

I live on [REDACTED] in Topcroft and I am writing this Written Representation to add to the concerns I raised in my original Relevant Representation.

I want to make it clear that my objection is not just about traffic on [REDACTED]. I have concerns about the East Pye Solar project as a whole, particularly the scale of the development, the effect on the countryside and rural communities, the amount of additional energy infrastructure being put into the area, and whether the benefits of this particular project justify the damage and disruption it will cause.

I understand the need for renewable energy and I am not against renewable energy in principle. What concerns me is the scale of East Pye Solar and the fact that East Anglia is already taking a very large amount of renewable energy and other energy infrastructure. I think it is reasonable to question what additional benefit this particular project is actually going to provide and whether that benefit is enough to justify the impact on the countryside and the people who live here.

The change to the countryside is about much more than the solar panels themselves. There will be fencing, access tracks, substations, security equipment and other infrastructure. Taken together, these things will change the character of an area which is currently rural. There is also the cumulative effect of the number of renewable energy and other infrastructure projects being proposed and developed across East Anglia. I don't think the impact on local communities can properly be understood by looking at East Pye Solar on its own.

I am particularly concerned about the effect of construction traffic on Topcroft [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] itself is not a long road and is relatively straight, but it is part of a wider network of small rural roads leading into and around the village. Some of these roads are single track and have bends and limited passing opportunities. Topcroft is also a farming community, so farm machinery is a regular part of everyday traffic. The roads are also used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders as well as local residents.

I understand that [REDACTED] is not shown as a proposed construction traffic route. I am not suggesting that East Pye Solar has said it intends to send HGVs down the road. My concern is what could happen in practice during a large construction project and whether the wider local road network has been properly considered.

Traffic coming off the B1332/Norwich Road can use the local roads around Topcroft, and this is why I remain concerned about the possibility of construction traffic using roads such as [REDACTED] as an alternative or cut-through route. If there are delays, restrictions or other problems on the planned routes, I don't think it is enough simply to say that a road isn't a designated construction route and therefore will not be used.

This concern has now been specifically considered by the Applicant in EXAM/9.1, the Applicant's Draft Itinerary for the Accompanied Site Inspection. [REDACTED] and its junction with the B1332/Norwich Road are actually named in the document. The reason given for considering the location is to inspect the connection between the roads, the character and condition of the local rural roads and concerns about potential construction traffic.

However, the Applicant has proposed excluding the location because it is not marked as a potential construction route and therefore, in their view, would not be used by construction traffic.

I don't feel that this completely answers the concern I have raised. The fact that a road is not a designated route does not necessarily mean that it could never be used by construction traffic in practice.

I would ask the Examining Authority to look carefully at this assumption. I also think that actually seeing the area would be helpful. The relationship between [REDACTED] and the surrounding single-track roads, the bends, visibility and the limited passing opportunities are much easier to appreciate by being there than by looking at a plan.

I am particularly concerned about adding large construction vehicles to the existing mix of rural traffic. Farm machinery is already a regular part of everyday life here, and there are also walkers, cyclists and horse riders using the roads. I am concerned about how HGVs and other construction vehicles would interact with these existing road users.

I am also concerned about the noise and vibration that could come from construction traffic and other construction activity. Topcroft is a quiet village and that is one of the things that makes it a good place to live. Large numbers of HGVs and other construction vehicles over a long construction period would inevitably have an effect on that.

There is also the possibility of longer-term noise from equipment such as inverters and substations. Even if individual noise levels are described as relatively low, continuous noise can become noticeable in a quiet rural area, particularly in the evening and at night.

For me, these issues all add up. It isn't just the solar panels or one particular road. It is the overall change that a development of this size would bring, together with the construction period, traffic, noise, infrastructure and the cumulative effect on an area which is already accommodating a significant amount of energy development.

I believe the benefits of East Pye Solar need to be properly weighed against the actual harm and disruption it will cause to local communities, farmland and the countryside. I am not convinced that the additional benefit of this project justifies the impact it could have.

My concerns are not about preventing renewable energy generally. They are about the scale and location of this particular development and the effect it could have on people who actually live in the surrounding villages.

I would ask the Examining Authority to take my local knowledge of Topcroft into account, particularly in relation to the local road network and the concerns I have about [REDACTED].

I would also ask that the point raised in EXAM/9.1 about excluding [REDACTED] from the site inspection is considered carefully. I believe seeing the location in person would give the Examining Authority a better understanding of the concerns I have raised.

Overall, I remain concerned that the damage and disruption caused by East Pye Solar would be greater than the benefits that have been demonstrated for this particular project. I therefore continue to object to the proposal.

Thank you for taking my comments into consideration.