



Fosse Green Energy

Programme Document (Revision 3)

Planning Inspectorate Reference Number: EN010154

Fosse Green Energy Limited

March 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this report

1.1.1 Fosse Green Energy Limited (the Applicant) intends to submit a Development Consent Order (DCO) application seeking consent under the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) for the Fosse Green Energy project (the Project) which comprises a generating station with an anticipated capacity in excess of 50MW comprising the installation of solar photovoltaic panels, associated electrical equipment, cabling and on-site energy storage facilities together with grid connection infrastructure for the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the Project.

1.1.2 This Programme Document has been prepared in accordance with the guidance set out in the Planning Inspectorate's Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: 2024 Pre-application Prospectus. Production of the Programme Document is not a statutory requirement; however, it should set out the timetable and activities necessary for an effective pre-application process including the level of pre-application services from the Planning Inspectorate, and consultation with various parties required under the Planning Act 2008.

1.1.3 The Programme Document includes the following:

- the date the Applicant intends to submit their application and a timetable of the Applicant's pre-application process.
- the main issues for resolution and activities that will be undertaken to address these.
- the proposals for engagement with key stakeholders.
- how the Applicant will manage risk during the pre-application stage.
- reference to the Statement of Community Consultation.

2. Timetable

2.1 Current status of the Project

2.1.1 The Project commenced in March 2023. Since then, the Applicant has undertaken the following:

- Submission of a Scoping Report on 20 June 2023 and receipt of a Scoping Opinion from the Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) on behalf of the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (the Secretary of State) on 25 July 2023.
- A period of Non-Statutory Consultation from 11 September 2023 to 20 October 2023.
- Development of, and consultation on, the Statement of Community Consultation with the host authorities, Lincolnshire County Council and North Kesteven District Council.
- Preparation of a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEI Report).
- A period of Statutory Consultation from 21 October 2024 to 2 December 2024.

2.2 Anticipated timetable

2.2.1 The Applicant has prepared a programme for the Project which anticipates a DCO submission on 18 July 2025. Table 2-1 shows the anticipated timetable up to the submission of the DCO application, with previous steps also included for context.

2.2.2 The Applicant will keep interested parties informed on programme matters in progress meetings during the pre-application stage.

Table 2-1 Anticipated timetable

Project Stage	Activity	Anticipated Date
Non-Statutory Consultation and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping	Non-Statutory consultation	11 September 2023 to 20 October 2023. (COMPLETE)
	Submission of EIA Scoping Report to the Secretary of State via the Inspectorate	20 June 2023 (COMPLETE)
	Receipt of Scoping Opinion	25 July 2023 (COMPLETE)

Project Stage	Activity	Anticipated Date
	Non-Statutory Consultation Feedback Report	October 2024 (COMPLETE)
Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)	Informal Consultation SoCC	30 October 2023 to 6 November 2023 (COMPLETE)
	Formal Consultation (minimum 28 working days) SoCC	7 November 2023 to 19 December 2023 (COMPLETE)
Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEI Report)	Prepare and finalise the PEI Report	3 July 2024 – 11 October 2024 (COMPLETE)
Statutory Consultation	Formal consultation period	21 October 2024 – 2 December 2024 (COMPLETE)
Environmental Statement (ES)	Finalise EIA and prepare ES	3 February 2025 – 30 June 2025
Preparation of the DCO application	Prepare the DCO application including supporting documents	3 February 2025 – 30 June 2025
Adequacy of Consultation Milestone	Written submission to the Inspectorate setting out the consultation undertaken to date	18 April 2025
Draft document review	Review of the draft DCO (front end), Land Plans, Works Plans, Draft Book of Reference (front end) and Draft Consultation report (front end) by the Planning Inspectorate	Mid-late April 2025
DCO application finalisation	Finalisation of application documents	1 July 2025 – 17 July 2025
DCO Submission	Submit the DCO application to the Secretary of State via the Inspectorate	18 July 2025

3. Main Issues For Resolution

3.1 Outcome of Non-Statutory Consultation

3.1.1 The main issues arising from the Non-Statutory Consultation related to the following:

- Biodiversity net gain and wildlife.
- Project design.
- Agricultural land use.
- Impacts during construction.
- Community benefits.
- A range of other points including potential impacts on health (including mental health), property prices, aircraft safety and glint and glare.

3.1.2 As noted in Table 2-1, the Applicant has prepared a Non-Statutory Consultation feedback report which is available on the Project website (<https://fossegreenenergy.co.uk/assets/images/pdf/FGE-Consultation-Report-Final-Oct.pdf>). The report outlines how the responses to the Non-Statutory Consultation have been taken into account in the development of the Project.

3.1.3 The Applicant is seeking to address these issues through ongoing engagement with key stakeholders such as Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), North Kesteven District Council (NKDC), Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England (see Chapter 4 for a summary of the Applicant's proposals for technical engagement).

3.1.4 Table 3-1 sets out the considerations and proposed activities for the main issues already identified from the Non-Statutory Consultation and others that the Applicant will also be addressing during the pre-application stage.

3.2 Outcome of Statutory Consultation

3.2.1 A period of Statutory Consultation ran for six weeks from 21 October 2024 to 2 December 2024. The Statutory Consultation provided stakeholders and members of the community with opportunities to discuss and comment on the design presented in the PEI Report. Comments and feedback submitted as part of the Statutory Consultation have been recorded and will be taken into account as the design of the Project evolves.

3.2.2 Similar to the Non-Statutory Consultation the main issues raised at the Statutory Consultation related to biodiversity and wildlife, agricultural land use, traffic and access during construction, community benefits alongside other points including socio economic factors, battery safety, glint and glare and the water environment.

3.2.3 The Applicant continues to address the issues raised through an ongoing engagement strategy with key stakeholders including North Kesteven District Council, Lincolnshire County Council, Natural England, Historic England, the Environment Agency, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and National Highways.

3.2.4 Table 3-1 sets out the Applicant’s approach to resolution of the issues raised during the Statutory Consultation.

Table 3-1 Approach to resolution of issues

Considerations	Proposed activities
Project design	
<p>The Project design fix for the Environmental Statement (ES) to be submitted with the DCO application was developed and refined based on the feedback received during Statutory Consultation as well as ongoing environmental review and assessment work.</p> <p>The Applicant has maintained a design log which itemises the changes made at various stages of the Project's development.</p> <p>The ES will detail design changes from Statutory Consultation to DCO application submission.</p> <p>The evolution of the Project design will be explained in the Design Approach Document that is submitted with the DCO application.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement with key stakeholders including LCC, NKDC, the Environmental Agency, Natural England and Historic England. • Further environmental assessment work as part of the preparation of the Environmental Statement. Further development of the design where appropriate.
Biodiversity	
<p>A range of ecology surveys have been undertaken including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bird surveys (breeding and wintering); • Bat surveys (preliminary bat roost appraisal and activity surveys); • Great Crested Newt (eDNA) surveys; • Habitat surveys (National Vegetation Classification and Phase 1 Habitat Survey); • Aquatic habitats, macroinvertebrates and macrophytes; • Reptile surveys; • Badger surveys; • Water Vole and Otter; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement with LCC, NKDC, Natural England and Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust • For Examination, agree Statements of Common Ground with Natural England, LCC and NKDC that include matters related to biodiversity • Identity suitable mitigation and present this in the ES • Secure mitigation in the appropriate management plans and any Development Consent Obligations and/ or other legal agreements.

Considerations	Proposed activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terrestrial invertebrates scoping survey; and • Tree walkover survey. <p>Consultation has been undertaken with key ecology stakeholders such as Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust, Upper Witham Internal Drainage Board, Natural England and LCC/NKDC and is ongoing.</p> <p>The landscape scheme has been, and will continue to be, designed to maximise habitat creation opportunities without limiting the functionality of the Project. This includes the provision of grassland creation and provision of infill planting and new tree and scrub planting.</p> <p>Suitable buffers have been included in current proposals to offset from ecological features such as woodland blocks, individual trees, ponds and other surface water features. Exclusion zones have been established around the root protection areas of trees within the Site. The importance of mitigating the loss of arable field habitats which may be used by farmland birds is recognised.</p>	
Landscape and visual	
<p>Existing public rights of way and permissive paths which transverse the site introduce potential short range views. Long range views are also provided from Lincoln Cliff to the west of the site but these are distant. Existing hedgerows within and adjacent to the site are well managed, typically at heights of over 2m. Other visual receptors include residents of the nearby surrounding hamlets/villages of Witham St Hughs, Bassingham, Thurlby, Morton and Thorpe on the Hill.</p> <p>Winter viewpoint locations were shared with NKDC's landscape advisors (AAH). Further consultation is planned.</p> <p>Habitat creation and enhancement has targeted infill and planting to strengthen existing natural barriers. Planting is proposed around the proposed on-site substation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement with LCC and NKDC, and their landscape and visual advisors, AAH. • For Examination, agree Statements of Common Ground with LCC and NKDC that include matters related to landscape and visual impact. • Identity suitable mitigation in the ES • Secure mitigation in the appropriate management plans and any Development Consent Obligations and/ or other legal agreements.

Considerations	Proposed activities
<p>Through design, solar infrastructure has been removed from fields with views from Lincoln Cathedral. Analysis of the site has been undertaken to locate large on-site infrastructure in natural sheltered locations.</p> <p>Following feedback received during Statutory Consultation, additional permissive paths have been added to the Site and areas for solar infrastructure have been refined to maintain open views for residents at Thorpe on the Hill and Morton.</p>	
Archaeology	
<p>Geophysical surveys have been undertaken and the findings of the surveys have identified areas of possible archaeology.</p> <p>Consultation is ongoing with NKDC and LCC to discuss a high level approach to the programme of archaeological investigation and this will continue through the agreement of the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the proposed archaeological evaluation (trial trenching).</p> <p>Further investigation will be undertaken to determine any further embedded mitigation, such as areas of preservation in situ.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement with LCC, NKDC and Historic England. • For Examination, agree Statements of Common Ground with LCC and NKDC that include matters related to archaeology. • Identity suitable mitigation in the ES • Secure mitigation in the appropriate management plans and any Development Consent Obligations and/ or other legal agreements.
Water Environment	
<p>A Walkover survey of the site has been conducted.</p> <p>Consultation has been undertaken with the Environment Agency to discuss and agree the approach to the flood modelling.</p> <p>The design has given consideration to the presence of the River Brant and River Witham, two main rivers which cross the site, with particular reference to the grid connection and internal cabling. Consideration has also been given to areas of Flood Zone 3 and the Witham Washland Flood Storage Area.</p> <p>A commitment has been made to avoid the placement of solar stations and large infrastructure (such as the Battery Energy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement with the Environment Agency. • Engagement with the Lead Local Flood Authority and Internal Drainage Board, as required. • For Examination, agree a Statement of Common Ground with the Environment Agency that includes matters related to the water environment. • Identity suitable mitigation in the ES

Considerations	Proposed activities
Storage System (BESS) and On Site Substation) within areas at risk of flooding.	
Agricultural Land	
Agricultural Land Classification Surveys have been undertaken to confirm the agricultural grade of land in the area where solar infrastructure is proposed to be located (not the cable corridor). This information was shared at the Statutory Consultation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Soil Management Plan setting out how impacts to soil are minimised during construction, operation and decommissioning of the Project. • For Examination, agree a Statement of Common Ground with Natural England that includes matters related to soil management.
Community benefits	
Various suggestions were made by respondents to the Statutory Consultation on the community benefits that the Project could deliver. Suggestions ranged from funding local bus services, to planting trees and providing play equipment and sports facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement with LCC and NKDC on community benefits. • Secure mitigation in the appropriate management plans and any Development Consent Obligations and/ or other legal agreements.
Community impacts	
<p>Consultation has been undertaken with LCC and NKDC on the scope of environmental baseline surveys. These include the automatic traffic count surveys and the noise baseline surveys.</p> <p>Consideration has been given to proximity of residential receptors in locating on site equipment within the layout.</p> <p>Consideration has also been given to HGV routing from the Strategic Road Network and access locations which have been shared with LCC. Access designs have been shared and discussed with the Local Highways Authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement with Natural England, the Environment Agency, LCC and NKDC on construction related impacts. <p>For the DCO application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an Framework Construction Environmental Management Plan that sets out how environmental impacts will be minimised during the construction period. • Development of a Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan that provides a strategy for managing construction traffic during the construction period, to minimise the impact upon local communities. • Development of a Framework Decommissioning Management Plan that outlines how the Project will be decommissioned and the land re-instated to its previous use.

4. Engagement

4.1 Applicant's approach

4.1.1 During the pre-application stage, the Applicant has engaged and will continue to engage fully with all key stakeholders in the development of the DCO application. The Applicant is at varying stages of setting up agreements with the relevant key stakeholders. A summary is provided in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1 Engagement with Key Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Engagement Mechanism
Planning Inspectorate	
Standard Service Tier agreement	The Applicant will engage with the Inspectorate in accordance with the standard service tier (6 meetings per year at times to be agreed with the Inspectorate) and seek to provide a Project update at each meeting, alongside a look ahead of upcoming key milestones and Project activities.
Lincolnshire County Council	
Planning Performance Agreement (PPA)	The Applicant has agreed a PPA with LCC to enable technical engagement to progress. The Applicant meets regularly with LCC to provide Project updates and to seek views on a range of matters including assessment, design and proposed mitigation. Technical input is provided by LCC in this regard. Meetings are held jointly with NKDC.
North Kesteven District Council	
Planning Performance Agreement	The Applicant has agreed a PPA with NKDC to enable technical engagement to progress. The Applicant meets regularly with NKDC to provide project updates and to seek views on a range of matters including assessment, design and proposed mitigation. Technical input is provided by NKDC in this regard. Meetings are held jointly with LCC.

Stakeholder	Engagement Mechanism
Natural England	
Discretionary Advice Service (DAS)	<p>The Applicant has set up a DAS agreement with Natural England.</p> <p>The Applicant will seek advice from Natural England on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protected species licences (as required); and - Adequacy of mitigation proposals (as required).
Environment Agency	
Discretionary Advice Service	<p>The Applicant has a DAS arrangement with the Environment Agency.</p> <p>The Applicant will seek advice from the Environment Agency on a range of issues including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Method of assessment included within the ES. - Potential impacts on main rivers. - Flood Risk. - Adequacy of mitigation proposals (as required).
Historic England	
Discretionary Advice Service	<p>The Applicant has a DAS agreement set up with Historic England.</p> <p>The Applicant will seek advice from the Historic England on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Method of assessment included within the ES; and - Proposed mitigation measures .

4.1.2 The Applicant will also continue to engage with other stakeholders, such as National Highways, Internal Drainage Boards and Parish Councils as appropriate, and with the local community via a Community Liaison Group.

5. Risk

5.1 Risk management

- 5.1.1 The Applicant has prepared an Issues Tracker which has been informed by feedback received from key stakeholders during the Statutory Consultation. The identified issues carry a Red, Amber, Green status that reflect the degree of risk with each issue, as well as the Applicant's intended approach to resolve the issues. The Issues Tracker will culminate in a list of Potential Main Issues for the Examination, which will be submitted as part of the DCO application.
- 5.1.2 It should be noted that the anticipated programme dates set out in Table 2-1 are informed by the Applicant's DCO experience and that these parameters could be subject to change depending on any planning reform. To mitigate this risk, the Applicant will continue to review and implement the requirements of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended), the relevant regulations and policy contained within the designated energy National Policy Statements and the associated guidance documents and Advice Notes in order to prepare a compliant DCO application for the Project.

6. Statement of Community Consultation

6.1 Development of the SoCC

- 6.1.1 The Applicant has developed a SoCC in accordance with the requirements of section 47 of the Planning Act 2008.
- 6.1.2 As set out in Table 2-1, the Applicant informally and formally consulted with LCC and NKDC on the contents of the SoCC. The Applicant will demonstrate in the Consultation Report to be submitted with the DCO application how that feedback has been taken into account and also how the Statutory Consultation has been delivered in accordance with the agreed SoCC.