

Personal Local Impact Statement: Objection to Proposed Solar Development at Tivetshall

Date: November 20, 2025

From: Rob Spamer, [REDACTED]

This statement outlines my strong objection to the proposed solar energy development, including the associated Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), at East Pye, based on the profound and unacceptable impacts this scheme will have on my quality of life, the local environment, and the long-term safety of my community and home.

1. Irreversible Impact on Quality of Life and Landscape Character

The proposed industrial-scale development, occupying 6,500 acres, represents an irreversible industrialisation of our cherished rural environment.

a. Loss of Rural Amenity and Way of Life

As a resident of Tivetshall, my quality of life is deeply connected to the tranquillity of this area, defined by low ambient noise and dark night skies. My ability to enjoy this setting will be destroyed:

- **Dog Walking and Recreation:** I rely on our current quiet rural lanes and footpaths for safe and stress-free dog walking and for observing local wildlife (as part of my hobby as an amateur photographer), such as local deer, hare's & rabbit's, owls, birds of prey, woodpeckers as well as numerous migrating birds that visit the area. The inevitable increase in heavy construction traffic (HGV movements) and future operational traffic will immediately render these lanes unsafe for myself and my dogs and destroy their recreational value for the next 40 years.
- **Loss of Tranquillity:** The visual intrusion of hundreds of acres of black panels and high security fencing, coupled with the constant operational noise (see Section 3), will irrevocably destroy the peaceful character of the area, replacing the beauty of the countryside with an intrusive industrial infrastructure.
- **Deterioration of Mental Wellbeing:** Scientific evidence highlights the significant mental health benefits derived from connecting with nature and accessible open green spaces. The destruction of our immediate, accessible rural landscape and its replacement with a fenced, industrial site will remove a vital source of stress relief and outdoor engagement, resulting in a demonstrable negative impact on the mental wellbeing and health of residents.

b. Destruction of Countryside for Future Generations

The sheer scale of this development effectively sterilises this land for the lifetime of the project. This proposal sacrifices prime agricultural/rural land for temporary energy production, fundamentally changing the landscape character of our village. This destruction of the rural visual amenity cannot be mitigated by planting perimeter hedgerows; the visual impact from elevation and public rights of way will remain devastating and permanent for multiple generations.

2. Environmental and Ecological Degradation

While the development is promoted as environmentally beneficial, the local impact on biodiversity and existing ecology is demonstrably negative.

- **Habitat Fragmentation:** The construction process, followed by the installation of extensive security fencing, will sever existing wildlife corridors. This fragmentation will inhibit the movement of local mammals (such as deer and badgers) and disrupt the feeding and breeding patterns of ground-nesting birds and invertebrates.
- **Altered Microclimates:** The large expanses of panels create microclimates through constant shade and altered rainfall runoff patterns. This can impact soil ecology and disadvantage native plant species that thrive in direct sunlight, thereby reducing the diversity of local flora.
- **Loss of Observation Points:** The high security fencing, combined with intrusive CCTV poles, will prevent residents from enjoying and observing local wildlife, which currently contributes significantly to community wellbeing and environmental awareness.

3. Noise and Light Pollution

The operational phase of the solar farm, particularly the BESS, will introduce new, persistent sources of noise pollution incompatible with a rural setting.

- **Noise Pollution from Inverters and Transformers:** Solar energy conversion requires inverters and transformers which generate a continuous, low-frequency tonal hum (typically 120Hz and its harmonics). In a quiet rural area with low ambient background noise, this hum, particularly when cooling fans operate under peak load, can become highly intrusive and cause significant annoyance to nearby residents, affecting sleep and general wellbeing.
- **Nighttime Noise from BESS:** Unlike the solar panels, the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) must operate and cool 24/7. This means the associated cooling systems and HVAC units will introduce continuous, audible noise, violating the nocturnal tranquillity of the area.
- **Light Pollution:** Although panels themselves do not emit light, the mandatory security lighting and CCTV systems required for a BESS compound will generate light spill, disrupting the dark sky amenity enjoyed by residents and negatively impacting nocturnal wildlife.

4. Unacceptable Safety and Hazard Risks

The inclusion of the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) introduces catastrophic safety risks that are unacceptable in close proximity to residential areas and local infrastructure.

A. Catastrophic Fire, Explosion, and Runaway Risk from Battery Storage

The BESS uses lithium-ion technology, which is highly susceptible to a catastrophic failure mode known as thermal runaway. This process begins with an internal short or fault, creating a violent, self-sustaining chain reaction where internal heat causes rapid, uncontrolled cell-to-cell failure, escalating into an intense, deep-seated fire and potential explosion.

- **Extreme Hazard:** This runaway fire risk is not hypothetical. It leads to the instantaneous release of highly toxic and flammable gases (e.g., hydrogen fluoride, carbon monoxide).
- **Toxic Fumes:** A BESS fire produces a vast plume of corrosive and toxic gas, posing an immediate and severe threat to the health of residents, emergency responders, and livestock, especially considering the prevailing wind directions.
- **Deep-Seated Fire and Reignition Risk:** BESS fires are notoriously difficult to extinguish, requiring enormous volumes of water for cooling and sometimes reigniting days or even weeks later due to residual "stranded energy." The local emergency services may not be adequately equipped or resourced to handle an incident of this scale and complexity.

B. Increased Flood Risk and Groundwater Contamination

The large, impermeable surfaces created by thousands of solar panels alter natural drainage patterns, increasing surface water runoff and the likelihood of flash flooding in surrounding areas.

Furthermore, in the event of a BESS fire, the large volumes of water required for suppression create significant environmental hazards:

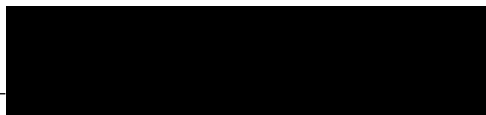
- **Critical Threat to Drinking Water (Norfolk Aquifer):** It is critical to note that **our local water supply in Norfolk is drawn from the underlying groundwater aquifer.** If a BESS fire occurs, the firefighting water becomes highly contaminated with toxic electrolytes, heavy metals, and corrosive residue.
- **Irreversible Groundwater Pollution:** Without robust, proven containment infrastructure (bunding and pollution control devices) that can handle a catastrophe of this magnitude, this toxic runoff will inevitably penetrate the ground and contaminate our sole source of drinking water, resulting in catastrophic and long-term ecological and public health damage.

Conclusion

The proposed solar and BESS development poses an unacceptable level of risk and detriment to this community. The industrial scale of the project will fundamentally and irreversibly destroy the unique rural character, tranquillity, and recreational amenity enjoyed by myself and my family, which constitutes a severe impact on our quality of life and mental wellbeing. Combined with the severe, unmitigable fire and environmental contamination risks posed by the BESS, particularly the threat to the crucial Norfolk groundwater aquifer, this development is entirely inappropriate for its proposed location.

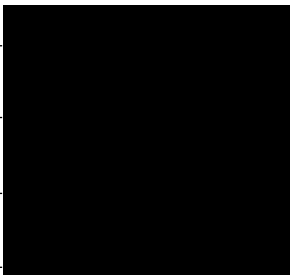
I urge the Committee to reject this proposal in its current form to protect our local heritage, environment, and the safety of all residents.

Signature: _____



Date: 20/11/2025

Name
(Printed): 

Address: 

DEADLINE: to reach East Pye by Wednesday 26th November 2025

Please post to FREEPOST EAST PYE SOLAR or email info@eastpyesolar.co.uk.

Copy to: The Planning Inspectorate (for the attention of the Case Manager, East Pye Solar Project)

Email: eastpyesolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk