

# Consultee Comments for Planning Application 24/00161/FUL

## Application Summary

Application Number: 24/00161/FUL

Address: Land West Of Bradmore Road And North Of Wysall Road Land West Of Wysall Wysall

Proposal: Construction, operation and subsequent decommissioning of a renewable energy park comprising ground mounted Solar PV with co-located battery energy storage system (BESS) at the point of connection, together with associated infrastructure, access, landscaping and cabling.

Case Officer: Gareth Elliott

## Consultee Details

Name: Mrs Danielle Scott

Address: 84 Thistle Bank, East Leake, Nottinghamshire LE12 6RS

Email: Not Available

On Behalf Of: Wysall And Thorpe-in-the-Glebe Parish Council

## Comments

Objections.

1. The proposed site (approximately 100 hectares) is directly adjacent to another solar farm (Highfields Farm Site - approximately 82 hectares). Each site is intended to generate 49.9 MW of electricity, giving a combined generating capacity of 99.8MW. Sites of more than 50 MW are classified as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and as such are referred to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy for approval. The cumulative impact of these two developments, which occupy a large swathe of agricultural land between Costock and Wysall, is excessive within this rural community.

2. The proposed solar farm encompasses Public Rights of Way (PRoW) including a section of The Midshires Way. These footpaths are very popular and are widely used by residents and visitors to the area. Whilst they would be retained under the proposals, they would be set within a 2.4m (minimum) high security-fenced corridor, which would have a seriously detrimental impact on the enjoyment and health benefits of these footpaths. Rushcliffe Borough Councils Solar Farm Development Planning Guidance (November 2022) highlights the importance of PRoWs as local amenities within the Borough that help to promote healthy lifestyles and wellbeing. The loss of amenity here is significant.

3. The proposed access to the northern part of the site is seriously flawed. Bradmore Road is a narrow country lane that local users already find problematic. On large sections of the road, it is already difficult for two cars to pass safely; the road is not suitable for lorries, as witnessed by damage to the grass verges and road surface along its length. We strongly feel that use of this road by articulated lorries and associated vehicles during the construction phase and beyond

would be both unsafe and adversely affect current users.

4. The north and south sections of the solar farm are to be connected by a cable embedded in the public highway. This would mean excavating the highway right through the village. This would include Bradmore Road, Keyworth Road, Main Street and Costock Road, which is a substantial distance. It would require a series of rolling lane closures, causing major disturbance and inconvenience to residents, businesses, local services, and other road users. It would also severely limit street parking and impact upon residents, people attending the local church (weddings and funerals as well as regular services), the village hall, and The Plough public house. These restrictions would be particularly detrimental to residents with mobility issues.

5. The Parish Council are concerned about the risk and impact of fire and explosions from the battery storage facility on the proposed site. Such incidents would give rise to toxic gases and lead to substantial air pollution over Wysall and beyond. Examples of these fires elsewhere have proved difficult to extinguish, even where local Fire Authorities have detailed plans for such emergencies. We are not aware of any such plans for this development. In the event of such an emergency (fire or explosion), access to the southern part of the site which forms the battery storage area is across fields that form the flood plain for the Kingston Brook. These fields often flood during periods of heavy rain, which would make it challenging for the emergency services to reach the scene. The applicants Flood Risk Assessment suggests that such emergency incidents are less likely during times of flooding but offers no rationale for this view. Contaminated water from firefighting could leak into the aquifer and pollute the Kingston Brook, causing devastating environmental consequences.

6. The Parish Council has a duty to refer to its Biodiversity policy when considering planning applications. These applications should be made with a view to minimise their impact on biodiversity in the area. We believe that this plan does not adhere to our policy. We are concerned that the proposed solar farm will have a negative impact on established flora and fauna, both in terms of numbers and diversity. This comes at a time when wildlife nationally is in decline. We are also concerned with the loss of agricultural land. This site is classified as being of moderate quality for agriculture, this is despite it being used productively for crop growth for many years. Solar farms would be better sited on non-productive land such as brown field sites. The Parish Council is aware of other solar farm proposals and land lease options entered by solar energy companies locally. Whilst we recognise the need for, and are supportive of the growth of, renewable energy nationally we would urge Rushcliffe Borough Council to carefully consider the cumulative impact of these schemes on small rural communities.