

AGENDA ITEM NO: 8/1(e)

Parish:	Northwold	
Proposal:	Proposed mixed use of land involving the installation of a solar farm together with continued agricultural use	
Location:	Land North of Whittington Hill Oxborough Lane Whittington Norfolk	
Applicant:	Whittington Hill Solar Limited	
Case No:	15/00866/FM (Full Application - Major Development)	
Case Officer:	Mrs H Morris Tel: 01553 616481	Date for Determination: 7 September 2015 Extension of Time Expiry Date: 9 October 2015

Reason for Referral to Planning Committee – The proposed solar farm development has an operational area in excess of 1 hectare.

Case Summary

The application site comprises agricultural land which lies approximately 650 metres north of Whittington Hill (A134).

The site lies within the countryside as defined by the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan (1998) Proposals Map.

The application seeks full planning permission for the proposed mixed use of land involving the installation of a solar farm together with continued agricultural use. The proposal involves the use of approx. 8.31ha of land although the actual development (which comprises the solar panel supports, the electricity sub-station building, transformers and inverter buildings and the access track would comprise approximately 3.15ha).

Key Issues

The key issues identified in the consideration of this application are as follows:

Principle of development;
Loss of agricultural land;
Landscape and visual impact;
Neighbour amenity;
Access and highway matters;
Other considerations; and
Crime and disorder

Recommendation

APPROVE

THE APPLICATION

The application seeks full planning permission for the proposed mixed use of land involving the installation of a solar farm together with continued agricultural use. The application is accompanied by a Design & Access Statement, a Flood Risk Assessment, an Ecological Appraisal, a Biodiversity Management Plan and an Appraisal of Landscape and Visual Effects.

The application site comprises agricultural land which lies approximately 650 metres north of Whittington Hill (A134).

The site lies within the countryside as defined by the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Local Plan (1998) Proposals Map.

SUPPORTING CASE

A Design and Access Statement (DAS) and Appraisal of Landscape and Visual Effects (ALVE) have been submitted in support of the application.

The DAS advises that the proposal would result in the temporary loss of approximately 345m² of agricultural land in order to enable the solar farm and associated buildings to be erected and to facilitate the site access. This land is currently used for agricultural purposes and according to the Natural England plans the land is Grade 2.

The overall holding of the landowner in the immediate vicinity includes further land to the south and west of the application site. The proposal involves the use of approximately 8.31 hectares of land although the actual development (which comprises of the solar panel supports, the electricity sub-station building, transformers and inverter buildings and the access track would comprise approximately 3.15 hectares (thus approximately 37% of the site)). This does though include the solar panel face which would not be situated on the ground.

Taking this into account the temporary loss of land would be around 345m² (or 0.4% of the site).

The site is currently in agricultural use and but for the areas which will be physically developed (345m²) this use will remain. The site is accessible directly from the A134 along an access track known as Ferry Drove which leads to Ferry Drove Cottage and the application site. That property is occupied by a relative of the landowner. The access track is also used for informal public access (it is not a designated footpath or public highway).

The site is immediately bound by agricultural fields. The wider character of the surrounding area is characterised by industrial and sporadic residential development to the west and south. Most prominent is the factory on Whittington Hill (Big K Products) which includes large industrial buildings and on-site lorry and car parking. The settlement of Whittington is approximately 1.5km to the west of the site, Northwold lies approximately 2km to the east.

The DAS advises that the aim of the proposal is to generate renewably sourced electricity which would be directly exported to the national grid. The development would be capable of generating 5MW of clean renewable electricity. The proposal would therefore seek to contribute towards the fulfilment of well-established national energy policies; national planning policies as well as local planning policies. It would result in environmental, social and economic benefits.

The physical development consists of:

- 18,920 solar panels – each measuring 1m x 2m. These are to be pole mounted such that the top of any panel is 2.5m high;
- 3 inverter buildings measuring a total of 13.22m² each;
- 3 transformer buildings measuring 2.2m x 2.5m x 2.7m;
- One customer sub-station building measuring 2.44m x 6.06m x 2.9m;
- One DNO sub-station building measuring 3.529m x 4.79m x 5.35m; this is the point at which the connection to the electricity grid occurs;
- 2m high boundary fencing; this would be situated to the perimeter of the site and would be screened from view via landscaping;
- 24 no. 2.4m high CCTV cameras to enable security at the site; and
- Access tracks from the point at which the road terminates near Ferry Drove Cottage to the site access; this would be used for construction and maintenance purposes.

Permission is sought for the development on a temporary basis as the solar farm is expected to have a usable life of 30 years – after that time the solar farm, any site buildings, enclosures and access tracks would be removed (unless any subsequent planning application was approved) and the land would be restored to full agricultural use.

The appearance of the solar farm is standard for this type of development. The solar panels would be dark blue in colour where facing the sun and the reverse of the panels are brown in colour. The panels would be fitted with an anti-glare film in order to reduce any visual annoyance whilst also maximising solar gain. The ancillary buildings are green in colour as is the boundary fencing. CCTV cameras and poles are typically white in colour. The colours utilised do not therefore create any undue visual prominence. Whilst it is inevitable that some impacts will arise from the proposal (as identified within the ALVE), the appearance is considered to be appropriate to the locality.

The proposal includes a full assessment of the impacts which would arise from the development using an appropriate and well used methodology to identify the likely effects. A series of representative viewpoints were devised by the applicant and the consultants in order to demonstrate the likely impacts. The selection of these viewpoints was based upon local knowledge, key public footpaths, views from settlements and other experiences within the area. The document includes an assessment of the cumulative impacts although there are no significant considerations in this regard given that the nearby Reaches Farm solar farm is unlikely to be seen in the same view from any public viewpoint. Some limited sequential views (when travelling along the A134) would result but no unacceptable harm would result owing to the topography and landscaping of the operational and proposed solar farm.

The assessment concludes that the proposed solar farm would be acceptable in landscape and visual terms as it could be successfully accommodated and assimilated into the wider landscape without causing unacceptable harm to landscape character, or to the visual amenity of the landscape features of the area. In reaching this conclusion the assessment identifies that, having regard to the methodology adopted, the scale of the visual effects would range between negligible and moderate. The identification of such impacts does not easily translate into a planning policy test and in any event the impacts need to be looked at in the round as the views closer to the solar farm will inevitably be more apparent. In this instance though, such views are not from public land.

Core Strategy Policy CS12 confirms that proposals should seek to protect and enhance existing assets.

The proposal has been informed by the landscape character of the area (as established in the Council's Landscape Character Assessment). It is also noted that a similar scheme has been approved (at Reaches Farm) and is operational within 350 metres of the site (to the east).

In relation to the landscape impacts, the visual sensitivity at the viewpoints range from low to medium effects (at year one of the development). The majority of the viewpoints would experience a medium magnitude of change. The overall scale of visual effects is therefore between negligible and moderate. All of the impacts have been mitigated via careful siting and the scale of the solar farm which is proposed.

It should also be noted that the development does not include any lighting of the site and that the solar panels are arranged in uniform rows. In addition landscaping would be provided around the perimeter of the site in order to screen views in to the site. The solar panels would also be constructed using a protective film such that glint and glare is not evident to the extent that it would cause harm to amenity. The proposal therefore adopts the criteria set out within the NPPF and draft Policy DM20.

As set out in the ALVE, the proposal would be partly visible from a Public Right of Way to the north of the river. The Right of Way is a dead end though and is therefore unlikely to be well used. The site topography and existing landscaping also means that the development would be well screened from this location. The impact of the solar farm upon users of the Right of Way is identified as being minor within the ALVE. In planning policy terms it will therefore be acceptable owing to the distance between the site, the apparent lack of usage and the existing screening.

The proposed solar farm is situated approximately 180 metres to the north-east of the nearest residential dwelling (Ferry Drove Cottage) although this property is occupied by a relative of the landowner who is supportive of the scheme. In any event the development includes a sufficient stand off from the dwelling and intervening landform and outbuildings to help screen any long distance views from the first floor of the house towards the site. The next closest dwelling (The Beeches) is on the southern side of Whittington Hill; it is located approximately 640 metres from the site. Due to the intervening topography the solar farm is unlikely to be prominent from the house.

With regard to noise matters the development would only generate limited noise from machinery and would therefore be limited to the inverter buildings and sub-stations. The level of noise is not considered to be significant and in any event the closest inverter is over 200 metres away from the property. There would therefore be no significant noise impacts as a result of the development. The proposal is therefore compliant with the NPPF and draft Policy DM20.

Solar technology has progressed rapidly in this field. Glint and glare would be limited by virtue of the technology which is used. In any event the solar panels would be only partly visible from Ferry Drove Cottage and only a minor glimpsed view would be apparent from The Beeches.

PLANNING HISTORY

There is no planning history for the site.

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

Parish Council: SUPPORT

Norfolk County Highways: NO OBJECTION subject to the imposition of conditions relating to the submission of a Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Norfolk County Council – Lead Local Flood Authority: NO OBJECTION

Norfolk Historic Environment Service: Comments will be reported via late correspondence or verbally at the meeting.

Environment Agency: NO OBJECTION

Environmental Health & Housing – Environmental Quality: NO OBJECTION

Environmental Health & Housing – Community Safety & Neighbourhood Nuisance: NO OBJECTION subject to imposition of a condition requiring submission and approval of a detailed construction management plan.

NATS Safeguarding: NO OBJECTION

Norwich International Airport: NO OBJECTION

REPRESENTATIONS

ONE letter from the adjoining land owner stating **NO OBJECTION** and supports the proposal

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

National Planning Policy Framework – sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

National Planning Practice Guidance - Provides National Planning Practice Guidance, in support of and in addition to the NPPF

LDF CORE STRATEGY POLICIES

CS01 - Spatial Strategy

CS06 - Development in Rural Areas

CS08 - Sustainable Development

CS12 - Environmental Assets

SITE ALLOCATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES PRE-SUBMISSION DOCUMENT

DM1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

DM15 – Environment, Design and Amenity

DM20 - Renewable Energy

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The key issues identified in the consideration of this application are as follows:

- Principle of development;
- Loss of agricultural land;
- Landscape and visual impact;
- Neighbour amenity;
- Access and highways matters;
- Other considerations; and
- Crime and disorder

The Principle of Development

To support the move to a low carbon future, there is considerable support in the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) for renewable energy development of the type proposed in this application. One of the Core Planning Principles set out in paragraph 17 of the document expressly supports “the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate...and...the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy)”.

Paragraph 93 of the NPPF further advises that planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Thereafter, paragraph 97 states that local planning authorities should recognise the need for all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable sources, and paragraph 98 directs authorities to approve planning applications for such development “if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable”.

The NPPG (Renewable and low carbon energy) provides advice on particular factors that a local planning authority will need to consider when determining applications for solar farms (as set out in the next section). This is further supported by a written Ministerial Statement dated 25th March 2015 where it states “any proposal for a solar farm involving the best and most versatile agricultural land would need to be justified by the most compelling evidence” and that “every application needs to be considered on its individual merits, with due process, in light of the relevant material considerations”.

This approach is supported by Policy CS08 of the Council’s Core Strategy (2011) which states that we will support and encourage the generation of energy from renewable sources. It advises that these will be permitted unless there are unacceptable locational or other impacts that could not be outweighed by wider environmental, social, economic and other benefits.

The principle of the proposed solar farm development is therefore considered acceptable provided that it complies with all other relevant planning policies and there are no significant impacts that are not outweighed by the benefits of the scheme.

Loss of Agricultural Land

Paragraph 112 of the NPPF states:

“Local planning authorities should take into account the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.

Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.”

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides further guidance on the particular planning considerations that relate to large scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic farms. Firstly, it recommends encouraging the effective use of land by focussing large scale solar farms on previously developed and non-agricultural land, provided that it is not of high environmental value. It then continues by stating that where a proposal involves greenfield land, local planning authorities will need to consider whether (i) the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary and poorer quality land has been used in preference to higher quality land; and (ii) the proposal allows for continued agricultural use where applicable and/or encourages biodiversity improvements around arrays.

At the local level, emerging Policy DM20 of the Council's Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Pre-submission Document (2015) advises that the Council will seek to resist proposals for renewable energy development where there is a significant loss of agricultural land or where land in the best and most versatile grades of agricultural land (1,2 and 3a) are proposed to be used. However, only limited weight can be given to this policy at this stage given that the document has yet to be adopted.

In this case, the application site comprises a total of approximately 8.31 hectares of Grade 2 (i.e. very good quality) agricultural land. That said, the actual development (which comprises of the solar panel supports, the electricity sub-station building, transformers and inverter buildings and the access track) would comprise approximately 3.15 hectares, thus only approximately 37% of the site. Given the size of the proposed development the agent considers in the submitted Design and Access Statement that it would not be reasonable to consider the proposal a 'large scale' solar farm because it sits well below the 20 hectares threshold where the loss of agricultural land requires reference to Natural England in order for them to review whether or not the loss of agricultural land is appropriate.

Officers concur with the view that the proposal is not 'large scale'. Furthermore, the application proposal seeks approval for mixed use of the land which would allow continued agricultural use in between the solar PV panels in the form of sheep grazing, which could be secured by condition. Given that the solar panel faces would not be situated on the ground the actual temporary loss of agricultural land would only be approximately 345 square metres for the estimated 30 year lifespan of the proposal.

It is therefore considered overall that the proposal would not result in a significant loss of agricultural land and although grade 2 agricultural land is to be used, the modest temporary loss (amounting to 345sq.m.) is considered justified given the benefits of providing renewable energy.

Landscape and Visual Impact

Section 11 of the NPPF, entitled 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' states at paragraph 109 that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, amongst other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.

Policy guidance in the NPPF very much regards landscape and visual impacts of development as being a material consideration. This is so even in circumstances where the effects of the proposed development will impact on land lying outside nationally designated areas, since two of the 12 Core Principles identified in the NPPF are expressly concerned with effects on "the countryside" and "the natural environment" in general terms, as opposed to only those areas which benefit from particular designation.

Further, Section 11 of that document expressly promotes the protection and enhancement of 'valued landscapes' in the general context of the "local environment", as opposed to protection of areas benefiting from particular designation.

At the local level Policy CS06 of the Council's Core Strategy (2011) sets out a four point strategy for rural areas. One of these four points is to 'maintain local character and a high quality environment'. The policy continues by stating that 'beyond the villages and in the countryside the strategy will be to protect the countryside for its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, and its natural resources to be enjoyed by all'.

Policy CS12 'Environmental Assets' of the Core Strategy (2011) also includes reference to landscape character. It concludes by stating that "development proposals should demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will protect, conserve and, where possible, enhance the special qualities and local distinctiveness of the area (including its historical, biodiversity and cultural character), gaps between settlements, landscape setting, distinctive settlement character, landscape features and ecological networks".

The Landscape Character Assessment prepared for the Council by Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) in 2007 and used as a supporting document for the Core Strategy identifies the application site as being within character type 'Settled Farmland with Plantations'. The site is within character area H5 'Northwold'. This confirms that the character of the area includes fields that are mainly regular in shape, medium sized and generally lined with hedges.

An Appraisal of Landscape and Visual Effects (ALVE) prepared by Pegasus Group has been submitted in support of the application. It considers the potential effects of the solar farm upon Landscape Character, Visual Amenity and Landscape elements such as vegetation, topography and water bodies. There is also an existing solar farm at Reaches Farm which has been installed relatively recently, so the submitted ALVE considers the potential for any sequential or in-combination cumulative effects.

The ALVE advises that the landscape character of the application site and its surroundings are fairly typical of the 'Settled Farmland with Plantations' landscape character defined in the Council's Landscape Character Assessment. Various photomontages have been included in the ALVE that show the proposed development site from several viewpoints. This shows that views of the solar facility from the surrounding area will be restricted given the distances involved and the lie of the land.

Cumulative effects when the proposed development is considered in combination with the existing solar installation at Reaches Farm are considered negligible by the ALVE due to the very limited proportion of either view at the same time. There would be some sequential experience of the two sites together, whilst travelling on the Thetford Road, however, this would be a minor and temporary effect, whilst planting proposals on the two sites mature. In the long term the effects would reduce to negligible.

Based on the findings of the landscape assessment and the site survey, a landscape strategy for the site has been developed which seeks to assimilate the proposals in a manner that will reinforce local landscape character. This includes maintaining and enhancing existing hedgerows and tree lines and restoring and managing the landscape structure of the wider site area.

It is therefore considered overall that the proposed development could be successfully accommodated and assimilated into the surrounding landscape without causing significant harm to the landscape character, visual amenity or landscape setting of the area.

Heritage Assets

The application proposal is supported by a report which provides an assessment of the heritage potential of the site and the significance of heritage assets within and around the site. This identifies that no designated assets are located within the application site and that there are a total of 13 designated assets within a 2km radius. However, the report concludes that the proposed development would not impact on any designated heritage assets or their settings given the distance from the application site, the site topography and screening by mature vegetation and modern development within the surrounding area.

In terms of archaeology, NCC Historic Environment Service originally raised an objection to the proposed development on the grounds that they disagree with the desk-based assessment's conclusions about the minimal archaeological impact of the proposed development. The desk-based assessment considers that there is some potential that heritage assets with archaeological interest (buried archaeological remains) of prehistoric and Roman date to be present at the proposed development site. Based on the previously recorded evidence from the vicinity of the site this could include ring ditches relating to prehistoric funerary monuments. As a result Norfolk Historic Environment Service requested that the results of a geophysical survey are submitted prior to the determination of the application in accordance with paragraph 128 of NPPF.

At the time of writing this report a geophysical survey is scheduled to be carried out with a view to the results and Norfolk Historic Environment Services' further comments being reported via late correspondence, or alternatively verbally at the meeting.

Neighbour Amenity

The closest residential property is Ferry Drove Cottage which is situated on the western side of Oxborough Lane which provides access to the proposed development. However, it would be over 200 metres away from the proposed solar farm itself and this distance coupled with the intervening landform and existing outbuildings would help screen any long distance views towards the site. The property is also currently occupied by a relative of the landowner who is supportive of the scheme.

The Council's CSNN team have raised no objection to the proposal but do have slight concerns relating to noise during the construction phase. As a result it is recommended that a condition be imposed on any consent requiring submission and approval of a construction management plan.

Highway Safety

Norfolk County Highways have advised they have no objection to the principle of the proposed development but they do have concerns that Oxborough Lane is narrow and of light construction presently, therefore construction traffic would need to be controlled and any adverse impacts on the road repaired as necessary. As a result it is recommended that should planning permission be granted conditions are imposed requiring the submission, approval and compliance with a Construction Traffic Management Plan which should cover the following:

- Condition survey of Oxborough Lane before and after works with any defects to be rectified by the developer as agreed with the Highway Engineer.
- Advanced signage for works access on A134.
- Management of traffic on Oxborough Lane so that vehicles would not meet.
- Laydown Area (as necessary) to effect the above.

Other Considerations

Given that the application site exceeds 1 hectare the application is accompanied by a flood risk assessment (FRA). The majority of the site lies within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) of the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) but a small part of the site, that closest to the River Wissey, is located within Flood Zones 2 (medium risk) and 3 (high risk). The Environment Agency has raised no objection to the proposed development.

The solar farm is to be a temporary, medium term use of the site, with an operational life of some 30 years. At the end of this period all equipment is proposed to be removed from the site and remediation works undertaken to revert it back to its former state as solely agricultural land and this may be secured by condition.

There are no other material considerations relevant to this application.

Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder issues raised by this proposal.

CONCLUSION

The proposed development is capable of producing 5MW of clean renewable which would be directly exported to the national grid. Although there are no regional targets for the production of renewable energy, there is still strong support for renewable energy developments in the NPPF and in other non-planning documents.

The application site is not in or adjacent to any nationally designated landscape areas and the proposal would not have any significant impact on the local landscape character. The proposal includes provision for the continued agricultural use of the land for sheep grazing in between the solar PV panels and would therefore only result in a modest temporary loss of grade 2 agricultural land. Once decommissioned, the land could revert back to sole agricultural use very quickly.

The benefits of the scheme strongly overcome any harm, and as such the proposal is recommended for approval, and it is considered to comply with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), Policies CS01, CS06, CS08, CS11 and CS12 of the adopted Core Strategy (2011) and draft Policy DM20 of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Pre-submission Document (2014). It is therefore recommended that planning permission be approved subject to the conditions set out below.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to the imposition of the following condition(s):

- 1 Condition The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
- 1 Reason To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004.

- 2 Condition The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: drawing nos. A.0268_02-A; A.0268_03-A; A.0268_04-A; A.0268_05-A; A.0268_06-A; and A.0268_09-A received by the local planning authority on 5th June 2015.
- 2 Reason For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
- 3 Condition The permission hereby granted is for the proposed development to be retained for a period of not more than 30 years from the date that electricity from the development is first supplied to the grid (the First Export Date), this date to be notified in writing to the local planning authority. By the end of the 30 year period the solar panels must be decommissioned. No later than 6 months after decommissioning, all related structures shall be removed and the site restored in accordance with a restoration scheme which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The restoration scheme shall be submitted to the local planning authority no less than 6 months prior to decommissioning and shall make provision for the dismantling and removal from the site of the solar PV panels, frames, foundations, inverter housings and all associated structures and fencing; and the repair of land drainage. The local planning authority must be notified of the cessation of electricity generation in writing no later than five working days after the event.
- 3 Reason The application site lies in the open countryside and it is important that once the development has ceased the site is brought back into a full agricultural use in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF (2012) and Policies CS06 and CS12 of the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy (2011).
- 4 Condition If the development hereby permitted fails for a continuous period of 12 months to produce electricity for supply to the electricity grid network, then, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority, the solar panels and the ancillary equipment relating to it shall be decommissioned and removed from the site in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to the local planning authority no more than 3 months after the end of the 12 month period. The scheme shall make provision for the dismantling and removal from the site of the structures and fencing; and repair of land drainage. The land shall be reinstated in accordance with the scheme within a period of 6 months after the end of the 12 month period.
- 4 Reason The application site lies in the open countryside and it is important that once the development has ceased the site is brought back into a full agricultural use in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF and Core Strategy Policies CS06 and CS12 of the LDF.
- 5 Condition The scheme hereby permitted shall not commence until full landscaping details in accordance with the proposed 'Landscape Strategy and Mitigation Measures' illustrated on Figure 9 of the submitted Appraisal of Landscape and Visual Effects produced by Pegasus Group (dated June 2015), has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved landscaping scheme shall be completed during the first planting season following the commencement of the development, or such longer period as may be agreed in writing by the local planning authority. Any trees / shrubs / plants which, within a period of five years of being planted die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

- 5 Reason To ensure that the development is properly landscaped in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with the NPPF. This condition needs to be pre-commencement in order for the approved landscaping details to be carried out and become established at the earliest opportunity.
- 6 Condition Prior to the commencement of development a detailed construction management plan, to include proposed timescales and hours of construction phase, must be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall also specify the sound power levels of the equipment, their location, and proposed mitigation methods to protect residents from noise and dust. The scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.
- 6 Reason To ensure that the amenities of future occupants are safeguarded in accordance with the NPPF. This needs to be a pre-commencement condition given the noise / dust emissions that could arise during the construction phase.
- 7 Condition Prior to the commencement of any works a Construction Traffic Management Plan which shall incorporate adequate provision for addressing any abnormal wear and tear to the highway, signing and managing construction traffic flow, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 7 Reason In the interests of maintaining highway efficiency and safety. This needs to be a pre-commencement condition given the impacts on highways efficiency and safety that could arise during the construction phase.
- 8 Condition For the duration of the construction period all works and traffic associated with the construction of the development will comply with the Construction Traffic Management Plan.
- 8 Reason In the interests of maintaining highway efficiency and safety. This needs to be a pre-commencement condition given the impacts on highways efficiency and safety that could arise during the construction phase.
- 9 Condition No development shall take place until a Solar Farm Grazing Management Plan (SFGMP) has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall describe the methods by which grazing will be maintained by sheep throughout the period during which the development is operational. If for any reason grazing by sheep fails to occur for a period of more than 12 months then, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority, the solar panels and the ancillary equipment relating to it shall be decommissioned and removed from the site in accordance with condition 4 above.
- 9 Reason The development hereby permitted allows for mixed use of the land which includes continued agricultural use of the land for grazing in accordance with the provisions of the NPPF (2012). This condition needs to be pre-commencement in order to ensure that the approved scheme can be provided and maintained throughout the period which the development is operational.
- 10 Condition No external artificial lighting shall be installed or operated during the period of this planning permission.
- 10 Reason In the interests of minimising light pollution and to safeguard the amenities of the locality in accordance with the NPPF.

- 11 Condition The height of any of the solar panels hereby permitted shall not exceed a height of 2.5 metres above existing ground level.
- 11 Reason In the interests of visual amenity and the landscape character of the area.