



Mr N Leaney
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Your ref:
My ref: PA21/05352
Date: 1 July 2021

Dear Mr Leaney

Scoping opinion for proposed installation of a solar PV farm and battery energy storage, plus ancillary infrastructure and equipment, landscaping and access

Regulation 15 – The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

Trevarthian Farm, Marazion, Cornwall, TR17 0DU

Thank you for your letter dated 20 May 2021 requesting an EIA Scoping Opinion in relation to the above proposal.

General comment

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regs), set out below is a detailed (but not exhaustive) list of environmental issues that should be included in the Environmental Statement (ES).

The ES should contain the maximum relevant information available prior to submission. Full regard should be given to the advice contained in Schedule 4 to the EIA Regs.

Details of the scoping exercise and any consultations and public meetings (before and after this request for a Scoping Opinion) should also be provided.

It is important that typographical errors are eliminated and the submitted document checked thoroughly so as to avoid unnecessary queries of data and/or statements, which can give rise to consultee and public concern.

The content of this Opinion does not prejudice any request for further information under Regulation 25 of the EIA Regs at a later stage.

Planning and Sustainable Development Service

Cornwall Council

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planning@cornwall.gov.uk

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Content of the Environmental Statement

Consultation is a key aspect of all Environmental Impact Assessments, and this Opinion lists those statutory consultees and other stakeholders who have been consulted in respect of the proposed development. The ES should report on how consultation responses have been addressed, including any justification for the omission of any issues.

Should any comments subsequently be received from the consultees/stakeholders which have yet to respond, they will be forwarded under separate cover.

Description of the Proposed Development and Site

The past, present and future uses of the site and surrounding areas should be described in sufficient detail to provide the context for analysis of the baseline and impact studies. The extent of the study area required around the site will vary according to the nature of the impact and its significance.

The description of the project should consider the existing nature of the site, construction and operational phases and should include the following areas:

- i. Physical characteristics of the site, including size, existing site layout, land use requirements, site infrastructure and access arrangements;
- ii. A Site Waste Management Plan to identify the types and quantities of any waste that would be produced by the construction project, together with consideration of how to re-use, recycle and recover any such wastes and/or which (if any) wastes would require final disposal;
- iii. The construction programme, including duration and any phasing of the main construction activities; and
- iv. Details of storage facilities and of plant/machinery or other structures required for these purposes.

The elements of the scheme that need planning permission should be set out. The procedure for obtaining other consents/regulatory assessments should also be explained.

Method Statement

This part of the ES should set out:

- i. The authorship of the document, including a statement outlining the relevant expertise or qualifications of such experts;
- ii. The various elements of the Statement, e.g. Non-Technical Summary and assessments;
- iii. The timetable to the Statement process;

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- iv. The results of consultations with statutory consultees, interest groups and the public; and
- v. How the baseline conditions were assessed and impacts identified, the measurement of their significance and an outline of the evaluation methodology employed in the assessments. Details of the methodology used in the specialist studies should be contained within the background reports.

Planning and Environmental Context

The ES should set out the proposal in the policy context formed by the legal framework, regulations made under statute, statutory development plans, government circulars and policy guidance, and published guidance from government departments and other statutory regulators. At the local level, the ES should describe the background of land use planning and environmental policies, and their application in relation to the site and the surrounding area.

Policies that form the overall context for a decision on the proposal should be described. Where policies set compliance standards or other statutory or non-statutory criteria, these should be identified. The detailed implications of these policies and others that relate to specific impacts should be considered when each impact is assessed.

The Statement should demonstrate conformity with the Development Plan. In this area, this currently comprises the Cornwall Local Plan Strategic Policies 2010 - 2030. Reference should also be made to the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

Site Location and Alternatives

The ES shall demonstrate that alternative options have been considered prior to proceeding with the current proposals, which should include a consideration of the 'do nothing' option.

Under this heading, the Statement should include a consideration of alternative options to the proposed site. It should also set out the justification for the chosen amount, layout, scale and height of development, having regard to the above factors and the rationale/benefits.

Identification of Issues and Impacts

This section should explain how environmental and amenity issues and potential impacts were identified and assessed. This should be incorporated into the specific chapters in the ES.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Natural England

"The scoping request is for a proposal that does not appear, from the information provided, to affect any nationally designated geological or ecological sites (Ramsar, SPA, SAC, SSSI, NNR) or landscapes (National Parks, AONBs, Heritage Coasts, National

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Trails), or have significant impacts on the protection of soils (particularly of sites over 20ha of best or most versatile land), nor is the development for a mineral or waste site of over 5ha.

At present therefore it is not a priority for Natural England to advise on the detail of this EIA. We would, however, like to draw your attention to some key points of advice, presented in annex to this letter, and we would expect the final Environmental Statement (ES) to include all necessary information as outlined in Part 4 of the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. If you believe that the development does affect one of the features listed in paragraph 3 above, please contact Natural England at consultations@naturalengland.org.uk, and we may be able to provide further information."

Cornwall Council Environment Service (Ecology)

No comments received to date.

Cornwall Wildlife Trust

No comments received to date.

Landscape and Visual Impact

Cornwall Council Environment Service (Landscape)

"Thank you for requesting comments on the above application from the Landscape Architects in the Environment Service. The following comments are provided having reviewed the documents submitted as part of the scoping application.

- 1. Any application for development will need to be accompanied by a comprehensive Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), Cumulative Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (CLVIA) and an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA)*

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

- 2. The initial study area for a solar pv energy development of this scale will need to examine a 20km radius (minimum) looking at landscape character areas, landscape designations, and the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV).*
- 3. A more detailed radius of up to 10km from the site should assess the impact of the development on landscape character and visual amenity. Between 10km and 20km from the site area notable features should also be assessed.*
- 4. Referring to the 2007 Cornwall Landscape Character Assessment the site is predominantly located within CA04 Mounts Bay, and fringes onto CA06 Mounts Bay East and CA03 Penwith Central Hills. The LVIA should assess the development's impact on the predominant character area, the transitional areas and the 'local landscape'. The significance of the impact on landscape character should be determined by referring to the impact the development will have on the wider character areas and the local landscape.*

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5. *The application documentation should be supported by viewpoints which cover a representative sample of the views from the immediate area and the wider landscape setting through 360 degrees. Viewpoints should not only be selected from roads, but should include public vantage points, historic features, tourist attractions and public rights of way within the landscape around the site.*
6. *Viewpoints and photomontages are to be agreed in advance of the application submission with a Landscape Architect from Cornwall Council, this is normally arranged through a Planning Performance Agreement. Local consultations with St Hillary Parish Council regarding assessment of landscape impacts on the locality would be welcomed.*
7. *Visual representation of development proposals should comply with Landscape Institute guidance: Technical Guidance Note 06/19 published 17 September 2019*
8. *All visualisations need to be clearly labelled for the lay person detailing how the image is to be printed and viewed, showing viewing distances and correct viewing position. They should include the angle of view on the image and not include views over 180degrees as these may distort the view and do not represent what would be seen by an individual at that viewpoint*
9. *If panoramic images are to be used to illustrate landscape context then the submission should also include 50mm single frame images centred on the site to more clearly represent how the eye would perceive the view on site.*
10. *Visualisations should illustrate the development in the centre of the image and be free from foreground features, such as trees, poles and posts which serve to foreshorten the view.*
11. *A residential amenity assessment will be required.*
12. *Wire frames are not to be relied upon to convey key landscape context as they are difficult for the lay person to interpret.*
13. *The visualisations must make clear that the images are not to be assessed on a computer screen. The images must clearly state the scale of paper on which to print the images to best replicate what the human eye would perceive were they to stand at that viewpoint.*
14. *Where landscape planting mitigation measures are illustrated by photo visualisation, the images should accurately show the impact of planting at year 1, year 10 and year 20.*

Renewable Energy Landscape Study

15. *The 2021 Renewable Energy Landscape Sensitivity Study (RELS) is an evidence-based document to support the Climate Change Development Plan Document and provides evidence to support proposed broad areas for renewable energy generation. It has now been through public consultation, and you are asked to refer to this evidence as part of the application submission. The following links are provided to access the 2021 RELS Study.*

- *Methodology and Overview of Results*

16. *This series of maps show each Landscape Character Area's sensitivity to onshore renewable energy installations. The proposal site appears to be within and close to the western boundary of Renewable Landscape Unit (RLU) 2.*

- *Opportunities Maps for Large Scale Solar*

17. *There are also reports that look in more detail at specific areas, available here.*

- *Renewables Landscape Units 1 -17*

Landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan

18. *A landscape and Ecological Mitigation Plan (LEMP) will be required as part of the EIA, integrating the landscape and biodiversity protection and enhancement measures together with an integrated sustainable drainage plan. The plan should be based on a construction and operational layout and not provided as a separate plan. This is to ensure that there are no conflicts between the construction and operational phases of the development and the landscape and ecological proposals. The plan should include for LEMP proposals to be included in the final layout as well including the establishment and long term maintenance phases.*

Other background information - Policy and Guidance

Climate Emergency Development Plan Document Topic Paper: Renewable Energy- February 2021

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/kcdbpgsd/renewable-energy-topic-paper.pdf>

Cornwall Local Plan Policy Adopted November 2016

adopted-local-plan-strategic-policies-2016.pdf (cornwall.gov.uk)

See Policy 14 (page 54) Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Attention is drawn to the important consideration of landscape character:

'2.93 In the case of wind and solar photovoltaic development, landscape character is seen as a key driver in determining the appropriate scale and density of development. A broad landscape strategy informs the decision process.'

'2.94 In this context guidance has been prepared on the level of development likely to be appropriate within each of Cornwall's 40 Landscape Character Areas ('An assessment of the landscape sensitivity to on-shore wind energy & large scale photovoltaic development in Cornwall' 2011) to be integrated into the Council's Renewable Energy SPD.'

'3. When considering such proposals, regard will be given to the wider benefits of providing energy from renewable sources, as well as the potential effects on the local environment; including any cumulative impact of these proposals.'

Cornwall Council Guidance 2016:

ANNEX 1 - An Assessment of the Landscape Sensitivity to On Shore Wind Energy and Large Scale Photovoltaic Development in Cornwall: Landscape Sensitivity and Strategy Matrices for each Landscape Character Area

<https://old.cornwall.gov.uk/media/18406299/renewable-energy-planning-advice-march-2016-annex1-appendix-1.pdf>

Cornwall Renewable Energy Planning Advice, March 2016

<https://old.cornwall.gov.uk/media/18406307/cornwall-renewable-energy-planning-advice-march-2016.pdf>

(See Chapter 5 Solar PV Ground Mounted)

Landscape Character Assessment

Character Area (cornwall.gov.uk)"

Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

Cornwall Council Historic Environment Planning (Archaeology)

"Thank you for consulting HEP Archaeology on this EIA scoping opinion for a large application site based upon two separate areas of land; one to the southwest of St Erth railway station and a larger area centred around Trevarthian, near Plain an Gwarry, Marazion (Plan AEM01-SP-01).

We have consulted the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Historic Environment Record and note that the proposed application site covers a large area rich in designated and non-designated heritage assets.

A considerable amount of the application area lies within Anciently Enclosed Land (AEL) as identified by the 1994 Historic Landscape Character (HLC) of Cornwall. AEL has a high potential for buried archaeology from medieval and earlier periods.

The application site is in close proximity to the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site at St Erth station and borders it near North Treveneague and to the east of Trevarthian. Additionally, as the application site sits within relatively low ground the proposed scheme has the potential to impact upon the settings of designated and non-designated heritage assets beyond its red line boundary, especially on the higher ground to the west.

We therefore recommend that the Heritage/Historic Environment chapter of the Environment Statement, is informed by baseline information not only gathered by desk-based analysis but also fieldwork and by the results of geophysical survey of the entire application site.

Following on from the gathering of the baseline information, the ES should provide a Statement of Significance and an Impact Assessment that summarises the proposals, assesses likely impacts on significance, and identifies any harm, and, where necessary, provides a mitigation strategy.

In terms of assessing the potential impacts on the settings of heritage assets we recommend that the application is supported by a Heritage Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment (HLVIA), the correct methodology for which is set out in 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (Historic England, 2nd Edition, December 2017).

We advise that the applicant undertakes our pre-application advice service, and that as part of this a scoping document is submitted outlining how and by what guidelines they

will undertake the heritage/historic environment chapter, the proposed sections that will be contained within it, and the list of heritage consultees the developer will engage with."

Cornwall Council Historic Environment Planning (Cultural Heritage)

"This development could potentially have an impact on designated and undesignated heritage assets and their settings in the area around the site. Specifically, grade II listed Trevarthian Farmhouse and front garden walls.

The entry on the Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Record reads as follows: The settlement of Trevarthian is first recorded as 'Trewarthyian' in 1209. The name is Cornish and contains the element tre meaning 'estate', 'farmstead' which implies a site of early medieval origin, and a personal name.

It is expected that the Environmental Report would contain a thorough assessment of the likely effects which the proposed development might have upon those elements which contribute to the significance of these assets, in the form of a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA). Given the extent of the proposed development, it is likely to be visible across a large area and could, as a result, affect the significance of heritage assets at some distance from the site itself. The assessment should clearly demonstrate that the extent of the study area is of the appropriate size to ensure that all heritage assets likely to be affected have been included and can be properly assessed. It is important that the assessment is designed to ensure that all impacts are fully understood. Section drawings, techniques such as photomontages are a useful part of this, along with visualisations. The assessment should also take account of other potential impacts which associated activities (servicing, maintenance and associated traffic) might have on the heritage assets in the area."

Traffic and Transport

A full Transport Assessment (TA) should be undertaken to inform the ES, and should include the following:

Construction Phase

- Movements likely to be generated, including staff, HGVs and deliveries;
- Consideration of the likely effects on the highway network (including through loss of existing car parking);
- Consideration of the environmental effects during construction; and
- Impacts and potential conflicts on other road users and pedestrian amenity.

Operational Phase

- Movements likely to be generated by the proposed development;
- Consideration of the likely effects on the highway network;
- Consideration of the environmental effects once operational;
- Consideration of the need for local highway and transport improvements;
- Impacts and potential conflicts on other road users and pedestrian amenity; and
- Any appropriate mitigation measures considered necessary.

Other Matters/Consultations

Cornwall Council Countryside Access

"Countryside Access Team in its role as Highway Authority for Public Rights of Way would require the applicant to undertake professional pre-application advice with ourselves prior to the submission of a full planning application should any public rights of way be affected. A diversion of a public right of way is a discretionary service and as such the applicant would need to determine whether Cornwall Council would support any diversion proposals."

CASE OFFICER COMMENT: Notwithstanding this, potential impacts upon users of any Public Rights of Way or Access Land shall be assessed, which may include traffic, noise, dust (during construction) and visual (post completion) impacts.

Mitigation

It is expected that mitigation measures will be described within each of the individual topic chapters of the ES. This should provide for a schedule of the measures proposed and a timetable for their implementation.

Cumulative Impacts

The ES should include an impact assessment to identify, describe and evaluate the effects that are likely to result from the proposed development in combination with other projects and activities that are being, have been or will be carried out. It should also consider the in-combination effects of the different predicted impacts.

Non-Technical Summary

The Non-Technical Summary should bring together all the aspects of the process in a manner to enable the general public to comprehend the information contained in the technical assessments.

Conclusion

The conclusion will draw on all the assessments carried out as part of the process.

Summary

This Scoping Opinion seeks to inform (where possible) the content of the ES to accompany a planning application submission for the proposed development. However, it should be appreciated that this Opinion is based on information currently available and is not exhaustive.

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Should you decide to change the details of your proposed development in any way, please contact the Case Officer (Adam Carlyon) via the contact details below to determine whether or not further screening or scoping of the proposal is necessary.

Yours sincerely

Louise Wood

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