



Meridian Solar Farm

EN010169

Volume 7

Other Documents

7.20 Potential Main
Issues for Examination

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

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

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Contents

- 1. Introduction** **2**
- 1.1. Overview 2
- 2. Potential Main Issues for Examination** **4**

1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

- 1.1.1. This Potential Main Issues for Examination (PMIE) document forms part of an application by Meridian Solar Farm Limited to the Secretary of State under the Planning Act 2008 (the 'Act') for a Development Consent Order (the DCO Application) for the Scheme.
- 1.1.2. The Scheme would comprise the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of a solar PV electricity generating station with associated infrastructure, including co-located Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), Inter-Array Connections to link the land parcels that form the Solar Development Areas, and an up to 13km overhead line Grid Connection (with one short undergrounded section) which would run north towards a point of connection (PoC) at the proposed Weston Marsh B National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) substation, to the north of Weston.
- 1.1.3. The Solar PV generating station, associated BESS, on-site substations and other associated infrastructure would be located within four land parcels (A, B, C and D) referred to collectively as the Solar Development Area, as shown in **ES Figure 1-1** (Doc Ref. 6.2).
- 1.1.4. The Inter-Arrays would be the areas within which 132kV connection cables (the 'Inter-Array Connections') would link the land parcels of the Solar Development Area. The configuration of the Inter-Array Connections (132kV) would comprise underground cabling between Land Parcels A and B ('the Underground Inter-Array') and an overhead line between Land Parcels C and D ('the Overground Inter-Array').
- 1.1.5. The Grid Connection Route would be the area between the Solar Development Area and the National Grid Weston Marsh B Substation in which a 400kV overhead line (the 'Grid Connection') would be located. There is one section where the Grid Connection would route underground to avoid conflicts with an existing 132kV overhead line. Cable Sealing End Compounds (CSECs) would join the proposed underground cable at that section with the proposed overhead line.
- 1.1.6. The Scheme comprises a generating station of more than 100 MW and the installation of above ground electric lines greater than two kilometres in length and a nominal voltage of 132 kV or greater. The Scheme therefore qualifies as an NSIP under sections 14(1)(a), 14(1)(b), 15(2) and 16 of the Act.

- 1.1.7. The purpose of this PMIE is to provide the Examining Authority (ExA) with a summary of the main residual issues with key stakeholders remaining at the time of the DCO Application submission. It is not an exhaustive list. It summarises the key issues that have arisen during the pre-application stage through feedback received as part of the consultations held and the technical engagement undertaken.
- 1.1.8. This PMIE has been prepared taking into account the Planning Inspectorate's Guidance within its Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Pre-Application Prospectus. It follows the format set out in the PMIE template issued by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 1.1.9. This document has not been shared with stakeholders for comment. The Applicant is working with stakeholders to progress Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs). Feedback from stakeholders to date is that their most up to date record of issues to be resolved will be set out in their Relevant Representations once they have read the DCO Application.
- 1.1.10. It is anticipated that a number of the issues outlined in this document may be resolved between the submission of the DCO Application and Examination, including once stakeholders have had an opportunity to review the DCO Application and through the evolution of application documents, including the negotiation of protective provisions, where necessary. It is the Applicant's intention to continue to work with stakeholders throughout the DCO Examination to resolve issues wherever possible.
- 1.1.11. This document should be read alongside information that is contained within the other application documents and plans.

2. Potential Main Issues for Examination

2.1.1. Table 2-1 sets out the PMIE arranged by topic. It sets out a summary of the matter, the stakeholders it applies to, the likelihood of the issue being resolved, and a summary of the current status.

2.1.2. The following consideration has been applied to each colour:

Shading	Definition
Red	Fundamental disagreements that are unlikely to be resolved during Examination. This includes where, through previous engagement, the Applicant and a stakeholder have 'agreed to disagree'.
Amber	Issues which are under discussion and may be resolved during the Examination.
Green	Issues that are likely to be resolved prior to or during the Examination.

Table 2-1 Potential Main Issues for Examination

Ref	Description of Issue	Affected Stakeholders	Signposting to Application	Status	Likelihood of being resolved
Agricultural Land and Soils					
ALC2	Development of BMV Land Development of land classified as BMV should be avoided.	Lincolnshire County Council South Holland District Council	ES Chapter 5: Agricultural Land and Soils (Doc Ref. 6.1) Outline Soil Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.14)	Red	While these surveys and analysis have continued to influence the Scheme design and layout, the Applicant does not consider it appropriate to avoid all BMV land. As noted above, solar panel infrastructure results in a temporary impact on the use of BMV land and can be appropriately managed via controls in the OSMP (Doc Ref. 7.14). While BMV is one matter to consider in the siting of Scheme infrastructure, this must be weighed with the other design and operational requirements of the Scheme.
Cultural Heritage					
CH1	Impact of Tall Infrastructure on Views and Settings of Nearby Heritage Assets	Historic England Lincolnshire County Council	ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage (Doc Ref. 6.1)	Amber	The Applicant has discussed the approach to the assessment of the Scheme on views from and the setting of heritage assets with

Ref	Description of Issue	Affected Stakeholders	Signposting to Application	Status	Likelihood of being resolved
	Tall elements including the on-site substations, BESS Compound and pylons particularly where located within otherwise flat open landscapes, may result in substantial change to views and settings of nearby heritage assets.				Historic England and Lincolnshire County Council. Further engagement will occur with both stakeholders following review of the DCO Application.
CH2	Archaeological Mitigation and Management Strategy The mitigation and management strategy is still to be presented to Historic England and Lincolnshire County Council.	Historic England Lincolnshire County Council	ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage (Doc Ref. 6.1)	Green	The issue remains under discussion, and it is envisaged that the Archaeological Mitigation and Management Strategy will be consulted on in detail with Historic England and LCC during the pre-examination stage and it is anticipated agreement is likely to be reached during examination.
Ecology and Biodiversity					
EB1	Habitats Regulation Assessment - Collision Risk with Overhead Lines Concerns that overhead lines would pose a collision risk to birds. Natural England has provided initial comments on the approach to the	Natural England	ES Appendix 9-14: HRA Report (Doc Ref. 6.3) ES Appendix 9-15: Collision Risk Analysis Technical Note (Doc Ref. 6.3)	Amber	The Applicant has consulted with Natural England on the scope of surveys, assessment and the approach to collision risk analysis. The Applicant has proposed targeted line markers to mitigate

Ref	Description of Issue	Affected Stakeholders	Signposting to Application	Status	Likelihood of being resolved
	HRA and its approach to collision risk analysis.				<p>the impact of collision risk with the overhead lines.</p> <p>No residual significant adverse effects are reported in relation to Ecology and Biodiversity. Further engagement will occur with both stakeholders following Natural England's review of the DCO Application.</p>
Hydrology and Flood Risk					
W1	<p>Flood Risk</p> <p>Concern raised at statutory consultation that further mitigation may be required to ensure flood risk is not increased on or off site.</p>	Environment Agency	ES Appendix 11-3: Flood Risk Assessment (Doc Ref. 6.3)	Green	<p>The Applicant has engaged with the Environment Agency through the preparation of ES Appendix 11-3: Flood Risk Assessment (Doc Ref. 6.3).</p> <p>The FRA concludes the siting of the Scheme infrastructure in the flood zones is not expected to result in any material or measurable loss of floodplain storage, nor any material change to flood depths or floodplain hydraulics. On this basis, no</p>

Ref	Description of Issue	Affected Stakeholders	Signposting to Application	Status	Likelihood of being resolved
					additional flood mitigation or compensation is required. The Applicant expects this matter to be resolved once the EA has reviewed the FRA.
W2	<p>Minimum overhead line clearance over drains</p> <p>South Holland IDB has requested a minimum conductor height over its watercourses to account for machinery which has a maximum height of 18 m at full reach.</p>	South Holland Internal Drainage Board	Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1)	Green	<p>The Applicant has prepared a technical note to respond to the requirements from SH IDB, this includes a request for further detail from SH IDB.</p> <p>The Applicant expects this matter to be resolved through further engagement with South Holland IDB.</p>
Landscape and Visual					
LV1	<p>Principle of an Overhead Line</p> <p>Requests to progress an underground cable instead of an overhead line to reduce landscape and visual effects.</p>	South Holland District Council	<p>Planning Statement (Doc Ref. 7.1)</p> <p>ES Chapter 3: Alternatives and Design Evolution (Doc Ref. 6.1)</p>	Red	<p>The Planning Statement (Doc Ref. 7.1) explains how the overhead line is in accordance with national policy within EN-5 and that there are no scenarios which reverse this strong starting presumption.</p> <p>Further ES Chapter 3: Alternatives and Design Evolution (Doc Ref. 6.1) describes the alternatives</p>

Ref	Description of Issue	Affected Stakeholders	Signposting to Application	Status	Likelihood of being resolved
					considered, including underground cables, which confirms an overhead line remains an appropriate technology choice.
LV2	<p>Landscape – Grid Connection Route</p> <p>Concerns that the Grid Connection would introduce a typology that is out of scale and character with the flat, expansive and predominantly horizontal qualities of the area.</p>	<p>South Holland District Council</p> <p>Lincolnshire County Council</p>	<p>ES Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual (Doc Ref. 6.1)</p>	Amber	<p>The Applicant has taken into account the impact of the proposed Grid Connection on the landscape within ES Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual (Doc Ref. 6.1). This provides a more detailed assessment than the PEIR assessment that South Holland District Council previously reviewed.</p> <p>It is expected that South Holland District Council and Lincolnshire County Council will provide further views on the assessment of landscape effects through further technical engagement and its Relevant Representation once the DCO Application is reviewed.</p>

Ref	Description of Issue	Affected Stakeholders	Signposting to Application	Status	Likelihood of being resolved
LV3	<p>Visual – Grid Connection Route</p> <p>Concerns that visual receptors are likely to experience prolonged and unavoidable views of the proposed pylons.</p>	<p>South Holland District Council</p> <p>Lincolnshire County Council</p>	<p>ES Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual (Doc Ref. 6.1)</p> <p>ES Figure 12-21: Photosheets (Doc Ref. 6.2)</p> <p>ES Figure 12-22: LCC Photosheets (Doc Ref. 6.2)</p>	Amber	<p>The Applicant recognises that it is not possible to screen views of the Grid Connection with planting due to the height of the pylons.</p> <p>It is expected that South Holland District Council and Lincolnshire County Council will provide further views on the assessment of visual effects through further technical engagement and its Relevant Representation once the DCO Application is reviewed.</p>
LV4	<p>Landscape and Visual – Cumulative Effects</p> <p>Concerns that there will be a significant cumulative effect on landscape and visual with other grid infrastructure proposed.</p>	<p>South Holland District Council</p> <p>Lincolnshire County Council</p>	<p>ES Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual (Doc Ref. 6.1)</p> <p>ES Figure 12-21: Photosheets (Doc Ref. 6.2)</p> <p>ES Figure 12-22: LCC Photosheets (Doc Ref. 6.2)</p>	Amber	<p>ES Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual (Doc Ref. 6.1) provides an assessment of cumulative effects with other schemes including Grimsby to Walpole and WMEL, which proposed overhead line infrastructure near Weston Marsh. Visualisations have been produced which include these cumulative schemes.</p> <p>Further engagement is required with South Holland District Council and Lincolnshire County</p>

Ref	Description of Issue	Affected Stakeholders	Signposting to Application	Status	Likelihood of being resolved
					Council regarding the conclusions reached for cumulative landscape and visual effects within the assessment.
National Grid					
NG1	<p>Weston Marsh B Substation Point of Connection</p> <p>NGET intends to construct two new substations at Weston Marsh to connect new customers and realign existing, to the NETS. The Grid Connection Route provides a connection to the Weston Marsh B Substation, being the closest of the two substations to the Solar Development Area, as the original Grid Connection Agreement did not state there could be two substation locations, nor stipulate a specific substation. However, confirmation as to which of the two substations the Scheme can connect to remains subject to final designs by NGET</p>	National Grid Electricity Transmission	<p>Grid Connection Statement (Doc Ref. 7.5)</p> <p>Interrelationships with Other NSIPs Report (Doc Ref. 7.2)</p>	Amber	NGET is still undergoing design development on its proposals at Weston Marsh and the wider Grimsby to Walpole NSIP. The Applicant is liaising with NGET to confirm a connection into the proposed Weston Marsh B Substation. Timescales are reliant on Grid Reform and progress of connection offers through NESO. The Applicant will update the Inspectorate as any further information is received from NGET/NESO. Should a confirmation of a connection to Weston Marsh A Substation rather than Weston Marsh B Substation, the Applicant will confirm any further consents or approvals required to accommodate this.

Ref	Description of Issue	Affected Stakeholders	Signposting to Application	Status	Likelihood of being resolved
	and a formal connection offer from NESO.				
NG2	<p>Interface between the Scheme and NGET's Grimsby to Walpole and Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire (WMEL) projects</p> <p>The Grid Connection Route for the Scheme overlaps with the indicative alignments for Grimsby to Walpole and WMEL</p>	National Grid Electricity Transmission	Interrelationships with Other NSIPs Report (Doc Ref. 7.2)	Green	<p>The Applicant and NGET have worked together through a series of design workshops to manage the interface between these projects. The Applicant is confident based on that engagement that a workable alignment for both projects can be accommodated.</p> <p>The Applicant is working with NGET to confirm agreement formally via a Statement of Common Ground.</p>
Noise and Vibration					
NV1	<p>Noise and Vibration</p> <p>Measures to mitigate noise impacts from construction vehicles to reduce the number of significant adverse effects.</p>	South Holland District Council	<p>ES Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration (Doc Ref. 6.1)</p> <p>Outline Construction Environmental</p>	Amber	The Applicant has provided an assessment of noise and vibration impacts from construction traffic within ES Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration (Doc Ref. 6.1). It concludes a number of significant adverse effects during the

Ref	Description of Issue	Affected Stakeholders	Signposting to Application	Status	Likelihood of being resolved
			<p>Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.10)</p> <p>Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.13)</p>		<p>construction phase associated with construction traffic. The Applicant has proposed measures within the Outline CEMP (Doc Ref. 7.10) and Outline CTMP (Doc Ref. 7.13) to reduce these where practicable.</p> <p>Further engagement is required with South Holland District Council and Lincolnshire County Council regarding the conclusions reached within ES Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration (Doc Ref. 6.1).</p>
Traffic and Access					
TR-1	<p>Cumulative Construction Traffic</p> <p>Impact of cumulative construction traffic on the local road network.</p>	Lincolnshire County Council	<p>ES Chapter 15: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 6.1)</p> <p>Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.13)</p>	Amber	<p>The Applicant has provided an assessment of impacts from construction traffic within ES Chapter 15: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 6.1). It concludes a significant adverse cumulative effect on road safety on A151 Holbeach Road, A16 South of Crowland, A16 North of Peterborough, Hull's Drove (East), predominantly as a result of the cumulative schemes during the</p>

Ref	Description of Issue	Affected Stakeholders	Signposting to Application	Status	Likelihood of being resolved
					<p>construction phase. The Applicant has proposed measures within the Outline CTMP (Doc Ref. 7.13) to enable additional management to be applied, if necessary.</p> <p>Further engagement is required with Lincolnshire County Council regarding the conclusions reached within ES Chapter 15: Traffic and Access (Doc Ref. 6.1).</p>

