



National Highways Planning Response (NHPR 22-12) Formal Recommendation to an Application for Planning Permission

From: Andy Jinks (Regional Director)
Operations Directorate
Midlands Region
National Highways
PlanningM@nationalhighways.co.uk

To: Rushcliffe Borough Council

CC: transportplanning@dft.gov.uk
spatialplanning@nationalhighways.co.uk

Council's Reference: 22/02241/FUL

Location: Land East of Hawksworth and Northwest of Thoroton, Shelton Road, Thoroton, Nottinghamshire

Proposal: Installation of renewable energy generating solar farm

National Highways Ref: 97055

Referring to the consultation on a planning application dated **14 December 2022** referenced above, in the vicinity of the **A46 trunk road** that forms part of the Strategic Road Network, notice is hereby given that National Highways' formal recommendation is that we:

- ~~a) offer no objection (see reasons at Annex A);~~
- ~~b) recommend that conditions should be attached to any planning permission that may be granted (see Annex A – National Highways recommended Planning Conditions & reasons);~~
- c) recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period (see reasons at Annex A);
- ~~d) recommend that the application be refused (see reasons at Annex A)~~

Highways Act 1980 Section 175B is not relevant to this application.¹

¹ Where relevant, further information will be provided within Annex A.

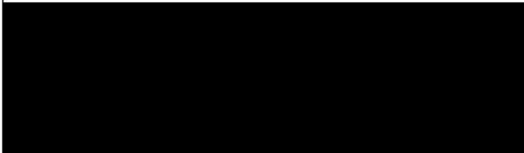
This represents National Highways' formal recommendation and is copied to the Department for Transport as per the terms of our Licence.

Should the Local Planning Authority not propose to determine the application in accordance with this recommendation they are required to consult the Secretary of State for Transport, as set out in the [Town and Country Planning \(Development Affecting Trunk Roads\) Direction 2018](#), via transportplanning@dft.gov.uk and may not determine the application until the consultation process is complete.

The Local Planning Authority must also copy any consultation under the 2018 Direction to PlanningM@nationalhighways.co.uk.

Signature:

Date: 15 December 2022



Name: Catherine Townend

Position: Spatial Planner

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Annex A National Highways' assessment of the proposed development

This response represents our formal recommendations and has been prepared by Catherine Townend, Spatial Planner for National Highways.

National Highways has been appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport as a strategic highway company under the provisions of the Infrastructure Act 2015 and is the highway authority, traffic authority and street authority for the Strategic Road Network (SRN). The SRN is a critical national asset and as such we work to ensure that it operates and is managed in the public interest, both in respect of current activities and needs as well as in providing effective stewardship of its long-term operation and integrity.

National Highways considers planning applications for new developments under the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and DfT Circular 02/2013: The Strategic Road Network and The Delivery of Sustainable Development ("the Circular"). The latter document sets out our policy on sustainable development and our approach to proposals which may have an impact on our network.

The SRN in the vicinity of the proposed development site is A46, A52 and A1 trunk roads.

Development Proposal

The planning application seeks full planning permission for the development of a 49.9MW ground mounted solar farm and all associated ancillary infrastructure. The Site (measuring 94.24 ha) is on agricultural land between the villages of Hawksworth and Thoroton, Nottinghamshire. 37.7ha of the Site is required to accommodate the solar panels themselves, with the remaining area being used for ancillary infrastructure and mitigation and enhancement measures.

Development proposals with a potential energy creation output of over 50MW are classed as National Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)s and subject to a Development Consent Order (DCO). As this site falls below this threshold, it is not considered an NSIP and is being determined by the Local Planning Authority (Rushcliffe Borough Council).

National Highways has considered the proposed development in relation to its potential impact on the SRN, and makes the following comments:

National Highways Considerations

Access

It is proposed the Site will be accessed via the creation of a new entrance off the public highway Thoroton Road. As Thoroton Road is not part of the Strategic Road Network owned and operated by National Highways, we have no specific comments to make about the immediate site access.

Boundary Issues

The site is located approximately two miles to the east of the A46 trunk road, two miles to the north of the A52 trunk road, and five miles to the west of the A1 trunk road. Given the Site does not share a common boundary with the SRN, we have no boundary related concerns.

Traffic Impacts – Operational Phase

According to the Planning Statement (dated 30 November 2022), the operational phase of the solar farm is anticipated to have negligible trip generation potential with approximately 10-15 Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs) expected every year for scheduled maintenance checks, with additional visits required to attend to remedial issues when necessary.

National Highways accepts the above and has no further comments to make about operational traffic impacts.

Traffic Impacts – Construction Phase

According to Appendix 6: Construction Traffic Management Plan (dated 30 November 2022), the construction period is expected to last six months with construction vehicles arriving from the A46 trunk road and then onto the local road network (managed by Nottinghamshire County Council).

During the anticipated six-month construction period, a total of 1106 Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) deliveries (equating to 2212 two-way movements) will be made to the Application Site. During the peak construction period there will be an approximate maximum of 20 HGV deliveries per day. Car/van movements for construction staff are stated to be maximum of 25-30 vehicles per day during the peak construction period.

The above vehicle numbers if taken at face value are not likely to give rise to any concerns to National Highways with respect of traffic impacts on the SRN.

However, the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) does not explain how trip generation numbers have been derived. We therefore request clarification on trip generation estimates for our consideration.

Recommendation

In light of the above, National Highways recommends that this application not be determined for a period of up to three months from the date of this letter. This is to give the applicant sufficient time to provide the above-mentioned information.

Standing advice to the local planning authority

The Climate Change Committee's [2022 Report to Parliament](#) notes that for the UK to achieve net zero carbon status by 2050, action is needed to support a modal shift away from car travel. The NPPF supports this position, with paragraphs 73 and 105 prescribing that significant development should offer a genuine choice of transport modes, while paragraphs 104 and 110 advise that appropriate opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport should be taken up.

Moreover, the build clever and build efficiently criteria as set out in clause 6.1.4 of [PAS2080](#) promote the use of low carbon materials and products, innovative design solutions and construction methods to minimise resource consumption.

These considerations should be weighed alongside any relevant Local Plan policies to ensure that planning decisions are in line with the necessary transition to net zero carbon.