



National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol, BS1 6PN

Customer Services: 0303 444 5000

email: LongfieldSolar
Farm@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

All Interested Parties, Statutory Parties and
any Other Person invited to the Preliminary
Meeting

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN010118

Date: 20 June 2022

Dear Sir/ Madam

**Planning Act 2008 – Section 88 and 89 and The Infrastructure Planning
(Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rules 4, 6 and 13**

**Application by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Limited for an Order Granting
Development Consent for the Longfield Solar Farm Project**

**Appointment of the Examining Authority and invitation to the Preliminary
Meeting**

Following my appointment by the Secretary of State as the Examining Authority (ExA) to carry out an Examination of the above application, I am writing to introduce myself. My name is Rory Cridland. A copy of the appointment notice can be viewed under the Documents tab on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website ([project webpage](#)).

I would like to thank those of you who submitted Relevant Representations. These representations have assisted me when considering how I will examine this application.

Invitation to the Preliminary Meeting

As a recipient of this letter you are invited to the Preliminary Meeting to discuss **the procedure** for the Examination of the above application.

The Preliminary Meeting will be a virtual event, held using Microsoft Teams.



Date	Start time	Joining details
Monday 18 July 2022	Arrangements Conference from: 09:30 am Preliminary Meeting starts: 10:00 am	This Preliminary Meeting will be held virtually using Microsoft Teams Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered
<p>IMPORTANT: The Preliminary Meeting should be completed before 1:00pm on 18 July 2022. However, a reserve period has been scheduled for 2:00pm on the same day to allow for the meeting to be resumed in exceptional circumstances e.g. to account for a failure of technology. Normally the reserve period will not be required and confirmation of this will be provided by the ExA at the end of the Preliminary Meeting and subsequently notified on the project webpage.</p>		

You must register by Procedural Deadline A (Monday 4 July 2022) if you intend to participate in the Preliminary Meeting and provide all the information requested (see below).

If you simply wish to observe the Preliminary Meeting then you do not need to register as you will be able to watch a livestream of the event. A link to the livestream will be made available on the [project webpage](#) shortly before the event is scheduled to begin. You will also be able to watch the recording of the event which will be published on the [project webpage](#) shortly after the event has finished.

Purpose of the Preliminary Meeting

The purpose of the Preliminary Meeting is to enable views to be put to me about how the application should be examined. See **Annex B** to this letter and the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice Note 8.3 - Influencing how an application is Examined: the Preliminary Meeting](#) for more information.

The Preliminary Meeting is **not** an opportunity for you to give your views about what you like or don't like about the application. The merits or disadvantages of the application will only be considered once the Examination starts, which is after the Preliminary Meeting has closed. All relevant and important matters will be taken into account when I make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Business and Industrial Strategy, who will take the final decision in this case.

The agenda for the meeting is at **Annex A** to this letter. This has been set following my Initial Assessment of Principal Issues arising from my reading of the application documents and the Relevant Representations received. The Initial Assessment of Principal Issues is set out in **Annex C** to this letter.



Written submissions about how the application should be examined

The Planning Act 2008 establishes a principally written process for the Examination of applications for Development Consent Orders and **representations made in writing carry equal weight to oral representations at all stages of the process.**

I am now requesting written submissions from recipients of this letter about how the application should be examined. I particularly wish to hear from you if:

- You consider changes need to be made to the draft Examination Timetable set out at **Annex D** to this letter; and/or
- you wish to comment about the arrangements for future Examination hearings, including the use of virtual methods.

You are invited to make a written submission about how the application is to be examined by **Procedural Deadline A (Monday 4 July 2022 23:59)** (see **Annex D** to this letter).

I request that all submissions are made using the [Make a submission tab](#) on the project webpage on or before **Procedural Deadline A. Annex G** to this letter provides further information about using the Make a submission tab.

Requests to participate at the Preliminary Meeting

Please note that **you are not required to attend, or make written submissions to, the Preliminary Meeting in order to participate in the Examination.** If you are an Interested Party you can make a Written Representation and comment on the Written Representations made by other Interested Parties during the Examination. You will also be able to participate in any hearings that are arranged.

If you wish to participate at the Preliminary Meeting you are required to notify the ExA in writing on or before **4 July 2022** (see **Procedural Deadline A**).

Any request to participate in the Preliminary Meeting **must include** the following information:

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top your letter or email from the Planning Inspectorate);
- email address (if available) and contact telephone number;
- name and unique reference number of any person/organisation that you are representing (if applicable);
- for blended events, confirmation of whether you will participate virtually or in-person; and
- the agenda item on which you wish to speak and a list of the points you wish to make.



Requests to participate should be made using the [Make a submission tab](#) on the project webpage on or before **Procedural Deadline A. Annex G** to this letter provides further information about the [Make a submission tab](#).

Please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter if you require any support to attend the Preliminary Meeting.

Format of Examination Events – Preliminary Meeting and Hearings

The Examination of the application will principally be a written process (see [Advice Note 8.4: The Examination](#)), supplemented where necessary by various types of hearings (see [Advice Note 8.5: Hearings and site inspections](#) and [Advice Note 8.6: Virtual Examination events](#)).

It is expected that both blended (part in-person and part virtual) and fully virtual events will form part of the Planning Inspectorate's future operating model. I therefore remain flexible and will confirm the format of any hearings to be held during the Examination Stage when I provide formal notification of each hearing. This will be at least 21 days in advance of it taking place.

After the Preliminary Meeting

After the Preliminary Meeting I will issue a letter (known as the Rule 8 letter) setting out the finalised Examination Timetable. A note and recording of the meeting will also be published on the [project webpage](#).

Other Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority

I have made some further Procedural Decisions which are set out in detail at **Annex E** to this letter. They are summarised as follows:

- Statements of Common Ground.
- Acceptance of an additional submission [AS-001] from the East of England Ambulance Service Trust.

Managing Examination correspondence

Given the volume and frequency of letters the Planning Inspectorate needs to send to Interested Parties during an Examination, we aim to communicate with people by email as electronic communication is more environmentally friendly and cost effective for the taxpayer.

If you have received a letter but are able to receive communications by email, please inform the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter as soon as possible.

As the Examination process makes substantial use of electronic documents, it will be useful for you to become familiar with the [project webpage](#).



A [Make a submission tab](#) is available on the website which provides a portal through which parties should make written submissions at relevant deadlines during the Examination. Further information about the 'Make a submission' portal is provided at **Annex G** to this letter.

There is also a function on the right-hand side of the project webpage called 'E-mail updates'. This provides you with an opportunity to register to receive automatic e-mail updates at key stages during the Examination.

Your status in the Examination

You have received this letter because you fall within one of the groups described in the Planning Inspectorate's document [What is My Status in the Examination?](#)

If your reference number begins with '2003', 'LOSF', 'LOSF-0', 'LOSF-AFP', 'LOSF-S57' 'LOSF-APP' you are in Group A. If your reference number begins with 'LOSF-SP' you are in Group B. If your reference number begins with 'LOSF-OP' you are in Group C. The meaning and purpose of those groups are explained in the document published at the link above.

If having read this document you are still unsure about your status, please contact the Case Team using the details at the top of this letter.

Awards of costs

All parties will normally be expected to meet their own costs. Costs can be awarded against a party who has acted unreasonably and has caused the party applying for the award of costs to incur unnecessary or wasted expense during the Examination. You should be aware of the relevant costs guidance [Awards of costs: examinations of applications for development consent orders](#).

Management of information

Information, including representations, submitted in respect of this Examination (if accepted by the Examining Authority) and a record of any advice which has been provided by the Planning Inspectorate is published on the [project webpage](#).

Examination Documents can also be viewed electronically at the locations listed in **Annex F** to this letter.

Please note that in the interest of facilitating an effective and fair Examination, it is necessary to publish some personal information. To find out how we handle your personal information please view our [Privacy Notice](#).

I look forward to working with all parties in the Examination of this application.



Yours faithfully

Rory Cridland

Examining Authority

Annexes

- A** Agenda for the Preliminary Meeting
- B** Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting and the Examination process
- C** Initial Assessment of Principal Issues
- D** Draft Examination Timetable
- E** Other Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority
- F** Availability of Examination Documents
- G** Information about the Make a submission tab

This communication does not constitute legal advice.

Please view our [Privacy Notice](#) before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.



Agenda for the Preliminary Meeting

You must register by Procedural Deadline A (Monday 4 July 2022) if you intend to participate in the Preliminary Meeting and provide all the information requested in the Rule 6 letter.

If you simply wish to observe the Preliminary Meeting then you do not need to register as you will be able to watch a livestream of the event. A link to the livestream will be made available on the [project webpage](#) shortly before the event is scheduled to begin. You will also be able to watch the recording of the event which will be published on the [project webpage](#) shortly after the event has finished.

Date: Monday 18 July 2022

Arrangements Conference: 9.30am

Meeting start time: 10.00am

Venue: **Virtual event (Microsoft Teams)**
Full instructions on how to join online or by phone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered

Attendees: Invited parties who have pre-registered

Agenda for the Preliminary Meeting	
09:30	<p>Virtual Arrangements Conference</p> <p>The Arrangements Conference will commence at 9:30am. This will be hosted by the Case Team and cover the housekeeping arrangements for the Preliminary Meeting and allow for any questions to be asked about how to take part.</p> <p>Please arrive at 9:30am to enter the virtual lobby. From here you will be admitted to the Arrangements Conference by the Case Team, greeted and given further instructions.</p>
10.00am Item 1	<p>Preliminary Meeting</p> <p>The Preliminary Meeting will formally open at 10.00am. The Examining Authority (ExA) will join, welcome participants and lead introductions.</p>
Item 2	<p>The Examining Authority's remarks about the Examination process</p>

Item 3	Initial Assessment of Principal Issues – Annex C to Rule 6 letter
Item 4	Procedural decisions taken by the ExA – Annex E to Rule 6 letter
Item 5	Draft Examination Timetable – Annex D to Rule 6 letter
Item 6	Dates and Format for Open Floor Hearing, Compulsory Acquisition Hearing, Issue Specific Hearing and for Accompanied Site Inspections, if required
Item 7	Any remaining questions or submissions regarding procedural matters not set out in the agenda that have been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in writing by Procedural Deadline A.
Item 8	Any other matters
Close of the Preliminary Meeting	

Please join the virtual lobby promptly using the instructions that will be sent to you. The event will start at **10.00am** irrespective of any late arrivals, for whom access may not be possible.

It may take some time to admit participants from the virtual lobby, your patience whilst you are waiting is appreciated.

The agenda for the Preliminary Meeting is subject to change at the discretion of the Examining Authority (ExA), although in making changes the ExA will be mindful of the need to provide opportunities for fair involvement to all invited parties.

Any request to participate in the Preliminary Meeting **must include** the information outlined in the Rule 6 letter.

Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting and the Examination process

Background

The Preliminary Meeting (PM) will take place virtually, using Microsoft Teams.

The Examining Authority (ExA) is conscious of videoconferencing fatigue and will aim to keep the proceedings focussed and as efficient as possible. This annex provides advance access to information that would usually be included in the ExA's introductory remarks. Please read this carefully. The ExA will only present a summary of the key points set out here in order to ensure that the time available for participants to speak is maximised.

The Examining Authority and the Case Team

The ExA will introduce himself at the start of the PM.

The ExA will be supported by the Planning Inspectorate Case Team. During the Arrangements Conferences a member of the Case Team will welcome and admit participants from the virtual lobby, and will be available to answer questions by email before and after the PM. The contact email address is:

LongfieldSolarFarm@planninginspectorate.gov.uk.

The purpose of the Preliminary Meeting

The PM is being held to discuss the arrangements for the Examination of the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Longfield Solar Farm, which is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), and which will generally be referred to in the PM and Examination as the 'Proposed Development'. The application has been made by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Limited, which will be referred to as 'the Applicant'.

You will find information about the application and, in due course, documents produced for the Examination on the [project webpage](#) of the National Infrastructure Planning website. The project webpage has links to the Examination Timetable, Relevant Representations, Examination documents and the Examination procedure.

You are encouraged to look at the [project webpage](#) if you haven't already done so, because it will be used to communicate with you and to provide access to documents throughout the Examination.

The main purpose of the PM is to discuss the arrangements for the Examination of the application. It focuses on the process only, and it will not be looking at the substance of the proposals: Questions, discussions and representations about the merits or disadvantages of the Proposed Development are for the Examination itself which will begin the day after the close of the PM.

The PM will be your opportunity to influence the process that the ExA intends to follow. The agenda for the PM is attached to this Rule 6 letter at **Annex A**. It is important to have the letter and the agenda in front of you and to refer to them during

the course of the PM. You may wish to print these in advance of the PM for reference.

Preliminary Meeting invitees

The Applicant is invited to the PM and is generally given the opportunity to reply to any representations made.

Everyone who has made a valid Relevant Representation has been registered as an Interested Party (IP) and has been invited to the PM. All IPs are entitled to involvement in the Examination.

Each person or organisation with an interest in land or rights that are affected by a Compulsory Acquisition request in this application is an Affected Person (AP) and has been invited to the PM. In addition to a general entitlement to involvement in the Examination, APs have a right to be heard in relation to any objection about the effects of Compulsory Acquisition on their interests in land, and a right to be notified of any Compulsory Acquisition Hearing. All APs are IPs, whether or not they have made a valid Relevant Representation.

Certain bodies are Statutory Parties and they have been invited to the PM. Statutory Parties can elect to become IPs without having made a valid Relevant Representation by notifying the ExA in writing.

The ExA has the power to involve people who are not IPs in the Examination as though they are IPs, including by inviting them to the PM. However, this is only done in exceptional circumstances, for example if it was clear that the application would materially affect a person, they are not automatically an IP or eligible to elect to become an IP and they had been unable to take the necessary action to register as an IP.

The ExA has decided to invite the following Other Persons to the PM:

- The East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Conduct of the Preliminary Meeting

During the PM participants may have to make allowances and be patient if there are delays associated with the technology used. In recognition of the fatigue associated with on-screen communication, the ExA will provide breaks during the PM as appropriate.

A digital recording of the PM will be made available on the project webpage as soon as practicable following the close of the PM. The recording allows any member of the public who is interested in the application and the Examination to find out what has been discussed at the PM. The making and publication of these recordings are a means by which the ExA meets the legal requirement to hold the PM (and any other hearings) in public. In this regard, **anyone speaking at the PM will need to introduce themselves each time they speak**, to ensure that someone listening to

the recording after the event is clear who was speaking. A written note of the PM will be produced and published as soon as practicable following the close of the PM.

As the recordings are retained and published, they form a public record that can contain personal information to which the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) applies. Participants must do their best to avoid providing any information which should otherwise be kept private and confidential. If there is a need to refer to such information, it should be in written form. Although this will also be published, personal and private content can be redacted or removed before it is made publicly available. Any person who is unclear on this point should ask the Case Team for guidance before they place personal and private information into the public domain.

The Planning Inspectorate's practice is to publish the recordings and retain them for a period of five years from the SoS's decision on the DCO. If you actively participate in the PM, it is important that you understand that you will be recorded and that the recording will be made available in the public domain. Please see our [Privacy Notice](#) for more information about how we handle your data.

Following the ExA's introductions, each participant who has been registered to speak will be asked to introduce themselves, including any organisations or groups that they represent. The ExA will then conduct the meeting in accordance with the agenda. If you prefer not to have your image recorded, you can switch off your camera at any point.

Government guidance and policy

The application is a NSIP under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) as a consequence of sections 14(1) and 15 of PA2008: it includes the construction or extension of an onshore generating station in England with a generating capacity of more than 50MW. The designated National Policy Statement EN-1 applies to this Examination and to decision-making relating to this application.

The ExA will consider the Proposed Development in accordance with the National Policy Statement EN-1 and any other applicable policy or considerations the ExA deems to be important and relevant. The PA2008 makes it clear that, in making a decision, the relevant Secretary of State (SoS) "*must decide the application in accordance with any relevant NPS*" (s104(3)), subject to certain provisos. Essentially, the provisos are that the application must not breach legal or treaty obligations, and that any adverse impact of the Proposed Development would not outweigh its benefits.

The SoS is entitled to disregard any representations that relate to the merits of the designated National Policy Statement (NPS). In practice, this means that the ExA will not spend time examining representations that challenge policy set out in NPSs, or the validity of NPSs themselves. The focus will be on the merits or disadvantages of the Proposed Development, tested to the appropriate extent using the tests set out in relevant designated NPSs that are in force.

Other important and relevant planning policies that the ExA may consider include policies in the relevant local authorities' development plans as well as the draft suite of Energy National Policy Statements. However, if these conflict with policy in a NPS, then the NPS will take precedence.

The Examination process

The Examination of NSIPs follows different processes to those, for example, of a Public Inquiry into a planning appeal following the refusal of planning permission. The main differences are that the Examination of NSIPs are primarily a written process and hearings take on an inquisitorial approach as opposed to an adversarial one.

This means that the ExA will probe, test and assess the evidence primarily using written questions. While some hearings are held to provide supplementary evidence, questions to the Applicant or to witnesses will come from the ExA. Questioning or cross-examination of witnesses by other parties will not generally be allowed.

In terms of opportunities to provide evidence in writing, the draft Examination Timetable makes provision for the following written processes:

- Local authorities can submit LIRs if they wish. Whilst these are voluntary, the PA2008 provides that if they are provided, they must be considered by the SoS in reaching a decision. Consequently, LIRs are a very important method for local authorities to communicate issues of concern to the ExA, the SoS and their residents.
- IPs can make Written Representations (WRs) and comment on WRs made by other parties.
- IPs can respond to the ExA's written questions (ExQs) and comment on responses to these written questions provided by others.
- IPs may be asked to contribute to the making of Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) if it appears that there are matters on which they and the Applicant agrees, and if it would be useful for this to be clarified. SoCGs most usefully extend to catalogue matters that are not agreed or are outstanding.

These written processes will be the principal means used by the ExA to gather information, evidence and views about the application. However, the Examination will only be effective if all parties resolve to give timely, full, frank, clear and evidenced answers to every question that is relevant to their interests and to engage fully with any other related processes such as the completion of WRs and SoCGs.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a series of numbered Deadlines for receipt of written submissions. Timely submissions received by the relevant Deadline and that address its purpose will be accepted. **Documents received after the relevant Deadline are only accepted at the discretion of the ExA and may not be accepted to ensure fairness to all parties.** Circumstances where documents are submitted late without good reason, causing inconvenience or delay to other parties can amount to unreasonable behaviour.

There is no merit in withholding or delaying information, or in failing to co-operate, and should it occur, any unreasonable behaviour that caused another party to incur wasted expenditure could lead to an award of costs against the offending party.

The ExA has discretion to make amendments to the Examination Timetable for the wider benefit of the Examination. If possible, events will be arranged for times when all relevant parties are available, but the ExA is under a duty to complete the Examination by the end of the six-month period beginning with the day after the close of the PM. This requirement is set by legislation, and while the ExA will try to rearrange event dates to accommodate all relevant parties, in practice there will be limited scope to alter dates set out in the draft Examination Timetable.

The statutory time limit for the Examination means that where there are matters that still need to be discussed and agreed between the Applicant and IPs, it will be very helpful to the ExA if these could be progressed as early as possible.

Hearings

The draft Examination Timetable includes provision for hearings, at which the ExA takes oral evidence from the various parties.

Any registered IP may request an **Open Floor Hearing** (OFH) to make oral representations about the application if they believe this to be preferable to relying on their written representation, though both carry equal weight. Oral submissions should be based on representations previously made in writing, but they should not simply repeat matters previously covered in the written submission. Rather, they should focus on specific detail and explanation to help inform the ExA. There should be no new or unexpected material in oral representations. A written summary note with any supporting evidence or references will be requested of each speaker following the hearing.

As with all Examination events, OFHs are subject to the powers of control of the ExA, as set out in the PA2008 and supporting legislation. Participants must register in advance by the Deadline shown in the Examination Timetable and in accordance with the instructions. It is common practice for the ExA to set a time limit for each speaker and speakers with common points are asked to come together to nominate a spokesperson or representative speakers to cover specific topics, so as to avoid repetition. Speakers representing public authorities, community and membership organisations or multiple IPs are normally provided with an additional time allowance, recognising their representative role.

The Applicant's draft DCO provides for the Compulsory Acquisition of land and rights, and the Temporary Possession of land. APs (ie those whose land or rights over land are affected) have a right to request and be heard at a **Compulsory Acquisition Hearing** (CAH). If one or more APs request to be heard then a CAH must be held. Provisional dates for CAHs are included in the draft Examination Timetable along with Deadlines by which requests to be heard must be submitted.

The ExA has the discretion to hold **Issue Specific Hearings** (ISHs) if it would aid in the Examination and there is a specific reason this would be more helpful than

reliance on written evidence only. The lack of an ISH on one or more topics does not suggest that that topic is less important than others which are subject to a hearing. Rather, it is an indication that the ExA is satisfied that the issues can be fully considered through written submissions and responses to its written questions and that each party has had a fair opportunity to put its case.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a number of dates reserved for ISHs and IPs may make suggestions for topics to be discussed at an ISH in their written or oral representations to the PM.

It may be necessary for the ExA to hold more than one ISH on the draft DCO. This is normal practice, and they are held on a without prejudice basis. Parties can suggest modifications and amendments to the draft DCO provided by the Applicant with the application, without prejudicing their overall position on the application.

Holding such hearings does not imply that the ExA has reached any judgements on the merits of the application. Whatever the ultimate recommendation is, the ExA must make sure that the draft DCO is fit for purpose if the SoS decides to grant consent, as any consent will be subject to Requirements (ie conditions) set out in the DCO.

At hearings it will not normally be necessary for parties to make long and detailed submissions that require (for example) PowerPoint presentations. Any supporting detail/information can be provided in writing following the event by the relevant Deadline.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a Deadline (**Thursday 18 August 2022**) for participants to notify the ExA that they wish to speak at an OFH or a CAH.

Site inspections

As part of the Examination process the ExA may undertake site inspections. These can be either unaccompanied or accompanied, though all would be subject to any public health restrictions in force at the time. The purpose of these is for the ExA to see features of the proposals within the context of the evidence put forward.

Accompanied Site Inspections (ASI) will only be necessary to view land to which there is no public right of access, or with no clear view from nearby locations with open public access. The purpose of ASIs is familiarisation only and no discussion of the merits of the Proposed Development will be entertained during an ASI.

The ExA may decide to hold USIs to relevant nominated locations, supported by the submission of additional written, photographic, video or even drone material if this would be preferable to not visiting sites or holding ASIs in circumstances which could make them difficult and unduly time-consuming to conduct (for example if public health restrictions are in place). The ExA may also consider if it would be appropriate to make arrangements for access only to be provided to specific sites such that they could be inspected as part of a USI on an access required basis (ARI). Notes of Unaccompanied Site Inspections (USIs) are published on the [project webpage](#).

The draft Examination Timetable includes a Deadline (**Thursday 18 August 2022**) for IPs to make submissions suggesting sites and locations that the ExA should visit. These will be used to inform further USIs/ASIs as well as possible ASIs.

Initial Assessment of Principal Issues

This is the Initial Assessment of the Principal Issues arising from consideration by the Examining Authority (ExA) of the application documents and Relevant Representations received. It is not a comprehensive or exclusive list of all relevant matters; regard will be had to all relevant matters in reaching a recommendation after the Examination is concluded.

A number of the Principal Issues set out below have an interrelationship and overlap and this will be reflected in the Examination. The Principal Issues are listed in alphabetical order and should not be taken to imply an order of importance.

The policy and consenting requirements and documents associated with the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) are an integral part of the Examination and are therefore not set out as separate Principal Issues. Furthermore, it should also be noted that whilst the effects of the proposal on (i) the achievement of sustainable development and (ii) the effects of the proposal in relation to human rights and equalities duties are not listed as specific Principal Issues, the ExA will conduct all aspects of the Examination with these objectives in mind.

Principal Issue	Brief amplification To include but not necessarily limited to:
1. Air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Construction and decommissioning effects, including dust; and 1.2. Effectiveness of proposed mitigation
2. Biodiversity, ecology and the natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Effects on legally protected species, including those subject to European site designations; 2.2. Effects on woodland (including ancient woodland), trees and hedgerows; 2.3. Adequacy of assessments and effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures; and 2.4. The extent to which the Proposed Development would deliver a biodiversity net gain and how that should be calculated and secured within the DCO.
3. Compulsory acquisition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. Whether the powers of compulsory acquisition included in the dDCO satisfy the conditions set out in the PA2008; 3.2. Whether the temporary possession powers sought are justified and proportionate; 3.3. Whether adequate consideration has been given to alternatives to compulsory acquisition; 3.4. Whether there is a compelling case in the public interest for land to be acquired compulsorily; 3.5. The effect of the Proposed Development on the assets and activities of Statutory Undertakers; 3.6. Financial arrangements (including project funding and guarantees for compensation); 3.7. Human rights considerations; and 3.8. The book of reference.

4. Battery storage technology	4.1. The potential safety hazards associated with battery storage technology and effectiveness of proposed mitigation.
5. Draft development consent order (dDCO)	<p>5.1. The appropriateness of the Applicant's dDCO including its structure, scope, provisions, requirements, and protective provisions;</p> <p>5.2. Consistency between the dDCO and the Explanatory Memorandum;</p> <p>5.3. Clarification of relevant definitions;</p> <p>5.4. Arrangements for decommissioning and restoration;</p> <p>5.5. Arrangements for the temporary stopping up of Public Rights of Way;</p> <p>5.6. Application and modification of legislative provisions, including the applicability of the relevant provisions of the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017;</p> <p>5.7. Phasing of the BESS; and</p> <p>5.8. Whether it is necessary to impose an upper limit on gross electrical output and/or battery storage capacity within the dDCO.</p>
6. Environmental statement general matters	<p>6.1. The expected duration of the construction phase for the Proposed Development and how the impacts of the construction phase have been assessed;</p> <p>6.2. The relationship between the Concept Design Parameters and the Outline Design Principles;</p> <p>6.3. The intended generating capacity for the Proposed Development having regard to the dDCO's reference to 'output capacity of over 50 megawatts';</p> <p>6.4. The identification of any other proposed nearby major developments and the consideration of cumulative and in combination effects of those developments with the Proposed Development;</p> <p>6.5. The approach to the consideration of alternatives to the Proposed Development, including location and scale, and whether the Proposed Development would comply with legal and policy requirements in relation to the consideration of alternatives;</p> <p>6.6. The approach to the assessment of climate change;</p> <p>6.7. The effects during the decommissioning phase for the Proposed Development; and</p> <p>6.8. The volume of waste arising during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development.</p>
7. Historic environment	<p>7.1. Effects on designated and non-designated heritage assets, including during construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the Proposed Development;</p> <p>7.2. Effects on below ground archaeological deposits; and</p> <p>7.3. Effectiveness of proposed mitigation.</p>
8. Landscape and visual effects	8.1. Suitability of the study area and the viewpoints used in the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;

	<p>8.2. Effects during construction, operation and decommissioning;</p> <p>8.3. Effects on views from the Public Rights of Way network;</p> <p>8.4. Consideration of glint and glare effects; and</p> <p>8.5. Effectiveness of visual mitigation measures.</p>
9. Land use, agriculture and socio-economics	<p>9.1. Effects on agricultural land and farming;</p> <p>9.2. Effects on soil quality;</p> <p>9.3. Effects on land allocated/safeguarded for mineral extraction;</p> <p>9.4. Economic and employment effects on the local and wider economy, during construction and operation;</p> <p>9.5. Whether the proposals are appropriate to minimise disruption to users of the public right of way network during construction and decommissioning;</p> <p>9.6. Effects on the living conditions/amenity of neighbouring occupiers;</p> <p>9.7. Effects on protected lanes; and</p> <p>9.8. Effects on Human Health</p>
10. Noise	<p>10.1. Identification of sensitive receptors;</p> <p>10.2. Noise effects during construction, operation and decommissioning; and</p> <p>10.3. Effectiveness of proposed mitigation.</p>
11. Traffic and transport	<p>11.1. Effects on the Strategic Road Network;</p> <p>11.2. Effects on communities and other sensitive receptors along the construction HGV delivery route, including associated noise and air quality;</p> <p>11.3. Arrangements to regulate the interaction of the Proposed Development with the proposed A12 to A120 Widening Scheme;</p> <p>11.4. Cumulative effects with the proposed A12 to A120 Widening Scheme;</p> <p>11.5. Effects on the Boreham Interchange; and</p> <p>11.6. Effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures, including the contents and adequacy of the Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan and Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan.</p>
12. Water environment	<p>12.1. Adequacy of Flood Risk Assessment and the approach to flood risk modelling including the River Ter and Boreham Brook;</p> <p>12.2. Potential changes in surface and groundwater quality including indirect implications for biodiversity;</p> <p>12.3. Ground conditions and land contamination;</p> <p>12.4. Relationship with Environmental Permits;</p> <p>12.5. Assessment of hydrological, water quality, water resource and wildlife effects;</p> <p>12.6. Water Framework Directive;</p> <p>12.7. Other water environment effects including surface water crossings, run-off, and contamination of surface and groundwaters;</p>

	<p>12.8. Disapplication of relevant legislation; 12.9. Climate change considerations; and 12.10. Mitigation and enhancement measures, including likely effectiveness, monitoring procedures and method for securing such measures within the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO).</p>
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Draft Examination Timetable

The Examining Authority (ExA) is under a duty to **complete** the Examination of the application by the end of the period of six months beginning with the day after the close of the Preliminary Meeting.

The Examination of the application primarily takes the form of the consideration of written submissions. The ExA will also consider any oral representations made at hearings.

Item	Matters	Date
1.	<p>Procedural Deadline A (PD A) Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions on the Examination Procedure, including any submissions about the use of virtual methods • Requests to be heard orally at the Preliminary Meeting 	Monday 4 July 2022
2.	Preliminary Meeting (PM)	Monday 18 July 2022 10:00am
3.	<p>Issue by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination Timetable. <p>Publication of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ExA's Written Questions (ExQ1). 	As soon as practicable following the PM
4.	<p>Deadline 1 (D1) For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Impact Reports (LIRs) from Local Authorities (see Annex E); • Responses to the ExA's First Written Questions (ExQ1); • Comments on Relevant Representations (RR); • Written Representations (WRs); • Requests from IPs to speak at an Open Floor Hearing; • Requests from APs to speak to a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing; • Notification by Statutory Parties of their wish to be considered an IP by the ExA; 	Thursday 18 August 2022

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of wish to have future correspondence received electronically; • Submission by the Applicant, IPs and APs of suggested locations for the ExA to include in any Site Inspection, including the reason for nomination and issues to be observed, information about whether the location can be accessed using public rights of way or what access arrangements would need to be made; • Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) requested by the ExA at Annex F; • Statement of Commonality of SoCG; • The Compulsory Acquisition (CA) Schedule; • Navigation Document/Guide to the application; and • Any further information requested by the ExA Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	
5.	<p>Deadline 2 (D2) For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on submissions received for Deadline 1; • Comments on the responses given to the ExA's First Written Questions ExQ1; • An updated version of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) in clean and tracked versions; • Schedule of changes to the dDCO; • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions; • Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) requested by the ExA at Annex F; • Statement of Commonality of SoCG; • Comments on LIRs; • Navigation Document/Guide to the application; and • Any further information requested by the ExA Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules 	<p>Thursday 8 September 2022</p>

6.	Hearings Dates reserved for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Floor Hearings (OFH) (if required) • Compulsory Acquisition Hearings (if required) • Issue Specific Hearings (if required) 	w/c Monday 26September 2022
7.	Deadline 3 (D3) For receipt by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on submissions received for Deadline 2; • Written summaries of oral submissions made at Hearings held during the w/c 26 September; • Updated Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) requested by the ExA at Annex F; • Statement of Commonality of SoCG; • An updated version of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) in clean and tracked versions; • Schedule of changes to the dDCO; • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions; • Navigation Document/Guide to the application; and • Any further information requested by ExA Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules 	Thursday 6 October 2022
8.	Publication by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ExA's Further Written Questions (ExQ2) (if required) 	Tuesday 18 October 2022
9.	Deadline 4 (D4) For receipt by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on submissions received for Deadline 3; • Responses to the ExA's Further Written Questions (ExQ2) (if issued); • Updated Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) requested by the ExA at Annex F; • Statement of Commonality of SoCG; 	Thursday 3 November 2022

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An updated version of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) in clean and tracked versions; • Schedule of changes to the dDCO; • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions; • Navigation Document/Guide to the application; and • Any further information requested by ExA Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules 	
10.	<p>Hearings (if required)</p> <p>Dates reserved for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further Open Floor Hearings (OFH) (if required) • Further Compulsory Acquisition Hearings (CAH) (if required) • Further Issue Specific Hearings (ISH) (if required) 	w/c 14 November 2022
11.	<p>Publication by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES) (if required) 	Tuesday 22 November 2022
12.	<p>Deadline 5 (D5)</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on submissions received for Deadline 4; • Written summaries of oral submissions made at Hearings during w/c14 November 2022 (if hearings are held); • Updated Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) requested by the ExA at Annex F; • Statement of Commonality of SoCG; • Comments on Responses to the ExA's Written Questions (ExQ2) (if issued); • An updated version of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) in clean and tracked versions; • Schedule of changes to the dDCO; • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions; 	Thursday 24 November 2022

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigation Document/Guide to the application; and • Any further information requested by ExA Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of the Examination Rules 	
13.	<p>Publication by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ExA's commentary on, or schedule of changes to, the dDCO (if required) • The ExA's Further Written Questions (ExQ3) (if required) 	Thursday 1 December 2022
14.	Date(s) reserved for Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) (if required)	w/c Monday 5 December 2022
15.	<p>Deadline 6 (D6) For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on submissions received for Deadline 5; • Comments on the ExA's commentary on, or schedule of changes to, the dDCO (if required); • Responses to the ExA's Further Written Questions (ExQ3) (if issued); • Comments on the Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES) (if issued); • An updated version of the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) in clean and tracked versions; • Schedule of changes to the dDCO; • An updated Compulsory Acquisition Schedule in clean and tracked versions; • Updated Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) requested by the ExA at Annex F; • Statement of Commonality of SoCG; • Navigation Document/Guide to the application; and • Any further information requested by ExA Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	Thursday 15 December 2022

16.	<p>Deadline 7 (D7)</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on submissions received for Deadline 6; • Comments on Responses to the ExA's Written Questions (ExQ3) (if issued); • Responses on comments on the Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES) (if issued); • Final dDCO Final dDCO to be submitted by the Applicant in the SI template with the SI template validation report; • Final updated BoR Final BoR and schedule of changes to BoR; • Final SoCG; • Final Statement of Commonality of SoCG; • List of matters not agreed where SoCG could not be finalised; • Final CA Schedule; • Final signed and dated section 106 (if required); • Final Navigation Document/Guide to the application; and • Any further information requested by ExA Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	Thursday 5 January 2023
17.	<p>Deadline 8 (D8)</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any further information requested by ExA Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 	Wednesday 18 January 2023
18.	The ExA is under a duty to complete the Examination of the application by the end of the period of six months	Wednesday 18 January 2023

Submission times for Deadlines

The time for submission of documents at any Deadline in the timetable is 23:59 on the relevant Deadline date, unless instructed otherwise by the ExA.

Publication dates

All information received will be published on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable after the Deadlines for submissions.

Hearing agendas

Please note that for Issue Specific Hearings and Compulsory Acquisition Hearings the ExA will publish a high-level agenda alongside the notification of the hearing to help inform your decision about whether to register to participate. A detailed draft agenda will be made available on the project webpage at least five working days in advance of the hearing date. However, the actual agenda on the day of each hearing may be subject to change at the discretion of the ExA. For Open Floor Hearings agendas may not be published.

Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES)

Where an applicant has provided a No Significant Effects Report or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report with the application, the ExA may decide to issue a RIES during the Examination. The RIES is a factual account of the information and evidence provided to the ExA on HRA matters during the Examination up to the date of the publication of the RIES, for the purposes of enabling the Secretary of State, as competent authority, to undertake its HRA. It is not the ExA's opinion on HRA matters. Comments on the RIES will be invited by the ExA and any received will be taken into account as part of the ExA's Recommendation to the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State may rely on the consultation on the RIES to meet its obligations under Regulation 63(3) of The Habitats Regulations 2017.

Other Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority (ExA)

I have made the following Procedural Decisions under Section 89(3) of the PA2008:

1. Acceptance of Additional Submissions

I have exercised my discretion to accept into the Examination the following documents:

Representation from the East of England Ambulance Services dated 10 June 2022. [AS-001].

2. Statements of Common Ground (SoCG)

In relation to some of the Principal Issues identified in Annex C, I would be assisted by the preparation of SoCGs between the Applicant and certain Interested Parties. The draft Examination Timetable at Annex D therefore provides a deadline for submission of SoCGs at **Deadline 1, Thursday 18 August 2022**.

The aim of a SoCG is to agree factual information and to inform me and all other parties by identifying where there is agreement and where the differences lie at an early stage in the examination process. It should provide a focus and save time by identifying matters which are not in dispute or need not be the subject of further evidence. It can also usefully state where and why there may be disagreement about the interpretation and relevance of the information. The reasons for the differences and interpretation of the implications of a difference can then be expanded in the evidence.

Unless otherwise stated or agreed, the SoCG should be agreed between the Applicant and the other relevant Interested Party or parties, and submitted by the Applicant. For each of those areas that are in dispute, it would be beneficial if each party would put their estimation as to the likelihood that disagreement will remain by the end of the Examination.

This should be done on a “Low”, “Medium” and “High” traffic light model. This will allow me to assess those areas where oral discussions may be most beneficial. SoCGs are requested to be prepared between the Applicant and:

Other Parties to the SoCG		SoCG to include
A	Essex County Council Braintree District Council Chelmsford City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment of impacts within the Council’s area, including (as relevant) matters relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - air quality; - biodiversity, ecology and the natural environment including the effect on habitats, species and nationally designated sites; - ground conditions and land contamination;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - historic environment including archaeology; - landscape and visual receptors; - the living conditions of residents of the area; - noise; - employment and other socio-economic factors; - traffic, transport and public rights of way; - glint and glare; - protected lanes; - water environment and flooding; - human health; - agricultural land and soils; - effect on trees, hedgerows and ancient woodland; - waste and minerals, including potential sterilisation of mineral extraction sites and decommissioning; - battery safety and fire risk. • The effect on European sites and features relevant to Habitat Regulations Assessment; assessment methodology and conclusions; • An assessment of the Proposed Development's cumulative and in-combination effects with any other nearby major developments; • An assessment of compliance with national and local planning policy relevant to the Proposed Development including the approach to consideration of alternatives; • Mitigation measures; including an assessment of their likely effectiveness, ongoing monitoring procedures and how mitigation will be secured within the DCO; • The Articles and Requirements of the dDCO; and • Any other relevant matters;
B	UK Health Security Agency/Office for Health Improvement and Disparities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach to assessment of effects on Human Health including methodology employed and assessment of significance of effects.
C	National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effect on existing apparatus; • Connection matters; and • Protective Provisions.

D	The Environment Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of hydrological, water quality, water resource and wildlife effects; • Adequacy of Flood Risk Assessment and the approach to flood risk modelling including the River Ter and Boreham Brook; • Water Framework Directive including adequacy of baseline data; • Other water environment effects including, but not limited to, surface water crossings, run-off, and contamination of surface and groundwaters; • Environmental permits; • Disapplication of relevant legislation; • Climate change considerations; • Mitigation and enhancement measures, including likely effectiveness, monitoring procedures and method for securing such measures within the dDCO; • Drafting of the dDCO, including the Articles and Requirements; • Protective Provisions; and • Any other relevant matters.
E	Natural England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effect on habitats, species and nationally designated sites; • The effect on European sites and features relevant to Habitat Regulations Assessment, assessment methodology and conclusions; • Methodology for EIA, including assessment of cumulative and in-combination effects; • Other issues relevant to Appropriate Assessment; • Land use, agriculture and socioeconomics including the effect on soils and BMV land; • Mitigation and enhancement measures, including likely effectiveness, monitoring procedures and method for securing such measures within the dDCO including the outline soils resource management plan; and • Drafting of the dDCO, including the Articles and Requirements.

F	East of England Ambulance Service (EEAST)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts on the operation of EEAST including the effectiveness of mitigation and management measures proposed.
G	Historic England	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effect on the Historic Environment including the adequacy of assessments, methodology and proposed mitigation; • Impacts on the setting of designated heritage assets; • Effectiveness of proposed mitigation and monitoring measures and method for securing such measures within the dDCO; and • Drafting of the dDCO, including the Articles and Requirements.
H	National highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact on the Strategic Road Network; • Interactions between the Order Limits of the proposed Longfield DCO and those of the proposed A12 to A120 DCO; • Arrangements to regulate the interaction of the Proposed Development with the proposed A12 to A120 Widening Scheme; • Cumulative impacts with the proposed A12 to A120 Widening Scheme; • Impact on Boreham Interchange; • Drafting of the dDCO, including the Articles and Requirements; • Protective provisions; and • Effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures, including the contents and adequacy of the Framework Construction Traffic Management Plan and Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan.
I	Network Rail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts on the operations of the statutory undertaker; • Protective provisions.

Availability of Examination Documents

The application documents and Relevant Representations are available on <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/eastern/longfield-solar-farm/>.

All further documents submitted in the course of the Examination will also be published under the [Documents tab](#) of the project webpage.

The Examination Library

For ease of navigation, please refer to the [Examination Library](#) (EL) which is accessible by clicking the blue button under the Documents tab. The EL is updated regularly throughout the Examination.

The EL records and provides a hyperlink to:

- each application document;
- each representation made to the Examination; and
- each Procedural Decision made by the Examining Authority.

Each document is given a unique reference which will be fixed for the duration of the Examination. **Please quote the unique reference number from the EL when referring to any Examination Documents in any future submissions that you make.**

Electronic deposit locations

Documents can be viewed electronically, free of charge, at the electronic deposit location listed in the table below. Please note that you will need to bring a form of identification and register as a library member in order to use a computer at this location.

The opening hours and availability of information technology set out in the table below may be subject to changes or limitations to address public health requirements as a result of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Bearing in mind the availability of the documents on the National Infrastructure Planning website and the effect of public health restrictions, please consider your need to attend this location with care. Please check the current circumstances with the relevant location before you attend.

Local authority	Venue/address	Opening hours	Printing costs
Essex County Council	Chelmsford Library County Hall Market Road Chelmsford CM1 1QH	Monday: 09:00 – 17:30 Tuesday: 09:00 – 17:30 Wednesday: 09:00 – 17:30 Thursday: 09:00 – 19:00 Friday: 09:00 – 17:30 Saturday 09:00 – 17:00 Sunday: 10:30 – 13:30	A4 BW £0.20 per A4 side A4 COL £1.35 per A4 side

Information about the Make a submission tab

The [Make a submission tab](#) is available on the project webpage.

You will need to enter your unique reference number ('Your ref' found at the top your postcard or email from the Planning Inspectorate) beginning either 2003 or LOSF. If you are making a submission on behalf of another person or organisation, and do not have your own unique reference number, then you should enter the unique reference number of the person or organisation you are representing. If you are not a registered Interested Party then it is at the discretion of the Examining Authority whether or not your submission is accepted.

Submissions will be published on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable following the close of the relevant Deadline. For further information about publishing submissions please view our [Privacy Notice](#).

You will be able to submit a document (upload file), make a text representation or both. It is possible to upload multiple files for each individual submission item. Electronic attachments should be clearly labelled with the subject title and not exceed 50MB.

Submissions **must not include hyperlinks** to documents/evidence hosted on a third party website eg technical reports, media articles etc. See the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice Note 8.4: The Examination](#) for further information about making written submissions. All submissions must be made in a format that can be viewed in full on the National Infrastructure Planning website. **Any submissions that exceed 1500 words should also be accompanied by a summary; this summary should not exceed 10% of the original text.**

You should select the relevant Deadline for your submission and then, on the next webpage, select the appropriate submission item as described in the Examination Timetable at **Annex A** to this letter. Please ensure you make a separate submission for each submission item and **do not duplicate your submission**. If you consider that your submission does not fit the description of any of the submission items then please select the submission item 'Other' and ensure that it is titled appropriately.

If you experience any issues when using the [Make a submission tab](#) please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter and they will assist.