

The Planning Inspectorate

By 'make a submission tab'

Our Ref: Michael Reynolds

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Michael Reynolds
Business and Environmental Services
East Block
County Hall
Racecourse Lane
Northallerton
DL7 8AD

Tel: 07970 151094

Email:

██████████@northyorks.gov.uk

Dear Sirs

**East Yorkshire Solar Farm
Deadline 6**

Responses to Written Questions

Q7.0.02 The concerns expressed in NYC's LIR regarding the protection of existing trees and tree loss were discussed at item 2a of the ISH2 on environmental matters [REP3-035]. The LEMP has been updated at Deadline 3 (in particular section 8) [REP3-016]. Does this address your concerns? If not, please set out your outstanding concerns.

The updated Framework LEMP produced at Deadline 3 partly addresses our concerns relating to vegetation protection. However, some concerns remain that there is lack of clarity for the Applicant to proactively develop the detailed design within the Grid Connection Corridor, and to sufficiently reinstate, compensate or offset potential impacts, or to contribute to Green Infrastructure. We would therefore recommend that the Applicant should consider proposals for the improvement and reinstatement of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows within the wider grid connection corridor (the order limits) rather than just limited to reinstatement along the cable line.

Q7.03.03 The Applicant responded in its Deadline 2 submission [REP2-020] to the Council's concerns regarding:

- the absence of an assessed viewpoint on New Road/Wren Hall Lane, the potential loss of vegetation and that the worst-case scenario had not been assessed (in response to ExQ1 Q9.0.1).*
- the methodology for the assessment of tranquillity (in response to ExQ1 Q9.0.2).*
- the provision of Green Infrastructure (in response to ExQ1 Q9.0.3).*

Do these responses, together with the updated LEMP [REP3-035] address your concerns? If not, please set out your outstanding concerns.

Additional Viewpoint (in response to ExQ1 Q9.0.1) - The Applicant states no vegetation will be lost as a reason for not selecting the viewpoint. The LVIA and revised Framework LEMP sets out the measures to be undertaken to minimise impacts upon existing vegetation and hedgerows within the Grid Connection Corridor “where practicable”. However, the detailed design for final cable alignment and temporary works are yet to be determined potentially affecting tree and hedgerow loss within the cable connection corridor (typically between 100m wide and 200m wide in proximity to Drax Power Station).

In the absence of an additional viewpoint and assessment we would suggest a proactive approach should be taken by the applicant for improving the existing vegetation within the grid connection corridor. This would give us confidence that further landscape and arboricultural impacts could be sufficiently mitigated at detailed design stage and that this would help avoid potential cumulative effects in association with other planned energy development in proximity Drax Power Station.

Method of Assessment of Tranquillity (in response to ExQ1 Q9.0.2). – Our comments relate only to the North Yorkshire Administrative area. The Applicant has not assessed tranquillity. As stated in our previous response, tranquillity is not solely a measure of noise impacts. Tranquillity might typically be considered within the LVIA independently of a noise assessment. The Applicant has stated that there are no static plant installations within North Yorkshire Council Administrative area [potential noise sources]. In the absence of assessment we would consider that there is potential for adverse effects on the landscape character and setting relating to tranquillity. Within North Yorkshire effects are likely to be localised, temporary and limited to the construction and decommissioning phases relating mainly to vehicle movements and construction / work activities.

Provision of Green Infrastructure (in response to ExQ1 Q9.0.3) – Provision for Green Infrastructure within the grid connection corridor is not explained and remains unresolved. As stated in our previous response, for a development of this scale we would also expect to see clear provision of green infrastructure actively applied within the whole of the application area, in accordance with principles of Natural England’s GI Framework. We would therefore recommend that the Applicant should consider proposals for the improvement and reinstatement of existing trees, woodland and hedgerows within the wider grid connection corridor (the order limits) rather than just limited to reinstatement along the cable line.

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The above responses have been picked up in discussions with the applicant. The Authority can confirm that the Statement of Common Ground put forward by the applicant is the agreed final position and we will seek sign off at the next available opportunity for submission at the next available deadline.

Yours faithfully

Michael Reynolds
Senior Policy Officer (Infrastructure)
North Yorkshire Council