

Formal Objection to the Proposed Solar Farm and BESS Installation

I wish to register my strong objection to the proposed construction of large scale solar panels and associated BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) infrastructure on farmland surrounding the Claydons. This development is inappropriate in both method and location, and it would cause significant, long lasting harm to the landscape, local communities, and the wider environment.

1. Misuse of Scarce Agricultural Land

- Productive farmland is a finite and increasingly valuable national resource. The UK population continues to grow, yet our landmass does not.
- Converting high quality agricultural land into industrial scale energy production directly reduces our capacity to grow food domestically.
- Food security is a strategic priority. Once farmland is industrialised, it is rarely restored to its original quality.
- Livestock cannot be reared on roofs, nor can crops be grown on car parks or industrial estates. Farmland is uniquely suited to food production, not energy generation.

2. Solar Infrastructure Should Be Located Elsewhere

There are numerous alternative locations for solar generation that do not require sacrificing productive countryside:

- Rooftops of homes, schools, colleges, warehouses, factories, and office buildings
- Car parks and transport hubs
- Brownfield and previously developed land
- Industrial estates and commercial sites

Many countries have already restricted or prohibited solar installations on farmland for these reasons. The UK should adopt similar protections.

3. Environmental and Ecological Damage

The proposal cannot reasonably be described as “green” when:

- Large areas of habitat will be fenced off, shaded, and disturbed
- Local wildlife—including bats, owls, deer, and a wide variety of birds—will be displaced
- Construction will disrupt ecosystems and fragment habitats
- End of life disposal of vast quantities of solar panels will create significant waste and environmental risk

The countryside around the Claydons is rich in biodiversity. Industrialising it with solar arrays and battery compounds is fundamentally incompatible with environmental stewardship.

4. BESS Safety Concerns

Battery storage systems carry well documented risks:

- Fire hazards, including thermal runaway
- Release of toxic chemicals
- Contaminated water runoff entering local watercourses during firefighting

These risks are especially concerning in rural areas with limited emergency access and sensitive natural environments.

5. Visual and Landscape Impact

- The proposed development would permanently alter the character of the countryside.
- Expansive fields of fencing, solar panels, and industrial equipment will dominate views and destroy the rural setting.
- The cumulative impact—when combined with HS2, EWR, and other recent major projects—is unacceptable. Local residents have already endured years of disruption.

6. Impact on Residents' Wellbeing and Local Amenity

- Construction traffic over 2.5 years will significantly increase noise, pollution, and road safety risks.
- Footpaths and bridleways currently enjoyed for recreation, exercise, and mental wellbeing will be degraded, moved or closed.
- Walking or riding through fenced industrial corridors is not equivalent to enjoying open fields and woodland.
- Ongoing noise from inverters, transformers, and battery systems will further diminish quality of life.

7. Inefficient and Rapidly Ageing Technology

- Solar technology evolves quickly; today's panels will be outdated long before the end of their operational life.
- Committing large areas of farmland to a technology that may soon be surpassed is short sighted and wasteful.
- More efficient, less land intensive methods of energy generation already exist and continue to develop.

Conclusion

This proposal represents the wrong technology in the wrong place. It sacrifices valuable farmland, harms local ecology, damages the landscape, and imposes significant burdens on residents, all for an energy solution that could be delivered far more appropriately elsewhere.

I therefore urge all relevant authorities to reject this application in full.