



# BEACON FEN ENERGY PARK

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN010151

Statement of Community Consultation  
November 2023



## Quality information

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## Revision History

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## List of Outstanding Issues and Information

Outstanding issue/info.	Section/Paragraph	Responsibility	Action

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# 1. Introduction

## Purpose of This Document

- 1.1.1 This document is the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) for the proposed Beacon Fen Energy Park (“the Proposed Development”), a solar park and battery energy storage system (BESS) located on land to the east of Sleaford, Lincolnshire.
- 1.1.2 The SoCC outlines how Beacon Fen Energy Park Ltd (“the Applicant”), a subsidiary of Low Carbon Ltd, of Stirling Square, 5-7 Carlton Gardens, London, SW1Y 5AD, intends to consult with local communities about the Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the Proposed Development, in accordance with sections 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008 (the Act).
- 1.1.3 It explains how the Applicant has identified consultees, the proposed consultation strategy, the timescales for consultation and how consultees can respond to and shape the Proposed Development.
- 1.1.4 Engagement with local communities and stakeholders has been carried out in a range of ways since March 2023.
- 1.1.5 It is anticipated that the statutory consultation in respect of the Proposed Development will take place in early 2024. The Applicant will have regard to representations received in response to the consultation when preparing the DCO application.
- 1.1.6 Should the Applicant require to carry out any further stages of limited, targeted consultation in respect of any proposed changes to the Proposed Development following the statutory consultation, the Applicant will use some, but not necessarily all, of the means of consultation outlined in this SoCC. The Applicant will liaise with the relevant local authorities in deciding the most appropriate activities for any further stages of consultation.

## Beacon Fen Energy Park

- 1.1.7 The Proposed Development is a solar and BESS development located to the east of Sleaford, Lincolnshire. The development is expected to generate approximately 400 megawatts (MW) of energy with BESS capacity of approximately 600MW. The Proposed Development has the potential to power approximately 130,000 homes and could also avoid up to 72,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions<sup>1</sup> each year.
- 1.1.8 The proposals for Beacon Fen Energy Park include building the infrastructure needed to export the electricity the energy park would generate into the National Grid. It is planned this would be at the existing Bicker Fen substation.
- 1.1.9 The Proposed Development is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) because it will generate over 50MW of electricity. This means it requires a DCO under the Planning Act 2008. The DCO application will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), who will then examine the

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<sup>1</sup> Low Carbon internal calculations using OFGEM Typical Domestic Consumption Values and BEIS Carbon Conversion Factors.



application before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State (SoS), who will then decide whether to grant the DCO. The Proposed Development is currently in the pre-application stage of the DCO process.

## SoCC Context

- 1.1.10 The aim of the SoCC is to set out how the Applicant intends to consult with local communities on the proposals for Beacon Fen Energy Park. The document includes an overview of the Proposed Development, the proposed consultation approach and ways that communities can engage with and respond to the statutory consultation.
- 1.1.11 PINS' Advice Note 8<sup>2</sup> acknowledges that: "Responding to the developer's pre-application consultation is the best time to influence a project, whether you agree with it, disagree with it or believe it could be improved."
- 1.1.12 This SoCC provides information on the nature and extent of the consultation that the developer intends to undertake with the communities potentially affected by the project before the DCO application is submitted.

## 2. About the Applicant

- 2.1.1 Beacon Fen Energy Park is a development proposed by the Applicant, a subsidiary of Low Carbon Ltd ("Low Carbon") – a privately-owned UK investment and asset management company specialising in renewable energy.
- 2.1.2 Founded in 2011, Low Carbon is committed to making a positive and significant impact on climate change by investing in large-scale renewable energy projects across a range of energy technologies including solar PV, onshore wind, offshore wind, waste-to-energy, battery storage and other proven renewable energy technologies. Deploying capital at scale into renewables, it invests across the full life cycle from concept through to development, construction, and operation.
- 2.1.3 Low Carbon has ambitions to create 20GW of new renewable energy capacity by the end of the decade - enough to power the equivalent of 7.8 million homes.
- 2.1.4 Low Carbon is a long-standing certified B-Corporation, a reflection of the company's fundamental ethos to balance the needs of the environment and society with its business interests.
- 2.1.5 For more information on Low Carbon please visit: [www.lowcarbon.com](http://www.lowcarbon.com).

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2 <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/#Pre-application>

## 3. Solar Development in Planning Policy

- 3.1.1 The SoS' decision on the Proposed Development must be made in accordance with the relevant National Policy Statements (NPSs) which outline the need for new energy infrastructure and the issues to be considered in determining such applications, subject to minor exceptions. Other matters which the SoS may consider important and relevant when determining an application for development consent may include other national and local planning policies.
- 3.1.2 The UK government is currently reviewing and updating the July 2011 Energy NPSs. The draft revisions to NPS EN-3 include specific policies in support of solar PV, as the Government notes:

*“Solar farms are one of the most established renewable electricity technologies in the UK and the cheapest form of electricity generation worldwide. Solar farms can be built quickly and, coupled with consistent reductions in the cost of materials and improvements in the efficiency of panels, largescale solar is now viable in some cases to deploy subsidy-free and at little to no extra cost to the consumer. The government has committed to sustained growth in solar capacity to ensure that we are on a pathway that allows us to meet net zero emissions. As such solar is a key part of the government’s strategy for low-cost decarbonisation of the energy sector’ (2.47.1).”*

## 4. The Project

### Beacon Fen Energy Park

- 4.1.1 The main components of Beacon Fen Energy Park will be solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and the battery energy storage system (BESS) infrastructure, and a cable route corridor that connects the project to the existing Bicker Fen National Grid substation. As the Applicant is still in the early stages of developing the proposals, the location of this equipment and how we will minimise any potential environmental impacts are still being determined.
- 4.1.2 The emerging proposals include:
- Solar PV panels and modular ground-mounting structures.
  - Supporting infrastructure – inverters, combiner boxes, transformers – converting the direct current to alternating current and stepping up the voltage so it can be exported to the National Grid.
  - A BESS, so electricity can be stored on-site and then released into the National Grid when it is needed most.
  - Onsite cables connecting the solar PV modules and energy storage system to inverters which, in turn, connect to the transformers.

- On-site substation within the solar PV panel area to export electricity from the solar energy park to the National Grid. The substation will include a control building comprising office and welfare space as well as storage.
- Fencing enclosing the operational areas of the site, with security measures including pole mounted internal facing closed circuit television (CCTV) around the site perimeter.
- Access tracks to the site during construction and for routine maintenance when operational.
- New planting around the site perimeter and within the solar PV area to enhance biodiversity and minimise the landscape impacts.

#### 4.1.3 In addition:

- During construction, one or more temporary construction compounds will be required, as well as temporary roadways, to enable access to all the land within the energy park boundary.
- Opportunities for landscaping and habitat management will be explored in areas around the energy park to provide a net gain in biodiversity.

## Components of a Typical Solar Park and Battery Energy Storage System

4.1.4 The schematic below shows the typical components of a solar park and battery energy storage system. The diagram is illustrative and not to scale.

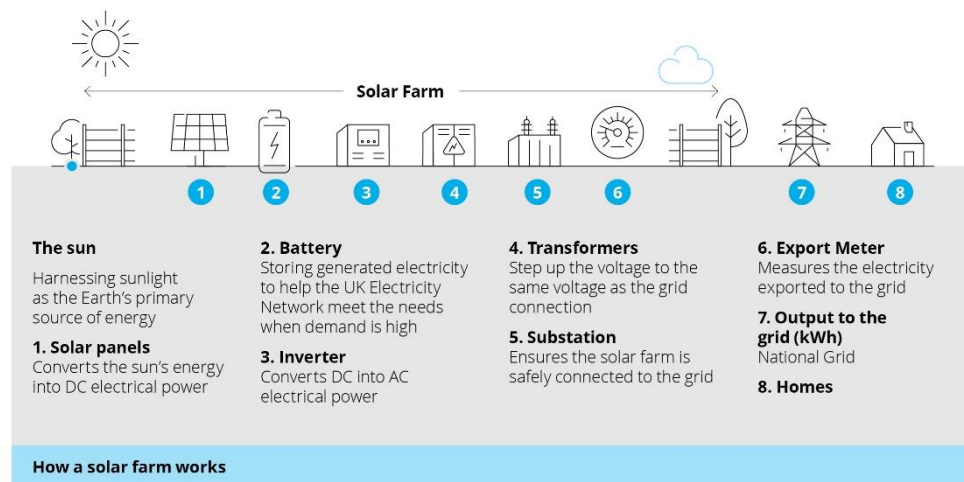
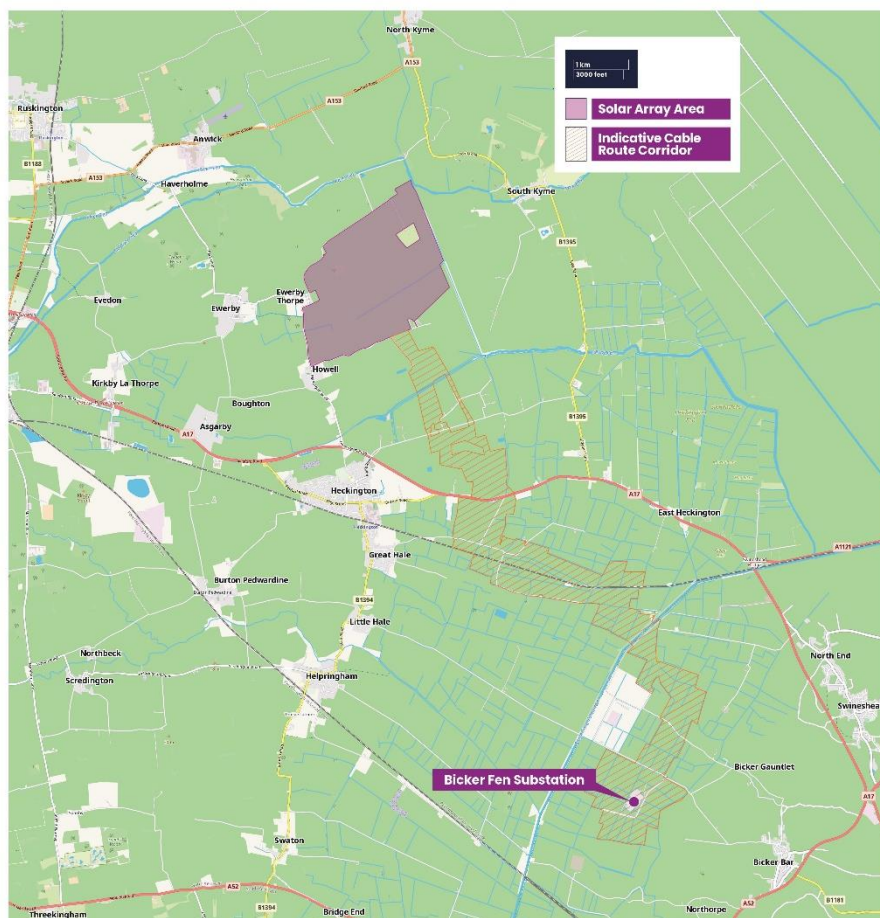


Figure 1 Schematic of a typical solar park and battery energy storage system

- 4.1.5 The DCO application for the Proposed Development will include all of these features. In addition, temporary works and associated infrastructure necessary for the construction and operation of the Proposed Development shall be included.
- 4.1.6 It is currently expected that the DCO application for the Proposed Development will be submitted in summer 2024.

## Site Location

- 4.1.7 Beacon Fen Energy Park comprises solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and BESS facilities on agricultural land wholly contained within the boundary of one solar array area comprising approximately 517 hectares (1277 acres), as well as the cable route corridor including grid connection infrastructure to connect the Proposed Development to National Grid's Bicker Fen substation.
- 4.1.8 The site for this Proposed Development is on land approximately 6.5 km northeast of the town of Sleaford and 2.5 km north of the village of Heckington (see **Figure 2** for indicative site boundary and location). The site includes an indicative cable corridor linking the solar PV and BESS to the nearby Bicker Fen substation.





blocks and scattered hedgerow trees. A small reservoir is located in the south-west of the solar array area.

- 4.1.12 The solar array area is bound to the south, west and north by local highways, and bound to the east by the Car Dyke. The north east corner of the area is crossed by a small section of the Ewer/12/1 Public Right of Way (PRoW).
- 4.1.13 Land use within the Cable Route Corridor is also predominantly agricultural. Where the Cable Route Corridor extends south from the solar array area it is located approximately 1.1km east of Heckington at the closest point.
- 4.1.14 All construction and decommissioning transport access will be confirmed as the design of the Proposed Development progresses, and in consultation with the relevant authorities. During the construction phase, one or more temporary construction compounds will be required, with temporary roadways to facilitate access to all land within the site.
- 4.1.15 A number of other solar developments are proposed at various scales in the vicinity of Bicker Fen substation, including Heckington Fen by Ecotricity. We have analysed other projects' submitted consultation documents to aid us in writing this SoCC and include best practice in respect of the proposed approach to consultation based on other developers' experiences in the local area.

## 5. Consenting Process

- 5.1.1 A description of the full DCO application process is shown in **Table 1** below. This SoCC outlines the consultation required for the pre-application stage only, to allow stakeholders to influence the Proposed Development before the DCO application is submitted.

THE DCO APPLICATION PROCESS	
1. Pre-application	Information will be in the local media and statutory consultation will be carried out with prescribed consultees and other stakeholders, including the local community.
2. Acceptance	The Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State, has 28 days to decide whether the application meets the required standards to proceed to examination including whether the developer's consultation has been adequate.
3. Pre-examination	You can register as an interested party and, by doing so, will be kept informed of progress and opportunities to put your case forward. Inspectors will hold a Preliminary Meeting and set the timetable for examination.

4. Examination	You can send in your comments in writing. You can request to speak at a public hearing. The Inspectorate has six months to carry out the examination.
5. Recommendation & Decision	A recommendation to the Secretary of State will be issued by the Inspectorate within three months. The Secretary of State then has a further three months to issue a decision on the proposal.
6. Post-decision	There is the opportunity for legal challenge.

*Table 1 DCO Application Process*

- 5.1.2 Refer to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) website<sup>3</sup> for more information on the DCO application and consenting process.

## Supporting Environmental Information

- 5.1.3 The Proposed Development is considered an 'EIA development' under Schedule 2 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 and the Applicant has confirmed under Regulation 8(1) its intention to prepare an Environmental Statement (ES), reporting on the likely significant environmental effects of the Proposed Development, to accompany the DCO application.
- 5.1.4 As the Proposed Development is an EIA development, a Scoping Report<sup>4</sup> was submitted by the Applicant to PINS on 19 April 2023. The Scoping Opinion<sup>5</sup> was provided by PINS on 26 May 2023.
- 5.1.5 A PEIR (Preliminary Environmental Information Report) will be prepared and made available as part of the statutory consultation. The PEIR will include information on the potential environmental effects as a result of the Proposed Development. We will be asking for the views of individuals and organisations on the information set out in the PEIR as part of the consultation described in this SoCC. Feedback received during consultation on the PEIR will be reviewed and taken into account before the application and EIA are finalised for submission. The final EIA will be set out in an Environmental Statement (ES), which will be submitted with the application for development consent.

<sup>3</sup> <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/the-process/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN010151/EN010151-000008-EN010151%20-%20Scoping%20Report.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/EN010151/EN010151-000005-EN010151%20-%20Scoping%20Opinion%202017%20EIA%20Regs.pdf>

- 5.1.6 The PEIR will be made available to the public to view free of charge at locations to be confirmed, as well as through publication on the Beacon Fen Energy Park website and the PINS website.

## 6. The Consultation Process

### Consultation Objectives

- 6.1.1 The Applicant is committed to consulting widely, honestly and comprehensively – to allow representations to be incorporated into the Proposed Development and influence its development, where practicable and appropriate.

- 6.1.2 PINS' guidance on the pre-application process<sup>6</sup> advocates that:

*“...early involvement of local communities, local authorities and statutory consultees can bring about significant benefits for all parties, by:*

- Helping the applicant identify and resolve issues at the earliest stage, which can reduce the overall risk to the project further down the line; as it becomes more difficult to make changes once an application has been submitted;*
- Enabling members of the public to influence proposed projects and feedback on potential options, and encouraging the community to help shape the proposal to maximise local benefits and minimise any downsides;*
- Helping local people understand the potential nature and local impact of the proposed project, with the potential to dispel misapprehensions at an early stage;*
- Enabling applicants to obtain important information about the economic, social and environmental impacts of a scheme from consultees, which can help rule out unsuitable options;*
- Enabling potential mitigating measures to be considered and, if appropriate, built into the project before an application is submitted; and*
- Identifying ways in which the project could, without significant costs to promoters, support wider strategic or local objectives.”*

- 6.1.3 This SoCC has been prepared having regard to, and in accordance with, PINS' guidance.

### Consultation Strategy

- 6.1.4 The consultation strategy for Beacon Fen Energy Park has been split into two phases as described below.

### Early (Non-Statutory) Consultation

- 6.1.5 An inception meeting was held with PINS in March 2023, with introductory meetings then held with Planning Officers for Lincolnshire County Council

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-the-pre-application-process-for-major-infrastructure-projects>

(LCC), North Kesteven District Council (NKDC), South Holland District Council (SHDC) and Boston Borough Council (BBC) between March and April 2023 to gain insight into the local area and advice on communicating with stakeholders.

- 6.1.6 NKDC indicated a consultation zone of 5km from the project boundary be used and all those within the zone be invited to take part in the consultation. As our site was spread over two areas at non-statutory consultation, we clarified to NKDC that we proposed a zone approximately 2.5km from the entire site boundary, including (conservatively and in contrast to some similar developments) the cable route and substation. No further correspondence was received and 2.5km was adopted for this round of consultation.
- 6.1.7 The project team published a consultation booklet in spring 2023 giving high level details of the Proposed Development and providing contact details for consultee engagement.
- 6.1.8 Additionally, a website (<https://www.beaconfenenergypark.co.uk/>) has been created showing details of the Proposed Development and frequently asked questions; this went live before the start of the non-statutory consultation (March 2023). The website will be updated as the consultation process progresses.
- 6.1.9 We completed a phase of early engagement between 15 May and 18 June 2023 to introduce the Proposed Development to statutory bodies, key stakeholders and local residents and businesses, allowing them an opportunity to engage with and comment on our early proposals.
- 6.1.10 Three in-person non-statutory Consultation Events and two online webinars were held as part of our early engagement phase.
- 6.1.11 To publicise the early (non-statutory) consultation phase, an advert was placed in local newspapers in May 2023, a leaflet drop was arranged to all properties within approximately 2.5km of the site's red line boundary, posters were sent out to local shops and parish councils, and two media releases were issued to the local press. A digital mailshot was also sent on the day the consultation commenced to 40 people on our subscribed mailing list.
- 6.1.12 During and after the consultation period, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page was added to the project website<sup>7</sup>, which was then updated to address the FAQs received.
- 6.1.13 The events provided further information on the initial scheme proposals, including details of the site location, proposed cable route corridor and potential environmental impact. They also gave those interested in the Proposed Development an opportunity to provide feedback via a hard copy or online survey.
- 6.1.14 Prior to the Consultation Events, letters were sent to key stakeholders including local MPs, county councillors, district councillors and parish councils, with the offer of a meeting.
- 6.1.15 The methods of consultation used during the early (non-statutory) consultation phase have been reviewed and adapted where necessary to influence the

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.beaconfenenergypark.co.uk/faqs/>



methods of communication we will use to inform people of our statutory consultation.

## Statutory Consultation

- 6.1.16 A statutory consultation will be carried out, in accordance with sections 42-44, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008 (the “Planning Act”).
- 6.1.17 Details of what we will consult on are included in section 7, who we will consult with in section 8 and what communication methods we will use in section 9.
- 6.1.18 Pursuant to the Planning Act and its associated regulations, it is required to provide a minimum period of 28 days for receipt of responses to the consultation; however, the Applicant intends to provide for the statutory consultation to be held for a period of 42 days, in order to provide additional time for consultees to submit responses.
- 6.1.19 Consultation materials will include information on how the proposals have changed since previous consultation, including how we have responded to feedback. We will capture feedback, comments and questions and will document how these influence the development of the Proposed Development and the Environmental Statement.
- 6.1.20 We plan to advertise these events in a similar way as our early (non-statutory) consultation events, considering any lessons learnt previously from early (non-statutory) consultation feedback. Previously, consultation respondents gave feedback that they had found out about our events via a postcard through the door or in a local newspaper, therefore we will use these methods again. Any additional suggestions made as part of the consultation of this SoCC will also be considered.

## 7. What Will We Consult On?

- 7.1.1 The purpose of our pre-application consultation is to gather views while the scheme proposals are being developed, to allow people the opportunity to influence relevant aspects of the Proposed Development.
- 7.1.2 The National Policy Statements recognise that many elements of energy infrastructure are functional. For example, NPS EN-1 at paragraphs 4.6.6-4.6.7 states: *“Whilst the applicant may not have any or very limited choice in the physical appearance of some energy infrastructure, there may be opportunities for the applicant to demonstrate good design in terms of siting relative to existing landscape character, land form and vegetation. Furthermore, the design and sensitive use of materials in any associated development such as electricity substations will assist in ensuring that such development contributes to the quality of the area. Applicants should also, so far as is possible, seek to embed opportunities for nature inclusive design within the design process. Applicants must be able to demonstrate in their application documents how the design process was conducted and how the proposed design evolved. Where a number of different designs were*

*considered, applicants should set out the reasons why the favoured choice has been selected” (NPS EN-1, 2023)<sup>8</sup>.*

- 7.1.3 We have consulted local authorities on this SoCC before publication by giving them five weeks to review and give feedback on a draft version. We will notify stakeholders that the SoCC has been published via a notice placed in local and county-wide newspapers in line with Section 47 of the Planning Act. Hard copies of the SoCC will be placed in the publicly accessible information points outlined in **Table 4** below for a minimum of four weeks. A digital copy of the SoCC will be published on the project website.
- 7.1.4 The statutory consultation phase will provide as much detail as possible about the Proposed Development. This will include:
- Details of the scheme proposals and parameters;
  - Preliminary Environmental Information (PEI) that has been gathered and how this has informed and affected the design;
  - The route of the electrical connection from the solar array area to Bicker sub-station;
  - The timescales and next steps for the Proposed Development;
  - Proposals for maximising the positive effects and community benefits of the Beacon Fen Energy Park; and
  - Proposed methods for minimising and mitigating any adverse effects on the local community or environment that could be caused by the Proposed Development.
- 7.1.5 During the statutory consultation, we will provide information on the Proposed Development, including PEI and any refinements made to its design since earlier consultation and engagement.
- 7.1.6 Individuals, communities and consultees will be invited to comment on all or any part of our proposals for the Proposed Development.
- 7.1.7 Hard copies of consultation documents will be made available at our in-person events, online on the project website<sup>9</sup>, and also in hard copy at the key locations outlined below in **Table 4**.

## 8. Identifying Our Consultees

### Local Communities

- 8.1.1 In defining who we directly contact from the local community, we have identified a consultation zone minimum 5km from the solar array area and 2.5km from the cable route, substation and proposed haul road boundaries, extended in certain locations to follow residential or geographic boundaries, encompassing approximately 9,296 properties. This zone has also been informed by consultation with NKDC (who requested 5km/2km respectively) and our early view as to the distance at which effects from the Proposed Development may be experienced. This includes those in nearby villages and

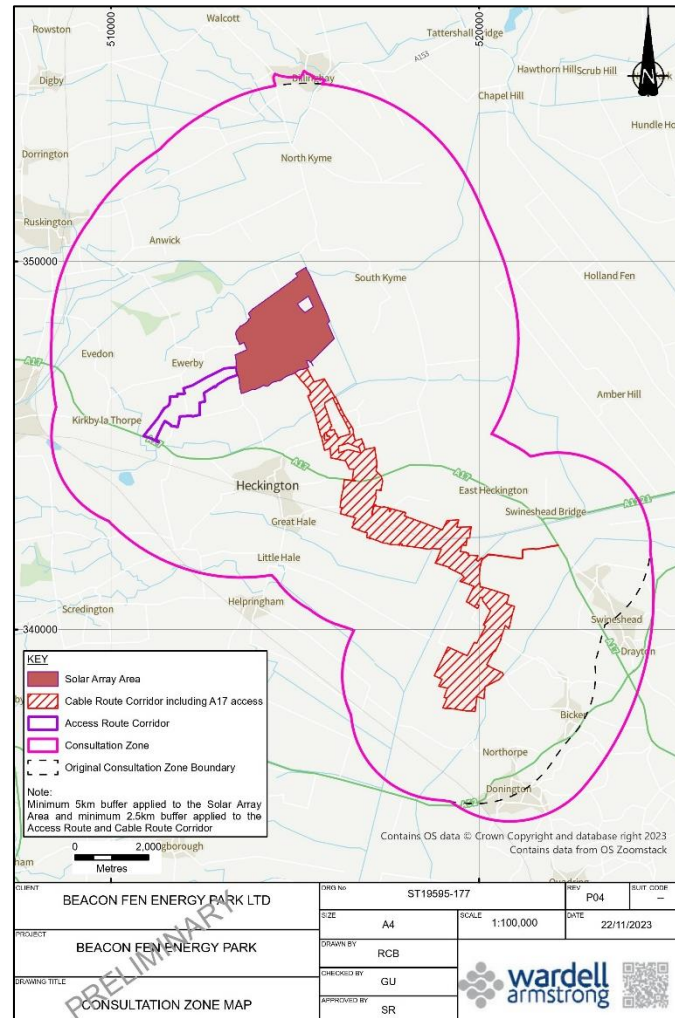
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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1147380/NPS\\_EN-1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1147380/NPS_EN-1.pdf)

9 <https://www.beaconfenenergypark.co.uk/documents/>

parishes, those that may be affected by construction traffic, and those that may experience a visual impact or disruption during construction. The consultation zone is shown below in **Figure 3**. All properties within this zone will be sent a hard copy leaflet drop inviting them to participate in our statutory consultation.



*Figure 3 Map showing outline of proposed consultation zone in pink*

- 8.1.2 We are aware that other stakeholders outside of our consultation zone will also be interested in taking part in and responding to our consultation. Therefore, we intend to use other methods, such as newspaper adverts, social media adverts, and sending digital mailshots to registered interested parties, to promote the consultation more widely, and encourage those from the wider area with comments and views to engage.

## Statutory Consultees

- 8.1.3 At the same time as consulting with the local community, the Applicant will be carrying out consultation on the same information (including the PEIR) with those bodies prescribed under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 (the Act):

- Persons as prescribed under Schedule 1 of the Infrastructure Planning (Application: Prescribed Forms and Procedures) Regulations 2009 (as amended);
- Each local authority as defined under Section 43 of the Act;

- Each person who is within one or more of the categories as set out under Section 44 of the Act.

## Non-Statutory Consultees

- 8.1.4 There are other non-statutory consultees with whom the Applicant intends to consult with as best practice. These include:
- Local community groups, i.e., residents' associations
  - Seldom heard groups
  - Local interest and amenity groups
  - Local schools and colleges
  - Local MPs
  - Local councillors; and
  - Local Parish Councils
- 8.1.5 Please note that these lists are not exhaustive.
- 8.1.6 Briefings will be offered to North Kesteven District, Boston Borough and Lincolnshire County Councillors and Town and Parish Councils at key stages of the DCO application process.

## Seldom Heard Groups

- 8.1.7 The Proposed Development is largely situated within North Kesteven District Council's (NKDC) jurisdiction. 94% of NKDC is classed as green space, which includes agricultural land and open space. Principal sectors of the economy are food and agriculture, engineering, tourism and construction.
- 8.1.8 There are low unemployment rates and relatively good skills levels in the District. Nationally, North Kesteven is in the top 15% of the least deprived local authority areas in England (IMD 2019)<sup>10</sup>.
- 8.1.9 More than 64% of the population live in rural settlements, including villages or market towns; therefore, North Kesteven has been classified as being 'mainly rural'.
- 8.1.10 North Kesteven district has a relatively underdeveloped transport and communications infrastructure. As a result, local communities have historically been self-reliant, with parish and town councils providing services such as playing fields or play areas.
- 8.1.11 Based on the above, for the purpose of pre-application consultation we have defined 'Seldom Heard' groups as including, but not limited to, those living in remote rural areas, those from ethnic minorities or where English is not their first language, those with a disability or communication impairment, those that are part of the LGBTQ+ community, and those who are unable to travel to a consultation event or engage with the Proposed Development via online channels.
- 8.1.12 To secure the attention of the 'Seldom Heard' audiences at early (non-statutory) engagement, we sent a hard copy leaflet drop to all properties within an approximately 2.5km boundary of the Proposed Development, and will be using a broader consultation zone for hard copy information during statutory consultation. We also set up analogue feedback mechanisms, including a

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.n-kesteven.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-03/North%20Kesteven%20District%20Profile%20-%202023.pdf>



Freepost address and telephone voicemail service which is available 24/7. Informed by this experience, we intend to use similar communication methods during our statutory consultation phase.

- 8.1.13 Within the consultation zone, most consultees live in villages, hamlets or more remotely and local public transport is infrequent. For this reason, locations for in-person consultation events will be chosen based on their proximity to populations and public transport routes. Additionally, online webinars will be held to ensure as many people as possible can engage with the statutory consultation.
- 8.1.14 Additionally, we will always provide summary information in clear, non-technical language, ensure all venues we use for events are fully accessible, and consider requests for large-print, braille, audio or other language versions of consultation documents.
- 8.1.15 A list of Seldom Heard groups we intend to consult with can be found at Appendix 3.

## 9. How We Will Consult and Publicise

- 9.1.1 We want to create opportunities for as many people as possible to get involved with our consultation by using the following tools:
- In person consultation events – information boards and materials exhibited at our in-person events will provide context to, and summarise, the proposals. The Beacon Fen Project Team will be on hand to answer questions, talk to participants and aid their understanding of the Proposed Development.
  - Online webinars – alongside in-person events, we also plan to hold at least one online webinar.
  - Digital versions of our consultation materials will be published via an online document library on the project website<sup>11</sup>.
  - Local information points – the consultation documents, including this SoCC, will be displayed at appropriate public buildings in the vicinity of the site. Should it not be possible, for whatever reason, to deposit the documents at the specified locations, then alternative representative buildings will be identified to allow access by the public. See **Table 3** for a list of the proposed locations.

### Communication Methods

- 9.1.2 The Applicant recognises that one method of consultation will not meet the requirements of every stakeholder group. For this reason, we propose to use a variety of communication methods as shown below in **Table 2**.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.beaconfenenergypark.co.uk/documents/>

METHOD	DETAILS
Website	A dedicated project website ( <a href="http://www.beaconfenenergypark.co.uk">www.beaconfenenergypark.co.uk</a> ) that is updated at pertinent intervals, including FAQs, and hosts digital versions of all consultation documents. We will also provide a digital version of our consultation feedback form via the website.
Digital mailshot	Sending mailshots to those who are registered on our mailing list when there is a pertinent update on the Proposed Development, or to invite them to take part in the statutory consultation.
Leaflet drop	Hard copy correspondence sent to all properties within the consultation zone (approximately 9,296) ahead of the statutory consultation phase.
Newsletters	Newsletters issued to local consultees/subscribed members around once a quarter, sharing updates on the Proposed Development.
Stakeholder briefings	Inviting key stakeholders, such as councillors, seldom heard or community groups, to online or in-person briefing meetings ahead of and during consultation phases.
Stakeholder emails	Issuing update emails to key stakeholders, including political representatives, to share key project information and invite them to take part in the statutory consultation.
Newspaper adverts	As required by Section 48 of the Planning Act, we will publish a Section 48 Notice advertising our intention to submit a DCO application in local newspapers for two consecutive weeks, and a national newspaper and the London Gazette for one week. We will also place adverts publicising the statutory consultation in titles within the Boston Standard series (including online at Lincolnshire World), the Boston Target series (including online at Lincolnshire Live), and the Lincolnshire Echo (or

METHOD	DETAILS
	successor/alternative titles if these become unavailable).
Consultation documents	Hard-copy versions of consultation documents including the PEIR, consultation booklets and SoCC will be available at in-person events and deposited at a range of local information points. Digital copies will be made available on the project website. Hard copies of documents can be made available to individual stakeholders, although this may be subject to a charge to cover print costs. The newspaper notices will state the cost, if applicable, for providing any printed documents.
Press releases	Media releases containing information on the Proposed Development and consultation timeline will be sent to a wide range of local media (see Appendix 4 for a list of proposed titles).
Information posters	Posters advertising the consultation will be sent to locations around the local area to be displayed on noticeboards. See Appendix 2 for details of proposed poster locations.
Social media	Adverts will be placed on social media to promote the statutory consultation.

*Table 2 – Communication methods*

## Consultation Events

- 9.1.3 We are proposing to hold two online webinars and four in-person events during the statutory consultation phase. The four venues have been selected based on their location, size and accessibility. Events will be held across weekends, daytimes and evenings within local school term times.

9.1.4 The proposed in-person event locations are as follows:

LOCATION	VENUE AND ADDRESS
Heckington	Heckington Village Hall, 9-11 High Street, NG34 9RA
Bicker	Bicker Village Hall, Cemetery Road, Bicker, Boston PE20 3BT
Ewerby	Ewerby Reading Rooms, 75 Main St, Ewerby, Sleaford NG34 9PJ
South Kyme	South Kyme Coronation Hall, High St, South Kyme, Lincoln LN4 4AD

*Table 3 – Proposed venues for statutory consultation events*

9.1.5 We anticipate that our statutory consultation will be held for six weeks in early 2024. The consultation will be advertised using the same channels as at our early (non-statutory) phase – see Table 2 above.

9.1.6 In addition to the consultation events and webinars, we will offer key political stakeholders within the consultation zone (MPs, County Councillors, District Councillors, Parish Councils) the opportunity to attend a briefing meeting either in person or online.

## Methods to Provide Consultation Feedback

9.1.7 Seeking feedback is key to the principles of consultation. This will be sought using a variety of mechanisms, including:

- Feedback forms provided at Consultation Events to provide detailed comments in response to specific questions;
- An online version of the feedback form to be made available during the consultation on the project website ([www.beaconfenenergypark.co.uk](http://www.beaconfenenergypark.co.uk));
- A dedicated email ([info@beaconfenenergypark.co.uk](mailto:info@beaconfenenergypark.co.uk)) and Freepost address (FREEPOST Beacon Fen Energy Park) to allow feedback or questions to be made directly to the project team [info@beaconfenenergypark.co.uk](mailto:info@beaconfenenergypark.co.uk).

9.1.8 A phone number (0330 0571943) has been set up to contact the project team with questions by leaving a voicemail, accessible 24 hours a day. Calls will then be returned by a member of the project team. Where consultees approach the Applicant by email, phone or post, the communication will be acknowledged within five working days following receipt of the enquiry.



- 9.1.9 We will accept feedback via hard copy and digital feedback forms provided during the consultation phase, as well as written feedback received in the form of letter or email during this period. Our consultation materials will make clear the importance of providing written feedback, in order for it to be formally considered in our consultation process.
- 9.1.10 We will respond to queries received verbally or via phone, but this will not necessarily be recorded as a formal consultation response to the consultation.
- 9.1.11 To follow the Proposed Development via the PINS website, Beacon Fen Energy Park is at the following address:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/east-midlands/beacon-fen-energy-park>

### Local information points

- 9.1.12 In order to make information accessible locally and for those without internet access, we have identified a range of public information points where key consultation documents will be sent for display.
- 9.1.13 Hard copies of consultation documents can be provided to stakeholders upon request. A charge may be incurred to cover the printing and/or postage costs for some larger documents.
- 9.1.14 We plan to place hard copies of some of our consultation documents, including the non-technical summary of the PEIR and this SoCC, to be viewed free of charge at the locations listed below in **Table 4** during the pre-application period. If for any reason we cannot deposit at a particular location, we will identify an alternative location as a replacement.
- 9.1.15 The libraries listed below also provide computers with internet access where stakeholders can view digital copies of all consultation documents.

LOCATION AND ADDRESS	OPENING TIMES
Heckington Community Library, St Andrew's Street, Heckington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 9RE	Monday 10:00 - 12:00 Tuesday 10:00 - 12:00 Wednesday 10:00 - 12:00 Thursday 10:00 - 12:00 Friday 10:00 - 12:00 Saturday 10:00 - 12:00
Sleaford Library, 13-16 Market Place, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 7SR	Monday 09:00 - 17:00 Tuesday 09:00 - 17:00 Wednesday 09:00 - 17:00 Thursday 09:00 - 18:00 Friday 09:00 - 17:00 Saturday 09:00 - 13:00
South Kyme Golf Club, 1 Skinner's Lane, South Kyme, Lincolnshire, LN4 4AT	Monday 07:00 - 16:30 Tuesday 07:00 - 16:30 Wednesday 07:00 - 16:30 Thursday 07:00 - 16:30 Friday 07:00 - 16:30 Saturday 07:00 - 16:30 Sunday 07:00 - 16:30

LOCATION AND ADDRESS	OPENING TIMES
Swineshead Pre-School Centre, North End, Swineshead, Boston, Lincolnshire, PE20 3LZ	Monday 08:00 - 15:00 Tuesday 08:00 - 17:00 Wednesday 08:00 - 17:00 Thursday 08:00 - 17:00 Friday 08:00 - 17:00
Lincolnshire County Council Offices, Newland, Lincoln, LN1 1YL	Monday 08:00 - 17:00 Tuesday 08:00 - 17:00 Wednesday 08:00 - 17:00 Thursday 08:00 - 17:00 Friday 08:00 - 17:00
Boston Library, Bank Street Entrance, County Hall, Boston, PE21 6DY	Monday 09:00 - 17:00 Tuesday 09:00 - 17:00 Wednesday 09:00 - 17:00 Thursday 09:00 - 18:00 Friday 09:00 - 17:00 Saturday 09:00 - 16:00

*Table 4 – Proposed local information points (subject to permission from venues)*

- 9.1.16 The opening times of these organisations are controlled by the venue operators and may be subject to change.
- 9.1.17 Hard and/or electronic copies of the SoCC will also be sent to all parish councils in the consultation zone.

## How We Will Respond to Consultee Comments

- 9.1.18 When statutory consultation has closed, we will review and finalise our proposed application having regard to the feedback received throughout. We will then produce a Consultation Report which will set out how the feedback from the pre-application consultation has shaped and influenced our proposed application.
- 9.1.19 In the Consultation Report we will also make it clear where we have not altered our proposals to reflect comments received and explain our reasoning. The Consultation Report will be submitted to the SoS as part of the DCO application.
- 9.1.20 Please note that all feedback will be included in the Consultation Report; however, no personal details will be published, in line with the Proposed Development's Privacy Policy<sup>12</sup>.
- 9.1.21 Names and personal contact details (including email addresses, telephone number and home address) may be collected for the purpose of contacting and corresponding with consultees. Appropriate technical and organisational security measures are in place to protect any personal information we receive against unauthorised or unlawful use, and against accidental loss, damage or

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.beaconfenenergypark.co.uk/privacy-policy/>

destruction in line with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) requirements. More information about these measures is available on request.

## 10. Other Consultations

10.1.1 We are aware of a number of other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects in the local area. These include:

- Heckington Fen Solar Park – currently in Examination stage
- Temple Oaks Renewable Energy Park – currently in Pre-Application stage
- Springwell Solar Farm – currently in Pre-Application stage
- Fosse Green Energy Solar and Energy Storage Park – currently in Pre-Examination stage

10.1.2 We have coordinated with other DCO solar projects in the area by monitoring their pre-application timelines, in order to minimise overlap of respective consultation dates and lighten the administrative burden on local statutory and non-statutory stakeholders.

## 11. Glossary of Abbreviations

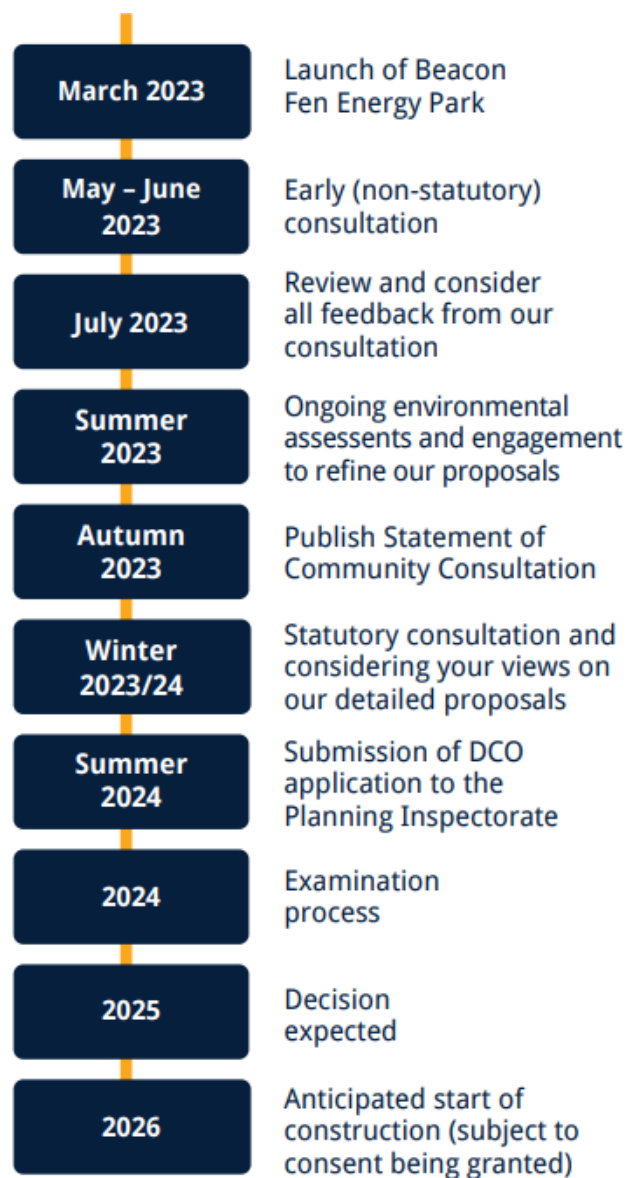
Abbreviation	Term
BBC	Boston Borough Council
BESS	Battery energy storage system
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon Dioxide
CCTV	Closed circuit television
DCO	Development Consent Order
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement
FAQ	Frequently asked question
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
KWh	Kilowatt hour
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council
MP	Member of Parliament

MW	Megawatt
NKDC	North Kesteven District Council
NPS	National Policy Statement
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
PINS	Planning Inspectorate
PEI	Preliminary Environmental Information
PEIR	Preliminary Environmental Information Report
PRoW	Public Right of Way
PV	Photovoltaic
SHDC	South Holland District Council
SoCC	Statement of Community Consultation
SoS	Secretary of State



# Appendix 1

*Planned timeline for Beacon Fen Energy Park (pre-application consultation to construction)*



## Appendix 2

### *Proposed poster display locations*

Village	Name of location
North Kyme	The Plough
	North Kyme Village Hall
Billinghay	Lincolnshire Co-op Billinghay Post Office
	Ship Inn
South Kyme	South Kyme Golf Club
	South Kyme Parish Council
	Hume Arms
Ewerby	Ewerby Reading Rooms
	Ewerby and Evedon Parish Council
Heckington	Sylv's Coffee Shop & Cafe
	Royal Oak Heckington
	POP in cafe
	The Windmill Shop
	Heckington Village Hall
	Heckington Parish Council
Helpringham	The Brass Windmill
Great Hale	Hale Magna Village Hall
	Great Hale Parish Council
Swineshead	Swineshead Village Store
	Swineshead St Mary's Church
	Lincolnshire Co-op Swineshead Food Store
	Swineshead Parish Council
	Baythorpe Tea Room & Garden Centre
Bicker	Bicker Parish Council
Donington	Co-op Food Donington
	The Black Bull
Sleaford	Sleaford Town Council
	Sleaford Library
	Sleaford Rugby Club
	Sleaford Town Junior Football Club
	Sleaford Leisure centre
Anwick	Anwick Community Centre

# Appendix 3

## *Proposed Seldom Heard consultees to consult*

<b>Support and advice: Disability, equality, diversity and inclusion related groups, charities and organisations</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Specialisation</b>
Abbeyfield UK Lincoln	Wellbeing, older people
ADHD 360	Mental health and learning disability
Adults Supporting Adults (ASA)	Wellbeing, mental health
Age Friendly Future	Wellbeing, older people
Age UK Lincoln and South Lincolnshire	Wellbeing, older people
Alzheimer's and Dementia Support	Wellbeing, older people
Alzheimer's Society	Wellbeing, older people
Alzheimer's Society - Side by Side North East Lincolnshire	Wellbeing, older people
Autistic Society Lincolnshire	Autism, learning difficulties
Blue Badge Scheme - Lincolnshire County Council	Disability, transport
Carre's Grammar School	Young people, learning
Children's Disability Register - Lincolnshire County Council	Disability, young people
Churches All Together in Lincolnshire	Religious Group
Citizens Advice Mid Lincolnshire	Equality
Community Digital Hubs	Equality
Community Lincs	Wellbeing
Dementia Cafe Lincoln	Dementia support
Dementia Cafe Sleaford	Dementia support
Dementia Support South Lincolnshire	Dementia support
Diabetes Service Lincolnshire	Diabetes, health, wellbeing
Diabetes UK - Midlands and East of England	Wellbeing, health, mental health
Disability Services - Lincolnshire County Council	Support, disability, blue badge, transport, care, equipment, finance, therapy and other
EDAN Lincs Domestic Abuse Service Lincoln	Health, mental health, wellbeing
Equality Diversity and Inclusion Team - Lincolnshire Police	Equality
Ethnic Minority and Traveller Education Team	Equality, education
Evergreen Care Sleaford	Wellbeing, support, health, older people
Evergreen Care Trust Stamford	Wellbeing, support, health, older people
GAIN - Guillain-Barré & Associated Inflammatory Neuropathies	Disability, support
Good Neighbour Scheme	Wellbeing
Grantham Short Breaks & Respite - Ambient Support	Mental health, learning disability and older people

<b>Support and advice: Disability, equality, diversity and inclusion related groups, charities and organisations</b>	
Great Hale Charities	Finance, support, wellbeing
Ground Level Network Lincoln	Religious Group
Guide Dogs	Blindness
Heckington Community Hub	Library services
Heckington Almshouse Charity	Older people, housing support
Heckington Relief in Need	Disability, support, wellbeing
Helpringham Community Cafe	Wellbeing, community group support
Helpringham Primary School	Young people, learning
Homestart Lincolnshire	Volunteering, support, mental health, wellbeing, parenting
JUST Lincolnshire	Equality, diversity & tackling discrimination
Kesteven and Sleaford High School	Young people, learning
KISIMUL School	Education, special needs, autism, learning difficulties, disability
Laffletics Disability Sports Club Sleaford	Disability, sports club, young people
LEAP Housing	Housing support, emergency accommodation
Volunteering, support, mental health, wellbeing, parenting	Equality, health, mental health
Lincoln and District Stroke Club	Health, wellbeing, mental health
Lincoln and Lindsey Blind Society	Blindness
Lincoln Central Mosque and Cultural Centre	Religious group
Lincoln Methodist Church	Religious group
Lincoln MS Therapy Centre	Health, wellbeing, mental health, disability
Lincoln Parkinson's Social Meet Up	Disability, health, wellbeing, mental health
Lincolnshire Action Trust	Equality, criminal justice system
Lincolnshire Black Police Association	Equality, wellbeing
Lincolnshire Community & Voluntary Service (CVS)	Health, wellbeing
Lincolnshire Community Foundation	Community groups support
Lincolnshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services	Volunteering, young people, wellbeing
Lincolnshire Learning Disability Partnership Board - Total Voice Lincolnshire	Learning disability, autism, wellbeing, mental health
Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	Mental health
Lincolnshire Police Federation	Equality
Lincolnshire Sensory Services	Disability services
Lincolnshire South Federation - Inspiring Women	Wellbeing
Lincolnshire Stroke Recovery Service	Health, mental health, wellbeing
Lincolnshire Transport Helpline - Dial a ride	Equality, transport
Lincolnshire Transport Helpline - Lincs Bus	Equality, transport
Lincolnshire Travellers Initiative	Equality
Lincolnshire YMCA	Day Care, youth work, emergency accommodation, housing and training

<b>Support and advice: Disability, equality, diversity and inclusion related groups, charities and organisations</b>	
Lincolnshire Young Carers	Health & Wellbeing
Linkage - Learning Disability	Equality, learning disability
Lions Club Sleaford & District	Volunteering, disability, mental health, wellbeing
Longhurst Group - Sleaford HRS	Housing support, wellbeing
MND - Motor Neurone Disease Cuppa and a Chat Support Group	Health, wellbeing, mental health, disability
MND - Motor Neurone Disease NELSWeLaR Support Group (North East Leicestershire, South West Lincolnshire and Rutland)	Health, wellbeing, mental health, disability
MND - Motor Neurone Disease South Lincolnshire Support Group	Health, wellbeing, mental health, disability
Moving Forward Lincolnshire	Family support
MS Support Boston & South Holland Society	Health, wellbeing, mental health, disability
NACRO Services in Lincolnshire	Housing support
National Deaf Children's Society	Hearing loss
New Life Church Sleaford	Religious group, volunteering
New Life Community Larder	Religious group, volunteering, food bank
NKDC Housing Options	Housing support
NK Social Strollers	Health, wellbeing
Nomad Centre Lincs YMCA	Housing support, wellbeing
Nomad Trust Lincoln	Housing support
North East Lincolnshire Women's Aid	Health, mental health, wellbeing
North Hykeham Children Centre	Children centre
North Lincolnshire Youth Council	Young people, support
Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church	Religious group
Parkinson's Service NHS Team	Parkinson's disease, disability, mental health, wellbeing
Pinfold Way Sheltered Housing Sleaford	Emergency housing, housing support
Project Compass	Wellbeing, support, health
Rainbow Stars Sleaford	Disability, support
Religious Society of Friends Quakers - Lincoln Quakers Meeting	Religious group
Rethink Mental Illness Woodhall Spa Group	Mental Health
Rotary Club of Sleaford	Volunteering, wellbeing, community support
Royal British Legion Sleaford	Wellbeing, veterans
Royal National Institute for the Blind	Blindness
Royal Naval Association Cleethorpes & Grimsby	Wellbeing, veterans
Royal Naval Association Lincoln	Wellbeing, veterans
Salvation Army - Sleaford	Religious group, volunteering
Samaritans Lincoln	Volunteering, mental health



<b>Support and advice: Disability, equality, diversity and inclusion related groups, charities and organisations</b>	
SEND - Special Educational Needs & Disabilities in North Kesteven and South Kesteven	Disability, learning difficulties, wellbeing, health
Seventh-Day Adventist Church	Religious group
SHINE Lincolnshire Support Group	Disability, equality, spina bifida
Shine Mental Health Support network in Lincolnshire	Mental health support
Short Breaks for Disabled Children	Disability, wellbeing, mental health
Siblinks	Wellbeing, support
Sleaford Children Centre	Children services, wellbeing
Sleaford Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	Equality
Sleaford Community Grocer	Food, support
Sleaford Dementia Support	Older people, dementia support
Sleaford Foyer - Housing Group	Equality, emergency accommodation
Sleaford Methodist Church	Religious group
Sleaford Mosque and Community Centre	Religious group
Sleaford u3a	Older people, wellbeing
Sleaford Vs Arthritis	Older people, wellbeing, arthritis support
Sleaford Youth Centre	Young people, support
SOLDAS - South Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Service - Boston Women's Aid	Health, mental health, wellbeing
South Lincolnshire Blind Society	Disability, blindness
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Local Offer - North East Lincolnshire	Special Needs, disability, learning difficulties
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Local Offer - North Lincolnshire	Special Needs, disability, learning difficulties
St Andrew's School, Heckington	Young people, learning
St George's Academy	Young people, learning
Stepping Up Walks	Health, wellbeing
Stroke Association - North East Lincolnshire	Health, mental health, wellbeing
T.E.D. Ageing Better in East Lindsey	Wellbeing, older people
The Centre for Reconciliation	Young people, wellbeing
VICTA - Support for Children and Young Adults who are blind or partially sighted	Blindness, visual impairment
VoiceAbility Lincolnshire	Mental health
Voluntary Centre Services North Kesteven	Volunteering
We Are With you (Previously Addaction) National	Addiction support
Wellbeing Lincs	Wellbeing, health, mental health
Youth Offending Service	Young people, support

## Appendix 4

*List of media titles press releases are proposed to be issued to.*

Heckington Living  
Lincolnshire Echo  
Lincolnshire Free Press  
Lincolnshire in Focus  
Lincolnshire Life  
Lincolnshire Live  
Lincolnshire Pride  
Lincolnshire Reporter  
Lincolnshire Today  
Lincolnshire World  
The Lincolnite  
Sleaford Standard  
Spalding Today  
Your Local Lincs  
Business Lincolnshire  
Business Link Magazine  
Business Live  
CityX  
BBC Radio Lincolnshire  
BBC Radio Yorkshire/Lincolnshire  
ITV News Central  
ITV Yorkshire  
Heckington Living Community Radio  
Lincs FM  
BBC One East Midlands  
BBC One Look North (Yorkshire)  
Capital Midlands  
ReNews  
4C Offshore  
Alt Energy Mag  
Carbon Brief  
Energy Voice  
Solar Power Portal  
ReCharge  
PV magazine