



Registered UK Charity: 1017387
Company No: 2786730



29 August 2014

Dear East Lothian Planning,

**PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF AN ELECTRICITY SUBSTATION ON
PRESTONPANS BATTLEFIELD - REF 14/00456/PPM**

I am writing on behalf of the Battlefields Trust, a national charity dedicated to the preservation, interpretation and presentation of battlefields as historical and educational resources (see www.battlefieldstrust.com), about the proposal to construct an electricity substation in the midst of the inventoried battlefield at Prestonpans (1745).

The Trust is concerned about the impact of the development on the battlefields setting, which, despite some additional mitigation measures proposed by the applicant, remains unsympathetic to the overall visual amenity of the site and is likely to detract from an understanding of battlefield terrain.

The proposed development also appears to be in the vicinity of where burials from the battle were found at the end of the 18th century during field drainage (see <http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/54986/details/prestonpans+battle+of+prestonpans+monument/> and <http://www.battlefieldstrust.com/media/648%2Epdf>), most likely those of government troops killed in the rout at the end of the battle. Whilst these graves have been disturbed, there is a good possibility that others remain and the Battlefields Trust judges that disturbing this site would run counter to Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) which states that:

3.85. change [on battlefields] should be managed carefully in an informed and sympathetic way that respects the value of battlefields and protects, conserves or enhances their key landscape characteristics and specific qualities.

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The burials are referenced by the applicant in its Cultural, Heritage and Archaeological report, but without explaining how the proposed damage to the heritage resource can be squared with the SHEP. Rather, the report is clear that 'Construction of the Onshore Substation is likely to result in the removal of all Cultural Heritage Assets falling within the construction footprint (para 56 refers)'. This suggests that the applicant accepts that its proposals are not compatible with the SHEP and is instead relying on the planning authority accepting that rescue archaeology as mitigation will suffice and that such an approach is somehow a substitute for careful management of a heritage resource. If the planning authority does accept this, it seems to the Trust that this is likely to set an unhelpful precedent for continued incremental development on the Prestonpans battlefield justified by rescue archaeology, which may be hard to counter.

The Battlefields Trust therefore asks that East Lothian Council rejects this application because of the adverse impact on the battlefield's setting, the potential threat to valuable battlefield archaeology, which is also a war grave, and to avoid setting a precedent for incremental development which could, over time, ruin the battlefield heritage resource at Prestonpans.

Yours faithfully

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Chairman Battlefields Trust

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