

Our ref: 25/02624/NMACON
Your Ref: N/A
Direct Dial: [REDACTED]
Ask for: [REDACTED]
Date: 19.12.2025



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Planning Inspectorate
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Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION NO : 25/02624/NMACON

DESCRIPTION : Application to make a non-material change to the Order pursuant to the Infrastructure Planning (Changes to, and Revocation of, Development Consent Orders) Regulations 2011

LOCATION : Longfield Solar Farm Large Site Covering Land to the West Of the District and within Chelmsford City Council

I refer to the above application requesting Non-Material changes to the Longfield Solar Farm Order 2023 (SI 2023/734) as corrected by the Longfield Solar Farm (Correction) Order 2023 (SI 2023/1241) (the Order). The changes would comprise the following: -

- 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.

Change 1

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. The proposed change would not have any effect on residents/businesses or any additional implications in respect of Habitats Regulations Assessment.

No objections are raised to the proposals made within Change 1.

Change 2

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 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 residents or business or any additional implications in respect of habitats regulation assessment.

No objections are made to the proposals within Change 2.

Change 3

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.

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.

No objections are made to the proposals within Change 3.

Change 4

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.

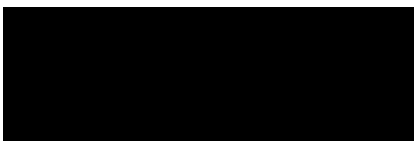
The applicant considers that the overlaps are de minimis and neither the Order nor the other planning permissions are prejudiced from their ongoing implementation.

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.

No proposals are made to the proposals within Change 4.

In conclusion it is considered that the changes detailed above are non-material and necessary to the development and therefore no objection is raised to the proposed changes.

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the Planning Development Manager.

For Planning Development Manager