

Objection to the Rosefield Solar Farm (NSIP reference EN010158)

Submitted by: Katherine Edgar, Resident of Botolph Claydon

I would like to begin by noting that I was unable to attend the Preliminary Meeting (Day 1) due to work commitments.

However, I did attend the Compulsory Acquisition Meeting (Day 2) online.

While I fully support renewable energy generation in principle, I believe this particular proposal is inappropriate in its scale, its location, and its cumulative impact on the surrounding communities. My concerns are set out below.

#### 1. Loss of Agricultural Land and Misuse of the Term "Farm"

This proposal would remove a vast area of productive agricultural land from active use for decades. Despite being described as a "farm", the development is not agricultural in nature.

The installation of piled structures, cabling, access tracks, and substations would cause long term harm to soil structure and drainage. Claims that the land can simply be "reversed" after 40+ years are speculative and, in my view, unenforceable.

At a time when food security is becoming an increasingly urgent national concern, the permanent industrialisation of high quality farmland cannot be justified.

#### 2. Severe Cumulative Impacts on an Overburdened Rural Area

This project cannot be considered in isolation. My community is already experiencing prolonged disruption from HS2 and East West Rail, both of which border parts of the proposed site. In addition, the prison extension, the new substation, and the Statera BESS all contribute to the pressure on local villages.

Residents are already dealing with noise, road closures, and heavy construction traffic. Adding a further 2,500+ acre industrial development would push cumulative impacts far beyond acceptable limits.

#### 3. Traffic and Highway Safety Risks

The local road network consists of narrow rural lanes that were not designed for sustained HGV movements.

Construction traffic from existing projects has already caused safety issues and ongoing road damage. Introducing additional HGVs would increase risks to pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, and farm vehicles.

To date, no credible mitigation strategy has been presented that would prevent significant harm to road safety or community wellbeing.

#### 4. Landscape and Visual Harm

The proposed development would cause a profound and irreversible loss of valued landscape and views for residents in East Claydon and Botolph Claydon.

My own house — one of the oldest houses in Botolph Claydon, a brick and timber property dating back to the 16th century — has enjoyed an uninterrupted view of the valley across to North Marston, Oving, and Quanton Hill. This rural landscape has remained largely unchanged for 500 years. I have attached a photograph of this view.

I also want to highlight that no one from Rosefield or the Planning Inspectorate has approached me to assess the impact on this view.

The sheer scale of the proposed development means it cannot be screened effectively. The industrial appearance of solar panels, fencing, CCTV, and substations is wholly incompatible with a predominantly agricultural landscape.

The Planning Inspectorate has repeatedly recognised that loss of rural character and visual amenity is a legitimate and material planning concern — particularly where entire communities are affected.

#### 5. Poor Site Selection and Lack of Consideration of Alternatives

The developer's primary justification appears to be proximity to a substation, which is a matter of commercial convenience rather than sound planning.

Large scale solar installations should prioritise brownfield land, industrial sites, car parks, and rooftops—not productive farmland.

Concentrating multiple major infrastructure projects in one rural area is inequitable and unsustainable.

#### 6. Harm to Local Farmers and Loss of Agricultural Livelihoods

This proposal would directly undermine the livelihoods of farmers who rely on this land for food production and other agricultural income.

The land is actively farmed and forms part of long established agricultural businesses. Removing such a large area from productive use for 40+ years threatens the viability of these farms, including Preston Farms and TCS Biosciences, which employs more than 60 people.

The developer's suggestion that the land will be "rested" or "enhanced" is speculative and does nothing to compensate for the immediate and long term loss of income to farming families.

The cumulative impact of HS2, East West Rail, and now Rosefield means that local farmers are being repeatedly displaced, with no realistic alternative land available. One farmer has already had to leave his farm.

Agriculture here is not just an economic activity—it is the foundation of the local community, heritage, and landscape. This proposal disregards that entirely.

#### Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above—cumulative impacts, loss of agricultural land, highway safety concerns, landscape harm, drainage risks, and poor site selection—I believe the Rosefield Solar Farm is fundamentally in the wrong location.

I therefore urge the Planning Inspectorate to refuse consent for this proposal.



