

From: William Kelly <William.Kelly@leics.gov.uk>
Sent: 26 August 2025 12:52
To: Laura Ashton
Cc: Planning Folder New
Subject: 25/00692/FUL | Installation and operation of a ground-mounted solar farm with associated infrastructure for a period of 40 years | Land At Heath Road Bagworth Heath Bagworth

Categories: Shaun

Dear Laura,

25/00692/FUL | Installation and operation of a ground-mounted solar farm with associated infrastructure for a period of 40 years | Land At Heath Road Bagworth Heath Bagworth

Archaeological considerations

Thank you for your consultation on this application. We recommend that you advise the applicant of the following archaeological requirements, for post-determination trial trenching.

Assessment of the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER), supported by the results of the submitted desk-based Assessment (AOC DBA Ref.: 26242), shows that the site lies within an area of archaeological interest. The presence of sands and gravels within Field C suggest a raised potential for prehistoric and early medieval activity. The presence of a historic Parish Boundary running along the northern boundary of Field B also indicates a potential for associated features or markers, such as pit alignments, ditches or burials, as these boundaries often follow much earlier territorial boundaries.

The applicant has also submitted a geophysical survey (AOC Report Ref.: 40329), although the results of this work are largely inconclusive. Geophysical survey does not represent a definitive statement of the site's archaeological potential, as not all types of archaeological deposit (including prehistoric, Anglo Saxon remains and human burials) are sensitive to detection by this method. Although the survey has not identified any positive evidence for archaeological activity here, it has not established their absence either. Indeed, the report shows a number of linear and discrete anomalies for which an archaeological origin has not been ruled out by the surveyor, which should be tested by trial trenching.

Given the limitations of geophysical survey as a means of archaeological evaluation, it is our recommendation that this should be supported by a programme of trial trenching in order to test any anomalies, in addition to any geophysically 'blank' areas. The trial trenching should target all of the areas where development impacts are proposed, including the cable route, site access tracks, on-site substation and any further construction related impacts such as compounds. We would also welcome further clarification regarding the methodology for implementation and impacts of the proposed ecological enhancement area, to better understand the potential impacts on any buried archaeological remains that may be present.

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 16, paragraph 207, the development area is of archaeological interest and also has the potential for further unidentified archaeological deposits. Based upon the available information, it is anticipated that these remains whilst significant and warranting further archaeological mitigation prior to the impact of development, are not of such importance to represent an obstacle to the determination of the application (NPPF paragraph 208).

While the current results are sufficient to support the planning decision, further post-determination trial trenching will be required in order to define the full extent and character of the necessary archaeological mitigation programme.

NPPF paragraph 218, states that Local Planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact of development, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible.

In that context it is recommended that the current application is approved subject to conditions for an appropriate programme of archaeological mitigation, including an initial phase of exploratory trial trenching, followed, as necessary by intrusive and non-intrusive investigation and recording. The Historic & Natural Environment Team (HNET) will provide a formal Brief for the latter work at the applicant's request.

If planning permission is granted the applicant must obtain a suitable written scheme of Investigation (WSI) for both phases of archaeological investigation from an organisation acceptable to the planning authority. The WSI must be submitted to the planning authority and HNET, as archaeological advisors to your authority, for approval before the start of development. They should comply with the above mentioned Brief, and with relevant Chartered Institute for Archaeologists "Standards" and "Code of Practice". It should include a suitable indication of arrangements for the implementation of the archaeological work, and the proposed timetable for the development.

We therefore recommend that any planning permission be granted subject to the following planning conditions (informed by paragraph 37 of Historic England's Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment GPA 2), to safeguard any important archaeological remains potentially present:

1. No demolition/development shall take place/commence until the necessary programme of archaeological work has been completed. The programme will commence with an initial phase of trial trenching to inform a final archaeological mitigation scheme. Each stage will be completed in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI), which has been [submitted to and] approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no demolition/development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed mitigation WSI, which shall include the statement of significance and research objectives, and
- The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works
- The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI.

Reason: To ensure satisfactory archaeological investigation, recording, dissemination and archiving

The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) must be prepared by an archaeological contractor acceptable to the Planning Authority. To demonstrate that the implementation of this written scheme of investigation has been secured the applicant must provide a signed contract or similar legal agreement between themselves and their approved archaeological contractor.

The Historic and Natural Environment Team, as advisors to the planning authority, will monitor the archaeological work, to ensure that the necessary programme of archaeological work is undertaken to the satisfaction of the planning authority.

Please will you ensure a copy of the Decision Notice is sent to us in due course, to enable us to continue to monitor and safeguard the archaeology of this site. Should you or the applicant have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

William

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