



Mallard Pass

Solar Farm

Mallard Pass Solar Farm

Statement of Community Consultation

Published in accordance with
Section 47(6) of the Planning Act 2008

May 2022

1. Introduction

Mallard Pass Solar Farm Ltd is proposing a new solar farm partly situated in South Kesteven, Lincolnshire, and partly in Rutland.

The vision for the project, referred to in this Document as ‘Mallard Pass’, is to support the urgent need to decarbonise our electricity system, deliver reliable and sustainable low-cost energy, enhance the local environment and be a responsible neighbour.

This Document, known as a **Statement of Community Consultation** (“SoCC”), has been prepared in accordance with Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008 and guidance¹. It explains how Mallard Pass Solar Farm Ltd intends to carry out its statutory consultation and consult with you, the local community, during the ‘pre-application stage’ before we submit our Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). There is more information on the DCO process in Section 9 of this SoCC.

Mallard Pass must apply for a DCO because it is proposed to have a generating capacity exceeding 50 megawatts (MW), meaning that it is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). This means our DCO application will be made to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), who, following an Examination of the application by PINS, will decide whether or not to grant the project development consent.

The approach to consultation set out in this SoCC was prepared in consultation with the host Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), Lincolnshire County Council, Rutland County Council, South Kesteven District Council, and Peterborough City Council. We have taken their advice and recommendations into consideration when planning our consultation activities.

Stage Two Statutory Consultation for Mallard Pass Solar Farm will run for 10 weeks, between Thursday 26 May and Thursday 04 August 2022. All Stage Two materials will be made available for public consultation upon formal launch, on Thursday 26 May 2022. All feedback must be received on or before Thursday 04 August 2022.

¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418009/150326_Pre-Application_Guidance.pdf

2. About us

Mallard Pass Solar Farm Ltd is a partnership between Windel Energy and Canadian Solar, two companies with strong track records in delivering renewable energy developments.

Founded in 2018, Windel is a privately held company that specialises in the development and asset management of renewable energy projects and low carbon technologies. Windel is based in Northumberland and Swansea, and has more than 3 gigawatts (GW) of clean, renewable power in various stages of development.

Canadian Solar was founded in 2001 in Canada and is one of the world’s largest solar power companies. It is a leading manufacturer of solar photovoltaic modules and provider of solar energy solutions and has a geographically diversified pipeline of utility-scale solar power projects in various stages of development.

Windel Energy and Canadian Solar have appointed a professional project team to provide support and expertise throughout the consenting stages of Mallard Pass Solar Farm. Together, the project team has significant experience of working across solar and DCO projects.

Mallard Pass Solar Farm Ltd recognises consultation to be a vital stage in the development of our proposals.

We want to listen to your views and work with you to develop our proposals for Mallard Pass. This will allow us to develop our plans responsibly and in a manner that supports local community interests.

3. Mallard Pass Solar Farm

The proposals for Mallard Pass include:

- A solar array which will provide electricity to the national grid.
- An anticipated potential output from the solar array of over 50 MW.
- Electrical connection infrastructure to the Ryhall 400 kilovolts (kV) substation, together with underground cables to connect the field parcels.
- Mitigation and enhancement measures.
- Other ancillary works; including access during construction and operation, fencing, landscaping and drainage.

If approved, Mallard Pass could generate in the region of 350 MW of renewable energy. The site area is partly situated in South Kesteven, Lincolnshire, and partly in Rutland, located on land either side of the East Coast Main Line. It equates to approximately 906 hectares (around 2,225 acres), including areas for solar development, mitigation and enhancement measures, as well as an area for potential highway works.

Mallard Pass Solar Farm has the potential to:

- Generate enough renewable electricity to power the equivalent of 92,000 UK households a year.*
- Support low-cost energy generation that increases the reliability of our national grid.
- Help the UK reach urgent climate change targets while supporting the local environment by delivering a biodiversity net gain.
- Provide green spaces that connect habitats, enhance local biodiversity and link recreational routes.

At a time when gas prices are at an all-time high due to our reliance on imported energy, it is our ambition to create low-cost energy that is kind to the local environment and delivers for the planet.

Components of a typical solar project



Solar array

1. Solar panels

Electrical connection infrastructure

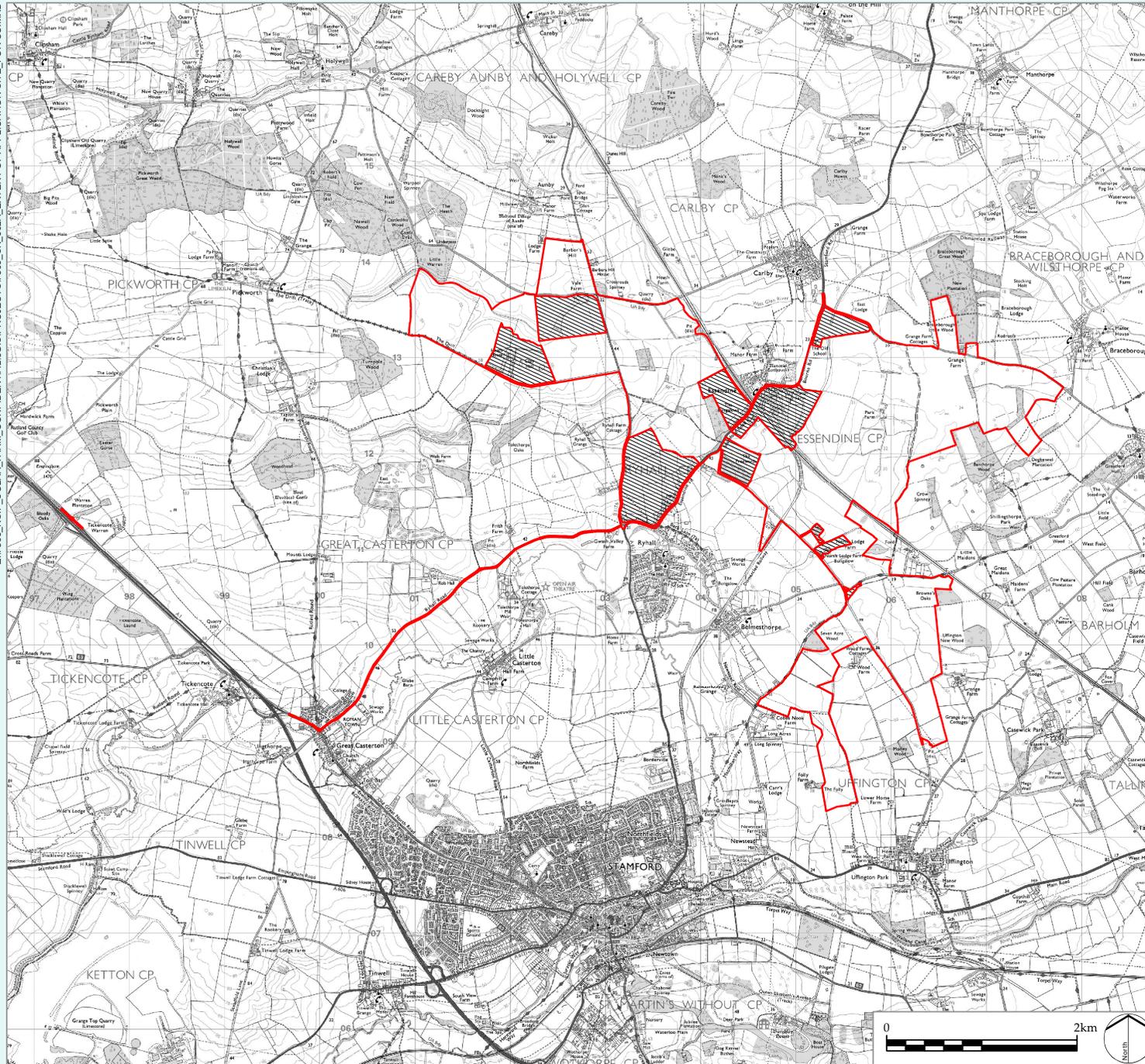
2. Inverter (DC to AC power converter)
3. Underground cable
4. Substation

Mitigation and enhancement measures

5. Landscape area

Ancillary works

6. Fencing



LEGEND

-  Site boundary
-  Areas outside of Site Boundary

This drawing may contain Ordnance Survey material by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. 2020 Reference number 0100031673.
OS Open data / © Natural England / © DEFRA / © DECC / © Historic England. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2020 | Aerial Photography - World Imagery.

Figure 2: Proposed site boundary

4. Our public consultation process

We are undertaking an iterative consultation process for Mallard Pass.

The feedback and information we receive will help inform the final design of the project that we submit to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) for approval. Our consultation will consist of at least two stages of consultation, including:

- A Stage One non-statutory consultation, lasting six weeks, from 04 November 2021 to 16 December 2021.
- A Stage Two Statutory Consultation, lasting ten weeks, from 26 May 2022 to 04 August 2022.

This SoCC relates to the carrying out of the Stage Two Statutory Consultation.

Stage One (04 November 2021 – 16 December 2021)

During our Stage One non-statutory phase of public consultation, we introduced our early-stage proposals for Mallard Pass to the community. We received community feedback on our concept plan and gained a broader understanding of the local area. The feedback received, together with information from our environmental surveys and discussions with technical stakeholders, informed the development of our design.

Stage One consultation was open to all interested members of the public and featured digital and non-digital methods for engagement.

Stage Two (26 May 2022 – 04 August 2022)

During our Stage Two Statutory Consultation, in accordance with Section 47 of the Planning Act, we will update you on our proposals for Mallard Pass. We plan to consult on our developed proposals along with the results from the ongoing environmental surveys and studies that have been carried out to date, which will be published in our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and summarised in the PEIR Non-Technical Summary (NTS).

Stage Two is statutory because it is the consultation that we must carry out by law. More specific details of what we will consult on are listed in Section 5 of this SoCC, and the methods for how we will consult are listed in Section 7.

You will still have the opportunity to formally comment on our proposals when the DCO application is submitted to PINS. PINS 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 the process can be found 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 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 PINS planned for the end of 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 (LPAs) 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 this feedback, including explaining how we have had regard to your feedback and how it has influenced our proposals.

5. What will we consult on?

The aim of our pre-application consultation is to ensure that both community 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. This will include potential issues such as, but not limited to:

- Short term and temporary impacts during construction, such as upon wildlife and local residents.
- Long term operational impacts, such as upon wildlife, landscape, local residents, and views.
- Benefits, such as the opportunity for biodiversity and recreational improvements.

The parameters of Mallard Pass, known as the Project Envelope, will be discussed through the consultation materials. These include the maximum size and scale of the project and information on the potential construction methodologies of the project. More information will become available regarding these aspects as our proposals develop.

	What we will consult on
<p>Stage One non-statutory consultation (held 04 November – 16 December 2021)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early-stage concept plan of Mallard Pass including potential mitigation and enhancement areas • Vision for the project • Opportunities for delivering biodiversity net gain • Opportunities for recreational improvements
<p>Stage Two Statutory Consultation (26 May – 04 August 2022)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed plans which have had regard to the comments received during our Stage One consultation • Developed design proposals for how Mallard Pass could look to local residents and visitors. This will include visualisations of the solar farm from local viewpoints • Suggested mitigation measures • Our PEIR and PEIR NTS, including but not limited to chapters on: wildlife, water resources and ground conditions, agriculture, and construction and traffic

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 Mallard Pass.

You can get in touch 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 the widest possible range of individuals and groups, and want our consultation to be accessible to everyone, regardless of personal circumstances. Figure 3 shows the consultation area, which includes:

A Core Consultation Zone, which centres on the proposed site and extends by a minimum distance of 2,000 metres from the proposed development area. Properties within the Core Consultation Zone will directly receive communications such as consultation leaflets (as set out in Section 7) from us in the post. Information events will be held at locations 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, as we recognise that there may be some interested individuals or parties who are not within 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 communities outside the Core Consultation Zone by advertising in local media, using social media, and maintaining a register of interested individuals. Informative consultation materials will be published online and be available to view and collect via our contact details.

Town Councils, Parish Councils and Meetings that we will contact include:

Essendine; Ryhall; Little Casterton; Great Casterton; Careby, Aunby and Holywell; Carlby; Pickworth; Bourne; Witham on the Hill; Thurlby; Belmesthorpe; Castle Bytham; Little Bytham; Tallington Braceborough and Wilsthorpe; Greatford, Barholm and Stowe; Uffington; and Stamford.

As well as the community consultation, we will be consulting with a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees on Mallard Pass Solar Farm, including:

- Owners, tenants and occupiers of the land included within the DCO application.
- MPs, Local Planning Authorities and Parish Councils.
- Statutory stakeholders, such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.
- Environmental groups, including RSBP and the local Wildlife Trusts.
- Local interest and community groups.



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 are listed on our project website and will be contacted ahead of Stage Two consultation to ensure that our approach best meets the needs of their members.



Ongoing engagement

Anyone is welcome to get in touch with us at any point before, during or in-between stages of consultation. Our contact details are listed in Section 12 of this SoCC.

From now until our application is submitted, we will consider the feedback and comments we receive and incorporate these within our proposals where possible.

You will also have the opportunity to formally comment on our proposals for Mallard Pass when the DCO application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. Guidance on the process can be found on the PINS website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice>.

Lincolnshire

South Kesteven

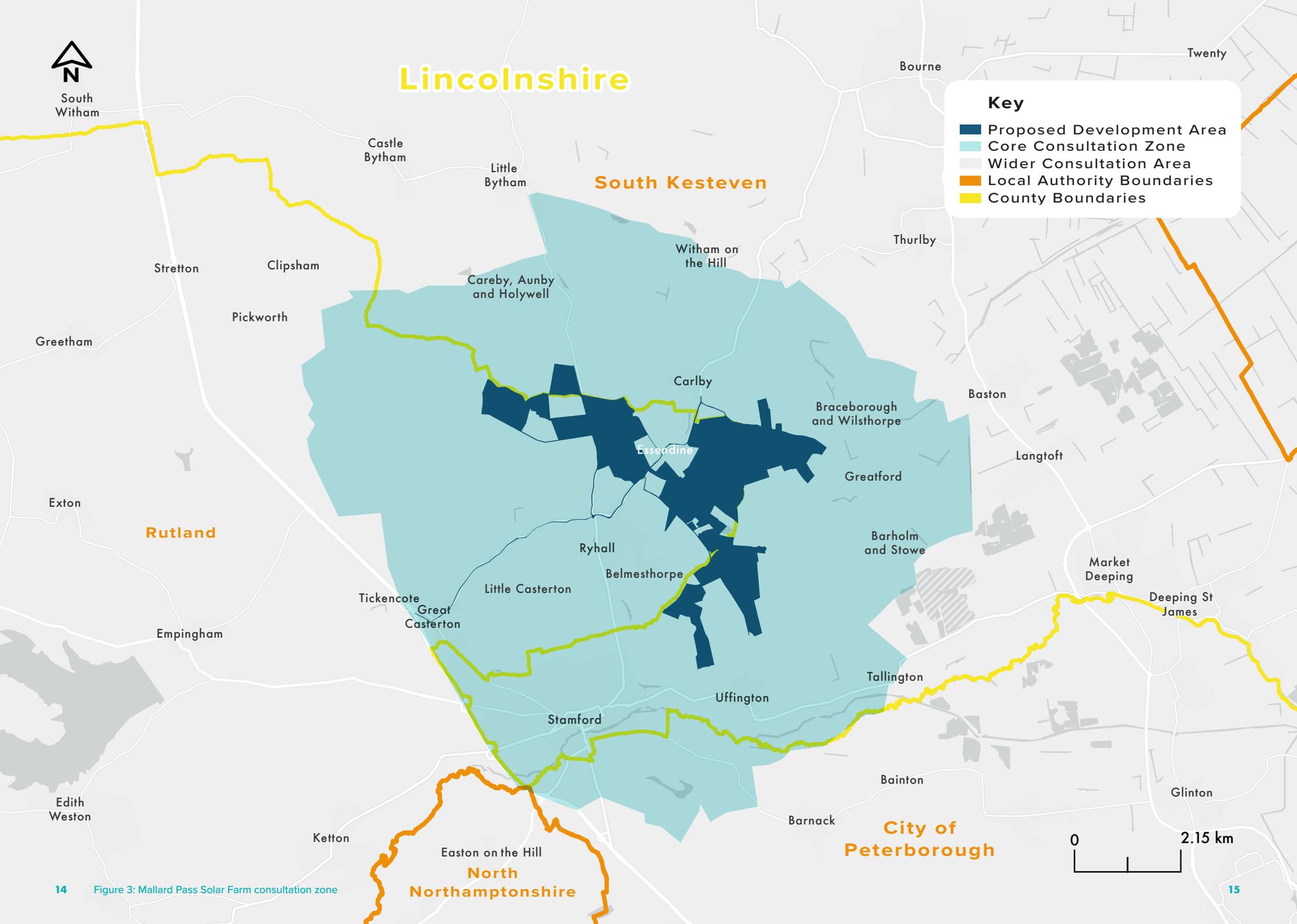
Rutland

City of Peterborough

North Northamptonshire

Key

- Proposed Development Area
- Core Consultation Zone
- Wider Consultation Area
- Local Authority Boundaries
- County Boundaries



7. How will we consult?

The consultation activities described in this section of the SoCC ensure 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 Stage Two Statutory Consultation is planned to take place between **26 May 2022** and **04 August 2022**, and will be carried out in the following ways:



Meetings and events

Information events will be held during Stage Two, including a series of in-person public exhibition events and digital webinars. These events will be held in accessible locations, on different days of the week and with a range of hours so as to accommodate different availability and needs within the community.

Members of the Mallard Pass team will be in attendance to answer questions and discuss the proposals with residents and other key stakeholders in more detail. Project materials setting out the developed proposals will be displayed and available to take away.

All events will be advertised in the Consultation Leaflet, advertisements and notices published across local, regional and national media, at Local Information Points (LIPs) and Community Access Points (CAP) sites, and on our website.

During Stage Two, we will hold four in-person public exhibition events:

- **Saturday 25 June 2022** – 11 am to 5 pm – Essendine Village Hall, Bourne Rd, Essendine, Stamford, PE9 4LQ
- **Wednesday 29 June 2022** – 3 pm to 8 pm – Stamford Town Hall, St Mary's Hill, Stamford, PE9 2DR
- **Thursday 30 June 2022** – 3 pm to 8 pm – Greatford Village Hall, Carlby Road, Greatford, PE9 4PR
- **Friday 1 July 2022** – 12:30 pm to 4:30 pm – Ryhall Village Hall, Church St, Ryhall, Stamford, PE9 4HR

Webinar events will additionally be held for any member of the public to join via telephone and internet. A step-by-step guide to access our community webinars is available on our website at www.MallardPassSolar.co.uk/Have-Your-Say.

- **Friday 17 June 2022** – 11 am to 1 pm
- **Tuesday 05 July 2022** – 6 pm to 8 pm

During our webinars, participants will be invited to submit questions, and members of the Mallard Pass project team will then respond on the webinar. All questions will be recorded, and a follow up response will be provided to questions that we weren't able to answer during a webinar event.

Meetings and briefing sessions will be offered to local parish councils, elected members and key local stakeholder groups that are present within the Core Consultation Zone. These meetings may be in-person or virtual depending upon circumstances at the time, and the details of these sessions will be arranged in liaison with attendees on a case-by-case basis.



Literature

All consultation materials are available at the Community Access Points (CAP) sites listed in Section 8 of this document, and will be available to take home from our events. These are also accessible to view, print and download from our website at www.MallardPassSolar.co.uk/Documents.

A Consultation Leaflet will be posted to all properties in the Core Consultation Zone at the start of Stage Two. This document will also be available online, to collect from CAPs, and to take away from our information events. Leaflets can also be posted to those outside the Core Consultation Zone on request.

Our Leaflet will publicise the Stage Two consultation opportunities and the information being consulted on. This will include the details of the consultation period and the activities being undertaken, such as dates, times and locations of information events and community webinars. It will also include details of how to access the project website and communications channels.

A Main Consultation Document will include more detail on the developed proposals for Mallard Pass. This document will be provided to elected representatives and key stakeholders, available online, at CAPs and to take away from our information events.

Feedback forms will be made available for community members to respond to the consultation. These will be available online and in hard copy at CAPs, information events, and by request. Feedback forms can be returned free of charge using the Mallard Pass FREEPOST address (FREEPOST Mallard Pass Solar Farm).



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 consultation team to ask questions, request information (including in alternative formats) and provide feedback:

- **By emailing:** info@MallardPassSolar.co.uk.
- **By calling:** **0808 196 8717** (open 09:00-17:00, Monday-Friday. A voice message service will operate for out of office hours and all missed phone enquiries will result in a callback within 24 hours during the working week.)
- **By writing to:** **FREEPOST Mallard Pass Solar Farm***

*Free of charge, no need for a stamp.



Our project website and online information

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

Consultation material will be presented digitally, providing information consistent with that available at events and through hard copy materials.



Advertising and local notices

- **Local press adverts** will be placed in Rutland Times, Stamford & Rutland Mercury and Bourne Local to inform local communities of the forthcoming Stage Two consultation. Adverts will include contact information and consultation event dates, times and locations.
- **Local Information Points (LIPs)** in the local vicinity, such as village halls, places of worship, shops and civic buildings will be provided with posters containing consultation information.
- **Social media** will be used to share information about our consultation process via our dedicated project Twitter account: **@MallardPass**.
- **Parish councils** and community groups will be provided with digital materials to enable them to advertise and promote the consultation via their own websites, newsletters, social media and online community forums as they see fit. Requests for hard copy materials will also be considered.



Local media engagement

We will be promoting our Stage Two consultation by engaging with local media outlets, including: Rutland & Stamford Mercury, Rutland Times, Lincs FM, Rutland & Stamford Sound, and BBC East Midlands. This will support with broadcasting the consultation to a wider audience and further ensure that interested individuals and parties have an opportunity to comment on our proposals.

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.

8. Community Access Points

Hard copies of this SoCC and Stage Two consultation materials, including our Leaflet, Main Document, PEIR and PEIR NTS, will be available at the following locations:

Essendine Village Hall

Bourne Rd
Essendine
Stamford
PE9 4LQ

Stamford Arts Centre

27 St Mary's St
Stamford
Lincolnshire
PE9 2DL

Ryhall Village Hall

Church St
Ryhall
Stamford
PE9 4HR

Due to COVID-19, some public buildings may be unable to host documents, may be accessible by appointment only, or opening times may vary. Please check with venues for up-to-date information.

All documents are available on our project website (www.MallardPassSolar.co.uk) or hard copies may be posted on request.

9. The planning process

Mallard Pass is classified 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 dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), the agency responsible for managing the examination process for NSIPs. It will then, 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 this before making a decision on whether to grant a DCO.

For more information on this process, or for 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/advice-note-eight-overview-of-the-nationally-significant-infrastructure-planning-process-for-members-of-the-public-and-others/>.



10. Environmental information

Mallard Pass is classed as an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development and will therefore undertake the EIA process.

The methodology the EIA will be agreed with the relevant regulatory and environmental bodies and your Local Planning Authorities (LPAs).

The following reports will be informed by consultation as part of the EIA process and as the DCO application is prepared:

Scoping Report

Our Scoping Report was published in February 2022 and presented the Project Envelope and the processes we will undertake to assess any potential impacts to the existing environment.

Feedback on this from LPAs and statutory consultees resulted in a Scoping Opinion, which was published by the Planning Inspectorate in March 2022. Both of these documents are available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's website at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/east-midlands/mallard-pass-solar-project>.

Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)

The PEIR will build upon the findings from the previous scoping documents and the feedback received through the Stage One consultation and engagement with stakeholders. It will be accompanied by a PEIR Non-Technical Summary (NTS), which presents the information in the PEIR in non-technical language so that it may be understood by a wider audience.

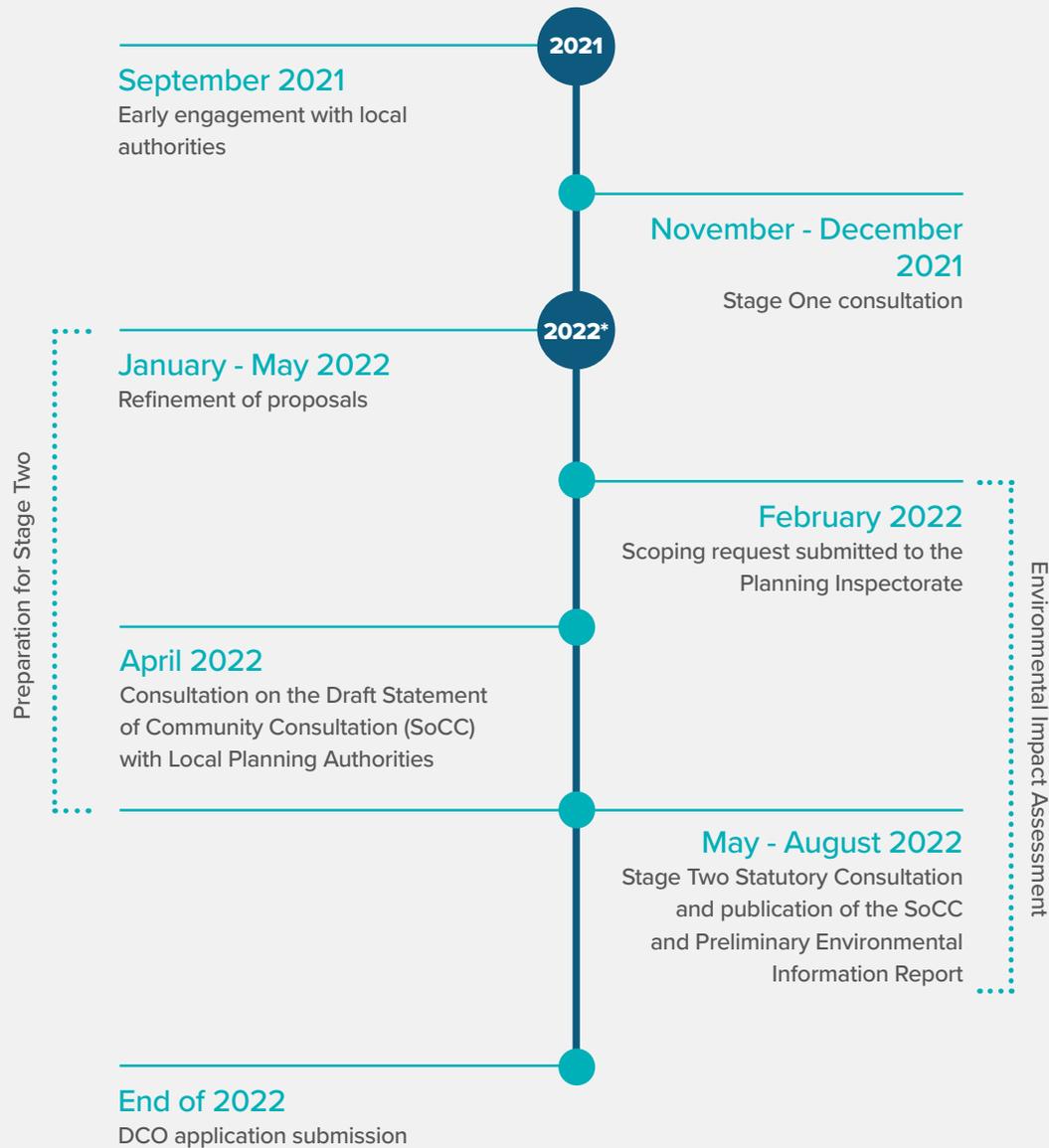
These documents will incorporate findings of the surveys and preliminary environmental assessments that have been carried out to date. This will enable consultees to develop an informed view of the likely potential impacts that Mallard Pass may have on the local environment. In our Stage Two Statutory Consultation, we will be seeking feedback on the findings of the PEIR.

Environmental Statement (ES)

The ES will advance the content of the PEIR and continue to incorporate the responses from the Stage 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.



11. Consultation timeline



*All future dates are indicative and subject to change.

12. Contact us

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to find out more information about Mallard Pass Solar Farm.

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

Should you require any documents in large print, audio or braille, please contact us at the details provided.



Email:

info@MallardPassSolar.co.uk



Freephone information line:

0808 196 8717



Freepost:

FREEPOST Mallard Pass Solar Farm



Visit our website:

www.MallardPassSolar.co.uk



Twitter:

[@MallardPass](https://twitter.com/MallardPass)