

Planning Committee – Tuesday 27th February 2024

Update Report of the Head of Service

This Update Report has been checked on behalf of Legal Services by John Teasdale

Item 5.1

Application No: P/2023/00217

Proposed Solar Farm, North of Bramble Cottage, Greensmiths Lane, Upper Leigh, Staffordshire, ST10 4NY

A response has been received from the applicants in respect of condition numbers 3 and 8, requesting small amendments to the wording of those conditions.

Condition 3 relates to the restoration of the land and the agent requested the removal of the requirement for the land to be restored to the former Agricultural Land Classification, as it is possible that the land will be of an improved quality once the solar farm is decommissioned.

Condition 8 relates to a Materials Management Plan and any earth bunds, however, the bund proposed to the substation area is a concrete bund, therefore a request was made to the wording of the condition.

Cllr Whittaker has raised a query in relation to the Ward details set out in the Committee report which states Abbey Ward.

The ownership of Shortwoods was also queried as the report states that this is in the ownership of the applicant.

Officer Response:

The conditions have been received and the wording has been amended and agreed with the agent as follows, the amended wording is underscored:

Condition 3:

When the land ceases to be used as a solar farm for renewable power production following any consecutive 6 month period of non-operation or at the end of the period of 40 years from the date of first export of electricity (as notified to the Local Planning Authority under condition 3 above, whichever shall first occur, the use hereby permitted shall cease.

Upon the cessation of the use all photovoltaic arrays and associated materials, plant, buildings and equipment brought onto the land in connection with the solar farm shall be removed and the land restored and reinstated to agricultural use with the ALC grade being equivalent to or above that existing within 6 months of the use ceasing in accordance with a decommissioning plan which shall have been first submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority unless otherwise agreed in writing. The decommissioning scheme shall provide for an aftercare plan(s).

Condition 8:

Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved (including site stripping and clearance) a Materials Management Plan (MMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This Management Plan shall define the excavation and bund formation processes for the transformer and

substation area and any other proposed areas of bunding and provide detailed drawings of these proposed works.

The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

In response to Cllr Whittaker's query, following a review of the Ward boundaries, this was changed to Blythe Ward in May 2023. As the application was registered prior to this change, the Ward details indicated Abbey Ward, this has been corrected.

A land registry search has been carried out which indicates that Shortwoods is not owned by the applicant or the landowner of the wider site. This does not materially affect the application as Shortwoods is situated outside of the application site, and mitigation measures referred to in the Committee Report are considered to protect the residential amenities of the dwelling.

Recommendation – Remains as per officer report – Grant Permission Subject to Conditions

For further information contact: Lisa Bird
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Item 5.2

Application No: P/2022/00947 Extension to Uttoxeter Cemetery, Stafford Road, Uttoxeter, Staffordshire

With regard to paragraph 14.10 of the officer report additional information has been received from the Town Council (as the applicants) confirming that the retention of the hedgerow would now result in the loss of approximately 336 No. burial plots within the cemetery extension site.

The cemetery itself would provide a minimum of 1,440 additional grave spaces.

Based on the average number of new burials over the last 5 years, the cemetery extension would provide space to cover burials for the next 99 years.

Officer Response:

As per the officer report the potential loss of burial plots as per paragraph 14.10 is considered sufficient justification for the loss of the mature hedgerow, subject to mitigation.

The Ordnance survey number had been omitted from the location plan during a previous revision. This has been corrected and reinstated on the site location plan, consequently Condition 2 relating to the plans condition has need to be updated to reflect this as per the below condition where the amended wording has been underscored:

Condition 2:

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans/documents subject to compliance with the other conditions of this permission:

Drawing No 2022-5024-001 Revision P8 Site & Location Plan scaled at 1:1250 and 1:500 dated as received on 23 February 2024

HSP2022-C4224-G-GPI-1198 Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Desk Study Report by HSP Consulting dated as received on 23 January 2023

Preliminary Ecology Appraisal by Fauna Forest Ecology dated as received on 1 November 2022

Written Scheme of Investigation for Geophysical and Earthwork Survey by University of Leicester Archaeological Services dated as received on 4 August 2023

Method Statement for removal of Hedgerow including Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) for Newts by SJL Landscapes Limited dated as received on 4 August 2023

Cross section of Road dated as received on 4 August 2023

Recommendation – Remains as per officer report – Grant Permission Subject to Conditions

For further information contact: Gary Shilton

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