

APPLICATION FOR A DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER FOR THE PROPOSED HECKINGTON FEN SOLAR PARK PROJECT

PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE NUMBER: EN010123

NOTICE OF PRELIMINARY MEETING AND ISSUE SPECIFIC HEARINGS – SECTIONS 91 and 94 OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008 AND RULE 13(6) INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (EXAMINATION PROCEDURE) RULES 2010

Notice is hereby given that, at the dates, times and locations set out below, the following Hearings will be held by the Examining Authority (on behalf of the Secretary of State (the “Secretary of State”)) for the examination of the application made by Ecotricity (Heck Fen Solar) Limited (Company Number 13225224) of Lion House, Rowcroft, Stroud, Gloucestershire, GL5 3BY (the “Applicant”) for a Development Consent Order (“DCO”) under Sections 14(1)(a), 15(2) and 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (the “Application”).

The Application is for the proposed Heckington Fen Solar Park which lies within the administrative areas of North Kesteven District Council, Boston Borough Council, and, at county level, within Lincolnshire County Council. The Application is for development consent for the construction, operation and maintenance and decommissioning of solar photovoltaic (PV) generating panels with a total capacity exceeding 50 megawatts (MW) together with associated energy storage and grid connection infrastructure at the Bicker Fen National Grid Substation (“the Proposed Development”).

The Application was submitted to the Secretary of State via the Planning Inspectorate on 15 February 2023 and accepted for examination on 13 March 2023. The reference number applied to the Application by the Planning Inspectorate is EN010123. The Examining Authority was appointed on 3 April 2023 to examine the Application.

HEARING	DATE	TIME	VENUE AND JOINING DETAILS
Preliminary meeting	Tuesday 19 Sept 2023	Seating available at venue from: 9:30 Virtual Arrangements Conference from: 9:30 Meeting starts: 10:00	Boston United Football Club Pilgrim Way Boston PE21 7NE By virtual means using Microsoft Teams. Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have preregistered.
Issue Specific Hearing 1 – Development Consent Order	Tuesday 19 Sept 2023	Seating available at venue from: 13:30 Virtual Arrangements Conference from: 13:30 Meeting starts: 14:00	
Issue Specific Hearing 2 – Scope of development and environmental matters	Wednesday 20 Sept 2023	Seating available at venue from: 9:30 Virtual Arrangements Conference from: 9:30 Meeting starts: 10:00	

Interested Parties and Affected Persons wishing to speak at the Preliminary Meeting or any of the Hearings listed above should notify the Planning Inspectorate in writing by Tuesday 5 September 2023 via the Heckington Fen Solar Park page of the Planning Inspectorate’s website: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/east-midlands/heckington-fen-solar-park/?ipcsection=overview>

If you require assistance with registering your attendance, please contact the Case Team at HeckingtonFenSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk or by calling 0303 444 5000. The Planning Inspectorate reference for the Application (EN010123) should be quoted in any correspondence.

The Hearings will also be held as blended events, and it will be possible to join them via any standard internet browser or alternatively by telephone dial-in. Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have preregistered.

The Procedural Deadline and subsequent Deadlines are set out in the Draft Examination Timetable, available to view in the Rule 6 Letter on the project page of the Planning Inspectorate’s website (link above).

Further information regarding the Hearings, the examination of the Application, the full timetable (and amendments), how and when to register to speak at the Hearings, and how and when to make written submissions will also be available on the project page of the Planning Inspectorate’s website (link above), or by contacting the Planning Inspectorate (details above).

Please note that Hearings will be recorded, and the recordings will be published on the Heckington Fen Solar Park page of the Planning Inspectorate’s website as soon as practicable after each Hearing has taken place.

Any further Hearings will be publicised as required by the Planning Inspectorate and by the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Application is for development consent to construct, operate, maintain and decommission a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating facility with a capacity of over 50 megawatts (MW) and export connection to the National Grid.

Heckington Fen Solar Park (the "Proposed Development") will cover an area of approximately 645 hectares (ha). The principal components of the Proposed Development comprise solar PV arrays, mounting structures, inverters, transformers, switchgears, onsite substation and ancillary buildings, low voltage distribution cabling, fencing, security and ancillary infrastructure, access tracks, temporary construction compounds, mitigation and enhancement areas and green infrastructure. To view a plan showing the location and route of the Proposed Development as submitted in the Application, please refer to the Location, Order Limits and Grid Coordinates Plans (Document Reference: EN010123-000119-2.8), available here: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/projects/EN010123/EN010123-000119-2.8%20-%20Location%20and%20Order%20Limits%20Plan.pdf>

Development consent is required to the extent that development is or forms part of a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) pursuant to sections 14(1)(a) and 15(1) and (2) of the Planning Act 2008, as an onshore generating station in England with a capacity greater than 50 MW. It is for this reason that the Proposed Development falls within the remit of the Secretary of State's decision-making powers.

The DCO, if granted, would authorise the compulsory acquisition of land, interests in land and rights over land, and the powers to use land permanently and temporarily. The DCO would also authorise alterations to the layout of streets, the construction of accesses to the Proposed Development, the temporary stopping up or management of the public rights of way, street works, removal of hedgerows and the application and disapplication of legislation.

APPLICATION FORM AND ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS

The application form and its accompanying documents (including maps and plans, the Environmental Statement, Non-Technical Summary, and the draft Order (the "Application Documents"), can be viewed and downloaded free of charge on the Heckington Fen Solar Park page of the Planning Inspectorate's website: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/east-midlands/heckington-fen-solar-park/?ipcsection=docs>

The documents can also be accessed through the Applicant's website: <https://www.ecotricity.co.uk/our-green-energy/heckington-fen-solar-park>

An electronic copy of the Application Documents can be supplied free of charge on a USB memory stick. To request a USB, please contact us using the details provided at the bottom of the notice.

The full suite of Application Documents can be made available in hard copy format on request at a cost of £5000 per copy. For any bespoke document requests, please contact the Applicant using the contact details at the bottom of the notice, who will provide the cost. Copies of individual documents are also available on request and a reasonable copying charge may apply.

If you require alternative methods for inspection of the Application Documents (for example in large print, audio, or braille formats), contact the Applicant using the details below:

CONTACT DETAILS FOR THE APPLICANT

Email: heckingtonfensolar@ecotricity.co.uk

Phone: 0800 151 0784

Post: FREEPOST ECOTRICITY SOLAR PARK

It should be noted that personal data, such as the name of persons over 18, will be published alongside a representation. If you do not wish personal data to be made publicly available, you should state why when submitting the representation. If necessary, the Planning Inspectorate will publish the representations with your name and personal data redacted. Representations will be made public and will be subject to the Planning Inspectorate's privacy policy at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-inspectorate-privacy-notice/customer-privacy-notice>