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Whitestone Solar Farm — EN0110020
Request for Examining Authority Site Inspections and Objection to Whitestone 1
Submitted by: David Mawhood
Resident of: Ravenfield, South Yorkshire
Procedural Deadline A — 27 October 2026
Dear Examining Authority,
Why I am concerned about Whitestone 1
1. I am a resident of Ravenfield and wish to express my strong objection to Whitestone 1. I respectfully request that the Examining Authority visits the countryside, public rights of way and roads around Ravenfield and Conisbrough Parks before making its recommendations.
2. I regularly enjoy walking my dogs in the countryside around Ravenfield and have also spent time walking with friends around Firsby and Conisbrough Parks.
3. These are places I know from personal experience. The countryside is part of what makes living in Ravenfield enjoyable, providing opportunities to exercise, spend time outdoors and escape the pressures of everyday life.
4. I am concerned that the scale of Whitestone 1 could fundamentally change the character of this countryside, replacing open agricultural fields and long-established views with extensive solar infrastructure, fencing, tracks and associated development.
5. I recognise the importance of renewable energy and the need to reduce carbon emissions. However, I do not believe that this removes the need to examine carefully whether such a large development is appropriate in this particular location.
6. My concerns extend beyond the visual effects. They include the loss of productive agricultural land, potential effects on wildlife, construction traffic, public rights of way and the combined effects of development on the wider countryside.
Ravenfield Footpath 10 — a recent walk through the countryside
7. On Sunday 25 October 2026, I walked my dogs with my wife, Sam, along Ravenfield Footpath 10.
8. This is the type of countryside we regularly enjoy. Being able to walk through open fields, appreciate the views and spend time outdoors is an important part of our lives.
9. I am particularly concerned about the potential effects of Whitestone 1 on the landscape visible from this route, including views across Conisbrough Parks towards Conisbrough Castle.
10. I ask the Examining Authority to walk representative sections of Ravenfield Footpath 10 and experience the changing views and topography for itself.
11. I do not believe that one photograph from a selected viewpoint necessarily represents what people experience when walking along an entire route.
12. As you move through the countryside, different views open up and the relationship between the paths, fields and surrounding landscape changes.
13. I am concerned that the introduction of solar panels, security fencing and associated infrastructure could significantly alter the experience of walking this route.
14. Even if a footpath remains legally open, its recreational value could be diminished if the surrounding countryside becomes dominated by development.
Walking around Firsby and Conisbrough Parks
15. I have also walked my dogs with friends around Firsby and Conisbrough Parks, including the countryside that would be affected by Whitestone 1.
16. These walks have given me an appreciation of the openness, peaceful surroundings and connected network of footpaths and bridleways in this area.
17. The value of these routes is not simply that they provide a way from one place to another. They allow people to enjoy the countryside, appreciate nature and spend time away from traffic and built-up areas.
18. I am concerned that the development could change the character of these walks through the introduction of extensive fencing, construction activity and electrical infrastructure.
19. I ask the Examining Authority to consider the experience of people using the connected network of public rights of way, rather than examining individual paths in isolation.
20. I would particularly welcome an inspection of Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 13 and the routes connecting Firsby with Ravenfield, to appreciate the open landscape and its recreational value.
Productive agricultural land and food security
21. One of my principal concerns is the amount of agricultural land proposed for Whitestone 1.
22. The surrounding countryside is not unused or derelict land. It forms part of an actively farmed agricultural landscape, with fields used for growing crops, including cereals.
23. I am concerned about the potential long-term removal of productive land from conventional food production.
24. At a time when food security and the resilience of Britain's domestic food supply are increasingly important, I believe the loss of agricultural production should be carefully justified.
25. I recognise that solar developments may allow some agricultural activities to continue, such as grazing. However, that is not necessarily equivalent to maintaining the existing production of arable crops.
26. I ask the Examining Authority to establish the quality and agricultural classification of the land proposed for Whitestone 1, including the amount of best and most versatile agricultural land, where applicable.
27. I would also like the Applicant to demonstrate what agricultural use would realistically continue during the operational life of the development and how that compares with the existing farming baseline.
28. I am concerned that the effects on agriculture should not be considered solely in terms of whether the land could theoretically be restored at the end of the development's operational life.
29. The loss or reduction of agricultural production over several decades is itself a consequence that deserves proper consideration.
30. I ask whether reasonable alternatives have been assessed that could reduce the amount of productive agricultural land required for Whitestone 1.
Wildlife and the wider countryside

31. I am also concerned about the effects of Whitestone 1 on wildlife and biodiversity.
32. Agricultural fields, hedgerows, field margins and surrounding habitats all form part of the wider countryside used by birds and other wildlife.
33. I do not believe that actively farmed land should automatically be regarded as having little ecological value simply because it is used for agriculture.
34. I am concerned that construction activity, fencing, tracks and changes in land management could affect existing habitats, wildlife movement and feeding areas.
35. I ask the Examining Authority to consider whether the Applicant's ecological surveys adequately reflect the existing conditions across the different seasons and whether the proposed mitigation is supported by sufficient evidence.
36. I would also like the Applicant to explain how wildlife connectivity would be maintained across Whitestone 1 and whether proposed biodiversity improvements would adequately address any adverse effects.
37. I recognise that solar developments can include habitat creation and ecological enhancement. However, I believe those benefits need to be demonstrated for this particular site and balanced against the effects on the existing countryside.
Common Lane — construction traffic and highway safety
38. I am concerned about the proposed construction access arrangements and the potential increase in heavy vehicle movements around Ravenfield.
39. Common Lane is an important part of the local road network, and I ask the Examining Authority to inspect the road and relevant junctions to understand the existing conditions.
40. Rural roads are used by residents, pedestrians, cyclists and other road users, and I am concerned about how additional construction traffic could affect their safety.
41. My concern is not simply the number of HGVs predicted to use the road, but the practical consequences of large vehicles meeting existing traffic, negotiating junctions and operating near vulnerable road users.
42. I ask the Examining Authority to establish whether the Applicant has adequately assessed vehicle turning movements, visibility, road widths, traffic conditions and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.
43. I also ask whether the proposed construction access arrangements have been properly compared with reasonable alternatives.
44. I believe the Applicant should demonstrate that the proposed arrangements can operate safely in practice, rather than relying solely on traffic management measures to be finalised after consent.
Ravenfield Primary Academy and local road conditions
45. I am also concerned about road conditions around Ravenfield Primary Academy, particularly the B6093 Moor Lane South and Main Street area.
46. I ask the Examining Authority to consider visiting during school arrival or collection times, when traffic and pedestrian activity may be substantially different from quieter periods.
47. I would like the Applicant to establish whether the proposed construction routes could affect this area directly or indirectly and whether school-time traffic conditions have been adequately assessed.
48. I am particularly concerned that the safety of children and other vulnerable road users should be considered in any assessment of construction traffic and potential changes to local traffic patterns.
Green Belt, historic landscape and cumulative development
49. I am concerned about the effects of Whitestone 1 on the openness and rural character of the Green Belt around Conisbrough Parks and Ravenfield.
50. This is a landscape with historic connections, including the former medieval deer park, established farms, public rights of way and views towards Conisbrough Castle.
51. I believe the combination of open countryside, agricultural activity, historic features and recreational routes contributes to the distinctive character of the area.
52. I am concerned that the introduction of extensive solar panels, fencing, electrical infrastructure and construction tracks could substantially alter this character for decades.
53. I am also concerned about the cumulative effects of renewable energy developments and associated infrastructure in the wider area.
54. Where several developments affect the same landscape or road network, their combined effects may be greater than the impacts of each proposal considered separately.
55. I ask the Examining Authority to establish whether the Applicant has adequately assessed the relevant existing and reasonably foreseeable developments, including cumulative landscape, traffic, agricultural and ecological effects.
56. I believe the long-term consequences for the countryside and local communities need to be fully understood before a decision is made.
Locations I ask the Examining Authority to inspect
57. I respectfully request that the Examining Authority considers the following locations, particularly to understand the effects of Whitestone 1 on the countryside, agricultural landscape, public rights of way and local road network.
58. My requested inspection locations are:
Ravenfield Footpath 10 — Braithwell Road towards Garden Lane (highest landscape priority). I walked my dogs on this route with my wife on 25 October 2026. I ask the Inspectors to walk representative sections and appreciate the changing views across Conisbrough Parks towards Conisbrough Castle.
Ravenfield Footpath 6 — near Ravenfield Primary Academy and Hollings Lane woodland. To appreciate the existing woodland, countryside and recreational network used by local residents.
Ravenfield Bridleway 4 — St James' View towards Garden Lane. To understand the existing rural character, open views and importance of the connected public rights of way network.
Ravenfield Footpath 2 — St James' Church towards Ravenfield Ponds and Arbour Lane. To appreciate the relationship between the historic church, surrounding countryside and wider landscape.
Common Lane, Ravenfield — proposed construction access and traffic arrangements. To inspect the existing road conditions, junctions, HGV access arrangements and potential conflicts with other road users.
B6093 Moor Lane South / Main Street — Ravenfield Primary Academy. To observe road conditions, ideally during school arrival or collection times, and consider any direct or indirect effects of construction traffic.

The Grazing Harts, Micklebring — surrounding countryside and landscape views. To appreciate the existing rural landscape and assess the potential visibility and landscape effects of Whitestone 1 from this location.
Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 13 — towards Hooton Woods and land parcel 29. To appreciate the topography, open countryside, agricultural landscape and recreational experience of people walking through the area.
Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 2 — Firsby Lane towards Hilltop Farm and Arbour Lane. To understand the connections between the public rights of way network, agricultural fields and proposed development.
Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 4 — Park Lane. To consider the existing rural character and potential effects of proposed infrastructure and construction arrangements.
Conisbrough Parks Footpath 3 — Arbour Lane towards Park Lane. To appreciate the open countryside, agricultural landscape and recreational value of the connected footpath network.
59. I appreciate that the Examining Authority may not be able to visit every location. My priorities are Ravenfield Footpath 10, Common Lane, Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 13, the surrounding agricultural landscape, Ravenfield Footpath 6 and The Grazing Harts at Micklebring.
60. I would particularly welcome the Inspectors walking part of Ravenfield Footpath 10, as I have used this route very recently and believe it would help them understand the countryside from the perspective of local residents.
My request regarding Whitestone 1
61. I recognise the importance of renewable energy and the need to reduce carbon emissions.
62. However, I believe the benefits of renewable energy must be properly balanced against the effects of a development of this scale on productive agricultural land, wildlife, Green Belt openness, the historic landscape and local communities.
63. My concerns are not based on opposition to renewable energy in principle. They relate to whether Whitestone 1 is appropriate in this particular location.
64. I ask the Examining Authority to examine whether the Applicant has adequately assessed the existing agricultural baseline, the potential loss of food production, wildlife impacts, construction traffic, landscape effects and the cumulative consequences of development.
65. I also ask whether reasonable alternatives have been considered that could avoid or reduce the harm to the most sensitive parts of Conisbrough Parks.
66. I strongly object to Whitestone 1 and respectfully request that the Examining Authority considers recommending refusal of consent for Whitestone 1, or its removal from the Development Consent Order proposal, if the evidence does not justify its inclusion.
67. I value the countryside around Ravenfield because it is somewhere my wife and I can walk our dogs, spend time with friends and enjoy the open landscape.
68. I hope the Examining Authority will visit these locations, experience the countryside and road conditions for itself, and carefully consider whether the long-term consequences of Whitestone 1 are justified.
Thank you for considering my request.
David Mawhood
Ravenfield, South Yorkshire
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