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Environment Agency

Planning Inspectorate

WhitestoneSolarfarm@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Interested Party Reference number: [redacted]
PINS reference: EN0110020

Date: 20 October 2026

Dear [redacted]

PROCEDURAL DEADLINE A

WHITESTONE SOLAR FARM

We have reviewed the Rule 6 letter and appendices, dated 6 October 2026, and would like to make the following comments on the examination procedure.

Draft Examination Timetable (Rule 6 Appendix D)

We are concerned about the proposed date for the publication of the Examining Authority's first written questions (ExQ1) on 22 December 2026. A significant number of Environment Agency staff will be on annual leave during the Christmas period, which may affect our ability to review and respond to any questions within the proposed timescales. We would therefore be grateful if consideration could be given to either:

- Bringing forward or delaying the publication date for ExQ1; or
- Extending Deadline 3 beyond 19 January 2027

This will allow sufficient time for the Environment Agency to review and respond fully to any questions directed to us.

We would also like to highlight that Environment Agency Technical Specialists assigned to this project are already committed to attending hearings for two other Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) on 11 and 12 November 2026. Depending on the agenda and environmental matters to be discussed for the Whitestone Solar project, there is a possibility that some Technical Specialists may be unavailable to attend Issue Specific Hearings (ISH) 1 and 2. In those circumstances, we may need to take questions away and provide written responses where the relevant technical specialists are not available.

Preliminary Meeting

We do not wish to speak at the Preliminary Meeting and will instead observe proceedings via the livestream.

Issue Specific Hearings

We welcome the proposal for the Issue Specific Hearings to be held as blended events, as the Environment Agency intends to participate virtually.

I trust this is satisfactory but if you have any queries, please contact me.

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Yours sincerely

[redacted]
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