



The countryside charity
Bedfordshire

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Post Hearing Written Submission
Planning Inspectorate, East Park Energy
Development Consent Order
9 June 2026 – Specific Hearing 3 (ISH3)
Public Rights of Way
Wyboston Lakes

Interested Party Reference number: [REDACTED]

CPRE Bedfordshire is a strong advocate for the generation of electricity through a variety of both small and large scale Solar PV systems.

However, we wish to ensure that wherever possible, Solar PV generating systems are located in the most appropriate locations, ensuring that environmental damage is kept to a minimum.

For this reason, we will support large scale Solar PV schemes when they are situated on brownfield land or on the poorest quality agricultural land with Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) of 3b, 4 and 5.

Provided that they are not in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or in National Parks and do not have an unduly adverse impact on the surrounding landscape.

We also support and encourage large scale solar installations on the roofs of industrial and commercial buildings e.g. offices, factories, retail complexes and warehouses.

We have supported large scale solar farms in various parts of Bedfordshire which comply with this policy.

In this case, CPRE Bedfordshire has strongly objected to the East Park Energy application for a range of reasons detailed in our response to the October 2024 Consultation.

Not least of these, the fact that the proposed site is almost entirely on Grade 2 Agricultural Land.

Some of the best agricultural land in the country.

With regard to the Impact on Landscape, Public Rights of Way and rural communities.

This is a massive scheme covering a vast area of quiet countryside and small rural villages.

The proposed Mega Solar Farm will transform the area, its historic and largely agricultural character, into an industrial complex across a 6 mile corridor covering around 1,900 acres.

The Mega Solar Farm will contain a massive 700,000 panels and will be the size of 1,000 football pitches.

Local Action Groups have calculated that it will cover an area larger than Gatwick Airport!

The industrialisation of a quiet rural community.

- **The impact on local communities across the area will be immense – an environmental catastrophe!**

Small villages like Little Staughton , Keysoe and Pertenhall will be almost encircled by fields of 1,000's of solar panels, completely transforming the sense of place and landscape in this rural area, currently "Open Countryside".

- **Public Footpaths and Rights of Way through the proposed Mega Solar Farm, will become hedge lined "alleyways" through huge fields of Solar Panels.**

Obstructing views of the rural landscape.

- **The suggestion by the developer that the Mega Solar Farm could be constructed in a way that protects Landscape Character and Public Rights of Way, through careful siting and screening, completely lacks credibility.**

Comment that this development is all about producing low cost electricity to benefit ordinary consumers is a fantasy!

In fact, it is all about the Government's "growth at any cost agenda" for the "Oxford Cambridge Arc" and the aim to create a UK "Silicon Valley".

It's objective is to provide low cost electricity for some of the most profitable companies on the planet – the likes of Google and their need for huge AI Data Storage Facilities which consume enormous amounts of electricity and water.

These AI Data Storage Facilities are environmentally unsustainable.

If this application is approved, then it will set a terrible precedent for future development in our precious countryside which will adversely impact us all, directly or indirectly.

We urge the Inspector to reject this environmentally unsustainable application.

We note with concern, that The Inspector carried out his unaccompanied site visit the day before the Hearing on Public Rights of Way – we consider this to be a lost opportunity.

Denying the Inspector the opportunity to visualise the real harm to the local environment that local groups such as CPRE Bedfordshire and others had articulated during the Hearing.

[REDACTED]

CPRE Bedfordshire

7 July 2026

Interested Party Reference number: [REDACTED]