Response to Comments

Project name:	**New Hall Solar Farm**
Author:	CC
Date:	20 February2024
Project number:	P22-2205
Reference:	P23-0113

Principle

The planning authority do not agree the proposed development will support the district in achieving its net zero 2030 target. While the solar farm would be in the district it would not directly facilitate the transition for homes and businesses to net zero operation. It would be selling wholesale electricity to the grid not for exclusive use by Wakefield Homes and businesses. While accepted some of this energy may reach homes and businesses in Wakefield there is no guarantee.

We find the suggestion that the renewable energy generating solar farm will not support Wakefield's net zero targets highly unusual and fundamentally incorrect.

The Council's Climate Chage Action Plan (page 10) says that it wants to make the entire District net zero by around 2030. Page 23 of the document also says that the Council was itself seeking to construct 2 solar farms to meet the Council's own net-zero target, let alone that of the District.

In the report 'Wakefield Council Pathway to Net Zero, it confirms the District reaching net zero by 2028 is a significant challenge. Page 4 says it aims to see solar energy deployed.

It is therefore clear that the Council sees solar farms as being a key part of the challenge of reaching local Net Zero targets. In addition, the NPPF is clear that all authorities must play their part, and is supportive of renewable energy schemes where their impacts are, or can be made acceptable.

Regarding considering the benefits, we are not aware of any planning appeal decision whereby an Inspector has discounted the benefits of renewable energy or apportioned them out to surrounding authorities. We therefore consider that such an approach would be unreasonable and flawed.

The Statement of need report prepared by Humbeat considers Grid Connection. Para 6.96 concludes only 3 bulk substations exist in Wakefield, highlighting the limited opportunities to connect large scale renewable energy generating projects in the district. You have not explained why the search assessment has not considered suitable sites near these substations. Please clarify this point so the planning authority can give further consideration.

The applicant has a grid offer at the nearby substation and it is appropriate to make use of this connection point given the limited availability of grid connections.

National Policy Statement EN-3, paragraph 2.10.25 states:

"To maximise existing grid infrastructure, minimise disruption to existing local community infrastructure or biodiversity and reduce overall costs applicants may choose a site based on nearby available grid export capacity".

Paragraph 28 of a planning appeal decision (ref: 3315877) for a solar farm at Leeming Substation in Hambleton District says:

> *"...However, given the proposal is seeking to use the spare grid capacity at this substation, and bearing in mind the limited opportunities that currently exist for grid connections nationally, I consider it is, in this case, justified to only consider sites within an area that could also make use of this capacity, rather than capacity that may exist at other substations elsewhere. In addition, from the technical considerations set out by the appellant at the hearing regarding how connections to the substation need to be made, I consider that the area of search utilised in the appellant's assessment is reasonable".*

In addition, it is noted that the 2 other bulk substations are either in urban areas, where land will not exist that could accommodate the proposed development, and/or are in, or surrounded by, Green Belt land. As such, Green Belt land is required even if a grid offer at the other substation were available.

The submitted site selection document notes at para 4.4 that Boom Developments have received a grid offer via a new DNO substation being provided as part of the applicants SPV company consented solar farm at Low Farm. Following further investigation of this this connection offer it appears one request was made and approved for a total of 86MW presumably with this proposal being an addition to the already consented part of the company's solar portfolio in the locality. This further reinforces the idea that this application is made for convenience, essentially extending an already consented solar farm. While acknowledged appeal decisions have given weight to gird connection availability, the planning authority is not satisfied with the site search assessment undertaken. There is no sequential assessment of GB lands within Kirklees. On a wider point the planning authority does not agree with the 4km search area provided. You should conduct a wider ranging assessment in the Wakefield and neighbouring districts, particularly the south-east and east of the district, Barnsley to the South and Doncaster to the East and in those areas where the other 33KV connections are available.

As discussed above, EN-3 positively supports making use of grid capacity. It would be perverse to suggest that capacity in a grid network that is highly constrained should be ignored because of the existence of another scheme nearby. The entity that is providing and generating the capacity is entirely irrelevant and you will be aware that it is very typical for there to be multiple solar farms near points of connection.

It should be noted that there is no requirement in planning policy to undertake a sequential test. The applicant has considered the availability of other sites to strengthen its case that a Green Belt site is required to accommodate the proposed solar farm. The Site Seach Assessment has considered land in Kirklees (see paragraph 4.10). It also references (see paragraph 4.16) the finding of Kirklees Council in approving the Low Farm solar farm that Green Belt land was required to accommodate the solar farm. We consider that Wakefield Council should accept Kirklees Council's conclusion on that matter and should not reach a conclusion that may suggest to the contrary.

We also fundamentally disagree that a search area should look beyond Wakefield to other local authority areas. If that were relevant, then the search should potentially look to find non-Green Belt land anywhere in the UK? That is not of course a reasonable approach. In addition, as discussed above, all local authorities should contribute to the generation of renewable energy and Wakefield has clearly committed to do just this.

Regarding the search area, as discussed above, Inspectors have accepted a grid connection as the appropriate starting point for considering alternatives. Addressing this issue at paragraph 119 of recent decision ref 3319421, the Inspector found that the point of connection was relevant to considering potential alternative sites and it was not appropriate to consider sites beyond the local authority boundary:

> *"It is therefore reasonable for the 4km distance to be used to assess alternative sites and I understand that connection difficulties can arise as the distance from the grid connection point increases. I therefore give little weight to arguments that the development should be located on unidentified lower quality agricultural land elsewhere in Essex or beyond".*

In terms of loss of agricultural land, the planning authority have concerns to the level of grade 2 and Grade 3a land which would be required to deliver the development with 18.2 Ha directly under panels and a total of 28.3 ha utilised. This would see productive land removed from adaptable agricultural management with it only being fit for sheep grazing for a 40-year period. The submitted agricultural land assessment states the land is predominantly grassland. This is not the case, with arable crops being grown on site. Having reviewed the historic aerial photography, this appears to have been the case for some time. In addition to the overriding concern of tillage land being lost, and impact this will have on the versatility of the land to adapt to changing needs/requirements over the 40 year period it would be restricted to grassland grazing, the LPA do not consider sufficient detail has been provided to determine the long-term impacts of the land being developed with the solar array foundation piles and associated siting of equipment and access roadways

This is a typo error. Appendix 3 of the report which is part of the technical assessment refers to 'cereal stubble'.

The specific agricultural use of the site is largely irrelevant however, as it is the resource that policy relates to. No loss of the resource will occur as the solar farm is temporary. In addition, grazing, is of course, still agriculture.

It should also be noted that there is no requirement to use the site for agriculture, let alone to grow crops. The government is actively paying farmers and landowners to take land out of productive use for environmental projects and other schemes.

The site would be restored to its current condition following decommissioning and the applicant would accept a planning condition requiring this, and relating to soil management to seek to preserve soil quality. There is evidence that solar farms improve soil health.

It is not clear how the land may degrade over time due to the level of works on site and subsequent operational phase. The Soil Health Breifing Note attached as appendix 5 of the submitted agricultural land assessment notes the greatest benefits in terms of increase in soil organic matter (SOM) and soil organic carbon (SOC), can be realised through land use change from intensive arable to grasslands. While accepted that the grass land created would have lower impacts than the tillage operations, it is not clear to what magnitude this would be diminished over and above an undeveloped grassland which would have the benefit of the elements reaching every part of the land. In the proposed development a large percentage of grassland will be under arrays/affected by associated infrastructure and thus not benefit from the levels of light and water which an undeveloped land holding would gain. This together with the concerns around built (above and below ground) elements leave it unclear as to what extent the development will have on the soil condition over time. Nor is it clear to what level soil restoration works would be required post development.

See above. This can be secured through condition.

Given the concerns over the loss of grade 2 and 3a agricultural land, the Site Search Assessment needs to be updated to consider if, after additional assessment the outcome is still Green Belt is, in your opinion the only option, are there areas of lower grade agricultural land available in the locality which could be utilised? A robust assessment of this needs to be demonstrated.

The NPPF seeks the use of lower quality land in preference to higher quality land where significant development of agricultural land is proposed.

Local Planning Authorities have a statutory responsibility to consult Natural England where a loss of land greater than 20 hectares may occur.

In our experience, Natural England will not object to the use of less that 20 hectares of Best and Most Versatile land. By way of explaining the background to that, at paragraph 111 of recent appeal decision ref 3319421 the Inspector said:

> *"In responding to the planning application Natural England had no objection to the development stating that the proposal would not appear to lead to the loss of over 20 ha of BMV. They went on to say "this is because the solar panels would be secured to the ground with limited soil disturbance and could be removed in the future with no permanent loss of agricultural land quality likely to occur." They concluded that the development is "unlikely to lead to significant and irreversible long-term loss (of BMV) as a resource for future generations." I agree with this assessment".*

Indeed, in this case, Natural England has not raised any objection in its consultation response. The proposed development involves less than 20ha of BMV land and through design (i.e. the areas selected to accommodate panels), the applicant has sought to use lower quality land.

In addition, grazing of the land can continue so the agricultural use can be maintained and none of the resource is lost because the proposed development is temporary and reversible.

In a recent appeal decision (ref 3321094) an Inspector said (paragraph 52) that the presence of BMV was not a predominating factor in determining whether the land was suitable for use as a solar farm and that there was compelling evidence, including the reversibility of the development, to use BMV land.

Paragraph 7.226 of the emerging local plan requires the Agricultural holding details need to be provided where proposals would result in the loss of agricultural land. While it is noted the land around the solar arrays and infrastructure could be used for sheep grazing, the concerns raised about agricultural productivity and versatility require this information to be submitted. The applicant needs to demonstrate that the remainder of the agricultural holding would provide a viable farming enterprise and that this proposal would not prejudice its continued viability during the lifetime of the proposed solar farm. This information should be prepared and submitted by a suitability qualified and experienced agricultural consultant.

The proposed development represents farm diversification, which planning and other government policy supports. The rent that the solar farm will provide will far exceed the income that can be generated from the current use of the land. Thus, rather than hinder, the proposal will support the rest of the agricultural holding.

<u>Landscape/Visual Amenity</u>

Please see separate note prepared by Landscape Visual.

<u>Glint & Glare</u>

The submitted G&G assessment states on page 55:

The available street view imagery, satellite mapping, terrain and any site imagery provided by the developer has been used to assess line of sight from the assessed receptors to the modelled solar panel area, unless stated otherwise. In some cases, this imagery may not be up to date and may not give the full perspective of the installation from the location of the assessed receptor.

Any screening in the form of trees, buildings etc. that may obstruct the Sun from view of the solar panels is not within the modelling unless stated otherwise. The terrain profile at the horizon is considered if stated.

Has any field work backed up the imagery used in the Glint and Gare assessment? This is considered necessary where images are not up to date and where the full perspective of the installation has not been accurately. You need to review and carry out additional field work where required. Please update the Glint and Glare Assessment accordingly to clarify these matters.

The aerial and streetview images used in the report are acquired from Google Earth and Google Earth Streetview images, which are dated between 2020-2021. Therefore, the imagery is considered up-to-date. The desk-based review of imagery is considered sufficient. From our (Pager Power) industry experience, of which we have completed over 1,200 glint and glare assessments, only a very small minority of glint and glare assessments have required a site survey. Furthermore, a site survey would only be feasible if there was no imagery available, as the imagery available from resources such as Google Earth accurately represent the environment.

Published guidance shows that the intensity of solar reflections from solar panels are equal to or less than those from water. It also shows that reflections from solar panels are significantly less intense than many other reflective surfaces, which are common in an outdoor environment. The Glint and Glare assessment needs to further consider impacts on residential properties to the south-west. The report does not sufficiently consider the impact, not showing any consideration for gradients, total potential glint and glare impact from the panels, frames, supports and associated infrastructure surfaces – The assessment needs updating to take account of these matters and to also consider the further visual impact issues raised as part of this further information request, in relation to the further identified residential properties that may be affected. It also needs to consider cumulative impacts in combination with the consented Low Farm development and any impact from the installed solar arrays at Newhall Prison.

The geometric model does account for variations to the terrain and gradients. This data is obtained from the Ordnance Survey 50 Digital Terrain Model (as stated in the report). The frames, supports and associated infrastructure surfaces are significantly smaller than the surface area of the panels, such that any solar reflection from these will be negligible. The EN-3, from which we believe this comment is based, also states that 'the glint and glare of the frames and supports is likely to be significantly less than the panels'.

We believe that dwellings within 1km of the proposed development to the southwest are sufficiently modelled in the assessment. Receptors adequately identify the perimeter of this area of dwellings with a clear line-of-sight of the proposed development (without considering obstructions such as vegetation and terrain). Any dwellings behind these receptors will only view the dwellings in front of them. The report also states that 'In residential areas with multiple layers of dwellings, only the outer dwellings have been considered for assessment. This is because they will mostly obscure views of the solar panels to the dwellings behind them, which will therefore not be impacted by the proposed development because line of sight will be removed, or they will experience comparable effects to the closest assessed dwelling'.

The Glint and Glare assessment needs to be updated to consider the impact of the development in isolation and cumulatively on the PRoW's and bridleways running through and adjacent to the proposed solar farm and that approved at Low Farm. This should also consider any potential cumulative impact from the solar arrays constructed Newhall Prison.

Please find enclosed version 2 of the report.

A section has been included to include PRoW and cumulative impacts at a high-level, which concludes no significant impacts would be predicted.

Environmental - Noise

The noise repot explains the proposed development includes the following items of noise-generating equipment:

1. 2no. STS-6000K-H1 Smart Transformer Stations.

2. 2no. STS-3000K-H1 Smart Transformer Stations.

3. 112no. SUN2000-215KTL-H3 Smart String Inverters.

Based on manufactures noise output data, IMMI noise modelling software was used to predict the cumulative levels of noise exposure, assuming all items of plant are operating simultaneously, at full load. Noise predictions have been made for the 10 closest residential locations (AP1 to AP10). In terms of separating distances, the shortest is 100m and relates to Chapel Lane (AP2) residents and the furthest is 370m and relates to residents at New Halll Lane (AP5). Typical background noise levels have been determined from a baseline noise survey undertaken between 29th November and 1st December 2022. This and the noise modelling data was assessed in accordance with BS4142 to determine the noise impacts for each of the 10 receptor locations. During the daytime period, operational noise levels were equal to background noise at Chapel Lane and lower than background everywhere else. According to BS4142 this indicates low impacts are expected at all locations.

It's unclear whether the noise model includes the variable topography in the locality, which raises uncertainty. We confirm the model did use variable topography.

Noise impacts during the night-time have not been investigated. Whilst I acknowledged the comments made explaining the solar equipment might be operational early in the morning, but not at full duty, therefore, unlikely to operate during the normal night period (23.00 – 07.00 hours) when people are trying to sleep. There are however concerns, as explained below, that fan noise from the cooling mode, may cause sleep disturbance.

The solar facility would only operate between 5am and 7am during the summer months and not when people are trying to get to sleep e.g. between 10pm and Midnight. The baseline noise data we have indicates noise levels start increasing at 5am and this is not an especially sensitive time.

It is officer's understanding that there are three noise sources associated with transformers and inverters used to convert electrical power from AC to DC. These are (1) core noise, (2) coil noise, and (3) fan noise. The core and coil noise are caused by electromagnetic forces. Officers understand these two noise sources were included in the full load assessment. The third noise source comes from cooling fan(s) mounted outside the transformer and usually directed across the fins of a heat sink. The cooling fans can be the most significant noise source. Whilst it is acknowledged the process of producing and converting solar power to electricity is largely daylight and solar activity dependant. If the cooling mode occurs during the night-time period, especially in the summer months when residents are likely to have

bedroom windows open, there is concern the noise impact could adversely impact sleeping. You are required to provide further information to address this matter.

The primary sound from inverters and transformers is low frequency which results in sound with a longer wavelength. The potential problems are well known. The noise report mentions no octave band data was provided by the manufactures, to aid the noise assessment. Given the concerns about low frequency noise, you are required to provide a noise output data for the items of plant being proposed, in 1/3 octave bands for all operating modes.

Octave bands were used in the modelling which were provided in the report (Section 6.1) although these were not initially provided by the manufacturer. Through correspondence with Huawei, we have used a 'guaranteed sound power', for the smart transformers where noise levels are guaranteed not exceed LWA 70dB. However there was no octave or 1/3rd octave band data available and so a typical spectrum had to be used. At this stage, the plant selections are only indicative, and it is very unusual for 1/3rd octave data to be available. If the local authority requires this, we would suggest a condition be imposed requiring noise details of the plant to be submitted and approved to the LA before commencement on site. It is worth pointing out that this site does not feature a large DNO transformer which is often the only source of low frequency noise. We do not anticipate the smart transformers will have significant low frequency tones.

PRoW

In addition to the comments already made by PRoW the following is also requested:

Provide further details of where the access tracks cross the bridleways and for the applicant to demonstrate how they will ensure the safety of the public as well as how the public's use of the paths with be protected. Clear crossing points and priority given to the public, is a minimum and should be detailed on plan.

The submitted CTMP sets out the proposed mitigation on the PRoW including details of the crossing points such as surfacing and fencing. We consider that these can be shown on a plan as part of a PRoW Mitigation Strategy that can be conditioned to any planning consent (we have agreed this elsewhere).

An area of the site crossed by footpath 27, between areas 1 and 2, remains open. What is the intention for this area, is it still to remain arable farmland? If so, reinstatement and maintenance of the footpaths, as required of landowners by law, is required to ensure they are convenient.

As per the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (ES Technical Appendix 6.7) the area between parcels 1 and 2 will be planted/managed to create 'tussocky grassland with wildflowers'. The route of the PRoW will therefore be unaffected and indeed a pleasant walking route will be provided for. A landscape management plan can be conditions that would set out how the site will be managed, such as mowing regimes.

We require information on the management of the land between areas 2 and 3 of panels will this area be maintained? We would require an undertaking that if left natural, the footpath will be maintained and kept from becoming overgrown.

As above, the land between parcels 2 and 3 will be planted/managed to create 'tussocky grassland with wildflowers' which will enable the PRoW to be retained and the management of this landscape can be conditioned.

Biodiversity

The LPA's ecologist is currently reviewing the scheme in terms of ecology and biodiversity impacts. The LPA will provide these comments in due course.

Noted

Historic England

I have provided some responses/queries to the points raised by HE below, and I think it would be worthwhile feeding this back to them and asking for some clarification of some of their comments/requests.

Historic England notes some concerns about the assessment, and encouraged the applicant to fully consider the following (our response in bold):

- whether a study area of 1km is appropriate for the extent of the proposed solar array and the topography of the application site;
  Our methodology and setting assessment makes clear that consideration is made with regard "heritage assets within or beyond the 1km study". If there are any particular assets in the wider vicinity whose significance HE anticipate will be affected by the proposals, we would be happy to provide a response in relation to these.

- the contribution the setting of New Hall Farm Moat and Fishpond Scheduled Monument makes to its exceptional significance;
  New Hall Moat and Fishpond (and its setting) are considered in detail from paragraphs 7.13-7.22 and it is acknowledged that less than substantial harm at the lowermost end of the spectrum is anticipated.

- a setting assessment of all affected non-designated heritage assets, especially the historic post-medieval farm buildings at New Hall Farm;
  The farm complex at New Hall primarily dates to the modern period, with almost all buildings shown on the 1849 Tithe Plan having been lost, reconfigured or altered. The development of the farm complex can be observed on Plates 6-11 of the Heritage Assessment. No buildings in the complex are identified by the Historic Environment Record. A single Building of Local Interest has been flagged by the Wakefield Conservation team who have to date provided a plan identifying the extent of the building, although no additional information on this building is available. This building lies outside the proposed development site but will be discussed in more detail below in the response provided to the Wakefield Conservation team (below).

- a setting assessment of Hope Pit Conservation Area, rather than just considering the direct impacts of the proposed cabling through the conservation area; and,
  Historic England guidance was followed in excluding Hope Pit Conservation Area from further assessment, as it was considered that the proposals would not result in any harm to its significance (see paragraph 7.5).

- an assessment of the Historic Landscape alongside Archaeology and Built Heritage.
  The only legible HLC types identified within the site are 'Agglomerated Fields' dating to the mid-20th century. Strip fields and piecemeal enclosure of post-medieval to modern date are noted as having previously existed within the site, although their legibility is now identified as being 'invisible'. Land within the site is also noted as having possibly comprised open fields prior to this (during the medieval period), but again, the legibility of this possible land-use is noted as being 'invisible'. All of

the above is in keeping assessment of the site's archaeological potential and discussion of the site's archaeological potential (Heritage Assessment – Section 6).

West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service

Archaeology

Feet impacts – Concrete feet could be utilised if significant archaeological remains are encountered. On this basis, would post-determination trial trenching be acceptable?

Cable impacts within site – additional information has been requested with regard to the cabling associated with the proposed development. Can the following information please be provided:

- Confirmation if cables will all be buried Yes, all cables are proposed to be buried
- Confirmation of how extensive the cable network will be We cannot confirm at this stage exactly where cables will be, but it should be assumed they could be anywhere, except where we are proposing no dig solution.
- Confirmation of the depth of cable burial Typical max depth of 750mm for LV cables, although occasional depth of 1m (only at services crossover points)

Cable route through Hope Pit Conservation Area – the cable route runs in/along the road so the potential impacts are anticipated to be low until the point at which it enters the proposed substation site.

Site compound and transformer locations – ***can you confirm the depth of stripping and foundations required for these elements?*** Containers for transformers etc. to be set on concrete plinths which will be laid to a depth of circa 0.6mm as shown on the submitted plans.

Wakefield Conservation and Design Team

New Hall Farm (Scheduled Monument) – The consultee disagrees with the assessment that a very minor level of harm to the asset's significance will result, but do not articulate the level of harm that they anticipate. The following summary comments are provided:

- There are concerns with submitted Heritage Statement contradicting itself in the significance of the Scheduled Monument.
No clarification is provided on this. A review of the Heritage Statement has not identified any contradictions.

- The Conservation Team disagree that the setting of the heritage assets has a "a very minor contribution" to the significance. The application site contributes highly to both the setting and historical significance of the Moat.
The Heritage Statement does not state that setting of the heritage asset in general only makes "a very minor contribution" to their significance, it clearly articulates the most important elements of the asset's setting, which make the greatest contribution to the asset's significance (paragraph 7.18). The asset lies in a modern agricultural landscape, has been partially infilled and built over and its setting has changed considerably from the medieval period. The response from the officer places considerable emphasis on the ownership and landholdings noted in the 1849 Tithe apportionment, however it should be noted that these landholdings are not contemporary with the medieval monument. The Heritage Statement notes that the

surrounding land is likely to have shared a similar historic association with the medieval moated site, however the extent and character of this historically associated land is uncertain. As noted above, the medieval heritage asset lies within a modern agricultural landscape (mid-20th century agglomerated fields as identified by the HLC) and is partially infilled and built over by modern agricultural buildings. No extant earthworks or legible features contemporary with the Scheduled Monument lie within the proposed development site. As stated in the Heritage Statement, the immediately adjacent agricultural land to the asset is retained. The closest area of development lies c.170m to the north, beyond largescale, modern agricultural buildings. An area of open space and public right of way are retained to the west of the monument, with development c.360m from the asset in this direction. No development is proposed to the south or east of the assets**.**

- Further photomontages are required from Viewpoint 1 and from the Scheduled Monument in order to do further assessments on the overall impact of the development.
Views to/from the asset are discussed in detail in paragraphs 7.15 and 7.16 of the Heritage Statement. The western extent of the monument is infilled and built over, with the extant earthworks associated with the monument screened from the proposed development by this, and further modern structures to the north. While the general location of the asset can be inferred from beyond the proposed development, it can only be done so in so far as its location relative to the modern farm buildings. The monument itself is not discernible in these views, and these are certainly not considered to be key or important views.

- If the setting is confirmed to be adversely impacted from the further assessment the removal of immediate solar panels would have to be considered in order to avoid or significantly reduce the level of harm to the Scheduled Monument.
As discussed, development has already been offset from the agricultural land immediately surrounding the asset. The level of anticipated harm to the significance of the asset has not been articulated by the officer. We maintain that the proposals will result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the asset at the lowermost end of the spectrum, as such this should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme.

New Hall Farm Cottage (BLI) – The response notes that *"The cottages are constructed of York stone; however, little is known regarding their age or historical significance."*
No information relating to the buildings is held by the Wakefield Conservation team who only have a plan identifying the row of cottages, along with the address included on the local list. Reference is made to the cottages in the Listing description of the Scheduled Moated site which states that it "is partly overlain by modern farm buildings and cottages but incorporated into the cottage range in the western half of the monument is a semi-derelict outbuilding reported to contain sixteenth and seventeenth century masonry." The development of the cottage range can be observed from the late-19th through to the mid-/late-20th century and is markedly different in form from the structures represented on the 1849 Tithe Map (see Plates 6-11 of Heritage Statement). The heritage significance of the asset is therefore considered to lie in the architectural and historic interest associated with these reported 16th/17th century elements. The remainder of the modern structures are not considered to be of heritage significance. Setting is only therefore considered to make, at most, a very minor contribution to the asset's significance.

It should be noted that these buildings lie outside the site boundaries, and that the immediately surrounding agricultural land will be retained. Taking a highly precautionary approach, the wider agricultural land including the proposed development site, could be considered to make, at most a very minor contribution to their significance due to its historic functional association with New Hall farm and the fact that the building remnants represent part of the historic farmstead. Assuming this very minor

contribution, the proposals would result in, at most, a very minor level of harm to the significance of this non-designated asset, which should be taken into account in the planning balance.

It is accepted that there will not be any harm to the significance of other assets identified in the wider vicinity (e.g. Grade II Listed Flockton Waggonway Tunnel, and Listed buildings at Caphouse Colliery).

Kirklees Conservation and Design Team

The following comments are provided:

- *Regarding the assets within the Kirklees boundary, the focus is the impact on the Hope Pitt Conservation Area. There is also the scheduled site of the 'Shaft Head and associated headgear near Caphouse, Colliery, Overton', which is with the Hope Pitt Conservation Area. The desk-based assessment purely focuses on the direct impact of the cable route and site compound. There does not appear to be a setting assessment of the proposed solar array on the Hope Pitt Conservation Area. We consider there is a need for a setting assessment of the proposals, to ensure that the wider impacts have been considered.* See comments to Historic England re the Conservation Area and the Scheduled Monument (above). We maintain the position that no harm is anticipated to the asset's significance.
- *We would also query if the 1km radius is sufficient to fully consider the impacts of the Solar array.* See comments to Historic England re study Area (above).

West Yorkshire Police

We note the comments of the police and confirm the following:

- The solar farm will be entirely enclosed within 2m high deer fencing which comprises wire mesh and wooden poles. This fencing is typical of almost all solar farms across the UK.
- There will be no external lighting. Infra-red CCTV is proposed that connects to remote monitoring. The CCTV will be positioned at intervals facing along the fence line.