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All Interested Parties, Statutory
Parties and any other person
invited to the Preliminary Meeting

Our Ref: EN010122

Your Ref:

Date: 16 July 2024

Dear Sir/ Madam

Application by Oaklands Farm Solar Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for Oaklands Farm Solar Park

Rule 8 letter - Examination Timetable and other Procedural Decisions

Section 89 of the [Planning Act 2008](#) and Rules 8 and 9 of [The Infrastructure Planning \(Examination Procedure\) Rules 2010](#).

This Rule 8 letter provides important information about how I, as the Examining Authority (ExA), will examine this application. It follows my consideration of all submissions that I have received, including in Relevant Representations, at Procedural Deadline A, and at the Preliminary Meeting.

The Examination Timetable

I have decided to examine the application to the Examination Timetable set out in **Appendix A** to this letter. This replaces the draft timetable in the [Rule 6 letter](#).

In finalising the Examination Timetable, I have sought to accommodate requests and suggestions made at the Preliminary Meeting or in writing. A list of the main changes to the draft timetable is provided in **Appendix B**.

If I vary the Examination Timetable during the Examination, notification will be sent to Interested Parties, Statutory Parties and any others that were invited to the Preliminary Meeting. Any changes will be published on the [project webpage](#).

As explained in the [Rule 6 letter](#) and at the Preliminary Meeting, the Examination will principally be a written process supplemented as necessary by hearings and site inspections. More information about the Examination process is provided in the [Rule 6 letter](#) and in [Advice Notes 8.4, 8.5 and 8.6](#).

First Written Questions

I have decided to issue the final version of the [First Written Questions](#). These replace the Draft Written Questions that was published on Tuesday 18 June 2024.

Please respond to this final version of the [First Written Questions](#) no later than **Deadline 1**, which is on **Tuesday 6 August 2024**.

Written Representations

Interested Parties are now invited to submit Written Representations. These must be received no later than **Deadline 1**, which is on **Tuesday 6 August 2024**.

Please make your Written Representation using the '[Have your say](#)' section of the [project webpage](#). More information about the '[Have your say](#)' section is provided in **Appendix C**.

When submitting a Written Representation please identify those parts of the application which you do or don't agree with, explaining why. Please include any data, methodology and assumptions used to support your submission.

Any written submissions that exceed 1500 words, should be accompanied by a summary that does not exceed 10% of the original text. The summary should set out the key facts of the written submission and must be representative of the submission.

Representations must not include hyperlinks to third party websites.

More information about Written Representations is provided in [Advice Note 8.4](#).

Changes to land interests

When the Applicant becomes aware that there has been a change in ownership, or a new interest, in relevant land the Applicant is requested to make the relevant person aware that they can make a request to me to become an Interested Party under Section 102A of the Planning Act 2008 by contacting the Case Team. The Applicant should provide confirmation that relevant persons have been informed of their rights in an update to the Book of Reference.

Other Procedural Decisions

Appendix B to this letter contains important details and clarifications about other decisions that I have made.

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 200 you are in Group A. If your reference number begins with OKFS-SP you are in Group B. If it begins with OKFS-OP you are in Group C. The meaning and purpose of those groups are explained in the document. Please contact the Case Team if, having read that, you are still unsure about your status.

Awards of costs

Parties are normally 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. Please refer to: [Awards of costs: examinations of applications for development consent orders](#).

Examination correspondence and management of information

Given the volume of letters that are to be sent, we aim to communicate by email as this is more environmentally friendly and cost effective for the taxpayer. Please tell the Case Team if you have received a letter by post but are able to receive information by email.

The Examination documents will be published on the [project webpage](#). Please 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. Examination Documents can also be viewed electronically at the locations listed in **Appendix D**.

Please make your written submissions at relevant deadlines during the Examination using the '[Have your say](#)' section of the [project webpage](#). More information about the '[Have your say](#)' section is provided in **Appendix C**.

The 'Get updates' section towards the bottom of the [project webpage](#) gives you the opportunity to receive email updates at key stages during the Examination.

To facilitate an effective and fair Examination, it is necessary to publish some personal information. Please view our [Privacy Notice](#) to find out how we handle this information.

I look forward to continuing to work with all parties during the Examination.

Yours faithfully

Stuart Cowperthwaite

The Examining Authority

Appendices

- A** The Examination Timetable
- B** Other Procedural Decisions
- C** The 'Have your say' section of the [project webpage](#)
- D** Availability of Examination Documents

This communication does not constitute legal advice.

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

THE EXAMINATION TIMETABLE

Submissions for each Deadline must be made by 11:59pm on the relevant date and will be published on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable after the Deadline.

Item	Event(s)	Date(s)
1.	<p>Procedural Deadline A</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> written submissions about how the application should be examined, including the draft Examination Timetable requests to speak at the Preliminary Meeting and/ or attend at the venue in person requests to speak at Open Floor Hearing 1 and/ or attend at the venue in person suggested locations for site inspections, including the reason for nomination, issues to be observed there and whether the location(s) require access to private land 	Tuesday 25 June 2024
2.	<p>Issue by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the agenda for the Preliminary Meeting the agenda for Open Floor Hearing 1 	No later than Tuesday 2 July 2024
3.	Preliminary Meeting	Wednesday 10 July 2024
4.	Open Floor Hearing 1	Wednesday 10 July 2024
5.	<p>Issue by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Examination Timetable (the Rule 8 letter) the ExA's First Written Questions 	As soon as practicable after the Preliminary Meeting
6.	<p>Deadline 1</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comments on Relevant Representations and Additional Submissions responses to the ExA's First Written Questions Written Representations from Interested Parties and summaries of any that exceed 1500 words any other information requested by the ExA for Deadline 1 	Tuesday 6 August 2024

Item	Event(s)	Date(s)
7.	<p>Deadline 2</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Impact Reports from local authorities • any other information requested by the ExA for Deadline 2 	Thursday 15 August 2024
8.	<p>Deadline 3</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requests to be heard at a further Open Floor Hearing • requests by Affected Persons (defined in Section 59(4) of the Planning Act 2008) to be heard at a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing • the Applicant's updates – refer to Appendix D of the Rule 6 letter • comments on the Deadline 1 and Deadline 2 submissions and any other information requested by the ExA for Deadline 3 	Thursday 22 August 2024
9.	<p>Issue by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ExA's Second Written Questions • notification of the date, time, and place of hearing(s) in October 2024 (if required) • notification of an Accompanied Site Inspection (if required) 	No later than Tuesday 10 September 2024
10.	<p>Deadline 4</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responses to the ExA's Second Written Questions • requests to be heard at an Issue Specific Hearing in October 2024 (if required) • the Applicant's proposed itinerary for an Accompanied Site Inspection (if required) • the Applicant's updates – refer to Appendix D of the Rule 6 letter • comments on the Deadline 3 submissions and any other information requested by the ExA for Deadline 4 	Tuesday 1 October 2024
11.	<p>Issue by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agenda(s) for hearing(s) in October 2024 (if required) • arrangements for an Accompanied Site Inspection (if required) 	No later than Tuesday 15 October 2024

Appendix A

Item	Event(s)	Date(s)
12.	Time reserved for hearing(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue Specific Hearing (if required) • Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (if required) • Open Floor Hearing (if required) 	Tuesday 22 October 2024 Wednesday 23 October 2024
13.	Time reserved for an Accompanied Site Inspection (if required):	Thursday 24 October 2024
14.	Deadline 5 For receipt by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Applicant's updates – refer to Appendix D of the Rule 6 letter • comments on the Deadline 4 submissions and any other information requested by the ExA for Deadline 5 	Thursday 31 October 2024
15.	Issue by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the ExA's Third Written Questions (if required) • the Report on Implications for European Sites (if required) 	No later than Tuesday 12 November 2024
16.	Deadline 6 For receipt by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responses to the ExA's Third Written Questions (if required) • the Applicant's clean version of the draft Development Consent Order in Microsoft Word, the email notification from legislation.gov.uk confirming successful validation, and the validation report • the Applicant's updates – refer to Appendix D of the Rule 6 letter • comments on the Deadline 5 submissions and any other information requested by the ExA for Deadline 6 	Tuesday 26 November 2024
17.	Publication of the ExA's schedule of changes to the draft Development Consent Order (if required)	No later than Tuesday 3 December 2024

Item	Event(s)	Date(s)
18.	<p>Deadline 7</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comments on the Report on Implications for European Sites (if required) • comments on the ExA's schedule of changes to the draft Development Consent Order (if required) • comments on the Deadline 6 submissions and any other information requested by the ExA for Deadline 7 	Tuesday 10 December 2024
19.	<p>Deadline 8</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • summary statements from parties regarding matters that they have previously raised during the Examination and that have not been resolved to their satisfaction • the Applicant's closing summary statement • the Applicant's final updates – refer to Appendix D of the Rule 6 letter • comments on the Deadline 7 submissions and any other information requested by the ExA for Deadline 8 	Tuesday 17 December 2024
20.	<p>The ExA is under a duty to complete the Examination no later than the end of the period of six months beginning with the day after the close of the Preliminary Meeting.</p> <p>The ExA will provide reasonable notification if it decides to close the Examination before Friday 10 January 2025.</p>	Friday 10 January 2025

OTHER PROCEDURAL DECISIONS

Please refer to the [Rule 6 letter](#) for Procedural Decisions made before the Preliminary Meeting about updates from the Applicant and Statements of Common Ground.

I have made the following Procedural Decisions either during or after the Preliminary Meeting.

1. Issue Specific Hearing in October 2024

During the Preliminary Meeting I noted that the Issue Specific Hearing under Item 11 of the draft Examination timetable in the [Rule 6 letter](#) is identified as a firm requirement. Recognising that this follows two rounds of written questions, I noted that this may not be necessary, and said that I was minded changing it to “if required” in the same way as is indicated for the Compulsory Acquisition Hearing and Open Floor Hearing. Time is reserved for these hearings in October 2024.

No parties at the Preliminary Meeting raised any concerns about this change.

To provide flexibility I have decided to change all references to the October 2024 hearings to “if required”.

2. Requests to be heard at hearings in October 2024.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a Deadline of 1 October 2024 for requests to be heard at hearing(s) in October 2024. There is an earlier Deadline for requests to be heard at a further Open Floor Hearing and at a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing in October 2024.

To address the repetition and to avoid confusion, I have changed the Deadline of 1 October 2024 to requests to be heard at an Issue Specific Hearing (if required) in October 2024.

3. Local Impact Reports

During the Preliminary Meeting, South Derbyshire District Council (SDDC) said that they are preparing a joint Local Impact Report (LIR) with Derbyshire County Council (DCC) and they are required to have it signed off at a committee before it can be submitted. DCC noted that their officers have delegated powers for the LIR. SDDC explained that committee meetings are scheduled for 8 August 2024, which they said is achievable but tight, and 19 September 2024, which is comfortable and preferred. SDDC requested a review of the 6 August date for the submission of the LIR.

I noted that LIR form a key foundation to the Examination and are normally required early in the Examination to allow time for the issues raised to be examined. I noted that the September date is over two months into the Examination and clarified that there would be other opportunities for SDDC to raise matters after the LIR is submitted.

The Applicant noted that submission of the LIR after 19 September 2024 would be after the issue of my Second Written Questions.

Responding to my question, SDDC said that the LIR could be issued one week after the 8 August committee meeting.

I am satisfied that SDDC's request to delay the date for the LIR is reasonable. Noting that SDDC's comments and the later opportunities for them to raise matters during the Examination and to limit the knock-on effects to the timetable, I have decided to move the date for submission of the LIR to a new Deadline of 15 August 2024 and have renumbered subsequent Items and Deadlines accordingly. I have also moved the Deadline of 20 August 2024 to 22 August 2024 to provide 7 days for comments to be submitted on the LIR.

4. The draft Development Consent Order

During the Preliminary Meeting I asked the Applicant if it could assist with my issue schedule of changes to the draft Development Consent Order (if required) no later than Tuesday 3 December 2024. My request was for the Applicant to provide a clean version of the draft Development Consent Order in Microsoft Word, the email notification from legislation.gov.uk confirming successful validation, and the validation report at Deadline 5 of the draft Examination Timetable, which is on Tuesday 26 November 2024.

The Applicant responded that it would be able to meet that request.

Noting the above, I have added to the Examination timetable for the Applicant's clean version of the draft Development Consent Order in Microsoft Word, the email notification from legislation.gov.uk confirming successful validation, and the validation report to be submitted on Tuesday 26 November 2024.

5. Site inspections

In their submission at Procedural Deadline A, SDDC [[PDA-002](#)] suggested locations for site inspections. Locations are suggested where private access is required to view the site and see the impact of the development on the landscape.

Responding to my decision to make a request at the Preliminary Meeting, SDDC said that they would provide a written submission at Deadline 1 of the Examination to explain whether, and if so why, it considers it necessary to visit locations where private access is required in addition to visits to nearby locations that do not require access to private land.

6. The Applicant's responses to written submissions

At the Preliminary Meeting I said that my First Written Questions would not repeat all the matters raised by parties in their Relevant Representations or Additional Submissions. I said that this includes matters raised in the submissions from Derbyshire County Council [[RR-078](#)], South Derbyshire District Council [[RR-295](#), [PDA-002](#)], Leicestershire County Council [[RR-170](#)], the Environment Agency [[AS-019](#)], Historic England [[AS-021](#)], and Natural England [[AS-022](#)] that I noted carefully and imagined that the Applicant may wish to discuss with those parties.

Responding to my decision to make a request at the Preliminary Meeting, the Applicant said that it intends to provide written responses to submissions from

those parties and all other parties and would continue to do so up to the end of the Examination.

7. Statement of Common Ground between the Applicant and the Health and Safety Executive

At the Preliminary Meeting and referring to Appendix G of the [Rule 6 letter](#), the Applicant asked for guidance on what should be covered in the Statement of Common Ground requested with the Health and Safety Executive.

During the Preliminary Meeting I noted the need to consider compliance with health and safety policy set out in relevant [National Policy Statements](#). I said that a letter from the Health and Safety Executive setting out any concerns would be an acceptable alternative to a Statement of Common Ground. Following the Preliminary Meeting, I have reviewed the UK Health Security Agency's Relevant Representation [\[RR-323\]](#).

I have now decided to request that the Applicant provides either a Statement of Common Ground with the Health and Safety Executive in accordance with Appendix G of the [Rule 6 letter](#) or a letter from the Health and Safety Executive setting out any concerns and that it is not necessary for either of those to cover the matters addressed by the UK Health Security Agency [\[RR-323\]](#).

THE 'HAVE YOUR SAY' SECTION OF THE PROJECT WEBPAGE

The '[Have your say](#)' section 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 200 or OKFS. 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 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 e.g., technical reports, media articles etc. See [Advice Note 8.4](#) 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 **Appendix 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 '[Have your say](#)' section of the [project webpage](#), please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter and they will assist.

AVAILABILITY OF EXAMINATION DOCUMENTS

The application documents and Relevant Representations are available on the [project webpage](#).

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

The Examination Library

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

The [Examination Library](#) records and provides a hyperlink to:

- each application document;
- each submission 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 [Examination Library](#) 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 locations listed in the table below. Please note that you will need to bring a form of identification and register as a library member to use a computer at these locations.

The opening hours and availability of information technology set out in the table below may be subject to change. Please check the current circumstances with the relevant locations before you attend.

Venue/ address	Opening hours	Printing costs
Swadlincote Library and Information Centre Civic Way Swadlincote Derbyshire DE11 0AD	Monday: 9:30am – 5:00pm Tuesday: 9:30am – 5:00pm Wednesday: 9:30am – 5:00pm Thursday: 9:30am – 7:00pm Friday: 9:30am – 5:00pm Saturday: 9:30am – 4:00pm Sunday: Closed	A4 and A3 - 10p per sheet

Appendix D

Venue/ address	Opening hours	Printing costs
Burton Library Riverside Burton upon Trent Staffordshire DE14 1AH	Monday: 9:00am – 6:00pm Tuesday: 9:00am – 5:00pm Wednesday: 9:00am – 5:00pm Thursday: 9:00am – 7:00pm Friday: 9:00am – 5:00pm Saturday: 8:30am – 4:30pm Sunday: Closed	A4 black and white - 15p per sheet A4 colour - 50p per sheet A3 black and white - 30p per sheet A3 colour - £1 per sheet