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Planning Department
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(via Planning Portal only)

27 April 2023

Dear sir or madam,

Re; Land at Hall Farm Solar Farm, Hall Farm, Main Street, Newbold Vernon, Leicester, LE9 9NL

18/01243/CONDIT: NMA application relating to changes to approved details (Phase II)

Introduction

We are writing to you in connection with the above operational solar farm to apply for s96 Non-Material Amendments (NMA) to planning permission 18/01243/CONDIT. The original planning consent for the solar farm was granted under 14/00660/FUL.

We are acting on behalf of the applicant, NextPower Bosworth Limited, who own and operate Phase II of the solar farm. They have identified following a recent audit of the operational solar farm, there are a number of minor changes to the approved layout that need regularisation under this NMA application.

It should be noted that the solar farm has been constructed in two discrete phases. This application (and the associated S73 application) relates to Phase II only (northern field, and eastern fields either side of the PROW – see submitted diagram). Phase I is located on the field in the south-west of the overall area of development. For clarity, the plans and drawings relating to Phase I are not affected, so there are no direct drawing/plan replacements.

Planning History

The following summarises what is understood to be the history of planning permissions and associated approvals:

- 14/00660/FUL. Erection of a 10MW solar farm and associated infrastructure. Granted 03.06.2015

Following a review of the operational solar farm in January 2023, it was concluded that there are a number of minor inconsistencies with the approved module layout (as detailed above), that need to be regularised and approved under this application.

Proposed Amendments

- CCTV Cameras and poles. It is apparent that the actual number of timber CCTV poles has reduced from 26No to 11No. The height of each pole is 2.5m however, and the actual number of cameras on each pole ranges between 3No to 4no per pole. The actual locations of the poles appear also to differ also from the consented plan under 18/01243/CONDIT. Please refer to *Security System Layout, HLF-CS-02 (Revision 1, dated 13/09/19)* and *CCTV Pole (Revision A1, dated 05/04/2023)*.
- Internal access tracks. The internal access tracks constructed to provide access to the individual solar park areas vary from the approved layout as detailed under 18/01243/CONDIT. Please refer to *General Layout, HLF-GL-01 (Revision 3 dated 15/04/20)* which provides further detail as to the setting out of the access roads within the solar park. The new tracks have been constructed within the central area of the park and provide improved access to the areas within the eastern half of the solar farm.
- Fences and gates. The installed 2.1m high deer fence is in line with the approved perimeter fence (plan reference JT04/P008). The double entrance access gates are also broadly consistent with this plan. The timber slatted fence feature either side of the entrance gates is slightly different from this approved plan, however this is considered *de minimis*. Should the LPA require an up to date drawing for completeness, this can be provided upon request.
- PV table racking system. The installed metal tables that accommodate the solar panels (four in landscape format) are broadly consistent with the approved racking system as detailed under plan JT04/PA004A. However, there are minor changes in the actual height of the table at the front and rear of each table. The approved height at the front of the table is detailed at 800mm whereas it has been built at minimum height of 720mm. The rear of the table is approved at 1800mm but on site it has been built at maximum height of 1900mm. Please refer to *Racking Detail (Revision A1, dated 13/04/2023)* to show the change in height.
- String Inverters. These small box-like structures have been installed underneath the PV panels (attached to the racking system) at the rear of every third row. Owing to their relatively small size they are not overtly visible but they do form part of the wider installation of the solar farm. Please refer to plan reference *Combiner Box Mounting Detail, HLF-ME-02 (Revision 1, dated 13/09/19)* to confirm position and location on these units on the racking system.

Planning Review & Analysis

The proposed changes as detailed above are relatively inconspicuous and modest in scale and nature. It is our belief that such variations and amendments to the approved layout can be considered under the s96 application. The proposed changes are not visually intrusive and do impact on the wider setting of the rural landscape in this area.

It is considered that the changes are necessary to help in the efficient running and operation of the solar farm. The proposed changes will not harm existing levels of ecology, flood risk or heritage

impacts. Furthermore, the proposed changes will not impact on the adjacent road network serving the solar farm.

Conclusion

We are of the opinion that the proposed changes are acceptable and are non-material. The overall impact on the surrounding area is negligible and will not harm the character and setting of the surrounding environment.

We hope that the above explanation of our proposals are clear and acceptable to your Officers. If you need any further explanation or you have any further questions or queries please do not hesitate to contact me at the address detailed above.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature]

James Jamieson
Planning & Development Manager

[Redacted contact information]