

Appendix A - Summary of Statutory Consultation Responses

Barkestone, Plungar and Redmile Parish Council:

- December 2020

The Parish Council strongly objects to this application.

Consultation process

Notwithstanding the difficulties of the current pandemic, we have consulted with residents and found an overwhelming majority against the proposal. We consider that there are strong planning reasons to reject this application, and that there are substantial weaknesses in the applicant's evidence and consequent assertions.

It is wholly unreasonable to claim a lack of public interest, as the applicant suggests, based as it is on the inadequate public consultation exercise. Moreover, those individuals who did send in their comments received scant responses from the agents. Most people who object to the proposal have very sensibly delayed their response until the formal application was available. Since then, an online petition raised only in December has already had gathered over 260 signatures, and the numerous individual objections continue to rise steadily.

Submitted evidence

Several residents have raised significant concerns over the submitted documentation. For example, the level of construction traffic has been severely under-estimated, and the Ecological Impact Assessment Report is based on the flimsy and incomplete evidence (e.g. desk based research only, few visits, no winter bird assessment). The Parish Council is especially disappointed at the Council's 'screening opinion' that an EIA is not required for this proposal; the assertion that the solar farm will not have a significant effect on landscape character is astounding, and, in our opinion, the applicant's supporting documentation is not an adequate substitute for a formal EIA.

As a result, the PC intends to commission our own assessments in key areas, and therefore this initial response represents is a holding objection pending the results of further investigation.

We are aware from consultee responses that there is a number of outstanding matters for the applicant to address, so given the likely deferment to of any decision, the parish council seeks formal extension of time in which to submit its fully informed response of this complex proposal (including any intervening amendments).

PLANNING REASONS FOR OBJECTION

Scale and location of the proposal:

Notwithstanding support for solar energy in principle, at appropriate scale and location, the massive size of this development is of fundamental concern.

The solar park would completely change a piece of quintessential English countryside, turning an agricultural landscape into a quasi-industrial one. The PC is aware of a trailing proposal for another huge solar park some two miles away, and the combined size of the two solar parks, if passed would be over 400 acres. We are very concerned that the rural landscape which is so

highly treasured by our parish residents, and which fosters an array of indigenous wildlife, is in grave danger.

This proposal is for a massive solar park on agricultural land in the heart of the Vale of Belvoir. The site is remote from a suitable grid connection, does not have easy access, and is not in a high solar output area of the UK. For these reasons, it needs to be exceptionally large to make it cost effective. The size has been pitched at 49.9MW, which is just 0.1 MW below the level at which the proposal would have to be decided at a national level. Even so, if it were in existence today, this would be within the top 5 largest solar parks in the UK.

Landscape and visual impact

This part of the Vale of Belvoir is identified as 'an expansive gentle vale landscape with a strong pattern of medium scale rectangular shaped pastoral and arable fields with managed hedgerows and the Grantham canal, punctuated by nucleated villages with prominent church spires' (Melton Local Plan: Landscape Character Assessment). The solar park would radically change the landscape, described in Melton Local Plan as 'sensitive to change', and amongst one of the more sensitive areas in the County (moderately to highly sensitive in the County Study).

Barkestone Church (Grade II*) has one of the prominent spires mentioned above, and the views Southwards towards that church would be significantly impacted by this solar park. The footpath in this area is being retained but it is doubtful whether anyone would choose to walk it any more. In addition, the presence of the solar park would blight other walking paths in the locality, including that along the Grantham Canal, which is an SSSI, and the disused railway line, which the Parish Council has just acquired under license to create a footpath and bridleway.

There is a campaign underway, led by Alicia Kearns MP, to secure AONB status for the Vale of Belvoir, bringing with it an enhancement of the tourism offers and sustainable rural economy which are already emerging in this area. That campaign would surely be blighted by this huge industrial development in the heart of the Vale (on an Ordnance survey map, the very spot where "Vale of Belvoir" is written).

Environment and ecology

The land has been assessed by the applicants as not best and most versatile agricultural land, but it is still good agricultural land, typical of that in the Vale of Belvoir, an area which has helped to make Melton the "food capital of England". The farm was successfully farmed for many years by a tenant farmer until recently, and could quite easily be so farmed for years to come.

The applicants claim that flat land suitable for solar parks is hard to find in England, but that statement is hard to substantiate.

The applicant has proposed a land management plan which is described as 'environmental enhancement'; in fact, it amounts to poor mitigation for the environmental harm caused by this solar park. The development will not improve the landscape from a visual point of view or ecologically, quite the opposite.

Natural England and the RSPB among others recommend that solar parks should not be sited near protected areas. The Grantham Canal SSSI is less than 50m away from this site, and the disused railway line, which provides habitat for an abundance of wildlife, is even closer.

The area has significant populations of birds which are on the RSBP's Red and Amber lists, as well as other important species including raptors such as the Red kite, Sparrowhawk and several

species of owl. The existence of this bird life also suggests that the landscape is a successful ecosystem which would be seriously impacted by an industrial type managed development. Certainly a more detailed study of the impact of this proposal on the wildlife of the area should be conducted.

Policy considerations

In paragraph 151 the NPPF endorses the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, but only if ensuring that adverse impacts, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts, are addressed satisfactorily. In our view the adverse impacts of this development on the landscape, visual amenity, recognised landscape character, biodiversity and ecology far outweigh the benefits of any solar energy gain, especially given the inherent inappropriateness of the site in terms of its access to the grid and its inaccessibility.

The NPPF (paragraphs 170-172) says that planning decisions should ‘conserve and enhance the natural local environment by, among other things, protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside’. Contrary to the applicant’s submissions, it is difficult to see how the development could fulfil such objectives.

Paragraph 174 of the NPPF also states that “to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats, and if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided then planning permission should be refused.” There are further points made in paragraphs 174-177 of the NPPF which have so far not been given adequate attention in this application.

Similarly, the Melton LP Policy EN1 is aimed at ensuring that the character of Melton Borough’s landscape and countryside will be conserved and, where possible, enhanced.

The Melton LP recognises that solar parks can have significant impacts on the character and appearance of the landscape (7.20.5). It refers to the balance between protecting the rural character and the need to reduce greenhouse gases/support low carbon energy (7.20.6). The Parish Council is convinced that, in this case, that balance weighs infinitely in favour of protecting the inherent character of the Vale from this unacceptably intrusive development.

The Melton Local Plan policy on renewable energy is policy EN10. Out of 14 factors which need to be considered in relation to proposals, at least seven are impacted by the proposal. It is the strongly held view of the PC that the proposal is likely to have net adverse impacts on the surrounding landscape and heritage assets, residential and visual amenity, biodiversity and ecology, best use of agricultural land and access for construction. These adverse impacts outweigh the advantages of this site in terms of its suitability for solar energy generation, for which there are many alternative acceptable locations.

Despite the consultant’s assertions, there would seem to be very few social or economic benefits to the local economy from this proposal. On the contrary there would be adverse impacts on the tourism and diversification of the rural economy in the wider locality.

- May 2021

We are writing to give our comments mainly on the Transport Statement Addendum (TSA) supplied by the applicant. We also have further comments on a number of other issues relating to this application.

On the TSA our view is that the proposals submitted are totally unacceptable. One of the problems with this site is its remoteness from main roads, and even from any roads at all. The weight limits in place in all the nearby villages are there for good reason, those villages not being suitable for heavy or frequent traffic. It appears to us that the applicant, having realised the impracticality of their original plan, is now busy trying to hammer a square peg into a round hole.

From recent discussions with the agent for the applicant (after submission of the TSA), it appears that they are continuing to revise their strategy to address individual issues, without solving the fundamental problem that the site's location is unsuitable for such a major construction project. For example, they have revised the size of HGV proposed to drive along the route from Castle View Road to the site, having discovered that an 11m truck would breach the EWL. This of course means there would be an even larger number (as yet unquantified) of smaller trucks driving along this route, including through the middle of Plungar, with even more safety concerns and aggravation to local residents etc.

We have read the comments recently submitted to you by Mr Chris Noakes. Mr Noakes clearly sets out the complete inadequacy, in fact the complete inaccuracy, of the TSA. We have read Mr Noakes' comments in detail and discussed them with him, and we do not propose to repeat his detailed observations. We agree with him that the Planning Authority currently has no reliable information on which they can make an assessment of the impact of the transport proposals.

In addition no effort at all has been made by the applicant to assess the impact of their revised proposals, for example to explain how many small trucks will be required to transport the cargo of one large HGV, or what exactly will need to be brought to the site to enable the construction works for the access etc., and what extra transport will be needed for that.

With the figures for expected amounts of traffic along the route not even having been worked out in relation to the size of this project, we still have no idea how much traffic is expected to pass through the narrow lanes of Plungar, and the other country roads which will be used. We can be sure however that it will be a great deal, causing substantial safety issues, as well as noise and pollution. This area is used by many horse riders, pedestrians and cyclists and so it is not just local motorists and residents who will be endangered. In addition we can be sure that this will not be a short period of disruption, but again the TS does not help at all in providing any reliable data on this question.

We summarise below our main concerns regarding the TSA:

1. The TSA provides no reliable data on the amount of traffic which will pass along the route from the Grid Connection site to the Solar Farm site.
2. The use of the village of Plungar for the passage of the large number of HGV which would be required, over a substantial period of time, is unacceptable. Plungar has narrow roads on blind bends, and even if weight limits are not breached, there are significant safety concerns, in addition to issues of noise and pollution. There will also be a huge increase in heavy goods traffic over an extended period of time, and the road quality may well suffer. Some residents in houses bordering the route have voiced concerns to us about potential cumulative impact on the fabric of their homes, some of which are over 250 years old. There is also an old railway bridge along the route out of Plungar which is already showing signs of deterioration and this is likely to be exacerbated by frequent HGV use.
3. The use of Flawborough Lane (aka Gypsy Lane) for access to the site is unacceptable. The lane is situated partly in Nottinghamshire, where it is a BOAT and an adopted highway, and partly

in Leicestershire, where it is a PROW. Nottinghamshire County Council has already stated “what has been submitted is unsatisfactory to determine that the proposal is acceptable in terms of highway safety for vehicles, equestrians and pedestrians, so [they] object to the proposal.” The lane is currently a rutted country track used by pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and farm traffic, with connections to other PROW’s. Whatever proposals are put forward by the applicants, it is impossible to conceive that this lane will not be out of action for all these users for the duration of the construction period. This will be particularly difficult for farm traffic at busy times of the year.

4. The TS and the TSA also do not make it clear what the status of Flawborough Lane is proposed to be over the course of the 40 years that the application covers. There is bound to be a requirement for vehicles to access the site for the whole of that period. It is likely if not certain that the solar panels will be required to be upgraded, perhaps on a wholesale basis. It is known that these panels do not have a 40-year life. The agent has recently mentioned to us a proposal to use temporary mats to cover the lane for HGVs to pass over (although this proposal has not been submitted as part of the application). Leaving aside that this will also require further HGV movements to deliver the mats, this will not take care of the ongoing requirement for access. In addition, clearly the need for traffic to the site to continue over the 40 year period will result in a continuation of all the transport issues for the whole of that period. Neither the TS nor the TSA cover this point at all. It is clear that most approved solar farms have been at sites where the access issues are not going to be a long term issue as well as a short term one.

5. The TSA will require a large number of HGVs to visit the Grid Connection site, using Castle View Road, a very narrow road unsuitable for such vehicles. The road would be ruined by such use. The argument that the EWL is not breached because the HGVs are accessing the grid connection site is a clever piece of sophistry. In fact the purpose of the HGVs’ journey is to transport the solar panels and other construction materials through Castle View Road. In this respect the Grid Connection site is being used as a transport depot, and the applicant should apply for planning permission for that use as well.

6. The junction of Castle View Road with Long Lane is on a bend along which other vehicles travel at speed and because of poor visibility at this junction, there are serious safety concerns.

7. The other country roads proposed as part of the route in the TSA, including Long Lane, are frequently used by cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders, even those not subject to the EWL. Such users are welcome in the Vale of Belvoir, which we wish to see continue to develop as a tourist destination, bringing pleasure to visitors and much needed growth to the local economy. A large increase in traffic on these roads is likely not only to cause safety issues for those users, but also to discourage them from visiting the area.

Other areas requiring further investigation

The poor quality of the Transport Statement, and subsequently the TSA, is only one area in which we feel that the documentation submitted with this application is inadequate, and in some aspects misleading.

This application, along with many others submitted throughout the country, is for a huge development, but significantly 0.1 MW in capacity below the level at which the application should by law received consideration at a national level. Given the size of the project, the Local Planning Authority deserves to have the fullest information from applicants to enable them to give the application the scrutiny it requires. The applicant should not be able to rely on the LPS not have the information or resources it needs to come to a proper conclusion.

These are the specific areas where we consider that further investigation is required:

- The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment appears to be selective in assessing the impact of the site from various viewpoints. Most astonishingly, it fails even to mention the view of the site from just outside the church of St Peter and St Paul in Barkestone, and the even more impacted view from halfway down Jericho Lane. On Jericho Lane, the view chosen is by the canal bridge, where the site is at eye level and screened by hedges.
- A number of local residents with farming knowledge of the land state that it is good quality farmland capable of growing a variety of crops including wheat. On Melton Borough Council's own assessment, the land is graded as mixed Grade 3a/3b (not specified as 3b, which is separately identified). The current landowner themselves recently removed some hedgerow, applying for permission to do so on the grounds that it would enable them better to farm the land. Current fertility will clearly depend on the extent to which the land has been well farmed. We consider that the objection raised in respect of this need to be taken seriously, and that further investigation should be made to determine the proper capacity of the land for farming, and particularly to determine whether the land is grade 3a in part, since if only 20ha of it is so, the proposal would need amendment.
- Very little mention has been made of the important SSSI, the Grantham Canal, which is at one point less than 50m from the site boundary. The wildlife significance of the canal is enhanced by the disused railway line bordering it, which has recently been acquired under licence by the Parish Council for development as a footpath, and is partly designated as a Local Wildlife Site. Natural England offered no objection to the proposals, but the standing advice submitted with their comments states that they should be specifically consulted in circumstances where a development proposal might affect an SSSI. Given the proximity of the SSSI to the site, we consider that Natural England should be consulted on this specific issue, or that confirmation is provided by Natural England that they have already considered it in their comment.
- The LCC Ecology officer says that the Ecology report is "satisfactory", but her brief report does not give the reader any confidence that a rigorous assessment of the applicant's data and assertion has been made. We understand that there is a perceived wisdom about the effect of solar farms on biodiversity and wildlife in general, but our observation of solar farm in operation suggests that the noble Ecology Management Plans submitted are seldom observed in practice. Many residents have pointed out that the Ecology report was based on one summer visit and there has been no winter birds study done. They have also pointed out that the number of species of birds in the area has been grossly understated, being based upon the records available, which have not historically been maintained to a high standard in the area. The landowner of this site themselves point out the rich wildlife in the area. We question whether the records used for the Ecology report can be relied upon, and we would like to see much more detail to justify the assertion that the solar farm will result in a biodiversity net gain.
- The LCC archaeologist recommends that the planning authority defer determination of the application and request that the applicant complete an Archaeological Impact Assessment of the proposals. As far as we know no such assessment has been done.
- As far as we know, no assessment has been made of the cumulative impact of this solar farm proposal and the one at Muston for which it is widely known that application is pending, nor has there been any assessment of the impact of these two proposals on spare grid capacity, which might otherwise be available for smaller and more

appropriate solar farms in the area.

Conclusion

The TS and the subsequent TSA are not fit for purpose. A transport proposal is required which enables decision makers to see just how much and what type of traffic will result for the proposal over the full life of the solar farm.

The inadequacy of the transport proposal tends to reinforce our view that in other areas, outlined above, this application has not received the level of scrutiny which it requires, given its size and controversial choice of site.

Bottesford Parish Council:

- May 2021

The Parish Council considered the Transport Statement Addendum (dated 16th March 2021) at its meeting on 17th May 2021.

This Addendum is a response to feedback relating to planning application 20/01182/FUL.

The Parish Council is of the opinion that the transport impact of such a scheme would be severe and would summarise its concerns as follows;

1. Castle View Road is a very narrow road and as such completely unsuitable for use in the manner outlined in this scheme. The dissatisfaction with HGV's going through Granby Village expressed by Nottinghamshire County Council must not result in an unacceptable traffic scheme being pushed into Leicestershire.

2. Due to the narrow nature of Castle View Road this scheme would likely result in an increase in accidents among both motorised and non-motorised users, particularly vulnerable road users such as walkers, cyclists and horse riders who use this stretch of road.

3. This scheme would add pressure at junctions already known to be dangerous. This proposed addition of significant HGV movements where the transport infrastructure is inadequate would considerably add to the risk to all road users.

4. The Parish Council is concerned about the impact of this scheme on the bridges over the Winterbeck River and the Canal.

In summary the Parish Council is of the opinion that there are plenty of alternatives to this scheme and that the proposed HGV Routing Plan contained in this Transport Statement Addendum is entirely unsuitable and must be reconsidered.

- September 2021

Although this application site is itself outside the Bottesford Parish boundary the proposal includes the use of Castle View Road as an access point, including creating 4 passing places, plus work at the transformer site – all within the Parish.

Bottesford PC has previously objected to the use of Castle View Road but the access proposals have not altered. The road in question is a lovely small lane most suited to use by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. The junction on to Belvoir Road is already very dangerous and its use as proposed by this scheme would be an accident waiting to happen. Bottesford PC agreed

unanimously at its recent meeting to object to this application primarily due to the impact on Castle View Road.

The original scheme used access roads in Nottinghamshire, but that County objected on highway and environmental grounds. Hence the revised scheme. It is the view of the Bottesford PC that Leicestershire Highways Authority should have taken a similar view to Nottinghamshire and stated that Castle View Road, the Winterbeck Bridge, and the junction with the A52 were unsuitable and no alterations could be justified.

There is no justification for the proposed off-loading arrangements at such a distance from the actual site that is going to be the solar farm in the supporting documents. Bottesford PC asserts that proposing that big lorries come to the substation, drop off material for the solar farm which then must be uploaded onto smaller vehicles, who then go a considerable distance to the solar farm site is nonsense. If the Solar Farm needs materials surely a closer site for storing materials should be located, such as Langar Airfield? Until there is specific evidence of a proper search this application should be deferred or dismissed.

The Parish Council noted concerns raised by the Canal and River Trust with regards to the impact upon the Grantham Canal over which the Cable run has to pass over in two places. Cllrs also observe that the Bottesford Tree Charter proposes that an avenue of trees be planted along the road as far as the Winterbeck.

The uncertainty and absence of information, despite it being a Full application, in this scheme should ensure that the Planning Authority refuse the application.

- October 2021

Bottesford Parish Council welcomes the fact that Castle View Road is no longer intended to be used as a drop off point. We would ask that this be formally included as a condition of any approval granted. The Council also requests that work on the sub station be time limited, and the access to the sub station be restored to reflect its rural location with landscaping being provided as soon as the work is completed. Finally, the Council also requests that there be a condition put in place to ensure that any footpaths and rights of way within Bottesford Parish affected by the digging of trenches are restored and replacement landscaping provided.

Granby Parish Council:

November 2020

Granby cum Sutton Parish Council wish to OBJECT to the Transport Statement in relation to the above Planning Application. An examination of the Transport Statement shows that;

- The route to and from the construction site in Leicestershire is from the A52 at Granby Lane over 'Thorough Bridge', a mid-18th Century Grade 2 listed structure across the River Smite, up Granby Hill, through Granby, a conservation village which has a 7.5T limit, along Main Street then Plungar Road and out of the village beyond the 7.5T limit before turning onto a track described in the application as 'Flawborough Lane' with a national speed limit of 60mph, but known locally as 'Gypsy Lane', mapped as a Byway Open to All Traffic (Granby BOAT 17) and shown on an Ordnance Survey map published in 1972, scale 1:2,500, as a track. This track (Granby BOAT 17) is the responsibility of Nottinghamshire County Council to maintain but has been unsafe for walkers, cyclists and horses for many years.

- The Transport Plan summarises Heavy Goods Vehicle movements at Table 5.1, as 482 deliveries and returns, equating to an average of 16 daily HGV movements using Granby as a rat run into and out of Leicestershire over a six week period.

- One activity requires 67 x 10m Rigid/Tipper Trucks each carrying around 15 cubic metres of stone equating to over 20T per delivery which nearly triples the weight restriction limit through Granby. Another activity requires 230 x 16.5m Articulated vehicle movements through the village.

Weight Restriction Orders are used to protect old/weak bridges and rural roads/villages. It is also an offence under the Road Traffic Act 1984 to drive a vehicle through the restricted area where the vehicle exceeds the weight limit imposed unless they are delivering or collecting within the weight restriction. Every misuse of weight restricted lorries will be reported and may be subject to a financial penalty of up to £1,000 for each occasion.

LCC Highways:

No objections subject to conditions.

Nottinghamshire Highways Authority:

No objection subject to conditions.

Highways England:

No objection.

Historic England:

Latest response – May 2021

Summary

The landscape in which the application site is located is historically important with heritage assets of outstanding importance in a setting with few modern interventions. It is therefore sensitive to large scale development.

By virtue of its scale and man-made character the proposed solar farm would appear incongruous and alter the character of the landscape which forms the setting to several highly graded heritage assets. In our view it would cause less than substantial harm to the significance that Grade I Listed Belvoir Castle, its Grade II* Registered Park and the Grade II* Listed Church of St Peter and St Paul, Barketstone, derive from their setting. We question whether an intervention of this nature should be introduced to this landscape and have concerns about the precedent it could set.

As the decision maker, your authority should assess whether the proposals would be justified or outweighed by public benefit in their current form in accordance with the paragraphs 194 and 196 of the NPPF. During this assessment you should consider whether proposals of this nature would be acceptable in this landscape. If you consider they would be, you should contemplate whether the proposals should be amended to reduce their impact.

MBC Conservation Officer:

No comments received.

LCC Archaeology:

No objections subject to conditions.

LCC Ecology:

No objections.

Natural England:

No objections.

Vale Barn Owl Conservation Group:

We are writing on behalf of the Vale Barn Owl Conservation Group. Since 2008 we have been working with landowners in the Vale of Belvoir to re-establish and encourage the local breeding population of Barn Owls. Through the establishment of a network of nest boxes and a degree of habitat management, we have had significant success in our aims to date. Furthermore, in conjunction with bird ringers working under licence from the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), we monitor the birds nesting in the area and this gives us a clear picture of their fortunes.

We do not wish to either support or object to the proposed development, but we would like to draw your attention to certain environmental matters, and particularly those concerning the Barn Owl – a protected, Schedule 1 species. No mention is made of this species in the planning documentation, yet it is present throughout the planned development area.

From what we can see on the planning documents and maps, at least two of our nest boxes will be affected by the development area (at SK 77047 35453 and SK 76909 35940). Barn Owls regularly breed in both of these boxes and we have recorded breeding in eight out of the last ten years. The proposed development is likely to cause significant disturbance in these two areas (e.g. site noise, light pollution and passing vehicles). Because Barn Owls are included in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, it is an offence to disturb this species when breeding (the season can stretch from March until November). For further details, see here: <https://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/barn-owls-law/protection-nesting-barn-owls/>

There is mention of erecting new nest boxes in the plans, but it is not clear whether or not these would provide suitable mitigation as we cannot find any mention of precise location, nest box design or considerations such as suitable habitat and lack of disturbance – all of which have significant bearing on the chances of Barn Owls using them successfully. As an organisation, we would welcome the chance to be involved in mitigation action and could provide advice and suitable boxes.

In addition, we would like to point out the importance of rough grassland to the Barn Owl. A pair needs at least 14ha to provide enough food for successful breeding and overwinter survival (see: <https://www.barnowltrust.org.uk/how-to-manage-land-for-barn-owls/barn-owl-habitat-requirements/>).

This need not be in a single block, but can comprise a patchwork of margins and buffer strips. Potentially, the development could improve the habitat for Barn Owls in this respect and alongside enhanced hedgerows would not only benefit the owls, but most farmland bird species (except Skylark) and a range of other flora and fauna. However, this and the proposed meadows would need careful grazing/cutting management. For Barn Owls, autumn cutting (with arisings removed) and/or grazing on a biennial cycle is ideal. Doing this earlier in the year will negate any benefits

for Barn Owls, and could in fact make things worse. The BTO's Barn Owl Monitoring Programme found that Barn Owls fared better in arable areas with grassy margins as opposed to heavily grazed grassland. Again, we would happily discuss plans with the developers to determine the most productive management practices with regard to Barn Owls and in terms of biodiversity enhancement in general.

Canal and River Trust:

No objection subject to conditions.

Grantham Canal Partnership:

Please treat this response as an objection until we are able to engage with the applicants and find out more information regarding their methodology and intentions regarding safeguarding the Canal infrastructure. I have seen the response of the landowner of the canal site, the Canal and River Trust of 20 November 2020 and we would like to endorse their comments and also add that we are also concerned regarding the method of cabling and in particular if such cabling were to be installed under the canal structure which is essentially fragile paddled clay. There do not seem to be any ground surveys provided the applicant analysing the type of challenges such a route might face and their proposals for overcoming them including how any repairs/renewals might be dealt with should the cabling fail. Equally any cabling in an highway overbridge which might have to be rebuilt to cope with future navigation on the restored Canal would be an anathema to us as it would add to the complexities and cost of regeneration. Any proposal which is not future proofed to protect the restoration of the Canal, an aim endorsed by the LPA as part of the Grantham Canal Partnership, will be something which we would oppose. Thank you for considering this response in your deliberations.

MBC Environmental Health:

No comments to make.

Leicestershire police Designing out Crime Officer:

General recommendations provided.

LLFA:

No objection, refer to standing advice.

Environment Agency:

The overall impact on the floodplain is likely to be minimal and, it is assumed that the permit/consent

obtained from the LLFA will assess the flood risk as part of this process. Therefore we have no formal comment to make.

Severn Trent Water:

No comments received.

Network Rail: No observations to make.
Health and Safety Executive: No comment to make.
MBC Building Control: No comments received.
Ramblers: No comments received.
Rushcliffe Borough Council: No comments received.
Nottinghamshire County Council Planning Policy Team: No strategic policy comments to make.
National Grid Plant Protection: No comments received.
Western Power Wayleavers: No comments received.
LCC Forestry: No comments received.