



## Preliminary meeting note

**Application:** Great North Road Solar and Biodiversity Park  
**Reference:** EN010162  
**Time and date:** 10.00am Wednesday 26 November 2025  
**Venue:** Sir Stuart Goodwin Suite,  
Newark Showground,  
Newark-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire, NG24 2NY (and virtually on  
Microsoft teams)

*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

Lead panel member Dr Andrea Mageean welcomed those present and introduced herself as the lead member of the panel of Examining Inspectors and Mr Graham Hobbins, Dr Philip Brewer as panel members to examine the Great North Road Solar and Biodiversity Park application. Together they comprise the Examining Authority (ExA).

Dr Mageean explained the appointment was made by delegation from the Secretary of State (SoS) for the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) on 20 October 2025.

Dr Mageean explained that the ExA would be examining the application made by Elements Green Trent Limited ('the applicant') before making a recommendation to the Secretary of State who will decide whether an order granting development consent for the proposed development which is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), should be made.

Dr Mageean 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. Audio recording

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

### **3. General Data Protection Regulation**

The ExA explained The Planning Inspectorate's duties under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Further info relating to the GDPR can be found in the Planning Inspectorate's ['Privacy Note'](#).

### **4. 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'](#)

### **5. 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 23 October 2025 and asked for any observations on them.

Mr Northcote representing JPAG (Joint Parishes Action Group) highlighted that paragraph 2.1.17 of EN-3 mentions scale and requested that this be displayed as a separate principal issue. The ExA clarified that although not noted as a standalone topic, the overall size and thus scale of the Proposed Development would be part of the considerations including site selection and land rights.

Jane Hiscock asked for a specific issue on cost-benefit analysis of the project. The ExA clarified that cost-benefit analysis is not a relevant matter for the examination. The ExA clarified that although not noted as a standalone topic, the overall size and thus scale of the Proposed Development would be part of the considerations including site selection and land rights. The ExA confirmed that the viability of funding for Land Rights would be considered.. Jane Hiscock also noted that landscape determinants, in relation to benefits, should be taken into account. The ExA noted this.

### **6. Examination Timetable**

The ExA noted requests, already received in writing, to amend the draft examination timetable contained in annex C of the [Rule 6 letter](#) and also welcomed further suggestions from the parties in attendance. 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](#) published on 2 December 2025. The examination timetable can be found in the Rule 8 letter published on 2 December 2025

Mr Northcote (JPAG) questioned the proposed five-month examination period, noting that the applicant had not opted for the fast-track procedure. The ExA explained that Rule 6 states that the examination is intended to conclude within five months. The ExA

confirmed that the timetable can revert to the statutory period if required and parties will be notified of any changes. A correction was noted by Mr Northcote (JPAG): the relevant week reserved for accompanied site inspections is commencing February 2026, not 2025.

Mr Northcote (JPAG) commented that while a panel of three may be quicker than two, the documents for this case are more complex than usual and expressed concern that the examination should not be rushed. The ExA acknowledged these comments and agreed to consider them. Liz Hopkins emphasized that the public needs sufficient time to review documents. The ExA reiterated that the full statutory timeframe remains an option if necessary.

The ExA confirmed that late submissions will only be accepted under exceptional circumstances. Newark and Sherwood District Council supported allowing additional time over the festive period to facilitate discussion on Statements of Common Ground.

## **7. Hearings and site inspections**

The ExA clarified the purpose of:

- Issue specific hearings
- Compulsory acquisition hearings
- Open floor hearings
- Accompanied site inspections
- Unaccompanied site inspections

The ExA sought comments on the arrangements for the above events. These were duly noted and considered by the ExA.

Further information relating to hearings and site inspections 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'](#)

Mr Northcote (JPAG) noted that the deadline for site inspections appears very early and is challenging for parish councils that rely on volunteers. They suggested aligning this deadline with Deadline 1 for practicality.

## **8. Procedural decisions**

The ExA clarified the procedural decisions made under section 89(3) of the PA2008 and asked for any observations. The procedural decisions can be found in [annex F](#) of the Rule 6 Letter.

## **9. AOB**

Matters were raised orally about s51 advice, content of the dDCO, and the status of information provided by the applicant which will be considered during the examination of the application.