

Booth, Elliott

From: Allen, Tim [REDACTED]
Sent: 17 January 2024 09:55
To: Heckington Fen Solar
Subject: FW: HECKINGTON FEN our ref PL00758702 - ExA 2nd Q's Historic England reply - with apologies for late submission

Importance: High

Categories: Late submission

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HISTORIC ENGLAND ADVICE

Our answers in italics

ExA's Question HE 2.1

North Kesteven District Council Historic England Applicant NKDC [REP2-101] and Historic England [REP2-091] consider that the solar park site lies within the setting of the Grade I listed Kyme Tower and that harm would arise to its setting (at the lower end of the scale). A plan [REP3-041] has been provided for the ExA to carry out a further Unaccompanied Site Inspection in order to assist in assessing the setting of Kyme Tower. Paragraphs 10.5.17 to 10.5.21 of ES Chapter 10 [REP2-024] sets out the elements which the Applicant considers contribute to its significance and goes on to conclude that no harm is predicted to occur. The Applicant's summary of ISH4 Agenda item 4 a) [REP3-039] reiterates their position regarding intervisibility and significance, and offers to provide further information in the form of visualisations.

Could NKDC and Historic England:

- i) Clarify whether the level of detail provided in paragraphs 10.5.17 to 10.5.21 of ES Chapter 10 [REP2-024] is proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset and if it is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on its significance.

Please see our responses to (ii) and (iii) below.

- ii) Confirm whether they agree with the elements of setting in paragraph 10.5.17 of ES Chapter 10 and state if there are any additional elements they also consider contribute to its significance.

The elements of setting drawn out in 10.5.17 appear to be the main ones of relevance in respect of the present development proposal however as discussed below long range views can still contribute to the significance of the asset albeit to a lesser degree and deserve consideration in the case of an asset of this importance. It will be for the ExA to consider if the applicant has provided them with sufficient information (including any additional visualisations) to test the extent to which the introduction of solar arrays and associated infrastructure into views from south of the Heckington Eau, within and across the proposed solar development impact upon significance.

- iii) Provide any further comments they may have in relation to the Applicant's summary of ISH4 Agenda item 4 a) [REP3-039] in relation to Kyme Tower.

Historic England refers back to its response to ExA HE 1.2 below, "Views from south of the Heckington Eau, within and across the proposed solar development will still have the capacity to contribute to significance, but arguably to a much lesser degree. The applicant assesses views affected by the development as incidental whilst the local planning authority stresses that they make a contribution to significance and can hence be regarded as entailing a degree of

harm. Such harm can occur via loss of agrarian appearance / obstruction of views through the development. Impacts of the development upon the significance of the Tower would appear to fall below the level of a reportable significant effect in terms of Environmental Impact Assessment. From a planning policy perspective in which all harm to the significance of designated assets requires clear and convincing justification and to be set against public benefits, a low level of less than substantial harm might still be identified and taken into the ExA's consideration."

Yours
Tim Allen

Tim Allen MA FSA
Team Leader (Development Advice)

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From: Allen, Tim

Sent: 07 November 2023 20:32

To: Midlands ePlanning <e-midlands@HistoricEngland.org.uk>

Subject: HECKINGTON FEN our ref PL00758702 - ExA 1st Q's HE reply - copy as submitted via portal

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Your reference number

23129

HE.1.2 North Kesteven District Council Historic England

ES Chapter 10 [APP-063] includes a setting assessment of the Grade I listed Kyme Tower and it is concluded at paragraph 10.5.22 that there would be no harm to its significance. NKDC in their LIR [REP1-033] disagree, stating at paragraph 16.26 that 'no views of the tower, or away from the tower, should be classed as 'incidental'' and they assign a negative impact on its significance.

ii) Can Historic England provide comment on both the Applicant's and NKDCs assessment of harm to Kyme Tower?

Historic England Advice

Kyme Tower is a Grade I listed building designated on the basis of its exceptional historic and architectural interest. As explored in the list entry it is a fortified tower of mid 14th century date with additions, removed c.1725. Built for Sir Gilbert de Umfraville in coursed limestone ashlar it comprises a 4-storey, square tower 77 ft high, with square projecting stair tower at the south-east corner which rises slightly higher than the main tower. The south, entrance front, bears scars on the ground and first floors of the later attached house which has since been removed.

The tower and associated moated site are included within a wider complex of archaeological earthworks designated as a Scheduled Monument on the basis of its national importance: 'Remains of medieval monastery, moated manor house, fishponds and post-medieval garden'. The attached house was demolished between 1720 and 1725. This tower is the earliest of a series of fortified towers built in this part of Lincolnshire, it is the only one built of stone, the later ones like Tattershall Castle, The Tower on the Moor at Woodhall Spa, the Hussey Tower at Boston and Rochford Tower at Skirbeck are all built of brick.

The tower was built both to see from and be seen in the wider landscape as well as offering a defensive refuge it was a statement of lordly power, status and cultural capital, and may have served as a viewing point for deer hunting / coursing. The significance of the tower derives in part from this landscape setting which whilst altered by agricultural improvement and drainage retains aspects of its former character. Parts of the historic landscape setting of the Grade I listed and Scheduled tower inevitably make a greater contribution to its significance than others. The closer setting of earthworks, manor and church, the village of South Kyme, the Kyme Eau and the former wetlands to either side; comprising South Kyme Low Ground to the north (containing place names such as Park and Lawn Hill Farms - indicative it would appear of a former deer park) and South Kyme Fen to the south are clearly important. Views to, from and across the monument in juxtaposition with Tattershall Castle and more distantly Lincoln Cathedral and Boston Stump are also important to understanding the Tower in the evolving medieval landscape.

Views from south of the Heckington Eau, within and across the proposed solar development will still have the capacity to contribute to significance, but arguably to a much lesser degree. The applicant assesses views affected by the development as incidental whilst the local planning authority stresses that they make a contribution to significance and can hence be regarded as entailing a degree of harm. Such harm can occur via loss of agrarian appearance / obstruction of views through the development. Impacts of the development upon the significance of the Tower would appear to fall below the level of a reportable significant effect in terms of Environmental Impact Assessment. From a planning policy perspective in which all harm to the significance of designated assets requires clear and convincing justification and to be set against public benefits, a low level of less than substantial harm might still be identified and taken into the ExA's consideration.

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