



## Meeting note

<b>Project name</b>	Springwell Solar Farm
<b>File reference</b>	EN010149
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	10 August 2023
<b>Meeting with</b>	Springwell Energy Farm Limited (the Applicant)
<b>Venue</b>	Microsoft Teams
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Project Update Meeting
<b>Circulation</b>	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.

### **National Grid Substation update**

Springwell Energy Farm Limited (the Applicant) explained it has identified its own preferred National Grid (NG) substation location within the proposed DCO boundary, which is a refinement on the options presented at non-statutory consultation, but notes the NG substation location is ultimately not within its control. The Applicant is continuing to work with NG to understand their proposed location and consenting process. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to consider the implications for its statutory consultation of the outcomes of the NG substation site selection process. The Applicant noted the implications and provided an explanation of its approach to managing them.

### **Engagement with statutory consultees**

The Applicant stated it has held discussions with statutory bodies including Natural England (NE) and the Environmental Agency (EA) and have agreed working relationships.

The Applicant explained it has largely completed the environmental surveys, with hedgerow surveys planned to be undertaken over the summer and trial trenching to begin after this year's harvest.

The Inspectorate requested it be kept informed of any key issues that arise from the surveys.

## **Progress towards statutory consultation**

The Applicant stated its aim is to begin statutory consultation in Q4 2023, depending on the outcomes of the NG decision on preferred substation site.

Amongst other material and events, the Applicant explained it will be sending out newsletters and information booklets to the wider community explaining the project, as part of statutory consultation.

## **Planning programme**

The Applicant stated it plans to submit its Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Inspectorate in summer 2024.

The Inspectorate queried if the Applicant would like to make use of the draft documents service. The Applicant confirmed it would like to make use of the service closer to the submission date. The Inspectorate reminded the Applicant to provide the Inspectorate as much notice as possible, and a discussion was held on the typical amount of time Applicants should build into the project programme to benefit from draft document feedback.

## **Specific decisions/ follow-up required?**

The following actions were agreed:

- The Inspectorate and the Applicant will look to arrange another project update meeting in late September 23.