EIA & Consenting

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Renewable Energy - Solar

Client: Solar2

Location: York

Project Overview

Commissioned by Solar2 to co-ordinate the delivery of the EIA, including conducting the required environmental assessments, and prepare the planning application for their 49.99MW solar farm.

Key Challenges

Greenbelt restrictions: The project was located within a protected greenbelt area, and required demonstration of 'Very Special Circumstances'.

Drainage concerns: The Ainsty Internal Drainage Board and Lead Local Flood Authority raised concerns about potential drainage issues.

Aviation safety: The York Gliding Centre expressed concerns about the solar farm encroaching on an emergency landing area.

Our Solutions

Addressed greenbelt restrictions by demonstrating the project's environmental benefits, including contributions to renewable energy targets, Net Zero goals.

Produced an Aviation Safeguarding Assessment demonstrating minimal risk. Negotiated directly with the gliding club, resulting in minor layout changes for an amicable compromise.

Conducted site visits, infiltration testing, and made minor layout adjustments to maintain proper buffer distances from watercourses, addressing the concerns of the relevant authorities.

The Successful Outcome

Successful collaboration with statuary consultees, mitigating potential objections, enabling development in a protected greenbelt area .

Planning permission granted in February 2024, with Atmos supporting the client in the discharge of conditions.

Although not a specific factor, we achieved a biodiversity net gain of 62.46% through habitat improvements like hedgerow enhancement, wildflower planting, and species-rich grasslands.

What our client said:

"I'm very pleased with Atmos' performance in assisting Solar 2 to overcome some significant planning challenges on Hessay Solar Farm, including drainage and aviation concerns.

In particular, Atmos produced a very strong justification for an application in terms of demonstrating 'Very Special Circumstances' for development within the Greenbelt"

John Moisey

Project Manager – Solar 2