

I am writing to formally object to the proposed solar development in Little Carlton, on the grounds of environmental risk, infrastructural suitability, and the long-term impact on the rural character and agricultural viability of the area.

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1. Traffic Impact, Structural Concerns & Road Safety

The road network serving Little Carlton is made up of narrow rural lanes without adequate width, passing points, or structural reinforcement for prolonged heavy industrial use. Construction of a solar farm typically requires:

- Frequent movements of HGVs, cranes, and low-loaders,
- Delivery of panels, frames, ballast, cabling, and substation equipment,
- Ongoing maintenance vehicle access even after construction.

Local roads are already sensitive; I currently experience noticeable vibrations and low-frequency rumbling from existing traffic. Increasing both traffic volume and axle weight has the potential to cause structural damage to nearby residential properties due to soil movement and vibration transfer.

Additionally, increased industrial traffic poses a significant safety risk to pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, agricultural vehicles, and residents accessing their homes. This is not an area designed for such traffic flow, and no mitigation proposals appear adequate for the scale of disruption anticipated.

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2. Flood Risk, Watercourse Proximity & Surface Water Concerns

The proposed site lies very close to a natural river source and sits within land known locally to be prone to seasonal waterlogging and flooding. Installing heavy infrastructure in this area raises several technical problems:

- Solar farms alter drainage patterns by compacting soil during construction (particularly under HGV wheelings).
- Compacted ground reduces permeability, increasing surface water runoff into lower-lying properties.
- The introduction of foundations, cabling trenches, and service roads can redirect water flow and exacerbate fluvial and

pluvial flood risk.

- Flooding around electrical infrastructure poses additional hazards, potentially affecting both safety and environmental integrity.

Government planning guidance (including NPPF Flood Risk Assessments) generally discourages large energy installations in areas with documented flood history or within close proximity to watercourses, unless extensive hydrological modelling has been completed. I see no clear evidence that such modelling has addressed the genuine local risks around Little Carlton.

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3. Environmental Impact, Loss of Habitat & Biodiversity Reduction

Little Carlton is a rural and ecologically sensitive area supporting:

- Birds, including species dependent on hedgerows, farmland, and riparian habitats,
- Small mammals, insects, and amphibians,
- Wildlife supported by the river corridor.

Industrial-scale solar installations can:

- Disrupt wildlife corridors,
- Reduce foraging and nesting opportunities,
- Eliminate open farmland habitats,
- Introduce glint and glare affecting birds' natural behaviours,
- Increase soil temperature and alter microclimates beneath panels,
- Require fencing that blocks movement of small animals and fragments habitats.

Once biodiversity is disrupted on this scale, it cannot be quickly or easily restored.

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4. Loss of Productive Farmland

The proposed site is currently farmland that contributes to agricultural output in Little Carlton. Converting viable farmland to an industrial energy site reduces:

- Local food production,
- Agricultural employment potential,
- The rural economy,
- The historic agricultural landscape that defines Little Carlton's character.

At a time when national guidance encourages retention of food-producing land, this development removes an asset of long-term community value.

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5. Visual & Landscape Impact

Although not my primary concern, the proposal would introduce a substantial industrial presence into a small rural village. The open landscape around Little Carlton contributes strongly to the area's identity. Solar panels, inverter cabins, security fencing, cameras, and service tracks will permanently alter this character.

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6. Technical & Planning Policy Concerns

There are several additional planning considerations that require scrutiny:

- Glint and Glare: Panels can cause reflectivity that affects both residential amenity and wildlife.
- Electromagnetic Fields (EMFs) from substations and cabling must be assessed for proximity to homes.
- Noise Impact: Inverter stations and cooling fans produce a continuous low-frequency hum that carries across flat rural

ground.

- Cumulative Impact Assessment: If there are other solar or energy projects within the wider district, the cumulative effect must be considered under planning policy.

- Soil Degradation: Panel foundations and access tracks can degrade soil quality, making future return to farming difficult.

These factors collectively demonstrate that the site is not suitable for an industrial-scale energy development.

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Conclusion

I am not opposed to renewable energy and recognise its importance. However, the proposed location in Little Carlton is fundamentally unsuitable due to:

- Flood risk and watercourse proximity
- Increased traffic, vibration, and road safety hazards
- Environmental harm and loss of wildlife habitat
- Removal of productive agricultural land
- Significant change to the rural character
- Technical issues relating to noise, drainage, and glint/glare

I respectfully request that the planning authority reject this proposal or require a full reassessment of site suitability. Thank you for considering my concerns.