



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Planning Committee

9 July 2026



S26/0956

Proposal:	Submission of details pursuant to Requirement 6 – (Detailed design approval) for Phase 2 Main Construction Works in relation to The Mallard Pass Solar Farm Order 2024 No. 796.
Applicant:	Mallard Pass Solar Farm Ltd
Application Type:	Submission of requirement details in relation to The Mallard Pass Solar Farm Order 2024 No. 796.
Reason for Referral to Committee:	At the discretion of the Assistant Director of Planning & Growth
Key Issues:	Compliance with design guidance and parameters within the Mallard Pass Solar Farm Order 2024 No. 796.

Report Author

Phil Jordan, Development Management & Enforcement Manager



01476 406080



phil.jordan@southkesteven.gov.uk

Reviewed by:

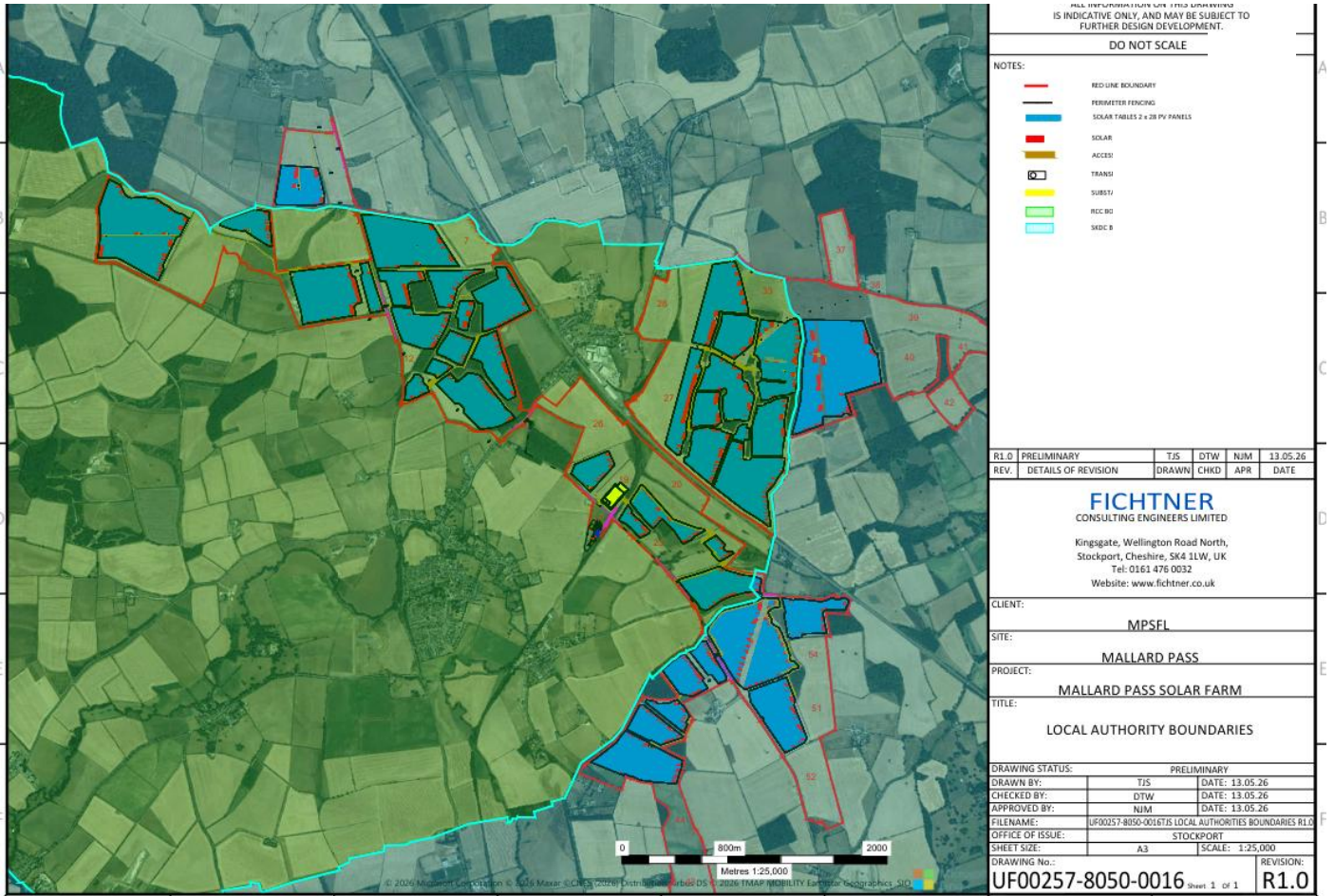
Adam Murray – Principal Development Management Planner

30 June 2026

Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)

That the Committee endorse the draft response to Mallard Pass Solar Farm Ltd and delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Planning & Growth, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to issue the final response and determine the Requirement 6 submission.

S26/0956 – Mallard Pass Solar Farm



1. Background

- 1.1 Mallard Pass Solar Farm Ltd (MPSFL) is progressing the development of a solar farm near Stamford, Lincolnshire. MPSFL is a special purpose vehicle owned by Quinbrook Infrastructure Partners Limited (Quinbrook). The Development Consent Order (DCO) for Mallard Pass Solar Farm was granted consent on 12 July 2024 by the Secretary of State for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.
- 1.2 Quinbrook acquired Mallard Pass in February 2025 and is taking forward construction of the scheme through its affiliate, Private Energy Partners. This is Quinbrook's second nationally significant infrastructure project in the UK, following Cleve Hill Solar Farm in Kent, which is now operational.
- 1.3 The project has now moved into the post consent phase. The construction programme has been divided into two phases: Phase 1 relates to off-site highway improvement works, and Phase 2 relates to construction of the solar farm and all associated on-site infrastructure.
- 1.4 The DCO includes 13 requirements that necessitate the submission and approval of details in advance of construction and/ or operation. These requirements are listed below as numbered in the DCO:
 3. Phasing of the authorised development
 6. Detailed design approval
 7. Landscape and ecology management plan (LEMP)
 8. Fencing and other means of enclosure
 9. Surface and foul water drainage
 10. Archaeology
 11. Construction environmental management plan (CEMP)
 12. Operational environmental management plan (OEMP)
 13. Construction traffic management plan (CTMP)
 14. Soil management plan
 15. Ground conditions
 16. Operational noise
 17. Skills, supply chain and employment
- 1.5 Each requirement involves submission and approval of details by both South Kesteven District Council and Rutland County Council. Most are technical matters with specified relevant consultees named in the DCO and are linked to outline plans and parameters agreed during the examination period and through the subsequent approval of the DCO. e.g. for drainage and flood risk matters we are required to consult with Lincolnshire County Council (as lead local flood authority), as they are the named consultee in the DCO and the competent authority in this respect.
- 1.6 There are currently 15 live requirement submissions being considered by the Council: seven relating to Phase 1 and eight relating to Phase 2. Three requirements have been approved to date, relating to phasing, ground conditions, and skills, supply chain and employment.
- 1.7 The procedure for discharge of requirements is set out in the DCO. It includes a defined timeframe for any requests for further information. If a decision is not made within 10 weeks, the relevant submission is deemed to be approved, unless a longer period of time is agreed between the Council and the applicant.

1.8 Given these parameters, requirement submissions are being determined under delegated powers, as allowed by the Council's constitution. However, there was a previous commitment by this Council to present the detailed design for the Phase 2 works to Planning Committee. This is therefore an opportunity for Planning Committee to comment on the detailed design of the overall scheme, with any comments made then fed back to the developer.

2. Description of the proposal

2.1 The application is seeking approval of details pursuant to Requirement 6 – (Detailed design approval) for Phase 2 Main Construction Works in relation to The Mallard Pass Solar Farm Order 2024 No. 796.

2.2 Phase 2 comprises:

- Solar PV arrays and associated infrastructure;
- On-site substation (located in Rutland);
- Electrical cabling (HV and MV);
- Construction compounds;
- Green infrastructure including landscaping and public access.

2.3 Requirement 6 of the DCO for Mallard Pass solar farm states that no part of the authorised development may commence until details relating to the design and its accordance with the design guidance and parameters are approved by the relevant planning authorities. The full wording is the requirement is:

(1) No phase of the authorised development may commence until details of—

(a) the layout;

(b) scale;

(c) proposed finished ground levels;

(d) external appearance;

(e) hard surfacing materials;

(f) drainage, water, electrical, power and communication cables and pipelines;

(g) vehicular and pedestrian access, parking and circulation areas, junction improvements and passing places; and

(h) refuse or other storage units, signs and lighting,

relating to that phase have been submitted and approved in writing by the relevant planning authority for that phase or, where the phase falls within the administrative areas of both the District of South Kesteven and the County of Rutland, both relevant planning authorities.

(2) The details submitted must accord with the design guidance, the parameters, and with any details approved under requirements 7, 8, 9(1) and 10 and demonstrate how they have taken account of the results of any archaeological investigations or archaeological evaluations carried out pursuant to the outline written scheme of investigation.

(3) The authorised development must be carried out and thereafter maintained in accordance with the approved details.

(4) Where an application is made to the relevant planning authority for that phase or, where the phase falls within the administrative areas of both the District of South Kesteven and the County of Rutland, both relevant planning authorities, to discharge this requirement, such application must include a statement to confirm how the design guidance and parameters have been taken into account in the details that have been submitted.

(5) Sub-paragraph (1) does not apply to the matters listed under sub-paragraph (1)(g) if consent has already been given to the details of those works pursuant to articles 9 (power to alter layout, etc. of streets), 10 (construction and maintenance of altered streets) or 13 (access to works).

2.4 The design guidance and parameters referred to in paragraph 2 are set out in the following approved documents:

2.4.1 Design and Access Statement - EN010127-001261-7.3.2 Design and Access Statement (DAS) [Version 2]

2.4.2 Environmental Statement Volume 2 Appendix 5.1: Project Parameters - EN010127-000322 Appendix_05-1Rev_P01_-_Proposed_Development_Parameters

2.4.3 Works Plans - EN010127-001401-2.2.3 - Works Plans [Version 3][1]

3. Engagement and Consultation

3.1 Officers attend a regular fortnightly meeting with the developer and representatives from Rutland County Council (RCC) and Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) to discuss progress with the project. In addition to consulting the relevant technical consultees identified in the DCO, South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) is consulting all Parish Councils in the development area and Mallard Pass Action Group (MPAG) on the requirement submissions. All applications are published on the weekly list and publicly available on the Council website.

3.2 A Community Liaison Group (CLG) has also been established, comprising representatives from local parish, district and county councils, together with the local Member of Parliament. The CLG has considered, or is scheduled to consider, the following matters:

3.3 Completed meetings: 7 October 2025: Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) and Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP); 25 November 2025: Community Benefit Fund; 12 February 2026: Design Details; 15 May 2026: Community Benefit Fund.

3.4 Upcoming meetings: 8 July 2026: Design Details; 31 July 2026: Community Benefit Fund.

3.5 Lincolnshire County Council

3.6 Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) has reviewed the details and have made the following
3.7 comments:

3.7.1 The details include a PROW diversion in Lincolnshire, which appears to relate to a PROW on the border between RCC/LCC (Field 36) - we are seeking comments from LCC's Rights of Way team on this and will forward on any additional observations as soon as possible. Other PROW diversions are in Rutland.

3.7.2 Access details and passing place in LCC are being technically approved by LCC under separate Minor Works agreement.

- 3.7.3 Drainage design for sub-station is in Rutland
- 3.7.4 HGV Access routes are as agreed at DCO stage and included in CTMP.
- 3.7.5 The primary compounds' layouts are provided showing indicatively parking, offices and equipment storage. These primary compounds are all in Rutland. The secondary compounds, some of which are in Lincolnshire, have no details shown.
- 3.7.6 Having given due regard to the appropriate local and national planning policy guidance (in particular the National Planning Policy Framework), Lincolnshire County Council (as Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority) has concluded that the proposed development would not be expected to have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact upon the local highway network or increase surface water flood risk and therefore does not wish to object to this planning application
- 3.8 **Mallard Pass Action Group**
- 3.9 MPAG have made representation on the Requirement 6 submission and a summary of the points raised is listed below. These relate to the overall scheme, and therefore the points raised relate to areas in both SKDC and RCC. This representation has been submitted in full to the applicant, along with a request to provide a response to all of the points raised. The points raised are summarised as follows:
 - 3.10 Design Efficiency & Project Scale
 - 3.10.1 Questions whether updated solar technology efficiencies have been reflected since the original 2022 design.
 - 3.10.2 Suggests potential overplanting beyond the stated 350MW DC capacity due to improved panel efficiency.
 - 3.10.3 Suggests potential for reducing site footprint, potentially removing Field 4 and increasing residential setbacks.
 - 3.11 Public Rights of Way (PROWs) Crossings
 - 3.11.1 Suggests a more direct access route (Field 36 to 34) instead of current 'dog-leg' layout.
 - 3.11.2 Benefits proposed: Reduced track damage (fewer sharp bends); ability to relocate infrastructure further from roads and homes; minimal vegetation impact.
 - 3.12 Learning from Comparable Projects
 - 3.12.1 Requests clarity on lessons learned from Cleve Hill solar project.
 - 3.12.2 Seeks explanation of how these lessons have influenced design and construction.
 - 3.13 Substation Design & Screening
 - 3.13.1 Concern about visual impact of substation (up to 13m high, ~2ha).
 - 3.13.2 Current planting seen as ineffective due to land levels and positioning.
 - 3.13.3 Requests clearer explanation of screening measures; consideration of bunding and additional planting; improved mitigation for views from Essendine and A6121.
 - 3.14 Cable Routing & Road Closures
 - 3.14.1 Seeks clarification on whether road closures are required for horizontal directional drilling (HDD) works.

3.14.2 Concern about impacts on key roads (A6121, B1176 at Carlby/Holywell crossroads).

3.15 Interpretation Boards

3.15.1 Notes community opposition to proposed boards.

3.15.2 Concerns: Urbanisation/commercialisation of rural area; increased visitors causing litter, BBQ damage, anti-social behaviour; lack of parking leading to road safety issues.

3.16 Construction Passing Places

3.16.1 The original plan was to remove after construction and the current proposal is to retain during operation.

3.16.2 Pros identified: Less verge damage and road repairs; easier vehicle access.

3.16.3 Cons identified: Increased rat-running and illegal HGV use; greater risks to cyclists and horse riders; potential increase in fly-tipping; loss of rural character; negative impact on wildlife.

3.16.4 Recommendation: Retain only limited, strategic passing places; reduce size (not designed for HGVs post-construction); rationalise locations based on need and safety.

3.17 Flood Mitigation Opportunities

3.17.1 Suggests scrapes and otter holts could also serve as flood attenuation features if well designed and located.

3.18 **Greatford Parish Council**

3.18.1 Greatford Parish Council has also made representation and the points made can be summarised as follows:

3.18.2 Objects to the proposal to retain passing places on Uffington Lane after construction;

3.18.3 Concern that retained passing places would encourage increased traffic, including: general vehicles using the road as a shortcut; HGVs avoiding the A15 and Tallington level crossing; and existing issue of rat-running traffic through Greatford could worsen.

3.18.4 Concern that passing places may increase fly-tipping incidents, providing additional accessible locations.

3.18.5 View that retention would harm the rural character of the lane.

3.18.6 Notes the road is regularly used by cyclists and horse riders, raising amenity and safety concerns.

3.18.7 Requests that passing places are removed after construction, and verges reinstated to restore the rural nature of the road.

3.19 **Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council**

3.20 Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council have also made representation and the points made can be summarised as follows:

3.21 Potential reduction in the scale of the solar farm

3.21.1 Questions whether improvements in solar panel efficiency mean the same output could be achieved using less land.

3.21.2 Suggests reducing the solar array footprint, removing isolated fields, increasing setbacks from homes and reducing landscape impacts.

3.22 Public rights of way and bridleway crossings

- 3.22.1 Raises concern that some proposed routes are indirect.
- 3.22.2 Suggests redesigning crossings to reduce conflict with users, move infrastructure further from roads and residents, and reduce maintenance impacts.

3.23 Visual impact of the substation

- 3.23.1 Highlights concern about the size and height of the proposed substation.
- 3.23.2 Questions whether planting will provide adequate screening.
- 3.23.3 Suggests further consideration of earth bunding and additional planting.

3.24 Road closures and cable installation

- 3.24.1 Seeks clarification on whether road closures will be needed during cable installation, despite the use of horizontal directional drilling.
- 3.24.2 Identifies particular concern about the A6121 and B1176 at the Carlby/Holywell crossroads.
- 3.24.3 Notes potential impacts on access, commuting, local businesses and traffic congestion.

3.25 Interpretation boards and visitor facilities

- 3.25.1 Records opposition to interpretation boards, educational signage and picnic-style visitor areas.
- 3.25.2 Raises concerns regarding urbanisation of the countryside, increased visitor numbers, verge parking, litter, anti-social behaviour and disturbance to wildlife.

3.26 Retention of construction passing places

- 3.26.1 Raises concern about retaining passing places after construction.
- 3.26.2 Identifies potential impacts including increased speeds, rat-running, HGV use, fly-tipping, loss of rural character, and risks to cyclists, horse riders and wildlife.
- 3.26.3 Suggests retaining only a limited number of strategically necessary passing places.

3.27 Flood mitigation opportunities

- 3.27.1 Suggests ecological features such as scrapes and otter habitats could also provide flood storage and attenuation.
- 3.27.2 Notes flooding as a significant local concern, especially for Banthorpe and Greatford.

4. Evaluation

4.1 Principle of Assessment

- 4.1.1 The application seeks approval of details pursuant to Requirement 6 (Detailed Design Approval) of the Mallard Pass Solar Farm Development Consent Order (DCO) 2024 in respect of Phase 2 Main Construction Works.
- 4.1.2 The principle of the development, its scale, extent and acceptability have already been established through the DCO process. Therefore, the scope of this assessment is limited to whether sufficient detailed design information has been submitted; and whether the submitted details accord with the approved design guidance; the parameter limits; and other relevant associated DCO requirements.

4.2 Compliance with Requirement 6

4.2.1 The submission includes:

- Detailed design drawings covering layout, scale, levels, infrastructure, access and materials;
- A schedule demonstrating compliance with the approved design guidance and parameters; and
- Confirmation of coordination with other DCO requirements including landscape, ecology, drainage and archaeology.

4.2.2 The applicant's submission confirms that the development will be implemented in accordance with the approved details, with as-built drawings to be submitted post-construction.

4.2.3 Officers are satisfied that the submission meets the formal requirements of Requirement 6, however it is noted that phase 2 details pursuant to Requirements 7 (LEMP), 8 (fencing), 9 (drainage) and 10 (archaeology) have yet to be approved. It is noted that the detailed design has been developed alongside those requirement submissions, and therefore formal approval of the detailed design should also be considered in parallel with those details.

4.3 Design Compliance and Technical Assessment

4.3.1 Solar PV Arrays

4.3.2 The submitted details confirm:

- Maximum panel height of approximately 2.85m (below the 3.3m limit);
- Minimum ground clearance of 0.8m;
- Minimum offsets of:
 - 250m from residential receptors;
 - 50m from public rights of way and rural roads.

4.3.3 The proposed design therefore accords with the approved parameter limits and is consistent with the impacts assessed through the DCO process.

4.3.4 The DCO sets parameters for the overall extent of the solar PV arrays and the submitted details accord with those parameters. It is acknowledged that improvements in solar technology may provide opportunities to reduce the area required for solar PV development, particularly given that the export capacity is fixed at 240MW AC. However, there is no basis to withhold approval of the submitted Requirement 6 details on this ground, as the current design remains within the approved parameters. Requirement 5 provides a mechanism for amended details to be considered. Accordingly, any efficiencies identified once procurement of the solar PV panels is complete, including the potential to make more efficient use of land and increase residential set backs, would not be precluded from being secured at a later stage.

4.3.5 On-Site Substation

4.3.6 The substation is located in Rutland and has a maximum height of 13m and footprint of approximately 1.98ha. It is proposed to be located approximately 34m from Uffington Lane, which is greater than the 12m design parameter. The total footprint of the ancillary buildings

is expected to be 859m² and both buildings will have a height of 6 m, which again is within the design parameters of the DCO.

4.3.7 The substation and ancillary buildings therefore fall within the approved parameters. Whilst limited detail is provided in this document regarding the effectiveness of screening, landscape mitigation is secured through Requirement 7 (Landscape and Ecology Management Plan). As noted above, those details have yet to be approved and therefore formal approval of the detailed design should be considered alongside the Requirement 7 submission to ensure consistency with the landscaping strategy.

4.4 Cabling and Electrical Infrastructure

4.4.1 All cabling is to be installed underground and horizontal directional drilling (HDD) is proposed to minimise disruption, particularly at key crossings. The proposed routing avoids root protection areas of trees and hedgerows and Local Wildlife Sites, except where a hedgerow crossing is required.

4.4.2 The approach accords with best practice and design guidance and has been designed to ensure minimum impact on sensitive environmental features including root protection areas of trees and hedgerows, Local Wildlife Sites and the West Glen River.

4.4.3 The submitted details also confirm that there are ongoing discussions with statutory undertakers and Network Rail regarding cable routes to ensure these take account of existing utilities and that an easement is agreed for crossing the East Coast Mainline.

4.5 Construction Compounds

4.5.1 The applicant proposes three primary construction compounds and five secondary compounds. This is a deviation from the design parameter which specified there should be one primary compound and up to seven secondary compounds.

4.5.2 However, Officers consider that sufficient justification has been provided and that this approach would improve construction efficiency; and reduce internal traffic movements across the site. Whilst representing a change from the approved design parameters, the compounds remain within the Order Limits and are operationally justified on the basis that this would improve construction efficiency and reduce the overall impacts associated with the construction phase.

4.6 Green Infrastructure and Landscaping

4.6.1 The scheme includes the retention of existing public rights of way; provision of approximately 8.1 km of permissive paths; and biodiversity enhancements including planting, habitat creation and ecological features.

4.6.2 As above, delivery is secured via Requirement 7 which relates to the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP). The proposals accord with the Green Infrastructure Strategy approved through the DCO process.

4.7 Representations and Consideration of Objections

4.7.1.1 Representations have been received from Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), Mallard Pass Action Group (MPAG), Greatford Parish Council and Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council. LCC has confirmed that the HGV access routes are those agreed at DCO stage and included in the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP), that access details and passing places within Lincolnshire are subject to separate technical approval by LCC, and that the drainage design for the substation relates to land within Rutland. LCC has also

noted that further Rights of Way comments are being sought in relation to the public right of way diversion at Field 36, and that further detail is required in relation to secondary construction compounds in Lincolnshire. Subject to those matters being addressed, LCC has confirmed that it does not object, as Highway Authority and Lead Local Flood Authority, on highway safety, network capacity or surface water flood risk grounds.

- 4.7.1.2 MPAG and Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council raise a number of overlapping concerns, including whether advances in solar technology could allow a reduced site footprint, whether the layout could be rationalised further, the design of public right of way and bridleway crossings, the effectiveness of substation screening, potential highway disruption associated with cable installation, the provision of interpretation boards and visitor facilities, the retention of construction passing places, and opportunities to integrate flood mitigation with ecological features. Greatford Parish Council's representation focuses principally on the proposed retention of passing places on Uffington Lane after construction, objecting on the basis that this could encourage additional traffic, including rat-running through Greatford and HGV movements seeking to avoid the A15 and Tallington level crossing, while also increasing opportunities for fly-tipping, harming the rural character of the lane and raising amenity and safety concerns for cyclists and horse riders.
- 4.7.2 Officers acknowledge the concerns raised. However, the scope of this application is limited to the discharge of Requirement 6 and whether the submitted Phase 2 detailed design accords with the approved design guidance, parameters and relevant associated requirement submissions. The principle of the development, its overall extent, generating capacity, principal layout and the inclusion of green infrastructure measures were established through the DCO process and cannot be revisited through this requirement submission. Matters such as landscape mitigation for the substation, drainage and ecological delivery are controlled through other DCO requirements, including the LEMP and drainage approvals. Traffic management associated with cable installation, construction activity, HGV routing and passing places will be addressed through the relevant highway and construction management controls, including the CTMP and separate technical approvals by the local highway authorities.
- 4.7.3 In relation to passing places, the concerns raised by MPAG, Greatford Parish Council and Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council are noted and have already been highlighted with the applicant. As noted by LCC, access details and passing places within Lincolnshire are subject to separate technical approval. These matters fall outside the scope of the Phase 2 detailed design approval and will be considered separately by both local highway authorities, particularly in respect of whether any passing places should be retained after construction, whether their number and size can be limited, and whether verges should be reinstated where retention is not justified. Overall, the submitted details demonstrate compliance with the relevant design parameters and guidance for the purposes of Requirement 6, subject to ensuring consistency with the related DCO requirement approvals and the comments raised to date being satisfactorily addressed.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 That the Committee endorse the following draft response to Mallard Pass Solar Farm Ltd and delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Planning & Growth, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to issue the final response and to determine the Requirement 6 submission.

- 5.2 *SKDC Planning Committee note that, for the purposes of Requirement 6, the submitted Phase 2 detailed design is considered to accord with the approved design guidance and parameter limits secured through the Mallard Pass Solar Farm DCO. The submitted information provides sufficient detail in relation to layout, scale, levels, materials, access arrangements and associated infrastructure, and acknowledge that the principle, extent and overall generating capacity of the development are matters already established through the DCO process. However, formal approval should remain dependent on ensuring consistency with the related requirement submissions, particularly Requirements 7, 8, 9 and 10 relating to landscape and ecology, fencing, drainage and archaeology, where those details remain outstanding and subject to separate approval.*
- 5.3 *The Committee further requests that the developer gives careful consideration to the matters raised through consultation, particularly the concerns of MPAG, Greatford Parish Council and Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council. In particular, the Committee urges the developer to continue to explore options to utilise the best available technology to ensure that the scheme makes an efficient use of land, and to continue to explore opportunities for increased setbacks from affected residential properties where possible.*
- 5.4 *In relation to the proposed retention of construction passing places on Uffington Lane and other rural lanes, before any final position is reached, the developer should work with the local highway authorities and affected communities to justify whether any passing places need to be retained post-construction, whether their number, size and location can be reduced and whether verges should be reinstated where retention is not necessary. This should have regard to potential effects on rural character, rat-running, HGV use, fly-tipping, cyclists, horse riders and local amenity. The applicant should also provide clarification already requested by Officers on substation screening, cable installation impacts, interpretation boards and opportunities to align ecological and flood mitigation measures.*