

Representation by Pertenhall and Swineshead Parish Council

Submitted against Deadline 8 the Final Deadline

7th September 2026

Pertenhall and Swineshead Parish Council submits this final Written Representation **strongly objecting** to the proposed East Park Energy project. This is largely what we submitted at the outset of the examination and nothing we have seen in the subsequent documentation has changed our views as these points have not been addressed. We emphasise that this objection relates not only to that part of the proposal that falls within our parish area but to the whole proposal covering adjoining parishes. For the reasons set out below the Parish Council strongly objects to the proposed development and believes that development consent should be refused:

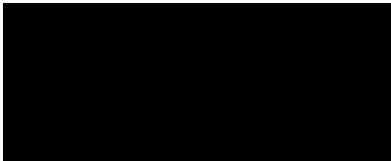
1. The scale of the development proposed between Swineshead and Hail Weston is overwhelming, particularly when the two existing sites and the two other solar farm sites granted planning permission in the corridor are considered. These smaller schemes combined with East Park Energy would create a solar corridor of 2,800 acres. Our objection relates not only to the part of the proposed scheme that would lie in Pertenhall and Swineshead Parish, but to the whole proposal, large parts of which in adjoining parishes will be very visible from the dwellings and well-used rights of way in the higher parts of the parish. The two sites C and D further east will intrude on views from commonly used roads.
2. Loss of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land. The project would occupy approximately 1,900 acres, with around 74% classified as Best and Most Versatile agricultural (Grades 2 and 3a). With at least a 3 year construction, 40 year operational and 2 year removal period, the proposal would constitute the loss of very productive farmland for a generation.
3. Lack of consideration of alternative solar energy sources. There is no real evidence that less-productive or non-agricultural options have been properly considered. We believe there is plenty of capacity on brownfield land, domestic and commercial rooftops, transport corridors and car parks for solar panels.
4. National planning policy considerations. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out how the best and most versatile agricultural land should be reflected in planning policies and decisions. The framework is clear that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality. The National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) states in para. 2.10.28 “Solar is a highly flexible technology and as such can be deployed on a wide variety of land types” In para. 2.10.29 “While land type should not be a predominating factor in determining the suitability of the site location applicants should, where possible, utilise suitable previously developed land, brownfield land, contaminated land and industrial land. Where the proposed use of any agricultural land has been shown to be necessary, poorer quality land should be preferred to higher quality land avoiding the use of “Best and Most Versatile agricultural land where possible”.

5. Visual Impact on landscape character. The huge scale of the proposed development would have a detrimental visual impact on the open, attractive landscape. There will be installed close to 700,000 solar panels mounted 3 metres high across 1,900 acres of rolling countryside. Add security fencing, lighting, CCTV, inverters, 3.5 metre high transformer units, and all the infrastructure associated with industrial battery energy storage systems. Natural screening – the so called ‘green infrastructure’ - is not likely to be effective. Planting often fails (and has at existing local solar sites) and even if it is successful, it takes years to mature. If the screening planting does succeed, it will radically change the landscape. If it fails, the view of acres of solar panels will radically change the landscape.
6. Impact on settlement pattern and individual dwellings. The proposal will fundamentally change the settlement character of the area for much the worse. The six villages will no longer be small settlements sitting in attractive farmed countryside. The surrounding landscape and views from the villages will be very different. Six residential properties will be within 100 m of the proposed Panel Area high fence lines.
7. Impact on historic environment and Listed Buildings. Preparatory work by the applicants has exposed the Roman town site south of Great Staughton and this is now protected. However, their work has revealed numerous prehistoric and Roman remains beyond the town itself and these do not have the same protection. The solar farm will also affect the setting of other nearby heritage assets. Within a few miles are several Grade 1 listed medieval churches, particularly significant is that at Little Staughton.
8. The detrimental impact of construction. If permitted, this scheme will take at least three years to construct. Long operation hours are proposed on Mondays to Fridays and half days on Saturdays. All the local communities would feel the impacts from the huge volume of construction traffic on narrow roads - thousands of HGV movements and thousands of site worker journeys as hundreds of site operatives go to and from the 10 construction compounds and site zones. East Park’s main construction compound would be off the busy B645, well known for its accident black spots, and rat-run traffic is anticipated across the whole local rural road network. As well as the traffic noise, the repetitive sound of pile-driving, would dominate local countryside and settlements. It is estimated that around 250,000 posts would have to be pile-driven to support nearly 700,000 panels.
9. The detrimental impact of the natural environment. We are concerned about the likely impact of the proposed scheme on local wildlife - animal and vegetable. East Park intends to totally transform six square miles of habitat, surrounding it with, apart from a few hedgehog height access points, impenetrable fencing. This will have a devastating impact on animal life. There are at present pockets of unusual wildflowers in the affected areas likely to be badly damaged.
10. Battery bank safety risks. East Park’s battery energy storage system, planned to be constructed in a compound between Hail Weston and Great Staughton, would consist of around 100 shipping container-sized units, each one packed with lithium-ion battery cells. These battery banks have well documented fire and explosion risks - there have been serious emergency incidents in the UK and internationally.
11. Increased flood risk. We have concerns about the probable increase in the risk of flooding along the Pertenhall Brook through East Park Site A and on eastward to its junction with the River Kim. The brook floods regularly after high rainfall, often blocking

roads in Pertenhall. We fear that water runoff into the brook will be faster from the pattern of solar panels than from cultivated farmland, thus increasing flood risk.

12. Public Rights of Way and recreational use of the area. We are concerned about the impact on public rights of way that run through the sites. East Park Energy state that the proposal is not expected to result in the loss of any public right of way but the nature of the footpaths and bridleways through the solar farms will be radically different and far less attractive to that experienced at present. During the 3 year construction period many rights of way will be adjacent to or crossed by construction vehicles meaning increased risk to users.
13. Detrimental effects on local residents. If and whenever the project is approved, local residents will then have to endure 3 years of construction disturbance before living with the project for at least 40 years. Most of the 3,500 local residents will not survive this period, of course, but the project is going to have, and already is having, a disturbing psychological effect on them. People are extremely worried about what it will mean for their way of life, their local environment and their properties. We have found no recognition of this in all the thousands of pages of material that applicants have published. Why not?

Kind regards,



Clerk to Pertenhall & Swineshead Parish Council