



Preliminary meeting note

Application: Steeple Renewables Project
Reference: EN010163
Time and date: 10:00 Tuesday 11 November 2025
Venue: West Retford Hotel, 24 North Road, Retford, DN22 7XG

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

Max Wiltshire (MW) welcomed those present and introduced himself as the lead member of the panel and Andrew Robinson as the other panel member constituting the Examining Authority (ExA) to examine the Steeple Renewables Project application.

MW explained the appointment was made by delegation from the Secretary of State (SoS) under delegated powers on 6 August 2025.

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

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.

The ExA explained The Planning Inspectorate's duties under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Further information relating to the GDPR can be found in the Planning Inspectorate's ['Privacy Note'](#).

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

MW then requested everyone introduce themselves and the topics they wish to speak on.

2. Video recording

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

3. Examination process

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

- ['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 10 October 2025 and asked for any observations on them.

The applicant advised the ExA that it is content with the current list of Principal Issues. However, in response to Procedural Deadline A, the applicant raised the interrelationship between this project and the proposed North Humber to High Marnham project. The applicant considered that this interrelationship should be added to the list of Principal Issues.

Julie Barlow raised concerns as a landowner regarding compulsory acquisition and asked if this will be addressed. The ExA advised that whilst this wasn't listed in the table of issues, compulsory acquisition is referred to as forming an integral part of the examination.

Sturton Le Steeple Parish Council read a statement as the most affected parish council. The ExA sympathised with this statement and encouraged individuals to participate in the examination process and raise any concerns.

Karen Hodgson raised that steering groups have been established on other projects and asked if the same can be done for this project to allow for greater engagement. Concerns were also raised regarding the lack of a hare survey. The ExA advised that matters of this nature can be raised during the afternoon Open Floor Hearing. With regard to the steering group, the ExA advised that these are arranged between the applicant and interested parties, not by the Planning Inspectorate.

North Leverton Parish Council asked the applicant if any representation had been made by nuclear fusion and commented on the disjointed nature of projects coming forward. The ExA advised this matter would be discussed at Issue Specific Hearing 1 and confirmed that nuclear fusion had submitted a Relevant Representation.

Christine Warren raised concerns on the cumulative impacts from multiple projects and the overwhelming number of documents associated with each. The ExA acknowledged these concerns and advised that it would interrogate the evidence and review all documents relevant to this project. The ExA confirmed that it had asked the applicant to prepare a report to assist all parties in understanding the project's relationship with surrounding projects. The ExA also advised that concerns on cumulative issues can be raised during the examination such as open floor hearings.

Nottinghamshire County Council confirmed it was satisfied with the issues raised but asked when impacts on biodiversity and ecology would be addressed noting it was not

listed on the agenda for the Issue Specific Hearing. The ExA explained that it wasn't included but it would be raised through written questions.

Julie Barlow raised a similar point regarding traffic. The ExA advised that issues not included in Issue Specific Hearing 1 would still be examined during the course of the examination.

5. Examination Timetable

The ExA summarised the key points in the deadlines and dates for the benefit of parties unfamiliar with the process.

The ExA noted requests already received in writing to amend the draft examination timetable contained in [annex C](#) of Rule 6 letter and also welcomed further suggestions from the parties in attendance.

All comments received were duly noted by the ExA and considerations would be considered when the examination timetable is published in the Rule 8 Letter.

6. 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 at:

- ['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'](#)

7. 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 G](#) of the Rule 6 Letter.

No comments have been made by any of the parties in attendance.

The ExA closed the preliminary meeting at 11:39.