

Planning Committee Agenda

5 July 2022 at 7pm

Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Chelmsford

Membership

Councillor J A Sosin (Chair)

and Councillors

L Ashley, S Dobson, P Hughes, R J Hyland, J Lardge,
R Lee, G H J Pooley, R J Poulter, T E Roper,
E Sampson, C Shaw and I Wright

Local people are welcome to attend this meeting remotely, where your elected Councillors take decisions affecting YOU and your City.

There is also an opportunity to ask your Councillors questions or make a statement. These have to be submitted in advance and details are on the agenda page. If you would like to find out more, please telephone Brian Mayfield in the Democracy Team on Chelmsford (01245) 606923 email brian.mayfield@chelmsford.gov.uk

PLANNING COMMITTEE

5 July 2022

AGENDA

1. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members are reminded that they must disclose any interests they know they have in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they become aware of the interest. If the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they are also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting.

4. MINUTES

To consider the minutes of the meeting on 20 June 2022

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Any member of the public may ask a question or make a statement at this point in the meeting, provided that they have submitted their question or statement in writing in advance. Each person has two minutes and a maximum of 20 minutes is allotted to public questions/statements, which must be about matters for which the Committee is responsible. The Chair may disallow a question if it is offensive, substantially the same as another question or requires disclosure of exempt or confidential information. If the question cannot be answered at the meeting a written response will be provided after the meeting.

Where an application is returning to the Committee that has been deferred for a site visit, for further information or to consider detailed reasons for refusal, no further public questions or statements may be submitted.

Any member of the public who wishes to submit a question or statement to this meeting should email it to committees@chelmsford.gov.uk 24 hours before the start time of the meeting. All valid questions and statements will be published with the agenda on the website at least six hours before the start time and will be responded to at the meeting. Those who have submitted a valid question or statement will be entitled to put it in person at the meeting.

6. LAND WEST OF HILL FARM, PAN LANE, EAST HANNINGFIELD, CHELMSFORD – 21/00555/FUL

7. 17 THE STREET, LITTLE WALTHAM, CHELMSFORD – 22/00273/FUL AND 22/00634/LBC

8. PLANNING APPEALS

MINUTES
of the
PLANNING COMMITTEE
held on 20 June 2022 at 7:00pm

Present:

Councillor J A Sosin (Chair)

Councillors L Ashley, S Dobson, R J Hyland, R Lee, G H J Pooley,
R J Poulter, S Rajesh, T E Roper, E Sampson and I Wright

Also present: Councillor D Clark

1. Chair's Announcements

For the benefit of the public, the Chair explained the arrangements for the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Hughes and C Shaw. The latter had appointed Councillor S Rajesh as her substitute.

3. Declarations of Interest

All Members were reminded that they must disclose any interests they knew they had in items of business on the meeting's agenda and that they must do so at this point on the agenda or as soon as they became aware of the interest. If the interest was a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest they were also obliged to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting. Any declarations are recorded in the relevant minute below.

4. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 31 May 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

5. Public Question Time

A statement was made on the application at Item 6. Details are given under minute number 6 below.

6. Land North-West of Boreham Interchange, Chelmer Road, Boreham, Chelmsford – 22/00473/REM

The Committee considered an application for the approval of reserved matters for the development of a new railway station and associated development on land to the north-west of Boreham Interchange, Chelmer Road, Boreham, pursuant to Condition 7 of the outline planning permission 10/00021/EIA for the station granted in May 2013. Approval was also sought for the discharge of conditions associated with the outline planning permission relating to the treatment of the public realm, the distribution and size of commercial space, a tree report, an Ecological Management Plan, archaeological evaluation, completion of archaeological fieldwork and post-excavation assessment.

A representative of Network Rail, the applicant, attended the meeting to make a statement in support of the application.

Whilst supportive of the application, the Committee sought clarification on a number of aspects of the proposed development:

- Whether the concerns expressed by the Minerals Authority during the consultation on the application that traffic associated with the railway station could come into conflict with vehicles accessing the Bulls Lodge Quarry had been addressed.
The officers advised that the concerns raised by the Mineral Authority had been addressed by the imposition of a Grampian style condition, which meant that the secondary surface level car park could not be brought into use until such time as the future estate road serving the car park, the future Business Park and the quarry had been completed as it would not be acceptable for the car park to be accessed from the current quarry haul road. The Mineral Planning Authority had removed their objection in light of the proposed condition.
- How the number of parking spaces at the station had been determined; if the proposed provision of spaces proved to be insufficient, whether this could lead to commuters parking on residential streets in Springfield and Beaulieu; why the secondary car park was some distance from the station; and whether a drop-off/pick-up point would be provided within the station..
Officers said that the number of car parking spaces had been determined at the outline application stage in agreement with the County Highway Authority. The secondary car park was proposed to the east of the station site as at that stage it was proposed to be multi-storey and so it was necessary to ensure that on account of its height it did not intrude upon the existing views of Danbury Ridge. Network Rail had concluded that a surface car park would be preferable for cost reasons but also having regard to changes in working patterns. The size of the existing station site meant that it was not possible to provide all car parking in one location without adversely impacting upon the bus interchange, the taxi provision and the level of cycle storage. A drop-off and pick-up point was planned to be provided within the premium car park. Parking enforcement measures were already being introduced in residential roads within the Beaulieu development and there were already restrictions upon the length of time people could park at the neighbourhood centre to prevent commuter parking. All estate roads accommodated double yellow lines to prevent any form of parking.
- The provision of lighting and CCTV along the pedestrian and cycle paths to the station.

It was confirmed that this would be bollard lighting, designed to have a minimum impact on the local ecology and landscape. A condition would ensure that CCTV would cover the pedestrian and cycle routes and the cycle storage area.

- Where waiting rooms would be provided; whether there was potential for a Park and Ride site associated with the station; and what the name of the station would be. The Committee was informed that waiting areas would be provided on the station concourse and platforms, two-thirds of which would be covered. A bus link would be provided to the station but there were no plans at this stage for an associated Park and Ride facility. The name of the station was not a planning consideration and the matter should be raised outside of the meeting.
- To what extent the station would be screened by the proposed planting during its first few years and whether any preserved trees would be affected by the development. It was demonstrated to the Committee how the proposed tree planting and other landscaping would, over time, ensure that the visual impact of the station on the surrounding landscape was minimal. There was only one tree the subject of a preservation order in or near the development site and it would be preserved.
- Whether there had been an assessment of the number of people who would use the station and what effect its provision would have on the use of other nearby stations. Officers said that the estimates of usage had accompanied the outline planning application and were not referred to in the supporting information for this application; there had also been an assessment of the likely impact on neighbouring stations on the main line and branch line. It was clear, however, that one of the main benefits of the new station would be to alleviate pressure on the current station in the city centre and reduce the number of car journeys to and from it.

The Committee was of the view that the application was of a high quality, with a focus on excellent design, the protection of the landscape and the provision of sustainable transport, and concluded unanimously that the application should be granted.

RESOLVED that planning application 22/00473/REM in respect of land to the north-west of Boreham Interchange, Chelmer Road, Boreham, Chelmsford be approved subject to the conditions detailed in the report to the meeting.

(7.02pm to 8.00pm)

The meeting closed at 8.00pm

Chair

PLANNING POLICY BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Chelmsford Local Plan 2013 – 2016 was adopted by Chelmsford City Council on 27th May 2020. The Local Plan guides growth and development across Chelmsford City Council's area as well as containing policies for determining planning applications. The policies are prefixed by 'S' for a Strategic Policy or 'DM' for a Development Management policy and are applied across the whole of the Chelmsford City Council Area where they are relevant. The Chelmsford Local Plan 2013-3036 carries full weight in the consideration of planning applications.

SUMMARY OF POLICIES REFERRED TO IN THIS AGENDA

- NPDSGN** NPPF Part 12 Requiring good design Paragraph 126 states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Paragraph 134 states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents.
- DM7** Policy DM7 - New Build & Structure in the Green Wedge - Planning permission will be granted for new buildings and structures where the development does not conflict with the purposes of the Green Wedge designation and is for one of a number of prescribed developments. Planning permission will be granted for the redevelopment of previously developed land, replacement buildings and residential outbuildings subject to meeting prescribed criteria.
- DM8** Policy DM8 - New Build & Structures in the Rural Area - Planning permission will be granted for new buildings in the Rural Area where the development would not adversely impact on the identified intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and is for one of a number of prescribed developments. Planning permission will be granted for the redevelopment of previously developed land, replacement buildings and residential outbuildings subject to meeting prescribed criteria.
- DM10** Policy DM10 - Change of use (Land & Buildings) & Engineering operations - Planning permission will be granted for the change of use of buildings in the Green Belt, Green Wedges and Rural Area subject to the building being of permanent and substantial construction and where the building is in keeping with its surroundings. Engineering operations will be permitted within the Green Belt where they preserve openness, do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, and do not harm the character and appearance of the area. Changes of use of land will be permitted in the Green Wedges and Rural Area where the development would not adversely impact on the role, function and intrinsic character of the area.
- DM13** Policy DM13 - Designated Heritage Assets - The impact of any development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting, and the level of any harm, will be considered against any public benefits arising from the proposed development. The Council will preserve Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Monuments.
- DM14** Policy DM14 - Non-Designated Heritage Assets - Proposals will be permitted where they retain the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, including its setting. Any harm or loss will be judged against the significance of the asset.

- DM15** Policy DM15 - Archeology - Planning permission will be granted for development affecting archaeological sites providing it protects, enhances or preserves sites of archaeological interest and their settings.
- DM16** Policy DM16 - Ecology & Biodiversity - The impact of a development on Internationally Designated Sites, Nationally Designated Sites and Locally Designated Sites will be considered in line with the importance of the site. With National and Local Sites, this will be balanced against the benefits of the development. All development proposals should conserve and enhance the network of habitats, species and sites.
- DM17** Policy DM17 - Trees, Woodland & Landscape Features - Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals that do not result in unacceptable harm to the health of a preserved tree, trees in a Conservation Area or Registered Park and Garden, preserved woodlands or ancient woodlands. Development proposals must not result in unacceptable harm to natural landscape features that are important to the character and appearance of the area.
- DM18** Policy DM18 - Flooding/Suds - Planning permission for all types of development will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the site is safe from all types of flooding. All major developments will be required to incorporate water management measures to reduce surface water run off and ensure that it does not increase flood risk elsewhere.
- DM19** Policy DM19 - Renewable & Low Carbon Energy - Planning permission will be granted for renewable or low carbon energy developments subject to their impact on residential amenity, the historic and natural environment, visual impact and highway safety.
- DM23** Policy DM23 - High Quality & Inclusive Design - Planning permission will be granted for development that respects the character and appearance of the area in which it is located. Development must be compatible with its surroundings having regard to scale, siting, form, architecture, materials, boundary treatments and landscape. The design of all new buildings and extensions must be of high quality, well proportioned, have visually coherent elevations, active elevations and create safe, accessible and inclusive environments.
- DM27** Policy DM27 - Parking Standards - The Council will have regard to the vehicle parking standards set out in the Essex Parking Standards - Design and Good Practice (2009) or as subsequently amended when determining planning applications.
- DM29** Policy DM29 - Protecting Living & Working Environments - Development proposals must safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of any nearby residential property by ensuring that development is not overbearing and does not result in unacceptable overlooking or overshadowing. Development must also avoid unacceptable levels of polluting emissions, unless appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place and permanently maintained.
- DM30** Policy DM30 - Contamination & Pollution - Permission will only be granted for developments on or near to hazardous land where the Council is satisfied there will be no threat to the health or safety of future users and there will be no adverse impact on the quality of local groundwater or surface water. Developments must also not have an unacceptable impact on air quality and the health and wellbeing of people.
- VDS** Sets out the local community's view on the character and design of the local area. New development should respect its setting and contribute to its environment.
- SPS1** Strategic Policy S1 Spatial Principles - The Spatial Principles will guide how the Strategic Priorities and Vision will be achieved. They will underpin spatial planning decisions and ensure that the Local Plan focuses growth in the most sustainable locations.

- SPS2** Strategic Policy S2 Addressing Climate Change & Flood Risk - The Council, through its planning policies and proposals that shape future development will seek to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Council will require that all development is safe, taking into account its expected life span, from all types of flooding.
- SPS3** Strategic Policy S3 Conserving & Enhancing the Historic Environment - The Council will conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment. When assessing applications for development , the Council will place great weight on the preservation and enhancement of designated heritage assets and their setting. The Council will also seek to conserve and where appropriate enhance the significance of non-designated heritage assets and their settings.
- SPS4** Strategic Policy S4 Conserving & Enhancing the Natural Environment - The Council is committed to the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment through the protection of designated sites and species, whilst planning positively for biodiversity networks and minimising pollution. The Council will plan for a multifunctional network of green infrastructure. A precautionary approach will be taken where insufficient information is provided about avoidance, management, mitigation and compensation measures. Where appropriate, contributions from developments will be secured towards mitigation measures identified in the Essex Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)
- SPS11** Strategic Policy S11 The Role of the Countryside - The openness and permanence of the Green Belt will be protected. Inappropriate development will not be approved except in very special circumstances. The Green Wedge has an identified intrinsic character and beauty and is a multi-faceted distinctive landscape providing important open green networks. The countryside outside of the Urban Areas and Defined Settlements, not within the Green Belt is designated as the Rural Area. The intrinsic character and beauty of the Rural Area will be recognised, assessed and development will be permitted where it would not adversely impact on its identified character and beauty.

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENTS

VDS: Sets out the local community's view on the character and design of the local area. New development should respect its setting and contribute to its environment.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019. It replaces the first NPPF published in March 2012 and almost all previous national Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance, as well as other documents.

Paragraph 1 of the NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. Paragraph 2 confirms that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions and should be read as a whole.

Paragraph 7 says that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development meant that the planning system has three overarching objectives; an economic objective; a social objective; and an environmental objective. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the Framework.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.



Planning Committee
5th July 2022

Application No	:	21/00555/FUL Full Application
Location	:	Land West Of Hill Farm Pan Lane East Hanningfield Chelmsford Essex
Proposal	:	Installation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) park generating up to 36.7 MW of electricity to the land West of Hill Farm Pan Lane, comprising of ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays, together with inverters/transformer stations, Distribution Network Operator (DNO) Substation, customer substation/switchgear and meter kiosk, internal buried cabling and grid connection cables, internal access tracks, security fencing and gates and CCTV cameras, upgraded existing site access, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.
Applicant	:	Mr Matt Rudling Cell Energy Ltd
Agent	:	Mrs Claire Wilkinson
Date Valid	:	26th March 2021

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1. Executive Summary
2. Description of the site
3. Details of the proposal
4. Other relevant applications
5. Summary of consultations
6. Planning considerations
7. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Appendices:

Appendix 1	Consultations
Appendix 1a:	Summary of consultation responses
Appendix 1b:	Summary of local residents' representations
Appendix 1c:	Parish Council comments in full
Appendix 2	Drawings

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. This application has been referred to the Planning Committee at the request of Councillor Poulter.
- 1.2. The proposal is to develop the site into a solar farm with associated plant, access tracks, mitigation and landscaping.
- 1.3. There is a recognised need and support for renewable energy technology through National and Local Planning policy and this development would contribute towards the targets set for the UK's greenhouse gas emission reduction and increasing the country's energy supply from renewable sources.
- 1.4. The assessment of renewable energy proposals requires the impacts to be considered in the context of the strong "in principle" policy support given the Government's conclusion that there is a pressing need to deliver renewable energy generation.
- 1.5. The development would provide approximately 36.7 MW of energy per year, roughly equivalent to powering 12,500 homes or a settlement broadly the size of Witham. This is given significant weight in favour of granting planning permission for the proposal.
- 1.6. The site is located within the rural area beyond the Green Belt. The proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the surrounding landscape both visually and with regard to landscape character that would be of a substantial/detrimental scale that would amount to a reason for refusal on these grounds. The predicted landscape affects arising from the proposed development are acceptable on balance when weighing up the overall benefits of the proposal and can be overcome by the proposed mitigation.
- 1.7. The proposal would have a low level of less than substantial harm on heritage assets. Landscaping would partly mitigate the harm, but a very low level of harm would remain. This harm, in the context of public benefits delivered by the proposal with regard to increasing the country's energy supply from renewable sources, would not amount to a reason for refusal on these grounds.
- 1.8. The proposal would not have a harmful adverse impact on ecology, residential amenity, highway safety or flood risk, subject to controls recommended by planning conditions.
- 1.9. The application is recommended for approval.

2. Description of site

The site

- 2.1. The application site is an area of land measuring about 68.2 hectares located to the west of Hill Farm, to the north of Pan Lane, East Hanningfield, and to the east of Southend Road. Southend Road runs parallel to the A130.
- 2.2. It comprises four agricultural fields. An Agricultural Land Classification Assessment was undertaken for the parcel of land. This has concluded that 96% of the land is categorised as 3b. The remainder of the land is within non agricultural use.

- 2.3. The site is bounded by hedgerows on all sides. The hedgerows to the north and east are scattered with trees. There are a number of existing field access points from Southend Road where there are gaps within the boundary line.
- 2.4. A Public Right of Way (PRoW) (reference PRoW 218_7) runs horizontally through the site towards East Hanningfield. To the west, the PRoW connects with other footpaths leading to West Hanningfield. The PRoW forms part of the wider St Peters Way long distance footpath.
- 2.5. Overhead power lines cross the site in a south east/north west direction.
- 2.6. The nearest residential dwellings; Dunnock Cottage and Hill Farm, are located to the east of the site off and to the north of Pan Lane. Glebe Cottages are located to the north-west of the site on the boundary with Pan Lane. Beyond the site are agricultural fields.

Surroundings

- 2.7. The character and appearance of the site and most of its surroundings is well vegetated agricultural land, which is typical of the land use of the surrounding countryside.
- 2.8. Nationally the site is located within National Character Area No. 111 Northern Thames Basin 111. Locally the site falls within the rural area beyond the Green Belt.
- 2.9. The site contains no built designated or non-heritage assets. The wider context includes a number of listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets including Grade II listed Bonteels Farmhouse and Claydons Manor. The site is crossed by the World War Two GHQ defence line. This forms part of a line of remaining defences running north-south along the A130 corridor.
- 2.10. The site does not contain or is adjacent to any protected trees or woodland. Nor does it contain any priority woodland habitats. The site is enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows which are typical features of the rural character of the local area and thus integral features of the landscape.
- 2.11. Within 5 km of the site are a number of nationally designated sites for nature conservation. About 1.5 km away to the west lies Hanningfield Reservoir Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) that are sited within close proximity to the site include Plough and Sail Meadows (LWS), Bloodlands (LWS) and Houden Wood (LWS).
- 2.12. The site is over 5km from the Crouch and Roach Estuaries (Mid Essex Coast Phase 3) RAMSAR, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) site.
- 2.13. There are several Public Rights of Way (PRoW) within the local area including PRoW 218_5, PRoW 218_47, PRoW 218_27 and PRoW 218_22 which lead to East Hanningfield and West Hanningfield respectively.

3. Details of the proposal

- 3.1. The application proposes to develop the site into a solar farm with associated substation, transformers/inverters, internal access tracks, fencing and gates, temporary construction compound and other ancillary infrastructure, mitigation, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

- 3.2. The proposal has been amended during the course of the application, with the main change being the removal of solar panels from the upper (eastern) edges of the site and the proposed introduction of mitigation and tree screening / hedgerows and biodiversity improvements.
- 3.3. The proposal would generate about 36.7 MW of renewable energy which would be supplied directly to the National Grid for commercial consumption as a commercial enterprise. The anticipated CO2 displacement would be the equivalent of powering 12,500 homes per year or a settlement roughly the size of Witham.
- 3.4. The proposal would include the installation of photovoltaic (PV) panels laid out in arrays of rows running from east to west across the site. The panels would be affixed to posts that would be driven or piled into the ground and linked to transformers by underground cables.
- 3.5. The height of the panels would be a maximum of 2.8 metres above the ground. The panels would be installed approximately 20 degrees from the horizontal and would be placed between 5 to 6 metres apart.
- 3.6. The electricity cabling would be concealed in shallow trenches leading to a substation neighbouring the site entrance with Southend Road. The substation would be sited within a site compound and would have a height of about 3.1 metres.
- 3.7. Associated infrastructure would comprise a transformer / inverter cabin, underground cabling, internal access routes, CCTV cameras placed on poles, screening / fencing, site access, servicing area and landscaping.
- 3.8. The Inverters/transformer cabin would have an appearance similar to shipping containers or similar cabin type structures and would measure about 3.5 metres high.
- 3.9. The plant would be sited within a fenced site compound set on a concrete base comprising crushed hardcore with space for the parking of at least four vehicles.
- 3.10. Fencing between about 2 metres tall and mainly stock proof, would be installed around the perimeter of the site. A security management system would be attached to the fencing containing CCTV cameras to a height of about 3 metres.
- 3.11. The intention is for the proposal to connect to the National Grid along an external cabling route, which has not yet been determined. As the precise route of the cable is to be determined it is excluded from consideration of this proposal. The applicants will need to apply for planning permission for it separately to this planning application.
- 3.12. The existing site access would be retained and upgraded. Internal access tracks would be formed throughout the site. The existing Public Right of Way (PRoW 218_7) would be retained.
- 3.13. Temporary planning permission is sought, with the solar farm having an operational lifespan of 40 years. After this, the scheme would be decommissioned with virtually all of the structures and equipment removed and the land would revert to its present undeveloped agricultural condition, or as may otherwise be agreed closer to the time.
- 3.14. Battery storage, in the form of battery energy storage systems (BESS) is not proposed.

Operation, Construction and Decommissioning

- 3.15. During the operational phases, activities would amount to the maintenance, cleaning and servicing of plant and equipment, plus vegetation management.
- 3.16. A temporary construction compound would be set up with the site development boundary during construction. The compound includes, amongst others, office and welfare facilities. Construction would take place for approximately four months including site preparation, security fencing, assembly and erection of PV strings, installation of inverters and grid connection.
- 3.17. Construction working hours are to be confirmed.
- 3.18. Limited details are provided regarding decommissioning, although a decommissioning strategy can be secured by way of condition. It is expected that the structure, including all ancillary equipment and cabling would be dismantled and removed from site. Materials would be reused or recycled, and the site would be reinstated for full agricultural use.

4. Other relevant applications

The site

- 4.1. A screening opinion 20/01501/EIASO was issued on 10th December 2020 for the proposed development of a ground mounted solar farm and associated infrastructure on land west of Hill Farm, East Hanningfield.
- 4.2. This confirmed that the proposal was not EIA development under Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations as amended.

Neighbouring sites

- 4.3. The proposal is for one of three planning applications for solar farms sited within close proximity to each other. The other two planning applications are:

Canons Barn (21/00502/FUL) Land East Of A130 South Of Canon Barns Road East Hanningfield Chelmsford Essex

- 4.4. Installation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) park generating up to 8 MW of electricity, comprising of ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays, substation, internal access tracks, transformers/inverters, fencing and gates, CCTV cameras, temporary construction compound, underground cable and connection to end user and other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

Sandon Brook (21/00394/FUL) Land East And West Of A130, North And South Of Canon Barns Road East Hanningfield Chelmsford Essex

- 4.5. Installation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) park generating up to 49.9 MW of electricity spread over three sites (sited either side of the A130/Canons Barn Road), comprising of ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays, battery-based electricity storage containers, and One Point of Connection (POC) mast of up to 35m in height on Church Road (junction with Link House Farm), together with inverters/transformer stations, Distribution Network Operator (DNO) Substation,

access and cable connection to POC mast to connect to 132 kV power line, customer substation/switchgear and meter kiosk, batteries, internal buried cabling and grid connection cables, internal access tracks, security fencing and gates and CCTV cameras, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements. Refused 9th December 2021.

4.6. Refused on the grounds that:

1). The proposal would result in an unacceptable form of development within the Green Belt outside the exceptions listed within the NPPF or Policies DM6 or DM10 of the Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan. The proposal would be for an inappropriate form of development that would lead to loss of openness. The NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The proposed development by reason of its siting and scale would result in the creation of a large-scale industrial development that would lead to visual and spatial loss of openness. The very special circumstances put forward by the applicants have been considered, but the applicant has not demonstrated that the harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by the very special circumstances suggested by the applicant.

2). The proposed development by reason of its siting and scale would result in the creation of a large-scale industrial development. It would be significantly detrimental to the landscape character of the area and would harmfully intrude on perceptions of field patterns and the setting of nearby villages. The predicted landscape affects arising from the proposed development are not able to be overcome by the proposed mitigation. The proposal would cause an unacceptable and adverse effect upon the natural environment which in turn would fail to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

4.7. The Council has received notification that the application is to be appealed by means of Public Inquiry. No date has been set for the appeal for type of procedure at the time of writing.

5. Summary of consultations

- East Hanningfield Parish Council – Objection.
- Essex County Council Highways – No objection subject to conditions.
- Ramblers Association – No reply received.
- West Hanningfield Parish Council – Objection.
- Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre Parish Council – No reply received.
- South Woodham Ferrers Town Council – Comments received.
- Rettendon Parish Council – Objection.
- UK Power Networks (Network Planner) – No reply received.
- Environment Agency – No reply received.
- H.S.E East Anglia Area – No reply received.
- Public Health & Protection Services – No reply received.
- Economic Development & Implementation – No reply received,
- Anglian Water Services Ltd – Comments received.
- Essex County Council (SUDS) – No objection subject to conditions.
- Natural England – No objection.
- Essex and Suffolk Water – No reply received.
- Police - Designing Out Crime – Comments received.
- Essex County Fire & Rescue Service – Comments received.
- National Grid Gas – No reply received.
- Fisher German – No reply received.

- ECC Minerals & Waste Planning – No reply received.
- Sandon Parish Council – No comments.

5.1. A main summary of the consultee comments is given at **appendix 1a** of this report. The Parish Council comments are appended in full at **appendix 1c**.

5.2. 23 residents commented on the application. Their comments are summarised within **appendix 1b** of this report. The main points raised relate to:

- The principle of development,
- Cumulative impacts of the proposal,
- Effect on landscape character and visual amenity,
- Natural environment including designated sites, mitigation and loss of agricultural land,
- Residential living environment,
- Traffic and Highway Safety,
- Flooding and Drainage,
- Green credentials and safety of the proposal / health impact.

6. Planning considerations

Main Issues

6.1. The main issues for this proposal are:

- the visual impact of the development on the landscape and the effect upon landscape character,
- the effect upon the natural environment including loss of agricultural land,
- the effect upon the historic character of the area,
- the effect upon residential living environment,
- the effect upon highway and flooding.

6.2. Consideration is also given to the cumulative effects of the proposal. This is because the proposal is for one of three planning applications for solar power sited within close proximity to each other.

Policy Context

6.3. Renewables now account for over one third of all UK electricity generation, up from 7 per cent in 2010, driven by the deployment of wind, solar and biomass. Electricity demand is predicted to double in the UK by 2050, driven in part by the electrification of vehicles and increased use of clean electricity replacing gas for heating. The Government has set a target to cut greenhouse gas emissions compared to 1990 levels in the UK by 100% by 2050.

6.4. The Government expects future low cost, net zero consistent electricity to be made up of on shore and offshore wind and solar, complemented by technologies which provide power or reduce demand when the wind is not blowing, or the sun does not shine.

6.5. The principle of solar development is supported in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states that planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimising vulnerability and providing resilience to the impacts of climate change, and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

- 6.6. More widely, the UK is committed to meeting a target of net-zero by or before 2050. This means that across the UK, emissions of Green House Gas for all sources will have to reduce from the current figure of 4352 million tonnes. The UK Government industrial and green growth strategies have made further pledges to invest in green growth low carbon infrastructure and investment in efficiency.
- 6.7. On 16th July 2019, Chelmsford City Council declared a Climate and Ecological emergency. The declaration represented a commitment to take appropriate action to make the Council's activities net-zero carbon by 2030.
- 6.8. Proposals for development of solar farms are assessed against a number of national and local planning policies including National Planning Policy Statements (NPS), National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and the statutory Development Plans for Chelmsford City Councils area.

National Planning Policy

- 6.9. The overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (NPS EN-1) and National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (NPS EN-3) set out national policy for the delivery of nationally significant energy infrastructure, including renewable energy although neither explicitly covers solar powered electricity generation or battery storage. The NPS's set out assessment principles for judging impacts of energy projects and are material considerations when considering development proposals.
- 6.10. The Environment Bill has put the 25-year Environment Plan into law and has created a statutory framework for environment principles. The Bill includes ambitious legislative measures to take direct action to address environmental policy including biodiversity net gain, restoration and enhancement of nature, improvement of air quality, tackling climate change, waste and resource efficiently and water resource management to enable the Government to reach its commitment to reach net zero emissions by 2050.
- 6.11. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) talks generally about renewables within the context of planning for climate change and makes no specific reference to solar farms. It favours sustainable energy systems as long as any impacts are (or can be) made acceptable, and that local planning authorities should approach these as part of a positive strategy for tackling climate change.
- 6.12. Paragraph 158 of the NPPF states that when determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should:
 - a. not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and
 - b. approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas.

- 6.13. All planning proposals and decisions should contribute and enhance the natural and local environment. The NPPF paragraphs 174a and 174b require proposals to:
- a. protect and enhance the valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b. recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services - including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.
- 6.14. The National Planning Policy Practice Guidance (NPPG) outlines guidance on the specific planning considerations that relate to large scale ground-mounted solar PV farms. It states that one consideration amongst others should be whether land is being used effectively; recommending that large scale solar farms are focused on previously developed and non-agricultural land.

Local Planning policies

- 6.15. There are several local planning policies that are relevant to the consideration of a solar farm application. These are set out in the Chelmsford Local Plan Adopted May 2021. Of relevance are:
- 6.16. Strategic Policy S2 – Addressing climate change and flood risk. It sets out policy requirements for mitigating and adapting to climate change. In addressing the move to a lower carbon future for Chelmsford, it states that the Council will, amongst other considerations, encourage new development that provides opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy technologies and schemes and provides opportunities for green infrastructure including city greening, and new habitat creation.
- 6.17. Policy DM19 – Renewable and low carbon energy sets out policy requirements for renewable or low carbon energy developments. It states that the Council will support renewable or low carbon energy developments that:
- a) do not cause demonstrable harm to residential living environment;
 - b) avoid or minimise impacts on the historic environment;
 - c) can demonstrate no adverse effect on the natural environment including designated sites;
 - d) do not have an unacceptable visual impact which would be harmful to the character of the area;
 - e) and will not have a detrimental impact on highway safety.
- 6.18. Several other Chelmsford Local Plan policies are relevant to the consideration of proposals including:
- Strategic Priority 5 - Delivering New and Improved Strategic Infrastructure
 - Strategic Policy S1 - Spatial Principles.
 - Strategic Policy S3 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment,
 - Strategic Policy S4 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment,
 - Strategic Policy S11 - The role of the countryside,
 - Policy DM8 - New buildings and structures in the Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt,
 - Policy DM10 - Change of use (Land and buildings) and Engineering operations.

- Policy DM13 - Designated heritage assets,
 - Policy DM14 - Non designated heritage assets,
 - Policy DM15 - Archaeology,
 - Policy DM16 - Ecology and biodiversity,
 - Policy DM17 - Trees, Woodland and landscape features,
 - Policy DM18 - Flooding / SUDs
 - Policy DM23 - High quality and inclusive design,
 - Policy DM27 - Parking standards,
 - Policy DM29 - Protecting living and working conditions,
 - Policy DM30 - Contamination and pollution.
- 6.19. In May 2021, the Council published its draft Solar Farm Development Supplementary Planning Document Consultation Document (solar farm SPD). The solar farm SPD contains local guidance on preparing and submitting proposals for solar farms. It also gives guidance on how planning applications should be considered in light of national and local requirements. The SPD was adopted by the Councils Cabinet on 6th November 2021 subject to a schedule of proposed changes.
- 6.20. There are several other studies, policies and publications relating to renewable energy proposals and climate change that have been published by other Government departments, bodies and interested stakeholders. Discussions were held during the COP26 summit which concluded with nearly 200 countries agreeing the Glasgow Climate Pact to aim to manage global temperature rise to 1.5 C. Other outcomes included the ratification of outstanding elements of the 'Paris Agreement'.
- 6.21. For the purposes of this planning application, consideration is based upon those documents that form part of National Planning Guidance and the Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan. This is in accordance with planning law that requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise

Principle of development

- 6.22. The principle of solar farm development is deemed acceptable subject to compliance with Policy DM19 and any other material considerations.
- 6.23. The approach in the NPPF, local planning policies and the solar farm SPD is to be supportive to the principle of solar energy developments provided that the environmental impacts can be appropriately managed.
- 6.24. A key environmental benefit is that the proposal has capacity to generate up to 36.7 MW of renewable energy which would provide enough energy to power up to 12,500 homes or a settlement roughly the size of Witham. Such a contribution is significant in the face of meeting national and local targets to reduce CO2 emissions.
- 6.25. This in-principle support and the environmental benefit must be weighed against any environmental harm and other impacts of the proposal in a balancing exercise. The balancing exercise is a matter of planning judgement.
- 6.26. The following assessment considers the impacts of the proposal which will then be balanced against the in-principle support and national benefits of the development.

Visual impact and effect upon the character of the area;

- 6.27. The site is currently in agricultural use and has a well vegetated character. Trees and hedgerows border the site boundaries and extend through the site. They would be retained.
- 6.28. The proposal would be located across a series of agricultural fields with a gently sloping gradient falling east - west. The fields within the site are delineated and divided by existing tree belts and woodland, rather than hedgerows. The wider area contains an undulating pattern of landform, creating areas of low lying land and undulating ridges.
- 6.29. The site is located within the Northern Thames Basin National character area. Locally, the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon, and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (CBA 2006) locates it within LCA F12 Wooded East Farmland. Key characteristics of the land include
- Wooded hill and ridge housing,
 - Sense of enclosure provided by large areas of deciduous and mixed woodland,
 - Intricate landscape pattern consisting of commons, pasture, heathland and woodland habitats,
 - Arable farmland fringing the outer edges of patches of woodland,
 - Narrow lanes,
 - Views of wooded horizons,
 - Predominantly linear settlement patterns.
- 6.30. Next to the site is Landscape Character Area LCA F11 South Hanningfield Wooded Farmland. Key characteristics of that land are:
- Undulating mature wooded farmland
 - Vast expanse of Hanningfield reservoir
 - Mixed woodland and patchwork of diverse habitats surrounding the reservoir
 - Small scale linear settlement pattern.
 - Medium to large scale arable fields with hedged and treed field boundaries.
 - Views to wooded horizons,
 - Network of quiet narrow rural lanes transverse the area.
- 6.31. The indicative site layout is shown on drawing Proposed PV Solar Farm Layout. 58047-EH-GA-L001 Rev D. This shows that the proposal would retain the original field pattern in situ. The solar panels would be sat on the slopes of the hillside, separated from the eastern site boundary by a large gap ranging between 40 m to 88 m deep. The solar panels would be sited on south facing east-westerly arrays (rows). Between the arrays would be a series of internal access tracks. A substation compound, housing the plant necessary to serve the development would be located close to the western boundary, roughly parallel to the St Peters Way footbridge that crosses over the A130.
- 6.32. Mitigation, in the form of additional planting, primarily along the site boundaries, is proposed. As part of the mitigation scheme, a new row of hedgerows would be introduced within the upper third of the site, running north – south through it. The hedgerows are proposed to be located to follow a historical field pattern.

- 6.33. This visual effect upon the character and appearance of the area, and the effects on the character and appearance of the surrounding area more generally, are addressed in the applicants Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA), which includes a series of verified visualisations of key viewpoints. The document describes the baseline qualities and current condition of local landscape character. The document has been amended over the course of the planning application.
- 6.34. The LVA describes the baseline qualities and current condition of local landscape character. It identifies several locations (visual receptor viewpoints) from which the site can be viewed. It also identifies steps that would be taken to mitigate against any harm that would likely to arise from the implementation of the development. Proposed areas of additional vegetation are shown on the indicative Landscape Mitigation Plan 2214D-00-50 Rev H. There is scope to require more planting at condition stage if required.
- 6.35. The LVA has been reviewed by the Council's external landscaping consultants, Essex County Councils Place Services (Place Services).
- 6.36. Place Services originally raised concerns regarding the methodology undertaken in the LVA assessment. This has led to a review and rewriting of the entire document, which has resulted in several delays to the consideration of the proposal.
- 6.37. Place Services advise that they have reviewed the amended document and are satisfied with the methodology, scope and geographical extent of the landscape studies that form the basis for the assessment of the effects. It is noted that an assessment of winter views has not been undertaken, but Place Services have considered the effect of winter views within their response to the proposal.
- 6.38. From the point of view of landscape and visual assessment, there are two aspects of the proposal that have potential to cause an effect on visual amenity and landscape character. These are the activities and elements of the proposal that would affect the fabric of the site landscape, and the activities and visual characteristics of the elements that would be visible from the surrounding locality.
- 6.39. The proposal would lead to a change in the character and appearance of the landscape, which could be argued to lead to a change in the quality of the landscape and loss of agricultural character. However, green energy equipment such as solar arrays and wind turbines are rapidly becoming features that are becoming an integrated part of the agricultural landscape.

Visual amenity

- 6.40. The proposal been supported by Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) mapping which shows that the site has potential to be visible from the west, south and east. The viewpoints were selected in agreement with Place Services to represent the most open views of the solar farm from a range of distances, directions and viewpoint receptor locations. Following discussions with Place Services, the amended LVA includes viewpoints taken from Public Rights of Way (PRoW) including PRoW 236_47 (St Peters Way which runs parallel to Church Road). The visual assessment includes consideration of the potential residual effects of the proposal during construction, after five years (medium term) and 15 years (long term) for all representative viewpoints.

- 6.41. With the exception of viewpoint 4 (view from St Peters Way crossing the site) and viewpoint 19 (view from PRoW 218_7), the harm caused from the visual effects of the development has been assessed to range from moderate/minor-adverse/none upon construction stage, to minor adverse/neutral/none after 10-25 years post construction during the operational phase.
- 6.42. From viewpoint 4 St Peters Way (PRoW 218_7), the public right of way which crosses the site, and viewpoint 19 (St Peters Way PRoW 218_7), the effect has been assessed to be major adverse during construction to moderate/major neutral after 10 -25 years post construction during the operational phase.
- 6.43. The visual effects of the various aspects of the construction phase would be temporary, intermittent, and short term. As the fields are arable, there would be limited loss of ground vegetation as result of the site compound, new tracks, substation, and cable trenches. Ground disturbance and waste management would be minimised by site management with full reinstatement over temporary disturbed and excavated areas.
- 6.44. From a landscape and visual perspective, the site is set on an open hillside and is visible from adjoining fields to the north, east and south and from limited views along Southend Road. It comprises an undulating landform from a low point of about 36.6 metres in the southwest corner to a high point of about 68.9 metres in the north-east corner.
- 6.45. The landscape quality of the site is generally poor with much of the site given over to intensively farmed arable land divided into four parcels by low quality hedgerows which are gappy in places but help to break up the fields. The hedgerow field boundaries form a linear feature around the site.
- 6.46. The hillside setting exposes open views with rising vegetated boundaries to the lower landscape to the west creating a scenic quality. To the west, the upper third of the hillside is exposed and the site is visible along Public Rights of Way (PRoW) including PRoW 236_47 and PRoW 217_7 St Peters Way which transverses towards and through the site east to west through the agricultural landscape. There are views along St Peters Way from high ground looking south and west.
- 6.47. The landscape as a whole is rural in nature with overhead power lines forming nominal visual detractors to the west. The proximity of the site to Southend Road and the A130 reduces perceptual aspects, although visually these are well screened through views across the site.
- 6.48. During the operational stage, aspects that are likely to give significant effects on landscape character and amenity are the solar panels/arrays, site tracks, fencing, CCTV, and the associated single storey substation and transformer/inverter buildings.
- 6.49. In general terms, the visibility of the proposed solar farm would be confined to an area local to the proposed site. This is due to the single storey height of the development itself, the nature of local topography in relation to the siting of the solar panels and levels of existing vegetation. Boundary screening is proposed and mitigation is shown on drawing 2214D-00-50 Rev H. The mitigation proposes additional planting along the site boundaries and within the upper third of the site to screen the development.
- 6.50. The photovoltaic panels would be seen within the existing field pattern and enclosing vegetation. The utilitarian design would not be aesthetically pleasing but would be softened by the existing hedgerows and proposed boundary screening.

- 6.51. Due to the hillside setting, the upper third of the site would be visible within the wider locality. When crossing St Peters Way and when walking towards the site along the PRoW network to the west, the proposal would lead to a change in the landscape, and users experience from open views to solar panels and associated infrastructure.
- 6.52. However, the change in visual appearance can be mitigated by the inclusion of green mitigation in the form of additional peripheral planting along the site boundaries and the creation of a new hedgerow running north/south through the development to help 'dilute' and break up the form of massing of the solar panels, thereby reducing the perception and amount of built form across the site.
- 6.53. The visual impact of the proposal would be primarily limited to high sensitivity visual receptors (local residents and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) users) and low sensitivity users (motorists). From close quarters, the proposal would result in significant change.
- 6.54. In relation to the effect that the proposal would have upon local residents' amenity, because the panels are single storey, the presence of intervening boundary treatment and vegetation would screen them from ground floor views. In cases where boundary treatment is limited/open, the arrays would be sited an acceptable distance from residential boundaries so to not be overbearing. At first floor level, it would be possible to see the arrays across an expansive viewpoint. It is acknowledged there would be expansive views of the panels but given their single storey nature and level of separation from neighbouring properties, the effect would not be harmful nor overbearing such that it would warrant a specific reason for refusal on amenity grounds. Further consideration is given to this matter in the section on residential living environment below.
- 6.55. The views available along the PRoW would be more extensive, especially as they are used recreationally by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Given the purpose of their journey and the slower speed at which they would pass through the landscape, PRoW users would be more sensitive to the visual impact of the development.
- 6.56. Most receptors using Southend Road would be moving fairly quickly, with drivers in particular having their attention focused ahead. Motorists are not regarded as sensitive to landscape impact as the view they would gain would be short lived.
- 6.57. From viewpoints 4, 19 and from wider views of the site when facing east towards the site from West Hanningfield, the proposed solar farm would lead to a marked and moderate / major adverse impact upon the visual amenities of the area that would diminish over time to moderate/minor adverse. As considered above, the effect can be mitigated through planting along the boundaries, the introduction of a hedgerow through the upper thirds of the site and the omission of solar panels from the high eastern section of the site.
- 6.58. Although the mitigation scheme would take time to establish, year on year the screening would improve. The additional planting plus use of the existing field boundaries; to minimise the need to create new accessways and breaches of field boundaries, together with plant painted in an appropriate finish and colour, would all help integrate the development into the landscape from the start of the operational phase.

- 6.59. Overall, views would be seen in the context of the landscape and roadside frontage. As mitigation planting proposals grow, the sensitivity and harm arising from this change would be reduced such that it would not be unacceptable within this undulating hillside setting. Place Services raise no objection to the proposal. The visual effects of the development would not be significant/important to warrant a reason for refusal on visual grounds.
- 6.60. Decommissioning would be temporary and offset by the restoration of the landscape.

Landscape Character

- 6.61. The site is located within East Hanningfield Wooded Farmland F12 in the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon, and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (CBA 2006). This has been identified as having high sensitivity to change, with key characteristics such as gently rolling/undulating wooded farmland, predominantly large arable fields with very mature treed field boundaries and ditches, evidence of field boundary loss, pockets of pasture and pony paddocks, a network of quiet lanes, a generally dispersed settlement pattern and a sense of tranquillity away from major road corridors.
- 6.62. The site sits on the western edge of the Landscape Character Area, across a large expanse of fields with hedgerows and tress along the boundary. The pattern and landform vary, creating areas of low-lying land and elevated ridges. Views of the wooded skyline are achievable, along with views of the rising land.
- 6.63. Adjacent to LCA F12, to the south east of the site at the junction with Pan Lane, is F11 South Hanningfield Wooded Farmland Landscape Character Area as identified in the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon, and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (CBA 2006). This has been identified within the Landscape Character Assessment as having high sensitivity to change, with key characteristics such as undulating farmland, medium to large-scale arable fields, with hedged field boundaries and views to a wooded horizon both within the character area and adjacent character.
- 6.64. There would be no significant adverse effects on landscape fabric during the construction phase as the proposal would make use of the existing entrance and there would be no loss of other landscape components such as trees. As arable fields, there would be minimal loss of ground vegetation as a result of the solar arrays, new tracks, substation and cable trenches. Close to the end of the construction phase, the proposed mitigation proposals would be commenced. In terms of the level of landscaping proposed, the Landscape Mitigation Plan 2214D-00-50 Rev H includes a new linear hedgerow configuration, new north-south hedgerow and site boundary belts. In line with existing habitats on site, wildflower and tussocky grassland would be implemented.
- 6.65. The main effects on the landscape character on the site would occur during the operational phase because of the presence of solar panels and infrastructure.
- 6.66. The site is set on undulating open hillside and is visible from adjoining fields to the west, south and east and from limited views along Southend Road.
- 6.67. The proposal would lead to the loss of four arable fields during the lifetime of the development and would replace arable land with an urban landform and landscape which would have an initial moderate/minor adverse effect on landscape character.

- 6.68. During the operational stage, the presence of the solar panels/arrays, site tracks, fencing, CCTV, and the associated single storey substation and transformer/inverter building would contrast with the existing agricultural character such that they would result in a moderate adverse effect on the site character and a minor moderate effect on the landscape character of the wider countryside. This is despite the introduction of green mitigation including peripheral and on site hedgerow planting and measures that could be agreed such as the cladding of the plant building out of materials to give it an appearance more similar to that of a utilitarian agricultural building.
- 6.69. A key characteristic of the area is its rurality. This is a rural and agricultural landscape where natural features such as agricultural fields, the presence of hedgerows and trees and wooded horizons and other perceptual elements of the landscape contribute to the area.
- 6.70. Although man made features such as pylons and the adjacent highway and water treatment works detract from the rurality of the area, in the context of wider landscape character, they appear as small pockets of urbanisation in the landscape. Further, the presence of pylons and roads are not uncommon nor uncharacteristic of rural areas and/or undulating farmland.
- 6.71. Yet this proposal is for a different form of development to the pylons, roadways and water treatment works. The geographical extent and physical presence and single storey height of the solar arrays and associated infrastructure would not result in a substantial /important change to the existing agricultural landscape, although it would generate a man-made industrial character.
- 6.72. Off site, the viewpoint analysis suggests there would be no significant adverse effect on the character of the landscape within the wider locality. The effect on landscape character would be limited to the locality of the site where the proposal would be seen in the context of the existing field pattern and would be framed by the boundary treatment and softened by the proposed green mitigation in the form of additional trees and new hedgerow planting.
- 6.73. There is a change in gradient along the hillside, with the upper third of the site set on higher and steeper slopes towards the eastern site boundary. Due to the change in gradient, this top third of the site is more visible and prominent within its setting. By limiting the siting of the development to the to flatter slopes and locating the plant compound on the relatively flat land next to Southend Road the visual impact and prominence of the development would be reduced.
- 6.74. The limited height and mass of the development and its siting along the lower levels of the hillside mean that the solar farm would be visually contained. The proposal would not remove any of the key characteristics of the wider landscape character. It would retain the site's field pattern, boundary vegetation and its low-lying form; all distinctive characteristics of the local landscape.
- 6.75. By introducing visual screening in the form of hedgerow and tree planting along the boundaries and also within the site, the appearance and massing of the solar panels would be diluted and broken up within the landscape. The introduction of green mitigation in the form of further vegetational cover would contribute to characteristic of wooded skylines and limit the extent of the industrial influence on character area.
- 6.76. Intervening vegetation coupled with the existing topography would predominantly screen any visibility within the site and along short term views. Whilst the proposal would be visible along the Public Right of Way network, especially along PRoW 218_7and PRoW 236_47, views of the site would be fleeting and temporary as users pass along the footpath. Overall, there is a good sense of enclosure and views of the solar farm would be limited to the short to middle distance.

In relation to longer views from PRoW 236_47, St Peters Way, the proposal would be visible but would be located along the lower confines of the hillside to limit the extent of visual envelope.

- 6.77. Once constructed, the development would involve very little activity that would disrupt the tranquillity of the landscape. The horizontal emphasis of the arrays means they would be seen to follow the existing topography. The use of stockproof type fencing would be consistent with the wider agricultural landscape, albeit would be of a height taller than generally used.
- 6.78. Over time, the proposal would become gradually more screened as the planting establishes and the perception of the proposal as an extension of urban form would become less and less discernible within the LCA.
- 6.79. Whilst the presence of the development in the surrounding locality would be clearly noticeable and the loss of the agricultural fields would remain, by reason of its siting away from the upper eastern slopes, together with the introduction of mitigation in the form of hedgerow and tree planting, Place Services advise that the proposal would not undermine and affect landscape character such that the effect on landscape character would be considered important. Any impact would reduce significantly away from the site.
- 6.80. During decommissioning, all planting measures would remain and there would be a minimal effect on landscape fabric. This would result in a beneficial effect to the site.

Conclusion

- 6.81. The summary and conclusion section of the LVA considers the impact of the solar farm on the landscape character and visual amenity. The assessment concludes that *“the development would result in localized landscape and visual effects and any harm caused as a result of the development on the local landscape associated with the site can be mitigated with resultant neutral effects. Overall, the fabric of the landscape would be improved as a result of the development with the cessation of intensive farming operations and visual effects of the development mitigated.”* (Para. 11.16)
- 6.82. The conclusion drawn has been considered by Place Services who agree that the effect on site character and land use would remain as moderate adverse, given the magnitude of change is large. However, given the proposed mitigation measures and reversible nature of the proposed development, Place Services are satisfied that the impact on the character of the site is not important.
- 6.83. The implementation of the proposal would overall bring about a moderate adverse change to the character of the immediate area. The localised harm from this change would not significantly diminish the overall quality of the local landscape character type or negatively impact upon user's experience 'walking through' or 'passing by' along the local Public Rights of Way and highway network in the long term.
- 6.84. The visual effects of the proposal would be localised, with the greatest visual impacts affecting a small number of visual receptors within the vicinity of the application site.

- 6.85. The proposed development would not be significantly detrimental to either the landscape character or visual amenity of the landscape within the wider study area. The proposal would not have an important adverse impact on the surrounding landscape. The predicted landscape effects arising from the proposed development are acceptable on balance when weighing up the overall benefits of the proposal.
- 6.86. This is dependent on mitigation landscaping set out in the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) (condition 11). The introduction of mitigation in the form of boundary planting and other landscaping measures, would not lead to harm to landscape character or visual amenity and can be managed at condition stage.
- 6.87. The comments raised within letters of representation relating to the coalescence of villages are noted, but, as this proposal relates to the development of four fields only, there would be no coalescence of the urban landform and villages. Further consideration in given with the section upon cumulative impacts below. (Paragraphs 6.174 onwards applies).

Effect on the natural environment including designated sites and loss of agricultural land

Biodiversity

- 6.88. The habitats within the development site comprise arable fields planted with arable crops including wheat and barley. All fields had a 6-8 metre margin bordered by hedging/fencing. The southern and western margins contained a diverse mix of flora including flowering plants. The remaining margins were dominated by false oat grass. The field systems are demarcated by hedgerows with varying densities of mature trees. The southern most field contains a small pond and associated vegetation surrounding it.
- 6.89. The site and land directly adjacent to it are not subject to any statutory or regional wildlife designations. The closest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is Hanningfield Reservoir, located about 1.5 kilometres to the west of the site. Plough and Sail Meadow, Bloodlands and Houden Wood are Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are located between 100 and 2000 metres to the east and south of the site.
- 6.90. The majority of the site consists of arable farmland planted with perennial rye grass and white clover pastureland. The arable fields are demarcated by hedgerow boundaries. Two large field margins of game cover crop within the site. The majority of the field margins contain poor semi-improved grassland. An area of dense scrub is located within the centre of the site, as well as three waterbodies
- 6.91. The solar arrays and other apparatus would be sited on grassland areas of the site.
- 6.92. A number of ecological studies have been undertaken and accompany the application.
- 6.93. The studies include an ecological desktop assessment, a revised ecological assessment, Great Crested Newt, ornithological, badgers, bat and hedgerow surveys. The surveys have been considered by the Councils Senior Natural Environment Officer and Natural England who raise no objections to the proposal on ecological grounds

- 6.94. A Habitats Regulation Assessment has been undertaken as part of the application which considers the impact of the proposal on ornithology (Breeding and wintering birds) which are associated with the national, European and international protected sites.
- 6.95. There is no requirement to submit details of a farmland bird/ skylark mitigation) to minimise any direct impact on skylarks/breeding birds. Natural England raises no objection of the proposal and there is no statutory guidance on compensating for skylarks on for solar schemes and it is considered the condition is satisfactory in this circumstance. However, there are areas of undeveloped land towards the eastern boundary of the site that could be used for nesting if this was required. Condition 11 (Landscape and Ecological Management Plan) would facilitate this if required.
- 6.96. The ecological impact assessment considers the proposal in relation to hedgerows and confirms which hedges constitute important under the Hedgerow Regulations. It confirms that none of the hedgerows within the site would meet the criteria. The proposal would utilise the existing gaps of breaks in hedgerows, with avoidance by design measures implemented. New hedgerow planting and enhancement to existing hedgerows would also bring a benefit to local landscape and ecological value.
- 6.97. An assessment of Badgers has been undertaken within the ecological impact assessment, the findings of which remain confidential. The assessment has been considered and a planning condition (No. 18) is attached to the decision notice.
- 6.98. The ecological impact assessment notes records of widespread species of bats within the wider area. Eight trees, of which seven are located within the northern boundaries provide potential to support Potential Roosting features. The arable margins were considered to provide moderate quality foraging habitats. It is agreed that no further survey work is required.
- 6.99. Three ponds are located within 250m of the site and were considered suitable for Great Crested Newts, with the eastern margin of the site being considered to be of high value. As no solar panels would be sited next to the eastern boundary, the proposal would not materially harm the terrestrial habitat of Great Crested Newts. The site habitats are considered to be of local importance for invertebrates and reptiles.
- 6.100. Biodiversity enhancements would be created through planting and appropriate management of wildlife friendly habitats. The enhancement forms part of a suite of proposed ecological improvements that can be secured by a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) which would control the development for the duration of the project (condition 11 refers).
- 6.101. The enhancement includes the seeding of the fields with a wildflower meadow grassland mix and planting additional hedgerows /screening, the infilling of gaps and the creation of a new hedgerow extending north/south through the site.
- 6.102. A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNG) has been submitted in accordance with the DEFRA 2.0 metric. Metric 3.0 was introduced during the consideration of the planning application and but for consistency metric 2.0 has been used. The metric has been prepared by the applicant's ecologists to assess the pre and post development units on habitat areas and linear features. This shows that the proposal would deliver 63.8 % gain in habitat units and 96.07% in hedgerows. This would be sufficient to satisfy the mandated net gain as set out by the Environment Act 2021. There are no river units on the site and thus no percentage increase is proposed.

- 6.103. The mitigation arrangements are acceptable subject to conditions (10, 11, 12 and 13) relating to amongst others, the submission of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, the submission of details relating to hard and soft landscaping, boundary treatment and CCTV and lighting.
- 6.104. Conditions can also consider matters such as the continuation and unobstructed movement of species within the site and adjacent landscape and compliance with the biodiversity net gain metric to deliver and manage, in perpetuity, the calculated gains (condition 14).

Trees

- 6.105. The site does not contain, or is adjacent to, protected trees or woodland. Nor does it contain any priority woodland habitats. The site is enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows which are typical features of rural character of the local area. As such, they are integral features of the landscape.
- 6.106. The proposal is supported by an arboricultural impact assessment. There are 57 trees on the site, none of which would be removed. There are no veteran trees on the site. The northern boundary contains the highest quality trees (category A and B). The trees are remote from the public footpath and road. This has recorded four veteran trees along the southern boundary, including additional A and B category trees, but the solar arrays would be sited sufficiently away from the trees such that they would not create any future issues with shade cast.
- 6.107. No tree removal is proposed, although if this does occur, any loss would be localised and would not affect the character and appearance of the local area and can be adequately mitigated for by new landscaping.
- 6.108. A deer fence is proposed to be set into the site to allow for a maintenance access around the perimeter. The installation of the fence where this occurs adjacent to retained trees would require a method statement and arboricultural supervision to ensure harm does not occur to the root area of such trees.
- 6.109. The comments made regarding ecology and trees within the letters of representation have been considered and reviewed and are duly noted.
- 6.110. Subject to the use of specific planning conditions relating to Landscape and Ecological Management Plan, the submission of an Arboricultural Method Statement and details of all hard and soft landscaping, boundary treatment and lighting, the development is acceptable in arboricultural terms (conditions 10, 11, 12 and 13 refer).

Loss of agricultural land

- 6.111. The NPPF at paragraph 174 (b) states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services - including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.
- 6.112. Annex 2: Glossary of the NPPF defines Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land as land in Grade's 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

- 6.113. The need to protect BMV land is reiterated within the Solar Farm Development SPD which states that land of such quality is an important area for food protection and reducing the agricultural land available increases the reliance on the importation of food, with subsequent impacts such as increased carbon emissions. The SPD advises that developments in the first instance should consider sites on previously developed land, brownfield or contaminated land, industrial land or land of grades 3b, 4 or 5.
- 6.114. Representations have been made that refer to the need to retain agricultural land, particularly following the country's departure from the European Union. This is so that crop and food production and growth can be undertaken within Great Britain thus promoting self-sufficiency, reducing the need to import crops/ food from outside the country, and reducing food miles. Comments relating to the need to consider sustainable agriculture are noted, as to are the potential ecological implications arising from the stripping of topsoil and carbon capture. Natural England do not object to the proposal in this regard.
- 6.115. The applicant has submitted an Agricultural Land Classification Report (ALC) report. The site area surveyed by the report was 67.4 hectares of land. The site was found to comprise land limited to 3b (65.4 hectares) and non agricultural (2.4 hectares).
- 6.116. As the land is shown to be outside of Grade 1, Grade 2 or Grade 3a and it is outside of the protective provision of planning policy. There is no requirement within either national planning policy or the Solar Farm Development SPD to protect land in poorer lower grades from development. The proposal would not lead to the loss of over 20ha of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land.
- 6.117. The removal of arable production is a material consideration, but this must be balanced against the benefit of the proposal in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. The small size and scale of the land lost is also considered material in this circumstance.
- 6.118. Planning conditions (5 and 7) can be used to ensure that the installation is removed when no longer in use and that the land is restored to its previous use and condition.

Effect on historic environment

- 6.119. The site contains no designated or non-designated built heritage assets.
- 6.120. The wider context includes a number of listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets, including Grade II listed Bonteels Farmhouse and Claydons Manor whose setting would be affected by the development due to the change to the rural character of the area identified within the consideration of landscape above.
- 6.121. Due to the level of separation and intervening natural screening between the site and the heritage assets, the Councils Heritage Officer considers the impact on setting would be minor.
- 6.122. The site is crossed by the World War Two GHQ defence line; which forms part of a line of remaining defences running north-south along the A130 corridor. There are remaining pillboxes to the north, south and west of the site. Pillboxes within the site have previously been demolished. The appreciation of the functional visual link as part of a defence line within a landscape setting would be diminished.

- 6.123. The NPPF, at paragraph 202 states that where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Paragraph 203 states the effect of an application on a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application.
- 6.124. Hill Farm lies to the immediate east of the site and includes an eighteenth and nineteenth century farmstead. A larger buffer would be provided between the farmstead and the solar panels, but the rural setting of the farmstead would be eroded and would adversely affect its significance.
- 6.125. There would be a very low level of less than substantial harm to the significance to Claydons and Bonteels Farmhouse. There would be a low level of harm to the setting of the GHQ pill box line.
- 6.126. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement is required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset in accordance with paragraph 203 of NPPF. The harm caused would be a low level of harm for the purposes of the NPPF. For harm to a designated heritage asset this should be balanced in against any public benefit delivered by the proposals in accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF.
- 6.127. There would be no unacceptable archaeological implications arising from the proposal.

Effect on residential living environment

- 6.128. The arrays themselves are passive during operation, they have no running parts and emit no carbon, noise, smell or light. Once installed, the system itself needs minimum maintenance and will be unmanned.
- 6.129. With the exception of Hill Farm, Dunnock Cottage and Glebe Cottages, there are few residential properties directly sited along the operational boundaries.
- 6.130. Glebe Cottages would be sited about 40 metres west of the nearest arrays and at least 340 metres from the substation compound.
- 6.131. Dunnock Cottages would be sited about 80 metres north from the nearest arrays and at least 650 metres from the substation compound
- 6.132. The site also adjoins the Southend Road and is close to the busy A130 which would further reduce the perceived noise impact from either on-site plant or construction noise.
- 6.133. The substation, inverter / transformer stations and other associated plant would be acoustically rated and can produce sound, but this can be managed and rated such that acceptable noise levels are achieved.
- 6.134. The effect of the noise attenuating benefits of agricultural land as noted in the letters of representation are noted, but in the absence of any substantive and supporting evidence to demonstrate this benefit, the loss of agricultural land on noise grounds are not considered material to the consideration of the application.

- 6.135. It is acknowledged that during the construction phases, there would be periods when works are likely to be audible to nearby receptors. The Transport Note advises that vehicular access to the site will be along an existing unmade field entrance through an existing gap in the boundary hedgerow off Southend Road. This would be upgraded and enlarged. There would be no requirement to introduce additional accesses into the site
- 6.136. Construction/delivery hours have not been confirmed, but these can be conditioned to bring them in line with the Council's standard working times which extend from 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturday to reduce any impact upon nearby residents.
- 6.137. It is not considered that the proposal would lead to material adverse impacts on noise.
- 6.138. The proposal would be visible from Glebe Cottages, Dunnock Cottage and Hill Farm as well as properties sited further away elsewhere to the south of the site along Southend Road. Due to its hillside location, it would also be visible within far longer views from West Hanningfield. The panels themselves, at a maximum of only 3 metres in height are not considered to be overbearing in relation to proximity from existing residential properties.
- 6.139. From close quarters, the proposal would result in a significant change in outlook, especially from Glebe Cottages, Dunnock Cottage and Hill Farm, but the combination of existing and proposed vegetation and the panels themselves generally screen views of other panels that would be of a similar height. The impact of residential first floor views would only offer a more expansive viewpoint and would not be unacceptable given their separation distance and the inclusion of planting boundaries.
- 6.140. Conditions relating to the submission of hard and soft landscaping /boundary planting / landscape management, are attached to the decision notice (conditions 10, 11, 12 and 13 refer).
- 6.141. Conditions relating to construction management and hours of operation can control the impacts of the proposal during the assembly of the site. The use of the site is not considered to result in unacceptable noise and disturbance. Conditions 8, 19 and 20 refer.
- 6.142. In relation to glint and glare, the solar panels are designed to absorb light, rather than reflect light. Although the surface is glass, it is not reflective in the same way as a mirror or window.
- 6.143. The submitted glint and glare study has considered the impact of glint and glare on residential dwellings and supports this stance. It states that for receptors where solar reflection is geometrically possible, of the 39 dwellings assessed, mitigation was judged not be needed because views of the reflecting panels would be significantly obstructed, would coincide with direct sunlight and there is sufficient separation distance.
- 6.144. Mitigation is recommended for two dwellings (Glebe Cottages and Hill Farm) due to effects being predicted for more than three months a year and less than 60 minutes a day. The mitigation would be in the form of planting/fencing as a means of screening to obstruct, as a minimum, ground floor views of the reflecting panels. This means dwellings would not experience solar reflections in practice.

- 6.145. The solar panels are not considered to harmfully affect nearby residential amenity by way of adverse glint or glare to warrant a reason for refusal on this ground.
- 6.146. Precise details of CCTV and fencing can be secured by condition so that it does not lead to loss of privacy and/or be visually intrusive or overbearing.

Effect on highway safety

- 6.147. The vehicular access to the site would be along an existing unmade field entrance through an existing gap in the boundary hedgerow off Southend Road. This would be upgraded and enlarged.
- 6.148. A Transport Statement (Transport Note) and Glint and Glare study have been submitted as part of the planning application. These consider the specifics of the proposal in respect of site access, routing, vehicle and vehicle frequency, condition surveys and glint and glare.
- 6.149. The Planning, Design and Access Statement identifies a period of 16 months to complete the construction of the solar farm. The intention would be for most construction traffic to come from the north at junction 17 of the A12/A130 along Southend Road. A secondary construction access route is proposed to the south along Main Road, Rettendon. Timings for Construction traffic and delivery vehicles would be programmed within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) or Construction Logistics Plan which can be conditioned. Conditions 19 and 20 refers. Parking would be contained within the construction compound.
- 6.150. The Highways Authority have been consulted on the proposal and have reviewed the information provided. They have considered the safety of the site access and the impact of the construction phase, the effect of the proposal upon Glint and Glare and upon highway users travelling along Pan Lane.
- 6.151. In relation to construction, the development would result in some impacts on the road network, but this would be restricted during the construction phase. It is inevitable that there will be some disruption to local traffic during the construction period, but the use of appropriate traffic management regimes, as is commonplace with schemes of this nature, would minimise any difficulties. Whilst there would be a degree of inconvenience, this would be relatively short lived.
- 6.152. The Highways Authority raise no objections to the proposal subject to appropriate planning conditions relating amongst others to the construction of the access way, provision of visibility sight splays and planting along the Southend Road roadside frontages.
- 6.153. There is a Public Right of Way (PRoW) which runs along the centre of the site PROW 218_17 which forms part of the St Peters Way. The Highways Authority has considered the impact of the proposal on users of the Public Right of Way and considers the relationship to be satisfactory. The Highways Authority recommend that in the event of needing to temporary close or divert the PRoW, a new route is secured. The applicants agent confirms that there are no plans to divert or close the PRoW, although it may need to be crossed during construction. As Public Right of Way Management is legally separate to the planning system, an informative No. 3 is attached to the decision notice to advise the applicant to contact ECC PRoW team to discuss and agree any requirements.

- 6.154. In relation to glint and glare, the intensity of reflection from panels would be relatively low given they are designed to absorb light, and reflection would be experienced at the same time as direct sunlight. Drivers would not be directly facing the reflected light and any views towards it would be towards the sun. The Glint and Glare report submitted with the application states that mitigation should be provided in the form of additional screening. This is proposed on the Landscape Mitigation Plan 2214D-00-50 Rev H. Additional boundary treatment and fencing ranging between 2 - 5 metres high is proposed. The Highways Authority confirm that subject to the mitigation being introduced by means of planning condition, they raise no objections to it.
- 6.155. The Highways Authority conclude that subject to appropriate conditions, including the provision of suitable boundary screening along the Southend Road site boundary frontage, the proposal as submitted is not considered detrimental to highway safety, capacity or efficiency.

Flooding and Drainage

- 6.156. As most of the development is solar panels which are supported on piled struts, the surface area of the site is comparatively small in comparison to the overall development site area.
- 6.157. As the proposal is identified as major development, a flood risk assessment has been submitted with the application. The Environment Agency and ECC SUDS team have been consulted. The Environment Agency has not replied to the Councils consultation request, but this does not preclude the determination of the planning application.
- 6.158. ECC SUDs team have reviewed the submitted assessment/drainage strategy and have no objections subject to a number of conditions relating to the submission a detailed surface water drainage scheme, a scheme to minimise off site flooding and prevent pollution during construction and a soil management plan.
- 6.159. They advise that the Council has a formal duty to consider warning and emergency response to managing flood risk.
- 6.160. The site lies within flood zone one, where it has low probability of flooding and flood risk. This means there is no requirement to introduce additional flood warning and emergency measures.
- 6.161. Details of the design of plant and the introduction of flood proofing /recovery measures and construction of the development can be secured by condition.
- 6.162. ECC SUDS advise that consideration should be given to the sustainability of the development, including the role of the planning system in helping to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change.
- 6.163. The site is not located within a coastal location. Measures to adapt to and mitigate against on and off-site flood risk can be managed by a water drainage scheme and soil management plan which can be conditioned.
- 6.164. The comments made within the letters of representation with regard to flooding and surface water drainage are noted. In the absence of an objection from ECC SUDS, the proposal is not considered to lead to harmful drainage or flooding to warrant a reason for refusal on this ground.

Other considerations

- 6.165. In addition to the above main considerations, numerous other considerations have been raised with the main ones considered below.
- 6.166. ECC Fire and Rescue raise no objections to the proposal, stating that it will be the applicant's responsibility to comply with the relevant sections of the building regulations. The developer will further be obliged to ensure the safe installation and operation of all apparatus to satisfy safety and insurance requirements.
- 6.167. There is no substantiated evidence to demonstrate that the proposal would lead to any other impacts on health of local residents nor interference with radio waves, tv reception and WIFI.
- 6.168. Concerns relating to property devaluation, Council taxes, and other development schemes within the rurality are not a material planning consideration.
- 6.169. Essex Police advise that following an increase in solar farms being targeted by thieves in other counties, consideration must be given to providing suitable site security for the proposal. This will be a matter for the developer and could be considered in further detail at condition stage.
- 6.170. The Council is aware that there may be services within the area and has consulted with the relevant stakeholders. Services, including Anglian Water raise no objection to the proposal. There may be separate arrangements outside of the planning process to notify utilities stakeholders separately.
- 6.171. A public consultation exercise was taken independently as part of the at pre-application stage by the applicants. A comprehensive public consultation exercise was undertaken by the Local Planning Authority during the planning application. During the course of the planning application, the Local Planning Authority has changed its consultation guidelines and procedures. The amended planning application has been duly publicised in accordance with the guidelines.
- 6.172. In relation to the suitability of other sites, preference for the use of alternative forms of energy such as wind and nuclear, the 'greenness' of manufacturing processes used in the construction of solar energy, the alleged limited lifetime of solar energy and local community benefit, planning law is clear that applications must be considered on their merits against the relevant development plan and other material considerations that apply. In this regard, the proposal has been assessed against this criterion and any future planning applications will also be considered on a site-by-site basis without prejudice basis to decisions the Council has taken.
- 6.173. The letters of representation have referred to a number of planning decisions where applications for solar farms have been refused. The decisions are noted, but they do not affect the determination of this planning application. The determination of a planning application must go back to basic principles set out within planning law. Namely, that planning applications must be assessed against the relevant national and local development plan policies and guidance and any other material considerations that may apply. It does not follow that there is an automatic presumption in refusing planning permission just because it has been done so elsewhere.

Cumulative Impact

- 6.174. The proposal is for one of three planning applications submitted within close proximity to each other. These other two planning applications are:

Canons Barn (21/00502/FUL) Land East Of A130 South Of Canon Barns Road East Hanningfield Chelmsford Essex

- 6.175. Installation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) park generating up to 8 MW of electricity, comprising of ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays, substation, internal access tracks, transformers/inverters, fencing and gates, CCTV cameras, temporary construction compound, underground cable and connection to end user and other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

Sandon Brook Sandon Brook (21/00394/FUL) Land East And West Of A130, North And South Of Canon Barns Road East Hanningfield Chelmsford Essex

- 6.176. Installation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) park generating up to 49.9 MW of electricity spread over three sites (sited either side of the A130/Canons Barn Road), comprising of ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays, battery-based electricity storage containers, and One Point of Connection (POC) mast of up to 35m in height on Church Road (junction with Link House Farm), together with inverters/transformer stations, Distribution Network Operator (DNO) Substation, access and cable connection to POC mast to connect to 132 kV power line, customer substation/switchgear and meter kiosk, batteries, internal buried cabling and grid connection cables, internal access tracks, security fencing and gates and CCTV cameras, other ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements. Refused 9th December 2021.

- 6.177. Refused on the grounds that:

1). The proposal would result in an unacceptable form of development within the Green Belt outside the exceptions listed within the NPPF or Policies DM6 or DM10 of the Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan. The proposal would be for an inappropriate form of development that would lead to loss of openness. The NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The proposed development by reason of its siting and scale would result in the creation of a large-scale industrial development that would lead to visual and spatial loss of openness. The very special circumstances put forward by the applicants have been considered, but the applicant has not demonstrated that the harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by the very special circumstances suggested by the applicant.

2). The proposed development by reason of its siting and scale would result in the creation of a large-scale industrial development. It would be significantly detrimental to the landscape character of the area and would harmfully intrude on perceptions of field patterns and the setting of nearby villages. The predicted landscape affects arising from the proposed development are not able to be overcome by the proposed mitigation. The proposal would cause an unacceptable and adverse effect upon the natural environment which in turn would fail to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside the development would result in an unacceptable form of development within the Green Belt outside the exceptions listed within the NPPF or Policies DM6 or DM10 of the Adopted Chelmsford Local Plan.

- 6.178. The decision has been appealed. The appeal was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 27th May 2022. At the time of writing, the appeal timetable has not been set and there are no dates for the consideration of the proposal.
- 6.179. The cumulative impacts of the proposal in relation to these planning applications is a material consideration to the determination of this application. The reason for this is due to their close proximity to the application site and the fact that they are for the same type of proposal, solar power.
- 6.180. The Sandon Brook solar farm site is located about 200 metres to the south of the application site, parallel to Church Road to the west of Canons Barn Bridge. The northern and southern fields directly neighbour the Water Treatment Works. The Canons Barn solar farm site is sited on the southern side of Canons Barn Road to the west of Southend Road.
- 6.181. Both of the above sites are located upon agricultural land (mainly 3b) within primarily flood zone one. Trees and hedges border the site boundaries and public rights of way are sited close by. Southend Road and/or the A130 neighbour the three sites.
- 6.182. Cumulatively the combined wattage of the three proposed solar farm sites would exceed the 50 MW referral criterion for which a proposal must be considered as a National Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and determined under Development Consent Order regulations. Individually, the proposals all propose a wattage below the NSIP threshold. This application Hill Farm is for 36.7 MW, Canons Barn was for 8 MW and Sandon Brook was for 49.9 MW.
- 6.183. All three planning applications have been submitted by different landowners, by different applicants and different planning agents. Except for geographical location, the Council is satisfied that they comprise three distinctly separate and individual sites. The Council is satisfied that they can be considered separately by the Local Planning Authority and the proposals do not form a National Infrastructure Project.

Relevant planning policies

- 6.184. Hill Farm is sited within the rural area beyond the Green Belt. Canons Barn and Sandon Brook are sited within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The policy consideration given above to Hill Farm does not apply to Sandon Brook and Canons Barn.
- 6.185. The Metropolitan Green Belt boundary extends to the eastern side of the A130. Within the Green Belt section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework applies. The fundamental aim of Green Belt Policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence Paragraph 147 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 148 states that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Paragraph 151 states that when located within the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases, developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.

- 6.186. In common with the application site, all three proposals must contribute to protecting and enhancing the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.
- 6.187. Locally, policy DM19 Renewable energy applies to all three proposals as well as the adopted Solar Farm Development SPD.
- 6.188. Policy DM6 New buildings and structures in the Green Belt is specific to Canons Barn and Sandon Brook due to their Green Belt siting. Policy DM8 New buildings and structures in the rural area is specific to Hill Farm. Policy DM10 of Change of use (Land and buildings) and Engineering operations applies equally to all three sites.
- 6.189. The planning application at Sandon Brook was refused on 9th December 2021 and has been appealed. Should the appeal be upheld, the Sandon Brook and Canons Barn proposals, together with this proposal, could have additional effects or increase the magnitude of change on the landscape and other planning considerations. The effect of this potential change is thus considered below.
- 6.190. The main issues affecting all three proposals is the principle of development and their compliance with the relevant policies above.

Principle of development and cumulative impact upon the Metropolitan Green Belt

- 6.191. All three applications must be determined on their merits against the relevant development plan policies unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Canons Barn and Sandon Brook were both found comprise inappropriate development within the Green Belt unless very special circumstances apply. Consideration of the proposal against other relevant development plan policies must also be undertaken.
- 6.192. This proposal is not sited within the Green Belt and therefore the above tests do not apply.
- 6.193. The Sandon Brook proposal was considered to amount to inappropriate development, harmful to the openness of the Green Belt and the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. The very special circumstances put forward by the applicant were not accepted.
- 6.194. Canons Barn was considered to amount to inappropriate development, but very special circumstances were accepted. These were that the benefits that the proposal would have in delivering a renewable form of energy were greater than and would thus outweigh the substantial harm, by reason of inappropriateness and loss of openness, that the proposal would have on the Metropolitan Green Belt.

Landscape character and visual amenity

- 6.195. The Council has commissioned a review of the cumulative Impacts of all three proposals which has been completed by ECC Place Services. It forms section 6.0 to their report dated May 2022.
- 6.196. In landscape and visual terms, cumulative landscape effects are those that can impact either upon the physical fabric or character of the landscape. Cumulative visual impacts are those effects that can be caused by combined visibility.

Construction

- 6.197. It is considered that the combination of construction activity would result in a materially more significant adverse effect than had the developments been constructed in isolation.

Visual amenity

- 6.198. Place Services consider there is intervisibility between all three sites at certain viewpoints. For example, the view taken from Canons Barn Road bridge where all three sites would be visible from the Public Footpath between Canons Barn Road and Water Treatment Works looking east and across the footbridge across the A130 to the north of the site looking both north and south. In this context, adverse cumulative effects would be experienced when compared to viewing the site in isolation.
- 6.199. Additionally, there would be some substantial/important adverse impacts on visual amenity that would be limited to the site (PRoW 218_7) and its immediate settings. Yet this would be of a neutral change given the positive contribution the additional landscape measures would have within the landscape.
- 6.200. In terms of sequential views, these will not be experienced by users travelling along a single Public Right of Way (PRoW), given the proximity of the schemes next to each other and the combination of intervening vegetation and topography. However, as users move across the wider PRoW landscape and join other PRoWs, they may experience sequential views. Similarly, the same would apply to users travelling along the local road network.
- 6.201. Collectively in terms of cumulative visual impact, adverse cumulative effects greater than the application site in isolation would be experienced.
- 6.202. Visually, the proposals would not lead to the coalescence of the neighbouring villages in the context that the proposal would not expand the Defined Settlement boundaries or residential envelopes of the village. However, there would be an increase in built form and man-made features in the context of the introduction of solar panels, associated infrastructure and access tracks. This would lead to a change in the character of the area resulting in the temporary loss of agricultural land and replacement with a more industrialised form of development.
- 6.203. All three sites fall within / neighbour the F12 Wooded Farmland Landscape Character Type within the Braintree, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment 2006 (Landscape Character Assessment). This characterises the land as a mixture of pastoral and arable farmland, elevated undulating hills, views to wooded horizons, mature field boundaries and framed views next to character areas.
- 6.204. Collectively the sites geographical extent is larger than the individual sites meaning combined and sequential visibility is possible as the proposals would impact upon framed views across the character areas. Further, locally, the number of fields in close proximity that could no longer be used for agriculture could be diminished.
- 6.205. Place Services consider that in in-combination effects with Sandon Brook and Canons Barn upon Landscape Character would be greater due to the increased geographical extent of the solar arrays and associated infrastructure across the local landscape.

- 6.206. Locally, Hill Farm (21/00555/FUL) is located within the Local Landscape Character Area F12 (East Hanningfield Wooded Farmland) within the Braintree, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessment (2006). Canons Barn is located within Local Landscape Character Area F11 South Hanningfield Wooded Farmland. Sandon Brook (21/00394/FUL), falls within both Landscape Character Areas.
- 6.207. In their report to Sandon Brook, Place Services considered there to be no direct effect upon LCA F11 South Hanningfield Wooded Farmland because of the combined effect of the Sandon Brook and Canons Farm development; Canons Farm is a small site such that there would be no material adverse effect from its development in combination with Sandon Brook, and consequently no cumulative effects would occur. Yet, in their report to Canons Barn, Place Services went on to consider though that there would be greater adverse effect on the landscape fabric of LCA F11 as a result of the two developments coming forward. Geographically, the Sandon Brook site is much larger than Canons Barn.
- 6.208. In relation to Hill Farm, the visual characteristics of F12 East Hanningfield Wooded Farmland include open and framed views to wooded horizons both within the character area and the neighbouring landscape character area (F11). This means the Hill Farm (21/00555/FUL) development within LCA F11 would result in adverse cumulative effects given that Sandon Brook and Canons Barn would be visible from the application site and would have an adverse cumulative effect that is greater than the effects of the individual development.
- 6.209. Cumulatively, should planning permission be granted/allowed for all three sites, the Local Planning Authority concurs with Place Services that the adverse cumulative effect on the landscape would be greater than the effects of the individual development.
- 6.210. However, as the cumulative effect of granting /allowing planning permission for all three proposals would not be of major significance/importance and can be balanced against the planning merits of the proposal, it is considered that the impact upon landscape would not warrant a specific reason for refusal on cumulative grounds.

Natural environment including designated sites and loss of agricultural land

- 6.211. The habitats within the three development sites consist of mainly arable fields with woodland planting, hedgerow, scrubland and grassland. The surrounding landscape is predominantly agricultural including arable and pastoral land use.
- 6.212. None of the sites are subject to any statutory or regional wildlife designations. The closest Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to all three sites is Hanningfield Reservoir. There are also several Local Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodlands located nearby.
- 6.213. All three planning applications are accompanied by ecological assessments and relevant arboricultural information. Natural England have been consulted on the proposals.
- 6.214. No objections were raised to any of the three proposals, subject to the use of conditions.
- 6.215. All three proposals promote site specific biodiversity enhancements through planting and appropriate management of wildlife friendly habitats including the provision of planting belts. The reliance on site specific measures which could be conditioned in the event of approval means there would be no cumulative harm to ecology.

- 6.216. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has also been completed for all three sites in accordance with either the DEFRA 2.0 or DEFRA 3.0 metric which show that each proposal would deliver biodiversity net gain.
- 6.217. Some of the sites, such as the Sandon Brook, contain Tree Preservation Orders along their site boundaries. Pockets of Ancient Woodland are also located close to the application site. These would not be removed as part of any of the development proposals.
- 6.218. All three sites contain mature trees and hedgerows which are typical features of the rural character of the area. Other than some minor low level tree removal, there would no large-scale felling and removal of trees and hedging that would result in a significant and noticeable change to the landscape.
- 6.219. There would be no cumulative impact upon existing trees and hedgerows. Should planning permission be granted, planning conditions could be used to mitigate against the removal of existing trees and ensure appropriate replacement / enhancement.
- 6.220. Agricultural Land Assessments have been submitted with all three planning applications. These show that the majority of land within the application sites is classed as Class 3b and is not Best and Most Versatile. The consideration of the loss of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Land can be/has been considered separately within each planning application. Overall, there would not be a cumulative loss of BMV land that would warrant a specific reason for refusal.

Historic environment

- 6.221. None of the three sites contain any designated or non-designated built heritage assets.
- 6.222. The rural context and rural character of the three sites forms part of the setting and wider landscape setting and context to a number of heritage assets. There are a number of listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets sited close to all three sites. The Grade II* buildings comprise the Church of St Peter, South Hanningfield and the Church of St Mary and Edward, West Hanningfield. Other buildings include Bonteels Farmhouse (Grade II) and Claydons Manor (Grade II).
- 6.223. The change to the rural character of the area have been identified within the consideration of landscape above and would be considered separately for each of the sites.
- 6.224. Cumulatively, due to the level of separation and intervening natural screening between the sites and the heritage assets, whilst there would be a change in landscape character, there would be no cumulative heritage impacts arising from the proposal. The Councils Heritage Officer considers the cumulative impact on setting would be minor and the harm would be a low level of less than substantial harm to both designated and non-designated heritage assets for the purposes of the Framework.

Residential living environment

- 6.225. The individual impact of the three proposals in relation to residential living environment has been considered specifically on their merits.

- 6.226. With the exception of a small number of residential dwellings; including those sited along Southend Road, Church Road, Pan Lane and Bennett's Avenue, there are few residential properties sited along the application site boundaries.
- 6.227. Cumulatively should planning permission be granted/allowed for all three sites, at first floor level, it would be possible to see the arrays across an expansive viewpoint resulting in a significant change in outlook. But given the single storey nature of the solar panels, the proposed inclusion of planting along the site boundaries and the general level of separation between the residential properties and the solar farm sites, any harmful effects would be limited to the application sites only and there would not be any cumulative loss of amenity that would warrant a specific reason for refusal on this ground.
- 6.228. The arrays themselves are passive during operation, they have no running parts and emit no carbon, noise smell or light. Once installed, the systems themselves needs minimum maintenance and will be unmanned. Plant can be acoustically rated but this can be managed and rated such that acceptable noise levels are achieved on each site resulting in no cumulative impact.
- 6.229. It is acknowledged that during the construction phases, there would be periods when works are likely to be audible to at nearby receptors, particularly if planning permission was granted for all three sites, but the nature of construction is temporary and conditions relating to Construction Management and hours of construction be used to ensure compliance with the Council's standard working times and to reduce any impact upon nearby residents.
- 6.230. In relation to glint and glare, again this is a matter for consideration within the individual planning applications. It is generally accepted that the solar panels are designed to absorb light, rather than reflect light. Although the surface is glass, it is not reflective in the same way as a mirror or window.

Highway Safety

- 6.231. All three proposals have been considered by the Highway Authority.
- 6.232. In relation to construction, the proposals would result in some cumulative impacts on the road network, but this would be restricted during the construction phase. It is inevitable that there would be some disruption to local traffic during the construction period, but the use of appropriate traffic management regimes would minimise any difficulties. Whilst there would be a degree of inconvenience, this would be relatively short lived.
- 6.233. The nature of solar farms is that once operational, they generate low levels of vehicle movements meaning the cumulative impact arising from the operation of the sites is low. Matters such as the provision, siting and safety of accesses can and has been considered within each planning application.
- 6.234. With the exception of views, which is considered above, there would be no cumulative impact upon users of the Public Rights of Way (PRoW).
- 6.235. In relation to glint and glare, there would be no cumulative impact as this has been considered on a site-by-site basis. The intensity of reflection from panels would be relatively low given they are designed to absorb light and reflection would be experienced at the same time as direct sunlight.

Flooding and Drainage

- 6.236. Flood Risk Assessments have been submitted with all three applications. The sites are all located within flood zone one, although Sandon Brook (21/00394/FUL) contains a small parcel of land within flood zone 3a, yet no works are proposed in this flood zone.
- 6.237. ECC SUDs team raised no objections to any of the three planning applications subject to conditions. Flooding and surface water management can be managed on a site-by-site basis and thus there would be no cumulative impacts.

Conclusions

- 6.238. The three development schemes would lead to an adverse cumulative effect upon visual amenity and landscape character that is greater than the effects of the individual development.
- 6.239. The three schemes would result in a large-scale industrial development that would adversely affect the landscape character and in turn would intrude on perceptions of field patterns and the setting of nearby villages.
- 6.240. However, the cumulative impacts of the three proposals would not lead to a substantial/important adverse level of harm to the character of surrounding landscape that would warrant a specific reason for refusal on cumulative grounds.
- 6.241. Although there would be adverse landscape and visual harm, this would be limited by the introduction of appropriate landscape mitigation measures and would not be of a substantial / detrimental scale.
- 6.242. The three development schemes would not give rise to unacceptable cumulative impacts upon the natural environment including designated sites and loss of agricultural land, the historic environment, residential living environment, highway safety and flooding and drainage.
- 6.243. There are no other planning related matters that would require a specific consideration on cumulative impact grounds alone.

Sustainability

- 6.244. The NPPF considers that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are independent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that opportunities can be undertaken to secure net gains across economic, social and environmental objectives.
- 6.245. The proposal is a renewable energy project which is supported by national and local planning policies due to the benefits it would deliver in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It would also deliver moderate social and employment benefits by providing employment in the construction and operational phase and generally contributing to sustaining jobs in the wider solar power industry. However, the loss of agricultural land could lead to the loss of agricultural jobs. This would somewhat be offset by the Governments commitment to promote renewable energy proposals.

- 6.246. There would be habitat and biodiversity net gains associated with the development.
- 6.247. The proposal would not cause unacceptable harm to landscape character / visual amenity and can be appropriately mitigated to reduce the level of harm.
- 6.248. Concerns have been raised over the harmful impact of the world's resource of the production of panels and the potential harm of carbon on construction work, yet there is no persuasive evidence to demonstrate such effects on the impact of the site to reduce CO2 emissions.
- 6.249. Based on the consideration given above, it is considered that the proposal is a form of sustainable development and would meet sustainable development objectives.

Conclusions

- 6.250. There is a recognised need and support for renewable energy technology through National and Local Planning policy and this development would contribute towards the targets set for the UK's greenhouse gas emission reduction and increasing the country's energy supply for renewable sources.
- 6.251. The assessment of renewable energy proposals requires the impacts to be considered in the context of the strong 'in principle' policy support given the Government's conclusion that there is a pressing need to deliver renewable energy generation.
- 6.252. The proposal would deliver 36.7 MW of energy which would provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions. This is roughly equivalent to powering 12,500 homes or a settlement the size of Witham. This is given significant weight in favour of granting planning permission for this proposal.
- 6.253. The proposal would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the surrounding landscape both visually and with regard to landscape character that would be of a substantial/detrimental scale that would warrant a specific reason for refusal on this ground.
- 6.254. The predicted landscape effects arising from the proposed development are acceptable on balance when weighing up the overall benefits of the proposal and can be limited by the proposed mitigation.
- 6.255. The proposal would have a low level of less than substantial harm on heritage assets. Landscaping would partly mitigate the harm, but a very low level of harm would remain. This harm, in the context of public benefits delivered by the proposal with regard to increasing the country's energy supply for renewable sources, would not amount to a reason for refusal on these grounds.
- 6.256. The proposal would not have a harmful adverse impact on ecology, residential amenity, highway safety or flood risk, subject to controls recommended by planning conditions.
- 6.257. The main benefit arising from the scheme is the contribution to the production of renewable energy and consequential reduction in CO2 emissions. These benefits are afforded substantial weight and outweighs any adverse landscape and visual harm arising from the development.
- 6.258. It is concluded that the proposal is acceptable and complies with the development plan and national and local planning guidance.

6.259. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised it is concluded that the proposed development is acceptable in accordance with the adopted Local Plan Policies, national planning policy and guidance and the Adopted Solar Farm Supplementary Planning Document.

7. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

7.1. The application is not CIL liable.

RECOMMENDATION

The Application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:-

Condition 1

The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than 3 years from the date of this decision.

Reason:

In order to comply with Section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Condition 2

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and conditions listed on this decision notice.

Reason:

In order to achieve satisfactory development of the site

Condition 3

The planning permission hereby granted shall be limited to a period of 40 years commencing from the date electricity generated by the solar panels is first exported to the National Grid. At the end of this 40-year period, the development shall be removed and the land restored to its previous agricultural use in accordance with details that shall have been previously submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To reflect the temporary nature of the permission and to ensure that the landscape impact of the development exists only for the lifetime of the development in accordance with Policy DM19 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 4

Prior to their installation, full details of the final location, design, materials and acoustic attenuation to be used for the:

- (a) panel arrays,
- (b) transformers,
- (c) inverters,
- (d) control room,
- (e) substations,
- (f) power conversion system,
- (g) HVAC unit,
- (h) all auxiliary buildings

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter permanently maintained in the agreed form unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

This information is required prior to installation of the development, to agree the precise location and specification of the solar farm and to ensure the design of the development integrates with the character and appearance of the area and does not materially affect the living environments of neighbouring dwellings in accordance with Policies DM19, DM23 and DM29 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 5

No later than six months prior to the expiry of the planning permission, or within six months of the cessation of electricity generation by this solar PV park, whichever is the sooner, a detailed scheme of works for the removal of the development (excluding the approved landscaping and biodiversity works) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

The scheme of works shall include the following:

- (a) a programme of works;
- (b) a method statement for the decommissioning and dismantling of all equipment and surfacing on site;
- (c) details of any items to be retained on site;
- (d) a method statement for restoring the land to agriculture;
- (e) timescale for the decommissioning, removal and reinstatement of the land;
- (f) a method statement for the disposal/recycling of redundant equipment/structures.

The scheme of works shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details and timescales. The operator shall notify the Local Planning Authority in writing within five working days following the cessation of electricity generation.

Reason:

To reflect the temporary nature of the permission and to ensure that decommissioning takes place in accordance with a strategy that has been agreed with by the Local Planning Authority in accordance with Policy DM19 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 6

The applicant/developer shall notify the Local Planning Authority in writing within 10 working days of electricity being generated from the development being first exported to the National Grid.

Reason:

To determine the start of the 40-year temporary planning permission.

Condition 7

If the solar farm ceases to export electricity to the grid for a continuous period of twelve months, a scheme shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its written approval within three months from the end of the twelve-month period for the removal of the solar farm and associated equipment and the restoration of (that part of) the site to agricultural use. The approved scheme of restoration shall then be fully implemented within nine months of the written approval being given.

Reason:

To ensure that the solar park fulfils its required purpose and to ensure that the landscape impact of the development exists only for the lifetime of the development in accordance with Policy DM19 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 8

No construction or decommissioning works shall take place except between the following hours: 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, and 08:00 to 13:00 Saturday. No construction or decommissioning works shall take place at any time on Sunday or a Bank Holiday.

Reason:

In the interests of protecting the living environment of occupiers of nearby dwellings in accordance with Policies DM19 and DM29 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 9

No external lighting, including lighting required for construction and decommissioning, shall be installed at the site until such time as a lighting strategy for biodiversity has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

All external lighting shall be installed in accordance with the details agreed in the strategy and shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed details, subject to any such variation that may be agreed with the Local Planning Authority. No additional external lighting shall be installed without prior written consent from the local planning authority.

Reason:

To ensure there is no disturbance or harm caused to protected species and neighbouring residents in accordance with Policies DM16, DM19 and DM29 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 10

Notwithstanding the details contained within the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), a landscaping scheme containing details of both hard and soft landscape works and soft landscaping management shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Subsequently the works shall be carried out as approved prior to the first exportation to the National Grid, or in the first available planting season following such exportation and permanently retained and maintained in accordance with the agreed lifetime of the development, subject to any such variation that has been previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

The details to be submitted shall include:

- (a) Hard surfacing including pathways and driveways, other hard landscape features and materials;
- (b) Existing trees, hedges or other soft features to be retained;
- (c) Soft landscaping planting plans including specifications of species, sizes, planting centres, number and percentage mix.
- (d) Details of planting or features to be provided to enhance the value of the development for biodiversity and wildlife;

Reason:

To ensure that the proposed development is visually satisfactory, to integrate the development within the area and ensure that the landscaping and planting is appropriately maintained in accordance with Policies DM16 and DM19 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 11

A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the local planning authority prior to first exportation to the National Grid.

The content of the LEMP shall include the following:

- (a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed;
- (b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management;
- (c) Aims and objectives of management;
- (d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives;
- (e) Prescriptions for management actions;
- (f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a five-year period).
- (g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
- (h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.

The LEMP shall include details of the legal and funding mechanism(s) by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the developer with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery. The plan shall also set out (where the results from monitoring show that conservation aims and objectives of the LEMP are not being met) how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme. The approved plan will be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To allow the LPA to discharge its duties under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and s40 of the NERC Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species) and to comply with the requirements of Policies DM16, DM17 and DM19 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 12

Prior to their installation, details of boundary treatment and CCTV cameras shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Thereafter, the works shall be carried out as approved prior to first exportation to the National Grid and permanently retained and maintained in accordance with the agreed form subject to any such variation that has been previously agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

The details to be submitted shall include:

- (a) Details of the proposed treatment of all boundaries and enclosures, including drawings of any gates, fences, walls, railings, piers;
- (b) Details of the CCTV cameras;
- (c) Whole perimeter fencing plan including provision for the ingress and egress of badgers and other small mammals.

(d) A scheme to deal with the provision of boundary screening along the Southend Road and Pan Lane roadside frontages whilst the agreed landscaping scheme matures.

Reason:

To ensure the proposed development is visually satisfactory, to integrate the development within the area, to prevent glint and glare to highway users and to and provide appropriate opportunities for biodiversity in accordance with Policies DM16 and DM19 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 13

In relation to tree protection, no works other than enabling works shall take place until an Arboricultural Method Statement has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Thereafter, the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement subject to such minor variations as may be agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

The details to be submitted shall include:

- (a) Details of trees and hedges to be retained and removed;
- (b) Details of tree surgery work to retained trees;
- (c) Specification for tree protection including layout and type of tree protection for construction including change that may occur during development;
- (d) Location and installation of services, utilities and drainage;
- (e) Details of construction within the root protection area of retained trees;
- (f) A full specification for the construction of the new access and parking areas, including details of the bespoke cross-over and cellular confinement specification, and the extent of the areas. Details must include the relevant sections through them;
- (g) Details of site access, temporary parking, welfare facilities, loading and unloading, storage of equipment, materials, fuels and waste;
- (h) Revised tree protection plan;
- (i) Boundary treatments within the root protection areas;
- (j) Arboricultural supervision and inspection, including timings, reporting of inspections and supervision.

Reason:

To safeguard the existing trees which are of amenity value in accordance with Policies DM17 and DM19 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 14

No works, including ground works and vegetation removal, shall take place until a scheme ("the scheme") to ensure that there is no net biodiversity loss as a result of the development has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The net biodiversity impact of the development shall be measured in accordance with the DEFRA biodiversity offsetting metric as applied in the area in which the site is situated at the relevant time and the scheme shall include:

- (a) (a) Proposals for on-site mitigation and/or for off-site offsetting, detailing in full measures to protect existing habitat during construction works and the formation of new habitat to secure a habitat compensation value of no less than expressed by the Biodiversity Metric 2.0 dated 2022.
- (b) A methodology for the identification of any receptor site(s) for offsetting measures;
- (c) The identification of any such receptor site(s);
- (d) The provision of arrangements to secure the delivery of any offsetting measures (including a timetable for their delivery); and
- (e) A biodiversity management and monitoring plan.

Reason:

This information is required prior to commencement of the development to ensure that the proposal provides Biodiversity Net Gain Measures in accordance with Policy DM16 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 15

No works, except demolition, shall take place until a soil management plan has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. Thereafter, the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and thereafter permanently maintained in the agreed form unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

This information is required prior to commencement of the development because soil compaction can cause increased run-off from the site. Failure to provide details before commencement of works may result in a system being installed that is not sufficient to deal with surface water occurring during rainfall events and may lead to increased flood risk and pollution hazard from the site.

Condition 16

No unbound material shall be used in the surface treatment of the vehicular access hereby permitted within 6 metres of the highway boundary.

Reason:

To avoid displacement of loose material onto the highway in the interests of highway safety.

Condition 17

Prior to their construction, and as shown in principle on drawings Proposed Site Boundary, C_H01_20_1000 Rev 3P and Proposed PV Solar Farm Layout 58047-EH-GA-L001 Rev D, details of the construction of the site access, visibility sight splays, dropped kerb vehicular crossing of the footway and details of surface water discharge from the highway, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, they shall be constructed ready for use prior to first export to the National Grid in accordance with the approved details. The access shall be permanently retained in accordance with the agreed form at all times.

Reason:

To ensure that vehicles can enter and leave the highway in a controlled manner in the interests of highway safety.

Condition 18

No development, including demolition, ground works or vegetation clearance, shall take place until the local planning authority has been provided with a badger walkover and/or monitoring survey including mitigation measures in the form of a method statement. The method statement shall set out the organisation or person responsible for implementing and supervising the method statement including whether a development licence will be required from Natural England for the closure of any sett(s). The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

Reason:

This information is needed prior to commencement of the development to ensure there is no harm caused to badgers in accordance with Policy DM16 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 19

No development shall take place, including any ground works, until a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) Abnormal Loads has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved Plan shall be adhered to throughout the construction and decommissioning period. The Plan shall provide for:

- i. Construction traffic routing including the routing of abnormal loads
- ii. Timings for the delivery of abnormal loads to the site
- iii. Details and location of temporary directional signage for abnormal load vehicles
- iv. Details and location of temporary advance warning signs
- v. The method(s) of convoy working and escort
- vi. The action to be taken in the event of a vehicle breakdown or emergency
- vii. The location of any layover or rest areas
- viii. Construction signage and traffic management measures

Reason:

This information is required prior to commencement of the development to ensure that appropriate measures exist to manage the construction of the development and to ensure the continued safe passage of all highway users, in the interests of highway safety and Policy DM1.

Condition 20

No development shall take place, including any ground works or demolition, until a Construction Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved plan shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Plan shall provide for;

- i. the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors,
- ii. loading and unloading of plant and materials,
- iii. storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development,
- iv. wheel and underbody washing facilities.
- v. Before and after condition survey to identify defects to highway in the vicinity of the access to the site and where necessary ensure repairs are undertaken at the developer expense where caused by developer.
- vi. Details of the siting, layout and finish of the construction compound
- vii Construction signage and traffic management measures

Reason:

This information is required prior to commencement of the development to ensure that on-street parking of these vehicles in the adjoining streets does not occur and to ensure that loose materials and spoil are not brought out onto the highway in the interests of highway safety and Policy DM1.

Condition 21

No works except demolition shall takes place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro geological context of the development, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

The scheme should include but not be limited to:

- (a) Verification of the suitability of infiltration of surface water for the development.
- (b) This should be based on infiltration tests that have been undertaken in accordance with BRE 365 testing procedure and the infiltration testing methods found in chapter 25.3 of The CIRIA SuDS Manual C753. These tests should be taken in all locations SuDS features are proposed.
- (c) Detailed engineering drawings of each component of the drainage scheme.

- (d) Details of how any surface water deriving from access roads or roads within the development will be managed and treated.
- (e) A final drainage plan which details exceedance and conveyance routes, FFL and ground levels, and location and sizing of any drainage features.
- (f) A written report summarising the final strategy and highlighting any minor changes to the approved strategy.

Reason:

This information is required prior to commencement of the development, to ensure there is a scheme to deal with the satisfactory storage of/disposal of surface water from the site, ensure the effective operation of SuDS features over the lifetime of the development and to provide mitigation of any environmental harm which may be caused to the local water environment in accordance with Policy DM18 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 22

No works shall take place until a scheme to minimise the risk of offsite flooding caused by surface water run-off and groundwater during construction works and prevent pollution has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the local planning authority. The proposal shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the details agreed in the strategy and shall be maintained thereafter in accordance with the agreed details, subject to any such variation that may be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason

This information is required prior to commencement of the development to ensure that the proposed construction of the development does not lead to excess water being discharged from the site in accordance with Policy DM18 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 23

Prior to first exportation to the National Grid, a maintenance plan detailing the maintenance arrangements including who is responsible for different elements of the surface water drainage system and the maintenance activities/frequencies, shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority, the applicant or any successor in title must maintain yearly logs of maintenance which should be carried out in accordance with any approved Maintenance Plan. These must be available for inspection upon a request by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason:

To ensure appropriate maintenance arrangements are put in place to enable the surface water drainage system to function as intended to ensure mitigation against flood risk and to ensure the SuDS are maintained for the lifetime of the development as outlined in any approved Maintenance Plan so that they continue to function as intended to ensure mitigation against flood risk in accordance with Policy DM18 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Notes to Applicant

1 Hours of work during construction

In order to cause minimum nuisance to neighbours, the applicant is strongly advised to follow guidelines for acceptable working hours set out by the Council's Public Health and Protection team.

Noisy work:

- Can be carried out between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday
- Limited to 0800-1300 on Saturdays
- At all other times including Sundays and Bank Holidays, no work should be carried out that is audible beyond the boundary of the site

Light work:

- Acceptable outside the hours shown above
- Can be carried out between 0700 and 0800; and 1800-1900 Monday to Friday

In some circumstance further restrictions may be necessary.

For more information, please contact Chelmsford City Council Public Health and Protection Services, or view the Council's website at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/construction-site-noise

Party Wall Act

The Party Wall Act 1996 relates to work on existing walls shared with another property or excavation near another building.

An explanatory booklet is available on the Department for Communities and Local Government website at

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/buildingregulations/buildingpolicyandlegislation/currentlegislation/partywallact>

2 The Highway Authority (Essex County Council) must be contacted regarding the details of any works affecting the existing highway. Contact details are:

Development Management Team,
Essex Highways,
Springfield Highways Depot,
Colchester Road,
Chelmsford
CM2 5PU.

Telephone: 0845 603 7631. Email: development.management@essexhighways.org.

3 The applicant is reminded that a grant of planning permission does not override the public's right to pass freely over a public footpath. The public's right and ease of passage over public footpath No PRoW 218_7 shall be maintained free and unobstructed at all times both during and post construction.

The applicant is advised to contact Essex County Council Highway Authority before development begins, as during the construction phase, it may not be possible to maintain the public footpath(s) free and unobstructed. If this is the case, the applicant may need to seek either the temporary diversion or closure of the footpaths during building works.

- 4 This permission is subject to conditions, which require details to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority. Please note that applications to discharge planning conditions can take up to eight weeks to determine.
- 5 The Highway Authority (Essex County Council) must be contacted regarding construction details for the proposed vehicular crossover. Contact details are:
Development Management Team,
Essex Highways,
Springfield Highways Depot,
Colchester Road,
Chelmsford
CM2 5PU.
Telephone: 0845 603 7631 Email: development.management@essexhighways.org.
- 6 Under Section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 it is an offence to deposit mud, detritus etc. on the highway. In addition, under Section 161 any person, depositing anything on a highway which results in a user of the highway being injured or endangered is guilty of an offence. Therefore, the applicant must ensure that no mud or detritus is taken onto the highway
- 7 It is the responsibility of anyone carrying out the works to comply with the relevant Building Regulations and requirements of any statutory undertakers.
- 8 The Public Right of Way network is protected by the Highways Act 1980. Any unauthorised interference with any route noted on the Definitive Map of PROW is considered to be a breach of this legislation. The public's rights and ease of passage over public footpath 218 _7, shall be maintained free and unobstructed at all times to ensure the continued safe passage of the public on the definitive right of way.
- 9 Essex County Council has a duty to maintain a register and record of assets which have a significant impact on the risk of flooding. In order to capture proposed SuDS which may form part of the future register, a copy of the SuDS assets in a GIS layer should be sent to suds@essex.gov.uk
- 10 Any drainage features proposed for adoption by Essex County Council should be consulted on with the relevant Highways Development Management Office.
- 11 Under Section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991, prior written consent from the Lead Local Flood Authority (Essex County Council) is required to construct any culvert (pipe) or structure (such as a dam or weir) to control or alter the flow of water within an ordinary watercourse. Ordinary watercourses include ditches, drains and any other networks of water which are not classed as Main River.

If you believe you need to apply for consent, further information and the required application forms can be found at www.essex.gov.uk/flooding. Alternatively you can email any queries to Essex County Council via watercourse.regulation@essex.gov.uk.
- 12 The grant of planning permission does not automatically allow development to commence. In the event of works affecting the highway, none shall be permitted to commence until such time as they have been fully agreed with this Authority. In the interests of highway user safety this may involve the applicant requesting a temporary closure of the definitive route using powers included in the

aforementioned Act. All costs associated with this shall be borne by the applicant and any damage caused to the route shall be rectified by the applicant within the timescale of the closure.

Positive and Proactive Statement

The Local Planning Authority provided advice to the applicant before the application was submitted and also suggested amendments to the proposal during the life of the application. The Local Planning Authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.

Appendix 1a: Overall Summary of consultation responses

The main consultation comments are listed below.

Local residents comments are set out in appendix 1b

Parish Council comments are set out in full at appendix 1c.

- H.S.E East Anglia Area – The site does not lie within the consultation distance (CD) of a major hazard site or major accident hazard pipeline.

- Essex County Council Highways - Proposal acceptable.

- In highways terms, the mitigation measures proposed are almost identical with minor amendment details, to make the proposal acceptable in planning terms.
- Please attach conditions relating to the submission of a Construction Traffic Management Plan, Construction Management Plan, Order securing the diversion and temporary closure of the of the existing definitive right of way Footpath no. 7 (Parish of East Hanningfield), the construction of vehicular access and visibility sight splays, construction of the vehicular turning facility and construction compound, provision of screening, provision of gates, provision of screening and landscaping, discharge of surface water, provision of gates and use of unbound material.
- Notes all work within or affecting the highway is to be laid out and constructed by prior arrangement with, and to the requirements and satisfaction of, the Highway Authority, details to be agreed before the commencement of works.
- Prior to any works taking place in public highway or areas to become public highway the developer shall enter into an appropriate agreement with the Highway Authority to regulate construction works. This will include the submission of detailed engineering drawings for approval and a safety audit.
- The Highway Authority cannot accept any liability for costs associated with a developer's improvement. This includes design check safety audits, site supervision, commuted sums for maintenance and any potential claims under Part 1 and Part 2 of the Land Compensation Act 1973. This shall be provided at no cost to the Highway Authority.

- Ramblers Association - No response received.

- East Hanningfield Parish Council – Substantive objection. Key themes.

- Adverse impact and loss of character and beauty of countryside and loss of openness.
- Cumulative effects of development.
- Harm to trees, Public Rights of Way, Agriculture and Flooding.
- Seeks confirmation that hedges will be retained / replaced.

- Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre Parish Council - No response received.

- South Woodham Ferrers Town Council -

- Consideration of the application should be deferred until after the Solar Farm SPD becomes effective.

- South Hanningfield Parish Council - Comments

- Recognises and supports need for solar power.

- Prefers that a more suitable site is found on a brownfield area with a lower grade of agricultural soil.

- West Hanningfield Parish Council - Substantive objection – Key themes.

- Harm to character and appearance of the area.
- Loss of agricultural land.
- Harm to ecology and trees.
- Potential for flooding
- Harm to residential amenity and quality of life.
- Solar as an energy is inefficient and unsuitable.
- Potential for theft.
- Does not directly benefit Chelmsford City Council nor local residents.

- Sandon Parish Council – No comments.

- Rettendon Parish Council – Objection.

- The application is one of three large solar farms. Individually each of the three proposed solar farms in this area significantly reduce the gaps between the individual villages and lead to an almost continuous one kilometre stretch of solar panels along this key north south corridor.
- Loss of agricultural land. Although Grade 3b land it is intensively farmed and productive. This proposal will reduce food production and the associated carbon capture of the growing crops
- The Sandon Brook solar farm site is in the Green Belt and it has not been demonstrated that there are no alternative sites outside the Green Belt.

- Public Health & Protection Services- No response received.

- Economic Development & Implementation - No reply received.

- Anglian Water Services Ltd - Comments

- The applicant should check for any Anglian Water assets which cross or are within close proximity to the site. Any encroachment zones should be reflected in site layout.
- If diverting or crossing over any of our assets permission will be required.

- Essex County Council (SUDS) - No objection

- Subject to a condition requesting a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site.
- The submission of a scheme to minimise the risk of offsite flooding caused by surface water run-off and ground water during construction works and prevent pollution.
- Provision of a maintenance plan detailing maintenance arrangements.
- The undertaking of yearly maintenance logs.
- The provision of a soil management plan.
- Strongly recommend looking at the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy to ensure that the proposals are implementing multifunctional green/blue features effectively.
- Prior to deciding this application you should give due consideration to the issue(s) below.
- Sequential Test in relation to fluvial flood risk;
- Safety of people (including the provision and adequacy of an emergency plan, temporary refuge and rescue or evacuation arrangements);
- Safety of the building;
- Flood recovery measures (including flood proofing and other building level resistance and resilience measures);
- Sustainability of the development.

- In all circumstances where warning and emergency response is fundamental to managing flood risk, we advise local planning authorities to formally consider the emergency planning and rescue implications of new development in making their decisions.
- Essex County Council has a duty to maintain a register and record of assets which have a significant impact on the risk of flooding. In order to capture proposed SuDS which may form part of the future register, a copy of the SuDS assets in a GIS layer should be sent to suds@essex.gov.uk
- Any drainage features proposed for adoption by Essex County Council should be consulted on with the relevant Highways Development Management Office.
- Changes to existing water courses may require separate consent under the Land Drainage Act before works take place.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to check that they are complying with common law if the drainage scheme proposes to discharge into an off-site ditch/pipe. The applicant should seek consent where appropriate from other downstream riparian landowners.

- Natural England - No objection.

- The proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on statutorily protected nature conservation sites or landscapes.
- European sites
- Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have likely significant effects on statutorily protected sites and has no objection to the proposed development. To meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, we advise you to record your decision that a likely significant effect can be ruled out.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have likely significant effects on statutorily protected sites and has no objection to the proposed development.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zones
- The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 requires local planning authorities to consult Natural England on "Development in or likely to affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest" (Schedule 4, w). Our SSSI Impact Risk Zones are a GIS dataset designed to be used during the planning application validation process to help local planning authorities decide when to consult Natural England on developments likely to affect a SSSI. The dataset and user guidance can be accessed from the data.gov.uk website
- Further general advice on the consideration of protected species and other natural environment issues is provided at Annex A.

- Essex and Suffolk Water - No response received.

- Police - Designing Out Crime

- Other parts of the country have seen an exponential rise in crime in relation to solar farms with everything from solar panels to cabling, batteries and ancillary equipment being targeted. Consequently the solar trade body has been in talks with the National Metal Crime Working Group.
- Would like to see greater consideration given to the security of the site.
- The installation of "Deer fencing" in relation to crime is not sufficient and this will only provide a symbolic boundary, and further that a single CCTV camera is unlikely to provide adequate coverage.

- Essex County Fire & Rescue Service

- Access for Fire Service purposes appears to be acceptable.

- More detailed observations on access and facilities for the Fire Service will be considered at Building Regulation consultation stage.
- Reference to compliance with Building Regulations.
- Notes additional water supplies for firefighting may be necessary for the development. Preference for sprinkler systems.

- National Grid Gas - No response received.

- Fisher German - No response received.

- UK Power Networks (Network Planner) - No response received.

- Environment Agency - No response received.

- ECC Minerals & Waste Planning - No response received.

- Local residents: 23 residents commented on the application with 31 letters in total.

- Their comments are summarised in appendix xxx of this report. The main points relate to:
- The principle of development,
- Cumulative impacts of the proposal,
- Effect on countryside, landscape character and visual amenity,
- Natural environment including designated sites, mitigation and loss of agricultural land,
- Residential living environment,
- Traffic and Highway Safety,
- Flooding and Drainage,
- Green credentials and safety of the proposal / health impact.

Appendix 1b: Summary of local residents consultation responses.

Main issues:

- Proposal forms one of three linked planning applications (21/00394/FUL, 21/00502/FUL, 21/00555/FUL) – Alleged collusion to avoid an inquiry / National Infrastructure Project.
- Potential cumulative effect on character, appearance and beauty of the countryside and surrounding villages. Blot on landscape.
- Proposal would consolidate and urbanise gaps between existing villages of West Hanningfield, East Hanningfield, South Hanningfield and Rettendon.
- Loss of green belt land.
- Adverse impact on the/ spoiling the character, appearance, beauty and setting of the countryside.
- Adverse visual impact and loss of view. Visible from roads, public rights of way (PRoW) Essex Cycle Route and residential properties. Siting on an elevated hillside would make the proposal highly visible within the locality
- Harmful change to landscape character by replacement of arable fields with urbanised, industrial landscape, alien and high density and overdeveloped.
- The section of St Peters Way bounded by the solar farm will become a narrow passage dominated on both sides by high screens and security fences.
- Mitigation screening will take years to establish.
- Loss of agricultural land.
- Proposal will affect self- sufficiency of England to produce its own food resulting in harm from food-miles that negate the usefulness of any electricity production.
- Sunshine should be used to grow crops and food. Loss of crop carbon capture. Currently county cannot produce enough food.
- Disagreement with agricultural land classification as sites are crop yielding. Agricultural land classification does not consider sustainability of agricultural processes. Local food production ensures easier control and conservation.
- Agricultural land classification does not account for the organic history of local land or on any innovative and sustainable practises being developed
- Planning application documents different from pre-application consultation.
- Adverse effect on the residential amenity/quality of life from construction and operation of the proposal. Increase in noise, disturbance, overlooking, loss of privacy, loss of light, loss of view, loss of privacy from siting of CCTV cameras.
- No mitigation shown around residents' dwellings. Could proposals be moved away from Dunnock Cottage, reducing the visual compact and using the residual field for biodiversity improvements?
- Current noise from the A130 to Hill Farm is absorbed by the agricultural land. Noise would be magnified by loss of agricultural land to solar.
- Loss of habitat. Harm to wildlife. Presence of extensive flora and fauna and protected and non-protected species on site. Security fencing could affect movement of species.
- Water supply pipes traverse the site from the Southend Road to Dunnock Cottage and Hill Farm. This is subject to a dead of easement. Contamination from solar panels if damaged could get into the soil/water and damage supplies – maintenance/repairs could be an issue.

- Harmful effect on highway safety as panels will block and screen views. Southern end of Pan Lane is an accident black spot.
 - Proposal unnecessary as UK government has committed to generate sufficient electricity for every UK home from sea-based turbines by 2030. Preference for wind farms.
 - Proposal appropriate to brownfield sites / disused airfield, roofs of existing buildings and integrated into new building project or marshland.
 - If scale and number of solar panels was reduced, then overall impact would be less.
 - Are the manufacturing processes used in the construction of solar panels green and low in carbon emissions? Installation produces damage, industrial pollution and hazardous waste.
 - Amount of energy produced from solar and proposed energy capture minimal. Negated by loss of agricultural land.
 - 30 years is not temporary. Cannot replace/reinstate lost nature, flora and fauna.
 - Essex Police have advised that there has been an exponential rise in crime in relation to solar farms. Deer stock security is unfit for purpose as it will provide a symbolic boundary. Security arrangements unviable.
 - Preference for reforestation of area
 - Proposal will lead to loss of blight, house prices and will impact upon tourism.
- Chelmsford local plan places a duty for proposals to preserve and enhance the environment.

Comments on amended proposal

- Amended proposals have not been properly publicised.
- Proposal creates an odd, shaped band between the solar farm and residential properties which may be abandoned due to cultivation issues in maintaining an odd shaped space. Small fields uneconomical to farm.
- Proposal in wrong space and would industrialise agricultural land.
- Continued endangerment of water supplies to Hill Farm and Dunnock Cottage.
- Maintains inappropriate location and proposal should be sited on the roofs of industrial/agricultural buildings.
- The current food crisis brought upon by the Ukraine war emphasises the need to retain agricultural land for food production.
- Returning polluted sites back to agriculture would not be simple or inexpensive.
- Reference to article in the Essex Chronicle dated 26th May which states that solar should be sited on poor grade land of low environmental value, commercial roof space and brownfield sites...productive farmland must be protected.

Appendix 1c: Parish Council representations in full

East Hanningfield Parish Council

Comments
<p>30.05.2022 - East Hanningfield Parish Council continues to object to this application. A representative of the Parish Council will be attending the Planning Committee meeting on 5th July in order to present the Council's reasons for objection.</p> <p>27.05.2021 - We are writing to you today on behalf of East & West Hanningfield Parish Councils, to make you aware of our resolute objection to the above solar farm planning applications in our parishes.</p> <p>We have worked closely together and have listened to our residents many concerns, which are reflected in the detailed responses that we have submitted, along with this letter, to Chelmsford City Council Planning Department.</p> <p>Attached to this letter is an aerial photograph. This clearly shows the impact on the open rural countryside between our parishes. These proposed solar farms will urbanise and industrialise the landscape and will change the rural aesthetics in this area for over a generation.</p> <p>We hope that you, your officers, and the planning committee will support us in rejecting these inappropriate solar farm applications.</p> <p>12.05.2021 - East Hanningfield Parish Council Comments regarding Hill Farm Solar Farm Planning Application 21/00555/FUL</p> <p>The Parish Council strongly objects to the Planning Application due to the impact on the landscape and its residents.</p> <p>This application is one of three large solar farms which have applied for planning approval in our Parish. The others are 21/00502/FUL Canon Barns Road and 21/00394/FUL Sandon Brook.</p> <p>Whilst it is recognised that each application must be considered separately the Supplementary Planning Document presented to Chelmsford Council Planning Board on March 4, 2021 currently awaiting public comments and subsequent approval clearly recognised that nearby solar farms could have a cumulative impact and should be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Effect on the village of East Hanningfield</p> <p>East Hanningfield is a peaceful and picturesque rural village. The key feature is the central conservation area which includes an attractive church, several listed buildings and the wide grass village green called The Tye. It has two restaurants which attract numerous visitors.</p> <p>The Village Plan determined that the local residents considered the village as a pleasant place to live and valued its attractive appearance and rural setting.</p>

The most direct route into the centre of the village from Chelmsford is via the Southend Road and Pan Lane. This route will now pass two sides of the solar farm which will visibly climb to the East and North. The perceived urbanisation and reduced attractiveness of the village will be evident and cannot be fully mitigated. This will affect the amenity of every resident.

Chelmsford City Local Plan

The Application is contrary to several priorities and policies in the Chelmsford City Local Plan.

Details are included as an attachment to this objection but include:

Strategic Priorities Minimise loss of best and most versatile land to ensure food production

Address climate change

Respect the character and appearance of the countryside

Strategic Policy S1 Spatial Principles

Strategic Policy S2 Addressing Climate Change and Flood Risk

Strategic Policy S3 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Strategic Policy S4 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

Strategic Policy S11 The Role of the Countryside

Policy DM8 New Buildings and Structures in the Rural Area.

Policy DM10 Change of Use (Land and Buildings) and Engineering Operations

Policy DM19 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Although a balanced assessment is necessary it is clear that the adverse effect on the amenity of residents and character of the countryside is not offset by climate change benefits. Over the 40 year project life any short term carbon reduction savings are more than offset by the long term loss of carbon sequestration by agriculture. The loss of food production is a further increase in climate change risk.

Landscape Character

The Application Visual Assessment quotes the Chris Blandford and Associates, East Hanningfield Wooded Farmland characteristics as prepared for Chelmsford City. What it omitted from their summary was the report conclusion that "overall the area has a relatively high sensitivity to change".

Open views to distant horizons, narrow often tree lined lanes, dispersed historic settlement patterns and areas of historic coaxial fields are all key characteristics of this area threatened by the solar farm.

The Hill Farm Solar Farm will infill part of the separation between East and West Hanningfield with an industrial landscape.

If multiple solar farms are approved there is a potential for a compound affect on the dispersed settlement character of East, West and South Hanningfield and Rettendon.

This could result in solar farms for two kilometres East to West along Pan Lane/Church Road and also North to South along the Southend Road. Some 20% of the open area between the four villages could be filled with solar panels.

Visual Impact

General

Due to the elevated nature of the site (it includes a 69 metre Trig Point on its boundary) it is clearly visible from the Southend Road, Pan Lane and the A130.

The fields can be seen from over 2.0 kilometres away to the South and East. These views will not be mitigated.

The choice of view points in the Landscape and Visual Appraisal for such a large site is very limited. No viewpoints at the high point of St Peter's Way or the residencies of Hill Farm/Dunnock Cottage have been chosen.

Although growing and filling in boundary hedging may reduce the impact this will take a long time and only be effective right next to the hedge. It will limit views across the site to the distance and have no effect on views of the site from a distance.

The Visual Impact Statement claims that hedgerow planting from bare root stock will achieve a 2.5 metre height within 5 years. This is extremely optimistic. Ten years to a mature shrub is more realistic and this will only provide an effective screen during the summer.

Public Rights of Way

St Peter's Way long distance walk from Chipping-Ongar to St Peter's chapel at Bradwell traverses the site running on the southern side of one of the boundary hedges. The walk here is at its highest point before dropping down to the sea at Bradwell. The estimated 1500 annual walkers benefit from long distance views across open farmland, hedges and woods to the southern horizon between 2.0 to 2.5 kilometres away.

These views will be replaced with a near one kilometre walk through a narrow tunnel between screening hedges, security fences and three metre high solar panels. This cannot be claimed as mitigation reducing the adverse impact to minor.

Pan Lane

Pan Lane is an attractive, narrow, undulating and winding lane running between agricultural fields some hedged, some open.

Pan Lane is used extensively for recreational cycling. As well as being part of the Essex County long distance cycling network it is on a timed circuit for local clubs so is used frequently for exercise, training and organised competitions.

Pan Lane is used not only by local residents but by motorists from Chelmsford and the A12 as a route to the two restaurants in the village, RHS Hyde Hall and as a link to South Woodham Ferrers and beyond.

The industrial nature of the solar farm will damage the attractiveness and character of this lane.

Pan Lane road safety

The most easterly part of the notorious double bend in the lane is a well know accident black spot. It is sharp, narrow and unsighted. Looking across the corner of the field to spot oncoming vehicles is a habit rapidly acquired by frequent users. This will not be possible if this corner is filled with panels and higher hedging. Accidents will increase.

Pan Lane Public Consultation

In the presentation of the proposals to the Parish Council in January 2021, Cell Energy submitted a plan which limited the eastern boundary of the solar farm to the most westerly part of the Pan Lane double bend. The latest planning application now extends solar panels beyond the second part of the double bend.

The January proposal reduced the solar panel boundary along Pan Lane versus the screening application by half, the proposal in the planning application only reduces the boundary by a quarter.

A condition of any planning consideration should include reversion back to the January proposal. This could be achieved with no reduction in panels and would reduce the visual impact on Pan Lane, local residents and eliminate the increased accident risk.

Agriculture

Although Grade 3b land it has been intensively farmed and productive. The NPPF recommends that one consideration regarding solar farms should be whether land is being used effectively and applications should be focussed on non agricultural land.

This proposal will reduce food production and the associated carbon capture of the growing crops.

Although the proposal mentions the potential for sheep grazing this is unlikely. There is no history of sheep grazing in this area. The farm does not have the necessary buildings and skills. Sheep farming would be detrimental to both the biodiversity plans and the reduction in greenhouse gasses.

Flooding

There is no plan to reduce the flood risk to adjacent roads. The drainage from the site to the south is to a ditch which directly feeds Sandon Brook. When there is extensive rain Sandon Brook frequently exceeds its capacity and Church Road becomes flooded and impassable.

The solar panels will increase the rate of rain water run off and the frequency of flooding will increase.

Planning Precedent

A planning application for a solar farm near Jackletts Farm Danbury was refused in October 2013 and refused at appeal in October 2014.

This proposal was smaller, less visible from roads and St Peter's Way long distance walk and farther from nearby properties than the Hill Farm proposal.

The inspector concluded that the effect on the landscape could not be made acceptable by mitigation and the need for renewable energy did not automatically override environmental protection.

Although it can be argued that the need for Climate Change action has become more urgent since 2013 this has been offset by progress in the carbon reduction of power generation and technical advances in offshore wind turbine power generation not matched by solar panels.

Recommendation

East Hanningfield Parish Council recommends rejection of the application.

The application will significantly affect the amenity of residents and the character of the area which cannot be adequately mitigated. It will give a short term carbon dioxide reduction but at the expense of a long term increase and a risk to food production.

This is not a precautionary approach to Climate Change.

Attachment

Chelmsford Local Plan May 2020

Strategic Priorities

3.29 The Local Plan seeks to minimise the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land to ensure food production.

Comment. The land is category 3 undifferentiated. It has however been farmed productively for cereals and oil seed rape for the last 40 years or more.

3.32 There is a need to address climate change globally and locally to minimise flood risks and reduce carbon emissions. There is scope within the Local Plan to reducing emissions through the location of development and the design of buildings.

Comment. There has been significant reduction in the carbon emissions of power generation but little in buildings and transport.

3.33Respect the character and appearance of landscapes....

Comment. A 68Ha solar farm with security fencing and cctv cameras will urbanise the landscape

Strategic Policy S1 Spatial Principles

4.14 The existing settlement patterns should be respected so development does not sprawl into nearby settlements undermining their distinct and separate identities.

Comment. The Southend Road (old A130) links the villages of Howe Green, Rettendon and Rettendon Common. The Solar Farm and potentially the adjacent solar farm will significantly reduce the rural gaps between these settlements.

Strategic Policy S2 Addressing Climate Change and Flood Risk

.....encourage new developments that reduces greenhouse gas emissions....

.....provides opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy and heating systems

.....provides opportunities for decentralised energy and heating systems

.....minimise impact on flooding

Comment. The December 2020 6th Carbon Budget identified that all power generation in the UK would be zero carbon by 2035. This will be primarily driven by offshore Wind Turbines NOT large scale solar. Every acre of wheat sequesters 8 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide per year (US Dept of Agriculture) this is 1200 tonnes per year for the Hill Farm solar farm site.

Post 2035 the solar farm will be a carbon dioxide penalty versus agriculture.

One of the major risks of climate change is food production. A large solar farm reduces food production. The United Nations Convention on Climate Change agreed action to reduce greenhouse gasses without affecting food production.

This strategic policy is best served by ambitious carbon reduction targets for new housing and commercial developments and facilitating the retrofitting of existing buildings. NOT by large solar farms.

Strategic Policy S3 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

5.21 There are a number of country lane and byways of historic and landscape value.

The council intends to protect these lanes.....by resisting development proposal which have a detrimental effect upon them.

Comment. Pan Lane which the Solar Farm borders is a classic Essex country lane. It is winding and undulating with for the most part hedges and grass verges on both sides. The lane passes through rolling countryside with distant views. It terminates at the East Hanningfield conservation area. It is an extremely popular recreational cycling and motoring route and is a leisurely short cut between Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers. Protection of this lane should be a local plan priority.

Strategic Policy S4 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

The Council will take a precautionary approach

The Council will seek to minimise the loss of the best and most versatile land (Grades 1,2 and 3a) to major new development.

5.24minimise potential light pollution on intrinsically dark landscapes.

5.27.....protect.....healthy farming landscapes

Comment. However Strategic Policy S4 is interpreted, protecting an attractive classic Essex landscape close to Chelmsford and bordering the route between Chelmsford City's two main and growing population areas of Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers must be a priority.

Screening will not stop the solar farm being highly visible. The security fencing and elevated cameras will send an unmistakable industrial signal.

Although the land being used is grade 3 it is highly productive and has always been cropped rather than used for pasture..

Strategic Policy S11 The Role of the Countryside

When determining planning applications.....ensure that development does not have an adverse impact on the different roles and character of the countryside.

The intrinsic character of the Rural Area outside of the Green Belt and not designated as the Green Wedge will be recognised, assessed and development will be permitted where it would not adversely impact on its identified character and beauty.

Comment. The solar farm will have an impact on the character and beauty of the local rural area. The three Hanningfields, East, West and South, are enhanced by the rolling rural landscape between them. This rural boundary has enabled all three villages to absorb developments within their individual boundaries without spoiling their rural character and farming history. Infilling this farm land separation with large areas of industrial development will seriously damage the character of all of them.

Policy DM8 New Buildings and Structures in the Rural Area.

B) Redevelopment of previously developed land

The Council will assess the development based on the following

i size etc.compared to existing

ii visual impact compared to existing

iii impact compared to existing

iv location is appropriate

8.59 New agricultural buildings. Evidence may be required to demonstrate the requirement for a building of the size proposed

8.60 Essential infrastructure....must be situated in the location proposed for connection purposes and the benefits of which override any adverse impact.

8.63 Economic growth in the Rural Area.....new building and structure will only be permitted where the proposal supports the sustainable growth and expansion of an existing, authorised and viable business. The council must be satisfied that the building is necessary.

Comment. This policy is primarily written to guide the planning associated with buildings as such is not particularly relevant to a solar farm. However, the nearest standard structure of the same physical dimensions is a cycle shed. It is highly unlikely that planning would be approved for 68 Ha of new cycle sheds in the rural area.

Policy DM10 Change of Use (Land and Buildings) and Engineering Operations

C) Rural Area

Planning permission will be granted for the change of use of land or buildings in the rural area where:

iii it does not adversely impact on the identified intrinsic character, appearance and beauty of the Rural Area

Comment. A large scale solar farm will clearly impact on the intrinsic character, appearance and beauty of the rural area. Part of the beauty is the distant views over rolling farm land. Screening cannot mitigate against that loss.

Policy DM19 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Planning permission will be granted provided that they

i do not cause demonstratable harm to residential living environment

iv do not have an unacceptable visual impact which would be harmful to the character of the area

Comment. The solar farm will have a significant detrimental impact on the amenity of the properties immediately adjacent to the development. There are many more properties in clear view of the farm and several thousand who live very locally and as a result drive past to their homes every day. There are many more who drive past less frequently either en route to Chelmsford or for recreation such as visiting nearby RHS Hyde Hall or the Nature Reserve at Hanningfield Reservoir.

The visual impact will be harmful to the character of the area.

12.05.2021 - East Hanningfield Parish Council has been working closely with West Hanningfield Parish Council regarding the above planning applications, and the Councils are united in their opposition to all three of the applications. East Hanningfield Parish Council's comments have been uploaded to the City Council's website, and it is understood West Hanningfield Parish Council's comments will follow in a few days.

East Hanningfield Parish Council is concerned that a map produced to show the cumulative impact of the three applications on the local landscape and their proximity to the main settlements should be submitted with the comments, but there did not appear to be a way to do this, so I am requesting that the attached map be included with the representations when the applications are considered by Council

West Hanningfield Parish Council

Comments
<p>08.06.2021 - Full response is under Application Documents 'West Hanningfield Parish Council Response'</p> <p>27.05.2021 - We are writing to you today on behalf of East & West Hanningfield Parish Councils, to make you aware of our resolute objection to the above solar farm planning applications in our parishes. We have worked closely together and have listened to our residents many concerns, which are reflected in the detailed responses that we have submitted, along with this letter, to Chelmsford City Council Planning Department.</p> <p>Attached to this letter is an aerial photograph. This clearly shows the impact on the open rural countryside between our parishes. These proposed solar farms will urbanise and industrialise the landscape and will change the rural aesthetics in this area for over a generation.</p> <p>We hope that you, your officers, and the planning committee will support us in rejecting these inappropriate solar farm applications.</p>
<p>07.06.2022 -</p> <p>West Hanningfield Parish Council Response to The Planning Application 'Land West of Hill Farm Pan Lane East Hanningfield Chelmsford Essex (Revised Application)'. Planning Ref. No: 21/00555/FUL Date 23rd May 2022 Rev Final for Issue Contents Forward Page Executive Summary Application Details Application Documents Reviewed Commentary on effectiveness of Solar Farms P Comments and Clarifications on the Application Documents and Reports Conclusion Forward</p> <p>This document is one of three that West Hanningfield Parish Council have produced as a response to the application for planning permission for three Solar Photovoltaic farms aligned approximately north south along the A130 in proximity to the villages of Rettendon, East, West and South Hanningfield, combined they will extend for 2 km from the outskirts of Rettendon, in a northerly direction, past West Hanningfield to East Hanningfield. These are identified as Sandon Brook, Cannon Barns, and Hill Farm.</p> <p>The collective size of the land to be built upon is 168 ha (416 acres) of which 100 ha (248 acres) is located in the Metropolitan Green Belt, and the remaining 68 ha (168 acres) is within a designated rural area. All land is currently in agricultural use and has been so for the recent past.</p> <p>West Hanningfield Parish Council has objected to all three applications, the objection reasons and critical appraisal of each of the applications is contained in a separate document prepared for each development, however this Forward is common to each, to provide an overview of the scale and impact that these developments would have.</p> <p>The villages that are affected by these developments are individual, rural, agriculturally based settlements, this is reflected by countryside around them which is enjoyed by residents, horse riders' cyclists and visitors alike. The area contains a Site of Special Scientific Interest centred around The Hanningfield Reservoir and a number of footpaths, including St Peters Way which is said to have been a Pilgrims route for over a millennium.</p> <p>The magnitude of any one of the developments will have a significant impact upon the community in a host of ways, the detailed nature of these are discussed in each individual report, and it is because of this that the West Hanningfield Parish Council is opposing the applications.</p>

There are however a number of significant factors which are pertinent to the understanding of the opposition view that are identified below.

' The individual and combined area of the sites are large, the two biggest possible represent 10 % of the respective landowners holding which will be taken out of food production.' The UK currently imports approximately 40 % of its food stuff, and in the present time food security is a major concern. Using DEFRA metrics the area of the Solar Farms proposed would produce in 40 years approximately 56,000 tonnes of cereal, which if made into bread would be 65 million loaves.

' On all three consultations the overriding sentiment from the respondents was one of opposition.

' Solar PV as a method of generating electricity is spatially inefficient, this is discussed within this document, and uses large areas of land for a modest output. A comparison is that the combined output of all these sites could be met by three of the current generation of offshore wind turbines.

' The developments provide no benefit to the local community, there is an agricultural job impact, there is significant amenity and environmental impacts, all of which are born by residents and users of the countryside around.

' Two of the sites are within the Metropolitan Green Belt, which requires special reasons for allowing them to proceed, these are not evident from the applications.

' The remaining site is on an elevated terrain which is visible over a wide range and it will not be possible to mitigate this and its effects upon its surroundings.

' In conjunction with the three applications considered here there are a number of other Solar Farm applications in the wider area which further will impact upon the area and food production. The projects are principally investment vehicles where cost and profitability are the prime movers above any detrimental impacts that arise from them.

In conclusion West Hanningfield Parish Council has carefully examined the proposed applications and confirmed its opinion that all should be opposed, it is respectfully requested that Chelmsford City Council review the documents presented in support of this viewpoint.

Summary

This document is a thorough analysis of the applicants' submitted documents, it is extensive to ensure that each aspect of the application is reviewed thoroughly, it has been amended to include a commentary on the revised application, and we apologise for its length.

West Hanningfield Parish Council objects to this application on the following grounds:-

' Site selection based upon commercial criteria, i.e. an economically available point of connection into the National Grid and a willing landowner to lease the land from, these points force all other environmental and social considerations into second place.

' The site is traversed by a significant Public Right of Way, St Peters Way, which officially starts at Ongar Castle. The route takes the way to one of Britain's most ancient and remote churches, St Peter's-On-The-Wall, Bradwell which has attracted pilgrims for over a millennium. It is understood that 1,500 pilgrims make their way here every year. The proposed development will have a major impact upon this amenity, with the development being visible for some 2-3 km away on the footpath, which mitigation measures will be unable to obscure.

' There is no benefit to the local community who will be affected most by this large development, it will impact upon the openness of the area, the wellbeing of local inhabitants, and does not conserve or enhance the natural environment. (CCC Strategic Local Plan Policy S1 and S4)

' West Hanningfield is suffering from anti-social behaviour and rural crime, it is suggested that the comments of the Police should be considered who advise that there is an exponential rise in crime when a Solar Farm is introduced into an area, by virtue of the attractiveness for theft of the items contained in them. There is a disconnect in the documentation regarding the type and height of the boundary fence, the type of fence described, is suggested as being inadequate by the police in preventing theft. Higher perimeter security will further

increase the visual impact of the site.' Site is in close proximity to an SSS1, approximately 1.5 km to the southwest. ' The site is less than 2.3 km from another solar farm development (cannon Barns) to the east of

the village that has just received planning consent thus increasing the encirclement of the area with industrial developments.

' Improvements in bio-diversity are not demonstrated, the developer provides a Primary Ecological Assessment (PMA) but there is no specific identification on the supporting evidence for the Bio-Diversity Net Gain Assessment and associated improvement plan to support the life span of the site. (NPPF 2019)' Ecological damage to locality, the policy objective is to conserve and enhance the habitat and species, this has not been demonstrated, in addition the site is large in comparison with the local area and cannot fail to have an adverse impact upon the local ecology. (DM16 and CCC Strategic Local Plan Policy S4)

' Use of land for electrical generation by the use of Photo-voltaic cells is not efficient, large areas of land are required to achieve a modest output. The green production of electrical energy is better served, more efficient and with less detrimental side effects by the use of offshore wind energy. (Commentary on the effectiveness of Solar Farms Page 6) Also to be considered is the construction and commissioning of the site, which may not be on stream until 2024, National Grid are currently advising that there will be sufficient wind generated energy by 2031 to power all homes in the UK, making the life expectancy and contribution of energy by this site extremely small. (National Grid East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (Green) Community Newsletter April 2022).

' The overall Carbon impact performance of Solar Farms is undefined and may become a legacy as the Grid continues to decarbonise. (Commentary on the effectiveness of Solar Farms)

' Use of land for food production is significantly more important, especially following the UK leaving the EU, and the current events occurring in the Ukraine. It has been widely reported by World organisations including the United Nations that there will be an imminent world shortage of wheat. It is essential therefore that agricultural production is maximised to address this crisis and reduce the reliance on imported foods, currently over 40 % of food is imported. (DEFRA and National Statistics Origins of Food Consumed in the UK 2019). The retention of this land in agricultural production provides an immediate impact on this issue.

' Site is large scale (68 ha) for the local area of which there is no local benefit. The village of West Hanningfield is currently surrounded on the south and west sides by large commercial and industrial developments and this facility will exacerbate the current situation. It increases the risk of coalescing between neighbouring villages, East, West and South Hanningfield. In addition there is now an approved planning application for a solar farms to the west of this one, the modest nature of the area cannot support this proliferation of Solar Farms which would occupy an area in excess of 83 ha. (National Policy EN1 5.9.15 and CCC

Strategic Local Plan Policy S7)

' The site is in a designated rural area (Chelmsford Local Plan Figure 8), the site is elevated rising from 36 m AOD in the south west corner to 58 m AOD in the north east corner, it is highly visible over a long range in a wide arc when viewed from the NNE to the SSE, the visual impact survey does not consider the sites visibility from these viewpoints.

In Chelmsford County Council Pre Application Advice they advised that longer distance views from footpaths should be assessed, this does not appear to have been considered. (DM 10,16 and 19) The modified application make no difference to the visibility of the site, both from the near and far view aspects.

' The site is elevated, exposed, undulating and highly visible and does not meet the best practice for site selection as set out in BRE Planning Guidance for large ground mounted solar PV systems.

' Land grade is 3a and 3b (3b being the highest classification of land recommended for this use, BRE Planning Guidance for large ground mounted solar PV systems) , however it has been constantly farmed in the recent past with a range of crops, and therefore does meet the land selection criteria which states that 3b grade can only be used with special reason.

' The Flood Risk Proposals, do not indicate where the ordinary water course discharges into, as this may be in close proximity to Church Road / Sandon Brook bridge (which currently floods during periods of heavy

rain with the result that Church Road becomes impassable), the increased run off may worsen the current situation. The Flood Risk Proposals require the construction of drainage swales, there is no account of how these will impact upon the topography and ecology of the site. (CCC Strategic Local Plan Policy S1 and S2)

' The site will make no contribution to local employment and in effect there will be a net loss of local agricultural job prospects. (CCC Strategic Local Plan Policy S6)

' The application does not include supporting information for the soil classification or an arboriculture report.

' There are a significant number of discrepancies in the supporting reports and documents that have been submitted with this application these are too numerous to list here but these are highlighted in Comments and Clarifications on the Application Documents and Reports Section

Application Details

The Application is made by LanPro on behalf of Cell Energy Ltd, Walpole Suite, Church Road, Kettering, NR18 9RS.

The Planning Reference on the Chelmsford City Planning Portal is Planning Ref. No: 21/00555/FUL, the current final date for Public Comment is the 4th June 2022.

Application Documents Reviewed

The following documents which form the application were reviewed:-

1. Application form (Redacted)
2. MPC Cell Energy Statement of Community Involvement February 2021 Final
3. Planning Design and Access Statement Final 12.03.2021
4. Planning Design and Access Statement Addendum May 2022
5. Drawings:-
 - ' ZVI and Viewpoints
 - ' DNO Substation
 - ' Client Substation
 - ' RMU Housing
 - ' PV Front View
 - ' PV Side View
 - ' Auxiliary Transformer
 - ' Elevation of Inverter and primary transformer housing
 - ' Plan view of Inverter and primary transformer housing
 - ' Dimension drawing of inverter housing
 - ' Access panel drawing of inverter housing
 - ' Photomontage of inverter housing
 - ' Generator enclosure
 - ' Site Location Plan 1
 - ' Proposed site boundary
 - ' Site Location Plan 2
 - ' Landscape Character
 - ' Landscape Value
 - ' Site Location Plan (geographic)
6. Ecological Assessment
7. Flood Risk Assessment
8. Glint and Glare Study
9. Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment
10. Landscape and Visual Appraisal
11. Transport Note
12. Noise Impact Assessment

Commentary on effectiveness of Solar Farms

This section of the response sets out the relative inefficiencies of Large Scale Photovoltaic (PV) farms in respect of their spacial requirements and ability to achieve carbon savings.

1. Spacial Efficiencies

Solar Farms have a relatively low energy generation for the area that they occupy, in that they have an output of between 7-11% of their annualised theoretical maximum (Reference Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT), primarily because of the amount of hours they receive solar energy.(Theoretical output is the installed capacity of the site x the number of hours the site receives solar energy x the anticipated value of solar energy received in those hours x factor for Solar Panel Conversion performance). This should be compared to a typical Offshore Wind Turbine that has an output of around 30-35 % of their annualised theoretical maximum, making them spacially more efficient and with less deleterious side effects.

Generation from PV can only occur when there is some received solar energy, so energy export can only occur at this time and if there is a market demand for it. The number of structures required to house the inverters and primary transformers is 14 and a further 14 housings for the local Ring Main Units (RMU), the sizes of these structures are 2.9 high x 2.438 wide x 5.863 long and 3.15 high x 3.38 wide x 3.8 long. In addition to be able to export the produced energy the site needs a further compound which contains a number of buildings , the first to house the clients High Voltage Switchgear (3.2 high x 2.8 wide x 13.0 long) and the second to house District Network Operators High Voltage Switchgear (3.5 high x 4.79 wide x 6.0 long), the third for an auxiliary transformer the fourth for a standby generator a smaller enclosure will house the point of metering.

The nett result is that the low efficiencies, plant enclosures and diversified plant locations provide a modest generation capacity from a large (68 ha) tract of valuable agricultural land.

2. Carbon Saving Performance

The metric for the benefit of what Carbon Saving is achieved, is the measurement of what the Project life cycle carbon requirement is, compared to its nett output against the Grid carbon cost for electrical production. This is defined as the Cradle to the Grave analysis and includes the manufacture, transport, construction, installation, service, maintenance, lifetime replacements, removal, and end of life reinstatement of all the elements that form the projected installation. As it is envisaged this is a complex calculation, but very necessary as it is a major consideration in establishing the 'Green Credentials' of a project such as this. Given that the Carbon Profile for Grid electrical production has and will significantly fall in the next 28 years (DEFRA's emissions factor) to reach the Government's 2050 nett zero goal, the analysis should reflect the Solar Farm performance against the falling grid carbon values. Note The government has recently announced a revision to its Net Zero target bringing it forward by 15 years this impacts significantly upon the carbon reduction performance of Solar PV by shortening the available time for embedded carbon payback from 28 to 13 years, thus making the analysis of the Carbon Footprint even more critical to ensure that they are not becoming a carbon legacy. (Circular Ecology 'The Carbon Footprint of Solar PV') This has not been provided for this development and there is growing concern that the manufacture of solar panels have a significant environmental impact. (National Geographic November 11th 2014).

Note that PV panels have a loss of output factor applied each year as their effectiveness declines and an operational life span of around 25 years, so it is anticipated that there will be a significant replacement of operational equipment during the proposed project life cycle. In addition to the project lifetime carbon requirement, there is the additional consideration of the effect of the increase in food miles with the loss of agricultural production from this land.

Comments and Clarifications on the Application Documents and Reports

This section lists queries questions and comments on the reports and studies that have been submitted with this application.

1. Application Form

' Item 6 the site is not currently vacant as it has a crop growing it.

' Item 11 the flood risk assessment does not indicate the discharge point of the normal water course so there could be an increased flood risk elsewhere.

' Item 18 should the effect on the local agricultural workers who would normally be employed on the farming activities be considered here.

' Item 19 yes as 24 hour access would normally be required for the DNO plant.

' Item 20 the description is for a non commercial activity, can this description be used for the industrial process being proposed.

' Item 21 the description is that no hazardous substances are being used, has consideration been given switch gear arc suppression gases, generator diesel fuels, transformer oil and fire suppression gases if used in the inverter housings.

' Item 23 Pre App Advice section not complete.

2. Statement of Community Involvement

' Statement of community involvement, the level of information for the content and scale of the site equipment is basic, without locations, numbers, and sizes of the buildings to be located on the site. Without this it was not possible to understand the full impact of this project, i.e. The site is proposed to use in excess of 60,000 PV panels.

' Statement of community involvement, respondents were significantly against the development and in particular the choice of site location. As previously discussed, this is an elevated site with a wide arc of visibility which it will be impossible to visually mitigate.

3. Planning Design and Access Statement

' 1.1.2 This solar project is an investment vehicle; this being demonstrated by its backers who are an investment management company.

' 1.1.3 The claim that this site will assist Chelmsford City Council (CCC) meet its carbon target is not founded, as CCC currently buys all its electricity from a green source (Chelmsford City Council 5a Climate Change Action Plan).

' 1.1.5 The claim that there will be significant benefit from the site should be considered in light of the spacial efficiencies and carbon efficiencies of Solar PV installations, see commentary in this document on Page 6.

' 1.1.8 The mitigating proposals do not demonstrate that there are no unacceptable environmental impacts arising from this development, the elevated nature and size of the site would make it impossible to lessen the visual impact, so the planning balance is not weighted in favour of the project.

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' 2.1.3 The land has been in constant versatile agricultural production for certainly the last three decades, in addition there is no supporting analysis of the land quality which is quoted as Grade 3 and 4. Why therefore is it being taken out of agricultural production at this time when home food production is such a significant issue, with 40% of UK food being imported.

' 2.1.4 The hedges are currently cut at the standard agricultural trimming height of circa 1.5 m.' 2.1.5 The footpath traversing the site (Ref PROW 218_7) is St Peters Way and of significant importance (see Executive Summary page 2 of this document) and cited in the rejection of the appeal made by Lightsource SPV 40 Limited against the decision of Chelmsford Borough Council, application Ref 13/00926/FUL, dated 27 June 2013, was refused by notice dated 8 October 2013.

' 2.1.6 The considered area of the scope of visual impact is limited. The site on the western boundary is considerably more visible in a wide arc which includes the village of West Hanningfield and its environs.

' 2.1.7 The Hanningfield Site of Special Scientific Interest is an SSSI due to the important numbers of wildfowl that use the reservoir in the autumn and winter. Birds include Gadwall, Tufted Duck and Pochard. There are often thousands of Swifts, Swallows and Martins feeding over the water during peak fly hatches during the summer. The Reservoir is covered by a Bird Sanctuary Order. The close proximity of the site can only have a negative impact.

' 3.2.2 Due to the location and topography of the site it will be impossible to mitigate the visual impact of the site, particularly from the western aspect.

' 4.1.2-4.1.4 There is increasing evidence that the manufacture of PV panels has an adverse impact on the environment by virtue of the rare materials and chemicals used in them. There is no methodology provided as to how the ecology of the site be reinstated (if possible) following the decommissioning of the site, retrieval of buried cables, infilling of swales etc to re-establish the soil structure.

' 4.1.5 The associated equipment structures associated with the site are numerous and not small. The number of structures required to house the inverters and primary transformers is 14 and a further 14 housings for the local Ring Main Units (RMU), the sizes of these structures respectively are 2.9 high x 2.438 wide x 5.863 long and 3.15 high x 3.38 wide x 3.8 long. In addition to be able to export the produced energy the site needs a further compound which contains a number of buildings, the first to house the clients High Voltage Switchgear (3.2 high x 2.8 wide x 13.0 long) and the second to house District Network Operators High Voltage Switchgear (3.5 high x 4.79 wide x 6.0 long), the third for an auxiliary transformer the fourth for a standby generator, a further smaller enclosure will house the point of metering. The Police comments in respect of the site boundary fence should also be considered, as it will almost probably require a more significant and intrusive boundary to protect the site from criminal activity.

' 4.1.6 Screening of the PROW will have a major impact of the amenity value of the footpath, and as previously discussed, perimeter screening of the site cannot be effective by virtue of its elevated and undulating nature.

' 4.1.7 - 4.1.8 There is no supporting evidence to show that the Biodiversity can be improved, there is a body of evidence that states that an improvement is not a given, (BSG Ecology Literature Review 2019), there is no long term management plan.

' 4.1.13 It is not a benefit to plant a hedgerow to the south side of the PROW as this will block all near and far views from this section of footpaths, as it climbs through the site.

' 4.1.17 Whilst the life expectancy of the site is said to be 40 years, if built, what are the considerations given for individual items of plant replacement as they reach the end of their service life i.e. PV panel life expectancy circa 25 years.

' 4.1.21 There is no dismantling of the site or reinstatement plan provided, reinstatement of the soil structure may be difficult following the construction of drainage swales and cable trenches. It is believed that this is an important consideration when using a productive agricultural site such as this with the proviso that it returned to agricultural use.

' 5.1.3 There is no point of electrical connection shown in the application, it is presumed that the connection will be into a local grid connection and will have therefore minimal impact upon any local requirements. The site is not suitable for this development by virtue of its elevated nature, undulating topography, and high visibility which cannot be mitigated. The point raised concerning financial viability should not have any consideration where a project such as this has such a negative impact upon the locality. There is no benefit to the local community and no regard to the effects on the visual environment.

' 5.1.4 ' 5.1.5 the site is not a suitable location, there are more efficient alternatives such as offshore wind that can be used. The UK Government has identified that wind will be the prime source of green energy generation as set out in the HM Government Document the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution 2020 and others

' 5.1.6 The proposed site views from the west have not been considered in detail, there is a higher density of population on this side of the site and the site is appreciably more visible from this aspect.

' 6.2.1 ' 6.2.2 The Chelmsford Local Plan designates the area as a rural area (8.16) and Figure 8 shows this indicatively, in conjunction with this, Appendix 12 The Chelmsford Infrastructure Delivery Plan requires no additional electrical infrastructure requirements, and the Core Corporate Objective Planning Obligations strive to make a safer greener space. The Chelmsford Green Infrastructure Strategic Plan Initiative promotes renewable energy crops and sustainable energy from renewable woodland. Is there a better alternative available for the use of this land other than the proposed solar farm to explore one of these alternative carbon sequestration proposals? they appear to have the necessary credentials to create a viable alternative other than the current proposal.

' 6.3.4 ' 6.3.7 There are more efficient and available green energy supplies other than this proposed solution, as identified by HM Government.

' 6.4.1 The elevation and undulation of this site make it impossible to screen in accordance with the requirements of The Planning Practice Guidance ID5-013, so the site will always have a negative impact if developed.

' 6.4.2 There is no proposed continuing agricultural use identified.

' 6.4.3 The land topography will prevent adequate screening being feasible.

' 6.6.1 ' 6.6.5 The Draft Supplementary Planning Document 5.1, selected sites should have the least negative impact and areas are able to benefit from the development, neither are fulfilled in the case of this development. Page 150 (2.1) the benefit to the local ecosystems have not been demonstrated, there is a detrimental effect on local jobs (net loss of agricultural employment) and no local benefit. The land has been constantly farmed so there is already a developed income stream for the landowner.

' 7.2.1 There is no policy obligation for the local authority to provide local large scale solar generation, this location is determined by other factors outside the location and site suitability. There is no benefit to the local community, and it will have a significant amenity impact converse to the requirements of DM 19.

' 7.2.4 There is significant impact upon the intrinsic character and beauty of the area, so the requirements of DM 8 are not satisfied.

' 7.2.5 This cannot be identified as essential infrastructure as the supply is delivered to the grid network, it is not mandated that the site needs to be located on the chosen location, as previously discussed the energy supply can be provided in a far more efficient way from offshore wind.

' 7.2.6 The Project fails the Local Plan by virtue of its scale, topography of site and the minimal effect of mitigation measures arising from the elevation of the site.

' 7.2.7 The land has not been previously developed and has been in constant agricultural production therefore the requirements of The Planning Practice Guidance ID5-013 are not satisfied.

' 7.2.8 It was not possible to identify the location of the electrical connection point from the information provided.

' 7.2.9 ' 7.2.10 There is no supporting evidence for the land classification provided however it is noted that the land has been in constant productive agricultural production for the last three decades.

' 7.2.11 The project does not conform to SP2, DM 8, DM 10, and DM 19 as by virtue of its scale, topography, and adverse impact the local environment.

' 7.2.12 ' 7.2.19 The solution provided is inefficient with unqualified carbon reduction benefits (see page 6 of this documents). The energy production from this large tract of agricultural land can be easily met by offshore wind for which the UK has leading technology and resource, which has been identified as the way forward in HM Government Document the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution 2020.

' 7.3.1-7.3.6 It is believed that Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment is flawed in that insufficient receptors have been investigated to the west of the site where it is visible over a wide arc. Secondly the pre application guidance from CCC advised that views from adjacent footpaths should be viewed at a longer distance, and this does not appear to have been considered. The mitigation proposals of increasing the hedge heights from the current circa 1.5 m to 3.5 -5.0 m can only impact upon the openness of the landscape, and even with these heights the site will still be clearly visible.

' 7.3.7 The provision of a further hedgerow to the south side of the PROW (St Peters Way) will create a footpath tunnel and remove the near and far views of the undulating surrounding landscape available from the elevated position towards the north east corner.

' 7.3.8 The site is not well contained.

Woodham Ferrers & Bicknacre Parish Council

Comments

No response received

South Woodham Ferrers Town Council

Comments

11.05.2021 :-

"South Woodham Ferrers Town Council Planning Committee consider that the consultation period be deferred until after the Solar Farm Development supplementary documents become effective on 8th May 2021 in order to make an informed decision."

The Town Council have made no further comments to the application.

Rettendon Parish Council

Comments

23.05.2021 - The Parish Council strongly objects to the Planning Application due to the impact on the landscape and its residents.

This application is one of three large solar farms which have applied for planning application in our Parish. The others are 21/00502/FUL Canon Barns Road and 21/00394/FUL Sandon Brook.

Whilst it is recognised that each application must be considered separately the Supplementary Planning Document presented to Chelmsford Council Planning Board on March 4, 021 currently awaiting public comments and subsequent approval clearly recognised that nearby solar farms could have a cumulative impact and should be taken into consideration.

Chelmsford City Local Plan

The Application is contrary to several objectives and principles in the Chelmsford City Local Plan. In particular it is:

Contrary to the Chelmsford Local Plan Strategic Priority 3.33 to 'Respect the character and appearance of landscapes'

Contrary to Strategic Policy S1 Spatial Principles 4.14 'The existing settlement patterns should be respected so development does not sprawl into nearby settlements undermining their distinct and separate identities.'

The solar farms are essentially urban/industrial in appearance and character. The villages of East, South and West Hanningfield and Rettendon are small rural settlements separated by a largely agricultural landscape. Individually each of the three proposed solar farms in this area significantly reduce the gaps between the individual villages. The three combined have a compounding affect and remove 20% of the agricultural area between the four villages.

Contrary to Strategic Policy S4 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

The council have committed to take a precautionary approach. Damaging food production and the landscape which has evolved over centuries when there are proven alternatives is not a precautionary action.

Contrary to Strategic Policy S11, The Role of the Countryside.

The Sandon Brook solar farm is in the Green Belt and it has not been demonstrated that there are no alternative sites outside the Green Belt.

The NPPF requires that solar farms in the Green Belt need to demonstrate very special circumstances.

Contrary to policy DM19 'Renewable and Low Carbon Energy'

Specifically that planning permission will only be granted if it:-

iv. does not have a unacceptable visual impact which would be harmful to the character of the area.

No mitigation actions can be taken to totally hide the alien nature of the large mechanical constructions in a rural landscape.

Visual Impact

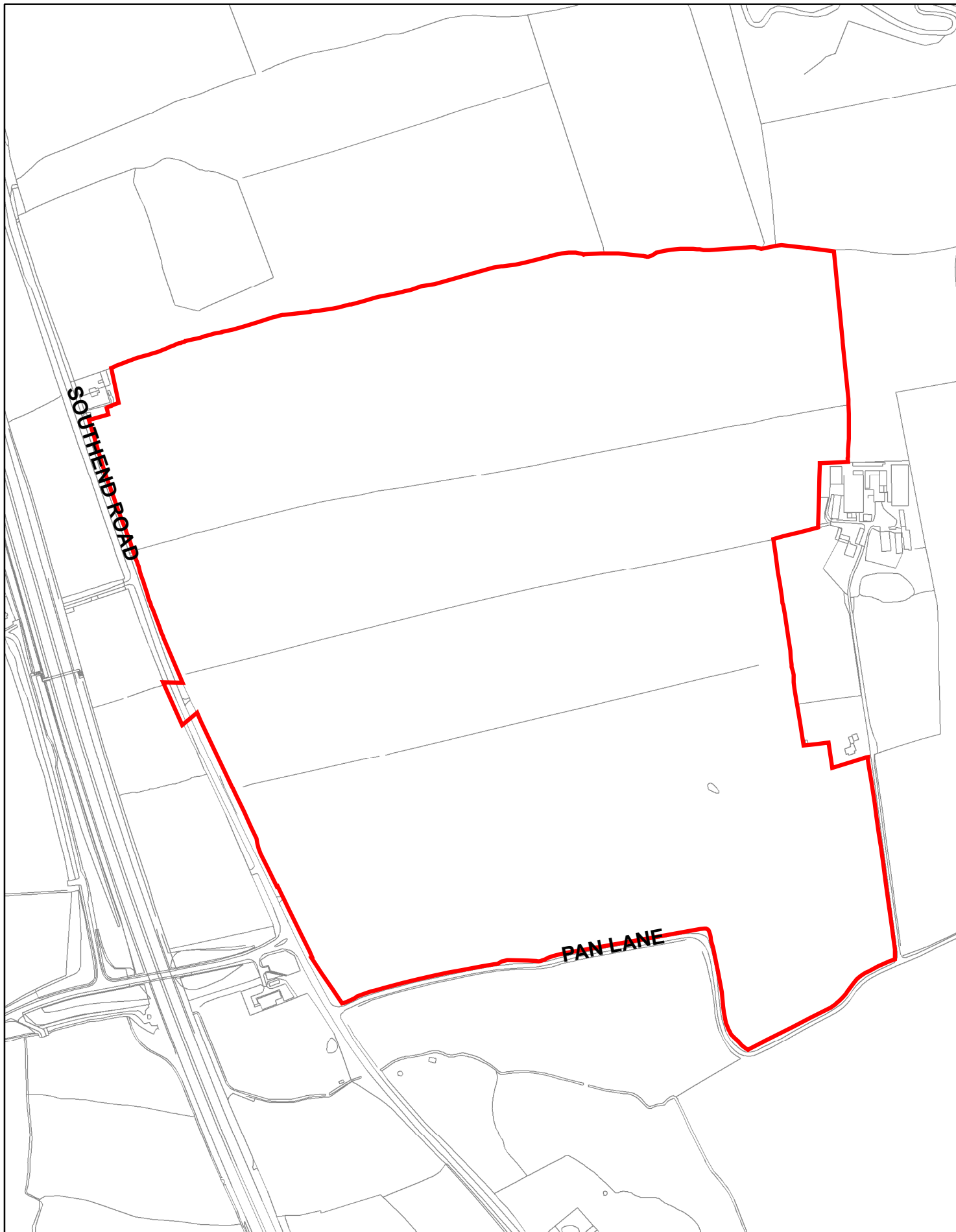
The Sandon Brook site and the proposed Hill Farm Solar Farm site are in fact on two farms only separated by 200 metres along Church Road. This will significantly reduce the rural separation between East and West Hanningfield.

The two solar farms are only separated by 300 metres along the Southend Road and the Canon Barns Road Solar farm is then immediately adjacent. This will result in an almost continuous one kilometre stretch of solar panels along this key north south corridor.

Agriculture

Although Grade 3b land it is intensively farmed and productive. The NPPG recommends that one consideration regarding solar farms should be whether land is being used effectively and applications should be focussed on non agricultural land.

This proposal will reduce food production and the associated carbon capture of the growing crops.



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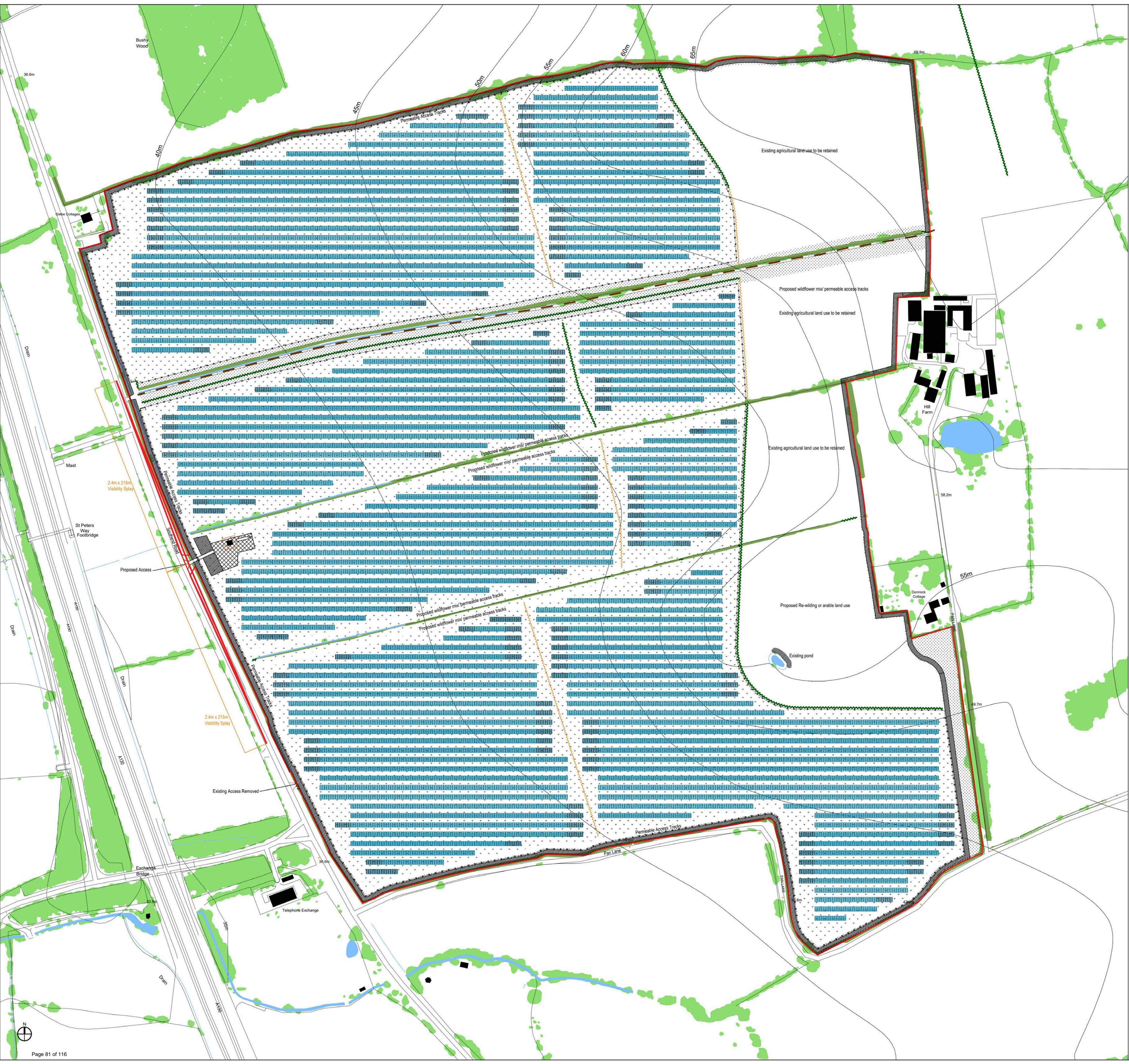


Planning Committee
21/00555/FUL

Planning & Development Management
Directorate for Sustainable Communities

PO Box 7544 Civic Centre
Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1XP

Telephone: 01245 606826



PLANTING NOTES

The handling of plants to be in accordance with National Plant Specification 'Handling and Establishing Landscape Plants'. All plants and planting operations are to comply with the requirements and recommendations of all current relevant British Standard specifications including but not limited to:

- BS 8545: Trees: From Nursery to Independence in the Landscape
- BS 3996-1:1992: Nursery stock. Specification for trees and shrubs
- BS 3882:2015 - Specification for topsoil
- BS 4428:1989. Code of practice for general landscape operations (excluding hard surfaces) (AMD 6784)
- BS 5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. Recommendations
- BS 7379-3:1991. Grounds maintenance. Recommendations for maintenance of amenity and functional turf (other than sports turf)

All planting to be native species and of local provenance and to be carried out during appropriate climatic conditions and where possible in the optimal planting period October through until March. Existing topsoil and/or imported, cleanest horticultural amendments from sustainable UK sources. Contractor to satisfy themselves of measurements on site and the full extent of works before pricing.

Clearance

Cut back all grass and perennial vegetation including brambles, suckering and epicormic growth to a height of 25-50mm across site where planting is to be located and within areas defined for solar panels. All rubbish, debris and existing redundant infrastructure and tipped waste to be removed. Stone picking of all stones and debris over 25mm diameter to be undertaken.

Tree works

Construction works near existing trees to be protected and retained in line with BS 5837:2012. Any tree works to existing trees to be undertaken in line with BS 3998:2010 Tree Work.

Proposed Tree Planting

Feathered trees to be planted in pits 800x600x450mm or dimensions of rootball, whichever is greater. Tree to be supported by 1Nr stake (1500mm long, per tree, 600mm above ground, 75mm diameter), and 1no. bio-degradable tie. Standard trees to be planted in pits 1000x1000x600mm or dimensions of rootball, whichever is greater. Trees to be supported by 2no. stakes 1500mm long, 800mm above ground, 75mm diameter), cross bar (400x100x15mm) and 2no. biodegradable ties. 1 no. 25kg bag of soil improver and 140g Ermag slow release fertiliser to be incorporated into the soil of all new tree pits.

Topsoil

Shall be a minimum of 400mm deep over new planting beds and graded to fall. Imported topsoil must be BS 3882:2015 compliant and existing topsoil must be cultivated in accordance with BS 3882:2015. No cultivation should take place in wet waterlogged conditions and within the SPAs of existing trees.

Native Species Shelterbelt Mix

Plants shall be randomly mixed throughout the beds in groups of 3 or 5. Planting shall be at the specified density. All native planting shall be of local provenance.

Native Species Hedge Mix

Hedges to comprise a double staggered row of plants 450mm apart within each row, overall 5 plants per linear metre. Species mixed throughout the hedge line in random groups of 3/5, 500mm wide trench excavated to take plants and topsoil cultivated to 450mm depth prior to application of fertiliser. All native planting shall be of local provenance.

Mulch

Geotextile Weed-control fabric to be laid across any areas of bare earth following planting and up to the edge of the planting bed where it adjoins hard standing or grass. Planting beds to receive 75mm depth pulverised ornamental bark mulch.

Plant position

Final position of trees and shrubs subject to confirmation of service location and approval of statutory undertakers. Allow for location of service information prior to work commencing on site.

Seeding

All over-seeded areas to be scarified removing any stones, rubble, subsoil, and general construction historic site waste. Areas of hard standing to be treated in line with engineers specification.

Protection to planting

Native hedgerow plants and trees to be protected by rabbit fence as per Defra Guidance. Fences should consist of galvanised, 18 gauge, 31 millimeter (mm) hexagonal wire mesh. Attach the netting to a pair of 2.65mm, high tensile, spring steel straining wires using galvanised netting rings. Make sure there is one straining wire at the bottom of the fence and one at the top. Bury the bottom edge of the netting to a depth of 150mm, or lay the netting on the surface of the ground towards the rabbit fence. Anchor lapped netting at 1m intervals. All materials to meet the relevant British Standard.

Planting Season

Bare-root and root balled shrubs and trees to be planted between mid-November and mid-March dependant upon the planting season.

PLANTING SCHEDULE

Proposed Native Trees

To be included within proposed hedgerows planted informally on uneven centres 5, 7, 9 m and in groups of the same species of 1, 3 and 5. Numbers to be confirmed onsite

Code	Species	Common name	Specification	Girth	Height (cm)	Root
Ac	Acer campestre	Field Maple	Light Standard	6-8cm	175-200	B
Cav	Corylus avellana	Hazel	Feathered	100-120	150-175	B
Cm	Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	Light Standard	6-8cm	175-200	B
Ps	Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn	Light Standard	6-8cm	175-200	B
Ps	Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn	Feathered	100-120	150-175	B
Oa	Quercus robur	Common Oak	Light Standard	6-8cm	175-200	B

Proposed Native Trees

To be included within existing hedgerows planted informally on uneven centres 5, 7, 9 m and in groups of the same species of 1, 3 and 5. Numbers to be confirmed onsite

Code	Species	Common name	Specification	Girth	Height (cm)	Root
Ac	Acer campestre	Field Maple	Select Standard	10-12cm	250-350	B
Cm	Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	Select Standard	10-12cm	250-350	B
Ps	Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn	Select Standard	10-12cm	250-350	B
Oa	Quercus robur	Common Oak	Select Standard	10-12cm	250-350	B

Proposed Native Species Hedge Mix - 5 per lin

To be planted informally. Numbers to be confirmed onsite

%	Code	Species	Common name	Form	Height (cm)	Root	Container (L)
25	Ac	Acer campestre	Field Maple	Feathered	100-120	B	-
25	Cm	Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	Feathered	100-120	B	-
15	Cav	Corylus avellana	Hazel	Feathered	100-120	B	-
15	Ps	Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn	Feathered	100-120	B	-
10	Ros	Rosa canina	Dog Rose	Whp	40-60	B	-
10	Sa	Sambucus nigra	Alder	Feathered	100-120	B	-

Proposed Native Species Shelterbelt - 1 per m2

To be planted informally

%	Code	Species	Common name	Form	Height (cm)	Root	Container (L)
15	Ag	Arnus glutinosa	Alder	Feathered	100-120	B	-
10	Bx	Betula pendula	Silver Birch	Feathered	100-120	B	-
15	Fa	Fagus sylvatica	Beech	Feathered	100-120	B	-
5	He	Hea aquilum	Holly	Whp	40-60	B	-
15	Oa	Quercus robur	Common Oak	Feathered	100-120	B	-
5	Pa	Prunus avium	Cherry	Feathered	100-120	B	-
5	Pd	Prunus padus	Bird Cherry	Whp	60-80	B	-
10	Ps	Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn	Whp	40-60	B	-
10	Ti	Tilia europaea	Common Lime	Whp	100-120	B	-
5	Ue	Ulex europaeus	Corse	Whp	40-60	B	-
5	Vo	Viburnum opulus	Guelder Rose	Whp	40-60	B	-

Proposed species-rich grassland seed mix

Seed Mix specification to be confirmed pending ground investigation

Proposed native species wildflower seed mix

Seed Mix specification to be confirmed pending ground investigation

NOTES

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All dimensions are in millimeters unless stated otherwise.

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CDM 2015

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015) makes a distinction between domestic and commercial clients and outlines the duties you, as client, have under Health and Safety Law (HSE).

These duties can be found at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/cdm/cdm2015responsibilities.htm>

It is your responsibility as client to make yourself aware of your role within CDM 2015 and act accordingly.

KEY

- Site boundary
- Existing vegetation as defined by digital mapping and Tree Survey
- Existing Public Right of Way
- Proposed native hedge and tree planting
- Proposed restoration of historic field boundaries with native hedge and tree planting
- Proposed native species shelterbelt mix
- Proposed native species wildflower seed mix
- Proposed native species rich grassland seed mix
- Proposed solar panels and associated infrastructure
- Proposed security/buffer fencing
- Proposed close boarded timber security gate
- Visibility Splay

H	Revised to follow latest Road Line Boundary and visibility splay	REVISION BY: MR	DATE: 17.06.22	CHECKED BY: MT	DATE: 17.06.22
G	Revised to follow latest panel layout	REVISION BY: MR	DATE: 11.06.22	CHECKED BY: MT	DATE: 11.06.22
F	Revised to follow latest panel layout	REVISION BY: MR	DATE: 11.06.22	CHECKED BY: MT	DATE: 11.06.22
E	Revised to follow latest panel layout	REVISION BY: MT	DATE: 05.04.22	CHECKED BY: MT	DATE: 05.04.22
D	Revised to comply with Local Planning Authority Comments	REVISION BY: MR	DATE: 27.04.22	CHECKED BY: MT	DATE: 27.04.22
C	Revised to comply with Local Planning Authority Comments	REVISION BY: MR	DATE: 23.03.22	CHECKED BY: MT	DATE: 23.03.22
B	Revised to comply with Local Planning Authority Comments	REVISION BY: MR	DATE: 09.03.22	CHECKED BY: MT	DATE: 09.03.22

PURPOSE OF ISSUE
PL-For Planning Submission
RIBA STAGE 3

DRAWING STATUS
IN-For Information

PROJECT TITLE
East Henningfield Solar Farm

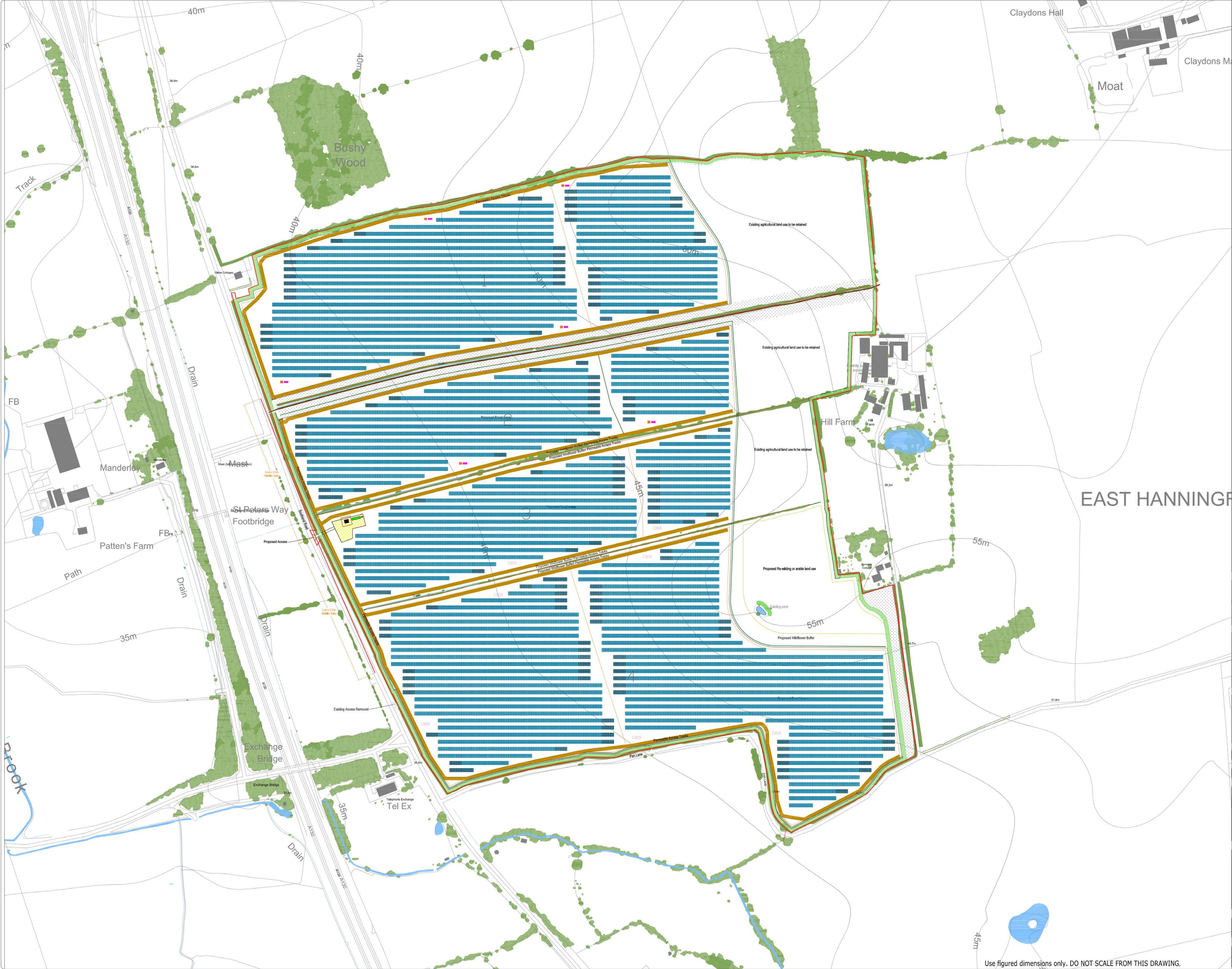
CLIENT
Cell Energy Limited

DRAWING TITLE
Landscape Mitigation Plan
SCALE
1:2000@A1

DATE
27.09.2021
DRAWN BY
MR
CHECKED BY
MT
APPROVED BY
TP

DRAWING NUMBER
PROJECT NO
2214D-00-50-H
TYPE
UNIQUE NO
REVISION

Lanpro
Architecture | Masterplanning | Landscape
& Urban Design | Architecture
Norwich Office: Buntingford House, 58 Pudding Lane, Norwich, NR2 1EQ
Tel: 01603 831 319
www.lanpro.co.uk



Notes

Rev	Description of Revision	Date
Revision History		


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FES Ltd.

Forth House
Pinnhill Business Park
Stirling, FK7 8HW

Tel. 01786 919 600
Fax. 01786 811 456



Discipline

☐ Multi Service Coordination
☐ Electrical Services
☐ Mechanical Services
☐ High Voltage Services
☐ Communications Services
☐ Fire Protection

Drawn	BF	Checked	CE
Scale	1:2500	Date	APR 22

Project

Solar PV Farm
Hill Farm
East Hanningfield
CM2 7TD

Drawing Title

PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR FARM
LAYOUT
42.434MWP

Drawing Number	58047-EH-GA-L001	Revision	C
Issue Status	PLANNING INFORMATION	Sheet	A1

Page 82 of 116

Use figured dimensions only. DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING.



Planning Committee
5th July 2022

Application No	:	22/00273/FUL Full Application
Location	:	107 The Street Little Waltham Chelmsford Essex CM3 3NY
Proposal	:	Retrospective application for the construction of a food preparation building. Extension and retention of a storage/fridge building. Provision of additional grassed parking surface for total of 31 parking spaces. Associated landscaping and tree planting.
Applicant	:	Mr David Hunt MARJORAM LEISURE LIMITED
Agent	:	Mr Stephen Hayhurst
Date Valid	:	17th March 2022

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Consultations
 Appendix 2 Drawings

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The application has been referred to the Planning Committee at the request of the Local Ward Member.
- 1.2. The White Hart is Grade II listed and forms part of a group of listed buildings within the village conservation area.
- 1.3. The proposal is seeking retrospective consent for the extension of a food preparation building, the construction and extension of storage/fridge building, the extension of the car park and associated landscaping and tree planting.
- 1.4. The development has an acceptable design in relation to the public house and would not result in any harm to the visual amenities or the conservation area. Given the existing relationships shared and by virtue of the size, siting and use of the development, the proposal would not adversely affect the amenity of any neighbouring residential properties.
- 1.5. The application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out at the end of this report.

2. Description of site

- 2.1. The White Hart is a public house and restaurant of seventeenth century origin, which is grade II listed and forms part of a group of listed buildings close to the centre of the village.
- 2.2. The public house and majority of the plot are located within the defined settlement of Little Waltham, however the rear half of the site is located within land designated as Green Wedge.
- 2.3. The site also lies within the Little Waltham Conservation Area.
- 2.4. It is bordered by playing fields to north, and residential properties and gardens to the south.
- 2.5. The street scene has a varied appearance and there is no defined rhythm or character to area.
- 2.6. The site has mature vegetation throughout and adjacent the boundaries.

3. Details of the proposal

- 3.1. The application is retrospective and consists of a number of elements this includes; the retention and extension of a storage building (identified as B & D on the associated block plan); the construction of a preparation building (identified as A on the associated block plan); the backwards extension of the car parking area to provide an additional 8 grasscrete parking spaces resulting in a total of 31 spaces.
- 3.2. A landscape proposal and remediation plan is included, which proposes to plant 9 new trees of mixed species and a quantity of native hedging along the north-west boundary.

4. Other relevant applications

- 4.1. 93/06106/FUL - Approved 31st August 1993 Remodelling of existing store to bar area including new front. New access to public bar and new carpark/yard layout. (Plan nos 93.397/1A, 2, 3B, 4A, 5 & 6)
- 4.2. 12/01802/FUL - Refused 30th January 2013 Refurbishment and extension to existing public house with addition of 14 no. guest bedrooms, demolition of existing outbuilding, new bin and cycle stores, car park, new wall and entrance piers
- 4.3. 13/01355/FUL - Approved 21st November 2013 Demolition of single storey side extension. Construction of part single, part two storey side/rear extension. Internal alterations. Installation of Bulk LPG Storage Tank. Provision of 8 new parking spaces & new external patio/seating area. Alterations to fenestration, new chimney and extraction system. New cycle shelter.
- 4.4. 14/00822/FUL - Approved 4th July 2014 Change of use of part of first floor of public house to private dining areas.
- 4.5. 17/00010/FUL - Refused 28th February 2017. Additional car parking to rear of site and creation of seating area to front
- 4.6. 22/00257/FUL - Application Withdrawn 21st April 2022 Retrospective application for the construction of a children's play equipment area. Associated landscaping and tree planting.

5. Summary of consultations

- Little Waltham Parish Council
 - Essex County Council Highways
 - Public Health & Protection Services (PHPS)
 - Local residents
 - Economic Development & Implementation
-
- 5.1. Little Waltham Parish Council have raised an objection to the proposal with regards to the extension of the car park, directing that it will cause an adverse impact to the surrounding area and would result in harm to neighbouring amenity in relation to noise and pollution.
 - 5.2. Essex County Council Highway Authority have stated that the proposal is acceptable subject to conditions.
 - 5.3. PHPS have raised no comments with regards to the application.
 - 5.4. One objection has been received from a member of the public with regards to the noise pollution caused by the fans and equipment in association with the food preparation building and storage building.
 - 5.5. No comments were raised by Economic Development & Implementation team

6. Planning considerations

Main Issues

- 6.1. Whether the extension of the car park has any adverse impact upon heritage assets, neighbouring amenity and the character of the surrounding area.
- 6.2. Whether the extension and retention of the food and storage buildings are harmful to neighbouring amenity.

Planning consideration

Parking area

- 6.3. The additional parking area would be located directly to the back of the existing. The land previously contained picnic benches and pub related paraphernalia, allowing patrons to drink, eat and participate in activities on the land. The use of land for parking in relation to the pub would be another ancillary activity and use.
- 6.4. The northern side of the new parking area abuts playing fields. The southern side abuts a neighbouring domestic barn.
- 6.5. Given the previous use of the land and existing relationship shared with the neighbouring properties that border the site, it is not considered that the extension of the car park and the activity that would entail would be materially harmful to neighbouring amenity.
- 6.6. The extended car park sits within the Green Wedge. The proposed car parking area will be constructed using seeded grass grids over a cellular-web tree root protection system (grasscrete). This provides protection and allows grass to grow and pass up through the cellular system, providing a grassed parking area and retaining the green aesthetic of the site. The edge of the parking area has also been stepped back from the north-western boundary to allow for planting to be introduced, which would not only assist with softening and climate change but would enhance the appearance and biodiversity of the site. Railway sleeper protection would be adjacent the new hedge and the existing outbuilding to Knights to provide a buffer of protection. Although the development would allow vehicles to park within this area, it is not considered that this would adversely impact on the role, function, character or appearance of the Green Wedge.
- 6.7. The car park addition would not adversely impact the conservation area or the setting of listed buildings.

Buildings

- 6.8. The development would see the retention and modification of ancillary buildings within the site. They are grouped with existing structures and are well related to their context. The works involve changing a flat roof to a slate pitched roof to Building A. Building B would have the roof re-pitched and clad in slate. A part-open bin store extension is also proposed to Building B on its western elevation with detailing to match the main building. The works are minor in nature. The scheme, subject to the proposed modifications and landscaping, would not adversely impact on the Conservation Area or the setting of the adjacent listed buildings.

Neighbour amenity

- 6.9. The development would not introduce or result in any materially harmful noises or smells outside of that which would occur in relation to a well-established village pub/restaurant. Public Health & Protection Services have raised no concerns regarding the proposal in terms of noise or pollution. Given the siting and scale of the buildings and the existing relationship shared with the neighbouring properties that border the site, it is not considered that the proposal would be materially harmful to neighbouring amenity.

Other matters

- 6.10 The proposal increases on-site parking provision, in an area with kerbside stress, inaccordance with parking standards. From a highway and transportation perspective the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority.
- 6.11 The application is accompanied by a tree survey schedule and tree survey plan. There are trees within the site that make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the local area. The proposal includes some pruning, however this is considered minor works, which would not be harmful. Although the proposal would see the removal of a Yew tree, this is of poor structural condition and a landscaping and remediation plan accompanies the application and shows that 9 new trees of mixed species and native hedging will be planted. As a result this provides suitable compensation.

Conclusion

- 6.12. With the above in mind it is considered that the proposal would comply with policies DM7, DM10, DM13, DM17, DM23, DM27, DM29 and SP11 of the Local Plan and therefore is acceptable.

7. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.1. The proposed works are not CIL liable.

The Application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:-

Condition 1

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and conditions listed on this decision notice.

Reason:

In order to achieve satisfactory development of the site

Condition 2

Prior to their use, samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure the proposed development does not detract from the historical value or character and appearance of the listed building and conservation area in accordance with Policy DM13 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 3

All rainwater goods shall be of cast iron or cast aluminium and painted black.

Reason:

To ensure the proposed development does not detract from the historical value or character and appearance of the listed building or conservation area in accordance with Policy DM13 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 4

Prior to their installation large scale drawings shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority showing details of the following :-

- (a) Eaves;
- (b) Verge;
- (c) Plinth;
- (d) Doors;
- (e) Vents & Flues

The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure the proposed development does not detract from the historical value or character and appearance of the listed building in accordance with Policy DM13 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 5

In relation to tree protection, tree surgery and construction methods, the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement dated February 2022 subject to such minor variations as may be agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason:

To safeguard the existing trees which are of amenity value and add character to the development in accordance with Policy DM17 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 6

The proposed landscaping scheme detailed on the approved drawing No.TCTC-18151-L-01 Rev A shall be carried out as detailed within the next available planting season (August 2022/Spring 2023).

If any of the landscaping proposed is removed, uprooted, destroyed or dies within a period of 10 years following its planting it shall be replaced within the next available planting season. The location, size and species of replacement planting shall be as agreed in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason:

To add character to the development and to ensure that the landscaping and planting is appropriately maintained in accordance with Policy DM17 and Policy DM23 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Notes to Applicant

1 Hours of work during construction

In order to cause minimum nuisance to neighbours, the applicant is strongly advised to follow guidelines for acceptable working hours set out by the Council's Public Health and Protection team.

Noisy work:

- Can be carried out between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday
- Limited to 0800-1300 on Saturdays
- At all other times including Sundays and Bank Holidays, no work should be carried out that is audible beyond the boundary of the site

Light work:

- Acceptable outside the hours shown above
- Can be carried out between 0700 and 0800; and 1800-1900 Monday to Friday

In some circumstance further restrictions may be necessary.

For more information, please contact Chelmsford City Council Public Health and Protection Services, or view the Council's website at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/construction-site-noise

Party Wall Act

The Party Wall Act 1996 relates to work on existing walls shared with another property or excavation near another building.

An explanatory booklet is available on the Department for Communities and Local Government website at

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/buildingregulations/buildingpolicyandlegislation/currentlegislation/partywallact>

- 2 This permission is subject to conditions, which require details to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority. Please note that applications to discharge planning conditions can take up to eight weeks to determine.
- 3 Tree surgery is a skilled operation and it is recommended that you consider seeking the services of a competent tree surgeon before carrying out the works. The Arboricultural Association holds a directory of competent tree surgeons which is available on their website: <https://www.trees.org.uk>
- 4 The applicant is requested to notify the Council of the date when the felling of the tree(s) the subject of this application, is known. To do this, please email the Trees and Landscaping section at planning.trees@chelmsford.gov.uk. This will assist the Council should any enquiries be made when the works are being carried out.
- 5 The remedial works subject of the proposal are necessary to support the application as their retention in their current form is wholly inappropriate and harmful to the setting and appearance of the Listed Building. As a result all the works subject of the application should be completed within 6 months of the determination date of the application. Failure to complete the works within the time will likely result in enforcement action being taken.

- 6 The development approved relates solely to that detailed in the proposal description and nothing else.

Positive and Proactive Statement

The Local Planning Authority provided advice to the applicant before the application was submitted. The Local Planning Authority has assessed the proposal against all material considerations including planning policies and any comments that may have been received. The planning application has been approved in accordance with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework to promote the delivery of sustainable development and to approach decision taking in a positive way.

Little Waltham Parish Council

Comments
<p>08.04.2022 - Little Waltham Parish Council wishes to object to this application. It is noted that the application seeks to extend the car park by an extra 31 spaces to the rear of the public house. A similar application in 2017 was refused on the basis of adverse impact upon the surrounding area which is in the conservation area. The Parish Council considers that there is no change to that situation in that there will be an adverse impact upon surrounding properties particularly the property 'Knights' in relation to noise and pollution as well as appearance.</p> <p>In addition in view of the fact that the applicant felled a number of mature trees in the area without the necessary consents, the Parish Council considers that this conduct indicates that trees in the area are at risk and would ask that existing trees together with any new trees planted in accordance with the landscaping scheme should be made subject to tree preservation orders.</p>

Economic Development & Implementation

Comments
No response received

Essex County Council Highways

Comments
<p>Date:- 8th April 2022</p> <p>The proposal increases on-site parking provision.</p> <p>From a highway and transportation perspective the impact of the proposal is acceptable to the Highway Authority as it is not contrary to the following Development Management policies: -</p> <p>A) Safety Policy DM1 ' DM7 of the Highway Authority's Development Management Policies February 2011.</p> <p>B) Accessibility Policy DM9 and DM11 of the Highway Authority's Development Management Policies February 2011.</p> <p>C) Efficiency/Capacity Policy DM1 ' DM6 of the Highway Authority's Development Management Policies February 2011.</p> <p>D) Road Hierarchy Policy DM2 - DM5 of the Highway Authority's Development Management Policies February 2011.</p>

E) Parking Standards Policy DM8 of the Highway Authority's Development Management Policies February 2011 which refers to the Parking Standards Design and Good Practice September 2009 (Essex Planning Officers Association/ECC)

Public Health & Protection Services

Comments

25.03.2022 - No PH&PS comments with regard to this application

Local Residents

Comments

Representations received

Customer objects
to the Planning
Application

Comments:

We would like to make a comment with regards to the application for retrospective planning permission for construction of food preparation building and the extension of storage /fridge building.

We realise that living next to a pub is never going to be silent, however locating the food preparation area with it's associated industrial level fan noise directly onto the neighbours property is inconsiderate. If the food preparation area were located elsewhere on the pub property such as where there is open car park space, this would put some distance between the noise source and any neighbours.

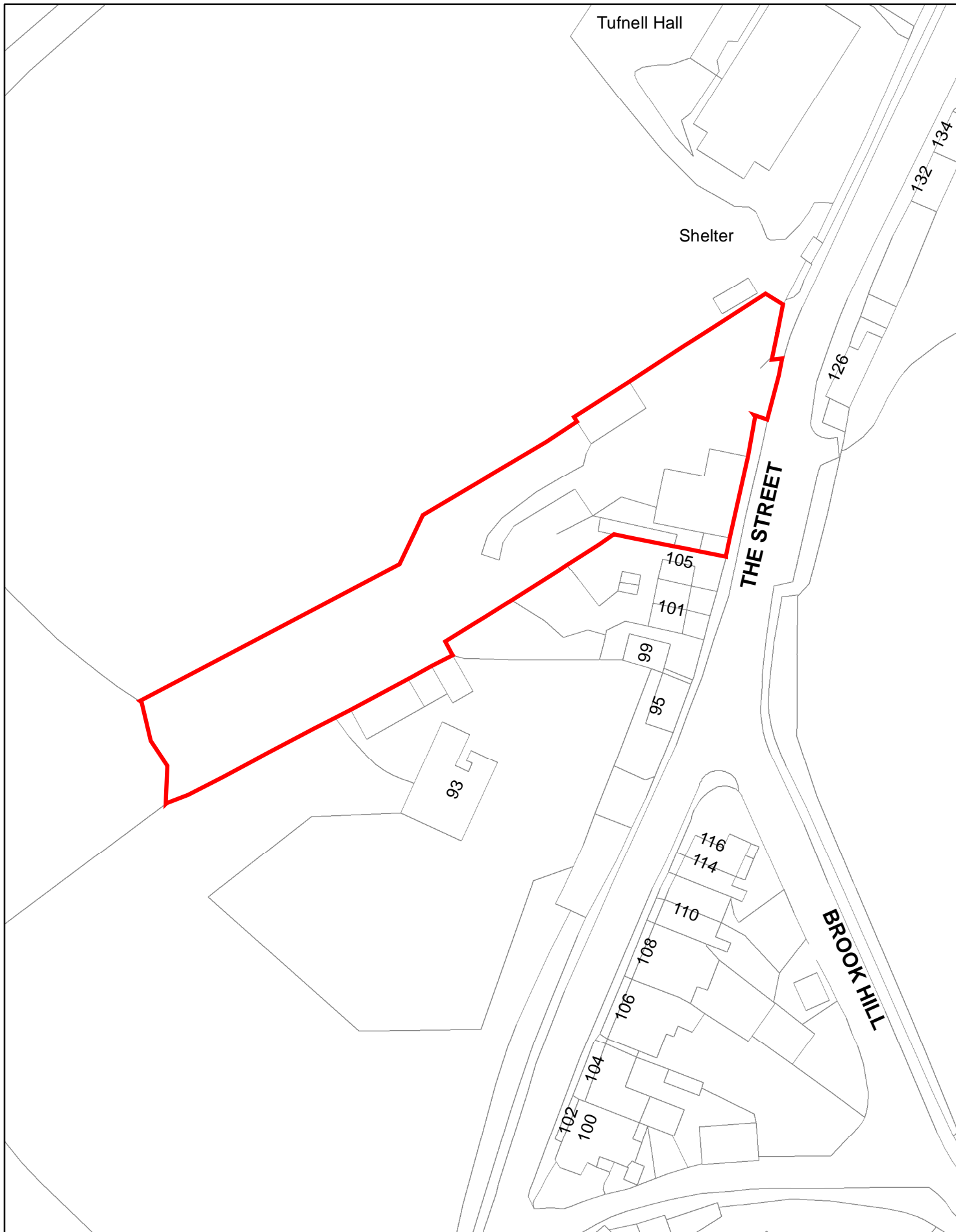
Currently the noise produced by the fans associated with various equipment and machinery located in the 'food preparation area' at the premises is at a disturbing and disruptive level. We are unable to fully enjoy our house due to the constant noise level.

We would hope that while considering this retrospective planning application, some thought and attention could be given to the level of noise currently coming from the premises and it's impact on the everyday lives of the neighbours and how this noise can be eliminated.

The noise is produced by the fans and equipment at the premises, fridges, chillers, air conditioners and ventilation whether or not the business is open as the fridges and chillers run constantly. The noise pollution is constant 24/7 which greatly impacts our enjoyment of our house and our garden, in short we are unable to enjoy our home as we

should be able.

If undertakings can be made and assurances given to ensure that the noise pollution produced by the fans on the premises can be eliminated, whether by relocation of the food preparation area or by the use of noise suppression equipment then we would be happy to withdraw our objection to the retrospective planning permission.



0 5 10 20 Metres

1:800



Planning Committee
22/00273/FUL

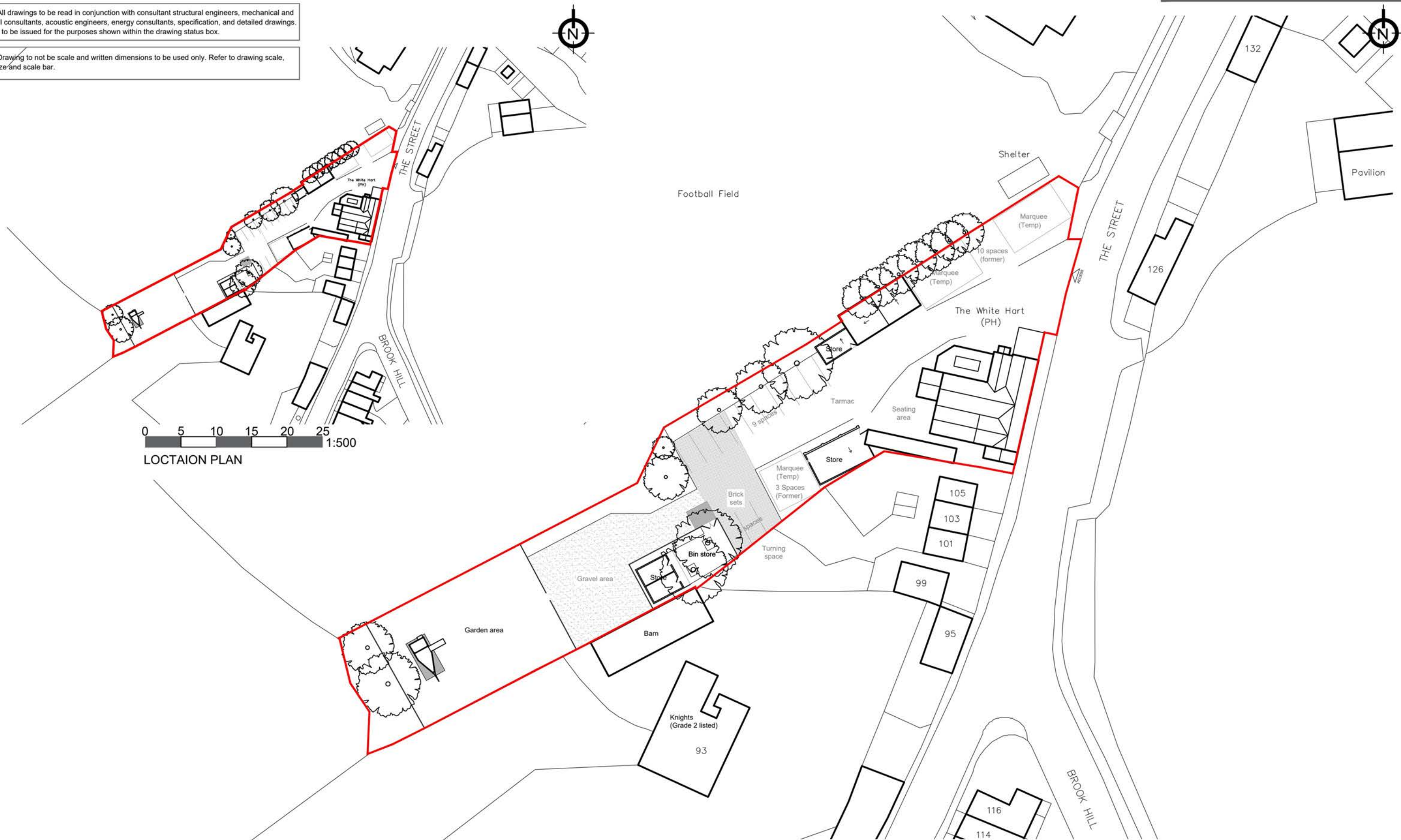
Planning & Development Management
Directorate for Sustainable Communities

PO Box 7544 Civic Centre
Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1XP

Telephone: 01245 606826

NOTE: All drawings to be read in conjunction with consultant structural engineers, mechanical and electrical consultants, acoustic engineers, energy consultants, specification, and detailed drawings. Drawing to be issued for the purposes shown within the drawing status box.

NOTE: Drawing to not be scale and written dimensions to be used only. Refer to drawing scale, paper size and scale bar.



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LOCAION PLAN

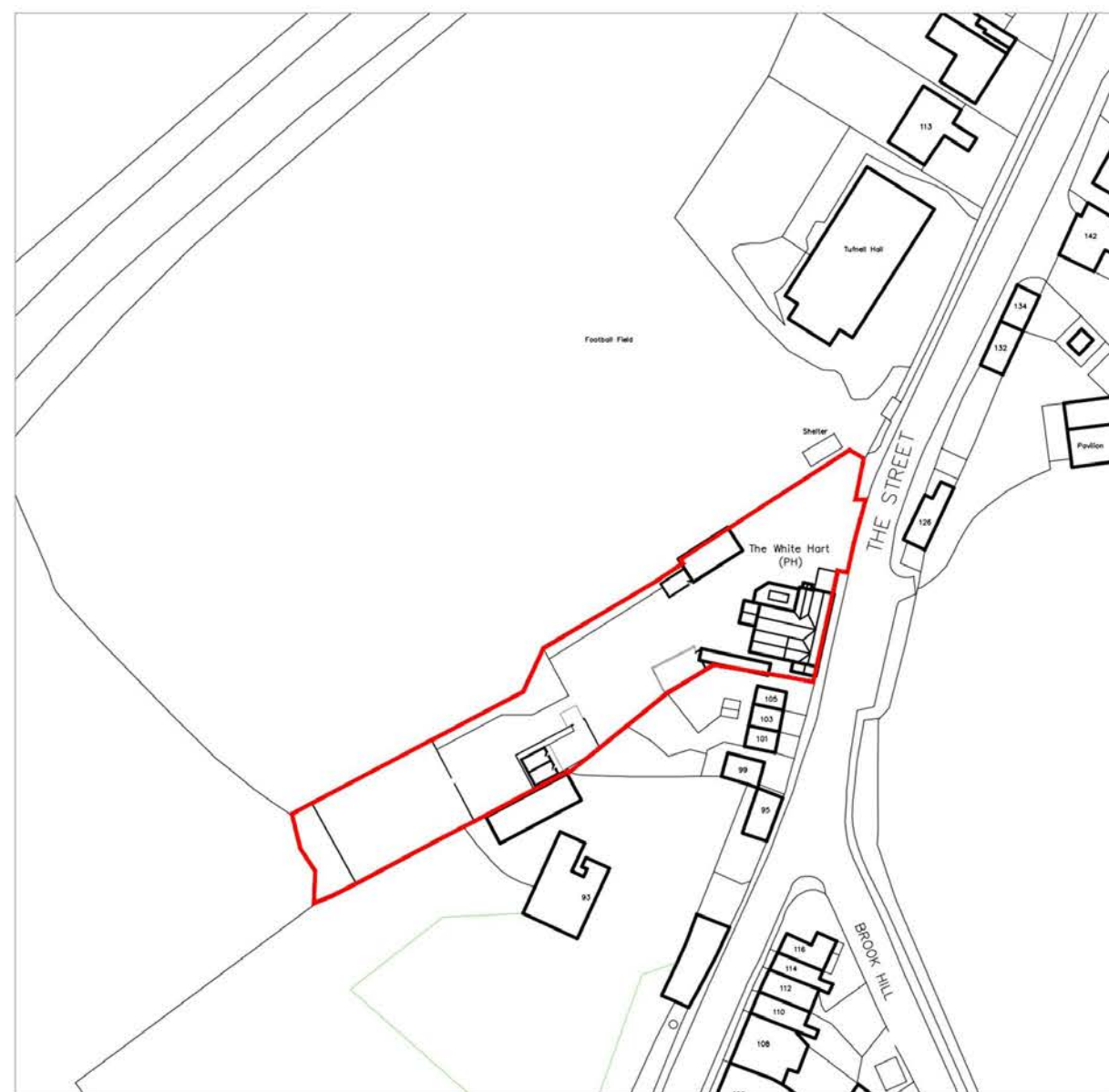
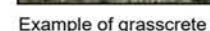
0 5 10 15 20 25
1:500
SITE PLAN



jbell
design and
conservation ltd
Suite 9, Holly House Business Centre
220-224 New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9AE
T: 07484 791794
E: jbell@designandconservation.co.uk

Client : Mr D. Hunt	Scale : 1:500/1:1250 @ A3
Project : The White Hart, 107 The Street Little Waltham, Chelmsford, CM3 3NY	Status : Planning
Drawing : Existing Site & Location Plan	Dwg No : 2021-501-001
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C:\Users\Jon Bell\OneDrive - designandconservation.co.uk\000 Projects\2021-501-The White Hart Little Waltham\DWG\EXISTING



LOCATION PLAN 1:1250

Score	Frequency
0	10
2	20
4	10
6	10
8	10
10	10

1:200



Drawing : <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> Proposed Site Plan </div>	Dwg No : <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> 2021-501-002 </div>
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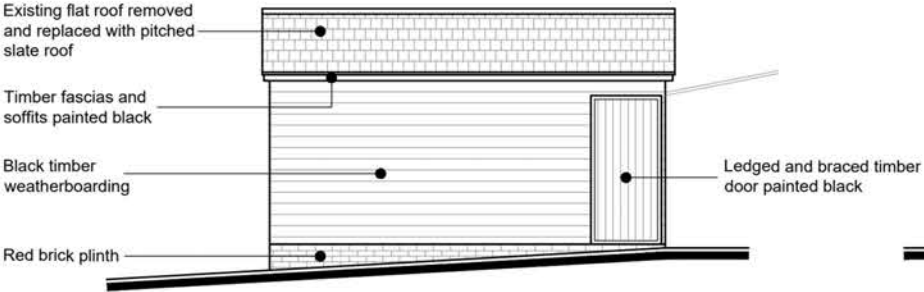
Planning

Dwg No : 2021-501-00

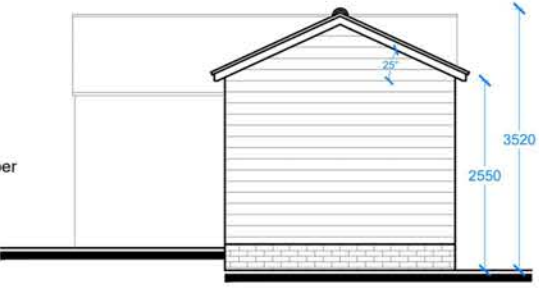
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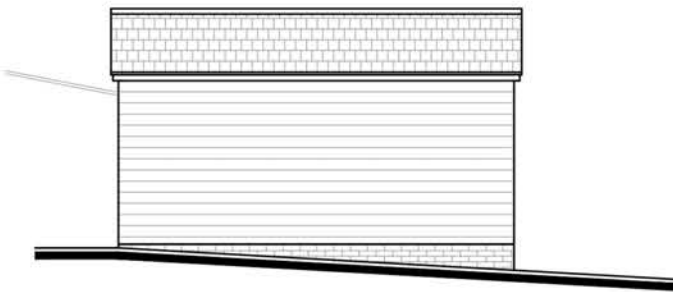
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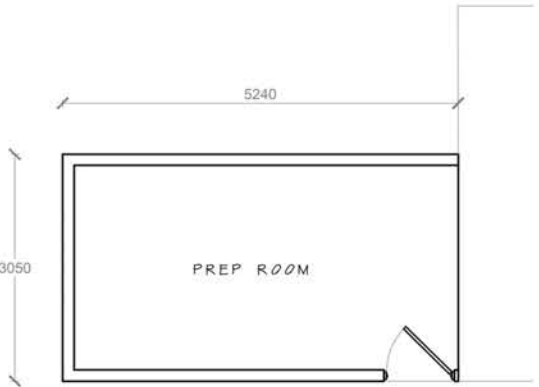
FRONT ELEVATION



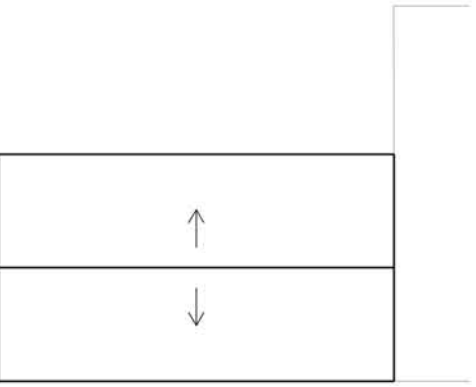
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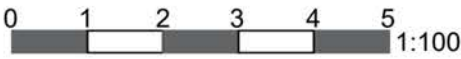
REAR ELEVATION



FLOOR PLAN



ROOF PLAN



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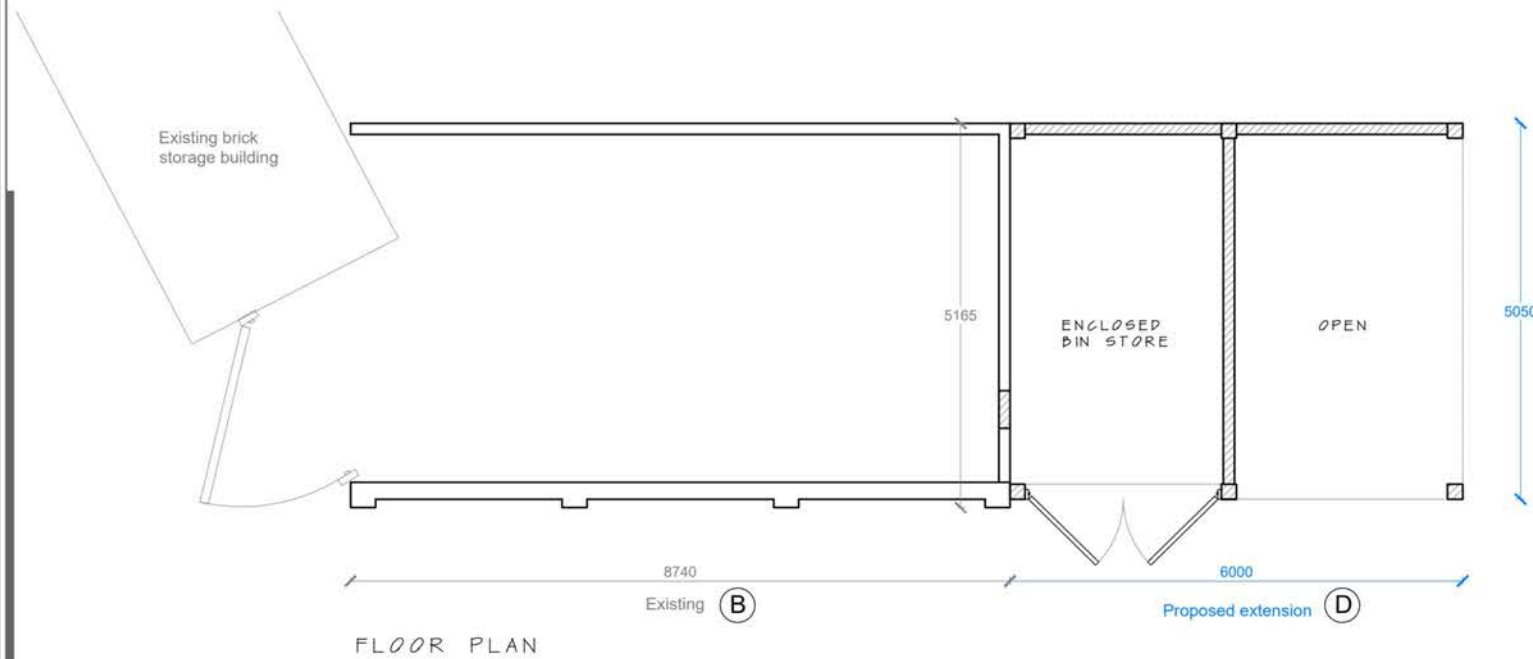
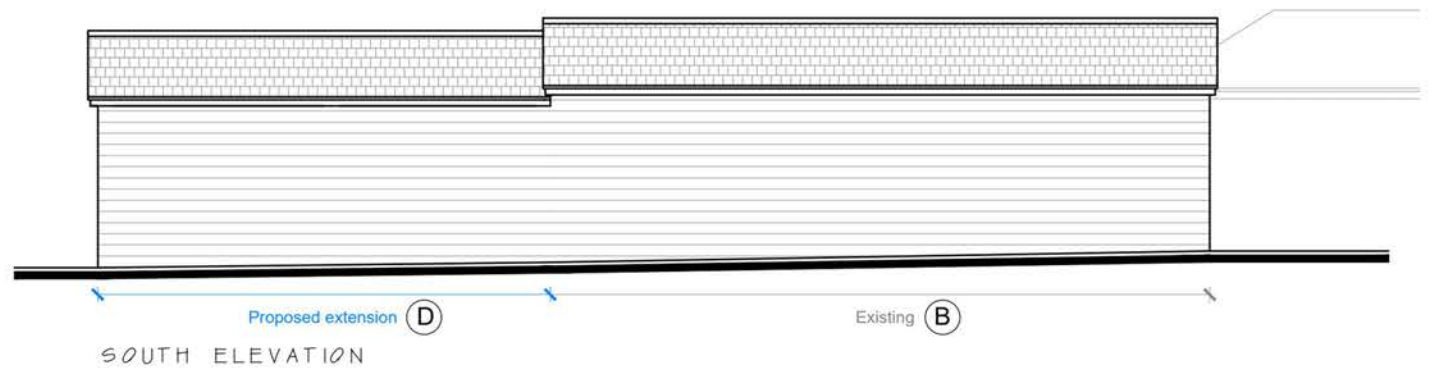
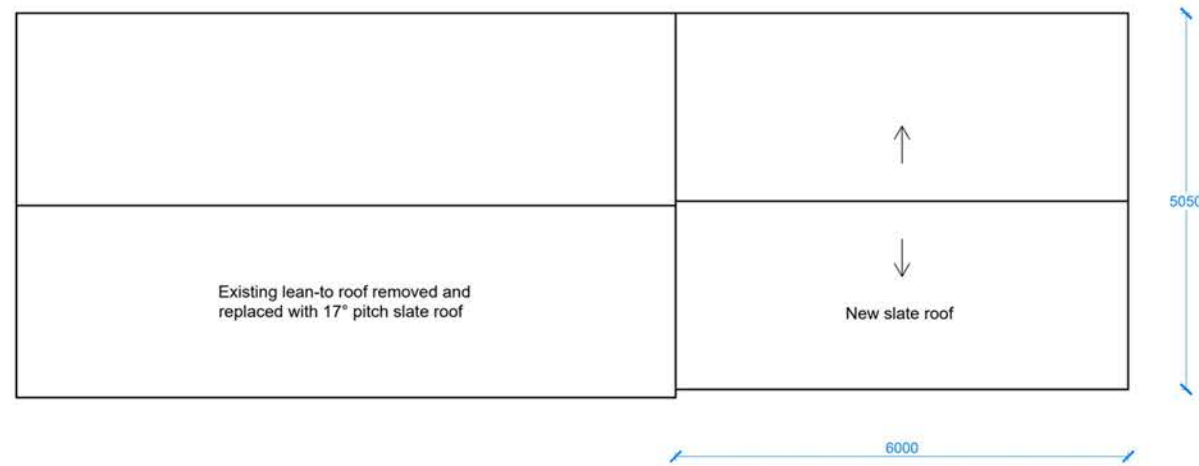
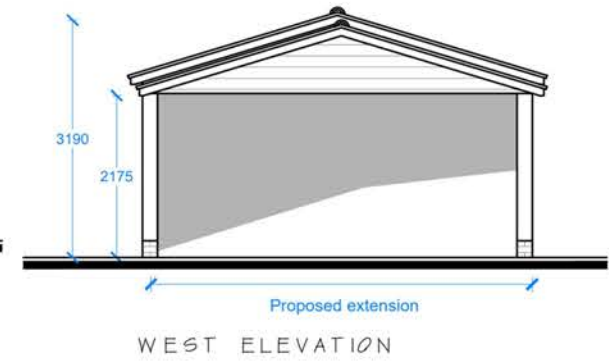
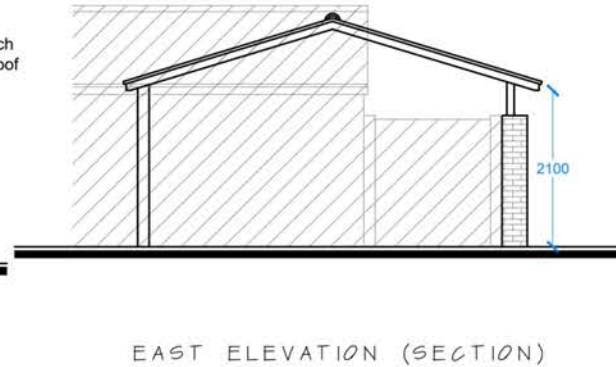
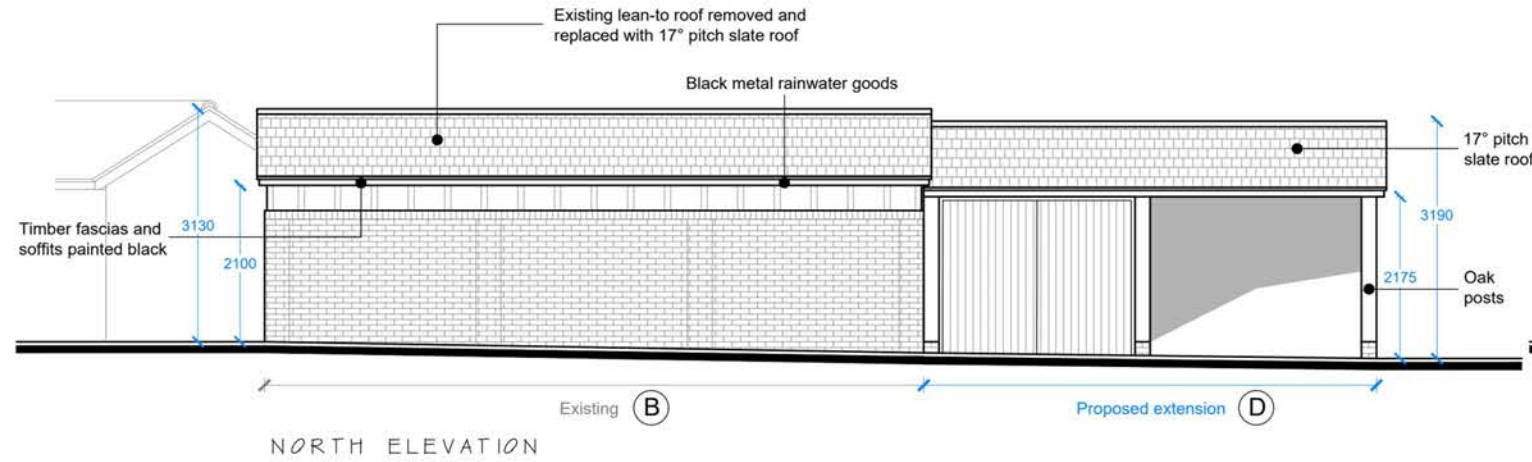
Suite 9, Holly House Business Centre
220-224 New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9AE
T: 07484 791794
E: jbell@designandconservation.co.uk

Client : Mr D. Hunt	Scale : 1:100 @ A3
Project : The White Hart, 107 The Street Little Waltham, Chelmsford, CM3 3NY	Status : Planning
Drawing : Proposed Building A	Dwg No : 2021-501-021
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**jbell
design and
conservation ltd**

Suite 9, Holly House Business Centre
220-224 New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9AE
T: 07484 791794
E: jbell@designandconservation.co.uk

Client : Mr D. Hunt	Scale : 1:100 @ A3
Project : The White Hart, 107 The Street Little Waltham, Chelmsford, CM3 3NY	Status : Planning
Drawing : Proposed Buildings B&D	Dwg No : 2021-501-031
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PROPOSED PLANTING SPECIFICATION

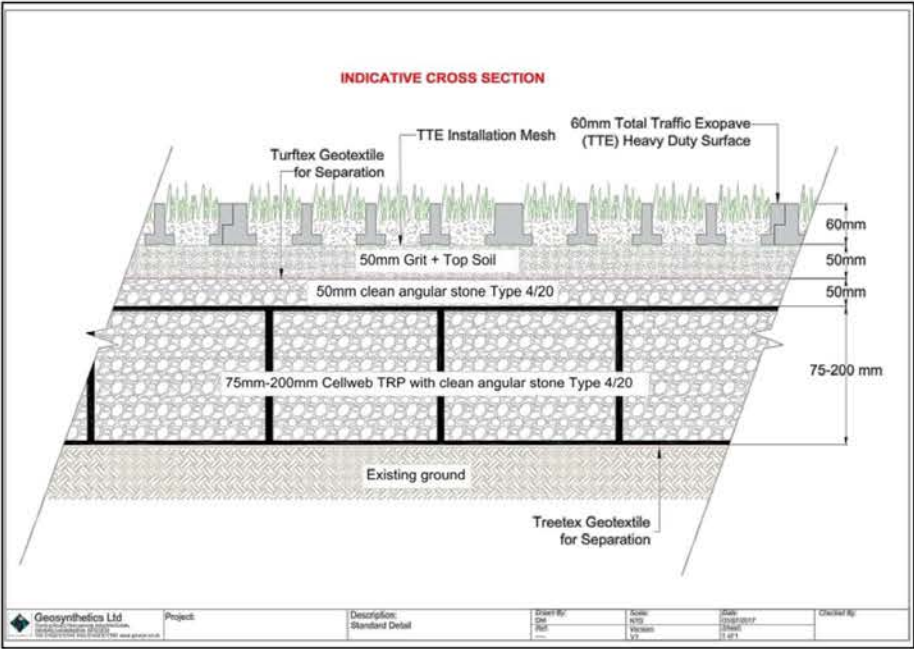
TREES

Ref	Species	Type / Container/ size (lt)	Girth (cm)	Height (m)	Quantity
Ac	Acer campestre (Field maple)	45 – 65lt	10-12	3 – 3.5	1
Cm	Crataegus monogyna (Hawthorn)	45 – 65lt	10-12	3 – 3.5	2
Cb	Carpinus betulus (Hornbeam)	45 – 65lt	10-12	3 – 3.5	1
Tc	Tilia cordata (Small leaved lime)	65 – 100lt	14-16	4 – 4.5	1
PcB	Pyrus communis 'Beth' Quince A root stock (Pear)	Bare root maiden	30 – 50cm clear stem	1-2m	1
MdP	Malus domestica 'Veitch's Perfection' MM106 root stock (Apple)	Bare root maiden	30 – 50cm clear stem	1-2m	1
PaA	Prunus avium 'Archduke' on M25 root stock (Cherry)	Bare root Half standard	80cm clear stem	1.5m	1
PaSS	Prunus avium 'Summer Sun' on M25 root stock (Cherry)	Bare root Half standard	80cm clear stem	1.5m	1

HEDGES

Ref	Species	Type	Density	No of Plants	Mix (%)	Height
H1	Crataegus monogyna (Hawthorn)	Bareroot whips	Double staggered row 4 per m2	228	50	40-60cm
	Euonymus europaeus (Spindle)				10	
	Acer campestre (Field maple)				10	
	Cornus sanguinea (Dogwood)				20	
	Viburnum opulus (Guelder rose)				10	
H2	Crataegus monogyna (Hawthorn)	Bareroot whips	Single row 6 per linear metre	72	50	40-60cm
	Euonymus europaeus (Spindle)				25	
	Cornus sanguinea (Dogwood)				25	

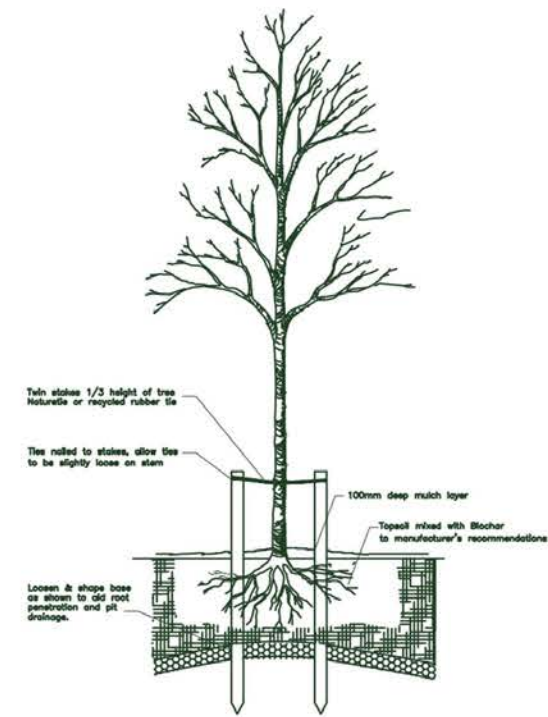
Geosynthetics TTE Construction Principle 2 on Cellweb No-Dig / Tree Protection Construction System



Geosynthetics TTE Construction Principle 2



Tree Planting Specification (Standard Trees)



Example of grasscrete

Playing Field

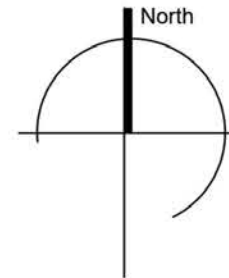
Shelter

THE STREET

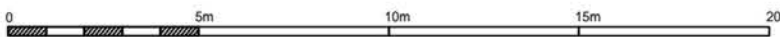
BROOK

Key

- Site Boundary
- Existing Trees Retained
- Tree proposed for removal (previously approved)
- BSS5837 (2012) Root Protection Area
- Existing brick pavements retained
- Proposed granite setts
- Proposed trees
- Proposed native hedge of mixed species
- Approximately 325m² area of proposed 100mm depth Cellweb Tree Root Protection System, laid on top with Geosynthetics TTE Construction Principle 2, grass surface layer (as per image). Shade tolerant grass mix grass under crown spread of Yew tree.
- Proposed lawn seed. Total area 440m². Germinant seed, A6 Supreme Shade grass seed mix, sown at a rate of 40g per m²



Do not scale from this drawing. Tree positions and dimensions should always be checked on site. The original of this drawing is in colour, do not rely on monochrome versions. This drawing is copyright Tracy Clarke Tree Consultancy Ltd ©



21.01.22	A	Updated site plan proposal
Date	Revision	Description

Title
Landscape Proposals and Remediation

Client
Mr Hunt

Site
The White Hart
107 The Street, Little Waltham, Essex,
CM3 3NY

Ref: TCTC-18151-L-01	Rev: A	Scale: 1:250 @ A1
Status: PL	Date: August 2021	Drawn By: TC



TRACY CLARKE
TREE CONSULTANCY

01371 811831 info@tracyclarke.co.uk www.tracyclarke.co.uk



Planning Committee
5th July 2022

Application No	:	22/00634/LBC Listed Building Consent
Location	:	107 The Street Little Waltham Chelmsford Essex CM3 3NY
Proposal	:	Retrospective application for the construction of a food preparation building and the extension and retention of an existing storage/fridge building.
Applicant	:	Mr David Hunt MARJORAM LEISURE LIMITED
Agent	:	Mr Stephen Hayhurst
Date Valid	:	30th March 2022

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Consultations
 Appendix 2 Drawings

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The accompanying planning application (ref: 22/00273/FUL) has been referred to the Planning Committee at the request of the Local Ward Member. It is appropriate for the associated application for listed building consent to be considered concurrently.
- 1.2. The White Hart is Grade II listed.
- 1.3. The proposal is seeking retrospective consent for the construction of a food preparation building and the extension and retention of an existing storage/fridge building.
- 1.4. The development subject of the application has an acceptable design in relation to the public house and would be sympathetic to the character of the listed building. Subject to conditions there would be no adverse impact on the character and setting of the listed building.
- 1.5. The application is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions set out at the end of this report.

2. Description of site

- 2.1. The White Hart is a public house and restaurant of seventeenth century origin, which is grade II listed and forms part of a group of listed buildings close to the centre of the village.
- 2.2. The public house and majority of the plot are located within the defined settlement of Little Waltham, however a portion of the site is located within land designated as Green Wedge.
- 2.3. The site also lies within the Little Waltham Conservation Area and is bordered by playing fields to north.
- 2.4. The street scene has a varied appearance and there is no defined rhythm or character to area.
- 2.5. The site has mature vegetation throughout and adjacent the boundary's.

3. Details of the proposal

- 3.1. The application is retrospective and consists of the retention and extension of a storage building (identified as B & D on the associated block plan)
- 3.2. The construction of a preparation building (identified as A on the associated block plan)

4. Other relevant applications

- 4.1. 93/06106/FUL - Approved 31st August 1993 Remodelling of existing store to bar area including new front. New access to public bar and new carpark/yard layout. (Plan nos 93.397/1A, 2, 3B, 4A, 5 & 6)
- 4.2. 12/01802/FUL - Refused 30th January 2013 Refurbishment and extension to existing public house with addition of 14 no. guest bedrooms, demolition of existing outbuilding, new bin and cycle stores, car park, new wall and entrance piers
- 4.3. 13/01355/FUL - Approved 21st November 2013 Demolition of single storey side extension. Construction of part single, part two storey side/rear extension. Internal alterations. Installation of Bulk LPG Storage Tank. Provision of 8 new parking spaces & new external patio/seating area. Alterations to fenestration, new chimney and extraction system. New cycle shelter.
- 4.4. 14/00822/FUL - Approved 4th July 2014 Change of use of part of first floor of public house to private dining areas.
- 4.5. 17/00010/FUL - Refused 28th February 2017 Additional car parking to rear of site and creation of seating area to front
- 4.6. 22/00257/FUL - Application Withdrawn 21st April 2022 Retrospective application for the construction of a children's play equipment area. Associated landscaping and tree planting.
- 4.7. 22/00273/FUL - Retrospective application for the construction of a food preparation building. Extension and retention of a storage/fridge building. Provision of additional grassed parking surface for total of 31 parking spaces. Associated landscaping and tree planting.

5. Summary of consultations

- Little Waltham Parish Council
- Local residents

- 5.1. Little Waltham Parish Council Little Waltham Parish Council has noted the comments of the conservation officer and supports the position that the proposed buildings are permitted provided that there are conditions in relation to material used so that the buildings are in keeping with the listed building and Conservation area.
- 5.2. The Parish Council objected to the extension of parking provision, however this does not form elements of the application as it does not required listed building consent.
- 5.3. One objection has been received from the public with regards to the noise pollution caused by the fans and equipment in association with the food preparation building and storage building.

6. Planning considerations

Main Issues

- 6.1. The impact of any development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting.

Planning consideration

- 6.2. The Listed Building Consent application is associated with and supports the planning application 22/00273/FUL.
- 6.3. Although comments have been received objecting to the extension of the car park and related impact, this is not an element of the listed building application, as it does not require listed building consent.
- 6.4. The assessment of an application for listed building consent relates solely to whether the development is appropriate and sympathetic to the character and appearance of the associated heritage asset. The impact to neighbouring amenity it is not a material consideration of the application. All other material considerations are assessed through a full planning application, which in this case has occurred through the associated planning application 22/00273/FUL.
- 6.5. The proposed kitchen extension would be a modest black weatherboard structure and the existing roof would be modified to form a gabled slate clad roof. The fridge store would also be modified with the roof re-pitched as a gable and clad in slate, with a bin store constructed beyond. The proposed works have a traditional appearance which would enhance the appearance of the buildings. Both these buildings would appear as an ancillary outbuilding, grouped with existing structures, which would be sympathetic to the character of the host building. Subject to conditions there would be no adverse impact on the character and setting of the listed building or conservation area.

Conclusion

- 6.6. With the above in mind it is considered that the proposal would comply with policy DM13 of the Local Plan and the development is acceptable.

7. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.1. The proposed works are not CIL liable.

RECOMMENDATION

The Application be APPROVED subject to the following conditions:-

Condition 1

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and conditions listed on this decision notice.

Reason:

In order to achieve satisfactory development of the site

Condition 2

Prior to their use, samples of the materials to be used in the construction of the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure the proposed development does not detract from the historical value or character and appearance of the listed building and conservation area in accordance with Policy DM13 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 3

All rainwater goods shall be of cast iron or cast aluminium and painted black.

Reason:

To ensure the proposed development does not detract from the historical value or character and appearance of the listed building or conservation area in accordance with Policy DM13 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Condition 4

Prior to their installation large scale drawings shall be submitted to and approved by the local planning authority showing details of the following :-

- (a) Eaves;
- (b) Verge;
- (c) Plinth;
- (d) Doors;
- (e) Vents & Flues

The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure the proposed development does not detract from the historical value or character and appearance of the listed building in accordance with Policy DM13 of the Chelmsford Local Plan.

Notes to Applicant

1 Hours of work during construction

In order to cause minimum nuisance to neighbours, the applicant is strongly advised to follow guidelines for acceptable working hours set out by the Council's Public Health and Protection team.

Noisy work:

- Can be carried out between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday
- Limited to 0800-1300 on Saturdays
- At all other times including Sundays and Bank Holidays, no work should be carried out that is audible beyond the boundary of the site

Light work:

- Acceptable outside the hours shown above
- Can be carried out between 0700 and 0800; and 1800-1900 Monday to Friday

In some circumstance further restrictions may be necessary.

For more information, please contact Chelmsford City Council Public Health and Protection Services, or view the Council's website at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/construction-site-noise

Party Wall Act

The Party Wall Act 1996 relates to work on existing walls shared with another property or excavation near another building.

An explanatory booklet is available on the Department for Communities and Local Government website at

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/buildingregulations/buildingpolicyandlegislation/currentlegislation/partywallact>

- 2 This permission is subject to conditions, which require details to be submitted and approved by the local planning authority. Please note that applications to discharge planning conditions can take up to eight weeks to determine.
- 3 The remedial works subject of the proposal are necessary to support the application as their retention is wholly inappropriate and harmful to the setting and appearance of the Listed Building. As a result all the works subject of the application should be completed within 6 months of the determination date of the application. Failure to complete the works within the time will likely result in enforcement action being taken.
- 4 The development approved relates solely to that detailed in the proposal description and nothing else.

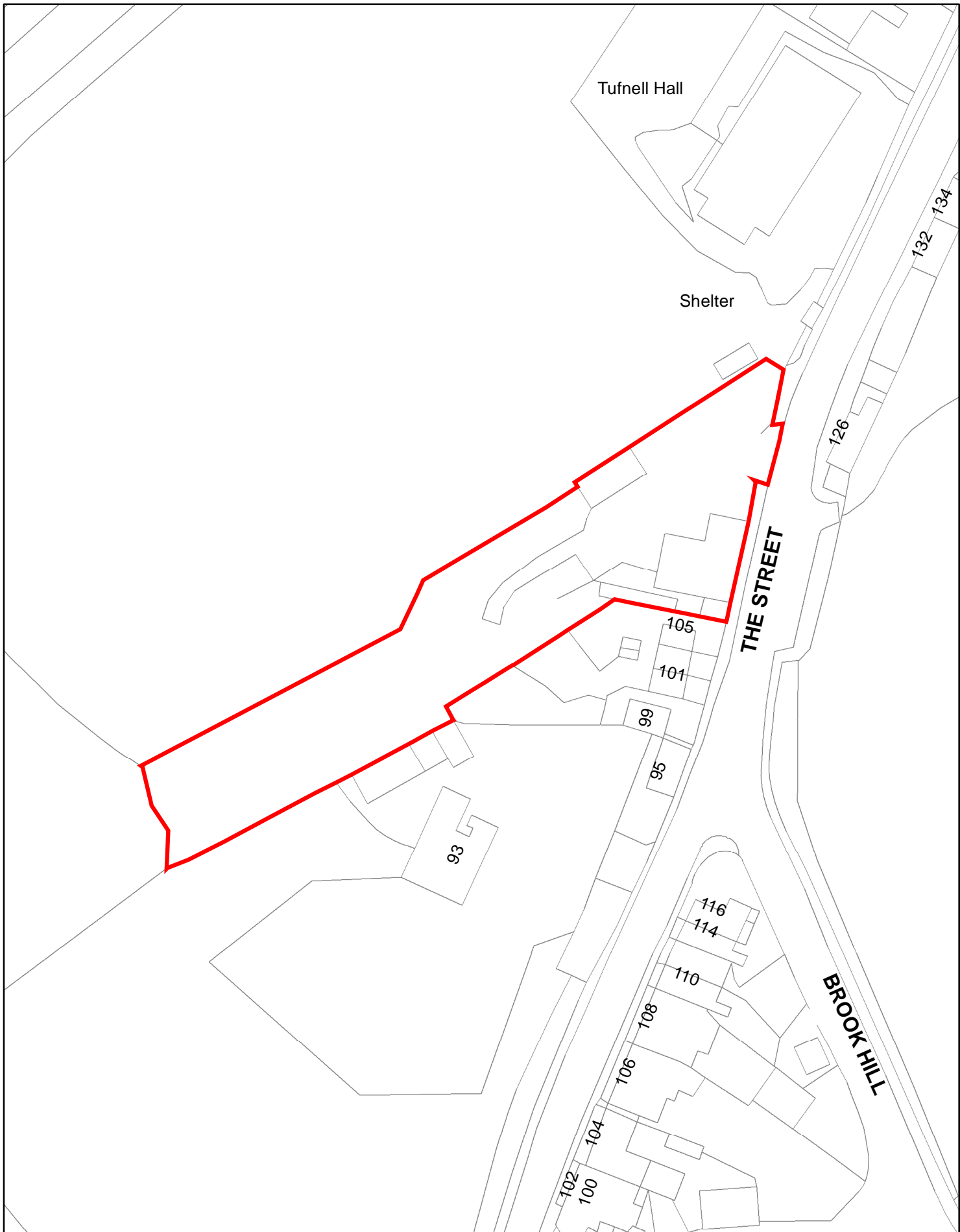
Little Waltham Parish Council

Comments
06.05.2022 - Little Waltham Parish Council has noted the comments of the conservation officer and supports the position that the proposed buildings are permitted provided that there are conditions in relation to material used so that the buildings are in keeping with the listed building and Conservation area. The Parish Council objects to the extension of parking provision in view of its proximity to neighbouring residential properties and the adverse impact that would be caused in relation to noise and fumes.

Local Residents

Representations received
<p>Customer objects to the Planning Application</p> <p>Comments: We would like to make a comment with regards to the application for retrospective planning permission for construction of food preparation building and the extension of storage /fridge building.</p> <p>We realise that living next to a pub is never going to be silent, however locating the food preparation area with it's associated industrial level fan noise directly onto the neighbours property is inconsiderate. If the food preparation area were located elsewhere on the pub property such as where there is open car park space, this would put some distance between the noise source and any neighbours.</p> <p>Currently the noise produced by the fans associated with various equipment and machinery located in the 'food preparation area' at the premises is at a disturbing and disruptive level. We are unable to fully enjoy our house due to the constant noise level.</p> <p>We would hope that while considering this retrospective planning application, some thought and attention could be given to the level of noise currently coming from the premises and it's impact on the everyday lives of the neighbours and how this noise can be eliminated.</p> <p>The noise is produced by the fans and equipment at the premises, fridges, chillers, air conditioners and ventilation whether or not the business is open as the fridges and chillers run constantly. The noise pollution is constant 24/7 which greatly impacts our enjoyment of our house and our garden, in short we are unable to enjoy our home as we should be able.</p>

If undertakings can be made and assurances given to ensure that the noise pollution produced by the fans on the premises can be eliminated, whether by relocation of the food preparation area or by the use of noise suppression equipment then we would be happy to withdraw our objection to the retrospective planning permission.



0 5 10 20 Metres

1:800



Planning Committee
22/00634/LBC

Planning & Development Management
Directorate for Sustainable Communities

PO Box 7544 Civic Centre
Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1XP

Telephone: 01245 606826

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NOTE: Drawing to not be scale and written dimensions to be used only. Refer to drawing scale, paper size and scale bar.



0 5 10 15 20 25
1:500
SITE PLAN



**jbell
design and
conservation ltd**
Suite 9, Holly House Business Centre
220-224 New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9AE
T: 07484 791794
E: jbell@designandconservation.co.uk

Client : Mr D. Hunt	Scale : 1:500/1:1250 @ A3
Project : The White Hart, 107 The Street Little Waltham, Chelmsford, CM3 3NY	Status : Planning
Drawing : Existing Site & Location Plan	Dwg No : 2021-501-001
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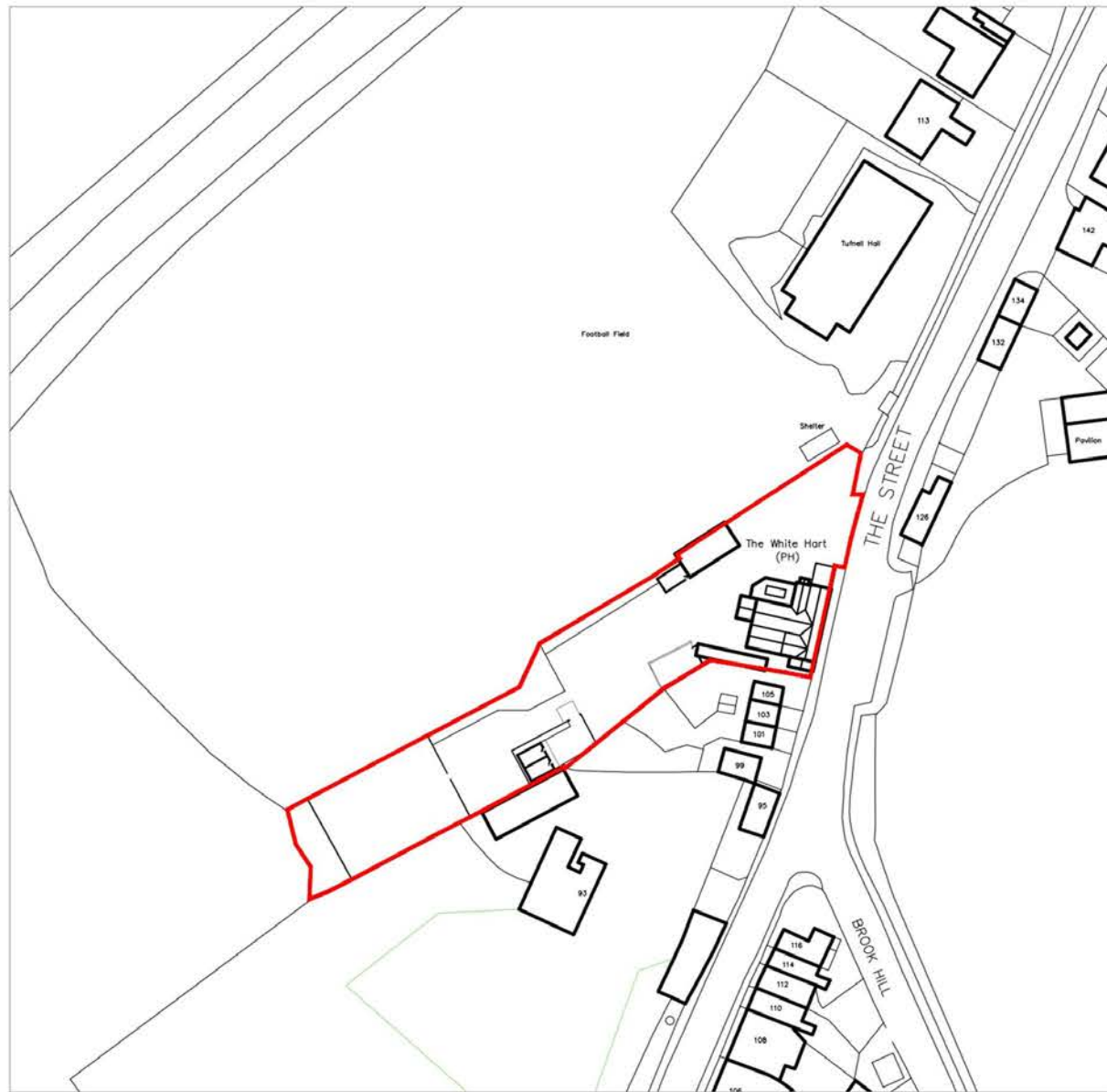
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Example of grasscrete



LOCATION PLAN 1:1250

0 25 50 1:1250

0 2 4 6 8 10 1:200



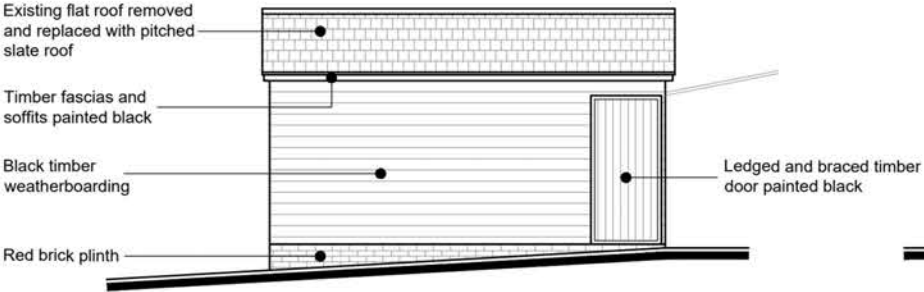
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design and
conservation ltd**
Suite 9, Holly House Business Centre
220-224 New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 8AE
T: 07484 791794
E: jbell@designandconservation.co.uk

Client : Mr D Hunt	Scale : 1:200 @ A1
Project : The White Hart, 107 The Street Little Waltham, Chelmsford, CM3 3NY	Status : Planning
Drawing : Proposed Site Plan	Dwg No : 2021-501-002
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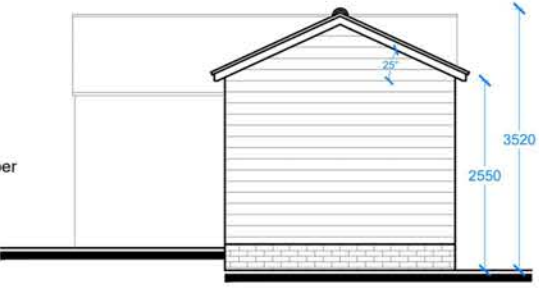
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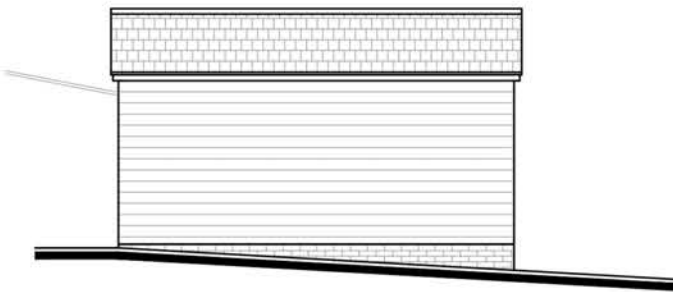
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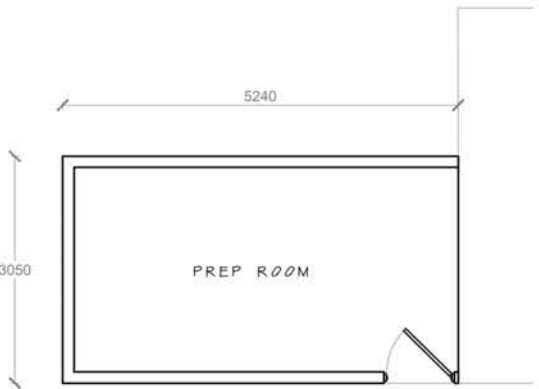
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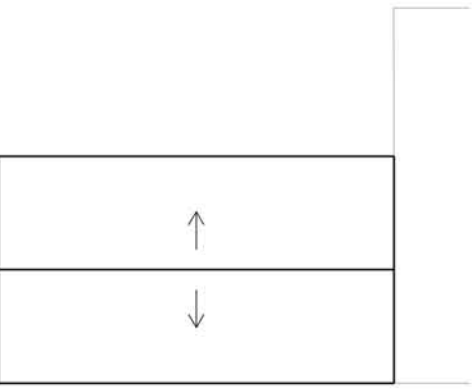
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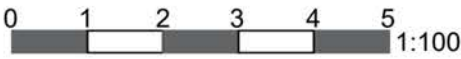
REAR ELEVATION



FLOOR PLAN



ROOF PLAN



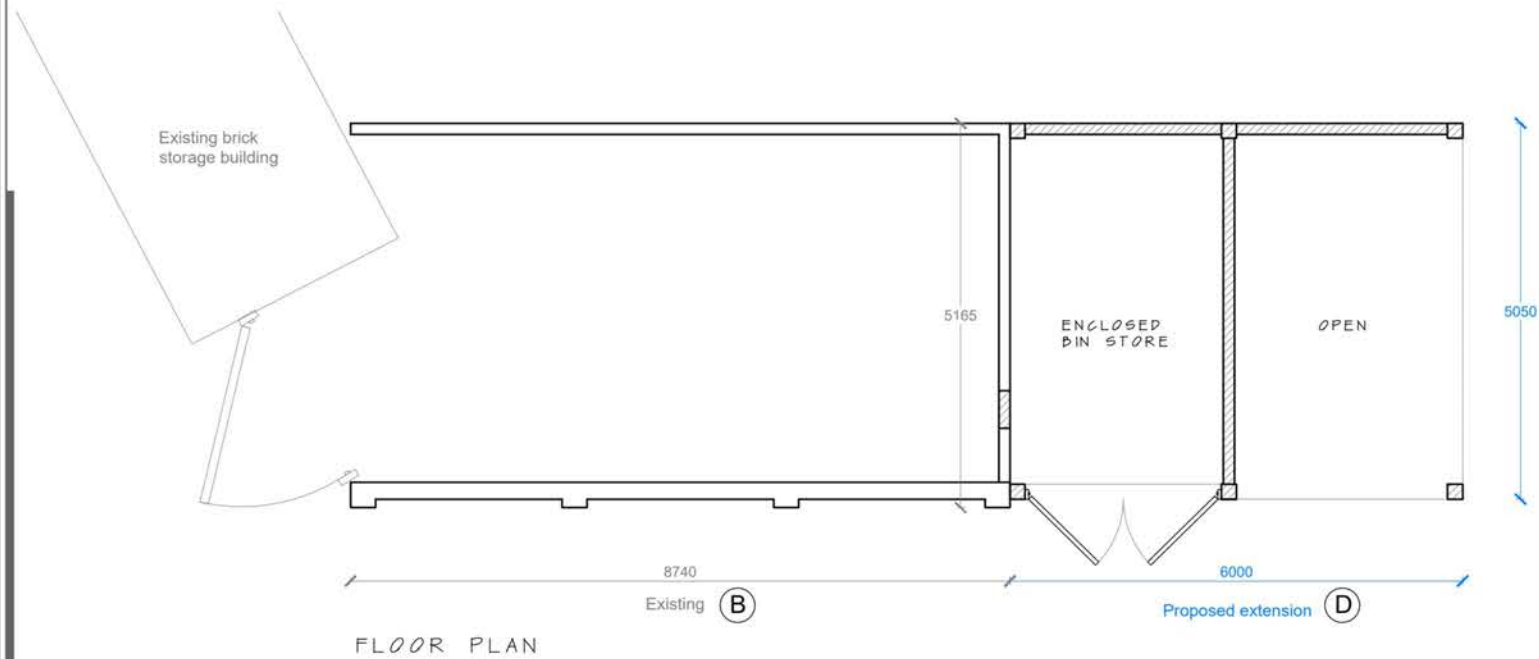
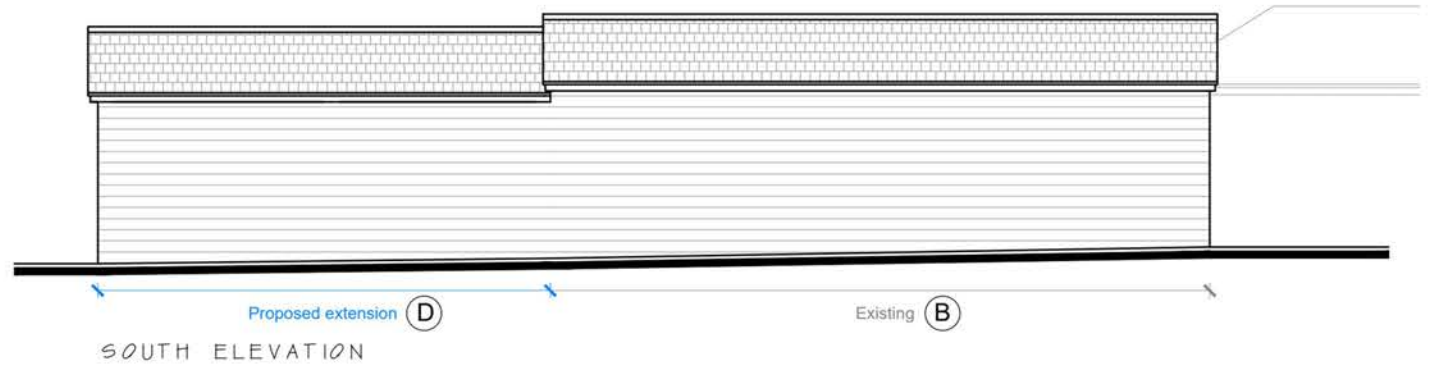
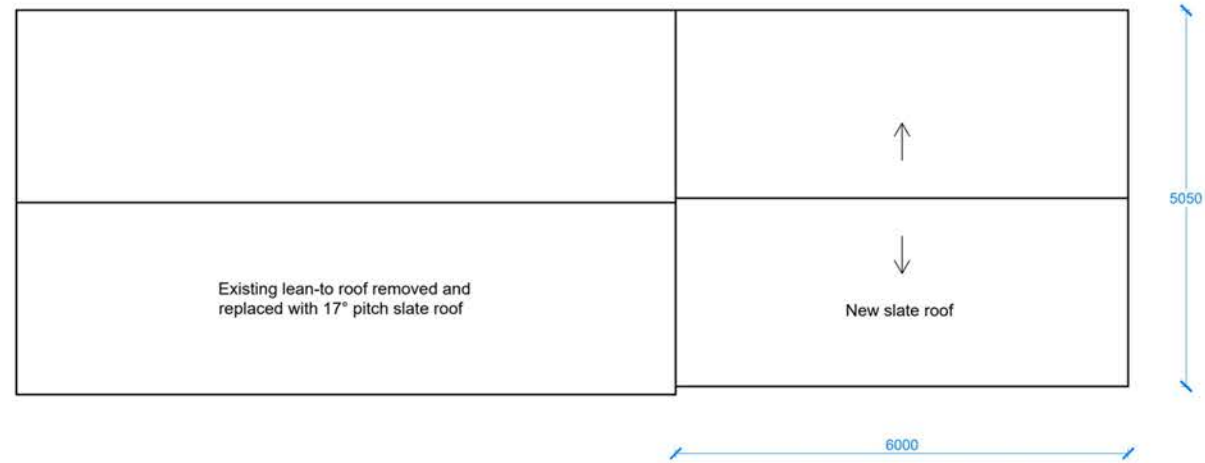
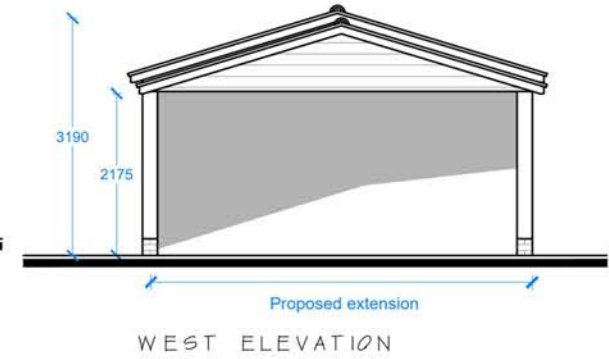
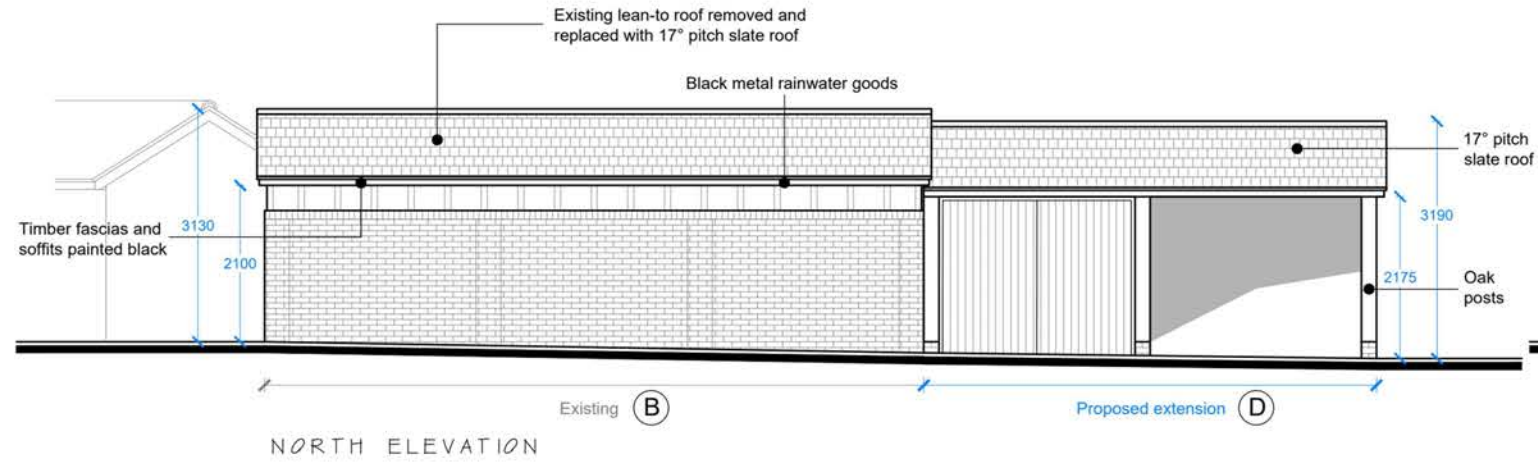
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Client : Mr D. Hunt	Scale : 1:100 @ A3
Project : The White Hart, 107 The Street Little Waltham, Chelmsford, CM3 3NY	Status : Planning
Drawing : Proposed Building A	Dwg No : 2021-501-021
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NOTE: All drawings to be read in conjunction with consultant structural engineers, mechanical and electrical consultants, acoustic engineers, energy consultants, specification, and detailed drawings. Drawing to be issued for the purposes shown within the drawing status box.

NOTE: Drawing to not be scale and written dimensions to be used only. Refer to drawing scale, paper size and scale bar.



jbell
design and
conservation ltd

Suite 9, Holly House Business Centre
220-224 New London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 9AE
T: 07484 791794
E: jbell@designandconservation.co.uk

Client : Mr D. Hunt	Scale : 1:100 @ A3
Project : The White Hart, 107 The Street Little Waltham, Chelmsford, CM3 3NY	Status : Planning
Drawing : Proposed Buildings B&D	Dwg No : 2021-501-031

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Appeals Report

Appeal Decisions received between 20/04/2022 and 17/06/2022

PLANNING APPEALS

Total Appeal Decisions Received	12	
Dismissed	11	92%
Allowed	1	8%
Split	0	0%

Written Reps

Telecommunications Apparatus Princes Road Chelmsford Essex

Reference	21/01110/TEL56
Proposal	Proposed telecommunications installation: Proposed 20.0m Phase 8 Monopole C/W wrapround Cabinet at base and associated ancillary works.
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 01/06/2022
Key Themes	Impact of the proposed mast on the movement of pedestrians.Reduction of the footpath by the installation of the mast and associated cabinets.
Agreed with CCC on	Agreed that the mast and cabinets would result in reduction of the footway to the detriment of pedestrians and users of the footway.
Disagreed with CCC on	None.
Costs Decision	None

Village Hall Common Road Stock Billericay CM4 9NF

Reference	21/00162/S73
Proposal	Removal of condition 1 to approved planning application 21/00162/FUL (Retrospective application for the construction of entrance gate with associated landscaping). To remove the requirement of the landscaping scheme.
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 27/04/2022
Key Themes	Impact on setting and character of the conservation area.
Agreed with CCC on	Agreed that removal of the landscaping scheme would be harmful to the setting of the conservation area.
Disagreed with CCC on	None.
Costs Decision	None

Back Inn Time 13 Cottage Place Chelmsford Essex CM1 1NL

Reference	21/01563/FUL
Proposal	Demolition of existing building and construction of a mixed-use development comprising of commercial ground floor and 7 residential units above.
Appeal Decision	Appeal Allowed - 25/05/2022
Key Themes	Effect on living conditions of future occupiers
Agreed with CCC on	
Disagreed with CCC on	Level of natural light and outlook
Costs Decision	Appellant's application for costs: Costs refused

Householder

PJ Food Stores 2 Writtle Road Chelmsford CM1 3BX

Reference	21/01001/ADV
Proposal	Retention of an externally illuminated billboard sign.
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 11/05/2022
Key Themes	Harm to visual amenity and harm to highway safety
Agreed with CCC on	Harm to visual amenity
Disagreed with CCC on	Harm to highway safety
Costs Decision	None

1 - 2 Corporation Road Chelmsford Essex CM1 2AR

Reference	21/01869/ADV
Proposal	Replacement of existing non-illuminated 48 sheet advertising billboard with illuminated digital advertising billboard.
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 27/04/2022
Key Themes	impact of adverts on the setting of nearby designated and non-designated heritage assets.
Agreed with CCC on	agreed that the proposed digital advertising board would be harmful to the setting of nearby non-designated heritage asset.
Disagreed with CCC on	disagreed that the proposed digital advertising board would not be harmful to the nearby designated heritage asset.
Costs Decision	None

Mapletree Cottage Brook Lane Great Baddow Chelmsford CM2 7SX

Reference	21/01376/FUL
Proposal	Demolition of existing conservatory. Roof extension with additional new dormer windows. Construction of single storey rear extension.
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 29/04/2022
Key Themes	Green Belt impact; protected species (did not consider)
Agreed with CCC on	Disproportionate extensions; inappropriate development
Disagreed with CCC on	
Costs Decision	None

25 Galleywood Road Great Baddow Chelmsford Essex CM2 8DH

Reference	21/01749/FUL
Proposal	Proposed five brick piers, metal railings and low-level lighting.
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 28/04/2022
Key Themes	Impact on the character of the street scene
Agreed with CCC on	Impact on the character of the street scene
Disagreed with CCC on	
Costs Decision	Appellant's application for costs: Costs refused

Wards Lodge Loves Green Highwood Chelmsford Essex CM1 3QJ

Reference	21/01471/FUL
Proposal	Replace 1.3m high 5 bar wooden gate with 2m high ornate metal gate
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 05/05/2022

Key Themes	Affect of gates on openness of Green Belt. Inappropriate development in Green Belt. Affect of Gates on setting of Designated heritage asset. Affect on character and appearance of the area.
Agreed with CCC on	Agreed gates would be inappropriate developemnt in the green belt. Agreed would be harmful to character and appearance of the area. Agreed would have harm on the setting of a listed building
Disagreed with CCC on	None
Costs Decision	None

92 Patching Hall Lane Chelmsford Essex CM1 4DB

Reference	21/02202/FUL
Proposal	Installation of Sliding Electric Gate
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 26/04/2022
Key Themes	Highway safety
Agreed with CCC on	Gate located 4m from highway would prejudice the safety of highway users
Disagreed with CCC on	
Costs Decision	None

3 Birdie Close Little Waltham Chelmsford CM3 3FW

Reference	21/02401/FUL
Proposal	Retrospective application for replacement timber cladding and construction of brick feature wall
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 03/05/2022
Key Themes	Impact on the character of the street scene and poor design
Agreed with CCC on	Impact on the character of the street scene and poor design
Disagreed with CCC on	-
Costs Decision	None

184 Maldon Road Great Baddow Chelmsford Essex CM2 7DG

Reference	21/01941/FUL
Proposal	Restrospective application for brick pillars and wooden gate.
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 05/05/2022
Key Themes	design - dominant harm to character and appearance of the areahighway safety
Agreed with CCC on	harmful design, highway safety
Disagreed with CCC on	-
Costs Decision	None

Bechers Watchouse Road Galleywood Chelmsford CM2 8NE

Reference	21/02197/FUL
Proposal	Formation of access and works to front driveway
Appeal Decision	Appeal Dismissed - 29/04/2022
Key Themes	HIGHWAY SAFETY, IMPACT TO CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE
Agreed with CCC on	IMPACT TO CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE, HIGHWAY SAFETY
Disagreed with CCC on	None.
Costs Decision	None