



Meridian Solar Farm

EN010169

Volume 5

Consultation

5.1 Appendix A:
Consultation Compliance
Checklist

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

Infrastructure Planning (Applications:
Prescribed Forms and Procedure)
Regulations 2009

March 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1.1. This Appendix provides a comprehensive breakdown of the Applicant's compliance to the legislation and guidance relevant to pre-application consultation for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

1.1.2. The applicable legislation and guidance comprises:

- Planning Act 2008 (PA 2008);
- The Infrastructure Planning (Application: Prescribed Form and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (APFP Regulations 2009);
- Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations 2017); and
- Guidance: Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (April 2024).

Appendix A-1.1 Table of Compliance

Planning Act 2008

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| Section 42 | <p>Duty to consult.</p> <p>1) The applicant must consult the following about the proposed application:</p> <p>a) such persons as may be prescribed</p> | <p>Identification of prescribed consultees</p> <p>The Applicant consulted all prescribed consultees identified and notified by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State.</p> <p>This was in accordance with Section 42(1)(a) of the PA 2008 and Regulation 11(1)(a) and 11(1)(c) of the EIA Regulations 2017.</p> <p>The full list of prescribed consultees is provided at Appendix G: Section 42 Consultees (Doc Ref. 5.1). The notification provided to all prescribed consultees comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter inviting feedback on the stage two consultation (see Appendix E: Statutory Consultation Materials (Doc Ref 5.1)) • A copy of the Section 48 notice, setting out details of the public consultation events and the document inspection locations (see Appendix D: Published Section 47 and Section 48 Notices (Doc Ref 5.1)) • A map of the Scheme boundary • A web link to the consultation documents library, which contained all the consultation materials including full PEIR and a Non-Technical Summary of the PEIR. <p>Scoping opinion and updates</p> |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | | <p>The Planning Inspectorate issued a Scoping Opinion on 10 July 2024, which included an updates list of consultees under Regulation 11(1)(a) and (1)(c).</p> <p>The Applicant reviewed and ensured consistency with this updated list of consultees.</p> <p>Integration into Environmental Statement</p> <p>The Applicant considered and actioned the Scoping Opinion during preparation of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and the Environmental Statement (ES).</p> <p>Responses and requirements were addressed within the technical chapters of the ES (Doc Ref 6.1).</p> <p>Compliance confirmation</p> <p>By consulting all prescribed bodies as identified by the Planning Inspectorate and incorporating feedback into the project documentation, the Applicant fulfilled the duty under Section 42 and relevant EIA Regulations 2017.</p> |
| | <p>aa) the Marine Management Organisation, in any case where the proposed development would affect, or would be likely to affect, any of the areas specified in subsection (2)</p> | <p>Not applicable. The Applicant did not consult the Marine Management Organisation under Section 42(1)(aa) of the PA 2008 as the proposed development does not involve offshore development or development within tidal waters. The MMO is not a relevant consultee in respect of the proposed development.</p> |
| | <p>b) each local authority that is within Section 43</p> | <p>The Applicant consulted each local authority within Section 43 of the PA 2008. The local authorities are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Kesteven District Council (A) |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) <p>The notification provided to all prescribed consultees comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter inviting feedback on the stage two consultation (see Appendix E: Statutory Consultation Materials (Doc Ref 5.1)) • A copy of the Section 48 notice, setting out details of the public consultation events and the document inspection locations (see Appendix D: Published Section 47 and Section 48 Notices (Doc Ref 5.1)) • A map of the Scheme boundary |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A web link to the consultation documents library, which contained all the consultation materials including full PEIR and a Non-Technical Summary of the PEIR. |
| | <p>c) the Greater London Authority if the land is in Greater London</p> | <p>Not applicable. The Applicant did not consult the Greater London Authority under Section 42(1)(c) of the PA 2008 as the proposed development is not located within or in an adjacent authority to the Greater London Authority. The Greater London Authority is therefore not a relevant consultee in respect of the proposed development.</p> |
| | <p>d) each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in Section 44.</p> | <p>The Applicant consulted each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in Section 44. Details of the consultation process and engagement activities are described in Section 7 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1). A full list of land interests consulted (nothing their interest in the land) during the statutory consultation is provided in the Book of Reference (Doc Ref. 4.3).</p> <p>The notification provided to all prescribed consultees comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter inviting feedback on the stage two consultation (see Appendix E: Statutory Consultation Materials (Doc Ref 5.1)) • A copy of the Section 48 notice, setting out details of the public consultation events and the document inspection locations (see Appendix D: Published Section 47 and Section 48 Notices (Doc Ref 5.1)) • A map of the Scheme boundary |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A web link to the consultation documents library, which contained all the consultation materials including full PEIR and a Non-Technical Summary of the PEIR. |
| Section 45 | <p>Timetable for consultation under Section 42</p> <p>1) The applicant must, when consulting a person under section 42, notify the person of the deadline for the receipt by the applicant of the person’s response to the consultation.</p> <p>2) A deadline notified under subsection (1) must not be earlier than the end of the period of 28 days that begins with the day after the day on which the person receives the consultation documents.</p> <p>3) In subsection (2) “the consultation documents” means the documents supplied to the person by the applicant for the purpose of consulting the person.</p> | <p>All section 42 consultees (including those defined under Section 43 and Section 44) were notified in writing of the commencement of the Section 42 consultation in writing on 24 April 2025 and of the consultation end date: 8 June 2025. This provided a consultation period of 45 days, exceeding the statutory minimum of 28 days.</p> <p>The Applicant also conducted a targeted consultation from 24 September 2025 to 22 October 2025 (28 days), to gather feedback on localised changes to the Scheme. The Applicant considered the proposed changes did not constitute fundamental alterations to the scheme and therefore determined that a targeted 28-day consultation was appropriate.</p> <p>The notification provided to all Section 42 consultees comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A personalised letter inviting feedback on the stage two consultation (see Appendix E: Statutory Consultation Materials (Doc Ref 5.1)) A copy of the Section 48 notice, setting out details of the public consultation events and the document inspection locations (see Appendix D: Published Section 47 and Section 48 Notices (Doc Ref 5.1)) |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A map of the Scheme boundary • A web link to the consultation documents library, which contained all the consultation materials including full PEIR and a Non-Technical Summary of the PEIR. |
| Section 46 | <p>Duty to notify Secretary of State of proposed application</p> <p>1) The applicant must supply the Secretary of State with such information in relation to the proposed application as the applicant would supply to the Secretary of State for the purpose of complying with section 42 if the applicant were required by that section to consult the Secretary of State about the proposed application.</p> <p>2) The applicant must comply with subsection (1) on or before commencing consultation under section 42.</p> | <p>The Applicant notified the Planning Inspectorate of the proposed application electronically on 23 April 2025, prior to the commencement of Section 42 consultation on 24 April 2025, as required by Section 46(1) of the PA 2008.</p> <p>Owing to a clerical error, the Planning Inspectorate’s email address for the Scheme was incorrect on the Find a National Infrastructure Project website, causing the notification to initially go undelivered.</p> <p>Through dialogue with the Planning Inspectorate, the Planning Inspectorate’s email address was updated and the Applicant re-submitted the Section 46 notice to the correct email address on 8 May 2025.</p> <p>The submission provided the same details as those provided to Section 42 consultees, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 46 notification letter (see Appendix F: Section 46 Notification (Doc Ref. 5.1)); • Example Section 42 and 44 cover letters; • A copy of the Section 48 notice; and • Scheme boundary plan. |
| Section 47 | Duty to consult local community | The Applicant prepared a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) which outlined how the Applicant proposed to consult with people living in the vicinity of |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | <p>1) The applicant must prepare a statement setting out how the applicant proposes to consult, about the proposed application, people living in the vicinity of the land.</p> | <p>the Scheme. Details of the process preparing the SoCC can be found in Section 6 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>The development of the SoCC involved formal consultation with the relevant local authorities, including Lincolnshire County Council and South Holland District Council, in accordance with Section 43(1) of the Act.</p> <p>The draft SoCC was issued on 31 October 2024, with a 28-day consultation period ending on 29 November 2024. Feedback received was reviewed and incorporated into the final SoCC. How the Applicant had regard to comments from local authorities on the draft SoCC is detailed in Section 6 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1), and a copy of the final SoCC is included in Appendix C: Statement of Community Consultation (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |
| | <p>2) Before preparing the statement, the applicant must consult each local authority that is within section 43(1) about what is to be in the statement.</p> | <p>The Applicant consulted the following Section 43(1) local authorities on the draft SoCC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lincolnshire County Council • South Holland District Council <p>Consultation responses were received from Lincolnshire County Council, which included detailed feedback on accessibility, local information points, and terminology.</p> <p>South Holland District Council also responded, confirming their satisfaction with the proposed consultation approach. A detailed overview of how the Applicant responded to the comments received during the SoCC consultation process is provided in Section 6 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref 5.1) and a copy of the final SoCC is included in Appendix C: Statement of Community Consultation (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | <p>3) The deadline for the receipt by the applicant of a local authority's response to consultation under subsection (2) is the end of the period of 28 days that begins with the day after the day on which the local authority receives the consultation documents.</p> | <p>The Applicant formally consulted each host local authority identified under Section 43(1) of the PA 2008 on the draft SoCC over a 28-day period, commencing on 31 October 2024 and concluding on 29 November 2024.</p> |
| | <p>4) In subsection (3) “the consultation documents” means the documents supplied to the local authority by the applicant for the purpose of consulting the local authority under subsection (2).</p> | <p>The consultation documents comprised a cover letter and the draft SoCC. A copy of the finalised SoCC is provided in Appendix C: Statement of Community Consultation (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |
| | <p>5) In preparing the statement, the applicant must have regard to any response to consultation under subsection (2) that is received by the applicant before the deadline imposed by subsection (3).</p> | <p>The Applicant had regard to all relevant comments received on the draft SoCC. Details of the comments received and how the Applicant responded is provided in Section 6 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref 5.1).</p> |
| | <p>6) Once the applicant has prepared the statement, the applicant must za) make the statement available for inspection by the public in a way that is reasonably convenient for</p> | <p>The Applicant publicised the SoCC through several methods to ensure it was reasonably convenient for people living in the vicinity of the land to inspect it. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing notice of the SoCC in a local newspaper, Spalding and South Holland Voice, circulating in the area on 17 April and 24 April 2025; |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | <p>people living in the vicinity of the land,</p> <p>a) publish in a newspaper circulating in the vicinity of the land, a notice stating where and when the statement can be inspected, and</p> <p>b) publish the statement in such manner as may be prescribed.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making printed copies of the SoCC available for inspection at local information points, including Crowland Library, Spalding Library, Holbeach Library, Tonic Health Centre Spalding, and Tonic Health Centre Holbeach; • Publishing the SoCC on the Scheme website to allow for digital access; and • Providing copies of the final published SoCC to the host authorities for their information. |
| | <p>7) The applicant must carry out consultation in accordance with the proposals set out in the statement.</p> | <p>The Applicant undertook consultation under Section 47 of the PA 2008 in accordance with the SoCC. See Appendix C: Statement of Community Consultation (Doc Ref. 5.1) for the Applicant's compliance to the commitments in the SoCC.</p> |
| <p>Section 48</p> | <p>Duty to publicise</p> <p>1) The applicant must publicise the proposed application in the prescribed manner.</p> | <p>The Applicant prepared and published a Section 48 notice in the manner prescribed under the PA 2008. A Section 48 notice was published in both national and local newspapers. The national newspapers included The Guardian and The London Gazette, with notices appearing on 24 April 2025. The local newspaper, the Spalding and South Holland Voice, featured the notices on 17 April 2025 and 24 April 2025.</p> |
| | <p>2) Regulations made for the purposes of subsection (1) must, in particular, make provision for publicity under subsection (1) to include a deadline for receipt by the applicant of responses to the publicity.</p> | <p>The Section 48 notice included a deadline of 11:59pm on 8 June 2025 for the receipt of responses.</p> <p>Chapter 3 of this Appendix A also describes how regulations prescribed for the purposes of subsection (1) have been addressed. This includes Regulation 4 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009.</p> |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| Section 49 | <p>Duty to take account of responses to consultation and publicity</p> <p>(1) Subsection (2) applies where the applicant</p> <p>a) has complied with sections 42, 47 and 48, and</p> <p>b) proposes to go ahead with making an application for an order granting development consent (whether or not in the same terms as the proposed application).</p> <p>2) The applicant must, when deciding whether the application that the applicant is actually to make should be in the same terms as the proposed application, have regard to any relevant responses.</p> <p>(3) In subsection (2) “relevant response” means</p> <p>a) a response from a person consulted under section 42 that is received by the applicant before the deadline imposed by section 45 in that person's case,</p> | <p>The Applicant has had regard to all relevant responses in accordance with Section 49 of the PA 2008 and has acted upon them where possible.</p> <p>All relevant responses received to the statutory consultation under Sections 42, 47 and 48 have been considered by the Applicant. A detailed summary of qualitative data from Section 47 consultees during the statutory consultation, including how the Applicant has considered this feedback, is provided in Appendix I: Section 47 Applicant’s Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>A detailed summary of the qualitative responses from Section 42 consultees during the statutory consultation, including how the Applicant has considered this feedback, is provided in Appendix H: Section 42 Applicant’s Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>A detailed summary of the qualitative responses during the targeted consultation, including how the Applicant has considered this feedback, is available in Appendix K: Targeted Consultation Applicant’s Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>The responses from local planning authorities to the draft SoCC can be found in Appendix C: Statement of Community Consultation (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | <p>b) a response to consultation under section 47(7) that is received by the applicant before any applicable deadline imposed in accordance with the statement prepared under section 47, or</p> <p>c) a response to publicity under section 48 that is received by the applicant before the deadline imposed in accordance with section 48(2) in relation to that publicity.</p> | |
| Section 50 | <p>Guidance about pre-application procedure</p> <p>1) Guidance may be issued about how to comply with the requirements of this Chapter.</p> <p>2) Guidance under this section may be issued by the Secretary of State.</p> <p>3) The applicant must have regard to any guidance under this section.</p> | <p>The Applicant has conducted its consultation in compliance with the PA 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects issued in April 2024 under Section 50, as set out in Appendix (A).</p> <p>At each stage in preparing the Application, the Applicant has also had full regard to the following Government guidance which relates to pre-application procedure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MHCLG and DLUHC Guidance ‘Planning Act 2008: Content of a Development Consent Order required for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects’ (April 2024) in preparing the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1) • MHCLG and DLUHC Guidance ‘Guidance related to procedures for the compulsory acquisition of land’ (September 2013) in preparing the Statement of Reasons (Doc Ref. 4.1) • MHCLG and DLUHC Guidance ‘Introduction to National Infrastructure Planning Guidance’ (April 2024) |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MHCLG Guidance 'Planning Act 2008: Application form guidance' (June 2013) in preparing the Application Form (Doc Ref. 1.2) • MHCLG and DLUHC Guidance 'Guidance on procedural requirements for major infrastructure projects' (updated December 2020) • MHCLG Guidance 'Associated development applications for major infrastructure projects' (April 2013). |

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| Reg. 3 | <p>Prescribed consultees</p> <p>The persons prescribed for the purposes of section 42(a) (duty to consult) are those listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 1 to these Regulations, who must be consulted in the circumstances specified in relation to each such person in column 2 of that table.</p> | <p>The Applicant consulted all relevant persons prescribed under the APFP Regulations 2009 who were considered relevant to this Application by the descriptions set out in column 2 of that table. A full list of Section 42 consultees is provided in Appendix G: Section 42 Consultees (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |
| Reg. 4 | <p>Publicising a proposed application</p> <p>1) This regulation prescribes for the purpose of section 48(1) (duty to publicise), the manner in which an applicant must publicise a proposed application.</p> <p>2) The applicant must publish a notice, which must include the matters prescribed by paragraph (3) of this regulation of the proposed application</p> <p>a) for at least two successive weeks in one or more local newspapers</p> | <p>The Applicant published a notice which included all the matters set out in paragraph (3). A copy of the Section 48 notice is provided in Appendix D: Published Section 47 and Section 48 Notices (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>The Section 48 Notice was published in the Spalding and South Holland Voice on 17 April 2025 and 24 April 2025.</p> |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | circulating in the vicinity in which the proposed development would be situated; | |
| | b) once in a national newspaper; | The Section 48 Notice was published in The Guardian on 24 April 2025. |
| | c) once in the London Gazette and, if land in Scotland is affected, the Edinburgh Gazette; and | The Section 48 Notice was published in the London Gazette on 24 April 2025. No land in Scotland is affected by the Scheme, and there was therefore no requirement to publish in the Edinburgh Gazette. |
| | (d) where the proposed application relates to offshore development— (i) once in Lloyd’s List; and (ii) once in an appropriate fishing trade journal. | Not applicable. |
| | 3) The matters which the notice must include are: | The Section 48 notice included all of the elements listed under Regulation 4(3), as outlined below. A copy of the Section 48 notice is provided in Appendix D: Published Section 47 and Section 48 Notices (Doc Ref. 5.1). |
| | a) the name and address of the applicant; | The name and address of the Applicant is included in the Section 48 notice, as per the following extract: ‘Notice is hereby given that Meridian Solar Farm Limited of 10 Lower Thames Street, London, England, EC3R 6AF (the ‘Applicant’)...’. |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | b) a statement that the applicant intends to make an application for development consent to the Secretary of State; | The Section 48 notice stated that the Applicant proposed to apply to the Secretary of State under Section 37 of the PA 2008. It included the following wording: 'Notice is hereby given that Meridian Solar Farm Limited of 10 Lower Thames Street, London, England, EC3R 6AF (the 'Applicant') intends to submit an application (the 'Proposed Application') to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (the 'SoS') for a Development Consent Order ('DCO') under Section 37 of the PA 2008'. |
| | c) a statement as to whether the application is EIA development; | The Section 48 notice stated that the Application is EIA development: 'The Scheme is an Environmental Impact Assessment Development ('EIA development') as defined by the EIA Regulations 2017 and an Environmental Statement ('ES') will form part of the Proposed Application'. |
| | d) a summary of the main proposals, specifying the location or route of the proposed development; | <p>The Section 48 notice stated that the proposed DCO would, amongst other things, authorise components including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of photovoltaic (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) (the 'Scheme'). The Scheme will also include associated infrastructure, including co-located battery energy storage systems (BESS) and inter-array connections to link together the land parcels where solar panels are located". • "The compulsory acquisition of land and/or rights in, on, under or over land required for the Scheme, as well as rights authorising the temporary occupation of land for the Scheme. Other powers that the DCO may seek include the extinguishment and/or overriding of easements and other rights over or affecting land required for the Scheme; the application and/or |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance | | | | | | | | | |
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| | <p>e) a statement that the documents, plans and maps showing the nature and location of the proposed development are available for inspection free of charge at the places (including at least one address in the vicinity of the proposed development) and times set out in the notice;</p> | <p>disapplication of legislation relevant to the Scheme; the temporary stopping up or diversion of public footpaths during construction works; permanent and temporary alterations to the highway network for and in the vicinity of the Scheme, and such ancillary, incidental and consequential works, provisions, permits, consents, waivers or releases as are necessary and convenient for the successful construction, operation and maintenance of the Scheme”.</p> <p>The Section 48 notice stated that the consultation documents could be accessed free of charge from 24 April 2025 until 8 June 2025 at the places and times set out below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="981 663 2175 1388"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="981 663 1314 719">Location and address</th> <th data-bbox="1314 663 1697 719">Opening hours</th> <th data-bbox="1697 663 2175 719">Materials available</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="981 719 1314 1230"> <p>Crowland Library, Hall Street, Crowland PE6 0EW</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1314 719 1697 1230"> <p>Tuesday and Thursday: 9.30am to 12.30pm and 2pm to 5pm Saturday: 10am to 1pm</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1697 719 2175 1230"> <p>To take away Consultation Information Booklet Consultation Feedback Form Consultation Newsletter For reference only PEIR NTS SoCC</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="981 1230 1314 1388"> <p>Spalding Library, Victoria Street, Spalding PE11 1EA</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1314 1230 1697 1388"> <p>Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 9am to 5pm</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1697 1230 2175 1388"> <p>To take away Consultation Information Booklet</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Location and address | Opening hours | Materials available | <p>Crowland Library, Hall Street, Crowland PE6 0EW</p> | <p>Tuesday and Thursday: 9.30am to 12.30pm and 2pm to 5pm Saturday: 10am to 1pm</p> | <p>To take away Consultation Information Booklet Consultation Feedback Form Consultation Newsletter For reference only PEIR NTS SoCC</p> | <p>Spalding Library, Victoria Street, Spalding PE11 1EA</p> | <p>Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 9am to 5pm</p> | <p>To take away Consultation Information Booklet</p> |
| Location and address | Opening hours | Materials available | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Crowland Library, Hall Street, Crowland PE6 0EW</p> | <p>Tuesday and Thursday: 9.30am to 12.30pm and 2pm to 5pm Saturday: 10am to 1pm</p> | <p>To take away Consultation Information Booklet Consultation Feedback Form Consultation Newsletter For reference only PEIR NTS SoCC</p> | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Spalding Library, Victoria Street, Spalding PE11 1EA</p> | <p>Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 9am to 5pm</p> | <p>To take away Consultation Information Booklet</p> | | | | | | | | | |

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| | | | <p>Thursday: 9am to 6pm Saturday: 9am to 1pm</p> | <p>Consultation Feedback Form Consultation Newsletter</p> |
| | | <p>Holbeach Library, Co-Op Store, 5 Fleet Street, Holbeach, Spalding PE12 7AX</p> | <p>Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm Saturday: 9am to 12 noon</p> | <p>To take away Consultation Information Booklet Consultation Feedback Form Consultation Newsletter</p> |
| | | <p>Tonic Health Centre Spalding, 6 Broadgate House, Westlode Street, Spalding PE11 2AF</p> | <p>Monday and Thursday: 10am to 7pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 10am to 3pm</p> | <p>To take away Consultation Information Booklet Consultation Feedback Form Consultation Newsletter</p> |
| | | <p>Tonic Health Centre Holbeach, Holbeach Hub, Boston Road South, Holbeach PE12 7LR</p> | <p>Monday and Thursday: 10am to 7pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 10am to 3pm</p> | <p>To take away Consultation Information Booklet Consultation Feedback Form Consultation Newsletter</p> |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | f) the latest date on which those documents, plans and maps will be available for inspection (being a date not earlier than the deadline in subparagraph (i)); | The Section 48 notice stated that copies of consultation documents were available to view or download free of charge from www.meridiansolarfarm.co.uk throughout the duration of the consultation period, from 24 April 2025 to 11:59pm on 8 June 2025. |
| | g) whether a charge will be made for copies of any of the documents, plans or maps and the amount of any charge; | The Section 48 notice stated that copies of the consultation documents were available on the Scheme website: www.meridiansolarfarm.co.uk and it confirmed consultation documents would be available in hard copy at no extra charge (except the PEIR and NTS, hard copies of which could be requested for a charge of £0.35 per page to cover printing and posting costs). |
| | h) details of how to respond to the publicity; and | <p>The Section 48 notice stated that comments and representations in response to the consultation may be submitted in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback Form: Complete or download the Feedback Form at the Scheme website www.meridiansolarfarm.co.uk; or it can be completed and left at the consultation event; or by request from the project team either at an event or via phone or email. • By email or post: Completed Feedback Forms, and any other comments, can be emailed to enquiries@meridiansolar.co.uk or returned by post (no stamp required) to FREEPOST DOWNING MERIDIAN. |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| | (i) a deadline for receipt of those responses by the applicant, being not less than 28 days following the date when the notice is last published. | The deadline for receipt of responses was given as no later than 8 June 2025, providing 45 days following the date when the notice was published. |

Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
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| Reg. 8 | <p>Procedure for establishing whether environmental impact assessment is required</p> <p>1) A person who proposes to make an application for an order granting development consent must, before carrying out consultation under section 42 (duty to consult) either:</p> <p>a) ask the Secretary of State to adopt a screening opinion in respect of the development to which the application relates; or</p> <p>b) notify the Secretary of State in writing that the person proposes to provide an environmental statement in respect of that development.</p> | <p>The Applicant submitted a Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate on 30 May 2024, confirming that it intended to provide an Environmental Statement in respect of the Meridian Solar Farm pursuant to Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations 2017 and requested a Scoping Opinion pursuant to Regulation 10(1).</p> |
| Reg. 12 | <p>Consultation statement requirements</p> <p>1) The consultation statement prepared under section 47 (duty to consult local community) must set out</p> <p>a) whether the development for which the applicant proposes to make an application for an order granting development consent is EIA development; and</p> <p>b) if that development is EIA development, how the applicant intends to publicise and consult on the preliminary environmental information.</p> | <p>The Applicant confirmed in the SoCC that the proposed application for the Meridian Solar Farm is an EIA development. The SoCC also detailed how the Applicant intended to publicise and consult on the preliminary environmental information, specifying that the PEIR would be made available on the Scheme website and in hard copy at in-person consultation events and designated local information points, including libraries and community centres within the vicinity of the scheme.</p> |

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| | | The published SoCC can be found in Appendix C: Statement of Community Consultation (Doc Ref. 5.1). |
| Reg. 13 | <p>Pre-application publicity under section 48 (duty to publicise)</p> <p>Where the proposed application for an order granting development consent is an application for EIA development, the applicant must, at the same time as publishing notice of the proposed application under section 48(1), send a copy of that notice to the consultation bodies and to any person notified to the applicant in accordance with regulation 11(1)(c).</p> | <p>The Applicant published a notice of the proposed application under Section 48(1) of the PA 2008 and distributed a copy of this notice to the consultation bodies and all individuals previously notified under Regulation 11(1)(c) of the EIA Regulations 2017.</p> <p>The consultation documents provided to all Section 42 consultees comprised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter (see Appendix E: Statutory Consultation Materials (Doc Ref. 5.1)) containing information on the Scheme; • A link to the scheme website containing the full Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), including a Non-Technical Summary of the PEIR; • A hard copy of the notice publicised in accordance with Section 48 of the PA 2008, including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected. |

Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (April 2024)

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| Paragraph 009 | <p>What is the purpose of the Programme Document?</p> <p>To deliver a good pre-application process, including effective engagement and a well-prepared application, applicants should put together a Programme Document at the outset of the pre-application stage for submission to the Planning Inspectorate and agreement at the Inception Meeting. The Programme Document is an essential element of the quality standard for applications seeking a fast-track route to consent.</p> <p>Following the Inception Meeting, it is expected that the applicant will host and maintain the agreed Programme Document on its website, and update it as necessary during the pre-application period to publicise completion of significant stages and demonstrate progress in preparation of the application.</p> | <p>The Applicant noted that this guidance was introduced during the Scheme’s pre-application process.</p> <p>The Applicant supplied the Planning Inspectorate with its initial Programme Document and feedback was provided on 19 November 2024.</p> <p>An update Programme Document was prepared and published on its website dated September 2025.</p> |
| Paragraph 011 | <p>How should Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) be considered in preparing an application?</p> <p>Major infrastructure projects will normally be of a size, scale and nature that they will constitute Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development described within the terms of the EIA Regulations 2017. An applicant cannot begin to carry out statutory consultation under section 42 of the Planning</p> | <p>The Applicant submitted a Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate on 30 May 2024, confirming that it intended to provide an Environmental Statement in respect of the Meridian Solar Farm pursuant to Regulation 8(1)(b) and requested a Scoping Opinion pursuant to Regulation 10(1) of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.</p> |

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| | <p>Act until they have taken the necessary steps under Regulation 8 of the EIA Regulations 2017 to establish whether an EIA is required.</p> | <p>A Scoping Opinion was adopted by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) on 10 July 2024. The Scoping Opinion included a list of consultation bodies notified by the Planning Inspectorate under Regulation 11(1)(a) of the EIA Regulations 2017. The Applicant ensured consistency with this list of consultees for the statutory consultation under Section 42 of the PA 2008, which commenced in April 2025.</p> <p>Having consulted all statutorily prescribed bodies as identified in the Planning Inspectorate’s Scoping Opinion, the Applicant fulfilled the duty to consult as outlined in Regulation 11(1)(a) of the EIA Regulations 2017 and the associated APFP Regulations 2009.</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 012</p> | <p>How should Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) be prepared?</p> <p>Where an NSIP is determined to be EIA development in line with Regulation 8 of the EIA Regulations 2017 the applicant is required by Regulation 12 of the EIA Regulations 2017 to publish sufficient Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) to enable consultees to develop an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of the proposed development.</p> <p>There is no prescribed format for PEI. However, depending on the availability of material, applicants are encouraged to prepare this as an early draft of the Environmental Statement</p> | <p>The Applicant undertook consultation on the PEIR under Sections 42, 47, and 48 of the PA 2008 between 24 April and 8 June 2025 as part of the statutory consultation. More details are provided in Section 7 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |

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| | <p>and include it as such as part of the statutory consultation under sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act.</p> | |
| <p>Paragraph 014</p> | <p>What is needed for consideration of good design?</p> <p>Good design is not simply about the look of a project; it is about the whole process of putting a project together so that it achieves the elements of good design including choice of location, vision, narrative, design principles and consultation programme.</p> <p>Applicants should involve a diverse range of people including where appropriate, planners, environmental specialists, landscape architects, architects, engineers and community groups in informing the project vision, narrative, design principles, and project design process to support delivery of the outcomes of the project.</p> <p>Applicants should explain how the design responds to the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) design principles for national infrastructure: climate, people, places and value.</p> | <p>Ongoing consultation with technical and community stakeholders has informed the design of the Scheme. This included early engagement with local authorities, parish councils, and statutory bodies, followed by a multi-stage consultation process and a targeted consultation on design refinements.</p> <p>More information about the Scheme’s design and its compliance with the NIC design principles for national infrastructure is provided in the Design Approach Document (Doc Ref 7.3).</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 019</p> | <p>How can pre-application consultation shape proposals and help prepare applications that are accepted for examination?</p> <p>Applicants are responsible for consulting on proposed applications for DCOs. Applicants are specifically required to undertake statutory pre-application consultation activities as stipulated in the following legislation:</p> | <p>The Applicant consulted all prescribed consultees identified and notified by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State.</p> <p>This was in accordance with Section 42(1)(a) of the PA 2008 and Regulation 11(1)(a) and 11(1)(c) of the EIA Regulations 2017.</p> |

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| | <p>section 42 of the Planning Act, together with the provisions of sections 43 and 44 of the Planning Act, requires applicants to consult certain persons, including statutory consultees, local authorities, and others with a relevant interest in the land to which the proposed application relates, prior to the submission of an application. The prescribed list of statutory consultees for the purposes of section 42 of the Planning Act is set out in Schedule 1 to the APFP Regulations 2009, as amended by the Infrastructure Planning (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2024;</p> | <p>The full list of prescribed consultees is provided at Appendix G: Section 42 Consultees (Doc Ref. 5.1). The notification provided to all prescribed consultees comprised of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A covering letter inviting feedback on the stage two consultation (see Appendix E: Statutory Consultation Materials (Doc Ref 5.1)) • A copy of the Section 48 notice, setting out details of the public consultation events and the document inspection locations (see Appendix D: Published Section 47 and Section 48 Notices (Doc Ref 5.1)) • A map of the Scheme boundary • A web link to the consultation documents library, which contained all the consultation materials including full PEIR and a Non-Technical Summary of the PEIR. |
| <p>Paragraph 019</p> | <p>section 47 of the Planning Act requires applicants to consult relevant local authorities on what is to be in their SoCC setting out how applicants intend to consult the local community on the proposed DCO application, and then carry out consultation in accordance with the SoCC;</p> | <p>The Applicant prepared a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) which outlined how the Applicant proposed to consult with people living in the vicinity of the Scheme. Details of the process preparing the SoCC can be found in Section 6 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>The development of the SoCC involved formal consultation with the relevant local authorities, including Lincolnshire County Council and South Holland District Council, in accordance with Section 43(1) of the Act.</p> |

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| | | <p>The draft SoCC was issued on 31 October 2024, with a 28-day consultation period ending on 29 November 2024. Feedback received was reviewed and incorporated into the final SoCC. How the Applicant had regard to comments from local authorities on the draft SoCC can be found in Section 6 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1) and a copy of the final SoCC is included in Appendix C: Statement of Community Consultation (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>The Applicant undertook consultation under Section 47 of the PA 2008 in accordance with the SoCC. See Appendix C: Statement of Community Consultation (Doc Ref. 5.1) for the Applicant’s compliance to the commitments in the SoCC.</p> |
| Paragraph 019 | section 48 of the Planning Act requires applicants to publicise the proposed application in the prescribed manner as set out in Regulation 4 of the APFP Regulations 2009; and | <p>The Applicant prepared and published a Section 48 notice in the manner prescribed under the PA 2008. A Section 48 notice was published in both national and local newspapers. The national newspapers included The Guardian and The London Gazette, with notices appearing on 24 April 2025. The local newspaper, the Spalding and South Holland Voice, featured the notices on 17 April 2025 and 24 April 2025. A copy of the Section 48 notice is provided in Appendix D: Published Section 47 and Section 48 Notices (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |
| Paragraph 019 | the EIA Regulations 2017 set out requirements for preparing Environmental Statements prior to the submission of a DCO application, including engaging with statutory consultees and | <p>The Applicant has undertaken ongoing engagement with various stakeholders throughout the pre-application period and development of the Scheme.</p> |

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| | <p>local authorities prior to formal pre-application activities under section 42 of the Planning Act.</p> | <p>This included direct discussions with a number of technical stakeholders to provide updates on the DCO process, address key issues raised and review their responses to the stage two consultation.</p> <p>The records of engagement with technical stakeholders are detailed within the relevant topic chapters of the ES (Doc Ref. 6.1).</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 019</p> | <p>Effective pre-application consultation is key to developing well-prepared applications that are understood by the public. Consultation on development proposals allows consultees and local communities to influence how infrastructure that meets a national need can be accommodated in their area, and enables applicants to more effectively shape proposals.</p> <p>From a consultee’s perspective, engaging in pre-application consultation, including for example offering constructive mitigations to reduce a scheme’s impact on the local community and environment, does not undermine any submission on the principle of whether or not development consent should be granted.</p> <p>Early involvement of local communities, local authorities and statutory consultees during the pre-application stage, both through consultation and other forms of engagement, can bring about significant benefits for all parties, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • helping the applicant identify and resolve issues at the earliest stage, which can reduce the overall risk to the | <p>In accordance with Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the PA 2008, the Applicant undertook a programme of pre-application consultation prior to submitting its application for development consent.</p> <p>The Applicant’s approach to pre-application consultation was designed to ensure that consultees were given meaningful opportunities to understand the proposals and provide their feedback. A range of engagement methods were employed, supported by accessible materials presented in a variety of formats and at appropriate levels of detail. The Applicant also ensured that the Scheme was widely publicised to reach all those with an interest.</p> <p>The Applicant undertook a programme of 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:</p> |

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| | <p>project further down the line as it becomes much more difficult to make changes once an application has been submitted and accepted for examination;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enabling interested parties to understand and influence proposed projects, providing feedback on potential options, and encouraging the community to help shape the proposal to maximise local benefits and minimise any disbenefits; • enabling applicants to obtain important information about the economic, social, community and environmental effects of a scheme from consultees, which can help rule out unsuitable options; and • enabling appropriate mitigation measures to be identified at the outset; considered and, if appropriate, embedded into the proposed NSIP before an application is submitted. <p>Without adequate pre-application consultation in line with the legislation, the subsequent application when it is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate will not be accepted to proceed to examination. The Planning Inspectorate takes into account the responses received from local authorities during the acceptance period to determine on behalf of the Secretary of State whether the consultation is adequate.</p> <p>The Planning Inspectorate can either accept or decline to accept the application for examination. Where during the</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early engagement: raising awareness and introducing the Scheme to the local community and stakeholders (Chapter 3 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1)). • Stage one (non-statutory) consultation: a six week consultation held between Thursday 30 May and Thursday 11 July 2024 (Chapter 4 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1)). • Stage two (statutory) consultation: a six week and three day consultation held between Thursday 24 April and Sunday 8 June 2025 (Chapter 7 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1)). • Targeted (statutory consultation): a four week consultation held between 24 September 2025 and 22 October 2025 (Chapter 11 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1)) <p>Throughout the pre-application process, the Applicant has continued to refine the Scheme in response to feedback. Summaries of the feedback and the Applicant’s response included in Appendix H: Section 42 Applicant’s Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1), Appendix I: Section 47 Applicant’s Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1) and Appendix K: Targeted Consultation Applicant’s Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |

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| | <p>acceptance stage the Planning Inspectorate considers that the application is not satisfactory, it may advise the applicant to withdraw the application, and if appropriate can also recommend that the applicant carries out further consultation activity or engagement before the application is resubmitted.</p> | |
| <p>Paragraph 020</p> | <p>How can applicants ensure consultation is proportionate?</p> <p>The pre-application consultation undertaken should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the project and its effects. A 'one-size-fits-all' approach is not appropriate. For a straightforward and uncontroversial application, an applicant may choose to discharge the obligations of sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act concurrently in a single round of consultation, or in separate stages. For more complex proposals, an applicant may choose to conduct a non-statutory round of consultation (for example considering options) before undertaking a statutory round of consultation, or they may choose to run a multi-stage statutory consultation process.</p> | <p>The Applicant has undertaken multiple stages of consultation during the pre-application period to provide sufficient opportunities for prescribed consultees, local parishes, local communities and residents to engage with the consultation and contribute to the development of the Scheme. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an early engagement stage which began in February 2024, including introductory meetings with stakeholders, distribution of a newsletter to 4,018 addresses, and briefings with parish councils, local authorities, and the local MP • a non-statutory consultation held between 30 May and 11 July 2024, which allowed people to learn more about the proposals and provide their initial feedback at a formative stage • a statutory public consultation held between 24 April and 8 June 2025, which included publication of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a targeted consultation held between 24 September and 22 October 2025, focused on 38 localised changes to the Scheme and Order Limits. <p>The approach to consultation for each stage has been documented and the responses received at each phase have been considered as part of the development of the Scheme. For more information see the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |
| Paragraph 020 | Larger, more complex applications are likely to warrant going beyond the statutory 28-day minimum timescales for consultation laid down in the Planning Act to ensure enough time for consultees to understand project proposals and formulate a response. | All defined periods of consultation were held for a minimum of 28 days. The statutory consultation on the PEIR was held for 45 days, from 24 April to 8 June 2025, exceeding the statutory minimum and reflecting the larger and more complex volume of documents being consulted upon. |
| Paragraph 020 | <p>Once applicants have completed the consultation process set out in their SoCC, where a proposed application is amended in the light of responses to consultation then, unless those amendments materially and substantially change the proposed application or materially changes its effects as a whole, the amendments themselves should not trigger a need for further consultation. The amendments can be reported as part of the consultation report submitted with the application.</p> <p>Only where the project taken as a whole changes very significantly, and to such a large degree that what is being taken forward is fundamentally different from what was</p> | <p>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.</p> <p>These changes comprised design refinements aimed at reducing or balancing the environmental effects of the Scheme, together with minor additions 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 and consulted on.</p> |

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| | <p>previously consulted on, should re-consultation on the proposed application as a whole be considered.</p> <p>In understanding whether there has been a material and substantial change, applicants should take into account the following guiding factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the degree of change as compared to the proposals previously consulted upon as a whole; • the number of materially worse environmental effects as compared to what has been the subject of previous consultations; and • the level of public interest, and the likelihood that such interest would merit further consideration in the context of that change. <p>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.</p> <p>Targeted consultation can be statutory or non-statutory or a combination of the two depending on whether new persons needing to be consulted under section 42 of the Planning Act have been identified, but such targeted consultation will</p> | <p>In determining how to consult on the proposed changes, the Applicant had regard to paragraph 20 of the PA 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, April 2024 which states: <i>“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.”</i></p> <p>The Applicant also had regard to the commitments made in the SoCC, which stated: <i>“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.”</i></p> <p>The Applicant considers that the proposed changes do not constitute fundamental alterations to the Scheme, as they only reflect minor additions to Order limits or design refinements to reduce or balance environmental effects. 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.</p> |

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| | <p>not require the production of PEI provided proportionate and appropriate information on environmental implications of any changes, where necessary, is provided.</p> | |
| <p>Paragraph 021</p> | <p>Who should be consulted?</p> <p>Sections 42 to 44 of the Planning Act, Regulation 3 and Schedule 1 to the APFP Regulations 2009 set out details of who must be consulted, including statutory bodies, the Marine Management Organisation where appropriate, local authorities, and persons having an interest in the land to be developed. Section 47 of the Planning Act sets out the applicant’s statutory duty to consult local communities. In addition, applicants will want to consider the issues that may need to be addressed ahead of submission and may also wish to seek the views of other people who are not statutory consultees, but who may be significantly affected by the project.</p> <p>While the list of prescribed bodies who must be consulted was updated in April 2024, from time to time a body may cease to exist but may still be listed as a statutory consultee in the Regulations pending their updating. In such situations applicants should identify any successor body and consult with them in the same manner as they would have with the original body.</p> | <p>The Applicant consulted all relevant prescribed consultees in accordance with Sections 42, 43, and 44 of the PA 2008, and Regulation 3 and Schedule 1 of the APFP Regulations 2009. This included statutory consultees, host and neighbouring local authorities, and land interests identified within the Scheme boundary.</p> <p>A Scoping Opinion was issued by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) on 10 July 2024, following the Applicant’s Scoping Request submitted on 30 May 2024. The Scoping Opinion included a list of consultation bodies notified under Regulation 11(1)(a) and (1)(c) of the EIA Regulations 2017. The Applicant ensured consistency with this list when undertaking both the stage two consultation and the subsequent targeted consultation.</p> <p>Having consulted all statutorily prescribed bodies as identified in the Planning Inspectorate’s Scoping Opinion, the Applicant considers that it has fulfilled its duty to consult under Sections 42 to 44 of the PA 2008 and Regulation 3 and Schedule 1 of the APFP Regulations 2009. A full list of consultees consulted under Section 42 is provided in Appendix G: Section 42 Consultees (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |

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| Paragraph 022 | <p>How can applicants consult communities effectively?</p> <p>It is good practice for applicants to work with local stakeholders in the formative stages of the project, through early engagement. Early engagement with local authorities, parish and town councils can help applicants to ensure they find the best approach to engage the relevant communities in the most effective and proportionate way.</p> <p>Under section 47 of the Planning Act, applicants are required to produce a SoCC, setting out how they intend to consult the local community on the proposed application. Applicants should consider how they can engage communities in a way that supports them to understand the necessary issues at an appropriate stage to support preparation of their application, and how they will show how they have responded to their issues of concern.</p> | <p>Prior to the commencement of the statutory consultation, the Applicant undertook a programme of early engagement beginning in February 2024. This included introductory meetings with local authorities and parish councils, stakeholder briefings, and the distribution of a newsletter to local properties. These activities were designed to raise awareness of the Scheme and inform the approach to consultation. For more information see Section 3 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>The Applicant implemented best practice in community engagement by proactively engaging with local stakeholders throughout the non-statutory consultation period. This included a six-week stage one consultation held between 30 May and 11 July 2024, comprising in-person events, an online webinar and the publication of consultation materials. For more information see Section 4 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>Preparation of the SoCC is detailed in Section 6 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1). The Applicant undertook consultation under Section 47 of the PA 2008 in accordance with the SoCC. See Appendix C: Statement of Community Consultation (Doc Ref. 5.1) for the Applicant’s compliance to the commitments in the SoCC.</p> |
| Paragraph 022 | Local communities may need support to help them to input to the NSIP consenting process. Independent community | The Applicant sought to make consultation and materials accessible and open to all. This included making materials |

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| | <p>liaison chairs or forums can be used to provide support to local communities and non-statutory consultees to enable them to provide an effective input to the pre-application process. Applicants will want to consider whether these should be used, not least to assist an applicant’s own assessment of potential examination issues in preparing their Programme Document and SoCC.</p> | <p>available online and in hard copy, including at the consultation events and local information points during stage two consultation, as well as review requests for hard copies for materials. Further information about how the Applicant sought to make consultation activities accessible is detailed within the SoCC Appendix C: Statement of Community Consultation (Doc Ref. 5.1)</p> |
| <p>Paragraph 023</p> | <p>How should applicants engage statutory consultees and other relevant groups?</p> <p>Applicants must:</p> <p>consult the prescribed bodies as appropriate under Regulation 3 and Schedule 1 to the APFP Regulations 2009, as well as the Marine Management Organisation in certain circumstances, under section 42 of the Planning Act, giving the consultees at least 28 days to respond;</p> <p>publicise their proposed application under section 48 of the Planning Act, and Regulation 4 of the APFP Regulations 2009 sets out the detail of what this publicity must entail; and</p> <p>by section 49 of the Planning Act have regard to any relevant consultation responses from either statutory consultees under section 42 of the Planning Act, local communities under section 47 of the Planning Act, or wider publicity under section 48 of the Planning Act.</p> | <p>The Applicant compiled a comprehensive list of Section 42 consultees, incorporating those identified by the Planning Inspectorate in the Scoping Opinion issued on 10 July 2024 under Regulation 11(1)(a) and (1)(c) of the EIA Regulations 2017, as well as additional consultees treated as prescribed for the purposes of the consultation.</p> <p>Formal written notification was issued to all Section 42 consultees on 24 April 2025, marking the start of the statutory consultation period. The consultation ran for 45 days until 8 June 2025, which exceeded the statutory minimum of 28 days required under Section 45(2) of the PA 2008.</p> <p>Details of the Scheme’s compliant publication under Section 48 of the PA 2008 are provided in Section 7 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>The Applicant has had regard to all relevant responses received during the statutory consultation in accordance with Section 49 of the PA 2008 and has acted upon them</p> |

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| | <p>Applicants will often need detailed technical input from statutory consultees as expert bodies to assist with identifying and mitigating the impacts of projects, and other important matters. In many cases applicants will need to engage statutory consultees and others before the Inception Meeting with the Planning Inspectorate.</p> <p>Some statutory consultees have cost recovery arrangements in place for the advice they provide. The ability for statutory consultees to respond effectively to pre-application requests for advice means they have the information they need from applicants to do so. It is essential therefore that applicants arrange early engagement with statutory consultees to avoid unnecessary delays and the costs of having to make changes at later stages of the consenting process.</p> <p>It is equally important that statutory consultees respond to a request for technical input in a timely manner. This requires statutory consultees to allocate the necessary resource and work with applicants to support them in developing their application, taking account of the issues they raise.</p> | <p>where practicable. A detailed record of all comments from statutory consultees, together with the Applicant's response, is provided in Appendix H: Section 42 Applicant's Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1). Feedback from Section 47 consultees is presented in Appendix I: Section 47 Applicant's Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>Feedback received during the targeted consultation, including the Applicant's responses, is detailed in Appendix K: Targeted Consultation Applicant's Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> <p>The Applicant has undertaken ongoing engagement with various stakeholders throughout the pre-application period and development of the Scheme.</p> <p>This included direct discussions with a number of technical stakeholders to provide updates on the DCO process, address key issues raised and review their responses to the stage two consultation.</p> <p>The records of engagement with technical stakeholders are detailed within the relevant topic chapters of the ES (Doc Ref. 6.1).</p> |
| Paragraph 024 | <p>What do applicants have to do to consult people with an interest in land?</p> <p>Where an applicant proposes to compulsorily acquire an interest or take temporary possession of land it does not</p> | <p>In compliance with Section 42(1)(d) of the PA 2008, the Applicant undertook a diligent inquiry to identify and consult persons with an interest in land (PILs), as defined under</p> |

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| | <p>own in order to implement a proposed NSIP, under section 42 of the Planning Act they must identify and consult people, including those who own, occupy or have another interest in the land in question.</p> <p>It is the applicant’s responsibility to demonstrate at submission of the application to the Planning Inspectorate that due diligence has been undertaken in identifying all land interests. Applicants must ensure that the Book of Reference (which records and categorises those land interests) is sufficiently up to date at the time of submission (acknowledging the timescales for preparing and updating it) and fully meets the requirements of Regulations 5 and 7 of the APFP Regulations 2009.</p> <p>Where appropriate, the Book of Reference should be supplemented by a Land and Rights Negotiation Tracker, submitted by the applicant and updated during the examination, setting out the status of negotiations with landowners, Crown bodies and statutory undertakers affected by proposals for compulsory acquisition of land or rights and temporary possession.</p> <p>It should be noted that for an accepted application, the situation concerning compilation of land interests can continue to evolve during the examination as new information becomes available, and it is not uncommon for the Book of Reference to be revised and resubmitted more than once. This is usually a substantial undertaking and</p> | <p>Section 44. This included owners, occupiers, lessees, tenants and those with potentially relevant claims.</p> <p>The inquiry process involved a review of public records, including Land Registry data, the distribution of Land Interest Questionnaires, site visits, and the placement of site notices. The Applicant has provided a Book of Reference (Doc Ref. 4.3), which includes a full list of identified land interests.</p> <p>Formal notification of the statutory consultation was issued to all identified PILs on 24 April 2025. This correspondence included a personalised cover letter, a copy of the Section 48 notice, and a map of the Scheme boundary. Where appropriate, correspondence was also issued electronically. Efforts to identify unknown landowners were undertaken through local inquiries and the display of site notices.</p> <p>Following the launch of the statutory consultation, the Applicant identified additional PILs and issued them formal notification of the consultation, including an extension to the consultation period where appropriate.</p> <p>New PILs identified as a result of proposed changes to the Order Limits were consulted as part of the targeted consultation. These individuals received tailored correspondence consistent with the approach taken during the statutory consultation under Section 44. The Applicant’s approach to the targeted consultation is detailed in Section 11 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1).</p> |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
|-----------|--|------------|
| | <p>applicants should dedicate sufficient time and resource, particularly as in many cases there may be parcels of land where there is little information available. With this in mind, applicants are advised to make maximum use of electronic data bases when compiling the Book of Reference to enable such changes to be made easily.</p> <p>In addition, land interests can change over time and new or additional interests may emerge after an applicant has concluded statutory consultation but just before an application is submitted. In such a situation, the applicant should provide a proportionate opportunity to any new person identified with a land interest to make their views known on the application. Where new interests in land are identified very shortly before the intended submission of an application, despite diligent efforts earlier in the process, it may be difficult at that stage for applicants to consult and take account of any responses from those new interests before submitting their application as intended. If this situation arises applicants should be proactive and helpful in ensuring that the person understands how they can, if they so wish, engage with the process if the application is accepted for examination.</p> <p>Applicants should explain in the consultation report how they have dealt with any new interests in land emerging after conclusion of their statutory consultation having regard to their duties to consult and take account of any responses.</p> | |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
|----------------------|---|--|
| <p>Paragraph 025</p> | <p>What is the early adequacy of consultation milestone</p> <p>This adequacy of consultation milestone should be early enough to enable applicants to consider how to undertake any additional engagement that may be needed, but sufficiently towards the end of the pre-application stage to assess the adequacy of the consultation that has been done. It is likely therefore to be no later than around 3 months before the intended date of submission of the application.</p> <p>The adequacy of consultation milestone should be recorded by the applicant and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate 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 statement should include the views and any relevant supporting material from local authorities if available.</p> <p>The adequacy of consultation milestone is an informal but nonetheless 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. Inevitably this could mean a renegotiation of the expected date of submission, with the objective of avoiding the prospect of an application not being accepted for examination.</p> | <p>The Applicant submitted an Adequacy of Consultation Milestone (AoCM) document to the Planning Inspectorate on 7 November 2025.</p> <p>Prior to this, the Applicant agreed with the Planning Inspectorate to submit the AoCM document approximately two months in advance of the application submission. This was to enable the Applicant to include information about the concluding targeted consultation and to share the AoCM document with the host local authorities prior to submitting it to the Planning Inspectorate.</p> <p>The Applicant shared its AoCM document with Lincolnshire County Council and South Holland District Council on 15 October 2025.</p> <p>Lincolnshire County Council responded to confirm the Applicant had carried out adequate pre-application consultation in accordance with the relevant requirements as set out in Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Act.</p> <p>The Applicant did not receive detailed comments from South Holland District Council on the AoCM report.</p> |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
|----------------------|--|---|
| | <p>Under section 55(4)(b) of the Planning Act, at the acceptance stage, the Planning Inspectorate will seek the formal views from local authorities about the adequacy of consultation.</p> | |
| <p>Paragraph 026</p> | <p>What is the consultation report and how should applicants respond to consultees?</p> <p>Applicants are required under section 37 of the Planning Act to produce a consultation report alongside their application, which details how they have complied with the consultation requirements set out in the Planning Act and how the proposed application has been shaped as a result. The Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State will consider this report when deciding whether or not the applicant has complied with the pre-application consultation requirements, and ultimately, whether or not an application can be accepted to proceed to examination.</p> <p>This report should not include an excessively detailed description of every element of the consultation programme. The main objective should be to provide clarity not just on what consultation has been done but, crucially, how the applicant has taken it into account. It should therefore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide a general description of the consultation process undertaken including the timeline; • set out specifically what the applicant has done to comply with the statutory requirements of the Planning Act, including advice issued under section 51 | <p>The Consultation Report has been prepared to fulfil the requirements of Section 37(3)(c) of the PA 2008. It provides a comprehensive account of the Applicant’s adherence to the pre-application consultation duties under Sections 42, 47, and 48 of the Act. The Consultation Report demonstrates how the Applicant has had regard to all relevant responses received during the consultation process, in accordance with Section 49 of the PA 2008.</p> <p>Relevant sections to demonstrate it has been prepared in accordance with the guidance include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table 1-1 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1) summarises the pre-application engagement in chronological order; • This document, Appendix A Consultation Compliance Checklist (Doc Ref. 5.1), sets out how the Applicant has complied with relevant legislation and guidance, including the statutory requirements under the PA 2008; • Chapter 6 of the Consultation Report (Doc Ref. 5.1) sets out how the Applicant consulted relevant authorities on the SoCC. |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
|---------------|--|---|
| | <p>of the Planning Act, relevant secondary legislation and this guidance;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out how the applicant has complied with the requirements to consult local communities described in the SoCC; • set out any relevant responses to consultation (but not a complete list of responses); • provide a description of how the proposed application for submission has been informed and influenced by taking account of those responses, showing any significant changes made as a result; • provide an explanation as to why any responses advising on changes to a proposed project, including advice from statutory consultees and local authorities on effects, were not followed; and • be expressed in terms sufficient to enable the Planning Inspectorate to understand fully how consultation has been undertaken, and how the issues raised through consultation have been addressed or responded to. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed record of all comments from statutory consultees, together with the Applicant's response, is provided in Appendix H: Section 42 Applicant's Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1). Feedback from Section 47 consultees is presented in Appendix I: Section 47 Applicant's Responses (Doc Ref. 5.1). |
| Paragraph 026 | It is good practice that those who have contributed to the consultation are informed of the results. The consultation report may not be the most appropriate format in which to respond to the points raised by various consultee groups and | The Scheme website has remained live throughout the pre-application process and will be updated following the submission of the DCO Application. The Applicant will |

| Reference | Legislation | Compliance |
|-----------|---|--|
| | <p>bodies. Applicants should therefore consider producing a summary note in plain English for the local community setting out headline findings and how they have been addressed, together with a link to the full consultation report for those interested.</p> <p>A response to points raised by consultees with technical information is likely to need to focus on the specific impacts for which the body has expertise. The applicant should make a judgement as to whether the consultation report provides sufficient detail on the relevant effects, or whether a targeted response would be more appropriate.</p> | <p>consider further methods of notifying the community of the outcomes of the stage two consultation.</p> <p>The Applicant has undertaken ongoing engagement with various stakeholders throughout the pre-application period and development of the Scheme.</p> <p>This included direct discussions with a number of technical stakeholders to provide updates on the DCO process, address key issues raised and review their responses to the stage two consultation.</p> <p>The records of engagement with technical stakeholders are detailed within the relevant topic chapters of the ES (Doc Ref. 6.1).</p> |

Appendix A-1.2 Adequacy of Consultation Milestone Report



Adequacy of Consultation Milestone Report

November 2025



1.1.3.



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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.

4

1.1.5.



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.

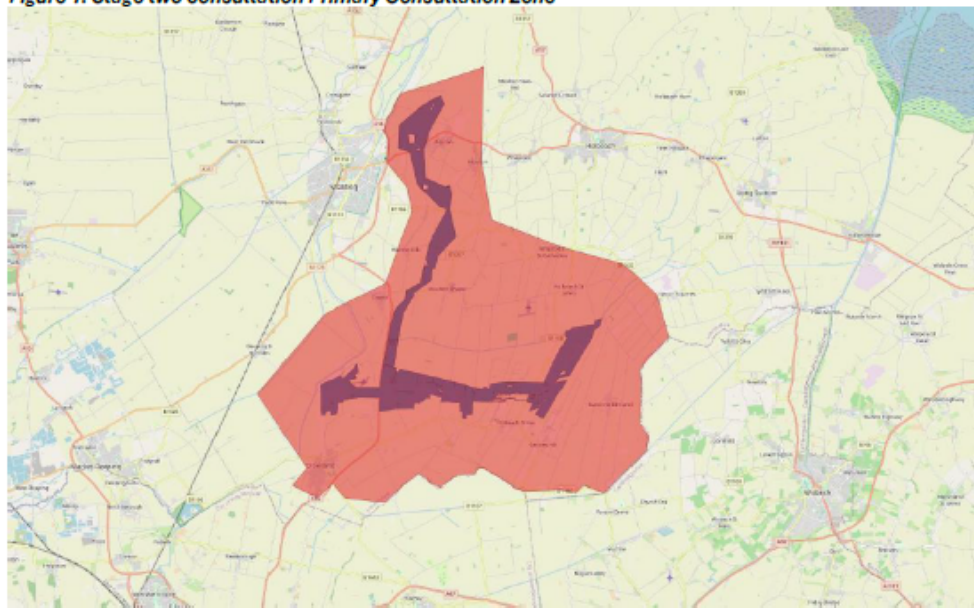
⁵ <https://meridiansolarfarm.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Meridian-non-statutory-consultation-summary.pdf>

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 | Included the following information: <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. Hard copies were available at consultation events, information points, and on request by post. |
| 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. | 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. 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. 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. |
| | 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. | The Applicant updated the language in the final version of the SoCC to reflect “seldom heard groups”. The organisations mentioned by LCC were also added into Appendix 4 ‘Community stakeholders’ and were written to at consultation launch. |
| | | |
| 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. | 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. 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 The feedback form was also available in hard copy to those that requested it. Hard copies were posted via Royal Mail. |
| 6.5 | The NTS of the PEIR is available for download from the project website. Paper copies of the PEIR and NTS are available at our consultation events and in one local information point, Crowland Library, for reference. | 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. 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. |
| 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. | The SoCC was uploaded to the Scheme website, and available to download, on the day of the consultation launch. 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. |
| 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. <p>Materials for reference only:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 |
|-----------------|---|--|
| | | <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 | <p>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> | <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 | <p>Statutory notices to publicise the consultation and the SoCC will be published in local and national news publications.</p> | <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 | <p>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> | <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 |
|------------------|--|---|
| | | <p>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> |
| Contact channels | | |
| 6.7.2 | <p>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> | <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 | <p>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> | <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



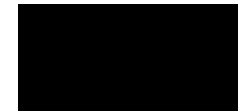
I have now received comments back from colleagues within our communication team on the draft SoCC, I have copied their comments below.

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.
- 6.8 "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, Aka, Spalding and District etc.

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 40kV lines' - has the overhead line option now been confirmed as your preferred approach?

Should LCC have any further comments before the closure of the consultation period is issued.

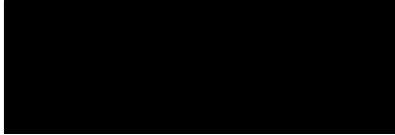


Mr. G. [Redacted] has been appointed as the lead ecologist for this project.

Infrastructure Officer
Lincolnshire County Council,
County Offices, Newstead, Lincoln LN1 2YJ

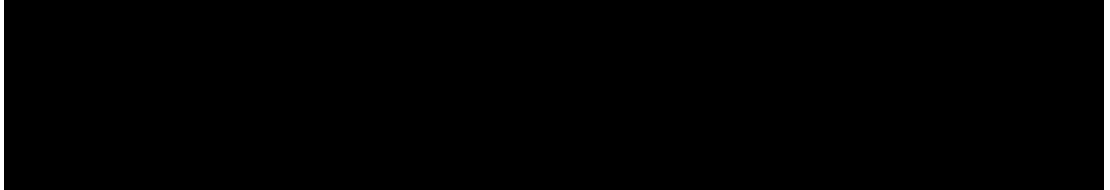


8.2 Appendix B: Local Authority feedback to the SoCC – South Holland District Council



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.





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 Dsitric 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

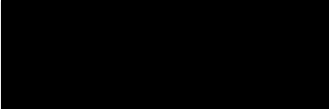
| Consultee | Consultee | Consultee |
|--|--|---|
| Environment group for Fenland - Friends of the Earth | Woodland Trust | Sutton Saint James Baptist Church |
| Local Energy Advice Partnership | Biodiversity Information Centre | St. Mary's Church Whaplode |
| Sustainability/ conservation group for the 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



Lincolnshire County Council
County Offices
Newland

Date: 31 October 2025

Lin [redacted]
Tel [redacted]
E-Mail [redacted]@lincs.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

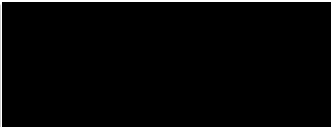


consultants have taken place throughout the majority of the pre-application process. Meridian Solar Farm Ltd formally consulted the Council on the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) on 31 October 2024.

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.



Consultation and Engagement
Statement of Community Consultation
Consultations

Appendix A-1.3 Lincolnshire County Council - Response to Adequacy of Consultation Milestone Report



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

Date: 31 October 2025

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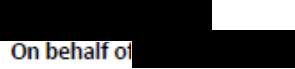

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Having reviewed the draft AoCM Report dated October 2025 LCC is content with the contents of this document. LCC is therefore satisfied that an appropriate level of consultation has been conducted at this stage.

Yours faithfully,


On behalf of 
Head of Planning

Consultation and Engagement
Statement of Community Consultation
Consultations

