



North Herts Council
Development and Conservation
North Hertfordshire District Council
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Date: 2 July 2025
Our ref: 05995

For the attention of: Planning Department, planning.control@north-herts.gov.uk

Application ref: 25/01349/FP
Location: Land North Of, Stevenage Road, Titmore Green, Little Wymondley, Hertfordshire
Proposal/Description: Full Planning Permission : Installation and operation of a battery energy storage system (BESS) facility incorporating batteries, transformers, inverters, switchrooms, substation, water tank, other associated infrastructure plus cable ducts, fencing, access track, landscaping and drainage infrastructure.

Thank you for consulting with Place Services on the above Full planning application. This letter sets out our consultation response on the landscape impact of the application and how the proposal relates and responds to the landscape setting and context of the site.

Site Context:

The application site is located between the A602 to the north and Stevenage Road to the south. The site comprises a singular field where the existing field boundaries define the site edges. A woodland belt runs along the northern boundary, and the other boundaries are defined by tree belts, woodland blocks, sparse hedgerows or fences. Various other commercial and farm buildings are located in the surrounding area along Stevenage Road. The A1(M) and railway are also located 600m~ to the east of the site.

Planning Policy Context:

North Hertfordshire Local Plan (Adopted 2022)

Policies to be considered that are relevant to landscape include Policy ENV3, ENV4, NE1, NE2, NE7, NE8, SP9 and SP12.

Wymondley Neighbourhood Plan

Policies to be considered that are relevant to landscape include Policy NHE1, NHE4 and NHE8.

Review of the proposal/submitted information:

The application has been supported by the submission of a Landscape and Visual Appraisal (Ref: TC24243) (Dated: 3rd April 2025) by Tir Collective.

Landscape Character

The application site is located within Landscape Character Area 215 Wymondley and Titmore Green of the North Herts and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment (2011). Key characteristics of this LCA that are relevant to the site include the rolling chalk landscape, irregular sized fields in arable with grazing adjacent to settlements, small winding lanes, historic place names and mature tree cover.

In our Pre-Application advice we advised that the following landscape receptors were included in the assessment:

- National Character Area (NCA) Profile 110 Chilterns
- North Herts and Stevenage Landscape Character Assessment: 215 Wymondley and Titmore Green
- The site and surrounding context
- The Chilterns National Landscape

Alongside the individual landscape features which has been included in Table 4-1 of the LVA, we would have expected the above landscape receptors to have been included. The approach included within the LVA compartmentalises the landscape receptors into physical features and therefore neglects to judge the effects in the combined features which make up the local character, as is established within the relevant LCAs, or by assessing the site and immediate context.

As per Para 5.36 of GLVIA3, not only are the “effects on individual components of the landscape” assessed, but also the “changes in landscape character”. We therefore consider this an omission from the submitted LVA, as per Policy NHE1 Landscape Character of the Wymondley Parish Neighbourhood Plan.

Notwithstanding the above, the LVA assesses that the worst impacts on the landscape receptors would be moderate adverse at Year 1 and moderate-minor adverse at Year 15. Based on our own assessment of LCA 215, we judge that the effects would not exceed these assessed effects. Therefore, we do not require a revision of the submitted LVA owed to the anticipated effects associated with this development.

Visual Effects

The submitted photography is taken in June 2024 (summer), when there is full leaf. We question whether additional views may be perceptible in winter months along Stevenage Road to the south of the site.

We would have preferred that all viewpoint photography was undertaken during winter months to represent the worst-case scenario when there was less leaf cover. We note that the submitted LVA does not acknowledge this as a constraint.

Table 5-1 identifies 4no. viewpoint details. Typically, we would expect more than 4 viewpoints within an LVA, however we acknowledge that views of the site are limited owed to the extent surrounding vegetation and landform. We previously advised in the Pre-Application that two additional viewpoint receptors should be included within the assessment, however these have not been included within this submission. Notwithstanding this, our concerns regarding the wider visual impact of the proposed development are minimal and therefore we judge the proposals can be accommodated within the site without this information.

However, we note that Table 5-4 judges that visual receptors Hertfordshire Way would experience moderate-major adverse effects at Year 1, which we would agree with. We judge that this is the primary receptor to experience large effects owed to the development proposals, and we consider that this has been fairly judged within the assessment.

Cumulative Effects

Whilst the submitted LVA includes methodology for assessing cumulative impacts, this has not been integrated into the LVA report. We advise that the cumulative impacts of the proposal with the nearby proposed solar farm at St Ippolyts, under reference 24/02455/FP Land Opposite Wymondley Grid Station.

Review of Location and Layout

A Landscaping Strategy (Dwg no. L100 Rev. A) has been submitted for review.

The Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) also includes details of Special Engineering/Supervised Excavations and Ground Protection for the proposed cabling which crosses through the root protection areas (RPA) of a number of trees. We welcome these protection measures alongside the fencing surrounding the main parcel.

Overall, we judge that the proposed scheme has been receptive to our Pre-App design comments and we welcome their inclusion within the proposals.

We do however have the following comments:

- Confirmation is needed regarding whether the soil cut to form the swale will be retained on site.
- *Sambucus nigra* should be removed from the Hedgerow mix. This species is invasive and has a tendency to restrict the growth of other species within the mix.
- The current plans do not include information on hard landscaping or boundary treatments. We advise this information is also submitted.

Submission Documents

We advise the following plans and information is submitted:

- Hard landscaping – The surface treatment to footpaths, public realm and highways should be aligned with the character of the development.
- Landscape Management and Maintenance Plan

- Ecological enhancements, bird / bat boxes and habitat hibernacula proposals.

Summary:

Some omissions have been identified within the submitted LVA however considering the anticipated effects, it is not essential that amendments are submitted. Recommendations based on the Landscaping Strategy and further required submissions have been included.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries in relation to this advice.

Place Services – Landscape Team

Email: landscape@essex.gov.uk



Place Services provide landscape advice on behalf of North Herts Council.

Please note: This letter is advisory and should only be considered as the opinion formed by specialist staff in relation to this particular matter.