

Our Ref: 04C300466
Your Ref: PP-12829223

20 March 2024

Development Management,
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council,
Hinckley Hub,
Rugby Road,
Hinckley,
Leicestershire,
LE10 0FR

Dear Sir/Madam,

FULL APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF A SUBSTATION AT THE EXISTING NAILSTONE SOLAR FARM AT NAILSTONE, NUNEATON, CV13 0QP.

I am writing on behalf of our client Aldi Stores Limited ('The Applicant'), who is seeking full planning permission for the erection of a substation at the Nailstone Solar Farm, Nailstone, Nuneaton, CV13 0QP.

Background

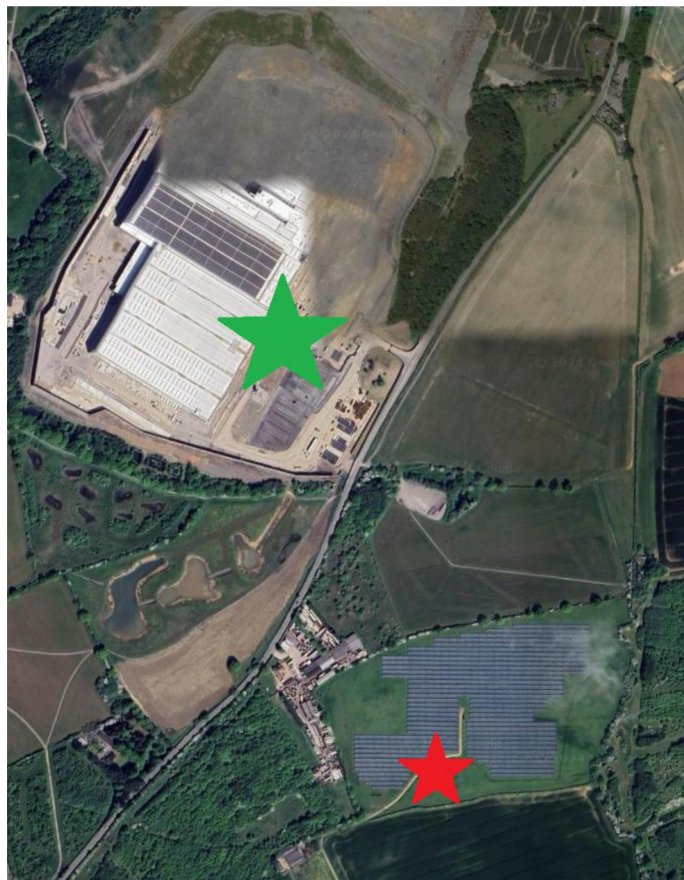
Full Planning permission was granted to Aldi Stores Ltd for the construction of a distribution centre at the nearby site in Nuneaton (application ref. 20/00224/FUL).

Following the grant of permission for the distribution centre, an agreement has now been reached between Aldi Stores Ltd and the operators of the adjacent solar farm at Nailstone Solar Farm, Nuneaton, CV13 0PQ, to supply power to the distribution centre from the existing solar farm.

The solar farm in which the proposal is sited, was granted consent for the solar farm in September 2015. Planning Ref.15/00823/FUL granted consent for the following development:

"The installation of a Photovoltaic Solar Farm, grid connection, access and associated works and infrastructure."

In order to facilitate the transfer of energy from the subject site to the nearby Aldi distribution centre, a substation in the form of a TR7 GRP Enclosure needs to be installed on site of the Nailstone Solar Farm. The proposed substation to facilitate the transfer of energy is the subject of this planning application. The energy is to be transferred via an underground cable from the substation to the site of the adjoining Aldi Distribution Centre.



(Figure 1: Approximate Location of substation outlined in a red star and location of the distribution centre to which the energy is to be transferred to, is outlined in green. Please note this is an indicative plan, please refer to submitted Plan Ref. Site Location Plan - for further precise location and details)

Proposals

As detailed in the Site Location Plan and Existing and Proposed Elevation plans, the proposed development comprises the erection of a new substation at the location set out in the Site Location Plan.

The substation is to be installed at the southern side of Nailstone Solar Farm. The appearance of the substation is a standardised housing design and will be green in colour (BS4800 14C39 Holly green / Hollybush) which is a fixed standardised design configuration. All aspects of the design of the substation including all dimensions, material use and colour are fully outlined in the accompanying Existing and Proposed Elevation Plan.



(Figure 2: Image of an example of the type of substation proposed. Please see accompanying plans for exact details of measurement and material use)

The green substation proposed is a standardised design, and the size and positioning has been fully considered to provide the correct power requirements, and therefore cannot be altered.

Planning Assessment

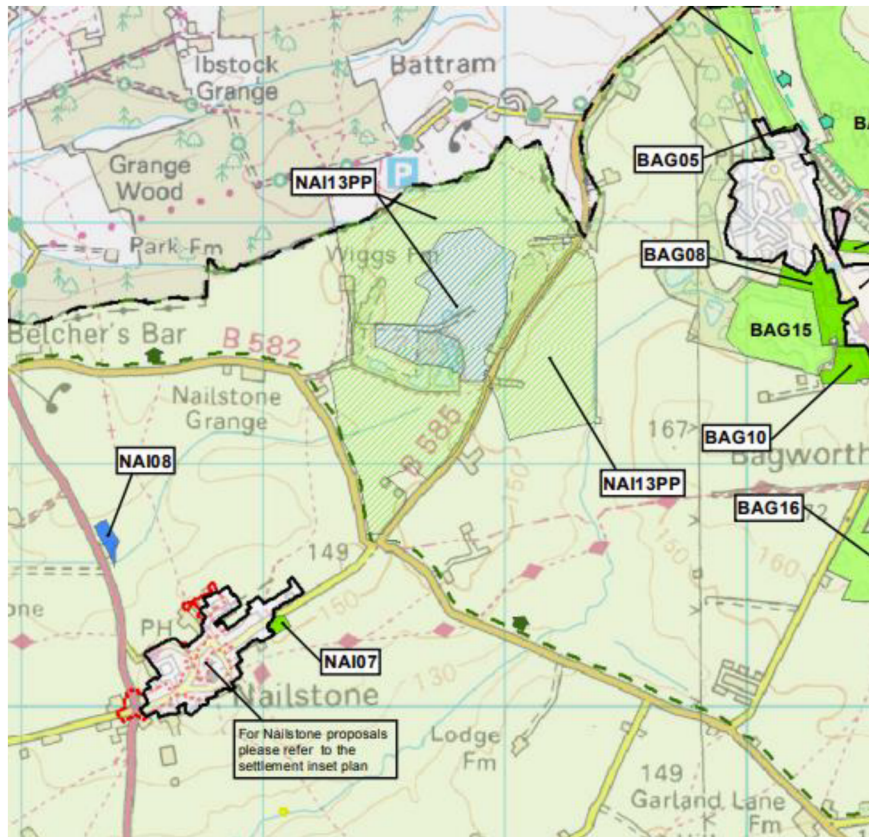
The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. One of the key considerations outlined in the NPPF is building a strong, competitive economy. As set out in Paragraph 85:

"Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential."

As the erection of a substation can be considered minor, the proposal will facilitate the ongoing operations of the adjoining Aldi Distribution Centre, contributing to the operation of the distribution centre in a sustainable manner, making use of a nearby solar farm, which produces sustainable energy. The output of the distribution centre contributes significantly to the operation and goods supply to supermarket stores in the wider region, making the proposal fully compliant with relevant national policy.

Local policy further supports this type of development. The Local Plan 2006 - 2026 consists of several Development Plan Documents, including the Core Strategy and The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD.

Policy DM2 of the Site Allocations and Development Management document outlines the policy provision for “Delivering Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development”. As part of this policy, it is outlined that the council is *“committed to reducing its environmental impact through carbon reduction measures and through the support of appropriately designed and sited renewable energy and low carbon developments.”*



(Figure 3: Extract from Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan document – Borough wide map. Indicating the site allocation of NAI3PP for the solar farm site, and the same site allocation for the adjoining Aldi Distribution Centre site.)

The site is allocated NAI3PP as per the Site Allocations Plan. The designation is for “New Employment Allocation / Open Space” with policies DM19 and DM8 applying. The primary aim of Policy DM19 is to look to retain the employment use of the site where appropriate. As the substation seeks to enhance the sustainability operation of the Neighbouring Aldi distribution centre site, the proposal would fully comply with the overarching aims of Policy DM19.

As the proposal would be considered development on an open space (Policy DM8), the context of this needs to be fully considered. The proposal seeks to erect a small substation on an expansive piece of land that is already occupied by a solar farm. The purpose of the substation is solely to assist in the transfer of sustainable energy generated from the solar farm to the Aldi site adjoining. The location of the proposed substation is fully within the solar farm site, not adjoining any sensitive receptors and fully screened by the PV panels to the north, tree lined boundary to the west and hedgerows to the adjoining field to the south. The considerate location of the proposal along with the highly sustainable function of the proposal should be considered at the forefront

of the assessment of the proposal. As such, the proposal is fully compliant with the site's designation, both Policy DM19 and DM8 of the site allocations plan.

There is emerging planning policy in Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, however as this is still at the very early stages, the material published thus far at the time of writing this cover letter, has not been considered materially in the assessment of this application.

Supporting Information

The following supporting plans and documents have been submitted in support of this application:

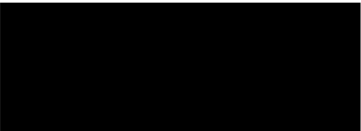
- Planning Cover letter dated 20th March February 2024;
- Application forms, duly signed and completed;
- Application fee: £642.00 (including service charge)
- Site Location Plan (Ref. dated 11.03.2024);
- Existing and Proposed Elevations (Ref. TR7);
- Sample photos 1 & 2

Summary

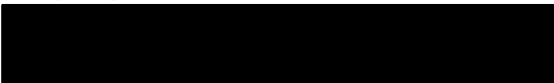
In summary, this application seeks consent for the erection of a substation at the existing Nailstone Solar farm site. The proposal has come about, in order to serve the transfer of energy produced from the solar farm site to the neighbouring Aldi Distribution Centre, providing green energy to the operation of the distribution centre. The proposal seeks to reduce the carbon output of the existing employment operations in the area, whilst ensuring the sustained economic performance associated with the distribution centre. Therefore, this proposal fully aligns with all aspects of national and local policy related to the local and national economy and also the goals and aims of reducing the carbon footprint within the borough. Furthermore, the type, design and dimensions of the substation is a standardised fixed configuration, and the location of the substation has been carefully considered to avoid negatively impacting on any sensitive receptors.

As such, I trust the information provided within this submission is sufficient to validate and determine the application without delay. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,



Danny Cremen
Planner



For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited