

Online Comment

Application H19-0329-24
Location Land East of Guanockgate Road Sutton St Edmund Spalding PE13 4PL
Proposal Temporary ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) farm with battery storage, substation and associated works.

Name Historic Environment Officer
Address Lincolnshire County Council Lancaster House 36 Orchard Street LN1 1XX

Date Submitted 09-05-24
For/Against Comments

Thanks for consulting us on this application,

There is little known archaeology within the vicinity of the proposed development area. However, roddon crests in the wider vicinity are known to contain areas of archaeological remains, due to these hard, sand and clay filled channels representing areas of 'high' or more solid ground within the wider fen landscape. An example of this can be seen from the major roddon to the east of the proposed development area (CHER ref. MCB24468, 03826 and MCB4671).

We are pleased that the applicant has submitted a Heritage Baseline and Impact Assessment, Archaeology Baseline, a Geoarchaeological Written Scheme of Investigation and a Written Scheme of Investigation for Geophysical Survey.

The development is for the erection of a new solar development, including battery storage and other associated infrastructure. This will include highly intrusive groundworks which will remove any surviving archaeological remains either wholly or in part. Currently there is insufficient specific information on the archaeological potential for the site and the extent of impact to buried archaeological remains from the proposed development.

The applicant's archaeological consultant sent to this section the results of the Geoarchaeological and Geophysical Survey. As a result, this section agreed a Design Brief dated April 2024 for Archaeological Evaluation in conjunction with the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team. The Brief should be responded to in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for submission to and approval by this section and the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Team prior to commencement of the Archaeological Evaluation.

Given the archaeological potential, but as yet unknown character and extent, I recommend that the applicant submits as part of this application: the results of a the Geoarchaeological and Geophysical Survey, the proposed trial trench evaluation Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for review, followed by the results of the trial trench evaluation, which may need to be followed by further archaeological mitigation if required to allow for the proposed development.

The trial trench evaluation will aim to determine the presence, absence, significance, extent depth and character of any archaeological remains which could be impacted by the proposed development as noted above.

Trenching results are also essential for effective risk management and to inform programme scheduling and budget management. Failing to do so could lead to unnecessary destruction of heritage assets, potential programme delays and excessive cost increases that could otherwise be avoided.

This information should be provided with the application so that an informed planning recommendation can be made and to meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs 200 and 211. Until the results of the required trial trench evaluation are submitted, this section cannot make an informed planning recommendation.

This will also help inform an appropriate mitigation strategy for the proposed impact if necessary and should permission be subsequently granted. Should a scheme of detailed work be required to mitigate construction impacts on archaeological remains identified during the evaluation, the scheme will be outlined in a further design brief for archaeological investigation.