SUBMISSION BY THE MERIDIAN ACTION GROUP

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: [redacted]

Meridian Action Submission 2 in response to Written Questions

The Meridian Action Group have already submitted comment on specific questions raised by the Planning Inspectorate. In this complementary submission we raise the question of overriding issues of the principles behind the applicants' proposals.

Issues of concern

Ref, Q2.0.7 Grid Connection The applicants do not have a Guaranteed Grid Connection since they are at Gate 1 and have no firm plan of getting to Gate 2. This heralds the prospect of a proposed scheme obtaining a DOC without prospect of a grid connection for a number of years so leaving the local community in limbo

Ref. Q5.0.4 Site selection The applicant has not demonstrated a comprehensive site selection process but has been drawn towards the proposed sub-station at Weston Marsh without seeking to review other options

Ref. Q14.0.2 BMV The applicant uses a methodology BMV which is in contrast with the methodology that is the norm - six such studies class all the land in the project as being of BMV quality, By using a different methodology the applicant understates the amount of BMV so favouring their case

Ref. Q19.0.11 Necessity of development in Flood Zone 3b It is proposed to partially develop in Flood Zone 3b. NPS EN-1 states that energy projects should not normally be consented in Flood Zone 3b unless it is necessary for operational reasons. The applicant states in [REP1-050] that removing these land parcels would reduce the scheme's generating capacity and viability, and that the solar stations are 'necessarily situated within Flood Zone 3b'. These are not 'operational reasons' but are economic reasons and should not be considered as planning reasons

Ref. Q18.0.21 Suitability of highway network NPS EN-3 paragraph 2.10.117 states that all sections of roads and bridges on the proposed delivery route can accommodate the weight and volume of the loads and widths of vehicles. Please comment on the suitability of the local highway network to accommodate the volumes and types of vehicles proposed to serve the proposed development throughout the OL, with particular regard to highway condition, carriageway width, junction visibility and any associated highway safety or capacity considerations.

This is a key issue. Since the project was initiated the local road network has substantially deteriorated, particularly due to drought conditions Typically they are very uneven and badly cracked even where recently resurfaced. These factors make them unsuited to local traffic let alone construction traffic. For instance Barrier Bank is

closed due to its condition and other roads, such as Hulls Dove, Cloot Drove and Langary Gate Road are similarly in poor condition.

The applicant state that they will survey the road network at the outset of the project to determine the condition and responsibility. This is not an adequate response and the liability will fall on local taxpayers

SUMMARY

These factors have a common overriding theme. The applicants, Meridian Solar, either disregard statutory guidance and/or minimise their proposed actions in order to minimise their overall scheme costs. This is to the detriment of the local area and community.