



Longfield Solar Farm

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Consultation Report Appendices

Appendices A-1 to A-4

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Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

Planning Act 2008

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure)
Regulations 2009

Table of Contents

Appendix A-1: Introductory leaflet	1
Appendix A-2: Contact with residents in October 2020.....	3
A-2.1 Overview.....	3
A-2.2 Letter 1	3
A-2.3 Letter 2	5
Appendix A-3: Non-statutory consultation materials	7
A-3.1 Press advert	7
A-3.2 Consultation booklet.....	8
A-3.3 Consultation letter.....	18
A-3.4 Press release.....	19
A-3.5 Consultation questionnaire.....	20
A-3.6 Virtual exhibition boards	23
A-3.7 Screenshot from virtual exhibition	40
Appendix A-4: Responses to non-statutory consultation.....	41
A-4.1 Anglian Water	41
A-4.2 Boreham Parish Council.....	45
A-4.3 Braintree District Council.....	50
A-4.4 Chelmsford City Council.....	52
A-4.5 Essex Area Ramblers	59
A-4.6 Essex Local Access Forum	61
A-4.7 Hatfield Peverel Parish Council.....	63
A-4.8 Highways England.....	67
A-4.9 Little Waltham Parish Council.....	69

Appendix A-1: Introductory leaflet



Longfield
Solar Farm

This leaflet introduces Longfield Solar Farm. We are contacting you to make you aware of our proposals at the earliest possible stage.

What is Longfield Solar Farm?

This is a proposal for a new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage, to help meet the country's need for low carbon energy.

It would use ground mounted solar panels to generate electricity from the sun. The batteries would store energy for when it is most needed. We have secured a grid connection agreement which would allow us to export or import up to 500MW of electricity to and from the national electricity transmission system.

Longfield Solar Farm would be located across several parcels of farmland north of the A12 and east of Boreham Road. The area we are considering for development is shown in the plan overleaf.

We are at a very early stage in developing our proposals. At present, we can introduce the proposals for Longfield Solar Farm and say where it will be located. We are making our proposals public at this stage because we want local people to be aware of them before asking for their views.

We still need to design our proposals and consult on them. The plan shows the area that we are considering for development. We don't expect to use the whole of this area for solar panels or battery storage, but we need to allow space for measures like landscaping and biodiversity improvements and also any other features on site that need to be protected.

Our early investigations into the Longfield Solar Farm have indicated that the site is capable of accommodating the scheme we are proposing and provide real benefits throughout the life of the project.

We will publish more information on our proposals as part of a consultation later this year.

Who is behind Longfield Solar Farm?

Longfield Solar Farm is a joint initiative between two companies with a long history in helping meet the UK's need for renewable energy – EDF Renewables UK and Padero Solar.

You can find out more at their websites:
edf-re.uk and paderosolar.com





Why is Longfield Solar Farm needed?

The way that we generate and consume energy in the UK is changing. The Government has committed to achieving 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2050, including in the way we generate our electricity.

That means older forms of energy generation, like fossil fuel power stations, are being taken out of use. There is an urgent need for new, cleaner, forms of energy generation to replace them. Solar energy projects like Longfield Solar Farm could have a major role to play in meeting this need.

Including battery storage in the proposals allows us to make more efficient use of the solar panels. This means we can store energy at times of low demand and release it when it is needed.



Get in touch

For further information, please contact us on **0800 0194 576** or info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk. You can also go to our website, longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk, for updates throughout the development process.

Planning process

Longfield Solar Farm will be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). This is because of the scale of the contribution it could make to the country's energy needs.

This means we need to apply to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) for a type of planning permission called a Development Consent Order (DCO). We will follow a process which assesses potential environmental impacts and we will consult with the local community before applying for a DCO.

DCO applications are managed by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on behalf of the Government. You can find out more about the planning process for the project on their website: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

When will I hear more?

We are getting in touch at the earliest stage in developing our proposals. We will publish more information about our proposals as part of a consultation later in 2020.

At this stage, we will be able to talk more about the site for Longfield Solar Farm, the technologies we are planning to use, what we need to consider in developing our proposals and the way we plan to assess potential environmental impacts.



Appendix A-2: Contact with residents in October 2020

A-2.1 Overview

Following the public launch of the Scheme, the Applicant wrote directly to 36 addresses in the immediate vicinity of the site to offering to meet to discuss the Scheme on 19 October 2020.

Residents of properties immediately adjacent to the site being considered by the Applicant at that time were offered an individual meeting. A list of addresses contacted and the letter sent to them by the Applicant is provided in A-2.2 below.

The Applicant also invited residents of properties close but not adjacent to the site being considered by the Applicant at that time. A list of addresses contacted and the letter sent to them by the Applicant is provided in A-2.2 below.

The Applicant met with the residents of 13 properties as a result. The purpose of these meetings was to introduce the Scheme and begin to understand potential impacts from development on properties close to the site.

A-2.2 Letter 1

Addresses contacted

- Noake's Lane, Little Waltham, Chelmsford, CM3 3NG
- White Oaks, Terling, Chelmsford, Braintree, Essex, CM3 2RA
- Hankins Farm, Terling, Chelmsford, Braintree, Essex CM3 2RA
- Bird's Farm, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 3NE
- Bird's Farm Cottage, Bird's Farm Lane, Boreham, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 3NE
- Noake's Barn, Noakes Lane, Little Waltham, Chelmsford CM3 3NG
- Noake's Farm, Noakes Lane, Little Waltham, Chelmsford CM3 3NG
- Noake's House, Noakes Lane, Little Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 3NG
- Scarlett's Farm, Scarletts Farmhouse, Sparrows Farm Road, Terling, Braintree, Essex CM3 2QZ
- Whitehouse Farm, Boreham Road, Great Leighs, Chelmsford CM3 3NF
- Headlands, Terling Road Little Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 3NE
- Hedgerow Cottage, Noakes Lane, Great Leighs, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 3NG
- Sparrow's Farm, Terling, Chelmsford, Braintree, Essex CM3 2QY
- Leyland's Farm, Terling, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 2QY
- Rolls Farm, Sparrow's Farm Road, Terling, Chelmsford, Braintree, Essex CM3 2RA
- Stock's Farm Cottage, Waltham Rd, Boreham, Chelmsford CM3 3BA
- Bufftons, Brentwood Rd, Herongate CM13 3PN
- Lyons Hall Farm, Bocking, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9FH
- Russell Green House, Russell Green, Boreham, Chelmsford CM3 3BD

- Kenwood House, 213 New London Road, Chelmsford CM2 0AJ

Copy of letter



ADDRESS 1
ADDRESS 2
ADDRESS 3
ADDRESS 4
POSTCODE

19 October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

Longfield Solar Farm

We wrote to you recently to introduce our proposals for Longfield Solar Farm. As you live close to part of the proposed Longfield Solar Farm, we wanted to offer you the opportunity to meet with us to learn more about the proposals.

Longfield Solar Farm is a proposal for a new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage, to help meet the country's need for low carbon energy. It would be located across several parcels of farmland north east of Chelmsford and North of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel. Part of the area we are currently considering for development is near to your address.

We are at an early stage in preparing our proposals for Longfield Solar Farm. We want to be able to consider your feedback in developing our design and carrying out our assessments of potential environmental impacts from the proposals. We are aware that you may also have questions for us.

We will begin consulting with the wider community in the coming weeks. Ahead of that, we would very much appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the proposals in more detail. We will also be organising online presentations and Q&As for people living close to the site when we hold the consultation – please do get in touch if you would like to attend one of these.

We are conscious of the need to protect everyone's health during the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic and are happy to meet in whichever way you would be most comfortable with – whether that would be a meeting in person with appropriate precautions, online, or by telephone.

If you would like to meet, or have any other questions, please do get in touch with us on 0800 0194 576 or info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk.

Yours faithfully,



James Pateman
Project Manager

A-2.3 Letter 2

Addresses contacted

- The Willows, Boreham, Chelmsford, Essex CM3
- Beggars Hall, Terling, Chelmsford CM3 2RA
- Russell Green Cottages, Boreham, Chelmsford CM3 3BB
- Brent Hall Lodge, Waltham Rd, Boreham, Chelmsford CM3 3BA
- The Thatched Cottage, Braintree Road, Terling, Chelmsford CM3 2AX
- Hunters Moon, Waltham Rd, Boreham, Chelmsford CM3 3AY
- White Gates, Main Road, Little Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 3PA
- Catkins, Waltham Road, Boreham, Chelmsford CM3 3AY
- Field End, Station Approach, North Fambridge, Chelmsford, Maldon, Essex, CM3 6NE
- Lawns, Waltham Road, Boreham, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 3AX
- The Owls Hill Tearoom, Owl's Hill, Terling, Chelmsford CM3 2PW
- Brick House Farm, Boreham, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 3HU
- Wallace's Lane Cottage, Boreham, Chelmsford CM3 3AU
- Wallace's Farm Cottage, Wallace Lane, Boreham, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 3AU
- Toppinghoe Hall, London Road, Hatfield Peverel, Chelmsford CM3 2EX
- Ridley Hall, Braintree Road, Terling, Chelmsford CM3 2AX

Copy of letter



ADDRESS 1
ADDRESS 2
ADDRESS 3
ADDRESS 4
POSTCODE

19 October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

Longfield Solar Farm

We wrote to you recently to introduce you to our proposals for Longfield Solar Farm. We would like to invite you to an online presentation and Q&A to learn more about the proposals.

Longfield Solar Farm is a proposal for a new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage, to help meet the country's need for low carbon energy. It would be located across several parcels of farmland north east of Chelmsford and North of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel.

We will begin consulting with the wider community in the coming weeks. We will write to you with full details of the consultation when it begins, but we would also like to invite you to an online presentation and Q&A for people who live close to part of the development site.

We are currently looking at a number of dates for the presentation:

- 1400-1500 on Saturday 31 October 2020
- 1800-1900 on Tuesday 3 November 2020
- 1800-1900 on Thursday 5 November 2020

Please do let us know whether you would like to attend a presentation on any of these dates. If you would prefer, or are not able to access the internet, we would be very happy to speak to you directly by telephone.

If you would like to attend a presentation, or have any other questions, please do get in touch with us on 0800 0194 576 or info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk.

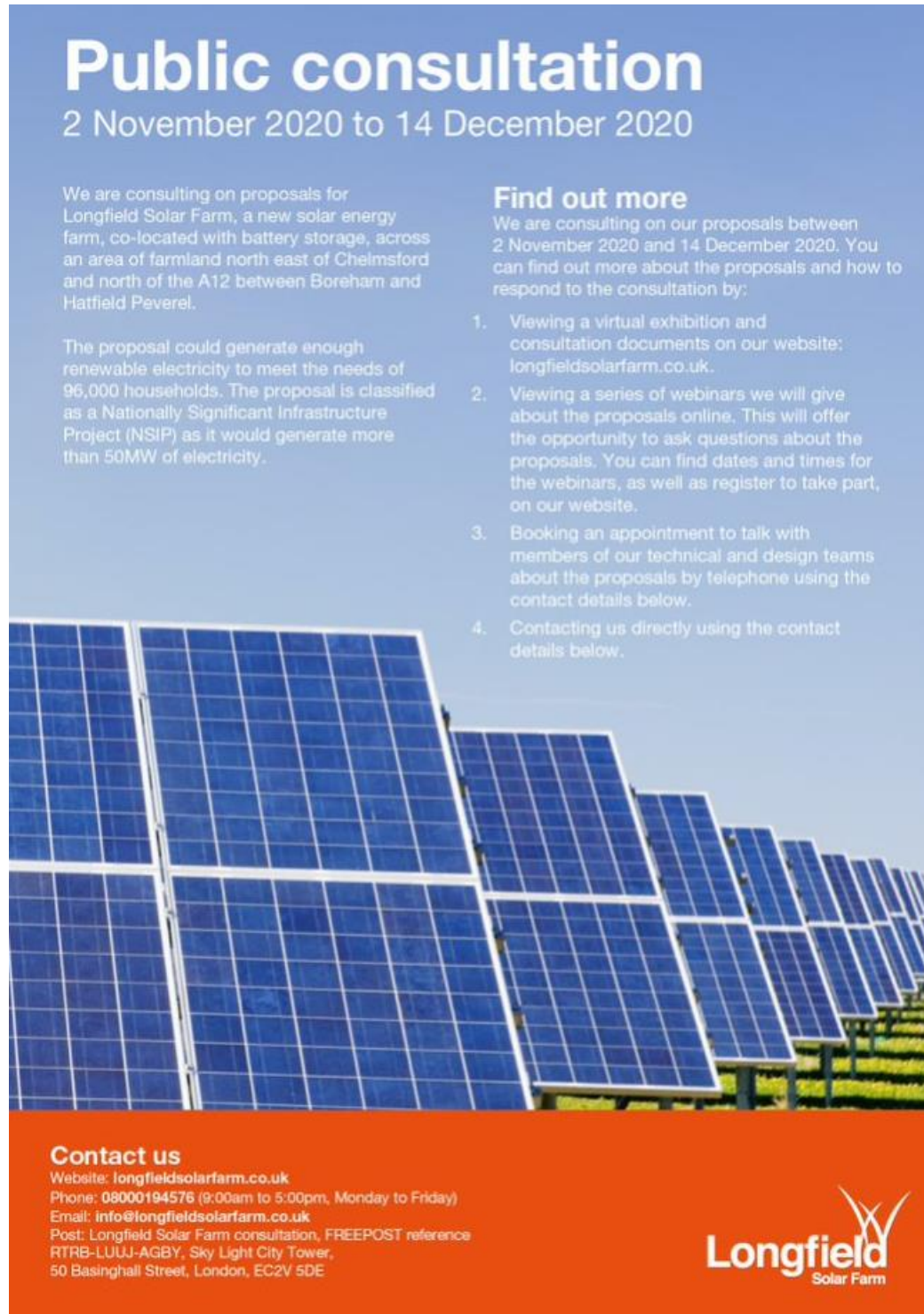
Yours faithfully,



James Pateman
Project Manager

Appendix A-3: Non-statutory consultation materials

A-3.1 Press advert



Public consultation
2 November 2020 to 14 December 2020


We are consulting on proposals for Longfield Solar Farm, a new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage, across an area of farmland north east of Chelmsford and north of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel.

The proposal could generate enough renewable electricity to meet the needs of 96,000 households. The proposal is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) as it would generate more than 50MW of electricity.

Find out more
We are consulting on our proposals between 2 November 2020 and 14 December 2020. You can find out more about the proposals and how to respond to the consultation by:

1. Viewing a virtual exhibition and consultation documents on our website: longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk.
2. Viewing a series of webinars we will give about the proposals online. This will offer the opportunity to ask questions about the proposals. You can find dates and times for the webinars, as well as register to take part, on our website.
3. Booking an appointment to talk with members of our technical and design teams about the proposals by telephone using the contact details below.
4. Contacting us directly using the contact details below.

Contact us
Website: longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
Phone: 08000194576 (9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday)
Email: info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
Post: Longfield Solar Farm consultation, FREEPOST reference RTRB-LUUJ-AGBY, Sky Light City Tower, 50 Basinghall Street, London, EC2V 5DE



A-3.2 Consultation booklet



Introduction

This booklet sets out our early proposals for Longfield Solar Farm.

We are in the process of developing our proposals for a new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage, to help meet the country's need for low carbon energy. Longfield Solar Farm proposes to use ground mounted solar panels to generate electricity from the sun, while the batteries would store energy for when it is most needed. It would be located on farmland north east of Chelmsford and north of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel. As Longfield Solar Farm would have the capacity to generate more than 50 megawatts (MW) of electricity, it is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) requiring a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008.

The Planning Act 2008 requires promoters of NSIPs to carry out consultation in a particular way (this is called "statutory consultation"). As we are in the early stages of developing our proposals, this consultation is classed as a "non-statutory consultation", which means it is being carried out before we undertake another round of consultation that will meet the requirements of the Planning Act 2008. This approach is in line with best practice so that we can gain valuable feedback that will help us to prepare our proposals in more detail. Following this consultation, we will consider the feedback and update our proposals for further consultation. For this reason, we are not presenting detailed information on design at this stage.

This is our first round of consultation. We will carry out a further round of consultation in 2021 which will contain a proposed design for the solar farm and the preliminary results of our environmental impact assessment work and our proposed mitigation measures. We set out more information about the planning process and the requirements for consultation later in the booklet.

Due to the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic, this is a remote consultation. We recognise that this presents challenges to how we consult, so we have thought carefully about how we ensure that everyone who is interested in our proposals can respond to the information that we are presenting. We explain how to find out more about our proposals and respond to this consultation later in this booklet.

Who is proposing Longfield Solar Farm?

Longfield Solar Farm is being brought forward by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd, a joint venture between two established developers of renewable energy: EDF Renewables (EDFR) and Padero Solar. The two organisations have brought together a highly experienced project team with an excellent track record in successfully delivering nationally significant infrastructure of this kind.

EDF Renewables has more than 25 years' worth of experience in delivering renewable energy projects in more than 20 countries around the world. In the UK, it provides much needed new affordable low carbon energy through 36 wind farms and one of the UK's largest battery storage units (together totalling almost 1GW). It has a portfolio of rooftop solar and grid scale solar energy generation in development.

Padero Solar has helped to develop more than 25 Solar Farms in the UK, and this has delivered over 390MWs of renewable energy. Padero Solar is part of a group of three companies. These include; PS Renewables, who are behind a number of solar projects, including Eveley Solar Farm (Hampshire), and PSH Operations, an Operations & Maintenance business managing over 1.3GWs of Solar Farm assets in the UK.

Our goal as project partners is to contribute to a net zero energy future through Longfield Solar Farm. Projects like this are creating business opportunities and economic activity which contribute to the country's green recovery.

Together, we are committed to the communities in which we work and exercise good stewardship over our projects for the long term.



Why is Longfield Solar Farm needed?

The UK is undergoing a major change in the way it meets its energy needs. In 2019, the Government legislated to commit the country to achieving 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2050 in comparison to emissions at 1990 levels.

Energy generation currently makes up a significant amount of the UK's carbon emissions. The UK must reduce this through a variety of measures including the introduction of new, cleaner methods of electricity generation that are able to come online and provide energy to the grid. This will happen at the same time as older, carbon-intensive methods of energy generation are being phased out.

In addition, the ways in which we use electricity are also changing. As we increasingly use electricity to power new modes of transport and industrial activity, it is anticipated that demand for electricity is likely to increase.

This can be seen through the increasing use of electric vehicles. National Grid has predicted that there may be up to 36 million electric vehicles on the UK's roads by 2040. This means that demand and supply for electricity and power flows will become increasingly complex.

To meet the national need caused by these trends we need to adapt our infrastructure to offer clean, low carbon sources of energy generation that are fit for the future. Solar energy is one of these sources and we are bringing forward proposals that do just this.

The battery storage element of the scheme would complement the shift towards renewable forms of energy generation. Solar and other forms of renewable energy generation are intermittent by their nature. Battery storage means that electricity can be stored when more is being produced than is needed and released again when it is needed.

Battery storage also has an important role to play in stabilising the National Grid. At times of an excess or shortfall in demand, battery storage facilities can balance the National Grid by making up for any shortfalls or by removing surplus power from the grid and storing it to be released later.

In addition to this, the Government has stated that the UK's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic should prioritise the delivery of low carbon projects. The proposed Longfield Solar Farm would play an important part in this national effort.

There is therefore an urgent national need for energy generation and storage of this type. To meet the Government's target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, the UK requires significant investment in new renewable energy generation at scale and this is one of a number of schemes being brought forward in the UK on that basis.



What is proposed?

Longfield Solar Farm is a proposed new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage. The proposals include grid infrastructure to connect Longfield Solar Farm to the National Grid and any necessary and appropriate environmental mitigation. We also need to secure development consent for infrastructure needed for building and maintaining Longfield Solar Farm such as construction compounds and site offices.

We have secured a grid connection agreement which would allow us to export or import up to 500MW of electricity to and from the National Grid. The proposed generating capacity of the Longfield Solar Farm means that it will be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and an application for a development consent order will be required – we set out more information on this on page 14.

We are still at an early stage in the design process. The design of the scheme will be subject to a number of stages as we proceed through this process. These will be informed by the feedback that you give us and through the results of our environmental impact assessment activity. We will be able to provide more specific details of our proposals as the design is developed in the coming months, which will then form part of the consultation that we will undertake in 2021.

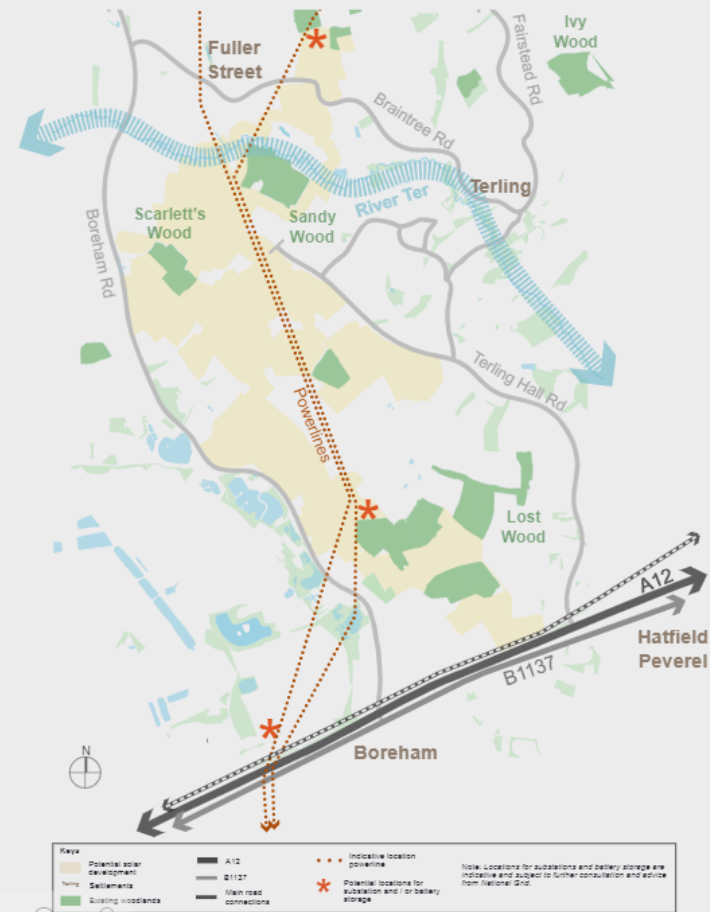
We currently expect to locate Longfield Solar Farm on around 380 hectares of land. The plan on page 7 shows the current area proposed for development, including land for two different route options for the grid connection infrastructure to connect into the National Grid. This plan is indicative and may change. Within this area, we will look to include:

- Ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels to generate electricity from the sun;
- Battery storage that will allow Longfield Solar Farm to import, store and export electricity to the National Grid, with priority being given to the solar PV generated electricity;
- Substations, inverters, transformers, switchgear, internal cabling and other electrical infrastructure required to support the solar PV panels and battery storage;
- Grid connection infrastructure which will allow us to export or import up to 500MW of electricity to and from the National Grid, including a new substation;
- Mitigation for environmental impacts that the scheme would have;
- Habitats to enable biodiversity and landscape improvements;
- Other associated infrastructure required for the construction and operation of the site, such as construction compounds, access tracks and welfare facilities.

Location

We are proposing to locate the scheme across an area of farmland north east of Chelmsford and north of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel.

The plan on this page shows how the site chosen for Longfield Solar Farm fits into this broader context – including options for the point that it will connect to the National Grid.



Technology

Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels

Longfield Solar Farm will use ground mounted PV panel arrays to generate electricity from the sun. Solar PV is a clean technology. Once set up the panels make use of sunlight to generate electricity. To manage the electricity generated by the panels, our proposals will require localised cabling and solar stations at regular intervals within the array of panels to safely transfer the electricity to substations and onwards to the National Grid and the battery storage facility.

Each solar station involves the following elements:

- **Inverter:** the inverters convert the direct current (DC) electricity generated by the solar PV panels into alternating current (AC) electricity. This needs to happen to ensure that the electricity generated can be exported to the national electricity transmission system;
- **Transformer:** transformers are required to control the voltage of the electricity generated at the site before it reaches a substation. From a substation, the electricity is then exported to the national electricity transmission system;
- **Switchgear:** a switchgear is a combination of electrical disconnect switches, fuses and circuit breakers. They are used to control, protect, and isolate the individual pieces of electrical equipment that make up the scheme.

We are yet to make final design choices on how the solar stations will appear.

Battery storage

We will also include battery energy storage as part of Longfield Solar Farm. This will allow electricity to be stored at times when demand is lower and released to the National Grid at times when it is needed. It will be included primarily to help manage the fact that the solar PV panels will not generate electricity at a constant rate, but it may also take surplus energy from the National Grid.

Battery storage technology is safe and makes use of tried and tested technology, much of which we also use in our day-to-day lives. One of the partners in Longfield Solar Farm, EDF Renewables UK, already operates one of the UK's largest battery storage projects in Nottinghamshire and this has operated safely since 2018.

We are yet to make final design choices on how the battery storage element of the proposals will appear or where it will be located. The plan on page 7 shows the locations we are currently considering for battery energy storage. We will present updated design information at the next stage of consultation.

Connecting to the grid

We have secured a grid connection agreement which would allow us to export or import up to 500MW of electricity to and from the National Grid.

This connection will be established through a new substation built on site at Longfield Solar Farm. This substation will then connect to an existing electricity line running through to the site. We are currently looking at three options for the location of the substation, as well as two options for the cable route connecting to it. These are shown on page 7.

The Solar PV panels, solar stations, battery storage system and the grid connection will be connected by a system of cabling. As we are still at an early stage in the design process, we are exploring options that include both underground cabling and overhead lines.

We would welcome your views on these options. We will present more information on the location and design of the new substation and of the design of our cabling route at the statutory consultation.

Components of a typical solar farm

1. Solar Energy
2. Fencing
3. Solar Panels
4. Inverter (DC to AC power converter)
5. Landscape Area
6. Substation
7. Battery Storage
8. Cables

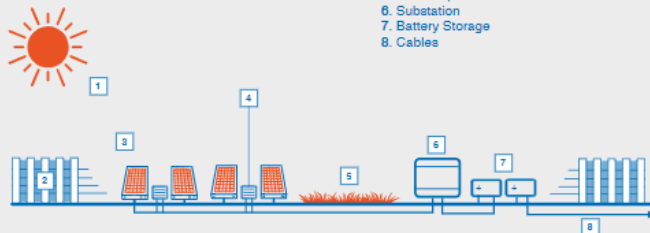


Figure: not to scale, and for the indicative purposes only.

Environmental impact assessment

We recognise that, as with any major infrastructure project, our proposals have potential environmental impacts, which need to be understood and managed.

We will conduct a rigorous programme of environmental impact assessments as we prepare our scheme proposals. These will include assessments of the scheme's potential environmental impacts such as cultural heritage, landscape and visual impact, existing infrastructure, flood risk, noise and vibration, socioeconomics, transport and access, air quality, ground conditions and glint and glare. Where appropriate, we will propose mitigation. This may also provide the opportunity for local habitat improvements.

To ensure that these assessments are accurate and capture large amounts of information, we need to carry out these assessments iteratively, over time. During these initial stages of the project, we are engaging with relevant bodies such as local authorities, technical stakeholders and environmental groups, as well as with the local community, to understand the scope and focus of our assessments.

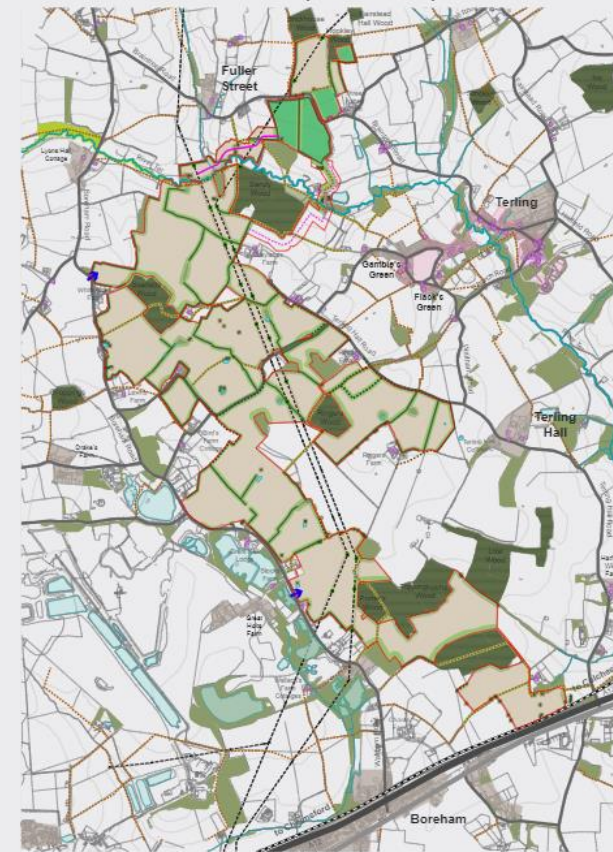
- 1. Scope**
 Consult with statutory bodies on the type and method of assessments we need to carry out.
- 2. Conduct assessments**
 Including air quality, landscapes and visual amenity, transport, noise, vibration, socioeconomics, cultural heritage, water and flood risk, ecology and nature conservation, and any cumulative effects.
- 3. Consult**
 Publish the preliminary results of our findings during the statutory consultation.
- 4. Consider**
 Consider all feedback received and finalise our environmental statement.
- 5. Submit**
 We must submit an environmental statement as part of our DCO application.

That means that the information we are sharing with you at this non-statutory consultation includes some details of the types of assessments we plan to carry out, but does not present the preliminary results of our environmental assessment work, which will be presented during the second consultation in 2021. The plan on page 11 shows environmental factors we need to consider in developing our proposals. Following this consultation, we will consider the feedback that we receive and will conduct assessments to allow us to present more detailed information when we next consult.

We are in the process of preparing a Scoping Report for submission to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). This will set out the areas that we think should be covered by our environmental impact assessments. Once we have submitted our Scoping Report, PINS will publish an opinion on the scoping required which we will use to guide our future environmental impact assessment.

We will prepare and submit an Environmental Statement as part of our DCO application. This will set out the outcomes of our assessments, as well as details of any proposed mitigation. More information will be available during the statutory consultation in 2021 where we will share the preliminary results of our Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) through a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) which you will be able to view and consider as part of the statutory consultation.

Site Features and Concept Masterplan



Site Features		Concept Masterplan Proposals	
Site boundary	Indicative landscape buffer	Water	Potential solar development
Existing settlements	Site of Special Scientific Interest	A12	Potential access
Listed buildings	Existing hedgerow	B1137	Preferred location for cable route
Conservation area	Existing scattered trees	Main road connections	Alternative location for cable route
Woodland	Trees	Indicative location powerline and buffer	Not solar - set aside location
Ancient Woodland (hatched)	Indicative tree roots	Public Right of Way	Potential connection

Construction, operations and management

We are still at an early stage in the design process for Longfield Solar Farm. We need to develop our scheme design in more detail before we can confirm the way we will build and manage Longfield Solar Farm.

As such, we can present information on the techniques we are likely to use in building and managing Longfield Solar Farm, but this is indicative. We will present more information on these topics during the statutory consultation.

Transport

We recognise that the routes that vehicles will take to and from site is a topic of significant interest. We have conducted an initial assessment and plan to use the following routes in construction, operations and decommissioning:

- To/From the A12 J19 (i.e. access to/from the south of the scheme) via the B1137 Main Road, Boreham and Waltham Road/Boreham Road;
- To/From the A130 Essex Regiment Way (i.e. access to/from the north of the scheme) via Wheelers Hill, Cranham Road and Boreham Road.

We still need to assess these routes in detail. This may impact on our final choice of routes. We will present more information at the next stage of consultation.

Construction

If the scheme were to receive consent, we anticipate that the total construction period would take approximately 36 months to complete.

We would likely use the following techniques while building the scheme:

- **Solar PV:** the installation of the solar PV panels would require dug foundations. The mountings for the panels would then be inserted into these foundations with the remaining structures being mounted by hand. Some localised trenching would be required to install the necessary cabling and solar stations;
- **Battery storage:** the construction of the battery storage would require us to dig foundations and install the required cabling and equipment to allow the batteries to export and import electricity to and from the National Grid;
- **Cabling:** we are still determining the proposed installation method for cabling and will present more information on this at the next consultation.

Operations

While the scheme is operational, activity across the sites would be minimal and largely restricted to monitoring, maintenance, and the management of the visual and ecological mitigation features.

Decommissioning

Solar farms are temporary and typically have an operational lifespan of 40 years. Once Longfield Solar Farm reaches the end of its lifespan, its infrastructure can be dismantled and the site returned to its previous condition. This will be funded through the operational lifetime of the solar farm.

Community

We are committed to helping secure local economic benefits from the scheme and will engage with education providers about the potential for Longfield Solar Farm to support local skills development initiatives. We want to hear your views on how this could work in practice and welcome your feedback as part of this non-statutory consultation.

The companies behind Longfield Solar Farm have a proud history of investing in the communities in which they work and establishing community benefits for the duration of a project's operating life.



The planning process

The scheme is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) because its generating capacity would be more than 50MW. NSIPs are major developments which require development consent to be granted by the relevant Secretary of State through a Development Consent Order (DCO). This is a process established by the Planning Act 2008.

Unlike local planning permissions, which are considered by local authorities, DCO applications are made to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). PINS administers the application process on behalf of the Secretary of State. In this case, the relevant Government Department is the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

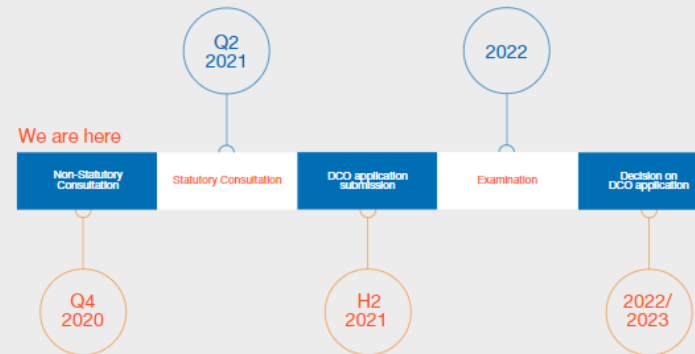
This current consultation is non-statutory consultation. We are carrying this out before our statutory consultation because we want to gain valuable feedback that will allow us to develop a better scheme and to ensure that later consultation is appropriate and effective.

You can find out more about the DCO process at the Planning Inspectorate's website:
<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>



Timeline

This non-statutory consultation is the first round of public consultation on our proposals for Longfield Solar Farm. We will conduct a further, statutory, round of public consultation before we submit our DCO application. Our indicative project timescales are outlined on the timeline on this page.



Responding to the consultation

We want as many people as possible to share their views on our proposals as part of this consultation. We are consulting at a time when it is not possible to meet in person, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are putting in place a detailed package of measures to ensure we can continue with the consultation.

We are very aware of how important it is to make sure that anyone in the community who wants to find out more or share their views on the proposals, is able to do so. We're providing a range of ways to do this.

Find out more

You can find out more about our proposals by:

- Viewing a virtual public exhibition on our website: longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
- Viewing a series of online presentations we will give about our proposals. These will also offer the opportunity to ask questions. The details of the times and dates for the webinars are on our website: longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
- Booking an appointment to talk to us individually about the proposals by Freephone using the contact details on the following page;
- Contacting us directly using the details in this booklet.

Share your views

The consultation will take place between 2 November 2020 and 14 December 2020.

- Fill in a consultation questionnaire on our website: longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
- Complete a questionnaire and return it to info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk or Longfield Solar Farm consultation, FREEPOST reference RTRB-LULU-AGBY, Sky Light City Tower, 50 Basinghall Street, London, EC2V 5DE
- Write to us at info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk or Longfield Solar Farm consultation, FREEPOST reference RTRB-LULU-AGBY, Sky Light City Tower, 50 Basinghall Street, London, EC2V 5DE

We will consider all written responses that we receive by the consultation deadline of 14 December 2020.

Following this non-statutory consultation, we will consider all the views that we receive and continue to develop our proposals for Longfield Solar Farm ahead of the statutory consultation which we anticipate holding in 2021.

Our final DCO application will include a Consultation Report setting out how we have had regard to the responses received during this non-statutory consultation and all the responses received during the statutory consultation.

Any comments received will be analysed by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd and any of its appointed agents. Copies may be made available in due course to the Secretary of State, the Planning Inspectorate and other relevant statutory authorities so that feedback can be considered as part of the DCO process. We will request that any personal details are not placed on public record and will be held securely by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd and its agents in accordance with the data protection law and will be used solely in connection with the consultation process and subsequent DCO application and, except as noted above, will not be passed to third parties.





Contact us

For further information, please contact us by:

- Visiting our website:
longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
- Calling 08000194576
(9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday)
- Emailing info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
- Writing to us at Longfield Solar Farm
consultation, FREEPOST reference
RTRB-LUJJ-AGBY, Sky Light City Tower,
50 Basinghall Street, London, EC2V 5DE

A-3.3 Consultation letter



ADDRESS 1
ADDRESS 2
ADDRESS 3
ADDRESS 4
POSTCODE

30 October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

Longfield Solar Farm – public consultation from 2 November 2020 to 14 December 2020

We are consulting on our proposals for Longfield Solar Farm, a solar energy farm co-located with battery storage, on farmland north east of Chelmsford and north of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel. We would like to invite you to share your views on the proposed scheme as part of the consultation.

The consultation will take place between 2 November 2020 and 14 December 2020. We have enclosed a consultation booklet, which sets out information about:

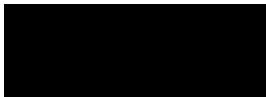
- The background to our proposals
- The companies behind Longfield Solar Farm
- Our proposals for Longfield Solar Farm
- Where we are planning to locate Longfield Solar Farm
- The technologies we are proposing to use
- How we will assess potential environmental impacts from our proposals
- The planning process
- How to take part in the consultation

To make it easier to respond to the consultation, we have also enclosed a consultation questionnaire and a pre-addressed Freepost envelope. Alternatively, you can write to us using the enclosed Freepost envelope or at the email address at the end of this letter. We will consider all responses we receive in time by the consultation deadline of 14 December 2020.

We would be very grateful for any responses we receive as part of the consultation. Following the consultation, we will consider all the views that we receive and continue to develop our proposals ahead of a further round of consultation which we anticipate holding in 2021.

For further information, please see our website, www.longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk, or contact us direct on info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk or 0800 0194 576.

Yours faithfully,



James Pateman
Project Manager

Alexander House - 1 Mandarin Road - Rainton Bridge Business Park - Houghton le Spring -DH4 5RA
Registered Company No. 11618210 - longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk

A-3.4 Press release



News Release

2 November 2020

Public consultation begins on new solar energy farm near Chelmsford

From today (Monday 2 November) people have the chance to make their views known on the Longfield Solar Farm with a consultation now open until 14 December 2020. The proposed new solar energy farm incorporating battery storage will be located across farmland north east of Chelmsford and north of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel.

Announced in September this year, the project is a joint venture between EDF Renewables UK and Padero Solar. The proposals for Longfield Solar Farm have the potential to generate enough renewable electricity to meet the needs of up to 96,000 households and are classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project.* The consultation will make available more information about the proposals.

The developers are consulting in a range of different ways to make sure people can share their views while staying safe during the COVID 19 pandemic. These include launching a virtual public exhibition, writing directly to people living near the site proposed for Longfield Solar Farm, and holding online and telephone Q&A sessions.

James Pateman, Project Manager for Longfield Solar Farm, said: "We're proposing Longfield Solar Farm to help the UK meet its ambitious targets to source low carbon, renewable energy generation and meet its goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050. We are very much looking forward to revealing more about our proposals and discussing them with the local community."

"This is the first stage of our public consultation programme. We're consulting at an early stage in the scheme's development because we want to gain valuable feedback from the local community which will help us develop our proposals. We encourage as many people as possible to learn more about the scheme and share their views."

Further information about the project is available at www.longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk.

Ends

For further information, please contact:

Douglas Johnson



A-3.5 Consultation questionnaire



CONSULTATION QUESTIONNAIRE 2 November 2020 – 14 December 2020

Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd is consulting on its proposals for Longfield Solar Farm, a new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage. As the energy generating capacity of the proposed Longfield Solar Farm would be more than 50MW, the project is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). Further detail on our proposals can be found on our website, www.longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk, or in the consultation booklet.

This is our first round of consultation. We will carry out a further round of pre-application consultation, which is a statutory requirement for NSIPs. We want as many people as possible to share their views on our proposals as part of this consultation.

How to respond to this consultation

This questionnaire is designed to help you give us your feedback on the proposals. You can respond to the consultation by:

- Completing this questionnaire online: www.longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
- Completing this questionnaire and returning it to Longfield Solar Farm consultation, FREEPOST reference RTRB-LUUJ-AGBY, Sky Light City Tower, 50 Basinghall Street, London, EC2V 5DE
- Completing this questionnaire and sending it by email to info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
- Writing to us directly using the email address or Freepost address set out above

Responses must be received by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd between 2 November 2020 and 14 December 2020. Following this non-statutory consultation, we will consider the views we receive and they will be used to inform our proposals as they are developed.

1. Do you have any comments on our initial proposals for:

a) the solar energy generation element of the scheme?

b) the battery storage element of the scheme?



c) the cable routes and grid connection?

d) the construction and operation of Longfield Solar Farm?

2. Are there any local environmental enhancements you feel could be included as part of the scheme?

3. Do you have any comments on how the scheme could contribute to local employment and skills development?

4. Do you have any information relevant to the scheme and/or local environment which you think we should take into account?



5. Is there anything you would like to know more about at the next round of consultation events?

6. Do you have any further comments?

If you would like to be kept updated on this project, please provide your contact details below:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Email address:

Please tick the boxes below as appropriate:

Age:	0-19	20-39	40-59	60-79	79+
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occupation:	Student	Part-time	Full-time	Retired	Unemployed
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

All consultation questionnaires should be returned by 2359 on **14 December 2020** to: Longfield Solar Farm consultation, FREEPOST reference RTRB-LUUJ-AGBY, Sky Light City Tower, 50 Basinghall Street, London, EC2V 5DE or info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk. You can find more information on the proposals and also complete this consultation questionnaire online at www.longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk.

Your comments will be analysed by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd and any of its appointed agents. Copies may be made available in due course to the Secretary of State, the Planning Inspectorate and other relevant statutory authorities so that your comments can be considered as part of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application process. We will request that your personal details are not placed on public record and will be held securely by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd in accordance with the data protection law and will be used solely in connection with the consultation process and subsequent DCO application and, except as noted above, will not be passed to third parties.

A-3.6 Virtual exhibition boards



Introduction

This virtual exhibition sets out our early proposals for Longfield Solar Farm.

We are in the process of developing our proposals for a new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage, to help meet the country's need for low carbon energy.

Longfield Solar Farm proposes to use ground mounted solar panels to generate electricity from the sun, while the batteries would store energy for when it is most needed. It would be located on farmland north east of Chelmsford and north of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel. As Longfield Solar Farm would have the capacity to generate more than 50 megawatts (MW) of electricity, it is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) requiring a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008.

The Planning Act 2008 requires promoters of NSIPs to carry out consultation in a particular way (this is called "statutory consultation"). As we are in the early stages of developing our proposals, this consultation is classed as a "non-statutory consultation", which means it is being carried out before we

undertake another round of consultation that will meet the requirements of the Planning Act 2008. This approach is in line with best practice so that we can gain valuable feedback that will help us to prepare our proposals in more detail. Following this consultation, we will consider the feedback and update our proposals for further consultation. For this reason, we are not presenting detailed information on design at this stage.

This is our first round of consultation. We will carry out a further round of consultation in 2021 which will contain a proposed design for the solar farm and the preliminary results of our environmental impact assessment work and our proposed mitigation measures. We set out more information about the planning process and the requirements for consultation later in the exhibition.

Due to the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic, this is a remote consultation. We recognise that this presents challenges to how we consult, so we have thought carefully about how we ensure that everyone who is interested in our proposals can respond to the information that we are presenting. We explain how to find out more about our proposals and respond to this consultation as part of this exhibition.

Who is proposing Longfield Solar Farm?

Longfield Solar Farm is being brought forward by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd, a joint venture between two established developers of renewable energy: EDF Renewables (EDFR) and Padero Solar. The two organisations have brought together a highly experienced project team with an excellent track record in successfully delivering nationally significant infrastructure of this kind.

EDF Renewables has more than 25 years' worth of experience in delivering renewable energy projects in more than 20 countries around the world. In the UK, it provides much needed new affordable low carbon energy through 36 wind farms and one of the UK's largest battery storage units (together totalling almost 1GW). It has a portfolio of rooftop solar and grid scale solar energy generation in development.

Padero Solar has helped to develop more than 25 Solar Farms in the UK, and this has delivered over 390MWs of renewable energy. Padero Solar is part of a group of three companies, these include; PS Renewables, who are behind a number of solar projects, including Eveley Solar Farm (Hampshire), and PSH Operations, an Operations & Maintenance business managing over 1.3GWs of Solar Farm assets in the UK.

Our goal as project partners is to contribute to a net zero energy future through Longfield Solar Farm. Projects like this are creating business opportunities and economic activity which contribute to the country's green recovery.

Together, we are committed to the communities in which we work and exercise good stewardship over our projects for the long term.



Why is Longfield Solar Farm needed?

The UK is undergoing a major change in the way it meets its energy needs. In 2019, the Government legislated to commit the country to achieving 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2050 in comparison to emissions at 1990 levels.

Energy generation currently makes up a significant amount of the UK's carbon emissions. The UK must reduce this through a variety of measures including the introduction of new, cleaner methods of electricity generation that are able to come online and provide energy to the grid. This will happen at the same time as older, carbon-intensive methods of energy generation are being phased out.

In addition, the ways in which we use electricity are also changing. As we increasingly use electricity to power new modes of transport and industrial activity, it is anticipated that demand for electricity is likely to increase.

This can be seen through the increasing use of electric vehicles. National Grid has predicted that there may be up to 36 million electric vehicles on the UK's roads by 2040. This means that demand and supply for electricity and power flows will become increasingly complex.



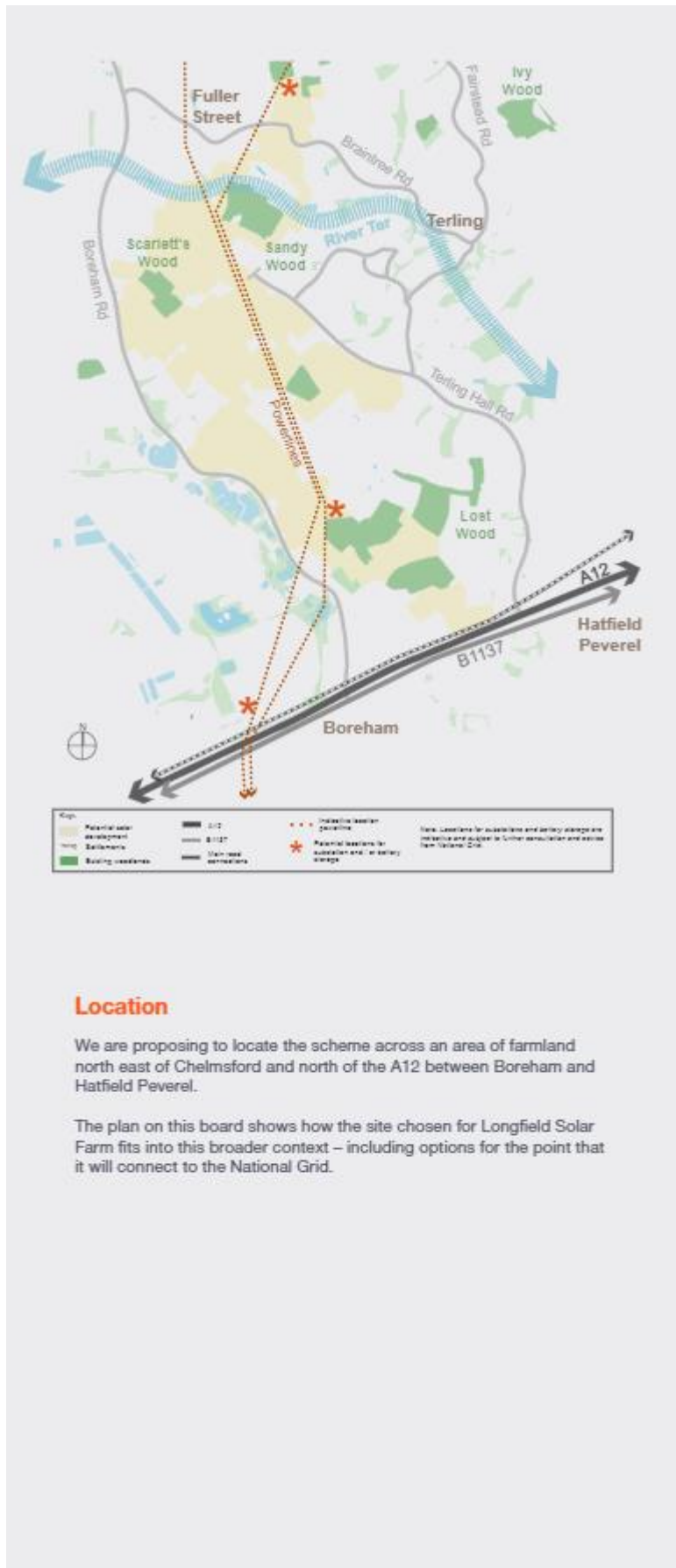
To meet the national need caused by these trends we need to adapt our infrastructure to offer clean, low carbon sources of energy generation that are fit for the future. Solar energy is one of these sources and we are bringing forward proposals that do just this.

The battery storage element of the scheme would complement the shift towards renewable forms of energy generation. Solar and other forms of renewable energy generation are intermittent by their nature. Battery storage means that electricity can be stored when more is being produced than is needed and released again when it is needed.

Battery storage also has an important role to play in stabilising the National Grid. At times of an excess or shortfall in demand, battery storage facilities can balance the National Grid by making up for any shortfalls or by removing surplus power from the grid and storing it to be released later.

In addition to this, the Government has stated that the UK's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic should prioritise the delivery of low carbon projects. The proposed Longfield Solar Farm would play an important part in this national effort.

There is therefore an urgent national need for energy generation and storage of this type. To meet the Government's target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, the UK requires significant investment in new renewable energy generation at scale and this is one of a number of schemes being brought forward in the UK on that basis.



Location

We are proposing to locate the scheme across an area of farmland north east of Chelmsford and north of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel.

The plan on this board shows how the site chosen for Longfield Solar Farm fits into this broader context – including options for the point that it will connect to the National Grid.

What is proposed?

Longfield Solar Farm is a proposed new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage. The proposals include grid infrastructure to connect Longfield Solar Farm to the National Grid and any necessary and appropriate environmental mitigation. We also need to secure development consent for infrastructure needed for building and maintaining Longfield Solar Farm such as construction compounds and site offices.

We have secured a grid connection agreement which would allow us to export or import up to 500MW of electricity to and from the National Grid. The proposed generating capacity of the Longfield Solar Farm means that it will be a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and an application for a development consent order will be required.

We are still at an early stage in the design process. The design of the scheme will be subject to a number of stages as we proceed through this process. These will be informed by the feedback that you give us and through the results of our environmental impact assessment activity. We will be able to provide more specific details of our proposals as the design is developed in the coming months, which will then form part of the consultation that we will undertake in 2021.

We currently expect to locate Longfield Solar Farm on around 380 hectares of land. The plan on the previous board shows the current area proposed for development, including land for two different route options for the grid connection infrastructure to connect into the National Grid. This plan is indicative and may change. Within this area, we will look to include:

- Ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels to generate electricity from the sun;
- Battery storage that will allow Longfield Solar Farm to import, store and export electricity to the National Grid, with priority being given to the solar PV generated electricity;
- Substations, inverters, transformers, switchgear, internal cabling and other electrical infrastructure required to support the solar PV panels and battery storage;
- Grid connection infrastructure which will allow us to export or import up to 500MW of electricity to and from the National Grid, including a new substation;
- Mitigation for environmental impacts that the scheme would have;
- Habitats to enable biodiversity and landscape improvements;
- Other associated infrastructure required for the construction and operation of the site, such as construction compounds, access tracks and welfare facilities.

Technology

Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels

Longfield Solar Farm will use ground mounted PV panel arrays to generate electricity from the sun. Solar PV is a clean technology. Once set up the panels make use of sunlight to generate electricity. To manage the electricity generated by the panels, our proposals will require localised cabling and solar stations at regular intervals within the array of panels to safely transfer the electricity to substations and onwards to the National Grid and the battery storage facility.

Each solar station involves the following elements:

- **Inverter:** the inverters convert the direct current (DC) electricity generated by the solar PV panels into alternating current (AC) electricity. This needs to happen to ensure that the electricity generated can be exported to the National Grid;
- **Transformer:** transformers are required to control the voltage of the electricity generated at the site before it reaches a substation. From a substation, the electricity is then exported to the National Grid;
- **Switchgear:** a switchgear is a combination of electrical disconnect switches, fuses and circuit breakers. They are used to control, protect, and isolate the individual pieces of electrical equipment that make up the scheme.

We are yet to make final design choices on how the solar stations will appear.



Approved for use and for the consultation purposes only

Battery storage

We will also include battery energy storage as part of Longfield Solar Farm. This will allow electricity to be stored at times when demand is lower and released to the National Grid at times when it is needed. It will be included primarily to help manage the fact that the solar PV panels will not generate electricity at a constant rate, but it may also take surplus energy from the National Grid.

Battery storage technology is safe and makes use of tried and tested technology, much of which we also use in our day-to-day lives. One of the partners in Longfield Solar Farm, EDF Renewables UK, already operates one of the UK's largest battery storage projects in Nottinghamshire and this has operated safely since 2018.

We are yet to make final design choices on how the battery storage element of the proposals will appear or where it will be located. The plan on the next board shows the locations we are currently considering for battery energy storage. We will present updated design information at the next stage of consultation.

Connecting to the grid

We have secured a grid connection agreement which would allow us to export or import up to 500MW of electricity to and from the National Grid.

This connection will be established through a new substation built on site at Longfield Solar Farm. This substation will then connect to an existing electricity line running through to the site. We are currently looking at three options for the location of the substation, as well as two options for the cable route connecting to it.

The Solar PV panels, solar stations, battery storage system and the grid connection will be connected by a system of cabling. As we are still at an early stage in the design process, we are exploring options that include both underground cabling and overhead lines.

We would welcome your views on these options, which are shown on this board. We will present more information on the location and design of the new substation and of the design of our cabling route at the statutory consultation.



The Environmental Impact Assessment process



1. Scope

Consult with statutory bodies on the type and method of assessments we need to carry out.



2. Conduct assessments

Including air quality, landscapes and visual amenity, transport, noise, vibration, socioeconomics, cultural heritage, water and flood risk, ecology and nature conservation, and any cumulative effects.



3. Consult

Publish the preliminary results of our findings during the statutory consultation.



4. Consider

Consider all feedback received and finalising our Environmental Statement.



5. Submit

We must submit an Environmental Statement as part of our DCO application.

Environmental impact assessment

We recognise that, as with any major infrastructure project, our proposals have potential environmental impacts, which need to be understood and managed.

We will conduct a rigorous programme of environmental impact assessments as we prepare our scheme proposals. These will include assessments of the scheme's potential environmental impacts such as cultural heritage, landscape and visual impact, existing infrastructure, flood risk, noise and vibration, socioeconomics, transport and access, air quality, ground conditions and glint and glare. Where appropriate, we will propose mitigation. This may also provide the opportunity for local habitat improvements.

To ensure that these assessments are accurate and capture large amounts of information, we need to carry out these assessments iteratively, over time. During these initial stages of the project, we are engaging with relevant bodies such as local authorities, technical stakeholders and environmental groups, as well as with the local community, to understand the scope and focus of our assessments.

That means that the information we are sharing with you at this non-statutory consultation includes some details of the types of assessments we plan to carry out, but does not present the preliminary results of our environmental assessment work, which will be presented during the second consultation in 2021.

The plan on board 11 shows environmental factors we need to consider in developing our proposals. Following this consultation, we will consider the feedback that we receive and will conduct assessments to allow us to present more detailed information when we next consult.

We are in the process of preparing a Scoping Report for submission to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). This will set out the areas that we think should be covered by our environmental impact assessments. Once we have submitted our Scoping Report, PINS will publish an opinion on the scoping required which we will use to guide our future environmental impact assessment.

We will prepare and submit an Environmental Statement as part of our DCO application. This will set out the outcomes of our assessments, as well as details of any proposed mitigation. More information will be available during the statutory consultation in 2021 where we will share the preliminary results of our Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) through a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) which you will be able to view and consider as part of the statutory consultation.

Site Features and Concept Masterplan



Site Features			Concept Masterplan Proposals		
	Site boundary		Indicative landscape buffer		Water
	Existing settlements		Site of Special Scientific Interest		A10
	Listed buildings		Existing hedgerow		A117
	Conservation area		Existing scattered trees		Main road connections
	Woodland		Trees		Indicative location gantry and buffer
	Upland/Woodland (planted)		Indicative tree roots		Public Right of Way
					Potential solar development
					Potential access
					Preferred location for cable route
					Alternative location for cable route
					Potential connection
					Not solar - set aside location

Construction, operations and management

We are still at an early stage in the design process for Longfield Solar Farm. We need to develop our scheme design in more detail before we can confirm the way we will build and manage Longfield Solar Farm.

As such, we can present information on the techniques we are likely to use in building and managing Longfield Solar Farm, but this is indicative. We will present more information on these topics during the statutory consultation.

Transport

We recognise that the routes that vehicles will take to and from site is a topic of significant interest. We have conducted an initial assessment and plan to use the following routes in construction, operations and decommissioning:

- To/From the A12 J19 (i.e. access to/from the south of the scheme) via the B1137 Main Road, Boreham and Waltham Road / Boreham Road;
- To/From the A130 Essex Regiment Way (i.e. access to/from the north of the scheme) via Wheelers Hill, Cranham Road and Boreham Road.

We still need to assess these routes in detail. This may impact on our final choice of routes. We will present more information at the next stage of consultation.

Construction

If the scheme were to receive consent, we anticipate that the total construction period would take approximately 36 months to complete.

We would likely use the following techniques while building the scheme:

- **Solar PV:** the installation of the solar PV panels would require dug foundations. The mountings for the panels would then be inserted into these foundations with the remaining structures being mounted by hand. Some localised trenching would be required to install the necessary cabling and solar stations;
- **Battery storage:** the construction of the battery storage would require us to dig foundations and install the required cabling and equipment to allow the batteries to export and import electricity to and from the National Grid;
- **Cabling:** we are still determining the proposed installation method for cabling and will present more information on this at the next consultation.



Operations

While the scheme is operational, activity across the sites would be minimal and largely restricted to monitoring, maintenance, and the management of the visual and ecological mitigation features.

Decommissioning

Solar farms are temporary and typically have an operational lifespan of 40 years. Once Longfield Solar Farm reaches the end of its lifespan, its infrastructure can be dismantled and the site returned to its previous condition. This will be funded through the operational lifetime of the solar farm.

Community

We are committed to helping secure local economic benefits from the scheme and will engage with education providers about the potential for Longfield Solar Farm to support local skills development initiatives. We want to hear your views on how this could work in practice and welcome your feedback as part of this non-statutory consultation.

The companies behind Longfield Solar Farm have a proud history of investing in the communities in which they work and establishing community benefits for the duration of a project's operating life.



The planning process

The scheme is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) because its generating capacity would be more than 50MW. NSIPs are major developments which require development consent to be granted by the relevant Secretary of State through a Development Consent Order (DCO). This is a process established by the Planning Act 2008.

Unlike local planning permissions, which are considered by local authorities, DCO applications are made to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). PINS administers the application process on behalf of the Secretary of State. In this case, the relevant Government Department is the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

This current consultation is non-statutory consultation. We are carrying this out before our statutory consultation because we want to gain valuable feedback that will allow us to develop a better scheme and to ensure that later consultation is appropriate and effective.

You can find out more about the DCO process at the Planning Inspectorate's website:
<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

Timeline

This non-statutory consultation is the first round of public consultation on our proposals for Longfield Solar Farm. We will conduct a further, statutory, round of public consultation before we submit our DCO application. Our indicative project timescales are outlined on the timeline on this board.



Responding to the consultation

We want as many people as possible to share their views on our proposals as part of this consultation. We are consulting at a time when it is not possible to meet in person, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are putting in place a detailed package of measures to ensure we can continue with the consultation.

We are very aware of how important it is to make sure that anyone in the community who wants to find out more or share their views on the proposals, is able to do so. We're providing a range of ways to do this.

Find out more

You can find out more about our proposals by:

- Reading a consultation booklet, available at our website: longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
- Viewing a series of online presentations we will give about our proposals. These will also offer the opportunity to ask questions. The details of the times and dates for the webinars are on our website: longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
- Booking an appointment to talk to us individually about the proposals by Freephone using the contact details on the following board;
- Contacting us directly using the details in this exhibition.

Share your views

The consultation will take place between 2 November 2020 and 14 December 2020.

- Fill in a consultation questionnaire on our website: longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk
- Complete a questionnaire and return it to info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk or Longfield Solar Farm consultation, FREEPOST reference RTRB-LUJ-AGBY, Sky Light City Tower, 50 Basinghall Street, London, EC2V 5DE
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We will consider all written responses that we receive by the consultation deadline of 14 December 2020.

Following this non-statutory consultation, we will consider all the views that we receive and continue to develop our proposals for Longfield Solar Farm ahead of the statutory consultation which we anticipate holding in 2021.

Our final DCO application will include a Consultation Report setting out how we have had regard to the responses received during this non-statutory consultation and all the responses received during the statutory consultation.

Any comments received will be analysed by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd and any of its appointed agents. Copies may be made available in due course to the Secretary of State, the Planning Inspectorate and other relevant statutory authorities so that feedback can be considered as part of the DCO process. We will request that any personal details are not placed on public record and will be held securely by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd and its agents in accordance with the data protection law and will be used solely in connection with the consultation process and subsequent DCO application and, except as noted above, will not be passed to third parties.

Contact us

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Calling **08000194576**

(9:00am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday)

Emailing **info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk**

Writing to us at

Longfield Solar Farm consultation,

FREEPOST reference

RTRB-LUJJ-AGBY,

Sky Light City Tower,

50 Basinghall Street,

London, EC2V 5DE

A-3.7 Screenshot from virtual exhibition



Appendix A-4: Responses to non-statutory consultation

A-4.1 Anglian Water



Longfield Solar Energy Limited
[Sent by e-mail to: info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk]

Anglian Water Services Ltd
Lancaster House
Lancaster Way
Ermine Business Park
Huntingdon
PE29 6XU

Tel 01480 323000
www.anglianwater.co.uk

14 December 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

Longfield Solar Farm: Non-statutory Consultation

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above project. Anglian Water is the water and/or sewerage undertaker for the site. The following response is submitted on behalf of Anglian Water.

General comments

The proposed site straddles the statutory water and sewerage boundaries for the area served by Anglian Water. With part of the site being within the area served by Essex and Suffolk Water for water services. The following comments relate to the Anglian Water company area only.

Anglian Water would wish to assist Longfield Solar Energy Ltd in relation to the location of our existing water supply and sewerage infrastructure and how this could be safeguarded or relocated if required so that we can continue to serve our customers.

The location of our existing infrastructure and assets (including both underground infrastructure and aboveground assets such as pumping stations and water recycling centres) is available on request to view at the following address from digdat Utilities:

[REDACTED]

Solar Energy generation element

Based upon the information provided the proposed solar development does not appear to affect Anglian Water's existing infrastructure. However, we would wish to reserve the right to comment further as part of future consultations particularly where any changes are made to the location of the solar development.



Registered Office
Anglian Water Services Ltd
Lancaster House, Lancaster Way,
Ermine Business Park, Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire, PE29 6XU
Registered in England
No. 2366656.

an AWG Company

Cable routes and grid connection

The alignment of the proposed powerline which runs parallel to the A12 has yet to be determined and the full extent towards Chelmsford and Hatfield Peverel is not shown in the current consultation. It could potentially affect Anglian Water's existing water supply and sewerage infrastructure dependent upon its location.

Information relevant to the scheme and/or local environment which you think we should take into account

Reference is made to construction compounds, access tracks and welfare facilities.

At this stage it is unclear whether there is a requirement for a connection(s) to the water supply network and/or public sewerage network for the above site or as part of the construction phase.

Anglian Water has a pre-planning service which can be used to identify feasible water and drainage solutions for applicants, and which can be used to identify the expected costs of making a connection(s). Further details of this service can be found at the following address:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] /

If a connection is required we would recommend that Longfield Solar Energy Ltd obtains pre-planning advice from Anglian Water to inform the application to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)

We note that a Preliminary Environmental Information Report for the project will be published with statutory consultation. Anglian Water has previously provided comments to the Planning Inspectorate in relation to the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment of the above project. This response should be read together with our previous comments relating to the EIA Scoping Report.

Protective Provisions for Anglian Water

Anglian Water seeks the inclusion of our standard protective provisions in Draft DCOs where our existing infrastructure is located within the site boundary to ensure we can continue to operate our infrastructure on behalf of our customers.

Please find attached a copy of our standard protective provisions. We would wish to reach agreement about the wording for Anglian water to be included in the Draft DCO including the protective provisions prior to submission of the application. If you would like to suggest any changes or additions to these provisions, we would be grateful if these could be shared with Anglian Water for comment.

Draft DCO wording

The Model Provisions for inclusion in Draft DCOs¹ included standard wording relating to foul and surface water drainage.

We would ask that any provisions relating to the discharge of water to the sewerage network to be included in the Draft DCO include reference to consultation with Anglian Water prior to the approval of the requirement(s) by the relevant local planning authorities.

Should you have any queries or require any further information from Anglian Water to assist in the development of this project please let me know.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Stewart Patience.

Stewart Patience
Spatial Planning Manager, MRTPI

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/2265/contents/made>

APPENDIX: STANDARD PROTECTIVE PROVISIONS FOR ANGLIAN WATER

FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANGLIAN WATER

(1) For the protection of Anglian Water, the following provisions shall, unless otherwise agreed in writing between the undertaker and Anglian Water, have effect.

(2) In this part of this schedule –

“apparatus” means any works, mains, pipes or other apparatus belonging to or maintained by Anglian Water for the purposes of water supply and sewerage and

(a) any drain or works vested in Anglian Water under The Water Industry Act 1991,

(b) any sewer which is so vested or is the subject of a notice of intention to adopt given under section 102 (4) of The Water Industry Act 1991 or an agreement to adopt made under section 104 of that Act,

and includes a sludge main, disposal main or sewer outfall and any manholes, ventilating shafts, pumps or other accessories forming part of any sewer, drain, or works (within the meaning of section 219 of that Act) and any structure in which apparatus is or is to be lodged or which gives or will give access to apparatus.

“alternative apparatus” means alternative apparatus adequate to enable Anglian Water to fulfil its statutory functions in not less efficient a manner than previously;

“functions” includes powers and duties

“in” in a context referring to apparatus or alternative apparatus in land includes a reference to apparatus or alternative apparatus under, over or upon land; and

“plan” includes sections, drawings, specifications and method statements.

(3) The Company shall not interfere with, build over or near to any Apparatus within the Order Land or execute the placing, installation, bedding, packing, removal, connection or disconnection of any apparatus, or execute any filling around the apparatus (where the apparatus is laid in a trench) within the standard protection strips which are the strips of land falling the following distances to either side of the medial line of any relevant pipe or apparatus; 2.25 metres where the diameter of the pipe is less than 150 millimetres, 3 metres where the diameter of the pipe is between 150 and 450 millimetres, 4.5 metres where the diameter of the pipe is between 450 and 750 millimetres and 6 metres where the diameter of the pipe exceeds 750 millimetres unless otherwise agreed in writing with Anglian Water, such agreement not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed, and such provision being brought to the attention of any agent or contractor responsible for carrying out any work on behalf of the Company.

(4) The alteration, extension, removal or re-location of any apparatus shall not be implemented until

(a) any requirement for any permits under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010 or other legislations and any other associated consents are obtained, and any

A-4.2 Boreham Parish Council

Boreham Parish Council

Parish Office, Village Hall
Main Road, Boreham
CM3 3JD



Email: [REDACTED] Telephone: [REDACTED] Website: [REDACTED]

RESPONSE TO THE NON STATUTORY CONSULTATION

1. THE PROPOSED SITE

Boreham Parish Council (BPC) would like to understand the basis for selecting this site for the largest solar farm in the UK to date. The site, which is of an irregular shape, largely comprises good quality agricultural land organised in medium/large sized fields used for growing crops including oil seed rape, potatoes, cereals and field beans. The loss of land to food production may have a larger impact as we leave the EU. There is little detail regarding how the site will be used, the location and design of key elements and the amount and type of construction proposed. It is clear that whatever the design, the installation will be extensive and the site does not appear to be an obvious choice for such a large and industrialised solar farm.

The site is characterised by open views across the fields, interspersed with woodland and crossed in many places by public footpaths and other public rights of way. Waltham/Boreham Road currently passes through views of open fields or with sight of fields through or above existing hedgerows. Many of the footpaths and bridle paths within the designated site also pass through open fields. These footpaths and bridle paths are heavily used by locals and visitors and there will be significant loss of amenity during installation and potentially beyond. BPC would like additional details regarding how the developer proposes to maintain public access to these rights of way throughout the construction process and during operation.

BPC also notes that the maps shown in the various documents prepared to present the Longfield Solar Farm proposal do not accurately portray recent changes to the location of footpaths east of Waltham Road in Boreham.

The EIA Scope and other documentation for Longfield Solar Farm recognises that the development will fundamentally alter a key landscape characteristic (the arable farmland) and effectively transform it into a more urban landscape. The mitigation for this is to obscure the view of solar farm from the public rights of way and from dwellings adjacent to the site. High hedgerows (2.5 to 3m) are proposed to block views of the solar panels and larger elements such as battery storage, a substations and CCTV monitoring towers (c 5m). However, it is likely to take more than 5 years to develop a hedgerow system which will form an effective screen and even if this was accomplished the general effect would be to close in many footpaths which have previously enjoyed wider views over open fields.

Boreham Parish Council

Parish Office, Village Hall
Main Road, Boreham
CM3 3JD



Email: [REDACTED] Telephone [REDACTED] Website: [REDACTED]

2. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Two proposed access points to the proposed site are both on Waltham/Boreham Road. The proposal is that the main construction and decommissioning access to the Site will be via road at junction 19 (A130 and B1137) of the A12. It is proposed that any abnormal loads would use these main access points. The anticipated worst-case construction traffic mentioned is 42 HGVs and an unspecified number of additional LGV movements per day for 2-3 years (Q1 2024 to Q1 2026). These estimates are based on an east west configuration of panels. No estimates are provided for different designs on the level of site traffic.

The route from junction 19 of the A12 will take traffic through Boreham village on Main Road and then up Waltham Road to the site. The report outlines the traffic anticipated for Longfield but fails to adequately consider the impact during the same period of the widening of the A12 and reconfiguration of the Boreham Interchange for the Chelmsford North East By Pass. These will almost certainly result in additional traffic through Boreham and onto Waltham Road with a high risk of congestion delays. There will be an accompanying increased risk to other road users.

The other route to the site from Essex Regiment Way via Wheelers Hill and Cranham Road is totally unsuitable for abnormal loads and HGVs. It is a country lane which is narrow in places. The report mentions a possibility of widening some country roads if required. This may be impractical. The EIA Scope document also fails to acknowledge the impact of construction of the Marriages flour mill on Cranham Road. It should also be noted that Essex Police have a facility in Waltham Road.

The total impact of all anticipated road use during the period between Q1 2024 to Q1 2026, with particular focus on 2024 as the likely peak year for construction activity, needs to be fully investigated and the associated risks assessed.

BPC notes that during public presentations on Longfield it was indicated that road traffic would be minimised by constructing access roads within the site. However, the EIA Scope document contradicts this by proposing to use the network of minor roads around the site for some deliveries in order to reduce the need to construct internal access roads.

3. THE ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

There is very little detail in any of the documentation regarding how proposed increases in biodiversity will be measured or achieved. There are elements of the proposed outline design and approach which may be detrimental to local flora and fauna. BPC acknowledges that agricultural land benefits from periods of resting fallow and that this may result in the re-establishment of

Boreham Parish Council

Parish Office, Village Hall
Main Road, Boreham
CM3 3JD



Email: [REDACTED] Telephone: [REDACTED] Website: [REDACTED]

wildflower meadows which benefit invertebrates but there are other elements of the scheme which are likely to be detrimental and the impact of these needs to be assessed.

A 3m high perimeter fence around the operational areas of the site would have an adverse effect on access for wildlife, particularly deer which roam freely over this part of the proposed site. Depending on the design of these fences they may also restrict other species such as brown hares.

More information is required to determine the impact of construction activity and of the solar farm itself on the birds and animals currently resident year round on the site and on seasonal visitors such as migrating geese and other waterfowl, cuckoos etc. Furthermore, there is a risk that glint, glare and noise from the installation and site lighting may also disrupt the activities of wildlife including bats and owls.

BPC would be interested in seeing the Biodiversity Management Plan in order to understand the overall impact of the site.

4. LOCAL BENEFIT

The opportunity for local benefit from Longfield Solar Farm appears limited based on what has been presented. The construction of the site will probably require specialist teams from outside the area and BPC does not anticipate any long term employment opportunities at the site for local residents. It appears more likely that many existing jobs linked to farming this land will fall away. BPC looks forward to reviewing the expected employment analysis. In addition, most of the infrastructure at the site is specialised and will be imported from overseas so there appears to be limited opportunity for local businesses. BPC would welcome information regarding the likely local benefits of Longfield.

5. RISK

The risks associated with the proposal need to be assessed when the design is more fully developed. Consideration also needs to be given to the timing and approach to decommissioning the site at the end of its life (2065). BPC trusts these elements will be developed further in preparation for the next consultation phase.

Battery storage: There are known fire risks associated with battery storage and most particularly with lithium ion battery technology.

Boreham Parish Council

Parish Office, Village Hall
Main Road, Boreham
CM3 3JD



Email: [REDACTED] Telephone: [REDACTED] Website: [REDACTED]

Biodiversity: There is a risk of disruption of the local biome and the potential for reduction in biodiversity rather than an increase as proposed. The reports also recognise the risk of introduction of non-native species.

Traffic disruption causing accident or delay: Approved developments in the Boreham area are already expected to greatly increase traffic levels on roads proposed for use by Longfield and at times of peak activity. This poses a potential risk of injury to road users and of project delays. There are no facilities for HGV parking in the area or for staging deliveries which may increase the risk of traffic congestion.

Glint and glare: The impact of glint and glare is given low priority in documents provided. Glint and glare may impact users of public rights of way, road users and may impact wildlife. There are anecdotal reports of migrating waterfowl striking panels in solar fields, mistaking them for water, although BPC is unaware of any specific evidence for this.

Noise: The EIA Scope document accepts that there will be additional noise associated with the development. The location for siting key elements of infrastructure and whether battery storage is used overnight will determine the impact on those residences close to the site boundary.

Flooding: The site has a high water table and once the design of the site is known, the impact of any hard standings or site roadways on flood risk will need to be assessed.

Planning Blight: BPC notes that, depending on the detailed site design, there is a risk of negative impact on adjacent residential and other properties (planning blight). This will be more severe for properties located in the proximity of battery storage and substation infrastructure. Use of the existing Bulls Lodge substation location may partially mitigate this risk as the land is already a brownfield site designated for this purpose.

All risks will need to be assessed and mitigated where possible.

6. CONCLUSION

BPC recognises that this non statutory consultation is the initial stage of the planning process. As a result, the information provided in the Longfield Solar Farm publications lacks detail regarding the final design of the site and location of key infrastructure elements, the technology to be used, impact assessments relating to traffic and environmental impacts, benefit to the local community (if any) and proposed increases in biodiversity. However, with regard to what has been presented

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CM3 3JD



Email: [REDACTED] Telephone: [REDACTED] Website: [REDACTED]

so far, BPC is unconvinced that the selected site is suitable for such an industrialised solar farm due to the scale and scope of the proposal.

This type of development is better suited to brownfield sites or low grade agricultural land and it is difficult to foresee how the challenges outlined in points 1 to 5 above will be met. We are not able to ascertain how such a fundamental change to key landscape characteristics with the loss of amenity, loss of good quality agricultural land and potential disruption to the ecosystem over such a large area can be outweighed by the benefit of the solar power which may be generated. This may become clearer with additional detail in future stages of the consultation process.

A-4.3 Braintree District Council

Our ref: 20/00006/ODC
Your Ref: Longfield Solar Farm (Non-Stat) Consultation
Direct Dial: 01376 552525 ext. 2526
Ask for: Mr Tim Havers
Date: 14.12.2020



Development Management
Causeway House Braintree
Essex CM7 9HB

Tel: [REDACTED]
Email: planning@braintree.gov.uk

Longfield Solar Farm Consultation
RTRB-LUUJ-AGBY
Sky Light City Tower
50 Basinghall Street
London

Are there any local environmental enhancements you feel could be included as part of the scheme?

In terms of Ecology, there would be a need to secure a biodiversity net gain across the site. However, a basic net gain is a minimum target and there may well be scope to secure a much greater gain which would obviously weigh in the planning balance when assessing the proposal. The Council would be keen to see the biodiversity value of the site being maximised and further information being provided at an early stage as to how that might be done and what types of biodiversity schemes could be implemented and maintained.

Linked to the above, securing new tree planting is also an important matter across the District. Again, the Council would request that detailed consideration is given to how this might be secured and further information provided upon this at an early stage in the proposals.

Cycle route provision is a corporate priority for Braintree District Council. The site covers a large area and the Council would ask that you consider whether a cycle route could be incorporated across or looping around the site, perhaps making use of some of the maintenance tracks for example.

Do you have any comments on how the scheme could contribute to local employment and skills development?

At this stage it is not clear exactly how many jobs the scheme would generate, what specialisms these would incorporate and whether there was the opportunity for defined local linkages via for example apprenticeships or similar. Further information is required in relation to this.

Do you have any information relevant to the scheme and/or local environment which you think we should take into account?

The Council holds detailed information relating to the locality, some of which we referred to in the Scoping Opinion consultation response. This includes matters such as designated heritage assets; landscape designations; contaminated land; the location of local wildlife sites and of course Adopted and Emerging Development Plan Policies, the former including the Adopted Hatfield Peverel Neighbourhood Plan. Many of these matters were covered in the Scoping Report. You should also have an awareness of The Terling Village Design Statement.

It is noted that the Essex Way crosses the site, to the south of Sandy Wood. The impact of the proposal upon this important public right of way and its setting should be given particularly careful consideration.

The Council would also take this opportunity to again highlight the following:

- The site lies within the zone of influence of the Essex Coastal Natura 2000 sites which are of both European and International importance. The Council's Adopted Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) SPD is relevant, insofar as it identifies the importance of ensuring sufficient recreational space (including footpaths and other public rights of way) remain available in the southern part of the District, to help alleviate recreational pressure on these protected coastal sites.
- The River Ter (SSSI) is also adjacent to the site. This flows to the Essex Coast, acting as a vector by which impacts upon the protected Natura 2000 Essex coastal sites may be channelled.

- As discussed in the Council's response to the Scoping Report consultation there are a high number of Local Wildlife Sites, Ancient Woodlands and Designated Heritage Assets in the locality. The impact of the proposal upon these is of particular concern, especially as the site's developable area effectively surrounds some of the above completely.

Is there anything you would like to know more about at the next round of consultation events?

Yes. In addition to specific matters raised above, in general terms there are a number of matters where there are currently several indicative options set out such as battery storage locations, grid connections etc. These options will obviously need to be narrowed down and at the next consultation it would be helpful to understand why selected options have been chosen and why others have been discounted.

Conclusion

The above response is tailored to the specific questions set out in the non-statutory public consultation only. This is an extremely important infrastructure project within the context of the District and Braintree District Council are already actively engaging with Essex County Council; Chelmsford City Council and the Longfield Solar Farm Developer Team to ensure that the Council can provide an appropriate and significant level of input into the detailed consideration of all aspects of this proposal.

Yours Faithfully



Mr Tim Havers MRTPI
Principal Planning Officer

For Christopher Paggi, Planning Development Manager

A-4.4 Chelmsford City Council

Chelmsford City Council Non-Statutory Consultation Response

December 2020

Chelmsford City Council (CCC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the initial (non-statutory) consultation for Longfield Solar Farm.

About Chelmsford

Chelmsford is located at the heart of the county of Essex with a population of approximately 180,000. It has a mixture of both urban and rural landscapes, with the City Centre a major draw, the town of South Woodham Ferrers and villages set within the countryside.

Chelmsford has good road and rail connections. Chelmsford has a mixed economy with a high number of jobs in the service sector, education and health, administration, manufacturing and construction. For more information about Chelmsford please refer to the Chelmsford Local Plan 2013-2036 available at <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-new-local-plan/new-local-plan/adopted-local-plan/>

Summary of proposals:

The proposal for the solar farm includes:

- Ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels to generate electricity from the sun;
- Battery storage that will allow Longfield Solar Farm to import, store and export electricity to the National Grid, with priority being given to the solar PV generated electricity;
- Substations, inverters, transformers, switchgear, internal cabling and other electrical infrastructure required to support the solar PV panels and battery storage;
- Grid connection infrastructure which allows export or import of up to 500MW of electricity to and from the National Grid, including a new substation;
- Mitigation for environmental impacts that the scheme would have;
- Habitats to enable biodiversity and landscape improvements;
- Other associated infrastructure required for the construction and operation of the site, such as construction compounds, access tracks and welfare facilities.

Consultation Response:

Do you have any comments on our initial proposals for the solar energy generation element of the scheme?

CCC recognises that solar energy development can help meet targets for reducing carbon emissions, reduce reliance on fossil fuels and provide local energy security. They can also

provide an income stream for farmers and landowners and support local employment opportunities.

As such, CCC may support the development of solar energy development in principle provided there are no significant environmental impacts that cannot be appropriately managed through the planning application process. There is limited detailed information regarding the environmental impact at this stage and further information is needed from detailed studies ahead of a judgement being made.

The design of the solar panels will have implications on the impact of the proposal, clarity should be given for the alignment and/or movement of solar arrays and all assessments undertaken having regard to this type of installation. The potential impact of glint and glare from the solar panels on landscape/visual amenity, aircraft, rail and road safety must also be considered in developing proposals.

The new Chelmsford Garden Community is allocated in the Chelmsford Local Plan to the south west of the site which when complete will be in the region of 10,000 new homes and significant new employment. Consideration should be given for this scheme to also directly provide neighbourhood-scale power for the new garden community.

CCC will continue to engage with the process and provides additional comments below.

Do you have any comments on our initial proposals for the battery storage element of the scheme?

The opportunity to store electricity generated and supply the National Grid throughout peak and low demand appears an efficient way to utilise the solar energy generated. Ensuring the safety and reliability of the battery storage will be important.

It is noted that three indicative battery storage locations have been shown, however further consideration of these locations is needed in terms of their scale, design, access for maintenance, landscape and visual impact, impact on the biodiversity, flood risk and drainage, and amenity impacts such as noise.

Any associated infrastructure and buildings required to support the solar equipment must be designed and constructed to minimise their landscape and visual impact and be of a design appropriate to the rural context.

Do you have any comments on our initial proposals for the cable routes and grid connection?

It is noted that the proposal includes indicative locations for powerlines, the proposal will need to assess the visual and landscape impact and take into account the amenity impacts to the existing communities and the strategic proposals within the adopted Chelmsford Local

Plan such as the proposed Chelmsford NE Bypass and new Garden Community (Strategic Growth Site 6) which make up some of the surrounding context.

The adopted Local Plan can be found at: <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-new-local-plan/new-local-plan/adopted-local-plan/>.

Consideration is also needed for the impact where soil stripping, storage and replacement is required for excavation for site compounds, access roads, cable trenching etc. Any site level changes should also be assessed and should not have a longer lasting impact when the site is returned following the decommissioning. Where possible, excavation should be minimised, and solar arrays and associated infrastructure installed in a manner that is capable of easy removal and the site returning to former use.

Do you have any comments on our initial proposals for the construction and operation of Longfield Solar Farm?

Information needs to demonstrate impact on the local highway network and that site access is able to accommodate the type and number of vehicle movements during the construction and operation of the site. It is noted that the proposal suggests two access points/routes. It should be recognised that part of these proposed routes includes Protected Lanes. Reference should be made to the evidence base study for the Chelmsford Local Plan which can be found at: <https://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-new-local-plan/new-local-plan/evidence-base/>. More information regarding vehicle movements is expected in future consultations.

The proposal should also assess the cumulative traffic impacts having regard to planned development within the locality such as the future Chelmsford NE Bypass, Radial Distributor Road 2, which will extend through the Chelmsford Garden Community, planned works to the Boreham Interchange and a future scheme to widen the A12 (a further Development Consent Order proposal).

The proposal should also ensure that the public rights of way in the vicinity of the site remain available and convenient for public use. Public rights of way through the development site should retain their character, amenity value and usability and be integrated with the development.

It has been noted that the proposal will take approximately 36 months to construct with a potential life-span of 40 years. More details regarding the construction compounds including details of their size, location and restoration of the land post construction and decommissioning is needed. Any proposed temporary construction compound should be carefully located in order to minimise environmental or amenity impact. Access tracks to the solar farm should also be kept to a minimum to better enable the site to be returned to its previous condition.

As noted above, any associated infrastructure and buildings required to support the solar equipment must be designed and constructed to minimise their landscape and visual impact and be of a design appropriate to the rural context, taking into account flood risk and drainage.

Are there any local environmental enhancements you feel could be included as part of the scheme?

More information about the impact and consequently the visual and ecological mitigation that is required is needed to fully understand the enhancements that could be made. However, retaining existing site features such as existing hedgerows and ecological features is crucial to maintain landscape character and support biodiversity which should include a significant net gain.

Consideration should be given to security fencing and lighting that responds to the rural context. Where possible, the solar farm should minimise the use and height of fencing using natural features such as field hedges. More details should be included of all security and lighting features with consideration given to mitigating impact on wildlife and ecology.

Trees and woodland also provide vital benefits to the environment, including filtering air pollution, reducing noise, and creating and connecting wildlife habitats. The proposal should consider providing additional tree and woodland planting in line with the City Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency declaration and action plans to increase the woodland cover significantly in the Chelmsford District.

Do you have any comments on how the scheme could contribute to local employment and skills development?

Whilst the consultation material states that the proposals are committed to helping secure local economic benefits from the scheme and engaging with education providers about the potential for Longfield Solar Farm to support local skills development initiatives, no detail is provided as to how this would be undertaken. Outlining the positive legacy for the community e.g. net gain in biodiversity, community solar energy project, and new jobs that would be created by this proposal should be provided.

Opportunities for community benefit from the proposals should be explored, for example, providing jobs to local people both during construction and operation, consideration should be given to providing free or discounted energy to a local public building and establishing a local Environmental Trust.

Do you have any information relevant to the scheme and/or local environment which you think we should take into account?

The proposed development site covers a large area which has a diverse and rich historic environment. Within the Chelmsford boundary there are 10 grade II listed buildings and one grade I listed building within close proximity to the site and more within the wider area. There are also a high number of listed buildings on the Braintree District Council side of the site. These buildings sit within a rural landscape, which forms part of their settings' and contributes to their significance. There are also a number of buildings/structures/lanes of local interest in close proximity to the site which should be considered as non-designated heritage assets. The landscape includes ancient lanes, woodland and field boundaries. The proposed scheme will undoubtedly have a considerable impact on the historic environment.

The proposals should be informed by baseline studies to clearly define and assess the historic environment, this should include:

- Built Heritage Assessment, including identification of all heritage assets within 1.5km of the site boundary, assessment of their settings' and measures to avoid or mitigate harmful impacts in accordance with Historic England GPA3 The Setting of Heritage Assets (2017).
- Historic landscape assessment
- Archaeological desk-based study
- Landscape Visual Impact Assessment which should be in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA3).

When these studies have been produced by the developer they should be submitted to the council and a baseline evidence base agreed. This should then be used to inform the scheme design, avoiding or minimising harm to the historic environment and providing mitigation measures. Any proposals prior to an agreed evidence base is premature and ill-informed.

Furthermore, there are a number of other local environmental features that would need careful consideration, such as River Ter SSSI to the west of the site, a number of Ancient Woodland both surrounding and within the site, and number of Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS). These are protected and highly sensitive landscapes and any proposals should take into account the impact upon the natural environment and connecting wildlife habitats.

Landscape features in the countryside, also play an important part in shaping the character and appearance of an area. They can include, but are not limited to, trees, hedgerows, woodlands, meadows, field margins and water features that do not benefit from international, national or local designations.

The Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment, 2006 provides a comprehensive Borough/District-wide assessment of landscape character within the Study Area provides a useful reference in assessing the potential

landscape and visual impacts of individual proposals. Consideration must be given to the landscape and visual impacts of ancillary development such as including power cables, fencing, access tracks and construction compound. A detailed landscape mitigation plan should identify measures to avoid, reduce or remedy impacts on the landscape. These may include landscape buffer areas and the use of natural features such as hedges and/or trees to screen the development.

Land quality varies from place to place and the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) provides a method for assessing the quality of agricultural land. The Best and Most Versatile Land is defined as Grade 1, 2 and 3a. It should be recognised that land of such quality is an important area for food production and by reducing the agricultural land available increases the reliance on the importation of food, with subsequent environmental impacts such as increased carbon emissions. A balance is to be made between the benefits of renewable energy, the loss of agricultural land and the impact of such development on biodiversity.

Within the Chelmsford area, the proposed site includes predominately Grade 2 agricultural land (and some Grade 3 land within the site boundary covered by the EIA Scoping Report). The proposal should consider the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) and seek to minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land and ensure there is no long-term impact on the land once the site is decommissioned. An assessment should demonstrate the impact of the proposal on the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land and apply a sequential approach to the siting of the proposal taking into account soil quality of land.

Is there anything you would like to know more about at the next round of consultation events?

Future consultations should include more information about the community benefits and wider benefits of the electricity generation. It should also make clear the temporary features, how the site will be delivered and clarity on access points/routes, site design and impact on the wider local area. In addition, more details regarding the reasons for the scale, location of the proposal, potential traffic impacts, mitigation and decommissioning should be included.

More information would also be welcomed regarding the technology to be used, the net reduction in carbon emissions overall throughout the life-time of the project from the manufacturing process, operation and decommissioning of the site. A balance sheet reviewing the environmental cost and benefits of producing solar panels against the comparison with different types of energy both renewable and fossil fuels would be helpful in understanding the carbon reduction of this type of renewable energy.

In addition, the Council would be interested to know whether any consideration has been given to the addition of wind turbines on the site in addition to the solar arrays to maximise energy resilience through a mix of renewable sources of power.

The City Council may seek a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with the applicants of Nationally Significant Infrastructure solar farm projects to enable it to provide effective and timely planning advice throughout the Development Consent Order (DCO) process.

It is recognised that in the case of a DCO applications, Screening and Scoping Opinions should be requested from the Planning Inspectorate, CCC notes that the EIA scoping opinion has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate and welcomes the opportunity to review the EIA.

CCC has noted that for technical reasoning the boundaries between the initial consultation document and EIA scoping report differ. For further clarity in assessing the implications of the scheme in future consultation, it is requested that more detail and clarification is given to the changes to the site boundary in future consultation material and where possible, multiple site boundaries are not published to avoid any confusion. Further information is also sought for the intended use of the land to the west of Waltham Road.

Conclusion

CCC welcomes the opportunity to engage further with this proposal and supports the need for further assessment to be undertaken prior to any submission of the DCO application. This includes reviewing the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), Landscape and Visual Impact, Biodiversity and nature conservation, flood risk and drainage, impacts of noise, vibration, glint and glare, impact on land changes, traffic and transport studies, impact on the historic environment, cumulative impacts and socio-economic impacts and community gain.

As a host authority CCC also welcomes the opportunity to comment on the draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) and the proposals for consulting local people, stakeholders and communities on future statutory consultations.

A-4.5 Essex Area Ramblers

Longfield Solar Farm – EIA Scoping Report October 2020

Comments from Essex Area Ramblers

The Proposal

Longfield Solar Farm is a proposed new solar energy farm, co-located with battery storage. The proposals include grid infrastructure to connect Longfield Solar Farm to the National Grid. The developer also needs to secure development consent for infrastructure needed for building and maintaining Longfield Solar Farm such as construction compounds and site offices. The scheme is located across a large area of farmland north east of Chelmsford and north of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel.

EIA Scoping Report

The Scoping Report was published in October 2020 and the pre- application Consultation is open until 14th December 2020. The Scoping report accepts that there is potential for significant adverse landscape effects during both the construction phase and the operational phase. During construction there will be construction machinery and during the operational phase there will be the massing of solar panels. The decommissioning phase also has the potential to result in significant adverse visual effects due to the presence of machinery and general activity to remove the panels and associated structures.

Impact on PROWs

The area involved is very large and the developer's Scoping Report identifies 16 PROWs passing through the site or running adjacent to the Site boundary. It is obvious that the ambiance of these PROWs will be negatively affected by the construction and operation of this site, and measures should be taken to keep this to a minimum.

It is not clear at this stage which ones will be impacted but the Scoping Report states that a 'security fence will enclose the operational areas of the site' and 'PROWs may need to be either temporarily or permanently closed.'

NPPF paragraph 98 states that *Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.*

Therefore, it is not acceptable for any PROW to be closed at any stage during the construction or the operational phase of the project.

In the recent webinar, the developer stated that they would leave all PROWs as they are and make them better connected where possible. This is encouraging but not sufficient to alleviate the Rambler's concerns.

A security fence will enclose the operational areas of the site. The Scoping Report states that *'the fence is likely to be a 'deer fence' or other mesh*

security fencing approximately 2.5 – 3m in height. Pole mounted internal facing CCTV systems are also likely to be deployed around the perimeter of the operational areas of the Site.'

This will clearly have a serious detrimental impact on the attractiveness and tranquillity of using the PRowS. It is essential that sufficient width and mitigation measures, such as hedges, are implemented along the PRowS to ensure that users do not feel hemmed in by the fences and CCTV systems. Any significant viewing points should be maintained.

Conclusions

- The development should conform to NPPF paragraph 98 at all stages.
- Existing PRowS, or acceptable alternatives, should remain open at all times.
- The ambience of these PRowS will be negatively affected by the construction and operation of this site, and measures should be taken to keep this to a minimum.
- It is essential that sufficient width and mitigation measures are implemented along the PRowS to ensure that users do not feel hemmed in by the fences and CCTV systems.
- Significant viewing points should be maintained.

Graham Reeve
Area Walking Environment Officer
Essex Area Ramblers

12th December 2020

A-4.6 Essex Local Access Forum



TO: Longfield Solar Farm consultation
By Email: info@longfieldsolarfarm.co.uk

Please find below the response on behalf of the Essex Local Access Forum (ELAF). ELAF is an independent statutory advisory body set up under Section 94 of the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. A LAF's statutory function is to "advise as to the improvement of public access to land in that area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area, and as to such other matters as may be prescribed".

1. River Ter and northern fields

As noted in the EIA scoping report (2.1.18)...*"The northern part of the Site and surrounding area consists of undulating and relatively elevated landform, as part of the River Ter valley"* with ridgelines to the north and south of the river valley. The land around the river Ter by Sandy Wood / Terling Spring is in Flood Zone 3. There are also numerous springs. The EIA scoping report also notes that (9.5.2)... *"The greatest risk of adverse impacts during construction and decommissioning are in the vicinity of the River Ter, its tributaries, and the numerous small ponds ..."*.

This area is part of the B17 Terling Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Area. The western part is in Chelmsford City Council area and the eastern part is in Braintree District. The suggested land management guidelines include:

- Conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow pattern, and strengthen through planting where appropriate to local landscape character.
- Conserve and manage areas of seminatural woodland as important historical, landscape and nature conservation features.
- Conserve and manage the ecological structure of woodland, copses and hedges within the character area.
- Conserve and promote the use of building materials, which are in keeping with local vernacular/landscape character.

The northern area is close to the village of Terling and its conservation area. This area is popular with walkers with many of the PROWs being maintained by the Parish of Terling under a P3 agreement with Essex Highways. This northern area is more tranquil being furthest away from the A12 and the GEML railway line. **ELAF would wish to see this northern area being removed from the site boundary and that the site south of Hookley Wood site is removed** as a possible location for the solar & battery storage infrastructure / new sub-station compound. This compound is stated as having an approximate built footprint of up to 150m x 100m x up to 10m high (2.2.42).

2. Remainder of the site and public rights of way (PROWs)

The EIA scoping report (2.1.12) itemises 16 public rights of way (PROWs) - none being bridleways, 9 ancient woodlands / Local Wildlife Sites (2.1.14) and 4 registered parks. No CROW access land or registered greens are noted. It is noted that although surrounded by solar panel fields, the woodlands are outside the red line site boundary. There will also be 3.5-5m wide compacted stone access tracks across the site.

ELAF request that the site adjacent to Toppinghoehall Wood, which is in close proximity to Terling public footpath 32 (PROW 113_32) is removed as a possible location for the solar & battery storage infrastructure / new sub-station compound. This compound is stated as having an approximate built footprint of up to 150m x 100m x up to 10m high (2.2.42) and so would be extremely visible both visually and aurally. The Bulls Lodge substation or another site near the A12 would be less disruptive.

The EIA report (13.4.5) states that there will be temporary or permanent diversion or closure of PROWs. Paragraph 10.7.4 specifically states that... "*PROW which cross the site boundary will be temporarily closed and therefore recreational receptors along these routes will not be assessed for the construction phase*". **The closure of PROWs without the provision of suitable and convenient alternatives is NOT acceptable and is against ECC policies.**

The PROWs within, across and adjacent to the site boundary and the fields of solar panels will of course be negatively affected by the presence of solar panels and fencing. During a webinar it was stated that the PROWs will be enclosed within a 2 metre high thin wire mesh deer-type fence with a width of 2.5-3.0 metres being left for a PROW. This enclosure will have a particularly severe visual and enclosing effect on PROWs that currently run across open fields; there will also be the negative effect of walking between banks of solar panels up to 3.6metres high. However, there are relatively few crossfield PROWs within the site. **ELAF believe that there is the potential for mitigation / diversion / link schemes and request an involvement in the development of such schemes.**

There are potential negative effects on wildlife of fencing and the potentially disrupting effect of glint and glare from the solar panels.

3. The road network, access traffic and walkers, cyclists & horseriders (WCH)

The EIA scoping report states that (13.4.2) access for heavy construction traffic to the main site entrance on Waltham Road/ Boreham Road, just south of Stocks Farm, would be either via:

- a) A12 to J19 Boreham, then along the old A12 /B1137 to turn north along Waltham Road OR
- b) A130 Essex Regiment Way, then east on Wheelers Hill then Cranham Road finally turning south down Waltham Road.

It is noted that Waltham Road & Boreham Road... "*are rural single carriageway roads... and, commensurate with their rural character, without pedestrian footway or street lighting provision.*" The roads have no central white line in places. Whilst the local roads may be quiet, they are narrow especially the east-west route of Birds Farm Lane / Noakes Lane / Noakes Farm Road. Although there are no public bridleways inside the site boundary, an East Anglian Farm Rides route south of Chopping's Wood connects to Boreham Road near Noakes Lane. **Measures to increase the safety of walkers, cyclists and horse riders using these road will be welcome.**

Several PROWs terminate on Waltham Road - Boreham FPs 17, 20, 19, 18, 21 and 5 (Parish Code 213). Connections are made by walking along the carriageway of Waltham Road. **ELAF request the development of and an involvement in off-road mitigation / diversion / link schemes.**

4. Essex Local Access Forum (ELAF) and scheme development

We ask that that ELAF are kept informed of developments. Should the scheme proceed we look forward to working with yourselves to develop opportunities to mitigate the negative visual effects of fields of solar panels with potential new links / alternative routes.

Katherine Evans
Chairman - Essex Local Access Forum (ELAF)
Email: chairman.essexlaf@gmail.com
(also email: ELAF@essexhighways.org)
14 December 2020

A-4.7 Hatfield Peverel Parish Council

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council welcomes this opportunity to comment on the proposed Longfield Solar Farm.

1. Do you have any comments on our initial proposals for:

(a) The solar energy generation element of the scheme?

This is a massive infrastructure project involving the construction and installation of large engineering structures. There is scant information about the size and visual aspect of the engineering works. The positioning of the structures on the proposed site has yet to be provided. The lack of detailed information concerns the:

- (i) Height and size of the solar panels which contributes to their visual impact
- (ii) Massing of the solar panels which also contributes to their visual impact
- (iii) Extent, height, and visual impact of the battery storage installations
- (iv) Extent, height and visual impact of the switch gear housing and other ancillary equipment
- (v) Extent, height, and visual impact of security fencing. There is no indication which buildings and installations are to be surrounded by high metal industrial security fences and gates or where they will be located
- (vi) Quantity of industrial and security lighting, its visibility from roads and nearby settlements and light pollution generated
- (vii) Percentage of the site that might be under panels
- (viii) Quantity of noise generated.

Since none of this basic information has been supplied, the Parish Council can neither fully assess the impact of the scheme nor make fully reasoned responses/feedback. Whilst it is appreciated that this questionnaire comprises the first round of consultation, the paucity of information renders this process fundamentally flawed. The consultation and the conclusions that the applicant/proposer arrives at - can only be as good as the quality and amount of information that it supplies. That same information is insufficient.

Subject to that, see the response to Question 6 below for comment on the solar energy generation as a component of the proposals as a whole.

(b) The battery storage element of the scheme?

See the response to Question 1(a) above relating to the lack of information provided and as a result the inability to provide meaningful responses or draw substantive conclusions.

The battery storage element when combined with sub-station equipment could be particularly intrusive in a rural setting. The information provided does not detail the size, height and visual impact of these units. And it does not explore how many units are planned. The drawing on page 8 of the consultation booklet is particularly misleading. It shows the battery storage as being half the height and very much smaller than the representation of the solar panels, a sub-station or the fencing. It is understood that these will be much larger than the panels and fencing and probably bigger than the switchgear housing.

See the response to Question 1(c) below in relation to the possible siting of battery storage in the Fuller Street area - the comments relating to the cabling apply equally to the installation of battery storage in that area.

The information states that the battery storage units are safe as they are protected by cooling systems and the danger of fire is negligible. It is noted that similar units in use have been in place for a very limited time compared to the anticipated lifespan of this project. It is worrying that no

information is provided on action expected to contain any fire or explosion that might occur or the effect in terms of a possible pollution incident arising from any such event.

Subject to that, see the response to Question 6 below for comment on the battery storage as a component of the proposals as a whole.

(c) The cable routes and grid connection?

See 1(a) above relating to the lack of information and as a result the inability to provide meaningful responses or draw substantive conclusions.

Information provided is not clear as per the applicant/proposer's intentions in relation to the cabling and its specifications. A critical question needs to be addressed:
Are the cables to be underground or overhead?

This is not a credible position. Cabling is a crucial part of this engineering project and the applicant/proposer must have determined what cabling will be required. Perhaps this omission boils down to cost? Is the applicant/proposer willing to voluntarily spend money to minimize the visual and environmental detriment of this project?

The suggested positioning of battery storage in the Fuller Street area would be entirely inappropriate. It would be difficult to access and would have a major environmental impact including a road and bridge across the Ter. This would extend the site unnecessarily into un-spoilt countryside to the north and leave the battery storage exposed.

If the battery were to be situated in the middle of the site instead of Fuller Street, it would be away from roads and public access. It would thereby minimize the detrimental effect on its visual amenity. It would be a more secure location for potentially hazardous installations and mitigate the danger posed by them to the public.

If the battery storage is placed in the Fuller Street position as indicated on the plan, the attendant cabling connections would have to cross the River Ter and 'The Essex Way'. This would negatively impact an important walking route and would be rendered objectionable to countryside walkers. Subject to that, see the response to Question 6 below for comment on the cabling as a component of the proposals as a whole.

(d) The construction and operation of Longfield Solar Farm?

See the response to Question 1(b) above relating to the lack of information and as a result the inability to provide meaningful responses or draw substantive conclusions. Among the issues that are not feasible to assess at present are the:

- (i) Light pollution from industrial lighting
- (ii) Noise and low frequency hum and vibration from the operation of the equipment
- (iii) Danger of explosion of lithium batteries
- (iv) General effects on health of the equipment and its operation.

There is no doubt that the construction will be disruptive. This is compounded by the fact that no real indication of how this upheaval and the effect of ongoing operations can be minimized by the final agreed location of the PVs, battery storage, substations and ancillary features.

Subject to that, see the response to Question 6 below for comment on the proposals as a whole.

2. Are there any local environmental enhancements you feel could be included as part of the scheme?

This is a most aesthetically pleasing and un-spoilt piece of countryside. It has been traditionally farmed for hundreds of years. As the site stands, it does not require any enhancement.

The solar farm would blight the landscape and any adjustments made to the proposed scheme would not begin to mitigate the resultant environmental damage.

In order to give a meaningful answer to this question, results from the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) need to be known. It would be helpful to be notified as to whom - what body or institution - would be carrying out this exercise to confirm objectivity and impartiality.

3. Do you have any comments on how the scheme could contribute to local employment and skills development?

The construction phase will no doubt be carried out by major national civil and electrical engineering contractors. They will import the skilled personnel required to carry out the work. There is insufficient skilled labour in Hatfield Peverel and Terling to contribute in any significant extent to the construction process which will in any event be temporary. In operation, solar farms are not labour intensive. Maintenance of the major units such as switch gear etc. tends to comprise significant works carried out periodically and therefore suitably skilled labour will be imported from time-to-time to undertake it. The small number of people employed in this activity in Hatfield Peverel and Terling goes no way near to justify or outweigh the disadvantages of the scheme.

Further information is needed to answer this question. The applicant/proposer should be able to provide information from similar projects but it is likely the contribution will be relatively small.

4. Do you have any information relevant to the scheme and/or local environment which you think we should take into account?

The area in question is a quiet and attractive part of rural Essex. It is a pocket of countryside that is much loved by walkers and cyclists. The solar farm would constitute an industrialisation of this piece of countryside and thereby blight the landscape.

The land in question is also best and most versatile agricultural land. The resultant food production loss would be ill-advised on sustainability grounds.

An email reply from Longfield Solar Farm has suggested the expectation is to generate 350MW. This would require over 1 million PV panels and an area of around 500 acres (208 ha). This calculation is based on an analysis of 5 existing or planned solar farms.

See also the response to Question 6 below.

5. Is there anything you would like to know more about the next round of consultation events?

As per the above listing (i)-(viii) in response to question 1(a), a great deal of information will be required as to the extent, positioning, size, height, visual amenity, light pollution and noise in relation to the engineering components. It is imperative that the specifics of the solar panels, switch gear and other ancillary equipment - battery storage, cabling, security fencing and industrial lighting will be forthcoming. This pre-offering of data by the applicant/proposer is critical if the next round of consultation is to be useful or indeed credible as a consultation exercise.

Information on the consultation procedures are clearly required and are awaited. They should be not merely in outline but adequately detailed.

6. Do you have any further comments?

Insufficient information has been supplied by the applicant/proposer. As a result, the Parish Council are unable to provide meaningful responses or draw substantive conclusions. The Council can merely comment in general terms as to the selection of this site and the effect of the proposal on it.

The generation of renewable energy is both noble and essential. Any major engineering project to generate it will come with disadvantages and involve compromise. A green energy solution however does not imply an unfettered license to carry out projects where the benefit delivered is outweighed by damage to the environment. It is a matter of balance and proportionality. The Longfield Solar Farm project falls foul of this test because:

- (i) The site - and its environs - comprises Grade 2 agricultural land which is a finite resource. It is a resource that is in limited supply. The site is a tract of land that is essential to the maintenance of food security in a small island country with a large population. The appropriate location for solar panel farms is on industrial land or alongside 'dead' ground such as motorways. Panels attached to new build housing and industrial units can also make a significant contribution. If the sacrifice of agricultural land is necessary and unavoidable, it certainly should not be agricultural land graded 1 to 3.
- (ii) The site area has enormous visual amenity having been traditionally farmed for hundreds of years. The imposition on this landscape of such imposing industrial installations - many surrounded by high security fencing and industrial lighting - would result in the total destruction of the landscape's visual amenity.
- (iii) Power generation - green or otherwise - is an industrial use. It remains to be seen whether the battery storage component is classified as green energy.
- (iv) There are many more suitable sites for solar farms in Essex and the South East of England. It appears that no other sites are under consideration and evaluation. Instead of that, it seems that the only reasons for this particular site being considered is because the grid runs through it and it is being supported by a willing land-owner. These reasons are not sufficient to outweigh the significant disadvantages of the scheme in this location or the failure to seek alternative, more suitable sites.
- (v) No consideration appears to have been given to the effect of changes in technology in a quickly evolving environment over the lifespan of the project. This could result in further large-scale rounds of disruption on the scale of the original construction as equipment is refurbished or replaced.
- (vi) Will associated infrastructure be removed on decommissioning and what exactly will they be i.e. access tracks, construction sites and so on?
- (vii) The local roads which will be used for construction and ongoing maintenance are woefully inadequate for the purpose some being very narrow in places. Large vehicles trying to pass other traffic could cause serious degradation of the byways.

In conclusion, Hatfield Peverel Parish Council believe it is ill-conceived to allocate this land to solar generation and energy storage. In this location the impact on the rural landscape setting and loss of agricultural land would be total devastation. The infrastructure of the site is wholly unsuitable during construction and operation phases. The disadvantages of the scheme in its proposed location far outweigh any purported benefits. The solar panel farm and battery storage should be sited elsewhere - in a more sustainable location.

A-4.8 Highways England



Our ref: Longfield Solar
Your ref:

Mark Norman
Operations - East
Woodlands
Manton Lane
Bedford MK41 7LW

Direct Line: [REDACTED]

20 November 2020

Longfield Solar Farm consultation,
FREEPOST
reference RTRB-LUJJ-AGBY,
Sky Light City Tower,
50 Basinghall Street,
London,
EC2V 5DE

Dear Sir,

Longfield Solar Farm Consultation

I refer to your recent public consultation on proposals for a 500 MW solar farm, to the North East of Chelmsford.

We note that the proposals are at an early stage and it is therefore difficult for you to fully inform us of the possible impacts of the proposal on the Strategic Road Network.

We would like to work with you to understand and manage the interactions between the Solar Farm scheme and the A12 J19 to 25 Widening scheme as well as any impacts on the Strategic Road Network.

You may be aware we have plans for widening of the A12 between J19 (Boreham) and J25 (Marks Tey). The Longfield Solar Farm project and the A12 widening project are likely to be under construction at the same time, this will require careful planning (e.g. construction traffic for the Solar Farm during the A12 widening works) and there may be opportunities to work together to save abortive costs.

We will in due course expect to see a Transport Assessment (TA) setting out the impact of the proposal, not just in operation but also during construction and decommissioning at end of life. The TA should be carried out in accordance with Policy laid out in Department of Transport Circular 02/2013, WebTAG and Highways England's protocol on dealing with planning applications. It is strongly advised that you speak to us before undertaking work as this has been shown to result in a smoother passage through the planning process. If transport mitigation on the strategic network is needed then this should be discussed with Highways England to avoid abortive work or collude strategies.

We will also need to know how and where any connecting cables will cross our network, there may be ways of accommodating cable crossings with the A12 widening works, thereby saving disruption and costs for both parties and the travelling public.



We will also need to see a glint and glare report to ensure that users of the A12 are protected from undue distraction.

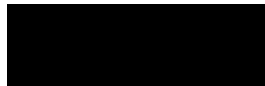
We will also need to work collaboratively with the provision of Walkers Cyclists and Horse rider's infrastructure and work towards a co funding strategy for third party benefits.

When the time comes HE will need to work with Longfield Solar Farm to agree a Transport Plan and elements of the construction and environmental management plan. It will be necessary to develop a Statement of Common Grounds ahead of examination period for both projects and finally have discussions about the Draft DCOs for the projects.

It would be useful in the near future to have a transport workshop between the Solar Farm, A12 Scheme and Essex County Council Highways to understand and align strategies and DCOs timelines.

We look forward to engaging with you to help successfully and smoothly deliver this project.

Yours faithfully



Mark Norman
Planning Manager
Operations (East)
Email: [redacted]@highwaysengland.co.uk

A-4.9 Little Waltham Parish Council

Dear Douglas,

Thank you for your email. The issue has been considered by Little Waltham Parish Council who have the following concerns -

1. The sheer scale of the proposed Solar Farm is a concern particularly as it will take a substantial amount of valuable tier 2 agricultural land out of food production which is a concern when it is understood that there is a need for the UK to increase its food production rather than reduce the same.
2. There is a concern about the impact upon traffic in the area particularly during the construction phase. Residents who live in the vicinity of Cranham Road have expressed concerns that following the grant of planning permission for Marriage's Mill there is already the prospect of a substantial number of heavy goods vehicles using that road and surrounding country roads and if the solar farm were to be located as proposed that would further increase not just traffic in the area but HGVs in particular and it should be noted that the roads in the area are not suitable for HGV traffic which will have a detrimental impact upon residents in that area of the Parish.

We trust you can take these concerns into account.

Regards

Suzanne Walker

Clerk to Little Waltham Parish Council


clerk@littlewaltham.org.uk