

Heritage advice
NSDC PLANNING CONSULTATION

The purpose of this report is to outline the main historic environment considerations that Conservation consider relevant to the proposed planning/ listed building consent applications. The report will seek to identify any relevant heritage assets and provide an assessment of impact in the context of legal and policy objectives. Advice is given at officer level only and without prejudice. These are otherwise the views of the Conservation Team only and should be taken into account alongside other material planning considerations in determining the merits of the application.

Application number: 23/01837/FULM

Date: 17th July 2024

Comments 26th March 2024 Addendum to Heritage Impact Assessment dated January 2024, including three new Zone of Theoretical Visibility maps

Comments 17th July 2024 following submission of the following documents that have been reviewed by Conservation:

- **Viewpoint 4, 5, 7**
- **Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Addendum**
- **Landscape Mitigation Masterplan**
- **Site Access Details**

Proposal

Proposed ground mounted photo voltaic solar farm and battery energy storage system with associated equipment, infrastructure, grid connection and ancillary work.

The proposed development is a 49.9MW solar farm with battery energy storage system across a c65ha area of farmland. The proposal consists of: rows of photovoltaic panels with a max. height of c2m above ground level; a battery storage compound, with the batteries in steel containers with underground cabling, located on the north-west boundary of the southernmost field; c2m high deer fencing around the site, with 2.4m palisade fence around the battery compound and 4m acoustic fence around the substation; site accessed through existing field gates off the A617; new internal service roads 4m wide of crushed stone, largely following existing tracks on site; a proposed screening bund along the eastern end of the site by Broadgate Lane; elements of increased hedgerow screening, of note being along the A617 boundary and near Oak Plantation; substation equipment with a max height of 6.8m; two 20m communication masts, within a 2.4m palisade fenced enclosure (subject to confirmation) set next to the transformers.

The proposed solar farm would have a life span of 40 years.

Site address

Land To The West Of Main Street Kelham

Potential Heritage Assets affected

The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA), which has been written in combination with site visits and the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), has drawn up a Scoping Table at Appendix 1 in which it scopes in, or out, heritage assets that could be affected by the proposal. This was limited to a 1km radius and extended to include specific heritage assets raised at pre-app stage, beyond the 1km radius, which had the potential to be affected.

The ZTV has now been increased from 2m previously (based on the height of the solar panels), to now ensure the higher structures in the compound, including the enclosures and the 6.8m transformers, are included in order to establish what heritage assets to scope in or out of the assessment. This is now represented on Figure 3 of the HIA Addendum, which in conclusion states that this increased height did not 'produce any significant differences in terms of potential visual impact on the assets'. Conservation agrees that increasing the height in the Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) has not changed the heritage assets Conservation considers could be impacted by the proposal and appreciates the clarity of having carried out this exercise. Further information has now been submitted to illustrate the impact of the communication towers in the landscape.

It is noted that the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is set for 2.5km from the site boundary, on the basis that given the height of the panels and the local setting the likelihood of the site being substantially perceptible at distances over 2.5km is very low. Conservation broadly agrees with this assessment, although notes the scheme does include several taller elements. It is, however, noted that the new ZTV using the 6.8m height of the transformers appears to go beyond 2.5km to take in wider positioned heritage assets and so Conservation is content that the scope here is satisfactory, noting again that the communication masts are now assessed by additional information assessed.

Page 5 of the HIA Addendum confirms that, 'all elements of the proposal, except the Comms Mast, are included in the montages', and also confirms on page 3 that, 'Montages of viewpoints 6-11 were not prepared because they have limited visibility of the proposed development' – it is presumed this assessment also included all elements of the proposal except the Comms Mast. As such it is accepted that some of the areas of query previously raised in terms of heritage impact have now been clarified, which is appreciated.

From reading these documents, from Conservation's own working knowledge of the area, Conservation's site visits, the relatively flat topography of the application site, and relatively low height of the panels, Conservation broadly agrees with the scoping exercise in the HIA. However, in addition to the heritage assets scoped in by the Agents for consideration Conservation believes there is an impact to consider at the parish churches of Kelham (St Wilfrid's) and Averham (Church of St Michael) as well as the un-registered Park and Garden at Kelham, which will also be considered here. The Addendum to the HIA confirms their scoping exercise does not find an impact on St Wilfrid's (and any references to it are an error), nevertheless Conservation maintains there is an impact to consider (see below) and retains these comments. The HIA addendum does now include an assessment for St Michael's at Averham and the non-registered park and garden at Kelham Hall.

In considering the site of Kelham Hall as a whole it is noted that their Appendix 1 separates out all the individual heritage assets on the site and scopes them in or out according to intervisibility. While it is appreciated that the significance of each designated heritage assets draws significance from its proximity and association with other heritage assets on site, and so it can be hard to separate out the significance of individual but interrelated heritage assets, it is agreed that it does

	make for the most meaningful consideration of impact if these assets are separated as they have been. While Kelham Hall is physically attached to, connected to, and strongly associated with the separately listed former monastic buildings on the site, it is accepted that it is the country house element of the Kelham Hall site that has the obvious intervisibility with the site and so it is most helpful to discuss impact in relation to this specific asset. Conservation considers the following heritage assets to have the potential to be impacted upon by the proposal: Averham village 1. Averham Conservation Area (CA) 2. The Old Rectory, Averham, brick and stucco L plan rectory, built 1838-39, Grade II 3. Church of St Michael, Grade I Kelham Village 4. Kelham Conservation Area 5. Kelham Hall Grade C19 Gothic Revival style country House, Grade I 6. Church of St Wilfrid, Kelham, Grade I 7. Kelham Hall unregistered Park and Garden (URP&G) Averham Estate 8. Averham Park House – former early C18 hunting lodge, now house, Grade II* 9. South Farm, former service wing of Averham Park, c 1720 , extended C19 and C20, Grade II 10. Averham Park post medieval hunting park, unregistered Park and Garden
Main issue(s)	i) Whether the proposal preserves the special interest of the listed buildings affected by this proposal; ii) Whether the proposal preserves/enhances the character and appearance of Averham and Kelham CA iii) Impact on the setting, and thereby significance, of the unregistered Parks and Gardens as identified
Précis of relevant documents, appraisals, features, significance etc.	• Heritage Gateway • Search the List online database of designated heritage assets by Historic England • Site visit for pre-app 5th August 2023 • Recap site visit 28th Nov 2023 • Supporting documents in the application, primarily the Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) and new Addendum, Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV), Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and accompanying visuals and montages
Pre app advice given	PREAPM/00198/22
Historic Environment Checklist	
Criteria	

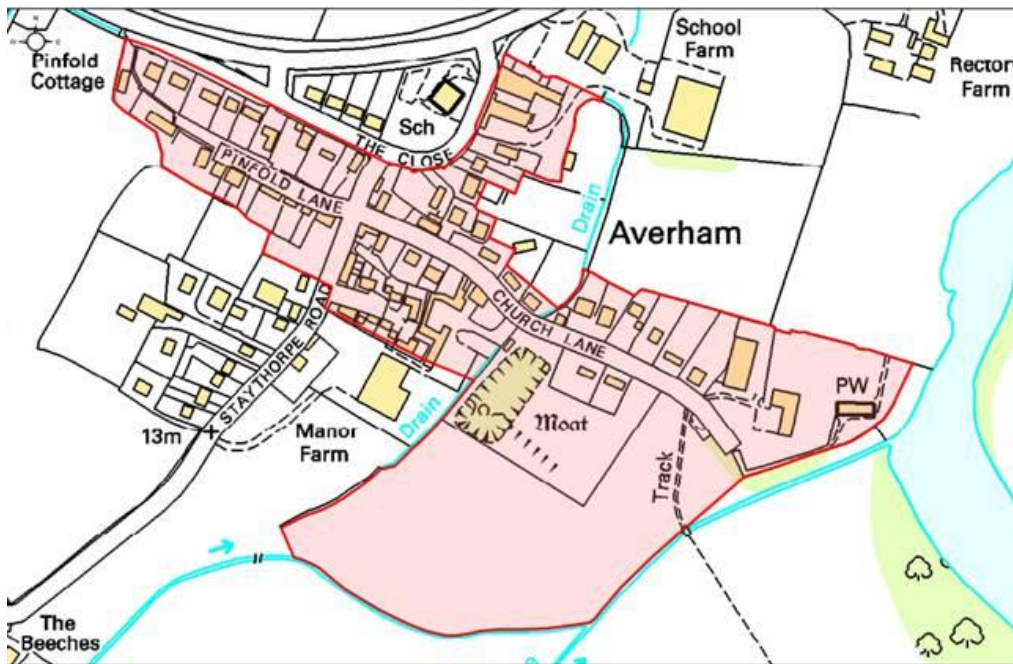
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	S.16(2): In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. S.66(1): In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. S.72(1): In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area
Relevant LDF Core Strategy policy	CP14: Seeks the continued conservation and enhancement of the character, appearance and setting of the District's heritage assets and historic environment, in line with their identified significance. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Where adverse impact is identified there should be a clear and convincing justification, including where appropriate a demonstration of clear public benefits.
Relevant LDF Allocations and Development Management DPD policy	DM9: In accordance with the requirements of Core Policy 14, all development proposals concerning heritage assets will be expected to secure their continued protection or enhancement, contribute to the wider vitality, viability and regeneration of the areas in which they are located and reinforce a strong sense of place. Listed Buildings: <i>Proposals for the change of use of listed buildings and development affecting or within the curtilage of listed buildings requiring planning permission will be required to demonstrate that the proposal is compatible with the fabric and setting of the building. Impact on the special architectural or historical interest of the building will require justification in accordance with the aims of Core Policy 14.</i> Conservation Areas: <i>Development proposals should take account of the distinctive character and setting of individual conservation areas including open spaces and natural features and reflect this in their layout, design, form, scale, mass, use of materials and detailing. Impact on the character and appearance of Conservation Areas will require justification in accordance with the aims of Core Policy 14.</i> All Heritage Assets: <i>All development proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings, including new operational development and alterations to existing buildings, where they form or affect heritage assets should utilise appropriate siting, design, detailing, materials and methods of construction. Particular attention should be paid to reflecting locally distinctive styles of development and these should respect traditional methods and natural materials wherever possible. Where development proposals requiring planning permission involve demolition, the resulting impact on heritage assets will be assessed under this policy.</i>
Relevant NPPF paragraphs	189: Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations. 194: In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. 197: In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. 199: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

	200: Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. 203: The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
Planning Practice Guidance	Paragraph 008: Understanding the significance of a heritage asset and its setting from an early stage in the design process can help to inform the development of proposals which avoid or minimise harm. Paragraph 013: All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset's curtilage may not have the same extent. The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each. The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The contribution may vary over time. Paragraph 015: The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation. Paragraph 018: Proposed development affecting a heritage asset may have no impact on its significance or may enhance its significance and therefore cause no harm to the heritage asset. Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the NPPF apply. Paragraph 020: Examples of heritage benefits may include: - sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting; - reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset; - securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation.
Making Changes to Heritage Assets: Historic England Advice Note 2	41: The main issues to consider in proposals for additions to heritage assets, including new development in conservation areas, aside from NPPF requirements such as social and economic activity and sustainability, are proportion, height, massing, bulk, use of materials, durability and adaptability, use, enclosure, relationship with adjacent assets and definition of spaces and streets, alignment, active frontages, permeability and treatment of setting. Replicating a particular style may be less important, though there are circumstances when it may be appropriate. It would not normally be good practice for new work to dominate the original asset or its setting in either scale, material or as a result of its siting. Assessment of an asset's significance and its relationship to its setting will usually suggest the forms of extension that might be appropriate. 42: The historic fabric will always be an important part of the asset's significance, though in circumstances where it has clearly failed it will need to be repaired or replaced. In normal circumstances, however, retention of as much historic fabric as possible, together with the use of appropriate materials and methods of repair, is likely to fulfil the NPPF policy to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, as a fundamental part of any good alteration or conversion. It is not appropriate to sacrifice old work simply to accommodate the new. 43: The junction between new work and the existing fabric needs particular attention, both for its impact on the significance of the existing asset and the impact on the contribution of its setting. Where possible it is preferable for new work to be reversible, so that changes can be undone without harm to historic fabric. However, reversibility alone does not justify alteration; If alteration is justified on other grounds then reversible alteration is preferable to non-reversible. New openings need to be considered in the context of the architectural and historic significance of that part of the asset and of the asset as a whole. Where new work or additions make elements with significance

redundant, such as doors or decorative features, there is likely to be less impact on the asset's aesthetic, historic or evidential value if they are left in place.

Significance of heritage asset(s)

1. Averham Conservation Area



Averham Conservation area is a small village Conservation Area, designated in 1992. It is typical of many of the local villages, being strongly brick and pantile in material palette, with some limited use of render, and having a predominantly agrarian background, leading to mostly modest and vernacular cottages and farm buildings. The higher status buildings in the village are limited to the medieval Grade I listed Church of St Michael and the former Rectory building adjacent. Averham is notable for having a particularly informal approach to the village church which is located at the far east of the village, next to the river, accessed via a simple footpath, set in a relatively open setting directly against the riverbank and next to its former Rectory.

The A617 now by-passes the village and while the historic road layout still survives the modern road infrastructure acts as a barrier and border to the village to its north. Significant views are primarily *within* the CA along the main stretches of road at Pinfold Lane, Church Lane and Staythorpe Road. Longer views out to the rural fringes are also gained from the church yard at the east of the village.

Generally, given the flat topography, modern infrastructure to the north, and modest height of the architecture, Averham as a village and CA is not prominent in the local landscape. The church tower is visible in some wider views from the north, but these are relatively limited and glimpsed.

The HIA assessment submitted with this application includes a more detailed description which Conservation is content to refer to in addition to these comments above.

2. The Old Rectory, Averham, brick and stucco L plan rectory, built 1838-39, Grade II

The three storey form and stucco façade, with simple classical Georgian detailing, makes this a pleasing and higher status building within the village. The HIA correctly identifies the importance of setting to the significance of this listed building, with its close physical and visual proximity to the medieval church of St Michael, located on the rural fringes of the village in large green grounds. Greenery around the

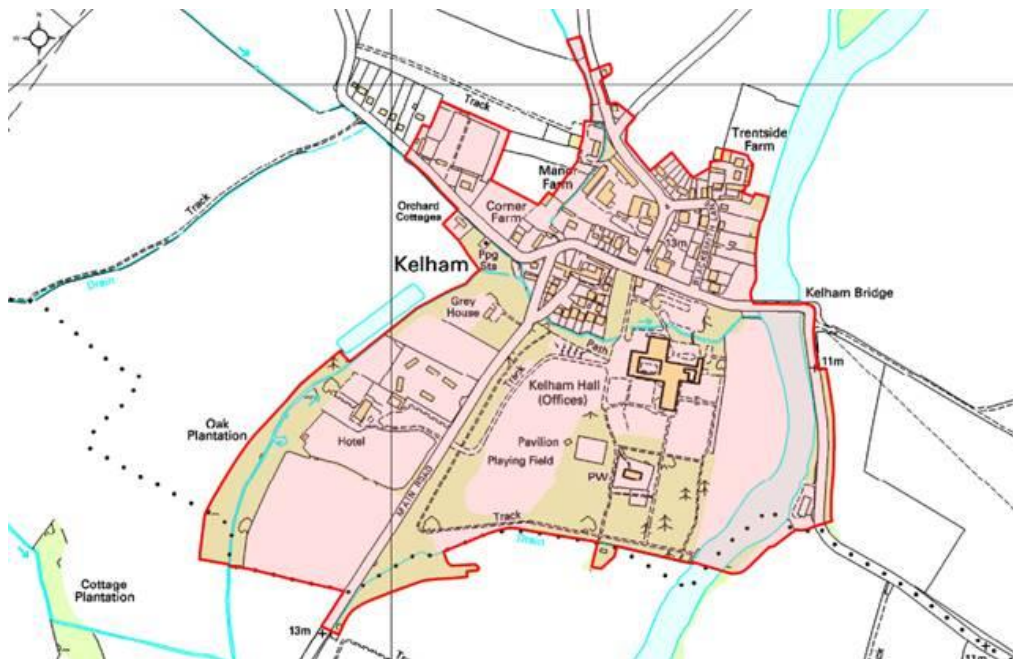
grounds prevent any obvious views of the building other than at its driveway and it, like the church, has a rather secluded setting.

The HIA assessment submitted with this application includes a more detailed description which Conservation is content to refer to in addition to these comments above. The Addendum clarifies that the asset is of High heritage value, being a listed building which by their nature are of national importance.

3. Church of St Michaels, Averham, Grade I

The parish church of Averham dates back to the C12, with phases in the C13, C14, C15, C16 and C19. The building is a mixture of rubble and dressed stone, with ashlar, brick, render, along with a mixture of tiled and leaded roof. The building has a modest west tower. The east window includes re-used C15 stained glass from Kelham Hall. The building has a large amount of external and internal decorative, architectural, historical and evidential significance. The building is located at the far east of the village, and (as explained above) is only accessible on foot along a narrow and informal footpath along the rural fringes of the village, giving the church a rather secluded feel, in a setting which feels little altered and largely away from modern intrusions. The churchyard is enclosed but has visibility still to its wider rural setting next to the river, the former rectory and farmland to the north. A track to its north creates an additional and informal approach to the church. The sound of the A617 and glimpses of modern infrastructure to the north do intrude somewhat into the character of this immediate setting. While the church is not obviously prominent in its wider setting the tower is visible from the east to west track that runs across the application site, acting as a way finder for the village around it.

4. Kelham Conservation Area



Kelham grew as village at an important crossing point over the river Trent. In common with many local villages Kelham has at its core a traditional farming village heritage, but is also distinguished by housing the country home and estate of Kelham Hall, which includes work by George Gilbert Scott. The estate is rather inward looking (deliberately so) from the rest of the village, but the monumental nature of the Hall and the more intimate association with the Home Farm element, as well as dotted estate cottages and the imposing entrance gate, still give a strong impact from the Hall in the village and a sense of local

identity. The history of Kelham was further enriched by the use and expansion of Kelham Hall as a C20 monastic site.

The rest of the village includes historic lanes with a mixture of vernacular architecture, including timber framed cottages.

The village is also home to Kelham House, an unlisted and more modest country house, also built in association with the Kelham Hall but on a separate site, giving the village the distinction of two country houses. The remains of an annexed but associated walled garden on Broadgate Lane also relate to the estate architecture of the village.

The parish church is medieval and relatively modest, now being found within the grounds of Kelham Hall and with a relatively treed and 'hidden' location and outlook.

The busy A617 road is a dominant feature through the village but nevertheless the village retains a coherent form and character.

The HIA assessment submitted with this application includes a more detailed description which Conservation is content to refer to in addition to these comments above.

5. Kelham Hall Grade C19 Gothic Revival style country House, Grade I

The existing Kelham Hall was built between 1859 and 1862 following a fire in 1857, however the service wing of this earlier phase (Anthony Salvin) does still survive, along with very limited traces of possibly pre-C17 footings. The new Hall was designed by George Gilbert Scott and is a good example of his signature Gothic Revival style, including highly decorative work in a palette of red brick and Ancaster stone dressings, with areas of polychrome work. The three storey tower, along with the roofscape and chimneys, make for a landmark feature on the skyline and horizon in and around Kelham, giving a strong sense of local identity and acting as a way finder for the village.

The Hall was later developed as a C20 monastic site and is now attached to separately listed, but clearly related, former Monk's accommodation block and a striking dome structure.

The Hall sits in landscaped grounds by the River Trent, which are an un-registered Park and Garden (see below), which include various separately listed garden structures and entrance gate. The Hall derives a good deal of its significance from its setting, not only from the immediate landscaped gardens but from its wider riverside and rural setting, especially with the deliberately open aspect of the grounds to the south. Setting plays an important role in both carefully curated views out from the Hall, but also in designed and more opportunistic views back towards the Hall. The Hall also relates to a range of (separately listed) formal farm buildings laid out adjacent as a Home Farm complex.

The HIA assessment submitted with this application includes a more detailed assessment which Conservation is content to refer to in addition to these comments above.

6. Church of St Wilfrid, Kelham, Grade I

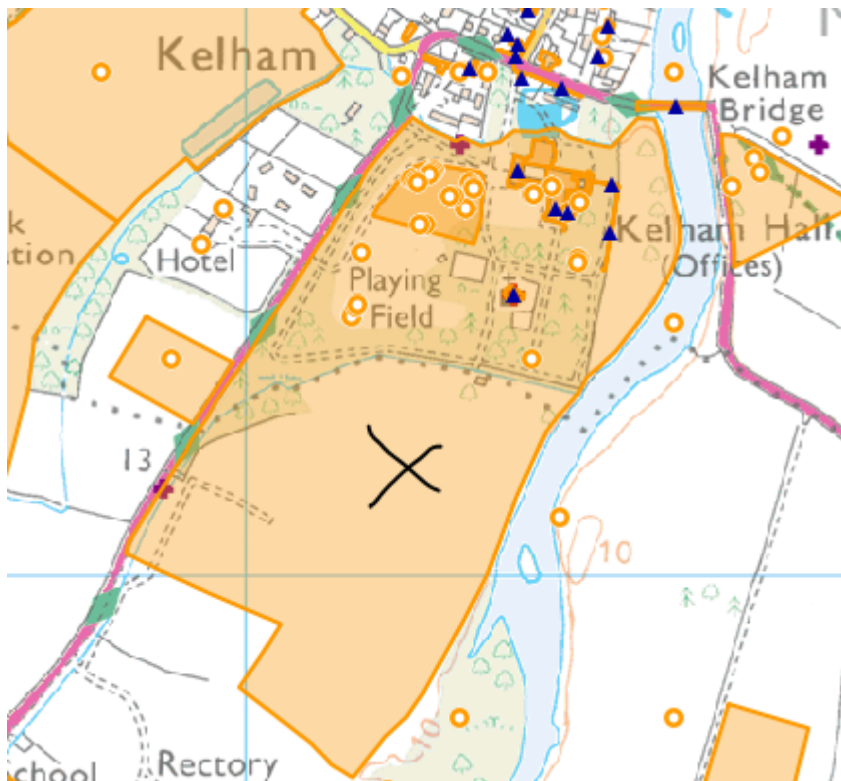
This medieval parish church dates back to the C14, with phases in the C15, early C18 and restored in the C19. It is built of ashlar, dressed stone and coursed rubble, with slate roofs. The building has a crenelated parapet and west tower. The building has a large amount of external and internal decorative, architectural, historical and evidential significance. The church is located in the southern

part of Kelham CA, in what is now the grounds of Kelham Hall, and largely enclosed by trees, giving it a very green and secluded approach and setting. While the church is not obviously prominent in its wider setting the tower is visible from the east to west track that runs across the application site, acting as a way finder for the historic village it serves.

7. Kelham hall un-registered Park and Garden

The presence of an un-registered Park and Garden at Kelham Hall is understood in the HIA but it has been specifically scoped out of the report due to the ZTV and the author's site visit. However, the ZTV does confirm that the site will have intervisibility with the application site, and given the proximity of the outline of the un-registered Park and Garden immediately adjacent to the proposal site Conservation has proceeded to consider the potential impact of the proposal on the significance of this heritage asset. An assessment of significance has now been included in the Addendum to the HIA and Conservation accords with this description.

The following is an extract of the un-registered Park and Garden around Kelham Hall taken from the Heritage Gateway, washed over in orange and identified here with the black cross:



The orange area now extends beyond the current grounds of the Hall, but the following map extracts illustrate how this land to the south once formed part of the parkland specifically associated with the Hall.

Sanderson's Map of 1835 (below) shows historic landscaping to the south of Hall, including a formal enclosure around the Hall (with the church included), with wider areas of landscaping showing a lake and specimen trees laid out in parkland:



The 1912/19 OS Map (below) shows the parkland identified in grey and shows a range of landscape features including the entrances and driveways, formal parterre, sunken lawn, woodland walks, the water meadows to the east (with ice house), and the haha looking out over parkland to the south:



Many of these landscape features still survive today, including listed urns and a gazebo and the site is very much to be enjoyed as a series of curated walks and vistas. Ground floor rooms were designed to access formal terraces, while large upper storey windows were designed to look out over the grounds to the east, south and west.

These features and other surviving landscape elements of the park contribute to the heritage significance of Kelham Hall by allowing it to be appreciated in a setting similar to that which it was designed within the mid C19 century.

The main change to this layout has come from removing the land to the south from the same ownership as the Hall and changing parkland over to modern farming, losing in the process the southern boundary of the estate, but still retaining the tree belt seen above. The land now has a different character to its intended parkland appearance, although some specimen trees survive to suggest a more historic high-status use. The footpath running around the edge of the grounds here is bound by a low wall and haha, deliberately designed to appropriate these wider views, which do still add to the significance here in anchoring the Hall and its grounds in a wider rural setting.

8. Averham Park House – former early C18 hunting lodge, now house, Grade II*

The building is a former hunting lodge dating back to 1720, no doubt replacing earlier lodges within the same estate. The Lodge was designed for entertaining and short stays, the family's main residence at this time being Kelham Hall. The Lodge was built with two detached wings, a guest wing to the north, which does not survive, and a service wing to the south, which now survives as separately listed South Farm. The roof of the lodge was originally built with a balustrade, probably as a viewing platform for the hunting, which is now lost. The former Lodge was located on high land overlooking Averham Park, to give it an obvious advantage in terms of surveying the landscape. This former hunting park is itself an un-registered Park and Garden, contributing the significance of this as a former hunting lodge and in its later status and appearance as a small country house.

The HIA assessment submitted with this application includes a more detailed assessment which Conservation is content to refer to in addition to these comments above.

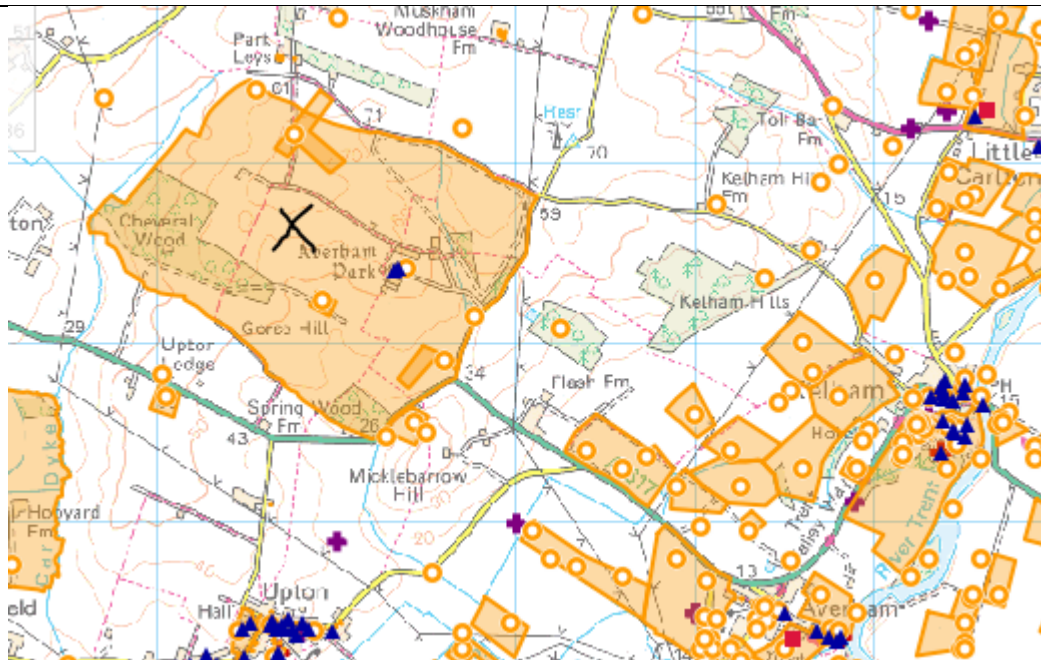
9. South Farm, former service wing of Averham Park, c 1720 , extended C19 and C20, Grade II

The building was once one of two detached wings associated with Averham Park House, this being the former service wing for the House, built c 1720. When Averham Park was divided into two farms in the C19 this became adapted to become the farmhouse of what was known as South Farm, including alterations and the addition of farm buildings. The setting of the building is an important part of its significance, especially in the context of its role in the wider Averham Park estate and former hunting park.

The HIA assessment submitted with this application includes a more detailed assessment which Conservation is content to refer to in addition to these comments above.

10. Averham Park post-medieval hunting park, unregistered Park & Garden

The following is an extract from the Heritage Gateway, with the black cross marking the location of Averham Park and the extent of the unregistered Park and Garden shown in the orange wash:



Averham Park is a former C17 hunting park for the former hunting lodge – now Averham Park House and its service wing, now South Farm. The land was used as a game park from the C12 but there is little evidence for the appearance of the Park until the early C18 when archival evidence provides images of the newly built lodge and grounds (see the HIA). Early depictions show woodland with geometric ‘rides’ leading from the house, with areas of open grassland, which evolved into less wooded areas and more areas of farmland, especially as the park was divided into two farms in the C19. Hedge lined lanes that formed the north and east boundaries of the park, the streams and ponds in the north east of the park, and footpaths being perhaps the remains of the geometric rides still survive today.

The HIA assessment submitted with this application includes a more detailed assessment which Conservation is content to refer to in addition to these comments above.

Assessment of proposals

July 2024 Comments

Conservation’s previous comments were content with the level of information provided with the exception of the potential impact of the potential communication masts.

Revised views points have been submitted for Viewpoint 4 (near Rectory Farm by Averham, on the A617), 5 (edge of the grounds to Kelham House) and 7 (north west end of village of Averham on the A617).

Viewpoints 4 and 7 represent the closest viewpoints to the possible two new communication masts. The indicative viewpoints are very helpful here, showing the masts to be quite recessive in the landscape views, assuming approximately the same height (relatively speaking in those views) and impact as pylons, in a landscape already marked by pylons. Additionally, the key heritage assets in this area, being Averham CA and its church, are then set further south with intervening modern northern fringes of the village and the A617 acting to separate and break up any views of the masts from these heritage assets. As such the masts will not be dominant features the new landscape and will hard to individually discern or identify. In these views the enclosure around the masts becomes essentially ‘lost’ and embedded within hedgerow height. As such, Conservation remains content the previous assessment of impact remains valid.

View point 5 clearly shows that the communication masts again assume the same relative height and impact as existing pylons in these views and will not become a landmark feature. The enclosures around them may well be visible just above and running in line with the horizon line at this point, making them a non impactful and hard to discern feature, and again not a dominant feature on the landscape. As such Conservation is content that impact to the setting of the House and on Kelham CA at this point remains the same as already identified.

It is noted that the site entrance from the A617 has become slightly more engineered to satisfy the requirements of Highways. The entrance itself is directly intervisible with heritage assets and is set off a busy modern road with modern infrastructure. There will be no additional impact to heritage assets from this revision.

Conservation also notes the proposed additional green screening planting, to existing hedgerows, in addition to existing hedgerows and grouping of new tree planting, noted within the LVIA Addendum And HC1002/02/05 Rev 1 Landscape Mitigation Masterplan, and the role this will play in softening the impact of the scheme as a whole, including the communication masts and other taller infrastructure. None of this additional planting will in itself harm the landscape setting of any heritage assets here.

End

March 2024 Comments - The Addendum to the HIA has been very helpful in confirming the accuracy of the supporting visuals and Agent's assessments, and thereby in informing the extent of impact to heritage assets. The impact as now re-assessed by the LPA's Conservation Team remains to the same heritage assets identified previously and to the same magnitude as identified previously, being at the lower end of less than substantial harm, as identified in detail below. There remains, however, an absence of information about the potential visual impact of the communication masts, so the overall impact of the proposal, should these elements be required, remains uncertain [now updated, see comments above].

1. Averham Conservation Area

The areas of Averham CA closest to the development site are those along Pinfold Lane and at School Farm on Staythorpe Road, to the north of the CA.

Pinfold Lane forms the focus of the northern part of the CA here and has a rather inward-looking character and appearance, once forming the edge of the village, with The Close beyond being a ribbon of modern development outside of the CA. Pinfold Lane is further separated from the application site by the A617 that bypasses the village, which feels and acts like barrier and border, and then a further field before the development would begin. While the proposal site is likely to be visible from the upper storeys of properties on Pinfold Lane, a point now agreed within the HIA Addendum, there is no obvious intervisibility from the public realm of the CA here at least. The exception will be where The Close borders the CA, where one would get views to the rear of the CA and then potentially across the development. Intervening distance, existing and proposed green screening, as well as the relatively flat terrain and low height of the panels, mean that the panels themselves will probably only have a limited impact, but the higher height of the structures like communication masts, transformers and battery compound may be visible. View Point 7 is the most likely to illustrate this potential impact, however the HIA Addendum concludes that this was not produced into a photo montage as views of the development are blocked by the hedgerow that borders the A617 and that, additionally, the hedgerow along the south west site boundary will be reinforced as part of the proposal because of the limited visibility of the proposed development. The HIA Addendum also confirms that all elements of the

proposal apart from the Comms Mast are included in the montages, so taken at face value their evidence suggests there would be no visual impact from the public realm. Even if there were a visual impact here, in terms of impact to the significance of the CA one would be viewing from a modern road, with the A617 in between, so it is a rather altered view, and one with the CA behind, so the overall impact to the significance of the CA is likely to be low here.

It is noted that Pinfold Cottage is a historic cottage taking the historic limits of the village up to the A617, and it is likely to have intervisibility with the proposal site. However, it is sited gable end onto the road, so does not have its principal aspect to the application site, is set well back from the road, has a modern garage to its north, and there would be the intervening road infrastructure as well as existing and proposed hedgerow boundaries to separate the building from the application site. The likely impact from this part of the CA is again limited.

School Farm at the northern end of Staythorpe Road has a more open aspect in part, farm buildings lining Staythorpe Road at this point but then becoming less visible from the A617. It may well be possible to be standing next to the farm buildings within the CA and see glimpses of the solar installation beyond, giving a sense of encroachment of modern and incongruous features in this more historic area of the CA. However, the relatively low height of the farm buildings, robust and informal setting of farm structures generally, the intervening green screening at both School Farm and around the application site, as well as the presence of modern road infrastructure, and of course the low lying nature of the panels, means that the impact to setting of the CA here will be slight, especially given it is now confirmed that visual impact from this angle *has* considered the taller elements of the scheme with the exception of the comms mast.

The central core of the CA is very inward looking with few opportunities to have intervisibility with the proposal site.

The CA stretches quite far east to encompass the historic church, but at this point the proposal site is then some distance to the north. There are views to the north, back to the application site, from the churchyard and from the track here, and the ZTV suggests there could be intervisibility. However, Conservation agrees with the HIA that the flat topography, intervening distance and vegetation means there are no obvious views or intervisibility with the application site from here. Further, additional hedgerow planting around the site will further decrease the chance of intervisibility. Possibly the taller elements of the masts might be glimpsed from here, but this impact would be seen against other modern vertical structures like the tall street lights of the A617, other masts, pylons, distant turbines and modern farm buildings. As such, the visual harm will be limited.

Overall, there is the possibility of minor negative visual impact from the fringes of the CA by experiencing the historic townscape in the same sweep as elements of the solar farm, this seems likely to be limited to views from upper storeys and possibly glimpsed views of some of the taller elements of the scheme. This impact will be limited by distance, green screening and the fact that it would be seen across modern infrastructure and across an altered landscape, such that the harm would be at the lower end of less than substantial.

In longer distant views looking back towards the CA it is hard to perceive the presence of a historic village here, the village generally being well contained and in many areas surrounded by modern housing and modern infrastructure. As such there is likely to be limited impact to the setting of the CA in terms of views from outside the CA looking back towards it with the solar farm in the same view.

However, while generally there are no obvious landmark features to identify the village in distant views, Conservation has observed that the church tower at Averham is visible from the east to west footpath across the application site and in these views the church tower does act as a way finder for the CA. The HIA Addendum states that views from this footpath at the point as identified previously by Conservation are screened by hedgerows, nevertheless a site visit (accompanied by the Agent and Case Officer) was undertaken by Conservation July 2022 where the views of the church tower were visible at some point on this footpath, so the potential for impact remains a possibility and in these views, however limited, there is likely to be some harm to the setting of the Averham Church and the CA through an altered foreground of modern energy infrastructure within the view. However, in these views the existing and further proposed additional green screening to this path will further limit opportunities to see the church tower and CA, so it is accepted that the harm in this aspect will be limited and at the lower end of less than substantial.

In conclusion, there may be limited intervisibility with the taller elements of the proposal from the northern side of the CA, more so from School Farm area and the rear of Pinfold Lane and Pinfold Cottage than from anywhere else, the limited possibility of some restricted intervisibility from the church yard, and limited possibility of largely mitigated impact in longer distance views looking back towards the village and its church tower, introducing a modern and incongruous new element to the otherwise rural farmland setting. The HIA Addendum has confirmed that this impact includes all the taller elements of the scheme, **except the masts**. Given the mitigating factors explored above **this harm will be at the lower end of less than substantial to the overall significance of Averham CA.**

2. The Old Rectory Averham

Conservation agrees with the analysis of impact in the HIA, noting that the ZTV suggests there could be some inter-visibility with the north wing and the proposal site, but noting that the site visit could not see any obvious visual link from ground level. Access has not been taken onto the rear grounds, but from the public realm generally, and given the separation distance, intervening buildings and green screening it seems very likely that visual impact from ground level would be so limited it would be hard to perceive. As per the HIA it is accepted that from upper storeys the development may be intervisible. In these views the solar farm would be a distracting and incongruous addition to the landscape setting of the Rectory, but seen across an altered landscape with existing vertical intrusions (see above), and at some distance. Setting contributes most strongly to the Old Rectory by its visual links to the church and by its immediate garden setting, which would not be affected by the proposal. As such, any impact would be at the **lower end of less than substantial**.

3. Church of St Michael and All Angels - Averham

As above, there could theoretically be intervisibility from the church and its grounds back to the application site, but the latter is not obviously borne out by a site visit. Nevertheless, possibly the tallest element of the proposal could be glimpsed in conjunction with this heritage asset and views from the tower have not been explored here, despite being raised at preapp stage. In these views it is felt that the visual impact would be hard to discern and be glimpsed at best, and across an altered landscape, placing any heritage harm to the **lower end of less than substantial**.

As discussed above, the east to west track running across the application site does afford views back to Averham Church in its landscape, seen here in combination with Kelham Church and the towers of Kelham Hall, making an attractive composition. This is already a somewhat glimpsed view given the greenery around this path. While this view will be detracted by the modern solar farm in the foreground

the existing and proposed increased green screening will limit opportunities to experience this altered view, making harm to the significance of the LB at the **lower end of less than substantiation**.

4. Kelham Conservation Area

The ZTV has confirmed three areas with the potential to be impacted by the proposed development: the former kitchen gardens on Broadgate Lane; the field in the south which borders Oak Plantation; and Kelham Hall.

The kitchen garden on Broadgate Lane, while altered through loss and some modern development, is still discernible and makes a rather attractive feature from the lane. It is accepted that historically the focus of the walled garden was inward looking, and that it is a structure designed for function primarily rather than aesthetics, nevertheless it does make a rather rustic and attractive feature of historic and architectural interest in the CA today. The structures here look out over Broadgate Lane and at this point the public realm of the CA has almost unbroken views out onto agricultural land which contributes positively to the setting of the CA, giving it a pleasing rural, open and green backdrop, with the Kelham Hills making an attractive landscape backdrop.

Without mitigation the outlook at this part of the CA would be quite altered and harmed by the modern and incongruous appearance of a solar farm. However, mitigation in the form of a bund is proposed here. This, if effectively implemented, would prevent wider views of the solar farm, and the indicative montages within the LVIA suggest it will be largely effective (now confirmed in the HIA Addendum to screen the taller elements of the proposal and not just the panels, **albeit the masts have not been included here**), although less so at the access point onto the site here.

The bund itself has an impact to consider. While this is a green feature and so not unattractive, it will effectively remove these long-distance landscape views which currently contribute positively to the setting of the CA here, so the mitigation alone will be harmful. In the context of the overall significance of the CA this harm will be at the **lower end of less than substantial to Kelham CA**.

The proposed impact to the field at Oak Plantation has the potential to affect the setting of Kelham House in the CA and the entrance and exit views of the CA in this area. However, despite the proximity of the proposal to the CA at this point, the impact to the north at least would be largely screened by the existing Oak Plantation, which may well be tall enough to also screen some of the impact from the higher elements of the proposal. Further, additional proposed tree planting mitigation is shown to essentially fully enclose this field to the south, effectively enclosing the southern part of the CA from the proposal site at this point. Sometimes mitigation measures themselves can be harmful, but in this case tree screening would look like quite a natural landscape addition, especially given the plantation here already, and would still leave a pleasant and relatively extensive field setting to the CA. The gables and chimneys of Kelham House are still visible over tree tops here at present, so there is likely still to be views in which one see the solar farm and distant architecture of Kelham House, but the proposed landscaping should be quite effective in terms of views out from this building. With the mitigation successfully implemented here the impact to the CA at this point is likely to be at the **lower end of less than substantial**.

The impact to Kelham Hall, which is within the CA, is perhaps best understood by looking at its impact as a listed building and unregistered Park and Garden (below), but impact to it as a way finder for the CA and from its grounds, which are a significant area of public open space in the CA, are relevant to discussion on the impact to Kelham CA. Mostly the grounds of Kelham Hall are well-contained and there is very limited scope for intervisibility with the application site due to tree cover, however the haka at

the southern part of the site gives unbroken views out to the farmland to the south and may allow for intervisibility with the southern part of the scheme, including towards the taller elements of the proposal like the masts and transformer etc. In these views it is accepted that the impact would be to an altered setting, with the A617 in between, and limited by mitigation planting, but it may well add an incongruous and imposing element in the landscape setting of the CA. Views back to Kelham Hall towers from within the application site, on the east to west track, will also be impacted by the solar farm in the foreground and then by being partly obscured by the proposed additional mitigation planting here. This will harm and obscure these views of Kelham Hall that otherwise act as a way finder for the CA. In these views the impact to the setting of the CA, and thereby the significance of the CA, will be at the **lower end of less than substantial harm**.

Overall, the impact to the CA will be slight, the majority of the CA being inward looking and contained by green landscaping. The exceptions are at Broadgate Lane, views back towards Kelham House, views back towards the landmark structures of Kelham Hall and Kelham Church and from the grounds of Kelham hall. In these views the impact of the proposal is limited by distance, existing screening and proposed mitigation and **will overall lead to harm at the lower end of less than substantial to the character and appearance of Kelham Conservation Area**.

5. Kelham Hall

It is accepted that there will not be intervisibility with the solar farm from the ground floor of the Hall. However, it has been established that there will be some intervisibility from the upper floors. The Hall has been specifically designed to enjoy views to the east, south and west, although towards the west (i.e. towards the application site) the view has been carefully controlled with a tree belt so that it does not take in the road or land beyond. As such, while there will be views of the application site from the upper floors, and they are currently of a rural and mostly agrarian setting which is a positive element, the *designed* view ends with the grounds in this direction and will not be impacted.

As above, it is not felt likely that there will be any intervisibility of the proposal site from the majority of the formal gardens and grounds of Kelham Hall due to orientation and substantial areas of trees and intervening village structures. However, the hah does give deliberate and unbroken views out over the landscape to the south and south west and this may then encompass an impact from the proposed solar farm, harming the setting, and thereby significance of the Hall.

The impact to the setting of the Hall, as seen by the impact to long distance views to its towers from within the application site, also need to be considered (as explored above).

Considering the overall significance of the Hall the likely harm from the proposed solar farm will be at the **lower end of less than substantial**.

6. St Wilfrid's Church, Kelham

Conservation has undertaken its own assessment on the impact of the proposal on the significance of this medieval church. As stated above, this is a relatively modest church, which is not obviously prominent in its setting. It is now set in the grounds of Kelham Hall and is effectively screened by tree planting associated with this historic Hall. The church has a modest tower which nevertheless does not obviously appear to be dominant in the surrounding landscape. It seems unlikely that the proposal will be visible from the church itself, other than perhaps the tower, which despite being raised at pre-app has not been explored here. It also does not seem likely that the proposal site will be intervisible with the immediate setting or graveyard of the church. However, it was observed in the pre-app site visit

that the east to west track running across the application site does afford views back to both Kelham and Averham churches, showing that there is a wider landscape setting impact to consider. As above, the church is not prominent in these views and is limited by existing green screening, which will be increased by the proposed mitigation, such that the opportunity to experience this view and see it altered by the solar farm in the foregrounds will be limited. This harm will be at the **lower end of less than substantial**.

7. Kelham Hall un-registered Park and Garden

The proposal site effectively borders part of this un-registered Park and Garden, albeit with the A617 in between. It is accepted that this part of the park and garden, while clearly of historic interest, it much harder to perceive in the landscape today, having been separated from the current grounds of the Hall and turned over the farming and aviation use, with the former boundaries of the parkland here now lost. The main landscape feature that survives in the southern part of the park and garden is the tree belt, which will itself then act as a screen to filter views of the solar far. There will be intervisibility from within this southern part of the former parkland, but it is accepted that this is private land with no public realm accessibility. The main impact will be from the path along the haha to the south of the current grounds of the Hall, from which open views will take in the southern part of the proposed solar farm. Such views will be mitigated in part by the tree belt, existing and proposed mitigation planting, distance and the intervening A617 and so overall the impact will be limited. The best preserved and most legible elements of the park and garden (with the exception of the walk along the haha) will not be impacted by the proposal. **Overall the harm will be at the lower end of less than substantial.**

8 - 10 Averham Park House, South Farm and the Averham Park un-registered Park and Garden

In agreement with the HIA Conservation finds that views from the listed buildings and park towards the application site are largely blocked by the lower ridge and woodland in the middle ground, and that the intervening distance makes the application site hard to discern in this flat terrain. From the application site looking back to these heritage assets it is also demonstrated that the Kelham Hills would prevent a good deal of visibility, with the southern most field looking back to the site of Averham Park - but at this distance not being clearly legible in the view. While intervisibility and impact from the parkland cannot be ruled out, it does seem likely that the visual impact will be hard to discern and would be low and only in limited areas and most likely in the winter months. The HIA identifies that the upper floors of the listed buildings may provide better visibility out across the application site, such that a minor negative impact from this solar farm in the setting of both listed buildings could occur. Again, this impact would be largely mitigated by the intervening distance but nevertheless wouldn't be nill. **The likely impact to these three heritage assets would be at the lower end of less than substantial.**

Recommendation (i.e. complies with policies/summary of opinion).	The proposed development harms the special interest of several listed buildings, which is contrary to s66 of the Act, as well as policy and advice contained within s16 of the NPPF, and CP14 and DM9 of the Council's LDF DPDs and should be given special consideration in the planning decision. The proposal harms the setting, and thereby significance, of two Conservation Areas. Harm to the setting of a Conservation Areas is not covered in s72 of the Act but harm to the significance of the two CAs is contrary to policy and advice contained within s16 of the NPPF, and CP14 and DM9 of the Council's LDF DPDs and should be considered in the planning decision. The harm to the two unregistered Parks and Gardens would be contrary to policy and advice contained within s16 of the NPPF, and CP14 and DM9 of the Council's LDF DPDs and should be taken into
---	---

	account in determining the application, balancing the scale of harm and the significance of the heritage assets. The harm in all cases is judged to be at the lower end of less than substantial and the information in the Addendum to the HIA has not changed this assessment. This does not necessarily constitute an objection from Conservation, who advise that the harm to heritage assets be given the appropriate consideration in the planning balance against the public benefits of the scheme.
Conditions	
Informative notes	