7 December 2023

Chief Planning Officer
Development Management
Wiltshire Council
Bythesea Road
Trowbridge
Wiltshire
BA14 8JN

Dear Sir/Madam

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF THE EXISTING WINGWALLS AND TEMPORARY ERECTION OF AN OVERBRIDGE STRUCTURE AT THE CANAL BRIDGE ON WHADDON LANE TO ENABLE THE CONSTRUCTION OF WHADDON FARM SOLAR PARK (PL/2021/03061).

CANAL BRIDGE ON WHADDON LANE, HILPERTON, TROWBRIDGE

ONLINE PLANNING PORTAL REF: PP-12663039

Pegasus Group is duly instructed by BSR Energy Ltd ["the applicant"] to submit a full planning application for the temporary erection of an overbridge structure spanning over the existing canal bridge on Whaddon Lane to enable the construction of Whaddon Farm Solar Park (Ref: PL/2021/03061).

Application Background

Planning permission PL/2021/03061 for Whaddon Farm Solar Park, was originally granted subject to conditions by Wiltshire Council on 6th April 2022. Following the original grant of planning permission, BSR Energy Ltd have acquired this project from the original developer INRG Solar (Whaddon) Ltd. and have undertaken a detailed design and procurement of equipment with their contractor which has resulted in some minor changes being proposed to the scheme. The applicant has recently submitted a S73 variation of condition application (Ref: PL/2023/04747) to vary the existing consent and regularise the proposed minor material amendments.

Among the changes sought as part of the parallel S73 application (PL/2023/04747), several changes have been sought to the approved Vehicle Routing and Construction Access Strategy. The originally approved Vehicle Routing Plan and Construction Access Strategy was developed on the pre-tense that there was an informal weight restriction placed on the bridge by the Canal and

River Trust, thus determining what vehicles could acceptably cross the canal and access the site. Due to the likely load of delivery vehicles associated with the construction of the development, it was proposed that construction vehicles would enter a separate construction compound on land to the south of the canal, where deliveries would be unloaded and split into smaller loads. These would then be loaded onto a tractor-trailer vehicle which could acceptably cross the bridge without exceeding the weight limit imposed by the Canal and River Trust.

Upon review of the detailed design and construction strategy the applicant has commissioned a structural investigation of the existing Canal Bridge to determine whether the existing structure is capable of withstanding vehicles up to the imposed weight limit and the increased concentration of construction traffic traveling to and from the site via the canal bridge. Following the investigation, significant faults were identified on the bridge structure necessitating the provision of a temporary overbridge to be constructed across the existing bridge structure to both enable the construction of the solar park development in addition to the necessary repair work to the bridge whilst enabling continued access for residents and business within Whaddon.

The erection of the temporary overbridge would be capable of withstanding the load of associated construction traffic without the need for delivery loads to be split and redistributed to the site in smaller vehicles or risking further damage to the canal bridge structure. The parallel variation application therefore seeks to relocate the temporary construction compound to land immediately adjacent to the solar park, north of the canal, which would see construction and delivery vehicles accessing the site directly via the temporary overbridge.

In addition to the S73 variation of condition application, a parallel highways license application has also been submitted by Beaver Bridge to Wiltshire Highways for the removal and replacement of the existing damaged bridge wingwalls and the erection of an over spanning temporary bridge structure which would avoid loading the bridge structure.

It is considered that this application is inherently tied to the existing Approval in Principle license application submitted to Wiltshire Highways and the live Section 73 Variation of Condition application (PL/2023/04747) currently with the Council for consideration. We would therefore request that the Council proceed to determine this application in tandem with the other parallel applications.

The Proposal

To enable works on the northern side of the bridge, an overbridge has been proposed due to the existing weight limit on the structure. The overbridge is to be founded on precast abutments positioned on the existing carriageway with approach ramps constructed with geogrid reinforced batters.

The existing bridge structure is a single span masonry jack arch bridge spanning over a canal and tow path. The existing deck comprises 6No. I beams spanning between abutments with jack arches spanning between the I beams concealing the conditions of the majority of the beams. The I beams span 7.066m with 4No. tie bars spanning between the I beams to resist the thrust forces from the

jack arches. The bridge has a total width of 5.545m. The parapets and abutments consist of a combination of masonry and stone brickwork.

Following inspection, the existing structure was noted to be in poor condition. The following was noted in the summary of the bridge condition.

> *'The most notable defects include: the areas of near collapsed wingwalls to the NW and SE with the associated cracking to the parapets suggests the element is no longer being supported. With the 4No cracks to each corner and multiple other defects could be due to settlement/rotation of the element. This is in urgent need of repair and further investigation as the integrity of the structure is under question. At the very least a weight restriction needs to be implemented as HGVs were witnessed using the structure. The various areas of spalling throughout the structure should be repaired at the earliest time to help prolong the life of the structure.'*

The works proposed as part of this application consist of an overspanning arrangement that would avoid loading the existing structure. Precast abutments will be positioned behind the existing abutments and wingwalls to mitigate against the risk of further movement of the wing walls and parapets.

During installation of the temporary overbridge a full road closure will be required. The temporary overbridge will have suitable restraint systems for the imposed speed limit on the bridge (5mph). Traffic calming measures will be installed to ensure this speed limit is maintained.

No changes to the existing water management regime will be made. Any surface water running from the temporary bridge will enter into the existing structures water management system, however, due to the construction methods proposed, precast/proprietary elements, water runoff will be minimal.

The existing bridge wing walls that are in a dangerous condition are to be removed and replaced or repaired prior to the installation of the temporary bridge. Following the removal of the temporary bridge, the existing structure should be fully inspected for further signs of movement prior to being brought back into use.

The temporary bridge and abutments will have suitable finishes on for the duration of the installation (Approx 30 weeks).

The construction of the temporary bridge is to be completed in the following sequence.

- The existing wing walls that are at imminent risk of collapse are to be demolished and rebuilt or repaired to retain the approach ramps of the bridge.

- Temporary abutments are to be constructed from precast blocks situated on the existing road surface.

- Temporary Bridge is to be lifted into position between the precast abutments. Mobile crane is to be positioned on the existing highway to the south of the bridge and away from the existing bridge.

- Geogrid reinforced approach ramps are to be constructed at either end of the structure. A stockpile of material may be required at the northern end of the structure prior to the works commencing to allow this to happen simultaneously.

- Asphalt surface, speed restraint systems and line marking to be carried out prior to site handover.

A full road closure will be required during the construction and removal of the temporary bridge. A temporary closure of the canal and tow paths will be required when lifting the bridge into position. The public right of way to the south of the bridge will be temporarily diverted during the installation and removal of the bridge.

The temporary structure will overspan the existing structure. The temporary bridge abutments will be positioned at a sufficient distance from the permanent bridge and abutments, so that the imposed loadings will be minimal when compared to current vehicular loadings.

The application is supported by an Approval in Principle Report and accompanying design drawings, prepared by Beaver Bridges which sets out the full details of the proposed overbridge design and the structural and geotechnical considerations.

Traffic Management & Community Assistance

To provide a consistent and considerate approach to integration within the community during the project, the applicant is currently placing appropriate notifications within the region, to make everyone aware of the potential for the up-coming works (subject to the Council's approval). In addition to this, publicised adverts will be issued of the confirmed dates locally, along with an invitation for locals to attend a meeting at a local venue, to meet and raise any concerns they may have for the group involved to alleviate with appropriate actions if needed. This will be an ongoing service during the project and a designated person will be appointed to act as a local community liaison.

The project works are intended to be carried out over a 2-night shift period and weekend works, to limit the local impact. Being that residences are at a distance from the bridge, the noise considerations are a minor issue and the period of works for machinery is to be kept to a minimum.

In-situ staff will be positioned within the cul-de-sac to the North of the bridge on radio contact, to keep visual watch on the residential premises, to ensure a team member is always on hand during the works for requests and assistance by the community.

Appropriate traffic & pedestrian signage will be placed both at a safe pre-agreed distance from the bridge on access and egress, as well as at the direct approach to the bridge notifying of the

works, the imposed speed restrictions of 5MPH and the width restrictions of single direction traffic (NOTE: the bridge that exists is already single traffic only).

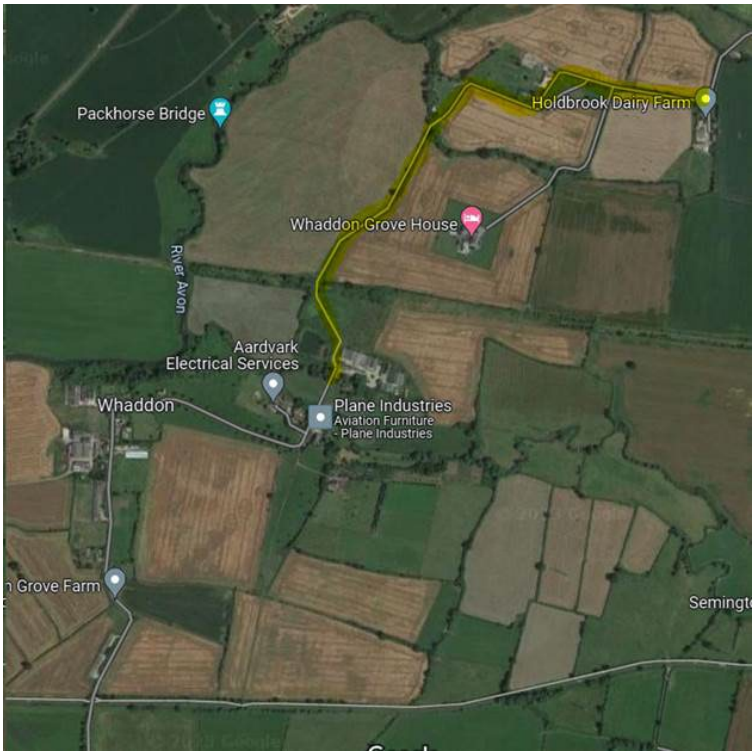
Speed humps & line markers will be installed via temporary asphalt surfacing and markings on access to and egress from the overbridge .

The overbridge system will be provided will luminous parapets on the temporary bridge for the purposes of night usage.

As the structure forms similar overall length to the existing bridge, with the temporary structure utilising extended length ramps and a flat deck, no detrimental effect is anticipated on the existing line-of-sight and therefore presents no further negative effect above that of the existing bridge currently in place.

The contractor will provide a temporary "on-site" medical service for the duration of installation & removal of the works. This will be via independent service (St. John's or similar) to facilitate potential medical emergencies during the programme. This same on site representation is also being booked for the Fire Service once they confirm their availability options. In addition, the applicant is in the process of liaising with all emergency services to inform them of the potential works to integrate with their services and provide support.

With consideration to the access and egress of emergency services during the temporary road closures whilst the installation and removal are taking place, the applicant is currently working with surrounding landowners and emergency services to agree an alternative emergency service access route. The proposed alternative emergency access route would utilise existing private farm track extending north from Whaddon before joining Berryfield Lane to the north east as highlighted on the extract overleaf. Permission for the alternative emergency access has been agreed in principle with the respective owners and discussion are ongoing with emergency services to confirm its acceptability.



Proposed Alternative Emergency Access Route

Planning Application Documentation

The planning application is supported by the documentation set out below:

- Application Form and Certificates
- Application Covering Letter [This Letter]
- Site Location Plan
- Approval in Principle Form, Prepared by Beaver Bridges
- Temporary Abutment Design Drawing - DWG No. 31378-3-BB-WLB-TAD-DRW-01-001 Rev. C1
- Temporary Ramp Design Drawing – DWG No. 31378-4-BBH-WLB-TRD-DRW-01-001 Rev. C2

The various documentation should be read collectively in order to gain a complete understanding of the proposal. The supporting information demonstrates the diligent approach adopted by the Applicant and their experienced consultant team in delivering a well-considered proposal.

The planning application documentation and application fee have been submitted to the Council via Planning Portal.

I trust that the above is sufficient for the application to be validated. However, if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Jack Ellis

Senior Planner

Enc. Documents as listed above