

**Application by Lime Down Solar Park Limited for an order granting development consent for the Lime Down Solar Project**

**Agenda for issue specific hearing 3 (ISH3) dealing with environmental matters**

<b>Hearing</b>	<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>Issue specific hearing 3</b> <b>Environmental Matters: Traffic and Transport; and Ecology and Biodiversity</b>	<b>Thursday 2 July 2026</b> <b>Hearing starts at 9:30am</b> Registration and seating available at venue from 9:00am and virtual Registration Process from 9:00am	The National Self Build & Renovation Centre, Lydiard Fields, Great Western Way, Swindon, SN5 8UB and By virtual means using Microsoft Teams

**Agenda Items**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Matters to be covered</b>
<b>Item 1</b>	<b>Welcome, housekeeping, purpose of the hearing, participant introductions</b>
<b>Item 2</b>	<p><b>Traffic and Transport</b></p> <p><b>2.1. Construction HGV and AIL Routes</b></p> <p>The Applicant will be asked to explain the main construction routes to/from the solar PV sites, how these were chosen, what alternatives were considered/ discounted, and why. The applicant will be subsequently asked to explain the selection of routes to the cable route corridor. Under this item, the ExA is likely to ask questions in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the decision to route construction traffic through the Cotswolds National Landscape.</li> <li>○ features of particular locations along some parts of the construction routes, following observations made by the ExA on the unaccompanied site inspections and the accompanied site inspection.</li> </ul> <p><b>2.2. Construction Traffic - HGV Forecasting</b></p> <p>The Applicant will be asked to explain its approach to trip calculation forecasting and whether any additional work is necessary, in light of Wiltshire Council and Stop Lime Down submissions that forecasted trips are underplayed.</p>

	<p>Stop Lime Down will be asked to explain and justify its methodology for calculating HVG trips, in light of the notable variance from the Applicant's assessment.</p> <p><b>2.3. Construction Traffic - Light Vehicle and Shuttle Bus Forecasting</b></p> <p>The Applicant will be asked to explain its reliance on proportioning light vehicle movements across the entire site, and justification for reliance on 50% shuttle bus usage.</p> <p><b>2.4. Highway User Safety</b></p> <p>The ExA will explore the robustness and validity of some of the assumptions and findings made by the Applicant regarding visibility, passing places, non-motorised user usage and highway safety on the main construction routes to the solar PV sites, as well as assumptions made around fear and intimidation.</p> <p><b>2.5. Highway Improvement Areas (HIAs)</b></p> <p>The ExA will seek an update on the intended works in each of the HIAs and will invite Wiltshire Council to explain whether additional HIAs inside or outside the Order limits are necessary (and if so where and why).</p> <p><b>2.6. Construction Traffic Management Plan</b></p> <p>The ExA will ask questions of the Applicant relating to the outline Construction Traffic Management Plan (oCTMP), specifically around how the traffic management plan would work in practice, and monitoring and adaptive management during construction phase.</p> <p><b>2.7. Any other Traffic and Transport Matters</b></p>
<p><b>Item 3</b></p>	<p><b>Ecology and Biodiversity</b></p> <p><b>3.1. Survey Work</b></p> <p>The Applicant will be asked to explain how the CRC Order limits was initially informed, how it has evolved, and how this was influenced by the habitat survey work. The Applicant will then be invited to explain how its overall approach is consistent with the mitigation hierarchy.</p> <p><b>3.2. Approach to Habitats</b></p> <p>The ExA will explore the Applicant's approach to the following specific habitats including how the mitigation hierarchy has been applied and what efforts for avoiding harm have been appropriately considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hedgerows</li> <li>○ Ancient Woodland</li> <li>○ Field Margins</li> <li>○ Existing buildings</li> </ul> <p><b>3.3. Approach to Species</b></p> <p>The ExA will explore the Applicant's approach to species including, but not limited to, bats and skylarks. With regards to bats the Applicant will be invited to set out their survey methodology and their approach to avoiding impacts on the Bath and Bradford upon Avon SAC.</p>

	<p><b>3.4. Monitoring</b></p> <p>The approach to habitat and species monitoring during construction, operation/ replacement and decommissioning, and how this would be secured, will be discussed with the Applicant. The ExA will seek input from Wiltshire Council regarding the applicant's preferred choice of monitoring and alternatives.</p> <p><b>3.5. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)</b></p> <p>The Applicant will be asked about their approach to BNG, including consistency with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, how the net gain detailed in the BNG Assessment Report [<a href="#">REP1-089</a>] is secured through the DCO and how this would be monitored.</p> <p><b>3.6. Grazing</b></p> <p>The Applicant will be asked about the potential for sheep grazing on the solar PV sites and what this might mean for the value of habitats and the BNG assessment.</p> <p><b>3.7. Any other Ecology and Biodiversity Matters</b></p> <p>Any other questions that the ExA wishes to ask.</p>
<b>Item 4</b>	<b>Review of the issues and actions arising</b>
<b>Close of hearing</b>	

### **Purpose of ISH**

At ISH3 we are looking for clarity on a number of matters across the traffic and transport, and ecology and biodiversity topics, as set out above.

### **Attendees**

For the traffic and transport component on the Thursday morning, the ExA would find it particularly helpful if the following parties could attend this hearing in person or virtually:

- Applicant
- Wiltshire Council
- Stop Lime Down (and if possible its traffic and transport expert Bruce Bamber from Railton TPC Ltd)
- Cotswolds National Landscape Board

For the ecology and biodiversity component on the Thursday afternoon, the ExA would find it particularly helpful if the following parties could attend this hearing in person or virtually:

- Applicant
- Wiltshire Council
- Natural England
- Environment Agency
- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

- Stop Lime Down (and if possible its ecology expert Nicholas Valori from Betts Ecology)

However, this does not indicate that other parties will not be able to contribute. All interested parties (IPs) 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. However, while every effort will be made to ensure that the items set out above will be discussed on the day, if there are additional matters to be dealt with or there are some items that take a considerable amount of time at the hearing, it may be necessary to prioritise those and defer others to written questions or to a subsequent hearing.

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.

All IPs are welcome to submit observations in writing by the deadline following the hearing.

### **Registration process**

Parties who have registered to speak (both in person and virtually) will receive a virtual 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 **9:30am** those attending virtually should join promptly at **9:00am** 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.

### **Any questions about this hearing**

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

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

Telephone - 0303 444 5000