

Email address:  
[Caroline.Reeve@aecom.com](mailto:Caroline.Reeve@aecom.com)

Our Ref: 23/00776/PREAPP  
Officer: Amanda Broadhead  
Email: [planning@bassetlaw.gov.uk](mailto:planning@bassetlaw.gov.uk)

25th January 2024

Dear Caroline

**A New Solar Farm and Energy Storage Proposal being brought forward by Tillbridge Solar Statutory Pre-application Consultation Thursday 14 December 2023 to Thursday 25 January 2024.**

I refer to your email dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023 and your consultation request Bassetlaw District Councils as a prescribed consultee under section 42 (1) (b) of the 2008 Act and Schedule 1 of the APFP Regulations.

As outlined in your consultation request the scheme comprises two distinct sections these being the Principal Site and the Cable Route Corridor.

The Principal Site: that being an area which covers approximately 1,400 hectares (ha), divided into 900 ha of developable area (where all solar PV panels and associated infrastructure would be located), and 500 ha of non-developable areas (which is being considered for environmental mitigation and enhancement measures). The Cable Route Corridor: that being an approximately 16 km Cable Route Corridor which would connect the Principal Site in West Lindsey, Lincolnshire, to the National Grid's Cottam Substation in Bassetlaw District Council.

The submitted correspondence identifies 20 revisions to the draft order limit and this would result in a total of 5 revisions to the draft order limits within the Bassetlaw District Council's administration area.

The following response should be read in connection with our initial letter dated sent in July 2023.

The Bassetlaw Local Plan 2020-2038 is at advanced stage, with the Council waiting for the Inspectors Report. At the present time, the Council is attaching limited weight to the Plan's policies; however once the Inspectors Report is received the weighting given to the policies is expected to change. The weighting will be undertaken in accordance with the criteria in the National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 48.

The Council is expecting to adopt the Local Plan by the summer of 2024.

The following comments are made with reference to the modified Local Plan position [chromeextension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/media/8099/local-plan-mm.pdf](https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/media/8099/local-plan-mm.pdf)

It should be noted that the content of policies may change on receipt of the Inspectors Report.

Given the strategic nature of this proposal it would be remiss not to take into account the emerging plan specifically in relation to the Former Cottam Power Station site. The site is identified by Policy ST6: Cottam Priority Regeneration Area.

The site boundary in Figure 11 of the Local Plan is taken from the landowners submission to the Council's Land Availability Assessment 2022 <https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/media/6884/final-laa-housing-paper-may-2022.pdf> It is the land in their ownership that they consider could be made available for development in the future.

The Local Plan is not allocating the site for development. The site is identified as a broad location where growth could go in the future subject to the various constraints identified being addressed satisfactorily through the provisions of Policy ST6. This position will be revisited as part of any future Local Plan review. So the site is not being relied upon in this Local Plan for either housing or employment provision.

The landowners Local Plan hearing statement contains an initial concept plan [https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/media/7299/matter4\\_edf-geraldeva.pdf](https://www.bassetlaw.gov.uk/media/7299/matter4_edf-geraldeva.pdf) The hearing statement also contains a constraints map. That aligns with the Council's current understanding of the constraints on site.

As such, the Council request that the provisions of Policy ST6 be considered in relation to this proposal, and that the proposal does not prejudice the ability of this site to come forward appropriately in a comprehensive manner in the future.

I have attached all the consultation responses received on the amended proposal and the targeted consultation and these are as follows:

**The Coal Authority has commented** the site to which this submission relates is not located within the defined coalfield. On this basis we have no specific comment to make.

**Bassetlaw District Council's Lead Neighbourhood Planner** has commented that previous comments were made on 28/11/2023 highlighting some inaccuracies within the Long list relating to neighbourhood plan allocations but this document has not been included this time so an assumption has been made that these corrections have take place. The 'host' parish councils have been correctly identified and the methodology appears consistent with what has been proposed previously (focussed – which is appropriate).

**Bassetlaw District Council's Environmental Health Officer** has commented previously on the proposal and the following comments should be read in connection with their previous comments. In regards to the five amendments to the scheme they have made the following comments:

**Noise:** The main development of the solar project will be sited within Lincolnshire, with only the cabling route within Bassetlaw.

The December 2023 consultation brochure details 5 amendments (increases to the Order limits) Bassetlaw are relatively minor amendments which will not significantly change the noise environment during the installation of the cables.

The commitment within the consultation to share cabling routes with other schemes (which is hoped would minimise the impact from noise to the residents in the Cottam area) is welcomed.

The final cabling route is clearly still being decided upon, and I would welcome, in due course, further details of the likely impact from noise to individual residents, together with appropriate attenuation measures, once the final route has been established.

**The Lead Local Flood Authority** has commented that the proposals do not appear that they seek to significantly increase the impermeable area of the site, and as such the LLFA would only comment that surface water runoff from the site should be prevented from being increased. Any runoff from any hardstanding/small buildings on the site should be captured on site, to prevent increasing runoff from the site. A copy of their previous comments are attached.

The District Council's Conservation Team has been consulted on the proposal and have acknowledged the following heritage assets are within the proposal site:

- a) The development area is located within the setting of several listed buildings. These assets are localised primarily within the areas of Cottam and Rampton
- b) The development area is located within the setting of the Fleet Plantation Scheduled Ancient Monument (List Entry Number: 1008594; Designated: 16th February 1953);
- c) The development area is located within the setting of a number of non-designated heritage assets, most prominent of which is the Cottam Power Station site, which is itself a non-designated heritage asset, as identified by the Council's approved criteria;
- d) The development area is located within the setting of the Rampton Manor Unregistered Park and Garden;
- e) There are a number of complex archaeological that reside within the boundaries of the development area

The key consideration in this instance is the scheme's impact upon the setting of the districts designated heritage assets. Another key consideration is the scheme's impact upon the setting of the districts archaeological sites, some of which lie within the boundaries of the development area. The scheme's impact upon the districts non-designated heritage assets will also be given consideration. Principle of Development: Built Heritage Conservation has no concerns with the principle of development as regards to its impact upon the districts built heritage. The bulk of the development area is predominantly set within the boundaries of the West Lindsey district in Lincolnshire. However, the southern portion of the cable route corridor would terminate at Cottam Power Station, which is sited within the District of Bassetlaw in North Nottinghamshire. None of Bassetlaw's above ground heritage assets lie within the boundaries of the development area. However, the proposed cable route is located within the immediate setting of a number designated and non-designated heritage assets. However, given the nature of the scheme in this area, the proposed works are unlikely to have any significant impact upon the setting of the majority of the surrounding built heritage. This is because the works that are focused within Bassetlaw relate primarily to the installation of underground interface cabling. Archaeological Deposits There are a number of complex archaeological sites located within the boundaries of the proposed cable route corridor. The significance of these sites, and their implications on this proposal should

be assessed separately by the Council's archaeological consultee. Principle of Development: Amendments to Scheme Conservation has no concerns with the majority of the amendments that are proposed under this submission, as the alterations to the order land upon which the scheme will take place would have very little impact upon the districts built heritage. However, Conservation has concerns with some of the proposed amendments, specifically with revision No.1 – Land to the South of Torksey Ferry Road. This amendment would see the land order of the scheme increased to allow for increased working room for the laying of the proposed cable route corridor. The area relating to this amendment is a linear range of agricultural land which runs along the southern aspect of Torksey Road. Conservation's concerns with this amendment relate to the medieval Fleet Plantation Moated Site, which is itself a Scheduled Ancient Monument (List Entry Number: 1008594; Designated: 16th February 1963). The proposed amendment is unlikely to directly impact upon the physical fabric of the monument, given that it is not included within the boundaries of the revised order land. However, Conservation has concerns with the potential impact that further encroachment may have upon this scheduled ancient monument and the impact that this may have upon any unknown archaeological deposits that may lie within the periphery of the site. Conservation would of course defer to the Council's archaeological consultant on any matters concerning below ground heritage. However, given the proximity between the Fleet Plantation site and the revised order land, Conservation would insist that further information is provided regarding revision No.1. Specifically, Conservation would request further clarification as to what activities/uses are proposed to be undertaken on the parcel of land which is located immediately to the north of the Fleet Plantation Moated Site.

To conclude the District Councils Conservation Officer commented the following

*“Conservation has no concerns with the principle of the proposed development. Conservation also has no concerns with majority of the revisions that are proposed under these amended plans. However, Conservation has concerns with revision No.1 – Land to the South of Torksey Ferry Road. In order to properly assess this aspect of the scheme, Conservation would require further clarification as to what activities/uses are proposed to be undertaken on the parcel of land relating to this revision. In reaching the above views, Conservation has had regard to: Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990; Policy DM8 of the Bassetlaw Core Strategy (December 2011); Paragraphs 195, 200, 201, 203, 205, 206, 207, 209 and 212 of the NPPF (December 2023); as well as guidance contained in Historic England's Advice Note 15 - Commercial Renewable Energy Development (Feb 2021)”*

### **Archaeological Deposits**

There are a number of complex archaeological sites located within the boundaries of the proposed cable route corridor. The significance of these sites, and their implications on this proposal should be assessed separately by the Council's archaeological consultee.

Please note we have not received a response from Nottinghamshire County Council Highway Authority with regards to the revision. However these comments may have been incorporated in the response from Stephen Pointer, Team Manager at Nottinghamshire County Council Planning Policy.

### **Summary**

It is noted that due to the proximity to this scheme and Cottam and West Burton solar projects and Low Carbon's Gate Burton Energy Park this scheme has refined plans to identify opportunities for collaborative working in regard to connection to the national Grid Cottam Power station.

This collaboration has included building an understanding of the extent of the respective Cable Route Corridors associated with each Scheme and how these might be able to sit alongside each other, ensuring that all routes can be brought forward to minimise land take and environmental impacts, including disruption during the construction phase. This approach is welcomed by Bassetlaw District Council.

The latest consultation round identifies 20 revisions to the draft order limit, and this would result in a total of 5 revisions to the draft order limits within the Bassetlaw District Council's administration area and the consultee to this local Authority also includes details of the targeted consultation from 14 December 2023 to 25 January 2024.

Bassetlaw District Council are in agreement with the methodology of the targeted consultation and wish all the above consultee comments to be taken into account prior to the application being formally submitted to PINs.

It should be noted that although we appreciate that the response deadline is January 25<sup>th</sup> should we receive any further responses from consultees, and we will forward them on for your records.

This letter was undertaken at officer level and is subject to change if further information becomes available and does not prejudice future comments.

Yours faithfully



Development Team Manager

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Coal Authority response

Notts County Council's Lead local Flood Authority's response

Bassetlaw District Council – Planning Policy's response

Bassetlaw District Council – Environmental Health Officer's response

Bassetlaw District Council – Conservation Officer's response