



Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Planning and Development Management
P.O. Box 7544, Civic Centre,
Duke Street, Chelmsford,
Essex, CM1 1XP

Your ref:

My ref: 25/01660/OBS3

Date: 17 December 2025

Dear Sir / Madam

LONGFIELD SOLAR FARM ORDER 2023 - NON MATERIAL CHANGE APPLICATION

SECTION 153 OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008 AND REGULATION 7 OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING (CHANGE TO AND REVOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDERS) REGULATIONS 2011

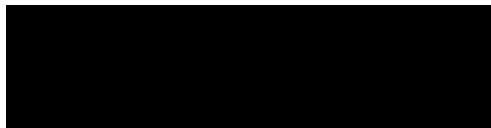
I am writing in respect of the notice dated 13th November 2025 to make a non material change made by Longfield Solar Farm Order 2023 (SI 2023/734) as corrected by the Longfield Solar Farm (Correction) Order 2023 (SI 2023/1241) made by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Limited.

I can confirm that Chelmsford City Council has no objection to the application.

Please see the attached covering letter and Officer Report for further information.

If you have any queries, please contact me.

Yours sincerely



Senior Planning Officer
Development Management, Sustainable Communities
Chelmsford City Council

Email: development.management@chelmsford.gov.uk

Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1JE

Web: www.chelmsford.gov.uk/planning



Pinsent Masons LLP
On Behalf Solar Energy Farm Limited

Planning and Development Management
P.O. Box 7544, Civic Centre,
Duke Street, Chelmsford,
Essex, CM1 1XP

Your ref:
My ref: 25/01660/OBS3
Telephone: 01245 606826
Date: 16 December 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

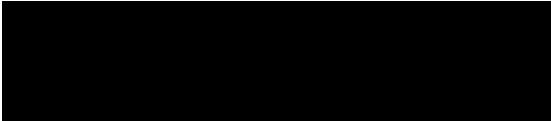
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

PROPOSAL: **Notice of application to make a non- material change to the following development consent order:
The longfield solar farm order 2023 (SI 2023/734) as corrected by the Longfield solar farm (correction) order 2023 (SI 2023/1241)**

APPLICATION NO: **25/01660/OBS3**
DATE RECEIVED: **26th November 2025**

We refer to the above application and are writing to advise you that we have **NO OBJECTION** to this proposal.
See Officer Report for consideration of the proposal

Yours faithfully


Planning Development Manager



DECISION MADE BY THE DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Application No	:	25/01660/OBS3 Observation Request from Adj. Borough 3
Location	:	Land North Of A12 East Of Waltham Road Boreham Chelmsford
Proposal	:	Notice of application to make a non- material change to the following development consent order: The longfield solar farm order 2023 (SI 2023/734) as corrected by the Longfield solar farm (correction) order 2023 (SI 2023/1241)
Applicant	:	PinSENT Masons LLP
Agent	:	
Date Valid	:	26th November 2025
Development Type	:	Consultations - CM/ ECC3/OBS (D91)
Drawing No(s)	:	Covering letter dated 13th November 2025 from PinSENT Masons; Letter dated 5th November 2025 from Department of Energy Security and Net Zero; Notice of application to make a non -material change to the Longfield Solar Farm Order 2023 (SI 2023;
Target Date	:	16th December 2025
Consult Expiry	:	

Description of the site

- The site is located on farmland north-east of Chelmsford and north of the A12 between Boreham, Hatfield Peverel, Great Leighs and Terling.
- The majority of the site is moderate quality agricultural farmland (Grade 3b) with some smaller areas of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (Grades 2 and 3a) located throughout the site.
- It also includes large areas of woodland, ponds and small areas of pasture along with trees, hedgerows and farm access tracks.
- The site lies within the administrative areas of Chelmsford City Council, Braintree District Council and Essex County Council.
- Bulls Lodge 400kV National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) substation lies within the south-west part of the Order limits to the west of Brick House Farm and about 400 metres to the north of the A12 carriageway. It falls within the administrative area of Chelmsford City Council.

- The site area is in the region of approximately 453 hectares.

Details of the proposal

The Development Consent Order granted development consent for the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic electricity generating facility and Battery Storage Energy System (“BESS”) with a total capacity exceeding 50MW and associated infrastructure. The Proposed Development included an export connection to the National Grid and includes upgrades, modification and an extension to the existing Bulls Lodge Substation.

This proposal seeks to make four non-material changes to the Longfield Solar Farm Order 2023 as corrected by the Longfield Solar Farm (Correction) Order 2023 (the Order). The changes would comprise the following: [here](#)

- Change one – amending Work No. 4A of Schedule 1 of the Order to facilitate the installation of a dual circuit.
- Change two – amending Article 6 of the Order to modify the Hedgerows Regulations 1997.
- Change three – amending Requirement 9 of Schedule 2 of the Order to require one submission of the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Strategy.
- Change four – amending Article 6(4) of the Order to address interactions with other planning applications

Other relevant applications

22/00001/NSIP -

Application by Longfield Solar Energy Farm Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Longfield Solar Farm. Granted. 26 June 2023

Details of the proposal are shown on the Location Plan [APP-010] (and in ES Figure 1.1 (Scheme Location) [APP-104]) and is described in detail in ES Chapter 2 [REP1b-011]. Schedule 1 of the dDCO [REP8-009] sets out the formal description of the various elements of the Proposed Development. Their locations are shown on the Works Plans [REP3-003 and REP3-004]. Further detail can be found in ES Chapter 2 [REP1b-011].

Consultations

Chelmsford City Council is a consultee to the planning application.

There is no formal requirement for Chelmsford City Council to undertake consultation on the application.

Planning considerations

Change one – amending Work No. 4A of Schedule 1 of the Order to facilitate the installation of a dual circuit

Work No. 4A of Schedule 1 of the Order authorises, at paragraph (i), works including the installation of one 400 kilovolt cable circuit connecting Work No. 3 (the new onsite substation) to Work No. 5 (the extension to the existing substation).

For resilience purposes, the applicant is seeking to install a second 400 kilovolt cable circuit as part of these works and proposes to amend the description of Work No. 4A of Schedule 1 of the Order to authorise this dualling.

It is considered that the proposed change would not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects to those originally assessed as part of the application for the Order. The change would not have new or different effects on local residents or business or any additional implications in respect of habitats regulation assessment. There are no other material considerations.

No objections are raised to proposed change one.

Change two – amending Article 6 of the Order to modify the Hedgerows Regulations 1997

Article 6 of the Order identifies extant legislation that is authorised to be modified or disapplied by virtue of the Order being made.

The list of legislation in Article 6 of the Order does not include the standard modification of the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 relating to the carrying out of development for the proposal. This means that the applicant is required to submit a Hedgerow Removal Notice under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 every time that any hedgerow needs to be removed, including those already identified and assessed in Schedule 12 of the Order.

The applicant explains that the process to obtain a Hedgerow Removal Notice is onerous and complex. The process restricts the flexibility of the detailed design of the proposal and poses a risk to the timing of phases of the proposal due to determination timescales. The applicant states that this was not the intention when drafting of the Order.

The proposed amendment would not result in uncontrolled hedgerow removal, as this would continue to be controlled by the corresponding and relevant parts of the Order – for example, through the vegetation removal plan, which is a certified document under Schedule 13 of the Order.

The applicant concludes that the approach has been consented in recent solar DCOs, including the Oaklands Farm Solar Park Order 2025.

It is considered that the proposed change would not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects to those originally assessed as part of the application for the Order. The change would not have new or different effects on local residents or business or any additional implications in respect of habitats regulation assessment.

It is acknowledged that the Hedgerow Removal Notice process is complicated. In this particular circumstance, suitable safeguards exist within the landscape and ecological management plan (Requirement 9) to ensure that there is acceptable provision for the replacement or reinstatement of hedgerows. Further, the Development Consent Order (DCO) as granted includes provision for at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain as well as mitigation including replacement planting. Chelmsford City Council (CCC) is satisfied that the removal and replacement of hedgerows can be managed satisfactorily. There are no other material considerations.

No objections are raised to proposed change two.

Change three – amending Requirement 9 of Schedule 2 of the Order to require one submission of the BNG Strategy

Requirement 9 of Schedule 2 of the Order requires the applicant to submit (for approval by the relevant planning authority) a landscape and ecological management plan (LEMP) for each phase of the proposal. As currently written in the Order, each LEMP requires the submission of a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Strategy to detail how the proposal is achieving the minimum 87% BNG during its operation.

A targeted LEMP has been submitted for various permitted preliminary works (including vegetation removal) without containing a BNG Strategy. The reason for this was because information regarding BNG was not available at the time of the submission of that LEMP; as the landscape design for the proposal had not yet been developed, nor did it form part of the works to which that LEMP related. Requirement 9 of Schedule 2 of the Order has only partially been discharged in relation to that LEMP.

The applicant considers that the Requirement to submit a LEMP for each phase of the process is inefficient. Instead they propose to amend Requirement 9 of Schedule 2 of the Order to alter the approach to require the submission of one site-wide BNG Strategy as part of the site-wide LEMP for the proposals main site construction works; which are the works that give rise to BNG considerations.

It is considered that the proposed change would not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects to those originally assessed as part of the application for the Order. The change would not have new or different effects on local residents or business or any additional implications in respect of habitats regulation assessment. The proposal would not lead to the loss of BNG and or effect the replacement or reinstatement of planting. The proposal is a technical change relating to process and there are no other material considerations.

No objections are raised to proposed change three.

Change four – amending Article 6(4) of the Order to address interactions with other planning applications

There are four small areas of overlap between the Order and two adjacent planning permissions relating to the extraction of minerals at Bulls Lodge Quarry, which lies in proximity to the existing substation.

The applicant considers that the overlaps are de minimis and neither the Order nor the other planning permissions are prejudiced from their ongoing implementation.

For the sake of clarity and good order, the applicant proposes to amend Article 6(4) of the Order to expressly provide for these overlaps to occur. The applicant notes that Article 6(4), as currently written in the Order, already addresses one of the areas of overlap, which lies directly to the north of the existing substation. The proposed change is to ensure that all of the overlaps are covered by Article 6(4), making the Order explicit, whilst continuing to not prejudice the ongoing implementation of the Order and the other planning permissions.

It is considered that the proposed change would not give rise to any materially new or materially different environmental effects to those originally assessed as part of the application for the Order. The change would not have new or different effects on local residents or business or any additional implications in respect of habitats regulation assessment. It is agreed that the proposal would not prejudice the other planning permissions and would bring comfort that these can continue. It is accepted the proposal is necessary in the interest of clarity and good order and there are no other material consideration.

No objections are raised to proposed change four.

Conclusion

The proposed changes are considered non-material and necessary. On the basis of the consideration above, no objections are raised to the proposed changes.

RECOMMENDATION

No objection. See Officer Report for consideration of the proposal.

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT ADOPTED PLANNING POLICIES:

SPS2

Strategic Policy S2 Addressing Climate Change & Flood Risk - The Council, through its planning policies and proposals that shape future development will seek to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Council will require that all development is safe, taking into account its expected life span, from all types of flooding.

SPS3

Strategic Policy S3 Conserving & Enhancing the Historic Environment - The Council will conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment. When assessing applications for development , the Council will place great weight on the preservation and enhancement of designated heritage assets and their setting. The Council will also seek to conserve and where appropriate enhance the significance of non-designated heritage assets and their settings.

SPS4

Strategic Policy S4 Conserving & Enhancing the Natural Environment - The Council is committed to the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment through the protection of designated sites and species, whilst planning positively for biodiversity networks and minimising pollution. The Council will plan for a multifunctional network of green infrastructure. A precautionary approach will be taken where insufficient information is provided about avoidance, management, mitigation and compensation measures. Where appropriate, contributions from developments will be secured towards mitigation measures identified in the Essex Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS)

SPS7

Strategic Policy S7 The Spatial Strategy - New housing and employment growth will be focussed to the most sustainable locations by making the best use of previously developed land in Chelmsford Urban Area; sustainable urban extensions around Chelmsford and South Woodham Ferrers and development around Key Service Settlements outside of the Green Belt in accordance with the Settlement Hierarchy. New development allocations will be focused on the three Growth Areas of Central and Urban Chelmsford, North Chelmsford, and South and East Chelmsford. Where there are large and established mainly institutional uses within the countryside, Special Policy Area will be used to support their necessary functional and operational requirements.

SPS11

Strategic Policy S11 The Role of the Countryside - The openness and permanence of the Green Belt will be protected. Inappropriate development will not be approved except in very special circumstances. The Green Wedge has an identified intrinsic character and beauty and is a multi-faceted distinctive landscape providing important open green networks. The countryside outside of the Urban Areas and Defined Settlements, not within the Green Belt is designated as the Rural Area. The intrinsic character and beauty of the Rural Area will be recognised, assessed and development will be permitted where it would not adversely impact on its identified character and beauty.

DM8

Policy DM8 - New Build & Structures in the Rural Area - Planning permission will be granted for new buildings in the Rural Area where the development would not adversely impact on the identified intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and is for one of a number of prescribed developments. Planning permission

will be granted for the redevelopment of previously developed land, replacement buildings and residential outbuildings subject to meeting prescribed criteria.

DM10

Policy DM10 - Change of use (Land & Buildings) & Engineering operations - Planning permission will be granted for the change of use of buildings in the Green Belt, Green Wedges and Rural Area subject to the building being of permanent and substantial construction and where the building is in keeping with its surroundings. Engineering operations will be permitted within the Green Belt where they preserve openness, do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, and do not harm the character and appearance of the area. Changes of use of land will be permitted in the Green Wedges and Rural Area where the development would not adversely impact on the role, function and intrinsic character of the area.

DM13

Policy DM13 - Designated Heritage Assets - The impact of any development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting, and the level of any harm, will be considered against any public benefits arising from the proposed development. The Council will preserve Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and Scheduled Monuments.

DM14

Policy DM14 - Non-Designated Heritage Assets - Proposals will be permitted where they retain the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, including its setting. Any harm or loss will be judged against the significance of the asset.

DM15

Policy DM15 - Archaeology - Planning permission will be granted for development affecting archaeological sites providing it protects, enhances or preserves sites of archaeological interest and their settings.

DM16

Policy DM16 - Ecology & Biodiversity - The impact of a development on Internationally Designated Sites, Nationally Designated Sites and Locally Designated Sites will be considered in line with the importance of the site. With National and Local Sites, this will be balanced against the benefits of the development. All development proposals should conserve and enhance the network of habitats, species and sites.

DM17

Policy DM17 - Trees, Woodland & Landscape Features - Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals that do not result in unacceptable harm to the health of a preserved tree, trees in a Conservation Area or Registered Park and Garden, preserved woodlands or ancient woodlands. Development proposals must not result in unacceptable harm to natural landscape features that are important to the character and appearance of the area.

DM18

Policy DM18 - Flooding/Suds - Planning permission for all types of development will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the site is safe from all types of flooding. All major developments will be required to incorporate water management measures to reduce surface water run off and ensure that it does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

DM19

Policy DM19 - Renewable & Low Carbon Energy - Planning permission will be granted for renewable or low carbon energy developments subject to their impact on residential amenity, the historic and natural environment, visual impact and highway safety.

DM23

Policy DM23 - High Quality & Inclusive Design - Planning permission will be granted for development that respects the character and appearance of the area in which it is located. Development must be compatible with its surroundings having regard to scale, siting, form, architecture, materials, boundary treatments and landscape. The design of all new buildings and extensions must be of high quality, well proportioned, have visually coherent elevations, active elevations and create safe, accessible and inclusive environments.

DM27

Policy DM27 - Parking Standards - The Council will have regard to the vehicle parking standards set out in the Essex Parking Standards - Design and Good Practice (2009) or as subsequently amended when determining planning applications. The relevant standards are contained in the 2024 Essex Parking Guidance which were adopted by Chelmsford City Council in 2025.

DM29

Policy DM29 - Protecting Living & Working Environments - Development proposals must safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of any nearby residential property by ensuring that development is not overbearing and does not result in unacceptable overlooking or overshadowing. Development must also avoid unacceptable levels of polluting emissions, unless appropriate mitigation measures can be put in place and permanently maintained.

DM30

Policy DM30 - Contamination & Pollution - Permission will only be granted for developments on or near to hazardous land where the Council is satisfied there will be no threat to the health or safety of future users and there will be no adverse impact on the quality of local groundwater or surface water. Developments must also not have an unacceptable impact on air quality and the health and wellbeing of people.

SOLAR

The Solar Farm Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in November 2021 and is part of the Local Development Framework. The Document contains local guidance on preparing and submitting proposals for solar farms and gives guidance on how planning applications should be considered in light of national and local requirements. The Plan is linked to borough-wide planning policies.

POSPD

The Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in January 2021 and sets out the City Council's approach towards seeking planning obligations which are needed to make development proposals acceptable in planning terms.

SPDSD

The Sustainable Development Supplementary Planning Document contains guidance on how new development can include sustainable construction techniques, including how it can be energy efficient, minimise the production of waste and overall reduce the negative impacts of development.

NPWIND

NPPF Part 14 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Paragraph 166 states that local planning authorities should expect new development to comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscape to minimise energy consumption.

Paragraph 168 states that when determining planning applications, 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;
- b) recognise that small-scale and community-led projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions;
- c) in the case of applications for the repowering and life-extension of existing renewable sites, give significant weight to the benefits of utilising an established site.

Background Papers

Case File
