Online Comment

Application	H22-0466-26
Location	Land in the Vicinity of Spalding Tee-Point Surfleet Seas End and Moulton Seas End
Proposal	Construction of the new Air Insulated Substation (AIS) - 400kV Weston Marsh Substation A, associated landscaping and environmental mitigation works, drainage, highways and other associated works.

Name	Gregory Watkinson, Principal Conservation Officer
Address	Council Offices Priory Road Spalding PE11 2XE

Date Submitted	18-06-26
For/Against	Comments

This proposal is for the latest aspect of the overall Weston Marsh, covering the construction of a new Air Insulated Substation (AIS) as well as associated landscaping, environmental migration works, drainage, highways and other associated works.

The proposed development is within visual range of several major designated heritage assets - The grade I listed Wykeham Chapel and the associated scheduled ancient monument, as well as Churchyard Cross, St Mary's Churchyard which is also a scheduled ancient monument in the grounds of a Grade I listed building.

The area also contains a substantial number of listed buildings and Non-Designated Heritage Assets (as outlaid in sections 5.2 and 5.3 of the Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment).

I am satisfied that for the most part, the scale and nature of the development is such that it would have a relatively innocuous effect on the historic environment setting of the great majority of these sites. However, a more substantial effect is identified as regards to Wykeham Chapel. Considering the cumulative effect of the overall development, there is a substantial alteration in the setting of the chapel, via the introduction of yet further heavy infrastructure into the landscape setting of the scheduled monument. As corroborated by the comments of Historic England, a sizeable portion of the significance of the asset is borne from the agrarian, rural setting, and so the introduction of large, modern energy infrastructure - of which this development contributes to further - into the setting will undoubtedly cause a form of harm to the setting of that asset.

I agree with the conclusion of Historic England by assigning that harm into the 'less than substantial harm' category, per para. 212 of the NPPF and agree that given the scale of the development and separation distances, that should be considered to be on the lower end of the 'less than substantial harm' scale. It will, however, necessitate a balanced judgement by the LPA as to whether the public benefits of this scheme outweigh that harm in accordance with para. 215 of the NPPF.

It should also be stated that per Policy 29(A.3) of the South and East Lincolnshire Local Plan, as harm has been identified to the setting of Wykeham Chapel, it must be asserted that the proposal fails to satisfy this requirement in that the proposal neither preserves or better reveals the significance of the asset. The failure, therefore, to fully satisfy Policy 29 of the SELLP should be given weight in the planning balance.

The applicant has satisfied Paras. 207 and 208 of the NPPF, and it falls upon us as the LPA to determine whether we believe that the proposal satisfies the remainder of the paras of Section 16. It is my view that, on the understanding that the LPA considers there to be substantial enough public benefit to outweigh the harm, per para. 215, that the proposal shall have satisfied Section 16 of the NPPF. On this understanding, I do not wish to raise any objections to the proposal at this time.