Submission ID: SCB4D7017

Whitestone Solar Farm — EN0110020
Procedural Deadline A — Request for Accompanied Site Inspections and Examination of Whitestone 1
Submitted by: Angela Eastwood, [redacted]
Interested Party reference number [redacted]
Submission date: 26 October 2026
Subject: Residential, landscape, heritage, equestrian, public rights of way and access impacts associated with Whitestone 1 (W1)

1. Purpose of this submission

1.1 I request that the Examining Authority (ExA) undertakes accompanied site inspections of [redacted] Firsby, and the surrounding Whitestone 1 (W1) area, including the public rights of way, historic landscape and proposed construction access routes identified below.

1.2 I live at [redacted] with my husband. I am also an experienced horse rider.

1.3 My principal concern is that the Applicant's assessment does not adequately represent the actual experience of living in Firsby, the surrounding landscape, the historic setting or the practical use of the bridleway network.

1.4 I am particularly concerned about the reliance placed upon selected representative viewpoints, the apparent deficiencies in baseline information, the accuracy of certain photographic records and public rights of way descriptions, and the implications of construction traffic and access controls.

2. [redacted] and the seven residential properties at Firsby

2.1 Firsby is a small rural hamlet comprising, to my knowledge, seven residential properties. Each property has a different orientation, outlook, elevation and relationship with the surrounding landscape.

2.2 The proposed W1 development would affect the landscape around the hamlet. In my view, the resulting experience cannot be adequately understood by considering one selected photographic viewpoint in isolation.

2.3 I have read that the Applicant did not consider visits to individual residential properties necessary. I ask the ExA to establish where that decision is recorded and what evidence supported it, particularly given the small number of properties and their differing outlooks.

2.4 I do not suggest that every residential property must automatically be visited for an Environmental Impact Assessment to be adequate. However, where a small group of properties faces materially different effects, the Applicant should be able to demonstrate how those differences have been identified and assessed.

2.5 [redacted] has its own particular outlook towards the proposed W1 development. The effects upon our home cannot be assumed to be identical to those experienced at neighbouring properties.

2.6 I therefore request that the ExA considers the cumulative experience of the hamlet, including views from individual homes, their gardens, the surrounding lanes and the public rights of way used by residents.

3. Applicant Viewpoint 11 — inadequate representation of [redacted]

3.1 The Applicant's revised Environmental Statement Appendix 7.4, Representative Viewpoint Assessment (AS-042), paragraph 7.4.180, identifies Viewpoint 11 as Firsby Hall Farm / Conisbrough Parks Footpath No. 3 and states that it is representative of residential views from properties at Firsby.

3.2 I expressly dispute the adequacy of Viewpoint 11 as a representation of the outlook from [redacted].

3.3 Each of the seven residential properties at Firsby has a different outlook. A photograph taken from a selected public location cannot automatically represent the views experienced from our principal windows, garden or other areas used as part of everyday residential life.

3.4 I also question whether the camera location, orientation, intervening vegetation and surrounding topography adequately represent the changing views experienced along the nearby bridleway network.

3.5 I have identified an apparent discrepancy between the public right of way described in the Applicant's Viewpoint 11 material and the location of Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 13 shown on the Rotherham definitive map. This requires verification against the Applicant's precise viewpoint coordinates and authoritative route geometry.

3.6 I also understand that an earlier proposed Viewpoint 12 associated with Bridleway 13 was omitted from the final representative viewpoint selection. I request the Applicant's original viewpoint-selection records and the reasons for its omission.

3.7 I ask the ExA not to assume that the selected Viewpoint 11 adequately represents [redacted] or all Firsby properties without a clear explanation supported by the underlying evidence.

4. Repeated requests for Whitestone to visit [redacted]

4.1 Since November 2024, my husband and I have repeatedly requested that Whitestone representatives, including [redacted] and [redacted], visit our property to understand its particular circumstances.

4.2 On 15 October 2025, at the Whitestone consultation event at Whiston, we personally asked [redacted] whether he would visit [redacted].

4.3 On 29 October 2025, Whitestone emailed offering a visit by [redacted] just two days later, on Friday 31 October 2025. Importantly, the Applicant expressly acknowledged our previous request for a property-specific visit because our property had a different aspect.

4.4 The proposed visit was offered at only two days' notice. Due to our work commitments, including my shift-working arrangements, we were unable to accommodate that date. I promptly requested alternative dates, and Whitestone acknowledged my shift-working circumstances and indicated that it would seek alternative arrangements. Given that we had been requesting a visit for some considerable time, I do not consider that our inability to accommodate an appointment offered at such short notice should be treated as a lack of willingness to engage.

4.5 On 12 January 2026, we supplied further availability. On 23 January 2026, Whitestone informed us that it was not planning further site visits at that time.

4.6 On 27 January 2026, I asked Whitestone to clarify why the proposed visit had not taken place and how our property-specific concerns would be addressed. Its response of 11 February 2026 stated that consultation feedback had been considered in updating the masterplans but did not provide a substantive explanation of the assessment of our property's distinctive circumstances.

4.7 I wish to make clear that the questions and concerns raised in this submission are not new. My husband and I

previously raised many of these matters in our responses to both the non-statutory and statutory consultations. These responses took considerable time and effort to research and prepare. Despite our continued engagement, we have not received satisfactory answers to a number of our property-specific concerns. I therefore ask the Examining Authority to establish where and how these matters have been addressed within the Applicant's assessment and consultation documentation.

4.8 I do not claim that the failure to arrange a mutually convenient appointment is, by itself, a breach of statutory consultation requirements. My concern is that the Applicant itself recognised a different residential aspect warranting a visit, yet no visit took place and I have not been shown the evidence demonstrating how that difference was subsequently assessed.

4.9 I therefore ask the ExA to inspect [redacted] and require Whitestone to identify the specific assessment addressing our property, rather than relying solely on generalised statements about consultation feedback.

5. Concerns regarding baseline evidence and viewpoint reliability

5.1 During my examination of the application documents, I have identified several apparent deficiencies and discrepancies concerning baseline information, viewpoint selection and the presentation of the existing environment.

5.2 These include disputed dates attributed to certain viewpoint photographs, apparent inconsistencies in the identification of public rights of way, concerns about the representativeness of selected camera positions and the omission or inadequate consideration of views towards Conisbrough Castle.

5.3 My concerns extend beyond the visual assessment. I have also questioned elements of the traffic and noise baseline information, including whether the recorded conditions adequately represent the environment experienced by residents and recreational users.

5.4 I recognise that some discrepancies require further verification. I do not allege that the Applicant has deliberately falsified evidence. However, the number and nature of the matters identified have significantly undermined my confidence in the reliability of its assessments.

5.5 I am concerned that an application containing these apparent deficiencies was considered sufficiently complete to be accepted for examination. I recognise that acceptance for examination does not establish that the assessments are accurate, nor does it predetermine whether development consent should be granted.

5.6 The central question is whether the ExA can be satisfied that the evidence provides a sufficiently reliable basis for assessing the environmental, heritage, landscape, residential and equestrian effects of W1.

5.7 I ask the ExA to require the Applicant to reconcile material discrepancies, provide original photographic dates and viewpoint coordinates where disputed, and explain whether corrections would alter the assessment conclusions.

6. Specific Applicant viewpoints requiring examination

6.1 — Applicant Viewpoint 7: Conisbrough Grange Farm / Park Lane. I question the representativeness of the selected camera position, including the influence of foreground vegetation and whether the photograph adequately conveys the openness and scale of the surrounding landscape. I request inspection from the selected position and nearby publicly accessible locations.

6.2 — Applicant Viewpoint 9: Garden Lane / Ravenfield Footpath 10. I question whether the selected position represents the visual experience along the wider Footpath 10 corridor, including its relationship with the historic landscape and views towards Conisbrough Castle. The exact route and viewpoint position should be checked against Rotherham's definitive map.

6.3 — Applicant Viewpoint 11: Firsby Hall Farm. This is a principal concern because the Applicant uses it to represent Firsby residential outlooks. I request comparison with [redacted], other residential positions where access is permitted, and the nearby Bridleway 13 corridor.

6.4 — Former Applicant Viewpoint 12: Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 13. I request examination of the position reportedly removed from the viewpoint selection and an explanation of the selection or exclusion criteria, particularly where vegetation screening has been relied upon.

6.5 — Applicant Viewpoint 15B: Parks Farm Cottages. I request verification of the original photographic date, camera position and the assessment's representativeness. My concerns about the date are not presented as a proven error pending examination of the original photographic records.

6.6 — Applicant Viewpoint 16: Conisbrough Lodge / Conisbrough Parks Footpath 4. I request consideration of the historic landscape and views towards Conisbrough Castle, including whether the visual assessment adequately informs the separate assessment of heritage setting. Footpath 4 should not be confused with the separate Bridleway 4.

6.7 These locations should not be assessed only as isolated photographs. The ExA should also consider the changing visual experience along continuous walking and riding routes, including seasonal changes in vegetation.

7. Heritage and the historic landscape

7.1 W1 lies within a landscape whose historic character and relationship with Conisbrough Castle, Conisbrough Parks, archaeological remains and other heritage assets require careful consideration.

7.2 My concern is that selected viewpoints and the treatment of vegetation may underrepresent the wider landscape experience and the contribution of open countryside to the appreciation of heritage assets.

7.3 I request inspections from Ravenfield Footpaths 2, 6 and 10, Moor Lane North and other appropriate public locations where the relationship between the proposed development, historic landscape and Conisbrough Castle can be appreciated.

7.4 I ask the ExA to consider whether the combined landscape and heritage effects of W1 have been adequately assessed, including whether removal of W1 would avoid harm that screening or planting cannot satisfactorily address.

8. Public rights of way and equestrian safety

8.1 The public rights of way around Firsby and Conisbrough Parks form an interconnected recreational network used by walkers, cyclists, runners and horse riders.

8.2 The effects of W1 should be considered across complete journeys, rather than only at individual crossing points or selected representative viewpoints.

8.3 I request particular attention to Conisbrough Parks Bridleways 2, 4, 13 and 14, together with the connecting footpaths and other bridleways affected by the proposed development.

8.4 The proposed construction arrangements raise concerns about interactions between horses and construction traffic, including heavy goods vehicles, temporary barriers, traffic control, noise, sudden movements and the availability of safe

space for horses and riders.
8.5 I request that the ExA examines the proposed crossing of Bridleway 2 at Firsby Lane, the relationship between Bridleway 4, Park Lane and the proposed W1 infrastructure, and the arrangements affecting Bridleway 14.
8.6 The position and potential effects of the proposed W1 substations should also be examined in relation to nearby equestrian routes, including operational noise, sudden activity, maintenance access and the ability of horses to react safely.
8.7 I ask the Applicant to identify the equestrian-specific risk assessments supporting its proposed construction and operational arrangements and to explain how those assessments reflect the actual use of these routes.
9. Firsby Lane — sole lawful vehicular access and private and family life
9.1 To the best of my knowledge, Firsby Lane provides the only lawful vehicular access to [redacted] and the other residential properties at Firsby.
9.2 I am particularly concerned about the potential introduction of controlled access arrangements on Firsby Lane during construction.
9.3 For residents without an alternative lawful vehicular route, restrictions or delays affecting access to their homes are not merely matters of construction convenience.
9.4 Such arrangements could affect our ability to travel to work, receive visitors and deliveries, attend appointments, maintain our property, undertake equestrian activities and obtain emergency assistance.
9.5 I consider the potential interference with access to our home to be a serious matter affecting our private and family life.
9.6 I specifically ask the ExA to record this concern and consider the principles of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, concerning respect for private and family life and the home, insofar as they are engaged by the proposed arrangements.
9.7 I do not suggest that temporary traffic control automatically constitutes an Article 8 breach. My concern is whether the practical effects on residents have been properly assessed, justified and safeguarded.
9.8 I request clarification of the precise legal and operational basis for any controlled access, including the duration of restrictions, hours of operation, resident access, emergency access, arrangements for horses and horseboxes, and enforceable protections.
9.9 I request that the ExA visits Firsby Lane to understand the absence of an equivalent alternative vehicular route and the relationship between the lane, residential properties, bridleway crossings and proposed construction activity.
10. A630 and construction access
10.1 I request an inspection of the proposed principal construction access from the A630 and its connection with Common Lane.
10.2 From local experience, I have serious concerns about existing road safety conditions, the suitability of the proposed access and the effects of additional construction traffic.
10.3 I ask that the assessment of recorded road traffic collisions is considered alongside local evidence of damaged street furniture and other physical indications of road safety problems, without assuming that such damage necessarily represents a recorded collision.
10.4 The ExA should consider whether the traffic baseline and proposed construction arrangements adequately represent the conditions experienced by local road users, residents, pedestrians and horse riders.
11. Requested accompanied site inspection locations
I respectfully request that the ExA considers the following locations, subject to safe access and any necessary permissions.

Priority	Location	Principal reason
1	VP01 — [redacted], Firsby	Property-specific residential outlook, equestrian use and W1 effects
2	VP02 — Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 13	Changing views, Firsby outlook and former Applicant VP12
3	VP03 — Conisbrough Parks Footpaths 2 and 3	Residential and recreational landscape experience
4	VP04 — Ravenfield Footpath 2	St James' Church and historic landscape
5	VP05 — Ravenfield Footpath 10	Applicant VP9, landscape and Castle views
6	VP06 — Ravenfield Footpath 6	Castle and historic landscape
7	VP07 — Moor Lane North	Wider historic landscape
8	VP08 — Thornberry Animal Sanctuary / Braithwell Road	Landscape and animal/equestrian context
9	VP09 — Grazing Harts, Micklebring	Landscape views
10	VP10 — Beacon Lane, Clifton	Elevated panoramic landscape
11	VP11 — Kilnhurst	Long-distance landscape views
12	VP12 — Conisbrough Grange Farm / Park Lane	Applicant VP7 and viewpoint representativeness
13	VP13 — Conisbrough Lodge / Conisbrough Parks Footpath 4	Applicant VP16 and heritage setting
14	VP14 — Parks Farm Cottages	Applicant VP15B and photographic evidence
15	VP15 — Braithwell bridleway 4 connections	Recreational route continuity
16	VP16 — Bridleway 2 / Firsby Lane	Construction crossing and equestrian safety
17	VP17 — Bridleway 4 / Park Lane	Crossing, substations and equestrian safety
18	VP18 — Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 14	Proposed construction access and route effects
19	VP19 — A630 Sheffield road/ Common Lane	Principal construction access and road safety
20	VP20 — Firsby Lane	Sole lawful residential vehicular access, subject to confirmation

11.1 I particularly request an accompanied inspection at [redacted]. Access to the property can be arranged by prior agreement.
11.2 Where an inspection of every location is impracticable, I request that the ExA prioritises [redacted], Bridleway 13, the Firsby Lane and Park Lane crossing locations, Ravenfield Footpath 10 and the A630/Common Lane access.
11.3 The other locations remain relevant to the wider examination of W1, and I ask that they are not disregarded merely because they may not all be visited during one inspection.
12. Questions for the Applicant
12.1 Where does the Environmental Statement specifically assess the residential outlook from [redacted]?
12.2 What evidence demonstrates that Applicant Viewpoint 11 is representative of [redacted] and the other residential properties at Firsby, given their differing orientations and outlooks?

12.3 Did the Applicant decide that visits to individual residential properties were unnecessary? If so, where is that decision recorded, who made it and what assessment evidence supported it?
12.4 Why did Whitestone offer a visit to [redacted] on 29 October 2025, expressly acknowledging its different aspect, and how were the matters that prompted that offer subsequently assessed when the visit did not take place?
12.5 What was the reason for omitting former Viewpoint 12 associated with Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 13 given that the bridleway extends beyond the photo taken and at the top has panoramic views across Conisbrough parks to the Beacons at Clifton (all the proposed development area)
12.6 Can the Applicant provide original viewpoint coordinates, photographic dates and relevant metadata for the disputed viewpoints?
12.7 Has the location and classification of Applicant Viewpoint 11 been checked against Rotherham's authoritative definitive public rights of way records?
12.8 How has the Applicant assessed changing views along complete public rights of way journeys rather than only at selected camera positions?
12.9 How have views towards Conisbrough Castle and the contribution of the wider historic landscape been considered in the assessment of W1?
12.10 What equestrian-specific assessments support the proposed construction crossings and arrangements affecting Bridleways 2, 4, 13 and 14?
12.11 What assessment has been undertaken of the proposed W1 substations in relation to nearby bridleways and horse-rider safety?
12.12 What precise restrictions, if any, are proposed for Firsby Lane, and how will uninterrupted reasonable access to residential properties be safeguarded?
12.13 Has the Applicant assessed the effects of those restrictions on residents' private and family life, including where no alternative lawful vehicular access exists?
12.14 How has the Applicant verified the suitability of the A630/Common Lane construction access against local road conditions and the proposed HGV movements?
12.15 What corrections or further assessments are necessary to address the disputed baseline and viewpoint information, and could those corrections alter the Applicant's conclusions?
12.16 Has the Applicant assessed the removal of W1 as a means of avoiding the combined residential, landscape, heritage, access and recreational effects identified in this submission?
13. Supporting evidence and further examination submissions
13.1 I rely upon the correspondence entitled Site Visit to Firsby, covering the proposed visit of 29 October 2025 and subsequent correspondence through 11 February 2026, as supporting evidence for the Applicant's recognition of [redacted] distinctive circumstances.
13.2 I also refer to the Applicant's revised Environmental Statement Appendix 7.4 (AS-042), particularly paragraphs 7.4.180 onwards concerning Viewpoint 11, together with the relevant landscape figures and rights of way plans.
13.3 Further property-specific photographs, mapped viewpoints and supporting evidence may be submitted at an appropriate subsequent examination deadline, in accordance with the examination timetable and the ExA's directions.
13.4 This submission identifies the locations and reasons for requested inspections. It is not intended to replace the detailed evidence and representations that I may make during the examination.
14. Conclusion — Request for removal of Whitestone 1
14.1 I respectfully ask the ExA to inspect [redacted] and the surrounding W1 landscape before reaching conclusions about the adequacy of the Applicant's assessments.
14.2 I consider that the proposed development would fundamentally alter the rural setting of Firsby, with potentially substantial effects on residential outlooks, the historic landscape, public rights of way, equestrian activity and access to homes.
14.3 I am particularly concerned that the Applicant has relied on a representative viewpoint for Firsby residents despite acknowledging that our property has a different aspect, and without completing the property-specific visit it offered.
14.4 My confidence in the Applicant's evidence has also been undermined by the apparent discrepancies I have identified in baseline information, photographic viewpoint records and the treatment of public rights of way and historic views.
14.5 I ask that my concerns about potential restrictions on Firsby Lane, the only lawful vehicular access to our home to the best of my knowledge, and their implications for our private and family life are expressly recorded and considered.
14.6 I recognise the national importance of renewable energy. However, that does not remove the need to establish that the particular environmental, heritage, residential, recreational and safety effects of W1 have been properly assessed and are acceptable.
14.7 I ask the ExA to examine whether the combined adverse effects of W1 can be satisfactorily addressed by mitigation or whether the more appropriate course is to avoid development in this part of the scheme.
14.8 My primary request is that the Applicant removes the entirety of Whitestone 1 from its proposal and that, if it does not, the Examining Authority recommends that Whitestone 1 is excluded from any Development Consent Order.
14.9 If the adverse effects cannot be satisfactorily addressed and W1 cannot appropriately be separated from the wider proposal, I ask the ExA to take those matters into account when considering whether development consent should be recommended.
14.10 I reserve all lawful rights relating to our home, property, access, residential amenity, blight and compensation. The pursuit of those rights must not be interpreted as acceptance of the development.
Angela Eastwood
[redacted]
26 October 2026