

From: [Charles Simpson](#)
To: [Oaklands Farm Solar](#)
Cc: [Amy Wheelton](#)
Subject: Submission Deadline 5 NSIP Oaklands Solar Project Open Hearing 22/10/24
Date: 31 October 2024 16:50:02

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Dear Mr Cowperthwaite,

Re: Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project - Oaklands Farm Solar Project

I write with respect to the call for additional evidence specifically relating to equestrian matters in the area local to the proposed Oaklands Farm Solar Project.

By way of background, my wife and I [REDACTED] own two horses that we ride around the local area recreationally. My wife has been a local resident here for [REDACTED] years.

With regards to our experiences and concerns specific to an equestrian nature, I list these below for ease:

- The majority of our equestrian activities lead to us using the roads around Coton-in-the-Elms, Lullington, Rosliston and Walton-on-Trent. All of these routes receive a significant amount of traffic regardless of the time of day and drivers are inconsistent in obeying the relevant speed limits. With the way the local roads run including hedges to either side, we are forced to trot quickly to navigate the route for fear of being hit by speeding drivers. The proposed development would lead to additional vehicles on this, and other local roads, including heavy construction vehicles. This will have a detrimental impact on our recreational activity.
- Catton Lane specifically is used as a 'rat-run' by motorists and its narrow nature means we now use it less often than we used to. We have often been faced with heavy construction vehicles using this route for access between the A38 via the Chetwynd Bridge and Burton-upon-Trent or Swadlincote. This leads to further degradation to this lane as there is already significant subsidence as the road descends to the Pessall Brook close to Rosliston. Poor road surfaces are particularly difficult for horses to navigate.
- Additionally, previously we have had cause to complain directly to one of the firms of heavy construction vehicles that uses this route after one of their drivers ran my wife off the road on her horse by very poor driving. Clearly, the additional heavy construction vehicles which would use this route as part of the site's construction would lead to such conflicts potentially occurring more frequently.

The site itself extends as far as Catton Lane and, as you may be aware from site inspections, there is little in the way of screening on the proposed site from the road. Solar panels by their nature are prone to reflection and glint from the sun and horses particularly are very sensitive to changes in light (something as minor as a cyclist's light on their bike can cause a horse to spook). This is an issue in that for the site to be properly screened, there would need to be extensive foliage planting around the site perimeter in order for horse riders not to be able to see the site from the road. Due to the height of a horse and rider combined, it would take many years for this foliage to grow to a suitable height. Indeed, screening would only be completed once the solar panels were installed so there would be a long period of potential danger to equestrian users of this route.

- Having reviewed the documentation provided by the developer to local residents, I note that there is mention given to improving links between existing paths and rights of way. However, no specific detail on this is provided. Moreover, I note from site plans that there would be no permitted access over any of the proposed site for equestrian users. This runs very much counter to the projects stated aims of improving local socioeconomics. It appears that these are merely statements designed to placate local residents on the impact of the scheme and that there will be no tangible benefits for local residents with horses or indeed others such as pedestrians or cyclists.
- In our minds, this is a clear illustration as to how there has been insufficient consideration given by the developer to enhancing active, public and shared transport provision and accessibility as per paragraph 5.14.18 of the Overarching National Planning Policy Statement for Energy (NPS-EN1).

We hope this information is of use in your deliberations on this specific matter in relation to this application.

Yours sincerely,

Anna and Charles Simpson

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