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Kingsway Solar Farm Limited

28th October 2025

By E-Mail – enquiries@kingswaysolar.co.uk

And by post – FREEPOST DOWNING KINGSWAY

Dear Sirs,

I am writing both in my capacity as Secretary to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of West Wratting and in my personal capacity to record concerns about the proposals for the solar farm as set out in Kingsway's recent consultation document and to register opposition to that development both by the PCC and by me, personally.

The concerns are:

1. That the surrounding villages are and have been for centuries rural villages with a focus on rural affairs and countryside life. The landscape and ecology would inevitably be debased.
2. That people choose to live in small rural villages for the peace and tranquillity of the surroundings. Many selected the villages for retirement for this reason. People do not want to live in the middle of an industrial solar panelled landscape.
3. That the proposed development would be too close to the villages such that the solar panels would be unreasonably visible and intrusive.
4. That the value of the parishioners' investment in their housing has already been reduced even by the threat of the industrialisation and this would increase if the development were to go ahead.
5. That the mental well-being of parishioners in the villages would be and already is being adversely affected.
6. That the layout of the panels in a number of discrete areas will cause a severance of the villages from the surrounding landscapes and disrupt the cultural identity of the community.

7. That this part of Cambridgeshire and the surrounding area has been the focus of significant renewable energy development and infrastructure in the recent past. There is a windfarm already on Part B and the Sunnica development is only a few miles away which have (or will) lead to significant cumulative changes.
8. For the reasons given in 1-7 above, I consider that the benefit of erecting solar panels on the designated sites to provide clean energy is far outweighed in the circumstances of this case by the detriment to the local community. The above factors have not been adequately addressed in the consultation document.
9. The proposed mitigating measures which have been proposed are insufficient to prevent unjustified interference with the landscape and ecology. The magnitude of the proposed development is simply too large for mitigating measures to tip the balance in favour of approval. In many respects the textual commentary on the assessment of sensitivity and overall effects is too brief to be understandable.
10. In so far as mitigating measures have been suggested, there is, in particular, insufficient information on fencing and too little detail on how the land which is not going to have panels erected over it will be maintained and used. Much greater detail is needed.
11. Greater detail is also needed in the form of representative viewpoints particularly in relation to the major footpaths passing through the area, such as the Icknield Way.
12. Overall therefore I would ask that the mitigating proposals should be expanded so that the local communities can have a proper opportunity to investigate the adequacy of the proposed landscape and ecological mitigation.
13. Our concerns are greatly exacerbated by considerations surrounding the safety of the proposed development both in terms of safety during construction and in use.
 - (a) As to the former,
 - (i) the proposed traffic movements both of HGVs and other vehicles to service the construction works are such that the proposed routes, through Brinkley, along the Six Mile Bottom road to West Wrating and using the road to the Woodland Cemetery are wholly inadequate to permit such movements.
 - (ii) This is particularly so bearing in mind the congested crossroads in Six Mile Bottom, the fact that the level crossings in Six Mile Bottom require large vehicles to obtain to seek permission before crossing and that the junctions in Brinkley are recognised to be dangerous. So far as the Six Mile Bottom road to West Wrating is concerned, the road is in many places too narrow even to allow two cars to pass with safety and there is poor visibility due to the tight bends on the road.
 - (iii) The routes proposed for non-HGV movements involve passing through the centre of all the villages where there is a school, many bus stops for school children, inadequate lighting and inadequate footpaths. The

proposed development land thus does not lend itself to appropriate adequate and safe access.

- (iv) These points have not been addressed adequately in the consultation paper.
- (b) As to the latter, the fundamental concern of anyone considering a large solar panel development is safety in relation to solar panels close to residential dwellings, particularly concerns about flooding and the need for and location of safe battery storage facilities. Again, this has not been adequately covered in the consultation document.
 - (i) Dealing first with flooding, this is an area susceptible to rainfall flood risk. Whilst the consultation paper acknowledges the need to reduce the rainfall flood risk, the assumptions made in mitigation do not appear to take into account that there will be an increase in run off due to the presence of impermeable solar panels. This should be addressed so as to seek to demonstrate that the development does not create an increase in the flood risk.
 - (ii) Turning to the proposed size and location of the BESS. The development proposed is on any basis enormous, covering some 1246 hectares and calculated to generate 500MW. The lithium batteries required for storage will be housed in 300 full sized containers located on elevated ground at the northern end of Plot B. Underlying all the land on which it is proposed to erect the panels is the water aquifer supplying drinking water to approximately 350,000 people in Cambridge. The proposed location of the battery containers is closely adjacent to an area designated as Zone I – Inner Protection, the most sensitive area for pollution. There is an unfortunate history of pollution of the aquifer. See e.g. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambridge_Water_Co_Ltd_v_Eastern_Counties_Leather_plc
 - (iii) It is a sad fact of life that lithium batteries do catch fire and suffer from what is known as “thermal runaway” such that they are difficult to control, and the means of control involve producing contaminated firewater which has the propensity to cause pollution through the underlying land. The Environment Agency requires that there must be a system to contain and manage any such firewater so as to ensure that it is not discharged to ground or surface water bodies.
 - (iv) Table 3.1 of the consultation document proposes that a water storage capacity of up to approximately 240,000 litres to allow a discharge rate of approximately 1,900 litres over a 2-hour period will be provided. It is unclear why the period of two hours has been specified and the figure proposed would appear to be a minimal and inadequate amount, far

from the maximum parameter required. This should be explained in greater detail so that it can be seen that there is provision for fire water storage capacity that can be seen to be 100% effective in a worst-case fire.

- (v) At a recent meeting with the developer, the question was asked as to what insurance would be in place to cover the effects of any pollution and there was no satisfactory answer. The question of insurance must be addressed. Who is to meet the cost of any pollution of the water aquifer?

14. That 80% of the supply of solar panels comes from China where issues have arisen concerning supply chain links to forced labour, particularly in the Xinjiang region, yet there is no requirement that the panels should be sourced on an ethical basis.
15. That the proposal is that after 40 years the land will be returned to agricultural land yet the detail as to how a sinking fund is to be set up and the sums to be involved are vague. This requires a significantly greater degree of clarity.
16. That an insufficient measure of compensation has been offered to those affected by the development. Kingsway has proposed (but is unable to confirm) that as compensation to the villagers affected by the development the sum of £300,000 per annum will be provided. This is to be contrasted with the Scottish Government's guidance that compensation should be at the rate of £5000 per MW per year. With the proposed 500MW capacity of the development we would have expected Kingsway to offer significantly higher compensation than the meagre sum currently proposed. For example, applying the Scottish Government guidance, this would result in a sum of £2,500,000 per annum being available.

May I thank you in advance for your careful consideration of these concerns and trust it will lead to the conclusion not to proceed with the development.

I should be grateful if you could acknowledge safe receipt of this letter.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Thorley', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Simon Thorley.

Secretary West Wrattling PCC