

# **Green Hill Solar Farm**

## **EN010170**

### **Consultation Report**

### **Revision A**

Prepared by: Copper Consultancy

Date: November 2025

Document Reference: EX1/GH5.1\_A

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)



## Contents

1	Executive summary .....	4
2	Introduction .....	12
3	Legislation, guidance and advice .....	14
4	Overview of non-statutory consultation (January–September 2024) .....	16
5	Consultation under EIA regulations .....	26
6	Developing the SoCC .....	29
7	Statutory consultation under Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008 .....	57
8	Statutory consultation under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 .....	66
9	Section 47 statutory consultation: Responses received and issues raised .....	71
10	Key themes and design changes .....	84
11	Targeted consultation on Order Limits .....	95
12	Ongoing engagement .....	111
13	Conclusion .....	113
14	List of appendices .....	114



## Issue sheet

Report prepared for: Green Hill Solar Farm Limited

Deadline 1

### Prepared by

Name: Nilufa Jahan

Job title: Account Director

### Approved by

Name: Tom Byrne

Job title: Associate Director

	Date	Prepared by	Approved by
Original	23/05/2025	NJ	LG
A	05/11/2025	NJ	LG

Revisions			
Section	Revision	Description	Reason for Revision
All	Reference numbers	Changes to the references to reflect references provided in the Examination Library	As required for submission at Deadline 1.
6	Allocation of table number 6.1.	Allocated table number to table on page 30.	As recommended through Section 51 advice from the Planning Inspectorate.



# 1 Executive summary

## 1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Green Hill Solar Farm ('the Scheme') is a proposed solar farm with energy storage that will generate and store renewable electricity for export to the National Grid.
- 1.1.2 The Scheme is being developed by Green Hill Solar Farm Limited ('the Applicant'). The Applicant is part of Island Green Power Limited (IGP), which is a leading international developer of renewable energy projects, established in 2013.
- 1.1.3 The Scheme consists of an electricity generating station with a capacity of over 50 megawatts (MW) consisting of ground-mounted solar arrays and associated development, the latter comprising: energy storage, grid connection infrastructure and any other infrastructure, as well as works integral to the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the Scheme. The point of connection (PoC) will be at the Grendon 400kV National Grid substation ('Grendon Substation').
- 1.1.4 As the proposed generating capacity for the Scheme is anticipated to be 500 MW, it exceeds the 50-MW threshold to be classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). It therefore requires a Development Consent Order (DCO) from the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero ('the SoS').
- 1.1.5 The Scheme is described in full in Chapter 4: Scheme Description of the Environmental Statement (ES) supporting the DCO application ('the Application').
- 1.1.6 This consultation report ('the Report') has been prepared by the Applicant to support the Application and should be read alongside all other documents submitted by the Applicant.
- 1.1.7 The Applicant has endeavoured to undertake an open and meaningful pre-application consultation process with a wide range of consultees. This Report seeks to evidence the consultation and engagement that have taken place throughout the pre-application and demonstrate how these have complied with the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 ('the Act') and have influenced the final design of the Scheme.

## 1.2 Pre-application consultation overview

- 1.2.1 This Report accompanies the Application by the Applicant to the SoS under Section 37(7)(c) of the Act (s37(7)(c)). The DCO would grant powers to construct, operate, maintain and decommission the Scheme.
- 1.2.2 This Report will demonstrate how the Applicant has complied with the requirements outlined in Sections (ss) 42, 44, 47, 48 and 49 of the Act and associated legislation and guidance. This report also sets out the extensive non-statutory community involvement and consultation undertaken for the Scheme.
- 1.2.3 In accordance with ss42, 47 and 48 of the Act, the Applicant undertook pre-application consultation on the Scheme ahead of submission of the Application to the SoS with the following consultees:



- prescribed bodies (in accordance with s42(1)(a));
- those with an interest in the land (in accordance with s42(1)(d) and as set out in s44) (also referred to as s44 consultees).
- community and other organisations in the 'vicinity' of the Scheme who may be affected both directly and indirectly by the Scheme (in accordance with s47); and
- wider communities and organisations (local, national and regional) in order to seek their comments on the Scheme proposals (in accordance with s48).

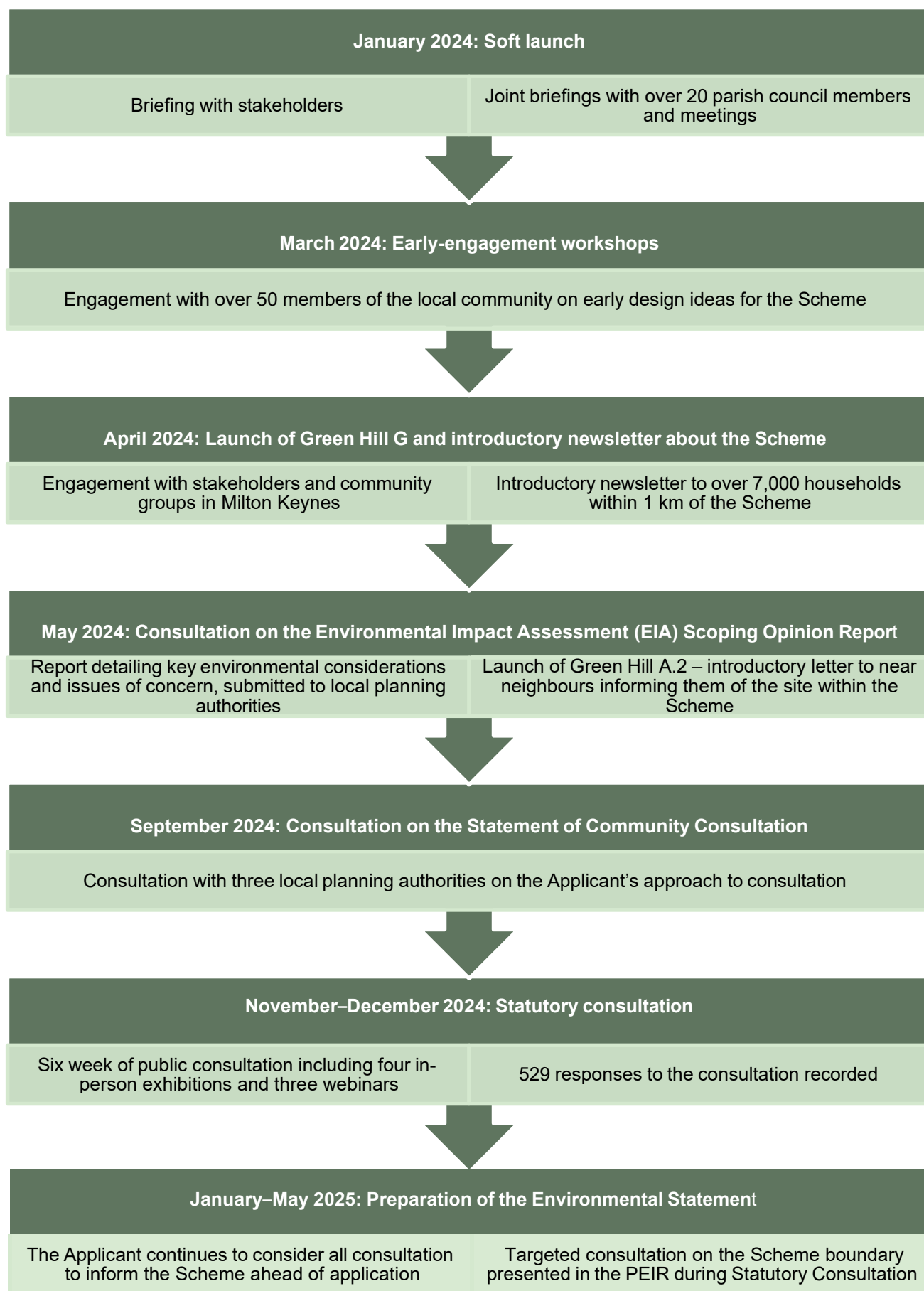
1.2.4 The Applicant also consulted with local authorities in accordance with s42(1)(b) and as set out in s43(1) of the Act. In addition to formally consulting with relevant local authorities under s42 of the Act, the Applicant has been carrying out ongoing regular meetings with West Northamptonshire Council, North Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council since December 2023.

1.2.5 The Applicant undertook three stages of community consultation to enable the development of the Scheme proposals in accordance with feedback received during the pre-application consultation process:

- a non-statutory consultation consisting of a soft launch of the project in January 2024, early introductory meetings with stakeholders and five early-engagement workshops between March and May 2024;
- a statutory public consultation on more detailed proposals, including the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), held for six weeks between 7 November and 19 December 2024; and
- a supplementary consultation, referred to as a 'targeted consultation', for 28 days between 13 March and 10 April 2025.

1.2.6 An overview of the timeline of consultation is provided below:







## 1.3 Non-statutory consultation overview

- 1.3.1 The non-statutory consultation phase of the Scheme consisted of introductory meetings with stakeholders, early-engagement workshops to present the initial design ideas of the Scheme and gather local insights, and meetings with local community groups.
- 1.3.2 The non-statutory consultation period was between January and October 2024.
- 1.3.3 In January 2024, the Applicant met with local stakeholders within North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire to inform stakeholders of the intention to bring forward the Scheme and to present early design ideas and the programme for consultation.
- 1.3.4 In March 2024, the Applicant met with stakeholders from West Northamptonshire Council, North Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council, community groups and technical stakeholders to present initial ideas for the Scheme.
- 1.3.5 This was conducted through consultation workshops, as part of the non-statutory consultation. The Applicant held five consultation workshops (formerly known as 'co:design workshops') with local stakeholders, by invitation, between March and May 2024. 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.
- 1.3.6 The Applicant published the presentation and the maps, introduced during the early-engagement workshops, on [www.greenhillsolar.co.uk](http://www.greenhillsolar.co.uk) ('Scheme website').
- 1.3.7 A summary of the collaboration workshops can be found in the Green Hill Solar Farm early-engagement workshop Summary Report, available on the Scheme website.
- 1.3.8 This report was shared with stakeholders via email and sent to members of the Scheme mailing list via an e-newsletter on 30 September 2024. Following the final workshop, the Applicant presented to members of North Northamptonshire Council, at the request of the Executive Director for Place and Economy. The outcomes of the workshops were used to shape the proposals for the Scheme for the public consultation.

## 1.4 Publication of the Applicant's Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

### Informal consultation on the SoCC

- 1.4.1 In February 2024, the Applicant issued an informal notice to North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council. This notice outlined the Applicant's intended approach to consultation and provided initial details regarding the draft SoCC. This marked the beginning of the informal consultation on the SoCC.
- 1.4.2 As Green Hill G was not included in the Scheme until May 2024, Milton Keynes City Council was not included in the initial informal consultation. However, the Milton Keynes City Council planning officers were subsequently briefed on the approach to the statutory consultation on 29 August 2024.

### Consultation on the SoCC



- 1.4.3 In accordance with s47 of the Act, the draft SoCC was sent to North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council on 12 August 2024, with a deadline for responses set for 20 September 2024.
- 1.4.4 Following consultation, the Applicant reviewed and incorporated the feedback received where possible. A formal response was issued to the same authorities on 5 November 2024, and the SoCC was published on 7 November 2024.
- 1.4.5 The Applicant has had regard to all feedback received from North Northamptonshire Council, including the responses of the parishes within its jurisdiction and of West Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council regarding the Applicant's approach to statutory consultation (Section 6.2.14).

### **Statutory public consultation**

- 1.4.6 In accordance with the Act, the pre-application statutory consultation aimed to ensure that the community, landowners, stakeholders and technical consultees had the opportunity to understand and influence the Applicant's proposals.
- 1.4.7 The statutory consultation was held for six weeks from Thursday 7 November to Thursday 19 December 2024.
- 1.4.8 The consultation sought feedback on all aspects of the Applicant's plans for the Scheme, including:
  - 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 in June 2024. As the site was included in the Scheme after the non-statutory consultation, the Applicant provided the opportunity for residents to share their feedback on its inclusion, and the inclusion of Green Hill A.2 was announced on the Scheme website via a 'News' update, in a meeting with planning officers from host local planning authorities and in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report;
  - the Cable Route Search Area;
  - the PEIR – containing preliminary assessments of the Scheme's likely 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; and
  - possible community benefits, including funding for local initiatives.
- 1.4.9 The consultation also sought general feedback and to identify other local issues or sensitivities that the Applicant should be aware of.
- 1.4.10 Following feedback on the draft SoCC, the Applicant extended the Primary Consultation Zone (PCZ) for the statutory consultation within the areas of the host local planning authorities (LPA) of North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council, and the neighbouring authority of Bedford Borough Council.





- 1.4.11 The Applicant undertook in-person exhibitions and virtual webinars during the statutory consultation. The Applicant welcomed 308 attendees across four exhibition events and 34 attendees across three webinars.
- 1.4.12 The Applicant received 529 responses to the statutory consultation.
- 1.4.13 The thematic summaries of the feedback responses to the statutory consultation from s42 Prescribed Consultees and s47 Community Consultation are available in Section 10 and Appendix 8 (GH5.8 CR Appendix\_Section 42 Applicant Responses - **[APP-031]**) and Appendix 10 (GH5.10 CR Appendix\_Section 47 and 48 Applicant Responses - **[APP-033]**).

### **Targeted consultation (March–April 2025)**

- 1.4.14 Following the statutory consultation, the Applicant launched a targeted consultation to gather feedback on specific minor changes to the Scheme's proposed Order Limits, while providing an update on the Scheme to the PCZ.
- 1.4.15 The changes to the Scheme's boundary, presented in the PEIR were a result of the ongoing evolution of the traffic and construction plans informed by engineering reviews. The changes were transport-related, to ensure sufficient land was available to facilitate vehicle access to the sites and the Cable Route Search Area.
- 1.4.16 The targeted consultation ran for 28 days from 13 March until 10 April 2025. An extension of 7 days was provided for feedback received via freepost to account for delays in the post. Therefore, feedback received via freepost was accepted until 17 April 2025.
- 1.4.17 The Applicant received 74 responses to the targeted consultation.
- 1.4.18 A comprehensive breakdown of the consultation approach, methodology and materials presented during the targeted consultation is available in Section 11.
- 1.4.19 The thematic summary of the key themes emerging from the feedback responses to the targeted consultation from s42 Prescribed Consultees and s47 Community Consultation are available in Section 11.6.

## **1.5 Feedback received from statutory consultation**

- 1.5.1 The responses received during the pre-application consultation process raised a number of issues in relation to the Scheme.
- 1.5.2 A summary of the key issues raised through the statutory consultation and targeted consultation are described in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1: Overview of the Applicant's response to feedback received.**

Key issue	Summary of the Applicant's response
The use of high-grade agricultural land for the development of the Scheme.	The Applicant's site selection process, including a search for sites, has been undertaken and presented as part of Appendix 5.1 (Site Selection Assessment) of the Environmental Statement. Chapter 5 Alternatives and Design Evolution



Respondents requested the Applicant to consider the use of the rooftops of warehouses and brownfield sites as alternative sites.	<b>[APP-042]</b> of the Environmental Statement explains in further detail the alternatives that were considered and the design evolution process for the Scheme.
The use of single-track roads to access sites through narrow village roads and residential streets.	Chapter 13 Transport and Access <b>[APP-050]</b> of the Environmental Statement notes that Construction vehicle trips will be coordinated to avoid movement during peak hours. This will be secured through the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan <b>[APP-553]</b> .
The potential impact on the landscape of the countryside.  Significant level of feedback requested screening, and additional planting of trees and shrubs, alongside setback and buffers.	<p>The Applicant notes that the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) considers both the landscape and visual effects of the Scheme independently to ensure both the impacts and effects on the fabric of the landscape are taken into account as well as the views and visibility.</p> <p>The mitigation associated with the Scheme is included in the Landscape and Ecology Mitigation &amp; Enhancement Measures forming part of the LVIA with details shown on Figures 8.16.1 to 8.16.10 and Section 8.8 of Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact <b>[APP-045]</b> of the Environmental Statement.</p> <p>The landscape measures also include the preparation of an Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (OLEMP) <b>[APP-548]</b> which prescribes how the landscape and ecology mitigation measures identified and proposed would be implemented and managed to ensure the effectiveness and certainty in achieving the objectives.</p>
Concerns were raised about the suitability of the Scheme in flood-prone areas. Respondents cited the flooding in October 2024 as reasons for concern.  There were concerns that the Scheme would contaminate local watercourses.	<p>Chapter 10: Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage <b>[APP-047]</b> of the Environmental Statement sets out the likely significant environmental effects of the Scheme on the local hydrology during its construction, operation and decommissioning phases.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy <b>[APP-097]</b> has been produced for each of the solar Sites which demonstrate that flood risk will not be exacerbated as a result of their installation and is likely to provide betterment over the existing surface water regime due to the reintroduction of natural land cover beneath the panels.</p>



<p>Refinement of the Cable Search Area.</p> <p>Respondents requested more information on the proposed cable corridor.</p>	<p>The Applicant notes the Scheme Description <b>[APP-041]</b> within Chapter 4 of the Environmental Statement provides information on the underground cabling and how these will be laid/removed to reduce impacts.</p>
<p>There were significant concerns regarding the impact the Scheme could have on local ecology and biodiversity.</p>	<p>The Applicant notes in Chapter 9: Ecology and Biodiversity <b>[APP-046]</b> of the Environmental Statement considers the potential impacts and mitigation regarding the Scheme on wildlife and biodiversity.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that Appendix 9.13 to Chapter 9: Ecology and Biodiversity <b>[APP-046]</b> of the Environmental Statement provides the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment <b>[APP-096]</b> for the Scheme.</p> <p>The assessment shows how the Scheme will likely result in over 10% gain in all Unit types (70.68% in Habitat Units; 18.55% in hedgerow Units; and 16.16% in Watercourse Units).</p>
<p>The feedback raised concerns about the impact of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) on existing levels of traffic, with significant focus on the traffic on the A4500.</p>	<p>Mitigation measures associated with transport and access are summarised in the Transport Assessment (Appendix 13.1 Transport and Access Assessment Tables <b>[APP-150]</b>) and the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) <b>[APP-553]</b> of the Environmental Statement.</p> <p>The Construction Traffic Management Plan also considers road users safety and how to reduce traffic impacts from the development. The Construction Traffic Management Plan also considers road users' safety and how to reduce traffic impacts from the development.</p> <p>Furthermore, Chapter 17: Socio-Economics, Tourism and Recreation <b>[APP-054]</b> specifically assessed the potential impacts of the Scheme, including HGV traffic, on the recreational use of highway and public rights of way for pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrian users.</p>

1.5.3 The Applicant continues to welcome feedback throughout the Examination process and explore opportunities to refine the Scheme.



## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Purpose of this document

- 2.1.1 This consultation report ('the Report') has been prepared on behalf of Green Hill Solar Limited (the 'Applicant') under the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' (now the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for NSIPs 1 guidance dated 30 April 2024.
- 2.1.2 The Applicant proposes to apply to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (the 'SoS'), under s37 of the Planning Act 2008 ('the Act') for a Development Consent Order ('DCO') for the Green Hill Solar Farm ('the Scheme'). The Application is expected to be submitted in Q2 2025.
- 2.1.3 This Report details how the Applicant has complied with the provisions of the Act and other relevant legislation and guidance.

### 2.2 Introduction to the Scheme

- 2.2.1 The Scheme comprises an electricity-generating station with a capacity of 500 MW consisting of ground-mounted solar arrays and associated development, the latter comprising: energy storage, grid connection infrastructure and any other infrastructure, as well as works integral to the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the Scheme. The point of connection (PoC) will be at the Grendon 400kV National Grid Substation ('Grendon Substation').
- 2.2.2 The Scheme comprises two main elements:
  - Nine sites (referred to collectively as the Sites where the Solar Arrays, Battery Energy Storage and other associated development (other than those parts of the grid connection cable to be located in the Cable Route Corridor) would be located; and
  - The Cable Route Corridor within which the underground cables connecting the Sites and PoC will be located. The Cable Route Corridor was consulted on and refined from the 'Cable Route Search Area' within the PEIR Scheme Boundary.
- 2.2.3 The Scheme will cover a combined area of approximately 1,441.4 hectares and will consist of eight solar array sites and one dedicated battery energy storage system (BESS) site, located between Northampton, Wellingborough and Milton Keynes. The nine sites (in total) are referred to as Green Hill A, A.2, B, C, D, E, F, G and Green Hill BESS.
- 2.2.4 The sites are characterised by agricultural fields, hedgerows, scattered trees and occasional areas of woodland.
- 2.2.5 The sites are located across several parishes:
  - Green Hill A and A.2 are located in the parishes of Old and Walgrave in West Northamptonshire. Green Hill A is located approximately 300 m east of Old and 600 m north of Walgrave, while Green Hill A.2 is located approximately 900 m east of Walgrave.



- Green Hill B is located within the parish of Holcot in West Northamptonshire, approximately 850 m south of Holcot and 1.2 km north-east of Moulton.
- Green Hill C is located within the parishes of Sywell and Mears Ashby in North Northamptonshire, approximately 1.5 km north-east of Sywell.
- Green Hill D is located within the parish of Mears Ashby in North Northamptonshire, immediately to the north of the village of Mears Ashby.
- Green Hill E is located within the parish of Mears Ashby and Wilby in North Northamptonshire, approximately 500 m north of Earls Barton.
- Green Hill F is located within the parishes of Easton Maudit and Bozeat in North Northamptonshire, close to the village of Easton Maudit and approximately 300 m west of the village of Bozeat.
- Green Hill G is located within the parishes of Warrington and Lavendon in Milton Keynes, approximately 600 m north-west of Lavendon.
- Green Hill BESS is located within the parish of Grendon, North Northamptonshire, approximately 600 m north-west of Grendon. Green Hill BESS is adjacent to the existing Grendon Substation.

2.2.6 The Applicant committed to carrying out meaningful, statutory pre-application consultation and engagement with the local community in the vicinity of the Application, as well as with landowners, businesses, parish councils, elected representatives and wider stakeholders, where appropriate.

2.2.7 The pre-application consultation had three distinct phases:

- a non-statutory phase-one consultation consisting of initial engagement meetings and consultation workshops held between January and October 2024;
- a statutory public consultation on more detailed proposals, including the PEIR, held for six weeks between 7 November and 19 December 2024; and
- a supplementary consultation, referred to as a targeted consultation, for 28 days between 13 March and 10 April 2025.

2.2.8 The statutory consultation comprises consultation of the Scheme under ss42–44 and ss46–48 of the Act.

2.2.9 Following refinements to the Scheme's boundary presented in the PEIR, the Applicant conducted a targeted consultation to consult on the changes to the Scheme's boundary. The consultation was held for 28 days between 13 March and 10 April 2025.

2.2.10 An overview of the non-statutory consultation is described in Section 4.

2.2.11 Responses to the statutory public consultation and how the Applicant has had regard to the feedback are described in Section 10 and provided in greater detail in Appendix 8 (GH5.8 CR Appendix\_Section 42 Applicant Responses – **[APP-031]**) and Appendix 10 (GH5.10 CR Appendix\_Section 47 and 48 Applicant Responses – **[APP-033]**).





## 3 Legislation, guidance and advice

### 3.1 Consultation report

3.1.1 This Report is submitted with the Application in accordance with s37(3)(c) of the Act. Relevant responses are defined in s49(3) of the Act as responses received to the consultation under ss42, 47 and 48 of the Act by the deadline published. However, the Applicant has also taken in to account late responses.

3.1.2 Pre-application consultation under s42 of the Act has taken place with:

- prescribed bodies (statutory consultees), being those listed in Schedule 1 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (as amended) (the 'APFP Regulations') and those specified by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) in the list of consultation bodies notified by the Planning Inspectorate under Regulation 11 of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations;
- non-statutory bodies treated as prescribed by the Applicant, including local charities, initiatives and member organisations;
- local authorities, in accordance with s42(1)(b) and s43(1); and
- persons with an interest in land or persons who would or might be eligible to make a relevant claim, in accordance with s42(1)(d) of the Act..

3.1.3 Pre-application consultation under s47 has taken place with:

- the local community (i.e. those living within the vicinity of the Scheme). A core consultation zone was identified and defined, although any interested members of the community were welcome to take part;
- local elected representatives, including parish councillors and members of West Northamptonshire Council and North Northamptonshire Council, and select members of Bedford Borough Council; and
- Members of Parliament (MPs) for Wellingborough, Daventry, Northampton South and South Northamptonshire.

3.1.4 Pre-application consultation has also taken place in accordance with s48 of the Act through publicity of the Scheme.

#### **Relevant legislation and guidance**

3.1.5 The following legislation has been complied with or considered when undertaking the pre-application consultation and when compiling the Report:

- Planning Act 2008 (as amended);
- Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009;



- Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended);
- Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on the Consultation Report (updated 24 March 2025);
- Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: Advice on EIA Notification and Consultation; and
- Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

3.1.6 A table setting out how the Applicant has complied with the relevant legislation and guidance is presented in Appendix 2 (GH5.2 CR\_Appendix\_Statement of Compliance – **[APP-024]**) of this Report .



## 4 Overview of non-statutory consultation (January–September 2024)

### 4.1 Publication of Scheme information

- 4.1.1 Information regarding the Scheme was published in the public domain in January 2024. This involved the launch of a dedicated website ([www.greenhillsolar.co.uk](http://www.greenhillsolar.co.uk)).
- 4.1.2 The website publicised the Applicant's free-to-use communications channels for community enquiries regarding the Scheme. The Scheme's communication channels included a freephone number (0800 012 9882) and an email address ([info@greenhillsolar.co.uk](mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk)).

### 4.2 Introduction of the Scheme to the consultees

- 4.2.1 The Applicant contacted officers from local authorities based on the administrative boundaries for the proposed Scheme. The Applicant contacted West Northamptonshire Council and North Northamptonshire Council in December 2023, and Milton Keynes City Council in April 2024.
- 4.2.2 The primary aim of the Applicant's initial engagement was to introduce local authorities to the Scheme and arrange introductory meetings to present the Scheme in greater detail, including the early environmental assessments and site selection work carried out up to that point in time. During this initial stage of engagement, the Applicant collaborated with stakeholders to help understand key issues and potential constraints in the local area.
- 4.2.3 In January 2024, as part of the initial engagement, the Applicant issued letters introducing the Scheme (Appendix 3.1 in GH5.3\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials – **[APP-025 – 026]**) to:
  - the MP for Wellingborough;
  - the MP for Daventry;
  - West Northamptonshire Council;
  - North Northamptonshire Council;
  - parish councils within West Northamptonshire Council and North Northamptonshire Council;
  - Milton Keynes City Council (in April 2024, following the inclusion of Site G);
  - the MP for Milton Keynes Central (in July 2024, following General Election boundary changes);
  - the MP for Milton Keynes North (in July 2024, following General Election boundary changes); and
  - residential and commercial properties considered 'neighbours' to the site (within 50 m of the site boundary).

The full list of stakeholders the Applicant contacted in this period is provided in Appendix 3.2 (GH5.3\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials – **[APP-025- 026]**).



4.2.4 The Applicant also met with planning officers from North Northamptonshire Council and from West Northamptonshire Council. At this point, the Scheme did not include land that warranted engagement with Milton Keynes City Council's Planning Officers. Table 4.1 details the meetings.

**Table 4.1: Details of stakeholder meetings.**

Date	Stakeholder (name/organisation)
13 December 2023	North Northamptonshire: Troy Healy, Principal Planning Manager, Growth & Regeneration
20 December 2023	West Northamptonshire: Shaun Robson, Head of Service, Development Management
29 August 2024	Milton Keynes City Council: planning officers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Elizabeth Verdegem, Team Leader – Development Manager</li><li>• Katherine Parsons, Ecology</li><li>• James Walsh, ProW</li><li>• Elizabeth Woodhouse, Senior Landscape Officer</li><li>• Rosie Armstrong, ProW</li><li>• Rachel Kilgallon, Flood Risk (LLFA)</li><li>• Nick Crank, Archaeology</li><li>• Simon Peart, Built Heritage</li><li>• Phil Cave, Highway</li><li>• Lucy Baxter, Development Planning Officer</li><li>• Sue Brown, Landscape Officer</li><li>• Luke Gledhill, Minerals.</li></ul>

4.2.5 In January 2024, the Applicant met with local councillors and conducted three joint briefings with local parish/town councils. Table 4.2 lists those whom the Applicant presented to.

**Table 4.2: Details of presentees.**

Date	Stakeholder (name/organisation)
17 January 2024	North Northamptonshire Council councillors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cllr Matthew Binley</li><li>• Cllr David Brackenbury</li></ul>



	<p>North Northamptonshire Council planning officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jasbir Sandhu, Interim Head of Development Management and Enforcement Lead</li><li>• Simon Richardson, Interim Planning Policy Lead Manager</li><li>• Debbie Kirk, Senior Development Management Officer</li><li>• Shivang Patel, Graduate Engineer, Kettering and Corby Areas for Assistant Director for Highways and Waste</li><li>• Troy Healy, Principal Planning Manager, Growth and Regeneration.</li></ul>
23 January 2024	<p>North Northamptonshire Parishes Councils:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wellingborough Town Council</li><li>• Grendon Parish Council</li><li>• Sywell Parish Council</li><li>• Hardwick Parish Council</li><li>• Easton Maudit Parish Council</li><li>• Bozeat Parish Council.</li></ul>
24 January 2024	<p>North Northamptonshire Council ward members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cllr Bert Jackson (Higham Ferrers Ward)</li><li>• Cllr Tim Allebone (Croyland and Swanspool).</li></ul>
24 January 2024	<p>West Northamptonshire Parish Councils</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walgrave Parish Council</li><li>• Holcot Parish Council</li><li>• Cogenhoe and Whiston Parish Council.</li></ul>

### 4.3 Applicant approach to ‘near neighbours’

- 4.3.1 After the Applicant’s communications channels were open (see Section 4.1) to all and any interested parties, and efforts were made to publicise the Scheme, the Applicant made additional efforts to contact owners and occupiers of residential properties closest to the Scheme. This includes updates to the website, phone lines and emails. The effort was also made to reach out to any interested parties after engagement with local district councils.
- 4.3.2 The Applicant identified 46 residential and commercial properties as being ‘near neighbours’ to the Scheme. These properties were considered near neighbours because they were within 50 m of the Scheme boundary, with an absence of existing built infrastructure between the residential property and the Scheme boundary.
- 4.3.3 The Applicant issued letters to these 46 residential properties in January 2024 (Appendix 3.3 in GH5.3\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials-[**APP-025- 026**]) (and letters were issued to newly identified addresses in May 2024 following the inclusion of Green Hill G) to introduce them to the Scheme, publicise consultation opportunities and invite them





to read about the Scheme. The letters also provided the contact details for the Community Relations Team if they had any questions or if they would like to meet with the Applicant.

- 4.3.4 As part of the initial project development phase, the Applicant identified and engaged with landowners close to the Scheme boundary.
- 4.3.5 Landowners of properties neighbouring the Scheme and within the Cable Route Search Area were identified and sent a letter at the start of the non-statutory consultation informing them of the proposals for the Scheme and inviting them to comment on them. The letters were issued 22 January 2024.
- 4.3.6 Following the inclusion of Green Hill A.2, the Applicant issued nine introductory letters on 12 July 2024 to residential and commercial properties within 50 m of the boundary of Green Hill A.2.

## 4.4 Early-engagement workshops (March–May 2024)

- 4.4.1 This phase of the consultation comprised early-engagement workshops to present the early design ideas of the Scheme and gather local insights.
- 4.4.2 In March 2024, the Applicant met with stakeholders from West Northamptonshire Council, North Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council, community groups and technical stakeholders to present initial ideas for the Scheme (Appendix 3.4 in GH5.3\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials - **[APP-025- 026]**).
- 4.4.3 This was conducted through consultation workshops, as part of the non-statutory consultation. The Applicant held five consultation workshops (formerly known as ‘co:design workshops’) with local stakeholders, by invitation, between March and May 2024. 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.
- 4.4.4 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 unitary authority councillors on Monday 4 and Tuesday 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 authority planning officers and other statutory and environmental consultees were invited to a workshop on Friday 15 March 2024 at Mears Ashby Village Hall; and
  - 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.
- 4.4.5 The fifth workshop was held in May 2024 following the inclusion of additional land in Milton Keynes, namely Green Hill G. The session was conducted in the same format as the workshops in March.



4.4.6 The full list of stakeholders invited to the early-engagement workshops can be found in Appendix 3.2 (GH5.3\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials - **[APP-025- 026]**).

4.4.7 The Applicant published the presentation and the maps from the early-engagement workshops on the Scheme website:

- Access and Location Plan (March 2024) (Appendix 3.6)
- Environmental Constraints Plan - Northern Sites (March 2024) (Appendix 3.7)
- Environmental Constraints Plan - Southern Sites (March 2024) (Appendix 3.8)
- Site Plan A Environmental Masterplan (1 of 9) (March 2024) (Appendix 3.9)
- Site Plan B Environmental Masterplan (2 of 9) (March 2024) (Appendix 3.10)
- Site Plan C & D Environmental Masterplan (3 of 9) (March 2024) (Appendix 3.11)
- Site Plan E (1) Environmental Masterplan (4 of 9) (March 2024) (Appendix 3.12)
- Site Plan E (2) Environmental Masterplan (5 of 9) (March 2024) (Appendix 3.13)
- Site Plan BESS Site Environmental Masterplan (6 of 9) (March 2024) (Appendix 3.14)
- Site Plan F (1) Environmental Masterplan (7 of 9) (March 2024) (Appendix 3.15)
- Site Plan F (2) Environmental Masterplan (8 of 9) (March 2024) (Appendix 3.16)
- Site Plan F (3) Environmental Masterplan (9 of 9) (March 2024) (Appendix 3.17)
- Full Site - Environmental Constraints Plan (March 2024) (Appendix 3.18)
- Environmental Masterplan Location (March 2024) (Appendix 3.19)
- Site G - Co:design (May 2024) (Appendix 3.20)
- Site G - Environmental Masterplan (May 2024) (Appendix 3.21)
- Site G - Location Plan (May 2024) (Appendix 3.22)
- Access and Location Plan (May 2024) (Appendix 3.23)
- Site G - Environmental Constraints Plan North including Site G (May 2024) (Appendix 3.24)
- Site G - Environmental Constraints Plan South including Site G (May 2024) (Appendix 3.25)

Appendices available in GH5.3\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials - **[APP-025- 026]**.

#### **Public Newsletter**

4.4.8 In June 2024, to raise awareness of the Scheme, the Applicant notified the wider public of the intention to develop Green Hill Solar Farm by publicising the Scheme to residential and business properties within a defined non-statutory PCZ through a newsletter (Appendix 3.27 in GH5.3\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials - **[APP-025- 026]**).



- 4.4.9 This newsletter contained information on the Scheme and details on how to contact the project team, such as the website address, email address and freephone information telephone number for those wishing to find out more. The non-statutory PCZ (Appendix 3.27 in GH5.3\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials - **[APP-025- 026]**) extended up to 1 km from the project site land parcel boundaries and 0.5 km from the Stage 1 Cable Route Search area. The newsletter contained:
- information about the Scheme;
  - a map of the sites;
  - a summary of initial engagement and early-engagement workshops; and
  - contact details (project email and freephone telephone).
- 4.4.10 The newsletter listed all of the different ways residents could contact the project throughout its duration (i.e. telephone, email and via the Scheme website).
- 4.4.11 The PCZ for the non-statutory consultation contained 8,652 residential and business addresses.
- 4.4.12 A press release was issued to local news outlets on 30 May 2024 to maximise reach to the local communities. The press release was issued to the following local publications:
- Northamptonshire Telegraph
  - Northampton Chronicle & Echo
  - Milton Keynes Citizen
  - The Bucks Herald (Milton Keynes).
- 4.4.13 The design of the Scheme taken forward for statutory consultation included the location of solar panels and associated development, provision of setbacks from public rights of way and other receptors, consideration of important views and potential routes to access the Scheme.

## 4.5 Feedback from early-engagement workshops

- 4.5.1 Following the early-engagement workshops, the Applicant produced the Early Engagement Workshops – Summary Report (the ‘Summary Report’) in September 2024.
- 4.5.2 The Summary Report provided a summary of the information presented and discussed at the early-engagement workshops. It also outlined the key themes from the comments received and explained how this feedback was being incorporated into the project design process for Green Hill Solar Farm.
- 4.5.3 The Summary Report was shared with stakeholders via email and sent to members of the Scheme mailing list as an e-newsletter on 30 September 2024. Following the final workshop, the Applicant presented to members of North Northamptonshire Council, at the request of the Executive Director for Place and Economy. The outcomes of the workshops were used to shape the proposals for the Scheme for the statutory consultation.
- 4.5.4 The Summary Report has been appended to this report (Appendix 4 in GH5.4\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Summary Report - **[APP-027]**).



## 4.6 Ongoing engagement (May – October 2024)

- 4.6.1 In the period between the early-engagement workshops and the statutory consultation, the Applicant continued engagement with local community stakeholders, such as community groups and near neighbours.
- 4.6.2 The Applicant kept local stakeholders informed of the progress of the Scheme.
- 4.6.3 Following the publication of the non-statutory consultation report, the Applicant shared the report with local councillors and MPs.
- 4.6.4 The Applicant shared the report with the following Ministers:
- Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero – Rt Hon Ed Miliband
  - Shadow Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero – Rt Hon Claire Coutinho
  - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Energy Efficiency and Green Finance) – Lord Callanan.
- 4.6.5 Table 4.3 details the meetings with local community stakeholders.

**Table 4.3: Details of local community stakeholder meetings.**

Date	Stakeholder (name/organisation)
23 August 2024	Sarah Bool, MP
28 August 2024	Mike Reader, MP
28 August 2024	Caroline Payne, Hannah Payne Rinding for Disabled Association (RDA)
9 September 2024	Chris Shaw, Chair of North Northants Local Access Forum
9 September 2024	Wellingborough Ramblers
12 September 2024	Stuart Andrew, MP
2 October 2024	[name redacted], near neighbour to Green Hill A.2
24 October 2024	[name redacted], near neighbour to Green Hill C

- 4.6.6 Table 4.4 details the meetings with host authorities during non-statutory consultation.

**Table 4.4: Details of host authority meetings.**

Date	Stakeholder (name/organisation)	Summary of meeting
13 December 2023	Troy Healy - Principal Planning Manager - Growth & Regeneration – North Northamptonshire Council	Meeting to introduce the scheme, providing an overview of the sites, timescales, constraints and opportunities.
20 December 2023	Shaun Robson (SR) – West Northamptonshire Council - Head of Service – Development Management	Meeting to introduce the scheme, providing an overview of the sites, timescales, constraints and opportunities.
29 February 2024	Local Authority: North Northamptonshire Council <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Nicola Thomson (NT) - North Northants Planning</li><li>Ryan Mills (RM) - Planscape (for North Northants)</li><li>Gareth Ryman (GR) - Consultant Ecologist</li></ul>	The Applicant's Ecologist and Planning Agent contacted North Northamptonshire Local Planning Authority to discuss the Scheme proposals and gauge initial thoughts from the Local Planning Authority on approach.
08 March 2024	Northampton County Archaeologist: Liz Mordue.	Meeting to introduce the Scheme, provide a high-level review of identified heritage assets and discuss proposed methodology.
25 March 2024	North Northamptonshire Conservation Officer: Samantha Pace.	Meeting to introduce the Scheme, provide a high-level review of identified heritage assets and discuss proposed methodology.
15 April 2024	North Northamptonshire Council Landscape Officer: Ryan Mills.	The meeting focused on reviewing suggested additional viewpoints, agreement on using Type 1-2 photographs for scoping, and identified landscape receptors to include in the assessment.
22 May 2024	Northampton County Archaeologist: Liz Mordue	Meeting to discuss scope of archaeological evaluation works.
26 June 2024	Milton Keynes City County Archaeologist: Nick Crank	Meeting to introduce the Scheme, provide a high-level review of identified heritage assets and discuss proposed methodology.
19 June 2024	West Northamptonshire Heritage Advisor: Rachel Booth	Meeting to discuss potential BESS site to the west of Grendon. At this meeting potential impacts were discussed, along with potential mitigation measures, including screening.
19 June 2024	West Northamptonshire: James Garling	Meeting to introduce the scheme and approach to hydrology, flood risk and drainage assessment.





9 July 2024	Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service : Adam Smith – Fire Protection Officer), Reece Aberdeen Roberts – Water Officer, John Pratt – Fire Protection Specialist	Meeting to introduce the Scheme and the Battery Energy Storage System plans. Safety measures embedded in the site design were explained. The discussion aimed to understand NFRS's concerns and requirements to address them effectively.
17 July 2024	North Northamptonshire Council Landscape Officer: Ryan Mills.	Meeting to discuss the approach to photomontages and viewpoint locations.
06 August 2024	West Northamptonshire Conservation Officer: Rachel Booth	Meeting to introduce the Scheme, provide a high-level review of identified heritage assets and discuss proposed methodology.
29 August 2024	Elizabeth Verdegan - Development Planning – Lead Case Officer Katherine Parsons – Ecology James Walsh – ProW Elizabeth Woodhouse, Senior Landscape Officer Rosie Armstrong – ProW Rachel Kilgallon – Flood Risk (LLFA) Nick Crank - Archaeology Simon Peart - Built Heritage Phil Cave - Highway Lucy Baxter - Development Planning Sue Brown - Landscape Luke Gledhill - Minerals	The meeting focused on introducing the Scheme, particularly Green Hill G, providing an overview of key constraints and opportunities.
03 October 2024	West Northamptonshire Council Minerals Officer: Laura Kennedy	The meeting focused on providing an overview of the Scheme, mineral safeguarding, impacts on current and future sand and gravel supply and Mitigation measures.
07 October 2024	North Northamptonshire Council Minerals Officer: Laura Kennedy	The meeting focused on providing an overview of the Scheme, mineral safeguarding, impacts on current and future sand and gravel supply and Mitigation measures.
Monthly Meetings with LPA planning team	West Northamptonshire Council: Nicky Scaife and Simon Ellis. North Northamptonshire Council: Nicola Thompson Milton Keynes Council: Elizabeth Verdegem and Lucy Baxter.	Monthly meetings with individual planning teams of the host authorities to provide programme and Scheme updates as well as discuss any actions such as response to scoping and statutory consultation.
Joint Monthly Meetings with LPA planning team	West Northamptonshire Council: Nicky Scaife and Simon Ellis. North Northamptonshire Council: Nicola Thompson Milton Keynes Council: Elizabeth Verdegem and Lucy Baxter. Bedford Borough Council: Peter Dijkhuis.	Monthly joint meetings with the host authorities and Bedford Borough Council will provide updates on the Scheme and facilitate broader discussions on council actions and approaches.



## 4.7 Landowner engagement

- 4.7.1 In the lead-up to the statutory consultation, the Applicant carried out a diligent inquiry to identify all persons with an interest in land within the categories set out in s44 of the Act.
- 4.7.2 This included reviewing the public data (e.g. the Land Registry), sending out a Land Interest Questionnaire, undertaking site visits and erecting site notices.
- 4.7.3 Prior to the consultation, the Applicant notified s44 consultees by issuing the following package of correspondence on 26 and 27 October 2024 in writing by post:
- a s44 cover letter produced on 25 October 2024, including a link to the consultation materials on the Scheme website; and
  - a copy of the notice publicising the Scheme under s48 of the Act, including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be viewed, such as the PEIR, the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) and the SoCC.
- 4.7.4 In the event of unknown landowners, the Applicant initially issued unregistered site notices and made site visits to query ownership with locals. The Applicant also contacted Persons with an Interest in Lands (PILs) using identified contact details to query the ownership of any adjoining land.
- 4.7.5 The Applicant continues their diligent enquiry so that new PILs are identified at the earliest opportunity, and such persons will be listed in the Book of Reference (GH4.3 Book of Reference **[APP-021]**), which will be submitted as part of the DCO application. All persons identified as having an interest in land within the Scheme boundary, or affected by the Scheme, were identified and notified of the statutory consultation, in accordance with s42 of the Act.



## 5 Consultation under EIA regulations

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is the process under which a development proposal is assessed for its likely significant environmental impacts before an application for consent is considered. The submission of the findings of the EIA in an ES allows the body deciding the Application to fully understand the environmental impact of a proposal when it makes its decision.

### 5.2 EIA scoping phase

- 5.2.1 The Applicant submitted a Scoping Request for the Scheme to the Secretary of State on 25 July 2024, and in this request notified the Secretary of State in accordance with Regulation 8(1)(b) of the EIA Regulations that the Applicant would provide an ES in respect of the Scheme.
- 5.2.2 PINS, on behalf of the Secretary of State, consulted with the relevant competent authorities and key statutory stakeholders to seek comments on the scope of the proposed EIA. A Scoping Opinion was adopted by PINS, on behalf of the Secretary of State, on 30 August 2024 and again on 27 September 2024, following a late response from Milton Keynes City Council.
- 5.2.3 Appended to the Scoping Opinion, PINS provided an updated list of consultation bodies notified by PINS under Regulation 11(1)(a) and (1)(c) of the EIA Regulations
- 5.2.4 The responses received to the Scoping Opinion and how the Applicant has responded are detailed in each chapter of the Environmental Statement ([APP-037]).

### 5.3 Pre-application consultation under the EIA Regulations

- 5.3.1 In accordance with Regulation 13 of the EIA Regulations, a copy of the notice under Section 48(1) of the 2008 Act was sent to consultation bodies and other persons notified to the Applicant under Regulation 11(1)(c) of the EIA Regulations by 30 October 2024. The consultation documents provided to all consultation bodies and other persons notified to the Applicant under Regulation 11(1)(c) of the EIA Regulations comprise:
- a covering letter (provided in Appendix 7.1 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials – [EX1/GH5.7\_A]), which publicised the consultation opportunities, as well as a link to where these documents are available on the dedicated project website;
  - a site plan showing the location of the Scheme (Appendix 7.6 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials – [EX1/GH5.7\_A]) and;
  - a hard copy of the notice publicised in accordance with s48 of the Act (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected free of charge) (Appendix 7.2 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials – [EX1/GH5.7\_A]).



- 5.3.2 In addition, both the PEIR and NTS, which included a summary of EIA matters, were available to all attendees at the statutory consultation information events. The PEIR and NTS were available on the Scheme website and at the designated local information points detailed in the SoCC.
- 5.3.3 Ongoing non-statutory consultation undertaken by the Applicant with technical consultees in addition to the statutory s42 consultation is described in Section 8 of this Report.

## 5.4 Non-statutory engagement for EIA

- 5.4.1 Prior to the pre-application consultation under Regulation 13 of the EIA Regulations (as set out above), a series of discussions and meetings were held with a number of technical consultees regarding the Scheme as part of the Applicant's ongoing engagement with consultees (Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1: Meetings with technical consultees**

Date	Stakeholder (name/organisation)	Summary
16 January 2024	Natural England: Nima Staniewick	Applicant ecologist contacted NE to hold initial meeting and confirm the scope of wintering bird surveys required. It was confirmed that nocturnal surveys would be required.
24 April 2024	Historic England: Hayley James	Meeting to introduce the Scheme, provide a high-level review of identified heritage assets and discuss proposed methodology.
01 July 2024	Environment Agency: Deborah Simons	Meeting to introduce the scheme and approach to hydrology, flood risk and drainage assessment.
05 September 2024	Natural England: Nima Staniewick	Applicant ecologist contacted NE to hold meeting regarding the revised scope of wintering bird surveys and mitigation.
29 November 2024	North Northamptonshire Council: Liam Harkin	Meeting to introduce the scheme and approach to hydrology, flood risk and drainage assessment.
19 December 2024	Local Authority: Charlotte Webbon (West Northamptonshire Council) Kathryn Parsons (Milton Keynes) Sven Rufus (North Northamptonshire Council)	The Applicant introduced the project and Clarkson and Wood's expertise, The meeting focused on the survey scope and design evolution as well as scoping responses. Various queries on species, mitigation, and survey methodologies were addressed.
13 December 2024	Historic England: Hayley James	Desk-top heritage-based review of Sites A, B, C, D, E, F and G.
16 December 2024	Milton Keynes City Archaeologist: Nick Crank	Meeting to discuss 1. Trial trenching WSI and trench locations in Site G

- 5.4.2 The ongoing non-statutory engagement with technical consultees enabled a continuous two-way dialogue between the Applicant and consultees on Scheme updates and enabled the



Applicant to continually consider consultee feedback in the iterative design of the Scheme proposals.

- 5.4.3 Following the adoption of the Scoping Opinion on 30 August 2024 and 27 September 2024, the Applicant continued engagement with several technical s42 consultees to discuss the opinion, surveys and assessments undertaken as part of the EIA and Scheme design changes ahead of the publication of the PEIR.
- 5.4.4 Relevant chapters of the Environmental Statement include a section on consultation, which details the engagement and meetings held with stakeholders and consultees throughout the pre-application and EIA phase of the Scheme.





## 6 Developing the SoCC

### 6.1 Preparation of the SoCC

- 6.1.1 As prescribed by s47 of the Act, the Applicant prepared a SoCC, setting out how it proposed to consult with people living within the vicinity of the land.
- 6.1.2 The Applicant identified North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council as the relevant host local authorities under s43(1) of the Act. These host authorities were formally consulted on the draft SoCC. Parish councils within these areas were also notified and consulted via their respective LPAs.
- 6.1.3 In accordance with s47(3), the deadline given for receipt of local authority responses to consultation on the SoCC was no less than the end of a 28-day period (commencing on the day after the day on which the local authority received the consultation documents).

### 6.2 Approach to LPA consultation on the draft SoCC

#### **Seeking initial feedback from LPAs on the Applicant's proposed approach to consultation**

- 6.2.1 In February 2024, in advance of the process where local authorities are consulted on the draft SoCC under s47(2), the Applicant sought feedback from North Northamptonshire Council and West Northamptonshire Council on the draft SoCC. The Applicant provided a notice of its intended approach to consultation and provided initial details regarding the draft SoCC.
- 6.2.2 The Applicant received acknowledgement of receipt from both councils, and no further comments or recommendations were provided regarding the proposed approach to consultation or the development of the SoCC.
- 6.2.3 As Green Hill G was not included in the Scheme until May 2024, Milton Keynes City Council was not included in the initial informal consultation. However, planning officers were briefed on the approach to the statutory consultation during the briefing on 29 August 2024.

#### **Consultation with LPAs on the content of the draft SoCC**

- 6.2.4 In accordance with s47 of the Act, the draft SoCC was provided to North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council on 12 August 2024, with a deadline for responses set for 20 September 2024.
- 6.2.5 Milton Keynes City Council responded on 17 September 2024, confirming it had no objections and was satisfied with the proposed consultation approach.
- 6.2.6 North Northamptonshire Council provided substantive comments, which included the comments from Grendon Parish Council and Irchester Parish Council, on 17 September 2024.
- 6.2.7 West Northamptonshire Council confirmed receipt of the draft SoCC and provided its comments on 20 September 2024.
- 6.2.8 Following consultation on the draft SoCC, the Applicant reviewed and incorporated the feedback received where possible. A formal response was issued to host authorities on 5 November 2024, and the SoCC was published on 7 November 2024.



- 6.2.9 The responses from LPAs to the draft SoCC can be found in Appendix 5.2 in GH5.5\_CR Appendix\_Statement of Community Consultation – **[APP-028]**.
- 6.2.10 Milton Keynes City Council responded on 17 September 2024 confirming they had no objections and were satisfied with the proposed consultation approach.
- 6.2.11 North Northamptonshire Council provided substantive comments, which included the comments from Grendon Parish Council and Irchester Parish Council, on 17 September 2024.
- 6.2.12 West Northamptonshire Councils confirmed receipt of the draft SoCC and provided their comments on 20 September 2024.
- 6.2.13 Following consultation, the Applicant reviewed and incorporated the feedback received where possible. A formal response was issued to host authorities on 5 November 2024, and the SoCC was published on 7 November 2024.
- 6.2.14 The table below outlines the key feedback received from North Northamptonshire Council, including the responses of the parishes within its jurisdiction and of West Northamptonshire Council regarding the Applicant's approach to consultation, and the actions taken as a result.

**Table 6.1: Applicant's response to feedback on SoCC**

Comment	Regard Had
[The SoCC] states that the consultation will take place 'for six weeks between November 2024 and January 2025'. It is suggested that this consultation period is either extended or moved to an alternative 6-week period, rather than taking place for 6 weeks during the proposed busy time over the Christmas and New Year holidays.	<p>The Applicant reviewed the consultation dates, resulting in a decision to bring the consultation forward so that it was completed before the Christmas period.</p> <p>The public (statutory) consultation was subsequently scheduled to run for six weeks, from Thursday 7 November to Thursday 19 December 2024.</p>
[The SoCC] states that the Public Consultation Zone (PCZ) will be restricted up to 1 kilometre from the project site and 0.5 km from the Cable Search Area. Given the size, scale and extent of the scheme, this was deemed 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.	<p>The Applicant reviewed the Primary Consultation Zone (PCZ) and made the following changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the PCZ was extended to up to 2 kilometres (km) from the Scheme site boundaries, within which the solar arrays and associated development would be located.</li><li>the Applicant also extended the PCZ to 1 km from the Cable Route Search Area, within which the electrical cables connecting the sites and Grendon Substation would be located.</li></ul>
Within the list of what non-statutory groups would be consulted, Parish Meetings need to be included.	The Applicant added Parish Meetings to the list of non-statutory consultees.
Walgrave Parish Council would like Walgrave to be considered as a host for one of the in-person consultation events.	The Applicant included Walgrave Village Hall as a venue for the consultation event held on Saturday 7 December 2024, from 12:00 to 17:00.



<p>This paragraph [in the SoCC] 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 the next steps but please ensure that identifying hard-to-reach groups will be in liaison with the local authorities.</p>	<p>Section 7.7 of the SoCC was updated to detail the steps that would be taken to ensure the consultation was inclusive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All references to 'hard-to-reach groups' were updated to 'seldom-heard' in the SoCC.</li><li>• A list of seldom-heard community groups was included in Appendix 1 of the SoCC.</li><li>• Table 3 of the SoCC outlined the consultation methods used to engage with seldom-heard groups.</li><li>• Automated subtitles were made available for webinars to ensure accessibility for individuals with hearing impairments.</li></ul>
<p>[The SoCC] 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.</p>	<p>The Applicant considered the suggestion. However, The Forum Towcester hub was not ultimately included as an Information point as it was not deemed accessible enough to residents within the PCZ due to its distance from the Scheme.</p> <p>Although this request could not be actioned, the Applicant added Wellingborough Library as an additional information point within the vicinity of the PCZ and closer to the Scheme.</p> <p>As Wellingborough Library provided access to the internet, the Applicant deposited hard copies of the consultation information booklet and the feedback form and requested respondents use the computers provided to access the SoCC, PEIR and NTS via the electric copies on the Scheme website.</p>
<p>[The SoCC] sets out how you are proposing to consult. Given the scale of the development and the 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.</p>	<p>The Applicant determined the number of consultation events by reviewing the suitability and availability of venues within or in the immediate vicinity of the PCZ. Four consultation events and three webinars were scheduled. This was determined to be proportionate to the size of the Scheme and sufficient opportunities to engage with the consultation.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Applicant provided copies of the consultation materials, including the consultation exhibition boards, on the Scheme website and provided a recording of a webinar, following requests from attendees.</p>



	<p>The events and webinars were organised over a range of days and times throughout the week, including evenings and weekends, to accommodate working families.</p>
<p>Irchester Parish Council offer Wollaston Library as a host venue as a local information point.</p>	<p>The Applicant considered the suggestion made by Irchester Parish Council to add Wollaston Library as a local information point. However, the Local Information Points were carefully selected to be located in areas that were accessible to as many stakeholders as possible in the PCZ, and Wollaston Library did not sufficiently meet these accessibility requirements.</p> <p>The nearest in-person consultation event to Wollaston Library was held at Grendon Village Hall, which had greater accessibility. Wollaston Library was open during at least one webinar, providing an option for individuals without personal computer access to participate.</p> <p>The Applicant also added Wellingborough Library as an additional information point within the vicinity of the PCZ.</p>
<p>As the proposal is within the locality of the 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.</p>	<p>The Applicant noted that the Habitats Regulations require consultation with the relevant Statutory Nature Conservation Body, Natural England, but do not outline any specific distinct requirements or methods for consultation beyond this.</p> <p>The Applicant consulted with Natural England and is carrying out ongoing engagement. Following discussions with Natural England, the Applicant undertook work to address environmental protection measures within the Scheme design to avoid harm to wildlife, disruption to habitats, and impacts on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area during construction.</p> <p>Consultation with Natural England is ongoing to inform the development of the Scheme's design ahead of the application submission. Discussions focus on identifying and mitigating potential environmental impacts and integrating appropriate measures into the final design.</p> <p>Additional information relating to this was made available during the public consultation and included in the PEIR.</p>



## 6.3 Publicity of the consultation under Section 47

- 6.3.1 Printed copies of the SoCC were available for inspection at local information points, and a digital version was made available on the Scheme website. A copy of the published SoCC can be found in Appendix 5.1 in GH5.5\_CR Appendix\_Statement of Community Consultation – [APP-028].
- 6.3.2 Table 6.1 details local information points where a hard copy SoCC was made available for inspection.

**Table 6.2: Local information points that provided a hard copy of the SoCC.**

Location	Opening times
Moulton Community Library	Monday to Saturday, 9:00–17:00; Sunday, 9:00–16:00 (self-service)
Rothwell Community Library	Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 10:00–16:00

- 6.3.3 A list of local information points where a digital version of the SoCC was made available for inspection:
- Brixworth Library
  - Wellingborough Library
  - Duston Library
  - Earls Barton Library
  - Milton Keynes Library
  - Moulton Community Library.
- 6.3.4 Owing to an error in distribution, a hard copy of the SoCC was not available at Moulton Community Library and was instead made available at Earls Barton Library. To compensate for this distribution error, the Applicant ensured that the SoCC was digitally available at Moulton Community Library.
- 6.3.5 Following an investigation, the Applicant has confirmed that the consultation booklets and feedback forms were delivered to Moulton Community Library on 6 November 2024, and it has been established that a computer was available for visitors to Moulton Community Library to use and that this could have been used to review the statutory consultation materials online. Consultation Information Booklets and Feedback Forms were also delivered to Moulton Community Library on Friday 29 November 2024 and were available to visitors.
- 6.3.6 To ensure this error did not affect any person's opportunity to comment on the Scheme, and to adhere to the commitments made in the SoCC and s48 notice, the Applicant placed the hard copies of the PEIR, the NTS and SoCC at Moulton Community Library for a minimum of 28 days, to align with a period of targeted consultation (Section 11). This provided people with the opportunity to view and provide any new or additional feedback on the statutory consultation materials, as well as the changes that are the subject of the targeted consultation.



## Publication of Section 47 and Section 48 notices

6.3.7 Section 47 notices as published are provided in Appendix 9.1 in GH5.9\_CR Appendix\_Section 47 and 48 Consultation Notices – **[EX1/GH5.9\_A]**. A digital copy of the s47 notice was also made available on the Scheme website.

6.3.8 Section 47 notices as published in local newspapers were scheduled as set out in Table 6.2.

**Table 6.3: Section 47 notices as published in local newspapers.**

Publication	Format	Date of notice
Daventry Express	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024
Northampton Chronicle & Echo	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024
Northamptonshire Telegraph	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024
Milton Keynes Citizen	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024
The Bucks Herald (Milton Keynes)	Print	Wednesday 30 October 2024
Times and Citizen (Bedfordshire)	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024

6.3.9 When publishing the SoCC on 1 November 2024, the Applicant issued a copy of the final published SoCC to the host authorities, alongside a copy of the s47 notice.

## 6.4 Adherence to the contents of the SoCC

6.4.1 Table 6.3 sets out the commitments the Applicant made for its statutory consultation with people living in the vicinity of the land, in accordance with s47 of the Act, and summarises how the Applicant fulfilled these commitments.

**Table 6.4: Summary of commitments made in the SoCC and how the Applicant fulfilled these.**

Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
<b>Consultation</b>		
Introduction	Consulted and had regard for comments from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>West Northamptonshire Council</li><li>North Northamptonshire Council</li><li>Milton Keynes City Council.</li></ul>	Comments were received from West Northamptonshire Council and North Northamptonshire Council. Milton Keynes City Council acknowledged receipt of the SoCC but provided no comments.  All comments were considered and incorporated where reasonably feasible.



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
5	<p>The Applicant will also be consulting on a PEIR, which provides information about the preliminary results of the Applicant's assessments, as part of the statutory consultation. An NTS will be available to summarise the content of the PEIR in non-technical terms.</p> <p>The PEIR and NTS will be available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on the website;</li> <li>• at information points; and</li> <li>• at in-person events during statutory consultation.</li> </ul> <p>The Applicant will be seeking views from members of the public and other stakeholders on these (PEIR and NTS) and other consultation documents.</p>	<p>Ahead of the statutory consultation, the Applicant produced a PEIR and NTS. These materials were made available on the website and at information points.</p> <p>The Applicant also provided hard copies at each consultation event, and the materials were available to view digitally on request.</p> <p>Views were sought both at events and via official feedback channels. Further evidence of this feedback is provided in Section 9 and Section 10 of this Report.</p>
7.1	<p>The statutory consultation will be held for six weeks between 7 November 2024 and 19 December 2024.</p> <p>All digital responses to the consultation must be received by 23:59 on the closing date.</p> <p>The Applicant will allow an additional two-week period to receive responses via post to account for any delays.</p>	<p>A six-week statutory consultation was held between 7 November 2024 and 19 December 2024.</p> <p>The deadline for digital responses was upheld. An additional two-week period to receive responses via post was allowed. The deadline for postal responses was 10 January 2025. This information was confirmed by a website update on 20 December 2024.</p>
7.2	<p>The Applicant will be seeking feedback on all aspects of the Applicant's plans for the Scheme. This will involve inviting comments on issues such as, but not limited to:</p> <p>indicative masterplans identifying potential areas for the solar arrays, associated</p>	<p>Materials provided at in-person events, information points and online offered comprehensive information on all aspects of the Scheme. These included:</p> <p>indicative masterplans of the Site; an indicative masterplan highlighting the addition of Site A.2; a map indicating the Cable Route Search Area;</p>





Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	<p>development, and potential mitigation and enhancement opportunities;</p> <p>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, the Applicant will provide the opportunity for residents to share their feedback on its inclusion;</p> <p>the Cable Route Search Area;</p> <p>the PEIR, which will include preliminary assessments of the environmental effects associated with the Scheme's construction, operation and decommissioning;</p> <p>visualisations of the Scheme from selected viewpoints;</p> <p>issues associated with the construction and operation of the solar farm and proposed mitigation measures;</p> <p>possible community benefit initiatives; and</p> <p>identify any other feedback and local issues or sensitivities we should be aware of.</p>	<p>digital and reference copies of the PEIR;</p> <p>visualisations of the Scheme from selected viewpoints;</p> <p>a Project Information Booklet providing information on the Scheme, including details of its construction, operation and proposed mitigation measures; and</p> <p>information on the Applicant's approach to community benefits, detailed within the Project Information Booklet and exhibition boards.</p> <p>A feedback form was made available to stakeholders, allowing them to share their views on all aspects of the Scheme.</p> <p>The form also invited feedback on local issues or sensitivities and suggestions for potential community benefits.</p>
7.3	<p>The Scheme has devised a new PCZ for the statutory consultation within the area of the host LPAs of North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council, Milton Keynes City Council and the neighbouring authority of Bedford Borough Council.</p> <p>The PCZ followed consultation with North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council and</p>	<p>A PCZ of 13,482 residential and business addresses was used, covering all main residential clusters within 2 km of the sites and 1 km from the Cable Route Search Area of the Scheme that could reasonably be expected to be impacted.</p> <p>The PCZ was in the SoCC and agreed with the host authorities during the SoCC consultation.</p> <p>A newsletter was distributed to the PCZ, announcing the start of the statutory consultation and providing details of the Scheme and how to participate.</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	Milton Keynes City Council, and is considered sufficient to engage with members of the local community who would be most impacted by the Scheme and are most likely to operate within the vicinity of it.	<p>The newsletter included locations, dates and times for all events and listed the locations of information points where further information could be obtained.</p> <p>A consultation leaflet was distributed in week three of the consultation that reminded people of the details of how to participate in the consultation.</p>
7.3	<p>In addition to the PCZ, we will be consulting the following groups:</p> <p>landowners with interest in the Scheme;</p> <p>statutory consultees, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ host parish councils</li> <li>○ host and neighbouring LPAs</li> <li>○ technical stakeholders, such as the Environment Agency and Historic England; and</li> </ul> <p>non-statutory consultees, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ MPs</li> <li>○ parish meetings</li> <li>○ community groups, voluntary organisations and faith communities</li> <li>○ environmental groups in the PCZ</li> <li>○ schools and colleges in the PCZ</li> <li>○ seldom-heard groups.</li> </ul>	<p>All consultee groups were contacted as part of the statutory consultation. A full list of stakeholders can be found in Appendix GH5.3_CR Appendix_Non-statutory Consultation Materials <b>[APP-025-026]</b> of this Report.</p> <p>Consultees were notified of the statutory consultation prior to the launch date and invited to a presentation about the Scheme.</p> <p>Consultees were invited to participate in the statutory consultation.</p>
7.3	Members of the general public will be notified of the consultation via notices in local, regional and national newspapers.	<p>In accordance with s48, notices were published once in two national newspapers:</p> <p>The Guardian London Gazette</p> <p>and twice across two successive weeks in locally circulating newspapers:</p> <p>Northamptonshire Telegraph Milton Keynes Citizen Times and Citizen (Bedfordshire).</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	The Applicant will also ask parish councils and parish meetings to publicise the consultation on their noticeboards.	Parish councils were contacted via the project inbox. It was requested that they publicise the consultation and how to participate in it (Appendix 7.3 in GH5.7_CR Appendix_Section 42 Consultation Materials - [EX1/GH5.7_A]).
<b>Consultation methods</b>		
7.4 Table 1	<p>The Applicant will be holding four consultation events at locations within or in the immediate vicinity of the PCZ, which are accessible by public and private transport.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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>	<p>Events were scheduled at accessible locations within the immediate vicinity of the PCZ. The events were held on:</p> <p>Monday 18 November 2024, 14:00–19:00: Grendon Village Hall, Main Road, Grendon, Northampton NN7 1JW;</p> <p>Saturday 23 November 2024, 12:00–17:00: Lavendon Village Hall, 22 High Street, Lavendon, Olney MK46 4HA;</p> <p>Wednesday 27 November 2024, 14:00–19:00: Swanspool Pavilion, Swanspool Parade, Wellingborough NN8 9SR; and</p> <p>Saturday 7 December 2024, 12:00–17:00: Walgrave Village Hall, 1 Newland Road, Walgrave, Northampton NN6 9PZ.</p> <p>Ahead of the events, it was confirmed that the venues were accessible by public transport and that parking was available to accommodate those using private transport.</p> <p>Members of the development team were present to answer questions directly. If they were unable to provide an answer on the day, attendees were encouraged to contact the project team via the official communication channels.</p> <p>The events were advertised through:</p> <p>the consultation newsletter and consultation leaflets distributed to the PCZ;</p> <p>local media, through a press release;</p> <p>local information points, through the availability of leaflets, which provided details of the consultation and how to participate;</p> <p>and</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
		<p>wider publicity through the local community, through the distribution of leaflets to local community groups.</p> <p>The following materials were available at the events:</p> <p>hard copies of the Project Information Booklet;</p> <p>feedback forms for attendees to complete;</p> <p>reference copies of the SoCC and the PEIR;</p> <p>indicative masterplans of the Scheme; and</p> <p>maps of the proposed access routes.</p>
7.4 Table 1	<p>Three webinars will be held for stakeholders to join via telephone or online via Livestorm.</p> <p>The webinar sessions will be hosted at times in the day and in the evening to accommodate working families.</p>	<p>Three webinars were held using the Livestorm platform:</p> <p>Wednesday 20 November 2024, 18:00–19:00;</p> <p>Tuesday 26 November 2024, 18:00–19:00;</p> <p>and</p> <p>Wednesday 4 December 2024, 12:30–13:30.</p> <p>To ensure accessibility, arrangements were made for participants to join the webinars via telephone. While it is not possible to determine how visitors accessed the webinar, the Livestorm platform also allowed registered attendees to join the webinar via webpage, and no software was required to download.</p> <p>The webinars scheduled between 18:00 and 19:00 were held outside typical working hours, accommodating the needs of working families. The Applicant scheduled one webinar at lunchtime to make it more accessible for attendees who may have work or other commitments during standard working hours.</p> <p>Following requests from attendees, a recording of a webinar was uploaded to the Scheme website. The recording contained automated subtitles.</p>
7.4 Table 1	Questions will be answered following the presentation on	The project team delivered a presentation that mirrored the information displayed on



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	<p>the webinar and in the time available.</p> <p>Any remaining unanswered questions will be answered in writing after the event if the respondent contacts the Community Relations Team.</p>	<p>the exhibition boards at the consultation events.</p> <p>A dedicated question-and-answer session followed the presentation, during which members of the project team were available to address queries within the allocated time. This was not included in the webinar recording.</p> <p>Following the events, the project team received three enquiries relating specifically to the webinar. These were addressed by the Community Relations Team via the project inbox.</p>
7.4 Table 1	The link to the webinars will be available on the Scheme website.	<p>The link to register for the webinars was provided on the Scheme website. Only those registered could participate.</p> <p>Once participants had registered, they were emailed a hyperlink that gave them access to the webinar.</p> <p>For those unable to attend, a recording was made available ensuring the webinar could be viewed, without any requirement to register, at a time that suited the consultee.</p>
7.4 Table 1	The webinars will be accessible via web browser and will not require the attendee to download software.	The Livestorm platform was accessible via web browser and did not require attendees to download software.
7.4 Table 1	Instructions on how to register and attend the webinars will be provided on the Scheme website.	Instructions on how to register for the webinars were provided under the 'Consultation by Collaboration' section of the Scheme website. This section was updated ahead of the statutory consultation.
7.4 Table 1	<p>Hard copies of the Project Information Booklet and the Consultation Feedback Form will be available to take away from all local information points:</p> <p>Brixworth Library Wellingborough Library</p>	<p>Hard copies of the Project Information Booklet and the Consultation Feedback Form were distributed ahead of the start of the statutory consultation to the following local information points:</p> <p>Brixworth Library Wellingborough Library* Duston Library</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	<p>Duston Library Moulton Community Library Earls Barton Library Rothwell Community Library Milton Keynes Library.</p>	<p>Moulton Community Library Earls Barton Library Rothwell Community Library Milton Keynes Library.</p> <p>*Note: Wellingborough Library did not initially receive materials at the same time as other locations, owing to a distribution error. However, this was rectified, and copies of the Project Information Booklet and the Consultation Feedback Form were issued. These arrived on Friday 29 November.</p> <p>The opportunity was also taken to replenish the supply of materials at the full list of information points. Additional copies of the Project Information Booklet and Consultation Feedback Form were distributed to ensure supply for the whole consultation period. The additional materials arrived on Friday 29 November.</p>
7.4 Table 1	<p>Electronic copies of the SoCC, PEIR and NTS will be available to view and download electronically (for reference) at each local information point with access to a computer.</p>	<p>The SoCC, PEIR and NTS were available online at information points that had access to a computer. Those information points were:</p> <p>Brixworth Library Wellingborough Library Duston Library Earls Barton Library Milton Keynes Library Moulton Community Library.</p>
7.4 Table 1	<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> <p>Moulton Community Library Rothwell Community Library.</p>	<p>Reference copies of the SoCC, PEIR and NTS were made available at Rothwell Community Library.</p> <p>It was brought to the Applicant's attention that, owing to a distribution error, Moulton Community Library did not receive hard copies of the SoCC, PEIR and NTS. Unfortunately, this error was not identified within the statutory consultation period. Following an investigation, the Applicant has confirmed that copies of the Project Information Booklet and Consultation Feedback Form were delivered to Moulton Community Library on 6 November 2024,</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
		<p>and it has established that a computer was available for visitors to Moulton Community Library to use and that this could have been used to review the statutory consultation materials online. Copies of the Project Information Booklet and Consultation Feedback Form were also delivered to Moulton Community Library on Friday 29 November 2024 and were available to visitors.</p> <p>In order that this error did not affect any person's opportunity to comment on the Scheme, and to adhere to the commitments made in the SoCC and s48 notice, the Applicant placed the hard copies of the PEIR, NTS and SoCC at Moulton Community Library for a minimum of 28 days from 13 March until 10 April 2025, aligned with the period of the targeted consultation set out in Section 11. This gave people the opportunity to view and provide any new or additional feedback on the statutory consultation materials, as well as the changes that were the subject of the targeted consultation.</p> <p>The Applicant placed an advertisement in the following locally distributed newspapers:</p> <p>Milton Keynes Citizen Northamptonshire Telegraph Times &amp; Citizen (Bedfordshire)</p> <p>providing details of the targeted consultation and confirming that the PEIR and other statutory consultation materials would be available for review at Moulton Community Library.</p> <p>The Applicant wrote directly to residential and business properties and parish councils within the PCZ, notifying them of the targeted consultation and confirming that the PEIR could be reviewed in hard copy at Moulton Community Library.</p> <p>The Applicant also provided an update on the Scheme website and issued an e-newsletter</p>





Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
		<p>to anyone registered for the Green Hill Solar Farm mailing list.</p> <p>The SoCC, PEIR and NTS were also available for download via the project website and as reference copies at the in-person consultation events.</p>
7.4 Table 1	All statutory consultation documents (mentioned above) will be presented digitally and available for download, free of charge, from the website.	The SoCC, PEIR and NTS were available for download via the project website and signposted under the 'Documents' section of the Scheme website.
7.4 Table 1	Information made available at the consultation events will also be published on the website.	<p>All information provided at the consultation events was made available for download in the 'Documents' section of the Scheme website.</p> <p>This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>digital copies of the exhibition boards displayed at the events;</li> <li>indicative masterplans that were printed and shared at the events; and</li> <li>a recording of one of the consultation webinars, which was made available in the 'Consultation' section of the Scheme website.</li> </ul>
<b>Consultation materials</b>		
7.4 Table 1	<p>A consultation newsletter, posted to all addresses in the PCZ, will provide an overview of the Scheme and the consultation, and explain how people can get involved.</p> <p>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 to key stakeholders.</p>	<p>A consultation newsletter was prepared and distributed to all addresses within the PCZ prior to the start of the statutory consultation. It was also sent electronically to stakeholders who had shared their email address with the Applicant, and public bodies with a relevant email address.</p> <p>The consultation newsletter included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an overview of the consultation process;</li> <li>details of the planning process;</li> <li>information about Green Hill Solar Farm;</li> <li>the Applicant's vision for Green Hill Solar Farm;</li> <li>background information on IGP, Green Hill Solar Farm's parent company;</li> <li>details of the early-stage consultation;</li> </ul>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
		a location map; information about the public consultation, including how to provide feedback, event times and locations, and details of local information points; a glossary and guidance on navigating the consultation documents; a project timeline; and contact details.
7.4 Table 1	<p>An information booklet has been produced 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.</p> <p>It will also list the information deposit points for the consultation materials.</p>	<p>A Project Information Booklet was produced ahead of the start of the statutory consultation. It was distributed to local information points and made available in hard copy at consultation events. It was also available for download on the Scheme website.</p> <p>The Project Information Booklet included the following sections:</p> <p>Introduction Key facts about the Scheme Details of engagement to date About IGP The need for Green Hill Solar Farm at a national level at a local level The Applicant's vision Site selection Evolution of the scheme design Our proposals Scheme description Solar farm details Indicative masterplans Green Hill Solar Farm's construction, operation and decommissioning Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Community benefit How to have your say (including how to provide feedback, event times and locations, and details of local information points) Next steps Glossary of terms Contact details.</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
		<p>On 28 November 2024, it was noted that page 25 of the Project Information Booklet, in the EIA section, contained an error. A statement regarding the benefits to local species during the operational phase was corrected to accurately reflect the surveys undertaken.</p> <p>Corrected copies of the Project Information Booklet were distributed to local information points and made available at consultation events. The downloadable version on the Scheme website was updated.</p> <p>A correction notice was published on the Scheme website and made available in print at local information points. The notice gave stakeholders with any outstanding queries the contact details for the Community Relations Team.</p>
7.4 Table 1	<p>A feedback form will allow people to provide feedback on the proposals. This will be electronic and accessible via the Scheme website.</p> <p>The form will be available in hard copy on request, at in-person consultation events and at information points.</p> <p>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>	<p>A Consultation Feedback Form was made available on the Scheme website from the start of the statutory consultation on 7 November 2024. Copies of the Consultation Feedback Form were also provided at consultation events and information points throughout the consultation period.</p> <p>Additional copies of the Consultation Feedback Form were distributed to stakeholders upon request.</p> <p>The project team continued to receive hard copies of completed feedback forms submitted via freepost throughout the statutory consultation period.</p>
7.4 Table 1	<p>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.</p>	<p>The PEIR provided a detailed description of the Scheme, including a preliminary assessment of potential significant environmental effects and initial strategies for mitigating adverse impacts. The PEIR was made available on the Scheme website and at local information points.</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	An NTS of the PEIR can also be downloaded free of charge from the Scheme website and electronically at local information points, and will be available in printed format to view at consultation events.	The findings were summarised in the NTS, which was made available for download from the Scheme website and could be viewed electronically at local information points. Reference copies of the NTS were available at in-person consultation events, and tablets were provided to allow digital copies to be viewed upon request.
7.4 Table 1	<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>	<p>Exhibition boards were displayed at each consultation event and made available for download on the Scheme website. The boards contained the following information:</p> <p>Welcome and about Green Hill Solar Farm About IGP and the planning process Vision for Green Hill Solar Farm Location of Green Hill Solar Farm Scheme update ('you said, we did') Summaries of key PEIR topics Transport and access maps Approach to community benefits How to have your say Maps showing viewpoint locations.</p> <p>In addition to the exhibition boards displayed, visualisations of the Scheme from a number of viewpoints were also presented at each event and made available online.</p>
7.4 Table 1	<p>The SoCC will be made available online throughout the consultation and free of charge in hard copy on request.</p> <p>A hard copy of the SoCC will also be available to inspect at each local information point once the s47 notice has been publicised.</p>	<p>The SoCC was made available for download on the Scheme website throughout the consultation. Hard copies were also made available at information points and at each of the consultation events.</p> <p>Wellingborough Library did not initially receive a copy of the SoCC, owing to a distribution error. However, this was rectified on 28 November 2024, and a reference copy was issued and made available for inspection.</p>
7.4 Table 1	Upon request, all documents will be available in alternative accessible formats, such as braille and large print.	No requests were made for documents to be provided in alternative formats, but arrangements had been made to facilitate this.



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	<p>Requests for translated summary documents will be considered on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>All requests should be made to the development team by email at <a href="mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk">info@greenhillsolar.co.uk</a>, by phone on 0800 0129 882 or at the consultation events.</p>	<p>The Applicant accepted two requests for the indicative masterplan to be provided in larger print format (i.e. in A3 print).</p> <p>The Applicant did not receive any requests for consultation materials to be translated.</p>
7.4 Table 1	Select consultation materials are available for no extra charge.	The Project Information Booklet, Consultation Feedback Form and maps were made available free of charge. The project team received and fulfilled requests for these materials throughout the consultation period.
<b>Promotion of consultation</b>		
7.5	<p>Statutory notices will be published in accordance with s48 of the Act. These notices will be published once in a national newspaper and the London Gazette and twice (across two successive weeks) in locally circulating newspapers.</p> <p>Notices will also be sent to prescribed stakeholders and PILs as required by s42 of the Act.</p>	<p>In accordance with s48, notices were published, once in two national newspapers:</p> <p>The Guardian London Gazette</p> <p>and twice across two successive weeks in locally circulating newspapers:</p> <p>Northamptonshire Telegraph Milton Keynes Citizen Times and Citizen (Bedfordshire).</p> <p>A distribution list was prepared, and notices were shared and tracked in accordance with s42 of the Act.</p>
7.5 Table 2	<p>A consultation newsletter, posted to all addresses in the PCZ, will provide an overview of the Scheme and the consultation, and explain how people can get involved.</p> <p>The newsletter will indicate where the other consultation documents can be accessed and publicise the consultation events, including locations, dates and timings.</p>	<p>A newsletter was distributed to the PCZ and key stakeholders via email. Those who received the newsletter via email had previously shared their email address with us and requested that information be shared in this way.</p> <p>The newsletter provided details of the Scheme and how to participate in the statutory consultation.</p> <p>The newsletter included locations, dates and times for all events and listed the locations of information points. A QR code was also</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	<p>Copies of the newsletter will also be emailed to key stakeholders.</p> <p>The newsletter will contain a QR code to direct people to the Scheme website.</p>	<p>included to direct stakeholders to the Scheme website, where additional information could be found.</p>
7.5 Table 2	<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.</p> <p>Printed copies of the leaflet will be available at local information points. The Applicant will also ask local information points if they can display a hard copy of the consultation leaflet on their noticeboards, 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 three 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 website.</p>	<p>A consultation leaflet containing details of the consultation and ways to participate was emailed to key stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>parish councils;</li><li>local community groups; and</li><li>hard-to-reach groups.</li></ul> <p>An accompanying cover note requested that recipients publicise the leaflet via noticeboards or within their individual networks.</p> <p>The leaflet was delivered to residential and business properties within the new PCZ on 28 November 2024. The leaflet contained information on how to take part in the consultation and on the location of local information points.</p> <p>Hard copies of the consultation leaflet were provided to local information points, with a request that they display the leaflet alongside the other consultation materials on their noticeboards.</p> <p>The consultation leaflet contained a QR code directing people to the Scheme website.</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
7.5 Table 2	<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 seven days in advance of the launch of the public consultation on 31 October 2024.</p>	<p>To avoid repetition of the section notices, the press release was deferred and issued to local press on 4 November 2024.</p> <p>The press release contained information on the Scheme and the consultation, and how to participate, and was issued to the following local titles:</p> <p>Daventry Express Northampton Chronicle &amp; Echo Northamptonshire Telegraph Milton Keynes Citizen The Bucks Herald (Milton Keynes).</p> <p>No press release was issued to the national press, as a site notice had been distributed to The Gazette and The Guardian.</p>
7.3	<p>The Applicant 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 the Applicant is consulting on and invite them to take part in the consultation.</p>	<p>Key stakeholders were emailed an overview of the Scheme, an invitation to participate in the consultation and details on how to contact the project team.</p>
<b>Statutory notices</b>		
7.6	<p>Statutory notices to publicise the consultation will be published, under the requirement set out in s48 of the Act, once in a national newspaper and twice (across two successive weeks) in local circulating newspapers.</p> <p>The Applicant will publicise the consultation in the following publications:</p> <p>National newspapers:</p>	<p>In accordance with s48, notices were published, once in two national newspapers on 31 October 2024:</p> <p>The Guardian London Gazette</p> <p>and twice across two successive weeks in locally circulating newspapers on 31 October and 7 November 2024:</p> <p>Northamptonshire Telegraph Milton Keynes Citizen Times and Citizen (Bedfordshire).</p>





Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	<p>The Guardian London Gazette.</p> <p>Local newspapers: Northamptonshire Telegraph Milton Keynes Citizen Times and Citizen (Bedfordshire).</p>	
<b>Seldom-heard groups</b>		
7.7 Table 3	<p>Older people:</p> <p>Freepost and the freephone information line. Providing important information in both digital and non-digital formats and providing alternative formats, such as braille and large print, upon request. Providing paper copies of materials at information points. Face-to-face events at several locations, with members of the team available to assist with completing feedback responses.</p>	<p>Freepost and a freephone information line were provided, and materials were made available in both digital and non-digital formats.</p> <p>While no requests were received for materials in alternative formats, these arrangements were in place throughout the consultation.</p> <p>Paper copies of materials were distributed to local information points, and face-to-face events were held, with members of the project team being on hand to assist attendees.</p>
7.7 Table 3	<p>People with visual impairments:</p> <p>Providing important information in both digital and non-digital formats and providing alternative 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.</p>	<p>Materials were provided in both digital and non-digital formats, with alternative formats, such as braille, large print and dementia-friendly versions, available upon request.</p> <p>While no requests were received for materials in alternative formats, these arrangements were in place throughout the consultation.</p> <p>The Scheme website included an option to enlarge text, and a freephone information line was provided.</p> <p>Face-to-face events were held at several locations, where members of the team were on hand to assist attendees.</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
7.7 Table 3	<p>People with limited mobility:</p> <p>Directly mailing the consultation leaflet to all stakeholders within the PCZ and providing details of how to access paper copies of other consultation documents and how to provide feedback online and by post.</p> <p>Online engagement webinars to negate the need for travel to public events.</p> <p>Freephone information line and freepost.</p>	<p>The consultation leaflet was directly mailed to all stakeholders within the PCZ, and online engagement webinars were offered to negate the need for travel to public events.</p> <p>The venues for the consultation were selected based on their accessibility. The Applicant considered the availability of wheelchair access, parking for those who needed to drive and public transport for those unable to drive.</p> <p>A freephone information line and freepost service were made available throughout the consultation period.</p>
7.7 Table 3	<p>Geographically isolated individuals or communities:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Advertising the availability of telephone callbacks for stakeholders who would like to discuss the Scheme further with the development team.</p>	<p>The consultation leaflet was directly mailed to all stakeholders within the PCZ, providing details on how to access paper copies of other project documents. This included details of how to contact the project team and request materials to be sent via post.</p> <p>Stakeholders were also informed of the availability of telephone callbacks.</p>
7.7 Table 3	<p>People with hearing impairments:</p> <p>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 how to provide feedback by post.</p> <p>Online engagement through the consultation website.</p> <p>Providing important information in both digital and non-digital formats and</p>	<p>The consultation newsletter was directly mailed to all stakeholders within the PCZ.</p> <p>The Scheme website offered a digital platform for engagement, allowing individuals to access information on the Scheme and download copies of the consultation materials.</p> <p>Materials were also made available in both digital and non-digital formats, with arrangements in place to provide alternative formats, such as braille and large print, upon request.</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	providing alternative formats, such as braille and large print, upon request. Automated subtitles will be available at webinars to ensure each session is accessible.	The Livestorm platform enabled automated subtitles to be available for all webinar events.
<b>Enquiry channels</b>		
7.8	<p>The following enquiry channels were 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.</p> <p>These communication channels continue to be active throughout the pre-application period.</p> <p>Telephone: 0800 012 9882 monitored 9:00–17:30 weekdays (with an answerphone facility to take messages outside these hours). Email: <a href="mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk">info@greenhillsolar.co.uk</a>. People can email 24 hours a day, with emails being monitored 9:00–17:30 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 (no stamp or further details required). Should enquiries received via post require a response, this</p>	<p>Enquiry channels were monitored throughout the consultation period and responses were issued to stakeholders where required.</p> <p>The project team provided substantive responses within 10 working days. In exceptional circumstances where this was not possible, stakeholders were notified, and a holding response was sent.</p> <p>Responses to postal enquiries were issued within 10 working days and requests for printed copies of consultation materials and documents were fulfilled.</p>



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	will be issued within 10 working days of receipt. Urgent enquiries should be directed to the Scheme's email address or freephone telephone.	
<b>Responding to consultation</b>		
8.1	Between 7 November 2024 and 19 December 2024, people will be able to submit their feedback relating to the Scheme. All responses must be received by 23:59 on the closing date.	<p>Responses to the consultation were received between 7 November 2024 and 19 December 2024.</p> <p>Discretionary extensions were granted on a case-by-case basis to consultees contacted under s42 who expressed concerns about meeting the deadline of 23:59 on 19 December. A small number of new land interests were identified within the statutory consultation period; extensions to ensure that any new PIL had a minimum of six weeks to respond to consultation was provided when notifying these new PILs of the statutory consultation.</p> <p>An additional three-week period was allowed for postal feedback.</p>
8.1	Responses received after that date may not be considered. The Applicant will allow an additional two-week period to receive responses via post.	<p>Feedback received by post was accounted for during an additional three-week period following the close of the consultation.</p> <p>This extension was advertised on the website prior to the consultation deadline.</p>
8.1	Consultation responses can be made in the following ways: completing the feedback form online, which can be accessed	Feedback channels remained open and were monitored throughout the consultation period.



Section	Commitment	Complete/actions taken
	via the Scheme website ( <a href="http://www.greenhillsolar.co.uk">www.greenhillsolar.co.uk</a> ); 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 <a href="mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk">info@greenhillsolar.co.uk</a> or sent to FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM (no stamp or further details required); emailing comments to <a href="mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk">info@greenhillsolar.co.uk</a> ; and writing to us at FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM (no stamp or further details required).	All feedback received through these channels was noted and transcribed.  The feedback received was provided to the design and environmental assessment team to be taken into consideration.
8.1	In exceptional circumstances, the Applicant will take feedback over the phone; however, this will need to be arranged in advance.	While no requests were made for feedback to be given over the phone, these arrangements were in place throughout the consultation.
8.2	We will have a record and regard to all comments received during the consultation.	All feedback received within the allotted consultation period was carefully reviewed and taken into account.  Further evidence of this process, including how comments have been considered, is discussed in Appendix GH5.8_CR Appendix_Section 42 and Section 44 Applicant Responses – <b>[APP-031]</b> and Appendix GH5.10_CR Appendix_Section 47 and 48 Applicant Responses – <b>[APP-033]</b> .

## 6.5 Statement of compliance

- 6.5.1 As set out in this section, the Applicant published an s47 notice publicising the SoCC and made the SoCC available for the public to view at local information points and on the Scheme



website. Consultation activities were carried out in line with the SoCC, as set out in Section 6.4.

- 6.5.2 The Applicant considers that, in developing the SoCC and publishing the s47 notice, it has fully complied with the requirements of the Act and the relevant guidance relating to the pre-application procedure.

## 6.6 Publicity under Section 48

- 6.6.1 Section 48 of the Act requires the Applicant to publicise the proposed Application in accordance with Regulation 4 of the APFP Regulations.
- 6.6.2 Regulation 4 of the Act sets out what the publicity under s48 of the Act should entail. Specifically, Regulation 4 requires an applicant to publish the notice for at least two successive weeks in one or more local newspapers and once in a national newspaper. The Applicant placed notices in the London Gazette and The Guardian in addition to local publications (Table 6.4 and 6.5). Copies of the newspaper notice can be found in Appendix 9.2 in GH5.9\_CR Appendix\_Section 47 and 48 Consultation Notices – **[EX1/GH5.9\_A]**.
- 6.6.3 The notice published under s48 of the Act gave a deadline of 19 December 2024 for responses.

**Table 6.5: National newspapers in which the s48 notice was published.**

Publication	Publisher	Format	Date of notice
The Guardian	Guardian News & Media (GNM)	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024
London Gazette	The Stationary Office	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024

**Table 6.6: Local newspapers in which the s48 notice was published.**

Publication	Format	Date of notice one	Date of notice two
Northamptonshire Telegraph	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024	Thursday 7 November 2024
Milton Keynes Citizen	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024	Thursday 7 November 2024
Times and Citizen (Bedfordshire)	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024	Thursday 7 November 2024

- 6.6.4 In accordance with Department for Communities and Local Government Planning Act 2008: Guidance on the Pre-application Process (2015), the Applicant aligned the publication of the s47 and s48 notices, reflecting that the s48 consultation was held in parallel with the s42 and s47 consultations.
- 6.6.5 All consultees identified under s42 of the Act were provided with a copy of the s48 notice, as required by Regulation 13 of the EIA Regulations. These bodies are set out in Appendix 7.4 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials – **[EX1/GH5.7\_A]**.



## 6.7 Statement of compliance

- 6.7.1 The Applicant published its s48 notice as set out in the Act and the APFP Regulations. The notice contained the required information, including a deadline for comments on the proposals that coincided with other statutory dates given. The s48 consultation was held in parallel with the s42 and s47 consultations.





## 7 Statutory consultation under Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008

### 7.1 Overview of the statutory consultation

- 7.1.1 Held in accordance with the Act, the pre-application statutory consultation aimed to ensure that the community, landowners, stakeholders and technical consultees had the opportunity to understand and influence the Applicant's proposals.
- 7.1.2 The statutory consultation was held for six weeks from Thursday 7 November to Thursday 19 December 2024.
- 7.1.3 The consultation sought feedback on all aspects of the Applicant's plans for the Scheme, including:
- 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 in June 2024. As the site was included in the Scheme after the non-statutory consultation, the Applicant provided the opportunity for residents to share their feedback on its inclusion. The inclusion of Site A.2 was announced on the Scheme website via a 'News' update, in a meeting with planning officers from host local councils and in the EIA Scoping Report;
  - the Cable Route Search Area;
  - the PEIR, containing preliminary assessments of likely environmental effects associated with the Scheme's 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; and
  - possible community benefits, including funding for local initiatives.
- 7.1.4 The consultation also sought general feedback and other local issues or sensitivities that the Applicant should be aware of.
- 7.1.5 The Applicant also sought feedback on the key design changes that were informed by the non-statutory consultation and EIA Scoping Opinions.
- 7.1.6 Examples of the changes to the design include:
- solar panels have been sited further eastwards at Green Hill A to reduce the impact on views from the residential properties on Newland Road;
  - a number of fields have had solar panels removed from the design of Green Hill C, owing to potential landscape, ecology, and glint and glare impacts;

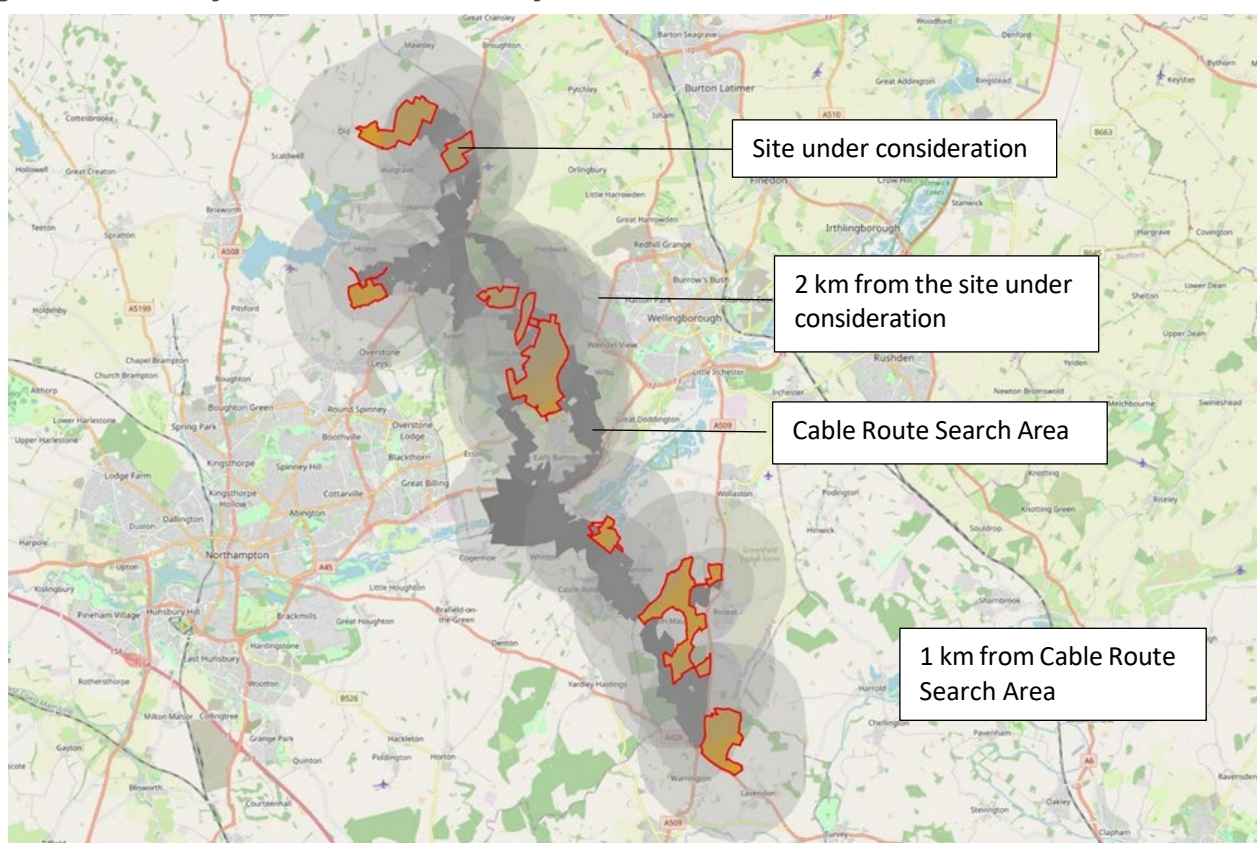


- a number of fields have had solar panels removed from the design of Green Hill E, owing to impacts on residential views from Earls Barton;
- a number of fields have had solar panels removed from the design of Green Hill F, owing to visual impacts on heritage assets at Easton Maudit and Grendon, ecology constraints and archaeological interests; and
- a series of permissive paths have been proposed as part of the Scheme, following ongoing consultations. These paths, planned around Green Hill E and F, aim to connect and enhance existing routes while also improving safety.

### **Primary Consultation Zone**

- 7.1.7 The Applicant extended the PCZ for the statutory consultation following comments from LPAs on the draft SoCC. The PCZ was extended within the area of the host LPAs of North Northamptonshire, West Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes, and the neighbouring authority of Bedford Borough Council.
- 7.1.8 The PCZ extended up to 2 km from the Scheme's site boundaries (within which the solar arrays and associated development would be located) and 1 km from the Cable Route Search Area (within which the electrical cables connecting the sites and Grendon Substation would be located). The changes to the PCZ were made following the comments on the draft SoCC made by North Northamptonshire Council, West Northamptonshire Council and Milton Keynes City Council. The changes resulted in the extension of the PCZ into Bedford Borough Council.
- 7.1.9 The changes to the PCZ were considered sufficient to engage with members of the local community who would be most impacted by the Scheme and most likely to operate within the vicinity of it.
- 7.1.10 Figure 1 shows the new PCZ for the statutory consultation. The PCZ contains approximately 13,400 residential and business addresses.

**Figure 1: Statutory consultation – Primary Consultation Zone.**



7.1.11 In addition to local residents and businesses in the vicinity of the Scheme (as defined by the PCZ), the Applicant consulted with the following groups see Appendix 3.2 (GH5.3\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials – **[APP-025-026]**) for the early- engagement consultee list):

- landowners with an interest in the Scheme;
- statutory consultees, such as:
  - host parish councils;
  - host and neighbouring planning authorities;
  - technical stakeholders, such as the Environment Agency and Historic England; and
- non-statutory consultees, such as:
  - MPs;
  - community groups, voluntary organisations and faith communities;
  - environmental groups in the PCZ;
  - schools and colleges in the PCZ;
  - seldom-heard groups.

7.1.12 Consultation was undertaken in line with the requirements of the Act and Regulations 3 and 4 of the APFP Regulations. According to the requirements in ss42, 47 and 48 of the Act, notices about the consultation were published in local and national newspapers, and s42 consultees were notified via an s42 notice letter (Appendix 7.1) and a s48 notice (Appendix 7.2) in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials – **[EX1/GH5.7\_A]**.

7.1.13 The s48 notices were advertised in the publications listed in Table 7.1 and 7.2.

**Table 7.1: National newspapers in which the s48 notice was published.**

Publication	Publisher	Format	Date of notice
The Guardian	Guardian News & Media (GNM)	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024
London Gazette	The Stationary Office	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024

**Table 7.2: Local newspapers in which the s48 notice was published.**

Publication	Format	Date of notice one	Date of notice two
Northamptonshire Telegraph	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024	Thursday 7 November 2024
Milton Keynes Citizen	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024	Thursday 7 November 2024
Times and Citizen (Bedfordshire)	Print	Thursday 31 October 2024	Thursday 7 November 2024

7.1.14 The Applicant also requested parish councils and parish meetings to publicise the consultation on their noticeboards (Appendix 7.3 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials – **[EX1/GH5.7\_A]**).

7.1.15 Formal notifications were issued to stakeholders on 30 October 2024, as required by s42 of the Act.

7.1.16 During the statutory consultation, the Applicant used a range of methods to ensure an inclusive, meaningful and open consultation. The consultation used digital and non-digital methods of communication to ensure it could be accessed by all stakeholders.

7.1.17 As part of the statutory consultation, the Applicant invited members of the public to four in-person events and three online webinars. The list of the consultation events can be found in Table 7.3.

**Table 7.3: List of consultation events.**

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, Olney 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
Wednesday 20 November 2024	18:00–19:00	Webinar – Livestorm
Tuesday 26 November 2024	18:00–19:00	Webinar – Livestorm
Wednesday 4 December 2024	12.30–13.30	Webinar – Livestorm

7.1.18 The Applicant undertook in-person exhibitions and virtual webinars during the statutory consultation. The Applicant welcomed 308 attendees across four exhibition events and 34 attendees across three webinars.

7.1.19 In addition to the consultation events, the Applicant met with local stakeholders to present the proposals for the Scheme. Table 7.4 provides a list of the stakeholder briefings during the statutory consultation.

**Table 7.4: List of stakeholder briefings.**

Date	Stakeholder (Name/organisation)
29 November 2024 (virtual)	Joint briefing with: Lavendon Parish Council members North Northamptonshire Councillor – Cllr Matthew Binley
27 November 2024	[name redacted], near neighbour to Green Hill A.2
11 December 2024 (virtual)	Moulton College
16 December 2024 (virtual)	Sarah Bool, MP
16 December 2024	Occupiers of Rectory Farm NN6 9PZ
18 December 2024	The Acorn Centre
19 December 2024	White Lodge, Walgrave, Northampton NN6 9PY
10 February 2025	Sywell Aerodrome
10 February 2025	Easton Maudit Airfield

7.1.20 The consultation materials used during the statutory consultation can be found in Table 7.5.

**Table 7.5: Consultation materials used during the statutory consultation.**

Consultation materials	
Material	Detail
Consultation Newsletter	<p>A consultation newsletter (Appendix 6.1 in GH5.6_CR Appendix_ Section 47 and Section 48 Statutory Consultation Materials – <b>[APP-029]</b>) posted to all addresses in the PCZ provided an overview of the Scheme, the consultation and how people could get involved. The newsletter indicated where the other consultation documents could be accessed and publicised the consultation events, including locations, dates and timings.</p> <p>The newsletter contained a QR code directing residents to the website.</p> <p>Copies of the newsletter were also emailed to stakeholders (Appendix 6.2) and interested parties who had signed up to the Scheme's mailing list.</p>
Project Information Booklet	<p>A booklet containing a summary of the proposals for Green Hill Solar Farm (Appendix 6.2 in GH5.6_CR Appendix_ Section 47 and Section 48 Statutory Consultation Materials – <b>[APP-029]</b>) and how the design of the solar farm developed following the non-statutory consultation, including maps illustrating the Scheme.</p> <p>The booklet also contained information on the public consultation events, such as the date, time and location of the exhibitions and webinars, and listed the information deposit points for the consultation materials.</p>
Consultation Feedback Form	<p>A form to allow people to provide feedback on the proposals (Appendix 6.3 in GH5.6_CR Appendix_ Section 47 and Section 48 Statutory Consultation Materials - <b>[APP-029]</b>). This was available in hard copy at local information points and consultation events. A digital copy was also accessible via the website.</p>
Preliminary Environmental Informational Report (PEIR) and Non-Technical Summary (NTS)	<p>The PEIR contained a summary of the Scheme and a preliminary assessment of the potential significant environmental effects and the initial strategies to mitigate adverse effects. The PEIR was based on information available at that time. However, the assessments are being developed and updated as the design of the Scheme is updated and further detail becomes available. This will be reported in an ES submitted with the Application.</p> <p>An NTS of the PEIR was made available to download free of charge from the website and electronically at local information points. Hard copies of the PEIR and the NTS were made available at local information points where access to the internet was not available.</p>





Exhibition materials	<p>The consultation events contained exhibition boards (Appendix 6.4 in GH5.6_CR Appendix_ Section 47 and Section 48 Statutory Consultation Materials - [APP-029]) to provide details of the Scheme, as well as to present maps of the proposed development.</p> <p>The exhibition boards were available at consultation events and on the website following the first consultation event.</p>
Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)	<p>The SoCC was made available online throughout the consultation and free of charge in hard copy on request. A hard copy of the SoCC was also available to inspect at local information points.</p>
Materials in alternative formats	<p>Upon request, all documents were made available in alternative accessible formats, such as braille and large print. Requests for translated summary documents were to be considered on a case-by-case basis but were not requested.</p>

7.1.21 The enquiry channels listed in Table 7.6 were 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 communication channels will continue to be active throughout the pre-application period.

**Table 7.6: Enquiry channels available to members of the community during the consultation.**

Method	Contact details	Hours of operation
Telephone	0800 012 9882	9:00–17:30 on weekdays (with an answerphone facility to take messages outside these hours).
Email	<a href="mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk">info@greenhillsolar.co.uk</a>	Members of the public were able to email 24 hours a day, with emails being monitored between 9:00 and 17:30 on weekdays. The development team aimed to acknowledge all emails received as soon as practicable and to provide a substantive response within 10 working days of receipt.
Post	FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM	Respondents were able to provide their responses in written format. Urgent enquiries were directed to the Scheme's email address or freephone line.





7.1.22 The Applicant used a variety of methods to make people in the PCZ aware of the Scheme and advertise the consultation in addition to the activities already outlined. These methods included those in Table 7.7.

**Table 7.7: Methods used to make people in the PCZ aware of the Scheme and to advertise the consultation.**

Method	Detail
Press release	A local media press release, separate from the section notices, provided wider notification to local stakeholders of the consultation events, reaching stakeholders outside the PCZ. The press release was circulated to local media outlets.
Emails and s42 letters	Emails were sent to stakeholders informing them of the statutory consultation, upcoming events, how to request further information and how to give feedback.  Section 42 consultees (Appendix 7.1 in GH5.7_CR Appendix_Section 42 Consultation Materials - <b>[EX1/GH5.7_A]</b> ) were identified and were sent an s42 letter and a copy of the s48 notice on 30 October 2024. The s42 letter informed consultees of the statutory consultation and invited them to provide their feedback on the proposed Scheme.
Scheme website	The Scheme website was updated on the launch of the statutory consultation. This update included details of consultation events, consultation materials, information on how to give feedback on the Scheme's proposals and details about a digital feedback form on the website.
Statutory notices and adverts	Statutory notices to publicise the consultation and the SoCC were published in local and national news publications in advance of the consultation launching.
Local information points	Hard copies of the Project Information Booklet and the Consultation Feedback Form were available to take home from a number of local information points within the PCZ.  A copy of the SoCC, the PEIR and the NTS of the PEIR were also available to inspect at locations that did not have access to the internet.
Site notices	Notices were placed in publicly accessible locations within the indicative Order Limits to notify local landowners and residents of the consultation (Appendix 9.3 in GH5.9_CR Appendix_Section 47 and 48 Consultation Notices - <b>[EX1/GH5.9_A]</b> ).  A map (Appendix 9.3 in GH5.9_CR Appendix_Section 47 and 48 Consultation Notices - <b>[EX1/GH5.9_A]</b> ) shows the locations of the 40 site notices that were placed in locations across the districts of West Northamptonshire, North Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes.



	The site notices were checked regularly throughout the statutory consultation period, and any damaged or removed notices were replaced.
--	---

7.1.23 Respondents were able to provide their response by:

- completing the feedback form online, which could be accessed via the Scheme website ([www.greenhillsolar.co.uk](http://www.greenhillsolar.co.uk));
- completing a printed feedback form, which could be collected from a consultation event or a local information point or on request by contacting the Community Relations Team. Completed forms could be handed to the development team at events, scanned and emailed back to [info@greenhillsolar.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk); and
- writing to at FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM (no stamp or further details required).

7.1.24 A total of 529 responses were received during this round of engagement through the online feedback form, hard copy letters, emails and hard copy feedback forms.



## 8 Statutory consultation under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008

### 8.1 Overview: Requirements and guidance

8.1.1 Section 42 of the Act states that the Applicant must consult the following 's42 consultees' about a proposed Application for a DCO:

- Section 42(1)(a) – such persons as may be prescribed;
- Section 42(1)(b) – each local authority that is within s43;
- Section 42(1)(c) – the Greater London Authority if the land is in Greater London (this is not relevant to the Scheme);
- Section 42(1)(aa) – the Marine Management Organisation, in any case where the project would affect, or would be likely to affect, any of the areas specific in subsection 2 of s42 of the Act (e.g. tidal or offshore areas) – therefore not considered further in this section; and
- Section 42(1)(d) – each person who is within one or more of the categories set out in s44.

### 8.2 Identification of consultees

8.2.1 In relation to s42(1)(a), the Applicant consulted all persons listed as a prescribed consultee notified by PINS on behalf of the SoS under Regulation 11(1)(a) and (c) of the EIA Regulations referred to in this Report as the 's42 consultees' and listed in (Appendix 7.4 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials - [EX1/GH5.7\_A]).

8.2.2 All of these s42 consultees were issued the same Scheme information and were included in the same way in the s42 consultation as the s42 consultees identified by PINS on behalf of the SoS.

8.2.3 Scheme information was issued to s42 consultees in writing by post and/or email, depending on contact details available to the Applicant.

8.2.4 In relation to s42(1)(b), the local authorities under the definitions set out in s43 of the Act were consulted.

8.2.5 For the purposes of s42(1)(d), a person is within s44 of the Act if the Applicant, after making diligent enquiry, knows that the person is an owner, lessee, tenant or occupier of the land; is interested in the land or has power to sell and convey the land; or is entitled to make a relevant claim if the order sought by the proposed Application were to be made and fully implemented.

8.2.6 Section 45(1) of the Act states that the Applicant, when consulting a stakeholder under s42, must provide notification of the deadline for responses to the consultation. Section 45(2) states that such a deadline must not be less than 28 days. The Applicant gave s42 consultees a period of 42 days (from 7 November to 19 December 2024) for consultation responses. This



deadline for responses was communicated in an s42 covering letter (Appendix 7.1 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials – **[EX1/GH5.7\_A]**).

- 8.2.7 In the instances where an s42 notification letter was not delivered, the Applicant sought alternative contact information and re-issued the s42 letter with a new deadline for response to the consultation to ensure all notifications were delivered.
- 8.2.8 During the public consultation, the Applicant's records indicated that Broughton Parish Council did not receive the s42 notification letter. The Applicant found an alternative address and provided an extension for their response to the consultation.

### 8.3 Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)

- 8.3.1 The PEIR and PEIR NTS were produced as part of the statutory consultation documents for the s42 consultation with the s42 consultees (and made available for the s47 statutory consultation).
- 8.3.2 The PEIR comprised the information specified in Regulation 12(2) of the EIA Regulations compiled by the Applicant and the information that is reasonably required for consultation bodies to develop an informed view of the likely significant environmental effects of the Scheme.
- 8.3.3 A PEIR NTS was also produced, recognising that some s42 consultees might have wished to view a more easily digestible document.

### 8.4 Identification of consultees under Section 43 of the Act

- 8.4.1 Section 42(1)(b) of the Act places a duty for the Applicant to consult each local authority that is within s43.
- 8.4.2 Section 43 defines what a local authority is for the purposes of s42 (i.e. any local authority in whose area the proposed development would be sited and neighbouring authorities sharing a boundary with the Scheme).
- 8.4.3 Local authorities are classified by the Act as 'A', 'B', 'C' or 'D', depending on whether the development is sited in their area ('B' and 'C') or not ('A' and 'D') and depending on the tier of the local authority.
- 8.4.4 The Applicant identified and consulted with local authorities identified in accordance with s43 of the Act. These local authorities are listed in Table 8.1 and referred to in this Report as 's43 consultees'.

**Table 8.1: Local authorities identified as s43 consultees.**

Local authority	Classification under Section 43
North Northamptonshire Council	B
West Northamptonshire Council	B



Milton Keynes City Council	B
Bedfordshire Borough Council	A
Central Bedfordshire Council	A
Buckinghamshire Council	A
Cherwell District Council	A
Stratford-on-Avon District Council	A
Rugby Borough Council	A
Harborough District Council	A
Rutland County Council	A
Peterborough City Council	A
Huntingdonshire District Council	A
South Kesteven District Council	A
Oxfordshire County Council	A
Warwickshire County Council	A
Leicestershire County Council	A
Lincolnshire County Council	A
Cambridgeshire County Council	A

8.4.5 The Applicant notified s43 consultees of the statutory consultation by issuing the following package of correspondence on 30 October 2024 in writing by post:

- an s42 cover letter, including a link to the consultation materials on the Scheme website (Appendix 7.1 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Material - **[EX1/GH5.7\_A]**); and
- a copy of the notice publicising the Scheme under s48 of the Act (Appendix 7.2 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials - **[EX1/GH5.7\_A]**), including details of the public consultation events and the locations of where the consultation documents could be viewed, such as the PEIR, the NTS and the SoCC.

8.4.6 An extension was provided to consultees who responded that they could not provide a response within the deadline and requested an extension.

8.4.7 The Applicant provided an extension to West Northamptonshire Council and Bedford Borough Council and requested their submission by 17 January 2025.



## 8.5 Identification of consultees under Section 44 of the Act

- 8.5.1 Section 42(1)(d) of the Act places a duty for the Applicant to consult each person within one or more of the categories set out in s44.
- 8.5.2 The Applicant sought to identify the s44(1)(d) consultees by undertaking a diligent enquiry before the statutory consultation commenced. This included reviewing the public data (e.g. the Land Registry), sending out a Land Interest Questionnaire, undertaking site visits and erecting site notices.
- 8.5.3 The Applicant issued consultation materials to 364 s44 consultees. These packs were issued before the statutory consultation, which ran from 7 November to 19 December 2024.
- 8.5.4 The Applicant notified s44 consultees by issuing the following package of correspondence on 26 and 27 October 2024 in writing by post:
- an s44 cover letter produced on 25 October 2024, including a link to the consultation materials on the Scheme website; and
  - a copy of the notice publicising the Scheme under s48 of the Act, including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be viewed, such as the PEIR, the NTS and the SoCC.
- 8.5.5 In the event of unknown landowners, the Applicant initially displayed unregistered site notices and made site visits to query ownership with locals. The Applicant also contacted PILs using identified contact details to query the ownership of any adjoining land.
- 8.5.6 A map (Appendix 9.3 in Appendix 9.3 in GH5.9\_CR Appendix\_Section 47 and 48 Consultation Notices - [EX1/GH5.9\_A]) shows the locations of the 40 section 48 notices that were placed in locations across West Northamptonshire, North Northamptonshire and Milton Keynes.

## 8.6 Duty to notify the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) of the proposed Application under Section 46 of the Planning Act 2008

- 8.6.1 Prior to commencing an s47 consultation, the Applicant notified the SoS of its intention to submit an application for development consent for the Scheme under s46 of the Act.
- 8.6.2 The notification was sent to PINS electronically on 30 October 2024, and included the following attachments:
- Section 46 notification letter, including a link to the consultation materials on the Scheme website (Appendix 7.5 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials - [EX1/GH5.7\_A]);
  - example copies of the s42 covering letters (Appendix 7.1 in in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials - [EX1/GH5.7\_A]) (one letter type being for s42 consultees and the other one for s44 consultees);



- site plan showing the location of the Scheme (included in Appendix 7.6 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials - **[EX1/GH5.7\_A]**); and
- a copy of the notice publicising the Application under s48 of the Act (Appendix 7.2 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials - **[EX1/GH5.7\_A]**) (including details of the public consultation events and the locations where the consultation documents could be inspected free of charge).

8.6.3 PINS, on behalf of the SoS, acknowledged receipt of the notification on 1 November 2024. A copy of this acknowledgement is included in Appendix 7.7 in GH5.7\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials - **[EX1/GH5.7\_A]**).

## 8.7 Undertaking the Section 42 consultation

- 8.7.1 In summary, s42 consultees (including those defined under s43, s44 and previously unidentified landowners) were notified of the commencement of the s42 consultation in writing on or before 30 October 2024. Consultation materials and a cover letter were provided.
- 8.7.2 The PEIR formed part of the s42 consultation document under s45(3) of the Act. Section 42 consultees were also directed towards the s47 community consultation materials.
- 8.7.3 The s42 consultation period, commencing on 7 November and ending on 19 December 2024, provided a response period of 42 days (therefore exceeding the minimum 28-day statutory period set out in s45(2) of the 2008 Act).
- 8.7.4 In total, 43 responses were received from s42 consultees.
- 8.7.5 A more detailed record of s42 feedback to the statutory consultation and the Applicant's response is provided in Appendix GH5.8\_CR Appendix\_Section 42 Applicant Responses-**[APP-035]**.

## 8.8 Statement of compliance with formal consultation under Section 42

- 8.8.1 In summary, the Applicant fully complied with ss42 and 44–46 of the 2008 Act by undertaking the following activities:
- the Applicant consulted with such persons as may be prescribed (s42(1)(a)–(d)) and relevant to the Scheme, including landowners under s44;
  - several additional non-prescribed consultees were scoped in as s42 consultees;
  - notification of the Scheme under s46 was provided to the SoS on 30 October 2024, before the start of the consultation period; and
  - a total response period of 42 days was provided for the s42 consultation, exceeding the statutory period of 28 days.





## 9 Section 47 statutory consultation: Responses received and issues raised

### 9.1 Approach to consultation feedback reporting

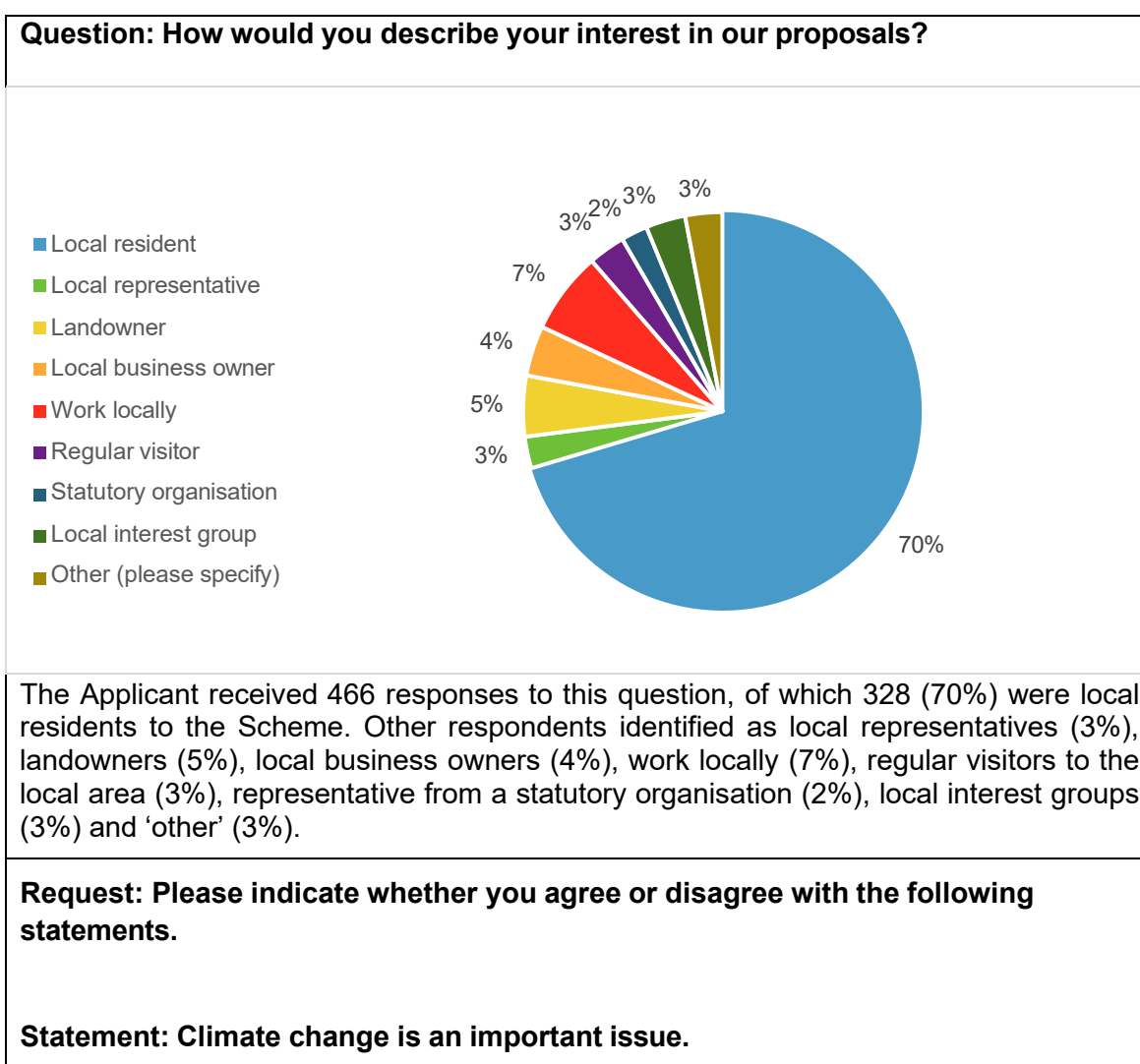
- 9.1.1 The statutory consultation was held over a six-week period between Thursday 7 November and Thursday 19 December 2024.
- 9.1.2 The Applicant invited feedback to be submitted in writing or online. Respondents were able to respond to the statutory consultation using several methods:
- completing a feedback form online, which could be accessed via the Scheme website ([www.greenhillsolar.co.uk](http://www.greenhillsolar.co.uk));
  - completing a printed feedback form, which could be collected from a consultation event or local information point or on request by contacting the development team;
  - completed forms could be handed to the development team at events, scanned and emailed back to [info@greenhillsolar.co.uk](mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk) or posted to FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM (no stamp or further details required);
  - emailing comments to [info@greenhillsolar.co.uk](mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk); and
  - writing to FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM (no stamp or further details required).
- 9.1.3 Guidance on how to provide feedback was communicated in correspondence sent to consultees and included in all consultation materials.
- 9.1.4 During the statutory consultation, the Applicant received 529 pieces of feedback. This included:
- 278 responses to the digital feedback form;
  - 170 written responses received by email;
  - 43 written responses received via freepost; and
  - 38 hard copy feedback forms via freepost.
- 9.1.5 The Applicant accepted responses delivered via freepost until 10 January 2025 to accommodate delays in the delivery of freepost mail.
- 9.1.6 The statutory consultation feedback form (both the paper copy and the digital version) included a mixture of closed (multiple-choice) and open-ended questions to encourage responses regarding the respondent's interest in the Scheme, the proposals, community benefits and the consultation process.
- 9.1.7 Therefore, the feedback received included a mixture of responses to closed (multiple-choice) and open-ended questions.

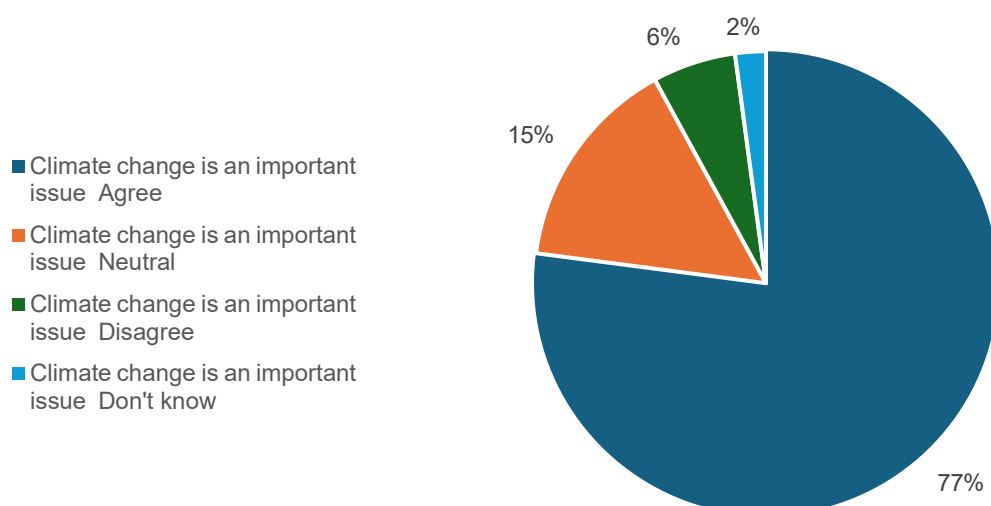


- 9.1.8 The Applicant reviewed every response received through online forms, email, letters and hard copy forms received via freepost. The Applicant transcribed the feedback and identified all common issues it contained.
- 9.1.9 The quantitative data from the closed questions are presented in Section 9.2 of this report.
- 9.1.10 A detailed summary of qualitative data from the s47 consultees during the statutory consultation, including how the Applicant has considered this feedback, can be found in Appendix GH5.10\_CR Appendix\_Section 47 and 48 Applicant Responses [APP-036] .

## 9.2 Quantitative analysis of responses received

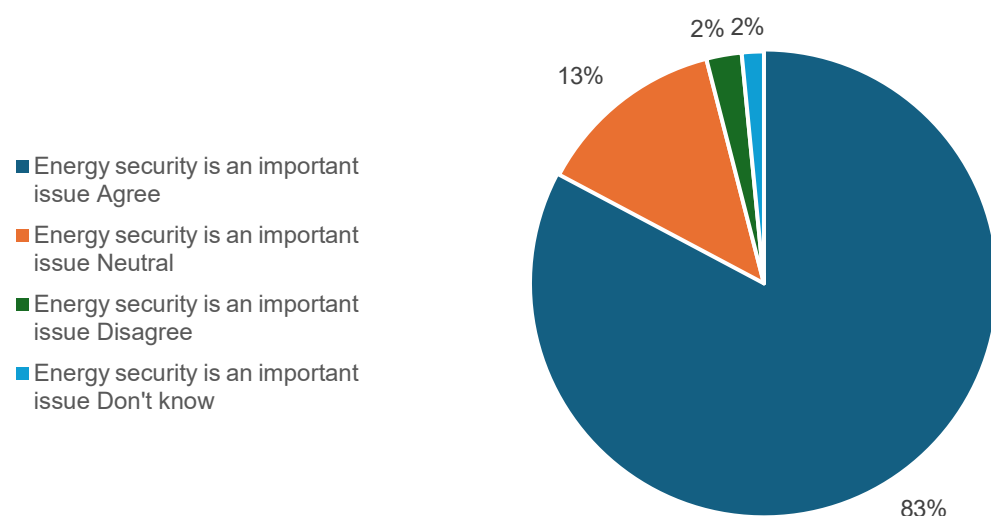
- 9.2.1 This section contains a summary of the quantitative data gathered by the Applicant through online forms, emails, letters and hard copy forms received via freepost.



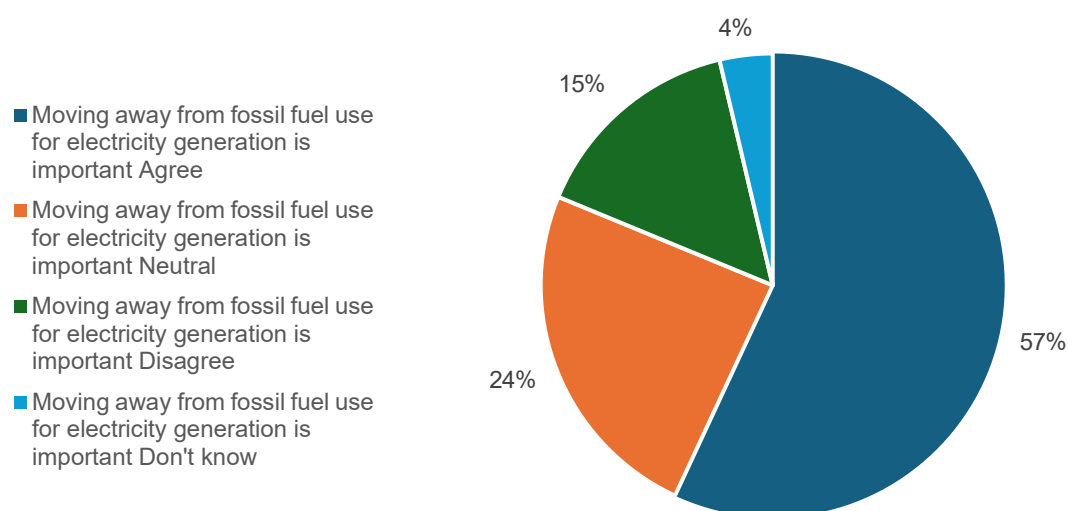


**The Applicant recorded 327 responses to this statement, of which 252 (77%) agreed with it. Only 49 respondents (15%) were neutral towards the statement, 19 respondents (6%) disagreed with it and 7 respondents (2%) did not know.**

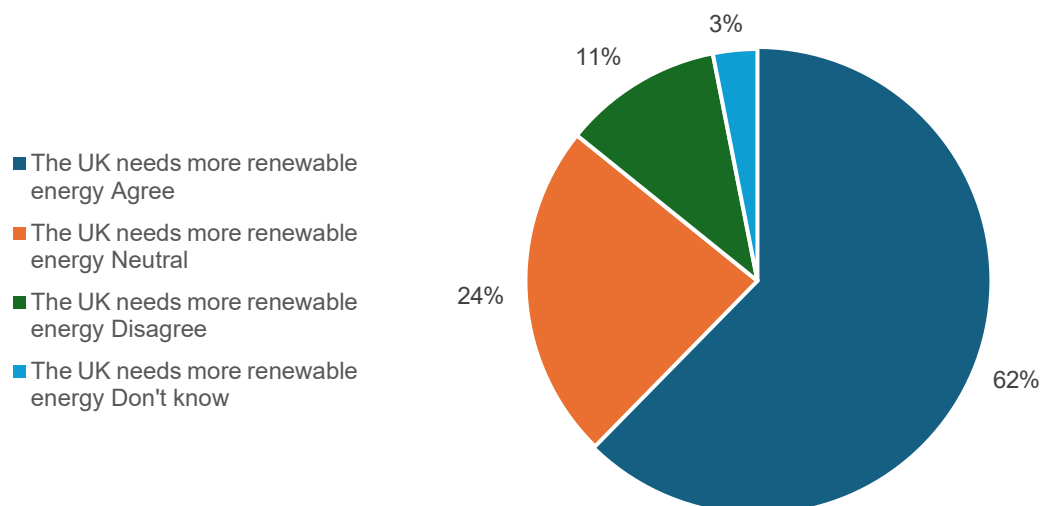
**Statement: Energy security is an important issue.**



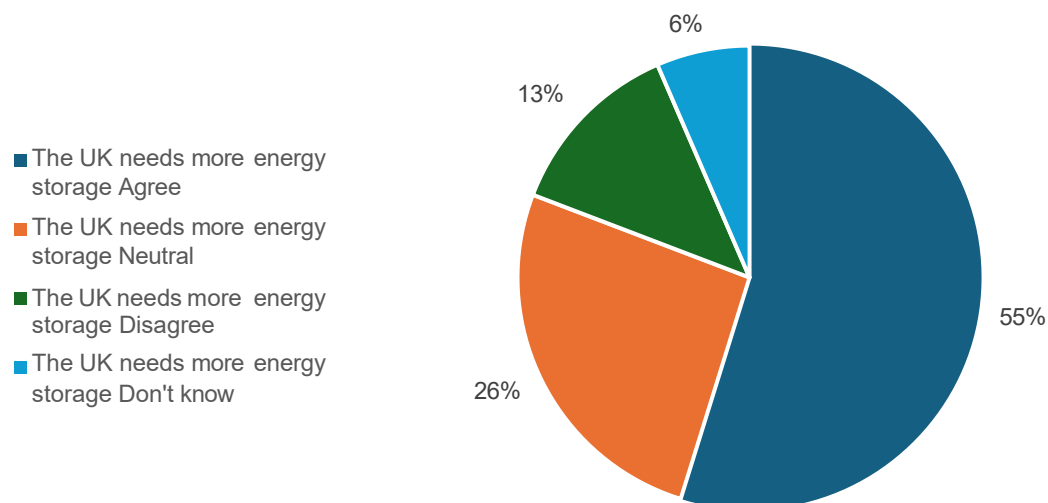
**The Applicant noted 325 responses to this statement, of which 269 respondents (83%) agreed with the statement. Only 13% of respondents (43) were neutral towards it, and 2% of respondents either disagreed (8) or did not know (5).**

**Statement: Moving away from fossil fuel use for electricity generation is important.**

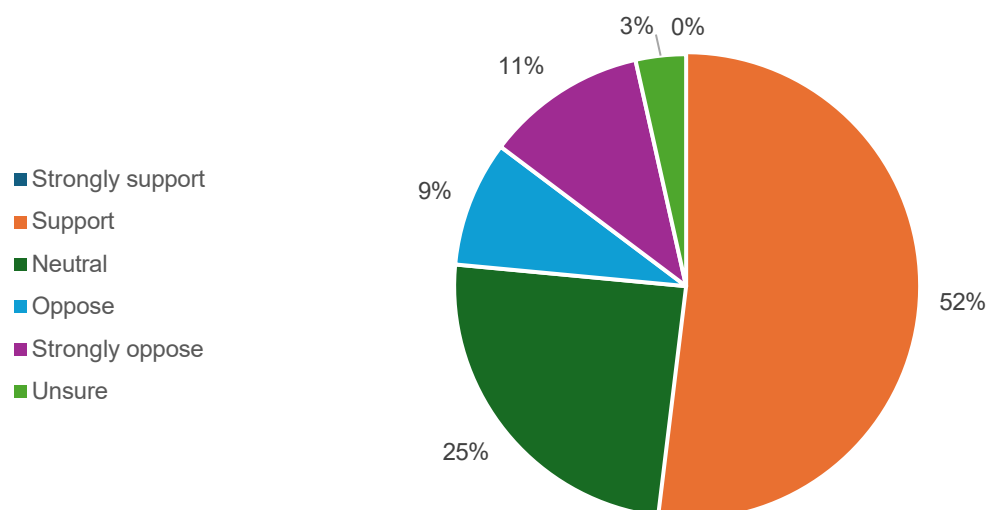
The Applicant noted 325 responses to this statement, of which 185 (57%) respondents agreed with it. Other responses to this statement included 79 respondents (24%) were neutral, 49 respondents (15%) disagreed and 12 respondents (4%) did not know.

**Statement: The UK needs more renewable energy.**

The Applicant noted 324 responses to this statement, of which 200 respondents (62%) agreed with it. Other responses to this statement include 78 respondents (24%) were neutral, 36 respondents (11%) disagreed and 10 respondents (3%) did not know.

**Statement: The UK needs more energy storage.**

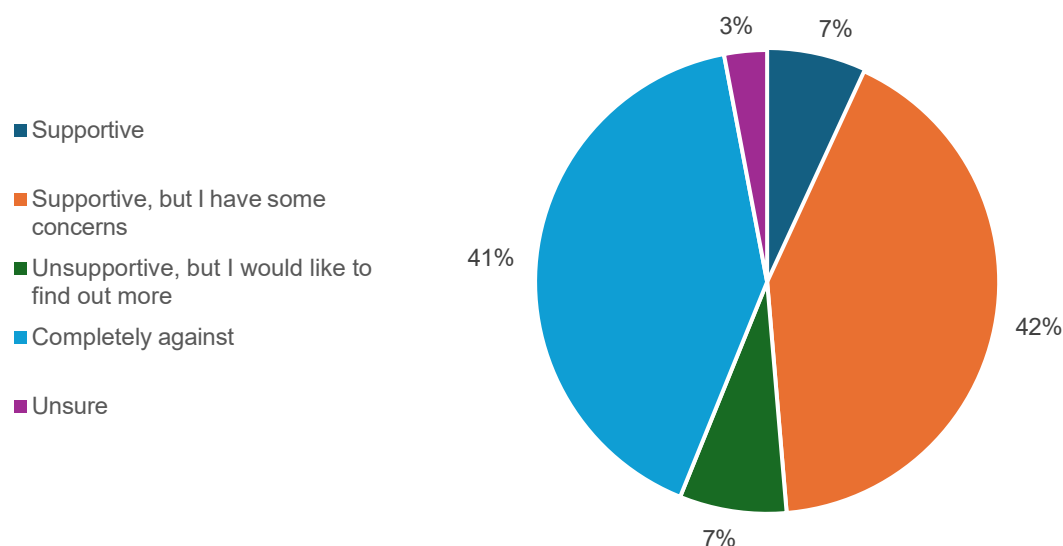
The Applicant noted 323 responses to this statement, of which 177 respondents (55%) agreed with it. Other responses to this statement include 84 respondents (26%) were neutral, 41 respondents (13%) disagreed and 21 respondents (6%) did not know.

**Request: Please tell us your views on solar energy.**

The Applicant noted 285 responses to this request, of which 148 respondents (52%) supported solar energy. However, 70 respondents (25%) were neutral and 32 respondents (11%) strongly opposed to it. The responses to the statement also included 25 respondents (9%) who opposed solar energy and 10 respondents (3%) who were unsure about it. No respondents (0%) strongly supported solar energy.

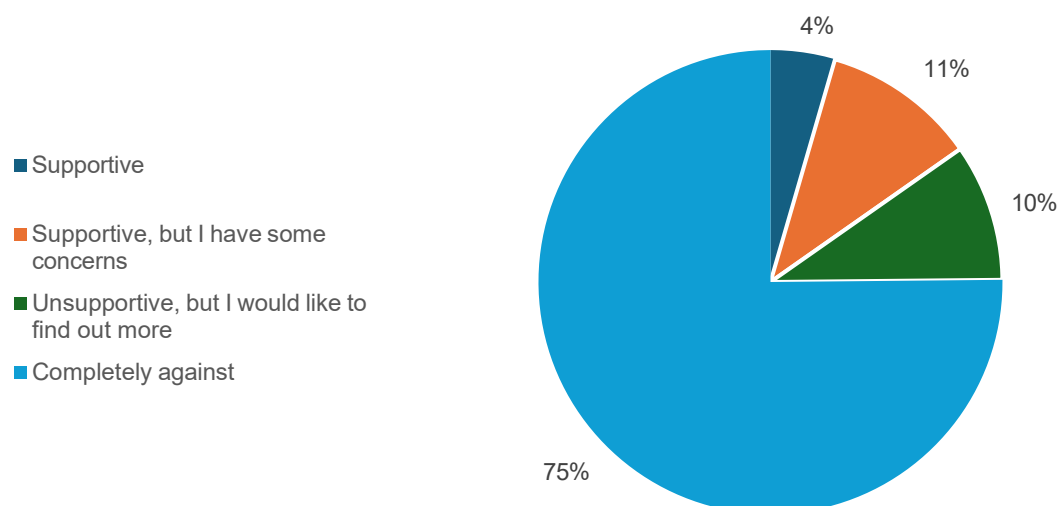


**Request: Please tell us your views on solar farms as part of the renewable infrastructure needed to meet the UK Government's commitment to achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.**



The Applicant noted 335 responses to this request, of which 140 respondents (42%) were supportive of it but had some concerns. The Applicant noted that 137 respondents (41%) were completely against the use of solar farms. Other responses included 25 respondents (7%) who were unsupportive but would like to find out more and 23 respondents (7%) who were supportive. Ten respondents (3%) were unsure.

**Question: Based on the information presented as part of the statutory consultation, how supportive are you of our proposals for Green Hill Solar Farm?**



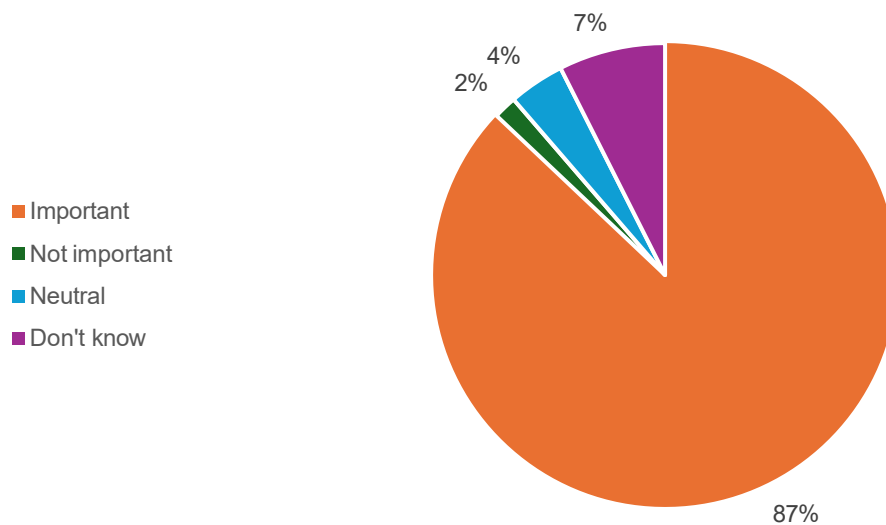
The Applicant noted 335 responses to this question, of which 251 respondents (75%) were completely against the proposals for Green Hill Solar Farm, 36 respondents (11%)



were supportive but had some concerns and 32 respondents (10%) were unsupportive but would like to find out more. Nine respondents (4%) were supportive.

**Request: Below we outline the design principles guiding the Green Hill Solar Farm scheme. Please let us know which of them are most important to you by ticking the relevant boxes below.**

**Design principle 1: Green Hill Solar Farm will be designed to be in harmony with the surrounding natural and built environment.**

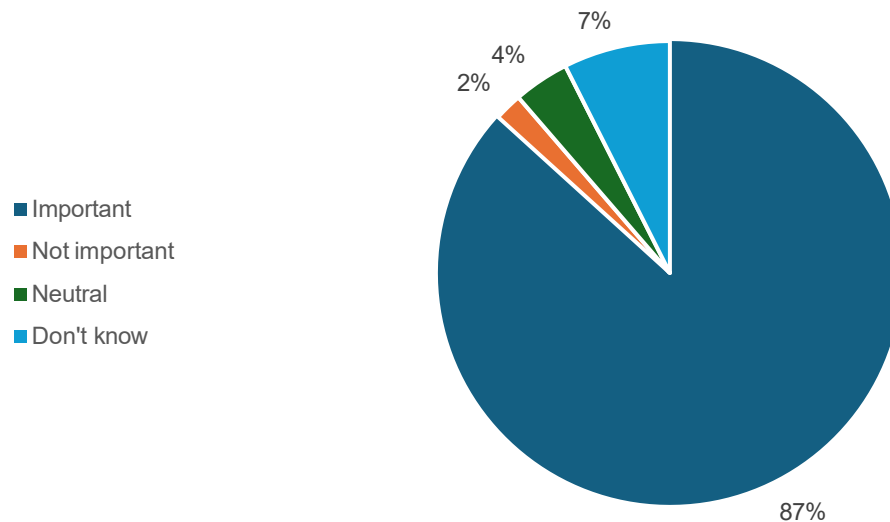


The Applicant noted 309 responses to this design principle, of which 269 respondents (87%) agreed that it was important, 23 respondents (7%) didn't know, 12 respondents (4%) were neutral and 5 respondents (2%) felt it was not important.



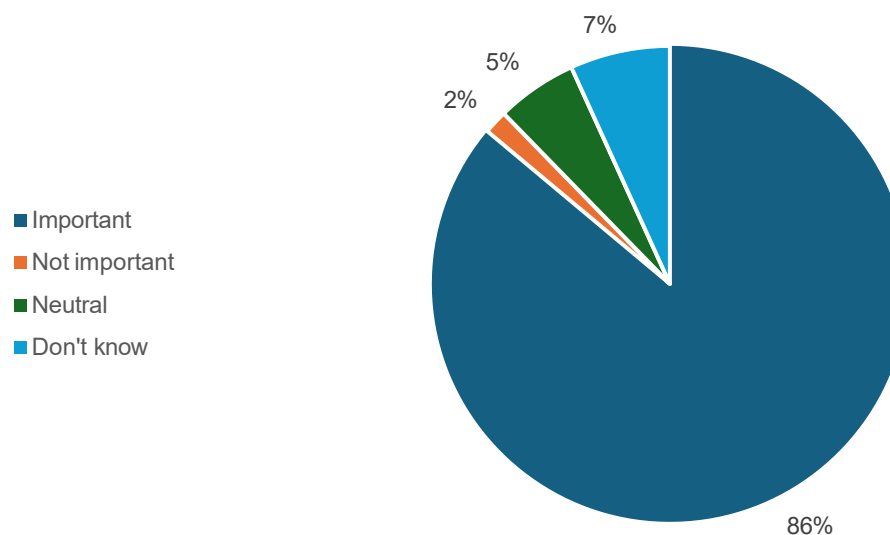


**Design principle 2: We are committed to mitigating impacts and minimising adverse effects on the environment throughout the Scheme's lifespan, including at decommissioning.**



The Applicant noted 309 responses to this design principle, of which 266 respondents (87%) felt it was important, 21 respondents (7%) didn't know, 17 respondents (4%) were neutral and 5 respondents (2%) said it was not important.

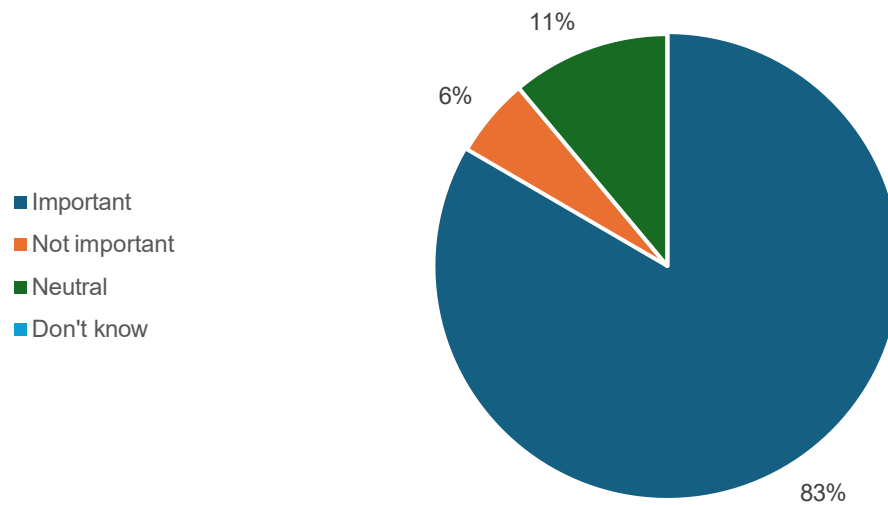
**Design principle 3: We will create new habitats and improve biodiversity. Soil will be restored to as good, if not better, quality by the end of the Scheme's lifespan.**



The Applicant noted 309 responses to this design principle, of which 266 respondents (86%) said it was important, 21 respondents (7%) didn't know, 17 respondents (5%) were neutral and 5 respondents (2%) said it was not important.

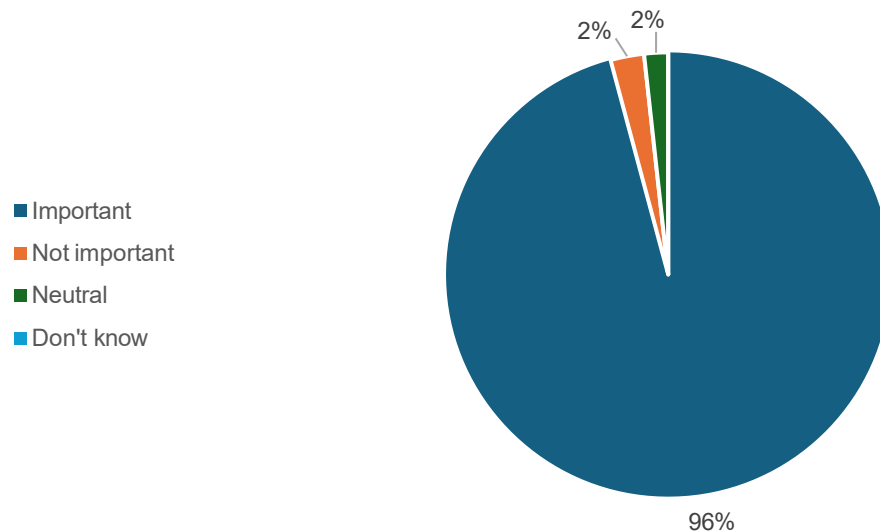


**Design principle 4: The Scheme will be designed to be flexible so it can adapt over time, responding to new technologies and climate change.**



The Applicant noted 271 responses to this design principle, of which 226 respondents (83%) said it was important, 30 respondents (11%) were neutral and 15 respondents (6%) said it was not important.

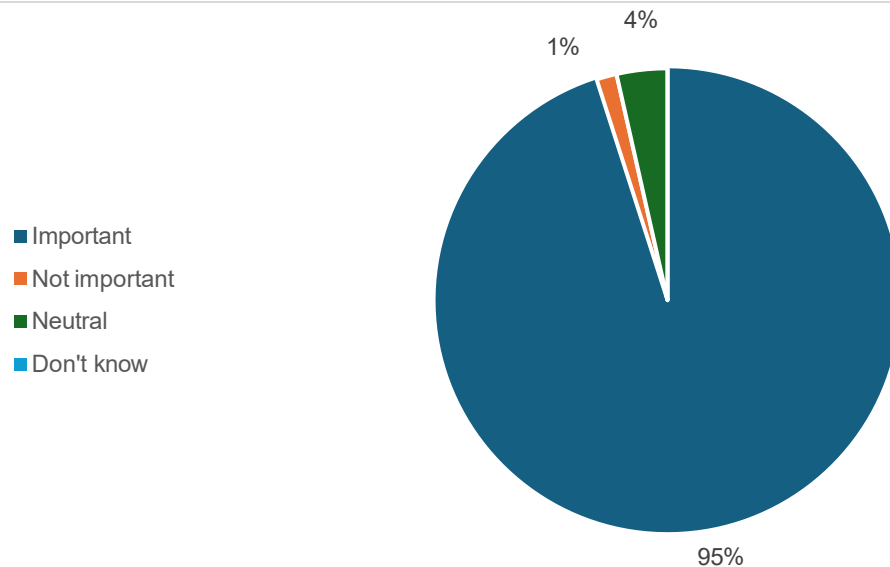
**Design principle 5: We will design the Scheme so that it has a reduced impact on air quality, traffic and noise, and safeguards the health and safety of local residents.**



The Applicant received 287 responses to this design principle, of which 275 respondents (96%) said it was important, 7 respondents (2%) said it was not important and 5 respondents (2%) were neutral.

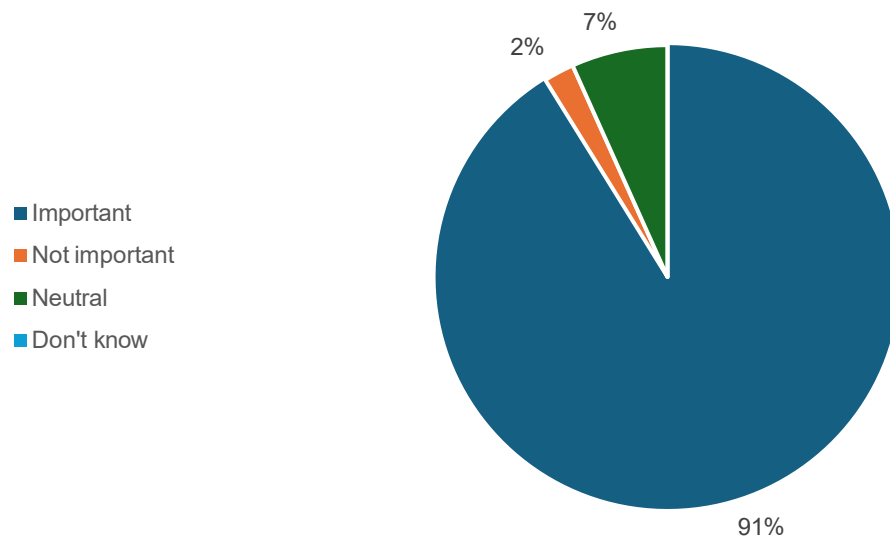


**Design principle 6: We will be sensitive to local heritage and create buffers with landscape screening to protect the landscape – including the built and natural environments.**



The Applicant noted 283 responses to this design principle, of which 269 respondents (95%) said it was important, 10 respondents (4%) were neutral and 4 respondents (1%) said it was not important.

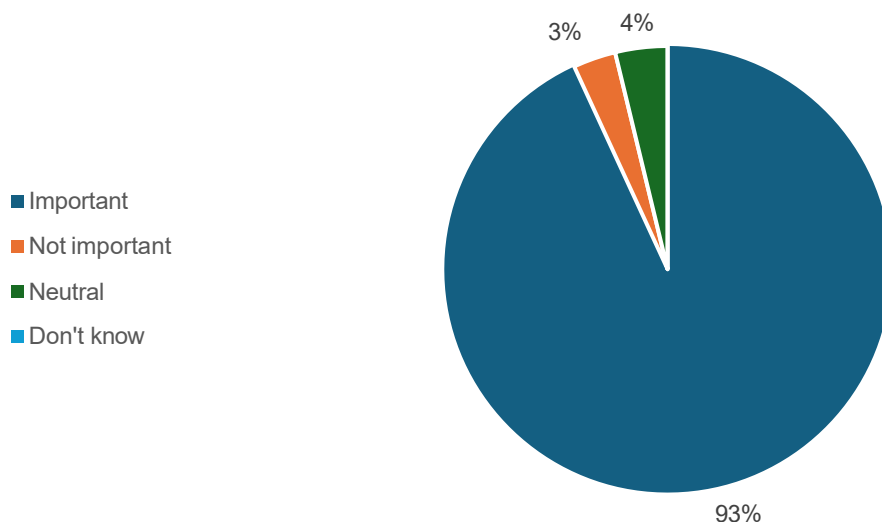
**Design principle 7: We will work in collaboration with stakeholders to promote and protect responsible land use.**



The Applicant noted 283 responses to this design principle, of which 258 respondents (91%) said it was important, 19 respondents (7%) were neutral and 6 respondents (2%) said it was not important.

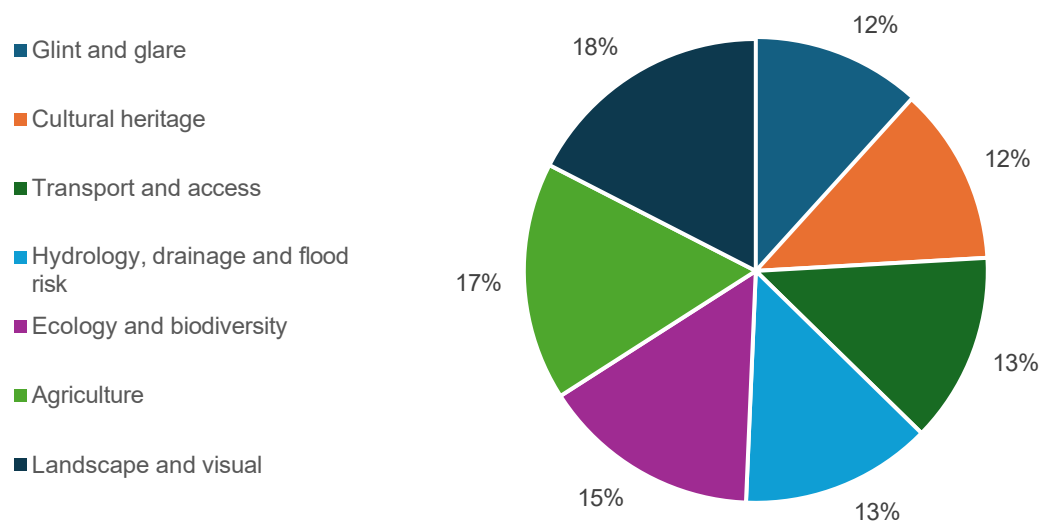


**Design principle 8: We will prioritise keeping public rights of way open and undisrupted throughout the project's life. Where possible, we will enhance local walking routes and paths.**



The Applicant noted 291 responses to this design principle, of which 271 respondents (93%) said it was important, 11 respondents (4%) were neutral and 9 respondents (3%) said it was not important.

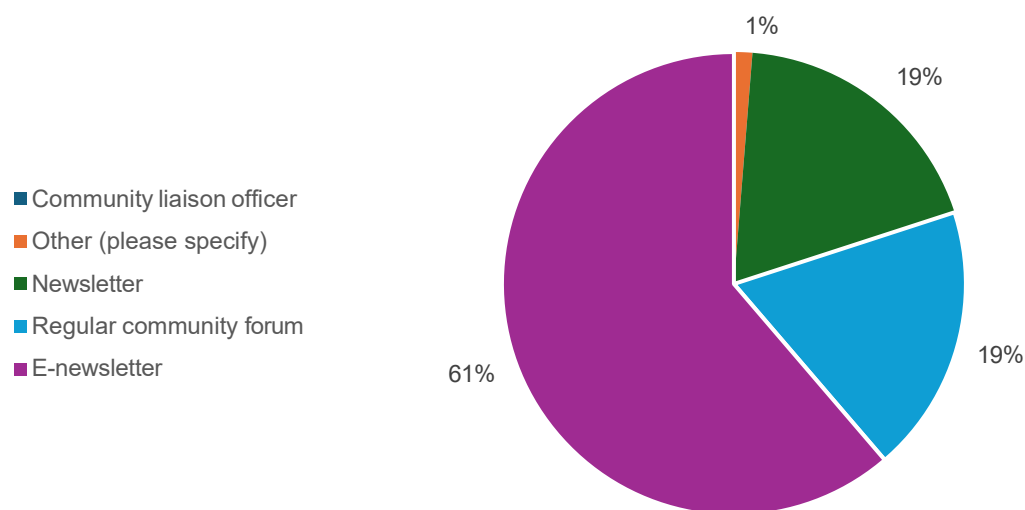
**Question: What environmental issues relating to the proposals are most important to you? Please tick the relevant boxes below.**



As respondents were able to select as many issues as they felt were important to them, the Applicant noted 1,776 responses to this question. The responses confirm that landscape and visual (18%) was the most important environmental issue to respondents, followed by agriculture (17%) and ecology and biodiversity (15%). Other responses included hydrology, drainage and flood risk (13%), transport and access (13%), cultural heritage (12%) and glint and glare (12%).

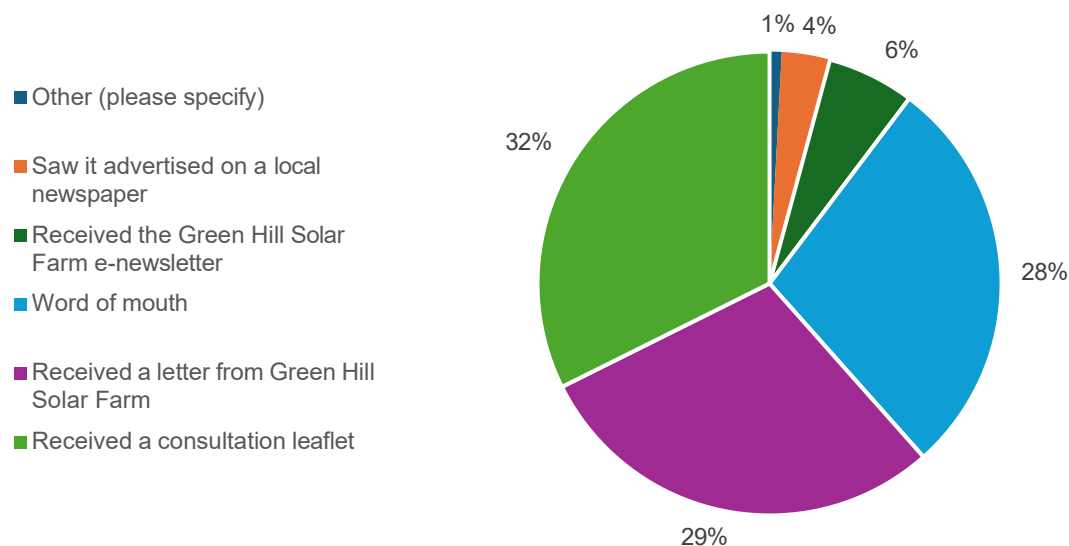


**Question: How would you like to be kept up to date during the construction, operation and decommissioning of Green Hill Solar Farm?**

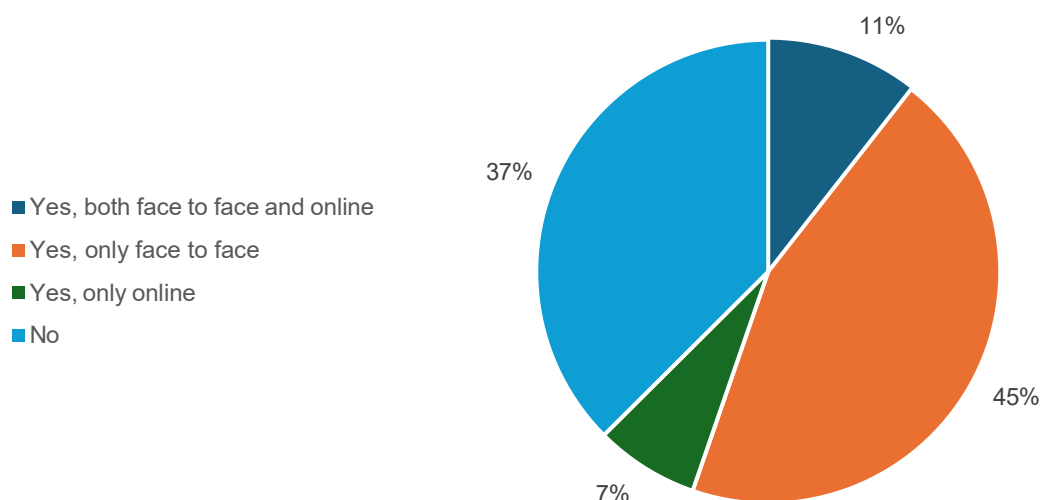


The Applicant noted 234 responses to this question, of which 144 respondents (61%) would like to be kept up to date via e-newsletter, 44 respondents (19%) via regular community forums, 44 respondents (19%) via newsletters and 3 respondents (1%) via other channels, such as through their local councillor and face-to-face meetings.

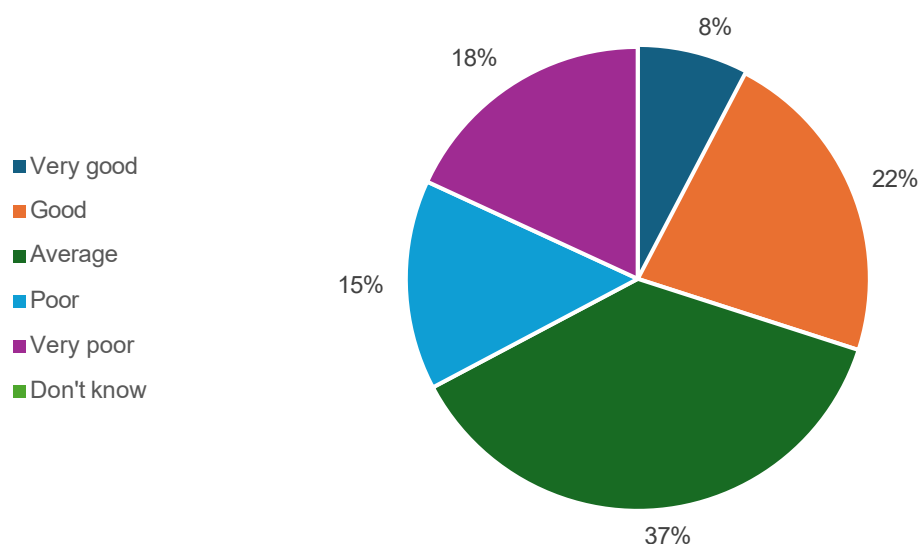
**Request: Please let us know how you heard about the consultation by ticking one or more of the following boxes.**



The Applicant noted 476 responses to this request, of which 154 respondents (32%) confirmed they had heard about the consultation via the consultation leaflet, 139 respondents (29%) had received a letter from the Applicant, 134 respondents (28%) had heard through word of mouth, 29 respondents (6%) had received an e-newsletter, 16 respondents (4%) had seen it advertised in a local newspaper and 4 respondents (1%) confirmed they had heard through other channels.

**Question: Did you attend our face-to-face or online consultation events?**

The Applicant noted 331 responses to this question, of which 148 respondents (45%) confirmed they attended the face-to-face consultation events only, 124 respondents (37%) did not attend the face-to-face or online consultation events, 35 respondents (11%) attended the face-to-face and online events and 24 respondents (7%) attended the online consultation events only.

**Request: Please rate the information included as part of this consultation in terms of how clearly it was presented and how easy it was to understand.**

The Applicant noted 287 responses to this request, of which 107 respondents (37%) said that the information presented as part of the consultation was average, 64 respondents (22%) said it was good, 52 respondents (18%) said it was very poor, 42 respondents (15%) said it was poor and 22 respondents (8%) said it was very good.



## 10 Key themes and design changes

### 10.1 Key themes emerging from feedback received during statutory consultation under Section 47 of the Act

10.1.1 This section provides a summary of the key themes within the qualitative responses from s47 respondents to the statutory consultation. This includes a summary of how the Applicant has provided this feedback in developing the Scheme, consistent with s49 of the Act (Table 10.1).

**Table 10.1: Summary of key themes within the qualitative responses received during the statutory consultation, including how the Applicant has considered this feedback.**

Feedback	Has this resulted in a change to the Scheme or the Applicant's evidence?	Applicant response
<b>Biodiversity and ecology</b>		
<p>Respondents expressed concern about the impact of the Scheme on both local and national levels of wildlife and biodiversity, citing local woodlands such as Wood Lodge Farm and Horn Wood as being home to wildlife.</p> <p>Respondents felt the Applicant had a duty of environmental care across all nine sites and, as a result, felt that the site design should prioritise the protection, restoration and enhancement of existing wildlife and habitats.</p>	No	<p>The Applicant noted the concerns about the potential impact on local wildlife and biodiversity.</p> <p>Chapter 9: Ecology and Biodiversity <b>[APP-046]</b> of the Environmental Statement considers the potential impacts and mitigation regarding the Scheme on wildlife and biodiversity.</p>
<b>Site selection and alternative</b>		
<p>Respondents raised concerns over the use of high-grade agricultural land (best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land grades 1–3) for the development of the Scheme.</p> <p>This concern was often associated with the loss of</p>	No	<p>Details of the process are set out in Appendix 5.1: Site Selection Assessment of the Environmental Statement. Chapter 5 (Alternatives and Design Evolution <b>[APP-042]</b>) of the Environmental Statement explains in further detail the alternatives that were considered and the</p>





<p>food production within the region and the nation, such as the production of wheat.</p> <p>Respondents requested the Applicant to avoid the use of BMV land and taking it out of agricultural use.</p> <p>Respondents also requested the Applicant to seek alternative sites for the Scheme, such as rooftops of warehouses and brownfield sites.</p> <p>Some respondents understood the need for solar-generated energy; however, they did not support the Scheme in this location and at this scale.</p>		<p>design evolution process for the Scheme.</p> <p>Detailed Agricultural Land Classification surveys (ALC) have been undertaken to identify the grade of the land within the Sites and are reported in Chapter 20: Agriculture Circumstances <b>[APP-057]</b> of the Environmental Statement and associated Appendix 20.1 (Agricultural Circumstances) <b>[APP-172]</b>.</p>
<b>Construction and construction traffic</b>		
<p>Respondents expressed concerns about the impact of construction activity on local communities and infrastructure.</p> <p>Respondents claimed the construction activity would impact the movement of vehicles, cyclists, horse riders and pedestrians within the local area, which would lead to an increase in existing traffic and a decline in leisure activities, such as hiking and horse riding.</p> <p>Respondents claimed the construction vehicles were not suitable for narrow, village roads such as Quite Lane and the A43 near Holcot used to access the sites.</p> <p>Respondents requested that the Applicant to</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Chapter 17: Socio-economics, Tourism and Recreation <b>[APP-054]</b> has assessed the potential impact on the local community during construction.</p> <p>Chapter 13 Transport and Access <b>[APP-050]</b> of the Environmental Statement notes that Construction vehicle trips will be coordinated to avoid movement during peak hours. This will be secured through the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan <b>[APP-545]</b>.</p> <p>Mitigation measures associated with transport and access are summarised in the Transport Assessment (Section 8) the Construction</p>



<p>manage the construction traffic to ensure the HGVs solely used the permitted routes.</p> <p>Residents felt the proposed two-year construction period would have severe impact on local residents' lives and well-being.</p> <p>Respondents felt the proposed access points to the sites were not appropriate as it increased traffic on single-traffic roads.</p> <p>Respondents raised concerns that the additional construction traffic would exacerbate the poor condition of the country roads.</p> <p>Respondents requested that public rights of way remain open during the construction of the Scheme.</p>		<p>Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) <b>[APP-553]</b>, presented as Appendix 13.1 to Chapter 13: Transport and Access <b>[APP-150]</b> of the Environmental Statement.</p>
<b>Landscape and visual</b>		
<p>Respondents expressed concern that the Scheme would cause visual impact to the local landscape, claiming it would alter the scenic beauty of the countryside.</p> <p>Respondents claimed the construction and operation of the new infrastructure would impact the views of the countryside from a distance and would diminish their quality of life.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has undertaken an assessment of the significance of the effect to the landscape and visual receptors for the four stages of the Scheme (construction, operation (Year 1), operation (Year 15), and decommissioning). This process systematically and transparently assesses the likely significant effects of the Scheme taking into account of embedded mitigation at each of the four stages. The methodology for this LVIA chapter is based on the general recommendations</p>



		set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, LI IEMA, 2013.
<b>Flooding</b>		
Respondents objected to the location of the Scheme, owing to it being situated on the River Nene flood plain with its high flood risk. Recent flooding and strong wind events were cited as drivers of risk.	No	The Applicant notes that a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy <b>[APP-097]</b> has been produced for each of the solar Sites which demonstrate that flood risk will not be exacerbated as a result of their installation and is likely to provide betterment over the existing surface water regime due to the reintroduction of natural land cover beneath the panels.
<b>Cumulative impact</b>		
Respondents expressed concern that the proposed development was close to existing and proposed energy infrastructure, such as the BESS at Grendon Lakes, smaller-scale solar farms at Irchester and Doddington, as well as the Burton Wold Wind Farm.  In addition, proposals for farms at Wellingborough and Kingsthorpe were also highlighted.	No	An assessment of cumulative effects associated with Cumulative developments is outlined in Section 8.11. The Cumulative Developments assessment considers the additional effects resulting from the Scheme in combination with the effects resulting from other similar developments, these being other renewable projects taken together which is considered appropriate in line with industry guidance.
<b>Safety of battery energy storage system (BESS)</b>		
Respondents also expressed concerns regarding potential fire risks associated with the BESS. Some feared that the fire could be carried by prevailing winds into nearby villages.	No	The Outline Battery Storage Safety Management Plan <b>[APP-551]</b> sets out fire fighting and safety measures in the event of a fire or explosion.



## 10.2 Key themes emerging from feedback received during statutory consultation under Section 42 and Section 44 of the Act

10.2.1 This section provides a summary of the key themes within the qualitative responses from s42 and s44 consultees to the statutory consultation. This includes a summary of how the Applicant has provided this feedback in developing the Scheme, consistent with s49 of the Act (Table 10.2).

**Table 10.2: Summary of key themes within the qualitative responses from s42 and s44 consultees received during the statutory consultation, including how the Applicant has considered this feedback.**

Feedback	Has this resulted in a change to the Scheme or the Applicant's evidence?	Applicant response
<b>Biodiversity and ecology</b>		
<p>The Applicant's commitment to the Biodiversity Net Gain is welcomed.</p> <p>Consultees have requested the Applicant to maintain a minimum 8-m buffer zone around all ancient woodlands and woodlands.</p> <p>Consultees requested the Applicant to undertake further assessment of bird surveys as it was deemed the one-year study provided only a snapshot of the area.</p>	No	<p>Chapter 9: Ecology and Biodiversity <b>[APP-046]</b> of the Environmental Statement considers the potential impacts and mitigation measures regarding the Scheme and wildlife.</p> <p>The following buffers have been implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 20m for woodland.</li><li>• 30m for ancient woodland.</li></ul> <p>Both diurnal and nocturnal wintering bird surveys have been conducted for two years across Green Hill B to G, which lie within the SPA consultation zone.</p> <p>Where survey deficits exist (as for Green Hill F and G where it was not possible to complete two full years' of survey), the results from completed surveys at these Sites have been considered</p>



		to assess the likelihood of additional FLL being present, using a precautionary approach.
<b>Site selection and alternative sites</b>		
<p>Consultees raised concerns about the scale of the Scheme.</p> <p>While they were supportive of green energy and understood the need for this, the development was considered vast in its scale and should be reduced to minimise the impact on local communities.</p> <p>Consultees were concerned the size of the Scheme would adversely change the countryside.</p>	No	<p>A Statement of Need (GH7.12_Statement of Need <b>[APP-556]</b>) has been submitted as part of the application, setting out the context, requirement and contribution of the Scheme to securing and decarbonising UK energy supply. The Statement of Need explains the requirement for large scale solar assets.</p> <p>NPS EN-1 4.4.3 states that the decision maker: “...should be guided in considering alternative proposals by whether there is a realistic prospect of the alternative delivering the same infrastructure capacity (including energy security and climate change benefits) in the same timescale as the proposed development”.</p> <p>A smaller scheme would not deliver the same 500MW generation capacity, energy security and climate change benefits as the Scheme, and as such would not represent a reasonable alternative.</p>
<b>Construction and construction traffic</b>		
<p>Consultees noted the proposed traffic and access routes for the construction of the Scheme and commented it would increase current traffic levels.</p>	No	<p>The Applicant notes this comment and has presented relevant assessment and mitigation in Chapter 13: Transport and Access of the Environmental Statement <b>[APP-050]</b>.</p>



<p>Consultees raised the impact to local traffic outside of the construction phase, such as through maintenance activities.</p> <p>Consultees requested an assessment of the cumulative impact of the overall proposal in terms of traffic and transport impact, given its use of the A45 for sites Green Hill E, Green Hill BESS and the Cable Route Search Area.</p> <p>Consultees raised concerns that the construction traffic and the subsequent increase to existing traffic levels would be 'wholly detrimental to our village life'.</p> <p>Consultees welcomed the outline construction traffic management plan (CTMP) prepared to support the PEIR and seek to contribute to the full plan. Consultees requested information be provided on staff travel.</p> <p>Consultees raised concerns about the proposed use of narrow, village roads for construction traffic.</p> <p>Consultees requested a detailed CTMP covering both on-site construction activities and those associated with the cable route installation.</p>		<p>The Chapter details the Applicant's consideration of the effects of traffic associated with the construction phase.</p> <p>The Construction Traffic Management Plan <b>[APP-553]</b> also considers road users safety and how to reduce traffic impacts from the Scheme.</p> <p>The operational phase, including consideration of equipment replacement has been considered. Traffic associated with the operation and maintenance phase (including replacement of equipment) is considered to be lower than that associated with the construction phase.</p> <p>The assessment of cumulative effects for the is summarised in Section 13.13 of the ES Chapter.</p> <p>The Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (OCTMP) includes measures to manage worker travel as well as construction traffic, a construction worker Travel Plan is to be prepared and approved by Requirement.</p> <p>The OCTMP includes measures to manage traffic to/from the Sites and Cable Route Corridor.</p> <p>Chapter 13: Transport and Access <b>[APP-050]</b> has assessed the routes that are forecast to be used by worker traffic and construction traffic (i.e. HGVs); refer to Section 13.8 of this Chapter which sets</p>
---	--	--



		out the trip generation and distribution of traffic.
<b>Landscape and visual</b>		
<p>Consultees noted the assessments undertaken to model the difference in the landscape from year 1 and year 15 post construction of the Scheme.</p> <p>Consultees commented that the assessment of the impact to landscapes and visual impact at 15 years is not acceptable and should display models at 1 year and 5 years in addition to 15 years.</p> <p>Consultees claimed the photomontages provided were not clear enough to help them understand the potential visual impact to the local landscape.</p> <p>Consultees requested photomontages of additional proposed infrastructure, such as the inverters, lighting and fences that would be on site and not simply show grey areas where panels would be erected, as this did not represent the true visual impact.</p> <p>Consultees commented that the size of the Scheme would dominate the landscape and create a further coalescence between Mears Ashby and Earls Barton.</p> <p>Consultees requested a topography plan be provided.</p>	No	<p>The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has undertaken an assessment of the significance of the effect to the landscape and visual receptors for the four stages of the Scheme (construction, operation (Year 1), operation (Year 15), and decommissioning). This process systematically and transparently assesses the likely significant effects of the Scheme taking into account of embedded mitigation at each of the four stages. The methodology for this LVIA chapter is based on the general recommendations set out in Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd Edition, LI IEMA, 2013.</p> <p>Viewpoints and photomontages have been produced and outlined in Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment <b>[APP-045]</b> Figure series 8.10 <b>[APP-308 – 313]</b> and 8.14 <b>[APP-334 – 400]</b>.</p> <p>The photomontages will show detailed modelling of proposed infrastructure.</p> <p>Landscape Effects have been assessed upon Landscape receptors collectively for the Sites themselves considered as 'Landscape Fabric' and each Study Area (1km/2km &amp; 5km).</p>



		Please refer to Figure 5.5 [APP-226] Topographic Gradient.
<b>Flooding</b>		
<p>Consultees expressed concern about the safety of the BESS infrastructure within Flood Zone 3 areas.</p> <p>Consultees requested the Applicant to provide a management plan relating to BESS fire risk.</p> <p>The Scheme's proximity to areas that are prone to flooding was also a cause for concern. Consultees requested the Applicant to maintain a minimum 9-m buffer around watercourses.</p>	No	<p>Site-specific hydraulic modelling has been undertaken using a one dimensional model of the Grendon Brook and River Nene, and a two dimensional direct rainfall model of the Field Drain which crosses the site.</p> <p>The modelling results show that the BESS site is largely located outside of the modelled flood extents from the Grendon Brook and River Nene. Where shallow depths are predicted in isolated areas, these are driven by the Field Drain and are limited to localised low points. The predicted flood depths remain below 0.3 metres across the site in all modelled events, including the 0.1 percent annual exceedance probability plus climate change scenario.</p> <p>Site-specific hydraulic modelling has been undertaken using a one dimensional model of the Grendon Brook and River Nene, and a two dimensional direct rainfall model of the Field Drain which crosses the site.</p> <p>The modelling results show that the BESS site is largely located outside of the modelled flood extents from the Grendon Brook and River Nene. Where shallow depths are predicted in isolated areas, these are driven by the Field Drain</p>





		<p>and are limited to localised low points. The predicted flood depths remain below 0.3 metres across the site in all modelled events, including the 0.1 percent annual exceedance probability plus climate change scenario.</p> <p>The development layout has been informed by this modelling, and all sensitive infrastructure is located outside of the predicted flood extents. Mitigation measures have been incorporated including raising equipment above ground level and using sealed drainage with self-actuating valves to prevent release of any runoff. The modelling approach and outcomes are presented in Annex J of the Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy.</p> <p>An Outline Battery Storage Safety Management Plan <b>[APP-551]</b> has been prepared.</p> <p>A 9m buffer has been applied around all watercourses unless local constraints or existing boundaries make this inappropriate. Where a full 9m easement cannot be achieved, an 8m offset is provided, consistent with EA guidance for Main Rivers.</p>
<b>Cumulative impact</b>		
Consultees requested that the Applicant to consider the cumulative impact of applications within 10 km of the Scheme.	No	The long list is based on up to a 10km area of search which aligns with the Study Area for ecology and biodiversity and the likely



<p>Specific concerns were raised in regard to the impact on the local landscape. A consultee requested the Scheme be viewed as eight separate solar schemes and a BESS to assess the cumulative impact on the local area.</p> <p>One consultee claimed the proposed study areas for cumulative impacts were inadequate, especially when assessing sequential impact where the area should be extended each time a scheme was encountered.</p>		<p>maximum range of any potential significant effects.</p> <p>Cumulative site visual effects and sequential effects are assessed in Section 8.9 of Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.</p> <p>An assessment of cumulative effects associated with Cumulative developments is outlined in Section 8.11. The Cumulative Developments assessment considers the additional effects resulting from the Scheme in combination with the effects resulting from other similar developments, these being other renewable projects taken together which is considered appropriate in line with industry guidance.</p>
<b>Cultural heritage</b>		
<p>Consultees noted the assessments on the potential impact to heritage stated in the PEIR.</p> <p>Consultees requested the Applicant to also consider non-designated heritage assets, which may be directly or indirectly affected by the Scheme.</p> <p>Consultees requested any impact on the Grade I listed church of St Peter and St Paul be avoided.</p> <p>Historic England supported the approach taken by the Applicant towards the historic environment.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>See Appendix 12.1 for Heritage Statement <b>[APP-139 – 145]</b> and Appendix 12.9 for Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment <b>Tables [APP-149]</b> for details of the assessment of heritage assets.</p> <p>ES Chapter 12: Cultural Heritage <b>[APP-049]</b> is supported by a Heritage Statement which assesses heritage assets including Grade I Listed Church of St Peter and St Paul (NHLE 1189610) and conservation areas.</p>



# 11 Targeted consultation on Order Limits

## 11.1 Targeted Consultation

- 11.1.1 Following the statutory consultation, the Applicant launched a targeted consultation to gather feedback on specific minor changes to the proposed Scheme's boundary presented within the PEIR, while providing an update on the Scheme to the PCZ.
- 11.1.2 The changes to the Scheme boundary were a result of ongoing traffic and construction evolution informed by engineering reviews. The changes were transport-related, to ensure sufficient land was available to facilitate vehicle access to the sites and the Cable Route Search Area.
- 11.1.3 A total of 25 revisions were made to the Order Limits. Detailed information on the Order Limits can be found in Appendix 11.1 in GH5.11 CR Appendix\_Targeted Consultation Materials – **[APP-034]**.

## 11.2 Approach to consultation

- 11.2.1 In determining how to consult on the Order Limits, the Applicant had regard to paragraph 20 of the Planning Act 2008: Pre-application stage for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, April 2024.

For any material change to a part of the proposed application where the project as a whole is not fundamentally changed, for example in the case of linear aspects where new information leads to a new alignment for a particular section of the proposal, a bespoke and targeted approach to further consultation can be adopted, which can address the specific consultation obligations arising proportionately.

- 11.2.2 The Applicant also has regard for the commitments made in the SoCC (Section 9):

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, as far as relevant and proportionate, in accordance with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC.

- 11.2.3 The changes to the Order Limits are minor and have not resulted in a substantial change to the Scheme. Furthermore, following an additional environmental review, it was confirmed that the minor changes are not likely to create any environmental effects beyond those described in the PEIR during the statutory consultation.
- 11.2.4 Therefore, the Applicant determined that a full re-consultation with s47 consultees was not required. Instead, the Applicant launched a targeted consultation focused solely on the changes to the Order Limits.
- 11.2.5 The Applicant carried out a diligent enquiry process to identify the land interests potentially affected by the additional land areas required and adopted a strategy to undertake a targeted consultation with those s44 consultees identified during the statutory consultation as well as those newly identified consultees associated with the Order Limits and local authorities falling within the s43 consultees, parish councils, MPs and local community groups.



11.2.6 During the targeted consultation, the Applicant consulted:

- landowners with an interest in the Scheme;
- statutory consultees, such as:
  - host parish councils
  - host and neighbouring planning authorities
  - technical stakeholders, such as the Environment Agency and Historic England; and
- non-statutory consultees, such as:
  - MPs
  - community groups, voluntary organisations and faith communities
  - environmental groups in the PCZ
  - schools and colleges in the PCZ
  - seldom-heard groups.

11.2.7 The relevant persons defined under s44 of the Act were consulted as part of the s42 consultation, as set out in Section 8.5.

11.2.8 A list of the stakeholders that were invited to take part in the targeted consultation is provided in Appendix 3.2 in GH5.3\_CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials – **[APP-025-026]**.

## 11.3 Targeted consultation (13 March – 10 April 2025)

11.3.1 The targeted consultation ran for 28 days from 13 March to 10 April 2025. An extension of seven days was provided for feedback received via freepost to account for delays in the postal system. Therefore, the Applicant received feedback via freepost until 17 April 2025.

11.3.2 The consultation dates were publicised in all consultation materials, including information on how to provide feedback and how to contact the Community Relations Team.

11.3.3 The changes to the PEIR boundary and individual maps were available on the Scheme website as part of the targeted consultation materials.

11.3.4 The Applicant produced a series of consultation materials, consistent with the materials produced for the statutory consultation. Table 11.1 provides a list of materials produced as part of the targeted consultation.

**Table 11.1: Materials produced as part of the targeted consultation.**

Material	Detail
----------	--------



Stakeholder Letter

A letter notifying local stakeholders (Appendix 11.2 in GH5.11 CR Appendix\_Targeted Consultation Materials -**[APP-034]**) of the targeted consultation was issued on 11 March 2025.

The letter provided details of the changes to the Scheme boundary as presented within the PEIR and of the consultation process, including links to the Scheme website. The letter also informed stakeholders that the PEIR, NTS and SoCC were available at Moulton Community Library, following the distribution error



	<p>during the statutory consultation that resulted in them not being available at Moulton Community Library.</p> <p>The letter was issued via email with a copy of the Targeted Consultation Newsletter.</p>
Section 42 Letter	<p>A letter notifying s42 stakeholders and Category 3 PILs of the targeted consultation (Appendix 11.3 in GH5.11 CR Appendix_Targeted Consultation Materials - <b>[APP-034]</b>) was issued via Royal Mail on 6 March 2025.</p> <p>The letter provided details of the changes to the Scheme's boundary and the consultation process, including links to the Scheme website. The letter also informed stakeholders that the PEIR, NTS and SoCC were available at Moulton Community Library, following the distribution error during the statutory consultation that resulted in them not being available at Moulton Community Library.</p>
Targeted Consultation Newsletter	<p>A newsletter (Appendix 11.4 in GH5.11 CR Appendix_Targeted Consultation Materials - <b>[APP-034]</b>) notifying the PCZ, MPs and local community groups of the targeted consultation was issued on 11–13 March 2025.</p> <p>The newsletter contained information on the changes to the Scheme boundary and how to access the consultation materials and provide feedback. The newsletter also informed stakeholders that the PEIR, NTS and SoCC were available at Moulton Community Library, following the distribution error during the statutory consultation that resulted in them not being available at Moulton Community Library, and invited feedback on the PEIR.</p>
Targeted Consultation Information Brochure	<p>A brochure (Appendix 11.5 in GH5.11 CR Appendix_Targeted Consultation Materials - <b>[APP-034]</b>) containing a summary of the changes to the Scheme boundary as presented within the PEIR, including maps illustrating the Scheme, was provided in hard copy at Moulton Community Library and in digital format on the Scheme website on 12 March 2025.</p> <p>It also contained an update on the Scheme, how to access the materials on the website and how to provide feedback.</p>



Targeted Consultation Feedback Form	<p>A form (Appendix 11.6 in GH5.11 CR Appendix_Targeted Consultation Materials - <b>[APP-034]</b>) was provided in hard copy at Moulton Community Library and in digital format on the Scheme website on 12 March 2025.</p> <p>It requested the respondent's comments on the changes to the Scheme boundary.</p>
Targeted Consultation Leaflet	<p>A leaflet (Appendix 11.7 in GH5.11 CR Appendix_Targeted Consultation Materials - <b>[APP-034]</b>) was placed at Moulton Community Library on 12 March 2025.</p> <p>The leaflet contained information on the changes to the Order Limits and how to access the consultation materials and provide feedback. It also informed the stakeholder that the PEIR, NTS and SoCC were available at Moulton Community Library, following the distribution error during the statutory consultation that resulted in them not being available at Moulton Community Library, and invited feedback on the PEIR.</p>
Public Consultation Feedback Form	<p>A form (Appendix 6.3 in GH5.6_CR Appendix_ Section 47 and Section 48 Statutory Consultation Materials - <b>[APP-029]</b>) allowed people to provide feedback on the proposals. This was made available in hard copy at Moulton Community Library for the duration of the targeted consultation. A digital copy was also accessible via the website.</p>
Preliminary Environmental Informational Report (PEIR) and Non-Technical Summary (NTS)	<p>A PEIR – containing a summary of the Scheme, a preliminary assessment of the potential significant environmental effects, the initial strategies to mitigate adverse effects and the NTS of the PEIR – was made available at Moulton Community Library for the duration of the targeted consultation.</p>
Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)	<p>A SoCC (Appendix 5.1 in GH5.5_CR Appendix_Statement of Community Consultation - <b>[APP-028]</b>), detailing the approach to statutory consultation, was made available in hard copy at Moulton Community Library for the duration of the targeted consultation.</p>

11.3.5 To ensure local residents were able to review and submit their feedback on the PEIR, the Applicant ensured hard copies of the Public Consultation Feedback Form were also made available at Moulton Community Library.



11.3.6 The Applicant advertised the targeted consultation in locally distributed newspapers to promote the consultation and inform the local community of the update to the Scheme.

11.3.7 The Applicant advertised the targeted consultation for one week in the following newspapers for publication in the week commencing 18 March 2025:

- Northamptonshire Telegraph
- Milton Keynes Citizen
- Times and Citizen (Bedfordshire).

Evidence of the advertisements can be found in Appendix 11.8 in GH5.11 CR Appendix\_Targeted Consultation Materials - **[APP-034]**.

11.3.8 The respondents were able to provide their feedback by:

- completing the feedback form online, which could be accessed via the Scheme website ([www.greenhillsolar.co.uk](http://www.greenhillsolar.co.uk));
- completing a printed feedback form, which could be collected from Moulton Community Library or on request by contacting the development team. Completed forms could be scanned and emailed back to [info@greenhillsolar.co.uk](mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk) or sent to FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM (no stamp or further details required);
- writing a free-form letter and sending it to FREEPOST GREEN HILL SOLAR FARM (no stamp or further details required); and
- emailing comments to [info@greenhillsolar.co.uk](mailto:info@greenhillsolar.co.uk).

11.3.9 The Community Relations Team operated a dedicated freephone line (0800 012 9882), which was monitored 09:00–17:30 Monday to Friday, with an answerphone facility to take messages outside of these times. Through this channel, people were able to speak to a member of the Community Relations Team to ask questions and request materials. However, feedback was not accepted via the freephone line.

## 11.4 Targeted consultation feedback

11.4.1 The process for analysing the feedback from targeted consultation was consistent with the process for analysing the feedback from statutory consultation.

11.4.2 During the targeted consultation, the Applicant received 74 responses from s42 consultees and s47 respondents.

11.4.3 In addition to the consultation, the Applicant met with local stakeholders to discuss any concerns they had about the proposed Order Limits. Table 11.2 provides a list of the meetings with local stakeholders during the targeted consultation.



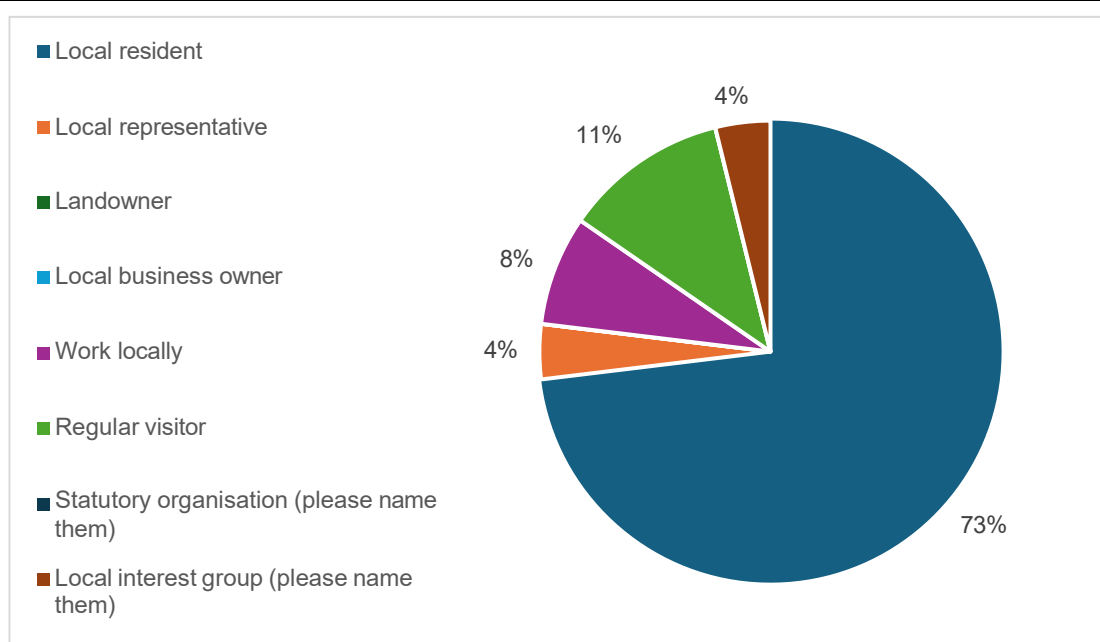
**Table 11.2: Meeting with local stakeholders during targeted consultation.**

Date	Details
15 April 2025	Meeting with Wellingborough Eco Group and Wellingborough Walks Action Group  Local landowner

## 11.5 Quantitative responses to targeted consultation

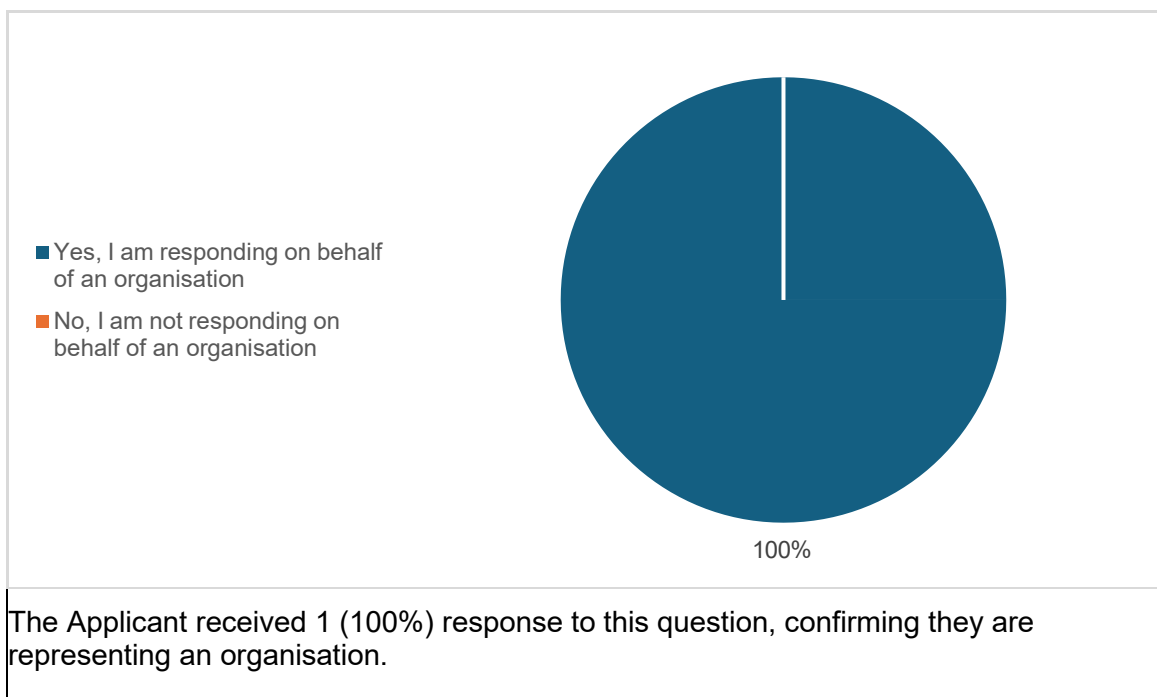
11.5.1 This section provides a summary of the quantitative responses received to the targeted consultation on the Order Limits, through online forms, emails, letters and hard copy forms received via freepost.

### 11.5.2 Question: How would you describe your interest in our proposals?



The Applicant received 26 responses to this question, of which 19 respondents (73%) were local residents to the Scheme. Other respondents identified as regular visitors (11%), work locally (8%) and members of local interest groups (4%). The Applicant did not receive responses from landowners, local business owners or representatives from a statutory organisation to this question.

Statement: If you have named an organisation above, please confirm this below, ensuring you have the authorisation to do so.



## 11.6 Key themes emerging from feedback received during targeted consultation under Section 47 of the Act

11.6.1 Table 11.3 provides a summary of the key themes within the qualitative responses from s47 respondents received during the targeted consultation, including how the Applicant has considered this feedback.

**Table 11.3: Summary of the key themes within the qualitative responses from s47 respondents.**

Feedback	Has this resulted in a change to the Scheme or the Applicant's evidence?	Applicant response
<b>Biodiversity and ecology</b>		
Respondents noted the Biodiversity Net Gain anticipated as a result of the Scheme.	No	Targeted arboriculture surveys in accordance with BS5837:2012 have taken place at proposed access points and visibility splays and an impact assessment for this element of the Scheme is included in Chapter 19: Arboriculture <b>[APP-056]</b> of the ES Statement.
Respondents were concerned about the impact of 'infilling' in the cable search area, once the development is installed..		
Respondents were concerned that the mature		Significant tree and woodland planting is proposed within



<p>trees in Grendon would be felled as part of the development.</p> <p>Respondents questioned how fencing would impact access for 'migratory nature' such as deer, brown hares, foxes and badgers.</p>		<p>the Sites to compensate for any tree losses associated with the Scheme.</p> <p>There will be palisade fencing around the substations and BESS compounds which will have a maximum height of 3m.</p> <p>Fencing will be permeable to mammals such as badgers and foxes, while deer have been regularly recorded within operational solar farms by ecological monitoring work conducted by Clarkson and Woods Ltd. The arrays themselves will provide suitable habitats for a range of species, alongside designated mitigation and enhancement provisions.</p>
<b>Consultation</b>		
<p>Respondents claimed not enough information was provided on the Order Limits to provide feedback.</p>	No	<p>The Applicant acknowledges these comments but remains confident in the level of consultation undertaken and information presented throughout the targeted consultation, as described in the Consultation Report.</p>
<b>Site selection and alternative</b>		
<p>While respondents supported the use of environmentally friendly sources of energy, they objected to the use of agricultural land to develop the Scheme.</p> <p>Respondents suggested the Applicant use alternative sites for the Scheme, such as rooftops, car parks, brownfield sites and central reservations.</p> <p>Respondents expressed concern that the size of</p>	No	<p>The Statement of Need (GH7.12_Statement of Need <b>[APP-556]</b>) demonstrates that a significant capacity of low carbon solar generation is urgently needed in the UK, and that the Scheme will, if consented, provide an essential progression to meeting the governmental objectives of delivering sustainable development to enable decarbonisation.</p> <p>The Applicant has followed a step-by step site selection</p>



the Scheme would engulf villages such as Mears Ashby.		<p>process which confirms the location of the Scheme is suitable for a large scale solar farm. This has included the avoidance of sensitive landscape and environmental designations in confirming site suitability and consideration of alternative sites. Details of the process are set out in Appendix 5.1: Site Selection Assessment of the Environmental Statement <b>[APP-077]</b>.</p> <p>Please also refer to Chapter 5: Alternatives and Design Evolution of the ES <b>[APP-042]</b>.</p>
<b>Construction and construction traffic</b>		
<p>Respondents were concerned about the impact on the local community, such as the noise from construction works, and the impact on air quality from construction dust.</p> <p>An increase in existing levels of traffic was a cause for concern. Respondents claimed that 50–100 daily HGV trips would clog the narrow country lanes, such as Walgrave High Street, and Bozeat. It would lead to months of disruption.</p> <p>Concerns were also raised about the impact of construction traffic on the current state of the roads. Respondents wanted assurance that the roads would not get damaged, and, if they did, they would be repaired quickly.</p>	No	<p>The Applicant notes this comment and has presented relevant assessment and mitigation in Chapter 13: Transport and Access C <b>[APP-050]</b> of the Environmental Statement.</p> <p>The Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan <b>[APP-553]</b>, considers road users' safety and how to reduce traffic impacts from the development.</p> <p>The Construction Traffic Management Plan will control HGV movements, ensuring suitable routes are used. It will also restrict site access to ensure construction traffic movements occur outside of peak periods and the more congested parts of the day. A Travel Plan will also be in place to minimise car and LGV movements associated with construction workers : measures such as shuttle</p>



		services linking key destinations and local hotels will be used.
<b>Access</b>		
<p>Respondents were concerned about the traffic route proposed for access to the sites. Many respondents claimed the roads were not suitable for construction vehicles.</p> <p>Respondents requested that access be maintained during construction of the Scheme.</p> <p>Respondents suggested alternative access points for the Applicant to consider.</p>	No	<p>Please refer to Chapter 13: Transport and Access <b>[APP-050]</b> for full transport assessment.</p> <p>Figure 13.4 <b>[APP-435]</b> which shows the proposed HGV routes (solid lines) and forecast construction worker routes (dashed lines).</p> <p>Site Access is outlined within Chapter 4: Scheme Description <b>[APP-041]</b> and Appendix 13.2: Transport Assessment <b>[APP-151 – 153]</b>.</p> <p>A total of 47 access points across the Scheme are proposed for construction and operation purposes for the Sites, Cable Corridor and Cable Construction Compounds. The majority of access points will be improved existing field accesses.</p>
<b>Landscape and visual</b>		
<p>Respondents raised concerns that the infrastructure would ruin rural aesthetics, despite the screening.</p> <p>Respondents were concerned the Scheme would spoil the landscape and make the local area an unattractive place to live.</p> <p>Respondents requested the Applicant to plant trees and wildflowers to mitigate</p>	No	<p>Chapter 8: Landscape and Visual Impact <b>[APP-045]</b> of the Environmental Statement sets out how the Applicant has considered the potential visual and landscape impacts to local residents and visitors, potential effects associated with the panels and associated infrastructure.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) considers</p>



the impact on the countryside.		both the landscape and visual effects of the Scheme independently to ensure both the impacts and effects on the fabric of the landscape are taken into account as well as the views and visibility.
<b>Flooding</b>		
<p>Respondents claimed the Scheme would not be appropriate in Grendon and Easton Maudit, citing the flooding in October 2024.</p> <p>Respondents requested a land drainage system be installed before the construction process began to ensure the sites did not get flooded.</p> <p>The land around the proposed Green Hill BESS site in Grendon is at risk of flooding.</p>	No	<p>Chapter 10: Hydrology, Flood Risk and Drainage [APP-047] of the Environmental Statement sets out the likely significant environmental effects of the Scheme on the local hydrology during its construction, operation and decommissioning phases.</p> <p>The Applicant notes that a Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy [APP-097] has been produced for each of the solar Sites which demonstrate that flood risk will not be exacerbated as a result of their installation and is likely to provide betterment over the existing surface water regime due to the reintroduction of natural land cover beneath the panels.</p> <p>Where additional infrastructure is proposed (e.g. battery sites), additional Drainage Strategies have been produced which indicate how sustainable drainage systems will be provided on-site to attenuate any increased runoff to greenfield rates.</p>
<b>Cumulative impact</b>		
Respondents raised concerns that the countryside was being 'eaten up by vast numbers of new housing estates	No	The Applicant notes this. Chapter 8 (Landscape and Visual Impact - [APP-045]) of the Environmental Statement



and far too many warehouses'. Concerns were raised that the cumulative impact of multiple developments would ruin the landscape.		and supporting appendices consider likely significant effects of views from nearby properties. The mitigation associated with the Scheme is included in the Landscape and Ecology Mitigation & Enhancement Measures forming part of the LVIA. The Applicant and its LVIA consultants have worked closely with the heritage consultants throughout the application process to inform the LVIA and associated mitigation plans.
<b>Battery energy storage system (BESS)</b>		
<p>Respondents were concerned the BESS would emit a low hum, audible from 100–200 m, which would disturb residents in Walgrave.</p> <p>Respondents raised risk of fire and chemical leaks from Green Hill BESS.</p>	No	<p>Chapter 14: Noise and Vibration <b>[APP-051]</b> compares the proposed noise to the existing noise levels in the area as per the appropriate planning policy.</p> <p>Please refer to the Outline Battery Storage Safety Management Plan <b>[APP-551]</b>.</p>

11.6.2 Detailed feedback received during the targeted consultation, including the Applicant's response to the feedback, is available in Appendix GH5.13\_CR Appendix\_Targeted Consultation Section 47 and 48 Applicant Responses – **[APP-036]**.

## 11.7 Key themes emerging from feedback received during targeted consultation under Section 42 and Section 44 of the Act

11.7.1 Table 11.4 provides a summary of the key themes within the qualitative responses from s42 and s44 consultees received during the targeted consultation, including how the Applicant has considered this feedback.



**Table 11.4: Summary of the key themes within the qualitative responses from s42 and s44 respondents**

Feedback	Has this resulted in a change to the Scheme or the Applicant's evidence?	Applicant response
<b>Biodiversity and ecology</b>		
<p>Consultees noted the Order Limits relate to transport. However, requested detailed arboriculture and hedgerow assessments for the sites should include any additional hedgerows or trees that are impacted by these changes.</p> <p>Where feasible, existing hedgerows and trees should be retained, with appropriate protection measures in place during construction.</p>	No	<p>Targeted arboriculture surveys in accordance with BS5837:2012 have taken place at proposed access points and visibility splays and an impact assessment for this element of the Scheme is included in Chapter 19: Arboriculture <b>[APP-056]</b> of the ES Statement.</p>
<b>Site selection and alternative</b>		
<p>Consultees claimed the size of the Scheme would create unprecedented disruption over a prolonged period.</p>	No	<p>Chapter 13: Transport and Access <b>[APP-050]</b> assesses the traffic disruption across the construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Scheme.</p>
<b>Consultation</b>		
<p>Consultees claimed the maps provided in the Targeted Consultation Information Brochure were not clear, and the digital maps provided were of minimal help.</p> <p>Consultees raised concern that not enough information about the</p>	No	<p>The Applicant acknowledges these comments but remains confident in the level of consultation undertaken and information presented throughout the statutory consultation and targeted consultation, as described in the Consultation Report.</p>





Order Limits was provided.		
<b>Construction and construction traffic</b>		
<p>Consultees raised concerns about the impact of HGVs on existing levels of traffic, with significant focus on the traffic on the A4500.</p> <p>Consultees requested the construction traffic avoided going through residential streets.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about the phasing of the construction works. Mears Ashby Council feared that all six access points around the village would be operational at the same time, thereby making the village gridlocked during construction.</p> <p>Consultees have requested a comprehensive CTMP.</p> <p>Drilling or excavation works should not be undertaken if they have the potential to disturb or adversely affect the foundations, or 'pillars of support', of any existing tower.</p>	No	<p>Please refer to Chapter 13: Transport and Access <b>[APP-050]</b> and the supporting appendices for the full assessment of construction routing, accesses and traffic forecasts. The Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan <b>[APP-553]</b> and Operational Traffic Management Plan <b>[APP-569]</b> include proposed traffic mitigation measures.</p> <p>Construction routes for HGVs have been selected based on a combination of site visits, traffic surveys, review of sensitivity receptors and highway characteristics.</p>
<b>Access</b>		
<p>Consultees opposed the access points in Bozeat, Easton Lane.</p> <p>Consultees suggested alternative routes for the Applicant to consider.</p> <p>Consultees were concerned how the public rights of way will</p>	No	<p>Access proposals are further discussed in Appendix 13.2: Transport Assessment <b>[APP-151 – 153]</b>.</p> <p>A total of 47 access points across the Scheme are proposed for construction and operation purposes for the Sites, Cable Corridor and Cable Construction</p>



be retained during the construction and operation of the scheme.		Compounds. The majority of access points will be improved existing field accesses.
<b>Landscape and visual</b>		
<p>Consultees requested slow- and low-growing species of trees and shrubs be planted beneath and adjacent to the overhead lines to mitigate the risk of growth to a height that compromised the safety of the infrastructure.</p> <p>The knock-on effect of the changes to the Scheme boundary will affect the landscape, particularly where boundary modifications result in an increased sense of openness or a loss of existing vegetation.</p> <p>Consultees requested the Applicant to commit to appropriate assessment, retention and mitigation planting within the DCO submission.</p>	No	<p>Please refer to the Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan <b>[APP-548]</b> for further details on planting proposals</p> <p>Mitigation measures as well as compensatory tree planting is proposed.</p>
<b>Cultural heritage</b>		
A consultee noted that there were no significant built heritage effects as a result of the proposed changes when compared to the PEIR presented at statutory consultation.	No	Chapter 12 is supported by a heritage Statement (Appendix 12.1 <b>[APP-110 - 120]</b> ), which assesses heritage assets and conservation areas.

11.7.2 Detailed feedback from s42 and s44 consultees received during the targeted consultation, including the Applicant's response to the feedback, is available in Appendix GH5.12\_CR Appendix\_Targeted Consultation Section 42 Applicant Responses – **[APP-035]**.



## 12 Ongoing engagement

### 12.1 Engagement with technical consultees

12.1.1 The Applicant continued to engage with technical consultation after the statutory consultation to discuss their feedback and the approach to preparing the ES. The table below provides details of these meetings.

**Table 12.1 Meetings with technical consultees after statutory consultation.**

Date	Stakeholder (name/organisation)	Summary of meeting
21 January 2025	Local Authority: Milton Keynes Sue Brown - Landscape Architecture Manager. Elizabeth Woodhouse - Senior Landscape Architect.	The Applicant provided a background on the scheme and landscape design, followed by discussions on design processes, environmental considerations, indicative layouts and the MK response to statutory consultation.
23 January 2025	North Northamptonshire Council Landscape Officer: Ryan Mills.	The meeting focused on discussing Section 42 comments in response to the statutory consultation.
28 <sup>th</sup> January 2025	North Northampton Heritage Advisor (WHNA) Samantha Pace	Meeting to discuss potential vibration impact from construction traffic to heritage assets. It was agreed that only Station lodge and Low Farmhouse would be scoped into potential vibration assessment.
28 <sup>th</sup> February 2025	Milton Keynes City Conservation Officer, Christopher Hooper	Meeting to discuss methodology and approach to assessment and detail finding with relation to Green Hill G.
10 March 2025	North Northampton Conservation Officer, Samantha Pace	Meeting to discuss methodology and approach to assessment and detail finding with relation to Green Hill A, B, C and the BESS.
24 <sup>th</sup> March 2025	West Northamptonshire Conservation Officer, Rachel Booth	Discussion regarding potential for vibration impacts as a result of construction traffic and update to design following PEIR.
24 March 2025	North Northamptonshire County Archaeologist: Liz Mordue	Meeting to discuss archaeological mitigation options, geophysical survey data and discuss mitigation areas.
30 April 2025	North Northamptonshire County Archaeologist: Liz Mordue	Meeting to discuss archaeological evaluation and mitigation options.
07 May 2025	Milton Keynes City County Archaeologist: Nick Crank	Meeting to discuss archaeological evaluation and mitigation options.
13 May 2025	Anglian Water Sustainable Growth Co-ordinator: Jo Grisaffi Spatial and Strategic Planning Manager – Sustainable Growth: Carry Murphy	Meeting to discuss the proposals, specific requirements and progress on the Application.



14 May 2025	North Northampton Conservation Officer, Samantha Pace	Meeting to discuss final Scheme design and proposed mitigation
-------------	---	--

12.1.2 The Applicant will continue their engagement with consultees, following the submission of the Application.

12.1.3 The Applicant intends to meet with National Grid after the submission in May 2025.



## 13 Conclusion

### 13.1 Concluding remarks

- 13.1.1 The Applicant has undertaken a comprehensive pre-application consultation on the Scheme.
- 13.1.2 The statutory consultation has been informed by the requirements of the Act and adheres to the requirements.
- 13.1.3 The Applicant's strategy of the early-engagement workshops, combined with an iterative consultation process for the non-statutory and statutory consultations, has resulted in multiple rounds of engagement with local stakeholders and community groups.
- 13.1.4 The Applicant has actively sought and given due regard to feedback provided by stakeholders on its approach to community consultation and has made changes where possible, as documented in this Report.
- 13.1.5 Consultation responses to each stage of consultation have been carefully documented and considered as part of the development of the Scheme, with stakeholders playing a key role in the design of the proposals.
- 13.1.6 The Applicant has sought to address comments, concerns and issues raised in the final Scheme design where possible and has responded to comments raised in the Report.
- 13.1.7 As well as preparing the Report, the Applicant has set out how it has complied with guidance and advice on consultation in the Section 55 checklist **[APP-004]**, which is also part of the DCO application documents.
- 13.1.8 The Applicant is grateful to all parties who have engaged in the pre-application consultation.



## 14 List of appendices

1. GH5.2 CR Appendix\_Statement of Compliance – **[APP-024]**
2. GH5.3 CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Materials – **[APP-025 – 026]**
3. GH5.4 CR Appendix\_Non-statutory Consultation Summary Report – **[APP-027]**
4. GH5.5 CR Appendix\_Statement of Community Consultation – **[APP-028]**
5. GH5.6 CR Appendix\_ Section 47 and Section 48 Statutory Consultation Materials – **[APP-029]**
6. GH5.7 CR Appendix\_Section 42 Consultation Materials – **[EX1/GH5.7\_A]**
7. GH5.8 CR Appendix\_Section 42 Applicant's Responses – **[APP-031]**
8. GH5.9 CR Appendix\_Section 47 and 48 Consultation Notices – **[EX1/GH5.9\_A]**
9. GH5.10 CR Appendix\_Section 47 and 48 Applicant Responses – **[APP-033]**
10. GH5.11 CR Appendix\_Targeted Consultation Materials – **[APP-034]**
11. GH5.12 CR Appendix\_Targeted Consultation Section 42 Applicant Responses – **[APP-035]**
12. GH5.13 CR Appendix\_Targeted Consultation Section 47 and 48 Applicant Responses – **[APP-036]**