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All Interested Parties, Statutory Parties and  
any Other Person invited to the Preliminary  
Meeting

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN010149

Date: 9 April 2025

Dear Sir/ Madam

## **Planning Act 2008 – Section 88 and 89 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rules 4, 6 and 9 and 13**

### **Application by Springwell Energy Farm Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Springwell Solar Farm project.**

### **Appointment of the Examining Authority and invitation to the Preliminary Meeting and Notification of Hearings**

Following my appointment by the Secretary of State as the lead member of the Examining Authority (ExA) to carry out an Examination of the above application I am writing to introduce myself and the other member of the ExA. My name is Jonathan Manning and the other member of the ExA is Benjamin Northover. A copy of the appointment notice can be viewed under the [Documents tab](#) on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website ([project webpage](#)).

We would like to thank those of you who submitted Relevant Representations. These representations have assisted us when considering how we will examine this application.

### **Invitation to the Preliminary Meeting**

As a recipient of this letter you are invited to the Preliminary Meeting to discuss **the procedure** for the Examination of the above application.

Date	Start time	Venue and joining details
Wednesday 7 May 2025	Registration and seating available at venue from:	County Assembly Rooms 76 Bailgate, Lincoln LN1 3AR



	<b>09:30</b> <b>Virtual Registration Process from:</b> <b>09:30</b> <b>Preliminary Meeting starts:</b> <b>10:00</b>	and 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
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**IMPORTANT:** The Preliminary Meeting should be completed before 1:00pm on Wednesday 7 May 2025. However, a reserve period has been scheduled for 2:00pm on the same day to allow for the meeting to be resumed in exceptional circumstances e.g. to account for a failure of technology. Normally the reserve period will not be required and confirmation of this will be provided by the ExA at the end of the Preliminary Meeting and subsequently notified on the [project webpage](#).

**You must register by completing the [Event Participation Form](#) by 22 April 2025 if you intend to participate in the Preliminary Meeting and provide all the information requested (see below).**

If you simply wish to observe the Preliminary Meeting then you do not need to register as you will be able to 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 **22 April 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 **22 April 2025**.

## Purpose of the Preliminary Meeting

The purpose of the Preliminary Meeting is to enable views to be put to us about how the application should be examined. The ExA will therefore limit the scope of the Preliminary Meeting to consideration of **how the application will be examined**. See **Annex B** to this letter and the Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say](#) for more information.

The Preliminary Meeting is **not** an opportunity for you to give your views about what you like or don't like about the application. The merits or disadvantages of the application will only be considered once the Examination starts, which is after the



Preliminary Meeting has closed. All relevant and important matters will be taken into account when we make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Energy, who will take the final decision in this case.

The agenda for the meeting is at **Annex A** to this letter. This has been set following our Initial Assessment of Principal Issues arising from our reading of the application documents and the Relevant Representations received. The Initial Assessment of Principal Issues is set out in **Annex C** to this letter.

### Written submissions about how the application should be examined

The Planning Act 2008 establishes a principally written process for the Examination of applications for Development Consent Orders and **representations made in writing carry equal weight to oral representations at all stages of the process.**

We are now requesting written submissions from recipients of this letter about how the application should be examined. We particularly wish to hear from you if:

- You consider changes need to be made to the draft Examination Timetable set out at **Annex D** to this letter; and/or
- you wish to comment about the arrangements for future Examination hearings, including the use of virtual methods.

You are invited to make a written submission about how the application is to be examined by **Procedural Deadline A** (22 April 2025) (see **Annex D** to this letter).

We request that all submissions are made using the 'Have your say' tab on the project webpage on or before **Procedural Deadline A. Annex H** to this letter provides further information about using the Make a submission tab.

### Requests to participate at the Preliminary Meeting

Please note that **you are not required to attend, or make written submissions to, the Preliminary Meeting in order to participate in the Examination.** If you are an Interested Party you can make a Written Representation and comment on the Written Representations made by other Interested Parties during the Examination. You will also be able to participate in any hearings that are arranged.

If you wish to participate at the Preliminary Meeting you are required to notify the ExA in writing on or before **22 April 2025** (see **Procedural Deadline A**).

Any request to participate in the Preliminary Meeting **must include** the following information:

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top your 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; and
- the agenda item on which you wish to speak and a list of the points you wish to make.

Requests to participate should be made using the [Event Participation Form](#) on or before **Procedural Deadline A**.

**Please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter if you require any support or assistance to attend the Preliminary Meeting, either virtually or in person.**

### **Format of Examination Events – Preliminary Meeting and Hearings**

The Examination of the application will principally be a written process supplemented where necessary by various types of hearings. See the Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say](#) for more information.

Both blended (part in-person and part virtual) and fully virtual events form part of the Planning Inspectorate's operating model. We remain flexible and will confirm the format of any hearings to be held during the Examination Stage when we provide formal notification of each hearing at least 21 days in advance of it taking place.

We are providing formal notification that the **Preliminary Meeting will be a blended event and that the OFH/CAH/ISH referred to in Annex E to this letter will also be blended events.**

### **After the Preliminary Meeting**

After the Preliminary Meeting we will issue a letter (known as the Rule 8 letter) setting out the finalised Examination Timetable. A note of the meeting will also be published on the [project webpage](#).

### **Notification of initial hearings**

We have made a Procedural Decision to hold the following initial hearings:

- Preliminary Meeting (PM) on Wednesday 7 May 2025 (Blended)
- Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1) on Wednesday 7 May 2025 (Blended)
- Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) on Thursday 8 May 2025 (Blended)
- Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1 (CAH1) on Friday 9 May 2025 (Blended)



Important information about these hearings is contained in **Annex E** to this letter, including what details need to be provided with a request to be heard at a hearing and the procedure that will be followed.

### **Examining Authority's draft list of Written Questions**

We have made a Procedural Decision to issue a list of first written questions. The draft list has been included in this letter. This list is being issued to allow all parties an opportunity to begin to prepare their responses. **Please do not provide responses to this list.**

We wish to make clear that the draft list may not include all the questions that will be included in the final version of the Written Questions and/or some questions may be changed or updated in the final version. Some of the questions may also form the basis of discussions at ISH1 and CAH1.

The final version of the Written Questions will be published as soon as practicable following the Preliminary Meeting. The final version will permanently replace the draft list.

The proposed deadline for responses to the final version of our Written Questions is Deadline 1 on 3 June 2025 (see **Annex D** to this letter). There will be an opportunity to discuss this proposed deadline at the Preliminary Meeting.

### **Other Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority**

We have made some further Procedural Decisions which are set out in detail at **Annex F** to this letter. They are summarised as follows:

- Statements of Common Ground.
- Request for suggested locations for an Accompanied Site Inspection.
- Acceptance of Additional Submissions into the Examination.

### **Changes to land interests**

When the Applicant becomes aware that there has been a change in ownership, or a new interest, in relevant land the Applicant is requested to make the relevant person aware that they can make a request to the ExA to become an Interested Party under section 102A of the PA2008 by emailing the project mailbox. The Examination Timetable includes various Deadlines for the submission of an updated Book of Reference and schedule of changes to the Book of Reference, which should include confirmation that relevant persons have been informed of their rights under section 102A.

### **Managing Examination correspondence**

Given the volume and frequency of letters the Planning Inspectorate needs to send to Interested Parties during an Examination, we aim to communicate with people by



email as electronic communication is more environmentally friendly and cost effective for the taxpayer.

If you have received a letter but are able to receive communications by email, please inform the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter as soon as possible.

As the Examination process makes substantial use of electronic documents, it will be useful for you to become familiar with the [project webpage](#).

A 'Have your say' page is available on the website which provides a portal through which parties should make written submissions at relevant deadlines during the Examination. Further information about the 'Have your say' page is provided at **Annex H** to this letter.

There is also a function on the right-hand side of the project webpage called 'E-mail updates'. This provides you with an opportunity to register to receive automatic e-mail updates at key stages during the Examination.

### **Your status in the Examination**

You have received this letter because you are a person or organisation who is involved in the NSIP process. See the Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [National Infrastructure Projects and the people and organisations involved in the process](#) for further details.

If, having read the advice, you are still unsure about how you are involved in the process please contact the Case Team using the details at the top of this letter.

### **Awards of costs**

All parties will normally be expected to meet their own costs. Costs can be awarded against a party who has acted unreasonably and has caused the party applying for the award of costs to incur unnecessary or wasted expense during the Examination. You should be aware of the relevant costs guidance [Awards of costs: examinations of applications for development consent orders](#).

### **Management of information**

Information, including representations, submitted in respect of this Examination (if accepted by the Examining Authority) and a record of any advice which has been provided by the Planning Inspectorate is published on the [project webpage](#).

Please note that in the interest of facilitating an effective and fair Examination, it is necessary to publish some personal information. To find out how we handle your personal information please view our [Privacy Notice](#).

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

Yours faithfully



*Jonathan Manning*

**Lead Member of the Examining Authority**

**Annexes**

- A** Agenda for the Preliminary Meeting
- B** Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting
- C** Initial Assessment of Principal Issues
- D** Draft Examination Timetable
- E** Notification of initial hearings
- F** Other Procedural Decisions made by the Examining Authority
- G** Examination Documents
- H** Information about the 'Have your say' page
- I** The Examining Authority's Draft Written Questions (ExQ1)

This communication does not constitute legal advice.

Please view our [Privacy Notice](#) before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.

**You must register by completing the [Event Participation Form](#) by 22 April 2025 if you intend to participate in the Preliminary Meeting and provide all the information requested (see below).**

If you simply wish to observe the Preliminary Meeting then you do not need to register as you will be able to 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 **22 April 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 **22 April 2025**.

Please note that by attending the event either in person or online you are agreeing to be filmed for the purposes of the online livestream of the event and the recording of the event which will be published on the [project webpage](#). A limited number of seats will be available for observers who wish not to be filmed at the venue. 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 page of our website after the event.

**Date:** **Wednesday 7 May 2025**

**Registration Process:** **09:30am**

**Meeting start time:** **10.00am**

**Venue:** **Blended event at County Assembly Rooms, 76 Bailgate, Lincoln LN1 3AR and by virtual means using Microsoft Teams**  
Full instructions on how to join online or by phone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered

**Attendees:** **Invited parties who have pre-registered**

<b>Agenda for the Preliminary Meeting</b>	
<b>09:30am</b>	Registration and seating available at venue for in-person attendees
<b>09:30am</b>	<b>Virtual Registration Process</b> Please arrive at 09:30am to enter the virtual lobby. From here you will be admitted to the virtual meeting by the Case Team, greeted and given further instructions.



	The Registration Process will commence at 09:30am. This will be hosted by the Case Team and cover the housekeeping arrangements for the Preliminary Meeting and allow for any questions to be asked about how to take part.
<b>10.00am</b> <b>Item 1</b>	<b>Preliminary Meeting</b> The Preliminary Meeting will formally open at <b>10.00am</b> . The Examining Authority will join, welcome participants and lead introductions.
<b>Item 2</b>	The Examining Authority's remarks about the Examination process
<b>Item 3</b>	Initial Assessment of Principal Issues – <b>Annex C</b> to Rule 6 letter
<b>Item 4</b>	Draft Examination Timetable – <b>Annex D</b> to Rule 6 letter
<b>Item 5</b>	Other Procedural Decisions – <b>Annex F</b> to Rule 6 letter
<b>Item 6</b>	Any other matters
<b>Close of the Preliminary Meeting</b>	

If you are participating using Microsoft Teams please join the virtual lobby promptly using the instructions that will be sent to you. The event will start at **10.00am** irrespective of any late arrivals, for whom access may not be possible.

It may take some time to admit participants from the virtual lobby, your patience whilst you are waiting is appreciated.

The agenda for the Preliminary Meeting is subject to change at the discretion of the Examining Authority (ExA), although in making changes the ExA will be mindful of the need to provide opportunities for fair involvement to all Invited Parties.

Any request to participate in the Preliminary Meeting **must include** the following information and be made on the [Event Participation Form](#):

- Name and unique reference number (found at the top your 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; and
- the agenda item on which you wish to speak and a list of the points you wish to make.

## **Introduction to the Preliminary Meeting**

### **Background**

The Preliminary Meeting (PM) will be a blended event with some participants attending in person and some taking part virtually using Microsoft Teams

The Examining Authority (ExA) is conscious of videoconferencing fatigue and will aim to keep the proceedings focussed and as efficient as possible. This annex provides advance access to information that would usually be included in the ExA's introductory remarks. Please read this carefully. The ExA will only present a summary of the key points set out here in order to ensure that the time available for participants to speak is maximised.

### **The Examining Authority and the Case Team**

The ExA will introduce themselves at the start of the PM.

The ExA will be supported by the Planning Inspectorate Case Team. During the Registration Process a member of the Case Team will welcome and admit participants from the virtual lobby, and will be available to answer questions by email before and after the PM. The contact email address is:

[Springwellsolarfarm@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:Springwellsolarfarm@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

### **The purpose of the Preliminary Meeting**

The PM is being held to discuss the arrangements for the Examination of the application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) for the Springwell Solar Farm, which is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), and which will generally be referred to in the PM and Examination as the 'Proposed Development'. The application has been made by Springwell Energy Farm Limited, which will be referred to as 'the Applicant'.

You will find information about the application and, in due course, documents produced for the Examination on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website ([project webpage](#)). The project webpage has links to the Examination Timetable, Relevant Representations and Examination documents and Examination procedure.

You are encouraged to look at the [project webpage](#) if you haven't already done so, because it will be used to communicate with you and to provide access to documents throughout the Examination.

The main purpose of the PM is to discuss the arrangements for the Examination of the application. It focuses on the process only, and it will not be looking at the substance of the proposals: Questions, discussions and representations about the merits or disadvantages of the Proposed Development are for the Examination itself which will begin the day after the close of the PM.

The PM will be your opportunity to influence the process that the ExA intends to follow. The agenda for the PM is attached to this Rule 6 letter at **Annex A**. It is important to have the letter and the agenda in front of you and to refer to them during the course of the PM. You may wish to print these in advance of the PM for reference.

### **Government guidance and policy**

The application is a NSIP under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) as a consequence of section 14 of the PA2008. It includes development of a solar photovoltaic array electricity generating facility, and satisfies section 15 of the PA2008, including subsection 1 and subsection 2. The designated National Policy Statements (NPS) EN-1 and EN-3 apply to this Examination and to decision-making relating to this application.

The ExA will consider the Proposed Development in accordance with NPS EN-1 and EN-3 and any other applicable policy or considerations the ExA deem to be important and relevant. The PA2008 makes it clear that, in making a decision, the relevant Secretary of State (SoS) “*must decide the application in accordance with any relevant NPS*” (s104(3)), subject to certain provisos. Essentially, the provisos are that the application must not breach legal or treaty obligations, and that any adverse impact of the Proposed Development would not outweigh its benefits.

The SoS is entitled to disregard any representations that relate to the merits of the designated NPS. In practice, this means that the ExA will not spend time examining representations that challenge policy set out in NPSs, or the validity of NPSs themselves. The focus will be on the merits or disadvantages of the Proposed Development, tested to the appropriate extent using the tests set out in relevant designated NPSs that are in force.

Other important and relevant planning policies that the ExA may consider include policies in the relevant local authorities’ development plans. However, if these conflict with policy in a NPS, then the NPS will take precedence.

In summary, the PM will establish the procedures and timetable for the Examination of the Proposed Development. It will set a framework for the ExA to enable the SoS to consider and decide the application. In doing so, the ExA will have regard to:

- The positions and representations of all Interested Parties (IPs);
- any Local Impact Reports (LIR) prepared and provided by relevant local authorities;
- other prescribed matters; and
- any other matters that appear to be both relevant and important to the relevant SoS’s decision.

### **Preliminary Meeting invitees**

The Applicant is invited to the PM and is generally given the opportunity to reply to any representations made.

Everyone who has made a valid Relevant Representation has been registered as an Interested Party (IP) and has been invited to the PM. All IPs are entitled to involvement in the Examination.

Each person or organisation with an interest in land or rights that are affected by a Compulsory Acquisition request in this application is an Affected Person (AP) and has been invited to the PM. In addition to a general entitlement to involvement in the Examination, APs have a right to be heard in relation to any objection about the effects of Compulsory Acquisition on their interests in land, and a right to be notified of any Compulsory Acquisition Hearing. All APs are IPs, whether or not they have made a valid Relevant Representation.

Certain bodies are Statutory Parties and they have been invited to the PM. Statutory Parties can elect to become IPs without having made a valid Relevant Representation by notifying the ExA in writing.

The ExA has the power to involve people who are not IPs in the Examination as though they are IPs, including by inviting them to the PM. However, this is only done in exceptional circumstances, for example if it was clear that the application would materially affect a person, they are not automatically an IP or eligible to elect to become an IP and they had been unable to take the necessary action to register as an IP.

### Conduct of the Preliminary Meeting

The ExA estimate that the PM will take three hours to complete.

During the PM participants may have to make allowances and be patient if there are delays associated with the technology used. In recognition of the fatigue associated with on-screen communication, the ExA will provide breaks during the PM as appropriate.

A digital recording of the PM will be made available on the project webpage as soon as practicable following the close of the PM. The recording allows any member of the public who is interested in the application and the Examination to find out what has been discussed at the PM. The making and publication of these recordings are a means by which the ExA meets the legal requirement to hold the PM (and any other hearings) in public. In this regard, **anyone speaking at the PM will need to introduce themselves each time they speak**, to ensure that someone listening to the recording after the event is clear who was speaking. A written note of the PM will be produced and published as soon as practicable following the close of the PM.

As the recordings are retained and published, they form a public record that can contain personal information to which the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) applies. Participants must do their best to avoid providing any information which should otherwise 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 retain them for a period of five years from the SoS's decision on the DCO. If you actively participate in the PM, it is important that you understand that you will be recorded and that the recording will be made available in the public domain. Please see our [Privacy Notice](#) for more information about how we handle your data.

Following the ExA's introductions, each participant who has been registered to speak will be asked to introduce themselves, including any organisations or groups that they represent. The ExA will then conduct the meeting in accordance with the agenda. If you prefer not to have your image recorded, you can switch off your camera at any point.

### **The Examination process**

The Examination of NSIPs follows different processes to those, for example, of a Public Inquiry into a planning appeal following the refusal of planning permission. The main differences are that the Examination of NSIPs are primarily a written process and hearings take on an inquisitorial approach as opposed to an adversarial one.

This means that the ExA will probe, test and assess the evidence primarily using written questions. While some hearings are held to provide supplementary evidence, questions to the Applicant or to witnesses will come from the ExA. Questioning or cross-examination of witnesses by other parties will not generally be allowed.

In terms of opportunities to provide evidence in writing, the draft Examination Timetable makes provision for the following written processes:

- Local authorities can submit LIRs if they wish. Whilst these are voluntary, the PA2008 provides that if they are provided, they must be considered by the SoS in reaching a decision. Consequently, LIRs are a very important method for local authorities to communicate issues of concern to the ExA, the SoS and their residents.
- IPs can make Written Representations (WRs) and comment on WRs made by other parties.
- IPs can respond to the ExA's written questions (ExQs) and comment on responses to these written questions provided by others.
- IPs may be asked to contribute to the making of Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) if it appears that there are matters on which they and the Applicant agrees, and if it would be useful for this to be clarified. SoCGs most usefully extend to catalogue matters that are not agreed or are outstanding.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a series of numbered Deadlines for receipt of written submissions. Timely submissions received by the relevant Deadline and that address its purpose will be accepted. **Documents received after the relevant Deadline are only accepted at the discretion of the ExA and may not be**

**accepted to ensure fairness to all parties.** Circumstances where documents are submitted late without good reason, causing inconvenience or delay to other parties can amount to unreasonable behaviour.

These written processes will be the principal means used by the ExA to gather information, evidence and views about the application. However, the Examination will only be effective if all parties resolve to give timely, full, frank, clear and evidenced answers to every question that is relevant to their interests and to engage fully with any other related processes such as the completion of WRs and SoCGs.

There is no merit in withholding or delaying information, or in failing to co-operate, and should it occur, any unreasonable behaviour that caused another party to incur wasted expenditure could lead to an award of costs against the offending party.

The ExA has discretion to make amendments to the Examination Timetable for the wider benefit of the Examination. If possible, events will be arranged for times when all relevant parties are available, but the ExA is under a duty to complete the Examination by the end of the six-month period beginning with the day after the close of the PM. This requirement is set by legislation, and while the ExA will try to rearrange event dates to accommodate all relevant parties, in practice there will be limited scope to alter dates set out in the draft Examination Timetable.

The statutory time limit for the Examination means that where there are matters that still need to be discussed and agreed between the Applicant and IPs, it will be very helpful to the ExA if these could be progressed as early as possible.

## **Hearings**

The draft Examination Timetable includes provision for hearings, at which the ExA takes oral evidence from the various parties.

Any registered IP may request an **Open Floor Hearing (OFH)** to make oral representations about the application if they believe this to be preferable to relying on their written representation, though both carry equal weight. Oral submissions should be based on representations previously made in writing, but they should not simply repeat matters previously covered in the written submission. Rather, they should focus on specific detail and explanation to help inform the ExA. There should be no new or unexpected material in oral representations. A written summary note with any supporting evidence or references will be requested of each speaker following the hearing.

As with all Examination events, OFHs are subject to the powers of control of the ExA, as set out in the PA2008 and supporting legislation. Participants must register in advance by the Deadline shown in the Examination Timetable and in accordance with the instructions. It is common practice for the ExA to set a time limit for each speaker and speakers with common points are asked to come together to nominate a spokesperson or representative speakers to cover specific topics, so as to avoid repetition. Speakers representing public authorities, community and membership organisations or multiple IPs are normally provided with an additional time allowance, recognising their representative role.

The Applicant's draft DCO provides for the Compulsory Acquisition of land and rights, and the Temporary Possession of land. Affected Persons (ie those whose land or rights over land are affected) have a right to request and be heard at a **Compulsory Acquisition Hearing** (CAH). If one or more APs request to be heard then a CAH must be held. Provisional dates for CAHs are included in the draft Examination Timetable along with Deadlines by which requests to be heard must be submitted.

The ExA has the discretion to hold **Issue Specific Hearings** (ISHs) if it would aid in the Examination and there is a specific reason this would be more helpful than reliance on written evidence only. The lack of an ISH on one or more topics does not suggest that that topic is less important than others which are subject to a hearing. Rather, it is an indication that the ExA is satisfied that the issues can be fully considered through written submissions and responses to its written questions and that each party has had a fair opportunity to put its case.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a number of dates reserved for ISHs and IPs may make suggestions for topics to be discussed at an ISH in their written or oral representations to the PM.

It may be necessary for the ExA to hold more than one ISH on the draft DCO. This is normal practice, and they are held on a without prejudice basis. Parties can suggest modifications and amendments to the draft DCO provided by the Applicant with the application, without prejudicing their overall position on the application.

Holding such hearings does not imply that the ExA has reached any judgements on the merits of the application. Whatever the ultimate recommendation is, the ExA must make sure that the draft DCO is fit for purpose if the SoS decides to grant consent, as any consent will be subject to Requirements (ie conditions) set out in the DCO.

At hearings it will not normally be necessary for parties to make long and detailed submissions that require (for example) PowerPoint presentations. Any supporting detail/information can be provided in writing following the event by the relevant Deadline.

The draft Examination Timetable includes a Deadline (**22 April 2025**) for participants to notify the ExA that they wish to speak at an OFH or a CAH.

### **Site inspections**

As part of the Examination process the ExA may undertake site inspections. These can be either unaccompanied or accompanied.

The purpose of these is for the ExA to see features of the proposals within the context of the evidence put forward. Notes of Unaccompanied Site Inspections (USIs) are published on the [project webpage](#).

Accompanied Site Inspections (ASI) will only be necessary to view land to which there is no public right of access, or with no clear view from nearby locations with open public access. The purpose of ASIs is familiarisation only and no discussion of the merits of the Proposed Development will be entertained during an ASI.

The ExA may decide to hold USIs to relevant nominated locations, supported by the submission of additional written, photographic, video or even drone material if this would be preferable to not visiting sites or holding ASIs in circumstances which could make them difficult and unduly time-consuming to conduct (for example if public health restrictions are in place). The ExA may also consider if it would be appropriate to make arrangements for access only to be provided to specific sites such that they could be inspected as part of a USI on an access required basis (ARSI)

The draft Examination Timetable includes a Deadline for IPs to make submissions suggesting sites and locations that the ExA should visit. These will be used to inform further USIs/ARSIs as well as possible ASIs.



**Initial Assessment of Principal Issues**

This is the Initial Assessment of Principal Issues prepared as required under section 88(1) of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). It has been prepared by the Examining Authority (ExA) following its reading of:

- The application documents;
- the Relevant Representations received in respect of the application; and
- its consideration of any other important and relevant matters.

This initial assessment has guided the Examining Authority in forming a provisional view as to how the application is to be examined. It is not a comprehensive or exclusive list of the issues that will be subject to examination and inevitably some issues will overlap or interrelate. The ExA will have regard to all important and relevant matters during the Examination and when it writes its Recommendation Report to the Secretary of State for Energy after the Examination has concluded.

The order of the issues listed is alphabetic and does not imply any order of prioritisation or importance.

The policy and consenting requirements and documents associated with the PA2008 are an integral part of the Examination and are therefore not listed as main issues.

Achievement of good design and sustainable development apply across the different topic areas and will be taken into account as overarching and integral components of the IAPI. It should also be noted that whilst the effects of the proposal in relation to human rights and equalities duties are not listed as main issues, the ExA will conduct all aspects of the Examination with these in mind.

**1. Air Quality including the BESS Plume Assessment****2. Alternatives and Site Selection****3. Biodiversity including Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Proposals****4. Climate Change****5. Cultural Heritage and Archaeological Trial Trenching****6. Cumulative Effects****7. Grid Connection****8. Land, Soils and Groundwater including Effects on Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land****9. Landscape and Visual Impact****10. Traffic and Transport, including Public Rights of Way**

## **11. Water Environment and Flood Risk**

### Draft Examination Timetable

The Examining Authority (ExA) is under a duty to **complete** the Examination of the application by the end of the period of six months beginning with the day after the close of the Preliminary Meeting.

The Examination of the application primarily takes the form of the consideration of written submissions. The ExA will also consider any oral representations made at hearings.

Item	Matters	Date
1.	<b>Procedural Deadline A</b> Deadline for receipt by the ExA of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written submissions on the Examination Procedure, including any submissions about the use of virtual methods</li> <li>• Requests to be heard orally at the Preliminary Meeting</li> <li>• Requests to be heard at an Open Floor Hearing or Compulsory Acquisition Hearing</li> <li>• Request to be heard at Issue Specific Hearing</li> <li>• Suggested locations for site inspections (Accompanied or Unaccompanied), including justification, for consideration by the ExA</li> </ul>	22 April 2025
2.	<b>Preliminary Meeting (PM)</b>	<b>Wednesday 7 May 2025</b> <b>10:00am</b>
3.	<b>Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1)</b>	<b>Wednesday 7 May 2025</b>
4.	<b>Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1)</b>	<b>Thursday 8 May 2025</b>
5.	<b>Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1 (CAH1)</b>	<b>Friday 9 May 2025</b>
6.	<b>Issue by the ExA of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examination Timetable</li> </ul> <b>Publication of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ExA's First Written Questions (ExQ1)</li> </ul>	<b>As soon as practicable following the PM</b>

7.	<p><b>Deadline 1</b></p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments on Relevant Representations (RRs)</li> <li>• Written Representations</li> <li>• Summaries of all WR exceeding 1500 words</li> <li>• Local Impact Reports (LIRs)</li> <li>• Responses to ExQ1</li> <li>• Post-hearing submissions, including written submissions of oral cases</li> <li>• Applicant's draft Itinerary for ASI</li> <li>• Notification of wish to have future correspondence received electronically</li> <li>• Any further information requested by ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010</li> </ul>	3 June 2025
8.	<p><b>Deadline 2</b></p> <p><b>For receipt by the ExA of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments on Written Representations</li> <li>• Comments on the Local Impact Reports</li> <li>• Comments on responses to ExQ1</li> <li>• Comments on Applicant's draft Itinerary</li> <li>• Comments on any further information/additional submissions received by Deadline 1</li> <li>• Any further information requested by ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010</li> </ul> <p><b>Updates from the Applicant:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statements of Common Ground</li> <li>• Statement of Commonality</li> <li>• Draft Development Consent Order (dDCO)</li> <li>• Explanatory Memorandum</li> <li>• Schedule of Changes to dDCO</li> <li>• Status of Negotiations / Compulsory Acquisition Schedule</li> </ul>	17 June 2025

9.	<b>ASI and Hearings</b> <b>Dates reserved for ASIs and hearings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further ISHs (if required)</li> <li>• CAH (if required)</li> <li>• Further OFHs (if required)</li> <li>• ASI (if required)</li> </ul>	w/c 14 July 2025
10.	<b>Deadline 3</b> <b>For receipt by the ExA of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-Hearing Submissions, including written summaries of oral submissions and any documents requested by the ExA</li> <li>• Comments on any further information and submissions received at Deadline 2</li> <li>• Any further information requested by ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010</li> </ul> <b>Updates from the Applicant:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statements of Common Ground</li> <li>• Statement of Commonality</li> <li>• Draft DCO</li> <li>• Explanatory Memorandum</li> <li>• Schedule of Changes to dDCO</li> <li>• Status of Negotiations / Compulsory Acquisition Schedule</li> </ul>	12 August 2025
11.	<b>Publication by the ExA of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES) and any associated questions (if required)</li> <li>• ExA's commentary on, or schedule of changes to, the dDCO</li> <li>• The ExA's Written Questions (ExQ2)</li> </ul>	2 September 2025
12.	<b>Deadline 4</b> <b>For receipt by the ExA of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses to ExQ2</li> </ul>	23 September 2025

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments on any further information and submissions received by Deadline 3</li> <li>• Comments on ExA's proposed changes to the dDCO</li> <li>• Any further information requested by ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010</li> </ul>	
<b>13.</b>	<p><b>Deadline 5</b></p> <p>For receipt by the ExA of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final DCO</b> Final DCO to be submitted by the Applicant in the SI template. Applicant to provide the email notification from <a href="https://publishing.legislation.gov.uk/validation">https://publishing.legislation.gov.uk/validation</a> confirming the document has successfully passed validation, and the PDF version of the SI validation report obtained from the link in the notification email. The Applicant should also provide a clean (all tracking removed) standalone MS Word version of the dDCO, with no header or cover page.</li> <li>• <b>Final updated BoR</b> Final BoR and schedule of changes to BoR</li> <li>• <b>Final Statements of Common Grounds</b></li> <li>• <b>Final Explanatory Memorandum</b></li> <li>• <b>Final Schedule of changes to the dDCO</b></li> <li>• <b>Final Statements of Commonality</b></li> <li>• <b>List of matters not agreed where SoCG could not be finalised</b></li> <li>• <b>Final Navigation Document/Guide to the application</b></li> <li>• <b>Final Status of Negotiations CA Schedule</b></li> <li>• <b>Final Status of Negotiations with Statutory Undertakers</b></li> <li>• <b>Final NPS tracker</b></li> <li>• <b>Final signed and dated section 106</b></li> <li>• <b>Comments on the RIES and responses to any associated questions (if issued)</b></li> <li>• <b>Comments on responses to ExQ2</b></li> <li>• <b>Comments on any further information received</b> Comments on any additional information/submissions received by <b>Deadline 4</b></li> </ul>	<b>7 October 2025</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Any further information requested by ExA</b> Any further information requested by the ExA under Rule 17 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010</li> </ul>	
<b>14.</b>	The ExA is under a duty to complete the Examination of the application by the end of the period of six months	<b>7 November 2025</b>

### Submission times for Deadlines

The time for submission of documents at any Deadline in the timetable is 23:59 on the relevant Deadline date, unless instructed otherwise by the ExA.

### Publication dates

All information received will be published on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable after the Deadlines for submissions.

### Report on the Implications for European Sites (RIES)

Where an applicant has provided a No Significant Effects Report or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report with the application, the ExA may decide to issue a RIES during the Examination. The RIES is a factual account of the information and evidence provided to the ExA on HRA matters during the Examination up to the date of the publication of the RIES, for the purposes of enabling the Secretary of State, as competent authority, to undertake its HRA. It is not the ExA's opinion on HRA matters. Comments on the RIES will be invited by the ExA and any received will be taken into account as part of the ExA's Recommendation to the Secretary of State. The ExA may also raise questions in the RIES to confirm or clarify matters that remain outstanding.

The Secretary of State may rely on the consultation on the RIES to meet its obligations under Regulation 63(3) of The Habitats Regulations 2017 and/ or Regulation 28 of The Offshore Marine Regulations.

**Notification of initial hearings**

The Examining Authority (ExA) provides notice of the following initial hearings:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Hearing</b>	<b>Start time</b>	<b>Venue and Joining details</b>
<b>Wednesday 7 May 2025</b>	<b>Open Floor Hearing 1 (OFH1)</b>	<b>Registration and seating available at venue from:</b> <b>13:30pm</b> <b>Virtual Registration Process from:</b> <b>13:30pm</b> <b>Hearing starts:</b> <b>14:00pm</b>	<b>County Assembly Rooms, 76 Bailgate, Lincoln LN1 3AR</b> and 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
<b>Thursday 8 May 2025</b>	<b>Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air Quality, inc BESS Plume Assessment</li> <li>• Alternatives and Site Selection</li> <li>• Cumulative Effects</li> <li>• Cultural Heritage, inc extent of assessment work</li> <li>• Grid Connection</li> <li>• Landscape and Visual Effects</li> <li>• Traffic and Transport, inc proposed junction improvements and site accesses</li> <li>• Water Environment, inc sequential test</li> </ul>	<b>Registration and seating available at venue from:</b> <b>09:30am</b> <b>Virtual Registration Process from:</b> <b>09:30am</b> <b>Hearing starts:</b> <b>10:00am</b>	<b>County Assembly Rooms, 76 Bailgate, Lincoln LN1 3AR</b> and 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



Date	Hearing	Start time	Venue and Joining details
Friday 9 May 2025	Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1 (CAH1)	<p>Registration and seating available at venue from:</p> <p><b>09:30am</b></p> <p><b>Virtual Registration Process from:</b></p> <p><b>09:30am</b></p> <p><b>Hearing starts:</b></p> <p><b>10:00am</b></p>	<p><b>County Assembly Rooms, 76 Bailgate, Lincoln LN1 3AR</b></p> <p>and</p> <p>By virtual means using Microsoft Teams</p> <p>Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered</p>
<p><b>NOTE:</b> If any of the above hearings are no longer required then notification that a particular date is no longer required will be published as soon as practicable on the <a href="#">project webpage</a>, providing reasonable notice to Interested Parties of the decision to cancel them.</p>			

**You must register by completing the [Event Participation Form](#) by 22 April 2025 if you intend to participate in any of the hearings and provide all the information requested (see below).**

If you simply wish to observe any of the hearings then you do not need to register as you will be able to 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 hearing 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 **22 April 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 **22 April 2025**.

Any request to participate in a hearing **must 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.

Requests to participate should be made using the [Event Participation Form](#) on or before **Procedural Deadline A**.

**Please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter if you require any support or assistance to attend any of the hearings, either virtually or in person.**

### **Hearing agendas**

For Issue Specific Hearings and Compulsory Acquisition Hearings the ExA will publish a detailed draft agenda 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. For Open Floor Hearings an agenda may not be published.

### **Procedure at hearings**

The Examination of the application will principally be a written process supplemented where necessary by various types of hearings. See the Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [The stages of the NSIP process and how you can have your say](#) for more information.

The Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public provides important information about hearing procedures:

- [What to expect at a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project event](#)
- [Registering to speak at, or attend, a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project event](#)

The procedure to be followed at hearings is set out in Rule 14 of The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010. The ExA is responsible for the oral questioning of a person giving evidence and the process affords very limited scope to allow cross-questioning between parties.

## **Hearing livestream and recording**

A link to a livestream for each hearing will be made available on the [project webpage](#) shortly before any hearing is due to open. The livestream is available to anybody who wishes to observe a hearing in real time.

All hearings are recorded, and the recordings will be made available on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable after the close of 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.

## **Other procedural decisions made by the Examining Authority**

The Examining Authority (ExA) has made the following Procedural Decisions:

### **1. Statements of Common Ground (SoCG)**

In relation to some of the Principal Issues identified in **Annex C** to this letter, the ExA would be assisted by the preparation of SoCGs between the Applicant and certain Interested Parties. The draft Examination Timetable at **Annex D** to this letter therefore establishes **Deadline 2** for submission of SoCGs.

The aim of a SoCG is to agree factual information and to inform the ExA and all other parties by identifying where there is agreement and where the differences lie at an early stage in the Examination process. It should provide a focus and save time by identifying matters which are not in dispute or need not be the subject of further evidence. It can also usefully state where and why there may be disagreement about the interpretation and relevance of the information. Unless otherwise stated or agreed, the SoCG should be agreed between the Applicant and the other relevant Interested Party or parties, and submitted **by the Applicant**.

The ExA acknowledge the draft SoCGs provided with the application between the Applicant and: Anglian Water, Cadent Gas Ltd, National Grid Electricity Transmission, Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service and Exolum Pipeline System Ltd. The ExA request additional SoCGs between the Applicant and:

#### **A. Lincolnshire County Council, to include:**

- Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land and soils.
- Biodiversity.
- Climate change.
- Cultural heritage.
- Cumulative effects.
- Development Consent Order.
- Fire safety.
- Grid connection.
- Landscape and visual impact.
- Public health.
- Traffic and transport, inc public rights of way.
- Minerals and waste.
- Socio-economic effects.
- Water environment.

#### **B. North Kesteven District Council, to include:**

- Air quality.
- Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land and soils.
- Biodiversity.
- Climate change.

- Cultural heritage.
- Cumulative effects.
- Development Consent Order.
- Grid connection.
- Landscape and visual impact.
- Noise and vibration.
- Public health.
- Socio-economic effects.

**C. Environment Agency**, to include:

- Flood risk.
- Water framework directive.
- Water quality.
- Waste management.
- Management plans and mitigation.

**D. Historic England**, to include:

- Assessment methodology.
- Designated heritage assets.
- Non-designated heritage assets.

**E. National Highways**, to include:

- Effects on Strategic Road Network (SRN) and adequacy of assessment.
- Protective Provisions.

**F. Natural England**, to include:

- Matters relating to protected species and habitats.
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- BMV agricultural land.
- Monitoring, mitigation and enhancement.

**All of the SoCGs listed above should cover the Articles and Requirements in the draft Development Consent Order.** Any Interested Party seeking that an Article or Requirement is reworded should provide the form of words which are being sought.

Where a particular SoCG cannot be agreed between the parties by **Deadline 2**, or if any local authority position needs to be signed off at a higher level, draft versions of that SoCG are requested to be submitted **by the Applicant** at **Deadline 2**. The position of the relevant Interested Parties should then be confirmed in the course of the Examination. The draft Examination Timetable makes provision for updated SoCGs to be submitted at various Deadlines with final versions by **Deadline 5**.

The content of SoCGs will help to inform the ExA about the need to hold any Issue Specific Hearings during the Examination, and to enable the ExA and

the Applicant to give reasonable notice of any hearing in advance of them taking place.

## **2. Accompanied Site Inspection – suggested locations**

The draft Examination Timetable at **Annex D** to this letter includes an Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) w/c 14 July 2025.

The ExA requests that Interested Parties submit suggested locations for the ExA to visit as part of an ASI by **Procedural Deadline A** (22 April 2025). The request must include:

- Sufficient information to identify the location;
- the issues to be observed at the location;
- information on whether the site can be accessed via public land; and
- the reason why the location has been suggested.

**Interested Parties should be aware that ASIs are not an opportunity to make any oral representations to the ExA about the Proposed Development.** However, participants may be invited by the ExA to indicate specific features or sites of interest.

The Applicant is requested to prepare a draft itinerary for the ASI to be submitted by **Deadline 1**. This should include:

- Relevant locations referred to in the Relevant Representations received;
- any other locations at which the Applicant has predicted likely significant environmental effects; and
- the locations suggested by Interested Parties submitted by **Procedural Deadline A**.

Comments by Interested Parties on the Applicant's draft itinerary must be submitted by **Deadline 2**.

The ExA will consider each suggested site location, including those provided in the Applicant's draft itinerary, to determine if it could be viewed from public land on an unaccompanied basis or if it is necessary to view it on an accompanied basis. The ExA will also consider if it would be appropriate to make arrangements for access only to be provided to specific sites such that they could be inspected as part of an Unaccompanied Site Inspection on an access required basis.

The ExA will publish its final itinerary at least five working days before the date of the ASI.

### **3. Additional Submissions**

In addition to the documentation submitted by **Procedural Deadline A** the ExA has exercised its discretion and made a Procedural Decision to accept the following Additional Submissions:

- Responses to Section 51 advice submitted by the Applicant [AS-001 to AS-019].
- Written representation submitted by Deborah Green [AS-020].
- Updated flood and coastal erosion risk data submitted by the Environment Agency [AS-021].

## **Examination Documents**

The application documents and Relevant Representations can be inspected on the [project webpage](#).

### **How to stay up to date**

All further documents submitted in the course of the Examination will also be published under the [Documents tab](#) of the project webpage.

You can also sign up to get [email updates](#).

If you have any questions about the process, examination events or how to access the documents, you can email [Springwellsolarfarm@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:Springwellsolarfarm@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) or contact us on 0303 444 5000.

## **The Examination Library**

For ease of navigation, please refer to the [Examination Library](#) (EL) which is accessible by clicking the blue button under the Documents tab. The EL is updated regularly throughout the Examination.

The EL records and provides a hyperlink to:

- Each application document;
- each representation made to the Examination; and
- each Procedural Decision made by the Examining Authority.

Each document is given a unique reference which will be fixed for the duration of the Examination. **Please quote the unique reference number from the EL when referring to any Examination Documents in any future submissions that you make.**



## Information about the 'Have your say' page

The 'Have your say' page is available on the [project webpage](#).

You will need to enter your unique reference number ('Your ref' found at the top your postcard or email from the Planning Inspectorate) beginning either 2002 or AFP, SP, or EIA. If you are making a submission on behalf of another person or organisation, and do not have your own unique reference number, then you should enter the unique reference number of the person or organisation you are representing. If you are not a registered Interested Party then it is at the discretion of the Examining Authority whether or not your submission is accepted.

Submissions will be published on the [project webpage](#) as soon as practicable following the close of the relevant Deadline. For further information about publishing submissions please view our [Privacy Notice](#).

You will be able to submit a document (upload file), make a text representation or both. It is possible to upload multiple files for each individual submission item. Electronic attachments should be clearly labelled with the subject title and not exceed 50MB.

Submissions **must not include hyperlinks** to documents/evidence hosted on a third party website eg technical reports, media articles etc. See the Planning Inspectorate's Advice for members of the public: [Advice for submitting representations or comments](#) for important information about making written submissions. All submissions must be made in a format that can be viewed in full on the National Infrastructure Planning website. Any submissions that exceed 1500 words should also be accompanied by a summary; this summary should not exceed 10% of the original text.

You should select the relevant Deadline for your submission and then, on the next webpage, select the appropriate Submission item as described in the Examination Timetable at **Annex D** to this letter. Please ensure you make a separate submission for each Submission item and **do not duplicate your submission**. If you consider that your submission does not fit the description of any of the Submission items then please select the Submission item 'Other' and ensure that it is titled appropriately.

If you experience any issues when using the 'Have your say' page please contact the Case Team using the contact details at the top of this letter and they will assist.



### Application by Springwell Energyfarm Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Springwell Solar Farm

#### The Examining Authority's draft written questions and requests for information (ExQ1)

Issued on 9 April 2025

The following table sets out the Examining Authority's (ExA's) draft written questions and requests for information - ExQ1. If necessary, the examination timetable enables the ExA to issue a further round of written questions in due course. If this is done, the further round of questions will be referred to as ExQ2.

Questions are set out using an issues-based framework derived from the Initial Assessment of Principal Issues provided as Annexe C to the Rule 6 letter of 9 April 2025. Questions have been added to the framework of issues set out there as they have arisen from representations and to address the assessment of the application against relevant policies.

Column 2 of the table indicates which Interested Parties (IPs) and other persons each question is directed to. The ExA would be grateful if all persons named could answer all questions directed to them, providing a substantive response, or indicating that the question is not relevant to them for a reason. This does not prevent an answer being provided to a question by a person to whom it is not directed, should the question be relevant to their interests.

Each question has a unique reference number which starts with Q1 (indicating that it is from ExQ1) and then has an issue number and a question number. For example, the first question on air quality issues is identified as Q1.3.1. When you are answering a question, please start your answer by quoting the unique reference number.

If you are responding to a small number of questions, answers in a letter will suffice. If you are answering a larger number of questions, it will assist the ExA if you use a table based on this one to set out your responses. An editable version of this table in Microsoft Word is available on request from the case team: please contact [springwellsolarfarm@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:springwellsolarfarm@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) and include 'Springwell Solar Farm' in the subject line of your email.

**Responses are due by Deadline 1: Tuesday 3 June 2025**



### Abbreviations used:

<b>AIL</b>	Abnormal Indivisible Load	<b>LCA</b>	Landscape Character Area
<b>ALC</b>	Agricultural Land Classification	<b>LCC</b>	Lincolnshire County Council
<b>BESS</b>	Battery Energy Storage System	<b>LCT</b>	Landscape Character Type
<b>BMV</b>	Best and Most Versatile	<b>LIR</b>	Local Impact Report
<b>BNG</b>	Biodiversity Net Gain	<b>LPA</b>	Local Planning Authority
<b>BoR</b>	Book of Reference	<b>LVIA</b>	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
<b>CA</b>	Compulsory Acquisition	<b>MOD</b>	Ministry of Defence
<b>CCTV</b>	Closed Circuit Television	<b>NCA</b>	National Character Area
<b>DAD</b>	Design Approach Document	<b>NH</b>	National Highways
<b>dDCO</b>	Draft DCO	<b>NE</b>	Natural England
<b>EA</b>	Environment Agency	<b>NGET</b>	National Grid Electricity Transmission
<b>EIA</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment	<b>NKDC</b>	North Kesteven District Council
<b>EM</b>	Explanatory Memorandum	<b>NPA</b>	Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017
<b>ES</b>	Environmental Statement	<b>NPS</b>	National Policy Statement
<b>ExA</b>	Examining Authority	<b>NR</b>	Network Rail
<b>ha</b>	Hectare	<b>NSIP</b>	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
<b>HDD</b>	Horizontal Directional Drilling	<b>oBSMP</b>	Outline Battery Safety Management Plan
<b>HE</b>	Historic England	<b>oCEMP</b>	Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan
<b>IEMA</b>	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment	<b>oCTMP</b>	Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan
<b>IP</b>	Interested Party	<b>oDEMP</b>	Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan
<b>ktCO<sub>2e</sub></b>	Kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent	<b>oDS</b>	Outline Drainage Strategy



<b>oLEMP</b>	Outline Landscape Environmental Management Plan	<b>R</b>	Requirement
<b>oOEMP</b>	Outline Operational Environment Management Plan	<b>RR</b>	Relevant Representation
<b>oPRoWPPMP</b>	Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Paths Management Plan	<b>RVAA</b>	Residential Visual Amenity Assessment
<b>oSMP</b>	Outline Soil Management Plan	<b>SoR</b>	Statement of Reasons
<b>oWSI</b>	Outline Written Scheme of Investigation	<b>SoS</b>	Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
<b>PA2008</b>	The Planning Act 2008	<b>TA</b>	Transport Assessment
<b>PM<sub>2.5</sub></b>	Particulate Matter less than 2.5 micrometres in diameter	<b>UXO</b>	Unexploded Ordnance
<b>PRoW</b>	Public Right of Way	<b>WWII</b>	World War II

### The Examination Library

References in these questions set out in square brackets (eg [APP-010]) are to documents catalogued in the Examination Library. The Examination Library can be obtained from the following link:

[EN010149-000270-Springwell Solar Farm Examination Library.pdf](#)

It will be updated as the examination progresses.

### Citation of Questions

Questions in this table should be cited as follows:

Question reference: issue reference: question number, eg ExQ1 1.1.1 – refers to question 1 in this table.



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ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
1.	General, Cross-topic and Need	
Q1.1.1	The Applicant National Grid	<p><b>Grid Connection</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development is reliant upon National Grid constructing a new substation at Navenby to enable a point of connection to be made to the National Electricity Transmission System [APP-0160]. However, the substation does not currently have planning permission.</p> <p>North Kesteven District Council (NKDC) has raised concerns about construction timescales, the validity of the Environment Statement (ES) and potential benefits if delivery of the Substation is delayed [Relevant Representation (RR)-305]. Further, NKDC has also set out that National Grid has confirmed the need to carry out overhead line works under s37 of the Electricity Act 1989 which would be determined by the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero (the SoS).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Applicant and National Grid</b>, provide an update on the progress of the planning application for Navenby Substation and its delivery timescales.</li> <li><b>Applicant</b>, what is your reply to the concerns raised by NKDC?</li> <li><b>National Grid</b>, is delivery of Navenby Substation reliant on new overhead power lines?</li> <li><b>Applicant</b>, provide evidence that there are no obvious reasons why the Navenby Substation application or consent for the new overhead power lines would be refused (Section 4.11, NPS EN-1) and therefore be impediments to the delivery of the Proposed Development.</li> <li><b>Applicant and National Grid</b>, if consent cannot be gained for Navenby Substation or the new overhead powerlines is there a fall back or would the Proposed Development be undeliverable?</li> <li><b>Applicant</b>, is a requirement needed in the dDCO to restrict the commencement of the Proposed Development until permission for Navenby Substation and the overhead power lines have been granted?</li> </ol>
Q1.1.2	Applicant	<b>Cumulative Effects Assessment</b>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
	Lincolnshire County Council North Kesteven District Council	<p>The ES cumulative assessment [APP-056] considers the Proposed Development alongside other projects. Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) [RR-233] has requested that a similar approach be adopted for the solar projects in western Lincolnshire where each applicant was required to produce an inter-relationship report at the start of their examination, which is subsequently updated at each deadline during the examination. LCC note that these reports captured information from emerging Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and as details about the projects became available required the applicant to undertake further assessments to assess how these impact on the cumulative impact assessments that have been prepared in the submitted ES.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Applicant</b>, provide an inter-relationship report that considers all relevant developments.</li> <li>Should the cumulative assessment now also include Leoda Solar Farm?</li> <li><b>LCC</b> and <b>NKDC</b>, are you content with the extent to which cumulative effects have been assessed in the ES?</li> </ol>
<b>2. Alternatives and Site Selection</b>		
Q1.2.1	Applicant	<p><b>Alternative Sites</b></p> <p>Many Interest Parties (IPs) [too many to list] questioned why the Proposed Development was proposed on agricultural fields rather than other types of sites, for example industrial rooftops or brownfield land. National Policy Statement (NPS) EN-3 paragraph 2.10.29 states that where possible, solar development should utilise suitable previously developed land, brownfield land, contaminated land and industrial land.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain why it is necessary to site the proposed development on agricultural land.</li> <li>The Applicant considered and discounted sites on the NKDC brownfield land register [APP-0136, Paragraph 3.3.18]. Was a similar exercise undertaken for the wider site selection process across Lincolnshire, Rutland and Cambridgeshire?</li> <li>Did any of the other potential sites identified in paragraph 3.2.9 of the Site Selection Report consist, either partly or wholly, of previously developed land, brownfield land, contaminated land or industrial land?</li> </ol>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>d. Did the criteria for a maximum of two landowners indirectly limit the search to areas of agricultural land instead of previously developed land areas which may involve more landowners?</p> <p>e. Is the simplicity of siting the Proposed Development on land with a single landowner an adequate reason to discount other potential sites which could have fewer adverse effects? Provide further justification.</p>
Q1.2.2	Applicant	<p><b>Alternative Solar Panel Technologies</b></p> <p>The ES [APP-044, Table 4.1] sets out the reasons for discounting tracker panels and east-west fixed panels. Do either of these different technologies require less land take than the proposed technology through increased efficiency or higher density of installation? If so, how was this factored into the decision to discount these technologies?</p>
Q1.2.3	Applicant	<p><b>Panel Array Efficiency</b></p> <p>Paragraph 2.10.55 of NPS EN-3 states “The installed generating capacity of a solar farm will decline over time in correlation with the reduction in panel array efficiency. There is a range of sources of degradation that developers need to consider when deciding on a solar panel technology to be used. Applicants may account for this by overplanting solar panel arrays.”</p> <p>a. How has the reduction in panel array efficiency been considered in the decision of the solar technology to be used?</p> <p>b. Was overplanting a consideration in relation to alternative site layouts and technologies? If so, provide further details.</p>
Q1.2.4	Applicant	<p><b>Alternative Development Size and Scale</b></p> <p>Schedule 4 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regulations) requires “a description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of development design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer”. Paragraph 3.2.8 of the Site Selection Report states that landholdings with a minimum 1,000</p>



ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		acres were considered. Explain the approach to considering alternative sizes and scales of the proposed development including the reason that smaller sites of less than 1000 acres were not considered.
<b>3. Air Quality</b>		
Q1.3.1	Applicant	<p><b>PM<sub>2.5</sub> Targets: Interim Planning Guidance</b></p> <p>Interim Planning Guidance on the consideration of the Environment Act PM<sub>2.5</sub> targets in planning decisions was published on 4 October 2024. In accordance with this guidance set out:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How has exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub> been considered when selecting the development site?</li> <li>What actions and/ or mitigations have been considered to reduce PM<sub>2.5</sub> exposure for development users and nearby receptors (such as houses, schools etc.) and to reduce emissions of PM<sub>2.5</sub> and its precursors?</li> </ol>
Q1.3.2	Applicant	<p><b>Battery Energy Storage System Plume Assessment</b></p> <p>The Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Plume Assessment [APP-0152] considers the possible impacts of the BESS Compound on the nearby receptors in an emergency situation; primarily the emergency responders and those in the surrounding area such as workers or local residents. It notes that once the battery technology has been chosen a revised plume assessment will be provided post-consent. The potential risk of fire and air pollution from the proposed BESS facility has raised significant concern from IPs [too many to list]. These include concerns that the time assumed to distinguish a fire is too short and there won't be enough water on-site.</p> <p>The UK Health Security Agency [RR-429] has raised several concerns with regard to the contents and methodology used in the BESS Plume Assessment. It states <i>'that a plume assessment is completed using methodology such as atmospheric dispersion modelling which allows comparison of predicted concentrations of pollutants (to include PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) at the receptor location with applicable health-based standards or guidelines values for air.</i></p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p><i>Where UK standards or guideline values are not available, those from the World Health Organization or other reputable international bodies (EU or OECD) should be used'.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a revised BESS Plume Assessment to address all of the matters raised by the UK Health Security Agency.</li> <li>Provide further justification to explain why relatively low wind speeds were assumed in the assessment.</li> <li>Respond to the concerns of IPs with regard to the time assumed to distinguish a potential fire and the volume of water on-site.</li> <li>Should the requirement to provide a revised plume assessment once the battery technology is known be secured in the dDCO?</li> </ol>
Q1.3.3	Applicant	<p><b>Outline Battery Safety Management Plan</b></p> <p>The Outline Battery Safety Management Plan (oBSMP) [APP-0147] sets out that an Emergency Response Plan will be provided post-consent, in consultation with Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service and other relevant stakeholders.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Justify why a draft of this cannot be provided now.</li> <li>Should the requirement for an Emergency Response Plan be set out in Requirement (R) 7 of the dDCO?</li> </ol>
Q1.3.4	North Kesteven District Council	<p><b>Outline Management Plans</b></p> <p>The Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) [APP-0140]; Outline Decommissioning Environmental Management Plan (oDEMP) [APP-0146] and the Outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP) [APP-0141] all contain measures that seek to mitigate/ minimise effects on air quality. Are you content with the measures set out in these and are they sufficient to adequately mitigate/ minimise air quality effects?</p>
Q1.3.5	Applicant	<b>Cumulative Effects</b>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		The ES [APP-056] includes the consideration of air quality effects, alongside those from the proposed Navenby Substation. Further, the Air Quality Assessment [APP-081, Paragraph 9.1.2.] states: ' <i>All permitted developments are expected to agree and follow site-specific CEMP and CTMP that will adequately control dust emissions, construction plant exhaust emissions and road traffic exhaust emissions from construction</i> '. This indicates that a detailed cumulative assessment that considers the total traffic movements for all relevant developments in the area has not been undertaken. Explain fully why a detailed cumulative assessment has not been undertaken and whether the projects cumulatively would exceed the screening criteria.
<b>4. Biodiversity</b>		
Q1.4.1	Applicant	<p><b>Extent of Biodiversity Net Gain Secured</b></p> <p>The dDCO [APP-012, Requirement 8] secures a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), whereas the BNG Assessment [APP-095] demonstrates 31.66% BNG in respect of habitat units and 20.68% in respect of hedgerow units. NKDC [RR-305] note that the Examining Authority assigned 'great weight' (positive) in the overall planning balance in relation to EN010123 (Heckington Fen solar park) where a minimum of 65% BNG was committed to by Requirement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the reason for the difference between the % figure in R8 and the BNG assessment.</li> <li>Which of the above figures are relied upon in the assessment of beneficial effects in ES chapter 7 [APP-047] and the wider planning balance within the Planning Statement [AS-018]?</li> <li>What weight should the ExA afford to the delivery of a minimum of 10% BNG if that is all that is secured in R8?</li> <li>What is the highest % BNG that the Applicant is willing to commit to within R8 of the dDCO?</li> </ol>
Q1.4.2	Applicant	<p><b>Biodiversity Net Gain Trading Rules</b></p> <p>LCC [RR-233] raised concern that the trading rules set out in the Statutory BNG metric user guide are not currently being met in relation to the loss of native hedgerow with trees –</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		associated with bank or ditch' habitat. The BNG Assessment [APP-095] explains that this could be overcome by creating some of the proposed new hedgerows on a bank or creating a ditch along an existing hedgerow. Will the Green Infrastructure Parameters and the BNG Assessment be updated to ensure that the proposals do meet the trading rules?
Q1.4.3	Applicant	<b>Monitoring of Biodiversity Net Gain, Ecology and Landscape Mitigation</b> NKDC [RR-305] state that it will seek to ensure that an appropriate fee is set for monitoring BNG, ecology and landscape mitigation works in respect of Springwell solar farm as the responsibility for this duty is likely to fall upon the Council. Will this be included in a s106 agreement. If not, how will such works be monitored?
Q1.4.4	Applicant	<b>Green Infrastructure Parameters</b> Should the Green Infrastructure Parameter Plans [APP-060, Figure 3.3A-F] and the Green Infrastructure BNG Parameters [APP-095, Figure 2, Appendix A] be included in Schedule 13 of the dDCO? If not, explain how the green infrastructure parameters would be secured?
Q1.4.5	Applicant	<b>Monitoring of Bat Species</b> The Applicant states in the ES [APP-047, Paragraph 7.11.1] that the effect of bats' use of solar farms is uncertain due to lack of research and therefore it is proposing to monitor bat species activity for the first 10 yrs post construction. a. How are any actions determined necessary by the monitoring secured or controlled? b. Is there monitoring and learning from other solar developments in the wider area that can be undertaken to inform action sooner?
Q1.4.6	Applicant	<b>Use of Large-Scale Solar Farms by Birds and Insects</b> Numerous IPs [too many to list] have raised concerns regarding various species mistaking areas of solar panels for large expanses of water. For example, Metheringham Parish Council [RR-264] raised concern that the panels can kill insects and other small creatures as a result of

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>the solar radiation and that migrating wading birds have been known to crash into the panels. An IP [RR-417] also raised concern that populations of bats, owls, red kites and other raptors would be deterred from using the land to hunt, that aquatic insects would lay their eggs on the panels rather than in the local watercourses.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a response to the specific concerns raised by IPs.</li> <li>What research and evidence is available on the use of large scale solar farms by the species that are present within the Order limits?</li> <li>Provide extracts of relevant evidence for consideration in the examination.</li> </ol>
Q1.4.7	Applicant	<p><b>Management of Grassland</b></p> <p>Butterfly Conservation Lincolnshire Branch [RR-047] have provided some detailed comments on the management of the different grassland types within the order limit.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a response to the recommendations made by Butterfly Conservation Lincolnshire Branch.</li> <li>What guidance is available on the specification and management of grassland within solar farms?</li> </ol>
Q1.4.8	Applicant	<p><b>Culverting of Watercourses</b></p> <p>Under the heading of 'Biodiversity, ecological, geological conservation and water management' NPS EN-3 states in paragraph 2.10.87 that culverting existing watercourses/ drainage ditches should be avoided.</p> <p>The ES [APP-047] states that six sections of ditches which will need culverting for internal access road bridges or are in close proximity to proposed works. The Riparian Mammal and Aquatic Habitat Assessment Survey [APP-088] concluded that use of the surveyed ditches as temporary refuge and foraging habitat cannot be entirely discounted. In accordance with paragraph 2.10.88 of NPS EN-3, demonstrate that no reasonable alternatives exist to the culverting of these ditches?</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
Q1.4.9	Application	<p><b>Protected Species Licences</b></p> <p>The ES states [APP-047, Paragraphs 7.8.11 and 7.9.24] that any loss of bat roosts would be mitigated and compensated under a European Protected Species licence from Natural England (NE). NE [RR-291] state that it is unable to provide a position on the likelihood of a licence being granted without having reviewed a draft licence application.</p> <p>Is it proposed that a draft licence application will be made to NE within the timescales of the examination?</p>
Q1.4.10	Applicant	<p><b>Woodland Plots</b></p> <p>The Forestry Commission [RR-131] advise that it would ideally like to see woodland creation carried out in 5 hectare (ha) blocks or that connecting planting with existing woodlands, should create blocks of at least 5ha.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm the areas of the proposed individual woodland blocks.</li> <li>Can the Forestry Commission's advice be accommodated? If not, provide justification.</li> </ol>
Q1.4.11	Applicant	<p><b>Maintenance of Hedgerow</b></p> <p>Is there any conflict between the maintenance requirements of hedgerows for visual screening purposes and for ecological purposes? And how would this be managed?</p>
Q1.4.12	Applicant	<p><b>Birdstrike</b></p> <p>The Ministry of Defence (MOD) [RR-278] raised concern that the proposed attenuation pond shown in field Tb2 on the Illustrative Layout Plans [AS-006] has the potential to attract and support bird species hazardous to air traffic. It considers a requirement necessary to ensure that proposed waterbodies or wetland features would not introduce a birdstrike hazard to aircraft.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>c. Provide further information on the proposed attenuation pond and whether it has been designed and managed to support bird species.</p> <p>d. Provide comment on the MOD's proposed requirement.</p>
<b>5. Climate Change</b>		
Q1.5.1	North Kesteven District Council Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Assessment Methodology</b></p> <p>Are NKDC and LCC content with the methodology used in the climate change assessment in the ES [APP-048] and the assumptions used in ES Appendix 8.1: Raw Data and Emissions Factors [APP-096]?</p>
Q1.5.2	Applicant North Kesteven District Council Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Baseline for Assessment Comparisons</b></p> <p>In the decision letter for Gate Burton Energy Park (July 2024), the Secretary of State commented that it considered a Combined Cycle Gas Turbine power plant an inappropriate baseline for assessment comparisons.</p> <p>a. <b>Applicant</b>, provide further justification for this assumption in light of the SoS' view.</p> <p>b. What comparison should be used instead?</p>
Q1.5.3	Applicant	<p><b>Projected Emissions</b></p> <p>Explain where the figures in the ES [APP-048] Table 8.15 UK Carbon budgets, column 'Estimated project emissions (ktCO<sub>2</sub>e)' have been derived, as they do not seem to correlate with the other figures set out in Tables 8.11-8.14.</p>
Q1.5.4	Applicant	<p><b>Suggested Benefits</b></p> <p>The ES [APP-048] sets out that the Proposed Development would provide a saving of 9.6 million tonnes of carbon.</p> <p>a. How does this compare to global emissions, which the ES states is the study area?</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		b. Against global emissions, can this be considered a significant beneficial effect?
Q1.5.5	Applicant	<b>Carbon Reduction Plan</b> The oCEMP [APP-0140, Table 5] sets out that all members of the supply chain will provide a carbon reduction plan, where feasible. a. Should the need for this be secured in its own right in the dDCO? b. Should the oOEMP [APP-0140] and the oDEMP [APP-0146] also include the need for a carbon reduction plan?
Q1.5.6	Applicant	<b>Power Generation</b> Numerous IPs [including RR-319] raise concern that the projected amount of power generated from the Proposed Development will be lower than claimed due to the weather and low hours of sunshine in the Lincoln area. Further, other IPs [including RR-322] set out that there are other forms of renewable energy that have lower Total Life Cycles, which should be preferred. What is your reply to both of these suggestions?
Q1.5.7	Applicant	<b>Sourcing Solar PVs and Other Infrastructure</b> Numerous IPs [too many to list] are of the view that there are carbon footprint concerns about the sourcing and manufacturing of Solar PVs from China. What is the Applicant's reply?
<b>6. Compulsory Acquisition, Temporary Possession and Other Land or Rights Considerations</b>		
Q1.6.1	Applicant	<b>Schedule of Negotiations</b> Provide a revised Schedule of Negotiations [APP-018] to provide an update on the current status of all negotiations, including Crown Land.
Q1.6.2	Applicant	<b>Unknown Landowners</b>



ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		There are a number of plots identified in the Book of Reference (BoR) [AS-007] for which the owners are not known. Provide an update on efforts to establish these owners/ interests and details on what further steps will be undertaken to identify these owners prior to the exercise of Compulsory Acquisition (CA) powers.
Q1.6.3	Applicant Blankney Estates Limited	<b>Variation to Option Agreement</b> The Statement of Reasons (SoR) [APP-015] notes that the Applicant and Blankney Estates Limited are currently negotiating a variation to the signed option agreement, based on changes required to align with the submitted Application and Order limits. What is the current status of these discussions?
Q1.6.4	Network Rail	<b>Network Rail Unidentified Property Rights</b> Network Rail (NR) has set out [RR-296] that it is investigating if it has any unidentified property rights that could be affected by the Proposed Development. Provide an update on these investigations.
Q1.6.5	Applicant National Grid Electricity Transmission	<b>National Grid and the Order Limits</b> National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) has set out [RR-289] that the inclusion of the entirety of the field in which the proposed Navenby Substation would be located contradicts previous discussions NGET had with the Applicant in relation to the Project, where NGET's position is that only the cable route should be shown. NGET also note that it is important that no rights are granted over this area that would restrict the delivery of Navenby substation which is required by the Applicant for delivery of the Project. Provide an update on these discussions.
Q1.6.6	Applicant	<b>Cable Corridors</b> The Work Plans [APP-007] show large areas of land for cables (Work No. 6) within the Order Limits. The ES [APP-043] notes that multiple cables will be required across the Proposed

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>Development and the width of these cable trenches will vary depending on the number of cables in each, up to 19 metres. The SoR [APP-015, Paragraph 4.4.3.] indicates that the location/ route of the cables is currently unknown and detailed surveys are required. However, the Vegetation Removal Parameter Plans [APP-60, Figure 3.11a to f] suggest that the locations of the cables (at least where it crosses field boundaries) are known.</p> <p>Given that a maximum width of 19 metres is needed and the Vegetation Removal Plans suggest that the locations of the cables are known, justify how seeking CA powers over all of the land identified for Work No. 6 accords with the need for the SoS to be satisfied that the Applicant is seeking no more land than is reasonably required for the purposes of the Proposed Development.</p>
Q1.6.7	Applicant	<p><b>Powers of Acquisition – Permanent Rights</b></p> <p>Article 24 of the dDCO [APP-012] is drafted to enable compulsory acquisition of new rights over <u>all</u> of the Order land, with a schedule which limits the compulsory acquisition power in defined plots to the defined rights listed in Schedule 9.</p> <p>Provide further justification for this approach and demonstrate that persons with an interest in the Order land, particularly for plots identified in the Land Plans [AS-004] and BoR [AS-007] for temporary possession were aware that undefined new rights were being sought over <u>all</u> of the Order land and were consulted on that basis.</p>
Q1.6.8	Applicant	<p><b>Powers of Acquisition – Temporary Possession</b></p> <p>Articles 31 and 32 of the dDCO [APP-012] give temporary possession powers of <u>any</u> of the Order land. Due to this, temporary possession powers are not limited to the land specified in Schedule 11.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>In addition, the Applicant is seeking to disapply the temporary possession regime under the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 (NPA) in Article 6(1)(h). The ExA note that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The notice period under Articles 31(3) and 32(3) of 28 days is substantially shorter than the 3 months required under the NPA.</li> <li>• Under the NPA, the notice would also have to state the period for which the acquiring authority is to take possession.</li> <li>• The NPA provisions include the ability to serve a counter-notice objecting to the proposed temporary possession so that the landowner would have the option to choose whether temporary possession or permanent acquisition was desirable.</li> </ul> <p>a. Provide further justification why temporary possession powers of any of the Order land is necessary and appropriate, and explain what steps have been taken to alert all persons with an interest in the Order land to this possibility.</p> <p>b. Other than any prior precedent, what is the justification for only requiring 28 days' notice in Articles 31(3) and 32(3)?</p> <p>c. Should these articles include the need to state a period of possession and the ability to serve a counter-notice?</p>
Q1.6.9	Applicant	<p><b>Funding</b></p> <p>The Funding Statement [APP-016] notes that the current cost estimate of the Proposed Development is approximately £650m-£750m and this estimate has been arrived at by including construction costs, preparation costs, supervision costs, land acquisition costs (including compensation payable in respect of any compulsory acquisition), equipment purchase, installation, commissioning and power export'. Confirm if decommissioning costs have also been considered.</p>
Q1.6.10	Applicant Cadent Gas Limited	<b>Protective Provisions</b>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
	National Grid Electricity Distribution (East Midlands) National Grid Electricity Transmission Anglian Water	Cadent Gas Limited [RR-048], National Grid Electricity Distribution (East Midlands) [RR-288], NGET [RR-289] and Anglian Water [RR-026] have all set out that they will require protective provisions within the dDCO. Provide an update on negotiations with each party set out above.
<b>7. Cultural Heritage</b>		
Q1.7.1	Applicant Historic England Lincolnshire County Council North Kesteven District Council	<p><b>Extent of Archaeological Trial Trenching</b></p> <p>Historic England (HE) [RR-159], LCC [RR-233], and NKDC [RR-305] raised concerns that the amount of trial trenching undertaken to date is not sufficient to identify the presence of archaeology across the impact zone. HE proposes that there is significant opportunity for further evaluation trenching to be undertaken during the examination period.</p> <p>a. <b>Applicant</b>, is any further trial trenching planned to take place during the examination period? If so, when could details of further trenching be provided to HE and LCC for comment?</p> <p>b. <b>HE, LCC and NKDC</b>, do you consider it necessary for there to be a blanket spread of more trial trenching to a certain percentage of the Order limits or are you wanting to see specific targeted areas of additional trial trenching? If so, indicate where these areas are?</p>
Q1.7.2	Applicant Historic England Lincolnshire County Council North Kesteven District Council	<p><b>Requirement 11 - Archaeology</b></p> <p>HE state in its RR [RR-159] that there needs to be a mechanism whereby the results of additional assessment stage trial trenching undertaken post-DCO have a material bearing upon the subsequent phase of the archaeological mitigation scheme. The Examining Authority (ExA) note in paragraph 4.1.7 of the Outline Written Scheme of Investigation (oWSI) [APP-0148] that Task specific WSIs would be prepared in consultation with the Local Planning Authority's (LPA) archaeological advisor prior to the carrying out of any archaeological trenching or investigation.</p> <p>a. <b>Applicant</b>, explain with reference to the wording of R11 and R5 how the LPA will be involved in determining the scope for any subsequent archaeological work and additional</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>mitigation measures in the detailed design, as a result of the above archaeological trenching or investigation?</p> <p>b. Should R11(1) include that any approval by the relevant planning authority (LCC) be in consultation with HE and NKDC?</p> <p>c. <b>LCC, NKDC and HE</b>, provide your comments on the proposed drafting of this requirement including any additional/ revised drafting as appropriate with accompanying justification.</p>
Q1.7.3	<p>Applicant</p> <p>Lincolnshire County Council</p> <p>North Kesteven District Council</p>	<p><b>Above Ground Heritage Assets</b></p> <p>NKDC [RR-305] and LCC [RR-233] raised concern that there is a lack of detailed analysis of built heritage assets. The Applicant submitted revised documents [AS-001, AS-012, AS-013, AS-014, AS-015, AS-018 and AS-019] in response to Section (s) 51 advice issued by the Planning Inspectorate [PD-002].</p> <p>a. <b>LCC and NKDC</b>, does the additional information provided by the Applicant in response to the s51 advice address any of your concerns regarding effects on the settings of above ground heritage assets and/ or provide clarity as to which assets would experience less than substantial harm?</p> <p>b. <b>LCC and NKDC</b>, for those heritage assets that have been scoped into the assessment, do you agree with the results of the Applicant's assessment?</p> <p>c. <b>LCC and NKDC</b>, can you provide a list within your Local Impact Report (LIR) of built heritage assets that have not been scoped into the assessment which you consider should be scoped in with accompanying justification?</p> <p>d. <b>Applicant</b>, provide justification for the scoping out of the specific farmhouses referenced in the NKDC RR as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thompsons Bottom Farmhouse and outbuildings (LBEN 1254329/1254407)</li> <li>• Temple Farmhouse (LBEN 1254328 and 1261359)</li> <li>• Home Farmhouse (LBEN 1061825)</li> <li>• Farmyard to the north of The Firs (LBEN 1280661)</li> </ul>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
Q1.7.4	Applicant	<p><b>Brauncewell Medieval Village</b></p> <p>ES Chapter 9 [AS-012] states that there is a slight adverse effect on the setting of Brauncewell medieval village scheduled monument (less than substantial harm) but a significant beneficial effect of a proposed permissive path which is said to offset the adverse effects (para 9.9.25). Does the Applicant consider that the overall effect is moderate beneficial or is the beneficial effect to be taken in balance against the adverse effect to result in a less significant benefit?</p>
Q1.7.5	Applicant Ministry of Defence	<p><b>World War II Aeroplane Crash Sites (non-designated heritage assets MLI25416 and MLI25417)</b></p> <p>ES chapter 9 [AS-012] states that piling will be avoided in the areas of the World War II (WWII) crash sites and that detailed design will seek to route cables outside of the crash site locations so that these sites will be preserved in situ.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Applicant</b>, if a licence to recover a crashed military aircraft in accordance with the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 might be required, will a letter of no impediment be sought from the MOD prior to the end of the examination?</li> <li><b>MOD</b>, do you have any comments on the suitability of the works proposed in the areas of the WWII crash sites?</li> </ol>
Q1.7.6	Applicant	<p><b>Cable Routes</b></p> <p>Paragraph 9.9.9 of the ES [AS-012] states that cabling will be above ground in areas of high archaeological density within the Ground Mounted Solar PV Generating Station (Work no.1). However, between Springwell Central and Springwell East and between Springwell Central and Springwell West it is proposed to bury the cables. As stated in para 9.9.13, burying the cables could result in the loss of some of the archaeological features, the loss of physical evidence of their relationships and phasing and damage to other features.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What reasonable alternatives were considered to the undergrounding of cables in the locations specified on the Works Plans?</li> <li>How will adverse impacts on the complex archaeology in the cable route be avoided and/ or minimised in the detail design and how will this be secured?</li> </ol>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
<b>8.</b>	<b>Draft Development Consent Order (DCO)</b>	
Q1.8.1	Applicant	<p><b>Part 1 Preliminary - Article 2(8)</b></p> <p>The Explanatory Memorandum (EM) [APP-013, Paragraph 4.2.4] states that: ‘<i>Paragraph (8) confirms references within the Order to materially new or materially different environmental effects (in the context of the Authorised Development or part of it not being authorised if it would result in such effects), are not intended to apply where the effects are different to those assessed in the ES by virtue of being an adverse effect that has been reduced or avoided, or a positive effect that has increased in significance. Without this clarification, the “materially new or materially different” provisions could have the inadvertent consequence of not encouraging a reduction in adverse effects or an increased benefit from a positive effect at detailed design</i>’. Confirm whether or not article 2(8) has precedent in any previously made DCOs.</p>
Q1.8.2	Applicant	<p><b>Part 2 Principal Powers – Article 6</b></p> <p>Article 6 of the dDCO [APP-012] would allow development not authorised by the DCO to be carried out within the Order limits pursuant to planning permission. The ExA consider that this would appear to obviate the need, in such circumstances, to apply to change the DCO (through s153 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008)). Provide further justification for this article.</p>
Q1.8.3	Applicant	<p><b>Part 2 Principal Powers – Article 6</b></p> <p>The Environment Agency (EA) [RR-130] has set out that it is satisfied that no activities will take place that would require the need for a flood risk activity permit and does therefore not consent to the disapplication of the consent required in relation to the carrying out of a relevant flood risk activity under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016, as required by section 150 of the Planning Act 2008. This is also relevant for the legislation contained in part (d). Applicant, provide further justification for the need to disapply this legislation in light of the EA’s comment.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
Q1.8.4	Applicant	<b>Part 3 Streets - Article 10</b> Article 10 of the dDCO [APP-012] would authorise the alteration of <u>any</u> street within the Order limits. Provide further justification to demonstrate why this power is necessary and should not be limited to only identified streets.
Q1.8.5	Applicant	<b>Part 3 Streets - Article 13</b> Notwithstanding any other precedents, provide justification to demonstrate why this power is appropriate and proportionate having regard to the impacts on pedestrians and others of authorising temporary working sites in these streets.
Q1.8.6	Applicant	<b>Part 5 Powers of Acquisition – Article 27</b> Article 27(1) of the dDCO [APP-012] includes the words ‘paragraph 22(1)’ should this be amended to read ‘paragraph (1)’?
Q1.8.7	Applicant	<b>Part 6 Miscellaneous and General – Article 40</b> Article 40(1) states that ‘ <i>the undertaker may fell or lop any tree or shrub near any part of the authorised development...</i> ’. However, the EM [APP-013, Paragraph 4.6.10] refers to ‘within or overhanging the Authorised Development’. The ExA consider that this could be misleading. Provide a revised EM to address this matter.
Q1.8.8	North Kesteven District Council	<b>Part 6 Miscellaneous and General – Articles 41 and 41</b> NKDC [RR-305] has set out that it has some concerns around the powers that would be afforded under Articles 40 and 41. Please explain fully what these concerns are.
Q1.8.9	Applicant	<b>Part 6 Miscellaneous and General – Article 49</b> Provide further justification for the inclusion of the words ‘to take’ in Article 49(1).



ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
Q1.8.10	Applicant	<p><b>Schedule 2 Requirements</b></p> <p>The EM [APP-013, Paragraph 5.2.3] states: '<i>Many of the requirements require submission of details for approval by the relevant planning authority. In some instances, the relevant planning authority is under a duty to consult with a third party or parties in relation to the document submitted to them. This is a departure from the model provisions</i>'. Confirm whether this approach has been accepted in any previously made DCOs.</p>
Q1.8.11	Applicant	<p><b>Schedule 2 - Requirement 10</b></p> <p>The title of R10 of the dDCO [APP-012] states that it relates to surface and foul water drainage. However, the ExA note that the content of R10 makes no reference to surface water. Explain why this is the case.</p>
Q1.8.12	Applicant	<p><b>Schedule 2 - Requirement 11</b></p> <p>The EM [APP-013, Paragraph 1.6.7] sets out that R11 relates to the approval and implementation of the written scheme of investigation for archaeological mitigation. However, the first paragraph of R11 does not include the word 'archaeological'. Advise if it should.</p>
Q1.8.13	Applicant	<p><b>Schedule 3 - Railway Matters</b></p> <p>NR [RR-296] is concerned that Schedule 3 of the dDCO [APP-012] disapplies the Great Northern and Great Eastern Railway Companies Act 1879 and Great Northern Railway (Spalding to Lincoln) Act 1878. It notes that this legislation provides Network Rail with a series of rights and responsibilities which allow it to carry out its statutory undertaking in respect of the regions covered by the legislation. NR also consider that Protective Provisions are required in the dDCO. Provide further justification why the disapplication of this legislation is required and why Protective Provisions are not required.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
Q1.8.14	Applicant	<p><b>Schedule 16 - Discharge of Requirements</b></p> <p>NKDC [RR-305] has set out that there will be an increase in planning fees in April 2025 and requests that a proportionate increase is reflected in the fees set out in Schedule 16.</p> <p>NKDC also request an increase in the number of days available for considering further amendments as it considers the timescale set out in Schedule 16 does not allow sufficient time for consultation. Further, the EA [RR-130] are of the view that 6(a) (Further information and consultation) should be amended to allow required consultees 15 days of receipt of the application to notify the relevant planning authority in writing specifying any further information it considers necessary in order to comment on the application. The EA consider this is needed to provide adequate consultation timescales that align with those in the Development Management Procedure Order 2015, i.e. 21 days (equivalent to 15 business days).</p> <p>What is the Applicant's reply to these matters?</p>
Q1.8.15	Applicant	<p><b>Explanatory Note</b></p> <p>The dDCO [APP-012] states that '<i>A copy of the Order plans and the book of reference mentioned in the Order and certified in accordance with article 42 (certification of plans and documents, etc) of this Order may be inspected free of charge during working hours at North Kesteven District Council, District Council Offices, Kesteven Street, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 7EF and at Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln, LN1 1YL</i>'. Confirm that NKDC and LCC has agreed to this.</p>
Q1.8.16	Applicant	<p><b>Explanatory Memorandum</b></p> <p>The EM [APP-013, Paragraph 1.6.12.] sets out that approval and implementation of a decommissioning environmental management plan also secures a dust management plan, an emergency preparedness and response plan, a site waste management plan and a health and</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		safety plan. The oDEMP [APP-0146, Paragraph 1.1.11] identifies that it will also secure a 'Traffic Management Plan and Travel Plan'. Therefore, should the EM also refer to this plan?
Q1.8.17	Applicant	<p><b>Explanatory Memorandum</b></p> <p>The provisions of s127 of the PA2008 referred to in the EM [APP-013, Paragraph 3.3.2 and 3.3.3], will only apply if a representation is made under s127(1)(b) which causes the SoS to be satisfied of either of the matters set out in s127(1)(c). The wording of these paragraphs of the EM does not make this clear. Provide a revised version of the EM to address this matter.</p>
<b>9. Land, Soils and Groundwater</b>		
Q1.9.1	Applicant	<p><b>Use of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land</b></p> <p>The use of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land has been raised as a concern by many IPs [too many to list]. NPS EN-3 (Paragraph 3.10.14) states that: <i>'While land type should not be a predominating factor in determining the suitability of the site location applicants should, where possible, utilise previously developed land, brownfield land, contaminated land and industrial land. Where the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary, poorer quality land should be preferred to higher quality land (avoiding the use of "Best and Most Versatile" agricultural land where possible)'</i>. Explain fully how the Proposed Development and the selection of the site accord with these requirements.</p>
Q1.9.2	Applicant North Kesteven District Council Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Agricultural Land Classification Surveys</b></p> <p>The Applicant has undertaken Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Surveys of the application site [APP-112 to APP-114]. NE [RR-291] has noted that the ES [APP-051, Table 11.12] presents a breakdown of land use across the Order limits, but does not specifically categorise any construction compounds or access tracks.</p> <p>a. <b>Applicant</b>, confirm if construction compounds and access tracks have been taken into account in Table 11.12 and if so, where.</p> <p>b. Are <b>LCC</b> and <b>NKDC</b> content that the ALC surveys have been undertaken robustly?</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
Q1.9.3	Applicant	<p><b>Permanent loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land for Green Infrastructure</b></p> <p>NE [RR-291] and numerous other IPs [too many to list] have raised a number of concerns with regard to the permanent loss of BMV land to Green Infrastructure. Provide further justification for the use of BMV land for these areas, particularly what consideration has been given to the siting of the 'irreversible' Green Infrastructure away from BMV land and prioritising the siting of 'temporary' Green Infrastructure on BMV land.</p>
Q1.9.4	Applicant	<p><b>Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land and Fixed Solar Equipment</b></p> <p>NKDC [RR-305] has set out that the amount of land given over to fixed solar equipment (satellite collector compounds, BESS and Springwell substation and main collector compound) would be 21ha, which is described in the ES as a temporary loss of BMV land. NKDC go on to note that IEMA guidelines say that the permanent sealing of land above 20ha (including temporary development where there would be a reduction in soil quality) is a major adverse environmental impact and it notes that ExA's on other solar projects have taken the view that such a loss of land is a permanent impact as it is virtually impossible to mitigate. What is the Applicant's reply?</p>
Q1.9.5	Lincolnshire County Council North Kesteven District Council	<p><b>Cumulative Effects on Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land</b></p> <p>The Applicant has set out [APP-056, Paragraph 16.8.9.] that it estimates the total area of BMV land within Lincolnshire to be over 410,000ha. Therefore, the Proposed Development would alone occupy some 0.13% of the BMV land in Lincolnshire and with the development of all the solar farms identified in the cumulative assessment [APP-056, Table 16.1] alongside the Proposed Development, approximately 2% of the county BMV land resource will be temporarily used. Do LCC and NKDC agree with the Applicant's figures?</p>
Q1.9.6	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Soil Management and Mitigation</b></p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
	North Kesteven District Council	<p>The oCEMP, oOEMP, oDEMP and Outline Soil Management Plan (oSMP) contain a range of measures to manage and mitigate potential effects on soil. NE [RR-291] has raised several concerns with regard to the contents of the oSMP, with regard to soil handling and soil reinstatement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Applicant</b>, provide further justification for the need to handle soils in the wetter winter period, and/ or provide further information to illustrate that every effort will be taken to avoid the need to handle soils in a plastic condition.</li> <li><b>Applicant</b>, should the oSMP include a clear commitment to restoring the original ALC grade of all restored agricultural land?</li> <li><b>Applicant</b>, clarify why removal of hardstanding is specifically limited to a 1 metre depth.</li> <li><b>Applicant</b>, explain why reference is made within the ES [APP-051, Paragraphs 11.7.22 and 11.8.24] to the importation of topsoil during restoration and why this could be necessary.</li> <li>Are <b>LCC</b> and <b>NKDC</b> content with the measures set out in all of the above management plans?</li> </ol>
Q1.9.7	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council Environment Agency	<p><b>Contamination</b></p> <p>The ES [APP-051, Paragraph 11.8.1.] sets out that an interpretive report is required relating to site investigation work that has already been completed prior to construction works commencing and will be issued to LCC. This will provide further information relating to potential pollutant linkages that were identified in the Preliminary Risk Assessment [APP-115 to APP-118]. In addition, the Preliminary Risk Assessment makes several recommendations, such as shallow intrusive works to determine ground and groundwater conditions, gas monitoring and boreholes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is it appropriate to prepare the interpretive report post consent?</li> <li><b>Applicant</b>, how are the recommendations in the Preliminary Risk Assessment being addressed?</li> </ol>
Q1.9.8	Applicant	<b>Unexpected Contamination</b>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>The EA [RR-130, Paragraph 3.5] has requested that an additional requirement be added into the dDCO in relation to unexpected contamination and has put forward wording. The EA has also noted that it would need to be consulted on any remediation strategy to ensure it is carried out in a manner that protects controlled waters.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm if the wording is considered suitable.</li> <li>If not, provide alternative wording and explain why the suggested wording is not suitable.</li> <li>Provide a revised dDCO than includes the requirement.</li> </ol>
Q1.9.9	Applicant Environment Agency	<p><b>Effects of Firewater on Groundwater</b></p> <p>Numerous concerns [too many to list] have been raised about the potential for contaminants from a BESS accident to affect groundwater. Further, the EA [RR-130] consider the BESS emergency response plan should consider the potential effect of the release of firewater from the BESS compound on groundwater quality. The ExA note that the oOEMP and oBSMP contain some details in this regard.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Applicant</b>, what is your reply?</li> <li><b>EA</b>, what further information is required?</li> </ol>
Q1.9.10	Applicant	<p><b>Effects of Solar PVs on Groundwater</b></p> <p>There have been numerous concerns raised [too many to list] that chemicals contained within the Solar PVs could leak causing contamination and therefore affect groundwater quality. How will the Applicant ensure that this would not occur?</p>
Q1.9.11	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council North Kesteven District Council	<p><b>Unexploded Ordnance</b></p> <p>The ES [APP-051, Table 11.3] sets out that the risk of Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) will be managed by the implementation of a UXO Risk Management Plan for intrusive works.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is it appropriate to prepare the risk management plan post consent?</li> <li>Is the requirement for a risk management plan suitably secured in the dDCO?</li> </ol>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
<b>10.</b>	<b>Landscape and Visual Impact</b>	
Q1.10.1	Lincolnshire County Council North Kesteven District Council	<b>Assessment Methodology</b> Do NKDC and LCC have any comments on the Landscape and Visual Methodology and Assessment Criteria [APP-107] and/ or the assumptions made in paragraph 10.4.33 of ES chapter 10 [APP-050] regarding the proposed planting growth rate?
Q1.10.2	Lincolnshire County Council North Kesteven District Council	<b>Study Area</b> The ExA note that NKDC and LCC agreed the study area for the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) subject to justification being presented in the LVIA and confirmation of there being no significant effects beyond these distances [APP-050, Table 10.1]. Are you satisfied with the justification provided by the Applicant in Section 10.4 of ES chapter 10?
Q1.10.3	Applicant	<b>References</b> Provide copies, for inclusion into the Examination Library of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ref. 10-22: National Character Area Profile 47 – Southern Lincolnshire Edge (2014) Natural England.</li> <li>Ref. 10-23: North Kesteven Landscape Character Assessment (2007) David Tyldesley and Associates for North Kesteven District Council.</li> <li>Ref. 10-24: The Historic Character of the County of Lincolnshire – English Heritage Project No 4661 - The Historic Landscape Character Zones (2011) John Lord and Alastair Macintosh, Lincolnshire County Council.</li> </ol>
Q1.10.4	Lincolnshire County Council North Kesteven District Council	<b>Residents and Visitors of Surrounding Villages</b> Are LCC and NKDC satisfied with the Applicant's justification set out in Table 10.2 and Section 10.5 of ES Chapter 10 [APP-050] for not undertaking a full assessment of visual impacts for:

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>a. Residents and visitors to the villages of Scopwick, Kirkby Green, Blankney and Ashby de la Launde; and</p> <p>b. Residents of the barracks at RAF Digby.</p>
Q1.10.5	<p>Applicant</p> <p>Lincolnshire County Council</p> <p>North Kesteven District Council</p>	<p><b>Wider Landscape Character</b></p> <p>Numerous IPs [including RR-306] raise concern regarding the extent of solar development within the wider Lincolnshire area and the impact this would have on the character of the landscape.</p> <p>a. When considered cumulatively with other solar developments (both above and below the threshold for NSIP development), does the extent of solar development affect the key characteristics of the Central Plateau Landscape Character Type (LCT) or National Character Area (NCA) 47 - Southern Lincolnshire Edge?</p> <p>b. <b>Applicant</b>, in a similar format to Figure 16.8 [APP-072], provide a plan that shows the Order limits and other solar developments in relation to the boundary of LCA7, LCA11, the Central Plateau LCT and NCA47?</p>
Q1.10.6	<p>Lincolnshire County Council</p> <p>North Kesteven District Council</p>	<p><b>Character of Surrounding Villages</b></p> <p>Do LCC and NKDC agree with the Applicant's position in ES chapter 10 [APP-050] that the changes to the Landscape Character Area (LCA) 7 and LCA11 surrounding Blankney, Scopwick, Kirkby Green, Ashby de la Launde and RAF Digby will not affect the character of these villages? If not, provide an explanation of how the character of these villages would be affected.</p>
Q1.10.7	<p>Lincolnshire County Council</p> <p>North Kesteven District Council</p>	<p><b>Viewpoint and Photomontage Selection</b></p> <p>Figures 10.3(a-d) and 10.4 [APP-066] of the ES show the visual receptor groups, viewpoint and photomontage locations.</p> <p>Confirm if you agree with these visual receptor groups, viewpoint and photomontage locations. If you consider that any further viewpoints and/ or photomontages would be reasonably</p>



ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		required, provide precise details of these along with a clear justification for why they are required.
Q1.10.8	Applicant	<p><b>Vegetation in Photomontages</b></p> <p>The year 10 photomontage for Viewpoint 12 (Spires and Steeples Trail) [APP-130] appears to show the proposed hedgerow in leaf to the right-hand side of the track whereas the existing hedgerow on the left-hand side is without leaves.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is it correct that the proposed species of hedgerow would be in leaf in early March?</li> <li>Are there other times of the year that the proposed hedge species would offer less dense screening and if so, could additional photomontage views be provided?</li> </ol>
Q1.10.9	Applicant	<p><b>Viewpoint 36 Photomontage</b></p> <p>Do the photomontages for viewpoint 36 [APP-133] show the worst potential case placement of structures within the relevant Work No. parameters?</p>
Q1.10.10	Applicant	<p><b>CCTV Posts</b></p> <p>The Design Commitment D5 [APP-0138] states that CCTV will be located typically every 50-60 metres. It is noted that CCTV posts are shown on the photomontages for viewpoint 29c [APP-132] but not on viewpoint 28b [APP-132] or viewpoint 17a [APP-131].</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should there be CCTV posts shown in these photomontages?</li> <li>Provide more details about how the final locations and spacing of CCTV posts will be determined.</li> </ol>
Q1.10.11	Applicant	<p><b>Viewing Angle</b></p> <p>Does the assessment of visual effects on viewpoints account for the angle at which you would be viewing the panels (eg. face on from the south, side on from the east and west or the underside of the panels from the north)?</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
Q1.10.12	Applicant	<p><b>Visual Effects on Public Rights of Way Users</b></p> <p>NPS EN-3 (footnote 89 to paragraph 2.10.43) states that screening along public right-of-way networks to minimise the outlook into the Solar Park may impact on the ability of users to appreciate the surrounding landscapes. Several IP's [including RR-306] raised concern that the open nature of Landscape Character Area (LCA) 7 would be eroded by enclosure arising from screening planting and that the open agricultural character elements of LCA11 would change to an inherently enclosed character with long range vistas compromised in order to screen the Proposed Development.</p> <p>How has the impact on the ability of users to appreciate the surrounding landscapes been taken into consideration in arriving at the conclusions in ES chapter 10 [APP-050]?</p>
Q1.10.13	Applicant	<p><b>Residential Visual Amenity Assessment</b></p> <p>The Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) [APP-111] concludes that the 'Residential Visual Amenity Threshold' would not be exceeded for any residential property.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain in further detail how a professional judgement is reached on whether or not the 'Residential Visual Amenity Threshold' is exceeded.</li> <li>It has been assessed in the ES [APP-050] that some properties would experience major adverse significant visual effects, but it is not considered that the 'Residential Visual Amenity Threshold' would be exceeded. Explain how this can be the case and the difference between the criteria used in the ES and the RVAA.</li> </ol>
Q1.10.14	Applicant	<p><b>Project Principles</b></p> <p>Requirement (R) 5 of the dDCO [APP-012] requires the detailed design proposals to be developed in accordance with the Design Commitments [APP-0138]. The Design Commitments are based on the Project Principles as set out in section 6 of the Design Approach Document [APP-0137] but do not cover all the project principles.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>a. Should R5 require the detailed design to be developed in accordance with both the Design Commitments and the Project Principles? If not, explain how the Project Principles would be applied to the detailed design proposals.</p> <p>b. Should the Project Principles be included in Schedule 13 (documents and plans to be certified) of the dDCO?</p>
Q1.10.15	Applicant	<p><b>Good Design</b></p> <p>The Design Approach Document (DAD) [APP-0137] sets out the need for good design and includes Design Principles that would be used to inform the detailed design process for different components of the Proposed Development.</p> <p>a. Provide further explanation of how the Springwell Substation (Work No. 2), Satellite Collector Compounds (Work No. 3) and the BESS (Work No. 4) would be capable of being laid out and designed (including through use of colour and materials) in order to promote the best possible aesthetic and visual appearance and to minimise landscape and visual effects.</p> <p>b. The Design Commitments [APP-0138] document includes various options for the colour and materials of above ground structures. Provide a summary of how the final appearance of above ground structures in Work Nos. 2 to 4 would be determined in order to minimise their landscape and visual effects?</p> <p>c. What bearing would the proposed colour and any reflectivity of the solar panels and panel mounting structures have on their landscape and visual impact?</p>
Q1.10.16	Applicant	<p><b>Advanced Planting</b></p> <p>Paragraph 5.3.8 of the Outline Landscape Environmental Management Plan (oLEMP) [APP-0142] states that the Applicant is committed to implementing proposed vegetation and advanced planting prior to the installation of solar panels including planting adjacent to the A15 to mitigate glint and glare effects of Solar PV development in Winter 2024-25.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The ExA observed what appeared to be advanced planting in field C6 on Unaccompanied Site Inspection 1 [EV1-001]. Provide details of locations where early planting has already been implemented.</li> <li>b. Have any other locations been identified for advance planting of screening vegetation and why?</li> <li>c. How would any further proposed advance planting be secured by the dDCO [APP-012]?</li> <li>d. Other than the areas where construction access is required, what would prevent all the proposed screening vegetation being planted prior to the installation of solar panels and could this mitigate any adverse visual effects in the construction phase and year 1 of the operational phase?</li> </ul>
Q1.10.17	Applicant	<p><b>Height Parameters</b></p> <p>Fields By03, By10, By28, Lf04, Lf11 include land which is in flood zone 2 and 3. Figure 3.2b [APP-060] shows that all panels in these fields are subject to a maximum height parameter of 3.5m above ground level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Do all panels within these fields By03, By10, By28, Lf04, Lf11 need to be installed to the maximum height parameter of 3.5m or only those panels that fall within the actual flood zone areas?</li> <li>b. Should the height parameter plans Figures 3.2(A-F) be included within Schedule 13 of the dDCO? If not, provide justification.</li> </ul>
Q1.10.18	Applicant	<p><b>Security Fencing</b></p> <p>Is the Applicant confident that the proposed post and wire fencing and other security measures will be sufficient for security? Or is there a risk that more robust security might be needed in the future which could have a worse visual impact?</p>
Q1.10.19	Applicant	<p><b>Co-ordination of Visual Mitigation with the National Grid Substation Proposals</b></p> <p>LCC [RR-233] and NKDC [RR-305] consider there are potential opportunities for the Applicant and the National Grid Substation proposals to coordinate mitigation planting in the area around</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>the National Grid Substation. The local authorities give the example of extending of carriageway hedgerow planting further north along the western edge of the A15 (along field parcels Bcd024, Bcd027, Bcd031).</p> <p>Has the Applicant explored either the example given by the local authorities or any other opportunities to provide mitigation planting within the Order limits that would provide screening of the National Grid Substation? If not, provide justification.</p>
Q1.10.20	Applicant	<p><b>Not Significant Effects</b></p> <p>Paragraph 3.34 of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (3rd Edition) states that it should be made clear that effects not considered to be significant will not be completely disregarded. Explain how this has been taken into consideration, including in relation to the assessment of cumulative and combined effects, population effects and the wider 'planning balance' within the Planning Statement [AS-018].</p>
<b>11. Noise and Vibration</b>		
Q1.11.1	North Kesteven District Council	<p><b>Methodology</b></p> <p>Are NKDC content with the methodology used in the noise and vibration assessment in the ES [APP-052] and the assumptions [APP-052, Paragraphs 12.4.16 to 12.4.37] used for: construction plant items and activities; construction and decommissioning traffic; and operational plant noise?</p>
Q1.11.2	Applicant	<p><b>Construction Noise</b></p> <p>The oCEMP [APP-0140] states that applicable noise thresholds will be defined in each of the CEMPs and that compliance with these noise limits will ensure adverse effects are unlikely.</p> <p>a. Should noise limits be defined in the oCEMP and/ or dDCO?</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		b. If not, how can the ExA be sure that noise limits for construction works would be adequately secured and that adverse effects would be unlikely?
Q1.11.3	Applicant	<p><b>Operational Noise</b></p> <p>The current drafting of R15 refers to ‘the operational noise rating levels as set out in the environmental statement’.</p> <p>a. For clarity and precision, should such ‘noise rating levels’ be specified in R15?</p> <p>b. Explain the links and any overlap between R15 and R5 (Detailed design approval) and R13 (Operational environmental management plan).</p>
Q1.11.4	Applicant	<p><b>Public Rights of Way</b></p> <p>Due to the transient and temporary nature of users along Public Rights of Way (PRoW) through the Proposed Development, and the proposed distance between PRoW and equipment, noise impacts along these areas have not been assessed. However, an IP [RR-031] raised concern that the users of this network of ProW include regular users who should not be classed as temporary and whilst the users are “transient” in that they are passing along the ProW, their whole experience of the use and enjoyment of the ProW would be destroyed by noise and disturbance.</p> <p>a. Is there guidance available as to the noise level that would constitute a significant effect for recreational users of PRoW?</p> <p>b. Provide a description of the character of the noise and the maximum noise level experienced by recreational users of PRoW.</p>
Q1.11.5	Applicant	<p><b>Distinctive Tonal, Impulsive or Low Frequency Noise</b></p> <p>Paragraph 5.12.6 of NPS EN-1 requires that the Applicant’s assessment includes the identification of any distinctive tonal, impulsive or low frequency characteristics of noise.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>a. Provide a summary, in the clearest possible terms, of how these characteristics have been identified. This may include examples of equivalent sounds sources to provide a guide to all IPs.</p> <p>b. Given the design flexibility sought for particular elements of the proposal, what likelihood is there that such characteristics might change once the final design has been determined?</p>
Q1.11.6	Applicant	<p><b>Horizontal Directional Drilling</b></p> <p>Paragraph 2.8.3 of the oCEMP [APP-0140] states that activities such as trenchless/ Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) could be required outside of the assumed day-time construction hours (i.e. evening, Sundays, Bank Holidays or at night), which will be agreed upon with the relevant planning authority prior to these works.</p> <p>a. Are there any other construction activities that might be required to be undertaken outside of the assumed day time construction hours?</p> <p>b. In what circumstances and with what justification would HDD be expected to occur outside assumed day time construction hours?</p> <p>c. What would be the expected frequency and duration of such HDD works and over what period might they be expected to continue in any specific location?</p> <p>d. Provide justification as to whether a worst-case scenario for HDD at night has been assessed in the ES.</p>
Q1.11.7	Applicant	<p><b>Decommissioning</b></p> <p>ES chapter 12 [APP-052] states that the likely noise impacts from decommissioning activities are considered to be similar to the noise impacts predicted from construction activities. Are there any noise impacts in the decommissioning phase (for example from the breaking apart of concrete) that could be greater than the impacts in construction?</p>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Population</b>	

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
Q1.12.1	Applicant North Kesteven District Council	<p><b>Skills and Education Package</b></p> <p>NKDC [RR-305] state that it is seeking a skills and education package.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>NKDC</b>, do you consider this to be necessary for mitigation of impacts or is it considered enhancement?</li> <li><b>NKDC</b>, do you consider that this should be in addition to the measures set out in the outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [APP-0153] and R16 of the dDCO [APP-012]?</li> <li>Has there been any discussion regarding a possible s106 agreement? If so, provide an update.</li> </ol>
Q1.12.2	Applicant	<p><b>Supply Chain Effects</b></p> <p>In Paragraphs 13.7.12 and 13.7.52 of ES chapter 13 [APP-053] it is assumed that the supply chain effects are retained at Construction Labour Market Area and Lincolnshire scales respectively. Is there an existing supply chain at these scales that can support the construction and operation phases?</p>
Q1.12.3	North Kesteven District Council Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Stepping Out Network and Effects on Tourism</b></p> <p>ES Chapter 13 [APP-053] acknowledges that significant visual effects from PRow and the Stepping Out Network may adversely impact the number of visitors to the area in the operational phase. However, the Applicant's position [APP-053, Paragraph 13.7.26] is that as other routes of the network may continue to be used, the residual impacts associated with loss of visitors such as the potential loss of business will not likely be impacted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you agree with the Applicant's conclusion of no significant effect on tourism related to the stepping out walks considering there are moderate/ major adverse visual effects for footpath users identified in ES chapter 10 [APP-050]?</li> <li>Is any evidence available that quantifies how regularly the PRow and the Stepping Out Network within and adjacent to the Order limits are used?</li> </ol>
Q1.12.4	Applicant	<p><b>Health and Quality of Life</b></p>



ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>LCC [RR-233] raised concern that the Applicant has not undertaken a health impact assessment. Submissions have also been made by local residents [too many to list] on the potential effects on health and well-being. Paragraph 5.12.6 of NPS EN-1 requires that, where noise impacts are likely to arise from the proposed development, the applicant's assessment includes an assessment of any likely impact on health and well-being where appropriate. Further, paragraph 5.12.17 of NPS EN-1 states that proposals, where possible, should contribute to improvements to health and quality of life through the effective management and control of noise.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide further justification for not undertaking a health impact assessment.</li> <li>Explain further how the application has taken the impact of noise on health and well-being into consideration?</li> <li>Summarise how the proposed development contributes to improvements to health and quality of the life, cross referencing where necessary to existing documents.</li> <li>If it has not been possible for the proposed development to achieve improvements to health and quality of life, then explain why not.</li> </ol>
Q1.12.5	Applicant	<p><b>Permissive Paths</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development would provide an additional 8.58km [APP-0145] of permissive paths. What will happen to the permissive paths after decommissioning?</p>
Q1.12.6	Applicant	<p><b>Ethical Procurement</b></p> <p>Numerous RRs [too many to list] have raised concerns regarding ethical procurement of solar panels. Paragraph 2.5.5 of the outline Employment, Skills and Supply Chain Plan [APP-0153] states that solar developments can carry an increased risk of modern slavery due to the complexities in the supply chain relating primarily to solar panels. Paragraph 2.5.4 states that a rigorous approach would be taken to ensure those in the supply chain and contractors abide by the Applicant's values.</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide more detail on the measures that would be applied to the Applicant's own operations, and those of the supply chains, to evaluate the risks of modern slavery including an explanation of how these measures would be secured.</li> <li>b. Provide more detail on the compliance screening and certification process for suppliers of solar panels.</li> </ul>
Q1.12.7	Applicant	<p><b>House Prices</b></p> <p>Numerous RRs [too many to list] raised concerns regarding impact of the Proposed Development on house prices. Scopwick and Kirkby Green Solar Action Group [RR-370] have presented a calculation for loss of value for individual dwellings in Scopwick and Kirkby Green Parish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Provide a response to the devaluation calculation presented by Scopwick and Kirkby Green Solar Action Group.</li> <li>b. Explain what evidence can be relied upon to assess the potential impact of the Proposed Development on house prices.</li> </ul>
<b>13. Traffic and Transport, inc Public Rights of Way</b>		
Q1.13.1	Applicant National Highways	<p><b>Strategic Road Network</b></p> <p>National Highways (NH) [RR-290] has set out that the Applicant should provide further information, regarding the methodology for calculating the number of peak hour workers on the Strategic Road Network (A1/ A46) to allow it to complete its independent checks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Applicant</b>, what is your reply?</li> <li>b. <b>NH</b>, what additional information is required to address your request?</li> </ul>
Q1.13.2	Applicant	<p><b>Assessment Methodology - Traffic Survey Data</b></p> <p>The Transport Assessment [APP-123, Paragraph 5.4.4] states: '<i>Whilst only 2024 survey data has been used as a baseline for the junction modelling in Section 9, ATC survey data collected in 2023 and DfT count point data collected in 2022 has been used to obtain data for the</i></p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<i>assessments undertaken in ES Volume 1, Chapter 6: Air Quality and ES Volume 1, Chapter 12: Noise and Vibration</i> . Provide further explanation why using different survey data has been selected for the different assessments and is such an approach justified and robust?
Q1.13.3	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Proposed Highway Improvements</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development proposes improvements at the A15/ B1191 and A15/ Gorse Hill Lane junctions and 'General Arrangement' drawings are illustrated in the oCTMP [APP-0141, Appendix 3]. LCC has set out [RR-233] that it requires: full details of the proposed junction improvements on the A15; approval through S278 of the Highways Act 1980; and a bond for these major works. Further, it notes that the wording of the dDCO [APP-012, Articles 8 and 10] would give the Applicant the right to do these works with no further approvals by LCC, which it considers unacceptable as no technical details have been submitted or approved by LCC. Further to this, the ES [APP-054, Paragraph 14.10.53] sets out that safety audits of the indicative junction improvement schemes have been undertaken and are included in the TA [APP-123]. However, they do not appear to have been included.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Applicant</b>, what is your response to the matters raised by LCC?</li> <li><b>Applicant</b>, provide the Road Safety Audits referred to in the ES.</li> <li><b>LCC</b>, does the same apply to all other proposed highway improvements, such as the B1191 RAF Digby and Ashbyde-la-Launde widening and vehicle passing bays along Temple Road?</li> </ol>
Q1.13.4	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>A15/ B1202 Junction Improvement</b></p> <p>The Transport Assessment (TA) [APP-123] identifies capacity issues at this junction, but notes that LCC are proposing their own improvement works due to existing issues. LCC has set out [RR-233] that it considers the Proposed Development should make a financial contribution to the improvements works. In addition, in the absence of the delivery of the improvement works, the Applicant has proposed a commuter bus alternative [APP-054, Paragraph 14.9.6].</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide an update on the delivery of the potential junction improvement works, including anticipated timescales.</li> </ol>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>b. <b>Applicant</b>, what is your response to the request from LCC to contribute towards the cost of the improvement works?</p> <p>c. <b>LCC</b>, are you content that in the absence of any improvement works, the proposed commuter bus is a realistic alternative?</p>
Q1.13.5	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>North Hykeham Relief Road</b></p> <p>The TA [APP-123, Paragraph 10.1.29] identifies that the North Hykeham Relief Road scheme is expected to be completed in 2028. On this basis, the Applicant considers that it is likely that the baseline levels of traffic predicted for 2028 will not materialise, thus the operation of the A15/ B1202 Junction should improve, and the overall impacts of development traffic lessened.</p> <p>a. Provide an update on the delivery of the proposed relief road.</p> <p>b. <b>LCC</b>, do you agree with the Applicant's view?</p>
Q1.13.6	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Site Accesses</b></p> <p>The oCTMP [APP-0141, Paragraph 3.3.3] sets out that the typical layout of a site access is illustrated in Appendix 3 of this oCTMP and secured within the Streets, Rights of Way and Access Plans [APP-008].</p> <p>a. <b>Applicant</b>, given the locations of the site accesses are known and set out in the Streets, Rights of Way and Access Plans justify why full site access designs, including visibility splays, have not been provided?</p> <p>b. <b>LCC</b>, are you content with the level of detail provided for site accesses?</p>
Q1.13.7	Applicant National Highways National Rail Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Abnormal Indivisible Loads Route</b></p> <p>The oCTMP [APP-0141, Appendix 3] sets out the route that Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AILs) would follow to the application site. NR [RR-296] wishes to ensure that AIL movements under or near the Bridges are undertaken safely at all times and has set out that its engineers will be considering the details in the oCTMP.</p> <p>a. <b>NH</b> and <b>LCC</b>, is the proposed route considered to be acceptable?</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>b. <b>NR</b>, provide an update on your consideration of the oCTMP.</p> <p>c. <b>Applicant</b>, set out how any AIL movements will safeguard any bridges along the route.</p>
Q1.13.8	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Outline Travel Plan</b></p> <p>The measures proposed by the Applicant to promote sustainable modes of transport are set out in the oCTMP [APP-0141, Appendix 1]. Does the Outline Travel Plan go far enough and should it include mode share targets?</p>
Q1.13.9	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Construction Traffic Routes</b></p> <p>Concern about construction traffic travelling through local villages has been raised by numerous interested parties [too many to list]. The routes proposed to be used by construction traffic are identified in the ES [APP-070, Figure 14.4] and in the oCTMP [APP-0141]. To ensure that effects do not arise that have not been assessed in the ES, should these routes be secured in a requirement within the dDCO?</p>
Q1.13.10	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Construction Traffic Movements</b></p> <p>The ES [APP-054, Table 14.23] identifies anticipated construction traffic movements on each assessed link. To ensure that effects do not arise that have not been assessed in the ES, should these figures be secured in a requirement within the dDCO?</p>
Q1.13.11	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Cumulative Traffic Effects</b></p> <p>The ES [APP-056, Table 16.4 and Section 16.7] considers cumulative effects in relation to traffic and transport. However, it is unclear to the ExA whether the detailed modelling undertaken in the TA [APP-123] includes potential traffic from the proposed National Grid Navenby Substation and other relevant developments, which are located in proximity and could have an overlapping construction period.</p> <p>a. <b>Applicant</b>, confirm whether or not this is the case.</p> <p>b. If not, how does the Applicant propose to address this matter?</p>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>c. Should Leoda Solar Farm also now be included in the cumulative assessment?</p> <p>d. <b>LCC</b>, are you content with the extent of cumulative assessment undertaken?</p>
Q1.13.12	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Public Rights of Way Improvements</b></p> <p>LCC [RR-233] wish to see: a new PRow linking ROWS/5/1 to the highway on the western end; an enhancement to fix the gap between the legal line of Ashby De La Launde PF11 to the highway; the continuation of Cuckoo Lane; and that the surfacing for the proposed upgrade to the existing PRow between Scopwick and Blankney to bridleway status to be defined to ensure that it is accessible all year round.</p> <p>a. <b>Applicant</b>, what is your response to these requests?</p> <p>b. <b>LCC</b>, provide further evidence to justify the need for such improvements and why they are necessary to make the development acceptable.</p>
Q1.13.13	Applicant Lincolnshire County Council	<p><b>Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Paths Management Plan</b></p> <p>The Outline Public Rights of Way and Permissive Paths Management Plan (oPRoWPPMP) [APP-0145] contains the Applicant's approach to managing the PRows and Permissive Paths to ensure they are safe and accessible. Network Rail [RR-296] has set out that the oPRoWPPMP proposes changes to a public right of way that includes a railway crossing (the Scopwick Yard Level Crossing which connects Scop/8/2 and M/tin/7/1) and that it does not appear that the impacts on the railway or on continuing use of the public rights of way using the level crossing in this location have been considered. It notes that the oPRoWPPMP sets out various alternative routes for Scop/8/2 but these do not facilitate access across the railway to connect with the existing path on the other side and would therefore render the level crossing obsolete while any diversions are in place.</p> <p>a. <b>LCC</b>, are you content with the details set out in the oPRoWPPMP?</p> <p>b. <b>Applicant</b>, how will access to the level crossing be maintained?</p>
<b>14. Water</b>		

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
Q1.14.1	Applicant	<p><b>New Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Data</b></p> <p>The EA has advised [AS-021] that new flood and coastal erosion risk data has been published that may affect the consideration of the Proposed Development. Advise what implications the new data has for the Proposed Development and provide any amended assessments that may be required.</p>
Q1.14.2	Applicant	<p><b>Existing Drainage Infrastructure</b></p> <p>Anglian Water has noted [RR-026] that there are numerous buried mains pipes and sewers located within/ adjacent to the public highway and green verges and in locations west and north of Scopwick and south-west of Ashby there are buried main water supply pipes which cross the open countryside. How have these been taken into account in the Illustrative Layout Plans and Sections [APP-009] to avoid any potential impacts?</p>
Q1.14.3	Applicant	<p><b>Flood Risk and the Sequential Test</b></p> <p>The Proposed Development seeks to locate Solar PV modules in areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3(a &amp; b). Therefore, the Sequential Test must be met, as set out in NPS EN-1, the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance. Further, NPS EN-1 states energy projects should not normally be consented within Flood Zone 3b (Paragraph 5.8.41). The Applicant has also set out [AS-018, Paragraph 8.5.16] that it is noteworthy that the areas of the site which are in Flood Zones 2 and 3 benefit from an extant permission for a solar farm (NKDC reference 14/0937/FUL) and therefore, as a realistic fallback, development could be carried out in this location.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a map with supporting evidence that demonstrates why it is not possible for Solar PV modules to be located in areas of Flood Zone 1 (taking into account wider sustainable development objectives) for <u>all</u> land within and adjoining the Order limits.</li> <li>Explain fully why Solar PV modules <u>must</u> be located in Flood Zone 3b, for operational reasons.</li> </ol>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		c. Provide further evidence that the extant permission is a realistic fallback, is directly comparable to the Proposed Development (such as scale) and that the Applicant intends to implement the permission should development consent be refused.
Q1.14.4	Applicant	<p><b>Flood Risk at Scopwick</b></p> <p>Numerous IPs [including RR-369 and RR-190] have raised concerns about:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the use of piling and the potential to damage fragile clay drainage pipes across the site;</li> <li>2. the artesian effect around Scopwick and piling could push the ground water up into the upper stratum, causing flood risk to the village of Scopwick;</li> <li>3. being able to manage the anticipated volume of water and use of swales and vegetation absorption to counter the flows of rainfall; and</li> <li>4. lack of external supervision of construction works and ongoing maintenance.</li> </ol> <p>Applicant, respond to each of these concerns.</p>
Q1.14.5	Applicant	<p><b>Outline Drainage Strategy</b></p> <p>The Outline Drainage Strategy (oDS) [AS-016, Appendix A] sets out that no infiltration testing has been undertaken at the Proposed Development to date, though anecdotal information (soilscape and runoff rates) suggests a measure of infiltration may be viable.</p> <p>The oDS sets out that due to the rural nature of the Proposed Development, discharge of surface water to the public sewer network is not being sought as part of the Proposed Development. The EA are concerned [RR-130] that there is the potential for impacts on surface water from the disposal of foul water from the proposed facilities at the BESS. The EA note that the proposed development site boundary of Springwell West is located approximately 290 metres from a public foul sewer (Main Street, Ashby de la Launde) and are of the view that the Applicant needs to demonstrate that connection to the public foul sewer is not feasible (in terms of cost and/ or practicality).</p>



ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>Both Anglian Water and the EA [RR-026] [RR-130] have requested that it is included as a specific consultee to the discharge of Requirement 10 (Schedule 2) (Surface and foul water drainage) of the dDCO [APP-012] to enable it to make comments on the final drainage strategy.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given that infiltration is at the top of the drainage hierarchy should more work and on-site investigation be undertaken to establish this now?</li> <li>Provide more evidence to demonstrate that connection to a public foul sewer is not feasible.</li> <li>Should the EA and Anglian Water be added as discharge consultees to Requirement 10 of the dDCO?</li> </ol>
Q1.14.6	Applicant	<p><b>Water Supply</b></p> <p>The ES [APP-055, Paragraph 15.12.1] notes that there is uncertainty regarding the confirmation of whether the welfare facilities will be water mains fed or whether a bowser can supply the potable water. When will this be confirmed and has the potential for a mains water connection been allowed for in the Order limits?</p>
Q1.14.7	Applicant	<p><b>Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan and Outline Operational Environmental Management Plan</b></p> <p>The outline plans [APP-0140] [APP-0143] set out an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan will be developed in consultation with the EA, in relation to responding to flood warnings. The EA note [RR-130] that it does not normally comment on or approve the adequacy of flood emergency response procedures accompanying development proposals and consultation with the EA is therefore unlikely to be required. Provide amended outline plans to address this matter.</p>
<b>15. Other Matters, inc Waste</b>		
Q1.15.1	Applicant	<b>Anticipated Construction and Operational Waste Quantities</b>

ExQ1	Question to:	Question:
		<p>The EIA regulations state that the description of the development should include an estimate, by type and quantity, of types of waste produced during the construction and operation phases (Schedule 4 Paragraph 1(d)). Anticipated quantities of waste have not been provided in ES Chapter 3 [APP-043], the oCEMP [APP-0140] or the oOEMP [APP-0143] for the construction and operation phases.</p> <p>In line with the EIA regulations and the requirements of NPS EN-1 confirm the anticipated volumes of waste from the Proposed Development, and the impact of waste generation from the Proposed Development on the capacity of waste management facilities.</p>
Q1.15.2	Applicant	<p><b>Below Ground Cables at Decommissioning</b></p> <p>At the end of the operational phase, it is proposed that all the below ground cables will be left in place. NPS EN-3 states that generally, it is expected that the panel arrays and mounting structures will be decommissioned, and underground cabling dug out to ensure that prior use of the site can continue.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the reasoning for leaving the below ground cables in place.</li> <li>Are there any adverse effects or potential hinderance to use of the land associated with the cables being left in place?</li> </ol>
Q1.15.3	Applicant	<p><b>Microlight Aircraft Site</b></p> <p>An IP [RR-337] has raised concern about the potential effects of the Proposed Development on a registered microlight aircraft site and noted that the Civil Aviation Authority have expressed their concerns to the Applicant. Has the application assessed such potential effects?</p>