



Preliminary Meeting Note

Application:	Mallard Pass Solar Farm
Reference:	EN010127
Time and date:	10am on Tuesday 16 May 2023
Venue:	East of England Showground in person and virtually via Microsoft Team

This meeting note is not a full transcript of the Preliminary Meeting. It is a summary of the key points discussed.

1. Welcome and Introduction

David Cliff, as Lead member of Examining Authority (ExA), welcomed those present and introduced himself as the lead member of the Panel of Examining Inspectors to examine the Mallard Pass Solar Project application. Mark James introduced himself as the other member of the panel.

The ExA explained that the ExA would be examining the application made by Mallard Pass Solar Farm Limited ('the Applicant') before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero who will decide whether an Order granting Development Consent for the proposed project, which is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), should be made.

The ExA explained the purpose of the Preliminary Meeting (PM) and noted that the Examination will commence after the PM closes.

The full audio recording of this Preliminary Meeting is available on the National Infrastructure Planning website and can be accessed [here](#)

The ExA explained the Planning Inspectorate's duties under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Introductions were invited and made by all those present (in-person and on-line) who had indicated a wish to speak at the Preliminary Meeting.

Further info relating to the GDPR can be found in the Planning Inspectorate's [Privacy Note](#).

2. Examination Process

The ExA briefly explained the examination process under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008), further info can be found in the [Advice Note 8.4](#).

The ExA referred all parties to [Annex B](#) of the [Rule 6 letter](#) of 13 April 2023, which provided further information about the purpose and context of the PM and the subsequent examination process, including the different types of hearings where these are required.

The ExA confirmed that all documents and submissions received and accepted during the Examination will be published on the project-specific page of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

The ExA highlighted the importance of the submission of information in accordance with Examination Deadlines.

3. Initial Assessment of Principal Issues

The ExA explained the purpose of the Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (IAPI) (section 88 of the PA2008), which can be found in [Annex C](#) of the [Rule 6 letter](#) of 13 April 2023 and asked for any observations on them. The Examination Authority clarified the scope of the IAPI in response to comments from Mallard Pass Action Group.

4. Examination Timetable

The ExA noted requests already received in writing to amend the draft Examination Timetable contained in [Annex D](#) of Rule 6 letter and also welcomed further suggestions from the parties in attendance.

Suggestions and comments made included those from Lincolnshire County Council, Rutland County Council and South Kesteven District Council regarding their ability to submit their Local Impact Reports by Deadline 1 due to implications arising from the recent local elections.

The ExA sought comments on the timetable for hearings and accompanied site inspections. Comments received included those on behalf of Essendine Parish Council regarding dates of Compulsory Acquisition Hearings and those from the Applicant suggesting that the second week reserved for proposed hearings be pushed back by one week. Discussion also took place on adding further time for hearings and/or site inspections.

All suggestions and comments received were duly noted by the ExA and consideration of these and the submissions at Procedural Deadline A would be reflected in the ExA's Rule 8 Letter and in subsequent Hearing Notifications.

The Examination Timetable can be found in the [Rule 8](#) letter published on Tuesday 23 May 2023.

5. Procedural decisions

The ExA clarified the procedural decisions made under section 89(3) of the PA2008 and asked for any observations.

Procedural decisions previously made by the ExA can be found in [Annex F](#) of the Rule 6 Letter. These include, but were not limited to, matters relating to:

- Statements of Common Ground (SoCG);

- Local Impact Reports;
- Site Inspections; and
- The Applicant's additional submissions.

Comments were made by parties, including the Applicant, on matters arising from these Procedural Decisions. The ExA confirmed that consideration would be given to these comments and those previously made in writing at Procedural Deadline A. Matters discussed included the following:

With regard to **SoCG** and comments from the Applicant regarding Statutory Undertakers, the ExA explained that where matters are agreed, a statement from both parties to that effect should be submitted. In the absence of such a written statement, a SoCG would be expected. It was also noted that a SoCG with between Mallard Pass Action Group and the Applicant would be most appropriately submitted once Written Representations have been submitted.

With regard to **Site Inspections**, the ExA explained that unaccompanied site inspections could be made by the ExA for those parts of the site that can be accessed by public road and footpath. Accompanied site inspections would generally be required for those locations that are not publicly accessible. The final itinerary would be based on suggestions made by Interested Parties at Deadline 1 and the Applicant's draft itinerary for an ExA site inspection at Deadline 2.

A summary of the **Applicant's additional submissions** at Procedural Deadline A was also provided by the Applicant. The ExA confirmed that a decision would be confirmed on the acceptance of these documents in the Rule 8 letter.

Further Procedural Decisions and matters of clarification made by the ExA following the meeting can be found in Annex B to the [Rule 8](#) Letter.

6. Any Other Matters

The ExA briefly reviewed other matters raised in writing at Procedural Deadline A that were of relevance to the Preliminary Meeting.

The Applicant confirmed that a response document has been submitted at Procedural Deadline A to the Relevant Representations submitted.

No further comments were made by any of the parties in attendance.

7. Close

The Preliminary Meeting closed at approximately 1.00pm.