

Nottinghamshire County Council

# Local Impact Report – Cottam Solar Farm

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Nottinghamshire County Council has prepared this report in accordance with the advice and requirements set out in the Planning Act 2008 and the Advice Note One: Local Impact Reports Version 2, April 2012. The advice note reflects the IPC being abolished and the work of the IPC transferring to the Planning Inspectorate under the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.2. The Advice Note states that when the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) decides to accept an application it will ask the relevant local authorities to prepare a Local Impact Report and its preparation should be prioritised and indicate where the local authority considers that the development would have a positive, negative or neutral effect on the area. The Report may include any topics that they consider to be relevant to the impact of the development on their area as a means by which their existing body of knowledge and evidence on local issues can be fully and robustly reported.
- 1.3. The Advice Note indicates that topics addressed in the Local Impact Report may include:
  - Site description and surroundings/ location
  - Details of the proposal
  - Relevant planning history and any issues arising
  - Relevant development plan policies, supplementary planning guidance or documents, development briefs or approved master-plans and an appraisal of their relationship and relevance to the proposals
  - Relevant development proposals under consideration or granted permission but not commenced or completed
  - Local area characteristics such as urban and landscape qualities and nature conservation sites
  - Local transport patterns and issues
  - Site and area constraints
  - Designated sites
  - Socio-economic and community matters
  - Consideration of the impact of the proposed articles and requirements within the draft Order (such as the scheme) in respect of all of the above
  - DCO obligations and their impact on the local authority's area.
- 1.4. The Local Impact Report may also comment on the development consent obligations and the requirements and also any relevant representations.
- 1.5. In producing the Local Impact Report the council has not sought the views of local parish councils and local interest groups as to any particular matters that

should be reflected in the report because the parish councils and other local groups have the opportunity, through the consultation process, to make their observations direct to PINS.

- 1.6. The Local Impact Report is intended to be used by the local authority as a means by which the existing body of local knowledge and evidence on local issues is fully and robustly reported.
- 1.7. The Local Impact Report has been written so as to incorporate the topic areas suggested in the Advice Note (set out above) and the obligations and proposed requirements submitted with the application for DCO.

## **2. The Project Proposal**

### **The NSIP Proposal**

- 2.1. The Scheme comprises a solar project of solar array sites, associated infrastructure and energy storage infrastructure. The solar arrays will convert the solar energy into electricity and be exported to the national grid via underground cables.
- 2.2. The operational life of the Scheme is anticipated to be 40 years. Once the Scheme ceases to operate, the development will be decommissioned. However, as is typical for energy generation, the DCO application will not seek a temporary or time limited consent.
- 2.3. The Scheme comprises a number of land parcels described as Cottam 1, 2 and 3 for the solar arrays, grid connection infrastructure and energy storage; and the cable route corridors. The Sites are located approximately 6.5km south-east and 4km north east of Gainsborough.
- 2.4. The grid connection point will be at the National Grid substation at Cottam Power Station.
- 2.5. The majority of the Scheme is located within the administrative boundary of West Lindsey District Council and Lincolnshire County Council; with the grid connection infrastructure located within the administrative boundary of Bassetlaw District Council and Nottinghamshire County Council.
- 2.6. The Sites identified for built development, namely, solar panels, sub-stations and energy storage for the Scheme are located within a 19km radius of the grid connection at the former Cottam Power Station.

- 2.7. Cottam 1 is made up of a number of sites / fields clustered within an area of countryside centred around the village of Coates in the District of West Lindsey.
- 2.8. Cottam 2 sits to the north of Cottam 1 and is located to the east of the village of Corringham.
- 2.9. Cottam 3 sits to the north of Cottam 2 and is split in to two areas:
- Cottam 3a, to the north-east and south-east of the village of Blyton; and
  - Cottam 3b, to the east of Pilham. Cable Route Corridor Search Areas
- 2.10. The cable route corridor links the Sites to the grid connection point at Cottam Power Station. The cables will be laid into trenches which will range in width from 0.47m to 1.60m in width. The width and spacing of the cable trenches may differ depending on environmental constraints and engineering requirements, or in locations where crossing third party apparatus such as railway lines.
- 2.11. In addition to the trenches, land will be required in the corridor for access and soil and cable 'lay down'. Construction compounds and access routes along the cable corridor will also be required. The likely temporary working area for the cable corridor is anticipated to be 25m in width.
- 2.12. The solar array Sites and associated substations and energy storage are to be connected to the National Grid at a substation at Cottam Power Station. The Scheme will connect to the National Grid substation via a new 400kV substation constructed as part of the Scheme to provide the connections to the various solar Sites at 132 or 33kV. The substations, cable connections and energy storage will be required for the duration of the Scheme. The substations and energy storage will be decommissioned and removed at the end of the lifetime of the Scheme but the underground cables are anticipated to be decommissioned in situ to minimise environmental impacts.
- 2.13. The solar panel installations within each of the three Sites will each have a generating capacity of more than 50MW and therefore each constitute an NSIP.
- 2.14. The consent order submission uses the Rochdale Envelope due to the fact that certain design elements are not known at the present time. This approach means that the assessment of the application has been based on the worst case scenario and a set of parameters have been submitted.

## **Site Description and Surrounding Location**

- 2.15. Cottam 1 is in agricultural use and is relatively flat, with isolated trees interspersed with landholdings and farmsteads, including access tracks and field access.
- 2.16. The River Till meanders in a predominantly north/south direction across the western portion of the landholding. In some areas the river comprises part of the red line area identified, and in others it adjoins the boundary. The banks of the river are lined with trees. A section of river, joining the River Till, in the north-eastern portion of the landholding, appears to have been canalised. Where this has taken place there are wide open river banks with only low lying vegetation.
- 2.17. There are many woodland blocks adjoining and within close proximity to the eastern portion of the landholding. Overhead lines cross parts of the Site.
- 2.18. There is a chain of villages on the B1398, which runs north/south to the east of the Sites. The villages within close proximity of the Site are Glentworth, Fillingham, Ingham, Cammeringham, Brattleby, Aisthorpe and Scampton.
- 2.19. There is also a chain of villages on the B1241, running north/south to the west of the Site. The closest villages are Kexby, Willingham by Stow, Normanby by Stow, Stow, Sturton by Stow and Bransby.
- 2.20. Thorpe Lane runs along the southern edge of the landholding, connecting the settlement of Thorpe in the Fallows (with around five dwellings in total, with some slightly offset from the Site) to Sturton by Stow, to the west, and Brattleby, to the east.
- 2.21. Ingham Road, turning into Stow Lane runs east/west through the centre of the landholding, connecting the villages of Stow and Ingham. Part of the Site boundary adjoins the road. The settlement of Stow Pasture lies on this road, comprising around seven dwellings. The Site boundary adjoins the gardens of some of these properties and is in close proximity to others.
- 2.22. The small settlement of Coates, comprising around ten houses is accessed off the Ingham Road, and lies within the centre of the landholding area. Whilst the settlement is in the centre of the landholding, the closest Site boundary to any dwelling is over 500m. The settlement also contains the historically important St Edith's Church.
- 2.23. The closest larger settlements are Gainsborough, approximately 7km north-west of the landholding, and Lincoln, approximately 9km south-east of the

landholding. The landholding is situated in the centre of a 'square' of A roads: The A15, A57, A156 and A631. The closest of these, the A15, is approximately 4km east of the landholding.

- 2.24. The railway line to the west of the landholding, connecting Lincoln and Gainsborough is over 3km from the Site.
- 2.25. There are public footpaths and bridleways running alongside and through the Site. The most notable of these are:
- The public footpath that connects Ingham, to the villages of Coates and Stow Pasture 'Stow/83/1' (part of which runs through the Site);
  - The bridleway that connects Thorpe in the Fallows to Ingham Road 'Camm/31/1' (part of which runs through the Site);
  - The bridleways extending north-west from Ingham, running alongside the Site: 'Fill/86/1' and 'Fill/85/2';
  - The public footpath 'Stur/73/1' that extends to the east of Sturton by Stow terminates at the Site; and
  - The public footpath running north from Broxholme 'TLFe/32/1' extends to Thorpe Lane (which runs along the south of the Site) joins the Site boundary.
- 2.26. The decommissioned Cottam Power Station is around 8km from the Site.
- 2.27. There are airfields in the surrounding area including Scampton around 3.5km to the south-east of the landholding; and Sturgate around 3.5km to the northwest of the Site.
- 2.28. A number of the villages on the B1398, to the east of the Site, accommodate conservation areas. The villages with conservation areas are Hemswell, Glentworth, Fillingham, Ingham, Brattleby, South Carlton and Burton-by-Lincoln. the village of Springthorpe, south of the Site at Corringham, has a conservation area. There is also a small conservation area in the village of Saxilby
- 2.29. There are a considerable number of listed buildings in the settlements around the Site. There are two Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) in the centre of the Area, within the village of Coates, and a SAM adjoining the Site to the south.
- 2.30. There is an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) which runs along the chain of villages on the B1398, to the east of the Sites. It extends on average between 500-900 metres from the road to the west. This AGLV comprises the B1398 'Cliff Road' and its immediate views over the landscape to the west. The Sites are generally over 1.5km west of the designation, however the

undulating shape of the designation around the village of Fillingham means the closest landholding at Cottam 1 is 200 metres from the designation.

- 2.31. A significant portion of the Site is identified by Central Lincolnshire as either an opportunity for creation or an opportunity for management as part of the ecological network.
- 2.32. There is a single Local Wildlife Site (LWS) – ‘Willingham to Fillingham Road Verge LWS’. It is located along road verges within the red line boundary of the Site.
- 2.33. The majority of the Site at Cottam 1 to the north of the woodland ‘Normanby Gorse’, west of Normanby by Stow, is designated as a Sand and Gravel Area of Search in the Lincolnshire Minerals Local Plan. There are small parts of the Cottam 1 Site which also have this designation, around Lowfield farm and the corner of the field on the edge of the Site next to the bridge leading to Sturton by Stow from Thorpe in the Fallows.
- 2.34. The entirety of the Site is designated as a Petroleum Exploration Development Licence (PEDL) Block.
- 2.35. Small parts of the Site are located in flood zones 2 and 3 and are at risk from Surface Water flooding.
- 2.36. Cottam 2 and 3 sites are both in agricultural use. This includes an area which appears to be used for storage in relation to farming.
- 2.37. The Site at Cottam 2 is bounded by Corringham Beck to the north-west, and Yewthorpe Beck to the east. Corringham Beck appears to be canalised, with wide banks with only low vegetation. Yewthorpe Beck is a meandering river with established vegetation and trees lining its banks. There is a farmstead, and a house which are surrounded by the Site. The land is relatively flat and is predominantly well screened from its immediate surroundings by tall hedges around the boundaries of the Sites. The fields are generally large and typically have dividing hedgerows. There are only isolated trees outside of field margins. The Site benefits from existing field accesses. Overhead lines cross parts of the Site.
- 2.38. Part of the Site at Cottam 3 comprises a former airfield. Two former runways running north-west/south-east and north-east/south-west cross the Site. Their positioning is still visible from aerial imagery. Kirton Road (B1205) runs along



the south of the Site. Most of the boundary with Kirton Road benefits from reasonably well-established hedges. There are sections with lower hedges.

- 2.39. The remainder of the former airfield, parts of which adjoin the Site, and parts of which are surrounded by the Site, are used for motorsport and storage and distribution. There is also a house next to the storage and distribution area, which adjoins the north-western part of the Site. The Site benefits from vehicular access from Kirton Road, which is shared with these other land uses. There are two isolated houses to the south of the B1205 in the proximity of the Site.
- 2.40. The A159 Laughton Road runs north/south along the western extent of the Site. There is reasonably well established hedging with trees along the boundary.
- 2.41. The village of Blyton is approximately 250 metres to the south-west of Cottam 3. Properties from the village may have views towards the Site. A smaller number of these towards the northern edge of the village may have views of the western extent of the Site. There are scattered isolated dwellings to the north of the landholding, all more than 500 metres from the Site boundary.
- 2.42. The fields are generally large and some have dividing hedgerows. There are only isolated trees outside of field margins. Overhead lines cross parts of the Site.
- 2.43. The landholding at Cottam 3b comprises medium-large agricultural fields, approximately 400 metres east of the village of Pilham. A trainline runs along the northern border of the Site.
- 2.44. Sites are situated approximately 5km to the east/north-east of Gainsborough. There are smaller villages between Gainsborough and the sites, including the closest villages of Blyton and Corringham. The villages of Springthorpe, Pilham, Laughton, Scotton and Northorpe are located in close proximity of the Site. There is a chain of settlements on the B1398, which runs north/south to the east of the Sites. The settlements within close proximity of the Site are the villages of Hemswell, Willoughton, Blyborough, Grayingham and the market town of Kirton in Lindsey.
- 2.45. The main roads in the surrounding area are the A159 Laughton Road which runs north/south along the western extent of Cottam 3; The A631 Corringham Road, which runs to the south of Cottam 2; and the A15 which runs north/south to the east of the Sites, beyond the chain of villages along the B1398.

- 2.46. The railway line between Gainsborough and Kirton in Lindsey runs in a north-east/south-west direction in between the landholdings of Cottam 3.
- 2.47. There are no public footpaths or bridleways within close proximity of the Cottam 2 or Cottam 3 landholdings, although the public footpaths of note are:
- The public footpath to the north of Cottam 3 'Blyt/32/1' around 500 metres to the west of the Site where there may be views across the landscape to the Site.
  - The public footpath to the north of Corringham village 'Corr/22/1', which is around 500 metres to the west of the Cottam 2 Site.
- 2.48. There is a public footpath 'Phil/20/1' which runs alongside and through the Cottam 3b site in an east/west direction, through the south of the Site.
- 2.49. Burton Power Station is around 10km from Cottam 2 and 11km from Cottam 3. Cottam Power Station is around 14km from Cottam 2 and 16km from Cottam 3.
- 2.50. The closest airfield is Sturgate, approximately 3km south of Cottam 2.
- 2.51. Cottam 2 is bounded by Corringham Beck to the north-west, and Yewthorpe Beck to the east. Corringham Beck appears to be canalised, with wide banks with only low vegetation. Yewthorpe Beck is a meandering river with established vegetation and trees lining its banks.
- 2.52. There is limited woodland in the area surrounding the Sites, save for Laughton Forest, which is around 2km north and north-west of Cottam 3.
- 2.53. Cottam 3 is surrounded by an ex-airfield which is now used for motorsport and storage and distribution.
- 2.54. There is only one conservation area close to the area, within the village of Hemswell, to the east of Cottam 2. Potential impacts of the Scheme on the conservation areas and their settings are considered in Chapter 8 Landscape and Visual and Chapter 13 Cultural Heritage of the PEIR.
- 2.55. There are a number of listed buildings in the rural area surrounding Cottam 3.
- 2.56. There are three Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) in the area between the landholdings. None of these are in close proximity to the Sites.

- 2.57. There is an AGLV which runs along the chain of villages on the B1398, to the east of the Sites. It extends on average between 500-900 metres from the road to the west. This AGLV comprises the B1398 'Cliff Road' and its immediate views over the landscape to the west. Cottam 2 is around 4km west of the designation.
- 2.58. There is an AGLV designated around the town of Gainsborough, which encompasses woodland and surrounding farmland. The closest land parcel of Cottam 2 is over 2km east of this designation.
- 2.59. The third AGLV of note comprises Laughton Woods AGLV, which is located to the north and west of Cottam 3. The closest part of Cottam 3 to the AGLV is around 1km, from the northernmost extent.
- 2.60. There are no Biodiversity Opportunity Areas designated on the Sites, although an area to the north of Cottam 3 is identified for possible creation.
- 2.61. There are SSSIs within Laughton Forest: Laughton Common SSSI; Scotton and Laughton Forest Ponds SSSI; Scotton Beck SSSI; Scotton Common SSSI; and Tuetoes Hills SSSI. Cottam 3 is in the impact risk zones for those SSSIs. Cottam 2 is outside of any impact risk zones.
- 2.62. The western third of Cottam 3 is designated as a Sand and Gravel Area of Search in the Lincolnshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.
- 2.63. The fields to the west of Cottam 2 are designated as a Sand and Gravel Minerals Safeguarding Area. The entirety of Cottam 2 and 3 are designated as a Petroleum Exploration Development Licence (PEDL) Block.
- 2.64. A very small portion of Cottam 2 is in Flood Zone 3 and small parts are at risk from Surface Water flooding.
- 2.65. There are 3 other NSIP schemes in this area – Gate Burton Solar, West Burton Solar, and Tillbridge Solar. All of the projects are at similar stages to Cottam and the developers have worked together to minimise the impacts by designing the cable routes so that they share a selection of the route.

#### **Relevant Planning History and any Issues Arising**

- 2.66. The following planning history applies to this site within Nottinghamshire insofar as applications made to Nottinghamshire County Council:

**Table 1 – Planning History Nottinghamshire County Council - 'County Matters' sites, applications/permissions of note**

<b>Application Reference</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Development description</b>	<b>Distance from project (km)</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<a href="#">1/22/01031/CDM</a>	Cotham P/S Rising Main	Construction of an underground foul water rising main. Land to the west of Cottam Power Station, Retford, DN22 0NP	Within the DCO project application boundary west of Cottam P/S	Granted 24/11/22 and constructed	Majority of works are below surface level
<a href="#">1/22/00047/CDM</a>	Sturton le Steeple Quarry	Continuation of mineral working operations at Sturton le Steeple Quarry subject to a modification to the 'trigger date' for the interim restoration of the quarry. - Variation of conditions 67 and 68 to 31 December 2024 to afford sufficient time for additional surveys, to secure all necessary approvals under non-planning regimes and implementation works to take place prior to extraction recommencing	3km north of cable corridor to Cottam power station	Variation approved 20/04/2022. Relates to a longstanding permission for a new sand and gravel quarry. Permission has been implemented with enabling works, including new access but mineral extraction has yet to commence. Quarry is also allocated in the Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan. Quarry has been taken over by new operator with intentions to commence mineral extraction.	Significant pending quarry development. Approx 7 million tonnes sand and gravel reserve but being evaluated. Expected to be mainly exported by HGV, but river barge option and wharf also possible. Wetland restoration
<a href="#">1/19/01556/CDM</a>	West Burton/ Bole Ings ash fields	Variations of conditions 11, 13, 37 and 53 of planning permission	6km north of cable corridor to	Active PFA ash extraction operations. Up to	Significant and large scale extractive industry.

		1/18/00234/CDM to enable full ash recovery from phase 1B/2 and revisions to method statement, restoration, landscaping and aftercare. - West Burton Power Station and Bole Ings Ash Disposal Site, Retford, DN22 9BL	Cottam p/s	400,000 tonnes per annum extracted for sale to construction industry	Export of PFA is via road transport/ HGV. Restoration to grassland and wet areas
<a href="#">1/21/01770/CDM</a>	Cottam power station ash fields	Variation of Condition 46 of Planning Permission 1/13/01359/CDM to defer the submission of a restoration and aftercare strategy for the former ash disposal site until 25th December 2025 to allow an extended period of time for the wider redevelopment of the Cottam Power Station site to be fully considered.- Cottam Ash Disposal Site, Outgang Lane, Retford, Nottinghamshire, DN22 0EU Proposal	700m to East of power station	Ash operations paused pending further time to allow wider development options at the former Power Station site	Previous large scale ash deposit and extraction operations. Partially restored. Not clear if more ash will be extracted in the future and depends on wider development options
1/43/12/00006	South Leverton oil field	South Leverton Oil wells x4 sites	1.2km - 2km west of cottam p/s cable corridor	Conventional oil extraction sites- with permission until 2032.	Operated by Igas

1/12/01027/CDM1/12/01028/CDM	Gainsborough Oil field	Gainsborough Oil wells-multiple existing well sites (aprox 7 within Notts)	9-10km N of cottam p/s cable corridor (various sites)	Conventional oil extraction-mostly active and with permission until 2032. Ground water monitoring boreholes recently given permission	Part of wider oil field into Lincolnshire. Oil collected by HGV to collecting station. Operated by Igas
Multiple site permissions. S73 extensions of time granted 2021	Beckingham oil field	Beckingham Oil wells-multiple existing well sites (aprox 13 well sites)	10km+ NW of cottam p/s cable corridor (various sites)	Conventional oil extraction-mostly active and with permission until 2032. Ground water monitoring boreholes recently given permission	Part of wider oil field. Oil collected by HGV to collecting station. Operated by Igas
1/23/00410/CDM	Lound PFA deposits	The extraction, processing and export of pulverised fuel ash from former ash disposal lagoons and their progressive restoration, and associated development-Former ash disposal lagoons south of Lound, Retford. DN22 8SG	Aprox 12km NW of Cottam P/S	Submitted 10/03/23 and under consideration	

2.67. The issue of cumulative development especially with the other proposed NSIPs will need careful consideration by the examiner to ensure that the proposed development is in accordance with current planning policy.

**Relevant development plan policies, supplementary planning guidance or documents, development briefs or approved master-plans and an appraisal of their relationship and relevance to the proposals**

2.68. The following Plans, strategic objectives and policies are considered relevant to the proposed development:

**Nottinghamshire and Nottingham Replacement Waste Local Plan Part 1: Waste Core Strategy (2013)**

- SO2 Care for our environment – protect our landscape, countryside, wildlife and valuable habitats from harmful development and make the most of opportunities to enhance existing open space and provide new habitats. Protect water, soil, and air quality across the county. Protect our heritage assets and their settings, including archaeological remains and protect the character of our townscapes.
- SO3 Community well-being – protect local amenity and quality of life from the possible impacts of waste management such as dust, traffic, noise, odour, visual impact etc. and address local health concerns. Make sure that local people have the chance to be involved in decisions about new waste management facilities by providing more information, encouraging wider involvement and targeting key groups or individuals where appropriate.
- SO4 Energy and climate – encourage the efficient use of our natural resources by promoting waste as a resource to be re-used, reduce the need to transport waste, minimise energy use and encourage use of combined heat and power where this can help to offset fossil fuel use. Minimise potential climate change impacts from waste management but accept that some change is inevitable and manage this by making sure that all new waste facilities are located and designed to withstand the likely impacts of flooding, higher temperatures and more frequent storms.
- SO5 Sustainable transport – encourage alternatives to road such as water and rail where practical. Locate sites close to sources of waste and/or end-markets to reduce transport distances and minimise impacts on the strategic road network. Make use of existing transport links to minimise the impact of new development.
- Policy WCS1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development - When considering development proposals the Councils will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. They will always work proactively with applicants jointly

to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Core Strategy (and, where relevant, with policies in other plans which form part of the Development Plan) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Councils will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

- Policy WCS10: Safeguarding Waste Management Sites - The following sites will be safeguarded for waste management facilities:
  - a) Existing authorised waste management facilities including potential extensions and sites which have a valid planning permission that has not yet been implemented; or
  - b) Sites allocated in the Site Allocations Document. Safeguarding will only apply to the above identified sites and any land immediately adjacent to the site where a need to safeguard has been clearly demonstrated

### **Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan (2021)**

- Policy SP7: Minerals Safeguarding, Consultation Areas and Associated Minerals Infrastructure Minerals Safeguarding Areas 1. Locally and nationally important mineral resources, permitted reserves, allocated sites and associated minerals infrastructure will be safeguarded from needless sterilisation by non-minerals development through the designation of minerals safeguarding areas as identified on the Policies Map. 2. Non-minerals development within minerals safeguarding areas will have to demonstrate that mineral resources will not be needlessly sterilised as a result of the development and that the development would not pose a serious hindrance to future extraction in the vicinity. 3. Where this cannot be demonstrated, and where there is a clear and demonstrable need for the non-minerals development, prior extraction will be sought where practicable. Minerals Consultation Areas 4. District and Borough Councils within Nottinghamshire will consult the County Council as Minerals Planning Authority on proposals for nonminerals development within the designated Mineral Consultation Area, as shown on the Policies Map. 5. The Minerals Planning Authority will resist inappropriate non-minerals development within the Minerals Consultation Areas. 6. Where non-minerals development would



cause an unacceptable impact on the development, operation or restoration of a permitted minerals site, mineral allocation, or associated minerals infrastructure, suitable mitigation should be provided by the applicant prior to the completion of the development.

- Policy MP2: Sand and Gravel Provision 1. An adequate supply of sand and gravel will be identified to meet expected demand over the plan period from: a) The extraction of remaining reserves at the following permitted quarries: MP2c Sturton Le Steeple

### **Relevant development proposals under consideration or granted permission but not commenced or completed**

2.69. See Table 1 above.

### **Local area characteristics such as urban and landscape qualities and nature conservation sites**

2.70. There are a number of local area sites, these have been identified in paragraphs 2.17-2.67 above. These have been discussed in the above policy section. The Examiner is requested to seek views from the statutory bodies including Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Environment Agency on these topic areas.

2.71. In terms of archaeology the part of the scheme which affects Nottinghamshire is the route of the cable trench and some ancillary works. The investigation of archaeological potential and subsequent mitigation proposals for the scheme have been devised by the archaeological consultants for the Gate Burton scheme, rather than for the Cottam proposal. It is understood that a number of schemes currently share the same cable run. NCC understand that the archaeological mitigation work proposed is of a good standard. By contrast, NCC see from the archaeological reports relating specifically to most of Cottam sites 1,2, and 3, that the applicants are proposing to mitigate impacts from their scheme on the archaeological remains they have demonstrated are present, "as necessary", which seems vague and ill-defined.

### **Local transport patterns and issues**

2.72. Nottinghamshire County Council are the Highway Authority for area. This section of the LIR report reviews the outstanding issues associated with highways and transport aspects of the proposals and in particular the matters which require careful consideration.

2.73. The proposed solar farm is in Lincolnshire. Therefore, the construction and operation of the project would have only a minor and largely temporary impact on the Nottinghamshire road network. However, the proposal would

be connected to the National Grid at Cottam Power Station which would involve works within the County relating to the laying of a cable within the proposed grid connection corridor. The grid connection corridor for the Gate Burton Solar Project covers a similar area, and it is likely that so would the grid connection corridor for the Tillbridge Solar Project. The West Burton Solar Project in part would also share the same grid connection corridor where it crosses the River Trent before heading north to ultimately terminating at West Burton Power Station.

2.74. For this project, the Nottinghamshire construction accesses to the grid connection corridor are proposed on Torksey Ferry Road (Grid Connection Access 1/101), Cottam Road (Grid Connection Access 2/102, 3/103, and 4/104), and Headstead Bank (Grid Connection Access 5/105 and 6/106). To minimise disruption, these accesses should be shared with the other solar projects where applicable, and therefore, should be of the same design and position. It is noted that access is proposed via Torksey Ferry Road which would route construction traffic through Rampton. This is not proposed as part of the Gate Burton Solar Project. The Highway Authority therefore question whether this is necessary. Cottam Road is a far superior route avoiding the village.

2.75. Where practical each solar project should share construction compounds. Each Construction Traffic Management Plan will need to set out arrangements for managing arrivals and departures at each access across projects where they are likely to be accessing the grid connection corridor at the same time. Where possible, works required within the grid connection corridor for each project should be undertaken as a single operation.

### **Site and area constraints**

2.76. The site lies predominantly within Lincolnshire within a mainly rural area the Nottinghamshire element comprises of the cable route corridor. The area constraints have been outlined in the above policy section.

### **Designated Sites**

2.77. The designated sites have been outlined in the Policy Section above.

2.78. The County Council does not have professional in house expertise to comment on ecological designated sites and therefore advice should be taken from Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England.

### **Socio-economic and community matters**

Rights of Way

- 2.79. Public rights of way are an important consideration for the County Council. It is anticipated that as the cabling is underground that the main disruption to public rights of way would be during the construction phase.
- 2.80. With regard to the cabling installation within Nottinghamshire, with potentially up to six Public Rights of Way impacted, it would be difficult to comment until the specific route has been identified. Trenching underground cabling, requiring a 25m working corridor, would invariably affect PROW in the short term during the construction phase and it is requested that these closures, wherever practicable, are employed sensitively to optimise the connectivity of the wider PROW network and any works that affect the safe use of the PROW should be closed temporarily under a formal Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO), which is managed by Nottinghamshire County Council as Highway Authority.

#### Minerals

- 2.81. As the Mineral Planning Authority, it is the responsibility of Nottinghamshire County Council to form policies and determine applications relating to mineral development. One of the key responsibilities of both the County Council but also the District and Borough Councils is to safeguard mineral resource (PPG, Paragraph 005, 2014). As minerals are a finite resource that can only be worked where they are found, the emerging Minerals Local Plan contains Policy, SP7, Adopted Minerals Local Plan which seeks to safeguard mineral resource from unnecessary sterilisation from non-mineral development and so establishes Mineral Safeguarding and Consultation Areas (MSA/MCA).
- 2.82. As a two-tier authority, the Minerals Local Plan forms part of the overall Development Framework for Bassetlaw District Council. The entire western side of the River Trent lies within a Sand and Gravel Mineral Safeguarding Area, but that given relatively small land take we do not foresee any problems. There is an area of concern however. The northern cabling route option, the buffer zone for which, runs through or at least very close to the permitted sand and gravel site at Sturton Le Steeple quarry (1/46/06/00014/). This site is operated by TARMAC. As this site is not presently active, it may not have been picked up as part of the initial scoping exercise.
- 2.83. Sturton le Steeple Quarry is an important source of sand and gravel and is a significant contributor to the resource landbank, as identified within the Adopted Nottinghamshire Minerals Local Plan March 2021.
- 2.84. In terms of the Waste Core Strategy, there are no existing waste sites within the vicinity of the site whereby the proposed development could cause an issue in terms of safeguarding existing waste management facilities (as per Policy WCS10).

**Consideration of the impact of the proposed articles and requirements within the draft Order (such as the scheme) in respect of all of the above**

- 2.85. It is requested that the examiner considers the time period for the life of the project. County Council officers are of the opinion that if the ES has been based on a life period of 40 years then the development order consent should be for up to 40 years and not last indefinitely.

**DCO obligations and their impact on the local authority's area**

- 2.86. The County Council has no further comment to make on this subject.