



Public Document Pack
Boston Borough Council

**Chief Executive
Rob Barlow**

Municipal Buildings
Boston
Lincolnshire PE21 8QR
Tel: 01205 314200

Friday 22 May 2026

Notice of meeting of the Planning Committee

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Planning Committee
on **Tuesday 2nd June 2026 at 10.00 am**
in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR

**Rob Barlow
Chief Executive**

Membership:

Chairman: Councillor Peter Bedford
Vice-Chairman: Councillor David Scoot
Councillors: Alison Austin, John Baxter, Anton Dani, Stuart Evans, David Middleton,
Barrie Pierpoint, Claire Rylott, Lina Savickiene, Sarah Sharpe,
Suzanne Welberry and Stephen Woodliffe

In order to vote on a planning application Committee Members must be present for the entire presentation and discussion on the item.

When an official site visit is undertaken which forms part of the decision making at Committee, only Members who have attended the site visit and received full representation will be able to debate and decide the application.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the committee meeting as observers except during the consideration of exempt or confidential items.

This meeting may be subject to being recorded.

Agenda

Part I - Preliminaries

A Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence and notification of substitutes *(if any)*.

B Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

C Minutes (Pages 1 - 8)

To sign and confirm the minutes of the last meeting.

D Public Questions

To answer any written questions received from members of the public no later than 5 p.m. two clear working days prior to the meeting – for this meeting the deadline is 5 p.m. on Thursday 28th May 2026

Part II - Agenda Items

1 B/25/0224 - Land East of Bicker Fen substation, Bicker Fen, Boston (Pages 9 - 44)

Application type: Major – Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Proposed installation and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and other ancillary and associated infrastructure

Site: Land east of Bicker Fen substation, Bicker Fen, Boston

A planning decision comes into effect only when the decision notice and associated documents are despatched by the Local Planning Authority and not when the Committee makes its decision.

The Human Rights Act 1998

It is implicit in these reports that the recommendations to and the consideration by Committee will take into account the Council's obligations arising out of the Human Rights Act and the rights conferred by Articles 6,8,14 and Article 1 of the First Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). These are the rights to a fair hearing, respect for family and private life, the prohibition against discrimination and the peaceful enjoyment of possessions, respectively. The ECHR allows many to be overridden if there is a sufficiently compelling public interest.

In simple terms the Act requires a person's interest be balanced against the interests of the community. This is something that is part of the planning system and that balancing is a significant part of the consideration of issues identified to Committee by officer reports. Provided that those issues are taken into account, the Convention will be satisfied.

Notes:

Please contact Democratic Services (demservices@boston.gov.uk) if you have any queries about the agenda and documents for this meeting. Council Members who are not able to attend the meeting should notify Democratic Services as soon as possible.

Alternative Versions –

Should you wish to have the agenda or report in an alternative format such as larger text, Braille or a specific language, please telephone 01205 314351.

Boston Borough Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Planning Committee** held in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR on Tuesday 24th March 2026 at 10.00 am.

Present:

Councillor Peter Bedford, in the Chair.

Councillors David Scoot (Vice-Chairman), Alison Austin, Stuart Evans, David Middleton, Claire Rylott, Lina Savickiene, Sarah Sharpe, Suzanne Welberry and Stephen Woodliffe.

In attendance:

Officers:

Interim Group Manager – Planning and Development, Development Manager, Planning Officer, Senior Planning Lawyer and Democratic Services Officer.

30 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andy Izard and Barrie Pierpoint.

31 Declarations of Interest

Standing declarations of interest were received for all members of the Council who are also members of:

The South East Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee:

Councillors Bedford, Pierpoint, Scoot and Welberry. Councillor Alison Austin acts as a substitute.

The Internal Drainage Boards: Councillor Bedford, Evans, Rylott, Scoot and Welberry.

32 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 24th February 2026 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Evans' declaration of interest for item 2, and his withdrawal from the room for that item, which had been omitted in error.

33 Public Questions

No questions were received.

34 B/25/0356 - Land to the west of Cowbridge Road, Bicker, Boston

Application Type: S73 – Major

Proposal: (Application under s73 for the Variation of Condition 7 (Delivery Route) of permission B/22/0356

Site: Land to the west of Cowbridge Road, Bicker, Boston

The Chairman opened the item by welcoming Members and members of the public to the meeting. He introduced the application and invited officers to present the report.

The Planning Officer presented the application. Members were reminded that planning permission had been granted in July 2023 for a 49.95MW photovoltaic solar array, grid connection, battery storage and associated development. He advised that Condition 7 of that permission had imposed a prescriptive one-way routing arrangement for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) during construction, with loaded vehicles required to arrive via the Viking Link haul road and North Ing Drove, and unloaded vehicles required to depart via Cowbridge Road and Ing Drove. The intention of the condition had been to reduce the likelihood of construction vehicles meeting on narrow fenland roads and to minimise impacts on residential amenity and highway safety.

The Committee was shown a series of images, including satellite images of the location plan, and the two existing access routes (Routes 1 and 2). The Planning Officer described the relationship of these routes to Bicker village and the A52, highlighting the constrained nature of Cowbridge Road and Ing Drove and the long-standing concerns raised by residents throughout the wider phases of construction on Bicker Fen.

Members were advised that the applicant sought to vary Condition 7 to bring the routing requirements into alignment with the approved Construction Management Plan (CMP), which already allowed for more flexible routing options depending on the phase of construction. The CMP identified circumstances in which sole access or egress via Route 2 was necessary, particularly during phases of internal construction activity, and differed in important respects from the fixed one-way system imposed by Condition 7.

The Planning Officer confirmed that the proposal included a cap of four two-way HGV movements per day, alongside formal monitoring and record-keeping requirements. The Committee was shown the updated Highway Technical Note (February 2026), which evidenced that construction was now at an advanced stage, with 107 HGV movements remaining between January and July 2026 – an average of one movement per day. The Note included a monthly table of projected movements, identifying March 2026 as the peak remaining month, with 35 trips, but with only 24 further trips anticipated from April to completion. Members were advised that these levels were significantly lower than those experienced during earlier phases of construction.

It was further reported that the Highways Authority, Lincolnshire County Council, had raised no objection concluding that the revised arrangements would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety.

The application had been called in by Councillor James Cantwell, Ward Member, due to concerns raised by residents regarding amenity and the cumulative impacts of traffic associated with long-running infrastructure projects on Bicker Fen.

The Planning Officer summarised the representations received. Objections had been submitted by residents, the local action group, and the Parish Council, raising concerns including:

- past non-compliance with Condition 7
- deterioration of local roads and verges

- intimidation reported by residents when meeting construction traffic
- concerns about the suitability of narrow fen roads for HGVs
- cumulative amenity and safety impacts from multiple concurrent energy projects in the area
- perceived lack of monitoring and enforcement of the existing condition

Members were reminded that the scope of a Section 73 application was limited: the Committee was permitted to consider only matters arising directly from the variation of the condition itself, and not the principle of the development.

The Planning Officer provided additional detail on the proposed routing arrangements under the revised condition. He reiterated that the proposal would move the development from a fixed routing system to one governed by the CMP and the updated transport note, allowing the developer to manage access and egress in a way that was responsive to the remaining stages of construction.

He emphasised that this was not a relaxation of control, but rather a change in the form of mitigation, shifting emphasis from rigid route separation to tight limits on daily movements, active monitoring, and the use of the approved haul roads. He highlighted that:

- the overall volume of remaining traffic was now very low
- the nature of remaining works was limited
- cumulative construction activity in the broader area had diminished as other projects neared completion
- the Highway Authority considered the proposed variation acceptable

Members were advised that material weight should be given to the stage of construction, which was now close to completion. The revised condition sought to secure proportionate and enforceable control for the small number of remaining movements.

The Planning Officer concluded that the approved CMP, the February 2026 Highway Technical Note, the limited scale of outstanding works, and the proposed limit of four two-way HGV movements per day, provided a reasonable and proportionate approach to routing and traffic management for the remainder of the development.

The application had been recommended for approval.

The Committee then heard from four registered speakers.

The first speaker was Simon McArdle-Daniels, who objected to the application. He advised that he had lived on Longhedge Drove for more than 20 years and described long-standing difficulties for residents using Cowbridge Road, which included damage to verges, conflicts with construction vehicles, and concerns about highway safety arising from what he characterised as “industrial volumes” of HGV and LGV traffic. He cited concerns for a wide range of road users – not only drivers, but also cyclists, dog walkers and horse riders – and he felt that the applicant’s operations demonstrated a disregard for village amenity.

The second speaker was Tim Edmunds, Head of Compliance for AGR Renewables, who spoke on behalf of the applicant. He emphasised that construction of the solar farm was now 99% complete, that the remaining works required only limited HGV activity, and that

the proposed variation simply sought to regularise routing flexibility already contained within the approved Construction Management Plan (CMP). He further advised that the application followed a protracted dialogue with the Council, which sought to resolve an inherent conflict between condition 7 and the CMP. He confirmed that the applicant had engaged fully throughout the construction process and had participated in a joint transport group examining traffic issues in the Bicker area, attending all meetings. He assured Members that the applicant placed a high priority on safety, recognising the impact HGVs had on vulnerable road users. He cited the applicant's record of no safety incidents on either construction route

The third speaker was Councillor Colin Bateson, Chair of Bicker Parish Council, who objected to the proposal. He indicated that multiple companies were using the transport routes and did not communicate with each other, which exacerbated traffic issues. He stated that vehicles were failing to comply with the 20 mph speed limits, that the roads were ill-suited to HGVs, and that there was a continuous flow of different vehicle types associated with ongoing projects in the area. He drew attention to community concerns regarding speeding, poor compliance, lack of monitoring of traffic management measures and the cumulative impacts of construction traffic.

The final speaker was the Ward Member, Councillor James Cantwell, who also objected to the application. He outlined residents' experiences of distress, property damage and amenity loss from many years of infrastructure development on Bicker Fen, urging the Committee to uphold the existing condition. He asserted that Condition 7 had been disregarded by the applicant, and that the Traffic Management Plan had largely failed, with numerous incidents having occurred. He stated that both the Bicker Fen Action Group and Bicker Parish Council regarded the impacts on residents as immense.

To illustrate this, Councillor Cantwell read to the Committee a statement from long-term residents on Cowbridge Road, the Bowlers, which summarised the amenity impacts in relation to Policies 2.4 and 2.6.

Councillor Cantwell concluded by highlighting the long-term issues created by HGV traffic, which he said had produced a tangible adverse impact on residential amenity.

Following his contribution, Councillor Cantwell left the meeting in accordance with the Committee's public speaking policy.

During debate, Members discussed the history of the application and the cumulative burden placed upon rural roads and nearby residents.

The Committee acknowledged the officer assessment and the Highway Authority's conclusion that the revised routing would not result in an unacceptable safety risk. However, Members gave significant weight to the loss of amenity that residents had experienced over time. They cited the lived experience of those using Cowbridge Road, including repeated concerns regarding road and verge condition, disturbance, and difficulties caused when meeting construction vehicles on narrow fen roads.

Several Members expressed concern about reliance on developer-led monitoring and enforcement, observing that previous management measures had not fully mitigated the issues raised by residents.

The Development Manager advised that the Council would not routinely monitor the routes, but would consider alleged breaches where reported, and he confirmed that enforcement investigations had taken place.

Members questioned whether relaxing routing controls at this late stage of the project would undermine the protection intended by the original condition. They also explored the extent to which the Highway Authority had visited the site, undertaken independent monitoring, or held records of difficulties on the routes. The Development Manager clarified that the Highway Authority was not obliged to undertake such actions and that the Borough Council could not require them to do so. Members were advised that it was for the Committee to judge the adequacy of the information available.

Officers reiterated the legal framework of Section 73, confirming that the principle of the development could not be revisited. Members considered that the evidence of ongoing disturbance amounted to continued adverse amenity impacts, which the original routing requirement had been designed to address.

The Committee also discussed whether deferral was appropriate, either to obtain additional information from the Highway Authority or to undertake a site visit.

Members ultimately formed the view that, despite the reduced number of HGV movements remaining, the proposed variation would continue to negatively affect residents living along Cowbridge Road and Ing Drive. They considered that the existing condition remained necessary to safeguard amenity for the remainder of the construction period.

Deliberation continued on the specific grounds for refusal and the need for demonstrable harm to be established.

A motion for refusal of the application was proposed by Councillor Claire Rylott and seconded by Councillor Lina Savickiene.

Resolved:

That application B/25/0356 be refused on the grounds that the proposed variation of Condition 7 would result in adverse and unacceptable impacts to the amenity of residential dwellings along Cowbridge Road, contrary to the requirements of Policies 2 (criterion 6), 3 (criterion 11) and 31 (criterion 2) of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

[Councillor James Cantwell left the meeting at 10.27, during consideration of the above item.]

35 B/25/0485 2 Leicester Square, Boston PE21 8RR

Application Type: Full Planning Permission

Proposal: Proposed external steel staircase to serve first floor apartment/Flats 03 & 04, including removal of a first-floor window in lieu of a new access door at first floor level.

Site: 2, Leicester Square, Boston PE21 8RR

The Planning Officer presented the application and confirmed that it had been referred to Committee because Boston Borough Council was the applicant.

The Committee was shown the site location plan, together with existing and proposed floor plans and a series of photographs illustrating the rear elevation and the surrounding context.

Members were advised that the application related to an existing two-storey detached building located adjacent to St George's Road Car Park, containing residential flats arranged across the ground and first floors. The proposal comprised the installation of an external galvanised steel staircase on the rear elevation to provide an additional means of fire escape from the first-floor. Associated works included the replacement of an existing first-floor window with a new door to facilitate the escape route.

The Planning Officer explained that the staircase would be positioned within the enclosed rear yard, a location with significantly limited public visibility and where no loss of residential amenity would arise.

Members were advised that no objections had been received from neighbouring residents or consultees.

The application was recommended for approval.

In considering the application, Members acknowledged the importance of ensuring adequate fire-escape arrangements for residential premises. The Committee noted that the staircase was not intended to serve as a primary means of access and would therefore not materially increase activity or access at the rear of the property.

The application was proposed by Councillor Stephen Woodliffe and seconded by Councillor Sarah Sharpe.

Resolved:

That planning permission be granted in accordance with the officer recommendation and subject to the conditions set out in the report.

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out except in complete accordance with the following details shown on the submitted plan(s):

▪ DSA 25 - 063 10 Existing Plans, Elevations, Site Plan & Location Plan;

- DSA 25 - 063 100 Rev A Proposed Plans, Elevations, Site Plan & Location Plan – received 03-Mar-2026.

Reason: To ensure that the development is undertaken in accordance with the approved details, in the interests of residential amenity and to comply with Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.

The Meeting ended at 11.15 am.

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PLANNING APPLICATION B 25 0224

Application type:

Major - Full Planning Permission

Proposal:

Proposed installation and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and other ancillary and associated infrastructure.

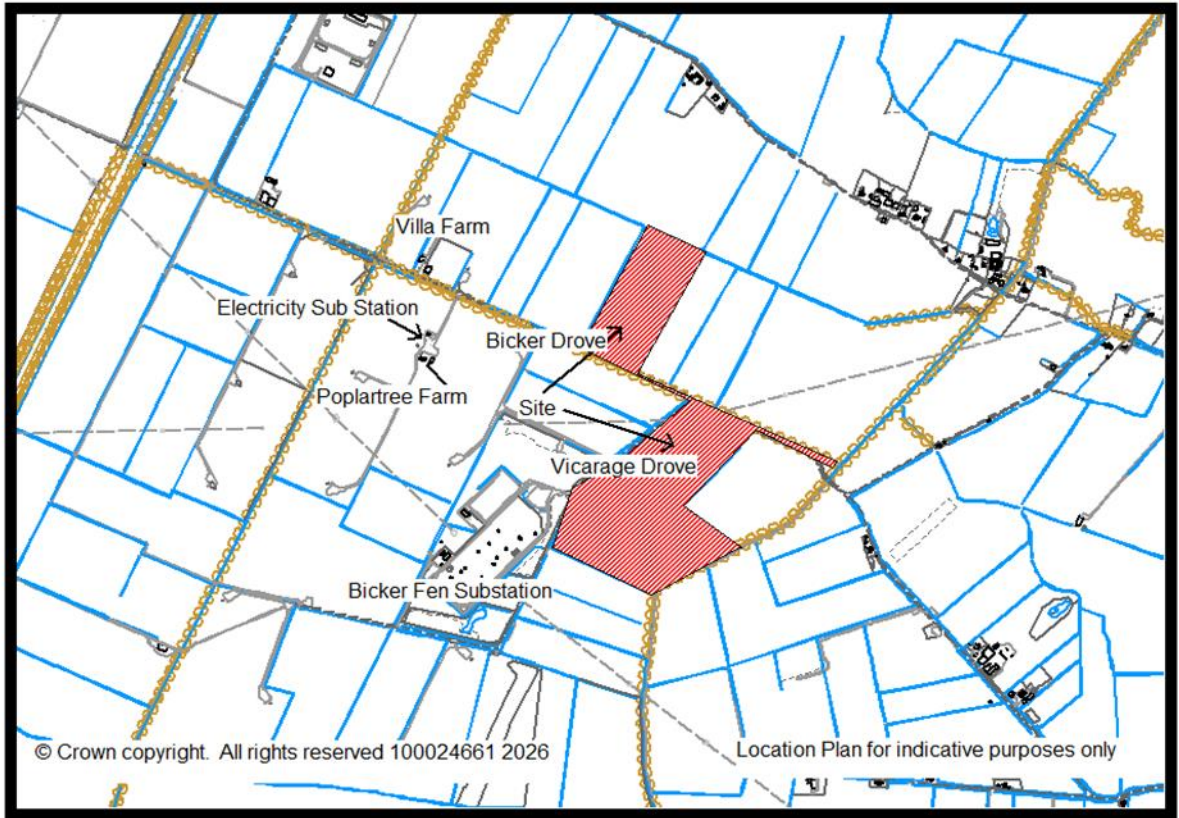
Location:

Land East of Bicker Fen substation, Bicker Fen, Boston

Applicant/Agent:

Applicant: Mr Chris McKerrow, Bicker Drove Limited

Agent: Mr Alexander McCombie, DWD



BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Planning Committee – 02 June 2026

Reference No: B/25/0224

Expiry Date: 27-Aug-2025
Extension of Time: 05-Jun-2026

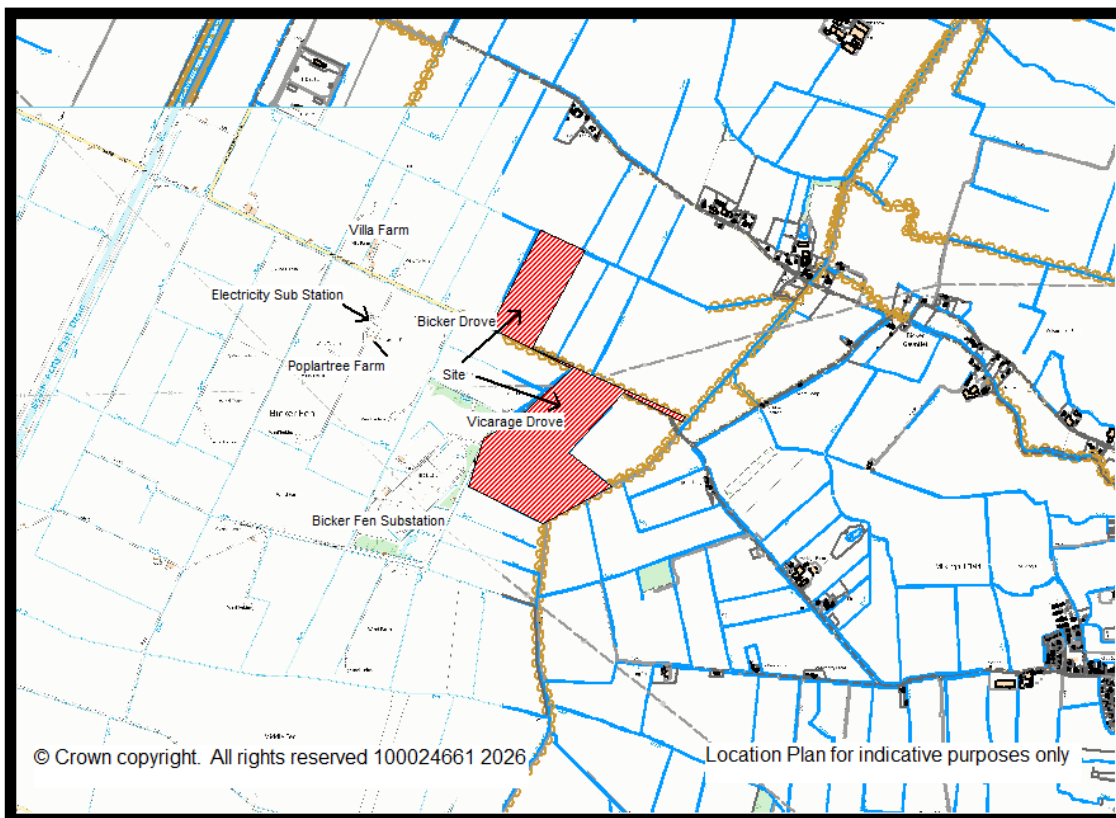
Application Type: Major - Full Planning Permission
Proposal: Proposed installation and operation of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and other ancillary and associated infrastructure
Site: Land East of Bicker Fen substation, Bicker Fen, Boston

Applicant: Mr Chris McKerrow, Bicker Drove Limited
Agent: Mr Alexander McCombie, DWD

Ward: Five Village Parish: Bicker Parish Council

Case Officer: Emma Turvey Third Party Reps: 32

Recommendation: Approve with conditions



1.0 Reason for Report

1.1 The application has been called in for Committee determination by the local Ward Member to allow full and public discussion of key planning matters relevant to the proposal.

2.0 Application Site and Proposal

2.1 The site comprises three agricultural fields, two of which would accommodate the development itself, with a third used as an enhancement area.

2.2 The two fields proposed for the development lie to the south of Bicker Drove and east of Vicarage Drove. These comprise approximately 17ha in size and are separated by a ditch running across the site. The western boundary of the site is the Hammond Beck and the public footpath Bick 2/1. To the west of the site beyond Vicarage Drove is the Bicker Fen Substation and its associated screening, with the Donington Wind Farm immediately beyond that.

2.3 A third field lies approximately 200m north west of the site, north of Bicker Drove and is approximately 7.2ha in size.

2.4 The site lies in the open countryside, is in flood zone 3 but lies outside the flood hazard zones. The site lies within the A1 Holland Reclaimed Fen Landscape Character Area.

2.5 The proposal seeks planning permission for a battery energy storage system with an anticipated import/export capability of 1.2 Gigawatts. The development would include:

- Up to 1056 battery Energy Storage Units with dimensions of 6.1m(l) x 2.5m(w) x 4.0m (h)
- Control and protection systems, including colling, fire protection, and fire suppression, power inverters, and transformers
- A 400kV Air Insulated System (AIS) substation with a height of 12.5m
- A welfare building
- Site security and lighting
- A biodiversity enhancement area on the northern parcel of land comprising approximately 7ha.
- Provision of access and suds infrastructure
- Landscaping and possible acoustic fencing

2.6 It is noted this development does not include the underground cable route that would connect the site to the existing substation. The Planning Design and Access Statement indicates this would be progressed separately under National Grid's powers as a statutory undertaker.

3.0 Relevant History

- 3.1 B/24/0266 – Screening Opinion on whether the works associated with the proposals to construct a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) would require an EIA – Not EIA development.

4.0 Relevant Policy

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan

- 4.1 The following policies contained within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019) (i.e. SELLP) are relevant to this application:

- Policy 1: Spatial Strategy
- Policy 2: Development Management
- Policy 3: Design of New Development
- Policy 4: Approach to Flood Risk
- Policy 5: Meeting Physical Infrastructure and Service Needs
- Policy 28: The Natural Environment
- Policy 29: The Historic Environment
- Policy 30: Pollution
- Policy 31: Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy
- Policy 32: Community, Health and Well-being

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.2 The following Chapters within the Framework are relevant to the determination of this application:

- Section 4: Decision Making
- Section 9: Promoting Sustainable Transport
- Section 11: Making Effective use of Land
- Section 12: Achieving Well-Designed Places
- Section 14: Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change
- Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
- Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021)

5.0 Representations

- 5.1 Following the advertisement of this application, a total of 32 letters of objection have been received from members of the public on this scheme, primarily from addresses within Bicker village or in the Bicker Fen area. That includes a letter from an action group, although it is not clear how many members of that action group may also have commented individually. Full copies of the comments can be viewed on the Council's

online planning register, but in brief they have raised the following points and objections (not all of which may be material planning considerations):

Principle

- Loss of prime farming land and will increase food costs
- Grade 1 Agricultural land would be lost to productive farming for decades
- Bicker Fen has more than its share of electrical infrastructure
- What is the life span of the development and what state does it leave the land in
- Solar panels and BESS schemes are inefficient
- Don't bring British or local jobs/employment
- Loss of farming jobs
- Scale of proposal is one of largest in Europe
- Lack of consideration of alternative sites

Environmental

- Harm to countryside and wildlife
- Will fundamentally alter the character of Bicker Fen and its rural setting and natural beauty
- It would create a sense of enclosure and industrialisation that would add to existing developments
- Loss of trees and habitats
- Contrary to policies to protect and enhance the natural environment
- BESS site would bring more fences, containers, humming transformers and lighting and more access roads.
- Visual impacts would be apparent for miles because of flat landscape
- Unsuitable site due to flooding and water run-off from ditches and dykes
- Battery manufacture is very carbon intensive and not green
- Impacts from noise from BESS and traffic on horses and riders
- Impacts on migrating birds
- Impacts on local wildlife and biodiversity

Highways

- Bicker Village is not suitable for heavy traffic
- Local Fen roads are narrow and prone to subsidence and not designed to accommodate large volumes of traffic
- Impact on pedestrians, cyclists and other road users from increased traffic
- Traffic management plans on other sites aren't being followed and can't be enforced
- Impacts from high number of staff vehicles accessing and leaving the site

Public Safety and Amenity

- Impacts from electrical interference, emf emission, light pollution, and noise levels
- Impact on residents' mental health
- BESS can release toxic substances under thermal runaway that are harmful to health and the environment
- Noise impacts and proximity to residences
- Noise and disturbance from traffic
- Will the applicants provide training and equipment for fire fighters to deal with a fire at the site
- Need for emergency planning between LFR and the developer

Other matters

- Inadequate consultation with residents

- Cumulative impacts with the Viking Link, Triton Knoll, wind farm, two solar farms, expanded substation, and three previously approved BESS sites
- Impacts on resident's investments in their homes and the value of those homes
- Proposals will affect tourism and social mobility
- Concerns about welfare and environmental impacts of manufacturing
- Concerns about environmental impacts of decommissioning and recycling of batteries
- Lack of community benefits
- Proposal would result in loss of community identity and industrialise area
- The planning process does not consider a wide enough variety of considerations

An additional letter of objection from a resident was received on the 22nd April 2026, which included additional concerns regarding traffic and highway issues following the response made by Lincolnshire County Council on the 10th April 2026.

5.2 In addition to this, we have received two comments from County Councillors. The first from the relevant ward member raising the following points:

- The current character of the area is clearly prime agricultural land used to provide food for the county.
- Many rural homes and occupants live within the area.
- Impact upon traffic and road safety as the haulage and construction traffic from other projects has an impact on the small access routes. The additional impact will affect emergency services.
- The safety of the residents walking along the rural lanes will be impacted.
- Capacity for access to and from the site via the proposed routes and parking for the construction vehicles will need to be catered for.
- Visual impact: the multiple large containers proposed will have a negative visual impact to views of the horizon, even with the natural enhancements.
- Construction noise and dust in the air is currently a problem; the new proposal will increase this.
- Impacts upon nature due to the wildlife relocated away from the site.
- Health and safety concerns of the possibility of contamination or toxicity impacts resulting from a disaster need to be considered.
- Lack of Grade 1 (BMV) farmland.
- Officers are possibly making decisions on matters they are not fully qualified in.
- No safety regulations around BESS or renewable energy projects.

5.3 A letter from the Leader of Lincolnshire County Council has also been received raising the following points:

- There is no demonstration that the development meets the needs of the districts or area.
- No justification as to why such a location in the countryside is necessary therefore the proposal is contrary to Local Plan Policy 1.
- The Planning, Design and Access Statement states that Policy 31 is a relevant policy however the proposed development is not a generator or provider of renewable energy.
- The cumulative impacts of the many developments in and around Bicker Fen incl. substations, solar farms and BESS's) on the countryside locations are not acceptable in terms of loss of agricultural land, landscape and visual impact.

- There is no reason why the proposal could not take place in an urban and/or Brownfield location.
- The proposed development will appear industrial with a height of up to 12.5m in a predominantly flat, rural location.
- The issues raised by LCC Highways have not been addressed.
- Heritage Lincolnshire have identified the site as an area of archaeological interest; therefore, field evaluation is required.
- The loss of a greenfield site and agricultural land, despite its identification in a flood zone is a concern.

6.0 Consultations

- 6.1 **Bicker Parish Council** – Object – Overdevelopment of the area from other renewable projects in the vicinity changing the way residents can use the area, their privacy and the general character of the Bicker Fen area. Other projects have led to a loss of open space and farmland, loss of trees and habitats, this proposal would further add to that and would be an unacceptable and irreversible loss resulting in reduced air quality, increased flood risk and a decline in local biodiversity. Environmental safety arising from risk of fire, including toxic gases and contaminated water run-off. Impact on traffic and road safety and the construction traffic is already having a massive negative impact on the quality of road surfaces and local pollution levels with concerns regarding speed of traffic, pedestrian safety and noise disturbance. Local and National planning policies set out the protection of high grade agricultural land, rural character and biodiversity and this does not meet that.
- 6.2 **BBC Environmental Health** – Do not wish to raise any objections to this application; request that a condition is attached to any consent requiring that the noise mitigation measures are implemented in full prior to operation of the site and are thereafter maintained and a condition requiring the incorporation of additional mitigation measures. Details of the additional measures to be incorporated shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any development is commenced on site. Should the proposed additional mitigation differ from that detailed in this noise assessment an updated noise assessment will also be required to demonstrate the effect of the measure(s) on noise levels. The agreed additional mitigation measures must also be implemented in full prior to operation of the site and are thereafter maintained. In the event that pile foundations are to be used in the construction of this development, details of the pile foundations and a method statement which identifies the measures to be taken to ensure that the amenity of neighbours are not adversely affected by noise and disturbance during the insertion of the pile foundations shall be required.
- 6.3 **BBC Ecologist** – Has stated that they are confident that 10% net gain will be achieved off-site for this application and have confirmed that a biodiversity gain plan, HMMP and a s106 will be required to be secured as pre-commencement conditions. An eDNA survey to be conducted on all waterbodies within 250m of the development site to be confident that no great crested newts will be impacted by the development, three nighttime walkover bat surveys to be undertaken to provide a more robust understanding of how the proposed development may affect commuting and foraging bats and habitat enhancements which include a minimum of two amphibian/reptile

hibernacula, a minimum of nine wall, tree or pole mounted bird boxes and three bat boxes.

6.4 **LCC Highways/SuDS** – Provided an interim response requesting:

- Consent is from the IDB
- It is noted that off-site highway improvements such as carriageway widening will be done where necessary however this needs to be identified at this stage so they can be agreed prior to determination of the application.
- The swept path for the emergency access onto Vicarage Drove does not show the boundary of the carriageway – this needs to be detailed to ascertain if the movements are achievable or whether any improvements are required.
- A detailed access drawing is required for both access points.
- The red site outline includes a parcel of land identified as ‘enhancement area.’ Other than that, there is no reference to this land – what will it be used for?
- No parking has been detailed to be able to accommodate the staff/vehicles that will arrive to site daily.

6.5 The application submitted details relating to the information requested by LCC and subsequently LCC concluded that the proposed development would not be expected to have an unacceptable impact upon highway safety or a severe residual cumulative impact upon the local highway network or increase surface water flood risk and therefore does not wish to object to this planning application and have requested that the necessary planning conditions and informatives be attached if approved and the following highway improvements be implemented:

- *‘Two passing places, minor widening and widening of the bend on Doubletwelves Drove.*
- *Widening of the carriageway on Bicker Drove between the bend and Vicarage Drove.*
- *Two passing places on Cowbridge Road.’*

6.6 **Black Sluice IDB** – Have provided a number of informative notes and comments in relation to their applicable byelaws and charges

6.7 **Anglian Water** – No comments to make

6.8 **Lincs Fire and Rescue** – The developer should produce a risk reduction strategy in collaboration with LFR. The strategy should cover the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the project.

6.9 **Heritage Lincolnshire (Archaeology)** – It is considered that the site offers a potential for archaeological remains to be present based on the extent and type of remains recorded at the site and in the vicinity. Insufficient information is available at present with which to make any reliable observation regarding the impact of this development upon any archaeological remains.

6.10 Therefore, given this it is recommended that the developer should be required to commission a Scheme of Archaeological Work, in the form of an archaeological evaluation to determine the presence, character and date of any archaeological

deposits present at the site. This evaluation should include a programme of trial trenching and a geoarchaeological assessment. Any programme of works to be carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation to be agreed with the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority. The results of the evaluation will inform the mitigation strategy required.

6.11 **National Gas** – There are no National Gas Transmission assets in this area

6.12 **Cadent Gas** – None received

7.0 Planning Issues and Discussions

7.1 The key issues in the consideration of this application are:

- The Principle of Development
- Impact On Landscape Character
- Impact On Biodiversity and Ecology
- Impacts On the Local Highway Network
- Impacts On Neighbour Amenity
- Impact On Heritage Assets and Archaeology
- Impact On Health and Safety
- Flood Risk and Drainage
- Other Matters

The Principle of Development

7.2 The proposal seeks planning permission for a 1.2GW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and ancillary works. The site is located in the open countryside, on a greenfield site outside of any defined settlement boundary.

7.3 There are a significant number of renewable projects within this wider Fen area. A wind farm, the Viking link interconnector, and Triton Knoll offshore wind farm all connect to the existing substation here. Furthermore, two solar farms are currently under construction in the vicinity of the site. In addition, three separate BESS's have been granted consent, albeit it at a smaller scale to this proposal. There are a number of other solar farms in the wider area, including Heckington Fen NSIP, the Little Hale Fen Solar Farm in North Kesteven that have been granted permission to connect to this substation and a further NSIP (Beacon Fen) currently under consideration.

7.4 Policy 1 of the Local Plan provides the spatial strategy for the Borough and in Section D sets out the approach to the countryside stating that *'In the Countryside development will be permitted that is necessary to such a location and/or where it can be demonstrated that it meets the sustainable development needs of the area in terms of economic, community or environmental benefits.'*

7.5 Policy 31 of the Local Plan refers to Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy. The policy states that:

'With the exception of Wind Energy, the development of renewable energy facilities, associated infrastructure and the integration of decentralised technologies on existing or proposed structures will be permitted provided, individually, or cumulatively, there would be no significant harm to:

- 1. visual amenity, landscape character or quality, or skyline considerations;*
- 2. residential amenity in respect of: noise, fumes, odour, vibration, shadow flicker, sunlight reflection, broadcast interference, traffic;*
- 3. highway safety (including public rights of way);*
- 4. agricultural land take;*
- 5. aviation and radar safety;*
- 6. heritage assets including their setting; and*
- 7. the natural environment.*

7.6 *Provision should be made for post-construction monitoring and the removal of the facility and reinstatement of the site if the development ceases to be operational.'*

7.7 The NPPF contains within it a strong presumption in favour of renewable and low carbon energy and para 168 sets out:

'When determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments and their associated infrastructure, local planning authorities should:

- a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal's contribution to a net zero future;'*

7.8 The above local and national policies provide clear support for renewable energy projects. The planning practice guidance sets out that *"Electricity storage can enable us to use energy more flexibly and de-carbonise our energy system cost-effectively – for example, by helping to balance the system at lower cost, maximising the usable output from intermittent low carbon generation (e.g. solar and wind), and deferring or avoiding the need for costly network upgrades and new generation capacity."*

7.9 The provision of a BESS could be located within a settlement, although practically this would need to be within a large industrial estate site, none of which are reasonably available for such a proposal within the Borough. Neither are there any suitable sites in the Council's Brownfield Land Register. In addition, it is important to note that the purpose of this BESS is to facilitate the provision of renewable energy through increasing capacity at Bicker Fen National Grid Substation. It therefore has to be within close proximity to Bicker Fen Substation to which the proposed development would connect. Consequently, it would be unreasonable for the development to be located within the confines of a settlement boundary where connection to the Substation would not be possible. Furthermore, there are no suitable settlements or industrial estates within the vicinity of the substation which could host this development. For this reason, the first 'test' of Part D, Policy 1 is therefore considered to be passed, and the countryside location is considered acceptable in principle.

- 7.10 In the event that the proposal would not be considered necessary to such a location, the second part of Policy 1 requires benefits 'for the area'. While the extent of the area is not defined, it is noted that the proposal would contribute towards national policy and legislative requirements to achieve net zero and therefore there would be wider environmental benefits for the Borough in achieving that. Policy 31(B)(4) clearly permits and does not specifically prohibit a rural/open countryside location for renewable projects depending on the acceptability of the agricultural land take assessment. As such, the location of the development in the open countryside does accord with the Local Plan.
- 7.11 The detailed considerations of Policy 31 will be discussed in more details below. But overall, it is considered that the proposal is acceptable in principle, complies with Policies 1 and 31 and significant weight should be given to the benefits arising from this scheme. A rural locality does not therefore, represent justification in its own right for the refusal of this application, which can accord with the requirements of Policy 31 of the SELLP.

Impact on Landscape Character

- 7.12 The proposal is for a 17ha Battery Energy Store, comprising some 1000 steel containers, a new substation and other ancillary works. The application site consists of two agricultural fields, with Bicker Drove to the north, Vicarage Drove to the west, and the Hammond Beck and a public footpath (Bick 2/1) along the western boundary of the larger field.
- 7.13 Policy 2 of the Local Plan states that a proposal requiring planning permission will be permitted provided that sustainable development considerations are met. These include size, scale, layout, density and impact on the amenity, trees, character and appearance of the area as well as the quality of its design and orientation. Policy 3 states that all development must create a sense of place by respecting the density, scale, visual closure, landmarks, views, massing of neighbouring buildings and the surrounding area.
- 7.14 Policy 31 of the Local Plan, as previously mentioned, states that development in relation to the renewable energy sector should not result in harm to *“visual amenity, landscape character or quality, or skyscape considerations”*.
- 7.15 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF (2024) states that *“planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities)...”*

- 7.16 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2024) states that *“planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*
- “b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland”*
- 7.17 The wider landscape context is predominantly rural agricultural land, with a very flat, open landscape character. The application site is not within a landscape of any national or special designation or protection however, the character assessment identifies the A1 Holland Reclaimed Fen as having a moderate to high sensitivity to change.
- 7.18 The area has seen some recent energy infrastructure development that have impacted the landscape. The Bicker Fen substation is to the west of the site, although is very well screened from the east, beyond that are the pylons and the wind turbines. The Triton Knoll onshore substation lies just over 1km to the north west of the site and the Viking Link converter station approximately 1.5km to the south west. These are all large and established features within the landscape and are the most prominent built features in the area.
- 7.19 The landscape character assessment acknowledges the wind farm and pylons as modern, large scale additions. More recently is the Viking link converter site to the south west and the Triton Knoll substation to the north west. The Wind Turbines and Pylons are very tall, dominating structures and the two substations are tall, highly visible structures within the landscape, the Viking link buildings are especially prominent.
- 7.20 More recently, the 49MW ARG Solar Farm, which is under construction, borders the site in its south western corner and extends to the south, spanning approximately 73ha. This solar farm straddles public footpath, with panels to either the east or west of the footpath for most of its length.
- 7.21 Beyond that there is very little in the terms of built form visible in the landscape. Isolated dwellings and farmyards exist. Notably, two residential dwellings are situated 360 metres east of the site. Additionally, Poplartree Farm and Villa Farm are located 600 metres and 700 metres to the north-west, respectively. Each of these existing structures are of a smaller scale than the proposed development.
- 7.22 This proposal is principally for the batteries, which are to be housed in approximately 1000 steel containers approximately 4m high across the southern field. This development would be more visually intrusive than the adjoining solar farm, by virtue of the height of the containers and their relative stark appearance. The containers themselves would be arranged in a regimented patterns across much of the site, and this would have an almost industrial character to it. The proposal also includes a 12.5m substation, this would be a very tall feature in the landscape that would occupy a significant proportion of the northern field.

- 7.23 In combination, these two features are likely to result in a visual and landscape impact more akin to that of the triton knoll substation than the adjoining solar farm.
- 7.24 Of particular note is the 'Bick 2/1' public footpath which runs along the Hammond Beck. This recreational public right of way has various designations further south, but for the purposes of this report any reference to that footpath is considered to be that continuous route from Cowbridge Road to Northorpe Road south of the site.
- 7.25 The footpath runs through the adjoining solar farm, as such is already impacted by views of energy development at an immediate level. The footpath runs north-south for a stretch of 600m immediately south of the site, when it meets the site, it travels along that south west boundary and beyond past the adjoining planting area to Cowbridge Road. Open views across the site are therefore relatively prominent on that footpath and this proposal would close them off, such that the footpath would enjoy very little of the open, flat landscape that defines the immediate area.
- 7.26 The application has been accompanied by a detailed Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) and this has been supplemented by a further technical note and additional photos during the course of the application.
- 7.27 That LVA and subsequent technical note identify that the proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact in wider views but acknowledges a moderate impact in the immediate vicinity of the site. It also states that the rural character and isolated quality of the landscape have already been eroded by the existing energy development in the area and that these set a precedent and perceptual influence over the landscape that reduce the impacts of this scheme. Ultimately, the report concludes *"Overall, there are no undue effects on landscape character or visual amenity which would be unacceptable and those which are important require weighing in the planning balance, noting they are localised and impacting transitory views"*.
- 7.28 While the methodology and the assessment of the relevant viewpoints within that LVA are not disputed, the conclusions that the proposal would not result in harm are not accepted. The LVA's assessment of the characteristics of the study area 3.1.21-3.1.23 identify that the lack of tree cover outside of settlements is notable and that there is a strong sense of isolation as well as tranquillity despite the dominance of existing infrastructure. However, following an independent review of the LVA which was undertaken by Bayou Bluenvironment in March 2026, in which the cumulative effects of the current proposal along with the relevant extant, approved developments for three BESS schemes within the study area (references: B/24/0363, B/24/0374 and B/24/0415) and a solar farm (reference: B/23/0300), and the Vicarage Drove Solar Farm.
- 7.29 The LVA review considered that the combined effect of the additional approved schemes on the landscape character of the area are significant to such an extent that they have a will substantially alter(ed) the landscape resource, views and visual amenity. The review concluded that although the addition of the proposed BESS will introduce a further 1056 battery units up to 4.5m high (includes 0.5m high concrete footings) and a 12.5m high substation, on 17ha of agricultural land, it will not create a

significant cumulative effect within the area which will remain largely rural, isolated quality characterised by large scale energy-related developments.

- 7.30 The review of the LVA suggested that further extensive mitigation planting would reduce the localised effects of the scheme, this could possibly include a proportion of evergreen shrubs and trees which would be in keeping with the landscape character of the area, which is also characterised by not only large-scale energy infrastructure, but also industrial scale agricultural buildings and farm buildings often surrounded by mature vegetation. Therefore, a condition would be attached to the permission should this scheme be approved to secure such details as further mitigation to help soften the visual impact of the development.
- 7.31 Furthermore, the LVA gives significant weight to existing landscaping that would, screen the development. This includes an area of woodland planting that forms the northeast corner beyond the site. It also includes that planting around the Bicker Fen substation as further wider screening.
- 7.32 The LVA review also acknowledged that the amended proposals include a hedgerow between the proposed development and the PRow (Bick 2/1) to provide screening from the footpath. The review concluded that the current openness of this footpath in this location will be lost, however only a short section of this footpath would suffer these effects, and this route appears to have very little usage.
- 7.33 Accepting that this type of development is supported in principle by both National and Local policy the proposal has demonstrated clear measures to minimise and soften its visual impact on the character and appearance of the area. It will be viewed in the context of existing renewable energy infrastructure which now forms the predominant character of the area and through the provision of new and enhanced landscaping. For this reason, it is considered that the visual impact of the development would be reduced to an acceptable level and would not result in adverse or significant harm being caused to the appearance or character of the area . The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with Policies 2, 3 and 31 of the Local Plan as well as the paragraphs 135 and 187 of the NPPF (2024). It is therefore considered that proposal would not result in significant visual harm to the character and appearance of the site or the surrounding area to such an extent that would sustain recommendation for refusal.

Impact on Biodiversity and Ecology

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 7.34 Policy 28 and 31 of the Local Plan seek to secure net gains in Biodiversity. The Environment Act and subsequent Schedule 7A within the Town and Country Planning Act require a measurable 10% net gain in biodiversity for all proposals that are not exempt. This scheme is not exempt and as such must meet these legislative requirements.
- 7.35 At application stage, this includes a baseline assessment of the proposed site and the submission of a biodiversity metric. These have been included, which detail a baseline

of 52.12 habitat units, 5.38 hedgerow units, and 2.83 watercourse units. The baseline assessment is considered to be accurate and acceptable, and no concerns have been raised by the Council's Ecologist and thus the minimum requirements for consideration at this stage have been met.

- 7.36 The application also includes indicative proposals for on-site habitat creation across the main site and at a parcel of land north of the land to be developed. This would principally provide units through moderate condition neutral grassland and could deliver a net 22.39 area units if that condition could be achieved, giving a net gain of 42.97%. Significant weight should be attached to this over delivery of BNG and given the magnitude of gains proposed, and the need for on-site management and monitoring, it is appropriate to secure the delivery of this through a S.106 agreement.

Protected Species

- 7.37 The application has been accompanied by a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) plus additional surveys relating to bats, water voles, and great crested newts. The PEA includes recommendations for enhancements that should be secured by condition, there is considered to be a low likelihood of great crested newts, and suitable water vole habitats can be avoided during the development (and this should be secured by condition).
- 7.38 The bat survey identified a significant level of foraging and commuting bats and the field margins and hedgerows were identified as providing connectivity to the surrounding habitat and concluded the site was of regional importance to commuting and foraging bats. The report went on to identify that subject to the minimisation of loss of hedgerows, provision of additional or enhanced hedgerows to off-set losses and controlling lighting during and after construction no impacts on bats would be expected. Existing hedgerows within the site are along the northern and southernmost boundaries and these would not be impacted by the need to create additional access points. It also recommended resurveying if works were not commenced by April 2026 and the enhancement of at habitats, these measures should be secured by condition.
- 7.39 Therefore, whilst the concerns of objectors relating to the adverse impact of the proposal upon local wildlife is duly noted, the evidence provided by the applicant demonstrates that this would not be realised and no adverse harm or impacts would arise, which is a view that is supported by the Council's Ecologist. Subject to the mitigation measures set out above, which would be secured through the imposition of conditions, there would be no adverse harm caused to local wildlife as a result of this development proposal.

Trees and Hedgerows

- 7.40 An arboricultural impact assessment and hedgerow survey have also been provided by the applicant. None of the hedgerows are identified as being of importance under the Hedgerow Regulations but are priority habitats within the UK biodiversity action plan criteria and should be enhanced. Hedgerow planting and enhancement are set out within the proposed biodiversity metric and a net gain of 31.72% gain is indicated in the indicative BNG metric.

- 7.41 A detailed tree survey has been provided that identifies two category C trees would need to be lost to facilitate the development and that no other losses or incursions into root protection measures would be necessary. However, this does not include an assessment of the installation of services, including the cable route to connect to the substation. A method statement for this cable route is included but it is still considered necessary to impose a condition to secure the detailed cable route and confirmation of any affected trees to ensure compliance with this.
- 7.42 Lastly, concerns have been raised by residents regarding lasting impacts of the proposal upon the environment following decommissioning. In terms of species and habitats, this scheme is considered to provide a substantial net gain and any harms that may arise through decommissioning have not, and cannot be, quantified at this stage. Therefore, it is important to note that the decommissioning and appropriate restoration of the site would be secured through the imposition of a condition seeing the land restored to its pre-development state and condition as further mitigation. Furthermore, there have been no objections to the proposal from any relevant statutory consultee which raises concerns of harm to be caused, or which challenges the feasibility of restoring the site following its decommissioning.
- 7.43 Overall, the proposals are considered to provide a significant enhancement to local biodiversity and would comply with Policy 28 and 31 in this regard. In addition, whilst this may not be evidence during the temporary construction phase of the proposal, overall, the development would result in no adverse harm to local wildlife, nor result in any adverse loss of BNG. The applicant has demonstrated that an overall 10% BNG would be achieved in accordance with the mandatory requirements of national policy. However, as this uplift is a mandatory requirement, this weighs neutrally in the planning balance.

Impacts on the Local Highway Network

Highway safety

- 7.44 It is noted that highway safety represents one of the main considerations in the determination of this planning application. This is a matter that has been raised as a serious concern by each objector to the application.
- 7.45 Within the SELLP, Policy 2 (4), Policy 3 (4) and Policy 36 (criterion 1 and 2) seeks to ensure that all proposals can be achieve appropriate means of access, that the likely traffic levels generated can be accommodated by the existing highway network and that the development provide sufficient levels of off-street parking provision so as to ensure that there would be no adverse impacts upon the existing highway network from either a safety or capacity perspective.
- 7.46 This local policy position is supported further by Paragraph 116 of the NPPF which confirms that, *'Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.'*

- 7.47 In the case of the current application, it is noted that highway safety needs to be largely considered and assessed in two ways; traffic movements during the construction phase of the development; and traffic during the operational phase of development.
- 7.48 A Transport Statement (TS) has been submitted to support this proposed development. The TS provides details of the existing road network, the accessibility by various modes including sustainable transport modes, an analysis of collisions within the vicinity, and the baseline traffic flows taken from 2025 traffic data collected between 8th-14th January 2025 at six locations. The report also includes a forecast of how vehicle trips will be distributed across the road network during the construction, operation, and decommissioning stages of the proposed development. The TS also sets out the methodology for the trip distribution for workers and Heavy Goods Vehicles and provides a Highway Impact Assessment which indicates the level of impact that the proposed development is expected to have on the local road network.
- 7.49 Section 5 of the Transport Statement provides details on the predicated traffic movements to and from the site during the construction, operational and decommissioning phases, which indicates:

Staff Trip Generation

Construction Phase

- Up to a maximum of 50 staff will be working at the site each day. To assess the worst-case scenario, it has been assumed that 100% of staff will travel to and from the site by private car. This brings the peak car movements during construction to up to 100 movements (50 inbound and 50 outbound) per day.

Operational and Decommissioning Phase

- During the operational phase of the site, vehicle movements are anticipated to be low, with up to 12 FTE travelling to and from the site.
- During the decommissioning phase, the number of staff trips is not expected to exceed those during the construction phase.

HGV trip Generation

Construction Phase

- At peak construction activity, up to 30 HGV deliveries (60 two-way movements, 30 inbound and 30 outbound) are anticipated per day.
- The peak HGV traffic will generally occur during the first three months of construction and is expected to decrease by up to 85% as construction progresses.

Operational and Decommissioning Phase

- vehicle movements are anticipated to be low, averaging one vehicle trip (two one-way trips) per month. There may be occasional (e.g., annual or less) visits by one or two HGVs for repairs and replacements.
- During the decommissioning phase, the number of vehicle trips is not expected to exceed those in the construction phase.

Abnormal Invisible Loads (AIL) Trip Generation

- There will be up to four Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AIL) transformer movements (two between months 13 to 20 and two between months 25 to 34) to deliver larger goods to the Proposed Development.
- 7.50 The Local Highway Authority (LCC) have been consulted and have raised no objection to the proposed development subject to the additional of planning conditions and informatives and highway improvements which includes:
- Two passing places, minor widening and widening of the bend on Doubletwelves Drove
 - Widening of the carriageway on Bicker Drove between the bend and Vicarage Drove.
 - Two passing places on Cowbridge Road
- 7.51 The matter of the condition of the roads surrounding the site have been raised in the majority of the objection letters, LCC have agreed that the roads are showing signs of wear and confirmed that the authority has the security of Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure that remedials to the highway network are recovered from the developments around Bicker Fen. It has been confirmed that pre- commencement and completion inspections will be carried out with Lincolnshire County Council and the applicants to agree any works required.
- 7.52 In terms of the capacity of the surrounding roads, LCC have considered the details within the outline Construction Management Plan and have concluded the impact of all developments on Bicker Fen, if they were all to come forward at the same time – the movements will be transient and so there would not be a highway safety issue. stated that:
- “There is no precise definition of "severe" with regards to NPPF Paragraph 116, which advises that "Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe." Planning Inspector's decisions regarding severity are specific to the locations of each proposal, but have common considerations:*
- *The highway network is over-capacity, usually for period extending beyond the peak hours*
 - *The level of provision of alternative transport modes*
 - *Whether the level of queuing on the network causes safety issues”*
- 7.53 The applicant has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority, that the proposed access would be appropriate and would not result in harm or undermine the safety of users of the surrounding highway network. Furthermore, the Construction Management Plan has demonstrated that construction traffic generated by the development could be accommodated and absorbed by the existing/surrounding highway network from a capacity perspective with no adverse or severe harm arising.
- 7.54 Whilst this view is not shared by objectors to the application, such concerns are noted to be anecdotal, whereas the application submission is supported by a detailed and appropriate Transport Assessment (dated April 2025) – the detail, scope, and findings

of which are supported and agreed by the Highway Authority as the relevant Statutory Consultee.

- 7.55 Whilst the conclusions of these documents differ from the views of objectors, no contradictory tangible evidence or assessment has been presented beyond anecdotal views to the contrary which would cast doubt on this documentation, or which suggests that the assessment of the proposal by the Highway Authority is flawed or erroneous to any degree.
- 7.56 Furthermore, it is important to note that an increase in vehicle movements itself does not equate to harm being caused, nor warrant the refusal of a planning application. The key consideration and planning test that must be made, is the extent and impact of any such increase, and whether this would result in demonstrable and severe harm to the highway network from either a safety or capacity perspective as confirmed within Paragraph 116 of the NPPF. There is no evidence to suggest that demonstrable or severe harm would arise as a result of the development.
- 7.57 Therefore, considering the assessment contained within the application submission and the Construction Management Plan proposed, and the lack of concern or objection from the Highway Authority, it would be unreasonable to conclude that the proposal would result in demonstrably severe or adverse highway impacts or harm either from a safety or capacity perspective. As such, officers are of the opinion that there is no justifiable reason for the application to be refused on the grounds of highway safety, particularly where concerns only relate to the temporary construction period.
- 7.58 Taking the above into account and securing additional details, and highways improvements via conditions as requested by the Highways Authority, it is considered that proposal would be in accordance with Policy 31 in respect of highway impacts and with Paragraph 116 of the NPPF. In this regard, the impacts of the development upon the highway network cannot reasonably be said to be severe.

Impacts on Neighbour Amenity

- 7.59 Policies 2, 3 and 30 of the Local Plan seek to ensure that new development does not significantly impact on neighbouring land uses by reason of noise, odour, disturbance or visual intrusion. Similarly, Criterion 2 of Policy 31 in the Local Plan refers to residential amenity.
- 7.60 Paragraph 187 within the NPPF states that:
“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environments by:
e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable; levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability.”
- 7.61 Paragraph 198 goes on to state that:
“*Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well*

as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impact resulting from noise from new development- and avoid noise giving rise to significance adverse impacts on health and the quality of life;

b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason.”

- 7.62 The underlying principles and aims of existing noise policy documents, legislation and guidance are clarified in Noise Policy Statement for England, DEFRA, 2010 (NPSE). The NPSE outlines three aims for the effective management and control of environmental. Neighbour and neighbourhood noise:
- *“Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life;*
 - *Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life; and*
 - *Where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life”*
- 7.63 The site is located in a rural location, the closest neighbours are Kingstree Lodge and Kingstree Cottage which are located on Cowbridge Road, 361 metres away, to the east of the application site.
- 7.64 A Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted with this application. The assessment includes the construction and operation of the battery energy storage system (BESS) including access works and associated infrastructure at this site.
- 7.65 In terms of the construction of the BESS, the assessment indicates that the construction will include the use of excavators and dump trucks, which are likely to generate the highest noise levels. If piling is required, this may generate relatively high noise and vibration levels. However, mitigation measures have been set out in part 5.3 of the Noise Impact Statement and would be incorporated into a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) which would be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval.
- 7.66 In terms of operation of the BESS the assessment confirms that the proposed development will operate 24 hours a day although there will be a variation in audible operational sound at nearby noise sensitive receptors (NSRs) over that time depending on the state of the system, ambient temperatures, and whether it is importing/exporting energy or idle and indicates that the BESS may operate less frequently during the spring and summer months when overall electricity demand is lower. Part 6.9 of the Noise Impact Assessment includes several mitigation measures to reduce the sound power levels of the battery units. The conclusion of this report ascertained that the predicted sound levels either meet or are below the required levels set out by the BBC’s Environmental Health department and British Standard Guidance.
- 7.67 BBC’s Environmental Health department have been consulted and confirmed that they do not object to the proposed development, nor raise any concerns, but have requested conditions be attached to any consent requiring that the noise mitigation measures are implemented in full prior to operation of the site and are thereafter

maintained and a condition requiring the incorporation of additional mitigation measures.

- 7.68 On balance, it is not considered that the proposed development would adversely impact the residential amenity of the residential properties. The proposal therefore accords with Policies 2, 3 and 30 and 31 of the SELLP (2019).

Impact on Heritage Assets and Archaeology

- 7.69 Bicker Fen is an area of Archaeological interest with finds dating to late prehistoric and Roman periods have been recorded. Policy 29 of the SELLP (2019) specifically acknowledges the historic archaeological landscape of the fens and states that developments will need to preserve or enhance heritage assets including any findings. Criterion 6 of Policy 31 in the Local Plan refers to heritage assets and their setting.
- 7.70 The application includes a heritage impact assessment which demonstrates an understanding of the historic value of the surrounding area. The County Archaeologist has been consulted on the application and has no objections subject to a scheme of archaeological works being carried out as mitigation and secured through the imposition of conditions. This should include trial trenching which will then inform the appropriate mitigation required on the site.
- 7.71 Subject to this further mitigation being secured through conditions, being successfully discharged and implemented in full on site, it is reasonable to conclude that the proposal would result in no adverse harm or impacts being caused to any archaeological remains.
- 7.72 Subject to conditions to secure the above, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in this respect, in accordance with Policies 29 and 31 of the Local Plan.

Impact on Health and Safety

- 7.73 The sites impact on health and safety in terms of fire hazards, pollution and other air quality is a material consideration and has been raised within the objection comments. It is first important to note that the Environmental Health team have raised no objections in respect of air quality, light pollution, ground pollution and noise.
- 7.74 Fire Risk and drainage for fire mitigation systems
An Outline Battery Safety Management Plan (OBSMP) has been submitted which highlights the fire safety risks associated with the Battery Energy Storage System, outline the safety objectives, BESS failure modes, relevant guidance (standards), BESS safety requirements, firefighting consultation and guidance, and preconstruction information requirements planned for the site. Paragraph 8.1.2 of the OBSMP sets out a Battery Fire Safety Compliance Checklist for the proposed development and highlights twenty-two areas of how the proposed development will adhere to the guidance set out in Grid Scale Battery Energy Storage System planning – Guidance for FRS (2022) [1] or alternative guidance where requirements are modified

- 7.75 At a minimum, the Site will have at least two water storage tanks with a combined capacity of 230,000 l of water (capable of supplying 1900l/m for 2 hours) for fire service use. Firewater will primarily be used by the FRS to douse adjacent BESS containers in the event of a fire, aiming to reduce fire propagation. The OBSMP also confirms that there will be a separation distance of 3.1m between each group of battery enclosures, inverters and transformers which is compliant with latest international standard FM Global 5-33 (2024) and that to mitigate fire risk vegetation shall be trimmed so that it is at least 10m away from the closest enclosure around the perimeter as per the minimum requirements of National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) guidance.
- 7.76 Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue raises no objection to the proposal, subject to the inclusion of a condition requiring a comprehensive risk reduction strategy. It should be noted, however, that compliance in this regard is a statutory requirement under Regulation 38 of the Building Regulations.
- 7.77 Subject to conditions to secure the above, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in this respect, in accordance with national and local policy in terms of Health and Safety impacts.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.78 SELLP Policy 4 seeks to ensure that new development is not unnecessarily exposed to flood risk and does not increase flood risk elsewhere. It identifies the process by which planning applications in Flood Zones 2 and 3 will be considered and sets out particular requirements for certain types of applications. Development within all flood zones (and development over 1 hectare in size in Flood Zone 1) will need to demonstrate that surface water from the development can be managed and will not increase the risk of flooding to third parties. The applicant has provided a Flood risk Assessment (FRA) and details within the planning statement on flood risk and drainage matters.
- 7.79 Paragraph 175 of the NPPF (2024) states that the sequential test should be applied to development within areas of known flood risk. The planning statement submitted by the applicant acknowledges that the site is within Flood Zone 3a. However, they also have stated that there are no alternative reasonably available sites at a lower flood risk than the site that would fulfil the proposed development's technical requirements to be located within 1.5km of the Point of Connection where the grid connection opportunity has been given (illustrated in Figure 1, Appendix A). It is therefore concluded that the Site proposed for the location of the Proposed Development is the sequentially preferred site within the defined area of search. Taking this in to account it would be unreasonable for the development to be located within a lower flood risk area or within the confines of a settlement boundary.
- 7.80 Taking this into account, Paragraph 177 of the NPPF (2024) is therefore relevant to this application. Para 177 states that if it is not possible for development to be located within areas of lower risk, the exceptions may have to be applied depending on the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification. Appendix 3 of the NPPF (2024) identifies that infrastructure for electricity supply as 'Essential Infrastructure'. Essential Infrastructure is permitted within Flood zones 3a providing that the Exceptions test is passed.

- 7.81 Paragraph 178 of the NPPF (2024) states that: *“To pass the exception test it should be demonstrated that:*
- a) the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and*
 - b) the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.”*
- 7.82 Part A of the above paragraph is considered passed as it is clear that the development is providing a sustainability benefit to the wider community in the form of increasing renewable energy supply. With regards to point b) the Planning statement and the FRA do not include specific measures that relate to raising floor levels or other mitigation. A condition securing a flood warning and evacuation plan as well as flood mitigation measures should be included. Subject to this, the proposal is deemed acceptable in respect of the exceptions test.
- 7.83 Notwithstanding the above, Paragraph 181 of the NPPF (2024): *“When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that:*
- a) within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;*
 - b) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment;*
 - c) it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate;*
 - d) any residual risk can be safely managed; and*
 - e) safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan.”*
- 7.84 Parts A, B, C and D above have been addressed in the previous paragraphs. Taking C in to account the applicant has provided an outline surface water scheme for the site within the FRA. Attenuation and treatment are provided on site for the first flush for all events. The surface water drainage system will allow improved drainage of the area post any flood event. SuDs will be utilised to manage surface water from the proposed development. The site also includes SuDs features in two sections. The outline strategy is deemed to be acceptable in principle, but a surface water drainage scheme should be submitted prior to the development commencing. This is supported by the consultee responses, in which Lincolnshire County Council in its role as the Lead Local Flood Authority has raised no objections subject to conditions. Point E has been addressed within the Transport Statement.
- 7.85 On balance, and subject to conditions, the proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact in terms of Flood Risk and meets the requirements of Policy 4 of the Local Plan as well as the NPPF (2024).

Other matters

7.86 Several objectors have raised concerns regarding the site not being suitable owing to the land being Grade I agricultural land. The applicant has submitted an agricultural land classification report that sets out that the site is solely Grade 3b and therefore not best and most versatile agricultural land to which the policies set out within the NPPF apply. This report included intrusive soil testing, but it is noted that this classification appears to be based heavily on the flood risks for the site. However, there are no specific comments to challenge this classification, and the report has been carried out by an appropriately qualified individual. Therefore, for the purposes of this application, this classification is accepted. As such the policies for protecting best and most versatile land are not considered to apply to this site.

8.0 Summary and Conclusion

8.1 In conclusion and taking into account the previous sections of this report, there is clear support for renewable energy projects and infrastructure in the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy 31 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019. The principle of the development is acceptable and the siting of the scheme in this location is appropriate to facilitate connection with renewable infrastructure.

8.2 The proposal has been assessed against the material planning considerations, local and national policies and is considered to be acceptable in terms of the character and appearance of the area, ecology, landscaping and BNG, loss of agricultural and, residential amenity, the Highway network, heritage assets and archaeology, flood risk, and health and safety subject to the relevant conditions and informatives.

8.3 Furthermore, the proposed facility is also entirely reversible and capable of being removed from the site once the operation of the site is ceased. Therefore, it is considered that the environmental benefits of the battery facility are, on balance, sufficient to outweigh the identified harms to the character of the area.

8.4 The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 32 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (2024) and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

9.0 Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Committee Approve this application subject to the following conditions;

CONDITIONS / REASONS			
Pre-commencement conditions?	Yes	Agreed with applicant/agent - Date:	Yes - 19/05/2026
1	The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of five years from the date of this permission.		

	<p>Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p>
2	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the following approved plans/documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2000 Site Location Plan <p>Reason: To ensure that the development is undertaken in accordance with the approved details, in the interests of residential amenity and to comply with Policies 2, 3, 4 and 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), and guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).</p>
3	<p>Prior to the commencement of the development, final plans for site infrastructure (including details of heights, materials and colours) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The infrastructure shown on the submitted plans must not exceed (in scale) the dimensions approved on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2001 General Arrangement ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2002 Section Plan ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2003 General Arrangement Sections ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2004 Access Track Typical Cross Section ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2005 Swept Path - Fire Truck ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2006 Swept Path Articulated Lorry ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2007 Site Cut Fill Plan ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2008 Security and Fire Fighting Details ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2009 Construction Compound ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2010 Typical Elevations of Bess Unit and MV Skid ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2011 Typical Welfare Building Plan & Sections ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2012 Typical Junction Detail Bicker Drove ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-2013 Typical Junction Detail Vicarage Drove ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-EE-3001 Substation General Arrangement ▪ VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-EN-1000 P03 Landscape Mitigation Plan (dated 26/09/2025) ▪ VD-ACM-R1-GE-DR-EE-3002 Substation GA Sections- North & South ▪ VD-ACM-R2-GE-DR-EE-3003 Substation GA Sections - East & West ▪ 60732059 Vehicle Tracking Drawings - Sheets 1-3 <p>Reason: To ensure that the development is undertaken in accordance with the approved details, in the interests of residential amenity and to comply with Policies 2, 3, 4 and 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), and guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).</p>
4	<p>The Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) shall not exceed 1.2 Gigawatts of power.</p>

	<p>Reason: In the interest of the safety of the site and surrounding area in accordance with Policy 31 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019).</p>
5	<p>In the event that pile foundations are to be used in the construction of this development, details of the pile foundations and a method statement which identifies the measures to be taken to ensure that the amenity of neighbours are not adversely affected by noise and disturbance during the insertion of the pile foundations shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before any dwelling is commenced on site. Thereafter, the works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved statement.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of neighbouring amenity in accordance with Policy 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
6	<p>No development shall take place until a written scheme of archaeological investigation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This scheme should include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An assessment of significance and proposed mitigation strategy (i.e. preservation by record, preservation in situ or a mix of these elements). 2. A methodology and timetable of site investigation and recording 3. Provision for site analysis 4. Provision for publication and dissemination of analysis and records 5. Provision for archive deposition 6. Nomination of a competent person/organisation to undertake the work 7. The scheme to be in accordance with the Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook. <p>The archaeological site work shall only be undertaken in accordance with the approved written scheme.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the preparation and implementation of an appropriate scheme of archaeological mitigation in accordance with national guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework, 2021 and accordance with Policy 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019.</p>
7	<p>Prior to any groundworks being undertaken a scheme of Archaeological recording shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include details of monitoring all groundworks with the ability to stop and fully record archaeological features.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure any archaeological features are recorded in accordance with Policy 29 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019).</p>
8	<p>The scheme of landscaping and tree planting shown on dwg. no. VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-EN-1000 (Landscape Mitigation Plan Revision P03) shall be carried out and completed in its entirety during the first planting season following completion of the development. All trees, shrubs and bushes shall be maintained for the period of five years beginning with the date of completion of the scheme and during that period all losses shall be made good as and when necessary.</p>

	<p>Reason: To ensure that the development is adequately landscaped, in the interests of its visual amenity and character in accordance with Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
9	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in accordance with a Detailed Construction Management Plan and Method Statement that shall first be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan and Statement shall indicate measures to mitigate the adverse impacts of vehicle activity and the means to manage the drainage of the site during the construction stage of the permitted development. It shall include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the phasing of the development to include access construction; ▪ the on-site parking of all vehicles of site operatives and visitors; ▪ the on-site loading and unloading of all plant and materials; ▪ the on-site storage of all plant and materials used in constructing the development; ▪ wheel washing facilities; ▪ the routes of construction traffic to and from the site including any off-site routes for the disposal of excavated material, and; ▪ strategy stating how surface water run off on and from the development will be managed during construction and protection measures for any sustainable drainage features. This should include drawing(s) showing how the drainage systems (temporary or permanent) connect to an outfall (temporary or permanent) during construction. <p>Reason: In the interests of the safety and free passage of those using the adjacent public highway and to ensure that the permitted development is adequately drained without creating or increasing flood risk to land or property adjacent to, or downstream of, the permitted development during construction in accordance with Policies 2, 3 and 30 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019.</p>
10	<p>The permitted development shall be undertaken in accordance with a surface water drainage scheme which shall first have been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ be based on verified groundwater levels and seasonal variations, as evidenced through on-site monitoring conducted over a six-month winter period; ▪ be based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development; ▪ provide flood exceedance routing for storm event greater than 1 in 100 year; ▪ provide details of how run-off will be safely conveyed and attenuated during storms up to and including the 1 in 100 year critical storm event, with an allowance for climate change, from all hard surfaced areas within the development into the existing local drainage infrastructure and watercourse system without exceeding the run-off rate for the undeveloped site; ▪ provide attenuation details and discharge rates which shall be restricted to Greenfield run off rate; ▪ provide details of the timetable for and any phasing of implementation for the drainage scheme; and ▪ provide details of how the scheme shall be maintained and managed over the lifetime of the development, including any arrangements for adoption by any

	<p>public body or Statutory Undertaker and any other arrangements required to secure the operation of the drainage system throughout its lifetime.</p> <p>No part of the development shall be occupied until the approved scheme has been completed or provided on the site in accordance with the approved phasing. The approved scheme shall be retained and maintained in full, in accordance with the approved details.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the permitted development is adequately drained without creating or increasing flood risk to land or property adjacent to, or downstream of, or upstream of, the permitted development in accordance with Policies 2, 3 and 30 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019.</p>
11	<p>The development shall not take place before a Material Delivery Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include details of the route to be taken by delivery vehicles to access the site and measures to ensure that at no time are returning vehicles met by vehicles accessing the site.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the safety of the users of the public highway in accordance with Policy 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
12	<p>No part of the development hereby permitted shall be occupied before the works to improve the public highway (by means of two passing places, minor widening and widening of the bend on Doubletwelves Drove. Widening of the carriageway on Bicker Drove between the bend and Vicarage Drove. Two passing places on Cowbridge Road) have been certified complete by the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the provision of safe and adequate means of access to the permitted development in accordance with Policy 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
13	<p>Before the access is brought into use all obstructions exceeding 0.6 metres high shall be cleared from the land within the visibility splays illustrated on drawing number VD-ACM-RO-GE-DR-CE-2012 Rev A & 2013 Rev A dated 15/07/25 and thereafter, the visibility splays shall be kept free of obstructions exceeding 0.6 metres in height.</p> <p>Reason: So that drivers intending to enter the highway at the access may have sufficient visibility of approaching traffic to judge if it is safe to complete the manoeuvre in accordance with Policy 36 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
14	<p>Prior to commencement of any part of the development hereby permitted, the condition of the part of Doubletwelves Drove, Bicker Drove and Vicarage Drove that will be used by vehicles making deliveries of materials and components to the permitted development shall be recorded by written notes, still and moving photographic images during an inspection that shall be undertaken by the</p>

	<p>Applicant’s representatives in the company of an officer, of the Local Highway Authority. Those public roads shall be maintained, at the cost of the Applicants, in a safe and suitable condition throughout the construction phase of the permitted development and shall be reinstated to no less than the standard of their pre-commencement condition following completion of the construction phase. The Applicants shall also follow a reciprocal process during the decommissioning phase of the permitted development.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the safety and free passage of the public using the public highway during the construction and decommissioning of the permitted development. The condition is imposed in accordance with Policies 2 and 3 South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
15	<p>A risk reduction strategy in collaboration with Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority before the site is brought into use. The strategy should cover the construction, operational and decommissioning phases of the project.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of the safety of the site and surrounding area in accordance with Policy 31 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019).</p>
16	<p>Prior to commencement of any part of the development hereby permitted, details of measures to enhance biodiversity on the site shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Measures to improve biodiversity should, where appropriate, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A minimum of two amphibian/reptile hibernacula are created and appropriately situated in raised/well drained area nearby to the watercourses onsite. ▪ a minimum of nine wall, tree or pole mounted bird boxes included within site ▪ 3 bat boxes included within site. ▪ Existing hedgerows and trees are retained and enhanced throughout and after the development. Further species rich, native hedgerows are created onsite to enhance the foraging habitat provision for bats. <p>The details shall be submitted in the form of sufficiently detailed maps that indicate the proposed location of bird/bat boxes on-site. If approved shall be implemented prior to occupation of the development and shall be maintained thereafter.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that any identified protected species are appropriately safeguarded through adequate mitigation, compensation, and habitat management and in accordance with SP 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan.</p>
17	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be undertaken in accordance with Section 5 of the Water Vole Survey Report dated April 2025 produced by AECOM Limited. These mitigation measures that need to be in place surrounding the ditches to ensure no disturbance is made to water voles from the development.</p>

	<p>Reason: To ensure the protection of protected species during the development, in accordance with Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
18	<p>The development shall not take place before a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This should include details of the proposed lighting management during construction be provided to limit the impact from the development on foraging and commuting, and shall include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If lighting is needed for construction works, then task-specific directional lighting to reduce light spill would be required which should be downwards facing and facing away from the woodlands. ▪ where external security lighting is required, such as at site compounds, this will be set on a motion sensor and set to as short a possible a timer as the risk assessment will allow. <p>Reason: To ensure the protection of protected species during the development, in accordance with Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
19	<p>Prior to commencement of any part of the development hereby permitted, an amphibian and reptile mitigation statement outlining the proposed approach to works shall be submitted. This should include a Risk Assessment Method Statements (RAMs). The RAMs should specifically address amphibians and reptiles, detailing measures for avoidance, protection and compliance with relevant legislation and best practice guidance.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure the protection of protected species during the development, in accordance with Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
20	<p>Prior to any vegetation clearance (defined as the deliberate removal of any semi-natural vegetative habitat e.g., grassland, trees, and native shrubs) or any works on the proposed development (whichever comes first), a written 30-year Habitat Management and Maintenance Plan (HMMP) for the site in question shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The approved HMMP shall be strictly adhered to and implemented in full for its duration and shall contain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) Aims, objectives and targets for management, including habitat target conditions matching the associated Biodiversity Metric 4.0 submitted with the application. B) Descriptions of the management operations necessary to achieving aims and objectives. C) Preparation of a works schedule, including timescales for habitat clearance and habitat creation and/or enhancement. D) Details of monitoring needed to measure the effectiveness of management. E) Details of the persons responsible for the implementation and monitoring. F) Mechanisms of adaptive management and remedial measures to account for changes in the work schedule to achieve required targets. G) Reporting on years 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 30. <p>Thereafter, the development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved HMMP.</p>

	<p>Reason: To ensure habitat protection is secured and BNG delivered during the development, in accordance with Policy 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
21	<p>The permission hereby granted shall expire 40 years from the date when the Battery energy Storage System first exports to the grid (excluding testing or commissioning).</p> <p>Written confirmation of the first operational date shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority no later than one calendar month after the event.</p> <p>Thereafter, the land shall be restored to its former condition in accordance with a scheme of decommissioning work (the Decommissioning Scheme) as required by Condition No. 22.</p> <p>Reason: To limit the long term effects of the development and in recognition of the temporary lifespan of the structures, in accordance with Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
22	<p>A Decommissioning Scheme (DS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority no later than 12 months prior to the expiration of this permission. The DS shall include provision for the dismantling and removal of all containers, hardstanding, buildings and other associated infrastructure hereby approved. The DS shall also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A scheme for the repair/reinstatement of any identified field drainage within the site; b. Measures to avoid contamination, compaction, or erosion of soils and land during the decommissioning phase; and c. The management of traffic during the decommissioning process and a decommissioning timetable. <p>Thereafter, the decommissioning shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved DS.</p> <p>Reason: To limit the long term effects of the development and in recognition of the temporary lifespan of the structures, in accordance with Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
23	<p>In the event the site ceases to store electricity for supply to the electricity grid network for a period of 12 months, an Early Decommissioning Scheme (EDS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, no later than 3 months from the end of the 12-month period. The scheme shall include the same provisions referred to in Condition 22 above, and the decommissioning shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved EDS.</p> <p>Reason: To limit the long term effects of the development and in recognition of the temporary lifespan of the structures, in accordance with Policies 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>

24	<p>No construction work shall be carried out outside the hours of 08:30am - 18:30pm Monday to Friday, 09:00am - 13:30pm on Saturdays or at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.</p> <p>Reason: In the interests of the amenity of local residents in accordance with Policies 2, 3 and 30 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, 2019.</p>
25	<p>Prior to the commencement of development, final details of the layout of the development hereby approved, must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details submitted shall be in general conformity with the approved indicative plan: VD-ACM-R0-GE-DR-CE-1000 (General Arrangement Drawing). The work shall then only be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved layout plans.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the development is undertaken in accordance with the approved details, in the interests of residential amenity and to comply with Policies 2, 3, 4 and 28 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (2019), and guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).</p>
	<p>Prior to first operation of the development, details of the final noise mitigation measures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details shall demonstrate that operational noise from the development will not exceed the levels assessed in the approved Noise Impact Assessment. The approved mitigation shall be implemented prior to first operation and retained thereafter.</p> <p>Reason: In the interest of neighbouring amenity in accordance with Policy 2 and 3 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2019.</p>
Informatives	
1	<p>In accordance with Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, please be considerate of causing damage to the existing highway during construction and implement mitigation measures as necessary. Should extraordinary expenses be incurred by the Highway Authority in maintaining the highway by reason of damage caused by construction traffic, the Highway Authority may seek to recover these expenses from the developer.</p>
2	<p>The permitted development requires the formation of a new/amended vehicular access. These works will require approval from the Highway Authority in accordance with Section 184 of the Highways Act. Any traffic management required to undertake works within the highway will be subject to agreement. The access must be constructed in accordance with a current specification issued by the Highway Authority. Any requirement to relocate existing apparatus, underground services, or street furniture because of the installation of an access will be the responsibility, and cost, of the applicant and must be agreed prior to a vehicle access application. The application form, costs and guidance documentation can be found on the Highway Authority's website, accessible via the following link: https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/licences-permits/apply-dropped-kerb.</p>
3	<p>Please contact the Lincolnshire County Council Streetworks and Permitting Team on 01522 782070 to discuss any proposed statutory utility connections, Section 50 licences and any other works which will be required within the public highway in</p>

	association with the development permitted under this Consent. This will enable Lincolnshire County Council to assist in the coordination and timings of these works. For further guidance please visit the Highway Authority's website via the following link: Traffic Management - https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/traffic-management
4	The highway improvement works referred to in the above condition are required to be carried out by means of a legal agreement between the landowner and the County Council, as the Local Highway Authority. For further guidance please visit our website: https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/adoptingimproving-roads-footpaths

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN	
BNG1	<p>BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN CONDITION</p> <p>The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for the development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition “(the biodiversity gain condition”) that development may not begin unless: (a) a Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and (b) the planning authority has approved the plan.</p> <p>The planning authority, for the purposes of determining whether to approve a Biodiversity Gain Plan if one is required in respect of this permission would be Boston Borough Council</p>
BNG3	<p>Statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements</p> <p>There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply. These can be found at Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 74-003-20240214 of the Planning Practice Guidance, which can be found at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain.</p> <p><u>Irreplaceable habitat</u></p> <p>If the onsite habitat includes irreplaceable habitat (within the meaning of the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024) there are additional requirements for the content and approval of Biodiversity Gain Plans.</p> <p>Effect of Section 73(2D) of the 1990 Act Under Section 73(2D) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) where –</p> <p>(a) a biodiversity gain plan was approved in relation to the previous planning permission (“the earlier biodiversity gain plan”), and</p> <p>(b) the conditions subject to which the planning permission is granted:</p> <p>(i) do not affect the post-development value of the onsite habitat as specified in the earlier biodiversity gain plan, and</p> <p>(ii) in the case of planning permission for a development where all or any part of the onsite habitat is irreplaceable habitat within the meaning of regulations made under paragraph 18 of Schedule 7A, do not change the effect of the development on the biodiversity of that onsite habitat (including any arrangements made to compensate for any such effect) as specified in the earlier biodiversity gain plan.</p> <p>- the earlier biodiversity gain plan is regarded as approved for the purposes of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in relation to the planning permission</p>

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