

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER URGENCY PROCEDURES

SUBJECT: Delegations for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP): Arrow Valley Solar

BRIEF STATEMENT OF SUBJECT MATTER:

The energy company Island Green Power has recently disclosed that it is seeking permission to build a large solar farm with battery storage facilities based on land within Stratford-upon-Avon and Wychavon Council boundaries. The scale of the project is such that it is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008.

It is understood that the project will include a connection to the electricity sub-station at Feckenham by an underground cableway. There will be no above ground infra structure in Redditch, but the installation of the cableway means Redditch will be classed as a host authority under the legislation.

NSIP applications are not decided in the usual way by local planning authorities; they are determined by the Secretary of State following a process administered by the Planning Inspectorate. There are similarities to the examination stages for the local plan process. If approved the Secretary of State will make a Development Consent Order (DCO) which will give legal authority for the solar farm to be built and specify the relevant plans, conditions etc. It is understood that the timeline to reach decision stage and the granting of a DCO will be over 2 years (Quarter 2 2028). The LPA will continue to be involved in monitoring the site and meeting other statutory duties during the subsequent implementation phase when the project is being constructed.

RBC will be treated as a statutory consultee in this matter and will not have any direct decision making powers. The process that has to be followed is set out in the Act and there are various stages at which the Council will be required to have input.

As RBC has never had to deal with an NSIP in it's area, there are no delegations currently in place for officers to be able to complete the statutory steps required. Some of the stages of responding to documents from PINS will be on very tight timelines (e.g. within 28 days) and it would be unachievable to report to members within those timeframes. It should also be noted that some of the feedback sought will be of a technical planning nature and not covering parts of the planning process that Members would normally participate in.

Officers arranged for this issue to be discussed by Members at the Constitution Review Working Party on 21st March. However, for the reasons set out below, the delegations will have to be granted via an urgent decision as opposed to being signed off at Full Council because of the time constraints.

DECISION:

- 1. That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services (following consultation with the Leader) to make representations and/or respond to consultations and engagement, from the Applicant and the Planning Inspectorate during all stages of the Development Consent Order process for the Arrow Valley Solar Project.**
- 2. That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to permit the necessary Officers to attend the Preliminary Meeting, hearings,**

prepare and give evidence, as is required, during the examination of the Development Consent Order.

- That authority be delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning, Leisure and Culture Services to deal with post-decision matters (if the Development Consent Order is granted for the Arrow Valley Solar Project).

(Council decision)

GROUNDS FOR URGENCY:

The first consultation from PINS (for planning officers to comment on the applicants scoping report) will be received at the start of April with a response required within 28 days. This will be followed in mid May by the first in a series of meetings initiated by the developer that planning officers will need to attend.

As this issue has arisen between the end of one municipal year and the start of the next, there are no Council meetings due to take place now until 26th May. Unfortunately, that is going to be too late for the initial steps referred to above. That being the case an urgent decision is going to be required to enable delegations to be granted to officers to respond to the NSIP application.

DECISION APPROVED BY:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE

INTERIM CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER
(if financial implications)

.....
(Signature) (John Leach - (CX))

.....
(Signature) (Julie Lorraine)

MONITORING OFFICER

.....
(Signature) (Claire Felton)

Date: March 2026

PROPOSED ACTION SUPPORTED *(amend as appropriate)*

..... (Signature) (Signature) (Signature) (Signature) (Signature)
<i>(Block Capitals)</i>	<i>(Block Capitals)</i>	<i>(Block Capitals)</i>	<i>(Block Capitals)</i>	<i>(Block Capitals)</i>
 MAYOR *	 PF HOLDER	 LEADER	 LDR of the CONSERVATIVE Group	 CHAIR O&S Committee
Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:

Notes:

* In addition to the Executive decision above regarding the matter under consideration, the Mayor is signing to agree both that the Executive decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. This is to ensure that the call-in procedures as set out in Part 8 of the Constitution shall not apply where an Executive decision being taken is urgent.