Planning Inspectorate

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

Agenda for Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH) dealing with matters relating to agriculture and soils, traffic and access, noise and socio-economics and land use

Hearing	Date and Time	Location
Issue Specific Hearing 4 (ISH4)	**Thursday 12 November 2026** **Hearing starts at 10:00am** Registration and seating available at venue from 9:30am and virtual registration process from 9:30am	Orton Suite Orton Hall The Village, Orton Longueville, Peterborough, PE2 7DN and By virtual means using Microsoft Teams

Agenda

Item 1	**Welcome, introductions, arrangements for the hearing**
Item 2	**Purpose of the issue specific hearing and examining authority's (ExA) opening remarks**
	Agriculture and soils
Item 3	• The local authorities and any registered interested parties will be asked to provide updates in respect of their positions including, but not limited to, the proposed use of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land and concerns with the applicant's Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) surveys. • The applicant and Natural England will be asked to give an overview of the outstanding areas of in respect of agriculture and soils. • The applicant will be asked to expand on consideration being given to the provision of amended mapping in relation to ALC and any implications this may have. • The ExA will explore with the applicant and local authorities their respective positions with regard to the cumulative assessment of effects on BMV agricultural land. • The ExA may ask questions of the applicant in relation to the above and other matters relating to agriculture and soils.

	Traffic and access
Item 4	• The applicant and Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) as the highway authority will be asked to provide an update on the proposed passing places strategy. • The applicant and LCC as the highway authority will be asked questions relating to Heavy Goods Vehicles and Abnormal Indivisible Loads routing. • The applicant will be asked to explain its approach to trip calculation forecasting and whether any additional work is necessary in particular relating to percentage increase on any individual road, construction traffic frequency, the calculation of the 60-minute drive time, and on-site traffic movements. • The applicant will be asked questions to expand on traffic figures during all phases of the development proposal. • The ExA may ask questions of the applicant in relation to the above and any other matters relating to traffic and access.
	Noise
Item 5	• The applicant will be asked questions relating to impacts associated with Horizontal Directional Drilling. • The applicant will be asked questions relating to operational noise associated with the conductors between the pylons. • The ExA may ask questions of the applicant in relation to the above and other matters relating to noise.
	Socio-economics and land use
Item 6	• The applicant will be asked to expand on how the deadline 3 version of the Outline Skills, Supply Chain & Employment Plan (OSSCEP) would maximise local benefit. • The applicant will be asked how local supply chains would benefit from the proposed development. • In relation to the local supply chain the applicant will also be asked to confirm how the OSSCEP would respond to implications arising from the number of other nationally significant infrastructure projects taking place in the vicinity of the proposed development and how, if any are arising, the applicant is addressing, or will address, such implications. • Lincolnshire County Council will be asked to expand on the suggested annual funding contribution of £50,000 per annum for the lifetime of the proposed development. • The ExA will explore with the applicant and the local authorities their respective positions with regard to the cumulative assessment of effects in relation to socio-economics. • The ExA may ask questions of the applicant in relation to the above and other matters relating to socio-economics.

	Any other matters
Item 7	• The ExA may ask other questions of the applicant and interested parties on a range of other matters not included in the above topics.
Item 8	**Review of actions and close**

Purpose of ISH
The main purpose of the Issue Specific Hearing is to clarify and get views on matters relating to each of the subjects set out in the agenda above.
Attendees

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

- Applicant
- Lincolnshire County Council, including Reading Agricultural Consultants and the County Highway Authority
- South Holland District Council, including Environmental Health
- Meridian Action Group
- Lincolnshire Against Needless Destruction

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 10:00am those

attending virtually should join promptly at 09:30am 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 puts its case.