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Application by Green Hill Solar Farm Ltd. for an Order granting Development Consent for a proposed solar development on land between Northampton and Wellingborough

PINS ref: EN010170

Summary Statement from Bozeat Parish Council (F7D1F5580)

Deadline 7 8th April 2026

Introduction

This document summarises the position of Bozeat Parish Council in relation to this proposal.

As with our previous representations I am representing both the Parish Council and CPRE Northamptonshire and this summary concentrates on issues that specifically relate to Bozeat and not the whole scheme.

Reasons that the scheme should not be approved

The scheme would cause significant harms that would adversely affect the residents of Bozeat. They are:

1. It would fundamentally and adversely change the whole area within which we live, work and take our leisure. Our attractive rural landscape would be transformed into an industrialised landscape scattered over a vast area
2. There would be two years of disruption and inconvenience during construction
3. Construction traffic would pass through residential areas of Bozeat creating both nuisance and safety concerns
4. The tranquil PRoWs that we use for leisure and exercise would become an unpleasant industrial environment. They would be avoided by both walkers and horse-riders with impacts on health and wellbeing
5. There would be a loss of local employment in agriculture, tourism and leisure
6. There is widespread, if not universal, objection to the scheme because of its size and spread – even from those who have supported other renewables schemes. Commonly used adjectives are ridiculous, bonkers and awful

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In the event that the scheme is approved

While we are strongly of the opinion that the harms of this scheme significantly outweigh its benefits and that it should not be approved, we have to consider the matters which should be addressed in the event that the scheme is approved.

Traffic and Transport

The Parish Council has repeatedly requested that the proposed construction traffic route that passes through Bozeat (Link 81) should be removed from the scheme. In the course of the Examination the Applicant has admitted that this highly sensitive route is not necessary in order to implement the scheme.

The Applicant has given various responses to our requests to remove this route, initially claiming that the route was necessary to reach Access F.2, then admitting at ISH1 that it would be possible to instead use Access F.3 and the internal track to reach Access F.2, then claiming that the level of traffic would be low and finally that they need not remove it because they had agreed the access with the Highways Authority (almost certainly without their knowledge that there would be an internal track linking Access F.2 with Access F.3).

The Applicant clearly has an alternative to avoid sending construction traffic through highly sensitive residential streets in Bozeat but they have stubbornly resisted making what would be a fairly minor concession to the community.

Securing the promised Community Benefit Scheme

Another issue that we have raised is that although the Application states that there would be a Community Benefit Scheme, the proposed DCO contains no Requirement for this to be provided. The promise of community benefit schemes for two other local schemes did not survive the sale of the scheme and have never materialised. Because the Applicant has stated that they do not intend to operate the scheme and that they may not even construct it, we do not believe that any funds will materialise unless the scheme is included as a Requirement within the DCO.

The resistance expressed by the developer to any suggestion that the Community Benefit Scheme should be linked to the DCO enhances our concern. Without a Requirement it must be assumed that no benefits will be delivered.

Securing Decommissioning Funding

We are similarly concerned that the proposed DCO does not contain a Requirement that would ensure that funds are available at the end of the scheme's permission to decommission the scheme. Should the final owner of the scheme not have access to sufficient funds to remove the scheme, it will not be removed and the land permanently lost to agriculture or any other use.

It is essential that there is a Requirement within the DCO that a bond or similar mechanism be put in place to fund decommissioning.

The Length of the Temporary Permission

The Applicant has put forward no reasons to support the need for a 60-year permission, but merely stated that some other sites have been given a 60-year permission. We see no justification to prolong the harms of the scheme and the loss of the land to agriculture beyond the 40 years set out in the NPS. There is, after all, nothing to prevent permission being extended towards the end of the 40-year permission should national priorities consider it to be desirable to do so at the time.

Conclusion

Bozeat Parish Council strongly objects to this harmful scheme and recommends that it is not approved.