

Final Representation: Outstanding Matters at the Close of the Examination
Susan Sheard

I do not wish to repeat the detailed points made in my previous submissions. However, I remain concerned that several substantive matters have not been satisfactorily resolved.

1.No accompanied site inspection:

Despite the scale and complexity of the proposed development, there has still been no accompanied site inspection. This is particularly significant for assessing the landscape, topography, heritage, agricultural and transport issues which are difficult to understand fully from documents and virtual material.

2.Virtual Site Inspection evidence:

The Applicant has now uploaded the remaining videos, but these are still not available through the Examination Library. This has made timely and meaningful scrutiny of evidence relied upon by the Applicant unnecessarily difficult.

3. BMV agricultural land:

The Applicant previously referred to approximately 75% of the Site as BMV land. Its latest presentation reduces this to 66.4%, excluding ungraded land from the headline figure despite stating that ungraded land is treated as Grade 2 for environmental assessment purposes. Including that land gives approximately 71.8% of the total Site. The calculation also includes areas such as buildings and roads which are not available for development. The change in methodology should be clearly reconciled so that the true extent of BMV land is not understated.

4. Local rural roads and transport:

Concerns remain regarding the suitability and safety of the local rural road network for construction traffic, including narrow roads, bends, visibility, passing difficulties and interaction with existing agricultural, residential, pedestrian and other traffic. I do not consider that these practical, real-world constraints have been adequately resolved.

6. Environment and ecology:

Significant concerns remain regarding the cumulative environmental effects of developing such a large area, including impacts on biodiversity, bats, badgers, breeding birds, watercourses and ponds, together with the potential effects of construction, drainage, soil disturbance and the long-term presence of solar infrastructure and battery storage. I remain concerned that the cumulative impact of this development, alongside other existing and proposed solar schemes in the area, has not been sufficiently addressed.

7.Overall adequacy of the evidence:

I recognise that the Applicant has responded to many of the issues raised. However, a response does not necessarily resolve the underlying concern. At the close of the Examination, I respectfully ask the ExA to consider whether the evidence is sufficiently complete, accessible and consistent to provide a robust basis for determining the application. This is not an objection to renewable energy. It is an objection to the scale, location and cumulative impacts of this particular proposal.