
EAST YORKSHIRE SOLAR FARM

**East Yorkshire Solar Farm
EN010143**

**Applicant's Summary of Oral Submissions at the Open Floor
Hearing and Post Hearing Notes**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1.1 An Open Floor Hearing (**OFH**) was held at 18:00 on Tuesday 9 July 2024 at The Parsonage Hotel, Escrick.
- 1.1.2 Parties from the Examining Authority, Pinsent Masons LLP (the Applicant's legal advisers for the Application) and six individual representatives were present at the OFH. It is the Applicant's oral submissions that are summarised in this document.

Table 1-1 Applicant's Summary of Oral Submissions and Post Hearing Notes

#	Agenda Item	Post-Hearing Notes
1.	Welcome, introductions and arrangements for the hearing	<p>The following parties were present at the hearing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Simon Warder, the Examining Authority (the ExA).• Amy Stirling, Senior Associate at Pinsent Masons LLP, the solicitors for East Yorkshire Solar Farm Limited (the Applicant) for this matter.• Jack Spurway, Head of Planning for the Applicant.• Emma Humphrey, individual representative.• Alison Taylor, individual representative.• Sally Beckitt, individual representative.• Peter Axup, individual representative.• David Fielder, individual representative.• John Stone, individual representative.
2.	Confirmation of who has notified the ExA of a wish to be heard at the OFH	<p>A list of those who spoke at the OFH is provided above.</p>

3. Oral submissions from Interested Parties

Oral submissions were made by Emma Humphrey, Alison Taylor, Sally Beckitt, Peter Axup, David Fielder and John Stone, all as local residents. Ms Stirling thanked the Interested Parties for attending the OFH and responded to certain points during the course of the OFH, though the Applicant notes that the majority of points raised by the Interested Parties are responded to across the other documents submitted by the Applicant during the Examination, including at Deadline 3.

As a general point, Ms Stirling noted that the Applicant is bringing forward a Scheme for which there is an established need, as it is a solar PV project with an output above 50 megawatts, and in accordance with the National Policy Statements (which are material considerations in the determination of this application), is designated as critical national priority infrastructure, with the need for the Scheme firmly established in the decarbonisation benefits and security of supply that the Scheme will bring. The Applicant has sought to bring forward a sensitive Scheme, both to the environment and the local community, with a host of management plans in place to secure obligations that the Applicant is legally required to comply with. For example, there are provisions for traffic and transport, landscape management and a community liaison group throughout construction, which are all points raised by the Interested Parties during the OFH.

The ExA stated that there were two main themes throughout the submissions of the Interested Parties at the OFH: (1) a lack of consultation and/or follow-ups to responses received during consultation; and (2) the absence of any benefits to the community.

In relation to the ExA's first point, Ms Stirling responded that the Applicant has carried out several rounds of consultation during the pre-application process, including a round of pre-application statutory consultation as is its legal obligation to do so, including community and stakeholder events, newspaper notices, written correspondence to individuals, considering feedback and preparing a Consultation Report **[APP-025]**. Indeed, the Consultation Report was submitted with the Application and was found to be of a sufficient standard, which formed part of the reasoning for the ExA accepting the Application for Examination. Ms Stirling also noted that the Examination process contains multiple rounds of Written Questions, Hearings and Deadlines, meaning there is plenty of opportunity for local residents to engage. The ExA queried whether dialogue was ongoing, to which Ms Stirling responded that the Applicant remains committed to ongoing dialogue.

As for the ExA's second point, Ms Stirling noted that whilst the Applicant is considering the provision of a community benefit fund, this is not a relevant planning matter and is not a matter which can be factored into the determination of whether or not consent for the Scheme is granted. In addition, and more generally, the Applicant has carried out various assessments throughout the preparation of the Application and during the Examination, which have found no significant effects on the local community which require mitigation – including, for example, there being no impact on the provision of services. As such, there is no legitimate planning purpose for a contribution as it is not required to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

The ExA asked if the community benefit fund is being considered in parallel to the formal planning process, to which Mr Spurway noted that the Applicant sought feedback from the local community on the fund being brought forward as part of the Scheme. The Applicant received meaningful feedback and as the Scheme progress, if granted, this fund will come forward and will take on the broad input received during the statutory consultation process.

The ExA asked the Applicant, from a public relations perspective, to make the local community aware of this fund. Mr Spurway responded that this was certainly referenced in the statutory consultation material and reiterated that it will be brought forward as part of the Scheme. Ms Stirling expanded that Question 15 of the statutory consultation feedback form (Section 2 of Appendix K to the Consultation Report **[APP-036]**) directly refers to the community benefit fund, with these materials being available throughout the consultation events and on the Applicant's website.

4. **Other Matters** N/A

5. **Close** N/A

