

MAIN CASE

Proposal: Detailed planning application to construct solar farm (12 MW) comprising of up to 50,000 panels and associated works (inverter cabins, transformers, DNO building, communications building, security measures and landscaping) at Triangle Farm, Soham

Location: Triangle Farm Angle Common Soham Ely Cambridgeshire CB7 5HX

Applicant: Cambridgeshire County Council

Agent: Savills (UK) Ltd

Reference No: 14/00779/FUM

Case Officer: Rebecca Saunt

Parish: Soham
Ward: Soham South
Ward Councillor/s: Councillor Hamish Ross
Councillor Tony Parramint
Councillor Colin Fordham

Date Received: 9 July 2014 Expiry Date:

[P88]**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the construction of a solar farm capable of generating up to 12 MW of electricity, on land to the south west of Triangle Farm in Soham. The application site covers an area of 28.5 hectares and is located to the west of Soham.
- 1.2 This proposal is of a significant scale, to be considered as a large scale renewable energy scheme, which at Full Council on the 4th September 2014, it was agreed by Members to be considered by Planning Committee, and as such it has been brought before the Planning Committee for determination.
- 1.3 The main issues for consideration are:
- The principle of development in the countryside and the policy issues surrounding renewable energy development;
 - The impact on visual amenity and the character of the countryside;
 - The impact on residential amenity;
 - The impact on nearby heritage assets;

- The impact on ecology and biodiversity;
- The possible loss of agricultural land;
- Highways issues; and
- Flood risk, pollution control and drainage issues.

1.4 A renewable energy development of this scale will make an important contribution to the Government's aim of reducing carbon dioxide emissions, and Local and National Policy are supportive of such schemes. It is considered that a countryside location is appropriate for this proposal and the temporary loss of agricultural land involved is acceptable. Any adverse effects in relation to visual amenity would be successfully mitigated through existing and proposed landscaping. There would be no adverse effects on residential amenity, heritage assets, flood risk or protected species and the proposal would result in biodiversity enhancements through the proposed landscaping scheme. The Local Highways Authority have requested additional information, this has been submitted by the applicant and Highways have advised that their concerns can easily be overcome, but no further response has been received. The application is recommended for APPROVAL, subject to the Local Highways Authority confirming that the additional information is acceptable, the conditions attached to this report and any conditions recommended by the Local Highways Authority.

1.5 **A Site visit has been arranged for 11.50am, prior to the Planning Committee meeting.**

2.0 **THE APPLICATION**

2.1 The application seeks permission for a solar farm which would generate a peak capacity of 12 MW of electricity and consist of up to 50,000 panels and associated works including inverter cabins, transformers, Designated Network Operator (DNO) building, communications building, security measures and landscaping.

2.2 The panels would be set within frames of 40 which would cover an area of approximately 27ha (excluding the access road), contained within existing field boundaries and would be laid out in arrays of rows running from east to west across the application site. The free standing solar panels would be constructed from toughened glass set in an aluminium frame and would be positioned at a 25 degree angle facing south, with a maximum height of 2.5 metres above ground level at the rear top edge. The panels are composed of modules with a dark blue/grey appearance and have limited reflectivity and minimal glare. The rows of panels would be set back from the site boundaries and there would also be a separation of 4-6 metres between each row, to ensure no overshadowing. The panels would be mounted close to the ground and fixed into position through piles driven into the ground. No concrete foundations are required.

2.3 12 small inverter cabins would be positioned at strategic locations throughout the site as shown on the 'Proposed Site Layout' plan submitted with the application. The majority of these would be located through the centre of the site. The inverter cabins would be 6.3 metres by 4.4 metres, with a height of 3.1 metres. The inverter cabins would feed a series of field transformers, which would have a footprint of 2.4 metres x 2.9 metres, with a height of 2.3 metres.

- 2.4 A DNO building which would provide the circuit breaker and other features which are necessary for the safety and maintenance of the site, a communications room and an auxiliary transformer would be situated adjacent to the southern boundary of the site. The DNO building would be 6.3 metres by 4.4 metres, with a maximum height of 3 metres, the communications room 7.2 metres x 3 metres with a maximum height of 2.4 metres and the auxiliary transformer 6.1 metres x 2.5 metres, with a maximum height of 2.6 metres.
- 2.5 A 2 metre high mesh security fence would be situated around the site of the solar arrays, which would include gates to allow wildlife to move across the site. CCTV cameras would also be erected on 3 metre poles at various intervals along the fencing to allow remote monitoring of the site.
- 2.6 Access to the site would utilise the existing highway network and would be from Mill Drove, then along existing farm tracks. 3 access points into the site would also be provided from the existing farm track, these would lead to a stone track that would serve the site.
- 2.7 The solar farm would link into the national grid by connecting into the power lines which pass over the site.
- 2.8 The planning application is supported by a number of plans and reports:
- Planning Statement;
 - Design and Access Statement;
 - Heritage Statement;
 - Flood Risk Assessment;
 - Ecological Appraisal and Protected Species Survey;
 - Landscape Proposals;
 - Proposed Site Access and Passing Bay Arrangement (Drawing No. N681/01);
 - Construction Traffic Management Statement;
 - Site Location Plan;
 - Proposed Site Layout (Drawing No. 308/416/001)
 - Ground Mount Panel Array, Deer Fence and Gate Elevations, Communications Building, Switch Room Building, Inverter Compound and Transformer Details (Drawing No.'s 308/416/002 – 011);
 - Landscape and Visual Appraisal;
 - Agricultural Land Classification Report;
 - Archaeological Evaluation Report.
- 2.9 All of the above documents are available to view online via East Cambridgeshire District Council's Public Access online service, via the following link <http://pa.eastcamb.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

3.0 THE APPLICANT'S CASE

3.1 The Applicant's case is set out in the Design and Access Statement, which can be viewed online via East Cambridgeshire District Council's Public Access online service, via the following link <http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/>. Alternatively a paper copy is available to view at the East Cambridgeshire District Council offices, on the application file.

3.2 The Design and Access Statement concludes that the *'overall scheme is considered appropriate for the locality and to provide a beneficial contribution to the renewable energy requirements including District, National and European Targets.....It is concluded that the scheme provides an appropriate design, enabling the development of a high quality renewable energy project with suitable mitigation and enhancements also proposed.'*

4.0 THE SITE AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

4.1 The site is located within the Parish of Soham, located outside the settlement boundary in the countryside, to the south west of Triangle Farm and to the west of Soham. The site comprises a block of 5 flat arable fields, with field boundaries marked by existing hedgerows and deep drainage ditches. The Agricultural Land Classification Report submitted with the application classifies the land as Grade 3b.

4.2 The site covers a total area of 28.5 ha (70.4 acres) and is surrounded by agricultural fields. The nearest properties are located at Triangle Farm, which are situated 200 metres to the north of the site and the applicant has advised that the site was selected because of its relatively isolated location away from residential properties and public vantage points. The site is screened by existing hedgerows and the railway line to the East.

4.3 A Public Right of Way (PRoW) known as Drove Lane passes to the south of the site, outside the site application area.

5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

5.1

13/00880/SCREEN	SCREENING OPINION - Solar Farm	29.10.2013
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6.0 REPLIES TO CONSULTATIONS

6.1 Neighbours

- Site notice was posted and letters were sent to 2 neighbouring properties. In addition, an advertisement was published in the Cambridge Evening News. Two contributors responded and both objected to the proposal.
 - 5 Richmond Road, Cambridge – The application is being submitted after the deadline for such applications. It is grade 3 agricultural land consisting of 5 intensely managed fields. Agricultural land should be

used for producing food crops and solar panels such be erected elsewhere.

- 53 Hertford Street, Cambridge – Inappropriate use of public money. Ignores the immorality of urbanising the countryside. Such farms have negative Net Present Value over the lifetime of the project. The scheme is too late for subsidy.

6.2 Parish Council

- Raised concerns over the loss of agricultural land and the benefits to Soham residents.
- An appropriate S106 agreement that benefits the town is essential.

6.3 English Heritage

- No comments to make.
- Recommended that the application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of the conservation officers' advice.

6.4 Conservation Officer

- The nature of the development, combined with the existing topography and landscaping will result in no harm being caused to the significance of the designated heritage assets.
- The site is located at a sufficient distance and is well screened by existing and proposed landscaping that there will be minimal impact on the wider setting of the heritage assets. No objection from a conservation viewpoint.

6.5 County Council Highways

- Raised concerns over the lack of clarity of the documents submitted as it is unclear if highway improvements are to be made to the junction to enable large vehicles to turn, and also whether the passing bays shown on the plan are proposed or existing.
- The condition of the junction and passing bays (if existing) will need to be assessed to ascertain if they can stand up to the rigours of construction traffic.
- Requested an amended plan detailing proposed works.

6.6 Middle Fen & Mere Internal Drainage Board

- Object to the proposal until full details of the drainage of the site are submitted.
- Water from this site is drained into the Board's Main Drain system and down to their Henny Pumping Station, where water is pumped into Soham Lode. Failure of the pump could lead to this site flooding. It appears from the FRA that this aspect of surface water drainage has not been understood or considered.

6.7 Environmental Health

- No objections.

- Recommend the times of construction and deliveries should be limited to 07:00-18:30 Monday-Friday and 07:00-12:30 Saturdays.

6.8 Environment Agency

- No objections.
- The FRA is appropriate to the scale and nature of the development.
- Although the site is shown to be in Flood Zone 3 it is also considered to be within an Area Benefitting from Flood Defences.
- Any source of flooding would potentially be from the IDB's minor watercourses and drains and would only be relatively shallow at worse case scenario.
- The FRA does propose a drainage scheme that appears prudent for the location.
- Recommend a suitable ground inspection regime is provided which can enable long term monitoring of the drainage at the same time as the panels are monitored.

6.9 Natural England

- No objections.
- Unlikely to affect any statutorily protected sites or landscapes.
- Natural England haven't assessed the impacts on protected species but their Standing Advice on protected species should be applied.
- Unlikely to lead to significant and irreversible long term loss of best and most versatile agricultural land, as a resource for generations. In the short-term there will be a loss of potential agricultural production over the development area.
- Advise that any best and most versatile land issues are considered in accordance with Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (March 2014 – in particular paragraph 013).
- Recommend that relevant parts of Defra's Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites are followed to protect soils.
- Applicant should be encouraged to prepare a habitat creation plan.
- If located on or adjacent to a local site then sufficient information should be provided on the impact on the local site.
- Securing measures to enhance the biodiversity of the site should be considered.
- May provide opportunities to enhance the character and local distinctiveness of the surrounding natural and built environment; use natural resources more sustainably; and bring benefits for the local community, for example through green space provision and access to and contact with nature.

6.10 Ministry of Defence

- No objections.

6.11 NATS Safeguarding

- No objections.

6.12 Architectural Liaison Officer

- No objections.

7.0 THE PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009

CS1	Spatial Strategy
CS6	Environment
CS8	Access
S6	Transport impact
EN1	Landscape and settlement character
EN2	Design
EN3	Sustainable construction and energy efficiency
EN4	Renewable energy
EN5	Historic conservation
EN6	Biodiversity and geology
EN7	Flood risk
EN8	Pollution

7.2 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan Pre-submission version (*as amended June 2014*)

GROWTH 2	Locational strategy
GROWTH 5	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
ENV 1	Landscape and settlement character
ENV 2	Design
ENV 6	Renewable energy development
ENV 7	Biodiversity and geology
ENV 8	Flood risk
ENV 9	Pollution
ENV 12	Listed Buildings
ENV 14	Sites of archaeological interest
COM 7	Transport impact

7.3 Supplementary Planning Documents

DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT ON RENEWABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT (COMMERCIAL SCALE)

8.0 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT POLICY

8.1 National Planning Policy Framework 2012

7	Requiring good design
10	Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
11	Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
12	Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

8.2 Technical Guide to the National Planning Policy Framework

9.0 PLANNING COMMENTS

9.1 The application site is approximately 28.5 hectares, with the PV array covering a significant proportion of the site. In view of the scale and nature of the development and the potential for it to have a significant effect on the landscape the applicant submitted a request for a Screening Opinion under Regulation 5 of the Town and County Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 prior to the submission of the application. The Council considered that the proposed scheme did not constitute EIA Development and therefore an Environmental Statement was not required in support of this planning application.

9.2 Both Local and National Planning Policy support the creation of renewable energy developments such as solar farms. The policy framework is such that local authorities should approve applications for renewable energy proposals unless there are material planning considerations that would outweigh public benefit associated with the development.

9.3 In considering this particular proposal the principle of renewable energy in this countryside location and the policy issues surrounding renewable development are discussed before going on to assess each of the relevant material considerations.

The principle of development in the countryside and the policy issues surrounding renewable energy development

9.4 The application site is located outside the settlement of Soham on land designated as countryside in the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009. Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy strictly controls new development in the countryside, restricting it to that which is essential to the efficient operation of local agricultural, horticulture, outdoor recreation and limited other uses specified within the Core Strategy.

9.5 Policy CS1 of the Core Strategy does not specifically identify renewable energy as a type of development that would be acceptable in countryside locations. However, policy GROWTH 2: LOCATIONAL STRATEGY, of the East Cambridgeshire Draft Local Plan (as amended June 2014) highlights renewable energy development as one of the types of development which may be permitted as an exception to the usual strict control over development in the countryside.

9.6 Both policy EN4 of the Core Strategy and policy ENV6 of the draft Local Plan state that proposals for renewable energy development will be supported unless their wider environmental, social and economic benefits would be outweighed by significant adverse effects that cannot be remediated and made acceptable.

9.7 In this case, the main material considerations which must be considered are: the impact on visual amenity and the character of the countryside; the impact on residential amenity; the impact on nearby heritage assets; the impact on ecology and biodiversity; the loss of agricultural land; highways issues; and, flood risk and drainage issues.

The impact on visual amenity and the character of the countryside

9.8 The application site is located in the countryside and the surrounding land is in agricultural use, predominately arable. The land is flat and relatively remote, but can

be accessed by public rights of way, which would allow close views of the application site. However, the close views to the west are shielded by existing hedging and trees on the boundary and the applicant has proposed additional tree, native scrub and hedge planting. The arrays would also be positioned 'sideways' on to the public view, helping to minimise the impact of the proposal. The hedging is not so dense on the eastern boundary. However, this would also be mitigated by additional tree, native scrub and hedge planting. Existing hedges and trees around the site and between individual fields would help protect views from the north of the site. The view from Wicken Road, to the south of the site would also be obstructed by existing trees and hedges.

- 9.9 The applicant has submitted a detailed Landscape and Visual Appraisal with the application which examines the potential impacts on the landscape character and features of the site, the local and wider landscape character and changes to views. The appraisal concludes that the development is generally visually well contained from public viewpoints in summer and winter by existing native hedges on the site boundary intervening vegetation. The proposed landscaping would ensure a continuous boundary hedge and deliver benefits to a range of wildlife.
- 9.10 It is considered that due to the remote location of the site, the existing trees and hedges and the proposed additional tree, native scrub and hedge planting any adverse impacts on the character of the countryside would be mitigated, especially when viewed in the context of the existing pylons which dominate the skyline and countryside in this area. As such, in terms of visual impact, it is considered that a solar farm could be accommodated within the site and the proposal and would meet the requirements of policies EN1 and EN2 of the Core Strategy.

The impact on residential amenity

- 9.11 The land surrounding the application site is predominantly undeveloped. However there are some residential properties within 200 metres, located to the north of the site at Triangle Farm.
- 9.12 The Environmental Health Officer has confirmed that they have no concerns to raise with the operation phase of the development as all the plant appears to be contained within buildings and the inverters and other buildings proposed are a greater distance from nearby properties. The solar panels will also be facing in a southerly direction, so will therefore be away from the nearest properties.
- 9.13 The applicant anticipates the construction of the site to take a 16 week period, during which the panels will be delivered to the site on HGV lorries. The Environmental Health Officer has advised that there may be possible impacts from construction traffic, so have advised that limiting the times of construction and deliveries during this phase to those requested within the applicants Construction Management Statement, dated July 2014, to ensure minimal impact on residential amenity during the construction phase.
- 9.14 Once up and running the solar farm would have no adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity. No floodlighting would be used in connection with the security cameras and there would be very little additional traffic generated by the development during its operational phase. The application is therefore considered to

be acceptable in terms of the impacts on residential amenity and complies with policy EN2 of the Core Strategy.

The impact on nearby heritage assets and archaeology

- 9.15 Policy EN5 of the Core Strategy aims to ensure that development proposals do not have an adverse impact on the historic environment.
- 9.16 The applicant has assessed the two main heritage assets (St Andrews Church and Soham Conservation Area) that are likely to be affected by the proposal within their Heritage Statement. English Heritage have raised no objections to the proposal and advised the application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of our specialist conservation advice. The Conservation Officer has raised no objections to the proposal and has advised that the nature of the development, combined with the existing topography and landscaping and sufficient distance from the heritage assets will result in no harm being caused to the significance of the designated heritage assets.
- 9.17 An Archaeological Evaluation Report was submitted with the application and the Cambridgeshire County Historic Environment Officer has advised that the report demonstrated a lack of surface deposits on the site, from which it can be concluded that the area lay outside the edge of the mere and was not affected by its sedimentation. Therefore, there is no archaeological evidence of significance in this proposed development area and no further archaeological work will be required in connection with this proposal.
- 9.18 It is therefore considered that the application is acceptable in terms of the impact of heritage assets and is in compliance with policy EN5 of the Core Strategy.

The impact on ecology and biodiversity

- 9.19 Policies ES6 and EN6 of the Draft Local Plan and Core Strategy respectively, seek to ensure that the impact on wildlife is minimised and that opportunities for biodiversity enhancement are taken.
- 9.20 There are no sites with international designations or sites of national importance within a 1500 metre radius of the site. There is one Local Wildlife Site, Mere Side Grasslands County Wildlife Site, which is situated 1500 metres from the centre of the application site. The local planning authority is satisfied that the proposal would have no adverse effects on this site. Natural England has confirmed that they have no objections with the application in terms of statutory protected sites or landscapes.
- 9.21 The applicant has submitted an Ecological Appraisal and Protected Species survey which incorporates a desk top study, Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and a Water Vole Survey. This identifies the habitat types present and establishes the likely presence or absence of protected species. The Phase 1 ecological appraisal identified the presence of, or potential for a variety of birds, water voles and bats. However, the assessment submitted with the application concludes that the impact of the development is considered to be 'Minor Adverse-Minor Beneficial' providing the proposal includes the recommended mitigation measures set out in the report, which include the introduction of owl nesting boxes and the erection of bat boxes. It

is recommended that these mitigation measures set out in the report are conditioned.

- 9.22 This proposal provides an opportunity to improve the biodiversity of the land and incorporate features into the design which are beneficial to wildlife. Policy EN6 of the Core Strategy states that development proposals should maximise opportunities for creation, restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats, and this reflects national planning policy.
- 9.23 With the use of appropriate conditions, outlined above, it is considered that the application is acceptable in terms of the impact on ecology and biodiversity and is in compliance with policy EN6 of the Core Strategy.

The possible loss of agricultural land

- 9.24 The application site is currently in agricultural production as part of Triangle Farm, which is located to the West of Soham. Land is classified into one of five grades, Grade 1 is land of excellent quality and Grade 5 is very poor. The National Agricultural Land Classification Map shows the area as comprising Grade 3 agricultural land. However, the maps are not sufficiently detailed to allow a field-by-field assessment, and that could only be achieved through detailed Agricultural Land Classification Survey. The applicant has submitted an Agricultural Land Classification Survey with the application which concludes that the site is Graded 3b.
- 9.25 There are no relevant Core Strategy or draft Local Plan policies relating to the loss of agricultural land. However, paragraph 112 of the NPPF states that “*where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality*”. The applicant has advised that the land is poor and can only be used for certain crops, therefore as the land is classified as 3b the loss of it is not considered to be a significant issue. The solar panels would also allow for grazing to be established around the panels, once they are constructed on the site.
- 9.26 The proposed development does not result in the irreversible development of agricultural land and the development will either be decommissioned after the initial 25 year period or returned to agricultural use or the applicant has advised that permission would be sought to extend the life of the site for a further number of years. The installation of the panels would also have no adverse effect on the soil quality and potential future agricultural use of the land. It is therefore considered that the temporary loss of this land for intensive agricultural purposes would not outweigh the public benefit associated with renewable energy generation.

Highways issues

- 9.27 The operational phase of the solar farm would result in very few additional traffic movements to and from the site. It is expected that a light vehicle (van or 4x4) will access the site once a fortnight when operational for maintenance purposes, as the site will be monitored remotely through the telecommunications network. However, there would be more significant traffic generation during the construction and decommissioning phases.

9.28 The Highways Officer has reviewed the proposals and has requested additional information in relation to the proposed highway improvements made to the junction to enable large vehicles to turn and also details of the passing bays. Additional information has been submitted to County Highways by the applicant but at present no further response has been received. Members will be updated on the highway concerns at Planning Committee and any recommended conditions would be appended to the conditions outlined within this report.

Flood risk, drainage and pollution control

9.29 Policy EN7 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure that proposals are not at risk of flooding and would not cause flood risk elsewhere. The majority of the application site is situated within Flood Zone 3, but is also considered to be within an Area Benefitting from Flood Defences. The Environment Agency has advised that the Flood Risk Assessment submitted with the application is appropriate for the scale and nature of the development at this location and they have raised no objections to the proposal and require no conditions.

9.30 The IDB raised an objection to the proposal and additional information was submitted by the applicant. The IDB have advised that the additional information submitted in the Flood Risk Assessment addresses their concerns and their objection has now been withdrawn.

9.31 The proposal would raise no adverse effects in terms of flooding or pollution and the IDB and EA have no objections. The development is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of the impacts on flood risk and drainage and complies with policy EN7 of the Core Strategy.

Other Issues

9.32 Two neighbour objections were received which raised concerns in relation to the loss of agricultural land, which has been addressed above. The other comments raised included the inappropriate use of public money, such farms have negative Net Present Value over the lifetime of the project and that the scheme is too late for subsidy. These issues raised are not material planning considerations and have therefore not been assessed as part of this application.

9.33 The Parish Council also commented that an appropriate S106 agreement that benefits the town is essential as part of the proposal. Planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

9.34 In this instance it is not considered that a S106 agreement would meet the above tests and therefore it has not been sought,

Summary

9.35 A renewable energy development of this scale will make an important contribution to the Government's aim of reducing carbon dioxide emissions, and Local and National Policy are therefore generally supportive of such schemes. It is considered

that a countryside location is appropriate for this proposal and the temporary loss of agricultural land involved is acceptable.

9.36 Having had regard to all of the information submitted, consultation responses and additional reports and assessments it is considered that there would be no adverse effects on visual or residential amenity, floodrisk or pollution or protected species and the proposal would result in biodiversity enhancements, through landscaping that would encourage a wider range of flora and fauna to the site. There are some outstanding concerns relating to highway safety from County Highways. However, County Highways have advised that these concerns can be overcome and additional information has been submitted by the applicant and Members will be updated at Planning Committee.

9.37 The application is recommended for Approval subject to:

- The County Council as Highway Authority confirming that the additional information submitted by the applicant is acceptable.

10.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

RECOMMENDATION: That Approval be Delegated to the Planning Manager, at a later date, subject to the County Council as Highway Authority confirming that the additional information submitted by the applicant is acceptable, subject to the following conditions and any additional highway conditions: -

1 Development shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings and documents listed below

Plan Reference	Version No	Date Received
308/416/001		9th July 2014
308/416/002		9th July 2014
308/416/003		9th July 2014
308/416/004		9th July 2014
308/416/006		9th July 2014
308/416/007		9th July 2014
308/416/008		9th July 2014
308/416/009		9th July 2014
308/416/010		9th July 2014
308/416/011		9th July 2014
CONSTRUCTION TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT LOCATION PLAN		9th July 2014
N681/01		9th July 2014
LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS		9th July 2014
ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL		9th July 2014
FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT		9th July 2014
AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION		28th July 2014
LANDSCAPE & VISUAL APPRAISAL		28th July 2014

- 1 Reason: To define the scope and extent of this permission.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within 3 years of the date of this permission.
- 2 Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended.
- 3 The times of construction and deliveries during the construction and decommissioning phases of the development hereby approved shall be: 07:00 - 18:30 Monday to Friday and 07:00 - 12:30 on Saturdays.
- 3 Reason: To safeguard the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers, in accordance with policy EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 4 The proposed solar panels shall be constructed in strict accordance with the design shown on drawing number 308/416/002, and the panels shall be laid out in accordance with the submitted Proposed 50,000 Panel Site Layout Plan No. 308/416/001, subject to the following parameters:
 - Maximum panel height from ground level - 2.5 metres
 - Minimum distance between rows (measured panel to panel) - 4-6 metres
- 4 Reason: The proposed development has been deemed to be acceptable against the parameters set out above. To ensure that the development does not introduce any additional adverse effects in terms of its visual or ecological impact in accordance with policies EN1 and EN6 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 5 The approved boundary treatment shall be the 2 metre deer fencing with timber posts and wire mesh, shown on drawing number 308/416/003 and 308/416/004, and laid out in accordance with the details shown on the Proposed 50,000 Panel Site Layout Plan No. 308/416/001. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, (or any order amending, revoking or re-enacting that Order) no additional boundary treatments shall be erected on the site.
- 5 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the countryside, in accordance with policies CS1, EN1 and EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 6 Prior to the commencement of the development full details of the materials to be used for the Communications Building, DNO and Client Switch Room Building, Site AUX Transformer, SMA Inverter Compound and Transformer Compound and ancillary structures shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and agreed in writing. The buildings shall be constructed in

accordance with the details shown on drawing numbers 308/416/006, 308/416/007, 308/416/008, 308/416/009, 308/416/010 and 308/416/011 and located in accordance with the details on the Proposed 50,000 Panel Site Layout Plan No. 308/416/001.

- 6 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the countryside, in accordance with policies CS1, EN1 and EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 7 No CCTV cameras shall be erected within the site (either freestanding or building-mounted) other than those expressly authorised within this application, shown on drawing number 308/416/005 and located in accordance with the details on the Proposed 50,000 Panel Site Layout Plan No. 308/416/001.
- 7 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the countryside, in accordance with policies CS1, EN1 and EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 8 No lights shall be erected within the site (either freestanding or building mounted) other than those expressly authorised within this application.
- 8 Reason: To safeguard the character and appearance of the countryside and to prevent potential adverse effects on protected species, in accordance with policies CS1, EN1, EN2 and EN6 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 9 The proposed soft landscaping works shall be completed in accordance with the details specified on drawing 'Landscape Proposals' dated July 2014, during the first planting season following the commencement of development.
- 9 Reason: To assimilate the development into its surroundings, in accordance with policy EN1 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 10 No development shall take place until a scheme for the maintenance of the soft landscaping for a minimum period of 5 years has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of the methods for the proposed maintenance regime, a detailed schedule, and details of who will be responsible for its continuing implementation. The soft landscaping shall be maintained in accordance with the agreed scheme.
- 11 The development shall be completed in accordance with the 'Conclusions and Recommendations' sections of the Ecological Appraisal and Protected Species Survey that accompanies the planning application, dated March 2014.

- 11 Reason: To ensure that the protected species on site are adequately protected, in accordance with policies EN1 and EN2 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 12 Prior to the commencement of the development an environmental management plan shall be submitted to the local planning authority and agreed in writing. The plan shall cover the entire lifespan of the development and identify who will be responsible for the ongoing management of the existing and newly created habitats. Once agreed the management of the site shall be undertaken in strict accordance with the details contained with the plan.
- 12 Reason: To conserve and enhance the habitats within the site, to improve biodiversity in accordance with policy EN6 of the East Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.
- 13 Should the solar panels not be used for the production of energy for a period of six months, the panels, support structures and associated buildings and all associated electrical cabling above and below ground, shall be removed in their entirety and the land shall be restored to its former condition in accordance with a scheme of work submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 13 Reason: To prevent the retention of development in the countryside that is not being used for its intended purpose in accordance with policy CS1 and EN1 of the Cambridgeshire Core Strategy 2009.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location(s)</u>	<u>Contact Officer(s)</u>
14/00779/FUM Application File http://pa.eastcambs.gov.uk/online-applications/	Rebecca Saunt Room No. 011 The Grange Ely	Rebecca Saunt Senior Planning Officer 01353 665555 rebecca.saunt@eastcambs.gov.uk
Screening Opinion	Rebecca Saunt	Rebecca Saunt
Draft Renewable Energy SPD	Stewart Patience The Grange Ely	Stewart Patience Forward Planning Officer 01353 665555

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/development-transport-committee-14012013>

Core Strategy

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/adoption-core-strategy>

Draft Local Plan

<http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/east-cambridgeshire-local-plan>