

Response to Kingsway Solar Targeted Consultation – January 2026

From Weston Colville Parish Council

Weston Colville PC remains disappointed that this industrialisation of the countryside appears still to be considered viable. The opposition within our community has not abated, and these insignificant change proposals will only make matters worse. The overall feel, from the document provided, is that the project is growing. Evidence of this is from the proposed increase in size of the 2 substations, the very much increased area for the BESS, and the proposal for additional panelled areas. The tiny offset where panels have been moved in Area C in no way mitigates anything. To address each change proposal in turn:

Change 1 – Additional panels are proposed. No suggestion is provided of whether any already proposed will now be removed from the design. There will be additional impact on public rights of way – much enjoyed by the effected communities.

Change 2 – Ditto comments for Change 1.

Both Change 1 & 2 may be seen in a different light if there was evidence that these additional areas provided relief elsewhere. There is no such evidence.

Change 3 – The additional areas marked for panels (C1 & C2) are way bigger than the areas to be relieved (C3 & C4). This provides further evidence that the project is growing

Change 4 – The increase in size will inevitably lead to an increase in noise, disturbance to wildlife, pollution from lights etc. Presumably the site will need to be secured by fencing, and other industrial paraphernalia, which is not acceptable.

Change 5 – The BESS is massively increased in size, which will only exacerbate the dangers identified in the Stage 2 consultation. The potential to permanently damage the underlying aquifer has not been addressed, nor has it been acknowledged that the BESS, should the project go any further, needs to be relocated away from the area where Cambridge and the surrounding villages draw their drinking water.

Change 6 – Ditto comments for Change 4.

The Parish Council remains deeply concerned that the consultation process continues to fall short of the standards expected for a development of this scale and impact, and that substantive concerns raised during the initial consultation have not been meaningfully addressed. It is particularly concerning that the targeted consultation gives the impression of being a procedural box-ticking exercise rather than a genuine attempt to engage with community feedback. Simply restating information and making minor amendments, without clearly responding to previously raised objections, undermines trust in the consultation process and does not align with the principles of meaningful public engagement.

The Parish Council is especially concerned by discrepancies between information provided verbally during briefings or meetings and that contained within the published consultation documents. In

several instances verbal assurances or explanations have not been reflected in the written material whilst key qualifications or caveats discussed verbally are absent from the published documentation.

The targeted consultation for the proposal also contains significant inaccuracies and deficiencies arising from the poor quality and the ambiguity of the maps provided. Several maps lack sufficient detail, clear boundaries, or consistent labelling, making it difficult to determine the exact extent of the proposed site, associated infrastructure, and its relationship to nearby properties, roads, and environmental features. In some cases, map scales are unclear and inconsistent, while in others the resolution is inadequate to identify field boundaries, access routes, or proximity to residential dwellings. This ambiguity creates confusion and increases the risk of misinterpretation by consultees. Furthermore, the absence of clear reference points and overlays, such as public rights of way, watercourses, or existing land uses, limits the ability of affected parties to assess potential impacts accurately.

There is also the concern that the targeted consultation does not include a transparent audit of previous feedback. Without a clear response to the points raised by residents, it is impossible to have confidence that the proposal has evolved in a way that reflects local knowledge, experience, and legitimate concerns. The making of the proposed route of the haul road is misleading. The wording is at odds with the diagram, and seems indicative of the lack of attention to detail throughout.

With the continued failure to publicly engage with the local community, changes to the proposal regarding Area C have not been fully explained and there has been no provision made for dialogue with the community between the publication of the targeted consultation and the deadline.

Still unaddressed is the concern relating to the absence of clear parameters regarding any potential compulsory purchase requirements associated with Area C. Despite making continued personal assurances to the contrary, Kingsway Solar's own statutory consultation documents confirms that the Development Consent Order (DCO) will seek powers for compulsory acquisition of land and/or rights needed for the scheme.

Since Area C lies within the defined "Developable Area" for solar panels and infrastructure, it falls within the scope of land that the Kingsway intends to cover in the DCO. The inclusion of compulsory purchase powers within the DCO fundamentally undermines the notion of voluntary negotiation and landowners may feel pressured into agreements to avoid the risk of compulsory acquisition.

The targeted consultation has not demonstrated that genuine, exhaustive attempts at voluntary agreements have been made in all relevant cases, particularly in respect to Area C. There is still no clear definition of the extent, criteria, or triggers for compulsory purchase. It does not clearly distinguish between permanent acquisition, acquisition of rights, and temporary occupation.

Landowners and the wider community have been given no meaningful indication of the level of risk or potential timescales involved and no reassurances have been provided that any compulsory purchase would be used solely as a last resort and in a proportionate manner. These inconsistencies and lack of clarity continue to create unnecessary anxiety for those affected landowners and residents, making it extremely difficult to understand the true nature and implications of the proposals.

The Parish Council expects a substantial change in approach, including clear, accurate information, honest responses to previously raised concerns, and respectful engagement with the community

most directly affected by this proposal. Without this, Kingsway Solar cannot credibly claim to have fulfilled its obligations to consult or to act in the interests of transparency and accountability.

In our response to the Stage 2 consultation, we cited many objections regarding noise, vibrations, light & other pollution, flooding risks, detrimental impact including loss of public rights of way, environmental impact on both wildlife & landscape, dangers on our narrow roads, the BESS, etc. etc. The list is endless, and none of the changes proposed at this stage address any of the points made, except perhaps in the area around our parish church and a single nearby listed building.

We wish to highlight one change that has not been mentioned in this targeted consultation. We remain implacably opposed to the panelling of area C6 in the original design. It makes no sense to continue with it – requiring as it does an expensive and damaging connection corridor & haul road. The thought occurs that it has been left in at this stage so Kingsway can be seen to respond to community concerns at a later stage by taking it out then. There is sufficient land in Changes 1 & 2 to remove this imposition, and no good reason has been provided as to why this has not been done. It is so close to homes, the closest in the whole proposal, and isolated from the rest of the development area. Weston Colville is surrounded on 3 sides – and the damage to health & well-being cannot be estimated. We can see for ourselves the damage in these areas the proposal has already had. One major concern is the increase in surface water flooding which will inevitably arise from building on this site. Homes at the bottom of Horseshoes Lane are already fearful of inundation, which has happened in the past. The effects on them from noise, light & vibration will need to be significantly mitigated should construction actually take place on this site. In addition, we shall also be seeking commensurate mitigation including additional drainage ditches, holding areas and planting to help offset the likely damage.

Weston Colville PC wishes to restate its opposition to this proposal, and rejects the notion that any of these 6 changes have in any way addressed the concerns raised at the Stage 2 consultation. Indeed, the situation now presented looks much worse.