

# Comments for Planning Application 22/00319/FUL

## Application Summary

Application Number: 22/00319/FUL

Address: Land To The West Of Wood Lane And Stocking Lane Kingston Estate Gotham Nottinghamshire NG11 0LF

Proposal: Installation of renewable energy generating solar farm comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays, together with substation, inverter stations, security measures, site access, internal access tracks and other ancillary infrastructure, including landscaping and biodiversity enhancements

Case Officer: Craig Miles

## Customer Details

Name: Mrs Wendy Bannerman

Address: The British Horse Society

## Comment Details

Commenter Type: Other Body

Stance: Customer made comments neither objecting to or supporting the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Dear RBC Planning

Ref: 22/00319/FUL | Installation of renewable energy generating solar farm

The response below is from the British Horse Society however our volunteers in the county may also respond at a local level.

The British Horse Society is the UK's largest equestrian Charity, with over 117,000 members representing the UK's 3 million horse riders. Nationally equestrians have just 22% of the rights of way network and are increasingly forced to use busy roads to access them.

Between 29.02.2020 - 28.02.2021

- 1,010 road incidents involving horses have been reported to The British Horse Society
- 46 horses have died
- 118 horses have been injured
- 130 people have been injured
- 45% of riders were victims to road rage or abuse
- 80% of incidents occurred because a vehicle passed by too closely to the horse
- 43% of incidents occurred because a vehicle passed by too quickly

This illustrates the importance of protecting, improving and extending safe off-road provision will help to prevent these numbers from increasing in the future.

According to BETA two-thirds of equestrians are women and Church et al (2010) found 37% of

women who are horse riders are over 45 years of age and over a third would pursue no other physical activity. The therapeutic and physical benefits of horse riding and carriage driving have been proven for people with disabilities (Favali and Milton, 2010).

The equestrian industry generates £4.7 billion of consumer spending, £5,548 per horse (BETA, 2019) to the economy benefitting local economies where equestrian activities thrive. There is a strong equestrian community here and local routes are well used and valued. DEFRA has recorded 452 horses in the immediate NG11 postcode area and 3045 in the LE12 postcode area (2021), making a total of £19,401,356 contribution to the economy.

New development plans provide opportunities to improve and extend the bridleway and byway network for the shared enjoyment of vulnerable road users equestrians, cyclists, pedestrians, wheelchair users and mobility scooter users.

The PRow with equestrian access that would be immediately impacted by the proposed development are Public Bridleways 1, 10,11, 12 in the parish of Gotham and BW1, 3, 5 and 13 in the parish of West Leake as detailed in the PRow Management Plan.

- Gotham Bridleway 1 is outside of the development area however, links directly to the bridleway network (Gotham BW 12). Whilst measures are being taken to accommodate the construction traffic access to the site, equestrians and other vulnerable road users must cross Kegworth road to use the PRow network. Already a 60mph road, the additional traffic, as detailed in the Transport management Plan Table 5-2, and the added complication of vehicles regularly turning into the access road on BW 12 will make the road crossing higher risk for PRow users in the absence of speed restrictions, other traffic calming measures or a light controlled multi-user crossing. As construction traffic is intended to be 07.00 to 19.00 on Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 16.00 on Saturdays, this may well coincide with times that equestrians are active on the bridleways and local highways network to reach the off-road routes.

- Gotham BW 12 is the intended route of the access road and is also known as Wood Lane. Passing bays are referred to in the Design and Access Statement 1.68 although the number and dimensions of these are unspecified. The 4.5m access road width proposed is of concern, particularly during the construction period: HGV's are generally 2.5m wide and 4.5m high (some vehicles for component transportation significantly larger, Transport Management Plan 5.60) which would sandwich a horse and rider between the vehicle and the hedgerow along the route with little room for refuge which may cause panic. The Traffic Management Plan 5.9 suggests the bridleway may be 'cordoned off'; more detail is needed regarding this as restricting the PRow could exacerbate the problem and could encourage vehicles to pass at speed. Extending the width by exposing more of the verge to the 6m suggested would be an improvement. Appropriate signage giving priority to users of the PRow would be welcome and there should be additional signage during construction to warn traffic of equestrians and other vulnerable road users in the area, and ensure they are considerate in terms of vehicles using the passing bays to stop and allow PRow users to pass safely.

- Bridleway Gotham 3/ West Leake 10 is crossed by a new access track. It is positive to note that the Transport Management Plan refers to banksmen being on site to manage these points and

priority given to PRow users. It would be advisable to instruct construction traffic to stop a short distance before the PRow and to turn the engine off if appropriate to ensure safe and unhindered passing for equestrians.

- Bridleway Gotham 12 is crossed by a new access track, therefore the points above apply.
- It is positive to note that the current surfacing of the bridleways affected will not be disturbed and the buffer described to prevent the PRow becoming narrow corridors is appreciated.

The permissive path described in the PRow Management Plan is difficult to identify on Appendix 1.14a but is a welcome inclusion, although dimensions and surfacing details would be useful. The inverters in the sections adjacent to this route appear to be situated close to the permissive route, whereas with the PRow, the design has appeared to consider locating the inverters away from the bridleways as is preferable. Sudden noise and continuous levels of noise can be a hazard for equestrians as horses are flight animals, therefore the further these elements can be located from the bridleway, the better it will be for safety but also for undisturbed enjoyment of the permissive route for all users.

No additional furniture (eg gates) features on the site plan, therefore it is assumed there will be no additional barriers to access the bridleways.

The BHS would welcome continued discussion and has further information for reference available here: <https://www.bhs.org.uk/advice-and-information/free-leaflets-and-advice>.

Wendy Bannerman  
Access Field Officer East and West Midlands  
British Horse Society

