



National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House
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Bristol, BS1 6PN

Customer Services: 0303 444 5000

email: westburtonsolarproject@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

All Interested Parties, Statutory Parties and
Other Persons

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN010132

Date: 11 October 2023

Dear Sir/ Madam

Planning Act 2008 – Section 88 and 89 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rule 6, 9 and 13

Application by West Burton Solar Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the West Burton Solar Project

Invitation to the resumed Preliminary Meeting and Notification of Hearings

Following Day 1 of the Preliminary Meeting on 7 September 2023, I am writing to let you know that we will be resuming the Preliminary Meeting on Wednesday 8 November 2023 at 15:00. This letter provides formal notification and an invitation to attend the resumed Preliminary Meeting, which will be a blended event. The resumed meeting will discuss the procedure for the Examination of the above application.

Resumed Preliminary Meeting	
Date:	Wednesday 8 November 2023
Seating available at venue for those attending at the physical venue in person	15:00pm
Arrangements conference for those participating via Microsoft Teams	14:30pm for 14:45pm Arrive at 14:30pm to enter the virtual lobby. The Arrangements Conference will start at 09:45am.



Preliminary Meeting resumes	15:00pm
Venue and joining details	Aspen Suite Hilton Doubletree Lincoln Brayford Wharf North LN1 1YW and via Microsoft Teams Full instructions on how to join will be provided in advance to those who have had a request to register accepted by the ExA.

Purpose of the Preliminary Meeting

The purpose of the resumed Preliminary Meeting is to enable a discussion of the revised timetable.

The resumed 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 we make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero who will take the final decision in this case.

The agenda for the resumed PM is at **Annex A** 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.**

On [13 September 2023](#) the Examining Authority (ExA) wrote to notify all Interested Parties and others of our Procedural Decision to delay the start of the Examination. The reasons for this in summary related to the close alignment of this Examination with that of other solar Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, and specifically the overlapping timetables, creating challenges for those seeking to participate in these separate Examinations. These challenges could, in turn, impact on the requirement for the ExA to receive timely, adequate, and informed submissions, and therefore our ability to conduct an efficient and effective Examination.

We have prepared a revised draft Examination Timetable, set out at **Annex C** to this letter. Written submissions on this document are invited by **Procedural Deadline B**



(Tuesday 31 October 2023). We request that submissions on the revised Examination Timetable are made using the [Make a Submission](#) page on the [project webpage](#) on or before **Procedural Deadline B**. **Annex D** to this letter provides further information about using the [Make a Submission](#) page.

Written comments to **Procedural Deadline B** should focus on the revised Examination Timetable only. There is no need to repeat submissions made to Procedural Deadline A.

Notification of initial Hearings

We have made a Procedural Decision to hold the following initial hearings:

- Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1) at 6pm on Wednesday 8 November 2023
- Issue Specific Hearing regarding the scope of the Proposed Development; Need, Site Selection and Alternatives; and Environmental Matters (ISH1) at 10am on Thursday 9 November 2023

Important information about these hearings is contained in **Annex D** to this letter, including what details need to be provided with a request to be heard at a hearing and the procedure that will be followed.

Requests to register for the resumed Preliminary Meeting and Hearings

If you wish to participate and speak at the resumed Preliminary Meeting and/or any of the above hearings, you are required to notify the ExA via the [Make a Submission](#) page on the project website by **Procedural Deadline B** (Tuesday 31 October 2023).

Please note that if you had previously registered to attend either Day 1 of the Preliminary Meeting and/or the Open Floor Hearing on 7 September 2023 you will need to register again to attend the resumed Preliminary Meeting or any of the above hearings.

Any request to participate in the resumed Preliminary Meeting or hearing must include the following information:

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top of 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)
- As this will be a blended event, please provide confirmation of whether you will participate virtually or in-person
- The agenda item on which you wish to speak and a list of the points you wish to make
- The hearing/s you wish to attend and speak at.



Joining instructions for the resumed Preliminary Meeting and hearings will be issued by the Case Team via email shortly before the resumed Preliminary Meeting date.

Please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter if you require any support to attend the resumed Preliminary Meeting or hearings, either virtually or in person, or require assistance using the Have your say online form.

If you do not have internet access, you can submit your representation via post to the address above and addressed for the attention of the West Burton Solar Project Case Team. Please be aware that any postal submissions must be received by the closing date of 23:59 on 31 October 2023.

After the Preliminary Meeting

As soon as is practicable following the close of the Preliminary Meeting we will issue a letter (known as the Rule 8 letter) setting out the finalised Examination Timetable. This will also include confirmation of Procedural Decisions taken by the ExA following both the initial and resumed Preliminary Meetings.

A note and recordings of the Preliminary Meeting and hearings will also be published on the [project webpage](#).

Further Procedural Decision made by the Examining Authority

The ExA has made a Procedural Decision to require that the Local Impact Reports prepared by the Local Authorities be submitted at **Deadline 1**. This is to ensure the timely availability of this information to the ExA.

Management of information

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 F** 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.

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 D 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](#).

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 'WEBS', 'WEBS-0', 'WEBS-AFP', 'WEBS-S57' 'WEBS-APP' you are in Group A. If your reference number begins with 'WEBS-SP' you are in Group B. If your reference number begins with 'WEBS-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](#).

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

Yours faithfully

Andrea Mageean



Lead Member of the Examining Authority

Annexes

- A Agenda for the resumed Preliminary Meeting
- B Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting
- C Revised Examination Timetable
- D Notification of Hearings
- E Availability of Examination documents
- F Information on the 'Make a Submission' page

This communication does not constitute legal advice.
Please view our [Privacy Notice](#) before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.

Agenda for the Resumed Preliminary Meeting

If you intend to attend and participate in the Preliminary Meeting, you must register by Procedural Deadline B, Tuesday 31 October 2023 via '[Make a Submission](#)' on our project website and provide all the information requested.

The Preliminary Meeting will start at 15:00pm irrespective of any late arrivals, for whom access may not be possible.

Agenda for the resumed Preliminary Meeting	
Item 1	The Preliminary Meeting will formally resume at 15.00pm . The Examining Authority will join, welcome participants and lead introductions. The public livestream and recording will start.
Item 2	Consideration of the draft Examination Timetable (refer to Annex B),
Item 3	Any other matters
Close of the Preliminary Meeting	

If you simply wish to observe the Preliminary Meeting, then you do not need to register as you will be able to either:

1. attend the physical event at the venue to observe the proceedings
2. 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; and/or
3. watch the recording of the event which will be published on the [project webpage](#) shortly after the event has finished.

If you participate using Microsoft Teams, please join the virtual lobby promptly using the instructions that will be sent to you. It may take some time to admit participants from the virtual lobby into the Arrangements Conference. Your patience while you are waiting is appreciated.

Please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of the Rule 6 letter if you require any support to attend the Preliminary Meeting.

Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting

Background

The Preliminary Meeting will be a blended event with some participants attending in person and some taking part 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 relevant to the ExA's remarks about the Examination process under Item 2 of the Preliminary Meeting Agenda, as set out in Annex A. Please read this carefully. The ExA will only present a summary of the key points set out here at the Preliminary Meeting.

The Examining Authority and the Case Team

The ExA will introduce themselves at the start of the Preliminary Meeting.

The ExA will be supported by the Planning Inspectorate Case Team. During the Registration Process 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 Preliminary Meeting. The contact email address is: WestBurtonSolarProject@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

The purpose of the Preliminary Meeting

The Preliminary Meeting is being held to discuss the arrangements for the Examination of the application for a Development Consent Order for the West Burton Solar Project, and which will generally be referred to in the Preliminary Meeting and Examination as the 'Proposed Development'. The application has been made by West Burton Solar Project 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 and Examination documents and 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 Preliminary Meeting 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 Preliminary Meeting.

The Preliminary Meeting will be your opportunity to influence the process that the ExA intends to follow. The agenda for the Preliminary Meeting 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 Preliminary Meeting. You may wish to print these in advance of the Preliminary Meeting for reference.

Government guidance and policy

The application involves the construction of an onshore generating station in England with a generating capacity of more than 50MW. It includes development falling within Sections 14(1) and 15 of the Planning Act 2008. As such it is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project under the Planning Act 2008.

The ExA will consider the Proposed Development in accordance with any other applicable policy or considerations required by the Planning Act 2008 and that it deems to be important and relevant. In addition to any designated or draft National Policy Statements this may include the National Planning Policy Framework and local development plans.

In summary, the Preliminary Meeting will establish the procedures and timetable for the Examination of the Proposed Development. It will set a framework for the ExA to enable the Secretary of State to consider and decide the application. In doing so, the ExA will have regard to:

- The positions and representations of all Interested Parties;
- any Local Impact Reports prepared and provided by relevant local authorities;
- other prescribed matters; and
- any other matters that appear to be both relevant and important to the relevant Secretary of State's decision.

Preliminary Meeting invitees

The Applicant is invited to the Preliminary Meeting 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 and has been invited to the Preliminary Meeting. All Interested Parties 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 and has been invited to the Preliminary Meeting. In addition to a general entitlement to involvement in the Examination, Affected Persons 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 Affected Persons are Interested Parties, whether or not they have made a valid Relevant Representation. Certain bodies are Statutory Parties and they have been invited to the Preliminary Meeting. Statutory Parties

can elect to become Interested Parties without having made a valid Relevant Representation by notifying the ExA in writing.

The ExA has the power to involve people who are not Interested Parties in the Examination as though they are Interested Parties, including by inviting them to the Preliminary Meeting. 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 Interested Parties or eligible to elect to become an Interested Parties and they had been unable to take the necessary action to register as an Interested Parties.

Conduct of the Preliminary Meeting

The ExA estimate that the Preliminary Meeting will take around two hours to complete.

During the Preliminary Meeting 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 Preliminary Meeting as appropriate.

A recording of the Preliminary Meeting will be made available on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable following the close of the Preliminary Meeting. 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 Preliminary Meeting. The making and publication of these recordings are a means by which the ExA meets the legal requirement to hold the Preliminary Meeting (and any other hearings) in public. In this regard, **anyone speaking at the Preliminary Meeting 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 Preliminary Meeting will be produced and published as soon as practicable following the close of the Preliminary Meeting.

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 Secretary of State's decision on the Development Consent Order. If you actively participate in the Preliminary Meeting, 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.

The Examination process

The Examination of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects 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 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects 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 Local Impact Reports if they wish. Whilst these are voluntary, the Planning Act 2008 provides that if they are provided, they must be considered by the SoS in reaching a decision. Consequently, Local Impact Reports are a very important method for local authorities to communicate issues of concern to the ExA, the SoS and their residents.
- Interested Parties can make Written Representations and comment on Written Representations made by other parties.
- Interested Parties can respond to the ExA's written questions and comment on responses to these written questions provided by others.
- Interested Parties may be asked to contribute to the making of Statements of Common Ground 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. Statements of Common Ground most usefully extend to catalogue matters that are not agreed or are outstanding.

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.

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 Written Representations and Statements of Common Ground.

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 Preliminary Meeting. 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 Interested Parties, it will be very helpful to the ExA if these could be progressed as early as possible.

The interrelationship with other projects is discussed at **Annex C** of the Rule 6 Letter issued on 7 August 2023

Hearings

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

Any registered Interested Party may request an **Open Floor Hearing** 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, Open Floor Hearings are subject to the powers of control of the ExA, as set out in the Planning Act 2008 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 Interested Parties are normally provided with an additional time allowance, recognising their representative role.

The Applicant's draft Development Consent Order provides for the Compulsory Acquisition of land and rights, and the Temporary Possession of land. Affected Persons (i.e., those whose land or rights over land are affected) have a right to request and be heard at a **Compulsory Acquisition Hearing**. If one or more Affected Persons request to be heard, then a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing must be held. Provisional dates for Compulsory Acquisition Hearings 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** 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 Issue Specific Hearing 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 dates reserved for Issue Specific Hearings and Interested Parties may make suggestions for topics to be discussed at an Issue Specific Hearing in their written or oral representations to the Preliminary Meeting.

The ExA may hold more than one Issue Specific Hearing on the draft Development Consent Order. This is normal practice, and they are held on a without prejudice basis. Parties can suggest modifications and amendments to the draft Development Consent Order 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 Development Consent Order is fit for purpose if the Secretary of State decides to grant consent, as any consent will be subject to Requirements (ie conditions) set out in the Development Consent Order.

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 (**Friday 24 November 2023**) for participants to notify the ExA that they wish to speak at an Open Floor Hearing or a Compulsory Acquisition Hearing.

Site inspections

As part of the Examination process the ExA may undertake site inspections. These can be either unaccompanied or accompanied. They 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. Notes of Unaccompanied Site Inspections are published on the [project webpage](#).

Accompanied Site Inspections 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 Accompanied Site Inspections is familiarisation only and no discussion of the merits of the Proposed Development will be entertained during an Accompanied Site Inspections.

A deadline of **Friday 24 November 2023** has been set for Interested Parties to make submissions suggesting sites and locations that the ExA should visit. These will be used to inform site inspections.

The ExA may decide to hold Unaccompanied Site Inspections 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 Accompanied Site Inspections 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 an Unaccompanied Site Inspections on an access required basis

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</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions on the Examination Procedure, including the draft Examination Timetable • Requests to be heard orally at the Preliminary Meeting • Requests to be heard at Open Floor Hearing 1 	Thursday 24 August 2023
2.	Preliminary Meeting - adjourned	Thursday 7 September 2023
3.	<p>Procedural Deadline B</p> <p>Deadline for receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions on revised draft Examination Timetable • Requests to be heard orally at the Preliminary Meeting • Requests to be heard at Open Floor Hearing 1 <i>(Please respond even if you previously requested to be heard at the postponed OFH1)</i> 	Tuesday 31 October 2023

Annex C

4.	Preliminary Meeting resumes	Wednesday 8 November 2023
5.	Open Floor Hearing 1 (Evening)	Wednesday 8 November 2023
6.	Issue Specific Hearing 1 regarding the Scope of the Proposed Development; Need, Site Selection and Alternatives; and Environmental Matters	Thursday 9 November 2023
7.	Issue by the ExA of Examination Timetable	As soon practicable after the Preliminary Meeting

8.	<p>Deadline 1</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Impact Reports from Local Authorities • Statements of Common Ground requested by the ExA (see Annex G) • Comments on Relevant Representations (RR) • Summaries of all RR exceeding 1500 words • Written summaries of oral submissions made at Open Floor Hearing 1 held on 8 November 2023 • Notification by Statutory Parties of their wish to be considered as an Interested Party (IP) by the ExA. • Applicant's draft itinerary for an Accompanied Site Inspection (if required) • Requests to be heard by interested parties 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 • Suggested locations for site inspections (Accompanied or Unaccompanied), including the reason for nomination, issues to be observed and whether the location(s) require access to private land. 	Friday 24 November 2023
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants updated documents – both clean version and version showing tracked changes since the last submitted versions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Draft Development Consent Order ○ Explanatory Memorandum ○ Book of Reference ○ Statement of Reasons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant’s reports on progress (see Annex G) ○ Report on the interrelationships with other National Infrastructure Projects ○ Schedule of progress regarding objections and agreements in relation to Compulsory Acquisition, Temporary Possession, other land rights and blight ○ Schedule of progress regarding Protective Provisions and Statutory Undertakers ○ Schedule of the latest versions of the Applicant’s submitted documents and documents to be certified 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schedule of Progress towards securing other consents • Any further information requested by ExA for this deadline 	
9.	<p>Publication by the ExA of:</p> <p>First Written Questions (if required)</p>	Friday 1 December 2023
10.	<p>Deadline 1A</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Representations • Summary of all WRs exceeding 1500 words 	Thursday 7 December 2023
11.	<p>Deadline 2</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on submissions at Deadline 1. • Updated Statements of Common Ground in clear and tracked changes version • Comments on the Applicant’s draft itinerary for the Accompanied Site Visit • Updated Applicant’s documents – clean version and version showing tracked changes since the last submitted versions of: 	Friday 15 December 2023

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report on the interrelationships with other National Infrastructure Projects ○ Schedule of progress regarding objections and agreements in relation to Compulsory Acquisition, Temporary Possession, other land rights and blight ○ Schedule of progress regarding Protective Provisions and Statutory Undertakers ○ Schedule of the latest versions of the Applicant's submitted documents and documents to be certified ○ Schedule of Progress towards securing other consents ○ Draft Development Consent Order ○ Explanatory Memorandum ○ Book of Reference ○ Statement of Reasons ● Any further information requested by ExA for this deadline 	
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<p>12.</p>	<p>Deadline 3</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responses to the ExA's First Written Questions • Comments on submissions received at Deadline 1A 	<p>Wednesday 3 January 2024</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Week reserved for hearings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accompanied Site Visit (if required) • Further Issue Specific Hearing(s) (if required) • Further Open Floor Hearing(s) (if required) • Compulsory Acquisition Hearing(s) (if required) 	<p>w/c 22 January 2024</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>Deadline 4</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on submissions for Deadlines 2 and 3; • Updated Statements of Common Ground in clean and tracked changes version • Written summaries of oral submissions made at hearings during w/c 22January 2024 (if required) 	<p>Wednesday 14 February 2024</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated Applicant’s documents – clean version and version showing tracked changes since the last submitted versions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report on the interrelationships with other National Infrastructure Projects ○ Schedule of progress regarding objections and agreements in relation to Compulsory Acquisition, ○ Temporary Possession, other land rights and blight ○ Schedule of progress regarding Protective Provisions and Statutory Undertakers ○ Schedule of the latest versions of the Applicant’s submitted documents and documents to be certified ○ Schedule of Progress towards securing other consents ○ Draft Development Consent Order ○ Explanatory Memorandum ○ Book of Reference 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Statement of Reasons ● Any further information requested by ExA for this deadline 	
15.	<p>Publication by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Second Written Questions (if required) ● Report on the Implications for European Sites (if required) 	Wednesday 21 February 2024
16.	<p>Deadline 5</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Comments on submissions made at Deadline 4 ● Any further information requested by ExA ● Responses to the ExAs Second Written Questions ● Comments on the Report on Implications for European Sites (if required) 	Wednesday 13 March 2024
17.	<p>Publication of the ExA's commentary on, or schedule of changes to, the draft Development Consent Order (if required)</p>	Wednesday 20 March 2024

<p>18.</p>	<p>Deadline 6</p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on submissions made at Deadline 5 • Comments on ExA’s commentary on, or schedule of changes to, the dDCO • Final Statements of Common Ground in clear and tracked changes version • Updated Applicant’s final documents – clean version and version showing tracked changes since the last submitted versions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Report on the interrelationships with other National Infrastructure Projects ○ Schedule of progress regarding objections and agreements in relation to Compulsory Acquisition, Temporary Possession, other land rights and blight ○ Schedule of progress regarding Protective Provisions and Statutory Undertakers ○ Schedule of the latest versions of the Applicant’s submitted 	<p>Wednesday 10 April 2024</p>
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	<p>documents and documents to be certified</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schedule of Progress towards securing other consents ○ Draft Development Consent Order ○ Explanatory Memorandum ○ Book of Reference ○ Statement of Reasons ● Any further information requested by ExA 	
<p>19.</p>	<p>Deadline 7</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 that have not been resolved to their satisfaction. ● Comments on submissions for Deadline 6It's ● Any other information requested by the ExA for this deadline 	<p>Wednesday 8 May 2024</p>

20.	The ExA is under a duty to complete the Examination of the application by the end of the period of six months	Wednesday 8 May 2024
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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.

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 ExA may also raise questions in the RIES to confirm or clarify matters that remain outstanding.

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 and/ or Regulation 28 of The Offshore Marine Regulations.

NOTIFICATION OF INITIAL HEARINGS

Open Floor Hearing 1	
Date:	Wednesday 8 November 2023
Seating available at venue for those attending at the venue in person	17:30pm
Arrangements conference for those participating via Microsoft Teams	17:30pm for 17:45pm Arrive at 17:30pm to enter the virtual lobby. From here you will be admitted to the Arrangements Conference by the Case Team and given further instructions. The Arrangements Conference will start at 17.45pm.
Hearing Starts	18:00pm
Venue and joining instructions	Aspen Suite Hilton Doubletree Lincoln Brayford Wharf North LN1 1YW and via Microsoft Teams Full instructions on how to join will be provided to those who have had a request to register accepted by the ExA.

**Issue Specific Hearing 1 regarding the scope of development, need and
environmental matters**

Date:	Thursday 9 November 2023
Seating available at venue for those attending at the venue in person	09:30am

Issue Specific Hearing 1 regarding the scope of development, need and environmental matters	
Arrangements conference for those participating via Microsoft Teams	<p>09.30am for 09:45am</p> <p>Arrive at 09:30am to enter the virtual lobby. From here you will be admitted to the Arrangements Conference by the Case Team and given further instructions.</p> <p>The Arrangements Conference will start at 09.45pm.</p>
Hearing Starts	10.00am
Venue and joining instructions	<p>Aspen Suite Hilton Doubletree Lincoln Brayford Wharf North LN1 1YW and via Microsoft Teams</p> <p>Full instructions on how to join will be provided to those who have had a request to register accepted by the ExA.</p>

If you would like to participate in any of the Hearings, then you are required to submit a request to register on or before **Tuesday 31 October 2023**. Information about how to submit a request to register is provided in the Rule 6 letter.

If you simply wish to observe any of the hearings, then you **do not** need to make a request to register as you will be able to either:

1. attend at the physical venue in person to observe the proceedings;
2. 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; and/or
3. watch the recording of the event which will be published on the [project webpage](#) shortly after the event has finished.

It is important that requests to register are submitted separately from any other written submission. Please select the appropriate Deadline and Submission Item on the '[Make a Submission](#)' page and ensure the submission is titled appropriately to allow us to quickly identify which event the notification relates to. **Annex E** provides further information about the '[Make a Submission](#)' page. Please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter if you require any support to attend a hearings.

Hearing agendas

Agendas for these hearings will be published 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.

Procedure at hearings

The Examination will principally be a written process (see the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice Note 8.4](#)), supplemented where necessary by various types of hearings. Please refer to the [Advice Note 8.5](#) and [Advice Note 8.6](#) as these provide important information about hearing procedures.

The procedure to be followed at hearings is set out in Rule 14 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010. The ExA is responsible for the oral questioning of a person giving evidence.

Hearing livestream and recording

A link to a livestream for each hearing will be made available on the [project webpage](#) shortly before any hearing is due to open. The livestream is available to anybody who wishes to observe a hearing in real time.

All hearings are recorded, and the recordings will be made available on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable after the close of the hearing. The recordings allow any member of the public who is interested in the application and the Examination to find out what has been discussed.

Availability of Examination Documents

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

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](#) which is accessible by clicking the blue button 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 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 [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 location/locations listed in the table below. Please note that you will need to bring a form of identification and register as a member/library member in order to use a computer at these locations.

Local authority	Venue/address	Opening hours	Printing costs
West Lindsey District Council	West Lindsey District Council Guildhall Marshall's Yard Gainsborough Lincolnshire DN21 2NA	Monday: 09:00 – 17:00 Tuesday: 09:00 – 17:00 Wednesday: 09:00 – 17:00 Thursday: 09:00 – 17:00 Friday: 09:00 – 17:00 Saturday: Closed	Printing costs available on request from West Lindsey District Council

Local authority	Venue/address	Opening hours	Printing Costs
Lincolnshire County Council	Gainsborough Library Cobden Street Gainsborough Lincs DN21 2NG	Sunday: Closed Monday: 09:00 – 18:00 Tuesday: 09:00 – 18:00 Wednesday: 09:00 – 18:00 Thursday: 09:00 – 17:00 Friday: 09:00 – 18:00 Saturday: 09:00 – 13:00 Sunday: Closed	A4 BW COST 10p per side A4 COL COST 25p per side A3 BW COST 20p per side A3 COL COST 50p per side
Lincolnshire County Council	Lincoln Central Library Free School Lane Town Centre Lincoln	Monday: 09:00 – 17:00 Tuesday: 09:00 – 17:00 Wednesday: 09:00 – 17:00 Thursday: 09:00 – 18:00 Friday: 09:00 – 17:00 Saturday: 09:00 – 16:00 Sunday: Closed	A4 BW COST 10p per side A4 COL COST 25p per side A3 BW COST 20p per side A3 COL COST 50p per side
Nottinghamshire County Council	Retford Library Churchgate Retford Nottinghamshire DN22 6PE	Monday to Friday: 09:00 – 18:00 Saturday: 09:00 – 15:30 Sunday: Closed	A4 BW COST 20p per side A4 COL COST 50p per side A3 BW COST 50p per side

			A3 COL COST £1 per side
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Information about the 'Make a Submission' page

The ['Make a Submission' page](#) 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 WEBS. 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 [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 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 D** 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' page](#), please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter and they will assist.