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# Steeple Renewables Project

## Statement of Reasons

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# Statement of Reasons

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# The Steeple Renewables Project Development Consent Order 202[ ]

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## STATEMENT OF REASONS

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## 1 GLOSSARY

“2008 Act”	The Planning Act 2008 (as amended) which is the legislation in relation to applications for NSIPs, including pre-application consultation and publicity, the examination of applications and decision making by the Secretary of State
“Applicant”	Steeple Solar Farm Limited
“Application”	The Application for a Development Consent Order made to the Secretary of State under Section 37 of the 2008 Act in respect of the Authorised Development, required pursuant to Section 31 of the 2008 Act because the Authorised Development comprises an NSIP under Section 14(1)(a) and Section 15 of the 2008 Act by virtue of it comprising the construction of a generating station in England of more than 50 MW
“Application Documents”	The documents submitted as part of the Application process indexed in the Application Guide (Document Reference EN010163/APP/1.4) including but not limited to the application form, a draft Order, the Environmental Statement, the outline environmental management plans and associated plans which set out the parameters for the Authorised Development
“Associated Development”	Defined under Section 115(2)(a) of the 2008 Act as development which is associated with the development for which development consent is required and that has a direct relationship with it. Associated Development should either support the construction or operation of the Principal Development or help address its impacts. It should not be an aim in itself but should be subordinate to the Principal Development
“Authorised Development”	The development to which the Application relates and which requires a DCO, as described in Schedule 1 to the Order, comprising the Principal Development and Associated Development
“Book of Reference”	The Book of Reference (Document Reference EN010163/APP/4.3) accompanying the Application defined in Regulation 7 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (as amended)

“Consultation Report”	The Consultation Report (Document Reference EN010163/APP/5.1) accompanying the Application which explains the consultation undertaken by the Applicant in accordance with the 2008 Act
“DCO”	A Development Consent Order made by the relevant Secretary of State pursuant to Section 103(1) of the 2008 Act to authorise an NSIP. A DCO does or can incorporate or remove the need for a range of consents which would otherwise be required for a development
the “draft Order”	The draft Order submitted with the Application Documents
“EIA”	Environmental Impact Assessment. The assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the Authorised Development undertaken in accordance with the EIA Regulations
“EIA Regulations”	The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) setting out how the EIA of NSIPs must be carried out and the procedures that must be followed
“ES”	The Environmental Statement (Document Reference EN010163/APP/6.2) accompanying the Application documenting the findings of the EIA, including the updates to the ES which have been submitted during the examination of the Application
“Explanatory Memorandum”	The Explanatory Memorandum to the draft Order that explains the intended purpose and effect of the draft Order and the authorisations and powers that the Applicant seeks
“Land Plans”	The plans (Document Reference EN010163/APP/2.1) showing the land to be used for the Authorised Development and to be certified as the “land plans” by the Secretary of State under article 34 of the Order
“LEMP”	Landscape and ecology management plan to be prepared in accordance with Requirement 6 in Part 1 of Schedule 2 of the draft Order (Document Reference EN010163/APP/6.3.7)
“Local Planning Authority”	Bassetlaw District Council

the “made Order”	The Steeple Renewables Project Order, being the DCO that would be made by the Secretary of State authorising the Authorised Development
“MW”	Megawatts
“NSIP”	As defined under Section 14(1) of the 2008 Act
“Order Land”	The land within the limits of land to be acquired or used and described in the Book of Reference
“Order Limits”	The limits shown on the Land Plans within which the Authorised Development may be carried out and land acquired or used
“Planning Inspectorate”	The Planning Inspectorate. A Government agency responsible for receiving and administering the acceptance and examination of applications for NSIPs on behalf of the Secretary of State
“Planning Statement”	The Planning Statement (Document Reference EN010163/APP/7.1) accompanying the Application which explains the national local policy support for the Authorised Development together with updates submitted during the examination of the Application
“Principal Development”	The development to which the Application relates and which requires a DCO as described in Schedule 1 to the draft Order
“Statement of Reasons”	This document - it explains the national need for the Authorised Development and sets out the justification for the acquisition of or interference with the Order Land
“Secretary of State”	The Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero who will determine the Application
“Undertaker”	The Applicant or such other person who takes the benefit of the DCO following the procedure within Article 5 of the draft Order
“Works Plans”	The plans (Document Reference EN010163/APP/2.2) which show the Work Nos referred to in Schedule 1 to the draft Order

## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This Statement of Reasons (“**Statement**”) forms part of a suite of documents supporting an application under Section 37 of the 2008 Act to the Secretary of State for a DCO. This Statement should be read in conjunction with those documents that relate to the compulsory acquisition powers sought as part of the Authorised Development, including the:
- (a) Draft Development Consent Order (Document Reference EN010163/APP/3.1);
  - (b) Explanatory Memorandum (Document Reference EN010163/APP/3.2)
  - (c) Land Plans (Document Reference EN010163/APP/2.1);
  - (d) Works Plans (Document Reference EN010163/APP/2.2);
  - (e) Funding Statement (Document Reference EN010163/APP/4.2);
  - (f) Book of Reference (Document Reference EN010163/APP/4.3); and
  - (g) Planning Statement (Document Reference EN010163/APP/7.1).
- 2.2 The development proposal relates to the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of Steeple Renewables Project (the “**Authorised Development**”), a renewable-led energy scheme.
- 2.3 The main elements of the Authorised Development will be the construction and operation of a solar and associated battery installation comprising over 50MW of a solar photovoltaic generating station and energy storage.
- 2.4 There will also be electrical connection infrastructure and the point of connection into the local electricity grid is directly to the existing 400kV substation at West Burton Power Station.

### **Purpose of this Statement**

- 2.5 This Statement details the overarching need for the Authorised Development. It sets out how the Authorised Development is consistent with Government policy, which identifies a need for low-carbon and renewable energy to address climate change, to meet the legal commitment to Net Zero, and to ensure a secure, diverse and affordable energy supply.
- 2.6 Government policy requires a mix of renewable energy projects, without preference for technology or scale, to achieve these objectives.
- 2.7 The co-location of the battery energy storage system reflects a developing trend that will offer flexibility in operation and maximise energy resources in a balanced and efficient way.
- 2.8 This Statement is required because the DCO, if made, would authorise the compulsory acquisition of interests or rights in land. The DCO would also confer on the Applicant additional powers including:
- (a) extinguishment of private rights of land;
  - (b) acquisition of subsoil only;
  - (c) rights under or over streets;
  - (d) imposition of restrictive covenants;
  - (e) temporary use of land for carrying out the Authorised Development; and

- (f) temporary use of land for maintaining the Authorised Development.
- 2.9 The Applicant's rationale and justification for seeking powers of compulsory acquisition are set out below. The Applicant considers that there is a clear and compelling case in the public interest for the inclusion of powers of compulsory acquisition within the DCO to secure the land and interests that are required for the Authorised Development.
- 2.10 The public benefit of allowing the Authorised Development to proceed outweighs the infringement of private rights that would occur should powers of compulsory acquisition be granted and exercised.

#### **Structure of this Statement**

- 2.11 This Statement:
- (a) sets out the background against which the Application is made, and provides a description of the Authorised Development;
  - (b) explains the need for the Authorised Development;
  - (c) provides a statement of the statutory authority for the proposed acquisition of land and rights by the Applicant;
  - (d) describes the Order Land;
  - (e) sets out the policy background;
  - (f) explains the relationship between the DCO and the Human Rights Act 1998;
  - (g) considers alternatives to compulsory acquisition and sets out the Applicant's justification for making the DCO;
  - (h) describes the case for acquisition of individual interests and rights and explains the Applicant's engagement with the affected landowner and third parties; and
  - (i) considers the funding and financial implications of the Authorised Development.
- 2.12 The purpose of the DCO is to authorise the construction and operation of a solar and associated battery installation comprising over 50MW solar PV and energy storage, which will help to meet the identified national need for new renewable energy generating capacity.
- 2.13 The DCO seeks to include powers to compulsorily acquire land rights, which are required to connect the Authorised Development to the National Grid. The Applicant has attempted to acquire the land and rights required voluntarily but has been unable to acquire all the necessary rights, and accordingly seeks powers of compulsory acquisition.

### **3 BACKGROUND TO THE AUTHORISED DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.1 The Applicant proposes to develop a solar generating station and all related connections and infrastructure.
- 3.2 The Authorised Development is an NSIP under Sections 14(1)(a) and 15(2) of the 2008 Act as, at the time of application, it consists of a generating station being a ground mounted solar photovoltaic generating station in England with a capacity of over 50MW.
- 3.3 As the Authorised Development would be an NSIP, development consent must be obtained from the Secretary of State and application for a DCO must be made to the Secretary of State, care of the Planning Inspectorate, under Section 37 of the 2008 Act.

#### **Associated Development**

- 3.4 Guidance on associated development has been issued by the Secretary of State.
- 3.5 In this guidance associated development is described as being *“typical of development brought forward alongside the relevant type of principal development or of a kind that is usually necessary to support a particular type of project”* (paragraph 6) and requiring *“(i)... a direct relationship between associated development and the principal development. Associated development should therefore either support the construction or operation of the principal development, or help address its impacts. (ii) Associated development should not be an aim in itself but should be subordinate to the principal development”* (paragraph 5).<sup>1</sup>
- 3.6 In some cases, there may be overlap between the Principal Development and the Associated Development.
- 3.7 All elements of the proposed development either constitute part of the Principal Development or are associated development within the meaning of Section 155(2) of the 2008 Act, and so can properly be authorised by the made Order.

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government, Planning Act 2008: Guidance on associated development applications for major infrastructure projects, April 2013  
WORK179435054.v.1

#### 4 AUTHORISED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The Authorised Development comprises the construction and operation of a solar and battery installation comprising:

- (a) solar photovoltaic modules and mounting structures;
- (b) solar inverter units;
- (c) transformer units for solar output;
- (d) battery energy storage system;
- (e) electrical cabling and connection to the National Grid; and
- (f) underground electrical connections and cabling.

4.2 A full description of the Authorised Development is included in Chapter 4 of the ES (Document Reference EN010163/APP/6.2.4).

##### **Solar Park**

4.3 The solar park will be located within Work No. 1. General works relating to the solar park are included within Work No. 7. The battery energy storage system will be located within Work No. 2. The onsite substation will be located within Work No. 3.

##### **Cable Route**

4.4 The electrical cabling connecting the solar park to the substation will be within Work No. 4. Connection installation works at the substation will be within Work No. 5.

##### **Access**

4.5 Temporary construction and decommissioning of the access tracks and compounds will be within Work No. 10. Works to facilitate access for all works excluding the connection installation works at the substation are included within Work No. 6.

4.6 The Order Land includes land for the creation of a new permissive path crossing the solar park, to be located within Work No. 9.

##### **Mitigation works, habitat creation and enhancement**

4.7 The Order Land includes area for ecological and environmental mitigation works, habitat creation or enhancement and landscape and biodiversity enhancement measures. These works are proposed on existing agricultural land, verges and hedgerows alongside and in proximity to the cable corridor and solar arrays as part of Works No. 8 (together the "Plots"):

<b>Works Number</b>	<b>Plot Number(s)</b>
8	01/01, 01/02, 01/03, 06/24, 07/01, 07/02, 07/03, 07/04, 07/05, 07/06 07/07, 07/08, 07/09, 07/10, 07/11

4.8 As these Plots are proposed alongside and in proximity to the cable corridor and solar arrays, acquisition of rights are sought over these Plots to be able to comply with the anticipated requirements of the LEMP (Document Reference EN010163/APP/6.3.7), which will require ongoing inspection and maintenance of restored and created habitat until established, to enable access to the land. The ability to undertake works and prevent

activities that could conflict with the requirements is also needed for a period post-construction, which is expected to be up to a maximum period of 40 years.

## 5 NEED FOR AND BENEFITS OF THE AUTHORISED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The Planning Statement (Document Reference EN010163/APP/7.1) sets out in detail the need for the Authorised Development and the contribution it would make towards achieving the objectives of policy, including UK Government policy, as set out in the National Policy Statements (“NPSs”). That case is not repeated in full here and this Statement should be read alongside the Planning Statement.

### 5.2 THE UK’S LEGAL COMMITMENT TO REDUCE CARBON EMISSIONS

#### Climate Change Act 2008

5.3 On 1 May 2019, the UK Government declared a climate emergency and recognised the need for the expansion of renewable energy systems and a move away from fossil fuels. This led to a modification of the Climate Change Act 2008, which provides the statutory targets for the UK to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 against a 1990 baseline.

5.4 In response to the climate emergency, the Government made the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019, which modified the statutory targets to a reduction in gas emissions of at least 100% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels (the “**Net Zero Target**”).

5.5 The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Better paper (the “**Net Zero Strategy**”) provides the framework for the UK achieving the Net Zero Target setting out the following demands on renewable energy systems, including solar:

- (a) the UK “*will fully decarbonise our power system by 2035*”;
- (b) there will be “*40GW of offshore wind by 2030, with more onshore, solar, and other renewables*”; and
- (c) the sixth carbon budget “*also requires a sustained increased to the deployment of land-based renewables such as local supported onshore wind and solar in the 2020s and beyond.*” Emphasis added.

5.6 Delivery of renewable energy generation, including the Authorised Development, must continue in order to meet the Net Zero Target and reduce emissions sufficiently in line with the sixth carbon budget.

5.7 The Climate Change Committee (the “**CCC**”) published its statutory 2024 Progress Report to Parliament on 18 July 2024 with an analysis of the findings against the 2022 Monitoring Framework.

5.8 On page 9 of its report the CCC is clear that “*annual... solar installation must increase by five times.*” Emphasis added.

5.9 On page 52 of its report, the CCC states that the “*indicators of roll-out of low-carbon technologies and nature-based solutions*” for solar capacity are “*significantly off track*”, adding on page 56 that “[d]espite an increase of 9% in 2023, solar PV capacity remains significantly off track... Total operational capacity for solar was 16 GW in 2023 [excluding all commercial-scale rooftop solar]. Achieving the Government’s ambition of 70 GW by 2035 will require more than 4 GW to be installed each year on average.” Emphasis added.

5.10 There is a clear drive towards renewable energy systems, including solar, where changes to the planning system are considered necessary to ensure projects, such as the Authorised Development, are consented in light of how urgently their deployment is required.

5.11 The Authorised Development, and clean energy sectors, has a significant role in achieving the Net Zero Target.

## **International Obligations: United Nations Convention on Climate Change (the “Convention”)**

- 5.12 The Conference of Parties (“**COP**”) reviews the implementation of the Convention. In 2021, the COP negotiated a global agreement with the key goal of limited increases of global temperatures to *“well below 2°C compared to pre-industrial levels.”* The parties also agreed to *“pursue efforts to”* limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C. This was a development of the Paris Agreement and represents a binding and universal agreement on climate from all the parties.
- 5.13 The agreement was reached by 196 parties, seeking to prevent a *“climate catastrophe”* by keeping temperature rises within 1.5°C.
- 5.14 At COP29, in 2024, the UK Prime Minister announced the UK’s 2035 Nationally Determined Contribution, *“committing to an at least 81% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2035, relative to 1990 levels, excluding emissions for international aviation and shipping.”*
- 5.15 The Authorised Development will be critical in contributing to these reductions.

## **5.16 PLANNING POLICY POSITION**

### **National Policy Statements**

- 5.17 The NPSs were established to set out the national policy for energy infrastructure in England. Since the NPSs were first drafted in 2011, there has been a shift in urgency to reduce carbon emissions. In response to this, the Government ran a consultation on the revised NPSs in September 2021 and March 2023 to June 2023. The revised energy NPSs were designated on 17 January 2024.
- 5.18 The Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (“**NPS EN-1**”), sets out the important role of solar in combatting climate change, noting *“analysis shows that a secure, reliable, affordable, net zero consistent system in 2050 is likely to be composed predominantly of wind and solar.”*
- 5.19 NPS EN-1, when combined with the relevant technology-specific energy NPSs, provides the primary basis for decisions made by the Secretary of State in respect of renewable development.
- 5.20 Part 3 of NPS EN-1 sets out that without significant amounts of new large-scale energy infrastructure, the Government’s energy and climate change objectives cannot be met, and that *“Government has concluded that there is a critical national priority (CNP) for the provision of nationally significant low carbon infrastructure.”*
- 5.21 “Low carbon infrastructure” is defined as including *“for electricity generation, all onshore and offshore generation that does not involve fossil fuel combustion.”*
- 5.22 Part 4 of NPS EN-1 states, *“Given the level and urgency of need for infrastructure of the types covered by the energy NPSs set out in Part 3 of this NPS, the Secretary of State will start with a presumption in favour of granting consent to applications for energy NSIPs.”*
- 5.23 It is therefore not necessary, when determining applications for solar parks, to demonstrate a specific need for the principle of solar development, and there is a presumption in favour of granting consent to applications for energy NSIPs, such as the Authorised Development.
- 5.24 Beyond the principle of solar park development being needed, it is important to note that the targets with the NPS require such a level of deployment that all currently planned and proposed solar park schemes are necessary. NPS EN-1 provides that, in relation to the weight to be given to that identified need, the Secretary of State has determined that

substantial weight should be given to this when considering applications for development consent under the 2008 Act.

- 5.25 The NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) ("**NPS EN-3**") has a chapter dedicated to *Solar Photovoltaic Generation* and highlights the Government's commitment to "*sustained growth in solar capacity to ensure that we are on a pathway that allows us to meet net zero emissions.*"
- 5.26 The Government has also stated the need for energy security, including:
- (a) the need to secure safe, affordable, reliable energy, preferably generated in the UK for the UK market;
  - (b) the need to replace existing ageing energy generation infrastructure;
  - (c) the need to meet expected electricity demand whilst meeting climate change commitments; and
  - (d) the need to maximise social and economic opportunities for the UK from energy infrastructure investment, as noted in the Clean Growth Strategy.<sup>2</sup>
- 5.27 In accordance with NPS EN-1, the Authorised Development would make a significant contribution to meeting national need. Specifically, the Authorised Development:
- (a) meets need in the UK for the types of infrastructure covered by NPS EN-1, and contributes significantly towards the delivery of a UK net zero consistent system (paragraph 3.3.20), necessary to achieve energy security at the same time as dramatically reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
  - (b) would contribute towards the UK Government's commitment to sustained growth in solar capacity to ensure the UK can meet the Net Zero Target as identified in NPS EN-3; and
  - (c) would contribute to the delivery of the 70 GW of renewable solar energy ambition set out in the British Energy Security Strategy (as discussed below), as referenced in NPS EN-3.
- 5.28 The Authorised Development should therefore be assessed on the basis that the Government has demonstrated that there is a need for renewable energy infrastructure, that the scale of the need is significantly in excess of what is currently being promoted and that the need for renewable energy is urgent.
- 5.29 In accordance with NPS policy, substantial weight should be given to the contribution that the Authorised Development would make towards satisfying this need and there is a presumption in favour of granting consent for the Application.

### **The National Planning Policy Framework**

- 5.30 The National Planning Policy Framework (the "**NPPF**") provides the planning policies of the UK Government in England, and details how these should be applied.
- 5.31 There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.32 Whilst the NPPF does not contain specific policies for NSIPs, it may be a relevant and important consideration in the determination of applications for development consent.
- 5.33 Paragraph 164 sets out, "*New development should be planned for in ways that:*
- (a) *avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care*

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<sup>2</sup> Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2017  
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*should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems; and*

- (b) *help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards."*

5.34 At paragraph 165, the NPPF provides, *"To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:*

- (a) *provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, and their future re-powering and life extension, while ensuring the adverse impacts are addressed appropriately (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);*
- (b) *consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and*
- (c) *identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers."*

5.35 Finally, paragraph 168 of the NPPF advises local planning authorities when determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon development local planning authorities should *"not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal's contribution to a net zero future."*

## 5.36 **UK ENERGY STRATEGIES**

### **Clean Power 2030 Action Plan**

5.37 The Clean Power 2030 Action Plan (the **"Action Plan"**) sets an ambitious timeline to deliver clean power across the UK alongside proposed reforms to the planning and consenting process.

5.38 The Action Plan sets out the UK Government's pathway to achieving a new era of clean electricity with energy security, lower bills, good jobs and climate action.

5.39 The Action Plan provides an ambition of 45-47 GW of solar power being generated, in addition to its contribution to the delivery of 4,000 MW of solar energy and 1,300 MW of battery storage in the Midlands, the region in which the Authorised Development is located, by 2030.

5.40 The Authorised Development would provide a meaningful contribution to these ambitions with an ability to generate and export clean energy from 2029.

### **The National Grid – Future Energy Scenario**

5.41 National Grid's 2024 Future Energy Scenario draws on the significance of renewable energy projects, such as the Authorised Development, in delivering net zero, with 102 GW and 96 GW of electricity generated by solar and wind developments needing to be connected by 2030 under National Grid's net zero scenarios.

### **British Energy Security Strategy**

5.42 The British Energy Security Strategy (**"ESS"**) focuses on the development of ground-mounted solar and strengthening policy in favour of development on non-protected land.

- 5.43 Notably, the ESS commits to “[continuing to support] the effective use of land by encouraging large scale projects to locate on previously developed, or lower value land, where possible, and ensure projects are designed to avoid, mitigate, and where necessary, compensation for the impacts of using greenfield sites.”
- 5.44 The ESS also sets out the framework for driving forward solar deployment, with updated planning documents to streamline the consenting process identified as an aim for 2022.
- 5.45 This is followed by the 2024 NPSs, as set out above, which clarify the critical national priority for renewable developments, including solar, such as the Authorised Development.
- 5.46 The identified trend is that the Government is focussing on clean energy supply to lower the UK’s carbon emissions and move away from fossil fuels and energy provided by other countries. There is a need for the Authorised Development to support and achieve this goal.

### **The UK’s Solar PV Strategy**

- 5.47 The UK’s Solar PV Strategy sets out the Government’s vision for solar PV in the UK and identifies “[s]olar PV [as] one of the eight key renewable energy technologies that can help to create a clean, balanced UK energy mix.” Emphasis added.
- 5.48 The vision is set around four guiding principles:
- (a) Support for solar PV should allow cost effective-projects to proceed and to make a cost-effective contribution to UK carbon emission objectives in the context of overall energy goals – ensuring that solar PV has a role alongside other energy generation technologies in delivering carbon reductions, energy security and affordability for consumers;
  - (b) Support for solar PV should deliver genuine carbon reductions that help meet the UK’s target of 15% renewable energy of gross final consumption by 2020 and in supporting the decarbonisation of our economy in the longer term – ensuring that all the carbon impacts of solar PV deployment are fully understood. Emphasis added;
  - (c) Support for solar PV should ensure proposals are appropriately sited, give proper weight to environmental considerations such as landscape and visual impact, heritage and local amenity, and provide opportunities for local communities to influence decisions that affect them; and
  - (d) Support for solar PV should assess and respond to the impacts of deployment on: grid systems balancing, grid connectivity and financial incentives – ensuring that we address the challenges of deploying high volumes of solar PV.

- 5.49 As set out in the supporting documents to the Application, including the ES and the Planning Statement, the Authorised Development achieves each of these principles.

### **5.50 BENEFITS OF THE AUTHORISED DEVELOPMENT**

- 5.51 In relation to the benefits of the Authorised Development, NPS EN-1 is clear that in addition to any adverse impacts of a development the Secretary of State should consider a scheme’s potential benefits including its contribution to meeting the need for energy infrastructure, job creation and any long term or wider benefits.
- 5.52 Paragraph 4.3.4 of NPS EN-1 provides, “*This information could include matters such as employment, equality, biodiversity net gain, community cohesion, health and well-being.*”
- 5.53 The Authorised Development includes significant benefits embedded within its design, and through mitigation measures, plans and strategies that are established under the draft Order’s requirements. The key benefits of the Authorised Development are:

- (a) delivery of large scale solar, which has a critical role to play in achieving the decarbonisation of the UK electricity network as critical national priority infrastructure. It is fundamental to the UK progressing towards and achieving its net zero carbon ambitions, as recognised by the clear targets for the amount of electricity to be generated in the UK from solar technologies, and will generate electricity for up to 180,000 homes, being approximately 50% of the homes in Nottinghamshire;
- (b) its ability to start delivery renewable energy to the grid quickly, with a lower lead in time compared to other renewable and low carbon technologies, with a secured connection date of October 2029;
- (c) the inclusion of a battery energy storage system ensures that the electricity generated by the Authorised Development can be managed, optimised, and delivered to the wider electricity grid when the time is right;
- (d) the battery energy storage system also provides the opportunity to store electricity from the grid, with battery energy storage system facilities recognised as being increasingly important to a resilient, well-functioning electricity network, which can meet supply and demand requirements from energy sources that now include increasing renewable energy technologies, and encourage the deployment of further renewable projects ensuring a security of supply;
- (e) the construction of two surface water detention basins reducing flood risk to the host village; and
- (f) the provision of two permissive paths to enhance active travel.

5.54 The need for and benefits of the Authorised Development demonstrate that there is a very strong and compelling case in the public interest for the Authorised Development to be delivered. To ensure delivery of the Authorised Development, the powers of compulsory acquisition sought are required and proportionate.

## **6 POWERS OF COMPULSORY ACQUISITION**

- 6.1 The Application has been made under the 2008 Act for a DCO granting consent to construct and operate the Authorised Development, including powers of compulsory acquisition for the land needed to do that.
- 6.2 Section 120 of the 2008 Act provides what may be included within a DCO, including provisions on ancillary matters to the development consented. Those ancillary matters may include the acquisition of land, and the creation, suspension and extinguishment of interests in or rights over land as set out in Schedule 5 to the 2008 Act.
- 6.3 The draft Order contains the following provisions:
- (a) Article 17 authorises the compulsory acquisition of land;
  - (b) Article 19 authorises the acquisition of rights over land, including by the creation of rights;
  - (c) Article 20 provides for the extinguishment of private rights in land that is compulsorily acquired; and
  - (d) Article 22 allows the Applicant to compulsorily acquire the subsoil of land only.
- 6.4 Article 18 sets a time limit for the Applicant to exercise the compulsory purchase powers and provides that notices under such powers must be served within 5 years of the date of the made Order. The draft Order also amends the compensation enactments to extend their provisions to include acquisition of rights in land only, as well as the land itself.
- 6.5 Section 122 of the 2008 Act sets out the purposes for which compulsory acquisition may be authorised and lists the conditions that must be met. This provides that the Secretary of State must be satisfied that the land:
- (a) is required for the development to which the development consent relates; or
  - (b) is required to facilitate or is incidental to that development,
- and that there is a compelling case in the public interest for the land to be acquired compulsorily.
- 6.6 The plots to be compulsorily acquired are set out in the Book of Reference (Document Reference EN010163/APP/4.3).

## **6.7 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES TO COMPULSORY ACQUISITION**

- 6.8 The objective to avoid or minimise compulsory acquisition was an important factor in selecting the site of the Authorised Development. Details of engagement with affected parties prior to submission are set out in Appendix 1, since submission engagement has been recorded in the Land Rights Tracker [EN010163/EX/8.6].
- 6.9 In the absence of compulsory acquisition, all of the land and rights required to allow the Authorised Development to be constructed and operated may not be secured, and therefore the Authorised Development would not proceed.
- 6.10 The Applicant needs to have certainty that the required rights and land can be obtained within a reasonable timeframe. Given the clear policy support for the development of renewable, clean energy projects, the granting of compulsory acquisition powers to the Undertaker represents a proportionate and legitimate interference with private rights and is in the public benefit.

## **7 SITE SELECTION**

- 7.1 The Applicant has undertaken a logical, staged process to arrive at the Authorised Development's location and design. The Site Description, Site Selection and Iterative Design Process ES chapter 3 (Document Reference EN010163/APP/6.2.3) sets out the approach taken, including consideration of alternatives and technical assessments. The ES chapter identifies where alternatives are considered to either not be commercially viable or physically/technically unsuitable to the extent that they carry significant risk to the implementation of the Authorised Development.
- 7.2 The following comprises a brief summary of the site selection process undertaken by the Applicant and should be read together with ES chapter 3.
- 7.3 Following confirmation by National Grid to the Applicant of grid capacity at the West Burton Power Station, with an immediately available point of connection, the Applicant identified a 15km search area for appropriate sites to minimise potential environmental impacts associated with cable routes, and electrical transmission losses that can occur along longer cable routes.
- 7.4 Once the 15km search area had been identified, the Applicant considered environmental constraints of land within that radius, such as:
- (a) agricultural land classification;
  - (b) designated ecological and geological sites;
  - (c) flood risk;
  - (d) existing highway infrastructure;
  - (e) designated cultural heritage assets including scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas; and
  - (f) National Parks and National Landscapes.
- 7.5 The Applicant also considered sites of existing and proposed renewable energy developments within the search area, alongside other areas of existing development, which were not available to the Applicant.
- 7.6 Due to the nature of the Authorised Development, any potential site had to be of a suitable shape, orientation and size that could appropriately accommodate the proposal. The Applicant determined that large open fields reduced the impacts presented by a mosaic of smaller fields, such as field buffers and ditches. A site was also required that was either level or had a gentle sloping topography with a preferred southerly aspect to maximise solar generation.
- 7.7 To ensure the delivery of the Authorised Development, an area of at least 150 acres was required and it was preferred that this would belong to a single landowner to minimise the potential impacts of the compulsory acquisition powers sought.
- 7.8 The site of the Authorised Development was selected as it is of a sufficient size and scale to accommodate the Authorised Development, is within the single ownership of a willing landowner and it has the least environmental impacts associated with the cable route due to its proximity to the point of connection.

## 8 ENGAGEMENT WITH AFFECTED PARTIES

- 8.1 All relevant landowners, lessees, tenants and occupiers identified by diligent enquiries have been notified of the Authorised Development and included in the consultation process.
- 8.2 In carrying out diligent enquiries, there is no Special Category Land or Crown Land identified within the Order Land.
- 8.3 Pre-application consultation under Section 42 of the 2008 Act commenced on 20 January 2025 and closed on 3 March 2025, meeting the statutory 42-day minimum timescale.
- 8.4 Landowners and occupiers (where appropriate) have been contacted with a view to entering into negotiations to acquire land or rights over the Order Land as necessary.
- 8.5 The Applicant has a completed Option Agreement with one of the landowners and agreed Heads of Terms with the remaining two landowners, with the Option Agreements being drafted.
- 8.6 Discussions are progressing with agricultural tenants to progress voluntary surrenders of their tenancies and the existing farm business tenancies are due to expire prior to the commencement of construction of the Proposed Development.
- 8.7 The Applicant will keep the Examining Authority updated as these progress to completion.
- 8.8 In accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *Planning Act 2008: Guidance related to procedures for the compulsory acquisition of land* (the "**CA Guidance**"), the Applicant will continue to seek to acquire the land, the rights and other interests and the temporary use of land, as well as secure the removal of rights affecting the Order Land that may impede the Authorised Development, by agreement wherever practicable.
- 8.9 The current position in respect of negotiations with the outstanding landowners is provided in the Land Rights Tracker [EN010163/EX/8.6] and will be updated during the examination of the Application. The Land Rights Tracker [EN010163/EX/8.6] sets out the position in respect of negotiations with Statutory Undertakers, and will be updated during the examination of the Application.
- 8.10 There are several interests identified in the Book of Reference (Document Reference EN010163/APP/4.3) where it has not been possible to identify ownership, occupation or interests in land. The Applicant has carried out searches and enquiries with the Land Registry, site visits and notices have been erected on site to seek to identify unknown landowners, occupiers or persons with an interest in the land.
- 8.11 The statement "Unknown" is given in the Book of Reference when diligent enquiries have been carried out and it has still not been possible to obtain information.
- 8.12 Where responses were received, due diligence has been carried out and the details of the interests are noted in the Book of Reference.

**9 CASE FOR THE POWERS OF ACQUISITION SOUGHT**

9.1 This section of this Statement sets out the Applicant’s proposals and justification for each class of acquisition. This includes explaining where the Applicant is seeking necessary flexibility for the detailed design stage, and it may be that the final land take is less than identified.

9.2 The Applicant is in discussions with the landowner and their tenants with the intention of reaching voluntary agreements for the land rights required. Powers of compulsory acquisition are therefore sought on a precautionary basis to ensure that the Authorised Development can be delivered, should the landowner default on that agreement or where unknown interests in the land emerge.

9.3 While the Applicant has undertaken a thorough and diligent land referencing and investigatory exercise, this possibility cannot be excluded and the Applicant requires to be able to acquire such interests where they emerge.

**9.4 ACQUISITION OF LAND**

<b>Works Number</b>	<b>Book of Reference Plot Number(s)</b>
1	02/03, 02/04, 02/05, 02/06, 02/09, 02/12, 02/13, 02/14, 02/17, 02/18, 02/20, 03/03, 03/05, 03/06, 03/07, 03/08, 04/01, 04/05, 04/07, 05/09, 05/15, 05/21, 05/24, 05/25, 05/26, 05/31, 05/34, 06/06, 06/09, 06/17, 06/22, 06/25, 06/26
2	05/09
3	05/09
7	02/03, 02/04, 02/05, 02/06, 02/09, 02/12, 02/13, 02/14, 02/17, 02/18, 02/20, 03/03, 03/05, 03/06, 03/07, 03/08, 04/01, 04/05, 04/07, 05/09, 05/15, 05/21, 05/23, 05/24, 05/25, 05/26, 05/31, 05/34, 06/06, 06/09, 06/17, 06/22, 06/25, 06/26
9	03/03, 04/01, 06/09
10	02/13, 02/18, 04/05, 05/09

**9.5 ACQUISITION OF RIGHTS AND IMPOSITION OF RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS**

**Cable rights and restrictive covenants**

<b>Works Number</b>	<b>Book of Reference Plot Number(s)</b>
4	05/03, 05/10, 05/11, 05/12, 05/14, 05/16, 05/17, 05/19
6	02/02, 02/08, 02/11, 02/15, 02/16, 02/19, 02/24, 02/26, 04/03, 04/04, 04/06, 05/01, 05/03, 05/04, 05/05, 05/06, 05/07, 05/13, 05/14, 05/29, 05/30, 05/33, 06/03, 06/05, 06/10, 06/16, 06/19, 06/20, 06/21
6a	02/22, 03/09
7	03/11, 05/22

**Access rights and restrictive covenants**

<b>Works Number</b>	<b>Book of Reference Plot Number(s)</b>
6	05/03, 05/14, 05/27, 05/28, 05/32
7	03/11

**National Grid substation rights**

<b>Works Number</b>	<b>Book of Reference Plot Number(s)</b>
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4	05/03, 05/10, 05/11, 05/12, 05/14, 05/16, 05/17, 05/19
5	05/10, 05/11, 05/12, 05/16, 05/17, 05/19

**Habitat mitigation and enhancement rights**

Works Number	Book of Reference Plot Number(s)
8	01/01, 01/02, 01/03, 03/01, 03/02, 03/04, 06/24, 07/01, 07/02, 07/03, 07/04, 07/05, 07/06, 07/07, 07/08, 07/09, 07/10, 07/11

**9.6 TEMPORARY POSSESSION**

- 9.7 Although not strictly a form of compulsory acquisition, temporary possession powers are sought in the draft Order to reduce the land within which the Applicant requires to seek permanent rights and to minimise the interference with the landowner's and occupiers' rights.
- 9.8 The Applicant is seeking to temporarily occupy the land required during the construction of the Authorised Development over which rights will not be required once construction has been completed.
- 9.9 This minimises interference by allowing the Applicant to access the land needed for construction without requiring the permanent acquisition of that land.
- 9.10 Temporary possession powers apply to all of the Order Land, and powers may be used before permanent rights are required.

## 10 HUMAN RIGHTS

10.1 The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporated into domestic law the European Convention on Human Rights (the “**European Convention**”). It includes provisions in the form of Articles, which aim to protect the rights of the individual.

10.2 Paragraph 10 of the CA Guidance sets out how applicants should consider Human Rights:

*“The Secretary of State must ultimately be persuaded that the purposes for which an order authorises the compulsory acquisition of land are legitimate and are sufficient to justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected. In particular, regard must be given to the provisions of article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights and, in the case of acquisition of a dwelling, Article 8 of the Convention.”*

10.3 The relevant Articles of the European Convention can be summarised as follows:

- (a) Article 6 of the Convention of Rights and Freedoms – ‘Right to a fair trial’ – entitles those affected by compulsory powers to a fair and public hearing;
- (b) Article 8 of the Convention of Rights and Freedoms – ‘Right to respect for private and family life’ – protects the rights of the individual to respect for their private and family life, their home and their correspondence. Interference with this right can be justified if it is in accordance with law and is necessary in the interest of, among other things, national security, public safety or the economic wellbeing of the country; and
- (c) Article 1 of the First Protocol – ‘Protection of property’ – protects the rights to peaceful enjoyment of possessions. No one can be deprived of their possessions except in the public interest.

10.4 Section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 prohibits public authorities from acting in a way that is incompatible with the rights protected by the Convention.

10.5 The made Order may infringe the human rights of persons with an interest in the Order Land. This infringement is authorised by law provided that:

- (a) there is a compelling case in the public interest for the compulsory acquisition powers included within the made Order, and that proper procedures are followed; and
- (b) any interference with a human right is proportionate and otherwise justified.

10.6 Of the land being acquired for the Authorised Development, the following plots are considered in detail because the acquisition affects either residential or commercial properties.

10.7 There are no occurrences of the Authorised Development acquiring land or rights directly from residential properties.

10.8 In addition, rights are being acquired from National Grid in respect of the substation at West Burton Power station, and Nottinghamshire County Council in its capacity as highway authority.

10.9 A Schedule of Engagement with Affected Parties for engagement prior to submission of the application is provided in Appendix 1, for ongoing engagement since submission, a record is provided in the Land Rights Tracker [EN010163/EX/8.6].

### **Compliance with the Convention**

- 10.10 It is recognised that the Authorised Development may have an impact on individuals; however, this is outweighed by the significant public benefits that will arise from the Authorised Development as explained in this Statement.
- 10.11 The Applicant is of the view that the draft Order strikes a fair balance between the significant public interest in seeing the Authorised Development proceed and the private rights that would be affected by the compulsory acquisition.
- 10.12 In relation to both Articles 1 and 8, the compelling public interest case for the compulsory acquisition powers included within the draft Order has been demonstrated in Section 9 of this Statement. The land over which compulsory acquisition powers are sought is the minimum necessary to ensure the delivery of the Authorised Development. The Authorised Development has been designed to minimise detrimental impacts, whilst achieving its public stated objectives. In this respect, the interference with human rights is both proportionate and justified.
- 10.13 In relation to Article 6, it is the case that proper procedures have been followed for both the consultation on the Authorised Development and for the determination of the compulsory acquisition powers included with the Authorised Development. Throughout the development of the Authorised Development, persons with an interest in the Order Land have had full opportunity to comment on the proposals, both in a statutory and non-statutory capacity, and the Applicant has fully engaged with the landowner. The Applicant has been responsive to landowner feedback in both the initial design of the Authorised Development and in iterative changes.
- 10.14 Following submission of the Application, individuals affected by the Authorised Development can submit representations about the draft Order and/or challenge the made Order by judicial review if there are any grounds for doing so.

#### **Fair compensation**

- 10.15 Any person affected by the exercise of compulsory acquisition powers or by the exercise of temporary possession, may be entitled to compensation. This entitlement to compensation is provided for by the existing compensation code, and Article 43 and Schedule 8 of the draft Order.
- 10.16 Any dispute in respect of the compensation payable can be referred for determination to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).
- 10.17 Paragraph 9 of the CA Guidance states that there must be a reasonable prospect of the requisite funds for the Authorised Development being available. Certainty of funding for the Authorised Development, including a guarantee that all compensation claims will be funded is detailed in the Funding Statement (Document Reference EN010163/APP/4.2).

#### **Conclusion**

- 10.18 For the reasons set out above, the Applicant considers that any infringement of the Convention rights of those whose interests in the Order Land might be affected by the exercise of powers of compulsory acquisition would be proportionate and legitimate, would be in the public interest and would be in accordance with national law.
- 10.19 The Applicant therefore considers that it would be appropriate and proportionate for the Secretary of State to make the draft Order including the grant of compulsory acquisition powers.

## **11 CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 This Statement demonstrates that the inclusion of compulsory acquisition powers within the draft Order for the purposes of the Authorised Development meets the requirements of Section 122 of the 2008 Act, together with the relevant guidance, and provides descriptions of the intended use of the land and rights to be acquired.
- 11.2 The powers of compulsory acquisition sought over the Order Land are required for the purposes of, to facilitate, or are incidental to, the Authorised Development and are proportionate and no more than are reasonably necessary.
- 11.3 There is a compelling case in the public interest for the Order Land or rights over the Order Land to be compulsorily acquired given the Authorised Development's contribution towards delivering clean energy, decarbonising the electricity network, energy independence and its being critical national priority infrastructure (NPS EN-1).
- 11.4 The Applicant has a completed Option Agreement with one of the landowners, and agreed Heads of Terms with the remaining two landowners, with the relevant Option Agreements being drafted. The Applicant will keep the Examining Authority updated as these progress to completion. Negotiations with tenants have been underway for a considerable time about access to land for surveys, extent of land to be used for development and acquisition of land for that purpose, both through the Applicant and the agent for the freeholder of the tenanted land.
- 11.5 All reasonable alternatives to compulsory acquisition have been explored and considering the national and local need for clean energy, and therefore the Authorised Development, there is a justification for the inclusion of compulsory acquisition powers within the draft Order.
- 11.6 This Statement, together with the draft Order and Book of Reference, explains the land and rights sought to deliver the Authorised Development by identifying plot numbers, the corresponding Works Numbers and setting out the specific use and purpose of those plots.
- 11.7 The Funding Statement (Document Reference EN010163/APP/4.2) explains how the construction of the Authorised Development and the acquisition of the Order Land or rights within the Order Land will be funded, together with any compensation paid should the compulsory acquisition powers sought be exercised.
- 11.8 As noted in Section 10 above, the proposed interference with the rights of those with an interest in the Order Land is for a legitimate purpose, the Authorised Development. It is therefore necessary and proportionate to deliver that purpose.
- 11.9 Articles 1, 6 and 8, as identified at paragraph 10.3 above, of the European have been considered and the Applicant considers that the very substantial public benefits arising from the delivery of the Authorised Development outweigh the private loss that would be suffered by those whose land or interests are to be acquired and therefore justifies interfering with that land or rights across that land.
- 11.10 The Applicant therefore requests that the draft Order be made and the compulsory acquisition powers and powers to temporary possession sought within the draft Order be granted.

## Appendix 1

### Engagement Record prior to submission

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of communication</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
Phone Call from Mrs Bradley	28-Jul-23	Phone	Emma Bradley
Call to request more information from M Thomson	04-Aug-23	Phone	M Thomson
Follow up with M Thomson re: contact	07-Aug-23	Email	Will Bridges M Thomson
Call from M Thomson	29-Aug-23	Phone	M Thomson
Meeting with the Bradleys	08-Sep-23	Meeting	Emma Bradley
Call to John Bartle re: Meeting	12-Sep-23	Phone	John Bartle
Contact with the Bartles re: Meeting request: Renewable energy proposals in Nottinghamshire	19-Sep-23	Email	John Bartle

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of communication</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
Contact with the Bartles re: Meeting request: Renewable energy proposals in Nottinghamshire	19-Sep-23	Email	G Bartle
Follow up with M Thomson re: Friday's Meeting	20-Sep-23	Email	M Thomson
Follow up with the Bartles RE: Meeting request: Renewable energy proposals in Nottinghamshire	21-Sep-23	Email	G Bartle
Follow up with the Bartles RE: Meeting request: Renewable energy proposals in Nottinghamshire	22-Sep-23	Email	G Bartle
Contact with the Bartle re: Tuesday's Meeting	22-Sep-23	Email	John Bartle
Follow up with the Bartles RE: Meeting request: Renewable energy proposals in Nottinghamshire	26-Sep-23	Email	G Bartle
Follow up with the Bartles RE: Meeting request: Renewable energy proposals in Nottinghamshire	26-Sep-23	Email	G Bartle
Meeting with P, S and J Bartle.	12-Oct-23	Meeting	P, S and J Bartle.

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of communication</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
Meeting with M Thomson	12-Oct-23	Meeting	M Thomson
Follow up from today's meeting	12-Oct-23	Email	G Bartle
Follow up from today's meeting	12-Oct-23	Email	M Thomson
RES Survey Access	16-Oct-23	Email	Will Bridges G Bartle
RES Survey Access	16-Oct-23	Email	Emma Bradley
RES Survey Access	16-Oct-23	Email	Emma Bradley
RES Survey Access	16-Oct-23	Email	Will Bridges M Thomson
RES Survey Access	16-Oct-23	Email	Emma Bradley Will Bridges

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of communication</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
RE: RES survey access	19-Oct-23	Email	Emma Bradley
RE: RES Survey access	19-Oct-23	Email	M Thomson
RE: RES survey access	20-Oct-23	Email	Emma Bradley
RE: RES Survey access	20-Oct-23	Email	M Thomson
Call to John Bartle to arrange meeting	30-Oct-23	Phone	John Bartle
Meeting with S Warburton	06-Nov-23	Meeting	Sandra Warburton
RE: Stanser family site access	08-Nov-23	Email	Will Bridges M Thomson
Contact with M Thomson re: Surveys	13-Nov-23	Email	Will Bridges M Thomson

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of communication</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
Steeple Renewables Project site access	16-Nov-23	Email	Will Bridges Tracy Bartle
RE: Steeple Renewables Project site access	23-Nov-23	Email	Will Bridges Tracy Bartle
Contact with the Bartles re: Surveys	24-Nov-23	Email	Will Bridges Isabel Bartle
Follow up from tenants about surveys	13-Dec-23	Email	Isabel Bartle
Contact with Tenants RE: Project site surveys	21-Dec-23	Email	Emma Bradley Will Bridges
Contact with Tenants RE: Project site surveys	21-Dec-23	Email	Will Bridges
Contact with Tenants RE: Project site surveys	21-Dec-23	Email	Will Bridges M Thomson
RE: Steeple Renewables Project site surveys	03-Jan-24	Email	M Thomson

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of communication</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
RE: Steeple Renewables Project site surveys	03-Jan-24	Email	Emma Bradley
Contact with Tenants RE: Project site surveys	03-Jan-24	Email	Will Bridges M Thomson
Contact with Tenants RE: Project site surveys	03-Jan-24	Email	Emma Bradley Will Bridges
RE: RES - Sturton Renewables site access and project update	24-Jan-24	Email	Isabel Bartle
RE: RES - Sturton Renewables site access and project update	31-Jan-24	Email	Isabel Bartle Tracy Bartle
RES - Sturton Renewables site access and project update	8-Feb-24	Text	Sandra Warburton
RE: RES - Sturton Renewables site access and project update	13-Feb-24	Email	Isabel Bartle Tracy Bartle
RE: RES - Sturton Renewables site access and project update	13-Feb-24	Email	Isabel Bartle Tracy Bartle

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of communication</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
RES - Sturton Renewables site access and project update	06-Mar-24	Text	Sandra Warburton
RES - Sturton Renewables site access and project update	14-Mar-24	Text	Lewis Bartle
RES - Sturton Renewables site access and project update	15-Mar-24	Text	Sandra Warburton
Seeking meeting date	21-Mar-24	Text	Sandra Warburton
RE: RES Survey access	08-Apr-24	Email	M Thomson
RE: RES Survey access	08-Apr-24	Email	M Thomson
RE: RES Survey access	11-Apr-24	Email	M Thomson
RE: RES Survey access	15-Apr-24	Email	M Thomson

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of communication</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
RE: RES Survey access	17-Apr-24	Email	M Thomson
RES Survey access	17-Apr-24	Text	Sandra Warburton
RE: RES Survey access	18-Apr-24	Email	M Thomson
RES site access	22-Apr-24	Text	Lewis Bartle
RE: RES Survey access	03-May-24	Email	M Thomson
RE: RES Survey access	07-May-24	Email	M Thomson
RE: RES Survey access	21-May-24	Email	M Thomson
RE: RES Survey access	28-May-24	Email	M Thomson
RE: RES Survey access	28-May-24	Email	M Thomson
RE: RES Survey access	11-Jun-24	Email	M Thomson

<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of communication</b>	<b>Stakeholders</b>
RE: RES Survey access	24-Jun-24	Email	M Thomson
RES Survey Access	24-Jun-24	Text	Emma Bradley
RES Survey Access	19-July-24	Text	Emma Bradley
RE: RES Survey access	26-Jun-24	Email	M Thomson
RES Survey access + meeting	27-Jun-24	Text	Sandra Warburton
RE: RES - Sturton Renewables	20-Aug-24	Email	Isabel Bartle Tracy Bartle
Site meeting with Landowner	15-Jan-25	Meeting	James Simon & Philip Bartle Emma & Andrew Bradley Roy, John & Mark Stanser's Agent Martin Thompson Robert & Lewis Bartle Sandra Warburton

Title	Date	Type of communication	Stakeholders
Site meeting with Landowner	01-April-25	Meeting	James Simon & Philip Bartle Emma & Andrew Bradley Roy, John & Mark Stanser's Agent Martin Thompson Robert & Lewis Bartle Sandra Warburton

### **Freeholder engagement**

#### **SNSE**

Engagement with representatives of SNSE commenced in mid-2022 focused on the possibility of utilising a proportion of the Sturton Estate for the development of a renewable energy scheme. These negotiations continued, periodically, through early 2023 as the extent of land requirements was developed in conjunction with SNSE. Early Informal Consultation was undertaken October - December 2023 based upon desk-based assessments. The outcome of the consultation allowed for the development of the Authorised Development and provided enough information to enable a voluntary agreement to be reached with SNSE in May 2024.

#### **Watkins**

As part of the Early Informal Consultation, land within the ownership of the Watkins was included as land to be investigated. This commenced discussions with the freeholders and the introduction of another freeholder, the Grays. Negotiations have been ongoing since October 2023 and Heads of Terms have been agreed. A voluntary agreement is currently with the respective solicitors for progression.

#### **Gray**

As part of the Early Informal Consultation, land within the ownership of the Watkins was included as land to be investigated. As part of the initial discussions with the Watkins it was noted that the inclusion of the Watkins land "islanded" circa 20 acres within a different ownership. As a result, negotiations also

commenced with the Grays. Negotiations have been ongoing since October 2023 and Heads of Terms has been agreed. A voluntary agreement is currently with the respective solicitors for progression.

### **Tenant engagement**

Before the launch of the concept of the Steeple Renewables Project into the public domain, meetings were sought with those that hold tenancies upon the land that was under investigate at that time. Initial meetings with tenants were held, in person, between 8<sup>th</sup> September – 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023. These meetings had a number of purposes:

- Introduction to RES;
- Introduction to the RES team;
- Introduction to the concept and need for Steeple Renewables Project;
- Presenting the DCO process and timescales; and
- Initial discussion regards the need to survey land in cooperation with tenants and to work around the planned farming activities to create as little disruption as possible. It was stressed that access would prefer to be arranged on a voluntary basis rather than using any legislative powers.

After initial contact had been made, more regular contact, via phone, email and in person, occurred with the Project Manager and the tenants. Initially this was to further understand the ongoing farming practices within each tenancy along with the respective positions towards voluntary access for non-intrusive surveys such as wintering birds, habitat and arboricultural surveys.

Between late 2023 to late 2024 these site surveys were undertaken to establish the site constraints to allow an informed site refinement to progress to Statutory Consultation in early 2025. Intrusive surveys such as geophysical and ALC surveys required further negotiations with the tenants and again voluntary access was agreed by all. During this period the process of developing a DCO application along what a DCO entails was reiterated. It was explained how a DCO application works and that a DCO is wider than simply a planning permission but can also include a range of powers including compulsory acquisition of land. It was also explained that the Applicant had a Generating License from Ofgem, which conveyed certain powers including those for entry for the purposes of survey. Whilst it was offered to compensate for any loss during the intrusive surveys. No claims were received as all access was closely arranged, often with daily contact, at a time suitable to the tenants, even if this meant a sub-optimal survey programme.

It was explained to tenants that the role of surveying the site was to understand the nature of the land and build a much fuller picture prior to Statutory Consultation. Prior to, and during, the Statutory Consultation period, tenants were met to discuss any location specific, as well as general, questions they may have had. Immediately prior to the start of Statutory Consultation the land agent and representatives for SNSE met with all tenants to commence discussions on commercial terms for the surrender of leases. This was followed by a further meeting in early April 2025, with the same attendees, to negotiate further.

