



Planning Inspectorate

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

Agenda for Issue Specific Hearing 3 on the draft Development Consent Order

Hearing	Date and Time	Location
Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) on the draft Development Consent Order	Friday 13 February 2026 Hearing starts at 09.00am Registration and seating available at venue from 08.30am and virtual registration process from 08.30am	West Retford Hotel, 24 North Road, Retford, DN22 7XG and By virtual means using Microsoft Teams

Agenda

- 1. Welcome, introductions, arrangements for the hearing**
- 2. Purpose of ISH3**
- 3. The draft Development Consent Order (DCO)**
 - The applicant may be asked to provide a very brief overview (no more than 5 minutes) of the draft DCO and the approach taken to its drafting.
- 4. Articles**

The ExA will ask questions in respect of the following articles:

 - Article 2 (Interpretation) – Definitions of “maintenance” and “site preparation works”
 - Article 6 (Application and modification of legislative provisions) – Clarification for legislation to be disapplied
 - Article 9 (Application of the 1991 Act) – Reasons for adding this article as opposed to a Permit Scheme requested by Nottinghamshire County Council
 - Article 10 (Power to alter layout, etc., of streets) – Additions of paragraphs (4) to (7) at deadline 2
 - Article 12 (Temporary stopping up of streets and public rights of way) – Scope of powers sought
 - Article 34 (Felling or lopping of trees or removal of hedgerows) – Changes made at deadline 2 and interpretation of “near any part”
 - Article 35 (Operational Land) – Applicant’s response to ExQ1 9.2.28

Responses will be sought where appropriate from the applicant, local authorities and other interested parties.

5. Schedule 2 – Requirements

- The ExA will ask questions in relation to the requirements listed in Schedule 2 part 1, including but not limited to:
 - Requirement 3 (Detailed design approval) – Whether provision should be made for a design review process
 - Requirement 6 (Landscape and ecological management plan (LEMP))–
 - Whether the full potential of BNG would be secured
 - Time period for maintenance
 - Requirement 17 (Archaeology) – (*if not previously covered in ISH2*)
 - Requirement 19 (Construction hours) – How the provisions in sub-paragraphs (2) and (3) would be interpreted and applied in practice.
 - Requirement 21 (Decommissioning and restoration) – Applicant to initially set out how the requirement would work in practice, followed by questions from the ExA
- The ExA will ask questions in relation to the procedures around the discharge of requirements, including local authority roles, listed in Schedule 2, part 2.

Responses will be sought where appropriate from the applicant, local authorities and other interested parties.

6. Schedule 10 – Protective Provisions: Relationship with the proposed North Humber to High Marnham project.

- The ExA will ask the applicant and National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc (NGET) to provide a brief update on their current positions (no more than 5 minutes each).
- The ExA will lead a discussion and ask questions on the need, or otherwise, for any protective provisions relating to the relationship between the proposed development and the proposed North Humber to High Marnham project, noting the content of the applicant's deadline 2 submission [[REP2-052](#)] (electronic pages 239 to 409) and NGET's deadline 3 submission [[REP3-053](#)]

7. Consents, licences and other agreements

- The applicant will be asked to provide an update of progress and timescales for completion of the consents, licences and agreements listed in the Consents and Agreements Position Statement [[REP1-006](#)].

8. Review of matters and actions arising

9. Any other business

10. Closing

Purpose of the hearing relating to the draft DCO

The purpose of the hearing is to examine and gain an understanding of the drafting of the draft DCO [REP3-005] and the powers sought by the applicant in the articles and schedules. In particular, it is to:

- clarify issues around how the draft DCO is intended to work – including the scope of what could be consented, the extent of the powers sought and what requirements, provisions and agreements are proposed;
- identify any possible issues of prevention, mitigation or compensation not covered by the DCO as currently drafted; and
- establish or confirm the views of Interested Parties as to the appropriateness, proportionality and efficacy of the proposals.

The DCO is the Order which the Secretary of State would make if they decided to grant consent for the application. Discussion during the hearing will be 'without prejudice' which means that parties may make contributions to improve the quality of the draft DCO without invalidating their own positions of support or opposition to the proposed development as a whole.

Irrespective of its recommendation, the ExA is required to present a draft DCO to the Secretary of State. Therefore, discussion about the specifics of the draft DCO does not indicate that the ExA has made up its mind about the application. The hearing into the draft DCO is likely to be of a technical nature and will be based on the specific wording of the Order.

Attendees

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

- Applicant
- Bassetlaw District Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc – primarily item 6.
- Any other statutory undertakers, other public authority, body or organisation who would be affected by provisions within the draft DCO
- Other IPs who submitted comments on the above topics

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 **09.00am** those attending virtually should join promptly at **08.30am** to ensure that all virtual attendees can complete the registration process in good time.

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.