

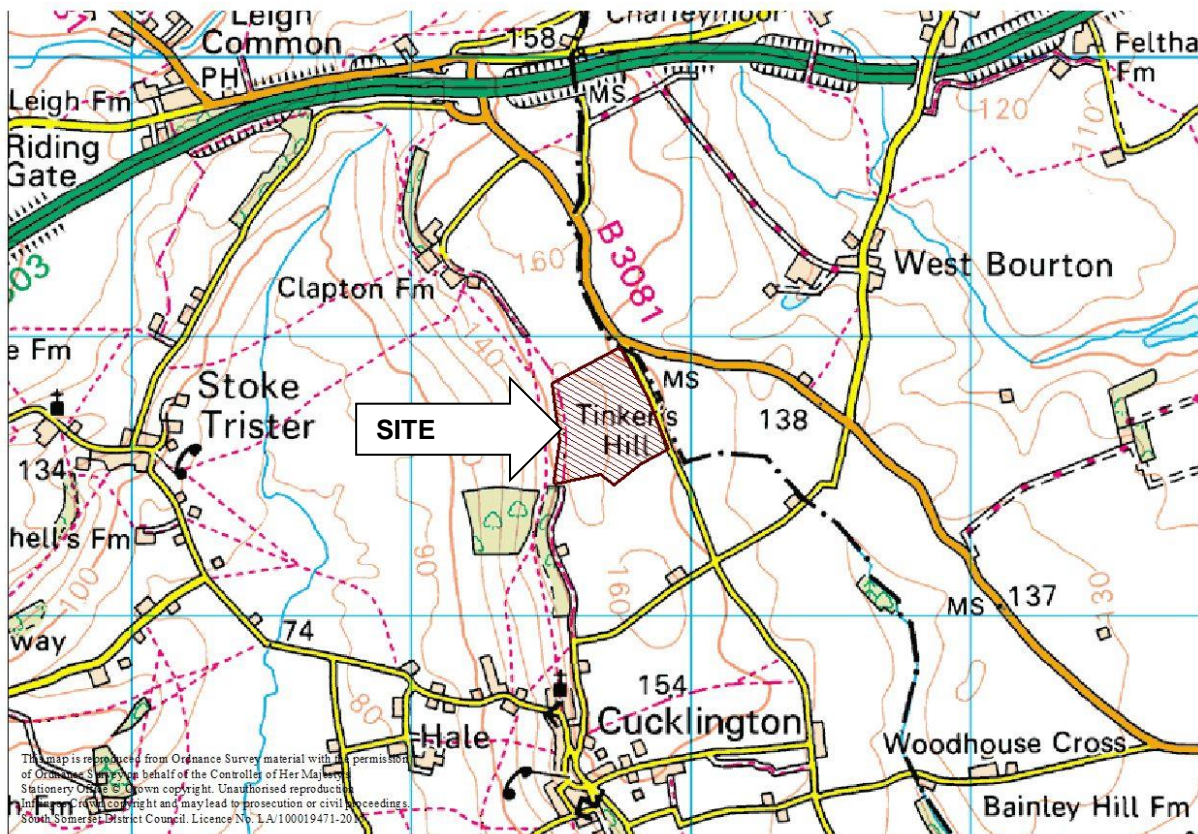
Officer Report on Planning Application: 15/03373/FUL

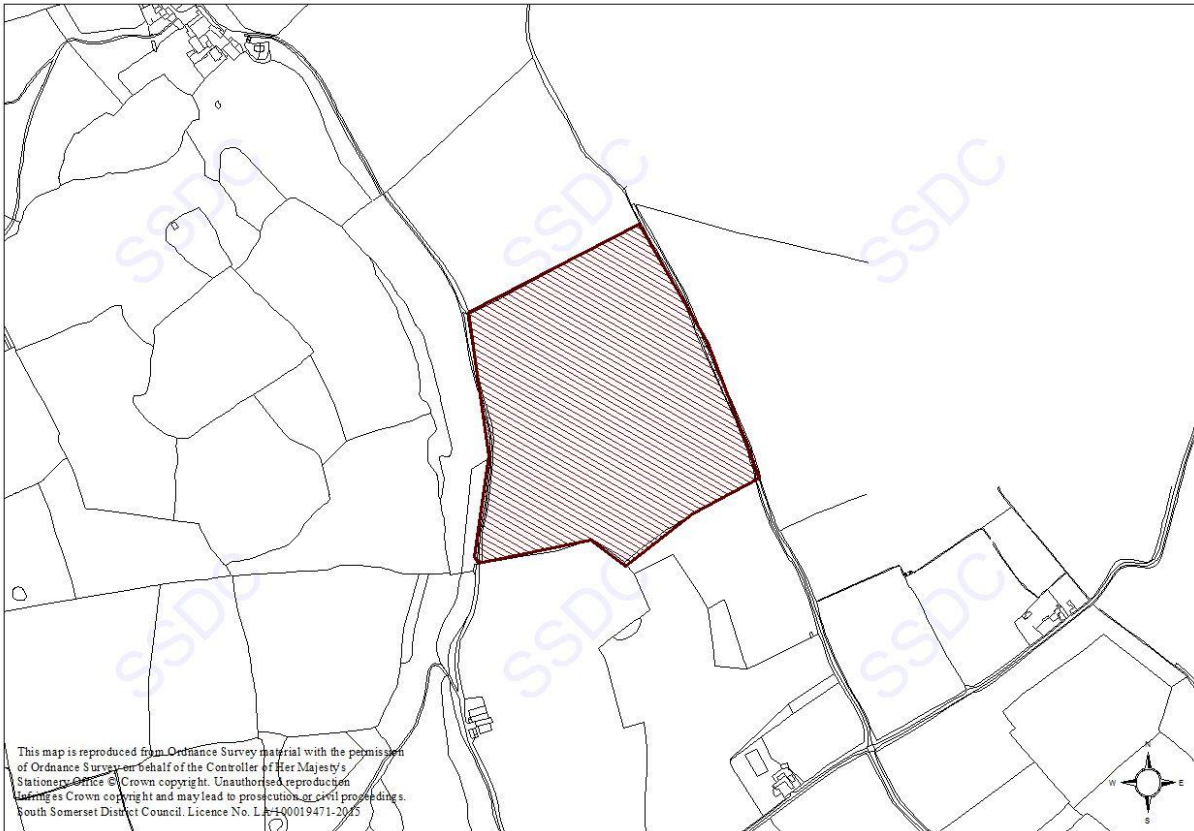
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| Proposal : | The erection of solar photovoltaic panels and associated works and infrastructure, including switchgear, inverter stations, access tracks, security fencing, security cameras, grid connection, together with temporary construction access, compound and unloading area (GR:375703/128694) |
| Site Address: | Land West of Tinkers Lane, Southeast of B3081 Cucklington Wincanton |
| Parish: | Cucklington |
| TOWER Ward (SSDC Member) | Cllr Mike Beech |
| Recommending Case Officer: | Lee Walton Tel: (01935) 462324 Email: lee.walton@southsomerset.gov.uk |
| Target date : | 21st October 2015 |
| Applicant : | Clapton Farm Solar Farm Limited |
| Agent: (no agent if blank) | Andrew Mann Wessex House Priors Walk East Borough Wimborne, Dorset BH21 1PB |
| Application Type : | Major Other f/space 1,000 sq.m or 1 ha+ |

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE

This application relates to a 'large scale' major development which, due to its size, must be referred to committee for determination if the officer is recommending approval of the application, which is the case in this instance.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL





The application is located within open countryside, a little less than 1km north of Cucklington and 1km south of the A303's interchange with the B3081. The application site comprises a single agricultural field under arable production with its eastern boundary adjacent to Tinker's Lane. The site's north eastern corner is close to Tinker's Lane junction with the B3081. The site's western boundary aligns with a Restricted Byway, an historic drove way. The actual extent of the solar panels is contained within the eastern half of the field.

The site is enclosed by established hedgerow and located on a plateau falling in a west to east direction. The land to the west beyond the site slopes steeply down, whereat there are extensive views out over the Blackmore Vale, whereas to the east and south is undulating with a gradual slope eastward and again, extensive views.

The proposal seeks consent for the erection of a 5 MW solar photovoltaic array and associated works and infrastructure for a temporary period of 25 years. Site access during the construction period would be via the B3081 from the A303. For the duration of the construction period a temporary compound and unloading area together with construction access point, involving widening of the existing field access, will be provided.

The works include:

- Framework and solar panels 0.5m to 2.8m in height with up-right piled supports to a depth of 1.2m.
- 4(no.) inverter stations comprising several different structures having an overall area extending to 14.7m by 4.6 and height of 2.3m
- 2(no.) switchgear 6m by 3m and 3.27 above ground level.
- Spares container 2.3m by 1.2m and 2.9m high.
- Access arrangements off the existing field access
- 2m high security fencing
- CCTV on 6m high pole mounted.

The grid connection is local to the site, to the south, to be finalised with the landowner, still to be confirmed. The cable will be underground with no disruption to the landscape.

The site that is outlined in red extends to 13.3 hectares of which 6.3 hectares will be enclosed wherein the solar array is located. The majority of the site is classed Grade 3b agricultural land while 2 hectares (out of 6.3 hectares on which the solar array will be erected) is classed 3a agricultural land.

The application is supported by the Planning and Environmental Report. This includes assessments and the consideration of the following:

- Site Selection
- Planning Statement
- Agricultural Land Classification Report
- Design Statement
- Access Statement
- Landscape and Visual
- Ecology
- Cultural Heritage

Additional information was submitted during the application process and in response to consultation responses received. This includes:

- Vegetation management plan
- Revised landscape (mitigation) planting plan
- Construction transport management plan
- Glint and glare assessment
- Updated LVIA and photomontages to include additional hedgerow planning, additional viewpoints
- location plan and additional viewpoint panoramas
- Site Selection and Justification Report
- Archaeological Evaluation: Interim Report.

RELEVANT HISTORY:

15/01091/EIASS - Proposed Installation of a photovoltaic array - EIA not required.

POLICY

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), and Paragraphs 2, 11, 12, and 14 of the NPPF states that applications are to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

For the purposes of determining current applications the local planning authority considers that the adopted development plan comprises the policies of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 2028 (adopted March 2015).

Policies of the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028)

SD1 - Sustainable Development

EQ1 - Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset

EQ2 - General Development

EQ3 - Historic Environment

EQ4 - Biodiversity

EQ5 - Green Infrastructure

EQ7 - Pollution Control

EP5 - Farm Diversification

TA5 - Transport Impact of new development.

National Planning Policy Framework - March 2012:

Chapter 1 - Building a strong, competitive economy

Chapter 3 - Supporting a prosperous rural economy

Chapter 7 - Requiring good design

Chapter 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Chapter 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

The NPPF advises that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should:

- not require applicants for energy development to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and also recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and
- 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 also expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas.

Other Material Considerations:

An EIASS application has been considered for the site. This determined that an EIA was not required and the overall scale of the site is subsequently reduced on receipt of the current application for planning permission.

CONSULTATIONS

CUCKINGTON PARISH MEETING: The residents of Cucklington ask you to carefully consider and to appreciate the importance of the local heritage and the rural character of this area and allow all visitors to continue to enjoy the area without the imposition of the industrialisation of our countryside. We urge you to reject this inappropriate and damaging proposal.

Our principal grounds for objection are:-

- Profound damage to the well-known visual amenity afforded by this unique and much treasured site which is totally inappropriate for such an industrial intrusion. The Restricted Byway (WN 11/11) immediately adjacent to the west of the proposed development is an historic Drovers road connecting the ancient settlements of Cucklington and Clapton with Penselwood.
- There is already a great local proliferation of solar developments which will, when completed, surround Cucklington. The boundary location of the site should not be ignored. There are a number of existing developments nearby in Dorset, such as Slaughtergate on the B3081, covering 4.5 hectares, and just over 2 km from Cucklington; Manor Farm (4.5 hectares, and less than 2 km), plus, of course the two sites in SSDC near Wincanton (Hook Valley and Higher Hatherleigh both about 4 km from Cucklington.)
- This application represents a gross misuse and loss of valuable "best and most versatile" agricultural land and is in a most inappropriate site.
- The photomontages in the application are grossly misleading as anyone familiar with the site would immediately see, and should not be relied upon. They do not even show the actual site but the photograph appended to this letter do.

PEN SELWOOD PARISH COUNCIL (adjacent) objects and believes it may be visually damaging to the AONB.

NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL - The comments from the Cranborne and West Wilshire Downs AONB Partnership point to an inadequacy in long range views contained within the Landscape and Visual Assessment (LVA) provided by the applicant. There is the potential for solar arrays to be visible from long range views.

To summarise, the Council would like to raise concern in relation to the following:

- The potential impact of the solar farm upon the setting of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB,
- The potential for there to be intervisibility between the application site and the existing solar farm at Manor Farm, Silton,
- The potential for there to be intervisibility between the listed heritage assets within the main settlement of Bourton and West Bourton,
- The impact of the proposals upon the settling of Bourton, particularly in relation to the right of way that runs immediately north of Bourton and borders the AONB.

BOURTON PARISH COUNCIL (adjacent) objects on the following grounds:

1. The profusion of existing solar arrays in the Wincanton / Silton / Gillingham area is such that any additional solar arrays would impose serious harm to the visual landscape in this area.
2. This solar array would be very visible from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and from many dwellings within Bourton, West Bourton and Silton.
3. If this application was to be granted, it would embolden developers on the grounds that the landscape in this area would then be deemed to have been blighted, increasing residents' vulnerability to further proliferation of solar arrays and to industrial scale wind turbines.
4. The proposed Clapton Farm development would represent highly inappropriate use of prime farmland and may threaten the livelihood of the tenant farmer.
5. Bourton Parish have an agreed Village Design Statement that was agreed following public consultation. Within this design statement the residents of Bourton identified that 'treasured views were an important factor' to them. The amended proposals outlined by Andrew Mann of Savills clearly shows that the residents of Bourton would now have a 'treasured view' removed as the proposed solar farm would be clearly visible from the western side of Bourton and Silton. Therefore this application would be in contravention of the village of Bourton's existing village design statement.
6. The Bourton Parish Council would also wish to express their disappointment that wider consultation has not been completed. Given that the proposed changes by the applicant to satisfy objections concerning the visual impact from the northern and western parts of the proposed site now affect Bourton and Silton residents who's visual impact or 'treasured view' would be affected.
7. Therefore on behalf of the residents of Bourton the parish council wish to register these objections to this planning application.

COUNTY HIGHWAY AUTHORITY - The roads leading to this site are extremely narrow and do not allow vehicles to pass in free flow and HGV's will have difficulty accessing the site without careful management. However as the development will only have a significant impact on the highway during the relatively short construction phase the highway authority are of the opinion that a refusal could not be justified based on those grounds. There is sufficient concern that I have recommended conditions requiring the submission of a Construction Management Plan that will contain details of how traffic accessing the site during that time will be managed. I have also recommended a "condition survey" be carried out of the highway leading to the site to ensure that the developer repairs any damage to the highway caused by vehicles accessing the site. Please also condition construction access and contractors' parking/ compound details, wheel cleaning on leaving the site, condition survey.

SSDC LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT - I have now had opportunity to review the additional landscape information offered in support of the above array proposal. I had initially concluded that whilst the array is at a raised elevation, it is well-contained by the local landscape network of hedgerows and mature trees; will have limited visibility once mitigation takes effect; and is at a scale that relates to the landscape pattern. Whilst there is a clear incongruity of character in the appearance of solar panels within rural fields, given the limited visual impact, and the

negligible impact upon the fabric of the site's surrounds, I did not consider the overall landscape impact to be sufficiently weighty to enable a landscape objection to provide a basis for refusal.

The additional landscape information is offered in response to concerns raised by Cucklington and Bourton PCs; and the Cranborne Chase & West Wilts AONB Partnership, and includes an updated LVIA, which primarily assesses additional viewpoints toward the site; provides extra photographic evidence; and proposes a revised landscape mitigation plan. The LVIA finds no additional landscape effects that can be assessed as significantly adverse, but noting the weight of concern expressed by local residents, has added to the mitigation package by including the proposal to plant new hedge lines to the immediate north and west sides of the array, to increase screening of the site in views from the byway to the west, and local vantage points to the north. In most part, I concur with the judgements made by the amended LVIA, and agree that the additional hedge planting will more positively respond to the potential visual impact upon users of the byway. Consequently, my view of the weight of the landscape impact is unchanged, and with the benefit of the revised mitigation proposal, I would suggest that if you are minded to approve, planting is conditioned for implementation in accordance with drawing 694-03H (with the amendment noted below) in the planting season immediately following planning consent.

One final point of detail, I would advise that the landscape proposals are amended, such that the hedgerow hornbeam trees (*Carpinus betulus*) are the native species, and not the fastigate cultivar. This will be the revision H that I have assumed above.

CRANBORNE CHASE AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY notes the application is slightly more than 1 kilometre outside of the boundary of the AONB. The potential site was reduced in size during the design process because of potential views. The site could be visible from areas in the vicinity of the AONB at Bourton. The LVIA does not provide longer distance views, particularly those from higher ground within this AONB from both the north and the east. The views from the Rights of Way in the vicinity of Bourton, and the importance of those views is incorporated in the Village Design Statement, adopted by North Dorset District Council. That analysis by the local community and the adoption by the District Council was regarded as a significant piece of evidence in the Inquiry that dismissed the proposal for wind turbines at Silton.

It is strongly advised you consider long distance views as the strange and glassy appearance of field scale PVs is something that does stand out from a distance and is not something that any viewer has to search hard to find. There appears to be some inconsistencies within the documentation such as reference to the quality of the land being largely Grade 3 and partly Grade 4, whereas in other places it is quite clear the land is largely Grade 3b with some Grade 3a, and some Grade 3a in the remainder of the field. Grade 3a is, of course, land that is categorised as 'best and most versatile' for agricultural production.

I would also advise that whilst the photographs provided are to a high quality in their production the process of joining photographs to produce panoramas has the effect of making the site appear further away than it would if viewed on site from the place the photograph was taken. Such panoramic photographs, whilst they have their uses, do consistently underestimate the impact of changes within the scene.

I would also advise that the submitted analysis of cumulative impacts should be viewed with caution as they only relate to other PV developments. The LVIA says that it is in accordance with Guidelines on Visual Impact Assessments 3rd Edition. However, it clearly states, and in the training sessions for professionals associated with that guidance, that all recent and new development should be considered in an assessment of cumulative impacts, not just similar developments.

If your Council is minded to look favourably on this proposal then I would strongly recommend that the hedges around the field, and particularly beside the road, are maintained at twice the height shown in the submitted photographs. Whilst that is unlikely to have a significant effect in reducing long distance visibility it will aid screening from closer views.

SSDC CONSERVATION - The Grade II* farmhouse is close to the site. However I agree with the submitted assessment that the lack of inter-visibility between the farmstead and application site means that there will be no impact on the setting of this highly graded asset. I am satisfied with other assessments included within the submission. I therefore do not consider the proposal to have the potential to harm the setting of any heritage assets.

HISTORIC ENGLAND - The application(s) should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.

COUNTY ARCHAEOLOGY - The geophysical survey of the site showed archaeological features that survive in what appears to be fairly good preservation. An archaeological evaluation was undertaken and based on this a mitigation strategy submitted at the time the Planning Officer's report to committee was being prepared. The county archaeologist's response shall be reported to committee.

SSDC ECOLOGIST: I've noted the Ecology chapter of the Planning and Environmental report. If further hedge removal is required for the grid connection, this could potentially have an impact on dormice if present and I recommend this should be subject to further assessment.

NPPF (para.118) expects development to deliver some enhancement for biodiversity, through taking opportunities to incorporate features beneficial for wildlife. I therefore recommend a condition requiring submission of landscape and ecology management plan to be submitted for approval and subsequently implemented.

SOMERSET WILDLIFE TRUST - In general we would support the findings of the appraisal. Further surveys for dormice should be carried out. We also support the proposals for Mitigation and enhancement as proposed in sections 7.69 to 7.74 that should be included in any planning permission.

NATURAL ENGLAND - General comments made

SOUTH SOMERSET RAMBLERS GROUP - The two adjacent ROW are to the West of the site. The path WN 11/26 runs along the boundary of Tinker's Hill field and although the development may interrupt a lovely view to the East, it would not affect the path and its use. The path WN 11/11 which runs parallel to WN 11/26 is below the ridge and would not be affected.

CPRE SOMERSET is not opposed to solar PV installations but their scale and location must be considered against their environmental impact. In particular, we are concerned about the loss of agricultural land and the visual and aesthetic impact on landscape character. This application falls short on the latter of these criteria and is also at variance with the policies for development of South Somerset. CPRE Somerset therefore objects to this application.

SAVE THE VALE ASSOCIATION - The proposal is entirely inappropriate as it is a much valued and unspoilt ridge that commands 360 degree panoramic views stretching to Glastonbury in the West and the Dorset Gap in the South. There is already a great proliferation of the solar developments in the immediate vicinity, surrounding Wincanton, in the Vale at Sutor farm, and stretching down towards Gillingham. The entire character of the area is now threatened.

SAVE OUR SILTON CAMPAIGN GROUP- The proliferation of existing solar arrays in the

area would impose serious harm to the visual landscape; the solar array would be very visible from the AONB and from many dwellings within Bourton, West Bourton and Silton; to permit would then be deemed that the locality would have been blighted increasing vulnerability to further proliferation; an highly inappropriate use of prime farmland.

LEAD LOCAL FLOOD AUTHORITY - No objections.

REPRESENTATIONS:

There have been 31 householder responses that object to the proposed development including the following reasons:

- Detrimental to the character of the neighbourhood
- Loss of visual amenity
- Prominent position
- 360 degree panoramic view
- Visible from surrounding high ground, from Bourton and the adjacent AONB
- Out of scale
- Scar the landscape
- The area and view will be destroyed in an AONB
- Industrialisation of the countryside
- Continued urbanisation
- Entirely inappropriate
- The public footpath referred to is a Restricted Byway, an ancient trackway serving the locality to move livestock until the enclosures.
- The nearest collar farm to this site is 1.1km on the B3081
- Two large solar farms are already visible from Cucklington
- Too many solar farms have blighted the area
- The local area is awash with solar schemes
- Original proposal having been considerably reduced it would be very difficult to resist a move to increase the size of the array at some future date
- The proposal contains no plan for the screening of this active part of the land using native hedging
- Unsuitable as an access
- Affects local Tourism
- Glare - there certainly glare from an existing site, despite assurances to the contrary
- Loss of quality agricultural land - solar farms should not be built on land graded 3a and higher
- The proposal suggests the village will get a financial benefit from this scheme. But the nature of this award is not spelt out.

CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of development:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that local authorities should have a positive strategy to promote energy for renewable and low carbon sources, and design their policies to maximise renewable and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts. The expectation should always be that an application should be approved if the impact is (or can be made) acceptable (para.98 of the NPPF).

Local Plan Policy EQ1 is applicable in considering renewable energy proposals. Bullet point 3 states that 'Development of renewable and low carbon energy generation will be encouraged and permitted, providing there are no significant adverse impacts upon residential and visual amenity, landscape character, designated heritage assets, and biodiversity.' Policy EQ2 also refers to the need to safeguard landscape character of the area and visual appearance is

clearly a weighty matter in considering environmental harm.

While it might be preferable for brown field sites to be considered before green field agricultural land there is no requirement for developers to consider brown field sites in the first instant. The supporting information indicates that the land on which the arrays are to be located and fenced is a little less than one third Grade 3a good quality agricultural land and two thirds 3b moderate quality agricultural land. In effect 2 hectares of land should be considered as 'best and most versatile agricultural land'. The NPPF (para.112) while this states development 'should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality' also requires we 'should take into account the economic and other benefits' of such land. The land is proposed to be continued in agricultural use and as such the use, as well as scale of the good quality land involved is not considered sufficient reason to seek to refuse the proposal. In their written statement (25 March 2015) the then Minister Eric Pickles states proposals for solar farms 'involving the best and most versatile agricultural land would need to be justified by the most compelling evidence' but this continues: 'Of course,... every application needs to be considered on its individual merits... in light of the relevant material considerations.' This effectively rules out an approach that would seek refusal on the basis that part of the land was the best quality. We are in essence drawn back to scale and possible on-going agricultural use made of the land that otherwise supports the proposal.

Any permission would be for a long-term but temporary basis for a period of 25-years. A condition can be imposed to require the site's restoration following cessation of its approved use should the site become redundant; and on this basis the principle of the use of this agricultural land for the purpose of a solar farm is considered acceptable. Accordingly the main considerations for this application relate to landscape character and visual appearance, impact on heritage assets, highway safety, and residential amenity.

Landscape character and Visual Appearance:

The council's Landscape Officer's response is given above, while the AONB's response is likewise extensively copied. In response to various consultation returns received the applicant submitted additional landscape and visual assessment. It should also be noted that while the AONB rehearses the considerations and draws attention to conflict within the applicant's submission and possible weaknesses, notably the lack of longer distance views of the site, their comments did not lead them to oppose at that stage. The additional evidence seeks to address these concerns.

The Bourton Village Design Statement considers a 'treasured view' is removed by the proposal with the proposed solar farm clearly visible from the western side of Bourton and Silton. Notwithstanding that the weight that can be attached to the Village Design Statement is limited, as it is not adopted by South Somerset Council, the additional landscape and visual evidence submitted in response to the North Dorset District Council's comments have not altered the Landscape Officer's original response and in consequence it must be considered that no significantly adverse impact results from the proposal.

The solar array would be glimpsed nearby the site, but seen amid field boundaries and at a distance the additional planting and site management that sees raised hedgerow heights, despite their deciduous nature, is considered, favourably mitigates in support of the solar arrays presence.

Impact on Heritage Assets:

The Conservation Officer has not raised any concerns with the site's relationship and possible impact on heritage assets. Historic England in considering the wider historic setting has not identified harm. While there are local concerns that relate to the ancient drove that forms the site's western boundary the solar arrays built form is stood back across the field from the adjacent field hedgerow that is the boundary of the restricted byway.

Highway Safety:

The Highway Authority do not object, notwithstanding their awareness of the narrow access lanes to the site. They have requested conditions that would be attached to any permission. The proposal seeks use of the existing field access point. This would be widened for use by the construction traffic, although a condition would seek reinstatement given the very limited annual traffic that is expected and to reinforce the rural character at the roadside.

Residential amenity:

There are no dwellings in close proximity to the site so that it is not considered that harm would result for the amenity of the residents.

Parish and Neighbour Responses:

All local community responses have been fully considered and are mostly considered within the relevant sub-headings of the officer report. Those that are not include:

The extent of the red outline has raised concerns that this encourages the future spread of arrays on site. Such actions require a new application whose considerations would reflect the visual impact and character and appearance of the site at the time. It is noted that the current application's reduced scale results from the need to address such concerns. Consultation responses make reference to such sites emboldening developers increasing residents' vulnerability to further proliferation, however as is seen in this case visual impact is a significant driver so that each application needs to be considered on its merits.

It is not considered that the proposed development would have an adverse impact on tourism in this location.

The government may encourage local communities to enter into negotiations with solar companies for community benefits but this is not part of the planning considerations and therefore would be a matter the local community needs to take up direct with the applicants.

Other Matters:

The County Archaeologist initially required further work on site and reports that this is a complicated archaeological site. The field trench evaluation has produced evidence of Iron Age activity, possibly associated with metal working/production. Given its interest a mitigation strategy was submitted at the point the planning officer's report was being finalised. The strategy has been forwarded to the County Archaeologist whose response will be reported to committee. Subject to their agreement there would not be any objection raised.

The application is accompanied by detailed assessments of ecological impacts. These have been assessed by the Council's Ecologist who has raises no objections.

The proposed development is located in low probability flood zone 1 and no significant flood risks to the site have been identified.

Conclusion:

Government advice is clear. Planning Authorities should approve applications for renewable energy projects where impacts are (or can be made) acceptable (NPPF Para 98). The proposal does not raise significant environmental objections while mitigation is possible to help accommodate the development.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve

01. Notwithstanding local concerns it is considered that the benefits in terms of the provision of a renewable source of energy, which will make a valuable contribution towards cutting greenhouse gas emissions, outweigh the limited impact of the proposed PV panels on the local landscape character, visual appearance and heritage assets. As such, the proposal accords with the Government's objective to encourage the provision of renewable energy sources and the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, and Policies SD1, EQ1 and EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:

01. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To accord with the provisions of section 91(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

02. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

1088-0200- 01 Issue 01
1171-0201- 01 Issue 011
1171-0204- 00 Issue 01
1171-0205- 04 Issue 01
1171-0903- 05 Issue 01
1171-0206- 15 Issue 01
1171-0207- 16 Issue 01
1171-0207- 40 Issue 01
1171-0208- 10 Issue 01
1171-0208- 54 Issue 01
1171-0208- 71 Issue 01,
694-03H, received 23 July 2015.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

03. Prior to commencement of development a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan detailing measures and management of the site for the benefit of biodiversity shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Landscape and Ecology Management Plan to include hedge height maintenance shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: For the enhancement of biodiversity in accordance with NPPF.

04. The development hereby permitted shall be removed and the land restored to its former condition within 25 years of the date of this permission or within 6 months of the cessation of the use of the solar farm for the generation of electricity, whichever is the sooner, in accordance with a restoration plan to be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The restoration plan will need to include all the works necessary to revert the site to open agricultural land including the removal of all the structures, materials and any ancillary equipment which shall be removed from the site.

Reason: In the interests of character and appearance further to policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

05. Before any building or engineering works are carried out on the site, a construction access and contractors' parking/compound area shall be provided, surfaced and drained in accordance with a detailed scheme, which shall include the relevant visibility splays

and shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Such scheme shall also indicate the eventual use of that area.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety further to policy EQ2 and TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

06. No development shall commence unless a Construction Environmental Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved plan. The plan shall include:

- Construction vehicle movements;
- Construction operation hours;
- Construction vehicular routes to and from site;
- Construction delivery hours;
- Expected number of construction vehicles per day;
- Car parking for contractors;
- Specific measures to be adopted to mitigate construction impacts in pursuance of the Environmental Code of Construction Practice;
- A scheme to encourage the use of Public Transport/vehicle sharing amongst contractors; and
- Measures to avoid traffic congestion impacting upon the Highway Network.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety further to policy EQ2 and TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

07. A Condition Survey of the existing public highway will need to be carried out and agreed with the Highway Authority prior to any works commencing on site, and any damage to the highway occurring as a result of this development is to be remedied by the developer to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority once all works have been completed on site.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety further to Policy EQ2 and TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

08. The applicant shall ensure that all vehicles leaving the site are in such condition as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. In particular (but without prejudice to the foregoing), efficient means shall be installed, maintained and employed for cleaning the wheels of all lorries leaving the site, details of which shall have been agreed in advance in writing by the Local Planning Authority and fully implemented prior to the commencement of work and thereafter maintained until the use of the site discontinues.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety further to Policy EQ2 and TA5 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

09. No means of external illumination/lighting shall be installed within the site, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of landscape character and visual appearance further to policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

10. The landscape planting scheme shall accord with drawing number 694-03H that removes the fastigiate cultivar that should be replaced by hedgerow hornbeam trees (*Carpinus betulus*). The scheme shall be implemented in the first planting season following the completion of the development. Any trees or plant that die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and landscape character further to policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

11. Colour tones of all associated structures shall accord with the details given in the applicant's letter of the 20 October 2015.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity further to Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

12. The access arrangements off Tinkers Lane required during the temporary construction period shall be removed and the simple field access reinstated on completion of the solar array development hereby permitted.

Reason: In the interests of character and appearance further to Policy EQ2 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006- 2028.

13. The recommendations under 7.69 to 7.74 of Planning and environmental report shall be undertaken as part of the planning permission.

Reason: For the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in accordance with NPPF and Local Plan Policy EQ4.
