

Objection to Planning Application 25/01947/FP (Land south of A507, Cumberlow Green, Clothall)

To: North Hertfordshire District Council Planning Department

Re: Application 25/01947/FP – **Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) and Solar Farm, Land South of A507 near Cumberlow Green, Clothall**

From: Matthew Cook, Local Resident of Cromer in North Hertfordshire

Date: 03 October 2025

I am a local resident writing to **formally object** to the above planning application for a large-scale solar farm and battery storage facility at Cumberlow Green, Clothall. My objection is based on numerous grounds, including the **detrimental impact on the local community, the countryside landscape, loss of habitat, noise and safety concerns**, and conflict with planning policy. I urge the Council to **refuse planning permission** for the following reasons, each of which is explained with reference to relevant policies and cases.

1. Harm to Countryside Landscape and Visual Amenity

Industrialisation of Rural Landscape: The proposed 187.3 hectare (463 acres) solar farm with extensive rows of panels, security fencing, and battery container units would **industrialise a vast swathe of open countryside**, permanently altering its rural character[1]. This area is currently an agricultural landscape valued for its **intrinsic scenic beauty and tranquility**, qualities which national policy seeks to protect. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires planners to recognize “the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside”[2]. Transforming nearly **1,000 acres** of farmland (when combined with the adjacent “Beane Valley” proposal in East Herts) into a solar power complex would fundamentally degrade the visual amenity of the area[1].

Adverse Landscape Impacts: The Council should note that the **East Hertfordshire Landscape Officer** has already objected to the sister proposal next door, stating the plans “are not landscape-led and give rise to **significant adverse landscape and visual effects**”[3]. The site at Cumberlow Green features gently rolling terrain visible from public roads and footpaths; the introduction of reflective panels and industrial equipment would be “**most incongruous**” in rural views, to borrow the phrasing from a Planning Inspector in a solar farm appeal[4][5]. Even if landscaping (e.g. hedgerow planting) is proposed, the East Herts landscape officer noted that the mitigation scheme was **insufficient to screen the arrays**, especially given the elevated and sloping nature of the terrain[6]. In short, the proposal would cause **significant harm to landscape character and visual amenity** that cannot be adequately reduced by planting.

“Temporary” 40-Year Term is Effectively Permanent: While the application is described as a 40-year proposal (often termed “temporary”), this is **effectively a generational loss** of landscape. As the East Herts landscape officer rightly observed, a 40-year period is “considered a substantial portion of a generation’s experience”[7]. Planning inspectors have similarly noted that **40 years is a relatively long time** to endure harms, even if theoretically reversible[8]. The long-term blighting of the views and character of the countryside for several decades cannot be justified by claiming the development is temporary – for all practical purposes, it would *be* the defining land use here for the majority of many residents’ lifetimes.

Relevant Precedent: It is also worth noting that North Herts District Council itself has **refused similar proposals** where landscape harm was an issue. In November 2023, a 25 MW solar farm near Wymondley (Sperberry Hill) was **refused** by the Planning Control Committee due to “the level of harm to the **rural character and appearance** of the area,” which was not clearly outweighed by benefits[9]. This demonstrates that the Council recognizes substantial landscape harm as a valid reason for refusal, even in the balance against renewable energy benefits.

In summary, the proposal conflicts with national and local policies aimed at protecting countryside character. The **scale and visual intrusiveness** of this industrial development in open rural landscape would cause **unacceptable harm to visual amenity**. The public benefits of renewable energy, while substantial, “**are not carte blanche**” to override environmental harm[10], especially when (as here) the harm to the countryside is significant and lasting.

2. Loss of Agricultural Land and Food Security

Best and Most Versatile Land: The development would occupy productive agricultural fields, likely including “**best and most versatile**” (BMV) **agricultural land** in grades 2 and 3a. Government policy is clear that if significant development of farmland is necessary, “**areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality**” (NPPF, footnote 65)[11]. At over 200 hectares, this is an extraordinarily large development; its necessity on this particular farmland has not been demonstrated. The applicant has not shown that **poorer-quality or brownfield sites** have been thoroughly considered as alternatives. Local conservation groups such as CPRE Hertfordshire emphasize that districts with high-grade farmland and beautiful countryside (such as East and North Herts) “**are not suited to industrial scale solar plants on greenfield**” sites[12].

Impact on Food Production: Removing these fields from agricultural use for decades undermines local and national food security. Opponents of the adjoining Beane Valley scheme have noted that taking such land out of food production “**is not a sustainable solution**”, and that solar panels ought to be sited on **brownfield land or rooftops instead** wherever possible[13]. The same principle applies here. At a time when both food security and renewable energy are national priorities, this proposal chooses to sacrifice one for the other, rather than seeking a balanced approach (e.g. using non-agricultural land). The

Written Ministerial Statement of Dec 2024 on solar development reinforced protecting BMV farmland for food production, even as it supports renewables[14]. This scheme flies in the face of that guidance by consuming a vast tract of quality farmland.

Reversibility and Soil Health: Although the application may claim the land can be restored after 40 years, the reality is that long-term infrastructure and groundworks can degrade soil structure. Evidence submitted in other solar farm cases has noted that even so-called “temporary” solar developments can cause **permanent, irreversible loss of soil function or quality** (e.g. through compaction, changes in drainage, removal of topsoil)[15]. The **Inspector in the Hawkchurch BESS appeal** (2024) explicitly found that such a proposal would “**erode the quality of the agricultural land**”, conflicting with NPPF’s requirement to safeguard soil resources[16]. Here, no clear strategy has been offered for how the land’s long-term agricultural quality will be protected during decades of industrial use.

In conclusion, the proposal entails a **major loss of productive agricultural land**, contrary to national policy which prioritizes using poorer land for solar farms. The **food production capacity** of these 500+ acres would be lost for a generation. This harm to agricultural interests is **not justified** – the renewable energy benefits could be achieved on alternative sites (such as brownfields or by distributing panels across rooftops) without this heavy impact on valuable farmland[13]. The application thus fails to comply with Policy NE12 of the North Herts Local Plan, which requires solar farm proposals on BMV land to be considered in line with national policy (i.e. only if absolutely necessary)[17][18].

3. Biodiversity and Habitat Impacts

Disruption of Local Ecosystems: The proposed site encompasses a large area of countryside that currently supports wildlife. Even if intensively farmed, such a landscape includes **hedgerows, field margins, and fallow areas that provide habitat** for various species. Notably, local residents have observed a **wild deer herd** in the area[13], and there are likely many small mammals, birds, and insects that call these fields home. Some of which are protected and priority species including bats, [REDACTED] skylarks, yellow wagtails, and red kites. The construction and operation of the solar farm could significantly **disrupt these habitats**, through vegetation clearance, soil disturbance, and the installation of security fencing that could impede animal movement. The scale of the development raises the risk of fragmenting habitat connectivity across the landscape.

Impact on Birds (Skylarks and Others): Open arable fields are often important for **ground-nesting farmland birds** such as skylarks, lapwings, and meadow pipits. The introduction of solar panels across most of the fields will remove the open space these ground-nesters require. In a recent North Herts solar farm case, it was recognized that the development would displace skylarks, and the Council imposed a condition to provide alternative foraging and nesting areas for them[19]. This underscores that such solar installations **do cause loss of habitat for priority bird species**, requiring mitigation.

Mitigation fields are provided however these are described as **poor condition grassland**, which may not meet ecological requirements without intensive management. No detailed Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan is included in the Biodiversity Gain Plan. RSPB guidance recommends annual rotation, no mechanical weeding during breeding season, and monitoring in years 2, 5, and 10. The current proposal lacks these commitments, raising concerns about long-term effectiveness. The Ecological Impact Assessment acknowledges the loss of nesting habitat due to fencing and solar panel installation. Without robust mitigation, this could result in a **net loss of Skylark breeding territories**, contrary to Biodiversity Net Gain principles.

No compensation plan has been provided for irreplaceable habitats. The plan is submitted “for information only” and not yet approved.

With the lack of a detailed Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan there is no enforceable Biodiversity Gain Plan. There are no details of who will manage habitats, how often, and with what methods. There is no information on monitoring protocols, adaptive management, or success criteria and how they will commit to long-term oversight (e.g. 30 years as required under BNG legislation).

There should be an independent review of ecological, arboricultural, and noise mitigation strategies to ensure that they are robust.

Inadequate Net Gain and Mitigation: The Environment Act 2021 mandates **10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)** for new developments. While the application may include a biodiversity metric calculation showing a net gain, there is reason to scrutinize this closely. Often, claimed gains are on paper (through habitat creation like grassland under panels), but in practice these sites can fail to achieve the promised ecological value. The East Herts landscape officer’s objection to the adjacent scheme noted the lack of effective enhancement of watercourses or landscape features[20] – a likely issue here too. Furthermore, some species cannot be mitigated for on-site: for example, **lighting and noise** from the BESS compound could disturb nocturnal wildlife (bats, owls), and fencing will exclude larger mammals such as deer. There is also **cumulative impact** to consider: two huge solar projects back-to-back will amplify habitat loss and pressure on wildlife corridors across a broad area (nearly 1,000 acres combined).

In summary, the proposal poses **significant risks to local biodiversity**. It would displace protected and priority species and irreversibly alter the ecological character of these fields. The measures offered do not convincingly offset the harm. This conflicts with Local Plan Policy NE4, which requires development to “appropriately protect, enhance and manage biodiversity” and deliver net gains for nature[21]. Here, the development’s sheer scale and nature (introducing an industrial land use) would undermine the **government’s goal of halting nature’s decline**, and as such the harm to wildlife is another compelling reason for refusal.

4. Noise Pollution and Loss of Tranquility

Operational Noise from BESS and Inverters: The inclusion of a large **Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)** compound and numerous inverters/transformers means this development will generate significant noise. BESS facilities are known to emit high noise levels primarily from cooling systems. needed to prevent battery overheating. It is noted that water cooled BESS units are mentioned in the Statement of Community Involvement (section 6.6). Water cooled units are more efficient than air cooled in high heat situations but the absorbed heat from batteries must still be extracted and the cooling liquid must be re-cooled by extracting heat outside the BESS container to complete the cooling cycle. This process produces noise. Studies have measured noise of **70–92 dB(A)** at 1 meter from typical BESS cooling equipment[22]. In aggregate, a facility with hundreds of battery units and power converters can produce noise **exceeding 70 dB(A) even at 30 meters distance**[23]. This is a substantial noise output, comparable to a busy road, and is utterly at odds with the current **quiet rural soundscape** of Clothall and Rushden area. Importantly, these systems can operate **day and night** – fans may run continuously during warm weather or periods of battery activity, including nighttime hours when background noise in this countryside is very low.

Impact on Nearest Residents: There are nearby residential properties (e.g. at Cumberlow Green itself and in Clothall/Rushden villages) which could be affected, especially during quiet nights. A noise assessment has been provided by the applicant; however, residents must be wary of optimistic assumptions in such reports. For instance, one community's objection to a BESS noted that the developer's Noise Impact Assessment predicted **night-time noise levels 6 dB above existing background**, a level likely to cause adverse effect[24]. Here, without extremely robust noise mitigation (such as acoustic enclosures or berms), the continuous hum and fan drone from the BESS, transformers, inverters and associated equipment **will degrade local amenity**. Even if it meets minimum regulatory limits, it will destroy the **tranquility of the countryside** that residents currently enjoy. This loss of quiet is a material planning concern: the NPPF states that decisions should mitigate and reduce potential adverse impacts of noise on health and quality of life.

Construction and Traffic Noise: In addition to operational noise, the construction phase will bring heavy machinery and increased HGV traffic on local roads (including the A507 and smaller lanes) for many months. This will create noise, dust and general disturbance for the community. Given the scale, one can expect hundreds of HGV movements bringing in panels, batteries, and site materials. The **rural road network** may not be suited to this volume, and the A507 itself – while a main road – would see slow-moving construction vehicles entering/exiting, potentially causing noise and safety issues for villages along its route. No detailed construction management plan has been shared with the public at this stage, leaving uncertainty about how noise and disruption will be controlled.

No Proposed Noise Conditions: A notable omission is any firm commitment to noise limits. The Noise Impact Assessment states that 'The equipment modelled as part of this assessment has been based on similar BESS / solar developments. The actual plant

ultimately chosen for installation is yet to be finalised, however these will be selected to comply with any noise limits specified in the Proposed Development's planning conditions. In a similar large BESS proposal in Nottinghamshire, the local action group highlighted that **no noise limit conditions** were recommended by the applicant, meaning residents would have little protection if noise exceeds predictions[25]. Without such safeguards, the risk of **“excessive noise levels, particularly at night”** remains, as was warned in the Staythorpe BESS case[26].

In conclusion, the development threatens to bring a constant industrial noise presence into a rural community. This **loss of tranquility and potential sleep disturbance** is contrary to planning policies aiming to ensure healthy living conditions. Given the uncertainties in the noise modeling (equipment not finalized, weather effects, etc.[27]), it is unsafe to assume impacts can be mitigated to acceptable levels. The prudent course is to refuse the application due to **unresolvable noise and disturbance impacts on residents and the countryside**.

5. Health and Safety Risks of Battery Storage (Fire and Pollution)

Fire/Explosion Hazard: The **Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)** component presents a serious **health and safety concern** for the local area. Lithium-ion battery installations, especially of this scale, carry a known risk of **thermal runaway leading to fires or explosions**. Such fires are difficult to control and can burn intensely, releasing toxic fumes. There have been notable incidents, for example a **2020 fire at a battery facility in Liverpool**, which underscore that the risk, while infrequent, is very real[28]. The technology is relatively new and evolving, and **“they are not so long established to prove that the safety risk is not significant”**, as one Planning Inspector cautiously observed[28].

Local residents are understandably **fearful** about the prospect of a large battery compound near their homes and villages. At a recent planning inquiry for a BESS, the Inspector acknowledged the community’s “genuine fear and apprehension” about safety, given that this is **“unregulated and new technology with a proven risk of fire, explosion and toxicity.”**[29] In that case, even the possibility of such an event (however statistically rare) weighed against the proposal because the **consequences could be catastrophic**.

Inadequate Emergency Measures: Key questions remain unresolved in the application: How will a battery fire be extinguished or contained? What volume of water would be needed, and where would contaminated fire-water runoff go? In the Hawkchurch (Devon) BESS appeal decision of Feb 2024, the Inspector *dismissed* the appeal largely because the developer had **not demonstrated safe containment of fire-water or provided adequate access for fire services**, thereby posing a pollution risk to local water supplies[30]. That proposal fell short of the National Fire Chiefs Council safety guidance (Nov 2022) and had only one access road, compounding the danger[30]. We must ask if the Cumberlow Green BESS has **multiple access points for emergency vehicles** and robust containment systems (e.g. bunding and tanks for fire-water). If not, it likewise **“falls short of national recommended standards without safety being demonstrated”**[30].

Groundwater Contamination: The proposed site is in a rural area where many properties may rely on wells or groundwater, and nearby streams feed local ecosystems. A battery fire can produce highly contaminated water runoff (from firefighters' efforts and from chemicals released). In Hawkchurch, evidence showed numerous private wells were directly in the groundwater path of the site, and the Inspector found it was **not proven that the proposal would not pose a significant pollution risk to local residents' water**[\[31\]](#)[\[28\]](#). While the hydrogeology at Clothall may differ, the applicant has not published a thorough risk assessment of groundwater contamination in the event of a fire. Without absolute certainty on this point, approving the BESS would be **recklessly gambling with environmental and public health**.

Lack of Specific Regulations: It is important to note that currently there are **no specific UK health and safety regulations or fire codes tailored to large-scale BESS installations**. This regulatory gap means we are relying on general guidance and the developer's assurances. The **Staythorpe Action Group** rightly pointed out that in the absence of clear legislation, the decision-makers "**must be absolutely certain, with no doubt, about the health and safety risks**" before approving such a scheme[\[32\]](#). At present, there remain substantial doubts. The applicant's documentation does not convincingly eliminate the possibility of a battery fire disaster. Planning is meant to be precautionary in matters of serious risk – if something **cannot be made safe**, it should not be permitted. The Devon appeal decision confirms that **unknown or unmitigated risks to safety are valid grounds for refusal**[\[33\]](#).

With regard to this development unacceptable environmental risks associated with the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), have been identified by the Environment Agency (EA) in their consultation response dated 15 September 2025. Ground water vulnerability, firewater containment risk, surface water drainage concerns and unconfirmed battery chemistry. In summary, the BESS element introduces an **unacceptable risk of fire and pollution** that could endanger local residents, first responders, and the environment. This is not a hypothetical concern but one acknowledged by inspectors and evidenced by real incidents. The proposal fails to demonstrate a *safe* operation. This runs contrary to NPPF para 188 (which states planning decisions should assume other regimes will operate, *but* planning should prevent development where an unacceptable risk remains) and to the fundamental principle that public safety is paramount. The **prudent and responsible decision is to refuse** the BESS and solar farm proposal on safety grounds alone.

6. Impact on Local Community and Amenity

Beyond the technical planning considerations, I wish to stress the **profound negative impact on the local community's well-being and amenity**:

- **Loss of Amenity and Enjoyment of Area:** Local residents, including myself, choose to live in this rural part of North Hertfordshire for its peace, open views, and access to nature. The proposed development would severely diminish those qualities – replacing green fields with metal and machinery. Public rights of way across or

adjacent to the site would be transformed from pleasant footpaths through open countryside to paths flanked by security fences and endless rows of panels. The enjoyment of our local area for recreation, dog walking, and scenic appreciation would be greatly reduced.

- **Noise, Traffic, Disturbance:** As outlined earlier, the community will suffer noise pollution and construction disruption. The character of Rushden/Clothall and other nearby hamlets is quiet and rural. Introducing what is essentially an **industrial facility** will bring traffic and activity not just during build-out but also maintenance (cleaning panels, servicing batteries) over decades. This erodes the *rural amenity* that residents currently have, and that they expected to continue under the protections of countryside planning policies.
- **Cumulative Burden on Community:** This objection is not happening in isolation. There is **widespread community opposition** to the solar farm proposals in this area. Over **1,000 objections** were lodged against the adjacent Beane Valley scheme in East Herts[34], an astonishing number that shows how strongly the community feels. Parish councils of multiple villages (Clothall, Rushden, Weston, Sandon, Wallington, etc.) have come together in concern. If both the East Herts and North Herts applications were approved, this community would find itself virtually surrounded by solar farms – an enormous cumulative burden in terms of landscape, traffic, and loss of amenity. The Planning Practice Guidance on renewables specifically advises councils to consider **cumulative landscape and visual impacts** (NPPF 160a)[35]. Here the combined effect would be to transform our entire locality into an energy generation zone, a prospect the community finds unacceptable.
- **No Meaningful Local Benefit:** The proposed development offers little to nothing in terms of local benefit. The generated power will feed into the national grid, not specifically to our villages. No significant local jobs will be created after construction (maintenance is minimal). There may be token community funds or biodiversity areas, but these pale in comparison to the permanent change imposed on our area. Essentially, the community is asked to sacrifice its countryside and tranquility for a project from which we derive no direct benefit – this imbalance is at the heart of local resentment. As CPRE Hertfordshire has emphasized, **renewable energy schemes must be sensitively located and fair to communities**, not just parachuted into attractive landscapes because the land is available.
- **Community Sentiment:** While not a determinative factor on its own, I urge the Council to heed the **strong local sentiment**. The NPPF encourages early and meaningful engagement with communities. Here, despite the developer's consultation exercise, the community remains overwhelmingly against the proposal. We feel our voice is clear – this development is **not welcome** and is seen as an inappropriate use of our cherished countryside. Approval against such unified

local opposition, especially when grounded in valid planning harms, would undermine public confidence in the planning system.

In conclusion, the **social impacts** on the local community weigh heavily against the application. The proposal would **significantly diminish residents' quality of life**, contrary to the planning objective of supporting healthy, safe and pleasant places to live. There are no compensating local benefits that might outweigh this harm. The Council has a duty to its residents and should defend their amenity and environment by refusing this application.

7. Policy Conflict and Conclusion

Conflict with Local and National Policy: For the reasons detailed above, the proposed solar farm and BESS clearly conflicts with multiple development plan policies and national guidance:

- **North Herts Local Plan (2011–2031):** Policy SP5 (Countryside) seeks to protect the countryside for its own sake – this industrial-scale development would contravene that by urbanising rural land. Policy NE1/NE4 (natural environment, landscape and biodiversity) require conserving and enhancing landscape character and biodiversity – the scheme demonstrably harms both. Policy NE12 (Renewable Energy) explicitly says proposals for solar farms on best and most versatile farmland will be determined in line with national policy^[17]; as argued, national policy (NPPF footnote 65) discourages using such land except where justified, and here it is not justified. The proposal does not meet the Local Plan's criteria for sustainable development in rural areas.
- **NPPF and National Guidance:** While the NPPF (Section 14) and Government support renewable energy in principle, they also emphasize that adverse impacts must be satisfactorily addressed and that the transition to low-carbon energy should be plan-led and *appropriate*. Paragraph 155 (formerly 160) of NPPF requires that plans “**maximize renewable energy development** while ensuring that adverse impacts (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts) are addressed satisfactorily”^[36]. In this case, the adverse impacts on landscape, community and safety are far from addressed satisfactorily – they are intrinsic to the proposal. Moreover, NPPF paragraph 180 (c) (previously 174) requires planning decisions to recognize the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and protect it^[2]. Approving this scheme would do the opposite. Additionally, the unresolved safety risks mean it fails the NPPF's stipulation that planning should prevent development that cannot be operated safely.
- **Case References:** The concerns I have raised are not mere speculation; they are supported by findings in comparable cases. Inspectors have **dismissed solar farm appeals where harms outweighed benefits**, even acknowledging the climate benefits. For example, harm to heritage and landscape led an Inspector to conclude that substantial public benefits “do not outweigh” the harm, noting that **renewable**

projects, while supported by policy, have no blanket entitlement if they cause serious harm[37][38]. In another case, a solar farm was refused due to impacts on important bird habitat and highway safety, confirming that basic environmental and safety constraints still apply to green energy proposals[39][40]. Most pertinently, a recent appeal for a **49.9 MW solar farm in North Hertfordshire's Green Belt was only allowed** after the Inspector found the site was “grey belt” and impacts were mitigated[41] – a scenario very different from this proposal, which is unambiguously an incursion into open countryside with clear harms. In essence, precedent shows that **large renewable schemes must be acceptable in planning terms** – if not, they can and should be refused.

Balancing Benefit and Harm: There is no doubt that renewable energy is a public good and that action on climate change is imperative. I support renewable energy in principle. However, the **planning system requires a balance**. In this case, the **harms are specific and acute**: a treasured local landscape lost, biodiversity disturbed, residents subjected to noise and risk. The benefits, while globally important, do not specifically require this site – they could be achieved in less sensitive locations or by much smaller scale installations distributed elsewhere. As one Inspector aptly stated, **“there is no carte blanche”** for renewable energy projects to override environmental and social factors[10]. The applicants have not made an exceptional case that this particular location is the only option for delivering solar energy. Nor have they minimized the harm sufficiently to tip the balance.

Conclusion: On **planning balance**, the proposal's **substantial harm** to the local community and environment **decisively outweighs** its benefits. It fails to comply with the development plan and national policy when read as a whole. There are multiple independent reasons for refusal – each of the sections above could alone justify refusing permission, and collectively they present an overwhelmingly strong case to *deny* this application.

I respectfully urge North Herts District Council to **REFUSE planning permission** for application 25/01947/FP. This decision would be consistent with both local sentiment and sound planning judgment. It would protect the community of Clothall/Rushden and the countryside of North Hertfordshire from an unwarranted and harmful development, while sending a message that renewable energy must be pursued in a truly sustainable manner – not at any cost.

Thank you for considering these objections. I trust the Council will give full weight to the concerns of residents and the merits of preserving our rural environment for current and future generations.

References:

- North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011–2031 (adopted 2022), relevant policies SP5, NE4, NE12.

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023, paras 155, 174(b) (180 b), 188, 159 (footnote 65) etc.
- East Herts Council Landscape Officer consultation response on Beane Valley Solar Farm (Application 3/24/...? Feb 2025) – excerpt in [3][6].
- Beane Valley Solar Farm Opposition Group – News update 05.08.2025[42][43].
- Rushden Parish Council – Meeting Minutes 18.09.2025 (community opposition)[44][45].
- CPRE Hertfordshire – “The Problem with Solar Farms” (2021)[12].
- Planning Appeal Decision – **Hawkchurch BESS, Devon** (PINS ref APP/U1105/W/22/3308239, Feb 2024)[28][30].
- Planning Appeal Decision – **Ashford Solar Farm, Kent** (PINS ref APP/E2205/W/21/3284479, Jan 2023)[4][46].
- Planning Appeal Decision – **Titchmarsh (STAUNCH) Solar Farm, Northants** (PINS ref APP/G2815/W/22/3300227, June 2023)[39][40].
- North Herts Planning Control Committee minutes, 22 Nov 2023 – refusal of 22/00709/FP (Sperberry Hill, Wymondley)[9].
- Planning Appeal (recovered) – **Wymondley Solar Farm** (SoS Call-in, allowed May 2023) – Conditions extract[19] (skylark mitigation).
- Noise Impact Studies for BESS (Noise Monitoring Services, “BESS Noise Challenges”, 2024)[22][23].
- National Fire Chiefs Council (NFCC) Guidance on Battery Storage Safety (Nov 2022).
- Written Ministerial Statement – “Solar Energy: Food Security and BMV Land” (Dec 2024)[14].

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[12] [PDF] THE PROBLEM WITH SOLAR FARMS | CPRE Hertfordshire

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<https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2025-05/CD3.1.1%20North%20Herts%20Officer%20Report%20180724.pdf>

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[21] HERTFORDSHIRE HOST WRITTEN RESPONSES:APPENDIX 1

[https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR020001/TR020001-002094-Dacorum%20Borough%20Council,%20Hertfordshire%20County%20Council,%20North%20Hertfordshire%20Council%20-%20Response%20to%20the%20ExA%E2%80%99s%20Written%20Questions%20\(ExQ1\)%20Appendix%201%20-%20Development%20Plan%20Policies.pdf](https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR020001/TR020001-002094-Dacorum%20Borough%20Council,%20Hertfordshire%20County%20Council,%20North%20Hertfordshire%20Council%20-%20Response%20to%20the%20ExA%E2%80%99s%20Written%20Questions%20(ExQ1)%20Appendix%201%20-%20Development%20Plan%20Policies.pdf)

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