



OAKLANDS FARM SOLAR PARK

Applicant: Oaklands Farm Solar Ltd

Statement of Common Ground with Historic England

October 2024

Document Ref: EN010122/D4/8.4

Version: Deadline 4

planning
transport
design
environment
infrastructure
land

SoCG between the Applicant and Historic England Oaklands Farm Solar Park

Oaklands Farm Solar Limited

September 2024 – Signed Version



Planning. Inspiring. Delivering.

Maidstone
01622 776226

Gatwick
01293 221320

London
020 3005 9725

www.dhaplanning.co.uk

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Statement of Common Ground between Oaklands Farm Solar Limited and Historic England

Applicant: Oaklands Farm Solar Limited

Project: Oaklands Farm Solar Park

Version/Date: Version 4/September 2024

Application Reference: EN010122

Version 1	First draft of SoCG	August 2024
Version 2	Second draft of SoCG	September 2024
Version 3	Third draft of SoCG	September 2024
Version 4	Signed by both parties	September 2024

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	3
1.1	CONTEXT	3
1.2	THE ROLE OF HISTORIC ENGLAND	3
1.3	THE APPLICATION SITE	3
1.4	THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	4
2	ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES.....	6
3	MATTERS AGREED/ NOT AGREED/ UNDER DISCUSSION.....	7
4	SIGNATURES.....	8

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

- 1.1.1 Oaklands Farm Solar Limited (“the Applicant”) is applying to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero for a Development Consent Order (“DCO”) under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (“PA 2008”) for the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of ground mounted solar photovoltaic arrays and a Battery Energy Storage System (“BESS”) on land west of the village of Rosliston and east of Walton-on-Trent in South Derbyshire (“the Proposed Development”).
- 1.1.2 Historic England have not provided advice or comment on the archaeological impact of the proposed development. Historic England has referred the Applicant to the Local Authority’s Archaeological Advisor to discuss these matters. This statement of common ground relates to the impact upon the setting of built heritage assets only.

1.2 THE ROLE OF HISTORIC ENGLAND

- 1.2.1 The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (HBMCE) which is known as Historic England, are the Government’s adviser on all aspects of the historic environment in England, including historic buildings and areas, archaeology and historic landscapes. They are an executive nondepartmental public body and are accountable to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). They have a duty to promote conservation, public understanding and enjoyment of the historic environment. This is achieved through:
- Championing historic places
 - Identifying and protecting our heritage
 - Supporting change
 - Understanding historic places and
 - Providing expertise at a local level

1.3 THE APPLICATION SITE

- 1.3.1 The Site lies within the administrative boundaries of South Derbyshire District Council and Derbyshire County Council. It is located approximately 0.25km west of the village of Rosliston and 0.7km south-east of Walton-on-Trent, and extends

from the former Drakelow Power Station, north of Walton Road, to the south of Coton Road. The Site (Order Limits) occupies a total area of approximately 191 hectares.

- 1.3.2 The Site mainly comprises agricultural land containing arable and pasture fields, enclosed by low clipped hedgerows with occasional hedgerow trees, and post and wire fencing. A small area of the northern section of the site is located within land associated with the operational National Grid Drakelow Substation and this area comprises scrub and trees and a series of overhead power lines.
- 1.3.3 The Site is crossed by a series of large scale power lines connecting into the Drakelow Substation. A small section of the Cross Britain Way / National Forest Way long distance path crosses the Site.

1.4 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.4.1 Oaklands Farm Solar Limited (“the Applicant”) is applying to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero for a Development Consent Order (“DCO”) under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 (“PA 2008”) for the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of ground mounted solar photovoltaic arrays and a Battery Energy Storage System (“BESS”) on land west of the village of Rosliston and east of Walton-on-Trent in South Derbyshire (“the Proposed Development”).
- 1.4.2 A full description of the Proposed Development is provided within the Environmental Statement (Doc 6.1).
- 1.4.3 The Project is split into a number of key works within the Order Limits including areas where ancillary works are required for the construction and operation of the key works. A plan showing the DCO boundary and location of the key works are provided in Doc 2.3 and submitted with the application.
- 1.4.4 The different elements of the works pertaining to the Proposed Development is set out in the Table below.

Proposed Development Works
Work No. 1 - a ground mounted solar photovoltaic generating station
Work No. 2 - a battery energy storage system compound
Work No. 3 - works in connection with a new 132/33kV onsite substation
Work No. 4 - works to trench and lay 132 kilovolt electrical cables connecting Work No. 3 to Work No. 5
Work No. 4A - crossing Rosliston Road with electrical cabling
Work No. 4B - temporary stopping up of water courses to trench and lay cables, installation of culverts, drainage and other features to cross watercourses
Work No. 4C - crossing Walton Road with electrical cabling

Work No. 4D - crossing Coton Road with electrical cabling
Work No. 5 - connection and installation works to the existing transmission network substation, including works to trench and lay 132 kilovolt electrical cables connecting to Work No. 4C
Work No. 5A - construction, operational maintenance and decommissioning access for Work No. 5
Work No. 5B - access to National Grid operational land for the construction, maintenance and decommissioning of Work No.5
Work No. 6 - temporary construction and decommissioning of access tracks and compounds
Work No. 7 - general works
Work No. 8 - works to facilitate access for all works excluding Work No. 5
Work No. 9 - works for areas of habitat management
Work No. 10 - works to implement new permissive path through Order limits

2 ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE PARTIES

- 2.1.1 Historic England has been formally consulted by the applicant concerning the Project up to the submission of the application as follows:
- EIA Scoping - September 2021
 - Preliminary Environmental Information Report April – June 2022
- 2.1.2 Following submission of the application we have been in correspondence with Historic England via email and a Teams call on Monday 20th May 2024. The Applicant facilitated full access for Historic England to walk over the site and Historic England visited the site on 5th June 2024.
- 2.1.3 This Statement of Common Ground has been prepared pursuant to the representations received from Historic England and seeks to agree on all matters raised.
- 2.1.4 A copy of the key email correspondence between the Applicant and Historic England is provided in Appendix A.

3 MATTERS AGREED/ NOT AGREED/ UNDER DISCUSSION

APPLICANTS POSITION	HISTORIC ENGLAND'S POSITION	POSITION SUMMARY	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
Baseline and Methodology			
<p>The Applicant considers that ES Chapter 7 together with its appendices 7.1 Historic Environment Assessment and 7.2 Geophysical Survey Report and Figure 7.1 (a&b), provides a comprehensive appraisal of the Site and its surrounds (the baseline) in respect of both built heritage assets and their setting and the potential archaeological resource within the Site.</p>	<p>Historic England agree that the appraisal of the built environment and its setting is comprehensive.</p>	Agreed	
<p>The Applicant considers that they have correctly identified all heritage assets that have the potential to be impacted by the Proposed Development.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	Agreed	
<p>The assessment undertaken has been completed in accordance with all relevant legislation and good practice guidance as detailed within Chapter 7.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	Agreed	
<p>The applicant considers the methodology used to establish the baseline of the Site and its surrounds together with the methodology used to identify the sensitivity of assets to the proposed development, the magnitude of an effect, is in accordance with good practice guidance.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	Agreed	

Effects – project alone		
<p>During construction the Proposed Development is considered to result in the following temporary effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No effect to the listed buildings associated with the construction phase of activity at Drakelow Park arising from change in their setting. No effect to the Grade II listed building Park (Grove) Farmhouse arising from change in its setting. 	<p>Historic England agree that construction effects will result in temporary effects that will not result in material harm to the setting of heritage assets. The primary effect during construction will be upon the unknown archaeological resource of the site.</p> <p>Historic England have referred the Applicant to the Local Authority’s Archaeological Advisor to discuss these matters. This statement of common ground relates to the impact upon the setting of built heritage assets only.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>It is Agreed that the Proposed Development will not result in an effect that would constitute anything more than less than substantial harm</p>
<p>During operation of the Proposed Development, it is considered to result in the following residual effects to these assets arising from change in their setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oaklands Farm farmhouse and storage range – less than substantial harm to a Low value asset Oaklands Farm Cottages – less than substantial harm to a Low value asset Church of St Mary, Rosliston, Grade II* listed building – low level of less than substantial harm to a High value asset. Church of St Mary, Coton in the Elms, Grade II listed building – very low level of less than substantial harm to a High value asset. Borough Walls Iron Age hillfort Scheduled Monument – no effect. Heritage assets at Walton-on-Trent – no effect. 	<p>Historic England Agree that the proposed development will cause a low level of less than substantial harm to the setting of all identified built heritage assets.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>It is Agreed that the Proposed Development will not result in an effect that would constitute anything more than a low level of less than substantial harm.</p>

Historic England’s relevant representation of 3rd March 2024 stated harm will be caused to the setting of multiple heritage assets, including through visual interconnectivity.

These affected assets include the Scheduled Monument Old hillfort SW of Old Hall Cottages, Church of St Laurence (GII*), Walton Hall (GII*), Church of St Giles (GII*), Cauldwell Hall (GII*), Church of St Mary’s (GII*) and Catton Hall (GII*). Also, multiple Grade II listed buildings in Walton-on-Trent, which is also a conservation area, Caldwell, Rosliston and Coton in the Elms.

There are several estate buildings that are all that remain of Drakelow Hall who’s setting has the potential to be affected by the proposed development. Other estate and farm buildings relating to Walton Hall, Catton Hall, manor and priory farms, Barr Hall Farm and several cottages.

Development to the North, closest to Drakelow Hall, depending upon final details,

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade II listed former Drakelow Park – no effect. Grade II listed Park Farm – no effect. 			<p>will have less impact on the setting of the heritage assets of the heritage assets closest to this part of the site.</p> <p>Following a site visit, Historic England further clarified on 11th July 2024 that these comments were wider overviews of the impacts of the proposed development, considering the appreciation of the setting of the surrounding churches as landmarks and other listed buildings. Harm will be caused by the proposed development, but this will be less than substantial harm to all assets noted above, as per Policy 208 of the NPPF. This includes the introduction of elements of urban features, such as the metal fencing around the entrances and road boundaries of the site, however, over time these will be mitigated by the landscaping proposed.</p> <p>We did advise increasing the landscape mitigation provided in the plans to offset the harm further caused during the operational phase of works.</p>
<p>During decommissioning there will be no below ground impact in areas that have not already been previously impacted during construction.</p> <p>Effects of the setting on built heritages assets will be less than or equal to those identified for the construction phase.</p>	<p>Historic England has stated any discussion regarding archaeological works should be referred to the Local Planning Authority’s Archaeological Advisor.</p> <p>Historic England agree that the effects of the decommissioning phase will cause less than substantial harm to the setting of built heritage assets.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>It is Agreed that the Proposed Development will not result in an effect that would constitute anything more than a low level of less than substantial harm.</p>	
Effects - cumulative			
<p>A full comprehensive list of potential cumulative developments (proposed and</p>	<p>Historic England welcome the provision of this information. We refer you to our response of less</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	

<p>approved) is set out in Chapter 2 of the ES. These have been fully considered to understand whether they have the potential to result in cumulative effects upon the setting of heritage assets. It is concluded that no cumulative effects are likely.</p>	<p>than substantial harm in our letter of 17th July 2024.</p>	<p>It is Agreed that the Proposed Development will not result in an effect that would constitute anything more than a low level of less than substantial harm.</p>
--	--	--

Mitigation and Requirements

<p>Given the nature of the Site and the level of effects to designated assets due to change in setting we do not believe it is necessary to provide mitigation to reduce the very low level of effects that will result from the development on the setting of heritage assets.</p>	<p>Historic England has stated on 3rd of May that suitable landscape mitigation to resolve impact on the setting and wayfinding character of the heritage assets.</p> <p>Following a site visit, further advice was provided 17/07/24 - The proposal will cause harm due to the change in setting of the heritage assets. Due to the nature of the development, with metal security fencing, lighting and CCTV, there is potential for further landscape mitigation to be introduced to reduce the harm caused by these features in an overtly rural and agricultural landscape.</p> <p>We have highlighted the assets of most concern and the possible mitigation methods for these assets. It is up to the applicant to consider whether they have suitably addressed these or if increased mitigation can be provided.</p>	<p>Not Agreed</p> <p>However, it is Agreed that the Proposed Development will not result in an effect that would constitute anything more than a low level of less than substantial harm.</p>
---	--	--

4 SIGNATURES

4.1.1 The Parties confirm that their respective positions are as documented within this Statement of Common Ground.

Signed...Ashley McInnes.....

Name and Position...Ashley McInnes, Lead Renewables Developer.....

On behalf of Oaklands Farm Solar Ltd

Date...01/10/2024.....

Signed...Molly Edwards.....

Name and Position...Molly Edwards, Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas

On behalf of the Historic England (HE)

Date...30/09/2024.....

APPENDIX A – EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE PARTIES

From: Edwards, Molly
Sent: Thursday, June 27, 2024 12:02 PM
To: Tim Spicer
Subject: Re: REMINDER: EXTENDED ADVICE SERVICE - Oaklands Solar Farm

Dear Tim,

Many thanks for patience and apologies for the delay. My comments are as follows:

Before my site visit, Historic England provided comments that raised concerns about harm to the setting and visual interconnectivity of heritage assets in the area. Of primary concern are the churches at Walton-on-Trent, Caldwell and Rosliston, and Walton, Catton and Cauldwell Halls. The harm the proposal causes also relates to the Scheduled Monument – Hillfort southwest of Old Hall Cottages and the wider built environment of neighbouring settlements.

The site visit provided an opportunity for further consideration and internal discussions on the proposal. The proposed site is on a rise in the landscape and therefore views are more likely to occur to surrounding areas and connecting with heritage assets. Therefore, concerns regarding the spires of churches are maintained, especially St Mary's, Rosliston, but this does not exclude other assets.

Whilst there is a clear need to provide security and enclosure to the development, this will cause more significant harm to the rural character of the area and the setting of the assets due to the more urban character of these features. Further assessment of these proposed features, especially considering fencing and hard landscaping options with more rural character, may mitigate the impact of the development in this setting. Soft landscaping has been proposed, but this will take time to establish and mitigate the visual impact of the infrastructure of the solar farm. Short term measures to alleviate this harm should be considered and proposed.

Regarding the SM to the southwest of the site, low less than substantial harm will be caused by the proposal. Glimpsed views are available connecting the monument with the PDA, most clearly in winter months. Further appropriate means of landscaping and screening as mitigation should be considered.

These comments are informal, and whilst I have seen the draft questions have been uploaded to the PINS website, these comments have not been provided as answers to them in any way.

Best regards,

Molly

Molly Edwards BA(Hons), MSt (Cantab)
Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
Regional Delivery Development Advice
Historic England - Midlands Region
The Foundry, 82 Granville Street, Birmingham, B1 2LH



Work with us to champion heritage and improve lives. Read our Future Strategy and get involved at

[REDACTED]

This e-mail (and any attachments) is confidential and may contain personal views which are not the views of Historic England unless specifically stated. If you have received it in error, please delete it from your system and notify the sender immediately. Do not use, copy or disclose the information in any way nor act in reliance on it. Any information sent to Historic England may become publicly available. We respect your privacy and the use of your information. Please read our full [privacy policy](#) for more information.

From: Tim Spicer
Sent: 04 July 2024 12:57 PM
To: Edwards, Molly
Subject: RE: REMINDER: EXTENDED ADVICE SERVICE - Oaklands Solar Farm

-- WARNING: This is an external message. Please use caution when replying, opening attachments or clicking on any links in this e-mail.--

Dear Molly,

Thank you for your email.

I note your concerns regarding the church spires but I think we have or certainly can demonstrate that views of church spires from within our site are largely not present or incidental (see attached ZTV). If you look at the ZTV this shows for example that there is no intervisibility between the Rosliston Church and the development? My understanding as well, is that something being visible is not the same as it's setting? I'd therefore like to understand where in particular within our proposed development you are concerned about with relevance to the Church Spires? If we know where this is then we can look at what we can do to try to introduce mitigation. Please provide details in this regard.

The fencing we are providing around the perimeter of the solar farm will be standard deer stock fencing that is appropriate for a countryside location. Please see attached. Unfortunately, there is no other fencing available that has a more countryside feel. Again, if there are particular places along the perimeter of the fence where you feel there will be a particular detrimental effect then please identify this and we will consider landscaping in these locations.

Perhaps we can have another short Teams call just to run through this before we start drafting the Statement of Common Ground?

Kind regards

Tim

Tim Spicer
Director (Environment)

From: Edwards, Molly >
Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2024 12:41 PM
To: Tim Spicer <
Subject: Re: REMINDER: EXTENDED ADVICE SERVICE - Oaklands Solar Farm

[External email - This message originated from outside DHA – prior to opening any attachments or opening links, please ensure their authenticity with the sender]

Dear Tim,

Many thanks for your email.

Our response is provided as a wider overview of the impacts of the proposed development, considering the wider appreciation of the setting of the surrounding churches and listed buildings. This proposal will cause harm due to the change in the setting of these listed buildings, but this harm is not serious and would constitute a low level of less than substantial harm as per paragraph 208 of the NPPF.

Views within the LVIA show proposed green metal fencing along the site's entries and road boundaries; however, over time the harm caused by these will be mitigated by the hedge growing in over the years.

I trust this clears up any further queries.

Kind regards,

Molly

Molly Edwards BA(Hons), MSt (Cantab)
Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
Regional Delivery Development Advice
Historic England - Midlands Region
The Foundry, 82 Granville Street, Birmingham, B1 2LH



Work with us to champion heritage and improve lives. Read our Future Strategy and get involved at historicengland.org.uk/strategy.

Follow us: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

This e-mail (and any attachments) is confidential and may contain personal views which are not the views of Historic England unless specifically stated. If you have received it in error, please delete it from your system and notify the sender immediately. Do not use, copy or disclose the information in any way nor act in reliance on it. Any information sent to Historic England may become publicly available. We respect your privacy and the use of your information. Please read our full [privacy policy](#) for more information.