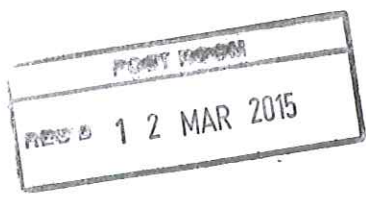




Please reply to:
Newcastle

Our Ref: TWP/KM 15.13
Your Ref:



10 March 2015

Chief Planning Officer
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
Stockwell Street
Leek ST13 6HQ

Dear Sir

Re: Planning Application No.
Proposed Solar Farm at Heywood Grange, Dilhorne

We act for Michael and Verity Brassington of Stansmore Hall Farm, Dilhorne whose land adjoins the site of the proposed solar farm above.

Mr & Mrs Brassington have, historically, received water from a stone chamber situated in Stansmore Wood. This previously also supplied the village of Dilhorne prior to the provision of a mains water supply. Mr & Mrs Brassington do not, however, have mains water and it is not available within the immediate vicinity of their farm.

Water collects in the chamber in Stansmore Wood. It percolates through higher ground, which is where the solar farm is proposed, and gathers in the chamber. It then flows by gravity to the farm and is used for human consumption, washing, etc. and for livestock.

There is a concern that the installation of the solar farm will destroy the sub-ground and prevent the onward percolation of the water to the chamber. It is understood that, as part of the scheme, it will be necessary to install trenches to carry the electricity supply from the panels to the transformers. These are to be a depth of approximately 1 metre which is basically understood to be the depth of the top soil and subsoil overlying the rock in this area. It is of great concern that these trenches will act as drains, despite the fact that they are filled, and carry the water away from its natural route through the ground.

We had understood that the developers were intending to produce a hydrologist's report on this aspect but this is not within the bundle of documents with the application.

Continued/....

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.../continued

Re: Planning Application No.
Proposed Solar Farm at Heywood Grange, Dilhorne

The Environmental Considerations Statement points out that a system of swales is proposed to allow the interception and infiltration of the flow from these areas. I would suggest that it is possible that interception will be made before any water reaches the swales, rendering them redundant.

The Agricultural Appraisal points out that the soil type is "slowly permeable, seasonally water logged soils over slowly permeable sub-strates, with negligible storage capacity". This confirms that water flows through the soil.

The Environment Report prepared by Elgar Middleton Environmental helpfully includes copies of historical survey mapping. Both the 1925 and 1948 plans shown indicate a spring at the northern side of Stansmore Wood where it abuts the proposed solar site. This again indicates the movement of ground water through the site.

The flood risk assessment deals comprehensively with the drainage of the site. It is accepted that the water entering the soil from rainfall will be, essentially, in the same quantities as now with water run-off from the solar panels falling onto the adjacent ground. At 4.2 of the Environment Report the proposal is to install swales at a depth of 0.15 metres on the down slope side of the development. These do not, I suggest, provide any assistance to the water entering my clients' water chamber. The concern is that the ground water will have been carried away, prior to travelling through ground to the swales, by the trenching system upon the site.

It is also noted that reference is made in the application to the screening of the site by the area of woodland surrounding. This is managed woodland with an ongoing schedule of thinning and harvesting. The visibility of the site will increase, rather than diminish, in forthcoming years.

Mr & Mrs Brassington ask that you take these very real concerns into account when considering this application.

Yours faithfully,

T W PARRY, BSc FRICS FAAV

Cc M & V Brassington, Stansmore Hall Farm
Cc James Wallwork, Elgar Middleton

