



Preliminary meeting note

Application: Springwell Solar Farm
Reference: EN010149
Time and date: 10:00 Wednesday 7 May 2025
Venue: Lincoln County Assembly Rooms

This meeting note is not a full transcript of the preliminary meeting. It is a summary of the key points discussed.

1. Welcome and Introduction

Jonathan Manning (JM) welcomed those present and introduced himself as the lead member of the panel and Benjamin Northover (BN) as panel member, constituting the Examining Authority (ExA) to examine the Springwell Solar Farm application. JM explained the appointment was made by delegation from the Secretary of State (SoS) for the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero.

JM explained the purpose of the preliminary meeting (PM) and noted that the Examination will commence after the PM closes.

The ExA confirmed that all documents and submissions received and accepted during the Examination will be published on the project-specific page of the National Infrastructure Planning website.

2. Video recording

The video recording of this PM is available on the National Infrastructure Planning website and can be accessed [project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website](#).

3. Examination process

The ExA briefly explained the examination process under the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008), further info can be found:

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

4. Initial assessment of principal issues

The ExA explained the purpose of the initial assessment of principal issues (section 88 of the PA2008), which can be found in [Annex C](#) of the [Rule 6](#) letter of 9 April 2025 and asked for any observations on them.

Lincolnshire County Council advised that all of the main issues identified should be afforded hearing time.

North Kesteven District Council expressed their concern that the topic areas cannot be covered substantially at ISH1.

Paul Frost queried why multiple topics which were brought up in Relevant Representations had not been listed and queried how such issues would be considered.

Marianne Overton for Cliff Villages Solar Action Group was concerned that the Springwell application has been taken in isolation and would prefer to see all solar farm applications in the area considered at the same time.

Several parties set out that health and well-being should be included as a principle issue.

5. Examination Timetable

The ExA noted requests, already received, to amend the draft examination timetable contained in [Annex D](#) of [Rule 6 letter](#) and also welcomed further suggestions from the parties in attendance. JM highlighted that the proposed timetable is 5 months.

Numerous parties set out comments about the timetable. All comments received were duly noted by the ExA and considerations will be reflected in the Rule 8 Letter.

The examination timetable can be found in the Rule 8 letter which will be published as soon as possible.

6. Procedural decisions

The ExA clarified the procedural decisions made under section 89(3) of the PA2008 and asked for any observations. Procedural decisions can be found in [Annex F](#) of the [Rule 6 Letter](#). No comments were made by any of the parties in attendance.

7. Any Other Matters

Martin Elvin queried whether the ExA could be accompanied by members of the public during the Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) and if suggested locations could be provided. The ExA noted the suggested site visit location submissions during Procedural Deadline A and noted the ASI is to show physical features of the site and confirmed that there will be an opportunity to comment on the draft itinerary.

Susan Elvin raised how the process was very difficult to access, with the community finding it very difficult to attend the meetings and also asked how the ExA are appointed.

Marc Williams of Scopwick and Kirby Green Parish Council and the Springwell Solar Action Group highlighted the difficulties faced by people understanding and accessing documentation relating to the application due to limits on resourcing.