

Dear Rory Cridland/Longfield Solar Farm Case Team

Longfield Solar Farm – Historic England Written Representation
Application Ref: EN010118

Please find attached Historic England's Written Representation relating to Longfield Solar Farm.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Sheila Stones.

Sheila Stones

Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
Planning Group | East of England
Historic England
Brooklands | 24 Brooklands Avenue | Cambridge | CB2 8BU

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Historic England

**REPRESENTATIONS OF THE HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND MONUMENTS
COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND (HISTORIC ENGLAND)**

**PLANNING ACT 2008 (AS AMENDED) – SECTION 88 AND THE
INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (EXAMINATION PROCEDURE) RULES 2010 (AS
AMENDED) - RULE 6**

**APPLICATION BY LONGFIELD SOLAR ENERGY FARM LIMITED FOR AN
ORDER GRANTING DEVELOPMENT CONSENT FOR THE PROPOSED
LONGFIELD SOLAR PARK**

APPLICATION REF: EN010118

DATED: 18 August 2022

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2. Introduction
3. Comments in relation to Designated Heritage Assets
4. Statement of Common Ground

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Historic England's written representation relates to previous correspondence regarding this project application, submitted as our Planning Inspectorate and Relevant Representation Form (Dated 03 June 2022 Ref: PL00751022). We identified that this development has the potential to impact upon the historic environment, and that we are keen to ensure that there is adequate mitigation to reduce this impact and to reduce any resulting harm further.
- 1.2 In all cases regarding designated heritage considered here, the effects are indirect as the change proposed is within the setting of the heritage assets. The assets within 1km of the site comprise three grade I listed buildings, nine grade II* listed buildings, 65 grade II listed buildings and three conservation areas. The impact of the proposal on the significance of an additional two grade I listed, 20 grade II* listed buildings and four registered parks and gardens within 3km of the site has also been considered.
- 1.3 We will not be commenting on non-designated heritage assets and archaeological sites; deferring instead to Chelmsford and Braintree Local Planning Authorities and their expert and specialist advisers.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (HBMCE), known as Historic England, is the Government's adviser on all aspects of the historic environment in England – including historic buildings and areas, archaeology and historic landscape – and have a duty to promote public understanding and enjoyment. HBMCE are an executive Non-Departmental Public body sponsored by the Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and we answer to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Digital Culture, Media and Sport.
- 2.2 Our remit in conservation matters intersects with the policy responsibilities of a number of other government departments for example, the Department of Communities and Local Government. The National Heritage Act (2002) also gave HBMCE responsibility for maritime archaeology in the English area of the UK Territorial Sea.
- 2.3 We note that the Examining Authorities have not issued any 'Written Questions and Requests for Information' specific to heritage, and therefore there are no matters to be addressed in that regard.

3. Comments in relation to Designated Heritage Assets

- 3.1 We are aware that the proposed development lies within a sensitive area for the historic environment, in the setting of a range of high value heritage receptors. As there are no designated heritage assets within the application site itself, the effects of the proposal are indirect, relating to the setting of the assets. Setting

is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced and Historic England's remit relates to how change might affect the ability to understand the significance that assets derive from their setting.

- 3.2 Historic England's focus in this representation is to advise on impacts to highly graded designated heritage assets within the 1km study area, specifically to the grade I listed Church of St Mary the Virgin, Great Leighs; Church of St Andrew, Boreham and Ringers Farmhouse, together with the grade II* listed The Old Rectory.
- 3.3 Within the 1km study area there are also the Terling, Boreham Road/Plantation Road and Boreham Church Road Conservation Areas. There are no highly graded registered parks and gardens or scheduled monuments within the 1km study area. Within the 3km study area are an additional two grade I listed buildings, 20 grade II* listed buildings, three scheduled monuments and four registered parks and gardens. However, we acknowledge that due to the level of intervening topography and screening, no impact in relation to these designated assets is anticipated and we accept that for this reason they have not been assessed in further detail in Appendix 7A, Heritage Desk Based Assessment of the Environmental Statement.
- 3.4 We previously stated that we are therefore keen to ensure the avoidance of significant impacts to the numerous highly graded designated heritage assets in the vicinity. In this respect we were pleased to see that the Environmental Statement included specific Cultural Heritage and Landscape and Visual Amenity Chapters (ES Volume Chapters 7 and 10) in addition to visualisations and photomontages.
- 3.5 Whilst we note that overall the new development will be notably visible, resulting in change to the landscape as a whole, the visual material provided by the applicants indicates that the development will generally be visible in limited views from many of the highly graded designated heritage assets. The magnitude of the impact on the grade I listed Ringers Farmhouse is anticipated as being low, resulting in a moderate adverse effect. In relation to the other highly graded assets, the magnitude of the impact is expected to be very low, which would therefore result in either a minor adverse or a negligible effect upon their setting.
- 3.6 We consider that the visualisations and accompanying analysis in the Environmental Statement provide sufficient information to allow the level of harm to be established and the balance to be weighed by the determining authority.
- 3.7 We expect that Chelmsford City Council and Braintree's historic environment advisers at Essex Place Services will provide lead advice on the impact to all 65 grade II listed buildings, four grade II registered parks and gardens and three conservation areas within their districts (in addition to their advice on the impact to the highly graded assets). We also expect that they will be the lead

advisers for effects on non-designated heritage, including unlisted buildings and structures in and around the development site; but focused on archaeological remains, as there are no scheduled monuments within the study area.

- 3.8 In policy terms any resulting harm would in our view be less than substantial and would need to be considered in relation to policy 202 of the National Planning and Policy Framework, although the determining authority would need to give due regard to policies 199 and 200. We do not consider it necessary to explore these issues any further, but would be happy to provide further clarification upon request.

4. Statement of Common Ground

- 4.1 We are currently engaged in agreeing a Statement of Common Ground with the applicants. This Statement is currently provisional, subject to changes which will ensure the document is in accordance with our statutory remit.

Sheila Stones
Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas