Planning Inspectorate

Application by Meridian Solar Farm Limited for an order granting development consent for the Meridian Solar Farm project

Agenda for Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1 (CAH1):

Hearing	Date and Time	Location
Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1 (CAH1)	**Tuesday 10 November 2026** **Hearing starts at 2:30pm** Registration and seating available at venue from 2:00pm and virtual Registration Process from 2:00pm	Orton Suite Orton Hall The Village, Orton Longueville, Peterborough, PE2 7DN and By virtual means using Microsoft Teams

Agenda items

Item 1	**Welcome, introductions, arrangements for the hearing**
Item 2	**Purpose of the compulsory acquisition hearing and examining authority's (ExA) opening remarks**
	Section 122 and 123 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008) - Purpose for which compulsory acquisition may be authorised and land to which authorisation of compulsory acquisition can relate
Item 3	The applicant will be asked to: • provide a brief overview as to whether the purpose for which compulsory acquisition powers are sought would comply with section 122(2) of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). • comment on whether the Secretary of State could be satisfied that the land proposed to be acquired is no more than is reasonably necessary for the purposes of the proposed development. The ExA may wish to discuss specific plots of land within the Order limits. • provide a brief overview as to whether all reasonable alternatives to compulsory acquisition have been explored. • provide a brief overview as to whether, having regard to section 122(3) of the PA2008, there is a compelling case in the public interest for the land to be acquired compulsorily and the public benefit would outweigh the private loss.

	• provide a brief overview of any recent updates to the Land Rights Tracker. • provide a high-level summary of what it considers the likely outstanding matters at the close of the examination will be and to confirm what efforts are being made to resolve remaining points of concern.
	Consideration of duties under the Equality Act 2010
Item 4	• The applicant will be asked to provide an update in relation to compliance with any duties under section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010.
	Sections 127 and 138 of the PA2008 - the acquisition of Statutory Undertakers' land and the extinguishment of rights and removal of apparatus of Statutory Undertakers
Item 5	• The applicant will be asked to provide a brief overview of any recent updates to Land Rights Tracker in respect of negotiations with statutory undertakers. • The ExA will seek to understand progress on the development of protective provisions, and respective parties' views in the event they are not agreed by the time the examination closes. • Any statutory undertaker wishing to speak in relation to an objection or issue raised that is relevant to the effects of the proposed development on its undertaking, apparatus or land will be invited to put oral submissions to the ExA. • In the event that agreement is not reached with all statutory undertakers, whether the relevant tests for the exercise of powers pursuant to sections 127 and 138 PA2008 would be met.
	Section 135 of the PA2008 - Crown Land
Item 6	• The applicant will be asked to provide an update in relation to the engagement with the Crown Estate to voluntarily acquire the necessary interests/ rights over the crown land within the Order limits and the seeking of consent from the Crown Estate pursuant to section 135 PA2008.
	Representations from parties who may be affected by the compulsory acquisition provisions in the draft Development Consent Order
Item 7	• The ExA will hear oral representations from any affected persons who have notified a wish to make oral representations.
	Specific matters related to funds and land
Item 8	• The ExA may raise further questions relating to land plots, land rights or funding.

Item 9	**Any other matters**
Item 10	**Review of actions and close**

Purpose of CAH

CAHs are for those whose land and/ or rights are directly affected. This includes all affected persons (APs) and additional APs. It may include persons not listed in the Book of Reference, but who have applied for and been granted interested party (IP) status under section 102 of the PA2008.

The CAH is being held to ensure adequate examination of the provisions within the draft Development Consent Order seeking to authorise the compulsory acquisition of land and/ or rights over land and to assess whether the conditions relating to the land and/ or rights being required for the proposed development or required to facilitate or be incidental to that development are met and whether there is a compelling case in the public interest for the land to be acquired compulsorily.

The ExA recognises that other Hearings may contribute information and evidence which will be used in support of a recommendation in respect of compulsory acquisition.

Attendees

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

- Applicant
- Lincolnshire County Council
- South Holland District Council
- Any statutory undertaker that wishes to discuss its position

However, this does not indicate that other parties will not be able to contribute. All APs and 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. 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 2:30pm those attending virtually should join promptly at 2:00pm to ensure that all virtual attendees can complete the registration process in good time.

Procedure at CAH

Guidance under the PA2008 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 puts its case.