

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
COMMITTEE

MONDAY 17 JUNE 2013 AT 5.00PM

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**UPDATE REPORT &  
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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## **PETERBOROUGH CITY COUNCIL**

### **PUBLIC SPEAKING SCHEME - PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

#### **Procedural Notes**

1. Planning Officer to introduce application.
2. Chairman to invite Ward Councillors, Parish Council, Town Council or Neighbourhood representatives to present their case.
3. Members' questions to Ward Councillors, Parish Council, Town Council or Neighbourhood representatives.
4. Chairman to invite objector(s) to present their case.
5. Members' questions to objectors.
6. Chairman to invite applicants, agent or any supporters to present their case.
7. Members' questions to applicants, agent or any supporters.
8. Officers to comment, if necessary, on any matters raised during stages 2 to 7 above.
9. Members to debate application and seek advice from Officers where appropriate.
10. Members to reach decision.

**The total time for speeches from Ward Councillors, Parish Council, Town Council or Neighbourhood representatives shall not exceed ten minutes or such period as the Chairman may allow with the consent of the Committee.**

**MPs will be permitted to address Committee when they have been asked to represent their constituents. The total time allowed for speeches for MPs will not be more than five minutes unless the Committee decide on the day of the meeting to extend the time allowed due to unusual or exceptional circumstances.**

**The total time for speeches in respect of each of the following groups of speakers shall not exceed five minutes or such period as the Chairman may allow with the consent of the Committee.**

1. Objectors.
2. Applicant or agent or supporters.

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**PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION COMMITTEE – 17 JUNE 2013 AT 5.00PM**  
**LIST OF PERSONS WISHING TO SPEAK**

Agenda Item No.	Page No	Application	Name	Objector/Applicant/Agent/ Supporters/Parish Council/Town Council/Neighbourhood Representatives
3.1	3	12/01905/R3FUL – INSTALLATION OF SOLAR FARM, LAND TO THE EAST OF BLACK DROVE, THORNEY, PETERBOROUGH	Councillor David Sanders Councillor Margaret Long Mr Stewart Jackson MP  Gemma Harris  Greg Bliss  Andrew Mustoe  Chris Stirling  Helen Plummer  Mike Greene  Alex Terry  Dawn Clipston  David Cassells	Ward Councillor  Thorney Parish Councillor  MP for Peterborough  Objector  Objector  Objector  Objector  Objector  Objector  Objector  Objector  Agent

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## BRIEFING UPDATE

P & EP Committee 17 June 2013

ITEM NO	APPLICATION NO	SITE/DESCRIPTION
1.	12/01905/R3FUL	<b>Land To The East Black Drove, Thorney, Peterborough.</b> Installation of a solar farm with an installed power capacity of up to 26MW, comprising the installation of photovoltaic panels, associated boundary fencing, security and CCTV cameras, site access and associated electrical infrastructure including inverter units; transformer and temporary construction compounds, electricity substation and 2no. terminal towers.

### **A. Request for Committee meeting adjournment**

Following the late receipt of English Heritage additional comments, the Officers recommendation to the Committee has now changed. Officers now recommend that the meeting be adjourned and that Members consideration of the planning application is deferred, until the archaeological issues have been resolved.

### **B. Additional Representations**

#### ***Local Residents/Interested Parties***

412 additional **objections** have been received since the Committee report was written. There are no new comments raised in these objections, that have not already been reported in the Committee report.

**University of Cambridge – Division of Archaeology** – A copy of their letter is attached. They conclude, in view of the archaeological potential of the site, it is imperative that proper and thorough hydrological, palaeo-environmental and archaeological investigations are designed, commissioned and conducted as part of the planning process and before any development decisions are made.

#### ***Parish Council***

**Thorney Parish Council** has requested the attached letter from the University of Cambridge, Division of Archaeology, dated 31<sup>st</sup> May 2013 be included within its objection to the proposal.

#### ***Consultees***

**English Heritage** - A further letter dated 11<sup>th</sup> June 2013 has been received. They are aware of the expert representations received from the University of Cambridge regarding the likely archaeological potential and the scale of harm which might be caused to heritage assets present. They consider that it would be appropriate to require the completion of a programme of archaeological, palaeoenvironmental and hydrological work to more fully identify the extent and character of non-designated historic assets and the potential harm to their significance prior to the determination of this application.

**Department of Communities and Local Government** – The Secretary of State, under his powers under Article 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2010, directs the Council not to grant planning permission on this application without specific authorisation. This direction is issued to enable him to consider whether he should direct under Section 77 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that the application should be referred to him for determination. This direction does not, of course, prevent the Council from considering the application, forming a view as to the merits or, if they are so minded, refusing permission.

### **C. Changes to conditions**

**Officers** request the following amendments to the wording of Condition 28:-

**Prior to the commencement of the development, an Operational Management Plan (OMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include but is not limited to:-**

- **Planting and management proposals for Grassland habitat, to include wild bird seed mixtures, rough grassland mixtures and nectar mixtures along field margins.**
- **Planting and management proposals for wet and dry drain buffers.**
- **Details of the installation of bird and bat boxes.**
- **Planting and management proposals of hedgerows.**
- **Details of the management measures to ensure protection of any species and their habitats on site.**
- **Details of specific habitat enhancement measures relating to protected species**
- **Details of the Ecological Monitoring Programme to be implemented throughout the lifetime of the development**
- **Details of measures to reduce collision risk to birds and bats through incorporating fence marking in any areas where fences will not be screened by hedgerow**
- **Details of the management measures required to maintain the biodiversity habitat , through the lifespan of the project**
- **Details to demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity to include locations and areas of newly created BAP Habitat(s)**

**Thereafter the OMP shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the development and the protection and enhancement of biodiversity in accordance with Policies CS20 and CS21 of the Peterborough Core Strategy (2011), the NPPF (2012) and PP16 of the Peterborough Policies DPD (2012).



**Charles French**

Head of Division  
Professor of Geoarchaeology  
Director of the McBurney Geoarchaeology Laboratory



**Proposed solar and wind farm developments at  
America Farm, Newborough and Morris Fens**

May 31, 2013

To Whom It May Concern

I write in the strongest possible terms of concern from both archaeological and environmental perspectives regarding the proposed solar and wind farm developments by Peterborough City Council at America Farm, Newborough and Morris Fens. As someone who has been intimately involved with the archaeological investigations of this part of northern Cambridgeshire for the past 35+ years, and indeed deciphered the buried past landscape sequences in this part of the country, any proposed development must take into account a number of significant archaeological, hydrological and environmental concerns.

The areas of land earmarked for development all contain buried prehistoric and Roman landscapes that are indicative of various phases of past landscape development. At America Farm, it is located at the narrow neck of fen embayment which joins the Flag Fen basin to the southwest and the wider Prior' Fen basin to the northeast, and contains both Neolithic and Bronze Age buried shorelines. In Newborough Fen, the development area contains the late Neolithic roddons or former tidal river channels, as well as the Bronze Age and Roman fen-edges. In Morris Fen, there are a number of buried fen islands which were dry land in the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods. Thus, each area contains both known archaeology and associated past environmental records, and has significant potential for more discoveries of the type seen in the Flag Fen basin through Dr Francis Pryor's investigations and indeed my own Division's archaeological unit (Cambridge Archaeological Unit) Late Bronze Age discoveries at Must Farm in the south of the same basin.

The significant point here is that the archaeology is buried under later marine and freshwater fen deposits and therefore is exceptionally well preserved, whether it is waterlogged or not! This makes the archaeology of this fenland region of Cambridgeshire certainly of national importance and in some cases (such as the discoveries at Flag Fen and Must Farm) of European and international significance). The absence of an on/near-surface archaeological record is not a guide to what is actually there; this can only be discovered by systematic, planned and well-funded, below-ground archaeological investigations.

Moreover, these development areas potentially contain waterlogged deposits that will provide palaeo-environmental evidence of landscape change throughout the last 10,000 years, as well as organic artefacts and textiles which are rarely preserved in archaeological contexts in non-fenland/non-waterlogged situations. In particular, the well preserved fenland deposits will provide data on human interactions with their landscape, for example how woodland

developed and the landscape became deforested and turned into a developed agricultural landscape during later prehistoric and Roman times, and how people coped with a landscape that was slowly but surely becoming drowned. This type of excellent data preservation can be affected by any development which involves ‘puncturing’ the later fen deposit build-up, such as is required to construct the proposed solar and wind farm sites. Thus the impact of the proposed development on the existing and past hydrological regime of the land concerned is also an essential study required as a prerequisite of any development plan for this area of fenland.

Given these very important considerations, it is imperative that proper and thorough hydrological, palaeo-environmental and archaeological investigations are designed, commissioned and conducted as part of the planning process and before any development decisions are made.

Yours sincerely,

*Charles French*

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