

27th January 2026

Planning Development Services

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
Hinckley Hub,
Rugby road,
Hinckley,
Leicestershire,
LE10 0FR

Planning Portal Reference: PP-14644750

Dear Sir/Madam,

Variation of Conditions 2, 7, 11, 14 and 16 of Planning Permission 24/00120/CONDIT relating to a variation of Conditions 2, 4, 12, 21, 22 and 23 of Planning Permission 21/01395/FUL for the installation and operation a of a renewable energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with substation, point of connection mast, switchgear container, inverter/transformer units, Site access, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure and landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

Church Farm, Washpit Lane, Barlestone, Nuneaton, Leicestershire, CV13 0EH

Please find enclosed an application submitted on behalf of JBM Solar Projects 26 Ltd (part of RWE Renewables UK Solar and Storage Limited), made under the terms of Section 73 ('S73') of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

This application has been submitted to seek a variation of Condition 2 'Approved Plans', Condition 7 'Archaeological Investigation', 'Condition 11 'Landscape and Ecological Management Plan', Condition 14 'Noise' and Condition 16 'Drainage' of planning permission 24/00120/CONDIT.

This application comprises the following documents and plans:

- Application form and certificates;
- Site Layout Plan, drawing number: P23-0657_EN_04, Revision C, prepared by Pegasus Group, dated 11th December 2025;
- Detailed Soft Landscape Plan, drawing number: P23-0657_EN_05, Revision C, prepared by Pegasus Group, dated 11th December 2025;
- Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, prepared by Pegasus Group, 11th December (Revision D)
- Drainage Technical Note 002, Revision 00, prepared by Calibro Consultants, dated 28th April 2025;
- Substation Layout, prepared by RWE, drawing number: 200, revision 2, dated March 2025;
- Battery Station Details, Rev 0, dated 11th March 2025, prepared by Ethical Power;
- Noise Assessment, prepared by LF Acoustics, dated April 2024;
- Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric, dated 8th May 2025;
- Post-development Habitats Plan – Sheets 1-2, prepared by Tyler Grange, dated September 2025.

The application fee of £2,085 (£2,000 plus £85 Planning Portal fee) has been paid via the Planning Portal upon submission.

Application Background.

Planning Permission (reference: 21/01395/FUL) for the *'Installation and operation a of a renewable energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with substation, point of connection mast, switchgear container, inverter/transformer units, Site access, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure and landscaping and biodiversity enhancements'* was granted by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council on 16th August 2022 subject to 26 conditions.

Subsequently, a Section 73 application (reference: 24/00120/CONDIT) for the Variation of Conditions 2 'Approved Plans', 4 'Permission Expiration Date', 12 'LEMP', 21 'CTMP', 22 'Access Drawings' and 23 'Vehicular Visibility Splays' of Planning Permission 21/01395/FUL was granted by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council on 23rd May 2024 subject to 22 conditions.

This Section 73 application seeks to vary the Conditions attached to planning permission 24/00120/CONDIT.

Prior to the determination of application 24/00120/CONDIT, a number of conditions attached to planning permission 21/01395/FUL were discharged, with the approved details being included as compliance conditions on the decision notice for planning permission 24/00120/CONDIT.

An application, reference: 25/00167/DISCON, to discharge Condition 07 (Archaeological Investigation) attached to planning permission 24/00120/CONDIT was submitted to the Council on 21st February 2025, and it was confirmed by the Council on 17th April 2025 that Condition 07 had been fully discharged.

Application Proposal and Proposed Amendments.

This application seeks to vary Conditions 2, 7, 11, 14 and 16 attached to Planning Permission 24/00120/CONDIT. The purpose of the current Section 73 application is to make the following amendments to the approved Site Layout and Landscape Strategy Plan due to requirements from the Engineering, Procurement and Construction contractor:

- Minor micro-siting adjustments to the layout of the Solar PV arrays;
- 1.1. Amendment to the internal road layout to increase routing efficiency and minimise potential impacts;
 - 1.2. Minor relocation of the Battery Energy Storage - Inverter System Units;
 - 1.3. Amendments to the Battery Energy Storage System Layout from 4 linear units to a 'Skid' configuration as per the latest EPC and manufacturer requirements and to ensure the latest and most efficient technology is deployed;
- Removal of redundant consented infrastructure such as standalone inverter units (with the already consented inverters within the BESS compounds now to be used for both the solar and storage elements due to improvements in technology meaning the additional consented standalone inverters are no longer required), alongside removal of the consented POC masts within the substation area from the plans, and standalone communications masts which are likewise no longer required;

- Removal of 2no. Beehives and replacement with 4no. Bee hotels following consultation with expert ecologists.

Justification for Variations.

The amendments sought are required by the Contractors who are constructing the site and are minor in nature. The amendments would remove infrastructure that is no longer necessary from the plans, and utilise the latest technology which has become available since the application was originally granted consent in 2022. The applicant, since permission was granted, was acquired by the UK's largest electricity generator, RWE, so are now the owner/operator, in addition to the developer of the scheme. As such, they have been able to seek the input from RWE's internal Operations and Maintenance and Biodiversity teams' vast experience from working on operational renewable energy sites, to ensure what is proposed maximises efficiencies, and results in the best possible outcomes. Overall, it can be concluded that there will not be any materially different impacts as a result of the amendments sought in this Section 73 application in terms of ecology, transport, drainage or landscape. The updated layout, containing the amendments described above, is located within the plan submitted with this Section 73 application titled: Site Layout Plan, drawing number: P23-0657_EN_04, prepared by Pegasus Group, dated 10th April 2025.

An updated Drainage Technical Note submitted with this Section 73 application confirms that the proposed minor amendments will require no further amendments to the approved drainage arrangements.

An updated Statutory Biodiversity Metric submitted with this Section 73 application confirms that the scheme will result in a biodiversity net gain of 62.78% Habitat Units and 29.75% in Hedgerow Units. There is no requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain given the scheme was consented prior to the Environment Act (2021) coming into force, however even if it were applicable, the scheme still delivers over 6x the current requirement for new planning applications submitted. The Post Development Habitat Plans submitted with this Section 73 application demonstrates the locations of the habitats retained, created and enhanced on site.

Proposed Revised Conditions.

This application seeks to vary the wording of Conditions 2, 7, 11, 14 and 16 of Planning Permission 24/00120/CONDIT. The proposed revised wordings to the conditions are identified below. Text proposed for deletion is identified in red bold text and is crossed out (for example: ~~deleted~~). Revised wording proposed is identified in red bold text and underlined (for example: revised wording).

Condition 2.

It is proposed that Condition 2 is amended to:

"The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the submitted application details, as follows:

- ***Block plan 1 (received 22 November 2021)***
- ***Site Layout Plan P23-0657-EN-00-03 (Received 5th February 2024)***
Site Layout Plan P23-0657_EN_05 Rev C (Dated 11th December 2025)
- ***Detailed Soft Landscaping Plan P23-0657-EN-00-01 Rev H (Received 5th February 2024)***

Detailed Soft Landscape Plan P23-0657_EN_05 (Dated 14th November 2025)

- **Fence, track and cctv details revision A (received 22 November 2021)**
- **Inverter station details revision A (received 22 November 2021)**
- **Substation Layout, prepared by RWE, drawing number: 200, revision 2 (dated March 2025)**
- **Custom switchgear details revision A (received 22 November 2021)**
- **Battery station details revision A (received 22 November 2021)**
- **Battery Station Details (dated March 2025)**
- **Comms and weather station mast revision A (received 22 November 2021)**

Condition 7.

It is proposed that Condition 7 is amended to:

“The solar farm shall not be brought into operation until The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Post-Excavation Assessment and Updated Project Design (prepared by Oxford Archaeology, dated February 2025) the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation WSI V4.1 Stoneshollow Solar Farm (received 5th December 2023) and provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition.”

Condition 11.

It is proposed that Condition 11 is amended to:

“The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details of the site wide Landscape & Ecological Management Plan provided in - Landscape & Ecological Management Plan received 5th December 2023 dated 11th December 2025 and maintained in accordance with this approved document for a period of 40 years or until such a time that the development is decommissioned.”

Condition 14.

It is proposed that Condition 14 is amended to:

“The development shall be carried out in accordance with the mitigation measures provided in Pile & Noise Method Statement Received 14 August 2023 Noise Assessment dated April 2024.”

Condition 16.

It is proposed that Condition 16 is amended to:

“The development shall only be carried out in accordance with the Drainage Scheme detailed in Drainage Details 23-309 (Received 11th April 2023) the Drainage Technical Note (dated 28th April 2025)”

Environmental Impact Assessment.

A request for a Screening Opinion under Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment 'EIA') Regulations 2017 was submitted to Hinkley and Bosworth Borough Council on 17th August 2021 (application reference: 21/01049/EAS). Hinkley and Bosworth Borough Council issued their Screening Opinion on 7th September 2021 that stated that the proposed development would have significant effects on the environment by virtue of its nature, size and location within the setting of a Grade II* Listed Building. As such, based on the information provided, and after consideration of the criteria set out in Schedule 3 of the 2017 Regulations, it was considered that an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required for the development proposed. HBBC did however, go on to state that should the development be 'scaled back' as a result of pre-application inputs, then the proposal could be re-screened.

As part of the Original Screening Request, the original design of the scheme was circa 130ha almost "wall to wall" with solar panels and no landscape proposals. It was therefore a "worst case" and design refinement was already underway. Information on what has led to the significantly scaled-back Proposed Development is set out in more detail in the approved Design and Access Statement submitted as part of the originally approved application (reference: 21/01395/FUL).

Following the changes, a second EIA Screening Request was submitted on 30th September 2021 which detailed the design evolution of the development and the areas in which proposed panels had been removed from as a result of initial assessments and consultee responses. The second screening letter also provided additional detail regarding the proposed mitigation to reduce the effects on the Grade II* Listed All Saints Church to an acceptable level, therefore negating the need for an Environmental Impact Assessment.

The second EIA Screening was registered as 21/01224/EAS, Hinkley and Bosworth Borough Council's Screening Opinion was received on 2nd November 2021. This confirmed that the 'scaled-back' development would not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Having regard to the description of development and applicable thresholds set out at Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations, it is considered that the amended development does not constitute 'Schedule 2 Development' for which an Environmental Statement could be required.

Paragraph 13(b) of Schedule 2 confirms that any change to or extension of development already authorised, as listed in paragraphs 1 to 12, can be Schedule 2 Development where either:

"(i) The development as changed or extended may have significant adverse effects on the environment; or

(ii) in relation to development of a description mentioned in column 1 of this table, the thresholds and criteria in the corresponding part of column 2 of this table applied to the change or extension are met or exceeded."

The proposed revision, which relates to minor-material amendments to the Site Layout Plan, is not considered to have potential significant adverse effects on the environment beyond those previously assessed. Furthermore it is considered that the changes proposed to the approved scheme do not exceed any thresholds as set out in Schedule 2.

Planning Policy Context.

The Development Plan relevant to this Site comprises the following:

- Hinkley and Bosworth Council Coore Strategy (December 2009);

- Local Plan 2006-2026 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (July 2016); and
- Barlestone Neighbourhood Plan (Made June 2022).

The Development Plan has not changed since the Solar Farm was originally granted planning permission or since planning permission 24/00120/CONDIT was granted.

A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) was published on 12th December 2024, which restates the support for renewable and low carbon energy.

Summary.

The proposed amendments to S73 Planning Permission reference: 24/00120/CONDIT are considered to represent minor changes to the approved development and therefore, an application seeking to vary Conditions 2, 7, 11, 14 and 16 of this permission under the terms of Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is appropriate.

I trust that the submitted details are sufficient to allow the validation of this application and progression towards determination. However, please do not hesitate to contact me at the earliest opportunity should you require any further information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'RJ', written over a horizontal line. There are two small dots below the line.

Robin Johnson, PIEMA, ACIEEM, AssocRTPI

Development Project Manager

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