

JOW/P18-2917

2nd February 2021

Honor Whitfield
Planning Development and Business Unit
Newark and Sherwood District Council
Castle House
Great North Road
Newark-on-Trent
NG24 1BY

Dear Miss Whitfield

**Construction of a solar farm and battery stations together with all associated works, equipment and necessary infrastructure (ref: 20/01242/FULM)
Land North of Halloughton, Southwell**

Further to our meeting on 29th January 2021, please find enclosed an updated Site Layout and Planting Proposals Plan for the above application, prepared to address comments received regarding built heritage and landscape and visual effects.

The submitted **Site Layout and Planting Proposals Plan No. P18-2917_12 Rev L** replaces the previously submitted Revision K.

Description of Amendments

The amendments shown in the submitted plan can be summarised as:

- Removal of proposed panels from land closest to Halloughton village and Conservation Area at the southern end of the easternmost field in the Application Site.
- Planting of a species rich meadow grassland where panels were previously proposed and allowance for the route of a historic footpath to be established across this area.
- Planting of a new native hedgerow along the new southern edge of the panels in the easternmost field and along the northern edge of the access track to further establish separation between the Proposed Development and the village.
- Removal of proposed panels from field in central section of the Application Site, south and east of the Southwell Bridleway 74.
- Removal of proposed hedgerow along southern edge of Southwell Bridleway 74.
- Reinforcement of existing trees and hedgerows along the northern boundary of the southern parcel with planting of further semi-mature trees.
- Reinforcement of hedgerow along western boundary of the Application Site, adjacent to Public Right of Way footpath 209/42/1, with planting of native trees.

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Consideration of Amendments

The amendments to the Proposed Development would increase the separation between the Proposed Development and the Halloughton Conservation Area and the new hedgerow would further restrict the limited intervisibility of the solar farm and the village. The new buffer from the Conservation Area will allow for a more uniform setback from the Conservation Area and its setting, across the full width of the southern boundary of the Proposed Development.

The Visual Assessment is updated to consider the removal of the built form from the field through which Bridleway 74 passes and the proposed implementation of semi-mature native trees along the northern boundary of the southern Site parcel.

The updated assessment applies to Viewpoints 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. A summary table is provided at Appendix 1 of this letter based on the revised layout. The text has been crossed through where the assessment varies from the December 2020 LVIA Addendum.

For Viewpoint 1, 2 and 3, the effects of the construction phase assume that whilst much of the activity taking place across the Application Site would be screened from view, there may be the opportunity for bridleway users on route 74 to experience heavily filtered isolated views of machinery beyond the intervening Application Site boundary hedgerows. Similarly, at Year 1 before the proposed boundary enhancement and infill vegetation has matured, bridleway users may have the opportunity to experience partial views of the proposed built form. By Year 15, for bridleway users at Viewpoints 1, 2 and 3 the matured proposed boundary vegetation in combination with the existing intervening field boundary hedgerows are expected to restrict views of the proposed built form resulting in a Negligible Scale of Effect.

The effects experienced by bridleway users at Viewpoint 4 have been updated to reflect the changes to the planting proposals to include an increased quantity of native semi-mature trees along the northern boundary of the southern parcel of the Site which are anticipated to be planted prior to the construction phase.

The effects assessed at Viewpoint 5 are not anticipated to be altered by the introduction of the new planting proposals or layout changes.

The removal of the panels in the central portion of the Site provides a clear buffer in excess of 100m between the two blocks of development. The removal of the panels from the field adjacent to the Bridleway 74 also ensures that the journey experienced by users passing through this section of the Application Site who currently experience views of an agricultural landscape would be retained. The implementation of additional semi-mature trees along the northern boundary of the southern parcel of the Application Site would further reinforce and strengthen the character of Policy Zones 37, 38 and 39 in line with the landscape actions detailed in the Newark and Sherwood Landscape Character Assessment.

As detailed above, the introduction of the semi-mature trees and removal of panels are also anticipated to lower the Magnitude of Change and subsequent Scale of Effects of bridleway users on route 74. It is therefore considered in light of these amendments that there would not be substantial change in the surroundings experienced by the bridleway users on route 74 on their approach to the village.

Response to VIA Comments

The LVIA Addendum identifies that partial views may be experienced from the upper floor windows of the properties during the construction phase and Year 1 resulting in a Low Magnitude of Change and Moderate Scale of Effect. By Year 10, following the successful establishment of the proposed vegetation, the Magnitude of Change is expected to reduce to Negligible.

It is acknowledged that VIA agrees with this assessment but require clarification as to the number of properties to which this visual impact applies. Figure 1, below, classifies the properties in Halloughton into three categories. Red pins identify where views of the Application Site would be restricted. Yellow pins identify where views of the Application Site are anticipated to be heavily filtered by boundary vegetation or the properties are single storey making the potential to experience views of the construction phase and Proposed Development unlikely. Finally, the green pins indicate the two storey properties from which views of the Application Site would theoretically be possible. The amendment to the layout, removing the proposed panels from land closest to Halloughton village and Conservation Area at the southern end of the easternmost field, is expected to further restrict the opportunities for residents to experience views of the construction phase or the Proposed Development.



Figure 1: Halloughton Property Analysis

Clarification was also sought from VIA on the overall scale of visual effect of the construction stage on the eastern end of the village of Halloughton. The LVIA Addendum identified that the construction phase would bring about a Medium Magnitude of Change in relation to the change in the perception of the landscape character. The village of Halloughton sits within Policy Zone 38 Halloughton Village Farmlands which in line with

the Newark and Sherwood Landscape Character Assessment has been assigned a Medium Sensitivity.

A Medium Magnitude of Change combined with a Medium Sensitivity would result in a Moderate Adverse effect on the perception of the landscape character of the village of Halloughton. However, it should be emphasised that this effect is based on the introduction of construction machinery accessing the Application Site at the eastern end of the village rather than views of the construction activities taking place across the Application Site. The effects are considered to be very localised and transient in nature.

As demonstrated above, opportunities for residents within Halloughton to experience views of construction activities taking place across the Application Site would be limited to a very small number of properties. The panels situated at the southern end of the easternmost field are set back from the roadside (near LVIA Viewpoint 8) by approximately 250m. A traditional double width farm gate will be installed at the roadside entrance as part of the construction process which will help retain the traditional farming appearance at the entrance to the village during the construction and operational phases. The access track will be formed of crushed stone laid down on top of a cellweb type structure which would replicate the appearance of other farm tracks in the locality.

Pulling the panels back from the southern end of the easternmost field and proposed additional planting would also limit the opportunities for visitors to the churchyard at Church of St James to experience views of the construction activity taking place within the Application Site, and also the Proposed Development.

Summary

The submitted Site Layout and Planting Proposals Plan No. P18-2917_12 Rev L has been prepared to address comments relating to built heritage and landscape and visual effects.

The amendments would reduce any such effects and are considered to further demonstrate that the Proposed Development is acceptable when considering the planning balance of all material considerations.

I trust this information allows for the application to be progressed to Planning Committee for determination at the earliest convenience. However, please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or require any further information,

Yours sincerely



James Walker
Associate Planner



Enc.

APPENDIX 1: UPDATED VISUAL ASSESSMENT VIEWPOINTS 1-5

Viewpoint reference	Receptor type and sensitivity	Magnitude of change			Scale of Visual Effect		
		Construction	Year 1	Year 10	Construction	Year 1	Year 10
1	Recreational High sensitivity	Medium Low	Medium Low	Low Negligible	Major Moderate	Major Moderate	Moderate Negligible
2	Recreational High sensitivity	High Low	High Low	Low Negligible	Major Moderate	Major Moderate	Moderate Negligible
3	Recreational High sensitivity	Medium Low	Low Negligible	Low Negligible	Major Moderate	Moderate Negligible	Moderate Negligible
4	Recreational High sensitivity	Medium Medium to Low	Medium Medium to Low	Low to Negligible	Major Major to Moderate	Major Major to Moderate	Moderate to Negligible
5	Recreational High sensitivity	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Moderate	Negligible	Negligible

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