

Green Hill Solar Farm

EN010170

Consultation Report Appendix: Statement of Community Consultation

Prepared by: Copper Consultancy

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Contents

Table of Contents

- **Appendix 5.1:** Statement of Community Consultation3
- **Appendix 5.2:** Responses from LPAs on draft SoCC42



Green Hill Solar Farm

Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

November 2024

Contents

1. Introduction
2. The Planning Process
3. About Island Green Power
4. The Proposed Development
5. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
6. Engagement Approach and Early Engagement (Non-Statutory Consultation)
7. Statutory Consultation
8. Responding to Consultation
9. Further Consultation
10. Appendices
11. Glossary of terms



1. Introduction

Green Hill Solar Farm Ltd (“we” or “the Applicant”) is preparing a **Development Consent Order (DCO)** application under the **Planning Act 2008** (“the Act”) for a new solar farm located on land to the west of Wellingborough, Northampton and north of Milton Keynes.

This document is a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC), which sets out how we intend to engage with local communities ahead of our application for development consent for the Green Hill Solar Farm project (“the Scheme”).

The Scheme is a **Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project** (NSIP) and requires consent from the Secretary of State (SoS) for the **Department for Energy Security and Net Zero** (DESNZ) via a DCO. This SoCC has been prepared under section 47(1) of the Act and **Regulation 12 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017**.

In accordance with section 47 paragraphs (2) to (5) of the Act, in developing this SoCC, we consulted with and have had regard to comments from the following section 43(1) local planning authorities:

- West Northamptonshire Council
- North Northamptonshire Council
- Milton Keynes City Council

A ‘Glossary’ can be found at the end of the document to define technical terms (bold).

2. The planning process

As the proposed **generation capacity** for the Scheme is anticipated to be 500 megawatts (MW), it exceeds the 50 MW threshold to be classified as an NSIP. The consenting regime for NSIPs comes under the Act and requires the Applicant to apply for a DCO.

Unlike planning applications under the **Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA)**, DCO applications must be submitted to the SoS through the **Planning Inspectorate (PINS)**. The Applicant therefore intends to apply for a DCO under Section 37 of the Act to PINS.

The Application would be examined by an independent **Examining Authority** appointed by PINS, who would make a recommendation on the application to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State for DESNZ makes the final decision on a DCO application.



Further information on the DCO planning process is shown in **Figure 1.1** and can also be found on the Planning Inspectorate website:

[\(https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/\)](https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/).

Before applying for the DCO, the Act 2008 requires us to carry out consultation with people living in the vicinity of the land (under Section 47), with prescribed stakeholders (under Section 42 of the Act) and those with an interest in the land.

This SoCC has been prepared with reference to guidance on pre-application consultation published by the Government and PINS and sets out the approach to consultation with the community in the vicinity of the Scheme.



Figure 1.1 Summary of the planning process for Green Hill Solar Farm



3. About Island Green Power

Island Green Power (IGP) is a leading developer of utility-scale solar projects and battery storage systems. We operate in the UK, Spain, Italy, Australia, and New Zealand. Our mission is to help countries accelerate the transition from fossil fuels to solar power by making more renewable energy possible, drastically reducing carbon emissions and contributing to global net zero targets.

Since its launch in 2013, we have successfully delivered over 34 solar projects worldwide that have generated more than 1GW of energy capacity, with many now owned by the largest solar investors. This includes 17 solar projects in the UK and Republic of Ireland. These range in size from below 5 MW to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) such as the Cottam Solar Project, currently the UK's largest consented solar project. Cottam will generate 600 MWac of clean, renewable, and secure electricity while including 600 MW of Battery Storage that will store and then release energy as needed.

4. The proposed development

The Scheme would cover approximately 1,200 hectares (excluding the **Cable Route Search Area**) of nine sites (Green Hill A to G and Green Hill BESS) across the administrative areas of West Northamptonshire Council, North Northamptonshire Council, and Milton Keynes City Council.

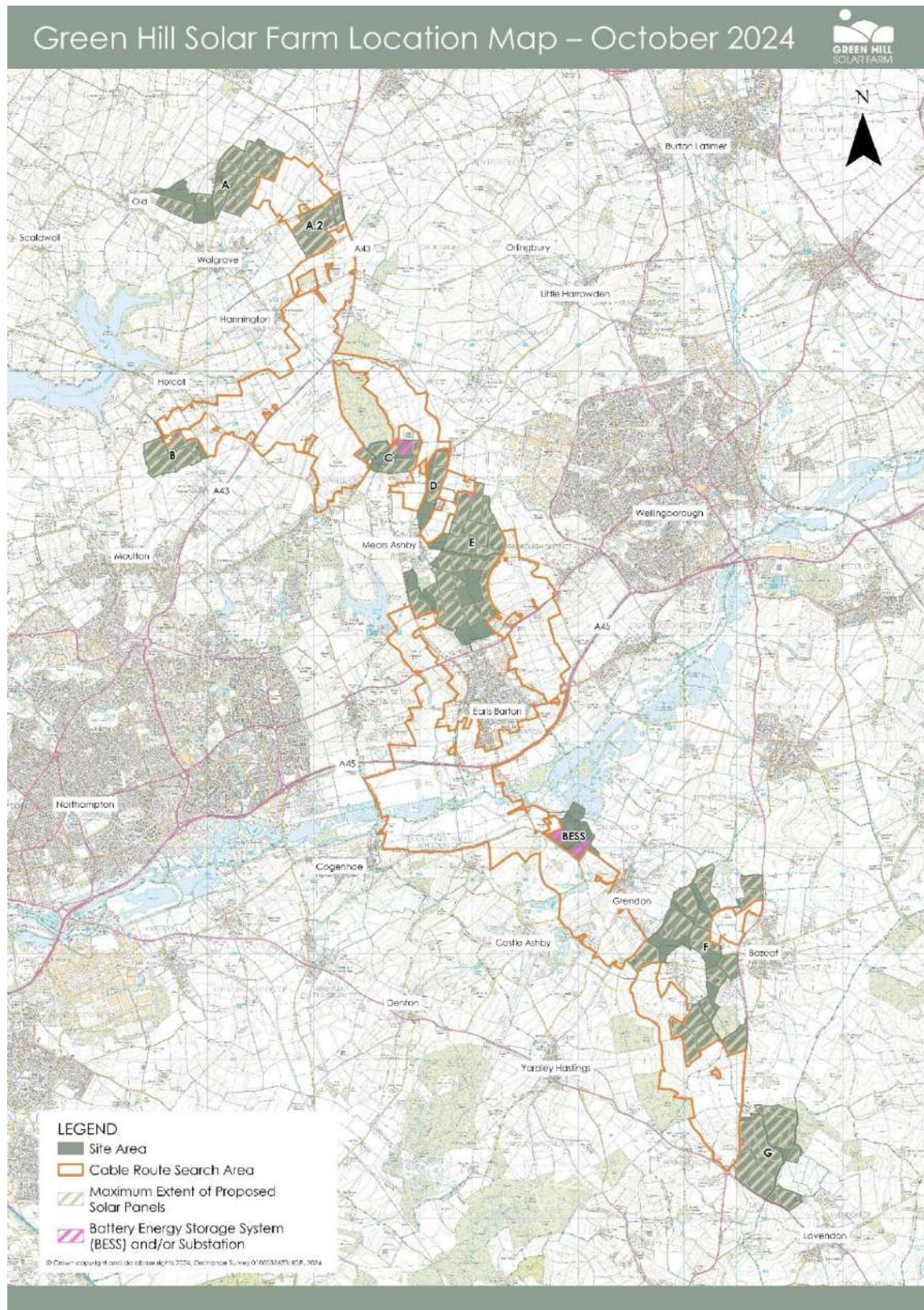
The proposed Scheme would have a lifetime of 60 years and consist of the development of a solar farm including :

- ground-mounted solar **photovoltaic (PV)** panels.
- 33kV, 132kV and 400kV substations.
- **battery energy storage systems (BESS)** and associated infrastructure.
- 11kV to 400kV underground electrical cables to connect the Green Hill sites A-G and the BESS to Grendon Substation and the wider **National Grid** network.
- fencing, security and lighting.
- landscaping and ecological mitigation and enhancements.

The Scheme is anticipated to supply a power output of 500 MW to the **National Grid**, which would provide a substantial source of electricity to the country, equivalent to powering approximately 115,000 households annually.



Figure 2.1 – Map of the sites and cable route search area
(as of October 2024)



5. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

We are required to undertake an **Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)** under the **Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017**.

This means our application must assess the likely significant environmental effects of our proposals and, where appropriate, implement mitigation measures to prevent or reduce any significant adverse effects.

An EIA **Scoping Opinion** was issued by PINS on 27 September 2024. This identifies the environmental issues and topics relevant to the Scheme, and which should be assessed as part of the EIA. The **Scoping Opinion** is available to view on the PINS website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN010170/EN010170-000002-GHSF%20-%20Scoping%20Opinion.pdf>

We will also be consulting on a **Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)**, which provides information about the preliminary results of our assessments, as part of the statutory consultation. A Non-technical Summary (NTS) will be available to summarise the content of the PEIR in non-technical terms.

The PEIR and NTS will be publicised and consulted upon as part of the public consultation and will be available on the website (www.greenhillsolar.co.uk) at information points and at in-person events during statutory consultation. We will be seeking views from members of the public and other stakeholders on this and other consultation documents.

An **Environmental Statement (ES)**, which will form part of the DCO application. The ES will set out the assessment and conclusions of the EIA process. It will build on the content of the PEIR and take into account the responses from the statutory consultation, stakeholder engagement and the results of surveys undertaken. It will also describe any changes to the Scheme and any mitigation measures that need to be implemented.

Preparation for the ES will begin in early 2025, following the public consultation.





Figure 3.1 Timeline of pre-submission activity for Green Hill Solar Farm DCO application

6. Engagement Approach and Early Engagement

6.1 Engagement approach

We are committed to engaging and consulting with communities and other stakeholders at all stages of the development process. In early 2024, we met with stakeholders from West Northamptonshire Council, North Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council and presented initial ideas for the Scheme. We issued letters to near neighbours, which are residential and commercial properties we consider as ‘neighbours’ to the site and likely to be interested in the proposals.

The approach to consultation consists of two broad phases:

- Ongoing engagement and consultation workshops held between January – September 2024; and
- Public (statutory) consultation period lasting 6 weeks from 07 November – 19 December 2024.



This SoCC relates to the carrying out of the statutory consultation, however, a summary of the ongoing engagement, also referred to as non-statutory consultation, is provided below.

6.2 Initial engagement and non-statutory consultation

The primary aim of our initial engagement was to introduce our early-stage proposals for the Scheme, including the early environmental assessments and site selection work carried out to date.

During this initial stage of engagement, we engaged collaboratively with stakeholders to help understand key issues and potential constraints in the local area. This took the form of consultation workshops as part of the non-statutory consultation. We held a series of consultation workshops (formerly known as ‘co:design’ workshops) with local stakeholders, by invitation, before the statutory consultation on the DCO.

These workshops took the format of a collaborative master-planning exercise between stakeholders and the developer, to capture local knowledge and incorporate this into the ongoing environmental assessments and design development.

We will engage with the same list of stakeholders for statutory consultation, as we did for the non-statutory consultation (Appendix 1).

6.3 Engagement and consultation

Five consultation workshops were held in March and May 2024. These consisted of the following stakeholder groups:

- Political stakeholders: two workshops were held for local host and neighbouring parish councillors and district councillors. They were held on 4 and 5 March 2024 at Mears Ashby Village Hall.
- Community stakeholders: community groups and representatives from relevant local organisations were invited to a workshop on Tuesday 5 March 2024 at Mears Ashby Village Hall.
- Technical stakeholders: local district planning officers and other statutory and environmental consultees were invited to a workshop on Friday 15 March 2024 at Mears Ashby Village Hall.
- Milton Keynes stakeholders: local political and community groups in Milton Keynes were invited to a workshop on Thursday 30 May 2024, at Turvey Village Hall.

The fifth workshop was held in May following the inclusion of additional land in Milton Keynes. The session was conducted in the same format as the workshops in March.



A full summary of the collaboration workshops can be found in the Green Hill Solar Farm Early Engagement Workshop Summary Report, which can be found on the Scheme website. This report was uploaded to the website and issued to all stakeholders invited to the workshops on 30 September 2024.

The outcomes of the workshops were used to shape the proposals for the Scheme. The proposals will be published at the public (statutory) consultation and available on the Scheme website, information deposit points and at public exhibition events.

To raise awareness of the Scheme, we notified the wider public of the intention to develop Green Hill Solar Farm by publicising the Scheme to the properties within a defined **Primary Consultation Zone** (PCZ) through a newsletter.

This newsletter contained information on the Scheme and details on how to contact the development team, such as the website, email address, and freephone information telephone line for those wishing to find out more.

The newsletter contained a summary of the engagement with stakeholders and outcomes of the consultation workshops and informed the residents of the upcoming statutory consultation in the winter.

A press release was issued to local news outlets to maximise reach to the local communities.

7. Statutory consultation

7.1 When will the consultation take place?

We are looking to hold our statutory consultation for six weeks between 7 November 2024 and 19 December 2024. All digital responses to the consultation must be received by 11:59 pm on the closing date. We will allow an additional two-week period to receive responses via post to account for any delays.

Although we do not expect any changes, if the dates are adjusted, all other aspects of the consultation, as outlined below, will remain unchanged.

7.2 What are we consulting on?

The consultation aims to ensure that the community, landowners, stakeholders, and technical consultees have the opportunity to understand and influence our proposals.

We will be seeking feedback on all aspects of our plans for the Scheme. This will involve inviting comments on issues such as, but not limited to:

- **Indicative masterplans** identifying potential areas for the solar arrays, associated development and potential mitigation and enhancement opportunities.



- The inclusion of Green Hill A.2 as land under consideration for the solar farm. As the site was included in the Scheme after the non-statutory consultation, we will provide the opportunity for residents to share their feedback on its inclusion.
- The Cable Route Search Area.
- The PEIR - which will include preliminary assessments of the Scheme's environmental effects associated with its construction, operation and decommissioning.
- Visualisations of the Scheme from selected viewpoints.
- Issues associated with the construction and operation of the solar farm and proposed mitigation measures.
- Possible community benefit initiatives.
- Any other feedback and local issues or sensitivities of which we should be aware.

7.3 Who are we consulting?

The Scheme has devised a new PCZ (Appendix 2) for the statutory consultation within the area of the host local planning authorities of North Northamptonshire, West Northamptonshire, Milton Keynes, and the neighbouring authority of Bedford Borough Council. The area extends up to 2 kilometres (km) of the Scheme site boundaries (within which the solar arrays and associated development would be located) and 1 km of the cable route search area (within which the electrical cables connecting the sites and Grendon Substation would be located). The PCZ followed consultation with North Northamptonshire, West Northamptonshire, Milton Keynes and is considered sufficient to engage with members of the local community who would be most impacted by the Scheme and who are most likely to operate within the vicinity of it.

The PCZ contains approximately 13,400 residential and business addresses.

Appendix 2 contains the PCZ around the proposed sites under consideration and Cable Route Search Area.

In addition to local residents and businesses in the vicinity of the Scheme (as defined by the PCZ), we will also be consulting the following groups (see Appendix 1 for the consultee list):

- Landowners with interest in the Scheme
- Statutory consultees, such as:
 - Host parish councils;
 - Host and neighbouring local planning authorities;
 - Technical stakeholders, such as the Environment Agency and Historic England.
- Non-statutory consultees, such as:
 - Members of Parliament;



- Parish Meetings;
- Local government elected representatives;
- Community groups, voluntary organisations, faith communities;
- Environmental groups in the PCZ;
- Schools and colleges in the PCZ;
- Seldom-heard groups.

Members of the general public will be notified of the consultation via notices in local, regional and national newspapers. We will also ask parish councils and parish meetings to publicise the consultation on their notice boards.

7.4 How we are consulting

During this statutory consultation, we will use a range of methods to ensure an inclusive, meaningful and open consultation. We will use digital and non-digital methods of communication to ensure that our consultation can be accessed by all stakeholders.

A proposed schedule for all engagement methods and materials is set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Statutory consultation methods and materials

Consultation methods	
Method	Detail
Consultation events	<p>We will be holding four consultation events at locations within or in the immediate vicinity of the PCZ, that are accessible by public and private transport. They will be advertised in consultation leaflets, in the local media, at local information points and through wider publicity using local community groups.</p> <p>Members of the development team will be at these events to discuss the proposals in more detail and answer any questions. Hard copies of selected materials will also be available to view and take away, with all materials available in digital format via the website.</p>



	The dates and times of the consultation events are as follows:		
	Date	Time	Location
	Monday 18 November 2024	14:00 -19:00	Grendon Village Hall, Main Road, Grendon, Northampton NN7 1JW
	Saturday 23 November 2024	12:00 – 17:00	Lavendon Village Hall, 22 High Street, Lavendon, Buckinghamshire. MK46 4HA
	Wednesday 27 November 2024	14:00 – 19:00	Swanspool Pavilion, Swanspool Parade, Wellingborough NN8 9SR
	Saturday 7 December 2024	12:00 – 17:00	Walgrave Village Hall, 1 Newland Road, Walgrave, Northampton NN6 9PZ
	Events will be held on a range of days and times throughout the week, including during the evening and at weekends to accommodate working families.		
Webinars	<p>Three webinars will be held for stakeholders to join via telephone or online via Livestorm, an online web conferencing platform for webinars and virtual meetings. Attendees of the webinars will be able to type questions to be answered by the development team members during the webinar. The webinar sessions will be hosted at times in the day and in the evening to accommodate working families.</p> <p>Questions will be answered following the presentation on the webinar and in the time available. Any remaining unanswered</p>		



	<p>questions will be answered in writing after the event if the respondent contacts the Community Relations Team.</p> <p>The dates and times of the webinars are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20th November 2024, 6 – 7 pm • 26th November 2024, 6 – 7 pm • 4th December 2024, 12:30 – 1:30 pm <p>The link to the webinars will be available on the Scheme website. We will require attendees to register for these online events in advance via the automated registration form on the Livestorm website.</p> <p>The webinars will be accessible via web browser and will not require the attendee to download software.</p> <p>Instructions on how to register and attend the webinars will be provided on the Scheme website.</p>
Local information points	<p>Hard copies of the Consultation Information Booklet and the Consultation Feedback Form will be available to take away from all local information points listed below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brixworth Library, Spratton Road, Brixworth, Northampton NN6 9DS (Monday – Friday - 9 am - 5 pm) • Wellingborough Library, 7 Pebble Lane, Wellingborough NN8 1AS (Monday – Friday 9 am – 6 pm, Saturday 9 am – 5 pm) • Duston Library, Duston Community Centre, Pendle Road, Northampton NN5 6DT (Monday – Friday - 9 am – 5 pm and Saturdays - 10 am – 2 pm) • Moulton Community Library, Moulton Community Centre, Sandy Hill, Reedings, Moulton, Northamptonshire. NN3 7AX (Monday to Saturday - 9 am – 5 pm, Sundays 9 - 4 pm (self-service only)) • Earls Barton Community Library, 27 Broad Street, Earls Barton, Northampton NN6 0ND (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday - 2 pm – 5 pm, Wednesday - 10 am – 1 pm)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rothwell Community Library, Market Hill, Rothwell NN14 6EP (Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday - 10 am – 4 pm) • Milton Keynes Library, 555 Silbury Boulevard, Milton Keynes MK9 3HL (Monday – Friday - 9 am – 6 pm, Saturday - 9 am – 5 pm) <p>Electronic copies of the SoCC, PEIR and Non-technical Summary (NTS) will be available to view and download electronically (for reference) at each local information point with access to a computer. While access to computers at libraries is free, a membership for the library may be required.</p> <p>Reference copies of the SoCC, PEIR and NTS will be provided to information points that do not have access to a computer and/or internet. These locations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moulton Community Library • Rothwell Community Library <p>Copies in other formats, such as braille, are available on request. Stakeholders will be able to request hard copies of selected consultation materials to be sent to them free of charge. However, a hard copy of the PEIR can be provided on request. The cost of printing and posting the PEIR is £750.</p> <p>The consultation materials that will be available free of charge, upon request are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Community Consultation • Consultation Information Booklet • Consultation Feedback Form • Consultation Newsletter • Non-Technical Summary
Scheme website	<p>A dedicated website www.greenhillsolar.co.uk is currently live and will be updated to publicise the statutory consultation for stakeholders to find out more information and provide feedback.</p> <p>All statutory consultation documents (mentioned above) will be presented digitally and available for download, free of charge,</p>



	from the website. Information made available at the consultation events will also be published on the website.
Consultation materials	
Material	Detail
Consultation Newsletter	<p>A consultation newsletter, posted to all addresses in the PCZ, will provide an overview of the Scheme, the consultation, and how people can get involved. The newsletter will indicate where the other consultation documents can be accessed and publicise the consultation events, including locations, dates and timings.</p> <p>Copies of the newsletter will also be emailed electronically to key stakeholders.</p>
Consultation Information Booklet	<p>Information booklet containing a summary of the proposals for Green Hill Solar Farm and how the design of the solar farm has developed following the non-statutory consultation, including maps illustrating the Scheme.</p> <p>The information booklet will also contain information on the public consultation events, such as the date, time and location of the exhibitions and webinars. It will also list the information deposit points for the consultation materials.</p>
Consultation Feedback Form	<p>A feedback form will allow people to provide feedback on the proposals. This will be electronic and accessible via the website.</p> <p>The form will be available in hard copy on request, at in person consultation events and information points. Completed hard copies can be returned to the development team at consultation events or via Royal Mail - FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM (no stamp or further details required).</p>
Preliminary Environmental Informational Report (PEIR) and Non-	The PEIR will describe the Scheme and contain a preliminary assessment of the potential significant environmental effects and the initial strategies to mitigate adverse effects. The PEIR will be based on information available at that time, but the assessments will be developed once further detail is available and reported



Technical Summary (NTS)	<p>within an Environmental Statement (ES) submitted with the DCO application.</p> <p>An NTS of the PEIR can also be downloaded free of charge from the website, electronically at local information points and will be available in printed format to view at consultation events.</p>
Exhibition Materials	<p>The exhibitions will contain exhibition boards to provide details of the Scheme as well as present maps of the proposed development.</p> <p>The exhibition boards will be available at consultation events and on the website.</p>
Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)	<p>This SoCC will be made available online throughout the consultation and free of charge in hard copy on request. A hard copy of the SoCC will also be available to inspect at each local information point once the section 47 notice has been publicised.</p>
Materials in alternative formats	<p>Upon request, all documents will be available in alternative accessible formats, such as braille and large print. Requests for translated summary documents will be considered on a case-by-case basis. All requests should be made to the development team by email at info@greenhillsolar.co.uk or by phone – 0800 0129 882 (or at the consultation events).</p>

All statutory consultation documents will be available free of charge online, on the website, and available in hard copy at the consultation events.

Select consultation materials are available for no extra charge.
Hard copy of the PEIR can be requested for a charge of £750.



7.5 Promoting the consultation

A range of methods will be utilised to promote the consultation to a wider audience, as listed in Table 2. In addition, statutory notices will be published in accordance with section 48 of the Act. These notices will be published once in a national newspaper and the London Gazette and twice (across two successive weeks) in local circulating newspapers. Notices will also be sent to prescribed stakeholders and persons with an interest in land as required by s42 of the Act.

Table 2: Methods to promote the statutory consultation

Method	Detail
Consultation Newsletter	<p>A consultation newsletter, posted to all addresses in the PCZ, will provide an overview of the Scheme, the consultation, and how people can get involved. The newsletter will indicate where the other consultation documents can be accessed and publicise the consultation events, including locations, dates and timings.</p> <p>Copies of the newsletter will also be emailed electronically to key stakeholders.</p> <p>The newsletter will contain a QR code to direct people to the Scheme's website.</p>
Consultation leaflet	<p>Consultation leaflets will be posted electronically to key stakeholders, such as technical consultants, political leaders and community groups asking them to publicise the consultation within their networks via email. Appendix 3 contains the list of stakeholders who will be asked to publicise the consultation leaflet.</p> <p>Printed copies of the leaflet will be available at local information points.</p> <p>We will also ask local information points if they can display a hard copy of the consultation leaflet on their notice boards, but this will be at their discretion.</p>



	<p>Hard copies of the leaflet will be distributed to residents and businesses within the PCZ approximately 3 weeks into the consultation period to boost engagement in the consultation.</p> <p>These leaflets will contain a QR code to direct people to the Scheme's website.</p>
Press releases	<p>One press release publicising the upcoming consultation and how the community and wider stakeholders can get involved will be issued ahead of the consultation.</p> <p>The press release will be released to national and regional newspapers 7 days in advance of the launch of the public consultation on 31 October.</p> <p>Section notices for Section 48 will be publicised separately. Please refer to Section 7.6.</p>
Stakeholder briefings	<p>We will issue communications to key stakeholders, including local political representatives (Councillors and MPs) and parish council clerks representing wards, constituencies, and parishes within the PCZ to provide information about the proposals we are consulting on and invite them to take part in the consultation.</p> <p>These will be issued to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • host constituency and neighbouring constituency area MPs; • elected representatives at West Northamptonshire Council; • elected representatives at North Northamptonshire Council; • elected representatives at Milton Keynes City Council; • elected representatives in Bedfordshire Borough Council • host parish councils; • neighbouring local authorities; • neighbouring parish councils; and • local interest groups, such as community and environmental groups. <p>See Appendix 1 for the full stakeholder list.</p>



	We will, in addition to the in-person and webinar events listed above, consider requests for additional briefing meetings with stakeholders.
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7.6 Statutory Notices

Statutory notices to publicise the consultation will be published, under the requirement set out in Section 48 of the Act:

- publicising the consultation - once in a national newspaper and twice (across two successive weeks) in local circulating newspapers.

We will publicise the consultation in the following publications:

National Newspapers:

Publication	Publisher	Format	Date of notice
The Guardian	The Guardian/ The Observer	Print	Thursday 31st October
London Gazette	The Guardian/ The Observer	Print	Thursday 31st October

Local Newspapers:

Publication	Format	Date of notice one	Date of notice two
Northamptonshire Telegraph	Print	Thursday 31 st October	Thursday 7 th November
Milton Keynes Citizen	Print	Thursday 31 st October	Thursday 7 th November
Times and Citizen (Bedfordshire)	Print	Thursday 31 st October	Thursday 7 th November

Formal notifications will be issued to stakeholders as required per Section 42 of the Act.



7.7 Seldom-heard groups

We want to ensure that our consultation is inclusive. We recognise that some individuals or groups may have difficulties taking part in the consultation process for a range of reasons. We have identified groups of people with protected characteristics under the equalities law.

Consultation methods used to engage with these groups are set out in Table 3. We will continue to liaise with local organisations representing groups of people with these characteristics to ensure accessibility to the consultation and that our approach best meets the needs of their members and those they represent.

The list of seldom-heard community groups are in Appendix 1.

Table 3: consultation methods which will be used to engage with ‘seldom-heard’ groups

Group	Consultation methods used to engage with these groups
The elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Freepost and the freephone information line.• Providing important information in both digital and non-digital formats and providing alternate formats such as braille and large print (upon request).• Providing paper copies of materials at information point locations.• Face-to-face events at several locations, with members of the team available to assist with completing feedback responses.
People with visual impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Providing important information in both digital and non-digital formats and providing alternate formats such as dementia-friendly, braille and large print (upon request).• Option to enlarge text on the website.• Freephone information line.• Face-to-face events at several locations, with members of the team available to assist with completing feedback responses.
People with limited mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Directly mailing the consultation leaflet to all stakeholders within the PCZ and provide details of how to access paper copies of other consultation documents and provide feedback by online and by post.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement webinars to negate the need for travel to public events. • Freephone information line and freepost.
Geographically isolated individuals or communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly mailing the consultation leaflet to all stakeholders within the PCZ and providing details of how to access paper copies of other project documents and provide feedback by post. • Advertising the availability of telephone callbacks for stakeholders with further questions or who would like to discuss the Scheme further with the development team.
People with hearing impairments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly mailing the consultation newsletter to all stakeholders within the PCZ and providing details of how to access paper copies of other project documents and provide feedback by post. • Online engagement through the consultation website and webinars to negate the need for travel. • Providing important information in both digital and non-digital formats and providing alternate formats such as braille and large print (upon request). • Automated subtitles will be available at webinars to ensure each session is accessible.

7.8 Enquiry channels

The following enquiry channels will be available throughout the consultation for members of the community and other stakeholders to contact the development team, ask questions, request further information or request printed copies of consultation materials and documents. These channels are provided in Table 4. These communication channels will continue to be active throughout the pre-application period.

Table 4: Information channels for Green Hill Solar

Method	Contact details	Hours of operation
Telephone	0800 0129 882	9 am–5:30 pm weekdays (with an answerphone facility to take messages outside these hours).
Email	Info@greenhillsolar.co.uk	People can email 24 hours a day, with emails being monitored



		between 9 am and 5:30 pm weekdays. We will aim to acknowledge all emails received as soon as practicable and will endeavour to provide a substantive response within 10 working days of receipt.
Post	FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM	Should enquiries received via post require a response, this will be issued within 10 working days of receipt. Urgent enquiries should be directed to the Scheme's email address or freephone line.

8. Responding to consultation

8.1 How to respond to the consultation

Between 7 November 2024 – 19 December 2024, people will be able to submit their feedback relating to the Scheme. All responses must be received by 11:59 pm on the closing date. Responses received after that date may not be considered. We will allow an additional two-week period to receive responses via post.

Consultation responses can be made in the following ways:

- Completing the feedback form online, which can be accessed via the Scheme website: www.greenhillsolar.co.uk
- Completing a printed feedback form, which can be collected from a consultation event or local information point, or on request by contacting the development team. Completed forms can be handed to the development team at events, scanned and emailed back to info@greenhillsolar.co.uk, or sent to FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM (no stamp or further details required).
- Emailing comments to info@greenhillsolar.co.uk.
- Writing to us at FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM (no stamp or further details required).

Stakeholders can also contact the development team by phone at 0800 0129 882, who can assist with any questions about the Scheme or consultation. In exceptional circumstances, we will take feedback over the phone, however this will need to be arranged in advance.



8.2 How we will use consultation feedback

We will have a record and regard to all comments received during the consultation. All feedback is important to us, and we will consider feedback on the proposals.

The feedback we receive will be submitted as part of our DCO application in a **Consultation Report**. The **Consultation Report** will set out how the feedback from the consultation has shaped and influenced the final proposals. All responses submitted during the statutory consultation will be responded to within the **Consultation Report**. Any responses published in the **Consultation Report** will have all personal details redacted. Please note, PINS can request a copy of all consultation responses and in this instance, personal details may be disclosed to PINS.

9. Further consultation

If, following changes to the proposals as a result of the feedback we have received, we consider it necessary to undertake further targeted or supplementary consultation, this would be undertaken, so far as relevant and proportionate, in accordance with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC.



Appendices

Appendix 1: The list of the consultees

West Northamptonshire Council (WNC)

- Leader of the Council,
- Deputy Leader of the Council,
- Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Leisure
- Cabinet member for Environment, Transport, Highways and Waste
- Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning Built, Environment and Rural Affairs

Ward councillors in:

- Moulton ward
- Long Buckby
- Hackleton and Grange Park
- Riverside Park
- Billing and Rectory Farm
- Talavera
- Boothville and Parklands
- Kingsthorpe South
- Kingsthorpe North
- Dallington Spencer
- Duston West and St Crispin
- Bugbrooke
- Brixworth

North Northamptonshire Council (NNC)

- Chair / Leader of the Council
- Vice-Chair
- Executive Portfolio Holder for Highways, Travel and Assets
- Executive Portfolio Holder for Growth & Regeneration
- Executive Portfolio Holder for Climate & Green Environment

Ward councillors in:

- Earls Barton
- Irchester
- Brickhill and Queensway
- Hatton Park
- Croyland and Swanspool
- Burton and Broughton
- Finedon
- Rothwell and Mawsley
- Irthlingborough
- Higham Ferrers



- Rushden Pemberton West

Milton Keynes Council:

- Leader of the Council
- Cabinet member for Climate, Sustainability and Innovation
- Cabinet Member for Public Realm (includes Highways)

Ward councillors in:

- Olney ward councillors
- Newport Pagnell North & Hanslope ward councillors
- Newport Pagnell South ward councillors
- Broughton ward councillors

Bedford Borough Council

- Mayor of the Council
- Portfolio Holder for Environment
- Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Planning & Prosperity

Ward councillors in:

- Harrold
- Sharnbrook
- Bromham

Parish Councils:

- Old Parish Council
- Walgrave Parish Council
- Holcot Parish Council
- Lamport and Hanging Houghton Parish Council
- Scadwell Parish Council
- Brixworth Parish Council
- Hannington Parish Council
- Moulton Parish Council
- Overstone Parish Council
- Loddington Parish Council
- Mawsley Parish Council
- Great Cransley Parish Council
- Broughton Parish Council
- Pytchley Parish Council
- Orlingbury Parish Council
- Northampton Town Council
- Sywell Parish Council
- Mears Ashby Parish Council
- Wilby Parish Council
- Earls Barton Parish Council



- Grendon Parish Council
- Easton Maudit Parish Council
- Bozeat Parish Council
- Hardwick Parish Council
- Wellingbrough Town Council
- Great Doddington Parish Council
- Wollaston Parish Council
- Strixton Parish Council
- Ecton Parish Council
- Cogenhoe and Whiston
- Castle Ashby Parish Council
- Yardley Hastings Parish Council
- Cogenhoe and Whiston
- Castle Ashby Parish Council
- Yardley Hastings Parish Council
- Lavendon Parish Council
- Warrington Parish Council
- Olney Town Council
- Clifton Reynes and Newtin Blossomville Parish Council
- Cold Brayfield Parish Meeting
- Harrold CP

Seldom-heard Groups

- Wellingborough Black Consortium
- Wellingborough LGBT Group
- Age UK Northamptonshire
- Mind Northamptonshire

Community Groups

- Rectory Farm Residents' Association
- Brixworth Community Larder
- Brixworth History Society
- Brixworth Community Church
- Eastern District North Social Club
- St James Working Mens Club
- Lakeside Club
- Great Doddington Working Men's Club
- Moulton Club
- Brixworth Wombles
- Walgrave Women's Institute
- Walgrave Neighbourhood Watch
- Holcot and Walgrave Scouts



- Clean Walgrave
- Mears Ashby Cricket Club
- Hardy Plant Society Northamptonshire Group
- Olney Camera Club
- Olney Running Club
- Lavendon History Group
- St Michael's Church, Lavendon
- Baptist Church, Lavendon
- Olney Town Cricket Club
- Olney & District Historical Society
- The Olney Group
- Newport Young Farmers
- Olney & Clifton Fishing Association
- Emberton District and Riding Club
- Community Action MK
- Olney Allotment Holders Association
- Sherington Shooting Centre
- Olney Allotment Holders Association
- Nene Valley Aeromodellers

Environmental Groups

- Helping Hands – Wellingborough
- Friends of Northants Green Activism
- Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs and Northants
- Northamptonshire ACRE
- Wellingborough Climate Action Project
- Staunch
- Climate Action – West Northamptonshire
- Northampton Young Farmers Club
- Young Peoples Trust for the Environment
- Nene Valley Bat Group
- Wellingborough Eco Group
- Xtinction Rebellion - Milton Keynes

Technical Consultees

- West Northampton (WN) - Planning officers
- North Northamptonshire (NN) Kettering Planning Office Manager
- North Northampton Council (NNC) – Planning officers
- WN Highway Authority
- NNC Highway Authority
- WN Public rights of way officer
- NNC Public rights of way officer

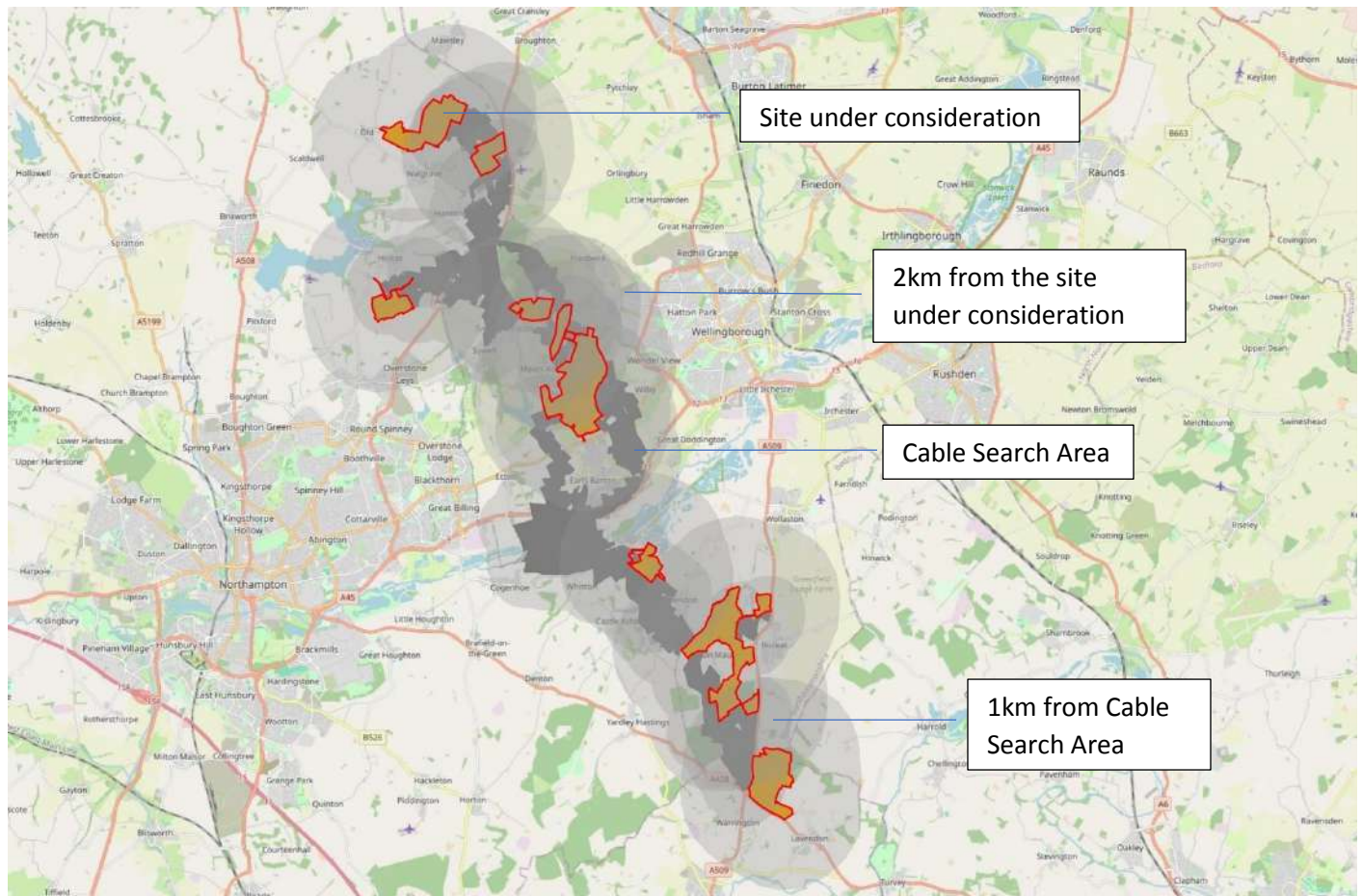


- WN Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFA)
- NNC LLFA
- WN Council Archaeologist
- NNC Council Archaeologist
- WN Council Heritage and Conservation Team
- NN Council Heritage and Conservation Team
- WN Council Ecologist
- NN Council Ecologist
- WN Council Environmental Protection Officer
- NN Council Environmental Protection Officer
- WN Council Arboricultural Officer
- NN Council Arboricultural Officer
- WN Council Landscape Officer
- NN Council landscape Officer
- Police (Crime Prevention Design Advisor)
- Historic England
- Natural England
- Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs and Northants
- Environment Agency
- RSPB
- National Highways
- Northamptonshire Local Nature Partnership (Nene River Trust, Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs and Northants, Northants Biodiversity Records Centre, University of Northampton, Natural England, Rockingham Forest Trust, Woodland Trust)



Appendix 2 – Primary Consultation Zone

2km from site boundary and 1km from Cable Search Area



Appendix 3 – List of stakeholders to publicise the Scheme consultation.

West Northamptonshire District Council (WNC)

Ward councillors in:

- Moulton ward
- Long Buckby
- Hackleton and Grange Park
- Riverside Park
- Billing and Rectory Farm
- Talavera
- Boothville and Parklands
- Kingsthorpe South
- Kingsthorpe North
- Dallington Spencer
- Duston West and St Crispin
- Bugbrooke
- Brixworth

North Northamptonshire District Council

Ward councillors in:

- Earls Barton
- Irchester
- Brickhill and Queensway
- Hatton Park
- Croyland and Swanspool
- Burton and Broughton
- Finedon
- Rothwell and Mawsley
- Irthlingborough
- Higham Ferrers
- Rushden Pemberton West

Milton Keynes Council:

Ward councillors in:

- Olney ward councillors
- Newport Pagnell North & Hanslope ward councillors
- Newport Pagnell South ward councillors
- Broughton ward councillors



Bedford Borough Council

Ward councillors in:

- Harrold
- Sharnbrook
- Bromham

Parish Councils:

- Old Parish Council
- Walgrave Parish Council
- Holcot Parish Council
- Lamport and Hanging Houghton Parish Council
- Scadwell Parish Council
- Brixworth Parish Council
- Hannington Parish Council
- Moulton Parish Council
- Overstone Parish Council
- Loddington Parish Council
- Mawsley Parish Council
- Great Cransley Parish Council
- Broughton Parish Council
- Pytchley Parish Council
- Orlingbury Parish Council
- Northampton Town Council
- Sywell Parish Council
- Mears Ashby Parish Council
- Wilby Parish Council
- Earls Barton Parish Council
- Grendon Parish Council
- Easton Maudit Parish Council
- Bozeat Parish Council
- Hardwick Parish Council
- Wellingbrough Town Council
- Great Doddington Parish Council
- Wollaston Parish Council
- Strixton Parish Council
- Ecton Parish Council
- Cogenhoe and Whiston
- Castle Ashby Parish Council
- Yardley Hastings Parish Council
- Cogenhoe and Whiston
- Castle Ashby Parish Council
- Yardley Hastings Parish Council
- Lavendon Parish Council



- Warrington Parish Council
- Olney Town Council
- Clifton Reynes and Newtin Blossomville Parish Council
- Cold Brayfield Parish Meeting
- Harrold CP

Seldom-heard Groups

- Wellingborough Black Consortium
- Wellingborough LGBT Group
- Age UK Northamptonshire
- Mind Northamptonshire

Community Groups

- Rectory Farm Residents' Association
- Brixworth Community Larder
- Brixworth History Society
- Brixworth Community Church
- Eastern District North Social Club
- St James Working Mens Club
- Lakeside Club
- Great Doddington Working Men's Club
- Moulton Club
- Brixworth Womble
- Walgrave Women's Institute
- Walgrave Neighbourhood Watch
- Holcot and Walgrave Scouts
- Clean Walgrave
- Mears Ashby Cricket Club
- Hardy Plant Society Northamptonshire Group
- Olney Camera Club
- Olney Running Club
- Lavendon History Group
- St Michael's Church, Lavendon
- Baptist Church, Lavendon
- Olney Town Cricket Club
- Olney & District Historical Society
- The Olney Group
- Newport Young Farmers
- Olney & Clifton Fishing Association
- Emberton District and Riding Club
- Community Action MK
- Olney Allotment Holders Association



- Sherington Shooting Centre
- Olney Allotment Holders Association
- Nene Valley Aeromodellers

Environmental Groups

- Helping Hands – Wellingborough
- Friends of Northants Green Activism
- Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs and Northants
- Northamptonshire ACRE
- Wellingborough Climate Action Project
- Staunch
- Climate Action – West Northamptonshire
- Northampton Young Farmers Club
- Young Peoples Trust for the Environment
- Nene Valley Bat Group
- Animals – Wellingborough Eco Group
- Xtinction Rebellion - Milton Keynes



Glossary of terms

Cable Route Search Area	The land being considered for the underground cabling route, subject to ongoing surveys and assessments.
Consultation Report	A document that details all the feedback gathered during the consultation phase of a project. It summarises key points raised, and outlines how the feedback influenced or was considered in the project's design and planning.
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)	A ministerial department of the Government of the United Kingdom responsible for ensuring the country has a secure, affordable, and sustainable energy supply.
Development Consent Order (DCO)	A type of planning permission required for large-scale infrastructure projects in the UK. The application for consent to undertake an NSIP is made to the Planning Inspectorate who will consider the application and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State, who will then decide on whether development consent should be granted for the proposed scheme.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	A process used to evaluate the potential environmental effects of a project, before it goes ahead. It identifies and assesses ways to reduce any significant impacts on the environment.
Environmental Statement (ES)	A comprehensive document that presents the findings of an Environmental Impact Assessment (see above).
Examining Authority	The Examining Authority is the Inspector, or the Panel of Inspectors appointed to conduct the Examination of the application.
Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017	UK regulations that set out requirements for assessing the environmental impact of major infrastructure projects.



National Grid	The electricity and gas transmission network that distributes energy across the UK.
Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)	Major infrastructure developments in England and Wales. They can include projects such as power plants, large renewable energy projects, new airports, airport extensions and major road projects.
Photovoltaic (PV)	A nonmechanical device that converts sunlight directly into electricity.
Planning Act 2008	A UK law that sets out the process for approving large infrastructure projects.
Planning Inspectorate (PINS)	The Planning Inspectorate is an independent government agency in the UK responsible for examining and making recommendations on significant planning and development projects. It also handles appeals for planning decisions made by local councils, ensuring that projects comply with planning laws and consider feedback from local communities and stakeholders.
Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)	A document prepared during the early stages of a project to assess potential environmental impacts. It provides details on preliminary findings and proposed mitigation measures.
Primary Consultation Zone	The immediate areas surrounding a project where consultation activities are focused. People, businesses and organisations within this area are most likely to experience direct impacts.
Regulation 12 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017	One of regulations set out in the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ("the EIA regulations") which required the developer/ applicant of an EIA application to produce a consultation statement setting out how they intend to publicise and consult on the preliminary environmental information.



Scoping Opinion	Written guidance from the Secretary of State on what information and level of detail that needs to be included in the Environmental Statement. The Planning Inspectorate prepares this guidance on behalf of the Secretary of State.
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA)	The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is an Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, regulating the development of land in England and Wales.



Response from LPAs on draft SoCC



Appendix 8—Responses from LPAs on the draft Statement of Community Consultation

Response from Milton Keynes City Council



Green Hill Solar Farm Limited
Lesley Giles

17th September 2024

Our Ref: 24/01879/CONINF

Dear M [REDACTED]

I write in relation to the consultation on the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) under s.47(2) Planning Act 2008.

The Council has reviewed the draft SoCC and considers that the planned engagement is comprehensive. While we have not received any comments from our parish councils on the draft SoCC, it is the Council's experience that the parish and town councils adjacent to the site, if given the opportunity, will be helpful in raising awareness around the statutory consultation on Green Hill Solar Farm.

The Council is committed to working with Green Hill Solar Farm Limited to increase engagement within Milton Keynes and will provide any further information on local groups and stakeholders as required.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Senior Planning Officer
Development Management
on behalf of the Head of Planning

Need to contact us?

planning.services@milton-keynes.gov.uk
01908 691691
Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ
www.milton-keynes.gov.uk



Response from North Northamptonshire Council



**North
Northamptonshire
Council**

Development Management Service
Wellingborough Office
Swanspool House, Doddington Road
Wellingborough
NN8 1BP
Tel: 0300 126 3000
www.northnorthants.gov.uk

Project Development Manager
Island Green Power
Unit 25.7 Coda Studios
189 Munster Road
London
SW6 6AW

FAO Lesley Giles

Ask for:
Telephone:
Email:

v.uk

Our Ref: NW/24/00448/EXT

Your Ref:

Date: 17 September 2024

Via email: info@greenhillsolar.co.uk

Dear Ms [REDACTED]

RE: Draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)
AT: Green Hill Solar Farm

I write further to your letter received on 12 August 2024 seeking North Northamptonshire Council's (NNC) comment on the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) (August 2024) for the Green Hill Solar Farm.

NNC has liaised with the inhouse communications team and the following Parish/Town Councils and Ward Councillors:

Ward Councillors

- Irchester
- Earls Barton
- Croyland and Swanspool
- Finedon
- Irthlingborough
- Higham Ferrers
- Rushden Pemberton
- Hatton Park
- Brickhill and Queensway
- Rothwell and Mawsley
- Burton and Broughton

Parish/Town Councils

- Sywell Parish Council
- Mears Ashby Parish Council
- Wilby Parish Council
- Earls Barton Parish Council
- Grendon Parish Council
- Easton Maudit Parish Meeting



- Bozeat Parish Council
- Irchester Parish Council
- Little Harrowden Parish Council
- Hardwick Parish Council
- Wellingbrough Town Council
- Great Doddington Parish Council
- Wollaston Parish Council
- Strixton Parish Council
- Ecton Parish Council
- Loddington Parish Council
- Mawsley Parish Council
- Great Cransley Parish Council
- Broughton Parish Council
- Pytchley Parish Council
- Orlingbury Parish Council
- Walgrave Parish Council

Any comments received have been incorporated into this consultation response.

Comments on Section 4: The Proposed Development

Paragraph 4.1 – This paragraph reads as though the proposed project will consist of a (singular area) solar farm and a battery storage facility.

- It is suggested that this paragraph addresses that the proposed solar farm is spread over several sites (A – G and BESS) within the districts and each area is only connected via the cable route.

Comments on Section 5: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Reference is made to a project website. Confusion has been raised over whether this is the PINS Green Hill Solar Farm page or the Green Hill Solar Farm website?

- Please be clear which website it will be? It should be the Green Hill Solar Farm project website.
- It would also be helpful if provisional submission dates are provided here for the submission of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application and the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) consultation.

Comments on Section 6: Engagement Approach and Early Engagement (Non-Statutory Consultation)

Paragraph 6.3 - With regard to the political stakeholder's co-design workshop, some attendees felt that that they were more of an information gathering exercise for the developer than being a truly cooperative workshop or consultation. They felt that 'the scheme itself was presented as though any concerns would be disregarded because the planning system would allow the proposal'. This has raised concern amongst stakeholders that further consultation responses will also have little or no influence on the proposals.

- It is suggested that a summary report of the workshops (the June 2024 newsletter does not provide a sufficient summary) is published on the Green Hill Solar Farm



project website including the feedback received as soon as possible. This was agreed in March 2024 at the workshops and has yet to be actioned.

Comments on Section 7: Statutory Consultation

Paragraph 7.1 – This states that the consultation will take place ‘for six weeks between November 2024 and January 2025’. However, for a large portion of this time, many people are preoccupied with preparation for and enjoying Christmas and New Year celebrations and events. This includes travelling to spend time with relatives and friends over the Christmas and New Year period. It is also at a time of year when the weather can restrict travel. It is considered that this timing could severely reduce the opportunity for people to participate in the consultation process.

- It is suggested that this consultation period is either extended or moved to an alternative 6-week period rather than taking place for just 6 weeks during the proposed busy time over the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Paragraph 7.2 – This paragraph states that visual representations will be presented, and feedback sought on them.

- It is suggested that comments from consultees within the Environmental Scoping regarding viewpoints is incorporated into the selected viewpoint list.

Paragraph 7.3 – This states that the Public Consultation Zone (PCZ) will be restricted up to 1-kilometre from the project site. Given the size, scale and extent of the scheme this seems unduly restrictive. It is considered that residents within the wider area will experience a substantial change in the character of the landscape in which they live, work and enjoy and so should also be included in the consultation.

- It is suggested that the consultation reaches out beyond this 1-kilometre zone. Not necessarily via letter but could be by other means (flyers, posters/notices on village hall notice boards etc). *Some Parish Councils suggest a 10-kilometre minimum PCZ area should be considered.

Figure 1 is too small and unclear.

- It is suggested that figure 1 should be clearer and include more detail (including the red line(s))

Within the list of what non-statutory groups would be consulted, Parish Meetings need to be included. This is because, for example, Easton Maudit, has a Parish Meeting and not a Parish Council.

- It is suggested that Parish Meetings are included in the non-statutory consultee list.
- Within the non-statutory consultee group, community groups, voluntary organisations, and hard-to-reach groups etc are included. However, there is no mention of the general public, wider than the PCZ. How is the general public intended on being reached? How are ‘hard-to-reach’ groups being identified?

Paragraph 7.4 – This sets out how you are proposing to consult. Given the scale of the development and number of communities impacted, 4 consultation events and 3 webinars are considered low.



- It is suggested that the number of consultation events and webinars are increased. Webinars should also include weekends and evenings to accommodate working families.
- Could webinars be recorded with a recording available on the Green Hill Solar Farm project website?
- Walgrave Parish Council would like Walgrave to be considered as a host for one of the in-person consultation events.
- It is suggested that the consultation event locations chosen are accessible and can be reached by both public and private transport.
- Is Livestorm a common platform for webinars? It is suggested that an alternative more common and accessible streaming platform is considered for the webinars.
- Can the format/approach to Questions & Answers during the webinars be clarified i.e. how many questions will be answered and will questions/answers be visible to all attendees? Will the Questions & Answers detail be available on the Green Hill Solar Farm website following the webinars?
- The requirement to register is likely to be a barrier to some attendees and it is unclear why this is needed. Please can this be reviewed? As it is a webinar there should be no limit to attendee numbers, surely providing a link to the webinar for those interested to just join on the day is sufficient.
- It is appreciated that the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) will be a substantial document, however it is considered that a printing cost of £0.35 per page is high and will be a specific barrier to the hard-to-reach groups identified in the draft Statement of Community Consultation. As copies will be available at some locations, then perhaps the maximum cost to anyone that is unable to access these locations should be postage only. Please could this be considered?
- Irchester Parish Council offer Wollaston Library as a host venue as a local information point.
- Some smaller parish councils have requested that a hard copy of all relevant documentation should be provided directly to them free of charge (prior to when a consultation begins – they suggest 10 days prior). Could this please be considered?

Paragraph 7.5 – This section is regarding promoting the consultation. It is considered that for a proposal of this scale, adequate coverage and notice needs to be provided.

- There does not appear to be any plan to promote to the wider public across NNC. On this basis, could additional press releases in a National Newspaper be considered? Perhaps one 14 days in advance and one 7 days in advance? Can this include the web address for the consultation?
- Could the posters also be in an electronic format so that other stakeholders (such as parish and town councils) can easily use them to inform social media platforms such as their Facebook pages, on their websites or within their newsletters etc?
- It states that stakeholder briefings would be considered on an ad hoc basis. Please could clarity around the criteria for such a meeting to be agreed be set out in the Statement of Community Consultation?
- It is suggested that stakeholder briefing sessions to key stakeholders is essential rather than optional.
- Posters and leaflets should include a QR code to the Green Hill Solar Farm website documents.



Paragraph 7.8 – This paragraph is regarding ‘Hard to Reach Groups’ and there is very general information about these groups and how they will be identified.

- It may be part of next steps but please ensure that identifying hard to reach groups will be in liaison with the local authorities.

Paragraph 7.9 – This paragraph discusses the proposed enquiry channels. Parish Councils have raised that the ‘substantive response issued within 10 working days of receipt’ has previously not been adhered to.

- It is suggested that a ‘next steps’ detail is provided in case a response is not received within the timescales set out in Table 4.

Comments on Section 8: Responding to Consultation

Paragraph 8.2 – This note how feedback will influence the designs of the solar farm. Some stakeholders have raised confusion over this sentence.

- Please could it be clear here, that it is the feedback on the design and potential impacts of the solar farm that will be taken into consideration and that it is not just accepting solar panel design comments.

It states in this paragraph that, ‘all responses submitted during the statutory consultation will be responded to within the Consultation Report’. It is unclear how this will be enforced?

- It is suggested that an appendix is included listing those that contributed to the Consultation Report so that contributors can easily see that their response has been acknowledged and included.

North Northamptonshire Council consider that this draft Statement of Community Consultation is compliant with Section 47(1) of the Planning Act 2008 and Regulation 12 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

This letter forms a consultation response from North Northamptonshire Council on Island Green Power’s proposals of how Island Green Power intend on consulting with the local community for Green Hill Solar Farm Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) during the Pre-application stage. NNC would be grateful if the comments contained within it can be considered as part of your plan for consultation.

Yours sincerely

Executive Director of Place and Economy



Response from West Northamptonshire Council

Green Hill Solar Farm Statement of Community Consultation WNC Comments

September 2024

Thank you for the opportunity to comment of the Green Hill Solar Farm draft Statement of Community Consultation August 2024. These are officer comments prepared with reference to (former) Daventry District Council SCI (adopted May 2017) and (former) South Northamptonshire DC SCI (adopted 2020). [Statement of Community Involvement \(SCI\) | West Northamptonshire Council \(westnorthants.gov.uk\)](#)

The statement sets out clearly how the applicant intends to engage with local communities ahead of the planning submission of the DCO.

Section 2 – The Planning Process

It would be helpful if Section 2 was expanded to make it more user friendly, to explain in layman terms the planning process for a DCO and opportunities for engagement and statutory consultation and how it fits in with the anticipated broad timetable for submission of the application. To assist with this, it should also include a glossary of abbreviations (NSIP, DCO)

Section 3 & 4

No comments

Section 5 - EIA

Can this paragraph be expanded to explain that this information will also be available and consulted on at the same time as the DCO.

Section 6 Non-Statutory consultation

This provides a clear statement of the early engagement undertaken to date, detailing the approach, details of the workshops and methods used to raise awareness of the project. It should be highlighted how the outcome of the early engagement was used to shape and inform the proposal and where that information can be found? Is there any reflection of what methods were successful and what could be improved?

Section 7 Statutory Consultation

This section clearly sets out the intended consultation plan including when consultation will take place, what will be consulted on, who will be consulted and how this will be undertaken. It is recommended that a hard copy of the information is placed at The Forum in Towcester hub this is the planning office for WNC as well as one of the main WNC libraries and in The Guildhall, One Stop shop.



Para 7.8 Hard to reach - Reference to hard to reach should be replaced with 'Seldom Heard' and further consideration on who and how to engage with those groups given. These could include (but not exhaustive) those on low incomes, English as a second language, and those groups with protected characteristics. WNC has a number of forums that could be used to make aware of the proposal. It is likely that expanding the methods of engagement and consultation would increase the reach.

Consultation material

- Exhibition material can be held at The Forum at Towcester and at the One Stop, The Guildhall
- Use social media as a tool to advertise the proposals and highlight how to make comments on the proposal

Section 8 – Responding to Consultation

Para 8.2, indicates how the consultation feedback will be used, this should be expanded to indicate how this will happen? Make clear how comments made as part of engagement / consultation inform the proposal and where this can be found. Will any respondents be notified of the progress of application? E.g. submission of application etc? Will this information be passed on to WNC?

Other comments

As the proposal is within the locality of Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (UNVGP SPA), the statement should include any reference to any consultation requirements methods set out in the Habitats Regulation.

Please note in addition to the above attached is an annotated draft of the statement which has identified some typos and suggested inclusions.