

LIGHT VALLEY SOLAR

Written Representation from Riccall Parish Council

Planning Inspectorate reference: EN0110012

Interested Party: Riccall Parish Council

Relevant Representation reference: RR-1161

Examination deadline: Deadline 1

Date: 11/08/2026

1. Riccall Parish Council's position

Riccall Parish Council acknowledges the national need for renewable energy. However, the Council objects to the Light Valley Solar application in its current form.

The scale, location and likely effects of the development raise serious concerns for Riccall and the surrounding area. The Council does not believe that its concerns about construction traffic, road safety, agricultural land, public rights of way and cumulative impact have been sufficiently addressed.

The Council's main concerns are King Ridding Lane, construction traffic on unsuitable local roads, safety around the A19, Main Street and Checker Lane, effects on public rights of way and community facilities, agricultural land and the overall scale of the development.

2. King Ridding Lane

Riccall Parish Council remains particularly concerned about the proposed cable-route construction compound and access points on King Ridding Lane.

King Ridding Lane is a narrow single-track rural road used by residents, agricultural vehicles, walkers and people using nearby public rights of way. It also provides access towards Skipwith Common and its visitor parking. There are limited opportunities for vehicles to pass safely.

The junction with the A19 is also a serious concern. The Council does not believe this route is suitable for a substantial increase in heavy goods vehicles without stronger evidence, detailed safety measures and effective monitoring.

The Transport Assessment forecasts that activity associated with the King Ridding Lane compound and access could add 58 daily vehicle movements. Total daily traffic would increase from 393 to 451 movements, approximately 15 per cent. HGV movements are forecast to increase from 28 to 56 per day, approximately 101 per cent.

The Council is particularly concerned that heavy vehicle movements could more than double on a narrow rural road. It is also concerned about the potential cumulative traffic impact with the existing wood-processing operation on King Ridding Lane, currently subject to a separate retrospective planning application.

The applicant should confirm peak movements, vehicle sizes, working and delivery hours, how long the compound and accesses would be used and whether employee and contractor vehicles are included.

The overall construction period could last 24–36 months, and even shorter use of individual compounds could significantly affect residents and road users.

The applicant should properly investigate alternative access arrangements, including possible access through the former mine site or the industrial estate on Market Weighton Road. The King Rudding Lane compound and accesses should be removed unless no safer and more suitable alternative is reasonably available.

3. A19, Main Street and Checker Lane

The Council remains concerned about construction traffic entering, leaving or crossing the A19 around Riccall, particularly given existing road-safety concerns on this section of the A19.

This includes vehicles turning at the King Rudding Lane junction, unsuitable or unauthorised turning movements and the potential use of Main Street and Checker Lane by construction traffic. There are also concerns about the proposed underground cable crossing of the A19 and possible damage or cutting back of trees and hedges along Checker Lane.

The Examining Authority should consider road width, visibility, pedestrian use and whether large vehicles can pass safely at the proposed access locations.

Before construction begins, a detailed Construction Traffic Management Plan should be approved following consultation with Riccall Parish Council and the highway authority. It should set out approved routes, delivery times, vehicle restrictions, warning signs, temporary speed restrictions where appropriate, wheel-washing, road-cleaning and the use of banksmen where required.

Construction vehicles should not wait, park, turn or make U-turns in unsuitable locations. Vehicle movements should be monitored and there should be a clear process for reporting breaches.

Pre-construction condition surveys should be completed on affected roads, with the applicant responsible for damage caused by the development. An appropriate financial bond or other guarantee should be secured to ensure that repair funds are available.

4. Cable works, public rights of way and community access

The cable corridor and associated works could affect public rights of way, permissive paths and access to community facilities.

Paths should remain open wherever safe and practical. Where closure is unavoidable, it should be as short as possible with a safe, clearly signed and accessible diversion. Residents and Riccall Parish Council should receive advance notice of closures or route changes.

The Council is also concerned about the potential effect on safe access to nearby community facilities, including the recreation ground and children's playground.

Mud, dust and construction materials should not be allowed to build up on roads, paths or public areas. Affected routes and surrounding land should be properly reinstated.

Noise, lighting, dust and working hours should be carefully controlled. The applicant should provide a named local contact for construction-related problems.

5. Site selection, agricultural land and restoration

The development is very large and would affect a significant amount of agricultural land across several communities.

Riccall Parish Council is concerned about the loss and disturbance of productive agricultural land and the wider effect on the rural character of the area.

The Council is also concerned that such a large development is predominantly proposed on agricultural land rather than previously developed or industrial land. National policy indicates that suitable previously developed, brownfield, contaminated and industrial land should be used where possible.

There are a number of former industrial, mining and power-generation sites within the wider area, including sites around Riccall, Wistow, Stillingfleet, Gascoigne Wood, Ferrybridge and Eggborough. The Council is not suggesting that each of these sites would necessarily be suitable for this development, but considers that the applicant should clearly demonstrate what consideration was given to previously developed and former industrial land, why alternative sites were discounted and why the extensive use of agricultural land is considered necessary.

Clear and enforceable arrangements should cover soil protection, drainage, flood-risk management and restoration. Temporary compounds, access tracks and other temporary areas should be removed and the land restored when no longer required.

The applicant should also provide secured funding for full decommissioning. Any consent should contain an enforceable requirement that agricultural land is restored to agricultural use following decommissioning, without future responsibility falling on landowners, local councils or the public.

6. Cumulative impact

Light Valley Solar should not be considered in isolation.

Riccall and the surrounding area are affected by, or being asked to consider, other major developments and planning proposals. These could place additional pressure on the same roads, landscape and communities.

The Council is also concerned about the cumulative loss of agricultural land from solar, energy and other developments. Agricultural land in the wider area supports food and crop production, including crops used by other local developments and businesses. The combined effect on the availability of productive land, associated traffic movements and the rural landscape should therefore be properly considered.

The cumulative effect should be properly assessed, particularly in relation to construction traffic, the A19, King Rudding Lane, public rights of way and agricultural land.

7. Community benefits

Riccall Parish Council is willing to discuss an appropriate community benefit package if the development is approved.

However, community benefits must remain separate from the decision on whether consent should be granted. They should not be treated as compensation for an unsafe access route or used to justify avoidable harm.

Any package should be fairly shared between the communities most affected and give them a meaningful role in deciding how funds are used.

8. Action requested by Riccall Parish Council

Riccall Parish Council asks the Examining Authority to recommend that development consent is not granted in its current form.

Should the application continue, the Council requests that:

1. The proposed use of King Rudding Lane is reconsidered and safer alternative access routes are fully investigated.
2. Full construction traffic details are provided, including peak movements, HGV numbers, vehicle sizes, working hours and how long each route would be used.
3. Detailed and enforceable traffic-management measures are agreed before construction begins.
4. Public rights of way, community facilities and safe access around the recreation ground and children's playground are protected.
5. Appropriate financial guarantees are provided for road repairs, land restoration and eventual decommissioning.

6. The cumulative impact of Light Valley Solar and other major developments is fully considered.
7. The applicant demonstrates what consideration has been given to suitable previously developed or former industrial land and why agricultural land is considered necessary.

Riccall Parish Council wishes to continue participating in the examination and reserves the right to comment further when additional information is provided.

AI assistance declaration

Open AI ChatGPT was used to assist with the structure and wording of this representation, using information supplied by Riccall Parish Council and published Light Valley Solar and Planning Inspectorate documents. The Council has reviewed and approved the final wording and accepts responsibility for the submission.

Signed: 

Position: Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer

For and on behalf of: Riccall Parish Council

Date: 11/08/2026