

Green Hill Solar Farm

EN010170

The Applicant's Cover Letter for Responses to the Secretary of State's Second Request for Information

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The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010



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Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
3-8 Whitehall Place
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11th September 2026

Dear Secretary of State,

Green Hill Solar Farm – Submissions to the Secretary of State Application Ref: EN010170

This letter sets out the documents which are submitted by Green Hill Solar Farm Limited ('the Applicant') in response to the second Request for Information ('RFI2') dated 28 August 2026 made by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero ('the SoS').

Submitted Documents

Note: For revised documents, clean and tracked changes versions of each are submitted when appropriate

Ref or plan/ drawing number	Document Title
Other Documents	
DEC/GH7.4_F	Outline Landscape Environmental Management Plan
DEC/GH7.5_F	Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy
Examination Submissions	
DEC/GH8.1.55	The Applicant's Cover Letter for Responses to the Secretary of State's Second Request for Information



Response to Request for Information

The Applicant's response to the matters set out in paragraphs 3-15 of RFI2 are as follows:

Battery Storage Safety Management Plan

3. NGET's response [C1-005] to the Secretary of State's letter dated 10 August 2026 raised concerns about fire risks arising from Work No 2. NGET requested that Requirement 6 of the draft Development Consent Order to be amended to require NGET to approve the battery storage safety management plan. NGET is requested to provide its preferred drafting of requirement 6 and to highlight any precedents in previously consented orders.

4. The Applicant is requested to provide justification why it considers NGET should not be part of the approval process for the battery storage safety management plan, including any precedents in previously consented orders.

The Applicant acknowledges NGET's concerns in relation to the potential for fire risks arising from Work No. 2 to affect its assets. The Applicant has provided NGET with the relevant information for how the measures within the outline Battery Safety Storage Management Plan (oBSSMP) [REP5-075] ensure that, in the event of a battery fire, neighbouring infrastructure will remain safe. This is achieved through a combination of buffer distances providing physical separation between the BESS and NGET's assets, as well as strict safety measures built into the design of individual BESS units, with the layout and exact unit safety requirements informed by large scale fire testing. The measures in the oBSSMP ensure that there is no credible risk to NGET's assets from the BESS in the areas of Work No. 2 near to Grendon Substation.

In relation to the statutory consultees named in the Requirements, the Applicant has sought to ensure that each named consultee can provide relevant technical information to support the relevant planning authority in their decision making for the discharge of that requirement. In relation to Requirement 6, the draft DCO [C1-006] names Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) and the Environment Agency. NFRS are able to provide expert advice to the relevant planning authority as to whether the detailed battery safety storage management plan submitted for approval meets their requirements for being able to manage a fire event safely, as well as ensuring that it complies with the National Fire Chiefs Council Guidance. The Environment Agency are able to provide expert advice on whether the design of the BESS meets its requirements to ensure that, in the event of a fire, wider contamination of the environment would not occur.

NGET is the statutory undertaker for electricity transmission assets, and it would not be expected to possess any relevant expertise in relation to BESS and BESS safety. The consultation feedback that NGET could provide would be very limited in scope and unlikely to be relevant. The protective provisions for NGET in Part 3 of Schedule 15 to the draft DCO provide NGET with oversight and control of 'Specified Works', being works within 15m of their assets or that could adversely affect its apparatus. The measures in the protective provisions are inherently targeted towards works that could pose a risk to NGET's apparatus, and therefore address the concern raised. Consultation on the detailed battery safety storage management plan would, by contrast, require NGET to review and comment on a document that falls outside of their scope as statutory undertaker for electricity transmission infrastructure.



The Applicant has carried out a review of DCOs and has found no example of a Requirement relating to battery safety that lists NGET as a consultee.

Protective Provisions for NGET

5. The Applicant states in its response to the Secretary of State's 10 August 2026 letter that the only outstanding issue between the parties is the definition of 'acceptable insurance' [C1-015]. The Secretary of State requests that NGET confirms that the additional issues raised in its submission to the Secretary of State have been agreed between the two parties [C1-005].

6. NGET and the Applicant are requested set out their justification for the different approaches to the insurance and, if possible, highlight any precedents in previously consented orders.

The Applicant is mindful that the concern identified by NGET relates to the use of only certain parts of the Authorised Development, specifically the BESS. The Applicant also recognises the intention of NGET is to ensure that, if the BESS does pose a risk to its assets, adequate insurance is in place to cover this. The Scheme makes provision for Work No. 2 (the BESS) to be located in two areas: on Green Hill BESS, near to Grendon Substation; and on Green Hill C, which is not near to any NGET assets. The Applicant understands that NGET's concern only relates to the BESS if it is constructed on the BESS Site.

With this in mind, the Applicant considers that this concern can be appropriately addressed with a minor amendment to the definition of "acceptable insurance", as follows:

"acceptable insurance" means general third party liability insurance effected and maintained by the undertaker with a combined property damage and bodily injury limit of indemnity of not less than £50,000,000.00 (fifty million pounds) per occurrence or series of occurrences arising out of one event. Such insurance shall be maintained (a) during the construction period of the authorised works; and (b) after the construction period of the authorised works, in respect of any use of Work No. 2 which constitutes specified works, and in respect of any maintenance works of the authorised works by or on behalf of the undertaker which constitute specified works and arranged with an insurer whose security/credit rating meets the same requirements as an "acceptable credit provider", such insurance shall include (without limitation)—

- (a) a waiver of subrogation and an indemnity to principal clause in favour of National Grid;
- (b) pollution liability for third party property damage and third party bodily damage arising from any pollution/contamination event with a (sub)limit of indemnity of not less than £10,000,000.00 (ten million pounds) per occurrence or series of occurrences arising out of one event or £20,000,000.00 (twenty million pounds) in aggregate;

Data Sharing

7. The Applicant is invited to revise the outline Landscape Environmental Management Plan, outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy, outline Operational Environmental Management Plan, and outline Construction Environmental Management Plan to provide that pre-construction, construction and post-construction and operational survey and monitoring data is regularly shared in the appropriate formats with the relevant Local Environmental Records Centre(s) and relevant national and regional environmental recording schemes.

The Applicant has amended the **Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (OLEMP) [DEC/GH7.4_F]** and **Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy**



(OEPMS) [DEC/GH7.5_F] to confirm that in accordance with CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct¹, records of notable species identified during ecological monitoring surveys during the construction and operational phases of the Scheme will be submitted to the relevant county biological records centre and, where appropriate, relevant national or regional environmental recording schemes.

The Applicant has not amended the **Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (OCEMP) [REP-015]** or **Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (OOEMP) [DEC/GH7.2_E]**, as the relevant ecological survey requirements during construction are secured through the EPMS, while the ecological monitoring requirements during operation are secured through the LEMP. Compliance with these documents is secured within the OEPMS and OLEMP already, meaning adding the reporting obligation to the OCEMP and OOEMP would only duplicate the requirement.

As set out in Table 3.3 of the OOEMP, *"A schedule of ecological monitoring requirements during the operational phase is also set out in the OLEMP to ensure the successful establishment of the proposed planting and to identify any remedial measures required"*.

Similarly, Table 3.2 of the OCEMP sets out that the OLEMP *"sets out the measures proposed to mitigate the potential impacts and effects on landscape (and ecological) features, and to enhance the landscape and biodiversity value of the Sites"*, and Table 3.3 of the OCEMP confirms that *"ecological protection measures relating to the construction phase are set out in the Outline Ecological Protection and Mitigation Strategy (OEPMS)"*.

Changes to the draft Development Consent Order

8. In response to the Secretary of State's most recent request for information, the Applicant produced an updated Schedule of Changes to the Draft Development Consent Order [C1-014]. In this, the Applicant included a proposed update to Article 6 (Disapplication and modification of legislation, etc.) in response to comments made by Natural England during the Examination of the Lime Down Solar Project (EN010168). Natural England is invited to comment on the wording of this requirement, and the suitability of adding this requirement into this Development Consent Order.

The Applicant understands that Natural England will respond directly to the SoS. The Applicant has made contact with Natural England who have advised that they are content with the change made to Article 6 of the Development Consent Order by the Applicant.

9. In the same response, the Applicant updated 'Article 2(1) (Interpretation) – definition of "permitted preliminary works"', to include the 'protection' of apparatus to the list of permitted preliminary works. The Applicant is invited to explain further the rationale for this addition to the draft Development Consent Order.

The definition of "permitted preliminary works" in article 2(1) includes, among other things, surveys (including geotechnical surveys and intrusive archaeological surveys). A utility company may require protective works to be put in place to ensure that its assets are not harmed by the carrying out of a geotechnical survey, such as the drilling of boreholes. The purpose of these permitted preliminary surveys is to inform the detailed design of the

¹ Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) (April 2025) Code of Professional Conduct.



Scheme. Accordingly, if the protection of apparatus were not included within the defined permitted preliminary works, a scenario may arise where ground condition surveys to inform the detailed design could not be carried out before the authorised development is commenced, due to a request from a statutory undertaker for protection of their assets.

Protective provisions for Cadent Gas Limited

10. The Applicant and Cadent are invited to comment on paragraph 97(4) of Part 8 of Schedule 15 (protective provisions for the protection of Cadent Gas Limited). Paragraph 97(4) provides: "(4) Any agreement or consent granted by Cadent under paragraph 100 or any other paragraph of this Part of this Schedule, will be taken to constitute agreement under sub-paragraph (1)."

11. The Secretary of State invites the Applicant and Cadent to consider whether this paragraph is accurately drafted, noting that previous protective provisions for Cadent stated that agreements relating to retained apparatus (or otherwise) would not be considered an agreement for the purpose of paragraph 97(1). For example, the corresponding paragraph in West Burton Solar Project Order 2025 provides: "(4) Any agreement or consent granted by Cadent under paragraph 69 or any other paragraph of this Part of this Schedule, will not be taken to constitute agreement under sub-paragraph (1)." (emphasis added).

The Applicant confirms that paragraph 97(4) of the protective provisions for Cadent should be consistent with the West Burton Solar Project Order 2025, and be amended to read as follows:

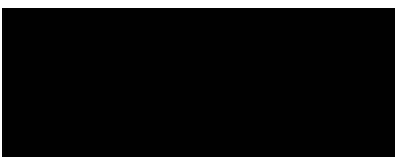
"(4) Any agreement or consent granted by Cadent under paragraph 100 or any other paragraph of this Part of this Schedule, will not be taken to constitute agreement under sub-paragraph (1)."

The Applicant understands that Cadent is confirming the same in response to this Request for Information.

The Applicant considers that the above, and supporting submissions, satisfactorily provide the additional information as requested by the SoS in their letter of 28 August 2026.

Please do not hesitate to contact us using the details provided below if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely,



Green Hill Solar Ltd.

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