

**Application by Springwell Energyfarm Limited for an Order Granting  
Development Consent for the Springwell Solar Farm****Agenda for Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3):**

Hearing	Date and Time	Location
<b>Issue Specific Hearing 3</b>	<b>Wednesday 16 July 2025</b>  <b>Hearing starts at 10.00</b>  Registration and seating available at venue from 09:30 and virtual registration process from 09:30	Blended event at Doubletree by Hilton Lincoln, Brayford Wharf North, Lincoln, LN1 1YW  and  By virtual means using Microsoft Teams

**Agenda**

- 1. Welcome, Introductions, Arrangements for the Hearing**
  - 1.1. The Examining Authority (ExA) will welcome participants, lead introductions, and address housekeeping matters.
- 2. Purpose of the Issue Specific Hearing**
  - 2.1. The ExA will explain the purpose of the Hearing.
- 3. Cumulative Effects**
  - 3.1. The inter-relationship report [REP1-068] and its adequacy will be discussed, having regard to the concerns raised by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC).
  - 3.2. The Applicant will be asked if there is any update on discussions with the promoters of Leoda Solar Farm and the Navenby Battery Storage (BESS) Project?
  - 3.3. The Local Authorities will be asked whether they have any general comments on the revised Cumulative Effects Assessment [REP2-009] provided by the Applicant at Deadline 2.
- 4. Air Quality, inc BESS**
  - 4.1. The Applicant and the UK Health Security Agency will be asked whether the Secretary of State could be satisfied that there is a strong likelihood that

there would not be any significant adverse effects on human health in the absence of atmospheric dispersion modelling. The Applicant will also be asked why the existing Plume Assessment does not consider the effects of smoke or particles created by a fire, nor does it consider the effects of projectiles or other debris released by an explosion.

- 4.2. Whether the Emergency Response Plan can be drafted before detailed design will be discussed with the Applicant and Local Authorities. Further, the Protective Provisions for Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service and the financial contribution sought will also be discussed with the Applicant and LCC.

## **5. Climate Change**

- 5.1. The assumptions within the Climate Change Assessment that there would be no replacement of solar panels during the lifetime of the Proposed Development and the distances that might be travelled to waste management facilities will be discussed with the Applicant and Local Authorities.
- 5.2. Matters associated with the Applicant's Climate Technical Note and comparison against other technologies rather than Combined Cycle Gas Turbine will be discussed with the Applicant and Local Authorities. Whether there is a need for ongoing monitoring of emissions data and renewable energy generation figures will also be discussed.

## **6. Land, Soil and Groundwater**

- 6.1. The Applicant will be asked for an update on discussions with Natural England on its outstanding concerns, particularly in relation to: construction compounds and access tracks; permanent loss of BMV land to green infrastructure; and soil handling.
- 6.2. The Environmental Statement's consideration of temporary uses such as: satellite collector compounds, BESS and Springwell substation, main collector compound, green infrastructure and the community growing area will be discussed with the Applicant and Local Authorities.
- 6.3. The Applicant and Local Authorities will be asked about soil management and mitigation, particularly the potential for sheep grazing. Whether food production is a matter for consideration in the planning balance will also be discussed with the Applicant and Local Authorities.
- 6.4. The Applicant and the Environment Agency will be asked questions about the approach to unexpected contamination and whether changes made to the Outline Construction Environment Management Plan [REP1-060] by the Applicant at Deadline 1 should form a new requirement within the Draft Development Consent Order.

- 6.5. The Environment Agency and Local Authorities will be asked whether they consider leaving cables in the ground during decommissioning an acceptable approach.
- 6.6. Matters associated with the management of firewater during a thermal runaway event at the BESS and the emergency response plan will be discussed with the Applicant and the Environmental Agency.

## **7. Biodiversity**

- 7.1. Following the response from the Applicant to Deadline 1 submissions [REP2-023] North Kesteven District Council (NKDC) will be asked to comment on whether it considers adequate steps have been taken by the Applicant to avoid or proactively minimise impacts on Local Wildlife Sites and Hedgerows.
- 7.2. It will be discussed with the Applicant and NKDC whether the information provided by the Applicant on the mitigation approach for scarce arable flora demonstrates that it is certain to preserve and improve the conservation status of these species.
- 7.3. It will be discussed with the Applicant and NKDC whether it has been demonstrated that post-development habitats are adequate to maintain the conservation status of ground nesting bird species and whether a specific strategy/ specification is a reasonable requirement.
- 7.4. The Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment and level of BNG secured within the dDCO will be discussed with the Applicant and Local Authorities.
- 7.5. The Applicant and Local Authorities will be asked for further detail about the proposed establishment of an Ecological Steering Group including the purpose, duration and scope of it.

## **8. Population, inc Health and Well-being**

- 8.1. The impacts on tourism associated with residual effects on users of the PRoW and stepping out network will be discussed with the Applicant and Local Authorities.
- 8.2. The impacts on health and well-being and opportunities for enhancement will be discussed with the Applicant and Local Authorities.

## **9. Other matters, inc Waste**

- 9.1. The Applicant will be asked to explain what they propose to do if the anticipated development of private sector PV panel recycling facilities does not occur in time to process the quantities of waste generated by the Proposed Development.

- 9.2. Following the response from the Applicant to Deadline 1 submissions [REP2-023] LCC will be asked to comment on whether it has any outstanding concerns relating to mineral resource safeguarding.
- 9.3. The Applicant and Local Authorities will be asked whether decommissioning and the funding for this is suitably secured in the dDCO.
- 10. Procedural Decisions, Review of Actions and Next Steps**
- 11. Closing Remarks**

## **Purpose of ISH3**

The main purpose of the Issue Specific Hearing is to clarify and get views on matters relating to each of the subjects set out in the agenda above.

## **Attendees**

The ExA would find it helpful if the following parties could attend this hearing.

- Applicant
- Lincolnshire County Council
- North Kesteven District Council
- UK Health Security Agency
- Environment Agency

However, this does not indicate that other parties will not be able to contribute. All interested parties (IP) are invited to attend and make oral representations on the matters set out in the agenda, subject to the ExA's ability to control the hearing.

The ExA has sought to provide sufficient detail to assist the parties to prepare for the hearing. The details set out above are indicative and the ExA may find it necessary to include additional agenda items or to amend the order in which the items are dealt with.

Anyone wishing to attend the hearing in person, who has not already advised the case team of this, should do so as soon as possible.

The event will be livestreamed and a link for watching the livestream will be posted on the [project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website](#) closer to the hearing date. IPs and members of the public who wish to observe the hearing can therefore view and listen to the hearing using the livestream, or view and listen to the recording, after it has concluded.

## **Registration Process**

Parties who have registered to speak (both in person and virtually) will receive a joining instruction email shortly before the hearing which will include a link to the virtual event on Microsoft Teams, and a telephone number should they need to participate by telephone. To enable the hearing to start on time at 10.00 those attending virtually should join promptly at 09.30 to ensure that all virtual attendees can complete the registration process in good time.

## **Procedure at ISH3**

Guidance under the Planning Act 2008 and the Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 provides that it is for the ExA to probe, test and assess the evidence through direct questions of persons making oral representations at hearings. Questioning at the hearing will be led by the ExA. Cross questioning of a person giving evidence by another person will only be permitted if the ExA decides it

is necessary to ensure representations are adequately tested or that an IP has had a fair chance to put its case.