Meridian Solar Farm

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Volume 8

Post-Submission Application Documents

8.10 Statement of Common Ground with South Holland District Council

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

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1. Introduction

1.1. Overview

1.1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to support the examination process for the proposed Meridian Solar Farm. A DCO application has been made by Meridian Solar Farm Limited ('the Applicant') to the Secretary of State pursuant to Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008.

1.1.2. SoCGs are an established means in the planning process of allowing all parties to identify and focus on specific issues that may need to be considered during the examination. The purpose and possible content of SoCGs is detailed in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's guidance entitled 'Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the examination stage of an application' (2026), which states:

"*A SoCG is a written statement prepared jointly by the applicant and another interested party or parties but led and submitted by the applicant, setting out the factual matters about the application on which they agree, for example, on data or methodologies concerning the determination of any significant effects, but can just as helpfully record disagreement.*

…

SoCGs are expected to be concise and focused on the key issues, with the scope agreed between the parties from the outset of discussions on the application during the pre-application stage. SoCGs are often revised during the course of the examination as matters are agreed or disagreements clarified between the applicant and interested parties."

1.1.3. This document relates to matters between the Applicant and South Holland District Council. It confirms to the Examining Authority where agreement has been reached between the parties, and where agreement has not (yet) been reached. This SoCG does not seek to replicate information that is available elsewhere, either within the DCO application and/or examination documents, referring out where appropriate.

1.1.4. The content of this SoCG has initially been based off the matters raised by South Holland District Council in its relevant representation [RR-183], with cross-reference to the original issue in brackets.

1.1.5. The terminology used within the SoCG to reflect the status between the parties is either:

- "Agreed" to indicate where a matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of the parties.
- "Not Agreed" to indicate a final position where parties cannot agree.
- "Under Discussion" to indicate where matters are subject of on-going discussion with the aim to either resolve or refine the extent of disagreement between the parties.

1.1.6. Where matters would require the involvement of third parties in order to come to an agreement, these dependencies are noted.

2. Summary of Engagement Undertaken

2.1.1. Table 2-1 summarises the key meetings and correspondence between the parties subject to this SoCG.

Table 2-1 Summary of key meetings and correspondence

Date	Engagement Type	Summary
11 September 2023	Online Meeting	Introduction to the Meridian Solar Farm Project.
10 April 2024	Online Meeting	Introductions were made and an introduction to the Scheme and LVIA scope was provided.
30 August 2024	Online Meeting	The viewpoints, associated with the Solar Development Areas, for summer photography were discussed. The proposed viewpoints and solar array ZTV were provided; SHDC had no comments.
31 October 2024	Online Meeting	Monthly project update meeting.
20 November 2024	Online Meeting	Monthly project update meeting.
31 January 2025	Online Meeting	Monthly project update meeting.
20 June 2025 – 23 July 2025	Email Correspondence	Seeking feedback on proposed baseline noise monitoring locations.
7 July 2025	Online Meeting	Monthly project update meeting including environmental update.
24 July 2025	Online Meeting	LCC/ SHDC LVIA Update Meeting to discuss the statutory consultation feedback received. An update was provided on the development of Scheme design. Landscape and visual mitigation principles were presented, and the viewpoint strategy was reviewed. Initial findings from the updated glint and glare assessment were presented. LCC and SHDC requested for the landscape strategy to consider the introduction of landscape corridors through the Site to increase permeability. Following the meeting, the Applicant shared a viewpoint spreadsheet and mapping for review, including an indication on the location of the On-Site Substation Compounds and overhead lines. Comments from both LCC and SHDC were received. The landscape strategy was also reviewed and updated in line with comments received during the meeting.

Date	Engagement Type	Summary
14 August 2025	Email Correspondence	Email correspondence seeking feedback on the list of cumulative schemes.
18 September 2025	Online Meeting	LCC/SHDC LVIA Update Meeting to discuss viewpoints. The Applicant had reviewed and incorporated viewpoints proposed by LCC into the baseline photography. An additional 12 viewpoints were included. The split of viewpoints to become a photomontage (Type 3) or an annotated image (Type 1) were discussed and agreed. LCC and SHDC were pleased that Applicant had incorporated their feedback and were comfortable with the viewpoint strategy. Study areas for landscape and visual effects were discussed (5km for Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections, and 10km for the Grid Connection Route). LCC and SHDC were content with the principle of adding permeable corridors within the individual parcels of the Solar Development Areas.
15 October 2025	Email Correspondence	Draft Adequacy of Consultation Milestone Report sent for review and comments
21 October 2025	Email Correspondence	The Applicant provided an updated LVIA methodology document for review. No comments have been received to date.
3 November 2025	Online Meeting	Monthly project update meeting.
16 December 2025	Online Meeting	Monthly project update meeting.
15 January 2026	Online Meeting	Monthly project update meeting.
24 February 2026	Online Meeting	Project update meeting ahead of submission of the DCO Application.
20 May 2026	Online Meeting	Member briefing to provide an update following acceptance of the project for examination.
05 August 2026	Online Meeting	Project update meeting to discuss pre-examination activities and programme.

3. Statement of Common Ground

3.1. Agricultural Land and Soils

3.1.1. Table 3-1 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Agricultural Land and Soils matters.

Table 3-1 Agricultural Land and Soils matters

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
Assessment Methodology and Baseline				
3.1.1	Use of provisional mapping for Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections (SHDC-003)	Provisional mapping has been used with the suggestion of further detailed surveys, post-consent. Whilst it is appreciated this is not an entire omission of assessment, provisional maps are not considered the most reliable for use at major developmental scale. An assessment post-consent denies interested parties the chance to provide comment.	The effects on soils and agricultural land within the Inter-Array Connections and the Grid Connection Route have been assessed on a worst-case basis, using existing data. It is considered that a detailed ALC survey for the entirety of the Inter-Array Connections and the Grid Connection Route would not guarantee avoidance of BMV agricultural land and that a targeted soil survey is most appropriate to determine requirements for restoration. The Inter Array Connections and the Grid Connection Route have, as a worst-case, been assumed to be wholly on ALC Grade 1 and 2 land based on Natural England's provisional mapping within **ES Chapter 5: Agriculture and Soils** (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1). During the operational phase, it is only the areas of the wooden poles within the Overhead Inter-Array Connection and the pylon bases and infrastructure associated with Cable Sealing End Compounds (CSECs) within the Grid Connection Route which are taken out of agricultural use. These are small areas	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			distributed over several kilometres. Therefore, the targeted soil sampling of the Grid Connection Route and the Inter Array Connections to be undertaken post-consent will provide more relevant data for informing the detailed Soil Management Plan (SMP) instead, which is to be prepared in substantial accordance with the **OSMP** (Doc Ref. 7.14 Rev 1). This approach is also precedented among other NSIPs, such as Tillbridge Solar Project, Sunnica Energy Farm and Yorkshire GREEN.	
Assessment				
3.1.2	Extent of high or very highly sensitive land impacted. (SHDC-001)	The extent of land impacted, and the loss of mostly high or very highly sensitive land is a concern.	As set out within **ES Chapter 5: Agriculture and Soils** (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1), BMV agricultural land is estimated to comprise 39.2% of the overall Solar Development Area on the basis of the ALC survey results. It is also noted that soils within BMV land are frequently more resilient to disturbance than soils in lower quality land and can be restored more readily.	Under discussion
3.1.3	Consideration of operational phase as a temporary impact (SHDC-002)	The operational phase is expected to be 40 years, therefore the claim of a temporary impact is not accepted. Removing such an area of land for food production for a generation is a very disruptive change. Given climate conditions changing the applicant's case for soil quality being maintained is not accepted and the lack of space for arable use of the land remains, therefore the impact of 40 years of food production loss has not been correctly acknowledged.	Removing land within the Solar Development Area from cultivation and the maintenance of permanent vegetation cover during the lifecycle of the Scheme protects soil from erosion, improves soil structure and improves carbon sequestration. Soil health is anticipated to improve over the operational period, particularly under climate change and extreme weather events. Decommissioning of the Solar Development Areas will aim to restore all agricultural land to the original ALC grade, as set out within the **OSMP** (Doc Ref. 7.14 Rev 1).	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			DEFRA's UK Food Security Report 2024[1] identifies that "*food production levels can be maintained or increased alongside the land use change required to meet our Net Zero and Environment Act targets*". Land use change associated with solar development is not identified as a risk to food security in the UK.	
3.1.4	Impacts on food security (SHDC-004)	The impact of losing land for food production for at least 40 years is considered significant with agricultural sectors in South Holland and Boston impacted significantly.	The Applicant acknowledges the concern around food security. As mentioned above, DEFRA's UK Food Security Report 2024[1] identifies that "*food production levels can be maintained or increased alongside the land use change required to meet our Net Zero and Environment Act targets*". Land use change associated with solar development is not identified as a risk to food security in the UK. Furthermore, as set out within Section 5.11 of **ES Chapter 5: Agriculture and Soils** (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1), it is estimated that cumulative solar projects in Lincolnshire, together with the Scheme, will account for approximately 3% of all agricultural land within Lincolnshire. An estimated 1.1 % of BMV land would be temporarily used and 0.02% of BMV land permanently used across the identified solar projects. This is indicative that solar schemes represent a small proportion of agricultural and BMV land in the County.	Under discussion

[1] DEFRA (2024) United Kingdom Food Security Report 2024. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2024 [Accessed 29/07/2026]

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			With regards to potential impacts on the agricultural sector, **ES Chapter 14: Socio-Economics and Land Use** [APP-065] considers direct land-take effects and indirect severance effects of the Scheme on agricultural businesses. Overall, no significant effects on the operation of these businesses are considered likely to occur.	
Other				
3.1.5	BMV land lost due to hard standing (SHDC-053)	The loss of best and most versatile agricultural land is a concern with the exact lost for the development unclear due to omissions for hard standing areas.	There are no omissions with regards to the assessment of hardstanding areas, all hardstanding areas have been considered within Section 5.8 of **ES Chapter 5: Agriculture and Soils** (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1). The assessment has subsequently informed the measures incorporated within the **OSMP** (Doc Ref. 7.14 Rev 1). The **OSMP** (Doc Ref. 7.14 Rev 1) includes measures to protect soil structure and function throughout construction and operation, including careful handling, storage, and reinstatement of soils. These measures are designed to ensure that the soil resource is safeguarded and that agricultural capability is not degraded over the lifetime of the Scheme. Following decommissioning, the land will be restored so far as reasonably practicable to its pre-construction condition, with the aim of returning it to its existing ALC grade. Post-restoration monitoring is secured within the **OSMP** (Doc Ref. 7.14 Rev 1), and any minor variability from baseline ALC grades identified at that stage would be investigated and	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			addressed to ensure the land is capable of productive agricultural use once reinstated. On this basis, while a substantial proportion of the Site comprises BMV land, the majority of the effects from land-take are long-term but reversible, and do not constitute a permanent loss of agricultural land.	

3.2. Battery Energy Storage System

3.2.1. Table 3-2 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Agricultural Land and Soils matters.

Table 3-2 Battery Energy Storage System matters

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
3.2.1	Fire hazards (SHDC-060)	Concern that the BESS will cause fire hazards.	The Battery Safety Management Plan (BSMP), which will be prepared in accordance with the **Outline Battery Safety Management Plan** (OBSMP) [APP-284] and secured by way of Requirement in the Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2), ensures that the final BESS compound will be designed in accordance with prevailing industry standards and good practice at the time of detailed design and implementation. As set out within the **OBSMP** [APP-284], the BESS units proposed for the Scheme will have built in safety features including cooling systems, fire resistant construction, fire detection, suppression systems, emergency stop functions and isolation monitoring, which are designed to regulate temperatures to within safe conditions to minimise the risk of fire. The broader BESS compound will include further measures, including ensuring adequate provision of land for water storage, and adequate separation between battery enclosures to ensure an isolated fire would not become widespread and lead to a major incident. The **OBSMP** [APP-284] has been prepared in consultation with the local Fire and Rescue Service (FRS). The final BSMP, to be developed at the detailed	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			design stage, would also be subject to approved in consultation with the local FRS.	

3.3. Cultural Heritage

3.3.1. Table 3-3 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Cultural Heritage matters.

Table 3-3 Cultural Heritage matters

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
Assessment Methodology and Baseline				
3.3.1	Incomplete trenching and route assessment (SHDC-005)	An evaluation of trenching should be completed.	The Applicant has submitted the final evaluation trenching results and deposit modelling at Deadline 1 within **Final Archaeological Evaluation Report** (Doc Ref. 8.6) and shared the documents with Historic England and Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) prior to the submission. The Applicant has reviewed the assessment presented within **ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1) as a result of this additional information and has concluded that the additional results do not change the conclusions regarding the potential impact of the Scheme on the cultural significance of the archaeological deposits. On this basis, we believe this matter to be agreed. See ref. 3.3.2 below regarding assessment of the Inter-Array Connections and Grid Connection Route.	Agreed
Assessment				
3.3.2	Extent of assessment on Cultural Heritage (SHDC-006)	A full assessment of the impacts of the development on Cultural Heritage in the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections should be provided. This should not deferred in order to ensure a sufficient assessment of harm and the application of mitigation can be applied to the development.	An assessment of impacts from the Inter-Array Connections and the Grid Connection Route is presented within **ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1) on the basis of a precautionary approach, in order to ensure a robust assessment. The scope and deferral of further archaeological	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			investigation works within the Inter-Array Connections and the Grid Connection Route has been agreed with LCC's Archaeological Advisor and is reflected within the **Outline Archaeological Mitigation and Management Strategy** (OAMMS) (Doc Ref. 8.7) submitted at Deadline 1.	

3.4. Draft DCO

3.4.1. Table 3-4 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Draft DCO matters.

Table 3-4 Draft DCO matters

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
3.4.1	Operational phase noise – Requirement 18 (SHDC-042)	Should the development be approved, we would request Requirement 18 of the Draft DCO to be modified to include a written validation report, including monitoring, to ensure compliance, and also an option for subsequent validation testing after significant plant replacement in the future.	Requirement 18 already requires the submission and approval of an Operational Noise Assessment prior to commencement of the relevant parts of the authorised development and requires the approved mitigation measures to be implemented and maintained throughout operation. The Applicant considers that Requirement 18 provides an appropriate mechanism to secure compliance with the operational noise limits assessed in the Environmental Statement. Table 3-10 of the **OOEMP** (Doc Rev. 7.11 Rev 1) includes a commitment to undertake operational noise monitoring to verify compliance with the noise levels presented in **ES Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration** [APP-064]. Monitoring locations will be agreed with the relevant stakeholder during detailed design and measurements undertaken once the Scheme is operational. With regard to significant plant replacement, Table 3-10 of the **OOEMP** (Doc Rev. 7.11 Rev 1) includes a commitment to undertake noise monitoring of the substation transformers, inverters and BESS as part of the annual maintenance regime. Where monitoring indicates that operational noise levels generated by	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			the Scheme have increased above those assessed in the ES, the Undertaker will liaise with the relevant planning authority regarding any appropriate maintenance, investigation or mitigation measures. In addition, should a noise complaint be received from a neighbouring receptor, the Undertaker would liaise with the relevant planning authority regarding the need for further monitoring and, where appropriate, undertake additional measurements of the relevant plant at locations and times agreed with the relevant planning authority.	

3.5. Grid Connection

3.5.1. Table 3-5 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Grid Connection matters.

Table 3-5 Grid Connection matters

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
3.5.1	Grid connection (SHDC-056)	Concerns that there remains uncertainty over which Weston Marsh Substations will be the point of connection.	As part of the wider Grimsby to Walpole project National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) is progressing the design of two new substations at Weston Marsh (A and B). The final siting of both substations remains subject to ongoing consultation and design coordination. The Applicant has therefore taken a proportionate and flexible approach, basing its design on the southern location (Weston Marsh B) to minimise interaction with other major projects while retaining sufficient land within the Order Limits to accommodate a connection point once NGET finalises the substation layout. Connection arrangements continue to align with the parameters of the original grid offer and with National Grid's emerging design for the Weston Marsh B Substation. Further details of the grid connection are set out in the **Grid Connection Statement** [APP-270].	Under discussion

3.6. Human Health

3.6.1. Table 3-6 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Human Health matters.

Table 3-6 Human Health matters

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
Assessment				
3.6.1	HGV traffic, mud and dust (SHDC-009)	Concerns that heavy HGV traffic would bring mud onto roads and would therefore cause significant dust impacts and health risks. This could be addressed through more consistent requirements for hard surfacing at access/egress points ensured.	The potential for HGVs to track mud onto local roads and contribute to dust generation has been recognised and addressed through a range of embedded mitigation measures. These include the provision of hard surfaced haul routes, regular cleaning of haul roads, and wheel washing facilities. Such measures represent established good practice and have a proven track record of effectively controlling trackout and associated dust emissions on construction sites. Their implementation is secured through the **OCEMP** (Doc Ref. 7.10 Rev 2) and **ODEMP** (Doc Ref. 7.12 Rev 1), ensuring dust and human health risks are appropriately managed. Further details are provided in Section 6.7 and Table 6-8 of **ES Chapter 6: Air Quality** [APP-057]. On this basis, we believe this matter to be agreed.	Agreed
3.6.2	BESS fire risk on human health (SHDC-010)	The assessment should assess the risk to human health from battery storage fires.	Potential fire incidents involving battery energy storage systems (BESS) and substations have been assessed separately in **ES Appendix 16-4: Unplanned Emissions Assessment from BESS** [APP-259], with a summary of the assessment provided within Section 16.5 Major Accidents and Disasters of **ES Chapter 16: Other Environmental Topics** [APP-067]. The appendix includes modelling of potential emissions	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			from thermal events affecting single or multiple cabinets, addressing the potential health impacts. The assessment demonstrates that after a distance of approximately 200m from a fire, any toxic emissions (hydrogen fluoride used as a proxy) would reduce to below the acute exposure guideline levels published by Public Health England. Given that the BESS Compound would be sited a minimum of 350m from residential receptors, concentrations will be below relevant health thresholds at any existing residential receptor location.	
Mitigation and Compensation				
3.6.3	Construction dust (SHDC-007)	Request for construction dust impacts to be minimised by design, as well as by mitigation, for example, appropriate location of haul roads and stockpiles.	**ES Chapter 6: Air Quality** [APP-057] provides a detailed assessment of construction dust risks, having regard to the extended construction period and proximity of residents. It commits to robust mitigation measures in line with IAQM guidance[2], such as covering and managing stockpiles, and installing and maintaining haul roads away from sensitive receptors. These measures are secured through the **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP)** (Doc Ref. 7.10 Rev 2) and **Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (ODEMP)** (Doc Ref. 7.12 Rev 1), which also require regular monitoring, complaint management, and coordination with other nearby construction sites.	Agreed

[2] Institute of Air Quality Management (2024) Guidance on the Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction. Available at: https://iaqm.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Construction-Dust-Guidance-Jan-2024.pdf [Accessed 29/07/2026]

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			Further details of these measures can be found in Sections 6.7, 6.8, and Table 6-8 of **ES Chapter 6: Air Quality** [APP-057]. With these mitigation measure in place, **ES Chapter 6: Air Quality** [APP-057] concludes that there would be no significant adverse effects from construction dust. On this basis, we believe this matter to be agreed.	

3.7. Hydrology and Flood Risk

3.7.1. Table 3-7 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Hydrology and Flood Risk matters.

Table 3-7 Hydrology and Flood Risk matters

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
Assessment Methodology and Baseline				
3.7.1	Groundwater flooding (SHDC-011)	It is not understood why groundwater flooding is omitted given the nature of the soils and known high groundwater level.	Groundwater flood risk is identified as low on the basis of the information presented on the Flood Map for Planning[3]. The GOV website for providing long term flood risk data[4] was used to obtain information regarding groundwater flood risk for the Scheme, and it is said that flooding from groundwater is unlikely in this area. Measures embedded within the design and management plans of the Scheme, more specifically the **Design Parameters** (Doc Ref. 7.4 Rev 2), **ES Appendix 11-4: Outline Drainage Strategy** [APP-227], **OCEMP** (Doc Ref. 7.10 Rev 2) and the **Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (OOEMP)** (Doc Ref 7.11 Rev 1), to mitigate flood risk from worst-case fluvial flood events would also mitigate for any impacts from groundwater flooding. As such, no further assessment of groundwater flood risk, or mitigation specifically to address groundwater flooding, is considered to be required.	Agreed

[3] Flood Map for Planning. Available at: Flood map for planning - GOV.UK. [Accessed 29/07/2026]
[4] Long Term Flood Risk Data. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
Assessment				
3.7.2	Flood risk (SHDC-059)	Concern that runoff from the solar array may cause flooding across the flat landscape.	The impact of the Scheme on surface water has been assessed within **ES Chapter 11: Hydrology and Flood Risk** (Doc Ref 6.1 Rev 1). The Solar Development Area Outline Drainage Strategy is presented in **ES Appendix 11-4: Outline Drainage Strategy** [APP-277] and has been developed to minimise flood risk through the proposed drainage measures, which have been detailed in the strategy report. Runoff from the Scheme would be managed to discharge at greenfield run off rates.	Agreed

3.8. Landscape and Visual

3.8.1. Table 3-8 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Landscape and Visual matters.

Table 3-8 Landscape and Visual matters

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
Assessment Methodology and Baseline				
3.8.1	Residential visual amenity assessment (SHDC-026, 027, 028)	The Council notes that a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment was not undertaken. The ES records that LCC requested a Residential Visual Amenity Survey, but the Applicant concluded that the Scheme would not reach the threshold at any property where residential visual amenity becomes a material consideration. A property specific Residential Visual Amenity Assessment should be provided for those dwellings most likely to experience close-range or open views of the solar arrays, substations, BESS compounds, overhead inter-array infrastructure and the Grid Connection Route.	It is important to distinguish between significant visual effects, which are routinely assessed through a LVIA, and the circumstances that justify a RVAA. The former does not automatically imply the latter, and the Landscape Institute's '*Technical Guidance Note 2/19: Residential Visual Amenity Assessment'* (TGN 2/19)[5] expressly recognises this distinction. It states that "*LVIA findings of significant (adverse) effects on outlook and /or on visual amenity at a residential property do not automatically imply the need for a RVAA*". TGN 2/19 notes that there is a misconception that a significant effect identified in the LVIA adjacent to a property will also potentially lead to reaching the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold. TGN 2-19 suggests that a RVAA may be recommended in circumstances where, for example, a development would be "'*blocking the only available view from a property', or 'overwhelming views in all*	Not agreed

[5] Landscape Institute (2019). Residential Visual Amenity Assessment. Technical Guidance Note 2/19.

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			directions'; and 'unpleasantly encroaching' or being 'inescapably dominant from the property'". TGN 2-19 specifically notes that, for overhead transmission lines, "*generally only those properties within 100 – 150 metres of the finalised route*" are potentially candidates for an RVAA. The Scheme was iteratively designed to avoid overbearing and intrusive design in particular for residential receptors through off-set distances from residences adjacent to the Solar Development Area, refinement of solar development parcels and pylon locations, and the incorporation of landscape mitigation. Proposed landscape mitigation is to soften the boundaries of the Solar Development Area, particularly in locations where views from residential properties may occur. Consequently, no residential property was identified where impact of the Scheme had the potential to reach the Residential Visual Amenity Threshold. The decision not to prepare a standalone RVAA was therefore a reasoned professional judgement, based on applicable guidance, the design evolution of the Scheme, and the findings of the LVIA.	
3.8.2	Future baseline (SHDC-033)	The future baseline does not adequately acknowledge the pace and scale of energy infrastructure change in the wider area. The future baseline and cumulative assessment should be read together, but the Council considers that the future baseline section itself understates the extent to which the receiving landscape is already under pressure from multiple infrastructure proposals.	The cumulative assessment included in **ES Appendix 12-7: Landscape and Visual Cumulative Assessment** [APP-241] considered the interaction of the Scheme with committed and reasonably foreseeable developments, including other energy infrastructure proposals, and assessed the resulting cumulative landscape and visual effects in accordance with the adopted methodology. As such, the relevant	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			developments were fully considered within the ES and informed the assessment of cumulative landscape and visual effects. The Applicant agrees with the Council's comment that the future baseline and cumulative assessment should be read together. The Applicant therefore considers that the ES provides an appropriate assessment of both the anticipated future baseline and the cumulative effects of the Scheme.	
3.8.3	Visualisations – cumulative project models (SHDC-035)	The Council also notes that cumulative project models are described as indicative in the visualisation material. Given the importance of cumulative effects to the Council's position, the Council considers that any uncertainty in cumulative visualisation should not be used to reduce the weight given to likely cumulative harm. Rather, where uncertainty remains, a precautionary approach should be applied.	The cumulative visualisations have been prepared using the best available information at the time of the assessment, including the Grimsby to Walpole and WMEL project models. Whilst they are described as indicative, they represent the most accurate depiction of the cumulative scenario that could be prepared based on the available information at that time. This position does not affect the weight that has been given to any identified cumulative effects. The assessment of cumulative effects has followed a precautionary approach, to determine the likely worst-case effects. The use of the term 'indicative' reflects that the design for other projects may continue to evolve.	Under discussion
Assessment				
3.8.4	Impacts on landscape (SHDC-013, 014, 015, 016)	The Council's position is that the Applicant's own assessment demonstrates that the Scheme would give rise to extensive, long-term and significant adverse landscape and visual effects across a broad area of open Fenland landscape. These effects would not be limited to the construction phase, would	The Council's comments do not identify any deficiencies in the LVIA methodology, baseline information or conclusions presented in the LVIA, but rather express the Council's view on the significance and planning weight to be attributed to the assessed effects.	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
		remain significant at Year 15, and would occur in combination with a growing concentration of nationally significant energy infrastructure within the wider area. The Council does not agree that the Scheme can be satisfactorily integrated into the landscape. The LVIA demonstrates that the mitigation strategy would not prevent significant adverse effects, and in some respects mitigation planting would itself alter the character and openness of the receiving landscape.	The Applicant recognises the significant adverse landscape and visual effects and has taken these into account in its planning balance set out within the **Planning Statement** [APP-260]. The Applicant has developed the Scheme proposals to avoid, reduce and mitigate adverse effects through application of the mitigation hierarchy and consideration of good design, but it is the nature of large-scale infrastructure projects that adverse effects cannot always be avoided or fully mitigated. The status of the Scheme as a Critical National Priority (CNP) infrastructure means that residual impacts, including landscape and visual, should not outweigh the urgent need for the Scheme in the planning balance. There are no residual impacts on any of the exceptions listed at paragraph 4.2.98 of EN-1 nor are any exceptional circumstances present that would reverse this presumption. The Applicant maintains its view that while the significant adverse landscape and visual effects reported will attribute some negative weight in the planning balance, the substantial benefits and urgent need for the Scheme outweigh these adverse impacts.	
3.8.5	Visual effects (SHDC-020, 021, 022)	The Scheme would not simply be glimpsed or filtered in the landscape. It would be experienced as a dominant and extensive infrastructure development from a number of public and residential receptor locations. The Council is particularly concerned with Viewpoint 3, from PRoW Crow/7/1 on the northwestern edge	The Applicant does not agree with the conclusion that the Scheme would be experienced as a dominant and extensive infrastructure development from a number of public and residential receptor locations. This conclusion is overly simplistic and does not reflect the varied findings of the LVIA as set out in **ES Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual** [APP-063]. Viewpoints 3 and 14 were selected as close range viewpoints from a specific location along a PRoW	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
		of Parcel A and Viewpoint 14, from Langary Gate Road south of Langary Gate Farm.	(receptor group: recreational users) and a local road network (receptor group: road users). As per **ES Appendix 12-5: Visual Baseline** [APP-239], neither represents a residential receptor.	
3.8.6	Grid Connection Route and overhead line infrastructure (SHDC-023, 024, 025)	The Council remains concerned that the use of overhead line infrastructure has not been adequately justified from a landscape and visual perspective. The Council considers that the overhead line infrastructure would intensify the industrialisation of the landscape and would compound the adverse effects of the solar and substation elements of the Scheme.	The Scheme design has been developed to take into account the proximity of receptors and to reduce the perceived industrialisation of the area. The Applicant has sought to minimise effects on residential properties, as far as reasonably practicable, through the routeing and design of the overhead lines within the Grid Connection Route and the Inter-Array Connection. During design development, buffers were situated around residential properties in order to align the overhead lines away from them as much as practicable. The Applicant notes the Council's comments regarding the visual effects of the Grid Connection Route. The selection of an overhead line as the preferred technology for the grid connection is guided by national policy contained in the National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks, EN-5, which states that the Government's position is that outside of nationally designated landscapes, overhead lines should be the strong starting presumption for electricity networks in general unless these would give rise to particularly significant landscape and visual effects. **ES Chapter 3: Alternatives and Design Evolution** [APP-054], Table 3-2 compares the potential environmental effects from the construction of an	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			underground cable and overhead line for the Grid Connection for each discipline. All landscape and visual effects reported with respect to Grid Connection Route infrastructure are moderate adverse effects. The cumulative effects assessment does not report an increase in the significance of the adverse effects as a result of additional overhead line infrastructure associated with the Grimsby to Walpole and Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire overhead line projects. No significant adverse effects have been specifically identified in relation to the presence of the overhead Inter-Array Connection Area infrastructure (also classed as an NSIP). On this basis, the Applicant concludes that the Scheme does not cross any part of a nationally designated landscape that would reverse this presumption, nor are the landscape and visual effects of the overhead lines reported in **ES Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual** [APP-063] deemed to be so significant that undergrounding should be given thorough consideration as a viable alternative in accordance with paragraph 2.9.14 of EN-5.	
3.8.7	Cumulative effects (SHDC-029, 030, 031, 032)	The Council considers that the cumulative effects of the Scheme are unacceptable. The Scheme would contribute to a broader pattern of landscape industrialisation and infrastructure intensification within the Fens. The cumulative effect would be particularly harmful because the receiving landscape is open, low-lying and visually exposed, with long views and limited containment.	The cumulative assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the principles set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, Third Edition (GLVIA3)[Error! Bookmark not defined.] and the Landscape Institute Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01: Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			GLVIA3[6]. These distinguish between the additional cumulative effects attributable to the proposed development and the overall cumulative effects arising from the totality of existing, consented and reasonably foreseeable developments. In accordance with this guidance, **ES Appendix 12-7: Landscape and Visual Cumulative Assessment** [APP-241] assesses both the additional contribution of the Scheme and the total cumulative landscape and visual effects. The ES therefore does not rely solely on an assessment of the Scheme's incremental contribution. It also identifies those landscape receptors where the totality of cumulative development would result in significant cumulative effects, including HLCA 10 The Wash, HLCZ WSH6 Townlands and HLCZ WSH4 Reclaimed Wash Farmlands. The distinction between the Scheme's additional cumulative contribution and the overall cumulative change is an important principle of LVIA methodology. Whilst receptors experience the combined presence of multiple developments, the assessment also identifies the extent to which the proposed Scheme contributes to those cumulative effects. The ES presents both assessments transparently to inform the decision-maker,	

[6] Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (2024). Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines on Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third Edition (GLVIA3), Technical Guidance Note LITGN-2024-01. Available at: https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/LITGN-2024-01-GLVIA3-NC_Aug-2024.pdf [Accessed 04/12/2025]

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			recognising that the overall cumulative change cannot be attributed solely to the Scheme. The Applicant therefore considers that the cumulative assessment appropriately and proportionately presents both the total cumulative effects experienced by receptors and the additional cumulative effects arising from the Scheme, consistent with established LVIA guidance.	
Mitigation and Compensation				
3.8.8	Mitigation (SHDC-017)	The Council is concerned that the Applicant's mitigation strategy is insufficient to address the scale of harm identified in the ES. The ES states that significant landscape and visual effects arise from land use change and the massing of proposed infrastructure, that it will not be possible to fully mitigate those significant effects, and that no additional mitigation is proposed.	The LVIA concludes that significant residual landscape and visual effects arise principally from the change in land use and the scale of the proposed infrastructure and recognises that these effects cannot be fully mitigated. However, the LVIA further explains that no additional mitigation is proposed because the scale and functional requirements of the Scheme preclude further screening or landform modification without compromising safety and operational integrity. This should not be interpreted as meaning that landscape and visual mitigation has not been incorporated into the Scheme. Mitigation has been developed iteratively through the design process and includes, amongst other measures, the incorporation of landscape planting associated with the solar development and the consideration of the siting, layout and design of Scheme infrastructure to reduce landscape and visual effects where practicable. The residual effects therefore reflect the limitations of mitigation in relation to infrastructure	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			of this scale and nature, rather than an absence of a mitigation strategy.	
3.8.9	Advanced planting (SHDC-018, 057)	Where the assessment relies on advanced planting, including assumptions around establishment before construction or early operation, this should be secured through robust DCO requirements.	The definition of "permitted preliminary works" within the **draft DCO** (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2) includes at limb (i) "advanced planting to allow for an early establishment of protective screening", thereby ensuring that these works can be undertaken in advance of the main construction works. Requirement 7 expressly provides that "commence" for these purposes includes limb (i) of the permitted preliminary works (advanced planting to allow for an early establishment of protective screening), thereby ensuring that these works are undertaken in accordance with the approved Landscape and Ecology Management Plan. The Applicant therefore considers that the **draft DCO** (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2) contains appropriate provisions to secure the implementation and maintenance of the landscape mitigation relied upon in the Environmental Statement (ES).	Under discussion
Other				
3.8.10	Overhead line solution (SHDC-052)	Concerns over the visual impact with the overhead line and would prefer the connection underground much like other NSIP schemes.	Overhead lines are the preferred technology as guided by national policy contained in paragraph 2.9.21 of EN-5[7]. This presumption is reversed when	Under discussion

[7] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2025. National Policy Statement for electricity networks infrastructure (EN-5). London: Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. Available at: www.gov.uk [Accessed 29 July 2026].

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			proposed developments would cross part of a nationally designated landscape. In the case of the Scheme, there are no nationally designated landscapes within or near to the Order Limits. Where the Applicant has chosen to underground a section of the 400 kV overhead line and the 132 kV Inter-Array Connection between Land Parcel A and B, this is to respond to technical constraints associated with crossing existing infrastructure and maintaining safe operations at the Peterborough and Spalding Gliding Club respectively. In respect of paragraph 2.9.14 of EN-5, which requires due consideration to the costs and benefits of feasible alternatives for overhead lines where particularly significant landscape and visual effects are reported, this policy is addressed in Section 5.11 of the **Planning Statement** [APP-260] and details regarding the selection of an overhead line are provided in **ES Chapter 3: Alternatives and Design Evolution** [APP-054]. All landscape and visual effects reported with respect to Grid Connection Route infrastructure are moderate adverse effects. The cumulative effects assessment does not report an increase in the significance of the adverse effects as a result of additional overhead line infrastructure associated with the Grimsby to Walpole and Weston Marsh to East Leicestershire overhead line projects. No significant adverse effects have been specifically identified in relation to the	

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			presence of the overhead Inter-Array Connection Area infrastructure (also classed as an NSIP). While there is no definition within EN-5 as to what may be deemed particularly significant, the Applicant has understood this to be those effects that exceed moderate adverse significance, which is not the case for the overhead line infrastructure, including in the cumulative effects assessment. Additionally, there is no specific segment of the Grid Connection Route where greater landscape or visual effects are reported. On this basis, the Applicant concludes that the Scheme does not cross any part of a nationally designated landscape that would reverse this presumption, nor are the landscape and visual effects of the overhead lines reported in **ES Chapter 12: Landscape and Visual** [APP-063] deemed to be so significant that undergrounding should be given thorough consideration as a viable alternative in accordance with paragraph 2.9.14 of EN-5.	

3.9. Noise and Vibration

3.9.1. Table 3-9 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Noise and Vibration matters.

Table 3-9 Noise and Vibration matters

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
Assessment				
3.9.1	Operational phase effects (SHDC-038)	We are most concerned about those locations where moderate adverse effects, which are significant, are predicted. The NPSE says 'significant adverse effects on health and quality of life should be avoided'.	Receptor Groups (RG) RG04, RG05, RG40, RG42, RG44, RG45, RG48, RG53 and RG54 are predicted to experience moderate adverse (significant) effects during the operational phase of the Scheme prior to the application of design mitigation for noise. After the proposed mitigation outlined in paragraphs 13.9.9 to 13.9.14 and 13.9.15 to 13.9.19 of **ES Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration** [APP-064], residual operational noise effects at these receptors during the night-time are predicted to be reduced to minor adverse and not significant. The predicted noise levels inclusive of mitigation are committed to as noise limits (presented in Table 13-29) to avoid significant effects during the operation of the Scheme. Noise limits are secured through the **OOEMP** (Doc Ref. 7.11 Rev 1) and Requirements 13 and 18 of the **Draft DCO** (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2). As such, no moderate adverse (significant) residual operational effects are identified.	Agreed
Mitigation and Compensation				
3.9.2	Operational phase - good acoustic design (SHDC-039)	We appreciate that the noise is technically reversable, but given the schemes 40 year lifespan we do consider this to be permanent in the lifetimes of	The indicative Scheme layout has been developed taking account of noise considerations and, where practicable, seeks to maximise separation distances	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
		those receptors who live there, and good acoustic design should be applied to the scheme to reduce this impact to as low as reasonably practicable.	between noise-generating infrastructure and sensitive receptors. In addition, the Scheme includes commitments to adopt low-noise substation transformers and BESS equipment where necessary and reasonably practicable to achieve the assessed noise levels. Noise-reducing design measures for the overhead line would also be incorporated where necessary and reasonably practicable. Collectively, these measures represent the application of good acoustic design principles to minimise operational noise effects as far as reasonably practicable. These measures are a commitment secured through the **OOEMP** (Doc Ref. 7.11 Rev 1) and the implementation of the measures set out in the **OOEMP** is secured through Requirement 13 of the **draft DCO** (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2). Requirement 18 additionally requires an operational noise assessment to be undertaken, and the mitigation measures identified in that assessment to be implemented and maintained throughout operation of the authorised development.	
3.9.3	Construction phase mitigation (SHDC-041)	Some major adverse and significant effects are currently predicted during some phases of construction. We would seek to ensure these are minimised though exploring the most appropriate construction methods, and to minimise the duration of those works as far as reasonably practicable.	The Applicant's assessment of construction noise effects is presented in Section 13.8 and Section 13.10 of **ES Chapter 13: Noise and Vibration** [APP-064]. Significant residual construction noise effects may occur at Receptor Group 53 if Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) works run into the night-time based on safety risks with stopping and starting the drilling process, however this will be avoided where practicable. Measures to mitigate construction noise impacts are	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			included within the **OCEMP** (Doc Ref. 7.10 Rev 2). These represent Best Practicable Means (BPM) and the most appropriate construction methods for reducing construction emissions. Construction-phase controls are secured through Requirement 12 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) of the **draft DCO** (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2). The Construction Environmental Management Plan must be substantially in accordance with the **OCEMP** (Doc Ref. 7.10 Rev 2) and approved by the relevant planning authority prior to commencement of the relevant part of the authorised development. No specific measures have been raised by SHDC.	

3.10. Socio-Economics and Land Use

3.10.1. Table 3-10 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Socio-Economics and Land Use matters.

Table 3-10 Socio-Economics and Land Use

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
Mitigation and Compensation				
3.10.1	Agricultural supply chain (SHDC-043)	The agricultural land use loss for the development is not sufficiently assessed, with significant local impacts expected from the loss of large areas of arable land, seriously affecting the agricultural supply chain of South Holland.	It is acknowledged that the ES does not include a specific assessment of effects on businesses along the wider agricultural supply chain. However, **ES Chapter 14: Socio-Economics and Land Use** [APP-065] assesses the likely impacts on agricultural employment and concludes that there would be no loss of agricultural employment arising from the construction and operation of the Scheme. The agricultural land within the Solar Development Area would continue to generate income for the landowners, and as the land is not farmed by tenants, would not result in any loss of jobs. There may be some contractors who undertake some farming activities on the land, but it is very likely that such contractors would not be entirely reliant on these farms for employment. As outlined within **ES Chapter 5: Agriculture and Soils** (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1), the Scheme will permanently impact approximately 34 hectares of BMV land; it is not considered that this impact can be reasonably expected to lead to a significant local impact on the agricultural supply chain. Areas of agricultural land within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections would experience	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			minimal effects (limited to the bases of overhead pylons and CSECs) and would consequently not have their current agricultural activities altered enough to result in the loss of agricultural employment. Given this conclusion that no loss of agricultural employment is anticipated, and that the majority of affected landowners within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections would not experience any substantial change to their farming activities, it is considered reasonable to conclude that the Scheme would not have a significant effect on the wider agricultural supply chain.	
3.10.2	Local jobs (SHDC-043)	The lack of direct jobs from the development is considered concerning with only 5 net local jobs proposed during the 40 year operational lifespan. Further work is needed to invest in local apprenticeships and supply chains to compensate for the lack of direct jobs on the development.	In relation to job creation associated with the Scheme, it is acknowledged that this is relatively limited in respect of the operational phase. However, the **Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan** [APP-283] provides a framework for maximising opportunities for the local supply chain and upskilling local residents. Further details of the approaches and commitments to securing these local benefits will be laid out within the detailed Skills, Supply Chain, and Employment Plan, which must be prepared and approved prior to commencement and subsequently implemented as approved in accordance with Requirement 20 (Skills, Supply Chain and Employment) of the **draft DCO** (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2). As set out in Table 14-23 within **ES Chapter 14: Socio-Economics and Land Use** [APP-065], it is estimated that of the 11 FTE net jobs created during the operational phase, five will be taken up by workers living within the 60-minute drive time, but this estimate assumes a leakage rate of 60%. There is	Under discussion

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			potential for leakage of economic benefits out of the local impact area to be reduced, and for take-up of jobs by local workers to be increased, through the detailed Skills, Supply Chain, and Employment Plan, as noted above.	
3.10.3	Local economic and social benefits (SHDC-044)	From an economic and social perspective, the Council would like to see the development doing as much as it possibly can to maximise the benefits for local people and businesses for hosting this infrastructure.	The **Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan** [APP-283] provides a framework for maximising local employment, opportunities for the local supply chain, and upskilling local residents. Further details of the approaches and commitments to securing these local benefits will be laid out within the detailed Skills, Supply Chain, and Employment Plan, which must be prepared and approved prior to commencement and subsequently implemented as approved in accordance with Requirement 20 (Skills, Supply Chain and Employment) of the **draft DCO** (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2). As summarised in **ES Chapter 10: Human Health** [APP-061], the Scheme will also deliver a permissive path connecting existing Public Rights of Way between Queens Bank and Shepeau Stow, providing opportunities for recreation, physical activity and improved connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. Separate to the ES, the Applicant is committed to establishing a Community Benefit Fund which is a voluntary commitment designed to provide additional support and tangible benefits to local communities impacted by the Scheme, rather than a formal element of the DCO Application. The exact details of the Community Benefit Fund are not yet established because it is intended to be developed in liaison with	Not agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			residents' representatives, so that it best serves their requirements.	
Other				
3.10.4	Community benefits (SHDC-042, 054, 061)	Without the proper assessment of the community funding and formal agreement within the examination process, there is no guarantee to the Council that sufficient offsets have been provided for. The proposed community benefits are not ambitious enough for a development of this scale and developers should fund a desperately needed new community building and replacement sports changing facilities for Crowland.	While it does not form part of the DCO Application, the Applicant is committing to a Community Benefit Fund of approximately £500,000 per year of operation of the Scheme (up to £20 million in total assuming a 40-year operational period), should the Scheme gain consent. The fund is not linked to the effects reported within the Environmental Statement as it is not considered mitigation or compensation (which are separately provided and secured as part of the DCO Application). The Applicant will work with the local authorities and parish councils to further develop its Community Benefit Fund proposals.	Not agreed

3.11. Traffic and Transport

3.11.1. Table 3-11 sets out the position of both parties in relation to Traffic and Transport matters.

Table 3-11 Traffic and Transport matters

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
Assessment Methodology and Baseline				
3.11.1	Methodology (SHDC-045)	The approach taken for the traffic and transport assessment appears reasonable in the methodology.	The Applicant welcomes SHDC's comments on the methodology and understands the parties to be agreed on the methodology.	Agreed
3.11.2	Construction traffic hours (SHDC-050)	The traffic assessment should take into account the consideration of works traffic hours in relation to effects on local transport	Construction traffic hours have been considered as part of the assessment presented in **ES Chapter 15: Traffic and Access** [APP-066] and the **OCTMP** [APP-278]. The traffic assessment identifies peak network periods as 08:00–09:00 and 16:00–17:00. Construction working hours are proposed to be limited to 07:00–19:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00–13:30 on Saturdays, with no routine construction activities on Sundays or Public Holidays. This means that construction workers will travel outside of the network peak hours, i.e. before 07:00 and after 19:00 on a weekday. The Applicant therefore considers that the timing of construction traffic has been appropriately considered within the assessment and that suitable mechanisms are in place through the **OCTMP** [APP-278] to minimise potential impacts on local roads.	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			On this basis, the Applicant understands this point to be agreed.	
Assessment				
3.11.3	Construction traffic vibration (SHDC-047, 058)	The proposed access roads for construction vehicles are not considered suitable with road weight limits and proximity to houses with resulting vibration harm a concern.	The Applicant does not agree that the proposed construction traffic associated with the Scheme would result in unacceptable highway impacts. The likely traffic effects of the Scheme have been assessed within **ES Chapter 15: Traffic and Access** [APP-066], which considers construction traffic generation, routing, access arrangements and the resulting impacts on the local and strategic highway network. The assessment concludes that no significant adverse traffic and transport effects are anticipated during the construction, operation or decommissioning phases of the Scheme. The Applicant also notes concerns regarding potential vibration impacts arising from construction traffic travelling in proximity to residential properties whilst utilising the local roads. In terms of vibration, construction traffic routes would be managed through the **OCTMP** [APP-278], which would require the use of roads suitable for HGV movements and consideration of any applicable weight restrictions. By restricting construction traffic to routes that are capable of accommodating HGV movements, the potential for vibration associated with vehicles travelling over road surface irregularities would be minimised. Where roads are suitable for the anticipated construction traffic and are maintained in an appropriate condition, vibration levels generated	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			by passing construction vehicles would not be perceptible.	
3.11.4	Mud on roads and large vehicles (SHDC-049)	The assessment should consider of the effect of mud on roads as well as the impact of large load vehicles on roads which are already in a poor state.	The **OCTMP** [APP-278] includes a range of measures intended to minimise the transfer of mud and debris onto the public highway, including the management of construction access points, wheel and vehicle cleaning measures, where necessary, monitoring of road conditions, and procedures for the prompt removal of mud or debris should it occur at any point during the construction phase. In relation to the condition of local roads, the requirement for road condition surveys is set out in paragraph 7.4.2 of the **OCTMP** [APP-278]. Surveys will be carried out pre-construction, during construction, and post-construction, to identify any defects that arise to highways assets/verges during the construction phase of the Scheme, for re-instatement. The Applicant has additionally developed a Temporary Passing Place Strategy to be submitted during examination following further engagement with the Local Highway Authority. Following agreement with the Local Highway Authority on these proposals, the designs are to be incorporated into the **OCTMP** [APP-278]. The passing place strategy and access mitigation proposals, to be secured through the **OCTMP** [APP-278], would facilitate the safe passage of construction traffic and reduce the risk of vehicles overrunning verges or carriageway edges on narrower roads as part of the	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			routing of construction traffic to/ from the Scheme. In addition, abnormal indivisible loads and other large vehicles would be managed through agreed routing strategies and traffic management measures secured through the **OCTMP** [APP-278].	
Mitigation and Compensation				
3.11.5	Construction traffic management plan (SHDC-046)	Only an outline construction management plan has been provided with a detailed plan to be provided post-consent. This is not considered appropriate for a development of this scale with mitigation measures needing to be assessed at examination. Without assessment the Council cannot assess the effectiveness and therefore the harm of the development which many have concerns about.	The approach adopted in the **draft DCO** (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2) is typical of nationally significant infrastructure projects, whereby framework or outline management plans are submitted and assessed as part of the application, with detailed plans being prepared and approved following consent. The draft DCO secures this through a series of requirements, including Requirements 12 (Construction Environmental Management Plan), 13 (Operational Environmental Management Plan), 15 (Construction Traffic Management Plan) and other management plan requirements. The detailed plans submitted pursuant to those requirements must be substantially in accordance with the corresponding certified outline plans and must be approved by the relevant planning authority (and, where specified, following consultation with relevant consultees) before the relevant stage of development may commence. The Applicant therefore considers that the draft DCO (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2) contains an appropriate and robust framework for the approval and implementation of detailed management measures. In respect of the **Outline Construction Traffic**	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			Management Plan (OCTMP) [APP-278] specifically, the purpose of the OCTMP is to establish the framework, controls and mitigation measures which will govern construction traffic management, whilst still allowing the flexibility to prepare the detailed CTMP upon the appointment of the Contractor to reflect the final construction methodology and programme.	
3.10.6	Community liaison (SHDC-048)	Request for one community liaison person in place for contact with any issues should they arise whilst works are being carried out.	The **OCEMP** (Doc Ref. 7.10 Rev 2) sets out that a Community Liaison Officer would act as the primary point of contact for queries or complaints throughout construction and commissioning. Furthermore, in accordance with Requirement 4 of the **Draft DCO** (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2), a Community Liaison Group must be established prior to the commencement of the Scheme to facilitate liaison between representatives of people living in the vicinity of the Order Limits and other relevant organisations in relation to the construction of the Scheme.	Agreed
3.10.7	Access remediation and reinstatement of field accesses (SHDC-051)	Request for a full scheme of remediation and reinstatement of field accesses after the cable/works have been undertaken.	With the implementation of pollution prevention and incident response measures contained within the **OCEMP** (Doc Ref. 7.10 Rev 2), it is unlikely that remediation of soils would be required following the removal of any temporary construction compounds and field accesses. Reinstatement of soils would be undertaken in accordance with the measures outlined within the **OSMP** (Doc Ref. 7.14 Rev 1). As set out within the **OSMP** (Doc Ref. 7.14 Rev 1), reinstatement will aim to restore all agricultural land without any degradation of the current ALC Grade, as informed by the detailed ALC survey.	Agreed

Ref	Matter	Stakeholder Position	Meridian Solar Farm Position	Status
			On this basis, the Applicant understands this point to be agreed.	

4. Signatures

4.1.1. This SoCG is agreed between the following:

Duly authorised for and on behalf of Meridian Solar Farm, the Applicant	Name	David Vernon
	Job Title	Head of NSIPs
	Date	21/09/2026
	Signature	DAVID VERNON
Duly authorised for and on behalf of South Holland District Council	Name:	SAM DEWAR
	Job Title	Director on behalf of South Holland DC
	Date	18/09/2026
	Signature	SAM DEWAR