

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

Agenda for Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1): Scope of Proposed development; Need, Site Selection and Alternatives; and Environmental Matters

Notification of the date, time, and venue for the Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) on Thursday 9 November 2023 was provided in Annex D of the [11 October 2023 Rule 6 Notification of resumed Preliminary Meeting](#).

Joining Instructions will be issued via email no later than the day before the Issue Specific Hearing to all parties who registered their attendance with the Planning Inspectorate.

If you simply wish to observe the Issue Specific Hearing, 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.

Issue Specific Hearing 1: Scope of Proposed development; Need, Site Selection and Alternatives; and Environmental Matters

Date	Thursday 9 November 2023
Seating available at venue for those attending at the venue in person	09:30am
Arrangements conference for those participating via Microsoft Teams	09:30am for 09:45am 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.

Issue Specific Hearing 1: Scope of Proposed development; Need, Site Selection and Alternatives; and Environmental Matters

	The Arrangements Conference will start at 09:45am.
Hearing Starts	10:00am
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.

Attendees

The Examining Authority (ExA) would be assisted by attendance of representatives of the following parties:

- The Applicant
- Lincolnshire County Council
- West Lindsay District Council
- 7000 Acres

This does not indicate that other parties will not be able to contribute. All Interested Parties are invited to attend and make oral representations on the matters in the Agenda, subject to the ExA's ability to control the hearing.

If you have not already confirmed your attendance, please do so by 23:59pm on Tuesday 31 October 2023 (Procedural Deadline B) via the ['Make a Submission' portal](#) on the project website.

If you require assistance, please contact the Case Team at the project mailbox: WestBurtonSolarProject@planninginspectorate.gov.uk or on 0303 444 5000.

AGENDA FOR ISSUE SPECIFIC HEARING 1: SCOPE OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT; NEED, SITE SELECTION AND ALTERNATIVES; AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

- 1. Welcome, introductions and arrangements for the hearings.**
- 2. Purpose of the Issue Specific Hearing and confirmation of those who notified the Examining Authority of a wish to be heard.**
- 3. Scope of the Proposed Development**

a) Introduction

The Applicant is asked to introduce the Proposed Development, covering the following:

- Energy generation and storage
- Grid Connection
- Design, scale and layout parameters, including the approach to the 'Rochdale Envelope'
- Construction Management
- Overview of operations, including operational life span.
- Decommissioning

(Guide time: 10 minutes).

b) Generating capacity and relationship with electricity exported

The Applicant is asked to outline the overall generating capacity of the Proposed Development and to explain the relationship between the generating capacity and the electricity exported, including reference to minimum and maximum capacities.

c) Role of the Energy Storage System and its capacity

The Applicant is asked to outline the role and purpose of the energy storage system and its capacity.

4. Need, Site Selection and Alternatives

- a) Planning Policy and Guidance; relevance of recent solar farm decisions

To include consideration of the weight to be accorded to the relevant draft National Policy Statements (NPS); the extent to which local policies are important and relevant to both site selection and scheme assessment; and the relevance of recent solar farm decisions.

b) Need and Benefits

The Applicant is asked to set out their position.

c) The approach to site selection and the extent of the Order limits:

To include consideration of the implications of the extent of agricultural land required.

d) Use of alternative technologies

To include the applicant's response to points raised in representations regarding alternative approaches to renewable energy generation.

5. Environmental Matters

a) Landscape and Visual impacts

Particular focus on the Applicant's assessment in terms of identified beneficial and adverse effects; consideration of how the cumulative landscape and visual effects of this and other nearby solar projects have been analysed.

b) Ecology and Biodiversity

Consideration of ecological survey work, including the impacts of the Proposed Development on existing trees/hedgerow and the value of new planting.

c) Soils and Agriculture

Consideration of National Policy which encourages the minimisation of impacts on the best and most versatile agricultural land and preferably use of land in areas of poorer quality. The impact on soil properties of an extended fallow period.

d) Cultural Heritage

Consideration of the approach taken to archaeological field investigations in establishing the sensitivity of the site areas.

e) Transport and Access

Consideration of road infrastructure compatibility with increased road use during construction, operation and decommissioning. Particular focus on the abnormal load access and road widening requirements for access. And, how all road users, and users of PROWs have been considered.

f) Cumulative assessments

Applicant to provide an update on work to consider the interrelationships with other solar projects (as referred to in Annex C and Annex G of the [Rule 6 letter, 10 August 2023](#)).

6. Statements of Common Ground

Update on the progress with Statements of Common Ground relevant to environmental matters with the following:

West Lindsay District Council, Lincolnshire County Council, Bassetlaw District Council, Nottinghamshire Country Council, the Environment Agency, Historic England.

7. Review of action points arising

8. Close of hearing

Purpose of ISH1

This Hearing is being held to help address matters identified by the ExA through its reading of the Application and site inspections to date. The ExA considers that it would assist its examination for matters relating to the Scope of Development to be examined through a Hearing in order to ensure that the nature and scope of the Proposed Development are clearly understood. It considers that matters relating to Need, Alternatives and Site Selection require oral representations and questioning in order to ensure adequate examination of these issues. A discussion of Environmental Matters is also required to address some of the matters raised in Relevant Representations. At this stage of the Examination the discussion will be high level and so the ExA expects to hear principally from the Applicant and their advisers in clarifying various matters.

The agenda provided above is indicative and may be subject to change on the day. Documents within the Examination Library should be taken as read and need not be repeated in oral submissions, though signposting to key documents and representations may assist.

Procedure at ISH1

Guidance under the Planning Act 2008 and the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 provide that it is for the ExA to probe, test and assess the evidence through direct questions of persons making oral representations at Hearings. Questioning at the Hearing will be led by the ExA. Cross questioning of a person giving evidence by another person will only be permitted if the ExA decides that it is necessary to ensure representations are adequately tested or that an Interested Party has had a fair chance to put its case.