

**Comment by Nick Timothy MP on planning application ref: DC/25/0909/FUL**

***Planning application - a. ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays together with inverter stations, grid connection infrastructure, access gates, internal access tracks, security measures, storage and ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and Biodiversity enhancements b. operational vehicular access and two construction vehicle accesses c. two temporary construction compounds***

**An 83-hectare solar farm on land off Poulters Lane, Horringer, Suffolk**

1. I am opposed to all ground-mounted solar applications. It is bad energy policy, because Britain is the worst country in the world for solar, and the intermittency challenges and costs of renewable technologies are not sufficiently considered in public policy. It is bad farming policy, because we should not sacrifice our best land. And it is bad for local people — because it will permanently alter, for the worse, our beautiful countryside and will mean we get higher bills.

2. So I am writing to submit my strong and unequivocal objection to the proposed development of a large-scale solar array at Poulters Lane. This proposal would be a blight on our beautiful countryside and, on balance, is not right for our area due to its scale, location and road safety concerns.

3. I urge its rejection for the following reasons:

**a) Fundamental unsuitability of location and environmental impact**

4. This is the wrong proposal for the wrong location. The attempt to industrialise open countryside is something I firmly oppose. This is not progress — it is environmental and civic negligence. There are a number of other locations — including brownfield sites — that would have a far less detrimental impact. As Whepstead Parish Council has said, this project may harm local flora and fauna.

**b) Unacceptable visual aspect**

5. The proposed site lies in open rolling countryside area where the visual impact of industrial-scale solar panels would fundamentally transform the panorama. This would harm the rural character of the landscape, irrevocably changing the view for residents. Attempts to screen would not mitigate this, and this judgement is reinforced by the Planning Inspectorate's decision to uphold Ashford Borough Council's rejection of a proposed solar farm there. Views of open countryside will be destroyed by the construction of a solar farm.

**c) Road safety concerns**

6. Access to the site is not suitable for the heavy construction traffic which will be required to build this project. It will be dangerous for residents and other drivers to be confronted with heavy vehicles on these very narrow roads, causing a risk to safety. As

Horringer Parish Council has pointed out in its submission, there are speeding issues within the village of Horringer. Nearly a third of traffic passing through the village does so above the 30 mph speed limit. The PC is rightly concerned about the additional 700 HGV trips that are expected to use the site during construction. They also point to a well-known pinch point between the Six Bells and the Beehive. There are also concerns about the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. Two HGVs passing in this location at the same time will be dangerous. There are also areas with minimum width pavements.

**d) Building on good farmland**

7. I do not agree with viable grade 3 agricultural land being used for commercial energy production. This is an inappropriate use of acreage which could be otherwise used to enhance Britain's food security.

**Conclusion**

8. This application would have a negative impact on the surrounding community and countryside and should be rejected.