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Our Ref: ABC/2022/091197
Date: 18 August 2022

Application No: 22/00668/AS

Location: Land south of M20, Church Lane, Aldington, Kent

Proposal: Installation of a solar farm with a generating capacity of up to 49.9MW comprising: ground mounted solar panels; access tracks; inverter/transformers; substation; storage, spare parts and welfare cabins; underground cables and conduits; perimeter fence; CCTV equipment; temporary construction compounds; and associated infrastructure and planting scheme.

Thank you for your consultation on the above referenced planning application.

Kent County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority have reviewed the East Stour Solar Farm FRA and Outline Drainage Strategy dated March 2022 prepared by Wallingford HydroSolutions Ltd and have the following comments:

It is detailed that the surface water for the site will be managed through the area immediately surrounding the panels being vegetated along with buffer strips of hedge rows and native woodland planting on the southern site to provide further attenuation. An unconnected cut-off swale is also proposed as a precautionary measure to store some of the run-off volume.

It is unclear from the report where the impermeable areas for the site such as the Spare building, Store building, Welfare block and Inverter units will be located we will expect this to be clearly detailed as part of any further detailed design application along with detailed hydraulic analysis.

Should you as LPA be minded to grant permission for the development we would recommend that the following conditions with advisories be applied:

Advisories

It should be noted that the parts of the site fall within the jurisdiction of the River Stour Internal Drainage Board; any works whatsoever that may have the potential to affect any adjacent watercourse (or the network's ability to convey water) will require their formal prior written permission. Further information can be found at:

<https://rsidb.org.uk/consents-byelaws/>

Furthermore any work in, under, over or within 8 metres of the banks of a designated main river or the toe of a flood defence requires a Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP). As of 6th April 2016, the Water Resources Act 1991 and associated land drainage byelaws have been amended and flood defence consents will now fall under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010. Further details and guidance are available on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-activities-environmental-permits>.

Conditions

Condition:

Development shall not begin in any phase until a detailed sustainable surface water drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to (and approved in writing by) the local planning authority. The detailed drainage scheme shall be based upon the East Stour Solar Farm FRA and Outline Drainage Strategy dated March 2022 and shall demonstrate that the surface water generated by this development (for all rainfall durations and intensities up to and including the climate change adjusted critical 100 year storm) can be accommodated and disposed of without increase to flood risk on or off-site.

The drainage scheme shall also demonstrate (with reference to published guidance):

- that silt and pollutants resulting from the site use can be adequately managed to ensure there is no pollution risk to receiving waters.
- appropriate operational, maintenance and access requirements for each drainage feature or SuDS component are adequately considered, including any proposed arrangements for future adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker.

The drainage scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason:

To ensure the development is served by satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of surface water and to ensure that the development does not exacerbate the risk of on/off site flooding. These details and accompanying calculations are required prior to the commencement of the development as they form an intrinsic part of the proposal, the approval of which cannot be disaggregated from the carrying out of the rest of the development.

Condition:

No building on any phase (or within an agreed implementation schedule) of the development hereby permitted shall be brought into use until a Verification Report, pertaining to the surface water drainage system and prepared by a suitably competent person, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The Report shall demonstrate that the drainage system constructed is consistent with that which was approved. The Report shall contain information and evidence (including photographs) of details and locations of inlets, outlets and control structures; landscape plans; full as built drawings; information pertinent to the installation of those items identified on the critical drainage assets drawing; and, the submission of an operation and maintenance manual for the sustainable drainage scheme as constructed.

Reason:

To ensure that flood risks from development to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those risks to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development as constructed is compliant with and subsequently maintained pursuant to the requirements of paragraph 165 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

This response has been provided using the best knowledge and information submitted as part of the planning application at the time of responding and is reliant on the accuracy of that information.

Yours faithfully,

Emily Neale

Graduate Flood Risk Officer
Flood and Water Management