Submission ID: SB30CF99D

1. I am asking the Examining Authority to visit [redacted], Firsby Lane and the surrounding countryside before reaching its conclusions about Whitestone Solar Farm, particularly Whitestone 1.
2. I am the wife of [redacted] and mother of [redacted]. Our family has lived and worked in the Firsby, Conisbrough and Ravenfield area for many years. I know this countryside very well, having spent much of my life walking through its fields, lanes, footpaths and bridleways.
3. I have always loved the open countryside around Firsby. I particularly enjoy the wildlife, the birds, the changing seasons.
4. I understand the need for renewable energy, and I am not against solar power. What worries me is the enormous scale of Whitestone 1 and what it could mean for the countryside, wildlife and communities that have been here for generations.
5. I would like the Inspectors to see this countryside as it is today, before deciding whether a development of this size is appropriate. Looking at plans and photographs cannot always explain what a place means to the people who know it. [redacted] and our family's circumstances
6. My first request is for the Inspectors to visit [redacted], by prior arrangement, to appreciate its setting and the countryside around it.
7. I am concerned about how the proposed development could change the views, tranquillity and rural surroundings that we have known for so many years.
8. My husband [redacted] is [redacted] and has [redacted]. This makes reliable access particularly important, including for family members, visitors, medical appointments and emergency services.
9. I am concerned not only about what the development could look like but also about the practical consequences for our everyday lives, particularly during construction.
10. I would welcome the opportunity for the Inspectors to visit and hear directly from our family about these concerns.
Firsby Lane — access to every residential property at Firsby
11. I particularly ask the Examining Authority to inspect Firsby Lane and the location where Whitestone proposes a construction crossing or associated traffic controls.
12. Firsby Lane is the only lawful vehicular access to all residential properties at Firsby. This is not a concern affecting only our family. Every resident depends upon this lane to reach their home.
13. I am worried about the prospect of construction vehicles crossing the lane and the possibility of temporary traffic controls, obstruction or delays.
14. For [redacted] residents and people with [redacted] reliable access is essential. We need to know that family, medical services, emergency vehicles and other essential visitors will always be able to reach us.
15. I would like the Inspectors to consider what could happen if a construction vehicle broke down, if machinery obstructed the lane or if an ambulance needed to get through urgently.
16. I ask whether Whitestone has properly assessed the effects of its proposed crossing on the entire Firsby community, including [redacted] residents, rather than treating the issue simply as one of managing construction traffic.
17. I would also like the Applicant to explain whether the crossing is necessary and whether an alternative construction arrangement could avoid interfering with Firsby Lane.
Wildlife and the birds that depend on these fields
18. One of my greatest concerns is what could happen to the wildlife that lives in and around these fields.
19. I have spent many years enjoying the birds and other wildlife around Firsby and Conisbrough Parks. These fields are not empty spaces. They are part of a living countryside, and I regularly see wildlife when walking in the area.
20. I am particularly concerned about ground-nesting birds and the loss or disturbance of the open farmland habitats they depend upon.
21. It is not just the solar panels themselves that worry me. There would also be fencing, construction tracks, machinery, vehicles, noise, lighting and electrical equipment, all of which could change the conditions in which wildlife currently lives.
22. I would like the Inspectors to visit the open fields around Firsby and Conisbrough Parks and appreciate the existing landscape and habitats before deciding whether the Applicant has adequately assessed their ecological value.
23. I ask the Examining Authority to establish whether the Applicant has properly considered ground-nesting birds, seasonal changes in wildlife use, habitat connectivity and the potential effects of construction disturbance.
24. I am particularly concerned about whether the surveys provide a sufficiently reliable picture of wildlife across the different seasons. I would not want important species or habitats to be overlooked simply because they were not present during a particular survey visit.
25. I also ask whether the combined effects of fencing, lighting, tracks, construction activity and changes to agricultural land have been adequately assessed, rather than each effect being considered separately.
26. I appreciate that Whitestone proposes ecological mitigation and habitat improvements. However, I would like the Examining Authority to establish what evidence demonstrates that these measures would adequately address the effects on the wildlife already using these fields.
The historic countryside around Firsby
27. I have always valued the history of this area as well as its wildlife. The countryside around Firsby, Conisbrough and Ravenfield has developed over many generations.
28. There are views towards Conisbrough Castle, the former medieval deer park, Ravenfield and St James' Church, together with historic farmsteads and archaeological remains.
29. When I walk through this countryside, the history, wildlife and landscape all feel connected. I do not see them as separate things.
30. I am concerned that extensive solar panels, fencing, tracks and electrical infrastructure could change the character of this landscape for a very long time.
31. I ask the Examining Authority to consider whether the Applicant has adequately assessed the effects on the historic landscape as a whole, including the experience of people walking through it and appreciating its historic features and views.
Walking, tranquillity and the value of open countryside
32. I have walked the footpaths and bridleways around Firsby, Conisbrough Parks and Ravenfield for many years. They

provide somewhere to enjoy nature, exercise and escape from traffic.
33. What makes these routes special is not simply that they connect one place to another. It is the open countryside around them, the wildlife, the views and the peace and quiet.
34. I am concerned that construction activity, fencing and electrical infrastructure could change that experience substantially.
35. A footpath may remain open, or a diversion may be provided, but that does not necessarily mean that people can continue to enjoy the countryside in the same way.
36. I would like the Inspectors to walk representative sections of the routes around Conisbrough Parks so that they can appreciate the experience of moving through this landscape rather than relying entirely on photographs taken from individual viewpoints.
Agricultural land and food production
37. I am also concerned about the loss of agricultural land from food production.
38. I understand that renewable energy is important, but food production is important too. With changing weather patterns and uncertainty about future food supplies, I believe we should be careful about changing the use of large areas of productive farmland.
39. I ask the Examining Authority to consider the quality of the agricultural land affected by Whitestone 1, the likely consequences for farming and whether the Applicant has adequately justified the proposed use of this land.
40. I would also like to understand what consideration has been given to alternative locations or designs that could reduce the effects on productive farmland and the historic countryside.
My land rights and concerns about consultation
41. I also have rights connected with land and access in Firsby, and I am concerned that I may have been overlooked during the consultation process.
42. As far as I am aware, I have not received the notification I would have expected if my rights could be affected by the development.
43. I ask the Examining Authority to establish whether I have been correctly identified in the Applicant's Book of Reference and whether my relevant land and access rights have been properly recorded.
44. In particular, I would like the following questions answered:
Am I correctly recorded in the Book of Reference?
Have my rights over land and access at Firsby been properly identified?
Was I a person who should have received a section 42 consultation notice?
If so, was a notice issued to me, when and at what address?
Does the proposed Development Consent Order seek any powers that could affect my existing rights?
If my interests were not identified or I was not notified when required, what steps will be taken to address that?
45. I am not making a legal accusation because I do not know exactly what has happened. I am asking for the position to be checked properly.
46. I find it worrying that I have had to rely on information from other people to understand how such a large development might affect rights connected with our family's land.
47. The amount of technical information involved is difficult for ordinary residents to follow. I ask the Examining Authority to consider whether the Applicant has provided affected people with a fair opportunity to understand the proposal and make their concerns known.
Locations I would like the Examining Authority to visit
48. [redacted]
This is my first priority. I ask the Inspectors to visit our house by arrangement, to appreciate its setting, the surrounding countryside and the effects that Whitestone 1 could have on our family.
49. Firsby Lane — proposed construction crossing
This is my second priority. I ask the Inspectors to visit the proposed crossing location and appreciate that this lane provides the only lawful vehicular access to all residential properties at Firsby.
I particularly ask them to consider the implications for [redacted] residents and those with [redacted].
50. Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 13 — towards Hooton Woods and land parcel 29
I ask the Inspectors to appreciate the open countryside, topography, existing habitats and wider views along this route.
I understand that an earlier landscape viewpoint along the bridleway was removed from the Applicant's assessment, and I ask that the adequacy of the remaining viewpoints be examined.
51. Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 2 — Firsby Lane towards Hilltop Farm and Arbour Lane
I request an inspection of the surrounding farmland and its relationship with the public rights of way network and proposed construction arrangements.
52. Conisbrough Parks Footpath 3 — Arbour Lane towards Park Lane
I ask the Inspectors to consider the existing rural landscape, wildlife habitats and the experience of walking through this countryside.
53. Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 4 — Park Lane
I request an inspection to appreciate the existing landscape and the potential effects of the proposed electrical infrastructure and construction activity.
54. Conisbrough Parks Route 14 — Arbour Lane towards Park Lane
I ask the Inspectors to consider the views towards Conisbrough Castle and the wider historic landscape. The precise route classifications should be checked against the definitive map.
55. Ravenfield Footpath 10 — Braithwell Road towards Garden Lane
I request an inspection to appreciate the changing views across the countryside towards Conisbrough Castle and consider whether the Applicant's selected viewpoint adequately represents the route.
56. Ravenfield Footpath 2 — St James' Church towards Ravenfield Ponds and Arbour Lane
I ask the Inspectors to consider the relationship between the church, the surrounding countryside and the historic landscape.
57. Firsby Brook and Firsby Bridge
I request an inspection to appreciate the local watercourse, surrounding habitats and drainage conditions, including any

potential effects of the proposed development.
58. I appreciate that the Examining Authority may not be able to visit every location. My priorities are [redacted], the proposed Firsby Lane crossing, the open farmland around Firsby, Conisbrough Parks Bridleway 13 and the historic landscape towards Conisbrough Castle.
Request for consideration of removing Whitestone 1
59. I respectfully ask the Examining Authority to give serious consideration to whether Whitestone 1 should be removed from the proposed development.
60. My concerns are not limited to one issue. They include the effects on wildlife and ground-nesting birds, the loss of open farmland habitats, the historic landscape, agricultural land, public rights of way, the setting of our family home and the proposed construction crossing affecting Firsby's only lawful residential access.
61. I ask the Examining Authority to examine whether these effects have been adequately assessed individually and together, and whether the Applicant has demonstrated that its proposed mitigation would be sufficient.
62. I also ask whether the scale and location of Whitestone 1 have been adequately justified and whether reasonable alternatives could avoid or reduce the harm to this countryside.
63. If the evidence does not justify including Whitestone 1, I respectfully request that the Examining Authority considers recommending its removal from the Development Consent Order proposal.
64. I am not against renewable energy. I understand why it is needed. But I do not believe that we should have to lose such a large area of living countryside without being satisfied that the location is appropriate and that the consequences have been properly understood.
65. I have known these fields, birds, paths and views for much of my life. They are part of what makes Firsby special, and I would like future generations to be able to enjoy them too.
66. I ask the Inspectors to visit and see the countryside for themselves, and to ensure that my family's circumstances, my land rights and the wildlife and landscape I value have been fully considered.
Thank you for considering my request.