



APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

for

**CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A SOLAR FARM AND BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE
SYSTEM, TOGETHER WITH ALL ASSOCIATED WORKS, EQUIPMENT, NECESSARY
INFRASTRUCTURE AND LANDSCAPING**

on

**LAND ADJACENT TO THE A614
WORKSOP
S80 3PA**

on behalf of

ONE PLANET DEVELOPMENTS LIMITED

PLANNING STATEMENT



1 Executive summary

1.1 One Planet Developments Limited is seeking planning permission for the construction and operation of a solar farm and battery energy storage system (BESS), together with all associated works, equipment, necessary infrastructure and landscaping, on land adjacent to the A614, Worksop, S80 3PA. Further details of the proposed development are set out in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) submitted with the application.

1.2 This Statement, which should be read alongside the DAS, as well as the plans and other documents submitted with the application, addresses the policy context against which this requires to be assessed, demonstrating that the proposed development:

- would contribute to increasing the use of renewable energy sources, as encouraged by both Policy DM 10: Renewable & Low Carbon Energy of the Bassetlaw Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (the key policy of relevance in the adopted Development Plan) and Policy ST51: Renewable Energy Generation of the Proposed Bassetlaw Local Plan (PBLP) (which is expected to become the adopted Development Plan shortly, and is therefore a significant material consideration);
- complies with all other relevant policies of both the adopted Development Plan and the PBLP;
- is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which makes it clear that the planning system is expected to support the transition to a low carbon future, including by encouraging the development of renewable and low carbon energy developments (as is proposed in this case); and
- is consistent with relevant precedent decisions, in particular appeal reference APP/C1570/W/23/3319421.

1.3 As the development complies with the Development Plan and is supported by relevant material considerations, with no material considerations indicating otherwise, the application should be approved.

2 Background

2.1 As set out in the NPPF (further details on which are provided in the context of material considerations in section 5 below), the planning system is expected to support the transition to a low carbon future, including by encouraging the development of renewable and low carbon energy developments (as is proposed in this case).



2.2 This is particularly important as the UK Government has established a target for the electricity system to be fully decarbonised by 2035, with there being a clear need to generate more energy from renewable sources if this is to be realised, including from solar farms. At the same time, there is also a clear need for the development of associated infrastructure, such as BESS, to ensure grid stability. The proposed development of a solar farm and BESS thus has an important role to play in facilitating the transition to a low carbon future powered by renewable sources, with this being a key driver behind this application.

2.3 Notably, the need for development of this nature is recognised in:

- **the National Grid’s 2023 Future Energy Scenarios Report** – which expects solar generation to increase to the point where, combined with wind, this will meet 71% to 84% of annual electricity demand by 2050 (up from 31% in 2022);
- **the Government’s Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)** – which identifies solar as one of the lowest cost ways of generating electricity, helping to reduce costs and providing a clean and secure source of electricity supply, with it stated that *“analysis shows that a secure, reliable, affordable, net zero consistent system in 2050 is likely to be composed predominantly of wind and solar”*;
- **the National Policy Statement for renewable energy infrastructure (EN-3)** (relevant terms of which are also considered in the context of material considerations, in section 5 below) – which highlights solar energy as being a key part of the Government’s strategy for low-cost decarbonisation of the energy sector, noting that:
 - **the Government’s British Energy Security Strategy (2020)** states that the Government expects a five-fold increase in combined ground and rooftop solar deployment by 2035 and, of particular pertinence in this case, is supportive of solar that is co-located with other functions (including storage) to maximise the efficiency of land use; and
 - **the Government’s Powering Up Britain: Energy Security Plan (2023)** states that the Government seeks large scale ground-mounted solar deployment across the UK, with sites specifically identified as being appropriate for this including low and medium grade agricultural land (which the majority of the application site in this case is, as set out in more detail below).



2.4 At the same time, the agricultural sector is currently facing significant challenges arising from factors such as labour shortages, climate change and changes in the funding regime. Further, in this case the land is generally very sandy and requires irrigation to farm successfully, while small areas of the western part of the site have been identified as being at risk of surface water flooding (albeit at a level that does not preclude this being used for solar panels), all as set out in the DAS. Renewable energy related farm diversification projects, which can make use of such constrained areas of land, provide a valuable opportunity for greater economic security for landowners, while also contributing to the security of the energy supply for the country as a whole and other associated economic benefits.

2.5 As also recognised in the National Policy Statement for renewable energy infrastructure (EN-3) and, in the context of this application, set out in more detail in the DAS, there are a number of factors to take into account when assessing whether a site is suitable for a solar development, with key features that have contributed to the application site being identified as such including that:

- the site has a favourable level topography;
- there are existing overhead cables, and the grid connection has been agreed;
- the majority of the site does not comprise Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land (per the ALC Report), and while a small part of the site is BMV land, the use of this is considered acceptable in this instance for the reasons given in paragraph 4.19 (subparagraph e) below);
- the site is not subject to any other natural, cultural heritage or landscape designations (as confirmed by the Ecological impact assessment and biodiversity net gain assessment, the Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (HEDBA), and the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) respectively); and
- there is an existing access to the site, such that a new access does not need to be created, and disturbance associated with construction works will be minimised accordingly.

2.6 Lastly in terms of background, the response to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening opinion (20/01546/SCR) confirmed that the proposed development does not constitute EIA development, and so an EIA Report is not required.

2.7 Taking the above into account, the application site has been identified as being particularly well suited for a solar farm and BESS development to address the clear



need for more developments of this nature to facilitate the transition to a smarter, more flexible, and lower carbon energy system, and the application requires to be assessed with these merits in mind.

3 The application

3.1 Full details of the proposed development and the design principles that have informed this are set out in the DAS.

3.2 As set out in the DAS, the application site comprises five fields bordered by mature woodland, with the A614 Blyth Road and the Clumber Park Hotel to the west, West Drayton Avenue (part of the Robin Hood Way) to the south, and the River Poulter to the north and east.

3.3 In total, the site covers an area of 88.21ha, within which the proposed development would cover an area of 73.22 hectares, with land around this, providing opportunities for landscape and biodiversity enhancement, as set out in more detail below.

3.4 Within the area to be developed, the proposed solar farm comprises solar photovoltaic panels measuring 2.38m x 1.3m, each of which would be fixed to aluminium or steel mounting frames set at approximately 25 degrees, with the minimum height at the front being 0.91m above ground level, and the maximum height at the back being 3m. The solar farm will have an export capacity of up to 40 MVA, providing an annual electricity output of 54.5 GW/h—sufficient to meet the energy needs of nearly 15,500 homes (based on the mean domestic electricity consumption in the East Midlands in 2021 of 3,534 kWh per annum)) and delivering a saving of over 20,150 tonnes per annum of CO₂ compared to the use of a gas-combined cycle (370g CO₂eq/kWh for gas-combined cycle generated electricity).

3.5 Alongside the solar panels, the proposed development includes 12 BESS containers, each measuring 12.19m x 2.5m x 2.9m, with side mounted heating, ventilation and air conditioning units.

3.6 Other associated equipment and infrastructure comprises:

Infrastructure	Number	Size
MV power stations (transformer and inverter)	17	12.21m x 2.48m x 2.91m
Spare parts containers	2	12.2m x 2.45m x 2.6m
Welfare container	1	12.2m x 2.45m x 2.6m
MV transformers	6	2.44m x 2.52m x 2.98m
Power conversion systems	12	3.7m x 2m x 2.35m



Substation compound (132kV), including DNO Control Room, transformer, and Customer Control Room	1	65.4m x 44.38m
Lattice tower	1	25m
Customer switchgear	1	12.2m x 2.45m x 2.6m
Water storage tank (250,000 Litres)	1	9.12m x 3.84m
CCTV camera and post	1 every 50m	2.9m high
Deer fencing (around the solar farm)		2.4m high
Palisade fencing (around the BESS and substation)		2.4m high
New internal access track		4m wide

- 3.7 It should also be noted that no site lighting is required during normal operations, but motion activated downward facing lighting (for emergency out of hours maintenance visits only) may be provided, with it envisaged that details would be confirmed through the submission of an appropriate lighting strategy prior to development commencing.
- 3.8 At the same time, the proposed development presents considerable opportunities for landscape and biodiversity enhancements as shown on the PPP.
- 3.9 Following construction, the site would be an unmanned facility requiring minimal maintenance (with a maintenance visit once or twice a week and DNO visit once or twice a month), and this will therefore generate minimal traffic movements or waste, and complying with all relevant policy requirements as set out below.
- 3.10 As well as the plans, this Planning Statement, and the DAS, the following documents have been submitted with the application:
- Agricultural land classification report (ALC)
 - Geophysical survey report
 - Historic environment desk-based assessment (HEDBA)
 - Noise impact assessment (NIA)
 - Flood risk assessment and surface water drainage strategy (FRA/DS)
 - Transport statement (TS) (including construction traffic management plan (CTMP))
 - Landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA)
 - Ecological impact assessment & biodiversity net gain assessment (EIA and BNGA)
 - Proposed planting plan (PPP)
 - Glint assessment (GA)



- Tree and hedgerow survey reports and constraints plan
- Planning phase battery management safety plan – fire strategy
- Decommissioning statement

3.11 Combined, these documents demonstrate that the proposed development will deliver a number of notable benefits and will not have any unacceptable negative impacts, in accordance with relevant policy requirements set out below.

4 Policy context

4.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, with the adopted Development Plan currently comprising the Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document of the Bassetlaw District Council – Local Development Framework (adopted December 2011) (LDF).

4.2 It is though noted that the LDF is soon to be replaced by the Bassetlaw Local Plan (BLP), which is expected to be adopted shortly, and this may ultimately be the Plan against which the application requires to be assessed. Specifically, independent examination of the Proposed Bassetlaw Local Plan (PBLP) has recently concluded and the Inspector’s Report (issued to the Council on 21 February 2024) confirms that, subject to main modifications, this can proceed to adoption. It is understood that this Report will be considered by Full Council later in 2024, and the BLP adopted thereafter, meaning that this may happen before the application is determined. Or, if not, this will be close to being adopted, and the terms of the PBLP will in any event be a significant material consideration with regards to how the application should be determined, and against which it should be assessed.

4.3 Importantly in this respect, paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that:

“Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to –

a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);

b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and



c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)."

4.4 Meantime, it should also be noted that the relevant policies from the LDF all date from 2011 (13 years ago), beyond the period in which Paragraph 33 of the NPPF states that policies in development plans should be reviewed (that being at least once every 5 years). Thus, under paragraph 11 d) of the NPPF, planning permission should be granted unless:

- *the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed – in terms of which, this Statement demonstrates that no areas or assets of particular importance would be affected, so there would be no basis for refusing the application for this reason; or*
- *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole – in terms of which, this Statement also demonstrates that there would be no such adverse impacts that would justify the application being refused for this reason.*

4.5 This notwithstanding, it is recognised that it is ultimately for the decision maker to decide the extent to which weight may still be given to the existing policies of the LDF (as long as it remains the adopted plan), and also the weight to be given to those of the PBLP, and to other relevant material considerations.

4.6 In light of the above, the following paragraphs address the relevant requirements of both the LDF and the PBLP, demonstrating how the application complies with these. Other relevant material considerations (including relevant provisions of the NPPF) are then addressed in section 5, demonstrating how these also support the application being approved.

Core Strategy & Development Management Policies of the Bassetlaw District Council – Local Development Framework (Adopted December 2011) (LDF)

4.7 In the LDF, the application site is not subject to any special designations, nor is it allocated for any particular use. It is though recognised that:



a) to the west of the site (on the opposite side of the A614 Blyth Road) there is land comprising part a Site of Special Scientific Interest (the Clumber Park SSSI), and a local wildlife site (the Clumber Park LWS); and

b) there is a local wildlife site (the Poulter Valley Plantation (West) LWS) to the east.

4.8 In addition, and although not shown on the LDF proposals map, land to the west of the A614 Blyth Road also includes Clumber Park Registered Park and Garden.

4.9 Relevant policy requirements in respect of these designations are accordingly considered below.

4.10 Firstly however, the principle of the proposed development requires to be assessed against **Policy DM10: Renewable & Low Carbon Energy** of the Bassetlaw Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document, which is clear that the Council will support proposals that seek to utilise renewable and low carbon energy to minimise CO₂ emissions (as the development proposed in this case does). This is though subject to the requirement that proposals for such infrastructure demonstrate that they:

- **are compatible with policies to safeguard the built and natural environment, including heritage assets and their setting, landscape character and features of recognised importance for biodiversity** – all relevant policies are addressed in this Statement, demonstrating how the proposed development is compatible with these;
- **will not lead to the loss of or damage to high-grade agricultural land (Grades 1 & 2)** – the ALC Report confirms that the majority of the site is Grade 3b land (of moderate quality), with only a small area of Grade 3a land, and none that is Grade 1 or 2;
- **are compatible with tourism and recreational facilities** – in terms of which, the key tourism and recreational facilities that could be affected by the proposed development are the Clumber Park Hotel to the west, and the Robin Hood Way to the south. However, the LVIA confirms that views towards the site from the Hotel will largely be restricted by tree cover, and that proposed planting will in fact beneficially enhance the sense of passing through a forest landscape to those travelling past the site along the Robin Hood Way (as opposed to the current view of arable farmland crossed by electricity pylons and transmission lines). The documentation submitted with the application also demonstrates that users of both the Hotel and the Robin Hood Way would not be affected by noise, glint, or



any other impacts. Thus, the proposed development is clearly compatible with these tourism and recreational interests;

- **will not result in unacceptable impacts in terms of visual appearance; noise; shadow flicker; watercourse engineering and hydrological impacts; pollution; or traffic generation** – where relevant to this proposal, these matters are addressed in the LVIA, GA, NIA, FRA/DS, and TS respectively, with these documents demonstrating that no unacceptable impacts arise in terms of visual appearance (including as a result of glint), noise, hydrological impacts, or traffic generation, while the nature and location of the proposed development is such that this will not give rise to any unacceptable impacts in terms of shadow flicker, watercourse engineering, or other forms of pollution; and
- **will not result in an unacceptable cumulative impact in relation to the factors above** – the LVIA, GA and NIA all consider potential cumulative impacts, demonstrating that none would arise, with the nature of any potential impacts meaning that this is also not an issue in respect of potential water or traffic related impacts.

4.11 At the same time, Policy DM10 also states that large-scale renewable and low carbon energy proposals must provide full details of arrangements for decommissioning and reinstatement of the site, albeit it should be recognised that full details may not be available until closer to the time that a scheme ceases to operate. Taking this into account, the Decommissioning statement provides an outline of proposed decommissioning restoration measures, and highlights the applicant’s commitment to submitting a site restoration scheme prior to operations ceasing, including a programme of works to remove the solar panels, batteries and related equipment. Related to which, it should be noted that the PBLP makes it clear that the submission of a decommissioning programme is most appropriately dealt with by way of condition, and the applicant would be happy for planning permission to be granted subject to a condition to this effect, with this and the Decommissioning statement satisfying this element of Policy DM10.

4.12 Finally in terms of Policy DM10, part C states that major development proposals will be expected to deliver specific low-carbon and renewable energy infrastructure in line with assessments of feasibility and overall viability. In terms of which, the fact that the proposed development as a whole would be for renewable energy generation, and the storage of that (which is defined in the Energy Act 2023 as a subset of renewable energy generation) means that nothing further in this respect should be required in this case, with this being something that should be supported in line with



the aspirations to increase the amount of energy generated from renewable and low carbon technologies, which underpins the Policy as a whole.

4.13 Other relevant policy requirements of the Core Strategy and Local Development Framework are addressed below:

- **Policy DM4: Design & Character**, which sets out design principle which all development proposals are expected to demonstrate, albeit many of these relate more to housing or mixed-use developments than to development of the nature proposed in this case. However, how the proposed development complies with those that are of relevance is set out below:
 - **local character and distinctiveness** – the siting and layout of the proposed development and proposed new planting is designed to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the local landscape character, and indeed there will be a positive impact on the landscape for those using the Robin Hood Way, as highlighted in the LVIA;
 - **amenity** – the NIA, GA, TS and LVIA all demonstrate that there will be no adverse impact on residential amenity, and the unmanned nature of the proposed development means that there is no requirement for space for waste and recycling and storage collection; and
 - **carbon reduction** – the very nature of the proposed development is inherently sustainable in design and to reduce carbon.
- **Policy DM8: The Historic Environment**, which establishes a presumption against development that would be determinantal to the significance of a heritage asset, whether designated or non-designated – in terms of which, the proposed development would have no negative impacts on any heritage assets, as confirmed by the HEDBA. Specifically, the HEDBA establishes that:
 - while the site is located in a landscape which contains a number of cropmarks likely to be indicative of Iron Age or Romano-British activity, the proposed scheme has avoided harm to these archaeological remains by excluding them from the development footprint and therefore ensuring that they will be preserved *in situ*;
 - currently, the site does not make a meaningful contribution to the heritage significance of the Clumber Park to the west, and it is anticipated that the



proposed scheme will be effectively screened from this Registered Park and Garden, with the same going for any associated Listed Buildings; and

- the proposed development will also result in no harm to the setting of any other designated heritage assets.

Thus, there is nothing in Policy DM8 that precludes the application being granted.

- **Policy DM9: Green Infrastructure; Biodiversity & Geodiversity; Landscape; Open Space & Sports Facilities**, which makes it clear that development proposals are expected to support the Council's strategic approach to the delivery, protection and enhancement of multi-functional green infrastructure, and take opportunities to restore or enhance habitats and species' populations, with development that would adversely affect features of recognised importance (including SSSIs and LWSs) only supported in specific circumstances, as well as ensuring that, in and adjoining the countryside, they are sensitive to their landscape setting and that they will not adversely affect or result in the loss of open space and sports facilities. In terms of which:

- the EIA and BNGA conclude that:
 - there would be no foreseeable impacts on any sites of nature conservation importance, including the Clumber Park SSSI and nearby LWSs, as a result of the proposals,
 - the only habitat that would be lost would be arable land of low ecological value, and its replacement with acid grassland habitat between and under the proposed solar panel arrays, along with proposed enhancements to hedgerows and new woodland and scrub planting, would significantly enhance the biodiversity value of the site (resulting in a 169.89% gain in habitat units, and a 247.99% gain in hedgerow units, as calculated through the Statutory Biodiversity Metric),
 - while construction of the proposed development could temporarily displace breeding skylarks, ground-nesting birds (including skylarks) will be able to continue to use the site for nesting once construction is complete, and proposed habitat enhancements are likely to increase the bird biodiversity of the site as a whole, and
 - subject to an appropriate lighting strategy being in place (which could be conditioned), there are no foreseeable impacts on any other species of



conservation concern, and indeed proposed habitat enhancements could also benefit bats, invertebrates and plant species;

- whilst the LVIA considers that the proposed development will have some adverse landscape effects, it also highlights that those will not be significant in the medium to long term once mitigating tree and scrub planting has established. Indeed, as also noted above, the LVIA concludes that proposed planting will beneficially enhance the sense of passing through a forest landscape to those travelling past the site along the Blyth Road and Robin Hoods Way (as opposed to the current view of arable farmland crossed by electricity pylons and transmission lines); and
- there are no open spaces or sports facilities on or adjacent to the application site.

There are thus no negative impacts that would preclude planning permission being granted in terms of Policy DM9, and habitats and species would be enhanced as sought by this, which should be welcomed and supported.

- **Policy DM12: Flood Risk, Sewage & Drainage**, which precludes the development of new units in Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b (except where defined by national planning guidance) and requires all new development to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), and provide details of adoption, ongoing maintenance and management of those – in accordance with which, the proposed site layout has been designed such that all new built development would be set back from any land within Flood Zones 2 or 3, and to incorporate appropriate SuDS, as set out in the FRA/DS.
- **Policy DM13: Sustainable Transport**, which seeks to ensure that opportunities are taken to minimise the need to travel by private car and provide access by active and sustainable modes of travel (albeit the introductory text acknowledges that the rural nature of much of Bassetlaw means that the private car is likely to continue to be the dominant form of transportation in the District) – in terms of which, the TS confirms that the proposed development will generate minimal levels of traffic once operational, with this limited to access by maintenance and DNO vehicles, rather than private cars, such that the use of private cars is not an issue in this case.

4.14 In light of the above, and insofar as it is considered appropriate to give weight to the relevant policies of the LDF, it is clear that the proposed development complies with these, and the LDF supports approval of the application accordingly.



Proposed Bassetlaw Local Plan (as submitted for examination on 18 July 2022 and modified per Inspector's Report published 21 February 2024) (PBLP)

- 4.15 In terms of the PBLP's Policies Map, the application site is still not allocated for any specific purpose, nor subject to any specific designations. It is though noted that:
- minor green corridors are now identified directly to the north and south of the site;
 - to the west of the site (on the opposite side of the A614) the Policies Map shows the Clumber Park Registered Park and Garden, with parts of this still also identified as being within the Clumber Park SSSI and the Clumber Park LWS; and
 - the Poulter Valley Plantation (West) LWS continues to be identified to the east of the site.
- 4.16 The relevant policy requirements in respect of these designations are accordingly addressed below, demonstrating that these do not preclude the development proposed.
- 4.17 In doing this, it should though be recognised that the BLDP broadly supports development of the nature proposed, with paragraph 10.2.8 noting that the NPPF emphasises that a positive strategy should be adopted to promote energy from renewable energy sources, with policies designed to maximise the development of renewable energy and heat. Related to this, paragraph 3.28 highlights the need for the use of more sustainable forms of energy, while paragraph 3.29 describes the District's capacity for renewable energy development as increasing.
- 4.18 More specifically in respect of the development proposed in terms of this application, paragraph 10.2.7 of the BLDP expressly refers to proposals for large scale ground mounted solar farms as being capable of contributing substantially to total solar power generation nationally (which, in the context of the need to use more sustainable forms of energy highlighted above, should therefore be encouraged). While it is recognised that there is a preference for future expansion of solar photovoltaics to be on commercial and industrial roof space where possible, paragraph 10.2.7 makes it clear that large scale ground mounted proposals may be acceptable subject to meeting the criteria of Policy ST51.
- 4.19 **Policy ST51: Renewable Energy Generation** is then supportive of development that generates, shares, transmits and/or stores zero carbon and/or low carbon renewable



energy, subject to the satisfactory resolution of all relevant site specific and cumulative impacts upon:

- a) **location, setting and position in the wider landscape, resulting from its siting and scale** – the LVIA demonstrates that the proposed development would not result in any significant landscape impacts in the medium to long term, with this being well screened by existing and proposed planting, and the siting and scale of the proposed development being clearly appropriate in this respect. And indeed, as also noted above, the LVIA concludes that proposed planting will beneficially enhance the sense of passing through a forest landscape to those travelling past the site along the Blyth Road and Robin Hoods Way, with the proposed development thus making a positive contribution to the site’s location, setting and position in the wider landscape, which should be welcomed accordingly;
- b) **natural and heritage assets and their settings** – as highlighted above, the EIA & BNGA concludes that there are no foreseeable impacts on any sites of nature conservation importance as a result of the proposals, including the Clumber Park SSSI and nearby LWSs, and the proposals would significantly enhance the biodiversity value of the site;
- c) **air and water quality** – the nature of the proposed development is such that it would not give rise to any air quality impacts, while the FRA/DS demonstrates that there would be no negative impacts on water quality;
- d) **hydrology and hydrogeology** – again, the FRA/DS demonstrates that there would be no negative impact in these respects;
- e) **the best and most versatile agricultural land** – in terms of which it is recognised that around a quarter of the site is grade 3a land, which is considered to be BMV land. However, the ALC report confirms that over 75% of the survey area is of no more than moderate quality (grade 3b). It should also be noted that, of the grade 3a land, two of the fields are identified in the FRA/DS as being at risk of surface water flooding, which will reduce their agricultural value. And, most importantly, this element of Policy ST51 needs to be read in the context of National Policy Statement EN-3, which states that: “...land type should not be a predominating factor in determining the suitability of the site location...”, and “...the development of ground mounted solar arrays is not prohibited on Best and Most Versatile agricultural land...”, with the key thing instead to be to consider any impacts of doing so, in accordance with paragraphs 2.10.73 – 92 and 2.10.107 – 2.10.126 of that. The terms of these paragraphs are thus addressed in detail as part of the consideration given to National Policy Statement EN-3 in paragraphs 5.3 to 5.6



below, in light of which it is concluded that the use of a small element of BMV land should be considered acceptable in this case, on the basis that no negative impacts have been identified in terms of those paragraphs, and the use of BMV land has been minimised by using land that is of no more than moderate quality for the majority of the site, with this also being in line with a relevant precedent decision, as set out in paragraph 5.7 below;

- f) **existing highway capacity and highway safety** – the TS concludes that, given the low volume of traffic generated by the proposal, the development will not have a significant impact on highway operation or road safety;
- g) **noise, light, glare, smell, dust, emissions or flicker** – where relevant to this proposal, these matters are addressed in the NIA and GA, with these documents demonstrating that no unacceptable impacts arise in terms of noise or glint, while the nature and location of the proposed development is such that this will not give rise to any adverse impacts in terms of light, smell, dust, other emissions, or shadow flicker;
- h) **aviation and radar** – the GA also confirms that no relevant aviation or radar interests would be adversely affected by the proposed development, with consultation with the nearest major aviation reception (Retford (Gamston) Airport) ongoing; and
- i) **recreation and local amenity** – again, the GA confirms that there would be no material impact on recreation or local amenity (including the Robin Hood Way or any other public rights of way) as a result of glint, while the NIA confirms that there would be no noise impacts, and the LVIA confirms that there would be no negative visual impacts on the hotel, the Robin Hood Way or any other recreational interests, and indeed, that the experience of users of the Robin Hood Way would be enhanced, as highlighted above) with the nature and location of the proposed development being such that no other impacts on recreation or local amenity are likely to arise from this.

4.20 The Policy also states that:

- *“Proposals must take into account operational and approved developments, as well as any proposed intensification to operational or approved proposals”* – as noted above, the LVIA, GA, and NIA all consider potential cumulative impacts, with other operational and approved developments thus having been duly taken into account when preparing this application;



- *“All renewable energy development will be expected to provide details of the expected power generation based upon expected yield or local self-consumption to enable effective monitoring of the district’s contribution to the national zero carbon targets”* – as also noted above, the solar farm will have an export capacity of up to 40 MVA, providing an annual electricity output of 54.5 GW/h – sufficient to meet the energy needs of nearly 15,500 homes (based on the mean domestic electricity consumption in the East Midlands in 2021 of 3,534 kWh per annum) and delivering a saving of over 20,150 tonnes per annum of CO₂ compared to the use of a gas-combined cycle (370g CO₂eq/kWh for gas-combined cycle generated electricity); and
- *“A decommissioning programme applied by a Condition to any planning permission granted will be required to demonstrate that the site can be returned to an acceptable state three years after cessation of operations”* – again as noted above, the applicant is happy for planning permission to be granted subject to a condition to this effect, with the Decommissioning Statement providing an outline of proposed restoration measures, and confirming the applicant’s commitment to submitting a site restoration scheme prior to operations ceasing, including a programme of works to remove the solar panels, batteries and related equipment.

4.21 Related to the criteria set out in paragraph 4.19 above, and as also set out in that, particular consideration has been given to relevant policy requirements in respect of nearby land subject to any special designations identified above. In particular, **Policy ST39: Green and Blue Infrastructure** requires the connectivity, quality, multifunctionality, biodiversity and amenity value of the green and blue infrastructure network to be enhanced, extended and managed through (of relevance in this case):

- **protecting and enhancing the landscape character and the distinctiveness of Registered Parks and Gardens** – in terms of which, the HEDBA demonstrates that detailed consideration has been given to the importance of protecting the Clumber Park Registered Park and Garden, as well as other Registered Parks and Gardens in the area, and that all of these would be duly protected;
- **protecting, enhancing and restoring watercourses, ponds, lakes and water dependent habitats where appropriate** – the FRA/DS confirms that all relevant elements of the water environment would be protected. In addition to which, the proposed development will also deliver riparian scrub with tussocky species rich meadow at it nearest point to the River Poulter, as indicated in the submitted PPP;
- **providing for biodiversity net gain** – as highlighted above, the EIA and BNG Assessment confirms that the proposed development would deliver a 169.89%



gain in habitat units, and a 247.99% gain in hedgerow units, as calculated through the Statutory Biodiversity Metric;

- **protecting and enhancing ancient and mature woodland and hedgerows, and providing for tree planting to secure recreational benefits and/or to aid climate change mitigation** – none of the existing woodland is classified as ancient woodland but, other than the removal of a short 4m section of narrow hedgerow in the southern part of the site for access, as shown on the proposed site plan, all existing woodland and hedgerows would in any event be retained, as shown on both that and the PPP, with existing hedges also to be enhanced and additional woodland planted as shown on the PPP as well, delivering a significant net benefit in this respect;
- **making appropriate provision for new green/blue infrastructure in new development** – as highlighted above, existing hedges would be enhanced and new woodland provided, as shown on the PPP, along with new scrub planting and the creation of a species rich meadow across much of the site, as also shown on the PPP; and
- **applying climate change mitigation and adaptation measures through new development, including flood risk and watercourse management** – the underlying purpose of the proposed development is to facilitate climate change mitigation by generating more energy from a renewable source, in addition to which climate change adaption measures have been applied in that the proposed site layout has been designed such that all new built development would be set back from both the nearest watercourse and any land at risk of flooding , while also having been designed to ensure that it does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere (all as set out in the FRA/DS).

4.22 Policy ST39 also sets out requirements in respect of green corridors, stating that the function, setting, and biodiversity, landscape, access and recreational value of those corridors identified in the Policies Map should be protected and enhanced, with an ecological impact assessment and/or landscape statement required for major development proposals that lie wholly or partly within identified buffer zones around these – for minor green corridors, including those to the north and south of the application site, the minimum buffer is 15m measured from each side of the centre point. Taking this into account, the proposed site layout retains a buffer in excess of this between all elements of the proposed development and the identified green corridors, ensuring they are protected accordingly, while proposed new planting around the site will enhance the function and value of these corridors as well. Further, and although the development is outwith the minimum buffer zone, the application



is nonetheless accompanied by an EIA and a LVIA which, combined, demonstrate that these corridors would not be adversely affected in any way. .

- 4.23 Lastly, where new green and blue infrastructure is proposed (as there is as part of the development proposed in this case), Policy ST39 requires that this should be accompanied by appropriate management and maintenance plans. The submission and approval of such plans is though something that can be conditioned, and the applicant would be happy for planning permission to be granted subject to a condition to this effect.
- 4.24 Policy ST39 should also be read alongside **Policy ST40: Biodiversity and Geodiversity**, which seeks to protect and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of Bassetlaw, including (of relevance in this case), SSSIs, LWSs, and other biodiversity/geodiversity of importance, with development that has an adverse effect on these designations only allowed if certain criteria are met. In this case however, the EIA and BNGA confirms that (subject to an appropriate lighting strategy being in place, which could be conditioned, as noted above) there would be no adverse effects on any such designations or interests, and the application thus complies with Policy ST40 in this respect.
- 4.25 Policy ST40 does not though only seek to protect biodiversity, but also to enhance it, specifically stating that: *“In line with national legislation, all new development should make provision for net biodiversity gain on site, or where it can be demonstrated after following the mitigation hierarchy this is not practicable, off site provision will be considered.”* In accordance with which the EIA and BNGA confirms that the proposed development would deliver a 169.89% net gain in habitat units, and a 247.99% net gain in hedgerow units, as calculated through the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, as also highlighted above.
- 4.26 Lastly in terms of natural heritage interests, **Policy 41: Trees, woodlands and hedgerows** aims to protect existing trees, woodland and hedgerows and secure additional planting that increases canopy cover in the interests of biodiversity, amenity and climate change adaptation by (of relevance in this case):
- retaining, protecting and improving woodland and trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), trees within conservation areas, and ‘important’ hedgerows as defined by the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 – no trees subject to TPOs or ‘important’ hedgerows would be affected by the proposed development;



- giving consideration to trees and hedgerows both on individual merit as well as their contribution to amenity and interaction as part of a group within the broader landscape setting – which the tree and hedgerow surveys and constraints plan do;
- resisting the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists – no ancient woodland or ancient or veteran trees would be affected by the proposed development; and
- seeking from major development, provision for new trees or an equivalent financial contribution to help mitigate the impacts of climate change in accordance with Policy ST50 – in terms of which, it should be noted that Policy ST50 refers specifically to new tree planting to offset the carbon emissions associated with the creation of new houses or non-residential floor space, and so is not relevant in this case. However, new woodland would be provided as shown on the PPP, which should be welcomed in accordance with the principles of Policy 41 in this respect.

4.27 Policy 41 then sets out further criteria which must be satisfied where development would adversely affect trees or hedgerows. In terms of which, it should be noted that:

- the application has been informed by a detailed survey of all trees and hedgerows on and around the application site, with all existing trees and hedgerows to be retained other than a short 4m section of narrow hedgerow, which would be removed to accommodate the internal access track as set out above, and that being de minimis in the context of the extent of the existing hedgerows on and around the site;
- a buffer of at least 10m is to be retained between all elements of the proposed development and the nearest trees, with at least 5m between all elements of the proposed development and the retained hedgerows, ensuring the health and safety of these;
- over 500m of hedgerow will be enhanced and additional planting will also be provided, as shown on the PPP, the value and extent of which significantly exceeds that of the short 4m section of hedgerow to be removed, providing a significant net benefit in this respect; and
- if further information with regards to the maintenance of both existing and proposed planting is required, the applicant is happy for planning permission to be granted subject to a condition requiring this to be submitted and approved prior to development commencing.



- 4.28 In light of the above, the application clearly complies with Policy 41.
- 4.29 Given the nature of the proposed development, it is recognised that careful consideration also needs to be given to any potential landscape and visual impacts, and these require to be assessed under **Policy ST37: Landscape Character**. Specifically, Policy ST37 states that proposals that contribute to the nature and quality of Bassetlaw’s landscapes will be supported where it can be demonstrated that (of relevance in this case):

“it protects and where possible enhances the distinctive qualities of the relevant landscape character policy zone, as identified in the Bassetlaw Landscape Character Assessment 2009 by conserving, restoring, reinforcing or creating relevant landscape forms and features”.

- 4.30 Related to this, it is though noted at paragraph 8.3.3 of the PBLP that, since human and natural activity evolves over time, landscape character also changes.
- 4.31 In terms of which, whilst the LVIA considers that the proposed development will have some adverse landscape and visual effects, it also highlights that none will be significant in the medium to long term once mitigating tree and scrub planting has established. And indeed, as also noted above, the LVIA concludes that proposed planting will beneficially enhance the sense of passing through a forest landscape to those travelling past the site along the Blyth Road and Robin Hoods Way (as opposed to the current view of arable farmland crossed by electricity pylons and transmission lines). Thus, the application should be supported in terms of Policy ST37.
- 4.32 More generally, all development also needs to comply with **Policy ST35: Design Quality**, which requires all development to be of a high quality design, and sets out the design objectives that are considered to be critical to delivering high quality spaces and places. Of relevance in this case, these require that the proposed development:
- **has a clear function, character and identity based upon a robust understanding of local context, constraints and distinctiveness, while reflecting the principles of relevant national and local design guidance** – which the proposed development does, as set out in the DAS;
 - **uses land efficiently and ensures density reflects local character** – the proposal uses land efficiently by maximising the use of lower grade agricultural land which is constrained for agricultural purposes and instead using it for much needed



renewable energy generation and storage, whilst also making use of an existing access;

- **where appropriate, positively preserves, enhances and integrates landscape and townscape features, and natural and heritage assets** – all existing trees and hedgerows would be retained, with these supplemented by additional planting and enhancements, and this planting also ensuring that any nearby heritage assets are appropriately protected, as confirmed by the HEDBA, all as highlighted above;
- **respects the local context and complements the landform, layout, building orientation, scale, height, massing, type, materials, details and landscaping of the surrounding areas** – while not all of this is relevant to this proposal, the LVIA confirms that the proposed development would respect and complement the local landform, in that it would have no significant adverse impacts on this in the medium to long term, and indeed would deliver positive enhancements, as highlighted in the context of Policy ST37 above;
- **incorporates high quality landscape design and maximises opportunities for greening, particularly where a development site adjoins the countryside** – which the proposed development does as shown on the PPP;
- **is sustainable in design and construction, and utilises modern construction methods and durable materials, where practicable** – the proposed development would comprise pre-fabricated panels and containers, designed for the proposed use, with the nature of the development as a whole being inherently sustainable in design;
- **minimises energy consumption by maximising opportunities for passive solar energy and integrating renewable and low carbon technologies where practicable in accordance with Policy ST51** – although this is not entirely relevant to this proposal, it should be noted that the proposed pre-fabricated containers would have minimal energy/water requirements, and the development as a whole seeks to maximise the use of renewable and low carbon technologies in accordance with Policy ST51, as set out in this Statement;
- **mitigates flood risk and water run-off utilising the drainage hierarchy in accordance with Policy ST52, and integrates water management appropriate to place** – as highlighted above and set out in more detail in the context of Policy ST52 below, the proposed site layout has been designed such that all new built development would be set back from any land within Flood Zones 2 or 3, and provides space for appropriate SuDS measures to be provided, described in the FRA/DS; and



- ensures an appropriate level of well-integrated, convenient and visually attractive areas for motor vehicle and cycle parking informed by the most up-to-date Nottinghamshire Parking Standards unless it can be demonstrated that it is not viable or feasible to do so – as noted above, the TS confirms that the proposed development will generate minimal traffic once operational, limited to a maintenance visit once or twice a week and DNO visit once or twice a month, with ample parking for such vehicles provided just outwith the substation compound, where it is both conveniently located and well screened.

4.33 In addition to the above support for the development in principle, it is recognised that there are a number of further policy requirements with regards to subject specific and technical matters as set out below, with many of these having been addressed in the context of the relevant policies. However, in respect of those not already addressed and which are relevant to the application site and the proposed development, the application also complies with each of these as follows.

- **Policy ST42: The Historic Environment**, which requires that the historic environment be conserved and enhanced, sensitively managed, enjoyed and celebrated for its contribution to sustainable communities – the HEDBA duly recognises the importance of ensuring that any potential impacts on the historic environment are robustly assessed and, as highlighted above, establishes that:
 - while the site is located in a landscape which contains a number of cropmarks that are likely to be indicative of Iron Age or Romano-British activity, the proposed scheme has avoided harm to these archaeological remains by excluding them from the development footprint and allowing them to be preserved *in situ*;
 - currently, the site does not make a meaningful contribution to the heritage significance of the Clumber Park to the west, and it is anticipated that the proposed scheme will be effectively screened from this Registered Park and Garden, with the same going for any associated Listed Buildings; and
 - the proposed development will result in no harm to the setting of any other designated heritage assets.

Thus, all relevant elements of the historic environment will be conserved, and can continue to be enjoyed and celebrated, in line with Policy ST42.



- **Policy 43: Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets**, which sets out more specific requirements in respect of proposals involving designated and non-designated heritage assets or their settings, with regards to which the HEDBA again demonstrates that all relevant considerations have been taken into account, and no relevant assets or their settings would be adversely affected. At the same time, Policy 43 also stipulates that, where evidence suggests that significant archaeological remains exist on site, proposals should be supported by an appropriate archaeological evaluation that provides an assessment of the significance of the remains and considers how the remains would be affected by the proposed development. And again, this requirement is satisfied by the HEDBA.
- **Policy 48: Protecting Amenity**, which states that proposals for development should be designed and constructed to avoid and minimise impacts on the amenity of existing and future users, individually and cumulatively, within the development and close to it, including a requirement that new development should not impact on the amenity of existing residents or generate a level of activity, noise, light, air quality, odour, vibration or other pollution which cannot be mitigated to an appropriate standard – where relevant to this proposal, these matters are addressed in the TS, NIA, GA and the planning phase battery management safety plan (fire strategy), with these documents demonstrating that no unacceptable impacts arise in terms of traffic activity, noise, glint, or fire risk, while the nature and location of the proposed development is such that this will not give rise to any adverse impacts in terms of light, air quality, odour, vibration, or other pollution, and there being no existing residents nearby that would be affected.
- **Policy 49: Contaminated and Unstable Land**, which sets out requirements to be satisfied in the event that development is considered to be on contaminated land and/or unstable land – in this case however, the application site does not have any history of any potentially contaminative use, and so nothing further is required in this regard to comply with Policy 49.
- **Policy ST52: Flood Risk and Drainage**, which requires all proposals to consider and, where necessary, mitigate the impacts of the proposed development on flood risk, on-site and off-site, commensurate with the scale and impact of the development. To this end, proposals must be accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (where appropriate) which demonstrates that the development, including the access and egress, will be safe for its lifetime, without increasing or exacerbating flood risk elsewhere and where possible will reduce flood risk overall. Where practicable, all proposals should incorporate SuDS in line with national standards – these points are all addressed in the FRA/DS, in terms of which it should in particular be noted that:



- the proposed site layout has been designed with all new built development set back from any land within Flood Zones 2 or 3, such that all development would be located within Flood Zone 1 (low risk), and is not considered to be at risk from either fluvial or tidal flooding;
 - given the nature of the development, with vulnerable infrastructure raised above the ground level, it is considered that groundwater flooding does not pose a significant risk;
 - although some localised areas across the site are at risk of surface water flooding, the only infrastructure in these areas would be solar panels at a height at which these would not be adversely affected by any surface water flooding that may occur, such that surface water flood risk is not considered to constrain the development; and
 - SuDS measures will be provided in accordance with the recommendations of the FRA/DS (with the applicant happy for planning permission to be granted subject to a condition to this effect), with these delivering betterment by reducing the surface water discharge rate from the site, thus ensuring that there is no adverse impact on neighbouring sites, and indeed reducing the risk of these being affected by flooding, when compared to the pre-development situation.
- **Policy ST53: Protecting Water Quality and Management**, which states that the quantity and quality of surface and groundwater bodies will be protected and where possible enhanced – in terms of which it should be noted that:
 - the proposed site layout plan includes a minimum 20m buffer between any proposed infrastructure and the site boundary closest to the closest watercourse (the River Poulter, which runs to the north/north-east of the site), such that there would be no development adjacent to this;
 - the FRA/DS confirms that, subject to recommendations outlined in this being incorporated into the proposed development (with the applicant happy for planning permission to be granted subject to a condition to this effect), there is the capacity to manage the surface water runoff from the development on-site without causing a detrimental risk to the groundwater beneath;
 - the recommendations of the FRA/DS also align with Policy ST53's drainage hierarchy in that proposed SuDS measures would infiltrate or discharge into



the ground, with these designed with an allowance for climate change as also set out in that;

- run-off from the proposed solar panels is considered to pose a low environmental risk and, in the unlikely event of a fire affecting the BESS element of the proposed development, any contaminated runoff would be contained, as also set out in the FRA/DS, with the Policy ST35 (3)(d) requirement that infiltration-based SuDS incorporate appropriate water pollution control measures satisfied accordingly; and
 - the nature of the proposed development is such that no infrastructure for water supply, sewerage or sewage treatment is required.
- **Policies ST54: Transport Infrastructure and ST55: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Active Travel** which, combined, require consideration to be given to the transport and access impacts of proposed developments, and to offer a range of sustainable and active travel choices (as appropriate to the development proposed) – in terms of which, the TS demonstrates that due consideration has been given to such matters, with this concluding that:
 - when upgraded as proposed, the site access will be suitable for use by large vehicles as required during the construction phase;
 - the level of activity generated during the construction period would not be significant in highway capacity terms, and the adoption of proposed construction management measures (as set out in the TS and CTMP) will minimise disruption and nuisance to other users;
 - once operational, traffic generated by the proposed development would be minimal (limited to a maintenance visit once or twice a week and DNO visit once or twice a month); and
 - given the low volume of traffic generated by the proposal it is concluded that the development will not have a significant impact on highway operation or road safety.

5 Material considerations

- 5.1 While the application should be approved on the basis that it complies with both the LDF and PBLP for the reasons given above, consideration has also been given to other relevant material considerations, namely NPPF, National Policy Statement for



renewable energy infrastructure (EN-3), and recent precedent decisions which provide further support for the application being approved, as set out below.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2 Of relevance to this application, paragraph 163 of the NPPF stipulates that when determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should:

- “...recognise that even small-scale projects can make a valuable contribution to significant cutting greenhouse gas emissions.” - in accordance with which, due weight needs to be given to the contribution that the proposed development would make to the decarbonisation of the UK’s energy system, as set out above; and
- “approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.” – with it having been demonstrated that any impacts in this case are acceptable, as set out in this Statement, and this application should thus be approved accordingly.

National Policy Statement for renewable energy infrastructure (EN-3)

5.3 Insofar as this National Policy Statement (EN-3) sets out factors which should be taken into account when assessing whether a site is suitable for solar development, these have been taken into account when preparing this application, as set out in the DAS, with the site considered to be well suited when assessed against these factors, for the reasons given in that.

5.4 In addition, EN-3 also sets out information which should be provided with planning applications, with this having informed the documentation submitted with this application, and all relevant information provided accordingly.

5.5 In particular, EN-3 refers to the importance of considering any impacts in accordance with paragraphs 2.10.73 – 2.10.126 of this (including the impact of using any BMV land, with regards to which consideration should be given to paragraphs 2.10.73 – 92 and 2.10.107 – 2.10.126, as highlighted above), in terms of which, all of these have been addressed above in the context of the relevant Development Plan policy requirements, however, in summary:

- the EIA and BNGS and FRA/DS combined demonstrate that there would be no negative impacts on biodiversity, ecology, geological conservation or water management, in line with paragraphs 2.10.75 to 2.10.88, with the proposed



development providing biodiversity enhancements in line with paragraphs 2.10.89 and 2.10.99;

- the LVIA and tree and hedgerow surveys combined demonstrate that the proposed development has been designed with due cognisance of the need to protect landscape, visual and residential amenity, in line with paragraphs 2.10.93 to 2.10.101, with existing vegetation, trees and hedges to be protected in line with paragraphs 2.10.100 and 2.10.101;
- the GA demonstrates that any potential glint and glare issues have been duly assessed in line with paragraphs 2.10.102 to 2.10.106, concluding that the overall potential for glint at receptors within the vicinity of the application site is low;
- the HEDBA demonstrates that the potential impacts on cultural heritage have been duly assessed in line with paragraphs 2.10.107 to 2.10.119, and that no relevant heritage interests would be negatively affected; and
- the TS demonstrates that potential construction traffic impacts have been duly assessed in line with paragraphs 2.10.120 to 2.10.126, and that the level of traffic generated during the construction phase is not significant, and will be limited in duration and effect, with any potential disruption or nuisance (including in respect of transport noise and vibration) to be minimised by the implementation of construction management measures as set out in that.

5.6 It should also be noted that, in terms of mitigation in respect of impacts on agricultural land, the proposed site layout is such that elements of the proposed development that would have the greatest impacts on soils (i.e. BESS development, substation compound, and associated infrastructure which would need to be located on areas of hardstanding) is located outwith areas of BMV land, with there thus being minimal disturbance of the soils on any areas of BMV land, in line with paragraph 2.10.27.

Precedent decisions

5.7 In terms of recent precedent decisions which provide further support for the application being approved, particular consideration should be given to **appeal reference APP/C1570/W/23/3319421** for the construction and operation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar photovoltaic arrays and battery storage, together with associated development on land west of Thaxted, Cutlers Green Lane, Thaxted, which was approved on 18 December 2023. Of relevance to this application, 85% of the application site in that case comprised BMV land, including a significant proportion of grade 2 land (this being a greater proportion of the site and higher



quality land than any of the land on the application site in this instance), with regards to which the Inspector concluded that:

“...whilst careful consideration needs to be given to the use of BMV, none of the policy or guidance set out above prohibits its use for large scale solar farms.”

5.8 On the basis that there has been no change to the relevant national policy context referred to in that decision since then, the same conclusion should be reached in respect of the use of a smaller portion of lower grade BMV land in this case, with there being nothing in the guidance which precludes this.

6 Conclusion

6.1 For the reasons given in this Statement, it is clear that the proposed development:

- would contribute to increasing the use of renewable energy sources, as encouraged by both Policy DM 10: Renewable & Low Carbon Energy of the Bassetlaw Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (the key policy of relevance in the adopted Development Plan) and Policy ST51: Renewable Energy Generation of the PBLP (which is expected to become the adopted Development Plan shortly and is therefore a significant material consideration);
- complies with all other relevant policies of both the adopted Development Plan and the PBLP;
- is supported by the NPPF, which makes it clear that the planning system is expected to support the transition to a low carbon future, including by encouraging the development of renewable and low carbon energy developments (as is proposed in this case); and
- is consistent with relevant precedent decisions, in particular appeal reference APP/C1570/W/23/3319421.

6.2 As the development complies with the Development Plan and is supported by relevant material considerations, with no material considerations indicating otherwise, the application should be approved.

Aurora Planning Limited
29 March 2024

