



# Preliminary Meeting Note

**Application:** East Yorkshire Solar Farm

**Reference:** EN010143

**Time and date:** 10:00am on 21 May 2024

**Venue:** The Parsonage Hotel and Spa, Escrick, North Yorkshire and virtually (Microsoft Teams)

*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

Simon Warder welcomed those present and introduced himself as the single Examining Authority (ExA) to examine the East Yorkshire Solar Farm application.

The ExA explained that the appointment was made by the Inspectorate under a delegation from the Secretary of State (for the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on Friday 12 January 2024).

The ExA explained that he would be examining the application made by East Yorkshire Solar Farm Limited ('the Applicant') before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State 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 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.

## 2. Audio recording

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

## 3. General Data Protection Regulation

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

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

#### **4. Examination Process**

The ExA briefly explained the examination process under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). Further information can be found in the Planning Inspectorate's [Advice Note 8.4](#)

#### **5. Initial Assessment of Principal Issues**

The ExA explained the purpose of the Initial Assessment of Principal Issues (section 88 of the PA2008), which can be found in [Annex C](#) of the [Rule 6](#) letter of 23 April 2024 and asked for any observations on them.

There were no suggestions for changes to the Initial Assessment of Principal Issues from the parties attending the hearing or in written submissions.

#### **6. 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.

Joanne Marshall on behalf of East Riding of Yorkshire Council confirmed that the council's Local Impact Report (LIR) will be presented to council members on 20 June 2024 and this will take place after Deadline 1. The ExA explained that Deadline 1 includes a large number of other documents but he could allow the council to submit its LIR at Deadline 2. The Applicant stated that it is content for East Riding of Yorkshire Council to submit its LIR at Deadline 2, and suggested that the draft LIR would be available before council approval. Joanne Marshall on behalf of the Council confirmed that the agenda for the committee meeting will be published on 14 June and the draft LIR will be available on that date.

Michael Reynolds on behalf of North Yorkshire Council confirmed that its LIR is not required to be signed-off by its committee members and it can submit the LIR at Deadline 1.

Guy Longbottom asked whether time will be allocated during the Examination to consider matters such as the effect of the proposal on the landscape, the health of local people and drainage. The ExA confirmed that the Initial Assessment of Principle Issues includes all these matters and there will be opportunities for Interested Parties to make submissions on these matters in writing and at future hearings.

All comments received were duly noted by the ExA and considerations will be reflected in the Rule 8 Letter.

The Examination Timetable can be found in the [Rule 8](#) letter published on 28 May 2024.

#### **7. Hearings and Site Inspections**

The ExA clarified the purpose of:

- Issue Specific Hearings

- Compulsory Acquisition Hearings
- Open Floor Hearings
- Accompanied Site Inspections

The ExA sought comments on the arrangements for the above events.

Sally Beckett considered that it would be beneficial for Sir David Davis MP to accompany the ExA on future site visits. She suggested that a site visit should take place during both summer and winter and for the ExA to visit each property that would be near the Proposed Development. The ExA confirmed that it would not be practical to visit every affected property and that the time limit for undertaking the Examination would not allow a visit to take place when the trees are not in leaf. However, he would be happy to visit a representative sample of properties and explained that the Applicant's landscape and visual assessment includes winter views. Sir David is welcome to go on the accompanied site inspection. The Interested Parties are invited to submit comments on the itinerary for the site inspection.

Further information relating to hearings and site inspections can be found in our [Advice Note 8.5](#).

## **8. Procedural decisions**

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

Procedural decisions can be found in [Annex F](#) of the Rule 6 Letter.

The Applicant queried the need for a Statement of Common Ground between the Applicant and the UK Health Security Agency. The ExA explained that he noted concerns relating to the effect of electromagnetic fields on human health and the UK Health Security Agency may have comments on this matter.

Michael Field provided examples of previously decided solar farm Development Consent Order (DCO) applications with specific reference to shortcomings in how electrical output was calculated and considered in the DCO process. He considered that the ExA should be supported by an electrical engineer who could analyse the design to determine the realistic output of the proposal so that a minimum output figure could be included in the DCO. The ExA explained that his role will involve considering significant environmental effects. Nevertheless, electrical output will be a consideration during the Examination and that he was aware of the issues involved.

The Applicant explained that its own engineers had estimated the output of the scheme. The Applicant suggested that an electrical engineer would not be required to support the ExA, as Interested Parties can comment on the Applicant's submissions about output and the ExA may choose to issue questions. The ExA confirmed that he will consider whether the support of an electrical engineer is necessary.

## **9. Other Matters and close**

There were no points under Other Matters and the ExA closed the meeting.