
The Planning Inspectorate
National Infrastructure Directorate
Temple Quay House
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6PN

14 May 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,
Planning Act 2008 - Application for a Development Consent Order for Steeple
Renewables Project
Application Reference: EN010163

Pegasus Group has been instructed on behalf of Steeple Solar Farm Limited ("the Applicant") to submit an application for a Development Consent Order ("DCO") ("the Application") pursuant to Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 ("PA 2008") for the proposed Steeple Renewables Project ("the Proposed Development").

Subject of the Application

The Application is for a DCO to construct, operate, maintain and decommission a ground mounted solar photovoltaic generating facility, with an associated energy storage facility ('BESS'), and grid connection to the National Grid West Burton substation together with all associated works.

The Application is required because the Proposed Development is classified as a Nationally Infrastructure Project ("NSIP") pursuant to sections 14(1)(a) and 15(1) and (2) of the PA 2008, as an onshore solar generating station in England with a capacity exceeding 50 megawatts ("MW"). As such, the decision on whether to grant development consent will be made by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.

The NSIP and associated development are described within Schedule 1 of the **draft DCO [EN010163/APP/3.1]**.

Application fee and documentation

The application fee of £8946 has been submitted by BACS transfer to the account of the Planning Inspectorate on 6th May 2025 and received on 7th May 2025.

The Application has been submitted via a Sharepoint system, which has been set up for file transfer of the application documents, as agreed with the Planning Inspectorate.

A GIS Shapefile showing the Order Limits for the Proposed Development was issued to the Planning Inspectorate via email on 25th April 2025.

A **Section 55 Checklist [EN010163/APP/1.6]** has been completed by the Applicant and included with the Application to assist with the Planning Inspectorate's acceptance of the Application.

Application formalities

This Application is made in the form required by Section 37(3)(b) of the PA 2008 and the application documents comply with the requirements in Section 37 of the PA 2008 and those set out in:

A) The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (“the APFP Regulations”)

B) The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (“the EIA Regulations”)

C) The Department for Communities and Local Government’s (DCLG, now known as the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) ‘Planning Act 2008 – Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects – Application Form Guidance’ (June 2013)

D) Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on the Preparation and Submission of Application Documents (last updated 21 January 2025).

Description of the Proposed Development

A technical description is included within Chapter 4 of the **Environmental Statement (‘ES’) [EN010163/APP/6.2.4]**. A non-technical description summary of the Proposed Development is included in the **Application Guide [EN010163/APP/1.4]**.

The Need for the Project

The Proposed Development provides for an export capacity of up to 450MWAC of clean energy (with 150MW of energy storage) at a time when the challenges of climate change by a **Planning Statement [EN010163/APP/7.1]** that set out the legislative and policy support for the Application.

Consent Flexibility

To account for the rapidly evolving technology of solar PV, the **draft DCO [EN010163/APP/3.1]** and **Works Plans [EN010163/APP/2.2]** allow for a degree of flexibility to allow for the use of the latest designs of equipment at the time of construction in accordance with the principle of the Rochdale Envelope.

The exact design details of the Proposed Development cannot be confirmed until the tendering process has been completed, and the design details have been approved by the relevant local planning authorities.

The Environmental Impact Assessment, the findings of which are presented within the submitted Environmental Statement, has considered and assessed the likely significant environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development based on the design parameters set out at **ES Chapter 3: Site Description, Site Selection and Iterative Design Process [EN010163/APP/6.2.3]** representing a worst-case scenario.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

The Application includes a **Shadow HRA Report [EN010163/APP/5.5]** as required by Regulation 5(2)(g) of the APFP Regulations and prepared in accordance with the Planning Inspectorate's 'Advice Note 10: Habitats Regulations Assessments' as well as 'Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on Habitat Regulation Assessments'. The HRA report identifies all relevant European sites potentially affected by the Proposed Development and sets out screening undertaken for the purposes of the Habitats Regulations together with an assessment of likely significant effects where necessary.

The Applicant's Appropriate Assessment, set out in the HRA Report, concludes that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites as a result of the Proposed Development.

Compulsory Acquisition

The land over which the Applicant is seeking powers of compulsory acquisition of land, rights and interests and powers of temporary possession in the draft DCO for the purposes of the Proposed Development is listed in the **Book of Reference [EN010163/APP/4.3]**. This is submitted in accordance with Regulation 5(2)(d) of the APFP Regulations and has been prepared with reference to the Department for Communities and Local Government guidance 'Planning Act 2008: Guidance related to procedures for compulsory acquisition of land' (September 2013).

The **Statement of Reasons [EN010163/APP/4.1]** provides the justification for seeking these powers within the DCO, considers the impacts of these powers on Human Rights and sets out the status of agreement and negotiations to date with relevant land interests.

Details of the funding of the Proposed Development and the compulsory acquisition powers sought are provided in the **Funding Statement [EN010163/APP/4.2]**.

The Statement of Reasons and Funding Statement are submitted in accordance with Regulation 5(2)(h) of the APFP Regulations.

Other Consents

A summary of other consents and licences likely to be required in addition to those being requested as part of the draft DCO is provided in **the Consents and Licences Required Under Other Legislation [EN010163/APP/5.8]**.

Pre-application consultation

The Applicant has had careful regard to the pre-application consultation requirements of the PA 2008, the guidance on pre-application consultation (issued by DCLG and PINS), the Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for National Significant Infrastructure Projects and its pre-application discussion held with PINS, as required by Section 50(3) of the PA 2008.

As required by Section 37(3)(c) of the PA 2008, the Application is accompanied by a **Consultation Report [EN010163/APP/5.1]**, which provides details of the Applicant's compliance with Sections 42, 46, 47, 48 and 49 of the PA 2008, the APFP Regulations, the EIA Regulations, and the relevant guidance.

Other matters

As required under Regulation 5(3) of the APFP Regulations, all relevant application document plans, drawings or sections provided under Regulation 5(2) are no larger than A0 size, are drawn to an identified scale (not smaller than 1:2500) and, in the case of plans, show the direction of north.

In accordance with Regulation 5(5) of the APFP Regulations, the Applicant retains all responses to the consultation carried out under Part 5 of the PA 2008 and can make them available at the request of the Planning Inspectorate and/or the Secretary of State.

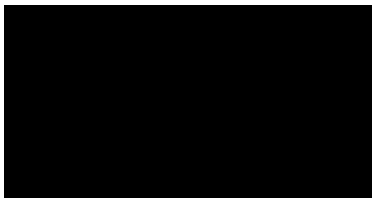
The Applicant has identified statutory and non-statutory sites or features of nature conservation; these are referenced in the **Statutory and Non-Statutory Nature Conservation Designations Plan [EN010163/APP/2.37]**.

ES Appendix 7.8 Confidential Badger Report [EN010163/APP/6.3.7] contain confidential information. This document is marked in the file name as confidential within the SharePoint folder.

The Applicant recognises that some of the application documents, including the outline plans, are documents which may require updates during the examination of the Application and in response to questions from the Examining Authority and comments from interested parties. The Applicant will therefore keep all application documents under review and will provide updates (where necessary) during the examination of the Application.

We look forward to hearing from you in relation to a formal acceptance of this Application. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you have any queries in the meantime.

Yours sincerely



[Redacted]

DCO Lead Developer

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