

Sent by Email to:

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Your Ref: EN010149

Interested Party Number: SWSF-SP005

Date: 22 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.

Following receipt of the Planning Inspectorates Rule 6 letter dated 9 April 2025 this letter sets out Lincolnshire County Council's (LCC) written submission about how the application should be examined in response to Procedural Deadline A for the examination of the above application.

Examination Procedures

The Council has reviewed the draft Examination Timetable set out at Annex D to the Rule 6 letter and is of the view that changes are needed.

The Council is concerned about the number of topics proposed to be covered in ISH1, as set out in Annex E to the Rule 6 letter. Based on our previous experience of DCO examinations, ISH1 typically addresses procedural matters such as the dDCO, the extent of the order limits, and the description of development. It may also consider high-level points on specific topics, with detailed discussions reserved for subsequent ISHs.

The key concern is that ISH1 would occur before our Local Impact Report or Written Representation are submitted. The agenda for ISH1 may not therefore capture points the Council intend to make, potentially making any discussion at ISH1 premature. The Council

does acknowledge that its Relevant Representation will have been taken into consideration, however, this is more of a high-level summary and not an in-depth report.

Furthermore, the number of topics may not allow enough time for thorough analysis of each topic. In light of the high level of public interest, with over 400 Relevant Representations submitted, the public and local interest groups might anticipate a more comprehensive discussion on various issues.

Having considered the ExA's initial assessment of principal issues set out in Annex C of the Rule 6 letter, the Council are of the opinion that Air Quality and the Water Environment may still be suitable topics for ISH1, as they are more discrete matters that may be the sole concern of other interested parties.

The Council would anticipate further ISHs for more detailed discussions of the other topics currently proposed for ISH1 in Annex E of the Rule 6 letter (Alternatives and Site Selection, Cumulative Effects, Grid Connection, Landscape and Visual impacts, Traffic and Transport and Cultural Heritage).

Notwithstanding the above, the Council would appreciate detailed information on the aspects of each topic the Examining Authority (ExA) wishes to cover at ISH1 in the agenda, to enable proper preparation by the Council and its technical officers in view of the number of topics to be covered. The Council also requests that the agenda be published as soon as possible, noting the minimum five days in advance, to allow adequate preparation time.

Site Inspections

The Council notes the particulars and locations visited by the ExA at the Unaccompanied Site Inspection (USI) on Monday 10 March and Tuesday 11 March 2025, which appears to have been more focused on Springwell East. The Council would like to suggest further viewpoint locations in Springwell West be visited at any Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) due to its open character and particularly views from users along the A15. For example viewpoints 31-35 and viewpoints 37 and 39. The Council will make further comments, as necessary, on the applicant's proposed draft itinerary at deadline 2.

Attendance at hearings

The Council confirms its intention to be in attendance at the Preliminary Meeting and Issue Specific Hearing 1. Attendees from LCC will be:

Preliminary meeting:

- Infrastructure Manager (LCC's planning lead)
- Planning Apprentice (LCC's support officer)

ISH1:

- Infrastructure Manager (LCC's planning lead)
- Planning Apprentice (LCC's support officer)
- Wooding - Infrastructure Archaeologist (covering Archaeology)
- Historic Buildings and Landscape Officer (covering Above Ground Heritage)
- Growth Manager Special Projects (covering Traffic and Transport)

██████████ – Consultant, AAH Planning (covering Landscape and Visual)

Event participation forms have been completed for the above attendees.

Yours faithfully

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for ██████████
Head of Planning