH1, that further information is either set out in this document or provided as part of the Applicant's Deadline 1 submissions.
- 1.1.3 This note does not purport to summarise the oral submissions of other parties, and summaries of submissions made by other parties are only included where necessary to give context to the Applicant's submissions, or where the Applicant agreed with the submission(s) made and so made no further submissions (this is noted within the document where relevant).
- 1.1.4 For completeness, no submissions were made at Open Floor Hearing 2 (OFH2), and therefore OFH2 is not addressed further.

2. Written summary of the Applicant's oral submissions at OFH1 on Tuesday 8 July 2025

- 2.1.1 The OFH1 was held at 19:00 on 8 July 2025 as a blended in person and virtual event at Doubletree by Hilton Lincoln, Brayford Wharf North, Lincoln, LN1 1YW, and using Microsoft Teams.
- 2.1.2 Ms Alexis Coleman, Legal Director at Pinsent Masons LLP on behalf of the Applicant, thanked those who made oral submissions. Ms Coleman then stated that many of the issues raised had already been raised in Relevant Representations to which the Applicant is providing a response to at Deadline 1 (this is now provided at Deadline 1). Ms Coleman also reassured participants that many of the topics raised by the Interested Parties would be explored in more detail at the Issue Specific Hearings.
- 2.1.3 Ms Coleman explained that from the outset of the Proposed Development's design and siting, the Applicant has sought to avoid and minimise such impacts as far as reasonably practicable. However, it was recognised that given the large-scale nature of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), some adverse effects will be unavoidable, despite the Applicant's best efforts to avoid them.
- 2.1.4 In light of this, Ms Coleman confirmed that a comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) had been carried out to identify the likely significant effects of the Proposed Development. Efforts had been made to mitigate those effects where possible. The findings of the EIA had been presented to ensure that both the ExA and the Secretary of State are fully informed and able to consider those impacts as part of the decision-making process.
- 2.1.5 The remaining effects must be weighed by the decision maker against the urgent need for renewable generation and its benefits for energy security and climate change, along with other significant benefits the Proposed Development will deliver, including extensive habitat creation and planting, the creation of new permissive paths, beneficial impacts on soil, and the creation of construction jobs.
- 2.1.6 Ms Coleman addressed the following key thematic points raised by Interested Parties at OFH1.

2.2 Agricultural land and food security

- 2.2.1 In response to submissions from Mrs Walker and others regarding the loss of agricultural land, Ms Coleman explained that a key focus of the Applicant has been to take steps to avoid and minimise the use of BMV land. This included removing grade 2 land parcels as the design has been developed.

2.3 Drinking water protected area, runoff and ground conditions

- 2.3.1 Responding to points raised by Mr White and Mrs Walker regarding the drinking water protected area, runoff and ground conditions, Ms Coleman explained that runoff from the hardstanding areas (substation and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)) will be treated appropriately prior to discharge to ordinary watercourses and tanked to prevent infiltration to the ground. The drainage features serving these areas will have an impermeable lining to impede the infiltration of potential contaminants to the ground and groundwater.
- 2.3.2 Ms Coleman explained that the Applicant has completed a Water Framework Directive (WFD) screening assessment, which concludes that the Proposed Development complies with the WFD objectives (**ES Volume 3, Appendix 7.4: Stage 1 Water Framework Directive Screening Assessment**). Ongoing engagement with the Environment Agency seeks alignment on these matters. Additionally, robust measures to prevent ground contamination have been embedded in the management plans for construction, operation, and decommissioning. These measures are subject to continued consultation with the Environment Agency to ensure that they remain appropriate and effective.

2.4 Operational noise

- 2.4.1 In response to submissions regarding operational noise from Ms Russell, Mrs Walker, Mr Walker, and Mr Cromley, Ms Coleman said that the substation and BESS equipment, in particular, have been located at a distance of at least 300 metres from residential properties and 100 metres from Public Rights of Way (PRoW), in order to reduce the likelihood of disturbance due to noise from fixed plant. As a result, the impact on residential receptors is not considered to be significant.
- 2.4.2 Regarding specific comments relating to the noise of inverters during operation, Ms Coleman explained that inverters form part of the power conversion stations and these units will not be located within 100 metres of residential dwellings and 50 metres of existing PRoW where practicable. The Applicant has also volunteered a restriction on operational noise, so that it is tied to the levels in the environmental statement.
- 2.4.3 Ms Coleman added that the Applicant takes compliance with all requirements, including on noise, very seriously, and has measures in place to ensure compliance is monitored. Ms Coleman further noted that breach of any requirement of the DCO will be a criminal offence.
- 2.4.4 **Post hearing submission in response to points raised by Mrs Walker on noise from inverters:** Mrs Walker raised a question about the consultation booklet from the second, statutory consultation which read '*The components of the solar farm that make some noise are the substations, transformers, inverters, and batteries. This noise is very localised and is anticipated to only travel 300m*

from the source, so the updated design places these items at least 300m from properties to seek to avoid impacts'. The Applicant acknowledges and apologises that this text was unclear as written. Instead, noise from the substation and batteries was anticipated to travel 300m from the source; therefore that infrastructure was placed at least 300m from residential properties. The noise from the inverters (also called the Power Conversion Stations or 'PCS') is not anticipated to travel as far. Where practicable, the PCS units will not be located within 100m of residential dwellings and not within 50m of existing public rights of way. In all cases, the PCS units will be designed so that they do not result in a nighttime noise level at residential receptors of greater than 35dB(A). This will be achieved through a combination of careful siting of the PCS units, and through the selection of the equipment we use, and where necessary, additional mitigation such as attenuators on ventilation inlets / outlets and / or localised noise screening in the form of a solid barrier around individual PCS units (we could use a combination of all these methods). The noise level is stated for the nighttime given the very low nighttime noise levels in many parts of the Order limits.

2.4.5 To be clear on the distances from residential properties and noise restrictions that are included in the Application for the Proposed Development:

- > The BESS equipment will be located at a distance of at least 300m from residential properties.
- > The substation equipment will be located at a distance of at least 300m from residential properties.
- > Where practicable, PCS units (which include inverters) will not be located within 100m of residential properties and will not be located within 50m of PRoW.
- > In all cases, this equipment will be designed to ensure that noise rating levels experienced at night at residential receptors does not exceed 35dB(A), regardless of distance from the receptor.
- > Upon commissioning of the scheme, there will be monitoring to ensure the equipment has been designed and can meet the noise rating level, and during operation of the scheme the environmental manager on site will monitor compliance with all restrictions and commitments and keep a log of compliance, including any deviations. If the local planning authority has concerns that the restrictions on noise are not being complied with, or it receives complaints from the public, it can approach the Applicant to ask it to demonstrate compliance with the noise requirements, and if we cannot demonstrate compliance the local planning authority may well take steps to take enforcement action to rectify any breach of the DCO requirements.

2.4.6 To ensure the controls are clear, we have made updates at Deadline 1 to our control documents.

2.5 Approach to consultation

- 2.5.1 In response to a number of concerns raised, Ms Coleman said that the Applicant has prioritised early, consistent, and meaningful, engagement throughout the project. This has included having a single point of contact, Ms Emily Sharp, and hosting a range of outreach activities such as in-person events, webinars, home visits and parish council meetings.
- 2.5.2 As a result of feedback received, the Proposed Development has undergone several refinements intended to enhance local amenity and, by extension, contribute positively to community wellbeing:
- > A break in the solar arrays at the northeastern boundary to facilitate Woodland Trust access to Road Wood and to retain ecological connectivity.
 - > Removal of arrays to maintain visual connectivity between the Fledborough Viaduct and Fledborough Village.
 - > Setbacks south of Ragnall Village and offsets of up to 50 metres from Main Street to improve residential amenity.
 - > Removal of land between North Clifton and South Clifton. Ms Coleman clarified that this adjustment was responsive, not a premeditated change, contrary to Mr Fox's suggestion.
 - > Bespoke buffers and setbacks tailored to individual properties.
 - > Solar panel arrays offset by a minimum of 15 metres—and up to 150 metres—from public PRoW.

2.6 Cumulative effects

- 2.6.1 Responding to points raised by Mrs Walker, Ms Coleman acknowledged the concentration of energy projects within the local area, primarily driven by grid capacity and other locational advantages that favour solar development. In assessing the cumulative impacts, the Applicant has considered not only other solar schemes but also a wider range of energy and proposed developments in the vicinity.
- 2.6.2 Ms Coleman explained that, while most cumulative interactions with other schemes are not anticipated to result in significant adverse effects, the assessment has identified two specific concerns:
- > A likely significant cumulative adverse effect on the landscape character within the Normanton-On-Trent published character area (Mid-Nottinghamshire Farmlands PZ12: Normanton-on-Trent), during both construction and operation phases.

- > A likely significant cumulative adverse effect on visual amenity associated with the PRoW to the south of East Drayton, again during construction and operation.

2.6.3 To proactively address these issues, the Applicant is preparing an Interrelationships Report that will detail:

- > How potential cumulative effects have been assessed in relation to neighbouring schemes.
- > How the Applicant is engaging with other developers to align mitigation strategies.
- > Opportunities for collaborative or integrated approaches that could minimise cumulative impacts.

2.6.4 The Applicant has submitted this report at Deadline 1.

2.7 Decommissioning plans

2.7.1 As noted by Mr White, below-ground cables installed at depths greater than one metre are proposed to remain in situ. Ms Coleman explained that this approach has been informed by environmental considerations, as removal may cause greater disruption to the surrounding habitat. Retaining cables at these depths still enables continued agricultural use of the land. However, the **Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (ODEMP) [APP-178]** will incorporate a mechanism to allow for removal of these cables should future industry best practice and regulatory standards indicate that extraction is the preferred option at the time of decommissioning.

2.8 Glint and glare

2.8.1 Responding to points raised by Mr Walker, Ms Coleman explained that a **Glint and Glare Assessment [APP-188]** was submitted as part of the wider DCO documentation. To proactively minimise any potential impacts, the Proposed Development incorporates several design measures, including:

- > Use of fixed solar panels, rather than tracked.
- > Installation of a 15-degree tilt, reducing the likelihood of reflective nuisance.
- > South-facing orientation to optimise performance and reduce off-axis reflections.
- > Application of anti-reflective coatings to all panels to further mitigate glare.

2.8.2 Ms Coleman added that while the potential for glint and glare effects on road and rail users remains low, the **Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan**

(OLEMP) [APP-179] includes provisions to undertake a more detailed assessment at the detailed design stage, taking into account existing vegetation.

- 2.8.3 Ms Coleman further noted that the **Glint and Glare Assessment [APP-188]** was undertaken on a precautionary basis, using conservative assumptions. The more detailed assessment will confirm whether interim screening remains necessary and, if so, the appropriate form and location of such mitigation.

2.9 Summary of specific issues raised by Interested Parties at OFH1 and the Applicant's response

- 2.9.1 In addition to the key themes raised by Interested Parties, as responded to by the Applicant in the OFH1 and as recorded above, the following specific points were raised and the Applicant's response to those points is as set out below.
- 2.9.2 Comments were made regarding funding of the Proposed Development by Mr Cromley. Ms Coleman clarified that the Proposed Development is privately funded, with a **Funding Statement [APP-009]** submitted as part of the DCO application which outlines the proposed funding arrangements.
- 2.9.3 Mr Oates made a number of points regarding the Socio-Economic Assessment, including regarding the loss of agricultural land, the projected construction job creation, the impacts over the duration of the Proposed Development, and the potential loss of transport industry jobs. In response, Ms Coleman explained that a detailed Socio-Economic Assessment, including anticipated job creation and impacts on agricultural operations, is available in **ES Volume 2, Chapter 17: Socio-Economics [APP-046]**. The Applicant has addressed these points further in its response to **Relevant Representations at Deadline 1 [EN010159/APP/9.3]** and in its **Written Summary of Oral Submissions made at Issue Specific Hearing 1 [EN010159/APP/9.5]**.
- 2.9.4 Mr Walker raised a number of concerns regarding grid connection to the High Marnham Substation. The proposed grid connection at High Marnham Substation and fire safety was discussed during Issue Specific Hearing 1 and is addressed in the **Applicant's Written Summary of Oral Submissions for Issue Specific Hearing 1 [EN010159/APP/9.5]**. Specific concerns regarding potential landscape and visual, and noise and vibration impacts on the home of Mr and Mrs Walker have been addressed in its response to **Relevant Representations at Deadline 1 [EN010159/APP/9.3]**.

Post Hearing Submission: Mr Walker raised the issue of house price impacts, which is something that was raised by a number of residents through statutory consultation and responded to in the **Consultation Report [APP-151]**. There is no evidence to suggest that solar farms have impacts on house prices in the UK. However, potential impacts from the Proposed Development on individual receptors, such as the Walker's residence, have been assessed and a range of

design changes and mitigation proposals have been incorporated to manage these impacts.

- 2.9.5 Mr Fox made comments regarding the adequacy of consultation. In response, Ms Coleman said that issues regarding the adequacy of consultation were considered earlier in the Preliminary Meeting, where it was noted that the 16 local authorities provided **Adequacy of Consultation Representations [AOC-001 to AOC-017]**. In those representations, all local authorities confirmed that the Applicant has complied with its statutory consultation requirements. Ms Coleman offered to provide references to where within the application materials, photomontages and other relevant application documents may assist in understanding the design of the Proposed Development and specific potential impacts.

Post hearing submission: The Applicant's firm position is that robust and extensive engagement was undertaken with stakeholders, the community, and those potentially affected by the Proposed Development. Two phases of consultation were undertaken, both non-statutory and statutory. The consultation undertaken, and how this informed the evolution of the Proposed Development's design, is set out in the **Consultation Report [APP-151]**.

- 2.9.6 The Applicant has addressed specific queries in Mr White's written submission regarding plans and access roads in its response to **Relevant Representations at Deadline 1 [EN010159/APP/9.3]**. In addition, Ms Coleman noted that a community benefit fund is proposed to operate throughout the life of the Proposed Development, which is distinct from the smaller fund currently in place.



one earth
solar farm