

From: clerk@wollastonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Sent: Monday, September 21, 2026 16:20

To: Green Hill Solar

Subject: Fw: Wollaston Parish Council - Formal Objection to the Green Hill Solar Farm

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WOLLASTON PARISH COUNCIL

Formal Objection to the Green Hill Solar Farm Development Consent Order (DCO) Application

Supporting the concerns of Mears Ashby and its residents

Dear Sir/Madam,

1. Introduction

Wollaston Parish Council wishes to formally express its support for the concerns raised by Mears Ashby Parish Council and its residents regarding the proposed Green Hill Solar Farm Development Consent Order (DCO) application.

Whilst Wollaston Parish Council recognises the national objectives of increasing renewable energy generation and supporting the transition to a low-carbon energy system, it believes that such developments must be appropriately located, carefully assessed and designed to avoid unacceptable harm to existing communities, the natural environment and the historic landscape.

The Council is particularly concerned about the proposed development across Areas C, D and E, which directly affects the countryside surrounding Mears Ashby and raises significant concerns regarding the potential impact on local residents, ancient woodland, heritage assets, public rights of way, agricultural land and the local highway network.

Wollaston Parish Council considers that the concerns raised by Mears Ashby warrant careful and thorough consideration before any final decision is made.

2. Grounds for Objection

2.1 Impact on Sywell Wood and the Natural Environment

Wollaston Parish Council is concerned about the proposed 9.2-acre Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) facility in close proximity to Sywell Wood, an area of ancient woodland.

Ancient woodland is an irreplaceable natural asset, and its protection must be given significant weight in the assessment of the proposed development.

The Council is concerned that the construction and operation of a large-scale industrial battery storage facility immediately adjacent to this woodland could adversely affect its ecological integrity, including through construction disturbance, changes to drainage and hydrology, and potential impacts on established habitats and wildlife.

The Council requests that the potential effects on Sywell Wood are fully assessed and that the applicant demonstrates how the woodland and its associated ecological environment would be protected from direct and indirect harm.

2.2 Battery Energy Storage System – Fire Safety and Environmental Risks

Wollaston Parish Council shares the concerns raised by Mears Ashby regarding the proposed location and scale of the BESS facility.

Battery energy storage installations can present fire safety challenges, including the risk of thermal runaway, which can result in intense fires and the release of hazardous substances.

The proximity of the proposed facility to Sywell Wood raises particular concerns regarding the potential consequences of a fire, including the possibility of fire spreading to surrounding vegetation and the potential effects of smoke, firefighting activities and contaminated water on the surrounding environment.

The Council requests clear evidence that the applicant has undertaken a comprehensive assessment of these risks and has developed appropriate, site-specific emergency response, fire prevention and containment measures.

The adequacy of access for emergency services, the availability of appropriate firefighting resources and the arrangements for protecting nearby residents, woodland and watercourses must be demonstrated.

These matters should be resolved before the development is permitted to proceed.

2.3 Impact on Mears Ashby, Areas C and D, and Local Public Rights of Way

Wollaston Parish Council is concerned about the extensive development proposed across Areas C and D and the resulting impact on the rural setting of Mears Ashby.

The proposed infrastructure would introduce a substantial industrial-scale development into the surrounding countryside, with the potential to alter the character and appearance of the landscape and adversely affect the amenity of residents.

The Council is particularly concerned about the impact on Wood Lodge Farm and the surrounding landscape, together with the proposed development's relationship to established public rights of way.

The Mears Ashby public footpath network provides an important recreational resource for residents and visitors, as well as opportunities to experience the surrounding countryside and wildlife.

The applicant's own consultation material identifies Mears Ashby Footpath TN3 as crossing through Green Hill D for approximately 1,600 metres, with Mears Ashby Bridleway TN7 crossing through and adjacent to Green Hill C for approximately 1,200 metres.

The Council is concerned that the construction and operation of the proposed development could significantly affect the enjoyment, accessibility and rural character of these routes.

Wollaston Parish Council therefore supports Mears Ashby's request for a full assessment of the impacts on public rights of way and for the avoidance of unnecessary closures, diversions or deterioration in the quality of these important community assets.

2.4 Archaeological Heritage and the Historic Environment – Area E

Wollaston Parish Council shares the concerns regarding the potential impact of the proposed development on the archaeological heritage of Area E, immediately east of Mears Ashby.

The archaeological investigations undertaken in connection with the Green Hill Solar Farm proposals have identified significant archaeological anomalies across Areas C, D and E, including evidence of possible prehistoric and Roman settlements, enclosures, trackways and historic field systems.

The Council is concerned that extensive construction works, including underground cable installation, foundations and associated infrastructure, could result in the disturbance or destruction of important archaeological remains.

Such remains provide valuable evidence of the history and development of the local area and may be irreplaceable once disturbed or destroyed.

The Council requests that the applicant demonstrates that the archaeological significance of Area E has been fully assessed and that appropriate measures are in place to avoid or minimise harm.

Where preservation in situ is possible, this should be prioritised. Any proposed archaeological investigation or recording should be proportionate to the significance of the remains and supported by an appropriate, enforceable mitigation strategy.

2.5 Highway Safety and Construction Traffic – Wilby Road

Wollaston Parish Council is concerned about the potential impact of construction traffic associated with the development on the rural highway network surrounding Mears Ashby.

Particular concern is raised regarding Wilby Road, which is understood to include narrow sections, restricted visibility and bends that may present challenges for large construction vehicles.

The Council is concerned that increased HGV movements could create additional hazards for existing road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and residents accessing nearby properties.

The absence of continuous pedestrian and cycling infrastructure on parts of the rural road network makes it particularly important that the safety implications of additional construction traffic are carefully assessed.

The Council requests that the applicant provides a comprehensive assessment of the proposed construction traffic routes, including the suitability of Wilby Road for the anticipated volume and size of HGVs.

Appropriate measures should be identified to manage traffic movements, protect vulnerable road users and prevent unacceptable damage to the highway network.

The Council also requests that consideration is given to alternative construction access arrangements where these would reduce impacts on Mears Ashby and neighbouring communities.

2.6 Loss of Agricultural Land and Rural Landscape Character

Wollaston Parish Council is concerned about the extensive use of agricultural land for the proposed solar development and the potential consequences for the rural character of the surrounding area.

The Council recognises the importance of protecting high-quality agricultural land and considers that the applicant should clearly demonstrate that the proposed land use is justified and that reasonable alternatives have been properly assessed.

The Council requests clarification of the extent of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land affected by the scheme, together with the measures proposed to protect soil quality and agricultural productivity.

The cumulative effects of the solar arrays, battery storage infrastructure, substations, access tracks, fencing and grid connection works must also be considered in assessing the overall impact on the countryside.

3. Conclusion

Wollaston Parish Council formally supports the concerns raised by Mears Ashby Parish Council and its residents regarding the proposed Green Hill Solar Farm Development Consent Order.

The Council considers that the potential impacts on Sywell Wood, the proposed BESS facility, the rural setting of Mears Ashby, public rights of way, archaeological heritage, highway safety and agricultural land require careful and comprehensive consideration.

The Council requests that the Secretary of State gives full weight to the concerns of the affected communities and ensures that the applicant has adequately demonstrated that the proposed development would avoid unacceptable environmental, heritage, highway and community impacts.

In particular, Wollaston Parish Council supports the request for the exclusion of the BESS facility and Areas C, D and E from the proposed Development Consent Order, unless and until the significant concerns identified can be satisfactorily resolved.

The Council respectfully requests that the Secretary of State considers these representations alongside those submitted by Mears Ashby Parish Council and other affected communities when reaching a decision on the application.

Yours faithfully,

On behalf of Wollaston Parish Council

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Name], Proper Officer & Responsible Financial Officer

Wollaston Parish Council

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