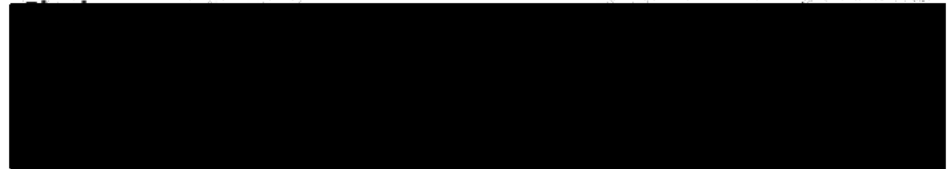




Long Stratton Town Council
Pavilion, Manor Road, Long Stratton, NR15 2XR



Planning Inspectorate

05 October 2026

Dear Planning Inspectorate.

East Pye Solar, solar panels and BESS.

The Town Council would like to object to this development based on the following facts.

Solar panels

1. The proposed plans see solar panels cover 1,212.3 hectares of arable land, currently, nearly half of what we eat in the UK is imported¹. By using the arable land that we have for solar panels negates the opportunity for a more sustainable Britain, something the community is encouraged to do through growing their own produce to combat the cost-of-living crisis. If the UK are unable to grow their own food and resort to importing, we are increasing the carbon footprint of the Countries that are providing produce and all the communities that the imported food has to travel through which undermines the Governments target of achieving net zero.
2. The solar panels will encompass our rural community and will impact the beauty of the area as well as the serenity, for solar panels will make continuous noise from the inverters and sub stations which will be intrusive for residents. It will transform a rural environment into an industrial one changing the nature of our community. Infrastructure of this size should be installed where it will have minimum impact.
3. Why do the solar panels need to be in this location? The regional renewable energy targets have been exceeded and therefore we are already oversubscribed with renewable developments and there is no benefit to the local community. The applicant's application accepts that prioritised schemes already meet the regional solar capacity ranges.
4. Barbastelle bats are a protected species, and several of the sites are home to the bats which outlined in the applicants DCO submission. Solar panels are documented to impact the bats ability to hunt and breed through loss of habitat and fragmentation and by the bats confusing solar panels with water bodies when the panels are horizontal at night.
5. Tas Chalk Stream is home to White Clawed Crayfish, evidenced by Norfolk Rivers Trust in 2022 and shared with the applicant, which is denied by East Pye Solar, however when the applicant carried out their aquatic surveys the streams were dry. As a very minimum, the aquatic surveys should be revisited.
6. Site 4 lies in a highly sensitive chalk-stream and chalk-aquifer catchment, with hydrological connectivity, private water supplies, private sewerage and vulnerable receptors around the scheme. The area around site 4 and Long Stratton is already prone to flooding, with several significant incidents recorded in the past decade. Impacts on private sewerage and hydrological

¹ Food Standards Agency, food.gov.uk

connectivity have not been assessed, and insufficient modelling has been carried out to understand the true impact of this scheme. Construction and operation of Land Parcel 4 would involve ground disturbance, runoff changes, possible sediment mobilisation, cable works, construction traffic, and potential pollutant pathways into the River Tas catchment. The water environment issues therefore go to legal compliance, ecological protection and the adequacy of the Environmental Statement.

7. Sites 1+2 impact Tibenham Airfield which is home to Norfolk Gliding Club. Tibenham Airfield wrote a detailed objection which has not been responded to, nor has action been taken by the applicant to overcome those objections. Tibenham Airfield & Norfolk Gliding Club are an important recreational organisation in the area providing a hobby that acts as a wellbeing strategy for people in the area. The club also creates revenue which will be lost if flight plans are impacted. The airfield is of historical value having been in operation during WWII.
8. Environment Concerns - Barbastelle bats and European Protected Species constraints. Land Parcel 4 is within a Core Sustainance Zone for barbastelle bats, linking it functionally to confirmed and likely maternity colonies in the wider East Pye landscape. CSZ land is essential for foraging, commuting and maintaining breeding success. East Pye Solar has recognised the whole area as of national importance for bats, with barbastelle activity recorded across the entire scheme area.

The proposal would introduce extensive arrays and fencing, lighting, CCTV, inverter infrastructure, prolonged construction disturbance, and fragmentation of functionally linked habitat. Peer-reviewed research demonstrates that ground-mounted solar has a negative impact on bat activity through habitat loss and fragmentation. In these circumstances, the applicant has not demonstrated that disturbance or damage to breeding or resting places can be excluded. Nor has it demonstrated that any European Protected Species licence would be grantable, including the requirement to maintain favourable conservation status. This legal constraint cannot safely be deferred to a post-consent protected species mitigation strategy.

BESS

1. The Town Council has serious concerns regarding the lack of a statutory consultee with the fire service. The BESS units will be placed near to Long Stratton, we currently have approx. 4000 residents and we have been earmarked for a large housing development which will see the Town grow to having 12,000 residents. The safety of lithium batteries presents a very significant risk, the risk assessment accepts that there will be a fire within its lifetime but there is no mitigation in place. A recent lithium battery fire at a nearby recycling centre burnt for over 2 days. In the event of a fire at the battery storage units, Long Stratton will be within the 6km evacuation radius. Where will all the residents be expected to go, who will assist the vulnerable? Who will assist the vulnerable if no one knows they are vulnerable? Who would cover the cost of rehousing thousands of residents when evacuated? In addition to this, house insurance will not cover this type of disaster leaving our community with housing damage without any means to financially rectify the damage. The impact that this would have if a fire was to occur is massive and therefore the lack of engagement with the fire service, the professional in risk assessing the threat of a fire, as a statutory consultee is negligent to the local community of which as a Town Council we represent.
2. Lithium batteries cannot be recycled and introduce a greater risk to the environment, what is the strategy for disposing and/ or recycling lithium batteries.
3. Long Stratton fire station would not be able to manage a fire of this magnitude due to the size of the station and retained fire fighters which means that there will be a delay to getting to the site to contain the fire.
4. Norfolk fire service has stated that the proposed site at Great Moulton of the National Grid substation is a fire hazard to Great Moulton and in turn everyone within a 6km radius.
5. Landscape and noise, BESS units will omit a low-level noise and they are unsightly.



Long Stratton Town Council

Pavilion, Manor Road, Long Stratton, NR15 2XR



Overall

1. Highways. Long Stratton has just benefited from a bypass to take the volume of traffic out of the Town. The proposed site of the BESS unit and the solar panels will see a large amount of HGV's coming through the Town using roads and housing developments that are unsuitable for that purpose. To get to Great Moulton HGV's would have to use single lane country roads which see a lot of pedestrian footfalls including young people getting to the local schools which poses a large health and safety concern.
2. Highways safety, glint and glare, and gateway harm
The application relies on out-dated and inconsistent mapping, specifically in the area surrounding Long Stratton. The Works Plan is on an outdated base map which does not include the Long Stratton Bypass, new road layouts and new ecological landscaping.
Land Parcel 4 straddles the A140, a major strategic route and the northern approach to Long Stratton. The scheme risks severe glint and glare risk to road users, conflict with existing congestion and planned highway changes, and unsafe interactions with public footpaths and local access. This is a public safety, landscape and settlement-planning issue, not a private amenity point. Currently the RAF of whom has a nearby airfield, are currently objecting to existing solar farms and requesting panels are covered over due to the glare blinding the pilots.
In addition to this, Air Ambulance use the local air space from Chequer's Airfield once a week for training and this development will prevent them from doing so making a life saving service struggle to find a suitable replacement.
3. Noise pollution from the infrastructure being put in place and HGV's as well as the disruption for road users to accommodate is unacceptable.
4. Noise pollution from this development both in the infrastructure being put in but also the low level hums that this BESS units and solar panels provide will impact those that struggle with neurodiversity. This is unacceptable.
5. How will the additional and significant Co2 emissions from HGV's and abnormal loaded vehicles travelling through the community be mitigated? Who will be responsible for the damage to the Highways that the volume and load that the HGV's will cause? The volume of HGVs in a small location presents a significant risk to public health.
6. The cable corridor is due to run alongside the new bypass, this has all been landscaped and should not be dug up 6 months after installation.
7. Economy concerns, having 1,212.3 hectares of solar panels in this rural area will impact all residents. It will lower house prices making it more difficult to sell property, businesses will suffer as it will make Long Stratton a less desirable place to live and businesses won't have the footfall needed for sustainability. We have also been earmarked for 1875 new houses which is part of the Governments initiative for ensuring there is housing for all and the target they set to achieve that, however the solar farms will impact the desirability.
8. Conflict with the adopted Long Stratton Neighbourhood Plan
The Long Stratton Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory development plan. The objection material identifies its emphasis on:

protecting the historic character and setting of Long Stratton;
maintaining a clear distinction between the settlement and surrounding countryside;
safeguarding rural approaches, landscape buffers and key views;
managing growth through planned housing, not industrial infrastructure.

Land Parcel 4 directly conflicts with those objectives. It sits on the immediate edge of Long Stratton and performs the role of open countryside buffer. The proposal would urbanise and industrialise that edge, undermining the planned settlement strategy at precisely the point where the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to preserve the relationship between the town and its rural setting. The applicant has not provided a lawful parcel-specific justification for overriding this adopted local policy. The general national need for solar cannot substitute for proper analysis of the development plan conflict.

9. Harm to the Long Stratton Conservation Area and designated heritage assets

Land Parcel 4 lies within the setting of the Long Stratton Conservation Area and is closely associated with a high concentration of designated heritage assets, including Grade I St Michael's Church, Grade II* The Old Rectory and barn, and numerous Grade II listed buildings. Open agricultural land along the historic Roman road, long views into and out of the settlement, and the legibility of historic development patterns are central to the significance of this area. This infrastructure is in addition to the new housing which has been deliberately planned to maintain a separation between town and countryside – East Pye Solar would create continuous development from the new housing in Long Stratton to Tasburgh.

The harm affects the ability to understand the historic relationship between Long Stratton, Stratton St Michael, the A140 Roman road, the churches, farmsteads, listed buildings and surrounding agricultural land. Solar infrastructure on both sides of the A140 would introduce an industrial character into views that presently contribute to heritage significance.

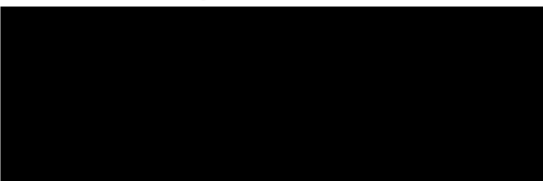
Screening planting cannot remove this harm. Dense planting would itself reduce openness and obscure the historic agricultural setting. Accordingly, the proposal gives rise to high-weight designated heritage harm. Under national heritage policy, great weight must be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. The applicant has not shown clear and convincing justification for this harm.

Conclusion

The energy collated from the solar panels goes to the national grid therefore this project does not benefit the community in any way it only causes distress with negative impact on the residents. Energy prices are not forecast to decrease, it doesn't create any employment opportunities and the proposal doesn't include any social value offering. It is not a green energy initiative for the residents of Long Stratton and the surrounding communities. It is not environmentally acceptable in this location and I am sure there are better sites that could accommodate the size of this application without negatively impacting the surrounding communities. Especially Land Parcel 4 which directly impacts the Long Stratton community.

I would strongly urge the planning inspectorate not to approve this application.

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of the representative of Long Stratton Town Council.

On behalf of Long Stratton Town Council.



Long Stratton Town Council
Pavilion, Manor Road, Long Stratton, NR15 2XR



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Long Stratton Town Council
Long Stratton Town Council Pavilion
Manor Road Playing Field
Manor Road
Long Stratton
NR15 2XR

South Norfolk Council
The Horizon Centre
Peachman Way
Broadland Business Park
Norwich, NR7 0WF

Tuesday 10th March 2026
Planning Reference: 2025/1689

Long Stratton Town Council are writing to the Local Planning Authority, South Norfolk Council, to formally object to the Field application for "Erection of a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and associated infrastructure including access, drainage, landscaping and other incidental works".

We have read and fully support the objections of the following parishes:

Aslacton, Great Moulton, Hempnall, Wacton, Tivetshall, Forncett.

We strongly object on the following grounds:

Frequent HGVs and AILs are planned to travel down Flowerpot Lane in Long Stratton, continuing into Stratton Road Wacton.

These roads are unsuitable for this purpose:

- HGVs will have to mount paths or verges to give way to other HGVs or emergency service vehicles needing to pass, posing a risk to pedestrians and potentially causing highway damage, leading to further safety risks.
- Flowerpot Lane is a *heavily* used road by pedestrians, most notably school children from the local schools and vulnerable residents. The increase in traffic will pose a **significant** safety risk.
- HGVs and AILs turning at the A140-Flowerpot Lane junction will cause chaos at the traffic lights and while turning the sharp corner, posing further safety risks.
- Noise pollution will be worsened for local residents due to the increase in traffic.

BESS developments pose a significant safety risk to those in the surrounding areas due to the high risk of lithium-ion battery fires.

- Long Stratton Fire Station would not be able to cope with a fire of this nature due to the small size of the station and number of retained firefighters.
- This type of fire is incredibly difficult to extinguish and toxic fumes are released, negatively impacting all surrounding residents. The proposed site is too close to residential properties and is completely unsuitable.

Negative impact on existing and future residents:

- This proposal would be highly likely to have a negative impact on the agreed 1800+ homes to be built in Long Stratton. Should this proposal be approved, Long Stratton and surrounding areas would become a significantly less attractive place to live – meaning people are less likely to buy houses in the areas, and existing residents would find it much harder to sell their homes should they wish to move.
- This proposal has already caused distress to residents in the surrounding parishes due to the risks it poses, which would only worsen should this be approved.

There are growing concerns over Britain's food security due to a significant amount of good quality agricultural land being converted into solar and BESS sites.

As other parishes have pointed out, this proposal is **not** a green energy initiative and offers no benefit to local residents whatsoever. On top of this, the proposed solar developments for the local areas have not yet been approved, therefore this BESS proposal is not meeting any "needs" as the infrastructure does not exist yet and may never exist in the first place.

Long Stratton Town Council

East Pye Solar EN0110014

Relevant Representation

Submitted by: *Long Stratton Town Council.*

Objection to East Pye Solar and Specific Objection to Land Parcel 4

We object to East Pye Solar. The applicant's case rests on a general national need for renewable energy, but it has not demonstrated a need for this particular utility scale transmission solar scheme in this particular location. The applicant's own material accepts that prioritised schemes already meet the relevant regional solar capacity ranges, and that general claims about 'optionality' and 'attrition' are relied upon to justify the project despite major local harm. The BESS case only has Gate 1 status, not a secured future connection, meaning it is not 'aligned' with Clean Power 2030 Action Plan either in this region or nationally.

National policy may support solar generation in principle, but it does not require every utility scale transmission solar scheme to be consented regardless of location, legal constraint, heritage harm, ecological risk, agricultural loss and cumulative impact. Where regional solar ranges have already been met by prioritised schemes, the planning balance must give substantially greater weight to whether this particular 500MW NSIP is necessary, proportionate and environmentally acceptable. In our submission, it is not.

This representation objects to the whole East Pye Solar Project and in particular Land Parcel 4.

1. Land Parcel 4 is structurally unsuitable and should not form part of the scheme

Land Parcel 4 is one of the most sensitive parts of East Pye Solar and is subject to multiple overlapping constraints: conflict with the adopted Long Stratton Neighbourhood Plan, harm to the setting of the Long Stratton Conservation Area and designated heritage assets, location within a barbastelle bat Core Sustainance Zone, cumulative effects with major Long Stratton growth, loss of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land, and highways safety and glint/glare risks on the A140.

These are not matters capable of being resolved by landscaping, micro-siting or later management plans. They arise from the location itself. Land Parcel 4 is on the immediate settlement edge, at the northern gateway to Long Stratton, and straddles the A140. It functions as the transition between the settlement and the countryside. Industrial-scale solar development in this location would replace open agricultural land with arrays, security fencing, access tracks, lighting, CCTV, cabling, conversion units, a construction compound, an HGV holding compound and a 132kV substation.

2. Conflict with the adopted Long Stratton Neighbourhood Plan

The Long Stratton Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory development plan. The objection material identifies its emphasis on:

- protecting the historic character and setting of Long Stratton;
- maintaining a clear distinction between the settlement and surrounding countryside;
- safeguarding rural approaches, landscape buffers and key views;
- managing growth through planned housing, not industrial infrastructure.

Land Parcel 4 directly conflicts with those objectives. It sits on the immediate edge of Long Stratton and performs the role of open countryside buffer. The proposal would urbanise and industrialise that edge, undermining the planned settlement strategy at precisely the point where the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to preserve the relationship between the town and its rural setting.

The applicant has not provided a lawful parcel-specific justification for overriding this adopted local policy. The general national need for solar cannot substitute for proper analysis of the development plan conflict.

3. Harm to the Long Stratton Conservation Area and designated heritage assets

Land Parcel 4 lies within the setting of the Long Stratton Conservation Area and is closely associated with a high concentration of designated heritage assets, including Grade I St Michael's Church, Grade II* The Old Rectory and barn, and numerous Grade II listed buildings. Open agricultural land along the historic Roman road, long views into and out of the settlement, and the legibility of historic development patterns are central to the significance of this area. This infrastructure is in addition to the new housing which has been deliberately planned to maintain a separation between town and countryside – East Pye Solar would create continuous development from the new housing in Long Stratton to Tasburgh.

The harm affects the ability to understand the historic relationship between Long Stratton, Stratton St Michael, the A140 Roman road, the churches, farmsteads, listed buildings and surrounding agricultural land. Solar infrastructure on both sides of the A140 would introduce an industrial character into views that presently contribute to heritage significance.

Screening planting cannot remove this harm. Dense planting would itself reduce openness and obscure the historic agricultural setting. Accordingly, the proposal gives rise to high-weight designated heritage harm. Under national heritage policy, great weight must be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. The applicant has not shown clear and convincing justification for this harm.

4. Barbastelle bats and European Protected Species constraints

Land Parcel 4 is within a Core Sustainance Zone for barbastelle bats, linking it functionally to confirmed and likely maternity colonies in the wider East Pye landscape. CSZ land is essential for foraging, commuting and maintaining breeding success. East Pye Solar has recognised the whole area as of national importance for bats, with barbastelle activity recorded across the entire scheme area,

The proposal would introduce extensive arrays and fencing, lighting, CCTV, inverter infrastructure, prolonged construction disturbance, and fragmentation of functionally linked habitat. Peer-reviewed research demonstrates that ground-mounted solar has a negative impact on bat activity through habitat loss and fragmentation. In these circumstances, the applicant has not demonstrated that disturbance or damage to breeding or resting places can be excluded. Nor has it demonstrated that any European Protected Species licence would be grantable, including the requirement to maintain favourable conservation status. This legal constraint cannot safely be deferred to a post-consent protected species mitigation strategy.

5. Best and Most Versatile agricultural land

Land Parcel 4 comprises approximately 101 hectares of agricultural land, including Grade 2 Best and Most Versatile land, used for productive crops including cereals, mustard, oilseed rape and miscanthus. The objection material records that Site 4 is made up of 12 agricultural fields listed as Grade 2 BMV. National policy expects poorer quality land to be preferred where significant development of agricultural land is necessary. The applicant has not demonstrated why this high-quality land at the edge of Long Stratton is required when the need case for this project in this region is already weak. The long operational life, construction traffic, piling, cabling, access tracks, compounds and altered drainage create a material risk of lasting soil degradation. The assertion of reversibility should be given little weight unless supported by enforceable restoration evidence and financial security.

6. Water environment, River Tas catchment and white-clawed crayfish

Site 4 lies in a highly sensitive chalk-stream and chalk-aquifer catchment, with hydrological connectivity, private water supplies, private sewerage and vulnerable receptors around the scheme. The area around site 4 and Long Stratton is already prone to flooding, with several significant incidents recorded in the past decade. Impacts on private sewerage and hydrological connectivity have not been assessed, and insufficient modelling has been carried out to understand the true impact of this scheme.

Norfolk Rivers Trust has provided evidence from 2022 (shared with East Pye Solar pre-application), of a breeding white-clawed crayfish colony within 2km of Site 4A. However, East Pye Solar claims there are no records post 2016; their aquatic surveys were carried out when streams and ditches were dry.

Construction and operation of Land Parcel 4 would involve ground disturbance, runoff changes, possible sediment mobilisation, cable works, construction traffic, and potential pollutant pathways into the River Tas catchment. The water environment issues therefore go to legal compliance, ecological protection and the adequacy of the Environmental Statement.

7. Highways safety, glint and glare, and gateway harm

The application relies on out-dated and inconsistent mapping, specifically in the area surrounding Long Stratton. The Works Plan is on an outdated base map which does not include the Long Stratton Bypass, new road layouts and new ecological landscaping.

Land Parcel 4 straddles the A140, a major strategic route and the northern approach to Long Stratton. The scheme risks severe glint and glare risk to road users, conflict with existing congestion and planned highway changes, and unsafe interactions with public footpaths and local access. This is a public safety, landscape and settlement-planning issue, not a private amenity point.

8. Cumulative and in-combination effects with Long Stratton growth

Land Parcel 4 must be assessed in combination with major planned growth at Long Stratton, including the new bypass, extensive housing development, associated infrastructure, altered traffic flows, lighting, drainage changes and cumulative pressure on the settlement edge. The ES fails properly to assess the in-combination effects of solar infrastructure, large-scale housing growth, transport infrastructure and other energy schemes in this location. This omission materially understates the effect on settlement setting, heritage assets, landscape character, residential amenity and highway safety. Land Parcel 4 is a tipping-point location. Further industrialisation here would undermine the planned form and identity of Long Stratton.

Conclusion

We object to the East Pye Solar Project as a whole. The applicant has not demonstrated that this scheme is necessary in this location, particularly where its own material accepts that prioritised schemes already meet the relevant regional solar capacity ranges. Generalised claims of national need, optionality and attrition do not justify a highly damaging scheme in a legally and environmentally constrained landscape.

Land Parcel 4 is particularly unacceptable. It conflicts with the adopted Long Stratton Neighbourhood Plan, harms the setting of the Conservation Area and designated heritage assets, affects a nationally important bat landscape, risks harm to a sensitive chalk-stream catchment, removes Grade 2 BMV agricultural land, creates highways and glint/glare risks, and has not been properly assessed cumulatively with Long Stratton's planned growth.

We respectfully request that the Examining Authority gives substantial weight to these objections, rejects the applicant's site-specific need case, and recommends refusal of the scheme. If the scheme is not refused in full, Land Parcel 4 should be removed from the Order Limits.

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