



# Planning Inspectorate

## Application by The Drovers Solar Farm Ltd for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Drovers Solar Farm

### Agenda for issue specific hearing 1 (ISH1)

Hearing	Date and Time	Location
<b>Issue specific hearing 1 (ISH1)</b>	<b>Thursday 7 May 2026</b>  <b>Hearing starts:</b> 10.00am  <b>Registration and seating available at venue from:</b> 9.30am  <b>Virtual Registration Process from:</b> 9.45am	The Duke's Head Hotel 5-6 Tuesday Market Place Kings Lynn PE30 1JS  and  By virtual means using Microsoft Teams

### Agenda

#### 1. Welcome and arrangements for the hearing

The Examining Authority (ExA) will welcome participants and address housekeeping matters.

#### 2. Purpose of the issue specific hearing and introductions

The ExA will explain the purpose of the hearing and lead introductions.

#### 3. Issues

##### 3.1. Site selection and alternatives

- The applicant will be asked questions about its approach to considering alternative locations, sizes and scales for the proposed development

##### 3.2. Grid connection

- The applicant, National Grid and the local authorities will be asked questions about the delivery of the proposed new Swaffham Substation, its implications for the proposed development and its supporting assessments, and whether it should be included in the order limits.

##### 3.3. Cumulative effects

- The applicant and the local authorities will be asked whether the approach to the cumulative assessment is robust and has captured all relevant other developments

#### 3.4. Aviation

- The applicant will be asked to comment on how it proposes to avoid interference from the proposed development with RAF Marham's Precision Approach Radar
- The applicant will be asked for its proposed approach to develop a glint and glare management plan, and for further details to demonstrate how it considers it complies with Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1), paragraph 5.5.41 regarding the risk of bird strike near aerodromes

#### 3.5. Landscape and visual

- The applicant will be asked questions relating to the adequacy of the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment
- The applicant will be asked questions regarding how the effects on landscape character and visual amenity have been considered

#### 3.6. Cultural heritage

- The applicant will be asked questions on the adequacy of the assessment of the contribution setting makes to significance in relation to Castle Acre Castle and Castle Acre Priory in the Environmental Statement, to include how the significance of the conservation area has been considered.

#### 3.7. Flood risk and water resources

- The applicant and the Environment Agency will be asked questions on the accuracy of the applicant's characterisation of groundwater elevations and flow and whether conclusions on groundwater receptor effects are robust.
- The applicant will be asked for its proposed approach to addressing the concerns the Lead Local Flood Authority have raised on the Flood Risk Assessment.

### **4. Next steps**

### **5. Closing Remarks**

## **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
- Breckland District Council
- Defence Infrastructure Organisation, Safeguarding Department (representing the Ministry of Defence)
- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- National Energy System Operator
- National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc
- Norfolk County Council (including as lead local flood authority role)

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 9:45am 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.