



HUMBERSIDE POLICE
Community Safety Unit
Pearson Park Police Station
Pearson Park
Hull HU5 2TD

Date: 7th March 2024

Mr Scott Jackson
North Lincolnshire Council
Business Development
Church Square
30-40 High Street
Scunthorpe
DN15 6NL

Dear Mr Jackson

Re: **PA/2024/129, Planning permission for the installation of a solar farm and associated infrastructure, including a control station, DNO substation, access tracks, inverters, and other auxiliary infrastructure**

Thank you for consulting with me on the above planning application to be located at land adjacent AALPS College, Winterton Road, Scunthorpe.

After consultation with Humberside Police, Neighbourhood Policing Team and Rural Task Force I can confirm that we have no objections to this application. However, I would strongly recommend that the Applicant considers the informative notes below.

Our comments are provided with the intention of reducing opportunities for future crime and anti-social behaviour which addresses our collective responsibilities outlined in Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Over recent years throughout the country solar farms have been the target for criminal activity by Organised Crime Groups and opportunists including theft of solar panels and cables, criminal damage and in one instance a violent offence reported on a security guard monitoring a solar farm under construction. Solar farms under construction are just as vulnerable to attack as functioning solar farms, due to the plant and machinery and drums of cable which attract offenders.

Having viewed the police data system I can confirm that the area around the proposed development site and nearby businesses have been persistently targeted. 19 offences have taken place between March 2021 and April 2023. Although in this location there has been only one report of ASB motorcycles since April 2023, we cannot stress enough the importance of the informative notes below, as this type of development may provide opportunities for criminal activity to take place.

The offences between March 2021 and April 2023 include:

- Forced entry to perimeter gate
- Broken fencing and theft of equipment
- Theft of diesel

- Theft of tools and machinery
- Quad bikes on land causing criminal damage
- Theft of vehicle through compound fence
- Theft of fuel and batteries

From January 2023 up to the present date there has been 38 reports of Quad-enabled criminality, including anti-social behaviour, theft of power tools and diesel. These crime types are not specific to the location of the proposed development but have occurred within Scunthorpe and surrounding area.

Other locations within the Humberside Police area have also been targeted, in-particular solar related crime.

Informative Notes

It is important to consider all aspects of security, therefore the following should be considered:

- Carry out regular (daily if possible) walks of the perimeter fence line to identify holes cut that could be a precursor to an upcoming theft
- Ensure that CCTV provides full coverage of the site and cannot be tampered with. It is also important to display signage around the development site. I have identified within the Planning, Design and Access Statement that CCTV cameras will be mounted on poles up to 2.4m high and will be orientated into the site and installed within the security fencing

Although CCTV is not a solution to all security problems it can help deter criminals and assist with the identification of offenders after a crime has been committed. If a CCTV system has a recording facility only, it can be a useful investigate tool whereas a monitored system allows a real-time reaction to criminal activity. CCTV is also often very useful in mitigating against risk where other forms of security are not feasible. It is important that an operational requirement for CCTV is drawn up in accordance with their specific use and that the objectives for the CCTV system are clearly established before a tendering process is started. The CCTV system must have a recording format that is acceptable to the police with images of evidential quality. Staff should be sufficiently trained to operate the system and be able to make recordings available to police on request and an operational requirement must take account of this fact. Early discussions with an independent expert and potential installers can resolve several matters including:

- monitoring and recording requirements
- requirements for observation and facial recognition/identification
- areas to be monitored and field of view
- activities to be monitored
- the use of recorded images
- maintenance of equipment and the management of recording
- subsequent ongoing training of operatives

CCTV which records can, to a limited extent, act as a visible deterrent but really it offers little preventative security beyond that: the recording may be useful in identification, providing evidence for prosecution and insurance purposes, but not for halting acts of theft: by the time the footage is viewed. However, consideration could be given to installing remote CCTV monitoring off-site by professional security personnel who can ensure active monitoring and fast response in the event of any issues, as detection software is also deployed to send alerts or raise alarm should suspicious or unexpected activity occur. As such, remote monitored CCTV offers not only the deterrent and

evidence-gathering technology, but also the crucial real-time response for monitoring the footage to ascertain what is happening in response to initial alarm or alert, audio warnings can be issued via some systems, which can be highly effective in scaring the offenders away and immediate follow up across a range of options, including alerting the police, manned security backup and designated key holders

- Ensure there is a robust escalation process in place when an offender is identified on site. Quick response times are of paramount importance
- Consider overt and covert forensic marking of panels and cables so that they are identifiable when recovered. (Forensic marking member companies are available from www.securedbydesign.com). If the individual solar panels can be marked overtly this would reduce the ease with which they could be re sold / re used and will help act as an additional deterrent and assist in any future identification
- Ensure that there are no gaps in hedging or the fence line. Make it difficult for vehicles to be brought onto the site by using ditches/bunds or strategically placed concrete blocks or gates which may also be appropriate in some instances, but would need to be designed carefully
- Security fencing is effective at delaying or deterring intrusion because of the need to climb over or penetrate through the fence. I have identified within the Planning, Design and Access Statement that a 2.6m high galvanised mesh security fence, topped with barbed wire mounted on wooden posts will be installed around the perimeter of the solar farm. To note: depending on the location, wooden posts can easily be cut down. The fence will be installed at the start of the construction programme and will remain for the duration of the operational life of the development.

It has been identified that offenders usually gain access by cutting a hole in the fence. Weld Mesh fencing is ideal for protecting premises without restricting view, it ensures that all angles are always in sight, reducing the risk of a security breach. Surveillance of and over the site from any surrounding streets, footways, and occupied buildings can help to deter potential offenders who may fear that their presence on the site will be reported to the police. The fencing system should be transparent to facilitate observation from outside the site and the use of a dark coloured coating will reduce the reflection of light and make it easier for passers-by to observe.

The recommendation would be to install fencing which has been tested and approved to current UK Government standards. I would like to recommend that the Mesh fencing has a minimum standard of either:

- LPS 1175: Issue 7.2:2014 Security Rating 2+, or
- LPS 1175: Issue 8:2018 Security Rating B3+, or
- LPS 2081: Issue 1.1:2016 Security Rating B

Applying one of these standards identifies the threat level, for example the tool kit used to penetrate the fence and the minimum delay time (in minutes) and can provide minimum enhanced resistance to opportunist attempts at forced entry.

Although the fence height will be 2.6m high it is advisable to ensure the fence is capable of raking or stepping to maintain height over different ground levels without creating large gaps underneath. I appreciate that 'Badger' gaps will be placed at regular intervals along the fence line increasing the gap between the bottom of the fence to c.20cm to allow the passage of small mammals. It is important to consider mitigating security measures around these areas as the fence line may become vulnerable.

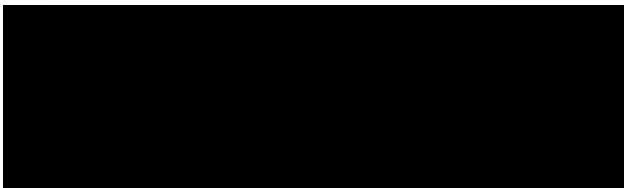
Wherever possible the boundary protection of the site should be an appropriate distance from the actual panels to discourage parking a vehicle against the site boundary and manually lifting stolen panels onto a vehicle

- I am unable to identify within the planning documents any details with regards to the height and design of the site entrance gates. The design, height and length of any gates should be consistent with the dimensions of the boundary fence into which they are set, and to close any gap beneath them to ground level. Entrance gates should be inward opening, of substantial framed construction and employ galvanized adjustable hinges and fixings mounted behind the attack face. Gates should be fitted with galvanized drop bolts (tamper proof fixings). It should not be possible to lift the gate from its hinges, and the hinges and lock cylinder should be protected in such a way as to prevent their use as climbing aids. It is recommended to use Closed shackle 'Sold Secure' padlocks to secure the gates rather than with chains which could be cut.

If the Applicant would like to discuss any of the above informative notes, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The area surrounding the proposed development site is significant, therefore Officers from Humberside Police Rural Task Force would be happy to meet with the Applicant at the proposed location to show the areas of concern such as access points etc. and where criminal activity has previously been committed. This may assist and prevent any issues during the construction phase and moving forward with the development. I would be happy for the Applicant to contact me in the first instance to arrange a convenient meeting with Humberside Police Officers.

Yours sincerely



Tracy Rokahr ASyl
Designing out Crime Officer
Community Safety Unit
Humberside Police