

Planning Act 2008 – Section 89 and The Infrastructure Planning (Examination Procedure) Rules 2010 – Rule 8, Deadline 1

Application by EPL 001 Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for Stonestreet Green Solar

Summary of Written Representation prepared by Aldington & Bonnington Parish Council, 10 December 2024

The written representation expands on the following areas:

- Presenting information gathered as part of the Aldington and Bonnington Neighbourhood Plan (ABNP) process, which reflects the community's views.
- Suggestions for additional site visit locations from key viewpoints and footpath locations likely to be considerably impacted by the proposal.
- The need to ensure that the generation of energy does not negate the need to ensure that it is done sensitively taking into account local circumstances and mitigating this, even if this reduces the upper generation limit.
- Inadequate approach to considering the scale of the development, in this particular location.
- Inadequate consideration of alternative sites.
- The impacts on local heritage and archaeology. A Heritage Assessment and assessment of LiDAR data is submitted as part of the representation.
- Specific impacts on the view and approach to St Martin's Church, which could be mitigated by either removing this field completely or amending the access arrangements.
- Lack of consideration of the impact of the scheme on the setting of the Kent Downs National Landscape and other landscape character areas. A response to the landscape and visual impact assessment has been submitted as part of the representation.
- The need to consider impacts on the full range of long-distance views, many of which are identified in the ABNP.
- The need to apply the ABNP Dark Skies policy across the area, not just those areas identified in the Ashford Local Plan.
- Lack of consideration of the impacts on designated and non-designated environmental features impacted by the scheme, often irreversibly.
- Further consideration needed to assess fully the traffic impacts of the scheme including the Smeeth crossroads, Station Road and notably Goldwell Lane. There is a focus on car users, but with few bridleways, cyclists and horseriders are key users of the rural lanes.

- Lack of engagement between the Applicant and the local community, for instance on potential improvements to the rights of way network reflecting local needs.
- The need to consider whether a design panel could be consulted given the challenging topography and visual landscape issues present.
- The lack of direct economic benefit to the community.
- The loss of Grade 2 agricultural land, notably in the area around Goldwell Lane.
- The lack of clarity around how the battery storage will be designed and effectively camouflaged against the wider landscape.
- Challenges associated with the consultation and engagement in the overall process, with a particular call to host additional hearings in Aldington itself.