

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

FAO: Naoual Margoum (Case Officer)
24 August 2026

Dear Ms Margoum,

Planning Act 2008 – Application for a Development Consent Order for the Meridian Solar Farm (Ref. EN010169) – Response to Procedural Deadline A

This letter is drafted in response to the Rule 6 Letter [\[PD-006\]](#) which requests written submissions about how the application should be examined, specifically in relation to:

- Requests for changes to be made to the draft examination timetable set out at annex D to this letter; and
- comment about the arrangements for future examination hearings, including the use of virtual methods.

Draft Examination Timetable

The Applicant has only one substantive point to raise in relation to the draft examination timetable set out in Annex D to the Rule 6 letter. It relates to the publication of the Examining Authority's (ExA) second written questions (ExQ2) which is currently scheduled for Friday 18 December 2026, with responses due Thursday 7 January 2027. These timescales mean that the drafting of responses will primarily fall over the Christmas and school holiday period.

The Applicant requests that ExQ2 be published one week earlier (Friday 11 December) to facilitate a full working week to progress responses and engage, where necessary, with relevant stakeholders ahead of the majority of organisations breaking up for the Christmas holiday period. This would still allow 10 days between Deadline 4 (during which the ExA will receive post-hearing submissions) and the circulation of ExQ2. It would also be approximately four weeks following the second round of hearings.

The Applicant considers this amendment to the timetable will facilitate higher quality responses to the ExQ2 by all parties. It notes that the draft timetable already includes provision for a third round of written questions on Thursday 21 January 2027, which it considers mitigates the reduced timeframe for the ExA to develop ExQ2, as any additional questions could be included in the ExQ3.

Annex F – Statements of Common Ground

Annex F of the Rule 6 Letter [\[PD-006\]](#) outlines a number of procedural decisions made by the ExA. Point 2 relates to Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs) and requests the submission of SoCGs between the Applicant and listed parties (including additional listed parties as per the Procedural Decision following Acceptance [\[PD-007\]](#)).

The Applicant is progressing draft SOCGs for the majority of listed entities in Annex F. However, at this stage, the Applicant does not propose to submit draft SOCGs at Deadline 1 for the following parties:

- **The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).** The CAA has advised the Applicant by email that the Scheme does not meet its criteria for further engagement and that it does not wish to continue discussions in relation to the Scheme. The CAA is not registered as an Interested Party. It is noted in respect of aviation matters that a SOCG with the Peterborough and Spalding Gliding Club is being progressed.
- **Relevant Statutory Undertakers.** It is noted that Annex F requests SOCGs with all relevant Statutory Undertakers. SOCGs will be entered for the majority of relevant statutory undertakers (including those otherwise listed in Annex F). However, the Applicant notes that there are several statutory undertakers listed in the book of reference that it does not propose to submit an SOCG for Deadline 1:
 - **Spalding Energy Company, Cadent Gas, National Grid Electricity Distribution and Network Rail.** The Applicant is in discussion with these parties as to the terms of bespoke protective provisions for the benefit of their assets. The Applicant and these parties are not progressing discussions on any other matters at this stage. As such, the Applicant does not consider it would be efficient or helpful to provide a SOCG with these parties, as it would simply record that negotiations are ongoing. Instead, the Applicant proposes to update the ExA on the status of those negotiations (including an estimation of how close they are to conclusion) within the Land Rights Tracker.
 - **BT Group Plc, Aidien Ltd, Cityfibre Ltd, CNG Services Ltd, ES Pipelines Ltd, Inovyn Enterprises Ltd, Lumen Technologies Ltd, Utility Assets Ltd, Yorkshire Water Services Ltd.** These statutory undertakers were flagged as potential rights holders within the Book of Reference. They have not responded to engagement by Meridian Solar enquiring as to the nature of those rights and whether protective provisions are required. They have not made relevant representations on the Scheme. As such, the Applicant does not consider that an SOCG is required or would be able to be progressed with these parties.
 - **Royal Mail Group, National Gas Transmission Plc, Fulcrum Electricity Assets Ltd, Fulcrum Pipelines Ltd.** These statutory undertakers were flagged as potential rights holders within the Book of Reference. They have confirmed directly to Meridian Solar that they do not have assets presently within the Order limits and do not object to the Scheme. They have not made relevant representations on the Scheme. As such, the Applicant does not consider an SOCG is required with these parties.

Should the position with any of the above parties change during the Examination, such that there are substantive or technical matters under discussion which would warrant reporting on in an SOCG, the Applicant will update the ExA accordingly and promptly pursue the preparation of such SOCG(s).

The Applicant trusts that the above is helpful and would be grateful for the ExA's confirmation as to whether the approach set out above would be acceptable. Should the ExA require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Michelle Burns at Michelle.Burns@quod.com or +44 774 949 1994.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Head of NSIPs

Downing Renewable Developments LLP

E: [REDACTED]

T: [REDACTED]