

Application: East Park Energy Solar Farm

Examination Ref: EN010141

Deadline 1

Submission: Post-Issue-Specific-Hearing Comments

Traffic, Transport, Site Visit

Interested Party – Sue Sheard

Ref: [REDACTED]

Dear Examining Authority

I submit the following comments at Deadline 1 in response to matters discussed during the Issue-Specific Hearings. These comments are intended to clarify points raised during the hearings and supplement my Written Representation previously submitted. I wish to focus particularly on outstanding questions relating to traffic and transport impacts and on proposed site visits.

1. A1/B645 Junction and Cumulative Construction Traffic

During the Traffic and Transport Issue-Specific Hearing the Applicant indicated that the High Wood Solar there would be no cumulative impact on traffic because High Wood Solar Farm had its own access road which it would use during the construction phase. What they failed to mention was that the construction traffic would use the same A1/B645 road junction and associated slip roads to access this road. This combined reliance on shared access during overlapping construction periods will put extra pressure on the rural highway network. Cambridgeshire County Council had previously raised concerns that trunk road slip roads are short, queuing occurs, agricultural vehicles slow the flow of traffic and construction HGVs will arrive in clusters at this junction. A local resident also shared her concerns about the shared loading of the junction and the risk of queueing of construction traffic to exit the A1 onto what is known by residents as a dangerous road.

2. Construction Traffic Timing Assumptions

The Applicant's case relies on the assumption that construction traffic will avoid peak hours. What happens if arrivals and departures spread into the peak period? This was not resolved at the hearing and clarification that these assumptions will be enforced through a Construction Management Plan from the Applicant would assist the Examination. The Applicant's conclusion relies on screening thresholds rather than local sensitivity. It does not mean there will be no congestion or no safety and community impact.

3. Collision History along the B645 Corridor

The Applicant states, in the Traffic and Transport Document that, based on the information available there is no pattern of accidents and therefore no statistically identifiable safety issues along the corridor between the junction with the B645/ A1 and Great Staughton . However, the corridor has recorded serious and fatal collisions over many years. Locals know it as a dangerous road, with narrow sections, sharp bends and very few sections of straight sections of the road. It is a fast road with people overtaking on the few sections of straight road. Many locals have experienced vehicles over the central white lines on the narrow bends. It is used by motorbikes, cyclists and horse riders. Many large agricultural vehicles use the road, including combine harvesters during the summer month. HGVs use the road to access the industrial site on Staughton Moor daily. An up-to-date analysis of all reported accidents between the A1 junction and Great Staughton should be undertaken to get a real understanding of what a dangerous road this is and the implications of increased traffic, particularly large HGVS on the safety of this road.

Suggested Site Visit Observation Point

Our property, [REDACTED], is situated at one of the highest points in the local area and provides clear and commanding views of the proposed solar farm, particularly Sites A and B. From this vantage point, views of the river valleys and open agricultural landscape can be seen which are characteristic of this area. Observing the landscape from this location would allow the Examining Authority to understand the scale of the proposed development in relation to the surrounding landscape character and the visual influence on these open rural views. Several public footpaths and bridleways crisscross the farm, and these are well used by local people, walking groups, horses and dog walkers. I respectfully suggest this location could be considered as part of the Examination's site visit.

Use of AI

In response to your request regarding the use of AI, I confirm I have used the AI language tool to explore the reasons as to why the B645 is not registered as an accident blackspot. It has helped me to structure my points and inform me about the lack of recent data around this issue. The points raised are my own views and are based on my responses to reading this information and attending the Issue-Specific Hearings.

I hope my comments are helpful to you in this Examination period.

Yours sincerely

Sue Sheard

Resident of Pertenhall