



Meeting note

Project name	Springwell Solar Farm
File reference	EN010149
Status	Final
Author	The Planning Inspectorate
Date	24 January 2023
Meeting with	EDF Renewables
Venue	Microsoft Teams
Meeting objectives	Inception Meeting
Circulation	All attendees

Summary of key points discussed, and advice given

The Planning Inspectorate (the Inspectorate) advised that a note of the meeting would be taken and published on its website in accordance with section 51 of the Planning Act 2008 (the PA2008). Any advice given under section 51 would not constitute legal advice upon which applicants (or others) could rely.

Proposed Development

EDF Renewables stated it has a partnership with Luminous Energy working on the Springwell Solar Farm. Together they form the Applicant, Springwell Energyfarm Limited.

The Applicant has secured an 800 Mega Watt (MW) connection agreement with National Grid. National Grid require a new substation in the area and is engaging with the Applicant on its location.

The Applicant informed the Inspectorate that there are agricultural tenants and confirmed a Book of Reference (BoR) would be provided.

The Applicant explained that the Site adjoins RAF Digby and confirmed initial engagement has taken place.

The Proposed Development would be categorised as three areas: Springwell West, Springwell Central and Springwell East.

Springwell West: the A15 single carriageway runs through this area along with an overhead powerline.

Springwell Central: The Inspectorate queried areas excluded from the Site within the centre of this part of the Site. The Applicant explained that this land does not form part of the emerging scheme.

Springwell East: The Applicant noted the presence of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) across the Site generally and additional, lower voltage, overhead lines.

Consultation

The Inspectorate asked when the Applicant will conduct non-statutory and statutory consultation. The Applicant confirmed non-statutory consultation is taking place in Q1 2023 and anticipates statutory consultation will take place in Q3 2023.

The Inspectorate queried if the Applicant has held discussions with Local Authorities (LA). The Applicant confirmed that early discussions had taken place and the Inspectorate advised the Applicant to have as much engagement as early as possible.

The Applicant has completed a letter drop in January amongst other communications and its public non-statutory consultation has gone live.

EIA Scoping

The Inspectorate asked if the Applicant is proposing to use the land for grazing, in which the Applicant explained that no decisions have yet been made.

The Inspectorate queried if the Applicant would be proposing fixed or tracker solar panels, in which the Applicant explained they are exploring opportunities and will decide closer to submission. The Inspectorate also explained that a solar advice note will be published soon focusing on information for environmental assessment and consultation.

The Applicant stated their scoping request submission is planned for late March.

Submission date

The Applicant explained it is planning to submit its DCO application in Q2 of 2024.

Specific decisions/ follow-up required?

The following actions were agreed:

- The Applicant suggested another project update meeting with the Inspectorate after the consultation period has ended and after receiving the EIA Scoping opinion. The Inspectorate will get back to the Applicant regarding dates.
- The Inspectorate recommended to the Applicant to consider using its draft document feedback service.

