



Adequacy of Consultation Milestone Report

November 2025



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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1 This Adequacy of Consultation Milestone Report ('the Report') has been prepared on behalf of Meridian Solar Farm Limited (the 'Applicant') under the Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects¹ guidance dated 30th April 2024 (the 'Guidance').
- 1.1.2 The Applicant will apply to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 ('the Act') for a Development Consent Order ('DCO') for the Meridian Solar Farm ('the Scheme'). The Application is expected to be submitted in Q1 2026. In addition to the Guidance introduced in April 2024, the Planning Inspectorate issued the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus² ('the Prospectus') in May 2024. Both the Guidance and the Prospectus set out updated requirements for those wishing to apply for development consent.
- 1.1.3 The adequacy of consultation milestone provides the Applicant with an opportunity to outline the stages of consultation that have taken place to date and demonstrate compliance with the Statement of Community Consultation ('SoCC') and the Programme Document.
- 1.1.4 The Guidance describes the Report as "*a short statement of the elements of consultation which have been carried out compared with the components set out in the Programme Document and the SoCC*". The Report is intended to be submitted no later than around three months before submission of the Application. It is also described in the Guidance as an "*important opportunity to check that the pre-application programme is on track, and if it is seriously adrift the Planning Inspectorate will advise the applicant about the steps necessary to enable the application to be submitted having fulfilled the statutory requirements*".
- 1.1.5 The Guidance also states that the Report should include the views and any relevant supporting material from local authorities if available.
- 1.1.6 Under Section 55(4)(b) of the Act, at the acceptance stage, the Planning Inspectorate will seek the formal views from local authorities about the adequacy of consultation.
- 1.1.7 The Applicant has been committed to carrying out meaningful, statutory pre-application consultation and engagement with the local community and stakeholders in the vicinity of the Scheme, and has done so by going beyond the minimum requirements set out in the Act.
- 1.1.8 This Report provides an overview of the engagement and consultation activity to date and how this complied with the requirements of the Act.

¹ www.gov.uk/guidance/planning-act-2008-pre-application-stage-for-nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects

² www.gov.uk/guidance/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-2024-pre-application-prospectus

2. Scheme overview

2.1 The Proposed Scheme

- 2.1.1 This section outlines the Scheme as presented during statutory consultation, to reflect the information presented in the consultation outlined in this report. It is noted that minor changes to the Scheme design are being progressed for the DCO Application submission, largely to reflect inputs received at statutory consultation, other direct engagement with stakeholders and further technical and environmental surveys.
- 2.1.2 The Applicant also notes that, at the time of writing, a targeted consultation is being undertaken on the proposed changes. Further details of this are provided in Section 6 of this Report.
- 2.1.3 The land required for the proposed Application is located within the administrative boundaries of Lincolnshire County Council ('LCC') and South Holland District Council ('SHDC').
- 2.1.4 The Scheme comprises the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of PV solar panels and approximately 12 to 13 km of overhead line connection into National Grid's planned Weston Marsh substation (due to be located east of Spalding, with the exact location to be confirmed by National Grid).
- 2.1.5 The Scheme will also include associated infrastructure, including co-located BESS and inter-array connections to link together the land parcels where solar panels are located. The Scheme would have capacity to generate approximately 750 megawatts (MW) of electricity for export to the National Electricity Transmission System.
- 2.1.6 The solar PV panels and associated BESS would be located within four land parcels (A, B, C and D), referred to collectively as the PV area. The inter-array areas are the indicative areas within which connection cables (the 'inter-array connection') would link the land parcels of the PV area. The configuration of the inter-array connection would be either overhead lines (up to 132kV), underground cabling (up to 132kV) or a combination of both. The grid connection corridor is the area between the PV area and the proposed National Grid Weston Marsh substation in which a 400kV overhead line (the 'grid connection') will be located.

3. Consultation and engagement overview

3.1 Consultation approach

- 3.1.1 The Applicant has engaged with stakeholders and the community in line with the requirements set out in the Act, along with the Guidance on pre-application consultation published by the Government, as well as the Planning Inspectorate's Advice for Local Authorities (August 2024)³ on the role of local authorities in the development consent process, and Advice on EIA Notification and Consultation (September 2024)⁴.
- 3.1.2 The Applicant engaged and consulted with communities and stakeholders at an early stage of developing the Scheme. This provided an opportunity for people to give feedback and share local insights at a formative stage in the Scheme's development, ahead of an initial design being developed, which was then presented at the second stage of consultation.
- 3.1.3 The Applicant undertook a multi-staged programme of consultation and engagement to help build understanding, encourage greater participation in the development of the Scheme and provide opportunities for local views to influence the proposals:
- Early engagement: raising awareness and introducing the Scheme to the local community and stakeholders (see section 3.2).
 - Stage one (non-statutory) consultation: a six week consultation held between Thursday 30 May and Thursday 11 July 2024 (see section 3.3).
 - Stage two (statutory) consultation: a six week and four day consultation held between Thursday 24 April and Sunday 8 June 2025 (see section 3.4).

3.2 Early engagement

- 3.2.1 In advance of the early engagement period, the Applicant met with South Holland District Council ('SHDC') officers and members, and Lincolnshire County Council ('LCC') officers and members, to introduce and brief them on the Scheme prior to wider public engagement.
- 3.2.2 Initial briefing meetings with these stakeholders took place between September and December 2023.
- 3.2.3 The Applicant undertook a programme of initial engagement on the solar development areas in February 2024 to help raise awareness and introduce the Scheme to the local community and stakeholders. The first phase of engagement also aimed to:
- Engage early with the community and statutory consultees to incorporate technical advice and local knowledge into the Scheme's development
 - Brief local elected representatives and secure their support for the engagement approach;
 - Understand initial views and allow stakeholders to shape the Scheme through the design process; and
 - Provide an early indication of the Applicant's approach to consultation and the aspects of the Scheme for which feedback was sought.
- 3.2.4 The early engagement stage of the Scheme included:

³ www.gov.uk/guidance/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-for-local-authorities

⁴ www.gov.uk/guidance/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects-advice-on-eia-notification-and-consultation

- **A consultation newsletter:** this was delivered to 4,018 addresses in an identified Primary Consultation Zone (PCZ) around the solar PV development areas. The newsletter introduced the Scheme to local residents and provided information about the upcoming stage one consultation, including how to find out more and take part.
- **Launch of a Scheme website:** the website (www.meridiansolarfarm.co.uk) included information about the Scheme and upcoming engagement activities. This remained the key location for project documents and updates throughout the project lifecycle.
- **Delivery of in-person project briefings:** project briefings took place with the following stakeholders:
 - Sir John Hayes MP;
 - Crowland Parish Council;
 - Gedney Parish Council;
 - Sutton St Edmund Parish Council;
 - SHDC members and officers; and
 - LCC Leader, Deputy Leader, Ward Member, Spokes of Environment and Green Investment Committee, and officers.

3.2.5 During this stage of engagement, an informal 'Approach to Consultation' document was provided to officers at SHDC. This document offered a brief description of the objectives of the Scheme and the phases of activity, along with more detailed information about the upcoming stage one consultation. Feedback received on this document not only informed the approach taken to early engagement but also the preparation of the SoCC.

3.3 Stage one consultation

3.3.1 A six-week stage one (non-statutory) consultation took place between Thursday 30 May and Thursday 11 July 2024. The consultation provided members of the local community and key stakeholders an opportunity to learn more about the proposals and give their initial feedback at a formative stage.

3.3.2 To help facilitate and guide the engagement with the local community, the Primary Consultation Zone ('PCZ') comprising homes and businesses surrounding the proposed Scheme boundary was extended for the stage one consultation. This accounted for the updated Scheme boundary, which included options for the connection corridors between the PV area and National Grid's siting area for its Weston Marsh substation. The Applicant delivered the following activities as part of this stage of consultation:

- **Consultation newsletter:** a newsletter was issued to 6,810 addresses within the updated PCZ. This provided details of the consultation, including details of how to attend the events and provide feedback.
- **Community and stakeholder letters:** letters were sent via email to the local MP, councillors, parish councillors, media, and identified community groups to inform them of the consultation and provide information about how to take part and provide feedback. The consultation newsletter was attached to these emails to ensure all stakeholders received a copy.
- **Public events:** the Applicant held three in-person events which provided an opportunity for consultees to learn about the project, engage with the project team and ask questions. In total, there were 233 attendees across all four events.

- **Press release:** a press release was shared with local newspaper publications to share details of the Scheme and the consultation with a wider audience beyond the PCZ. The press release included details about the proposals and the consultation.
- **Adverts:** a consultation advert was published in print and digitally in local newspapers *The Spalding & South Holland Voice*, and *Lincolnshire Echo*, which provided an overview of the Scheme, details about the consultation, and contact details for how to get in touch with the project.

- 3.3.3 To support the consultation events, the Applicant produced information banners to explain the early proposals, which were on display at the three in-person events. Digital copies of the information banners were also hosted on the Scheme website.
- 3.3.4 The Applicant also produced a feedback form which was available in hard copy on request and at the in-person events. This could be submitted digitally on the Scheme website or returned via the Freepost address. The Applicant received 427 responses to the stage one consultation which helped to shape the more detailed proposals that were shared at the stage two consultation.
- 3.3.5 The Applicant also held a collaboration workshop on 5 June 2024 with parish councils, technical stakeholders and local authority representatives, prior to the six-week stage one consultation period. The workshop session provided an opportunity for the Applicant to introduce the red line boundary areas, share further details about the proposals, clarify the consultation approach and create focused engagement.
- 3.3.6 A high-level summary of the feedback received during the stage one consultation was collated into a newsletter that was sent via email to stakeholders. It was also published on the Scheme website⁵.
- 3.3.7 A more detailed summary of the key themes that arose during the consultation and information regarding how the Scheme has taken them into account is available in the stage two consultation information booklet⁶.

3.4 Stage two consultation

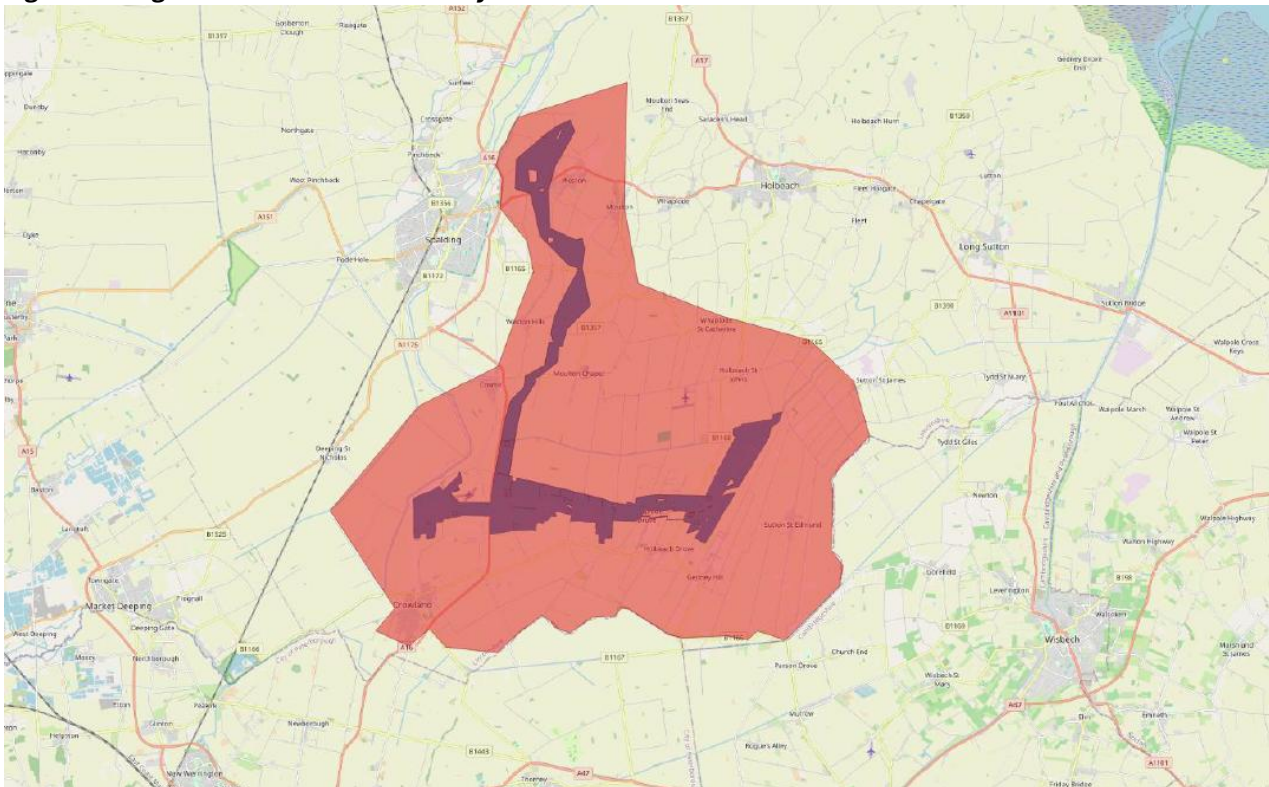
- 3.4.1 A stage two (statutory) consultation was held from Thursday 24 April until Sunday 8 June 2025, running for six weeks and four days to take account of bank holidays during this period. The consultation provided an opportunity for the Applicant to present the initial Scheme design and seek further feedback from consultees.
- 3.4.2 The primary aim was to ensure that the community, landowners, stakeholders and technical consultees had the opportunity to review, comment on, and influence aspects of the proposals before submission of the DCO application.
- 3.4.3 Under Section 47 of the Act, the Applicant has a duty to consult people living in the vicinity of the proposals. To help facilitate and guide the engagement with the local community, the PCZ was updated following the stage one consultation.
- 3.4.4 As part of the updated design presented during the stage two consultation, the connection corridor boundary north of the A151 was extended slightly west. As a result, the PCZ was also extended west up to the A16.

⁵ <https://meridiansolarfarm.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Meridian-non-statutory-consultation-summary.pdf>

⁶ <https://meridiansolarfarm.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/stage-two-consultation/Meridian%20Solar%20-%20stage%20two%20consultation%20information%20booklet.pdf>

- 3.4.5 Overall, the PCZ extended up to 2km from the Scheme boundary, incorporating the settlements of Crowland, Cowbit, Weston, Moulton, Moulton Chapel, Whalpole St Catherine, Whaplode Drove, Holbeach Drove, Gedney Hill, and Sutton St Edmund. It also follows existing landmarks and roads, thereby avoiding intersecting residential streets, or established communities.
- 3.4.6 In total, 6,828 addresses were identified within the revised PCZ and were all sent a consultation newsletter to notify them of the launch of the stage two consultation. In advance of any mailings to the PCZ, elected members of Parish, District and County and Constituency offices were notified via email to ensure stakeholders were kept up to date on the Scheme's development, and the materials that were entering the public domain.
- 3.4.7 Figure 1 below shows the PCZ for the stage two consultation. The Scheme boundary presented at the stage two consultation is marked in purple and the PCZ is shown in red.

Figure 1: Stage two consultation Primary Consultation Zone



- 3.4.8 In addition to the PCZ, the Applicant consulted with the following groups:

- Statutory consultees (see Appendix C), such as:
 - Landowners with interest in the Scheme;
 - Local authorities (host and neighbouring);
 - Technical stakeholders; and
 - Parish councils (host and neighbouring parish councils), and
- Non-statutory consultees (see Appendix D), such as
 - Community groups;
 - Environmental groups in the vicinity of the Scheme;
 - Seldom-heard groups; and
 - Members of Parliament.

- 3.4.9 The Applicant recognised that people who live and work beyond the PCZ may have an interest in the Scheme proposals and would like to participate in the stage two consultation. The Applicant was committed to ensuring that individuals, communities, and organisations could take part in the consultation and raised awareness of the consultation and therefore used several digital and non-digital methods as outlined in Table 1.
- 3.4.10 Copies of the various consultation documents will be provided with the Consultation Report submitted with the DCO application, as comprehensive evidence of the consultation undertaken.

Table 1: Stage two consultation engagement methods

Method	Detail
Consultation newsletter	<p>A consultation newsletter was posted via Royal Mail to all properties within the PCZ to notify them of the launch of the stage two consultation. It was also issued via email to wider consultees, including community groups and interested parties who had signed up to the Scheme's mailing list.</p> <p>The newsletter was hosted on the Scheme website and provided an overview of the proposals, a map of the Scheme, and details of the consultation, including the date and location of the events and how to provide feedback.</p>
Press release	<p>A press release was sent to five local media outlets that covered the Scheme site and beyond with instruction to publish on the day of the consultation launch. The press release provided wider notification to local stakeholders of the consultation events, reaching stakeholders outside of the PCZ.</p>
Emails and Section 42, 44 and 47 stakeholder letters	<p>Emails were sent to Section 42, 44 and 47 stakeholders, where email addresses were known, to inform them about the launch of the stage two consultation, advertise the upcoming events and explain how to provide feedback.</p> <p>All Section 42 and 44 consultees were also sent personalised letters via post on 24 April 2025 which a copy of the Section 48 notice and a map of the Scheme boundary. The letters informed consultees about the stage two consultation and invited them to provide their feedback.</p>
Consultation website	<p>The Scheme website was updated on the launch of the stage two consultation to include all of the consultation materials on the 'Documents' page.</p> <p>Details of the proposals, consultation events, and information on how to provide feedback on the proposals were also published on a dedicated 'Consultation' page.</p> <p>An interactive map of the Scheme, which allowed users to zoom in and out of areas of interest to them and read more about certain design aspects, was available on 'The Scheme' page of the website.</p> <p>A virtual consultation room was also added to the 'Consultation' page of the Scheme website ahead of the first consultation event. This replicated the information on display at in-person events in a digital format. Users could navigate the information banners, maps and consultation materials online, providing another interactive method for people to engage with the consultation.</p>

Method	Detail
Statutory notices and adverts	<p>Statutory notices to publicise the consultation and the SoCC were published in local and national news publications in advance of the consultation launching.</p> <p>The Applicant also published adverts in the local media prior to commencement of the consultation period.</p>
Information points	<p>Hard copies of the consultation information booklet, consultation newsletter and feedback form were available to take home from five local information points located within proximity to the Scheme site.</p> <p>A copy of the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) (see Section 4), the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the PEIR were also available to view at one of these locations.</p>
In-person consultation events	<p>The Applicant held three in-person consultation events for anyone with an interest in the Scheme to attend, find out more about the proposals and discuss the proposals with the project team. In-person events were held at venues within the PCZ and publicised in the consultation materials.</p>
Online information presentations	<p>The Applicant published two online information presentations during the consultation period. The first provided an overview of the proposals and where to find out more information.</p> <p>The second included project team members responding to some of the common questions asked during the consultation period in video format. This was produced in an engaging format and aimed to further support people understand the proposals ahead of submitting their consultation feedback.</p>
Stakeholder briefings	<p>Briefings with stakeholders were offered prior to the stage two consultation launch and took place throughout the consultation period. Briefings were conducted both in-person and online.</p>

3.4.11 Table 2 details the documents that were made available as part of the stage two consultation.

Table 2: Stage two consultation documents

Method	Detail
Consultation newsletter	Provided a high-level overview of the Scheme, of the consultation events and how people could get involved. The newsletter indicated where the relevant project information could be found and publicised the consultation events, including locations, dates, and times. This was sent to all homes and businesses within the PCZ and was available on the consultation website, at the consultation events, information points, and on request by post.
Consultation information booklet	<p>Included the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a summary of the proposals; • details of how people could take part in the consultation; • information on the potential benefits and impacts of the Scheme; • proposed mitigations to any potential impacts; and • and the timeline for the proposals. <p>Hard copies were available at consultation events, information points, and on request by post.</p>
Feedback form	Allowed people to provide feedback on the proposals. The questionnaire could be completed online or downloaded if required and sent into the consultation via Freepost. Paper copies were available at consultation events, information points, and on request by post.
PEIR and NTS	The PEIR contained a description of the Scheme, a preliminary assessment of the likely significant environmental effects, and the initial strategies to mitigate these effects. The PEIR was based on information available at the time . An NTS of the PEIR was available for download from the project website. Paper copies of the PEIR and NTS were available at consultation events and in one local information point, Crowland Library, for reference.
Interactive map	Located online, the interactive map allowed users to search for areas of interest to them and included explanations of the individual Scheme elements.
SoCC	Available online as part of the consultation, in paper format at consultation events and in one local information point, Crowland Library, for reference.
Virtual consultation room	Located online, the virtual consultation room provided the scheme information in the same format as was presented at the in-person consultation events.

3.4.12 Respondents were able to provide their feedback in the following ways:

- Completing a feedback form online at www.meridiansolarfarm.co.uk
- Completing a feedback form, and returning it free of charge to FREEPOST DOWNING MERIDIAN (no stamp required)
- Submitting completed feedback form by email to enquiries@meridiansolar.co.uk
- Providing freeform comments by email or post.

3.5 Landowner engagement

- 3.5.1 As set out in Section 44 of the Act, the Applicant is required to consult with three categories of person under Section 42(1)(d): (1) landowners, lessees, tenants, occupiers; (2) those with other interests in the land or have a power to sell and convey the land or release the land; and (3) those who may be entitled to make a claim for compensation as a result of the Scheme.
- 3.5.2 Ahead of the stage two consultation, the Applicant carried out a diligent inquiry to identify all persons with an interest in land within the categories set out in Section 44 of the Act. This included reviewing the public data (e.g. the Land Registry), sending out a Land Interest Questionnaire, undertaking site visits and erecting site notices.
- 3.5.3 In the event of unknown landowners, the Applicant initially erected site notices for unregistered land and made site visits to query ownership with locals. The Applicant also contacted persons with an interest in land (PILs) using identified contact details to query the ownership of any adjoining land.
- 3.5.4 A letter was issued to all Section 44 stakeholders at the launch of the consultation, which explained why they have been contacted in their capacity as a person with an interest in land, details about the consultation and how they could take part, a copy of the Section 48 notice and a copy of the Scheme boundary plan.
- 3.5.5 All persons identified as having an interest in land within the Scheme boundary, or affected by the Scheme, were identified and notified of the statutory consultation, in accordance with Section 42 of the Act.
- 3.5.6 The Applicant continues their diligent enquiry so that new PILs are identified at the earliest opportunity and such persons will be listed in the Book of Reference, which will be submitted as part of the DCO application.

3.6 Compliance under Section 42 of the Act

- 3.6.1 The Applicant consulted with the prescribed bodies pursuant to Section 42(1)(a) of the Act. The Applicant identified prescribed consultees with careful reference to:
- Schedule 1 of the 'The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009' ('APFP Regulations')); and
 - the list of consultation bodies in Appendix 1 of the EIA Scoping Opinion adopted by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) pursuant to Regulation 10 of the EIA Regulations dated 20 March 2024.
- 3.6.2 Section 42(1)(b) of the Act states that applicants must consult all local authorities which fall within one of the categories detailed in section 43 as follows:
- "B" Authorities (a unitary or district council in which the project is located);
 - "A" Authorities (a unitary or district council which borders a "B" authority);
 - "C" Authorities (a county council in which the project is located); and
 - "D" Authorities (a unitary or district council which borders a "C" authority).
- 3.6.3 In accordance with Section 42(1)(b) of the Act, Table 3 shows the local authorities that were consulted under section 43.

Table 3: Local authorities consulted under section 43

Organisation	Category
North Kesteven District Council	A
South Kesteven District Council	A
Boston Borough Council	A
King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Council	A
Fenland District Council	A
South Holland District Council	B
Lincolnshire County Council	C
North East Lincolnshire Council	D
North Lincolnshire Council	D
Norfolk County Council	D
Peterborough City Council	D
Nottinghamshire County Council	D
Leicestershire County Council	D
Cambridgeshire County Council	D

3.6.4 Consultation letters were sent via post to all Section 42 consultees which arrived on the day of the consultation launch (see Appendix C). The letters notified consultees about the launch of the consultation, identified where consultees could view the consultation materials, explained how consultees could respond to the consultation, and confirmed the deadline for providing feedback. The letters provided a link to the consultation website where all of the consultation documents could be downloaded. Enclosed was a copy of the Section 48 notice and a plan of the Scheme boundary.

3.6.5 For the Section 42 consultees that we also had email addresses for, an email also was sent to them on 24 April 2025, in addition to the letter they would receive in the post to notify them that the stage two consultation was officially open. A copy of the letter they would receive via post was attached to the email.

3.7 Compliance under Section 48 of the Act

3.7.1 As per Regulation 4 of the APFP Regulations, the Applicant was required to publish the Section 48 notice:

- for at least two successive weeks in one or more local newspapers circulating in the vicinity in which the proposed development would be situated;
- once in a national newspaper; and
- once in the London Gazette.

3.7.2 In accordance with Regulation 4(2) of the APFP Regulations, the Applicant published a notice as required by Section 48 of the Act for the stage two consultation in the following newspapers on the following dates:

- Spalding and South Holland Voice: Thursday 17 April and Thursday 24 April 2025
- The Guardian: Thursday 24 April 2025

- London Gazette: Thursday 24 April 2025.

- 3.7.3 The Section 48 notice included all details prescribed by Regulation 4(3) APFP Regulations, and a copy of the notice was sent to all Section 42 consultees, including the consultation bodies as an enclosure to the Section 42 letters for the statutory consultation.
- 3.7.4 The Consultation Report will outline in greater detail how the Applicant identified and consulted with the relevant prescribed bodies and local authorities as required under Section 42 and how it publicised the application in line with the requirements of Section 47 and 48 of the Act.

3.8 Compliance under section 46 of the Act

- 3.8.1 Prior to the stage two consultation, the Applicant notified the Planning Inspectorate of its intention to consult under Section 42 and supplied relevant information in relation to the proposed Scheme.
- 3.8.2 The notification was sent to the Planning Inspectorate electronically on 23 April 2025 and included a copy of the Section 42 and 44 consultation letters, a copy of the Scheme Development Area Boundary Plan and copy of the Section 48 notice.
- 3.8.3 Following an initial non-delivery, an additional notification was issued on 8 May 2025. The Planning Inspectorate accepted the notice on 9 May 2025 and clarified that the Applicant had complied with the requirements under Section 46 of the Act.

4. Developing the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

4.1 Developing the SoCC

- 4.1.1 Ahead of the stage two consultation, a SoCC was prepared, consulted on, and published following the process in accordance with section 47 of the Act and Regulation 12 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the “EIA Regulations”).
- 4.1.2 The SoCC set out how the Applicant planned to consult with the local community on its proposals for the Scheme.
- 4.1.3 Following the close of stage one consultation, the Applicant began preparing the SoCC, which was developed from the aforementioned Approach to Consultation document previously shared with SHDC.

4.2 SoCC consultation

- 4.2.1 LCC and SHDC are the relevant host local authorities for the Scheme under s43(1) of the Act. The Applicant carried out early engagement with these host authorities on the approach to statutory consultation, before formally consulting them on the draft SoCC over a 28-day period.
- 4.2.2 The Applicant also shared the draft SoCC with the following neighbouring local planning authorities for Information purposes only: South Kesteven District Council, Boston Borough Council, King’s Lynn and West Norfolk District Council, Fenland District Council, Peterborough City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Leicestershire County Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, Norfolk County Council.
- 4.2.3 The draft SoCC was sent to the host authorities on Thursday 31 October 2024, with a deadline for responses set for Friday 29 November 2024. LCC provided comments via email on 20 November 2024 and SHDC responded on 28 November 2024 to confirm it was happy with the consultation proposals.
- 4.2.4 Following the SoCC consultation, the Applicant reviewed and incorporated the feedback received where possible. Table 4 below outlines the key feedback received from the host and neighbouring authorities along with the Applicant’s response.

Table 4: Summary of local authority responses to the SoCC

Local Authority	Comment	Regard had
Lincolnshire County Council	Some confusion over the number of online events – there are references to both one and two online events.	The Applicant updated the SoCC to confirm it would hold three face-to-face consultation events and two online information presentations during the consultation period.
	Local information points – there needs to be more options, consider other libraries in the area, for example Holbeach and Spalding. Also, community centres, options include Tonic Health’s hubs in Spalding and Holbeach.	<p>The Applicant reviewed the local information points and confirmed it would deposit consultation materials in additional local information points, including Spalding Library, Holbeach Library, Tonic Health Centre Spalding and Tonic Health Centre Holbeach.</p> <p>The Applicant confirmed it would place hard copies of all the consultation materials in one information point, Crowland Library, including copies of the consultation information booklet, feedback form and consultation newsletter to take away. A copy of the PEIR, NTS and SoCC would be available to view only.</p> <p>In the other deposit locations, the Applicant confirmed it would place hard copies of the consultation information booklet, feedback form and consultation newsletter to take away.</p>
	Community consultation events, these seem to be spread across the area and at a range of times to allow maximum participation. However, must ensure that these venues are accessible to all.	The Applicant confirmed all the proposed consultation venues had suitable wheelchair accesses and were situated in locations accessible to local communities.
	Suggestion to rephrase “Hard to reach groups” to “Seldom heard groups”. Other community organisations mentioned to contact at consultation launch included Tonic Health in Spalding and Holbeach, and Spalding and District u3a.	<p>The Applicant updated the language in the final version of the SoCC to reflect “seldom heard groups”.</p> <p>The organisations mentioned by LCC were also added into Appendix 4 ‘Community stakeholders’ and were written to at consultation launch.</p>
South Holland District Council	We have read through the draft SOCC and are happy with what has been proposed including the location and number of exhibitions and information points.	Noted.
Fenland District Council	No comments to make at this stage.	Noted.

4.3 Publicity under Section 47 of the Act

- 4.3.1 In compliance with the publicity requirements of s47(6) of the Act, the SoCC was published in local news publications in advance of the consultation launch. This notice provided information on how the Applicant intended to engage with stakeholders and local communities during the upcoming stage two consultation.
- 4.3.2 A Section 47 notice was published in the Spalding and South Holland Voice on Thursday 17 April and Thursday 24 April 2025.
- 4.3.3 Hard copies of the SoCC were placed at the following information points for the duration of the stage two consultation period for reference:
- Crowland Hub and Library, Hall Street, Crowland, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE6 0EW
 - Spalding Library, Victoria Street, Spalding PE11 1EA
 - Holbeach Library, Co-Op Store, 5 Fleet Street, Holbeach, Spalding PE12 7AX
 - Tonic Health Centre Spalding, 6 Broadgate House, Westlode Street, Spalding PE11 2AF
 - Tonic Health Centre Holbeach, Holbeach Hub, Boston Road South, Holbeach PE12 7LR
- 4.3.4 The SoCC was also made available in hard copy at each of the consultation events held during the consultation period, and a digital version was available on the Scheme website from the day the consultation was launched.

4.4 Compliance with the SoCC

- 4.4.1 Table 5 below shows how the stage two consultation was undertaken in compliance with the SoCC, as per the requirements of Section 47(7) of the Act.
- 4.4.2 The Consultation Report and its supporting appendices will provide comprehensive evidence of compliance with the SoCC consultation process, including details of how all feedback was taken into account.

Table 5: Compliance of the stage two consultation with the SoCC

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
SoCC		
1.2	Consult with and have had regard to comments received from South Holland District Council and Lincolnshire County Council authorities on the SoCC.	A 28-day consultation was held with local authorities on the SoCC between 31 October and 29 November 2024. All comments received were considered and addressed within the final version of the SoCC that was published at the launch of the stage two consultation.
1.2	Publish a notice in the Spalding Voice to provide details of where the SoCC can be inspected.	The SoCC publication schedule was published, in accordance with section 47 and 48 of the Act in the following publications: Section 47 and 48 notice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spalding Voice (Thursday 17 April 2025 and Thursday 24 April 2025) Section 48 notice:

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Guardian (Thursday 24 April 2025) • London Gazette (Thursday 24 April 2025)
1.2	Neighbouring local planning authorities will receive the SoCC for information purposes only.	<p>The SoCC was shared with the following neighbouring local planning authorities for information purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Kesteven District Council • Boston Borough Council • King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Council • Fenland District Council • Peterborough City Council • Nottinghamshire County Council • Leicestershire County Council • Cambridgeshire County Council • Norfolk County Council.
Consultation		
6.1	In advance of any mailings to the PCZ, elected members of Parish, District, County and Constituency offices were notified via email.	An email was issued to elected members of Parish, District, County and Constituency offices on 24 April 2025 to confirm that the consultation period had opened and included a link to all consultation materials.
6.1	The 6,828 addresses that were identified in the PCZ will be directly notified about the consultation.	<p>Under Section 47 of the Act, the Applicant has a duty to consult people living in the vicinity of the land that is required for the Application.</p> <p>All properties within PCZ were sent a copy of the newsletter via Royal Mail delivery service at the start of the stage two consultation period.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that the PCZ increased from 6,810 addresses during the stage one consultation. This change reflects an extension to the connection corridor boundary north of the A151, which was extended slightly further west.</p>
6.2	The stage two consultation will run for six weeks from 24 April to 8 June 2025.	The stage two consultation took place from 24 April until 8 June 2025. This is in excess of the statutory minimum period of 28-days required by the Act.
6.3	The Applicant will seek feedback on all aspects of the Scheme	A comprehensive 12-page feedback form was developed to encourage comments on all key aspects of the

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
		<p>Scheme. This included, but was not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General comments on the overall Scheme • The updated plans for the land parcel sites, including the indicative location of equipment and infrastructure within each • The connection corridor between the land parcels and connection at National Grid’s proposed Weston Marsh substation • The indicative alignment for the overhead line within the grid connection corridor • The measures proposed to reduce the impacts associated with the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the Scheme • Suggestions on how Meridian Solar can benefit the local community; and • Any other feedback or local issues and sensitivities of which the Applicant should be aware. <p>In addition to the Feedback Form, consultees could provide their feedback via any of the permitted feedback channels, including contacting the project team via the dedicated email address, phone number of Freepost.</p>
6.4	<p>Will consult the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authorities; • Residents and businesses; • Landowners with interest in the Scheme; • Parish Councils; • Community groups; • Environmental groups in the vicinity of the Scheme; • Schools and colleges within the vicinity of the Scheme; • Seldom heard groups; • Statutory consultees; • Non-statutory consultees; and 	<p>All the community groups outlined in Appendix 4 of the SoCC were consulted. All statutory consultee groups were contained within the Section 42 consultation list and consulted. Further details will be included in the Consultation Report.</p>

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of Parliament and Local Government 	
Consultation materials		
6.5	<p>The Applicant will use a range of methods to ensure that the consultation is inclusive and accessible for a broad range of stakeholder audiences.</p> <p>Non-digital methods are being used alongside the digital medium to provide alternative means for consultees to engage with the Scheme.</p>	<p>Emails were sent to the following stakeholders on the day of the consultation launch to provide them of details about the consultation and a link to the consultation materials which were hosted on the Scheme website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 47 stakeholders, including local community groups and the Scheme mailing list Section 42 stakeholders that we obtained email addresses for. This included local Parish and District councillors. Section 44 stakeholders that we obtained email addresses for. <p>In addition to the website, hard copies of materials were also available upon request. Hard copies were also available to view at the in-person events and at five local information points.</p>
6.5	<p>Upload two online information presentations to the Scheme website during the consultation period. The first presentation will provide an overview of our proposals and where to find out more information. The second presentation will be uploaded after the in-person events and will provide a summary of the main questions we were asked and responses to them.</p>	<p>Two presentations were uploaded during the consultation period. The first provided an overview of the proposals and where to find out more information.</p> <p>The second included project team members responding to some of the common questions asked during the consultation period in video format. This was produced in an engaging format and aimed to further support people to understand the proposals ahead of submitting their consultation feedback.</p>
6.5	<p>A Consultation Newsletter will be sent to all homes and businesses within the PCZ and is available on the consultation website, at our consultation events, information points, and on request by post.</p>	<p>The Consultation Newsletter was sent via Royal Mail to all properties located within the PCZ. It was also attached to the emails that were issued to stakeholders on the day of the consultation launch.</p> <p>The newsletter was uploaded to the consultation website on the day of the</p>

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
		<p>consultation launch and hard copies were available at all in-person events and at each of the five information points. The Applicant carried out regular checks to ensure stock levels at the information points were high throughout the stage two consultation period.</p> <p>The newsletter was also available in hard copy to those that requested it. Hard copies were posted via Royal Mail.</p>
6.5	A Consultation Newsletter will be sent to all homes and businesses within the PCZ and is available on the consultation website, at our consultation events, information points, and on request by post.	<p>The Consultation Newsletter was sent via Royal Mail to all homes and businesses located within the PCZ. It was also attached to the emails that were issued to stakeholders on the day of the consultation launch.</p> <p>The newsletter was uploaded to the Scheme website on the day of the consultation launch and hard copies were available at all in-person events and at each of the five information points. Throughout the consultation period, weekly stock checks of the materials in information points were carried out and replenished where necessary.</p> <p>The newsletter was also available in hard copy to those who requested it. Hard copies were posted via Royal Mail.</p>
6.5	Hard copies of the Consultation Information Booklet are available at our consultation events, information points, and on request by post.	<p>Hard copies of the Consultation Information Booklet were available at all in-person events and at each of the five information points. Throughout the consultation period, weekly stock checks of the materials in information points were carried out and replenished where necessary.</p> <p>The Consultation Information Booklet was also available in hard copy to those who requested it. Hard copies were posted via Royal Mail.</p>
6.5	The Feedback Form can be completed online or downloaded if required and sent into the consultation via Freepost. Paper copies of the	Digital and hard copy versions of the Feedback Form were created for the consultation. The Scheme website included a link to the online Feedback

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
	Feedback Form will be available at our consultation events, information points, and on request by post.	<p>Form, which could be completed and submitted directly. The website also included a link to a non-digital version of the Feedback Form that could be downloaded, printed, completed and then submitted via Freepost.</p> <p>Hard copies of the Feedback Form were available at all in-person events and at each of the five information points. The Applicant carried weekly checks to ensure stock levels at the information points were high throughout the consultation period. On 9 May 2025, the Applicant checked stock levels and replenished consultation materials at Crowland Library, Spalding Library, and Tonic Health Centre. A further restock was undertaken at Spalding Library on 23 May 2025</p> <p>The feedback form was also available in hard copy to those that requested it. Hard copies were posted via Royal Mail.</p>
6.5	<p>The NTS of the PEIR is available for download from the project website.</p> <p>Paper copies of the PEIR and NTS are available at our consultation events and in one local information point, Crowland Library, for reference.</p>	<p>The PEIR and the NTS of the PEIR were both uploaded to the Scheme website, and available to download, on the day of the consultation launch.</p> <p>Hard copies of both were available to read at all in-person events, and were hosted at Crowland Library for the duration of the consultation period for anyone to view.</p>
6.5	The SoCC document will be available online as part of the consultation and is available in paper format at our consultation events and in one local information point.	<p>The SoCC was uploaded to the Scheme website, and available to download, on the day of the consultation launch.</p> <p>Hard copies of the SoCC were available to read at all in-person events, and was hosted at Crowland Library for the duration of the consultation period for anyone to view.</p>
6.5	At the start of the consultation period, hard copies of consultation materials were deposited in local information points located in the vicinity of the Scheme.	Hard copies of the consultation materials were deposited at local information points on the day of the consultation and remained there until the close of the consultation period.

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
		<p>The location of the information points were as follows:</p> <p>Crowland Library, Hall Street, Crowland PE6 0EW</p> <p>Materials to take away:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage two consultation information booklet • Feedback form; and • Consultation newsletter. • Materials for reference only: • PEIR • NTS; and • SoCC. <p>Spalding Library, Victoria Street, Spalding PE11 1EA</p> <p>Materials to take away:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage two consultation information booklet • Feedback form; and • Consultation newsletter. <p>Holbeach Library, Co-Op Store, 5 Fleet Street, Holbeach, Spalding PE12 7AX</p> <p>Materials to takeaway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage two consultation information booklet • Feedback form; and • Consultation newsletter. <p>Tonic Health Centre Spalding, 6 Broadgate House, Westlode Street, Spalding PE11 2AF</p> <p>Materials to takeaway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage two consultation information booklet • Feedback form; and • Consultation newsletter. <p>Tonic Health Centre Holbeach, Holbeach Hub, Boston Road South, Holbeach PE12 7LR</p> <p>Materials to takeaway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage two consultation information booklet • Feedback form; and • Consultation newsletter.

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
6.5	The consultation materials are available in hard copy for individuals at no extra charge (except the PEIR and NTS, hard copies of which can be requested for a charge of £0.35 per page to cover printing and posting costs). If you require this information in an alternative format, such as Braille, large print or alternative languages, please contact us using the details in this SoCC.	There were no requests for printed copies of materials that required a printing or postage charge, or request for information to be provided in an alternative format.
6.6	The public will be able to participate in, and respond to, the consultation through various methods.	<p>The public could take part in the stage two consultation in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By attending one of the three in-person events hosted in an exhibition format at locations across the PCZ • By watching the two online information presentations, to learn about the Scheme and consultation materials • By visiting the Scheme website and accessing the materials • By using the interactive Scheme map, which was hosted on the website for users to engage with elements of the Scheme by zooming, dragging and clicking to reveal more information • By visiting one of the five information points at community venues to host copies of consultation materials and signposting to feedback channels • Providing feedback via any of the feedback channels provided • Contacting the project team, including via a dedicated email address, phone number or Freepost.
Promoting the consultation		
6.7	A local media press release will provide wider notification to local stakeholders of the consultation events, reaching stakeholders outside the consultation mailing zone. The press release would be briefed into local and regional media outlets.	<p>A press release was issued to the following publications ahead of the stage two consultation launch, for publication on the day the consultation commenced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Spalding and South Holland Voice

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LincsOnline • Lincolnshire Live • Lincolnshire Echo • Peterborough Telegraph. <p>The publications covered the PCZ and beyond to secure a wider coverage. It included information about the consultation including details of the in-person events and how people could view the materials and provide their feedback.</p>
6.7	Emails will be sent to stakeholders informing them of the statutory consultation launch, upcoming events, how to request further information, and how to feed back.	<p>Emails were sent to the following stakeholders on the day of the consultation launch to provide notification that the stage two consultation had formally launched, provide details about the events, how to provide feedback and how to get in touch with the project team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Planning Inspectorate • Section 47 stakeholders, including local community groups and those on the Scheme mailing list • Section 42 statutory consultees that we obtained email addresses for. This included local Parish and District councillors; and • Section 44 land interests where an email address could be identified.
6.7	Statutory notices to publicise the consultation and the SoCC will be published in local and national news publications.	<p>Statutory notices were published in the following publications, in accordance with Section 47 and 48 of the PA2008, to confirm details of the stage two consultation and the SoCC:</p> <p>Section 47 and 48 notice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spalding Voice (17 April 2025 and Thursday 24 April 2025) <p>Section 48 notice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Guardian (24 April 2025) • London Gazette (24 April 2025)
6.7	The Applicant will run adverts in the local media during the consultation period. The adverts are designed in a clear, accessible format, clearly communicating what the consultation is about, when it is running and how to take part.	<p>A newspaper advert was published in the Spalding and South Holland Voice and the Peterborough Telegraph publications on the day of the stage two consultation launch.</p> <p>The adverts provided an overview of the consultation including the location</p>

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
		of the in-person events, details of how to provide feedback and a QR code linking to the Scheme website.
6.7	Briefings with key political stakeholders have been offered to provide an opportunity for early feedback and input.	<p>Prior to the launch of stage two consultation, stakeholder briefings were offered to the Member of Parliament for South Holland and The Deepings, Lincolnshire County Council, Spalding and South Holland District Council officers and members, mayoral candidates (as the local Mayoral elections took place near the start of the consultation launch), and Parish Councillors of the following Parish Councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crowland • Fleet • Cowbit • Weston • The Moultons • Holbeach • Whaplode • Sutton St Edmund; and • Gedney Hill. <p>The briefings were offered to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to discuss the Scheme with the project team and provide their input.</p>
6.7	<p>Three in-person events are being held at venues within the PCZ and publicised alongside online events in the Scheme launch newsletter, site notices, adverts and press releases.</p> <p>Events will be open for six hours, with one event held on a Saturday, and weekday event times running until 8pm to allow people to attend outside of normal working hours.</p>	<p>In person events took place at the following venues, located with reference to the PCZ and in areas near the land parcels and along the grid connection corridor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutton St Edmund Village Hall, Saturday 10 May 2025, 10:30-16:30 • Crowland Snowden Pavillion, Wednesday 21 May 2025, 14:00-20:00 • Weston Village Hall, Thursday 22 May 2025, 14:00-20:00
6.7.1	The Applicant will upload two online information presentations to the Scheme website during the consultation period.	<p>Two presentations were uploaded during the consultation period. The first provided an overview of the proposals and where to find out more information.</p> <p>The second included project team members responding to some of the</p>

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
		common questions asked during the consultation period in video format. This was produced in an engaging format and aimed to further support people to understand the proposals ahead of submitting their consultation feedback.
Contact channels		
6.7.2	People will be able to find out about the consultation, ask questions and request documents through the Scheme Freephone number and email address which have remained the same from the non-statutory consultation.	<p>A dedicated contact centre was created at the stage one consultation which remained open throughout the stage two consultation and beyond. People were able to contact the project team through the following channels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calling the Freephone line 0800 652 6120 (9:00am to 5:30pm, Monday to Friday) • Emailing enquiries@meridiansolar.co.uk; and • Writing to the Scheme: FREEPOST DOWNING MERIDIAN (no stamp required).
Wider engagement		
6.8	Ongoing engagement has been undertaken ahead of the launch of the consultation with relevant stakeholders including local authorities and MPs, technical stakeholders such as Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency, along with local interest groups, residents, and landowners who get in touch.	<p>All relevant local and parish councils, elected members for the county, and the MP South Holland and The Deepings were contacted at the launch of the stage two consultation and were kept informed about the Scheme.</p> <p>As part of this engagement, the Applicant encouraged stakeholders to contact the project team to arrange briefing meetings to discuss the Scheme. The Applicant subsequently met with the following stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MP South Holland and The Deepings • SHDC (Officers) • LCC (Officers) • SHDC (Members) • LCC (Members) • Crowland Parish Council • Whaplode Parish Council; and, • Cowbit Parish Council.

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
		<p>Stakeholders were also encouraged to share information about the consultation with members of their constituencies or local communities.</p> <p>Technical stakeholders were kept informed ahead of the stage two consultation as part of regular ongoing engagement.</p>
6.9	<p>To ensure that seldom heard groups are encouraged to get involved in the consultation, the materials are prepared to be accessible and clear.</p>	<p>The Applicant carried out the following activities to ensure engagement with seldom heard groups was as accessible as possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held events at a variety of times, including evenings and a weekend, to enable participation from people with different time commitments • Made provision for people who do not have access to the internet or are isolated by sending a community newsletter to every address within the PCZ and making key materials such as the consultation information booklet and feedback form available at information points • Chose accessible venues for local information points and in person events, where possible, side rooms at venues were also available allow communication in a quiet environment • Providing materials in alternative formats such as Braille or alternative languages, on request • Contacted local community and voluntary organisations including parish councils and schools with Scheme information and encouraging them to promote the consultation through their own existing communication channels • Provided a variety of communication channels including a Freephone number, email address and Freepost address for those seeking information. <p>In addition to properties within the PCZ, seldom heard groups that were</p>

Section of SoCC	SoCC Commitment	Compliance
		contacted are listed in Appendix 4 of the SoCC.
Feedback		
6.10	Feedback to the consultation should be submitted in writing or online to the by 11:59pm on Sunday 8 June 2025	<p>Consultation feedback could be submitted to the Scheme using the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing a feedback form online at www.meridiansolarfarm.co.uk • Completing a feedback form, and returning it free of charge to FREEPOST DOWNING MERIDIAN (no stamp required) • Submitting completed feedback form by email to enquiries@meridiansolar.co.uk • Providing free form comments by email or post.
6.11	The Applicant will have regard to all feedback received during the consultation period.	<p>Following the close of the consultation at 11:59pm on Sunday 8 June 2025, the Applicant reviewed all comments and suggestions received during the stage two consultation period.</p> <p>The Applicant granted discretionary extensions to stakeholders on a case-by-case basis. All feedback received after the closing date of the stage two consultation will be considered alongside feedback submitted before the deadline. The Applicant took time to consider and have regard to all feedback when making further refinements to the proposed design and developing the planned mitigation measures.</p>
6.11	A Consultation Report will be produced as part of our application for development consent, which will be submitted as part of the Application.	<p>The Applicant will set out a summary of the feedback responses in a Consultation Report, which will detail how the Applicant has had regard to all feedback and how the feedback has influenced the proposals.</p> <p>This report will form part of the application for development consent.</p>

5. Response to stage two consultation

5.1 Feedback analysis

- 5.1.1 The Applicant has had regard to responses received as part of the stage two consultation. A Consultation Report will be produced as part of the DCO Application in accordance with Section 37(3)(c) of the Act.
- 5.1.2 All feedback received during the consultation period has been processed into a secure database and then reviewed and analysed. For the purposes of the Consultation Report, thematically similar comments will be identified and grouped together into 'issues', and responded to by the Applicant.
- 5.1.3 The Applicant is considering the matters raised in consultation as part of the ongoing design and application preparation process, including to assess how potential impacts of the Scheme can be avoided, managed or mitigated, and how this mitigation should be secured through requirements in the Application that is submitted, while taking on board suggestions where possible and appropriate.
- 5.1.4 The Consultation Report will set out how the feedback from the consultation has influenced the proposals. All feedback submitted during the stage two consultation will be summarised and responded to within the Consultation Report and included within the document with all personal details redacted. The Applicant will take care to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Planning Inspectorate's Privacy Policy.

5.2 Response from host local authorities

- 5.2.1 The Applicant is currently reviewing the responses from host and neighbouring authorities, and a full response will be provided to points raised within the Consultation Report, relevant sections of the Environmental Statement and Statements of Common Ground. The Applicant is also engaging with the local authorities on the feedback received prior to submitting the DCO Application.

6. Targeted consultation

- 6.1.1 Following the stage two consultation, informed by ongoing surveys, design development and the feedback received, the Applicant identified a number of localised changes to the Scheme boundary.
- 6.1.2 These changes comprise design refinements aimed at reducing or balancing the environmental effects of the Scheme, together with extensions to the Order Limits shown during the stage two consultation, included where necessary to enable the construction and operation of the Scheme. A total of 38 changes were identified.

6.2 Approach to Consultation

- 6.2.1 In determining how to consult on the proposed changes, the Applicant had regard to paragraph 20 of the Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (April 2024), which states:
“For any material change to a part of the proposed application where the project as a whole is not fundamentally changed, for example in the case of linear aspects where new information leads to a new alignment for a particular section of the proposal, a bespoke and targeted approach to further consultation can be adopted, which can address the specific consultation obligations arising proportionately.”
- 6.2.2 The Applicant also had regard to Section 7 of the SoCC, which states:
“If, following the statutory consultation, we consider it is necessary to undertake further localised, targeted or supplementary consultation, this would be undertaken, so far as relevant and proportionate, in accordance with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC.”
- 6.2.3 The Applicant considers that the proposed changes do not constitute fundamental alterations to the Scheme. Furthermore, the changes do not affect the conclusions of the assessments set out in the PEIR, nor do they alter the likely significant environmental effects reported at that stage.
- 6.2.4 Accordingly, the Applicant determined that a targeted 28-day consultation, directed towards those considered most likely to be affected by or to have a direct interest in the proposed changes, was appropriate.

6.3 Undertaking Targeted Consultation

- 6.3.1 At the time of writing, this consultation is being undertaken in accordance with these principles. The Applicant has ensured that the following stakeholder groups were informed of the consultation and the changes being proposed:
- Land interests, identified under Section 44 of the Act
 - Properties within mailing zones identified by the Applicant around individual changes, proportionate to the likely environmental effects
 - Statutory consultees previously identified and consulted under Section 42 of the Act, including host local authorities, parish councils, and technical stakeholders; and
 - Non-statutory consultees identified as those most likely to have a direct interest in the proposals due to local environmental, heritage, community, or recreational considerations.
- 6.3.2 To support the targeted consultation, the Applicant produced a targeted consultation Information Booklet, which detailed the changes and included individual ‘change maps’.

- 6.3.3 To ensure stakeholders were made aware of the targeted consultation, the Applicant updated the website on 22 September 2025 to confirm that the targeted consultation would be taking place, and that further details would be provided once it commenced.
- 6.3.4 The Applicant updated the website again on 24 September 2025 to confirm the targeted consultation was live. The Information Booklet was also uploaded and made available to view and download.
- 6.3.5 The Applicant will have regard to all feedback received and will summarise responses in the Consultation Report, submitted with the Application.

7. Next steps

- 7.1.1 The Applicant is continuing to engage with key statutory bodies and host local authorities on any outstanding issues raised during or following the stage two consultation. Issues trackers are being progressed with key statutory stakeholders which will set out the issues under discussion between these parties and the Applicant. These iterative documents will eventually inform the Statements of Common Ground that the Applicant intends to submit either at the point of submission or during the early stages of the examination. This dialogue will continue as the Application is developed, finalised and submitted later this year.
- 7.1.2 The Applicant will keep stakeholders and communities informed of the next steps once the Application has been submitted and accepted, including how to take part in Examination. The Applicant will also publish an update on its website to explain the next steps.
- 7.1.3 All feedback submitted during the stage two consultation and targeted consultation will be summarised and responded to within the Consultation Report. The Applicant will take care to comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Planning Inspectorate's Privacy Policy.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix A: Local Authority feedback to the SoCC – Lincolnshire County Council



Subject: Meridian SoCC - LCC Comments

H [REDACTED]

I have now received comments back from colleagues within our communication team on the draft SoCC, I have copied their comments below.

I've had a look and have the following comments:

- 6.7 Some confusion over the number of online events – there are references to both one and two online events.
- 6.7 Local information points – there needs to be more options, consider other libraries in the area, for example Holbeach and Spalding. Also, community centres, options include Tonic Health's hubs in Spalding and Holbeach.
- 6.7.1 community consultation events, these seem to be spread across the area and at a range of times to allow maximum participation. However, must ensure that these venues are accessible to all.
- 6.9 "Hard to reach groups": This phrase can cause offence, as groups may be seldom heard rather than hard to reach. Consider using the phrase "seldom heard groups" instead. Other potential contacts are Tonic Health in Spalding and Holbeach. Also, Spalding and District u3a.

I note that the SoCC lists likely components of the proposed development which includes 'connection to the grid via an overhead line, likely lattice towers carrying 400kV lines' - has the overhead line option now been confirmed as your preferred approach?

Should LCC have any further comments before the close of consultation these shall be issued.

Please see the below email for our new Infrastructure Officer [REDACTED] who has been appointed as the lead archaeologist for this project.






Infrastructure Officer

Lincolnshire County Council,

County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL

8.2 Appendix B: Local Authority feedback to the SoCC – South Holland District Council

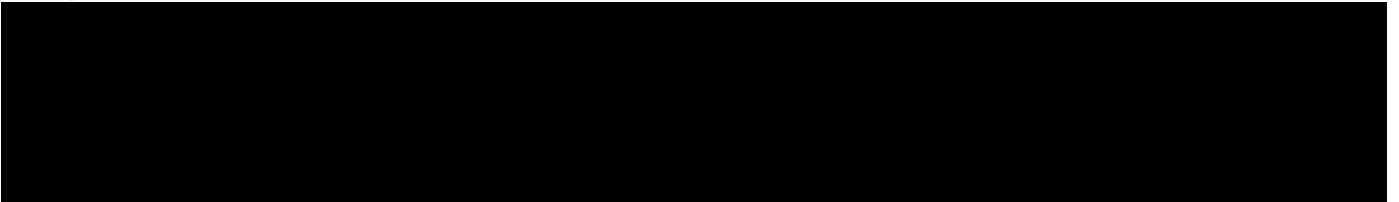


  Reply  Reply All  Forward 

Thu 28/11/2024 14:45

Thank you for the catchup meeting this afternoon. On behalf of South Holland DC and as discussed, we have read through the draft SOCC and are happy with what has been proposed including the location and number of exhibitions and information points.

Kind regards



8.3 Appendix C: Table of Statutory Consultees

Consultee	Consultee	Consultee
Weston Parish Council	Mining Remediation Authority	Bring Energy Limited
Crowland Parish Council	Lincolnshire Police	Bt Group Plc
Cowbit Parish Council	East Midlands Ambulance Service	Cityfibre Limited
Whaplode Parish Council	Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue	Colt Technology Services
Holbeach Parish Council	Lincolnshire County Council	Gtc Utility Construction Limited
Fleet Parish Council	South Holland District Council	Lumen Technologies Uk Limited
The Moultons Parish Council	North East Lincolnshire Council (D)	Mobile Broadband Network Limited
The Environment Agency	North Lincolnshire Council (D)	Network Rail Limited
Natural England	Nottinghamshire County Council (D)	Northern Powergrid (Yorkshire) Plc
The Forestry Commission	Leicestershire County Council (D)	Sota Solutions Limited
Historic England	Peterborough City Council (D)	Utility Assets Limited
South Holland Internal Drainage Board	Cambridgeshire County Council (D)	Verizon Uk Limited
North Level Internal Drainage Board	Norfolk County Council (D)	Virgin Media Limited
Lincolnshire County Council (Highways)	Boston Borough Council (A)	Vodafone Group Public Limited Company
Secretary of State for Transport	North Kesteven District Council (A)	Yorkshire Water Services Limited
Civil Aviation Authority	South Kesteven District Council (A)	Bassetlaw Dsitrict Council
The Health and Safety Executive	Fenland District Council (A)	Severn Trent Water Limited
United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust	King's Lynn and West Norfolk District Council (A)	Cadent Gas
NHS England	Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero	Anglian Water Limited
Anglian Water	Esp Utilities Group Limited	National Grid Electricity Distribution (East Midlands) plc
Cadent	Intergen (UK) Limited	Network Rail Infrastructure Limited

Eastern Power Networks	Fulcrum Pipelines Limited	National Grid Electricity Transmission plc
National Grid Electricity Transmission	Last Mile Asset Management Limited	National Grid Electricity Distribution plc
National Highways	National Gas Transmission Plc	x305 identified persons with an interest in land

8.4 Appendix D: Table of non-statutory consultees

Consultee	Consultee	Consultee
Environment group for Fenland - Friends of the Earth	Woodland Trust	Sutton Saint James Baptist Church
Local Energy Advice Partnership	Biodiversity Information Centre	St. Mary's Church Whaplode
Sustainability/ conservation group for the whole of the Fens	RSPB	St. John the Evangelist, Church
Getting It Sorted	Ramblers (Spalding)	All Saints, Holbeach
Lincolnshire Bird Club	Lincolnshire Walking Group	The Spalding Memorial Educational Trust
Volunteer Centre Fenland	Auto-Cycle Union	Friends, Families and Travellers
Healthy Fenland Project	British Horse Society - East Midlands manager	Lincolnshire Traveller Initiative
Whitemill Environment fund	Byways and Bridleways Trust	One Voice for Travellers
Lincolnshire community and voluntary service	Open Spaces Society	Girlguiding Lincolnshire South County
South Holland District council environmental services	Cycling UK Lincolnshire	South Holland Scout Groups
Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	Fenland Clarion Cycling Club	Lincolnshire Young Farmers
Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park	Spalding Cycling Club	East Lindsey LGBT+ Social and Support Group
Most People Campaign	Holbeach Cycling Club	Gingerbread (single parent group)
South Holland Business Association	Weston Wheelers Cycling Club	Mind - South Lincolnshire
Age UK Cambridge and Peterborough	Crowland Angling Club	The Lighthouse Project Spalding
Age UK Lincoln and South Lincolnshire	Spalding and District Civic Society	Art for Wellbeing
Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	Spalding Gentleman's Society	Lincolnshire Housing Partnership
Gosberton Community Action Team	Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology	Agape Care Foodbank - Spalding
Spalding & District Wildfowlers Association Limited	Crowland History Group	Crowland Community Larder
National Trust - Peckover House and Garden	Lincolnshire Young Archaeologists' Club	Holbeach Community Larder

Lincolnshire chamber of commerce	Friends of River Wellend Catchment UK	Help for Heroes
Greater Lincolnshire LEP	Inland Waterways Association	The Royal British Legion - Spalding
Invest in North Lincolnshire	Welland Yacht Club	SSFA Lincolnshire
Business Lincolnshire	Let's Move Lincolnshire	Women's Institute Lincolnshire South
Social Enterprise East Midlands	Lincolnshire Sensory Services	Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Partnership
Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust	South Lincolnshire Blind Society	Meridian Action Group
Lincoln Climate Commission	Lincolnshire Autistic Society	National Farmers Union
Lincoln ECO society	Just Lincolnshire	Host and neighbouring Members of Parliament
Tonic Health Spalding	Alzheimers Society Lincolnshire	Host and neighbouring ward councillors
Tonic Health Holbeach	Boston and South Holland (SEND)	Host and neighbouring parish councils
Spalding and District u3a	How are you Lincolnshire	
Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority	Liaise Lincolnshire	
Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Combined Authority	St John the Baptist Parish Church (Spalding)	
Active Travel England	Crowland Abbey	

8.5 Appendix E: Lincolnshire County Council – Response to AoCM



Date: 31 October 2025

[Redacted]
Planning Services
Lincolnshire County Council
County Offices
Newland
Lincoln LN1 1YL
Tel: [Redacted]
E-Mail: nsips@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

Adequacy of Consultation Request – Application Meridian Solar Farm Ltd. for a Development Consent Order for Meridian Solar Farm.

Thank you for your email dated 15 October 2025, which included the draft Adequacy of Consultation Milestone Report for comment. The document covers consultation and engagement overview, Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) development and compliance and approach to consultations, both Statutory Consultation and more recently the Targeted Consultation.

The Adequacy of Consultation Milestone (AoCM) was introduced through the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) Pre-Application Prospectus in 2024, and aims to facilitate an earlier consideration of the adequacy of consultation undertaken by the applicant at pre-application stage by the Planning Inspectorate. The written submission to the Inspectorate may include the views of local authorities.

The Prospectus sets out that written submissions should cover:

- The consultation undertaken to date
- The approaches set out in the Statement of Community Consultation
- Summarises the Consultation responses and the way in which they are shaping the application.

In response to your request for a view from Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) on the adequacy of consultation and having had regard to Section 42 (Duty to consult), 47 (Duty to consult the local community) and 48 (Duty to publicise) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended). I can confirm that LCC is of the view that Meridian Solar Farm Ltd to date has carried out adequate pre-application consultation in accordance with the requirements as set out in Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Act.

The Applicant commenced early engagement with LCC, regular meetings with the Planning Lead together with technical meetings with other specialist council officers and its

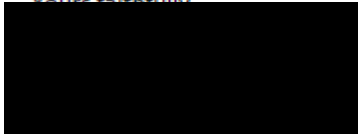
consultants have taken place throughout the majority of the pre-application process. Meridian Solar Farm Ltd formally consulted the Council on the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) on 31 October 2024.

There has been active engagement between the Meridian project team and LCC throughout the pre-application process. This has included regular liaison meetings between council officers and the project team approximately once a month. The approach to consultation has been a key topic of discussion at relevant times. The Council has been given the opportunity to review and provide feedback on the draft SoCC. The Council's feedback was taken into account.

The Council provided feedback on a number of documents including the Preliminary Environmental Information Report and Targeted Consultation Information Booklet, which included refinements/alterations in approach/design from previous consultations and comments with the Scoping Opinion. LCC have been kept up to date on amendments to the proposals through liaison meetings, and have been invited to discuss our comments from the consultations and agree mitigation measures at topic based technical meetings in relation to highway, public rights of way, agricultural land, landscape and visual and ecology matters. LCC welcomes any further engagement throughout the NSIP process.

Having reviewed the draft AoCM Report dated October 2025 LCC is content with the contents of this document. LCC is therefore satisfied that an appropriate level of consultation has been conducted at this stage.

Yours faithfully,



Consultation and Engagement

Statement of Community Consultation

Consultations