

## Application by Steeple Solar Farm Limited for an order granting development consent for the Steeple Renewables Project

### Agenda for Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) on Environmental Matters:

Hearing	Date and Time	Location
<b>Issue Specific Hearing 1 (ISH1) on Environmental Matters</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principle of the proposed development</li> <li>• Relationship with other proposed projects</li> <li>• Landscape &amp; visual</li> <li>• Historic environment</li> <li>• Flood risk, groundwater and contaminated land</li> <li>• Land use and agriculture</li> </ul>	<b>Wednesday 12 November 2025</b> Registration and seating available at venue from: <b>09:30am</b> Virtual Registration Process from: <b>09:30am</b> <b>Event starts: 10.00am</b>	<b>West Retford Hotel, 24 North Road, Retford, DN22 7XG</b> and <b>By virtual means using Microsoft Teams</b> Full instructions on how to join online or by telephone will be provided in advance to those who have pre-registered

### Agenda

#### 1. Welcome, introductions, arrangements for the hearing

#### 2. Purpose of the issue specific hearing

The Examining Authority (ExA) will explain the main purpose of the hearing, which is to undertake an oral examination of environmental matters, and how it will be conducted.

#### 3. Principle of the proposed development

The applicant will be asked to describe the principle of the proposed development and its components including:

- need;
- site selection and approach to considering alternatives;
- size;

- overall generating capacity;
- grid connection;
- Battery energy storage system; and
- technology.

The ExA will give the local host authorities (LHAs), being Bassetlaw District Council (BDC) and Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC), an opportunity to comment on the issues raised throughout this agenda item, followed by any other statutory consultees and interested party (IP).

#### **4. Relationship with other proposed projects**

The ExA will ask questions of the applicant on the interrelationship of the proposed development with other proposed projects, particularly the North Humber to High Marnham project and STEP Fusion Project, to understand whether there are likely to be any implications for the proposed development.

The ExA would welcome input from National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc and Fusion Solutions Limited on this agenda item noting the comments in their relevant representations ([RR-049] and [RR-046] respectively).

The ExA will then give the LHAs, statutory consultees and IPs an opportunity to comment on the issues raised throughout this agenda item.

#### **5. Landscape and visual**

The applicant and LHAs will be asked questions relating to the effects of the proposed development on landscape and visual matters including:

- Methodology adopted for assessing significant effects, including rationale for difference with assessing significance for other environmental topics.
- Content of viewpoint photographs [APP-095] and [APP-096] and photomontages [APP-097] and [APP-098], including choice of locations.
- Conclusions of the landscape and visual assessment, including suitability of proposed mitigation measures in reducing any significant effects.
- Methodology and conclusions of the Residential Amenity Assessment [APP-100].
- Approach to and findings of the cumulative assessment with other projects.

The ExA will give other statutory consultees and IPs an opportunity to comment on the issues raised throughout this agenda item.

#### **6. Historic environment**

The applicant, LHAs and Historic England will be asked questions relating to the effects of the proposed development on the historic environment including:

- Methodology adopted.
- Pre-determination trial trenching for archaeological remains.

- Assessment of effects and extent of harm to the significance of North Leverton Windmill.
- Setting of Crow Tree Farm and removal of the area recommended by NCC in its relevant representation [RR-052].
- Setting of group of buildings in North Leverton and removal of the area recommended by NCC in its relevant representation [RR-052].
- Whether an assessment on the setting, and extent of harm to the significance, of any other heritage asset is required.

The ExA will give other statutory consultees and IPs the opportunity to comment on the issues raised throughout this agenda item.

## **7. Flood risk, groundwater and contaminated land**

The applicant and Environment Agency will be asked questions relating to the effects of the proposed development on flooding, including:

- Approach adopted to the Flood Risk Assessment [APP-178] and the Flood Risk Sequential Assessment and Exception Test [APP-186] to [APP-189].
- The rationale and any implications for proposing development in Flood Zone 3.
- Environment Agency concerns in respect of groundwater and contaminated land.

The ExA will give the LHAs, statutory consultees and IPs an opportunity to comment on the issues raised throughout this agenda item.

## **8. Land use and agriculture**

The applicant will be asked questions relating to the effects of the proposed development on land use and agriculture, including:

- Omission of the biodiversity mitigation areas and cable route from the agricultural land classification survey.
- Loss of arable land, its economic and other benefits and impact on farming.
- Measures taken to minimise the use of best and most versatile agricultural land and the justification for its use.

The ExA will give the LHAs, statutory consultees and IPs an opportunity to comment on the issues raised throughout this agenda item.

## **9. Review of issues and actions arising**

## **10. Any other business**

## **11. Closure of the hearing**

## **Attendees**

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

- the applicant.
- Bassetlaw District Council.
- Nottinghamshire County Council.
- Parish Councils.
- Environment Agency.
- Historic England.
- National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc.
- Fusion Solutions Limited.
- Any other statutory undertakers, other public authority, body or organisation who would be affected by and has submitted comments on the above topics.
- Other IPs who submitted comments on the above topics.

All IPs are invited to attend the ISH and make oral representations. However, this is subject to the ExA's power to control the hearing. Participants may be legally represented if they wish, but the hearing will be conducted to ensure that legal representation is not required.

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 who has not already advised 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.

## **Arrangements Conference**

Parties who have registered to attend virtually, and Invitees, will receive an email shortly before the Hearing containing a joining link and telephone number to enable participation virtually as necessary. Please join the Arrangements Conference promptly. The Case Team will admit you from the virtual Lobby and register your attendance. The Arrangements Conference allows procedures to be explained and will enable the Hearing to start promptly.

## **Procedure at ISH**

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.

Every effort will be made to ensure that the issues will be discussed on the day that they are scheduled for. The hearing will finish as soon as the ExA deems that all those present have had their say and that all matters have been covered. If there are additional matters to be dealt with or there are submissions that take a considerable amount of time at any hearing, it may be necessary to prioritise matters and defer others to written questions.

The agenda is for guidance only. It is not designed to be exclusive or exhaustive. The ExA may add other issues for consideration, may alter the order in which issues are considered and will seek to allocate sufficient time to each issue to allow proper consideration of them. Any lack of discussion of a particular issue at a hearing does not preclude further examination of this issue, including the asking of further written questions.

Please contact the Case Team if you have any questions regarding the arrangements for the hearing or how to participate:

Email: [SteepleRenewables@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:SteepleRenewables@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

Tel: 0303 444 5000