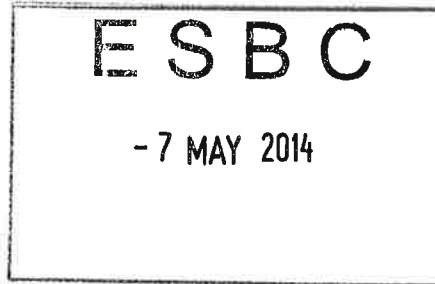


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6th May 2014

Our Ref: VD/AJR/Rolleston Park Farm

Dear Sir,

P/14/00572

Proposed Solar Farm on land at Rolleston Park Farm, Tutbury, Burton on Trent, Staffordshire.

I am writing to formally request a Screening Opinion to determine the requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to accompany a planning application for a Photovoltaic (PV) solar farm at the above location.

As required under this regulation, please find enclosed a site location plan together with a brief description below of the proposal and its possible effects on the environment.

Site Details

Rolleston Park Farm occupies an east to west tributary valley system leading to the River Dove. This is between Tutbury and Anslow, to the north-west of Burton upon Trent. The solar farm would be situated to the north of the farmstead and to south of Tutbury, near to Burton Road (A511). It would be formed in three adjacent parcels. The first of these (westernmost) is a large part of an irregular shaped field set a couple of fields from Tutbury and one field away from Rolleston Park Farm. The second (central) is the whole of an adjacent irregular shaped field, with an edge alongside the Burton Road and also one field away from Rolleston Park Farm. The third (southernmost) is a smaller area which is the western end of field to the south of the central field. It lies alongside an access track to Rolleston Park Farm from the east.

The three fields lie on the undulating slopes and plateau top of the valley, on the northern side of the Rolleston Park Farm valley area. Their boundaries are marked by a mix of hedging, patchy in places, the occasional tree and some sections are open with perhaps only a ditch dividing them from the next field. They are all in arable crop production.

Development Proposals

The site is currently in agricultural use. The proposed Solar PV Farm will involve a Change of use of land from (1) agriculture to (2) mixed use for agriculture and use for the generation of renewable energy. The proposal would have a renewable energy output of 19.2MW which would be able to generate enough clean electricity to power approximately 4,320 homes.

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The Solar PV Farm is proposed as a temporary installation for a period of 25 years. The solar farm could produce a carbon saving in the order of 10,560 Tonnes of CO₂ per year, a saving of 264,000 Tonnes of carbon over the lifetime of the solar farm.

On decommissioning the system at the end of its useful life, the panels and associated infrastructure will be removed and recycled. The land can then be returned to previous agricultural use, making the whole proposal completely reversible.

The PV arrays would run East-West across the site, each array will be mounted on a simple framework so that panels are facing due south, to maximise amount of energy generated. The PV arrays are arranged in a pre-determined spacing which maximises energy output from each array by minimising overshadowing caused by the adjoining array.

Grid connection will be via underground cable that will link Solar Farm to existing electricity grid. The exact route of connection is still to be determined.

The 19.2MW PV solar array is made up from racks of panels. The maximum height of each rack is 2.0m above ground level, they are angled at 20 degrees.

The arrays of panels will be mounted on a simple metal framework. The main purpose of the mounting structure is to hold the modules in the required position without undue stress. It must be capable of withstanding appropriate environmental stresses for the location, such as wind or snow loading. The framework will be driven into the soil, removing the need for deep foundations or piling. Such supporting systems are designed to avoid the use of concrete foundations.

The panels themselves are constructed with a protective aluminium frame, which provides structural rigidity. The front face of the panel is made from a sheet of glass covered with a non-reflective coating. This ensures that the maximum amount of light is absorbed by the photovoltaic cells, improving efficiency and reducing glare to a minimum. The panels will be largely hidden from public view. Compared to other forms of renewable energy generation - notably, for example, wind turbine generation - such a solar scheme is considered to have a very limited impact on the appearance of the wider countryside and landscape in the area.

Due to the location of the site, it will be enclosed by a 1.8m high livestock fence.

The whole of the site will be seeded with a proprietary grass and wildflower mix to develop the arable field into an area that greatly benefits local wildlife. In addition the fields will be grazed by sheep which will retain a "double-crop" agricultural use whilst keeping the grass below the panel height and ensuring that scrub does not establish.

Requirement for an EIA

The proposed development has been considered against the EIA Regulations and accompanying guidance in Circular 02/99.

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Under the EIA regulations an EIA is automatically required for Schedule 1 developments. The proposed solar park development does not fall within any of the categories set out in Schedule 1 of the regulations.

The proposed development will comprise of an installation for the production of electricity and as the size of the site exceeds 0.5ha it falls under Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations, '*industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water (unless included in Schedule 1)*' under Schedule 2, paragraph 3(a).

The Regulations state that Schedule 2 development which is likely to have significant environmental effect because of factors such as its nature, size or location, will need an EIA.

Summary

Having considered the Regulations, including Schedules 2 and 3, and the guidance in Circular 02/99, we consider that the proposed development does not warrant the submission of an environmental statement as it is not likely to have significant effects on the environment for the purposes of the 1999 Regulations by virtue of factors such as its size and location.

We intend to provide a comprehensive planning application including the following assessments:

- Landscape and Visual Appraisal
- Ecology Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Archaeological Assessment
- Transport Statement
- Community Statement
- Agricultural Assessment

We look forward to receiving the Council's screening opinion within the necessary timeframe.

In the meantime, should you have any queries or require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

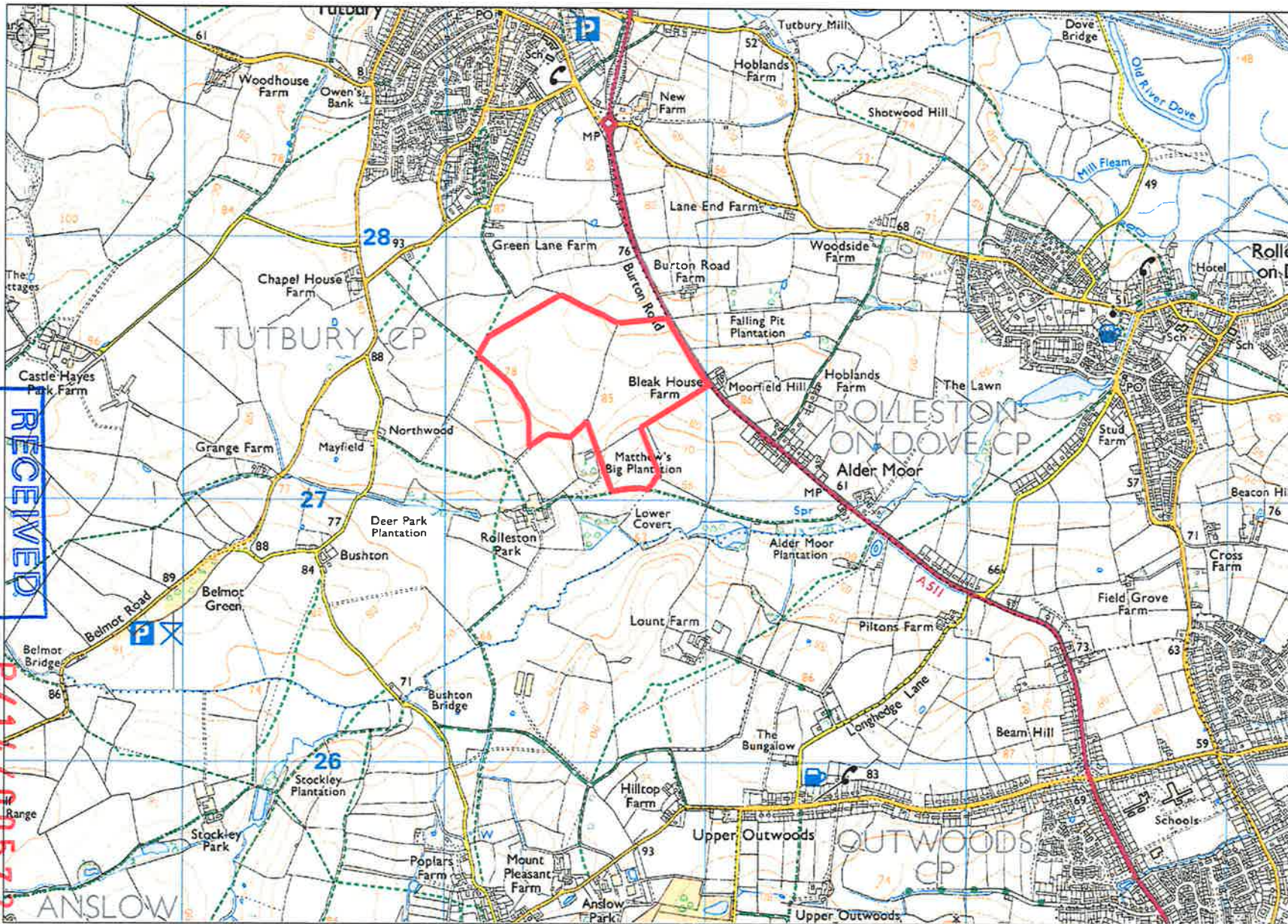
Yours sincerely,

Stuart Bradshaw
For and on behalf of Push Energy Ltd

Enc

RECEIVED
- 7 MAY 2014

P/114/00572



Revision:



Project:
Proposed Solar Farm
Rolleston Park
Tutbury
Staffordshire
Client:
Push Energy

Drawing Title:
Location Plan

Project Ref. / Drawing No.
JT08/PA001A

Scale: 1:10000 @ A3
Date: 20/02/2014
Drawn: JL
Checked: JK



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