



Application by The Drovers Solar Farm Limited for The Drovers Solar Farm

The Examining Authority's written questions and requests for information (ExQ3): Issued on 29 September 2026

Responses are due by deadline 5: Friday 16 October 2026

The following table sets out the Examining Authority's (ExA's) written questions and requests for information – ExQ3.

Questions are set out using an issues-based framework derived from the initial assessment of principal issues provided as **annex D** to the Rule 6 Letter dated 8 April 2026. Questions have been added to the framework of issues set out there as they have arisen from representations and to address the assessment of the application against relevant policies.

Column 2 of the table indicates which interested parties (IPs) and other persons each question is directed to. The ExA would be grateful if all persons named could answer all questions directed to them, providing a substantive response, or indicating that the question is not relevant to them for a reason. This does not prevent an answer being provided to a question by a person to whom it is not directed, should the question be relevant to their interests.

Each question has a unique reference number. When you are answering a question, please start your answer by quoting the unique reference number.

You should respond to the questions by using the **Have your say** function on the [project page of the National Infrastructure website](#) and selecting 'Responses to Examining Authority's Third Written Questions (ExQ3)' when asked.

If you are responding to a small number of questions, you can submit your answers by choosing 'Make a comment' and entering your answers in the 'Your comments' box. If you are answering a larger number of questions you should download a copy of the Microsoft Word version of the document, enter your answers and save the document using an appropriate file name. You can then submit the completed document by selecting 'Upload files'.

Microsoft Word version: [Examining Authority's Written Questions 03 \(ExQ3\)](#)



Planning Inspectorate

Download a copy of this Microsoft Word version of the ExA's written questions, enter your answers and save the document using an appropriate file name. You can then submit the completed document by choosing 'Make a comment' and selecting 'Upload files'.

Abbreviations used:

BESS	Battery Energy Storage System	PAR	Precision Approach Radar
BCKLWN	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk	PV	Photo-voltaic
BDC	Breckland District Council	R	Requirement
D	Deadline	RAF	Royal Air Force
dDCO	draft Development Consent Order	SoCG	Statement of Common Ground
DIO	Defence Infrastructure Organisation	TPO	Tree Preservation Order
ES	Environmental Statement		
ExA	Examining Authority		
ISH	Issue Specific Hearing		
LIR(s)	Local Impact Report(s)		
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Authority		
NCC	Norfolk County Council		
NESO	National Energy System Operator		
NGET	National Grid Electricity Transmission plc		
NPS	National Policy Statement		
oCEMP	outline Construction Environmental Management Plan		
oLEMP	outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan		
oOEMP	outline Operational Environmental Management Plan		



The Examination Library

References in these questions set out in square brackets (for example [APP-010]) are to documents catalogued in the Examination Library. The Examination Library can be obtained from the following link: [XCAT01 - Examination Library template](#)

It will be updated as the examination progresses.

Citation of questions

Questions in this table should be cited as follows:

Question reference: issue reference: question number, for example ExQ3 Q1.0.1 – refers to question 1 in this table.



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ExQ3	Question to:	Question:
1. General and cross-topic questions		
Q1.0.1	The applicant Anglian Water Borough Council King's Lynn and West Norfolk Breckland District Council Defence Infrastructure Organisation Norfolk County Council Environment Agency Historic England Natural England National Energy System Operator National Grid Electricity Transmission plc National Highways Norfolk Wildlife Trust	Statements of Common Ground Further to the Rule 6 letter [PD-006], could the applicant and parties listed please ensure that up to date Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) are provided at deadline (D) 5?
Q1.0.2	The applicant	Local policy compliance Policy Compliance Document [REP1-015] Tables 5 and 6 includes the applicant's assessment for compliance with Breckland District Council's (BDC) and Norfolk County Council's (NCC) development plan policies. Could the applicant comment on its compliance with the policies referred to in the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk's (BCKLWN) local impact report (LIR) [REP1-076] sections 1.5 to 1.7 inclusive?
2. Aviation		
Q2.0.1	The applicant	Environmental Statement – assessment of Precision Approach Radar (PAR) mitigation

ExQ3	Question to:	Question:
		Item 3-1, post hearing note in Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions and Responses to Action Points at ISH2 and ISH3 [REP4-035] refers to the applicant considering an update to ES Chapter 6: Landscape and Visual [AS-016] in respect of PAR mitigation and will provide this, if deemed necessary, at Deadline 5. Given the concerns raised by NCC in paragraph 5.1 [REP4-044], BDC in paragraph 3.3 [REP-043] and BCKLWN in paragraph 1.1 [REP-042] in their respective D4 submissions, could the applicant provide further evidence to demonstrate that the effects from the proposed PAR mitigation have been fully assessed for all relevant topics in the Environmental Statement (ES)?
Q2.0.2	The applicant Defence Infrastructure Organisation	Mitigation for PAR Table 3-1, Design Principles, Parameters and Commitments [REP4-020] refers to the PAR mitigation structures that would be implemented prior to the construction of any part of Work No. 1(a) within the areas shown as Mitigation Area 1, Mitigation Area 2 and Mitigation Area 3 on RAF [Royal Air Force] Marham Mitigation Areas Plan [REP4-039]. (i) Could the applicant and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) clarify if a process has been agreed to test and certify the effectiveness of the proposed PAR mitigation structures, prior to construction of any part of Work No. 1(a)? If so, how would this process be secured in the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO)? (ii) Issue Specific Hearing 3, Item 3-1, post hearing note, Written Summary of Applicant's Oral Submissions and Responses to Action Points at ISH2 and ISH3 [REP4-035] refers to if mitigation acceptable to the Ministry of Defence (MoD), could not be achieved within those parameters [referred to above], the [PV] panels in the affected areas would not be built. Could the applicant and DIO clarify how this restriction would be secured in the dDCO?
Q2.0.3	The applicant Defence Infrastructure Organisation	Effects on aviation from the proposed development Could the applicant and the DIO ensure that the Statement of Common Ground at D5 presents their latest positions on all outstanding matters of concern, resulting from the proposed development alone and for cumulative effects, to include: (i) Proposed wording for new requirements for Precision Approach Radar (PAR) mitigation and Glint and Glare Management (including reference to a Glint and Glare management plan) (ii) Whether agreement has been reached in the wording of the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) regarding:

ExQ3	Question to:	Question:
		a) the methodology for the possible use of cranes, high reaching plant equipment or temporal structure during the construction phase; b) birdstrike safeguarding measures before construction; and c) aerodrome height safeguarding, once the transmission line details are available. (iii) Whether agreement has been reached in the wording of the outline Operational Environmental Management Plan (oOEMP) regarding birdstrike hazard to ensure that the proposed development does not increase the risk of impact.
Q2.0.4	The applicant	Policy compliance (i) In light of the proposed PAR mitigation for the aviation effects from the proposed development, could the applicant update the Policy Compliance Document [REP1-015] to include its assessment of compliance with the following paragraphs: • NPS EN-1 Paragraphs 4.1.7, 4.2.15, 4.7.12, 5.5.37 to 5.5.44, 5.5.49 to 5.5.50, 5.5.53, 5.5.55 and 5.5.59 • NPS EN-3 Paragraph 2.10.59 (ii) Could the applicant update the relevant parts of its Environmental Statement (ES) as required in paragraph 5.5.37 above.
3. Biodiversity and ecology (including Habitats Regulations Assessment)		
Q3.0.1	Breckland District Council – part (i) The applicant – part (ii)	Tree Preservation Order (TPO) covering existing woodlands adjoining the Order limits During Issue Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3) [EV7-002], in response to item 3.1, question 2 concerning landscape and visual effects, BDC referred to possible future consideration of a woodland [tree] preservation order to protect the existing woodlands, which provide screening for the proposed development, adjoining the Order limits. For this scenario: (i) Could BDC explain what further steps it would need to undertake for consideration of TPOs covering the above existing woodlands (adjoining the Order limits) and what further information would be required to inform such consideration? (ii) Could the applicant signpost any relevant information in the application documents that could be required for a scenario whereby TPOs covering the above existing woodlands (adjoining the Order limits) could be considered by BDC in future?
Q3.0.2	Forestry Commission	Forestry Commission felling licence process

ExQ3	Question to:	Question:
		During ISH3 [EV7-002], in response to item 3.1, question 2 concerning landscape and visual effects, BDC referred to the Forestry Commission felling licence as a measure that is in place to protect the existing woodlands, which provide screening for the proposed development, adjoining the Order limits. Could the Forestry Commission describe what protection and limits, the felling licence process provides and also any circumstances where such a licence would not be permitted?
4. Climate change		
Q4.0.1	The applicant	No further questions at this stage.
5. Compulsory acquisition, temporary possession and other land or rights considerations		
Q5.0.1	The applicant	Option agreements Further to the applicant's response to ExQ1 Q5.0.1 [REP1-069], could the applicant provide an update on whether it has the consent it requires to be able to confirm the durations of the lease included in the Option Agreements for the Solar Photo-voltaic (PV) Site, the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and the National Grid and Customer Substations, before the end of the examination?
6. Cultural Heritage and archaeology		
Q6.0.1	The applicant	Impact on heritage assets With reference to the Policy Compliance Document [REP1-015], NPS EN-1 Paragraphs 5.9.23 to 5.9.28, the applicant's assessment refers to embedded mitigation with the oCEMP which includes: <i>"the locations of permanent above-ground assets have been selected to reduce/remove impact on heritage assets from construction works to the north."</i> Could the applicant provide a more detailed explanation to support the above statement to include separate identification of which assets have been selected to remove or reduce the impact on heritage assets from construction works to the north?
7. Draft Development Consent Order (DCO)		
7.0 General		
Q7.0.1	The applicant	Explanatory Note

ExQ3	Question to:	Question:
		Further to the applicant's response to ExQ1 Q7.6.1 [REP1-069], could the applicant provide an update on its progress with confirming the location referred to as "[TBC]"?
7.1 Schedule 2 - Requirements		
Q7.1.1	The applicant	Requirement (R) 2 The Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero has removed time limit extensions in other recently made DCOs, for example Peartree Hill Solar Farm. (i) In light of this, could the applicant explain further the purpose of introducing the term 'applicable period' in this requirement rather than providing a fixed time limit in years? (ii) Could the applicant provide any examples of precedents where this approach has been used for recently made Solar DCOs?
Q7.1.2	The applicant	R5 - Detailed design approval Further to the applicant's response to ExQ2 Q7.4.1 [REP3-088], could the applicant clarify whether the vertical limits of deviation for the proposed pylons are included in the parameters within the Design Principles, Parameters and Commitments document?
8. Flood risk, hydrology and water resources		
Q8.0.1	Norfolk County Council as the LLFA	Lifetime of development With reference to item NCC 9-2 of NCC's Statement of Common Ground [REP3-018], could the LLFA clarify how many years it considers would reflect the full development lifetime and why?
9. Grid connection		
Q9.0.1	The applicant	Notification of Gate 1 connection offer With reference to National Grid Electricity Transmission plc's (NGET) written representation [REP1-090] paragraph 3.7, could the applicant confirm whether it has received notification from the National Energy Systems Operator (NESO) that it will receive a Gate 1 connection offer? If so, could a copy be provided with its response?
10. Land and soil		
		No further questions at this stage.

ExQ3	Question to:	Question:
11.	Landscape and visual	
Q11.0.1	The applicant	Design of mitigation areas for RAF Marham's precision approach radar (i) Could the applicant comment in detail on how the design of the RAF Marham Mitigation Areas Plan [REP4-039] would be integrated with each of the existing and proposed features shown in the existing Appendix 1 – Green Infrastructure Strategy Plans, outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (oLEMP) [REP3-070] and provide updated plans for Appendix 1 to take account of the PAR mitigation areas? (ii) What factors would be considered to determine the design choice of bunds and/or fencing for the mitigation at each location and how would transitions be designed between different types of bunds and/or fencing? (iii) How would the above design choice align with the Design Principles in the Design Approach Document [AS-009] to [AS-011], and the oLEMP's ten strategic landscape and ecological opportunities (referred to in applicant's response to ExQ1 Q1.0.4 [REP1-069], which set a framework for the operational landscape and ecological management of the Scheme)?
12.	Need, site selection and alternatives	
		No further questions at this stage.
13.	Noise and vibration	
		No further questions at this stage.
14.	Population	
		No further questions at this stage.
15.	Transport and access	
Q15.0.1	The applicant	Temporary speed limit changes The dDCO [REP4-004], Schedule 8 refers to Traffic Regulation Measures for the A1065 between reference points 2s and 4f and shaded green on sheets 2 and 4 of the streets plan [APP-010], whereas paragraph 5.9.2 of the outline construction traffic management plan [AS-083] refers to implementing a temporary 40 miles per hour speed limit restriction, during construction, between the two access points

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ExQ3	Question to:	Question:
		onto the A1065. Could the applicant confirm the extent of the temporary speed limit and update any relevant document(s) for consistency?
16.	Other planning matters	
Q16.0.1	The applicant	Wildfire risk Further to concerns raised by Sporle with Palgrave Parish Council at ISH2, item 3-3 [EV6-004], regarding the risk of wildfires, could the applicant review its assessment relating to NPS EN-1 paragraph 4.10.8, in the Policy Compliance Document [REP1-015], to include consideration of how this risk would be mitigated?