Conisbrough Parks Parish Council submission - Examination procedure.

Regards: Whitestone Net Zero Ltd – EN0110020

This document is to be read alongside our Event Participation Form

Executive Summary

Conisbrough Parks Parish Council seeks an accessible and properly informed Examination of Whitestone 1, which lies predominantly within the parish. Its concerns cover heritage and archaeology, landscape and visual effects, Green Belt, traffic, public rights of way, flooding and drainage.

The Council requests practical support for residents without digital access, evening hearings, venues closer to affected communities, clear accessibility and welfare arrangements, and free parking. It seeks earlier hearing agendas, adequate preparation time and opportunities to refine contributions and respond to new evidence.

Residents' evidence and potential effects on people with protected characteristics, particularly age and disability, should receive appropriate consideration. The Council requests sufficient heritage hearing time, examination of enforceable mitigation, provision for reports at Deadline 2, comments on written answers and closing statements. Proposed inspection locations are set out in Appendix 1.

The Council will contribute selectively at issue specific hearings and requests confirmation of the two-minute silence at 11am on 11 November.

Introduction

Conisbrough Parks Parish Council represents a predominantly rural parish directly affected by Whitestone 1. Whitestone 1 lies predominantly within the Parish Council's administrative boundary and would therefore affect the parish's landscape, heritage, transport network, public rights of way and local communities in a particularly direct way.

The parish includes the village of Clifton and its Conservation Area (since 1977), together with a wider rural landscape containing historic buildings, archaeological remains, agricultural land, public footpaths and bridleways, and valued views towards Conisbrough Castle and the surrounding historic landscape. The Council considers that the significance of these assets and the character of the parish must be properly understood when examining the application. Noting here that village of Clifton, which forms the majority of parishioners, has circa 1 in 3 residents aged over 65 or more, something we feel Whitestone have underestimated the particular needs and vulnerability that their project could have on the parish community.

The Council wishes to assist the Examination through its local knowledge, residents' evidence and understanding of the relationship between the proposed development and the parish. Its concerns include, in particular:

- Cultural heritage and archaeology, including effects on the setting and significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets, the historic landscape around Clifton and Conisbrough, and the Scheduled Monument comprising the Conisbrough Parks Romano-British villa. The Council also wishes to examine the proposed mitigation measures, including those secured or proposed through the draft Development Consent Order and associated requirements.
- Landscape and visual effects, including the effect of solar panels, associated infrastructure, fencing, access arrangements and construction activity on the rural character of the parish, views

from Clifton and surrounding settlements, views towards Conisbrough Castle, and the setting of heritage assets.

- Construction and operational traffic, including the suitability and safety of proposed access routes, the effect of construction traffic on narrow rural lanes, visibility and road safety, and the interaction between HGVs, agricultural vehicles, residents, walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
- Public rights of way, including footpaths and bridleways, the safety and amenity of their users, the continuity and enjoyment of routes, and the effects of construction activity, temporary closures, diversions and changes to the rural setting.
- Green Belt matters, including the effect of the proposed development on the openness and purposes of the Green Belt, the character of the countryside and the cumulative relationship with other development in the area.
- Flooding and drainage, including surface-water runoff, existing drainage patterns, the capacity and maintenance of proposed drainage infrastructure, and potential effects on agricultural land, roads, properties and watercourses.

Where applicable, the Council will refer in its substantive evidence to the relevant application documents, particularly Environmental Statement Chapter 8 Cultural Heritage and Archaeology (APP-060), its associated figures and appendices, Chapter 7 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (APP-059), Chapter 13 Traffic and Transport (APP-065), Chapter 10 Water Resources and Flood Risk (APP-062), the Planning Statement (APP-037), the rights of way management plan (APP-047), and the draft DCO (APP-017) and associated control documents.

This submission concerns the arrangements for examining the application. This does not replace the Council's Relevant Representation ([redacted] or its detailed Written Representation which will be submitted by deadline 1 (24/11/26), in which these matters will be addressed in greater detail and supported by references to the application documents and document reference numbers.

Philip Knight is our principal speaker and will be attending all session across 10th, 11th and 12th Nov but if due to any unforeseen circumstances he was to be unavailable the Parish would then be represented by Cllr Paul Manning

Preliminary Meeting Written procedural submission

1 Participation without digital access

The Council welcomes the availability of in-person and telephone participation alongside online participation. However, the practical reliance on online documents, registration and updates presents barriers for residents who lack internet access, suitable equipment or digital skills, including some older residents.

The Council requests clear information about practical assistance with registration, access to paper documents, and non-digital ways of receiving essential information and making submissions. Please clarify how telephone participants can follow documents and drawings discussed during hearings.

The Council also requests a named Case Team contact through whom residents can arrange assistance and any necessary reasonable adjustments.

2 Daytime hearings and local venues

The first hearings are scheduled on weekdays during the daytime. This makes participation difficult for residents who cannot take time off work or who have caring responsibilities.

The Council requests an evening Open Floor Hearing, including an evening session at OFH2 if held, and consideration of evening sessions for other matters of substantial community interest, where practicable.

The Council also asks that suitable venues closer to the communities affected by Whitestone 1 be considered, particularly in Conisbrough or Doncaster. This request is intended to reduce travel, cost and accessibility barriers, while recognising that Whitestone affects communities across more than one local authority area.

3 Venue arrangements and attendee welfare

The Council has not yet received sufficient information about practical arrangements at the November venue. Attendees may be older, disabled, travelling considerable distances or attending successive sessions.

Please provide advance information about step-free access, accessible toilets and hearing assistance; the availability refreshments; whether attendees may bring their own refreshments; breaks and any suitable quiet or rest area; and parking availability, charges, accessible spaces and drop-off arrangements.

The Council requests free parking for hearing attendees, with any necessary permits or passes issued in advance. If this cannot be arranged, please explain the alternatives and costs before the events.

4 Hearing agendas and preparation time

The Council requests that the high-level agendas identifying the subjects for the Environmental Matters Hearings on 11 and 12 November be supplied or clearly signposted. The Council has experienced difficulty in formulating its submission here and completing Event Participation Form when preparing its registration.

The Rule 6 letter (PD-004, Annex E) states that high-level agendas will accompany notification and that detailed draft agendas will be available at least five working days before the hearings. The Council requests publication earlier than that minimum period wherever possible.

The Council is also concerned that the concentration of events on 10–12 November, combined with limited advance detail, leaves little time for the Parish Council and residents to marshal evidence and coordinate contributions. The general detail of the dates does not, by itself, resolve the difficulty of preparing for particular topics.

We would be grateful for confirmation that parties registering on 27 October may refine their contributions after publication of the detailed agendas, subject to the Examining Authority's directions. Where significant new material or issues arise, the Council requests adequate subsequent opportunities to respond in writing or at a further hearing.

5 Residents evidence and equality considerations

Some residents of the Parish have registered to speak about visual effects, heritage and local history. One has longstanding knowledge of the area's history and archaeology. Another has raised questions about whether effects on people with protected characteristics have been adequately assessed.

The Council asks that appropriate opportunities be provided for this first-hand evidence to be heard and considered alongside technical submissions and can supply their details to the inspectorate.

The Council does seek clarification of how the Examination will address potential differential effects of the development on people with relevant protected characteristics, including age and disability; barriers to their participation in the Examination itself; and any further evidence or adjustments needed to inform the Examining Authority's recommendation and the Secretary of State's consideration of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

6 Examination of parish concerns and site inspections

The Council requests sufficient opportunity to examine the matters identified above, including cultural heritage and archaeology, landscape and visual effects, Green Belt considerations, construction and operational traffic, public rights of way, footpaths and bridleways, and flooding and drainage.

The Council's detailed evidence will, where applicable, refer to the relevant chapters, figures, appendices and document reference numbers within the Environmental Statement and other application documents, including the draft Development Consent Order and its proposed mitigation and control measures. The Council's other concerns remain as set out in its Relevant Representation.

A separate schedule appendix 1 (submitted under suggested locations for site inspections) identifies proposed inspection locations. The Council asks that these be considered alongside previous inspection coverage and requests from other parties. In particular, inspections should assist the Examining Authority in understanding the relationship between the proposed development, Clifton Conservation Area, the wider rural parish, heritage assets, public rights of way, proposed access routes, and locations where flooding or drainage concerns may arise.

7 Heritage hearing and enforceable protections

The Council requests a dedicated opportunity to examine WS1 heritage if the November hearings do not adequately cover it. This should include the setting of Scheduled Monument 1491751 and Conisbrough Castle, the wider historic landscape and the adequacy and timing of archaeological evaluation. If needed, a heritage session should be included in the February hearing week.

The Council asks that the draft DCO hearing (ISH4) examine whether heritage mitigation relied upon in the Environmental Statement is enforceably secured, including the wording of any necessary requirements. These are requests for examination.

8 Expert evidence and later written responses

We ask that interested parties may submit reports by Deadline 2 (15/12/26), given Deadline 1 on 24 November follows shortly after the November hearings.

The Council also requests an express opportunity to comment on other parties' answers to the first written questions, for example at Deadline 4, and an opportunity for interested parties to submit concise closing statements at Deadline 6.

10 Armistice Day arrangements

We would like to request confirmation that Issue Specific Hearing 1 (Environment Matters) on Wednesday 11 November 2026 will pause to observe the national two-minute silence at 11am, with proceedings arranged to allow everyone present, including remote participants, to take part.

Issue Specific Hearings (ISH)

The Council requests opportunities to contribute at ISH1 and ISH2 on the following subjects, where included in the agendas. It will refine its points once the agendas are available and will contribute selectively where its local knowledge or evidence assists the Examination. It does not propose technical presentations on every topic.

- Heritage and archaeology: Scheduled Monument 1491751, Conisbrough Castle, Clifton Conservation Area and the wider historic landscape; assessment of setting; adequacy and timing of archaeological investigations; and how mitigation is secured. Relevant documents include APP-060, APP-116, APP-118, APP-119, APP-049 and APP-017. **The council notes and agrees with City of Doncaster Council and Historic England who all dispute the applicant's assessment of the setting of Scheduled Monument 1491751 and Conisbrough Castle**
- Landscape and visual effects: the coverage and accuracy of viewpoints, effects on the rural parish and views across Conisbrough Parks from Clifton, Conisbrough, Micklebring and within Conisbrough Parks Relevant documents include APP-059, APP-075, APP-076 and APP-111.

- Traffic and public rights of way: Park Lane and proposed accesses, construction routes, safety of vulnerable users, Footpath 16 and Bridleways 2 and 4. Relevant documents include APP-011, APP-065, APP-045, APP-047 and APP-017.
- Flooding and drainage: local flood evidence, construction runoff, downstream effects and drainage maintenance. Relevant documents include APP-062 and APP-050.
- Green Belt: opportunities to examine openness, purposes and the applicant's justification when those policy matters are scheduled. Relevant documents include APP-037 and APP-038.
- Equality considerations: opportunities for residents' evidence about differential effects and access barriers to be examined, and clarification of the evidence needed by the decision-maker.

Declaration of assistance

OpenAI ChatGPT was used to help finalise this submission and organise the Council's wording using the Rule 6 letter, the Examination Library, the Council's Relevant Representation and the Council representative's instructions/draft text it pulled together and account of discussions with residents. The Council has reviewed and approved the final wording and takes responsibility for its accuracy.