



Planning Inspectorate

National Infrastructure Planning
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To:
The Applicant; All Interested Parties;
Affected Persons; Category 3 Persons;
Statutory Parties; and
Other Persons

Our Ref: EN010147
Date: 5 September 2025

Planning Act 2008 (as amended) (PA2008) – Sections (s) 91, 92 and 93 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules (EPR) 2010 – Rules 13, 16 and 17

Application by Photovolt Development Partners on behalf of Solar Five Limited (the Applicant) for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Botley West Solar Farm Project

1. Notification of Hearings and Site Inspections

We have made a Procedural Decision to hold the following Hearings and Site Inspections.

| Hearing | Date | Start time | Location |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|--|--|
| Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI1) | Tuesday 7 October 2025 | The ASI shall commence at 9:00am. Please refer to the itinerary at Annex A to this letter for subsequent arrangements. | Participants are asked to meet no later than 8.45 am for a safety briefing and the site inspection will commence at 9.00am. The meeting point will be at Farmoor Reservoir, Cumnor Road, OX2 9NS. |

| Hearing | Date | Start time | Location |
|--|--------------------------|--|--|
| Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1 (CAH1) | Wednesday 8 October 2025 | Hearing starts: 9:30am Seating available at venue from: 9:00am Virtual Arrangements Conference from: 9:00am | The hearings to be held between 8 and 10 October 2025 will be held at: The King's Centre, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES The Hearings can also be attended by virtual means using Microsoft Teams . Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered Hearing venue and arrangements as above. |
| Issue Specific Hearing (ISH2) on environmental matters, including the draft Development Consent Order | Thursday 9 October 2025 | Hearing starts: 9:30am Seating available at venue from: 9:00am Virtual Arrangements Conference from: 9:00am | |
| Open Floor Hearing 3 (OFH3) | Friday 10 October 2025 | Hearing starts: 9:30am Seating available at venue from: 9:00am Virtual Arrangements Conference from: 9:00am | |
| NOTE: If any of the above hearings are no longer required then notification will be published as soon as practicable on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website, providing reasonable notice to Interested Parties of the decision to cancel. | | | |

Applicant's notification duties

The applicant is reminded of its duty to notify and publicise hearings under rule 13(6) and 13(7) of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010.

Purpose of hearings

Please refer to The Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say](#) for information about the purpose of open floor, issue specific and compulsory acquisition hearings.

Registration and requests to participate in Hearings

Please register using the [event participation form](#) by Monday 22 September 2025 if you intend to participate in the hearings and provide all the information requested. If you have any difficulty completing the form please contact the case team.

Please note that by attending the event either in person or online you are agreeing to be filmed for the purposes of the online live stream of the event and the recording of the event which will get published on the [project webpage](#). A limited number of seats will be available for observers who wish not to be filmed at the event. Please contact the case team to notify them if you prefer not to be filmed at the event. A transcript of the event will also be published on the [project webpage](#) after the event.

Any request to participate in a Hearing should include the following information:

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top of any letter or email from The Planning Inspectorate);
- email address (if available) and contact telephone number;
- name and unique reference number of any person/organisation that you are representing (if applicable);
- for blended events, confirmation of whether you will participate virtually or in-person;
- confirmation of the hearing(s) you wish to participate in, the agenda item(s) on which you wish to speak and/or brief details of the topic(s) that you would like to raise;
- for compulsory acquisition hearings, the plot number(s) of the relevant land provided in the book of reference and the land plans; and
- the examination library reference number (with paragraph/page number where appropriate) of any documents you wish to refer to.

Joining instructions for hearings will be issued by the case team via email shortly before the hearing dates.

Please contact the case team if you require any support or assistance to attend any Hearing, either virtually or in person.

If you simply wish to observe any of the hearings then you can either:

1. [Watch a livestream of the event](#) - a link to the livestream will be made available on the project webpage shortly before the event is scheduled to begin; and/or
2. Watch the recording of the event which will be published on the project webpage shortly after the event has finished.

Alternatively, you can attend the physical event at the venue to observe the proceedings; however, to ensure there is adequate seating capacity at the venue we request that you register your attendance to observe only by **Monday 22 September 2025** using the [event participation form](#). Please note that it may not be possible to participate on the day if you have not registered your wish to speak by **Monday 22 September 2025**.

2. Format of Hearings

All Hearings will be Blended events. Blended events allow attendance both in-person and virtually through Microsoft Teams. The Hearings will be live-streamed, and a link will be posted on the project webpage before the start of the event. Please see [Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: What to expect at a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project event](#) for more information. These Advice Notes are updated periodically to align with the most up to date Government guidance and Planning Inspectorate's working practices.

3. Hearing outline agendas and requested attendees

In cognisance of the resource implications of preparing and participating in Hearings the ExA has taken several steps, including providing early notice of Hearings, and issuing outline agendas in advance of the Hearing dates as set out below. Your attendance will ensure that discussion can progress at pace, and evidence and conclusions can be tested, with the aim of reaching resolution before the close of the Examination. Your attendance will also ensure that we are able to make better use of Examination resources and of the time of the parties that are present.

Detailed agendas for all Hearings are likely to be published by the ExA on the project webpage at least five working days in advance of the Hearing date. However, the actual agenda on the day of each Hearing may be subject to change at the discretion of the ExA.

To enable participants to make a decision about attending Hearings, the below summarises the anticipated content at the Hearings. The ExA is also requesting attendance from some parties, as listed here, at those Hearings (although anyone is able to attend these public meetings and may be allowed to participate at the ExA discretion).

| Outline agenda | Requested attendees |
|---|---|
| CAH on Wednesday 8 October 2025 1. Representations from Affected Persons 2. Protective provisions and positions of statutory undertakers 3. Specific land matters 4. Draft Development Consent Order | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant• National Grid• Siemen's Healthcare Limited• Thames Water Ltd• Blenheim Palace• Mr Tim Sumner• Affected persons who registered a wish to speak at the CAH at Deadline 4 |
| ISH on Thursday 9 October 2025 1. Draft Development Consent Order 2. Flood Risk and Drainage 3. Ecology and Biodiversity 4. Heritage 5. Landscape 6. Noise and vibration | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Applicant• Cassington Parish Council• Cumnor Parish Council• Defence Infrastructure Organisation• Environment Agency• Oxfordshire Host Authorities• Oxford Aviation Services |

| Outline agenda | Requested attendees |
|---|---|
| 7. Socioeconomics 8. Traffic and Transportation (including aviation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic England • Natural England |
| OFH on Friday 10 October 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested Parties and Affected Persons that register at Deadline 5 |

4. Procedure at Hearings

The Examination will principally be a written process, supplemented where necessary by various types of Hearings. Please refer to the [Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects: What to expect at a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project event](#) as this provides important information about Hearing procedures.

The procedure to be followed at Hearings is set out in Rule 14 of the EPR. The ExA is responsible for the oral questioning of Interested Parties or Other Persons giving evidence and **will not allow cross-questioning** between parties.

All hearings are recorded. The recordings and transcripts will be made available on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable following the hearing. The recordings allow any member of the public who is interested in the application and the examination to find out what has been discussed at a hearing. It is therefore important to note that anyone speaking at the hearing will need to introduce themselves, including any organisation or groups that they represent, **each time they speak** to ensure that someone listening to the recording after the hearing is clear who was speaking.

As the recordings are retained and published, they form a public record that can contain personal information to which the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies. Please refer to our ['Privacy Notice'](#) for further information. Participants must do their best to avoid making public any information which they would otherwise wish to be kept private and confidential. If there is a need to refer to such information, it should be in written form. Although this will also be published, personal and private content can be redacted or removed before it is made publicly available. Any person who is unclear on this point should ask the case team for guidance before they place personal and private information into the public domain. The Planning Inspectorate's practice is to publish the recordings and transcripts and retain them for a period of five years from the Secretary of State's decision on the development consent order (DCO). If you actively participate in the hearing, it is important that you understand that you will be recorded and that the recording and transcript will be made available in the public domain.

The evidence presented orally at hearings should be included in post hearing submissions and submitted at the relevant deadline in the [examination timetable](#).

5. Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI)

At Annex A of this letter is the ExA's requested itinerary for the ASI, together with details of the arrangements for the visit.

In selecting the sites for an ASI, the ExA has had regard to the availability of public access alternatives, the need to enter onto private land and the necessity to gain a better understanding of an area if not already attained from earlier unaccompanied site inspections (USIs). A number of USIs have already taken place covering a proportion of those sites nominated by Interested Parties, and the ExA will be undertaking further USIs where possible and necessary in response to the site nominations.

6. Request under Rule 17

The applicant is requested to provide an updated compulsory acquisition tracker, land and rights negotiations tracker and book of reference at **Deadline 5**, providing up-to-date details that will assist in preparations for the Compulsory Acquisition Hearing scheduled for 8 October 2025.

If you have any queries, please contact the case team using the contact details at the head of this letter.

We look forward to working with all parties in the Examination of this application.

Yours faithfully

David Wallis

David Wallis
Lead member of the panel of Examining Inspectors

Annex A ASI Itinerary for Tuesday 7 October 2025

This communication does not constitute legal advice.
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Planning Act 2008 (as amended)

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Accompanied Site Inspection itinerary – Tuesday 7 October 2025

The itinerary for the accompanied site inspection can be found below.

Please note that the Examining Authority's (ExA) inspection of sites is not an opportunity to provide any oral representations on the project or discuss evidence. It is an opportunity for the ExA to look at the physical features that can be seen on, or from the sites. Participants may be invited by the ExA to point out specific features or sites of interest.

Joining the site visit

Participants are asked to meet no later than 8.45am for a safety briefing and the site inspection will commence at 9.00am. The meeting point will be at Farmoor Reservoir, Cumnor Road, OX2 9NS. Participants are asked to assemble promptly as the ExA will not wait for parties who are not present at the start time.

To ensure the smooth running of the ExA's inspection, attendees may wish to provide contact details for the day, notify the Case

Team if there are any changes in attendance, and ensure the Planning Inspectorate is made aware of any special access requirements.

Please register attendance using the [Event Participation Form](#) by **23:59** on **Monday 22 September 2025**. If you experience any issues using this form, please contact the Case Team at BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk.

For logistical and safety reasons, capacity on the transport that will be used for the ASI may be limited. Priority will be afforded to the Planning Inspectorate staff, the Applicant, IPs who have notified us in advance of their wish to attend, local authorities and relevant Statutory Parties. In the case of a large number of unexpected attendees, any Interested Parties who express a wish to attend the ASI for its duration may be contacted by the Case Team to discuss the option of meeting the ExA at relevant locations in the itinerary instead.

Clothing

Attendees are recommended to wear appropriate sturdy footwear and weather appropriate clothing. The Applicant will provide high visibility vests or participants are welcome to provide their own.

Sites on private land

Access onto private land is at all times by permission of the person controlling it; householders, occupiers and landowners may refuse to allow some persons accompanying the ExA onto their land. Under those circumstances, the ExA will decide whether or not to proceed with that part of the inspection and may ask those refused access to wait outside.

Refreshments and Toilet Facilities

Please note that refreshments will not be provided but provision has been made for comfort breaks throughout the day.

Cancellations

Please note that in the unlikely event that the Accompanied Site Inspection is cancelled we shall endeavour to contact attendees beforehand, but we ask that you regularly check the Planning Inspectorate's project webpage. Please note times may vary from those scheduled depending on circumstances.

Yours faithfully

David Wallis

David Wallis
Lead Member of the Panel of Examining Inspectors

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ITINERARY FOR THE ACCOMPANIED SITE INSPECTION

| Location | Stopping Point | Time | Purpose/Comments | What3Words |
|---|--|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 9:00am - Congregate at Farmoor Reservoir Car Park, Cumnor Road, OX2 9NS for safety briefing and board minibus | | | | W3W: ///pardon.tinsel.drummers |
| 9.30am to 9.40am drive from Farmoor Reservoir Car Park to Hill End Outdoor Education Centre | | | | |
| 1 | Hill End Outdoor Recreation Centre, OX2 9NJ | 9.40am to 10.10am (30 minutes) | Requested by ExA in Rule 17 letter [PD-010] | W3W: ///such.chained.curl |
| 10.10am to 10.25am drive from Hill End Outdoor Education Centre to Purwell Farm, Lower Road, OX29 8AE | | | | |
| 2 | Purwell Farm, Lower Road, OX29 8AE | 10.25am to 10.45am (20 minutes) | Requested by ExA in Rule 17 letter [PD-010] | W3W: ///verges.hiked.regime |
| 10.45am to 10.50am drive from Purwell Farm to Goose Eye Farm, Lower Road, OX29 8AE | | | | |
| 3 | Goose Eye Farm, Lower Road, OX29 8AE | 10.50am to 11.10am (20 minutes) | Requested by ExA in Rule 17 letter [PD-010] | W3W: ///cleanser.silent.whispers |
| 11.10am to 11.20am drive from Goose Eye Farm to College Farm, Lower Road, OX29 8AE | | | | |
| 4 | College Farm, Lower Road, OX29 8AE | 11.20am to 11.40am (20 minutes) | Requested by ExA in Rule 17 letter [PD-010] | W3W: ///culminate.stages.seatbelt |
| 11.40am to 12.00pm drive from College Farm to Springhill Road, Begbroke, OX5 1RX | | | | |
| 5 | Springhill Road, Begbroke, OX5 1RX This stop to include Village End, Springhill Farm and Springfield Road | 12.00pm to 12.20pm (20 minutes) | Requested by ExA in Rule 17 letter [PD-010] | W3W: ///birthing.tabs.founders |
| 12.20pm to 12.50pm drive from Springhill Road, Begbroke back to Farmoor Reservoir Parking to conclude | | | | |