

Consultee Comments for Planning Application 24/00161/FUL

Application Summary

Application Number: 24/00161/FUL

Address: Land West Of Bradmore Road And North Of Wysall Road Land West Of Wysall Wysall

Proposal: Construction, operation and subsequent decommissioning of a renewable energy park comprising ground mounted Solar PV with co-located battery energy storage system (BESS) at the point of connection, together with associated infrastructure, access, landscaping and cabling.

Case Officer: Gareth Elliott

Consultee Details

Name: Ms Emily Gillott

Address: Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall, Loughborough Road West Bridgford, Nottinghamshire NG2 7QP

Email: Not Available

On Behalf Of: Archaeology Officer

Comments

PLANNING APPLICATION 24/00161/FUL

LAND WEST OF BRADMORE ROAD AND NORTH OF WYSALL ROAD

Thank you for your request for comments on the archaeological implications of the above application. I have the following comments to offer:

The geophysical surveys carried out ahead of the proposed solar farms in the area between Costock and Wysall and Bunny Old Wood, combined with the limited archaeological work done so far, have revealed a landscape of likely Middle Iron Age to late Roman activity (this covers a span of around 1000 years). This landscape shows the development of occupation in the area with several distinct phases and hierarchies; unenclosed Iron Age settlement, enclosed Iron Age Settlement of a hill fort type, possible Romano British ladder development, Roman agricultural activity and the presence of at least one high-status Roman building in the vicinity. There is complexity in the archaeological landscape on this and the adjacent site including potential nationally significant archaeology.

The findings on the adjacent site to the west are relevant here to understanding this application site and the cumulative impacts upon the archaeological resource and landscape.

The geophysical survey results on this site are noisy in places but clearly show several areas of archaeological interest. Enough information is required to make planning recommendations and to inform design and mitigation. Mitigation such as preservation in-situ cannot be agreed until it is understood what is to be mitigated.

The proposed trenching plan is not adequate. Evaluation via trial trenching needs to be carried out across the site, to include areas where preservation in-situ is being considered, in order to characterise the archaeological features, to confirm their absence or presence, depth, condition, preservation, significance etc. Without this information the impacts of the scheme to archaeology cannot be assessed.

Trial trenching is important for effective risk-management and to inform timescales and budget management. The results will be used to inform design of the scheme, a robust mitigation strategy and the planning decision.

Forthcoming regional guidance is expected to recommend between 3-5% across sites like these, defined by the red-line boundary. The scale of the evaluation here should be to the higher end of this percentage due to the indications that nationally significant archaeology may be encountered, and due to factors affecting the visibility of features within the geophysical data (magnetic disturbance, land drains, ridge-and-furrow).

The applicant may also wish to consider other evaluation techniques such as fieldwalking and/or alternate geophysical techniques on part of area 7.

It is extremely rare to see a readable landscape such as this that has the potential for significant insights into settlement hierarchy and succession from at least the Iron Age into the Roman period. There is no public benefit to the destruction of archaeological remains without adequate record.

Professional guidance from NPPF, Historic England, ClfA, EN3, EIA regs are consistent in their advice that risk should be understood at as early a stage in the process as possible and so I can only follow that advice and recommend this work be carried out prior to the application being determined.

All the best

Emily Gillott

Planning Archaeologist, Nottinghamshire County Council