



Planning Inspectorate

Application by Green Hill Solar Farm Limited for an electricity generating station with a capacity of up to 500 megawatts (MW) comprising of ground mounted solar arrays and associated development including energy storage, grid connection infrastructure and other infrastructure integral to the construction, operation and maintenance of the scheme.

Case reference: EN010170

Examining Authority's note of accompanied site inspection (ASI) to which the application or specified matters relates on 11 December 2025.

Examining Inspectors Mark Harrison, Catherine Beeby and Rebecca Norman (the panel appointed as the Examining Authority (ExA) for the application for the proposed Green Hill Solar Farm (the proposed development)) undertook the inspections on Thursday 11 December 2025. The conditions were mainly dry but damp underfoot, with some cloud, occasional sunshine and visibility was good throughout.

The inspection was undertaken by minibus and on foot on public rights of way and within privately owned parcels of land. A route was planned and circulated in advance [\[EV7-001\]](#) having regard to suggested locations submitted by procedural deadline A, enabling the ExA to obtain views of the various sites from a number of the identified viewpoints.

Note: all field numbers referred to in this note relate to the applicant's Environmental Statement Figure 3.1 Field Numbering Plan [\[APP-191\]](#).

Green Hill A:

At 8:38 the ExA departed from the Hilton Hotel, Northampton, travelling to the proposed site Green Hill A via Holcot. Arrival was at 9:15 and the ExA and other parties attending the ASI were met by a group of people at the entrance of the site at Newland Road who had signs and placards.

The ExA and accompanied representatives walked up the permissive path along the western edge of field number AF28 and viewed AF27 and AF29. The ExA noted the boundary treatments and heights, the hedgerows and trees within the area and views across the wider landscape, as well as the undulation of the land and land levels.

The ExA noted views from within AF24 including the copse of trees and the proposed location for the substation and cable route. Views to AF22 and AF23 were noted and the location of site Green Hill A2 (A2F1 – A2F3) as well as the farmsteads and outbuildings visible in the distance.

The ExA also viewed the location for the proposed extension to the permissive path and views across to AF14, AF15, AF16, AF17, AF18, AF19, AF20 and AF21.

Green Hill A2:

At 10:18 the ExA and other representatives travelled to Green Hill A2 via Walgrave, arriving at approximately 10:25. The ExA viewed sites A2F1, both sides of the access track, and

A2F2 and the properties in the vicinity. Views across to A2F4 were noted and the ExA viewed the location of the permissive path that has been proposed. The location of hedges and trees were noted as well as the metal water pump and the land levels and undulation.

Green Hill B:

The ExA and other representatives travelled to Green Hill B, arriving approximately 10:50 at Tithe Farm. Field BF1 was viewed and the ExA walked down the track noting the hedgerows, fencing and open views. The ExA viewed field BF4 and the approximate location for the proposed substation. The trees in the area were noted and the ExA viewed field BF5 before walking to a junction point in the track to view fields BF2 and BF3. The ExA noted the properties visible from these sites and the drains.

Green Hill C:

At 11:15 the ExA and other representatives travelled to Green Hill C via Holcot village, past Sywell Aerodrome and entering the site at the T junction near Beckworth Emporium, arriving approximately 11:30 and noting fields CF5 and CF6. The ExA noted the location of Sywell Wood and the conifer belts as well as other trees and vegetation in relation to CF1-CF4. The land levels were noted. The ExA walked along the edge of CF10, viewed CF9 and the existing mesh fencing and substation units, with existing solar farm to the north. The ExA viewed the potential location for the BESS C option or substation and viewed across to Green Hill D and the edge of Wellingborough.

Green Hill E:

At 13:00 the ExA travelled to Green Hill E via Highfield Road, noting fields DF1-DF4 which comprise the proposed site Green Hill D. The ExA travelled into Mears Ashby where they were met by a group of local residents with signs and placards.

At around 13:05 the ExA walked down the existing track access, viewing EF22 and EF23 and the edge of EF13. The ExA noted the land levels, trees and hedges and some fencing. The ExA then walked to EF20 and EF21 and viewed again EF13 and EF14. The ExA could see the sheds to the edge of Wellingborough in the distance and noted views across to EF19. The boundary trees, hedges and fencing were also noted in this location.

The ExA then walked between EF25 and EF26 and viewed EF18 and the land levels. EF21 and the land beyond was noted and then the ExA observed the views to EF31, EF24, EF32 and EF33. The route of the proposed permissive path to the A4500 was also noted. The ExA continued on to the field barn, viewing EF27 and EF28, the boundary treatments and land levels. The ExA then viewed EF29, EF30 and the settlement edge of Earls Barton, noting the location of the properties, the land levels and vegetation.

The ExA continued on to EF31 and viewed EF23, EF32 and EF33, noting the land levels, land form and vegetation before viewing the location of the proposed permissive path to the reservoir junction on Mears Ashby Road. The ExA then walked to the edge of EF30 at its closest point to Earls Barton and noted the copse, areas of hedging, views to EF28 and the existing pylons in the area. The properties lining Mears Ashby Road were viewed and the location of the windows facing the sites were noted, as well as the intervening fields and vegetation.

BESS2:

At around 14:35 the ExA and representatives travelled to the proposed BESS sites at Grendon via Station Road, crossing the one-way bridge near the marina.

At around 14:50 the ExA arrived at Pastures Farm, and noted the farm buildings and the existing Grendon substation and its infrastructure and pylons. The ExA walked to the proposed BESS2 site and noted the hedgerows, trees and the land levels. The ExA also noted the boundary of the Castle Ashby Registered Park and Garden on the opposite side of the road.

BESS1:

At approximately 15:00 the ExA and other representatives travelled around 1 minute to the Grendon BESS1 site, where they were met by a further group of protesters either side of the road. The ExA viewed Grendon Church, the existing Grendon substation and noted the hedgerows, trees and the land levels. The ExA noted the location of Grendon Lakes BESS referred to as cumulative development 8 in the applicant's Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment.

The ExA then walked to the boundary with the adjacent field which we had been invited to view, where horses were grazing and noted the trees, including the identified oak trees, hedgerows and other vegetation, and the existing pylons.

Green Hill G:

The ExA and other representatives travelled to Green Hill G at around 15:25 via Yardley Hastings, arriving at around 15:40.

The ExA walked down the public right of way from the A428 and noted the route of the Three Shires Way before viewing GF13 and GF12. The ExA noted the pylons and farmsteads in the distance and the location of Threeshire Wood. Field GF6 was noted and the hedgerows.

The ExA continued on foot to Lower Farm and viewed the drainage ditches, the bridges, existing and measured water flow levels and the topography of the area. The location of Lavendon village in relation to the property was also noted.

The ExA concluded the ASI at 16:05, before returning to the Hilton Northampton.

Mark Harrison, Catherine Beeby and Rebecca Norman

Members of the Examining Authority