

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

FAO: [REDACTED] (Case Officer)
22 September 2026

Dear [REDACTED],

Planning Act 2008 – Application for a Development Consent Order for the Meridian Solar Farm (Ref. EN010169) – Deadline 1 Submission

This letter is drafted to accompany the Deadline 1 submission from Meridian Solar Farm Limited ('the Applicant'). In its Rule 8 Letter [\[PD-008\]](#), the Examining Authority ('the ExA') has requested the following information of relevance to the Applicant to be submitted at Deadline 1:

- Comments on relevant representations;
- Post-hearing submissions;
- Initial Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs);
- Updated documents, if any revisions have been made; and
- Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010.

Comments on relevant representations

A total of 212 Relevant Representations (RRs) were submitted by Interested Parties (IPs). All of the RRs have been reviewed and considered by the Applicant and responded to within the **Relevant Representations Report** (Doc Ref. 8.5).

Due to the volume of RRs received, all RRs have been triaged and categorised for response by the Applicant's technical teams. Within the **Relevant Representations Report** (Doc Ref. 8.5), the Applicant has provided bespoke responses to local authorities, statutory consultees, parish councils and non-statutory organisations. All other RRs have been responded to thematically within the report in order to avoid repetition.

Microsoft Copilot was used by the Applicant solely to assist with the triaging of representations for allocation to the relevant technical specialists. All outputs were reviewed by the Applicant to confirm they had been correctly assigned. No AI programme was used to draft responses, which were prepared and reviewed by the relevant specialists.

Post-hearing submissions

The Applicant has provided a written summary of its oral submission made at Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1) held 8 September 2026 within **Written Summary of Oral Submissions at OFH1** (Doc Ref. 8.27).

The Applicant has also provided a written summary of its oral submission made at Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1): Strategic Matters held 9 September 2026 within **Written Summary of Oral Submissions at ISH1** (Doc Ref. 8.28). It is supported by two appendices in response to actions raised during ISH1:

- **Appendix A: Pylon Locations** (Doc Ref. 8.28); and
- **Appendix B: Location of Indicative Construction Compounds Within Parcel B5** (Doc Ref. 8.28).

In order to fully respond to some actions, application documents have been updated with some additional documents provided separately. These are detailed within each response and within the table at the end of this letter.

Where there are actions with deadlines beyond Deadline 1, these will be reported on at the relevant deadline.

Initial Statements of Common Ground (SoCGs)

The Applicant has drafted the initial SoCGs with a number of IPs as requested by the ExA at Annex B of its Rule 8 Letter [\[PD-008\]](#). This includes:

- **Statement of Common Ground with South Holland District Council** (Doc Ref. 8.10);
- **Statement of Common Ground with Lincolnshire County Council** (Doc Ref. 8.11);
- **Statement of Common Ground with Environment Agency** (Doc Ref. 8.12);
- **Statement of Common Ground with Natural England** (Doc Ref. 8.13);
- **Statement of Common Ground with Historic England** (Doc Ref. 8.14);
- **Statement of Common Ground with National Highways** (Doc Ref. 8.15);
- **Statement of Common Ground with Water Management Alliance** (Doc Ref. 8.16) (on behalf of South Holland Internal Drainage Board);
- **Statement of Common Ground with Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust** (Doc Ref. 8.17);
- **Statement of Common Ground with National Grid Electricity Transmission** (Doc Ref. 8.18);
- **Statement of Common Ground with Defence Infrastructure Organisation** (Doc Ref. 8.19);
- **Statement of Common Ground with Peterborough and Spalding Gliding Club** (Doc Ref. 8.20); and
- **Statement of Common Ground with Anglian Water** (Doc Ref. 8.21).

The Applicant intends to include matters relating to Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service within the Statement of Common Ground with Lincolnshire County Council in due course.

Where engagement with a stakeholder is solely related to the negotiation of protective provisions, a SoCG has not been submitted as per the Applicant's written submission in response to Procedural Deadline A [\[PDA-001\]](#).

A **Statement of Commonality** (Doc Ref. 8.9) has been produced which summarises the status of matters thematically by stakeholder. It will also set out the status of each SoCG at the various deadlines.

Any further information requested by the ExA

Within its Procedural Decision dated 23 July 2026 [\[PD-005\]](#), the ExA requested the Applicant to submit further information at Deadline 1 regarding the connection to the National Grid Weston Marsh substation and additional visualisations for coverage of both cable sealing end compounds. The Applicant has provided the following in response:

- **Additional CSEC Visualisations** (Doc Ref. 8.23) (including summer and winter photography); and
- **Connection to the National Grid Weston Marsh Substation Note** (Doc Ref. 8.24).

Submission of updated and additional documents

The Applicant has submitted a number of new and updated application documents at Deadline 1 where requested through the Rule 8 Letter [\[PD-008\]](#) and in response to further engagement with stakeholders.

The Applicant notes that the ExA has requested an Excel version of the Book of Reference, however the Applicant has produced the document in Word. The **Land Rights Tracker** (Doc Ref. 4.4 Rev 2) can be used to filter by land interest.

The table below sets out the updated and new documents submitted for ease of reference, including the reason for submission. The **Navigation Document** (Doc Ref. 1.4 Rev 2) provides a comprehensive list of all new and updated documents throughout the examination stage, including the reason for submission.

Updated or Additional Document	Document Title and Reference	Reason for Submission
Updated	Navigation Document (Doc Ref. 1.4 Rev 2) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	To update references to documents referred to within this submission.
Updated	Land and Crown Land Plans – Section A: Solar Development Area (Doc Ref. 2.4 Rev 2)	Updated to remove compulsory acquisition powers over plots A1-1, A1-2, A6-1, A8-2, A9-39, B4-24, as well as crown plot A11-10 further to engagement with the Crown Estate.
Updated	Land and Crown Land Plans – Section B: Grid Connection (Doc Ref. 2.4 Rev 2)	
Updated	Draft Development Consent Order (Doc Ref. 3.1 Rev 2) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received through the relevant representations (in particular, the relevant representations of Lincolnshire County Council, Natural England and the Environment Agency), and to correct minor typographical or referencing areas.
Updated	Explanatory Memorandum (Doc Ref. 3.2 Rev 2) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	
Updated	Book of Reference (Doc Ref. 4.3 Rev 2)	Updated to reflect latest land ownership information, and to reflect the removal of plots A1-1, A1-2, A6-1, A8-2, A9-39, B4-24, as well as crown plot A11-10, as acquisition powers are no longer sought.
Updated	Land Rights Tracker (Doc Ref. 4.4 Rev 2) (Excel and PDF versions supplied)	Updated to reflect latest status of land negotiations.
Updated	ES Chapter 5: Agriculture and Soils (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to Natural England's comments in its relevant representation, including (but not limited to) with regards to the assessment of effects caused by hardstanding on BMV land as a permanent effect on a precautionary basis, and the inclusion of a new table with the summary of effects for each ALC Grade.
Updated	ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in Lincolnshire County Council's (LCC) relevant representation to clarify the approach adopted for the assessment of harm and to reflect the issue of OAMMS (Doc Ref 8.7) at Deadline 1.
Updated	ES Chapter 9: Ecology and Biodiversity (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in Environment Agency's (EA) relevant

Updated or Additional Document	Document Title and Reference	Reason for Submission
		representation with regards to the assessment of impacts on fish.
Updated	ES Chapter 11: Hydrology and Flood Risk (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to detailed comments received in EA's relevant representation, with regards to the assessment of impacts associated with flood risk, geomorphology and water quality.
Updated	ES Chapter 18: Summary of Likely Significant Effects (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated to reflect changes to residual effects reported in ES Chapter 5: Agriculture and Soils (Doc Ref. 6.1 Rev 1).
Updated	ES Figure 2-2: Indicative Solar Development Area and Inter Array Connections Layout Plan (Doc Ref. 6.2 Rev 1)	Update in response to comments received in EA relevant representation regarding providing sufficient access of EA flood defence assets. To the western extent of Parcel A, the Applicant has included: • yellow hatching showing the EA land within the Order Limits; • an 8m wide purple hatch corridor to demonstrate how EA maintenance vehicles can access the Flood Defence Asset located within the yellow hatching; and • the tree and hedgerow planting has moved closer to the Solar Development Area fenceline as a result.
Updated	ES Figure 11-3: Fluvial and Tidal Flood Risk (Doc Ref. 6.2 Rev 1)	Figure title updated in response to comments received in EA's relevant representation to reflect that the figure also includes tidal extents of flooding.
Updated	ES Appendix 2-1: Watercourse Crossing Schedule (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to EA's relevant representation to include further details on which watercourse crossings impact on permanently wet or seasonally wet watercourses.
Updated	ES Appendix 5-2: Agricultural Land Classification Report – Parcels A and D (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in Natural England and LCC's relevant representations to include: • Full soil pit logs and descriptions, including clarification on where negative test results for calcium carbonate had been recorded. Where laboratory tests indicated textural differences from hand texturing of soils in the field, the auger logs have been updated. • Further detail added on previous ALC surveys within the Order Limits;
Updated	ES Appendix 5-3: Agricultural Land Classification Report – Parcels B and C (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	

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		- Further details added with regards to limitations of the survey with regards to ground conditions at the time of the survey and the use of archaeological trenches; - Further detail added with regards to the methodology used for ALC mapping.
Updated	ES Appendix 8-4: Heritage Setting Assessment (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated to correct formatting of coloured rows within the table which had been lost by error, but add meaning to the assessment.
Updated	ES Appendix 9-1: Ecology Legislation, Policy and Guidance (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in EA's relevant representation to include legislation relevant to the assessment of impacts on fish.
Updated	ES Appendix 9-4: Wintering Bird Survey Report 2022 - 2023 (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Update in response to comments received in Natural England's relevant representation to clarify that any wetland bird species recorded would be considered to form part of the Waterbird Assemblage for the Wash.
Updated	ES Appendix 9-5: Wintering Bird Survey Report 2023 - 2024 (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	
Updated	ES Appendix 9-6: Grid Connection Route Wintering Bird Survey Report 2023 - 2024 (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	
Updated	ES Appendix 9-14: Habitats Regulations Assessment Report (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in Natural England's relevant representation to include further information on how areas of Functionally Linked Land (FLL) have been identified and with regards to screening in the assessment of noise and visual disturbance on birds using the FLL during construction and decommissioning.
Updated	ES Appendix 11-1: Hydrology and Flood Risk Legislation, Policy and Guidance (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in EA's relevant representation regarding adding references to additional guidance.
Updated	ES Appendix 11-2: Water Framework Directive Report (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to detailed comments received in EA's relevant representation, with regards to the assessment of impacts associated with geomorphology, water quality and fish.
Updated	ES Appendix 11-3: Flood Risk Assessment (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 2) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in EA's relevant representation with regards to providing further explanation on the application of the Exception Test, overland flow paths in Gotts catchment, provision of an access strip to the Crowland and Cowbit

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		Washes Flood Storage Reservoir in Land Parcel A, and further discussion on the EA flood defence assets and tidal flood risk.
Updated	ES Appendix 11-3: Flood Risk Assessment - Annex B (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated to include Appendix 1 of the South Holland Main Drain Hydraulic Modelling Report which was missed from the submission by error.
Updated	ES Appendix 11-3: Flood Risk Assessment - Annex D (Doc Ref. 6.3 Rev 1)	Updated in response to comments received in EA's relevant representation to include a new Figure 1-6 to illustrate relevant tidal and fluvial flood defences associated with the River Welland.
New	ES Appendix 11-3: Flood Risk Assessment - Annex E (Doc Ref. 6.3)	New annex produced in response to EA's relevant representation to provide a sensitivity test for the H++ scenario.
Updated	Planning Statement Appendix E Heritage Statement of Harm (Doc Ref. 7.1 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in LCC's relevant representation to provide further clarification regarding the cultural significance of early prehistoric archaeological deposits within the Grid Connection Route.
Updated	Design Parameters Document (Doc Ref. 7.5 Rev 2) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in SHIDB's relevant representation with regards to the depth of trenchless crossings underneath the South Holland Main Drain, and to secure flood risk mitigation for any CSECs within the Work No 14 area, as further explained within Connection to the National Grid Weston Marsh Substation Note (Doc Ref. 8.24)
Updated	Environmental Mitigation and Commitments Register (Doc Ref. 7.7 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in EA and LCC relevant representations to record further mitigation commitments made in the DCO Application documents within the register and to record flood risk mitigation for any CSECs within the Work No 14 area, as further explained within Connection to the National Grid Weston Marsh Substation Note (Doc Ref. 8.24)
Updated	Biodiversity Net Gain Report (Doc Ref. 7.9 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust's relevant representation to account for area lost under solar panel mounting structures and to correct an error with regards to the assumed condition of modified grassland underneath the solar panels post-development.
Updated	Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.10 Rev 2) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in LCC and EA's relevant representations with regards to the drafting of mitigation commitments for cultural heritage and

Updated or Additional Document	Document Title and Reference	Reason for Submission
		hydrology and flood risk respectively. Additional mitigation on FLL also added in response to comments raised by Natural England in its relevant representation.
Updated	Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.11 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in LCC and EA's relevant representations with regards to the drafting of mitigation commitments for cultural heritage and hydrology and flood risk respectively. Commitment to investigate opportunities for rainwater harvesting also added in response to Anglian Water's relevant representation.
Updated	Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.12 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in LCC and EA's relevant representations with regards to the drafting of mitigation commitments for cultural heritage and hydrology and flood risk respectively. Additional mitigation on FLL also added in response to comments raised by Natural England in its relevant representation.
Updated	Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan - Part 2 (Doc Ref. 7.13 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Removal of duplicate CH-02 access design drawing and inclusion of LGR-07 access design which was missed by error.
Updated	Outline Soil Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.14 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in Natural England's relevant representation regarding the drafting of measures for post-DCO consent soil surveys, restoration and management. Also updated in response to relevant representation comments submitted by R Longstaff & Co LLP Rural Ltd to include firmer commitments to mitigate the potential for stoning of soils.
Updated	Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (Doc Ref. 7.16 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated in response to comments received in Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust's, Forestry Commission's and EA's relevant representations with regards to clarifying buffers for Local Wildlife Sites, use of Forestry Commission's tools for the selection of planting and measures to be adopted or the watercourse habitat enhancement buffer respectively.
Updated	Outline Skills, Supply Chain and Employment Plan (Doc Ref. 7.17 Rev 1) (Clean and tracked change versions supplied)	Updated following ISH1 where the ExA requested the Applicant considers further opportunities to tighten the language in the OSSCEP.
New	Relevant Representations Report (Doc Ref. 8.5)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].

Updated or Additional Document	Document Title and Reference	Reason for Submission
New	Final Archaeological Evaluation Report - Part 1 (Doc Ref. 8.6)	Submission of final evaluation report as noted within the ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage (Doc Ref. 6.1) at submission.
New	Final Archaeological Evaluation Report - Part 2 (Doc Ref. 8.6)	
New	Final Archaeological Evaluation Report - Part 3 (Doc Ref. 8.6)	
New	Outline Archaeological Mitigation and Management Strategy (Doc Ref. 8.7)	New control document produced following completion of the Final Archaeological Evaluation Report as noted within the ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage (Doc Ref. 6.1) at submission.
New	Additional Winter Photography Technical Note (Doc Ref. 8.8)	Produced to justify the absence of winter photography for a number of viewpoints.
New	Statement of Commonality (Doc Ref. 8.9)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with South Holland District Council (Doc Ref. 8.10)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with Lincolnshire County Council (Doc Ref. 8.11)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with Environment Agency (Doc Ref. 8.12)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with Natural England (Doc Ref. 8.13)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with Historic England (Doc Ref. 8.14)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with National Highways (Doc Ref. 8.15)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with Water Management Alliance (Doc Ref. 8.16)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust (Doc Ref. 8.17)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with National Grid Electricity Transmission (Doc Ref. 8.18)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with Defence Infrastructure Organisation (Doc Ref. 8.19)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with Peterborough and Spalding Gliding Club (Doc Ref. 8.20)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Statement of Common Ground with Anglian Water (Doc Ref. 8.22)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Additional CSEC Visualisations (Doc Ref. 8.23)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 in PD-005.

Updated or Additional Document	Document Title and Reference	Reason for Submission
New	Connection to the National Grid Weston Marsh Substation Note (Doc Ref. 8.24)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 in PD-005.
New	Schedule of Changes to Book of Reference (Doc Ref. 8.25)	To clearly set out the changes to the Book of Reference at Deadline 1.
New	Crowland Kinetic Views Assessment (Doc Ref. 8.26)	Assessment produced at the request of Historic England in its relevant representation.
New	Written Summary of Oral Submissions at OFH1 (Doc Ref. 8.27)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Written Summary of Oral Submissions at ISH1 (Doc Ref. 8.28)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as per the Rule 8 Letter [PD-008].
New	Post ISH1 Note: Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Land Take (Doc Ref. 8.29)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as part of the post-hearing actions [EV3-008].
New	Post ISH1 Note: Community Benefit Fund (Doc Ref. 8.30)	As requested by the ExA at Deadline 1 as part of the post-hearing actions [EV3-008].
New	Schedule of Changes to Draft DCO (Doc Ref. 8.31)	To clearly set out the changes to the Draft DCO at Deadline 1.

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 [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Head of NSIPs

Downing Renewable Developments LLP

E: [REDACTED]

T: [REDACTED]