

Cottam Solar Project

Statement of Community Consultation

June 2022



1. Introduction

Cottam Solar Project Ltd is proposing a new solar project that will cross the county border between Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire.

The solar project will support regional and national targets for reducing carbon emissions to net zero, contribute to improvements to local ecology and biodiversity and deliver affordable, subsidy free energy. This document is known as the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) and has been prepared and published in accordance with Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008. It explains how Cottam Solar Project Ltd intends to carry out its statutory consultation with you, the community, for its Development Consent Order (DCO) application.

The approach to consultation has been consulted on with Lincolnshire County Council, West Lindsey District Council, Bassetlaw District Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, under Section 47(2) of the Planning Act 2008. The feedback received was taken into account and used to inform this SoCC.

Cottam Solar Project Ltd recognises that consultation is a vital stage in the development of our proposals. We want to listen to your views and to work with local people and organisations to deliver these projects sensitively and in cohesion with the local environment.

This SoCC outlines how we will consult with you during the 'pre-application stage' before we submit our DCO application for the project to the Planning Inspectorate. There is more information on the DCO process in section 9 of this SoCC.

2. About us

Cottam Solar Project is a proposed development by Island Green Power who are an international developer of renewable energy projects.

Cottam Solar Project Limited is part of Island Green Power Limited. Established in 2013, Island Green Power (IGP) have delivered 26 solar projects worldwide totalling more than 1GW of capacity. This includes 14 solar projects in the UK and Republic of Ireland. IGP's mission is to increase solar energy usage, making more renewable energy possible and saving thousands of tonnes of CO2 in the process.



26 solar projects worldwide



Totalling over **1GW** of capacity



Island Green Power development in Salhouse, Norfolk.

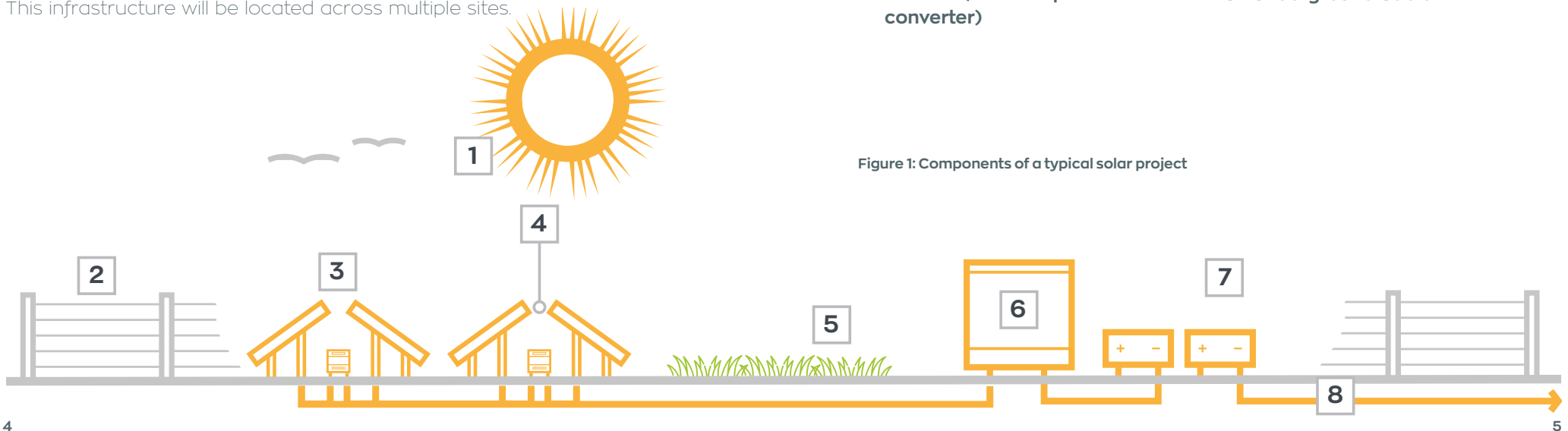
3. Cottam Solar Project

The proposed Cottam Solar Project comprises three sites. Cottam 1 is located in the area around Coates, Cottam 2 is located east of the village of Corringham, and Cottam 3 is located to the north-east and south-east of the village of Blyton and east of Pilham.

The proposals for the Cottam Solar Project include:

- Solar panels
- Built infrastructure such as substations, transformers inverters and energy storage
- Buried infrastructure which will be the cable route that allows the project to connect to the grid connection at Cottam Power Station
- Security features, including fencing and CCTV
- Landscaping and ecological enhancement

This infrastructure will be located across multiple sites.



The Cottam Solar Project has the potential to:

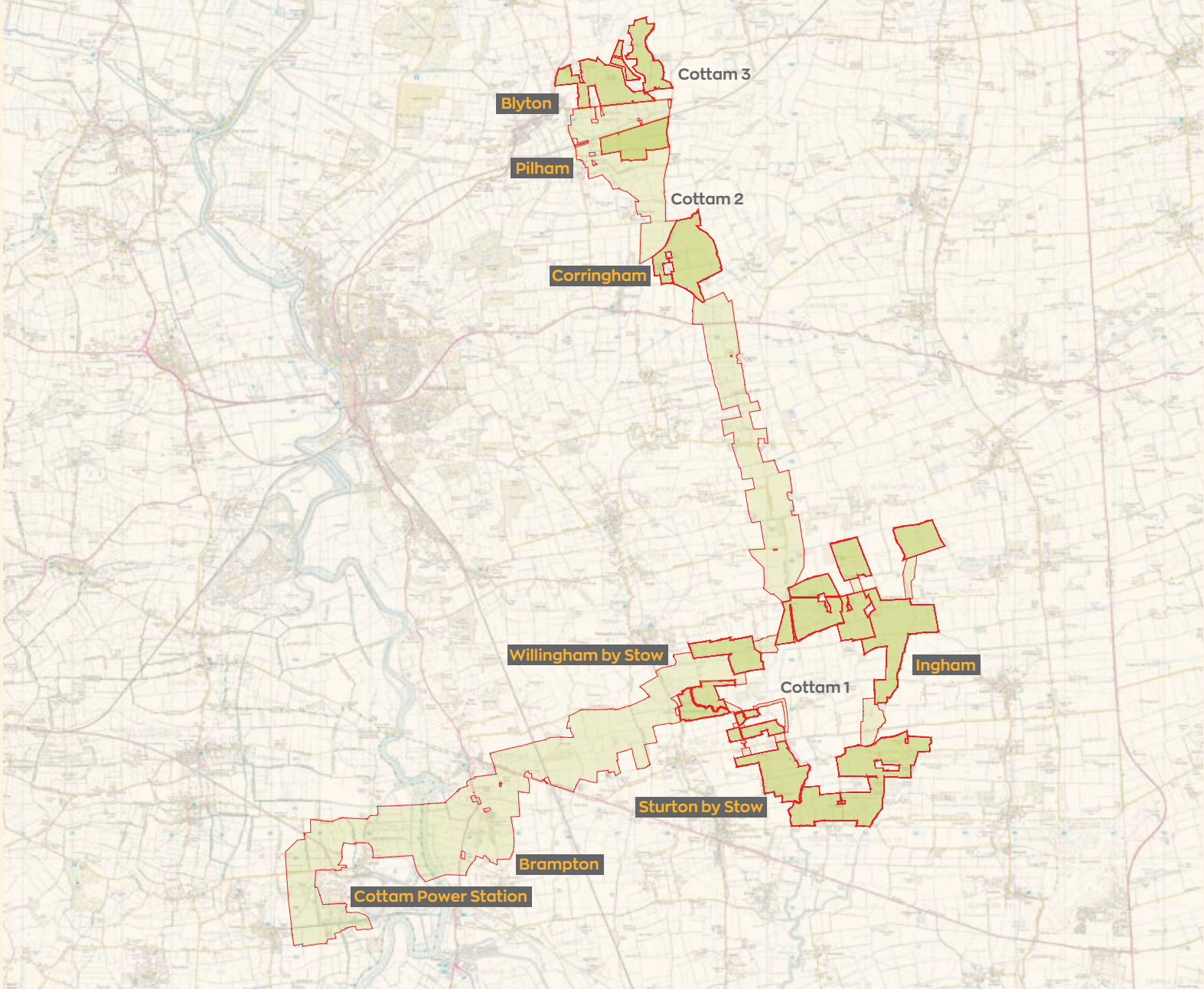
- Power in the region of **180,000** homes
- Replace around **30%** of the former generation capacity of the coal powered Cottam Power Station
- Support national and regional obligations to reduce carbon emissions to **net zero by 2050**
- Contribute towards strategic improvements to local ecology and biodiversity

Components of a typical solar project

1. Solar Energy
2. Fencing
3. Solar Panels
4. Inverter (DC to AC power converter)
5. Landscape Area
6. Substation
7. Energy Storage
8. Underground Cable

Figure 1: Components of a typical solar project

Figure 2: Proposed Site Areas for Cottam Solar Project



Key

- Area for solar panels and associated development
- Cable Route Search Corridor

4. Our public consultation process

We are undertaking an iterative consultation process for the Cottam Solar Project. The feedback and comments we receive will help inform the final design of the project that we will submit to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration.

We are also developing plans for a similar project connecting into West Burton Power Station. We recognise the proximity of these projects and are looking to develop the proposals in parallel. This includes coordinating our consultation activities on both projects with joint information events and opportunities to provide feedback so that communities interested in both projects do not have to submit feedback twice. We consider the merits of a coordinated approach to be:

- Efficiency for respondents
- Clarity for communities: clearly aligning programmes and providing information on both projects in consultation literature allows us to clearly explain both projects and their relationship with one another in single documents
- Increased opportunities: a coordinated approach results in each project benefiting from a larger consultation zone and number of events than would be the case were they being consulted on separately



Our consultation will consist of two joint phases of consultation for both projects, including:

- A non-statutory phase one consultation, lasting **6 weeks** which was held from **03 November 2021 until 16 December 2021**
- A statutory phase two consultation lasting for **6 weeks** from **15 June 2022 until 27 July 2022**

This SoCC relates to the carrying out of the phase two statutory consultation.



Phase one consultation (03 November 2021 – 16 December 2021)

This non-statutory consultation introduced our early-stage proposals for the Cottam and West Burton Solar Projects to the local communities. We received feedback on our initial proposals and suggestions from the communities, based on local knowledge of the area. All of this feedback has been useful for us to understand and consider as we develop and refine our proposals.

Our phase one non statutory consultation ran for 6 weeks, We posted our phase one information leaflet and feedback form to over 9,000 addresses within the core consultation zone. We also held five information events in venues across the proposed site areas, in the villages of Gringley-on-the-Hill, Willingham by Stow, Marton and Gate Burton and Blyton.



Phase two Consultation (15 June 2022 – 27 July 2022)

This statutory consultation, in accordance with Section 47 of the Planning Act, will allow us to update you on our proposals for the Cottam Solar Project. We will consult on more detailed proposals alongside presenting the findings of the environmental studies that have been carried out to date, which will be published in our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). The phase two consultation is the consultation that we must carry out by law. More details of what we will be consulting on are listed in section 5 of this SoCC and the methods for how we will consult are listed in section 7. As well as the community consultation in accordance with Section 47, this consultation also includes:

- Consultation with prescribed bodies such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and National Highways (under Section 42 of the 2008 Act);
- Consultation with host and neighbouring Local Planning Authorities (under Section 43 of the 2008 Act);
- Consultation with any persons with an interest in the land affected by the Project (under Section 44 of the 2008 Act); and general public consultation on the Project (under Section 48 of the 2008 Act)

We will be seeking feedback on the findings of the PEIR through our phase two consultation, and the full PEIR together with a non-technical summary will be made available as part of the consultation. The PEIR will be made available electronically on our project website, and we publicise, as part of our statutory notices, a service for requesting hard copies of the full PEIR. Hard copies of our community consultation documents will be made available via post on demand. See sections 7 and 8 for further details. You will also have the opportunity to formally comment on our proposals for the Cottam Solar Project when the DCO application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. The Planning Inspectorate will invite public views on the proposals and interested parties will be able to register and submit their views for consideration during the examination. Guidance on this process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/>



COVID-19

Our approach will be guided by the Government's policy on COVID-19 restrictions at the time of each stage of consultation, and the need to keep people safe. We will continue to liaise with the relevant Local Planning Authorities and ensure that all consultation material is easily accessible, and that consultation events are proportionate to allow for open dialogue whilst protecting public health.



Consultation reporting

As part of the DCO application to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, planned for late 2022, we will publish a consultation report that:

- Describes our consultation process
- Explains how we have satisfied and adhered to legal requirements.
- Details how we have worked with Local Planning Authorities to ensure our consultation is suitable for the area through the proposals set out in this SoCC
- Details the feedback and consultation responses we have received
- Responds to the feedback we have received, including explaining how we have listened to your feedback and how it has influenced our proposals

Other Solar DCO consultations

We are aware that there are a number of other solar projects in the planning process. We will continue to work collaboratively with other projects to reduce the risk of consultation confusion or consultation fatigue for the local community. We recognise the particular proximity of Low Carbon's proposed Gate Burton Energy Park to the Cottam and West Burton Solar Projects. We are working with Low Carbon to ensure that our respective consultations, where they are running simultaneously, allow local communities to fully engage with both. This includes staggering our respective consultation launches and ensuring that our information events are scheduled to avoid conflicts.

Our phase two consultation materials will indicate to local communities that the Low Carbon Gate Burton Energy Park consultation is also taking place through June and July 2022 and make clear how to find relevant information and respond to that consultation, independent of our own feedback channels.

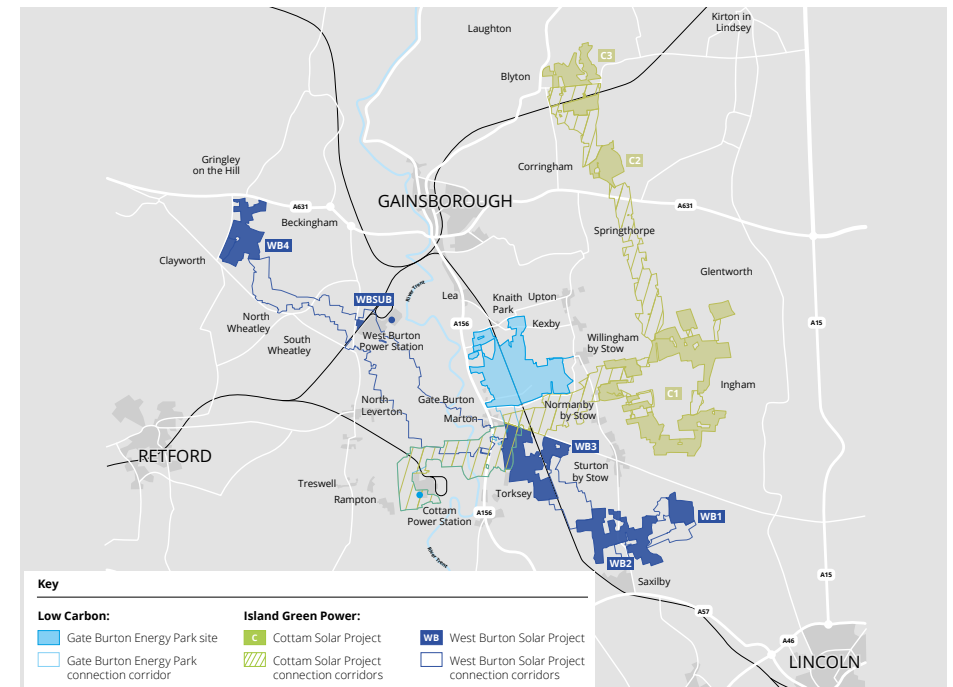


Figure 3: Gate Burton Energy Park and the Cottam and West Burton Solar Projects.

5. What will we consult on?

The aim of our pre-application public consultation is to ensure that the community, landowners and tenants, stakeholders and technical consultees have a chance to understand and influence our proposals. At each stage of consultation, we will be seeking feedback to help develop our proposals.

	What we will consult on
Phase One Non-Statutory Consultation (held 03 November – 16 December)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad project boundary, with expectation to be refined • Corridors or areas of search for the infrastructure required to connect the panels i.e. underground cables • The criteria local communities consider to be most important in refining the design of the scheme • Ideas or themes for landscape / environmental mitigation and enhancement • Priorities for other potential local community benefits • Approach to consultation
Phase Two Statutory Consultation (15 June 2022 - 27 July 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed site layouts and cable corridor route(s) • Clear project description • Proposed traffic access route(s) and movements • Detail on short-term and temporary impacts during construction, such as on local residents, landowners and tenants, amenities and the environment and mitigation measures • Detail on long-term operational impacts, such as on wildlife, local amenities, the local environment, landscape management plans and details of mitigation and enhancement measures • The contents of our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) which sets out the potential likely environmental effects of the project. A non-technical summary will accompany the PEIR to summarise the contents of the PEIR in a non-technical manner • Other plans, maps and documents to accompany the PEIR • Anything else that you think we need to consider

6. Who will we consult?

Our consultation process is open to anyone who may be interested in, or in any way feels impacted by our proposals for the Cottam Solar Project.

You can get in contact with us at any stage of the development process. Our contact details can be found in section 12 of this SoCC. We are seeking to actively engage with a wide range of individuals and groups. We want our consultation to be accessible for everyone to respond, regardless of any personal circumstances. Figure 4 shows the consultation area, which has been divided into two zones.

Core Consultation Zone centres on the site area and extends by a minimum distance of 2km from the proposed site boundaries of both the Cottam and West Burton Solar Projects and 1km from the phase one cable route search corridors. The zone has been extended further where proportionate and reasonable based on existing boundaries in order to avoid inappropriate ‘severance’ of communities.

All homes and businesses within the core consultation zone will directly receive communications such as consultation leaflets from us in the post. Information events will be held within the core consultation zone and relevant organisations such as parish councils and community groups will be notified of consultation opportunities.

A Wider Consultation Area recognises that there may be some individuals or parties that are interested in the project that will fall out of the scope of the core consultation zone. We are committed to ensuring that these interested parties still have an opportunity to view our proposals and have their say. We will publicise consultation opportunities to the wider consultation zone by advertising in local media in accordance with Section 48 of the Planning act 2008, and keeping a register of interested individuals. Informative consultation materials will be published online and available to view and collect via our contact details. Feedback will be accepted from any interested parties.

Approach to joint consultation

Due to the fact we are developing plans for the Cottam Solar Project in parallel with West Burton Solar Project and both projects are close in geographical proximity, we are proposing to coordinate consultation activities. Practically this will involve;

- **Joint consultation periods** for both projects being held in parallel
- **A shared core consultation zone** receiving information and hosting events with information relevant to both projects
- **Combined feedback mechanisms** allowing respondents to confirm whether they consider their feedback relevant to both projects or whether they would like to comment on one project (or site) specifically

As well as the community consultation we will be consulting with a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees on our proposals, including:

- Owners, tenants and occupiers of the land included within the DCO application
- MPs, Local Planning Authorities and parish councils
- Statutory stakeholders and prescribed consultees, such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England
- Environmental groups, including RSPB and the local Wildlife Trust



Ongoing engagement

Anybody is welcome to get in touch with us at any point before, during or between stages of consultation. Our contact details are listed in section 12 of this SoCC. Feedback will be considered as part of the detailed design process and incorporated where possible. Where this is not possible for technical reasons, we will explain this in our Consultation Report. You will also have the opportunity to formally comment on our proposals for the Cottam Solar Project when the DCO application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.



Seldom heard groups

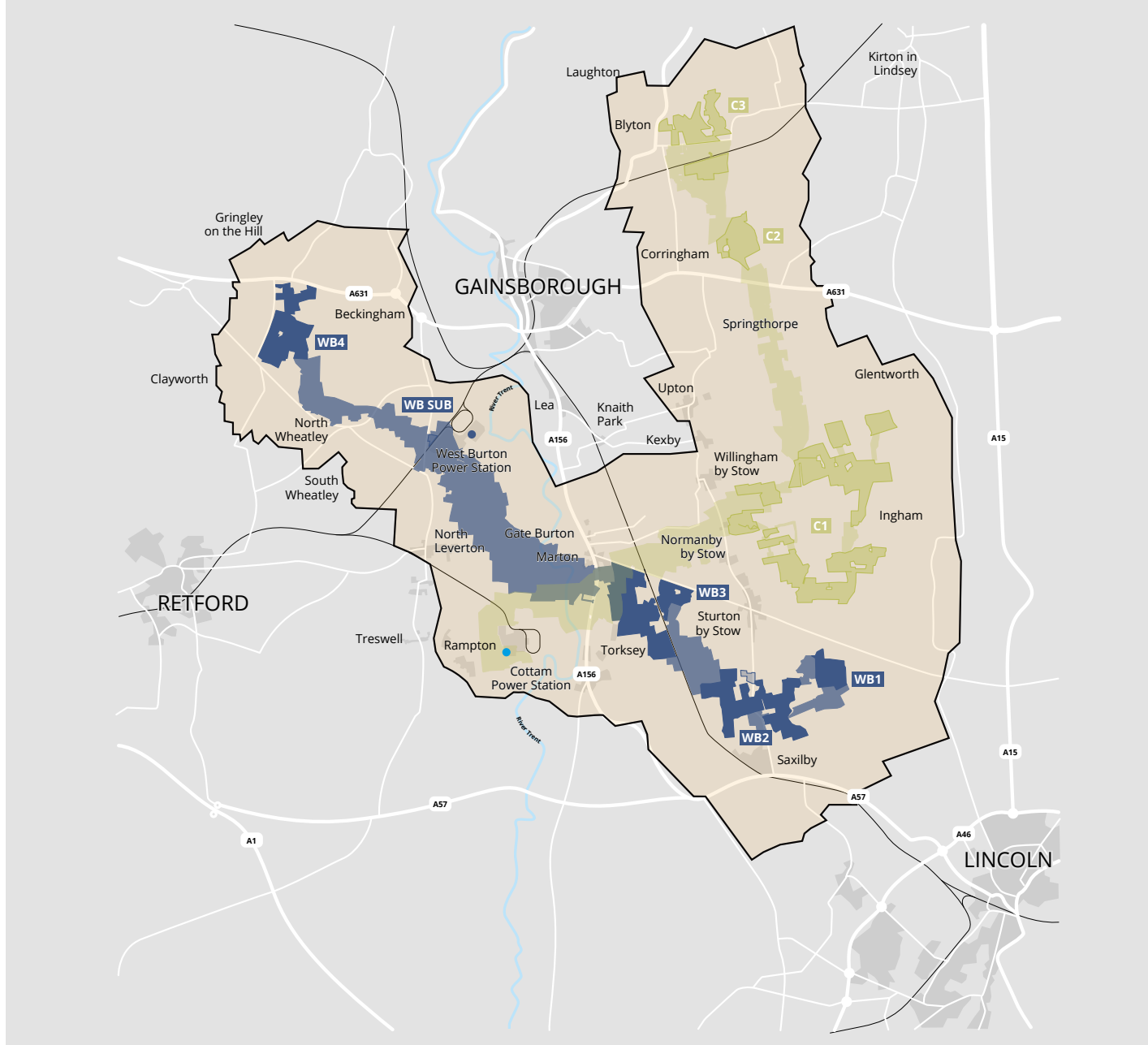
We have developed our consultation to be accessible to all groups in the community. We recognise that some individuals or groups may have difficulties taking part in the consultation process for a range of reasons. We have identified a number of organisations representing seldom heard groups in the consultation area. These organisations will be contacted ahead of phase two consultation to ensure that our approach best meets the needs of their members. We are hosting different formats of free-to-use communications channels to ensure our consultation is as accessible as possible. These formats include email, phone and post. We will also be using a combination of in person and digital formats such as in person events and webinars. We will also continue to notify them of consultation opportunities.

Identified seldom heard groups include:

Age UK Lincolnshire and South Lincolnshire
Age UK Nottingham and Nottinghamshire
Lincolnshire Deaf Association
Nottingham Deaf Society
Lincolnshire Autistic Society
Autistic Nottingham
The WI Nottinghamshire Federation
Lincolnshire Council For Voluntary Youth Services
Disability Nottinghamshire
Nottinghamshire Federation of Young Farmers Clubs
Lincoln and Lindsey Blind Society
Lincolnshire Traveller Initiative

This list was developed after consultation with the relevant local authorities.

Figure 4: Cottam and West Burton Solar Projects consultation area



Key

- Cottam Solar Project
- Cottam Solar Project connection corridors
- West Burton Solar Project
- West Burton Solar Project connection corridors
- Core Consultation Zone
- Wider Consultation Area

7. How we will consult

The consultation activities described in this section of the SoCC ensure an inclusive, meaningful and open consultation.

The activities include a range of methods to ensure our consultation can be accessed by all members of the community. Our statutory phase two consultation is planned to take place for six weeks between 15 June 2022 until 27 July 2022 (exceeding the statutory minimum period of 28 days as required by the Planning Act 2008). The phase two consultation will be carried out in the following ways:

Meeting and events



Information events will be held at locations across the core consultation zone. They will be advertised in consultation leaflets, across local media, at local information points and Community Access Points.

We will hold six in-person events during our phase two consultation, including events in Clayworth, Gringley on the Hill, Saxilby, Marton and Gate Burton, Willingham by Stow and Blyton. These events will be held on different days of the week with varied hours to accommodate different availability within the community. We will also hold two online webinars as part of our phase two consultation.

Members of the Cottam Solar Project team will be at these events to answer questions and discuss the proposals in more detail. Project materials setting out the developed proposals will be displayed and available to take away.



Two webinars will be held for any member of the public to join via telephone or internet connection. Details of our events and webinars are presented on page 22 of this SoCC.

Literature



Briefing sessions may be offered to local, elected members including parish councils within the core consultation zone.



Consultation leaflets will be posted to all properties in the core consultation zone at the start of the phase two consultation. These leaflets will also be available online, to collect from Community Access Points, and to take away from our information events. Information can also be posted to those outside of the core consultation zone on request.

These leaflets will publicise the phase two consultation process and include relevant information. This will include details of the consultation period and the activities that will be undertaken, such as dates, times and locations of events. Leaflets will also have details of how to access the project website, communications channels, and any available technical information such as the **Preliminary Environmental Impact Report (PEIR)**.



Feedback forms will be made available for community members to respond to the consultation. These will be posted to all properties in the core consultation zone and with the consultation leaflet, available online and in hard copy at Community Access Points, information events, and by request. Feedback forms can be returned free of charge using the project Freepost address (FREEPOST CAWB Solar Projects).



Section 48 Notices

Notices for both projects will be published in local newspapers, the Retford Times and Lincolnshire Echo, for two consecutive weeks. The notices will also be published in a national newspaper and the London Gazette advertising the intention to submit a DCO application for one week as required in accordance Section 48 of the Planning Act 2008. Section 48 Notices will include contact information and consultation event dates, times and locations.

Open communication

Our communications lines are open throughout the entire pre-application stage. Through these channels you will be able to speak to a member of our communications team to ask questions, request information (including in alternative formats) and provide feedback:

 **0808 169 1848** (open 09:00-17:00 Monday – Friday). A voice message service will operate for out of office hours.

 **info@cottamsolar.co.uk**

 **FREEPOST CAWB Solar Projects** (free of charge)

Our project website and online information

A dedicated project website www.cottamsolar.co.uk is live for you to find to find out more information and provide your feedback.

Consultation materials will be presented digitally, free of charge, providing information consistent with that available at events and through hard copy materials. There will also be an online version of the feedback form that can be completed and submitted via the project website.

Local information points

Locations such as village halls, places of worship, shops and civic buildings will be provided with posters containing consultation information.

Parish councils will be provided with digital materials to enable them to advertise and promote the consultation via their own websites, social media and online community forums. Requests for multiple hard copies of selected consultation materials will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Hard copy and alternative format requests

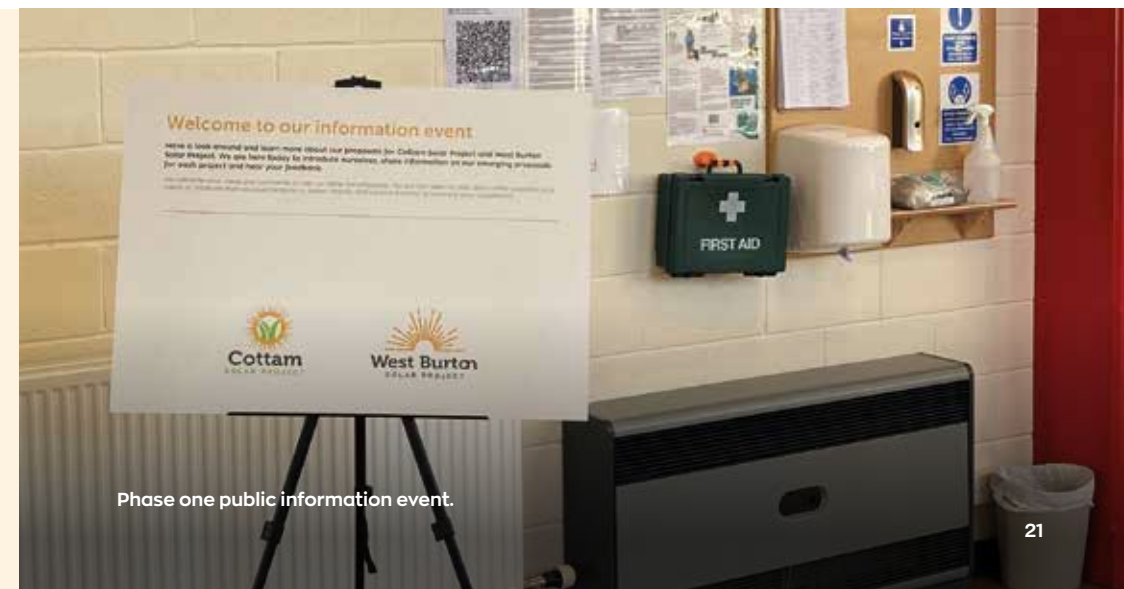
Hard copies of our phase two consultation and non-technical summary materials will be made available on request. During our phase two consultation we will provide access to hard copies of all materials, including technical documents, via Community Access Points and at information events.

We publicise as part of our statutory notices a service for requesting individual hard copies of technical documents, such as the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), and the process and charge for supplying these.

Documents can also be requested in large print, audio or braille formats. Requests for translated summary documents will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Statutory and prescribed consultees will be notified of the statutory Phase Two consultation in accordance with the requirements set out in the Planning Act 2008.

Should any changes to our consultation activities be required due to unforeseen events outside of our control, new details will be publicised in line with the methods set out in this SoCC.




Phase one public information event.

Public information events

Venue	Date and Time
Clayworth Memorial Hall Town St, Clayworth, Retford DN22 9AD	Wednesday 22nd June 2pm - 6pm
Saxilby Village Hall 34 High St, Saxilby, Lincoln LN1 2HA	Thursday 23rd June 3:30pm - 7:30pm
Blyton Memorial Hall Church Ln, Blyton, Gainsborough DN21 3JZ	Friday 24th June 11am - 3pm
Marion and Gate Burton Village Hall Trent Port Rd, Marion, Gainsborough DN21 5AR	Saturday 25th June 12:30am - 4:30pm
Webinar Online (please get in touch to register)	Monday 27th June 5pm - 6:30pm
Willingham Village Hall High St, Willingham by Stow, Gainsborough DN21 5JZ	Friday 1st July 10am - 2pm
Gringley on-the-Hill Community Centre W Wells Ln, Gringley on the Hill, Doncaster DN10 4QY	Saturday 2nd July 11am - 3pm
Webinar Online (please get in touch to register)	Tuesday 12th July 6:30pm - 8pm

8. Community Access Points

Hard copies of this document and Phase Two consultation materials, including our leaflet, Feedback form and PEIR, will be available for public inspection at the following locations.

 <p>Retford Library 17 Churchgate, Retford, DN22 6PE Monday - Friday 9 - 6pm Saturday 9 - 3:30pm</p>	<p>Saxilby Library St Andrews Centre, William Street, Saxilby, Lincoln, LN1 2LP Tuesday 10:30 - 3:30pm Wednesday 10:30 - 4pm Friday 10:30 - 1pm</p>
<p>Scotter Library High St, Scotter, Gainsborough, DN21 3RY Thursday 2 - 5pm Friday 10 - 1pm, 2 - 5pm</p>	<p>Gainsborough Library Cobden St, Gainsborough, DN21 2NG 9 - 5pm Monday to Friday 9 - 1pm Saturday</p>
<p>West Lindsey District Council Office Guildhall Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA Monday - Friday 9 - 5pm</p>	<p>Misterton Library 31 High St, Misterton, Doncaster, DN10 4BU Tuesday 2 - 5pm Thursday 2 - 5pm</p>
<p>St Mary's Church Church Road, Stow, Lincoln, LN1 2DE Monday - Sunday 8:30 - 7pm</p>	

All documents are available on our project website: www.cottamsolar.co.uk

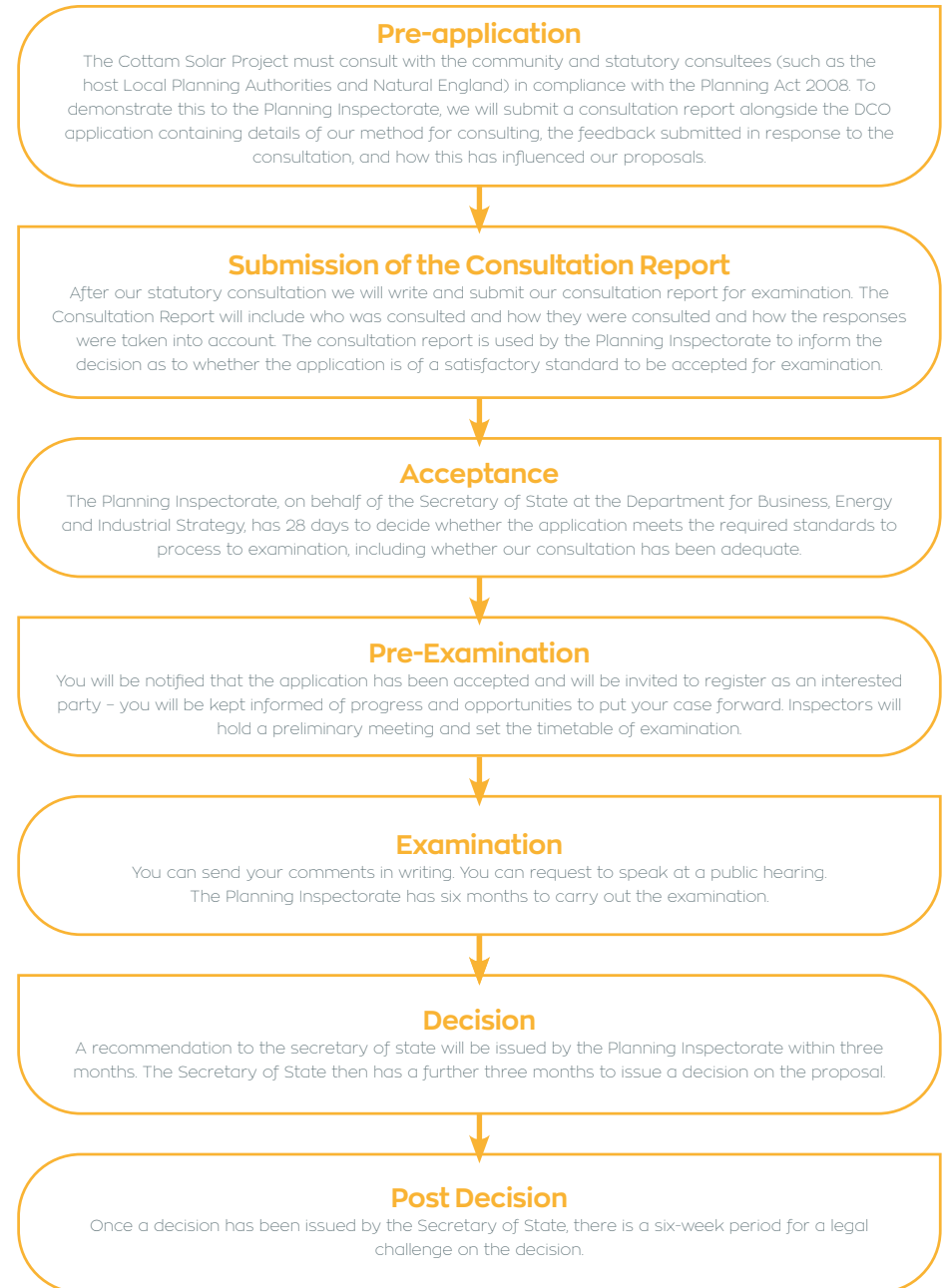
9. The Planning Process

The Cottam Solar Project is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) as it has a proposed generating capacity of over 50 MW. As an NSIP we must apply for a DCO.

The DCO application will be managed by the Planning Inspectorate, the agency responsible for managing the examination process for NSIPs. The DCO application will, if accepted, be examined by an independent Examining Authority, who will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

The SoS will then review the recommendation before making a decision on whether to grant a DCO. For more information on this process or advice on how to respond to our pre application consultation, you can access the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 8 at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/advice-notes/>



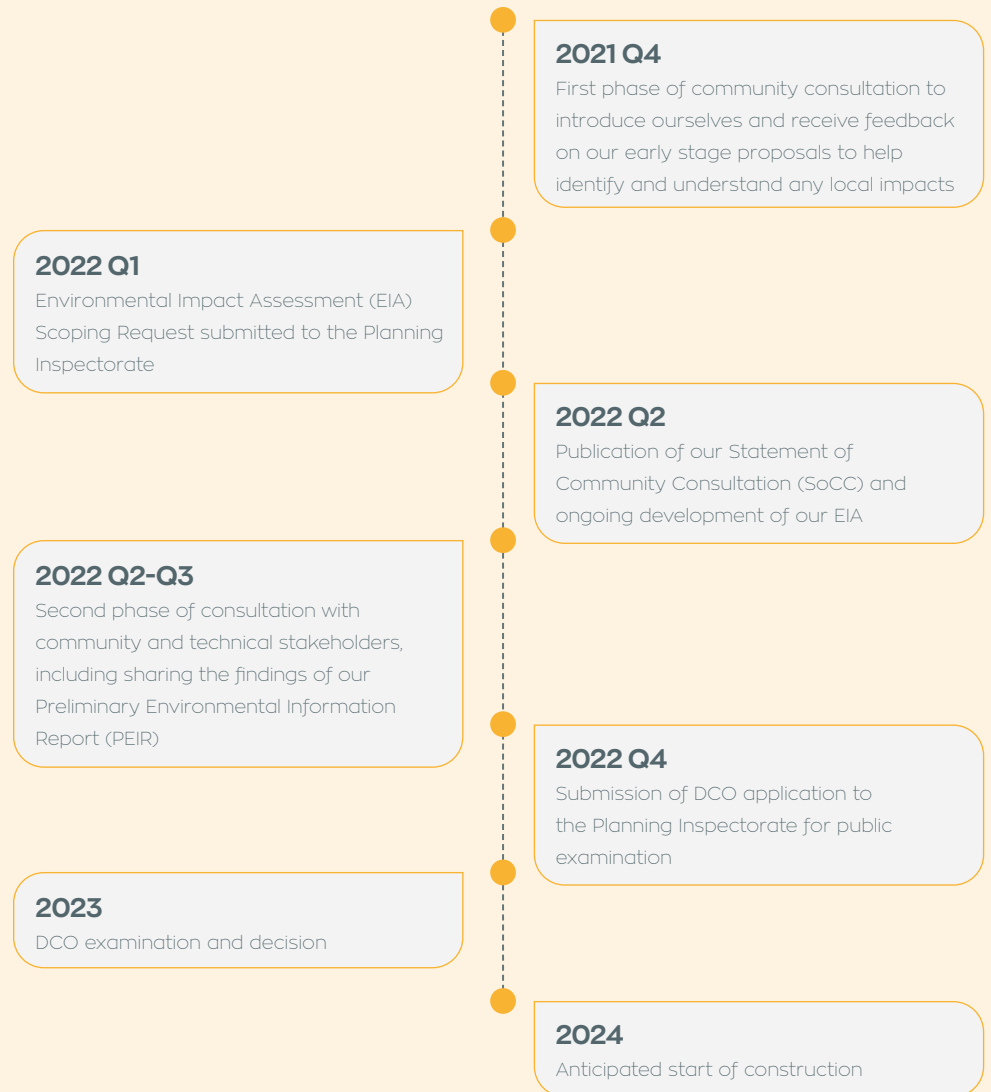
10. Environmental information

The Cottam Solar Project will undertake the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process. The methodology for the EIA will be agreed with the relevant regulatory and environmental bodies and your Local Planning Authorities.

The following reports (listed below) will be prepared as part of the EIA and the DCO process:

<p>Scoping Report</p> <p>Our Scoping Report was published in January 2022 and presented the Project Envelope and processes we will undertake to assess any potential impacts to the existing environment.</p> <p>Feedback on this from the Local Planning Authorities and statutory consultees resulted in a Scoping Opinion, which was issued by the Planning Inspectorate in March 2022. Both of these documents are available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's website.</p>
<p>Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)</p> <p>The PEIR will build upon the findings from the previous scoping documents and the feedback received through the phase one consultation and engagement with stakeholders.</p> <p>It will incorporate findings of the surveys and preliminary environmental assessments that have been carried out to date. This will enable consultees to develop an informed view of the potential impacts that the Cottam Solar Project may have on the local environment. It will describe any changes to the project and any mitigation measures that need to be implemented. We will be publishing and seeking feedback on the findings of the PEIR through our phase two consultation. See Sections 4, 7 and 9 for further details.</p>
<p>Environmental Statement (ES)</p> <p>The ES will set out the assessment and conclusions of the EIA process, building on the content of the PEIR and incorporating the responses from the phase two consultation, stakeholder engagement and results of the surveys undertaken. It will also describe any changes to the project and any mitigation measures that need to be implemented. The ES will form part of the DCO application for submission.</p>

11. Indicative consultation timeline



All future dates are indicative and remain subject change.

12. Contact details

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to find out more information about the Cottam Solar Project.

You can get in touch with members of our communications team using any of the communications lines listed below.

Should you require any documents in large print, audio or braille then please contact us using the details provided. All graphs and maps this document are for illustrative purposes only.



Email: info@cottamsolar.co.uk



Call: 0808 169 1848



Write to: FREEPOST CAWB: Solar Projects