

Subject: Additional Objection – Proposed Rosefield Solar Farm Development

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to submit additional comments and objections regarding the proposed Rosefield Solar Farm development and its associated infrastructure. We are local residents with a young family and we regularly use the surrounding countryside, particularly the network of public footpaths and rural lanes that pass through and around the proposed site. We recently moved from London to East Claydon, primarily so that we could raise our children in a rural environment with access to green space, fresh air, and the countryside. The ability to walk safely along local footpaths, enjoy open landscapes, and experience nature on our doorstep was a major factor in our decision to move here. For this reason, proposals that significantly change the landscape and the character of these spaces are of deep concern to us. While we understand the importance of renewable energy and the transition to lower-carbon electricity generation, we do not believe that a development of this scale is appropriate for this area. Our concerns relate particularly to the impact on public rights of way, the local landscape, wildlife, construction disruption, and the cumulative effect of multiple major infrastructure projects already planned for this area.

#### Cumulative Impacts

One of the most significant concerns is the cumulative impact of multiple large infrastructure projects affecting the same area. Local residents are already facing disruption and landscape change associated with projects such as HS2, East West Rail, a new double-the-size substation, the incinerator, other Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and solar applications such as Statera BESS, Grendon prison, and other related applications.

Individually these projects are substantial, but collectively they risk fundamentally altering the rural character of the area and placing a disproportionate burden on local communities. Renewable energy infrastructure is needed nationally, but concentrating such a large amount of infrastructure in one locality does not appear to be a balanced or fair approach.

#### Construction Impacts

The proposed construction period of approximately 2.5 years raises serious concerns. The area is served by narrow rural lanes that were never designed to accommodate sustained heavy construction traffic. Increased HGV movements would pose clear road safety risks, particularly for families, cyclists, horse riders, and pedestrians who regularly use these routes. We walk from our house in East Claydon to East Claydon C of E Primary School on a daily basis. The pavement is narrow in parts and the presence of heavy construction vehicles will impact the safety of our children.

We are lucky enough to be able to walk to school but many of the children who attend the school travel in from other local villages. Construction activity over such a prolonged period would also create disruption for local businesses, school runs, and everyday travel. For families with young children, road safety and reliability of local routes are essential. The scale and duration of construction traffic could significantly affect the safety and wellbeing of the community.

#### Public Rights of Way, Health and Wellbeing

The local network of public rights of way is one of the most valued features of the area. These footpaths are used daily by residents for walking, exercising, dog walking, and enjoying the countryside. For many families, including ours, these routes provide safe and accessible outdoor spaces that are vital for both physical and mental wellbeing.

The proposal to divert or move existing public rights of way across the site raises serious concerns. Even if technically retained, the character of these paths would change dramatically. Instead of open farmland views and quiet countryside, users would find themselves walking between large solar arrays, high security fencing, CCTV infrastructure, and lighting. During the construction phase, the presence of heavy vehicles moving across fields and near footpaths would also create potential safety risks. For those walking with children or dogs, this would significantly reduce the sense of safety and enjoyment that these paths currently provide.

Even once operational, the experience of walking through an industrial-scale solar installation surrounded by fencing and surveillance equipment would be very different from the current rural environment. It has the potential for a “prison-like” effect due to the presence of tall fencing, cameras, and infrastructure.

#### Landscape and Visual Impact

The landscape in this area currently retains a strong rural character, with open fields, hedgerows, and long views across the countryside. The scale of the proposed solar arrays would inevitably introduce a large industrial presence into this landscape.

For those using nearby footpaths and lanes, the change would be particularly noticeable. What are currently open views would instead be dominated by rows of solar panels, fencing, access tracks, and electrical infrastructure. Screening and planting may help in the long term, but they cannot fully mitigate the scale of visual change that would occur.

The countryside surrounding the village is an important part of why families choose to live here, and the loss of this landscape character would be deeply felt by many residents.

#### Loss of Agricultural Land

Another concern is the loss of productive agricultural land. The fields proposed for development currently form part of the working rural landscape that has supported farming in this area for generations.

Once covered by solar panels and associated infrastructure, this land would effectively be taken out of traditional agricultural use for the lifespan of the project, which could be several decades.

At a time when food security and the protection of productive farmland are increasingly important national issues, the large-scale removal of agricultural land from food production raises legitimate concerns. It is also the livelihood of many local residents. Agricultural land is a finite resource, and once it is converted to industrial energy infrastructure, it may be difficult to restore it fully to its previous use. The cumulative loss of farmland across multiple energy and infrastructure projects in the area should therefore be carefully considered.

#### Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and Collector Compound

The proposed Battery Energy Storage System and associated collector compound raise additional safety concerns. While battery storage technology has an important role in energy systems, there are well-documented risks associated with battery fires and thermal runaway incidents.

Given the rural nature of this location, emergency response times may be longer than in urban areas. The presence of multiple ongoing infrastructure works and potential road closures could also affect access for emergency services. These risks need to be carefully considered when assessing whether this is an appropriate location for such infrastructure.

### Wildlife and Local Habitats

The fields, hedgerows, and surrounding habitats support a wide range of wildlife. Residents regularly see birds, bats, deer, hares and a plethora of insects using these areas. The school regularly uses the local environment as a case study to learn about plant and animal habitats. Large-scale development has the potential to disrupt these habitats during construction and throughout the operational life of the site.

Even where mitigation measures are proposed, the transformation of open agricultural land into a fenced industrial energy site would inevitably alter the existing ecological balance.

### Community Engagement

Finally, we would like to note that the fact that some residents were unable to attend the recent consultation meetings, ourselves included, should not be interpreted as a lack of interest or concern. Like us, many people in the area have work commitments and family responsibilities that make it difficult to attend meetings in person or participate in live online sessions.

In addition, some members of the community may feel unable to speak openly due to their tenancy arrangements with local landowners, while others – particularly older residents – may find the planning process difficult to navigate.

For these reasons, the level of attendance at meetings should not be used as a measure of community support for this proposal.

### Conclusion

In summary, while renewable energy development is important, the scale and location of the proposed Rosefield Solar Farm raise serious concerns. The cumulative impact of multiple major infrastructure projects, the disruption to public rights of way, the effect on the landscape and wildlife, the safety concerns relating to construction traffic, and the risks associated with the Battery Energy Storage System all suggest that this is not an appropriate location for such a large industrial development.

As a family who recently chose to make East Claydon our home because of its countryside, green space, and healthy outdoor environment, we feel strongly that these qualities should be protected.

We respectfully ask that the planning authority carefully consider the impacts outlined above and recognise that this location is not suitable for a development of this scale.

Yours faithfully,

Tom & Hannah Elliott













