



## Meeting note

<b>Project name</b>	Rosefield Solar Farm
<b>File reference</b>	EN010158
<b>Status</b>	<b>Final</b>
<b>Author</b>	The Planning Inspectorate
<b>Date</b>	9 August 2023
<b>Meeting with</b>	EDF Renewables
<b>Venue</b>	Microsoft Teams
<b>Meeting objectives</b>	Inception 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.

The Inspectorate explained that the publication of the meeting note could be delayed up to six months, or until a formal scoping request had been submitted.

### Proposed Development

The Applicant (Rosefield Energyfarm Limited) explained that it is comprised of two companies, EDF Renewables and PS Renewables.

Working with the landowner, Claydon Estate, Rosefield is a proposed new solar farm with battery storage and supporting infrastructure to connect to the National Grid network near Botolph Claydon, Buckinghamshire. The Applicant has secured a grid connection agreement at the East Claydon Substation. The site extends across four parcels of land (with a single landowner) between HS2, Claydon House and the East Claydon substation.

The main features of the Proposed Development include:

- ground mounted solar PV generating station;
- Balance of solar system;
- Project substation;
- Battery energy storage systems (BESS);
- Ancillary infrastructure;
- Landscaping, habitat management, biodiversity enhancement and amenity improvements; and
- Vehicular access.

The Applicant shared a conceptual plan of the Proposed Development with the Inspectorate, which also illustrated the potential area within which underground cable

routes, access tracks and temporary construction compounds could be located between the main parcels. The ongoing HS2 development was shown in relation to the Proposed Development, located to the southeast of the site.

### **Approach to Consultation**

The Applicant sought early engagement from July 2023 with key stakeholders, including the Inspectorate, the local authority and parish councilors.

Non-Statutory Consultation was planned from late September for six weeks to introduce Rosefield and seek initial feedback to inform design. Near neighbours and landowners would be approached prior to the project's public launch. The Applicant also confirmed that they were in discussions with National Grid to understand National Grid's plans to extend the East Claydon substation.

The Inspectorate advised that the Applicant provide as much information as possible and times as to when the statutory consultees need to be engaged.

### **Constraints Plan and approach to Environment Impact Assessment (EIA)**

The Applicant showed a plan that displayed the environmental and infrastructure constraints and cumulative projects within the site and locality. Environmental designations outside of the site boundary included Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), ancient woodland, listed buildings and a registered park and garden. A small part of the site was in flood zone 2. Existing infrastructure included Public Rights of Way, the National Grid substation and associated overhead lines. These, along with the undulating topography of the site, have and will continue to inform the scheme design.

The Applicant was undertaking many surveys including, but not limited to, Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), ecology, landscape and archaeology surveys.

The Applicant planned to apply the Rochdale Envelope approach. There would be an early refinement of options via a design-led process, with flexibility retained where justified. The Applicant intends to engage with surrounding developers to inform the cumulative assessment where appropriate.

The Applicant set out its approach to scoping and provided early thoughts on topics that could potentially be scoped out based on findings to date and experience from previous projects. The Inspectorate advised the Applicant to refer to previously issued scoping opinions for the solar sector to ensure that a robust justification is provided when proposing to scope out matters from the EIA.

### **Planning Programme**

The Applicant explained it planned to carry out a Statutory Consultation in Q2/Q3 2024 with the final submission expected in Q1 2025.