8 October 2026

The Planning Inspectorate

c/o QUADIENT

69 Buckingham Avenue

Slough

SL1 4PN

Application Reference: EN0110012

Light Valley Solar

Response to Rule 17 Letter

Dear Examining Authority,

Introduction

In response to the Applicant's **Change Notification [CR1-001]**, the Examining Authority (ExA) issued a **Rule 17 Letter [PD-010]** on 5 October 2026. The ExA comments on the Applicant's proposed approach and timetable for the proposed Change Application. In summary, the ExA:

- state their concerns that there may be insufficient time within the examination for any additional affected persons, interested parties or additional interested parties to reasonably review submitted information and make representations about the proposed Changes which invoke the Infrastructure Planning (Compulsory Acquisition) Regulations 2010 ('CA Regulations');
- request the Applicant consider dividing the proposed change request to those changes which would invoke the CA Regulations and those that would not; and
- request an Addendum to the Environmental Statement identifying any changes to the assessments and findings on environmental effects accompany the Change Application.

Updated Proposed Timetable

As requested in the ExA's Rule 17, the Applicant has reviewed the proposed timetable it provided at Section 5.1 of the **Change Notification [CR1-001]** for any flexibility and alternative programme. The Applicant has determined it can bring the first press notices forward to be

published on Tuesday 27 October 2026 (instead of Thursday 29 October 2026). The result is that the ExA is afforded an additional day to issue notices of any hearings and deadline to request to speak, and to prepare the Initial Assessment of Principle Issues. The Applicant has prepared an updated Proposed Timetable on this basis at Table 1. Beyond this, the Applicant is unable to readily accommodate any further changes, because, as the ExA has observed, there is limited time left in the Examination. .

Table 1 – Proposed Updated Timetable

Stage	Proposed Date	Source
Submission of Change Notification	25 September 2026	Planning Inspectorate Change Guidance
Submission of Change Application	13 October 2026 This allows the ExA at least two weeks to make a Procedural Decision in respect of the Change Notification and gives time for the Applicant to complete the assessment and engagements referred to above, whilst also being three weeks prior to the November hearings.	CA Reg 5
Acceptance by ExA of change Application	23 October 2026 As part of the Procedural Decision in respect of accepting the Change Application, the ExA could also indicate that in responding to the Applicant's consultation, respondents (including interested parties and additional interested parties) should submit a full representation that could be both a relevant and also a written representation (such timing of which is allowed for by Regulation 13(2)). This could then be appropriately reflected in the Applicant's notices.	CA Regs 6 and 13
First Press Notice / Start of consultation period	27 October 2026	CA Regs 7 and 8
Second Press Notice	3 November 2026	CA Reg 8
Closing date for Consultation on Change Application	2 December 2026	CA Regs 7 and 8
Submission of Certificate of Compliance	3 December 2026	CA Reg 9

Stage	Proposed Date	Source
ExA issue notices of hearings	11 December 2026 The Applicant acknowledges this period is less than allowed for by the CA Regulations, but respectfully suggests this, to enable the full process to be carried out within the statutory Examination timescales.	CA Regs 11, 14, 15 and 16
Comments on responses, Relevant Representations and Written Representations	15 December to align with Deadline 5	CA Reg 12
Hearings (if required)	12-14 January 2027 The Applicant suggests this week as it would allow any Hearings required to take account of non-Change Application matters, taking account of documentation submitted at Deadlines 5 and 6 (7 January) and Christmas.	CA Regs 14, 15 and 16
Post-Hearing submissions	22 January 2027 The Applicant appreciates that this date goes beyond the current Examination timetable, but this date would still allow the Examination to complete within the 6 month statutory timeframe.	CA Regs 12 and 13

Whilst the Applicant appreciates the date for post-hearing submissions extends beyond the current Examination timetable scheduled to close on 14 January 2027, the Applicant maintains there remains sufficient time for the Examination to complete within the 6-month statutory timeframe (ending 28 January 2027) and would encourage the ExA to maximise the time available.

Examples of other DCO projects

To assure the ExA that the Applicant's timescales can be accommodated, the Applicant has conducted a detailed review of Change Application programmes which also had compressed timescales but were still ultimately accepted within their existing Examination timetables. This review is included as **Schedule 1**. It focuses on projects where the CA Regulations were engaged and draws out other similarities with the nature of the changes in the proposed Light Valley Solar Change Application.

When reviewing the precedent, the Applicant notes:

- The Applicant submitted its Change Notification on 25 September 2026 and is intending to submit its Change Application on 13 October 2026, which would leave 3 months and 15 days prior to the end of the 6-month statutory Examination period. This allows more time than was available in the Cottam, Medworth Energy From Waste, and Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension DCO Projects.
- The Applicant has suggested the ExA make a decision on whether to accept the Change Application within 10 days, which the Applicant has acknowledged is less than the period allowed for by the CA Regulations but observes that the nature of the proposed changes are limited, and that ExAs on other projects have been able to accommodate similar timescales (with some accepting an application in even less time).
- The consultation period as required by the CA Regulations can readily be facilitated, where consultation would end on 2 December 2026, with 1 month and 26 days remaining until the end of the 6-month statutory Examination period for all interested parties and affected persons to be afforded an opportunity to provide relevant and written representations, and potentially oral representations if the ExA considers additional hearings are required. Again, this is broadly consistent with the time available in other DCO examinations.

Table 2 – Summary of timescales in other DCO Examinations which submitted a Change Application

Project	CA Regulations engaged?	Period between Change Application submission and end of Examination	ExA period to accept Change Application	Period between end of consultation and end of Examination
Light Valley Solar	Yes	Anticipated 3 months 15 days	Anticipated 10 days	Anticipated 1 month 26 days
Cottam	Yes	2 months 26 days	10 days	1 month 10 days
West Burton	Yes	3 months 19 days	14 days	1 month 23 days
Green Hill	Yes	5 months	11 days	3 months 11 days
Medworth Energy from Waste	No	2 months 16 days	4 days	1 month 7 days
Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Project	Yes	3 months 6 days	6 days	1 month 21 days

On the basis of this breadth of precedent, the Applicant considers that there is sufficient time remaining within the Examination for consultation and consideration of CA Regulation invoking

changes and is consistent with the constructive and pragmatic approach taken in other DCO examinations.

The Applicant reiterates that each of the nine changes have been proposed in response to concerns raised by Interested Parties and/or Affected Persons, and that it is therefore in the wider community's interest for all changes, including the CA-invoking ones, to be accepted and consulted upon.

Treatment of Change 1

In the **Rule 17 Letter [PD-010]**, the ExA suggests the Applicant characterise Change 1 as a CA Regulation invoking change, 'unless evidence of each person with an interest in the additional land consents to the inclusion of the provision'. While the Applicant will certainly seek to obtain consent of any additional land interests, the Applicant relies on the example of the Change Application in Medworth EfW as precedent (see **Schedule 1**) together with the plain interpretation of the definition of 'additional land' in the CA Regulations to confirm that Change 1 does not engage the CA Regulations. Whichever option(s) is taken forward for Change 1, any extension of the Order limits would be temporary and only for the purposes of construction access. The Applicant's consultation approach is to include all non-CA Regulation changes within the broader consultation required by the CA Regulations and as such necessary procedural fairness will be afforded regardless.

ExA request to divide the changes based on whether the CA Regulations are engaged

The Applicant has also considered the ExA's suggestion to split the non-CA Regulation changes from the CA-Regulation changes into two separate change applications. The Applicant maintains the split is not necessary, and will be proceeding with including all nine changes in one request, as was done in Green Hill Change Application 1. The Applicant does not see the benefit in splitting out the changes based on whether the CA Regulations apply. As advised at Section 3 of the **Change Notification [CR1-001]**, the Applicant will update all land interests affected by every change of its proposals prior to submitting the Change Application (and commits to writing to each of them for all changes once the Change Application is submitted).

Request for ES Addendum

The Applicant confirms that as part of the Change Application consideration will be given to the environmental effects from the changes and how these may or may not alter the conclusions of the Environmental Statement. As has been the approach on other projects a Supplementary Environmental Information Report will be submitted to support the Change Application on 13 October 2026.

Approach to consultation

As set out in the **Change Notification [CR1-001]**, the Applicant maintains its approach to update all land interests affected by every change prior to submission of the Change Application next Tuesday to make them aware of the Change Application, with formal consultation on all of the changes taking place following the acceptance of the Change Application.

Following further refinement of the proposed changes, continued title interrogation and diligent enquiry the Applicant has identified 74 parties as having a legal right or interest over the land within the proposed Changes Application. Of those 74 parties, 73 have received either a s.42 notification, s.56 notification or s.102(a) notification. The Applicant notes that diligent enquiry is an ongoing process and is committed to consulting with all interests in respect of all of the proposed changes detailed in the Change Application.

The Applicant acknowledges the comments that the Examining Authority has not seen information regarding consultation and engagement taken to date on the proposed changes. Details of this engagement will be evidenced and provided within the Change Application.

The Applicant notes the request to consult all persons notified of the accepted application under section 56 of the Planning Act 2008, and all persons who made a relevant representation. The Applicant maintains its approach to targeted consultation with those affected by the proposed changes is appropriate and will list the consultees to be consulted as part of the Change Application.

The Applicant trusts this response assures the ExA that the Proposed Updated Timetable and procedure ensures the Examination of the DCO application and Change Application remains inclusive and efficient and statutorily compliant, with all parties having the opportunity to participate, and Examination completed within the time remaining.

If there are any queries about the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

Senior Development Manager

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Schedule 1

1. Cottam Solar Farm ('Cottam')

Cottam submitted a Change Notification on 21 November 2023[1] in advance of submitting the Change Application on 8 December 2023,[2] being 2 months and 26 days prior to the end of the 6-month statutory examination period[3]. The five changes comprised of changes to the Order Limits, with two modifications to the cable route corridor and three changes to the construction and operation accesses, which include a change of road and Abnormal Load access[4]. The nature of the proposed changes in Light Valley are not dissimilar, where Light Valley Solar includes similar modifications to the cable route corridor and accesses, including those for Abnormal Indivisible Loads.

The 'additional land' procedure under the CA Regulations was engaged. The ExA confirmed that the notification and publication requirements were acceptable to be carried out between 21 December 2023 and 28 January 2024, a time period of 38 days (ending 37 days before the end of the examination period), which notably included the period over Christmas[5]. The ExA deemed it acceptable to run the Relevant Representation period and the Written Representation period for the concurrently from 21 December 2023 to 28 January 2024 (ending 37 days before the end of the examination period)[6].

The ExA confirmed hearings arising under the CA Regulations, if required, could be held virtually in late February 2024 with a written summary of these hearings to be submitted at Deadline 6 on 5 March 2024. This coincided with the end dated of the 6-month examination period[7]. The hearings took place on 28 February to discuss the compulsory acquisition and temporary possession that arose from the Change Application and a written summary submitted[8]. The Applicant presents this example as containing similar changes to Light Valley Solar, which invoked the process under the CA Regulations and was able to be completed in the timeframe of the Examination period through utilisation of the full statutory timeframe.

2. West Burton Solar Project ('West Burton')

West Burton is another project which triggered the process for additional land under the CA Regulations because it sought to extend its Order limits. West Burton submitted a Change Notification on 3 January 2024[9] before submitting the Change Application and Consultation

[1] [REP2-109]
[2] [AS-063]
[3] [PD-010]
[4] [AS-063].
[5] [PD-014].
[6] [PD-014].
[7] [PD-014].
[8] [EV-047], [REP6-005].
[9] [AS-013]

Report on 19 January 2024[10]. The Change Application was submitted 3 months and 19 days prior to the end of the 6-month statutory examination period[11].

The five changes required an extension of the Order limits for the purposes of: the creation of areas to make temporary passing places during the construction phase, to add flexibility in the cable corridor route, to allow for flexibility in construction methods, to create a longer visibility splay and to provide a new access road. Of a similar nature are the Applicant's proposed Changes which include an alternative access (Change 1) and a change to visibility splays (Change 4).

The ExA accepted the Applicant's Change Notification on 2 February 2024, 11 working days after the Change Notification was submitted, although the decision itself was made on 24 January 2024[12]. The consultation period for the Relevant Representations for the Change Notification was from 8 February 2024 to 15 March 2024[13], a period of 36 days. The consultation closed 54 days before the end of the examination. A new Deadline 5 was introduced for 11 April 2024, 27 days before the end of examination, that required comments on submissions received at Deadline 4A (the closing date for the consultation period for the Relevant Representations for the Change Notification)[14]. The West Burton Solar Project is another example of a compressed Change Application programme and how the ExA accommodated submissions in relation to the Change Application by being flexible with the Examination timetable.

3. Green Hill Solar Farm ('Green Hill')

Green Hill submitted Change Notification 1 on 22 October 2025[15], being the day after the Preliminary Meeting. This meant the ExA was cognisant of the Change Notification when preparing the initial Rule 8 letter[16], which was subsequently varied once the change application was accepted[17]. Five of the nine changes engaged the procedure for 'additional land' under the CA Regulations, including extension of Order limits and changes in the CA status of parts of the land. This is not dissimilar to Light Valley, and relevantly, all changes were included in one application, which is what the Applicant has proposed here.

Green Hill submitted the Change Application and Consultation Report on 10 November 2025[18] and the ExA accepted it 11 days after submission on 21 November 2025[19]. The Applicant held conducted targeted pre-application engagement before formally carrying out its consultation between 4 December 2025 – 14 January 2026. Consultation ended 3 months and 7 days before the end of the 6-month statutory timeframe to end examination.

[10] [AS-056]
[11] [PD-013]
[12] [PD-012]
[13] [PD-013]
[14] [PD-013]
[15] [AS-016].
[16] [PD-006], see Annex B.
[17] [PD-013].
[18] [CR1-039].
[19] [PD-009].

4. Medworth Energy from Waste Combined Heat and Power Facility ('Medworth EfW')

Medworth EfW submitted a Change Notification on 16 May 2023[20], which was 3 months and 6 days prior to the end of the 6-month statutory examination period. The two changes proposed were minor amendments to extend the order limits within the boundary of the existing public highway at two different junctions. Relevantly, the proposed changes did not engage the CA Regulations because additional land was not required in respect of either change: one small additional plot of land was identified in respect of which only temporary possession powers are required. The Applicant refers to Medworth EfW as an example of where additional temporary possession powers were required and it was accepted that the CA Regulations were not engaged.

Medworth EfW submitted its Change Application on 5 June 2023[21]. This was accepted by the ExA on 9 June 2023, 4 days later. Pursuant to a procedural direction dated 13 June 2023[22], the ExA required Medworth EfW to carry out non-statutory consultation on the proposed changes. Medworth EfW held this consultation from 28 June 2023 until 14 July 2023 for a period of 16 days (exceeding the 15 days required by the ExA)[23]. The consultation closed just 38 days before the end of the examination. The ExA included an additional Deadline 7A in the programme on 11 August 2023 which was for the receipt of representations on the applicant's changes to the application, and broadened the scope of Deadline 8 on 18 August 2023 to include any comments on further information/submissions received at Deadline 7A[24]. These Deadlines were respectively 10 days and 3 days before the end of the Examination period.

While CA Regulations were not engaged, Medworth EfW is an example of a compressed consultation programme and how the ExA accommodated submissions in relation to the Change Application by being flexible, and maximising the time available, within the Examination timetable.

5. Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Project

Equinor submitted a Material Change Application during the examination period on 11 April 2023[25], 3 months and 6 days prior to the end of the 6-month statutory examination period[26]. The changes included the amendment of the Order limits in relation to the cable corridor and a project site, to change accesses and include an option of trenchless crossing in an area that amended the rights sought[27].

[20] [AS-015].
[21] [AS-017] to [AS-030], specifically Change Application Report [AS-028].
[22] [PD-016].
[23] [AS-032] and Change Application Consultation Report [AS-033] and [AS-034].
[24] [PD-018].
[25] [AS-045].
[26] [PD-019].
[27] [AS-045].

The ExA accepted the Change Application on 17 April 2023[28], 4 working days after the application was submitted. The consultation period for Relevant Representations took place from 20 April to 26 May 2023[29], 52 days before the end of the examination period. A new Deadline 6 was inserted for 20 June 2023[30], 27 days before the end of the examination period, to allow for the submissions of responses to Relevant Representations and for Written Representations on the project. A Compulsory Acquisition Hearing which allowed participation in relation to the Change Application was held on 22 June 2023[31], 25 days before the end of the examination period. The Sheringham and Dudgeon Extension Project is a further example of a compressed consultation programme and how the ExA accommodated submissions in relation to the Change Application by being flexible with the Examination timetable.

[28] [PD-014].
[29] [PD-019].
[30] [PD-019].
[31] [EV-093], [REP7-064]