James Croucher

From: Nick Armour
Sent: 03 April 2025 13:26
To: James Croucher
Cc: Louise Brown
Subject: Conservation Comments for 25/70019/SCOP - Newlands EIA Scoping request ("Hinchingbrooke Logistics Park")

Hi James,

I have assessed application 25/70019/SCOP which seeks to confirm the information required by the LPA to satisfy the EIA of the proposed "Hinchingbrooke Logistics Park".

While the majority of heritage assets are likely to be covered by the EIA I was disappointed by paragraph 11.20 of the EIA Scoping Report which dismissed recommendations for additional receptors made during a recent meeting with the applicant. The nature of the comments made in the scoping report did not suggest that a suitable level of investigation had been undertaken in order to exclude these heritage assets from the required Environmental Impact Assessment.

H3 – St Bartholomew's Church, Great Stukeley, is a Grade II* listed building located on the southern slope of the ridge running between Great and Little Stukeleys. The church is approximately 1250m to the north of the development site at an elevation of approximately 35m over datum. LVIA location 8 will indicate how the proposed development sits within the landscape as viewed from the southern edge of Great Stukeley village. The Report says that "the churchyard is well contained by surrounding buildings and planting". The majority of the planting is located within the grounds of Moat House, 21 Church Road and is not protected. The southern boundary of the churchyard is contained by an overgrown hedgerow. Given the transient nature of this planting and the importance of the heritage asset this should in no way exclude an assessment of the potential impact of the Logistics Park on the wider setting of the church or how that setting contributes to the significance of the Heritage Asset.

H4 – Pepys House is a Grade I listed building located within the Alconbury Brook valley and sitting below Hinchingbrooke House with which it has an historic association. The Report says that "the most limited of glimpses may be visible from a private first floor window albeit any view would be barely discernible". This is an assumption presented without supporting evidence. If views of the proposed development are available from within the building then the development would be within the surroundings in which the heritage asset is experienced and therefore within its setting as per NPPF, Annex 2: Glossary. Pepys House is occupied by the Samuel Pepys Trust who organise tours of the building so the assertion that it is private is misleading. Moreover the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) indicates that "the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting". Excluding Pepys House from a full impact assessment of the proposed development is not supported based on the reasoning provided.

H5 – Alconbury House is a "Small country house probably built for Sir Peter Burrell, bart, later Lord Gwydir (d. 1820) in late C18" (list description). Built on a T- shaped plan with the principal elevation overlooking the Alconbury Brook valley from an elevation of approximately 40m over datum. The proposed development is approximately 3.5km to the south southeast of the listed building. The 1951 sales particulars state that, "The House stands 163 feet above sea level, occupying one of the finest positions in the County and the Principal Rooms have a Southern aspect with an uninterrupted view for miles over the surrounding District". The Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 makes it clear that the importance of setting lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance. Even a cursory assessment of the significance of this building indicates that its location and construction were purposely chosen to allow full appreciation of views over the surrounding countryside. Again, the fact that the building and grounds are private property does not exclude the contribution of its setting to the significance of the heritage asset; the impact of the proposed development on that setting should be assessed. The report identifies the impact of the A1 and wind turbines on the wider context of the

heritage asset, making the case that an assessment of cumulative impact to the setting of Alconbury House should also be undertaken.

It is considered that he exclusion of these heritage assets from the EIA would demonstrate that the applicant had failed to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting, contrary to NPPF Paragraph 207. I recommend that Historic England should be consulted in respect of St Bartholomew's Church and Pepy's House when the main application is submitted.

Many thanks,

Nick.

Nick Armour

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Please be aware that the comments contained within this Email represent the informal opinion of an officer of Huntingdonshire District Council. These comments are made without prejudice to the eventual determination of any application that may be submitted.