



# Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

Statement of Community Involvement  
on behalf of Elstree Green Limited

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Prepared by Alpaca Communications | December 2020 |  
Document Reference: R014



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## **1. Executive Summary**

Elstree Green Limited (“the Applicant”) conducted a programme of public consultation and stakeholder engagement with regards to its proposals for a solar farm and battery storage facility on land to the northeast and west of Elstree Aerodrome (“the Site”). Although we are currently living through a pandemic, the Applicant sought to listen closely to the community, and pro-actively seek their involvement in the development of the proposals. A number of the issues raised by residents informed amendments to the submitted scheme.

The consultation centred around a virtual public exhibition, which was held on Thursday October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, via a webinar. Prior to the virtual public exhibition, the Applicant and Project Team presented and discussed early stage proposals in the form of a virtual presentation (Appendix 1) to Aldenham School on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020, a virtual presentation (Appendix 2) to Aldenham Parish Council & Aldenham East & West Ward Councillors on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020, a virtual presentation (Appendix 3) to Haberdasher Aske’s School on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and a virtual presentation (Appendix 4) to Letchmore Heath Village Trust on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

An eleven-slide deck presentation (Appendix 5) was presented during the virtual public exhibition, giving information about the Applicant, the application site and the conceptual design of the project. The Applicant and its development team were panellists for the virtual public exhibition, helping to explain the design of the site as well as engage in a Q&A session answering any questions attendees had. Attendees were encouraged to provide their thoughts and opinions through an online survey after the virtual public exhibition, or via submitting the feedback form included in the brochure via post or email. Additionally, the development team provided attendees with contact details if they wished to send any follow up questions or feedback – as a result of this members of the project team visited the local area to have socially distanced one-to-one meeting with residents who had specific concerns over the proposed site.

The consultation feedback received via the submitted feedback forms and online survey was constructive. Of the 32 local residents that completed a feedback form or online survey, eight were in favour of the proposal, 23 were in objection and one was of no opinion.

Key matters raised during pre-application consultation included:

- Impact on Green Belt;
- Construction periods;
- Traffic routing;
- Size of the project;
- Glint & glare impact especially in regard to the Aerodrome;
- Safety impact on those living next to site;
- Impact on local schools

The consultation also sought community feedback on the Concept Design (Figure 2) which outlined construction traffic route, interpretation boards as well as feedback on planting and whether residents would like to see an improvement in connectivity of footpaths and whether low-key nature areas around ponds should be included on the site that footpaths go past.

The Residents that responded were clear that they would like footpath connectivity to be improved and planting to take place along the ecological corridor low-key nature areas to be around the ponds. Majority of residents did not share a clear preference regarding the most suitable location for the interpretation boards.

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In response to a number of the issues raised during the public consultation process the design of the scheme has been amended as follows:

- The Applicant has reduced the area of solar panels on the site by 9.6 hectares or approximately 10%, to increase the buffer between the scheme and neighbouring properties.
- After consultation with Aldenham School, the Applicant has removed inverters from Field 7 adjacent to where Aldenham School's boarding houses are located.
- After a socially distanced one-to-one consultation between the Applicant and residents in Ward Cottages, Aldenham Road, the Applicant has decided to pull the project back, further away from the Ward Cottages and their communal garden area next to Field 7. The site will be moved back to the South substantially to mitigate the immediate views from the Ward Cottages.
- After a socially distanced one-to-one consultation between the Applicant and a resident on Butterfly Lane, the Applicant has pulled the project back substantially to the footpath, further away from Butterfly Lane by reducing the number of panels it will need. In addition, taking into account the viewpoints to the north and northeast, the Applicant has pulled back the site further by reducing panels to help mitigate the views. Further, the Applicant is looking at ways to improve the areas where they have pulled back the site design by adding additional planting and hedgerows.
- After a socially distanced one to one consultation between the Applicant and residents on Watling Street, the Applicant has decided to pull the project back, further away from the Watling Street properties by reducing the number of panels. Based on resident suggestions, the Applicant has removed panels and infrastructure from the field immediately behind the Watling Street properties and back to the existing footpath which will now be the boundary of the site. Furthermore, the Applicant is able to provide additional hedgerow planting in between the footpath and the property to further mitigate the view.
- After correspondence between the Applicant and the resident at Hilfield Lodge, the Applicant has decided to pull the project back, further away from Hilfield Lane in Field 1 to mitigate the impact the scheme has on Hilfield Lodge. Furthermore, the Applicant has also increased the buffer between the inverter locations and Hilfield Lodge.
- After consultation with the Belstone football club on the corner Watling Street and Butterfly Lane, the Applicant has provided a permissive footpath around the boundary of the football pitches as an alternative route to the one that currently crosses them.
- Following consultation with the local schools and residents, construction traffic and deliveries will be routed to the site outside of peak hours

In addition to reducing the area of the panels, the new design also offers:

- Over 7.5ha of grassland and wildflower planting
- 6.7ha of low intervention skylark habitat
- 2ha of parkland

## **Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage**

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- Two nature areas
- 0.7ha of orchard
- 578m of permissive paths linking to the Hertfordshire Way and providing an alternative route around Belstone FC football pitches
- 2.4km of green corridor

## **Introduction**

Elstree Green Limited proposes the installation and operation of a grid connected solar farm and battery storage facility (“the Proposed Development”) on land to the northeast and west of Elstree Aerodrome (“the Site”).

The Proposed Development would supply 49.9MW of clean renewable electricity to the National Grid, providing the equivalent annual electrical needs of approximately 15,600 family homes. The anticipated CO<sub>2</sub> displacement is around 24,500 tonnes per annum, which represents an emission saving equivalent of a reduction in approximately 8,100 cars on the road every year. It is estimated this solar farm will increase the total amount of renewable electricity generated in Hertsmere from 5.4% to 20%, bringing Hertsmere closer to the national average of 33% electricity generated from renewable sources.

This document provides an overview of the consultation programme, the feedback received together with an explanation as to how that feedback led to changes to the scheme design.

## **2. Approach to Consultation**

Alpaca Communications was appointed by the Applicant to assist with the pre-application public consultation on the Proposed Development.

Alpaca Communications is a specialist public consultation agency with broad expertise in advising on and implementing consultation programmes for both private and public-sector clients.

Alpaca Communications understands the role pre-application consultation can play in helping to influence a project before a planning application is submitted and address any concerns that local residents may have.

We are currently living through a pandemic, the likes of which the country has not experienced in living memory. The Application and the development team agree with the recent guidance issued by the UK's Government's Chief Planner, which emphasised that planning applications that positively impact the country and local communities must continue to come forward.

The Applicant strongly believes that now, more than ever, it is vital that local communities are able to see and shape planning applications that may have an impact on them.

'Front-loading' public engagement in this way helps ensure the proposals are as informed as possible by the local community and other stakeholders prior to the submission of the planning application to the relevant Local Planning Authority. This approach recognises that all parties benefit from a communications programme that ensures all of those people with a potential interest in a development are fully informed of the proposals and have had the opportunity to input early on. The Applicant is supportive of and fully committed to meaningful pre-application consultation.

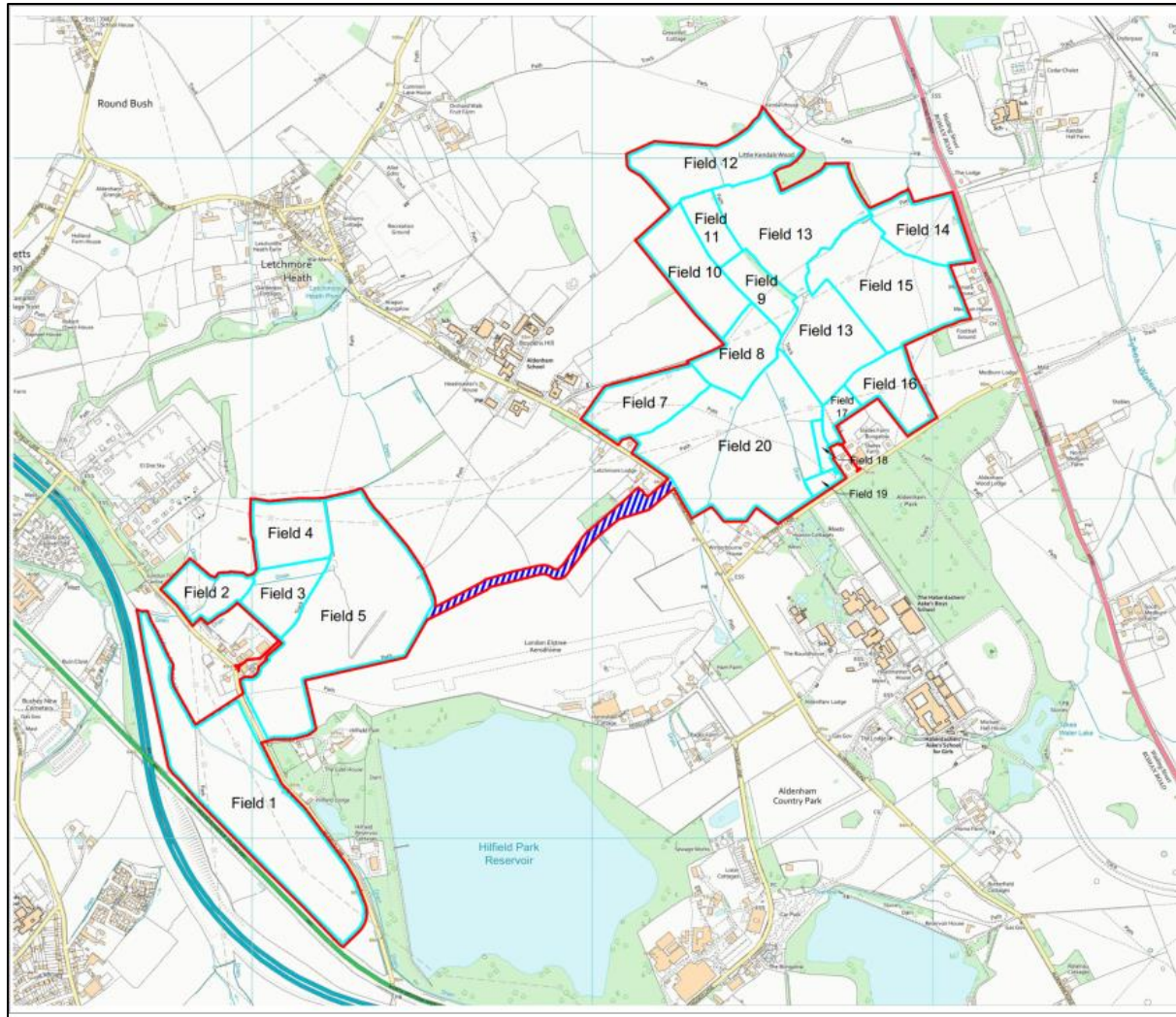
A project brochure was sent by post to residents and local businesses, this replicated the materials local residents would expect to see at a traditional public exhibition, including site maps, concept designs and viewpoint sketches. The brochure also included a feedback form which could be submitted via email or by using the enclosed prepaid envelope. The local resident brochure was sent via Royal Mail to a distribution area which covered 3.66 square miles and 541 residential and business addresses. The distribution area was specifically designed to reach those who may be immediately impacted by the proposal by way of construction traffic routing or visual impact.

To replace a traditional face-to-face public exhibition, we hosted a virtual webinar. The brochure invited local residents to attend the webinar and Q&A session event. The webinar had a forty-minute presentation by the Applicant and development team, which was followed by an extensive Q&A session where residents were able to ask questions about the proposals. A recording of the webinar was hosted on the dedicated public consultation website, which could be viewed at any time here <https://www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/>

### 3. Scheme Overview

The site comprises approximately 20 arable and grassland pasture fields totalling an area of approximately 130 hectares. The Site has been subdivided into two main parcels and the fields within the Site are referred to as Fields 1 to 20 (field 6 was removed during the design of the scheme).

- The western parcel (grid reference: TQ151965 (centre of parcel)) and comprises Field 1 to 5, as shown on figure 1
- The eastern parcel (grid reference: TQ165975 (centre of parcel)) and comprises Field 7 to 20 as shown on figure 1



**Figure 1: Extract from Site Location Plan.**

The Site is located wholly within the London Metropolitan Green Belt. The Hertsmere Borough Council Local Plan Core Strategy (2013) identifies that 80% of the borough falls within the Green Belt, with the four main settlements of Borehamwood, Bushey, Potters Bar and Radlett constituting the only urbanised areas in the borough.

The Site is located in a semi-suburban setting, with localised intrusion of man-made features areas, including the Elstree Aerodrome, adjacent to the southern boundary of the western parcel; Aldenham



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Road, which separates the two parcels; Hilfield Lane, which intersects the western parcel; the M1, which lies approximately 50m west of the western parcel (Field 1); and the A41 (North Western Avenue), which lies adjacent to the southwestern boundary of Field 1; Butterfly Lane and Watling Street, which lie adjacent to the southern and eastern boundary of the eastern parcel (Fields 7 and 20), respectively; properties and schools along Aldenham Road; overhead power lines, which cross over the Site; and the 400kV Elstree Substation which is located within approximately 100m to the north-west of the western parcel (Fields 2 and 4). The settlements within the wider context of the Site include Letchmore Heath, Round Bush and Radlett to the north; Bushey to the south-west, and Borehamwood to the east.

The Site is currently accessed via Hilfield Road and Butterfly Lane. The Site wholly comprises Subgrade 3b agricultural land, as identified by the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), which is not considered Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land.

For a full description of the Site, its surroundings and the Proposed Development please refer to the Design and Access Statement (Document Ref: R004).

## **4. The Consultation**

### **5.1 Consultation Aims**

The aims of the consultation were as follows:

- To work with local stakeholders and residents from the outset and see how we could improve the proposals by taking onboard their suggestions.
- To raise awareness of the proposals within the local community and to gain their valuable insight based on their local knowledge.
- To gain a firm understanding of the key issues affecting the local community.
- To ensure the local community had the opportunity to give feedback on the proposals, especially during the on-going pandemic.

### **5.2 Consultation overview and briefing political stakeholders**

On Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020, members of the development team virtually met with the Head, the Headmaster and the Bursar of Aldenham School and presented early stage proposals (Appendix 1).

On Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020, members of the development team virtually met with Aldenham Parish Council and two Ward Councillors representing Aldenham East and Aldenham West (Cllr Clapper & Cllr Selby) and presented early stage proposals (Appendix 2).

On Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020, members of the development team virtually met with Operations Manager of Haberdasher Aske's School and presented early stage proposals (Appendix 3).

On Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020, members of the development team virtually met with Letchmore Heath Village Trust and presented early stage proposals (Appendix 4).

The project brochure (Appendix 6) for the virtual public consultation event was sent out on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020, which covered over 500 surrounding residents and local businesses (see Appendix 7 for postal distribution area) inviting them to a virtual public exhibition on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2020. The Applicant held a virtual public exhibition, where designs of the proposed scheme were available for local residents to provide feedback on.

A website for the project (Appendix 8) was also created which can be accessed at the following address: <https://www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/>. The website provides visitors with an overview of the proposals, a recording of the virtual public exhibition as well the opportunity to get in contact with the development team or leave feedback.

### **5.3 The virtual public exhibition**

A virtual public exhibition was held on Thursday October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 via a webinar, 44 local residents attended the virtual event and four members of the development team were panellists for the session. An online presentation was presented during the virtual public exhibition, giving information about the Applicant, the application site and the conceptual design of the project. The Applicant and its development team were panellists of the virtual public exhibition, helping to explain the design of the site as well as engage in a Q&A session answering any questions attendees had.

Attendees were encouraged to provide their thoughts and opinions through an online survey after the virtual public exhibition, or via submitted the feedback form included in the brochure via post or

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email. Additionally, the development team provided attendees with contact details if they wished to send any follow up questions or feedback – as a result of this members of the project team visited the local area to have socially distanced one-to-one meeting with residents who had specific concerns over the proposed site.

A recording of the webinar was hosted on the dedicated public consultation website, which can be viewed at any time here: <https://www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/>

Figure 2 below shows the Concept Design presented at the exhibition on which community feedback was sought.



**Figure 2: Concept Design Presented at the Virtual Public Exhibition and included in the Brochure**

## 6. Consultation Feedback

### 6.1 Verbal Feedback / Questions

The virtual public exhibition webinar also included a live Q&A session, this lasted for approximately three hours. The most frequent issues that were raised or asked about by the attendees included Impact on greenbelt land, construction periods, traffic routing, size of the project, glint and glare impact especially in regard to the Aerodrome, safety impact on those living next to site and impact on local schools.

### 6.2 Feedback forms

The development team received 32 completed feedback forms via post or online feedback forms after the webinar. The results have been combined and are presented below.

The brochure feedback form and post webinar survey included identical questions, four multiple choice tick box questions, a comment section for question four and a space for additional comments.

**Question one: Has this local resident brochure / webinar been helpful in understanding our proposal?**

YES	NO	UNSURE
28	1	3

The results of question one reflects the effectiveness of the local resident brochure and webinar, demonstrating how attendees felt engaged and informed.

**Question two: What is the most important issue to you about our proposal, where 1 is of highest importance and 9 is of least importance?**

Table 1 collates the responses and ranks them in their order of concern as expressed by attendees, it reveals that Greenbelt impact and visual impact were the two main concerns expressed by attendees.

**Table 1: Issues of Importance to the Local Community**

RANK	ISSUE	SCORE*
1	Greenbelt impact	60
2	Visual impact	65
3	Loss of agricultural land	78
4	Landscape impact	81
5	Impact on footpaths	92
6	Climate Change	94
7	Residential amenity impact	96
8	Increasing Biodiversity	108
9	Construction Traffic	139

\*The lower the score, the higher the issue was in terms of importance for consultees.

**Question three: With regards to the proposals you have read/heard about, are you:**

IN FAVOUR	IN OBJECTION	OF NO OPINION
8	23	1

Question four: We would welcome your feedback on all aspects of the emerging design shown in the brochure, including whether:

- 4.1 Are the proposed locations of Interpretation boards in the right place?

COMMENTS
Yes
Yes
Yes
What are interpretation boards?
Yes

- 4.2 We have left a broad buffer along the footpaths across the site to preserve openness and create ecological corridor - would you like this kept open or planted?

LEFT OPEN	PLANTED
0	5

- 4.3 Would you like the layout of the site to allow improved connectivity of footpaths?

COMMENTS
Yes
Yes
Footpaths are fine
Yes
Yes
I would like a broad buffer along footpaths and connectivity to be improved
I am neutral

- 4.4 Would you like to see low-key nature areas around ponds on the site that footpaths go past? This could include informal seating, signage and wildflowers.

COMMENTS
Yes
Yes
Wildflowers would be lovely
Yes
Yes, anything to make them less
Yes
Yes
Again I am neutral

**Question five: Your views are important to us, if you'd like us to keep in touch how would you like us to contact you?**

WEBSITE	EMAIL	NEWSLETTER	SMS
1	22	2	0

Thirty-two feedback forms were received, of these forms below were the ones that contained detailed comments. Table 2 (Appendix 9) captures those comments.

#### 6.4 Summary of Feedback

In the context of the pandemic, the consultation programme successfully engaged a reasonable number of residents that live in close proximity to the proposed development site, over 90% of those that completed the feedback form felt that the brochure and/or webinar had been 'helpful'. The most frequently cited concerns were loss of green belt land and visual impact.

The consultation also sought community feedback on the Concept Design (Figure 2) which outlined, interpretation boards as well as feedback on footpath connectivity, planting and whether low-key nature areas around ponds should be included on the site that footpaths go past.

The Residents that responded were clear that they would like footpath connectivity to be improved and planting to take place along the ecological corridor low-key nature areas to be around the ponds. Majority of residents did not share a clear preference regarding the most suitable location for the interpretation boards.

#### 6.5 How Feedback Influenced the Scheme Design

In response to a number of the issues raised during the public consultation process the design of the scheme has been amended as follows:

- The Applicant has reduced the area of solar panels on the site by 9.6 hectares or approximately 10%, to increase the buffer between the scheme and neighbouring properties.
- After consultation with Aldenham School, the Applicant has removed inverters from Field 7 adjacent to where Aldenham School's boarding houses are located.
- After a socially distanced one to one consultation between the Applicant and residents in Ward Cottages, Aldenham Road, the Applicant has decided to pull the project back, further away from the Ward Cottages and their communal garden area next to Field 7. The site will be moved back to the South substantially to mitigate the immediate views from the Ward Cottages.
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- After a socially distanced one to one consultation between the Applicant and residents on Watling Street, the Applicant has decided to pull the project back, further away from the Watling Street properties by reducing the number of panels. Based on resident suggestions, the Applicant has removed panels and infrastructure from the field immediately behind the Watling Street properties and back to the existing footpath which will now be the boundary of the site. Furthermore, the Applicant is able to provide additional hedgerow planting in between the footpath and the property to further mitigate the view.
- After correspondence between the Applicant and the resident at Hilfield Lodge, the Applicant has decided to pull the project back, further away from Hilfield Lane in Field 1 to mitigate the impact the scheme has on Hilfield Lodge. Furthermore, the Applicant has also increased the buffer between the inverter locations and Hilfield Lodge.
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- Following consultation with the local schools and residents, construction traffic and deliveries will be routed to the site outside of peak hours

In addition to reducing the area of the panels, the new design also offers:

- Over 7.5ha of grassland and wildflower planting
- 6.7ha of low intervention skylark habitat
- 2ha of parkland
- Two nature areas
- 0.7ha of orchard
- 578m of permissive paths linking to the Hertfordshire Way and providing an alternative route around Belstone FC football pitches
- 2.4km of green corridor

## **7. Conclusion**

The Applicant undertook a comprehensive programme of public consultation, which successfully engaged local residents and their representatives. The consultation identified and engaged with local residents and key community, political and business stakeholders and the feedback received has influenced the final scheme design.



## **8. Appendices**

- Appendix 1: Aldenham School PowerPoint Presentation
- Appendix 2: Aldenham Parish Council & Ward Councillors PowerPoint Presentation
- Appendix 3: Haberdasher Aske's School PowerPoint Presentation
- Appendix 4: Letchmore Heath Village Trust PowerPoint Presentation
- Appendix 5: Virtual Public Consultation Webinar PowerPoint Presentation
- Appendix 6: Local Resident Brochure
- Appendix 7: Brochure Distribution Map
- Appendix 8: Website Home Page
- Appendix 9: Table 2: Summary of comments

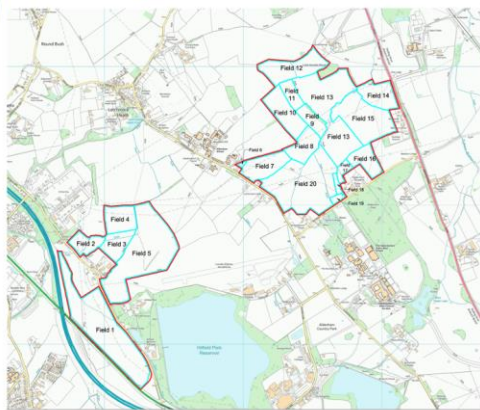
## Appendix 1: Aldenham School PowerPoint Presentation

### Hilfield Solar Farm

Aldenham School - 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020

### Introducing Enso Energy

- ▶ Enso Energy is one of the UK's most experienced net zero energy developers, with a strong focus on solar energy.
- ▶ Only by working with the the people most affected by renewable energy development will we be able to deliver the clean energy the country needs.
- ▶ Our expert team is honest, considerate and diligent and our ambition is to use the latest solar technology to make a positive impact on the country and the communities where we work.
- ▶ We have a proven track record in developing large scale energy projects, totalling in excess of 1,500MW of distributed generation.
- ▶ As a team, we have extensive solar development experience. Our consultants have developed over 400MW of solar energy across the UK



### Location of Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage



### Land Use

- ▶ A solar farm is part of a temporary diversification strategy. It will NOT change the land classification from agricultural Greenfield to commercial/industrial Brownfield.
- ▶ Land that has been intensively farmed can benefit from resting and rejuvenating the soil. Areas left fallow for 'Greening' can have other knock-on benefits for wider environmental quality that benefits rural amenity and the rural economy.
- ▶ A solar farm does not inhibit continued co-located agricultural use like grazing.
- ▶ At Hilfield Solar Farm the generating station would have an export capacity of up to 49.9MW for distribution to the national grid. This is equivalent to the annual electrical needs of approximately 16,000 homes and a carbon emissions saving of 25,000 tonnes per year, the equivalent of taking approximately 8,000 cars off the road every year.



### Design and Planning Process

- ▶ Three stage iterative design process
- ▶ **Stage 1: Concept Scheme Design**
  - ▶ Preliminary planning and environmental studies e.g. visual, ecology, traffic, flood risk etc
  - ▶ Submit EIA Screening Opinion: Ref 20/02113/ENSC
  - ▶ Community Consultation (including webinar)
- ▶ **Stage 2: Assessment Scheme Design (95% Fixed)**
  - ▶ Prepare environmental impact assessment studies and planning application
- ▶ **Stage 3: Planning Application Scheme Design (100% Fixed)**
  - ▶ Submit Planning Application



### Concept Scheme Design (Not to Scale)



# Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

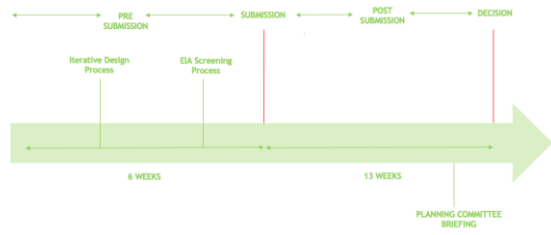
## R014: Statement of Community Involvement

### Benefits

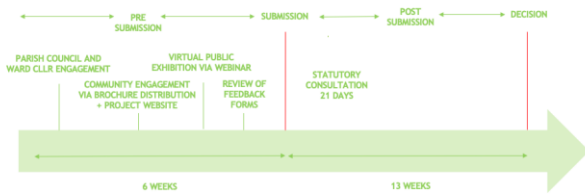
- ▶ It will assist Hertsmere Borough Council to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with local, national and international targets.
- ▶ Contribute towards the security of energy supply in Hertsmere Borough through the provision of local, competitive renewable energy supply.
- ▶ We estimate the solar farm will increase the total amount of renewable electricity generated in Hertsmere from 5.4% to 20% bringing Hertsmere closer to the national average of 33% electricity generated from renewable sources.
- ▶ Efficient technology choice that utilises bifacial modules generating c. 4% higher energy yield than mono-facial modules.
- ▶ Significantly enhanced biodiversity with options to reconnect ancient wildlife corridors, create a nature conservation area with wildflower meadows around the panels and hedgerow planting.
- ▶ No designated landscape, heritage or ecological designations are on site
- ▶ Potential for continued agricultural use of land through low intensity sheep grazing
- ▶ Temporary use (c. 35 years) that is easily reversed, allowing soil quality to improve ahead of return to sole agricultural use



### Planning Timeline



### Community Engagement Timeline



Thank you for your time  
Any questions?

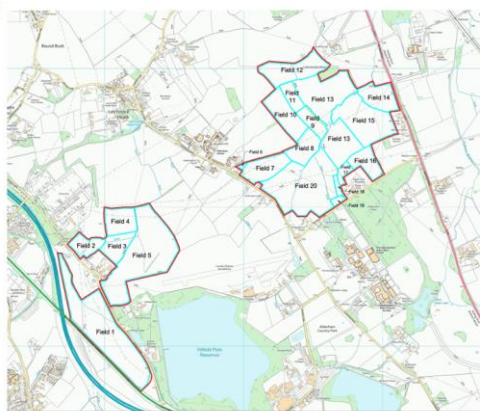
## Appendix 2: Aldenham Parish Council & Ward Councillors PowerPoint Presentation

### Hilfield Solar Farm

Aldenham Parish Council - 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020

### Introducing Enso Energy

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### Location of Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage



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- ▶ A solar farm does not inhibit continued co-located agricultural use like grazing.
- ▶ At Hilfield Solar Farm the generating station would have an export capacity of up to 49.9MW for distribution to the national grid. This is equivalent to the annual electrical needs of approximately 16,000 homes and a carbon emissions saving of 25,000 tonnes per year, the equivalent of taking approximately 8,000 cars off the road every year.



### Design and Planning Process

- ▶ Three stage iterative design process
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  - ▶ Submit Planning Application



### Concept Scheme Design (Not to Scale)



# Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

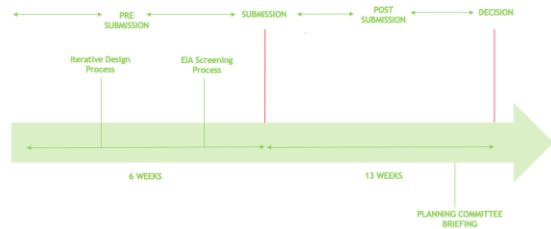
## R014: Statement of Community Involvement

### Benefits

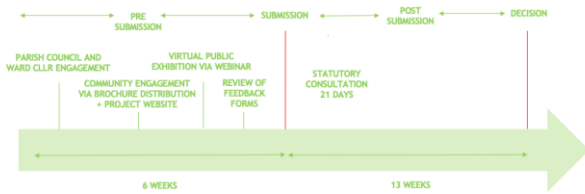
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- ▶ No designated landscape, heritage or ecological designations are on site
- ▶ Potential for continued agricultural use of land through low intensity sheep grazing
- ▶ Temporary use (c. 35 years) that is easily reversed, allowing soil quality to improve ahead of return to sole agricultural use



### Planning Timeline



### Community Engagement Timeline



Thank you for your time  
Any questions?

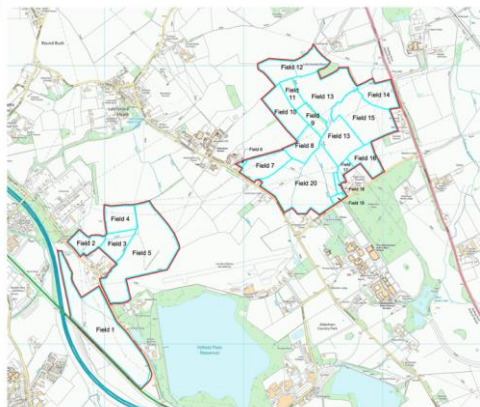
## Appendix 3: Haberdasher Aske's School PowerPoint Presentation

### Hilfield Solar Farm

Haberdasher Aske's School - 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020

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- ▶ Enso Energy is one of the UK's most experienced net zero energy developers, with a strong focus on solar energy.
- ▶ Only by working with the the people most affected by renewable energy development will we be able to deliver the clean energy the country needs.
- ▶ Our expert team is honest, considerate and diligent and our ambition is to use the latest solar technology to make a positive impact on the country and the communities where we work.
- ▶ We have a proven track record in developing large scale energy projects, totalling in excess of 1,500MW of distributed generation.
- ▶ As a team, we have extensive solar development experience. Our consultants have developed over 400MW of solar energy across the UK



### Location of Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage



### Land Use

- ▶ A solar farm is part of a temporary diversification strategy. It will NOT change the land classification from agricultural Greenfield to commercial/industrial Brownfield.
- ▶ Land that has been intensively farmed can benefit from resting and rejuvenating the soil. Areas left fallow for 'Greening' can have other knock-on benefits for wider environmental quality that benefits rural amenity and the rural economy.
- ▶ A solar farm does not inhibit continued co-located agricultural use like grazing.
- ▶ At Hilfield Solar Farm the generating station would have an export capacity of up to 49.9MW for distribution to the national grid. This is equivalent to the annual electrical needs of approximately 16,000 homes and a carbon emissions saving of 25,000 tonnes per year, the equivalent of taking approximately 8,000 cars off the road every year.



### Design and Planning Process

- ▶ Three stage iterative design process
- ▶ **Stage 1: Concept Scheme Design**
- ▶ Preliminary planning and environmental studies e.g. visual, ecology, traffic, flood risk etc.
- ▶ Submit EIA Screening Opinion: Ref 20/02113/ENSC
- ▶ Community Consultation (including webinar)
- ▶ **Stage 2: Assessment Scheme Design (95% Fixed)**
- ▶ Prepare environmental impact assessment studies and planning application
- ▶ **Stage 3: Planning Application Scheme Design (100% Fixed)**
- ▶ Submit Planning Application



### Concept Scheme Design (Not to Scale)



# Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

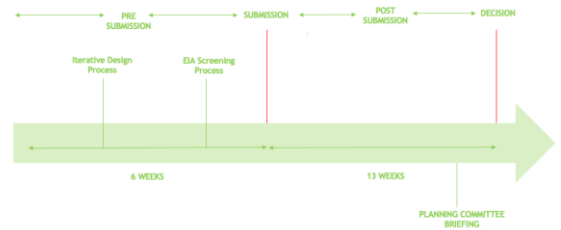
## R014: Statement of Community Involvement

### Benefits

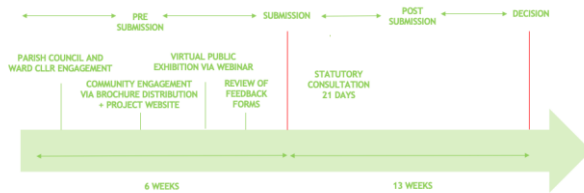
- ▶ It will assist Hertsmere Borough Council to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with local, national and international targets.
- ▶ Contribute towards the security of energy supply in Hertsmere Borough through the provision of local, competitive renewable energy supply.
- ▶ We estimate the solar farm will increase the total amount of renewable electricity generated in Hertsmere from 5.4% to 20% bringing Hertsmere closer to the national average of 33% electricity generated from renewable sources.
- ▶ Efficient technology choice that utilises bifacial modules generating c. 4% higher energy yield than mono-facial modules.
- ▶ Significantly enhanced biodiversity with options to reconnect ancient wildlife corridors, create a nature conservation area with wildflower meadows around the panels and hedgerow planting.
- ▶ No designated landscape, heritage or ecological designations are on site
- ▶ Potential for continued agricultural use of land through low intensity sheep grazing
- ▶ Temporary use (c. 35 years) that is easily reversed, allowing soil quality to improve ahead of return to sole agricultural use



### Planning Timeline



### Community Engagement Timeline



Thank you for your time  
Any questions?

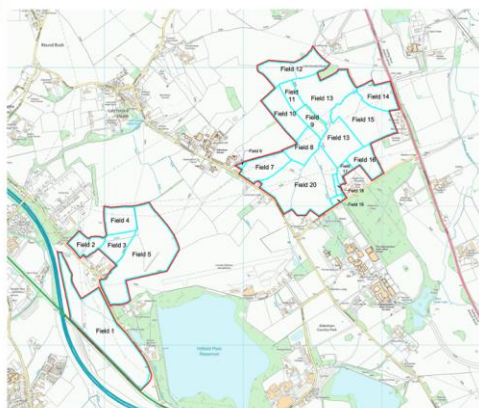
## Appendix 4: Letchmore Heath Village Trust PowerPoint Presentation

### Hilfield Solar Farm

Letchmore Heath Village Trust- 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020

#### Introducing Enso Energy

- ▶ Enso Energy is one of the UK's most experienced net zero energy developers, with a strong focus on solar energy.
- ▶ Only by working with the the people most affected by renewable energy development will we be able to deliver the clean energy the country needs.
- ▶ Our expert team is honest, considerate and diligent and our ambition is to use the latest solar technology to make a positive impact on the country and the communities where we work.
- ▶ We have a proven track record in developing large scale energy projects, totalling in excess of 1,500MW of distributed generation.
- ▶ As a team, we have extensive solar development experience. Our consultants have developed over 400MW of solar energy across the UK



#### Location of Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage



#### Land Use

- ▶ A solar farm is part of a temporary diversification strategy. It will NOT change the land classification from agricultural Greenfield to commercial/industrial Brownfield.
- ▶ Land that has been intensively farmed can benefit from resting and rejuvenating the soil. Areas left fallow for 'Greening' can have other knock-on benefits for wider environmental quality that benefits rural amenity and the rural economy.
- ▶ A solar farm does not inhibit continued co-located agricultural use like grazing.
- ▶ At Hilfield Solar Farm the generating station would have an export capacity of up to 49.9MW for distribution to the national grid. This is equivalent to the annual electrical needs of approximately 16,000 homes and a carbon emissions saving of 25,000 tonnes per year, the equivalent of taking approximately 8,000 cars off the road every year.



#### Design and Planning Process

- ▶ Three stage iterative design process
- ▶ **Stage 1: Concept Scheme Design**
- ▶ Preliminary planning and environmental studies e.g. visual, ecology, traffic, flood risk etc
- ▶ Submit EIA Screening Opinion: Ref 20/02113/ENSC
- ▶ Community Consultation (including webinar)
- ▶ **Stage 2: Assessment Scheme Design (95% Fixed)**
- ▶ Prepare environmental impact assessment studies and planning application
- ▶ **Stage 3: Planning Application Scheme Design (100% Fixed)**
- ▶ Submit Planning Application



#### Concept Scheme Design (Not to Scale)





# Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

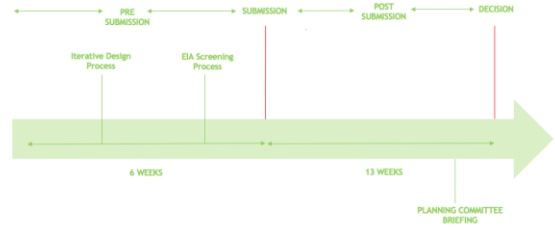
## R014: Statement of Community Involvement

### Benefits

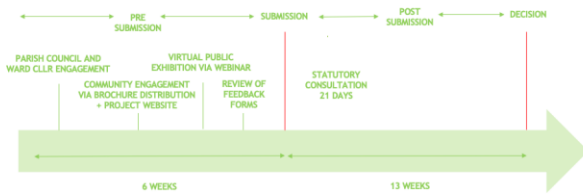
- ▶ It will assist Hertsmere Borough Council to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with local, national and international targets.
- ▶ Contribute towards the security of energy supply in Hertsmere Borough through the provision of local, competitive renewable energy supply.
- ▶ We estimate the solar farm will increase the total amount of renewable electricity generated in Hertsmere from 5.4% to 20% bringing Hertsmere closer to the national average of 33% electricity generated from renewable sources.
- ▶ Efficient technology choice that utilises bifacial modules generating c. 4% higher energy yield than mono-facial modules.
- ▶ Significantly enhanced biodiversity with options to reconnect ancient wildlife corridors, create a nature conservation area with wildflower meadows around the panels and hedgerow planting.
- ▶ No designated landscape, heritage or ecological designations are on site
- ▶ Potential for continued agricultural use of land through low intensity sheep grazing
- ▶ Temporary use (c. 35 years) that is easily reversed, allowing soil quality to improve ahead of return to sole agricultural use



### Planning Timeline



### Community Engagement Timeline



Thank you for your time  
Any questions?

## Appendix 5: Virtual Public Consultation Webinar PowerPoint Presentation

### Hilfield Solar Farm

Public Consultation Webinar - 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020

### Introducing the team

- ▶ Macquarie and the Green Investment Group (and its predecessor organisation, the Green Investment Bank), have supported nearly 7.5 GW of renewable projects in the UK - and are specialists in structuring and developing corporate PPAs.
- ▶ The project is being led by Enso Energy, one of the UK's most experienced net zero energy developers, with a strong focus on solar energy.
- ▶ Enso has a proven track record in developing large scale energy projects, totalling in excess of 1,500MW of distributed generation.
- ▶ We have appointed Aardvark to lead on the planning application and environmental assessments as they also have extensive solar development experience having advised on over 500MW of solar energy across the UK.
- ▶ Our expert team is honest, considerate and diligent and our ambition is to use the latest solar technology to make a positive impact on the country and the communities where we work.



### Concept Scheme Design



At Hilfield Solar Farm the generating station would have an export capacity of up to 49.9MW for distribution to the national grid.

This is equivalent to;

- the annual electrical needs of approximately 16,000 homes in Hertsmere.
- a carbon emissions saving of 25,000 tonnes per year
- the equivalent of taking approximately 8,000 cars off the road every year.

It's estimated this solar farm will increase the total amount of renewable electricity generated in Hertsmere from 5.4% to 20%, bringing Hertsmere closer to the national average of 33% electricity generated from renewable sources.

(not to scale)



### Temporary Land Use

- ▶ The solar farm would have an operational life of 35 years after which it could be returned to agricultural use.
- ▶ A solar farm is therefore part of a temporary diversification strategy. It will NOT change the land classification from agricultural Greenfield to commercial/industrial Brownfield.
- ▶ Land that has been intensively farmed can benefit from resting and rejuvenating the soil. Areas left fallow for 'Greening' can have other knock-on benefits for wider environmental quality that benefits rural amenity and the rural economy.
- ▶ A solar farm does not inhibit continued co-located agricultural use like grazing.

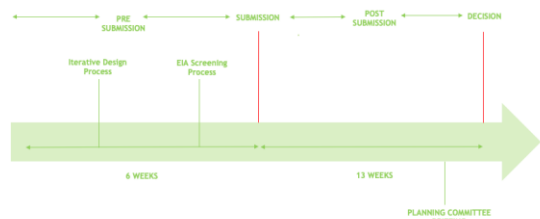


### Benefits

- ▶ It will assist Hertsmere Borough Council to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with local, national and international targets and its declared Climate Emergency.
- ▶ Contribute towards the security of energy supply in Hertsmere Borough Council through the provision of local, competitive renewable energy supply.
- ▶ Efficient technology choice that utilises bifacial modules generating c. 4% higher energy yield than mono-facial modules.
- ▶ Significantly enhanced biodiversity with options to reconnect ancient wildlife corridors, create a nature conservation area with wildflower meadows around the panels and hedgerow planting.
- ▶ Potential for continued agricultural use of land through low intensity sheep grazing
- ▶ Temporary use (c. 35 years) that is easily reversed, allowing soil quality to improve ahead of return to sole agricultural use



### Planning Timeline



# Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

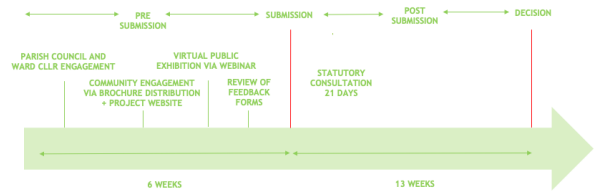
## R014: Statement of Community Involvement

### Design and Planning Process

- ▶ Three stage iterative design process
- ▶ **Stage 1: Concept Scheme Design**
- ▶ Preliminary planning and environmental studies e.g. visual, ecology, traffic, flood risk etc. were undertaken between February and August this year
- ▶ EIA Screening Opinion request was submitted in August: Ref 20/02113/ENSC
- ▶ Community Consultation (including webinar) - September/October
- ▶ **Stage 2: Assessment Scheme Design (95% Fixed)**
- ▶ Prepare environmental impact assessment studies and planning application - September/October
- ▶ **Stage 3: Planning Application Scheme Design (100% Fixed)**
- ▶ Submit Planning Application - October/November



### Community Engagement Timeline



### Feedback we've had so far...

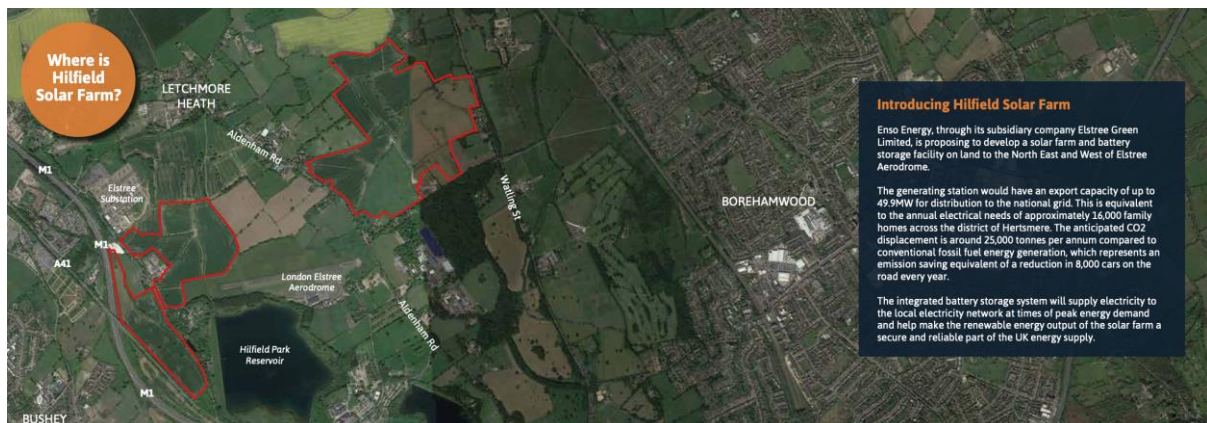
- Concerns about glint and glare on air traffic, traffic, footpath users and local residents
- Potential noise generated by the site, particularly in reference to the local schools
- What guarantee is there that the site will not become brownfield sites once the project ends?
- Loss of open views from existing footpaths
- Need to ensure local impacts are managed during construction in particular reference to school drop off and pick up times.
- How will it assist in meeting Hertsmere's goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
- What will the battery storage look like?

### Specific Sound Level map from Preliminary Noise Assessment



Thank you for your time  
Any questions?

## Appendix 6: Local Resident Brochure



Evolving Concept Design of Hilfield Solar Farm

### What are the Benefits of the Solar Farm and Battery Storage Facility?

The main benefits of the development proposed are summarised below.

- The project will assist in meeting Hertsmere Borough Council's goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with local, national and international targets and its declared Climate Emergency
- Contribute towards the security of energy supply in Hertsmere through the provision of local, competitive renewable energy supply.
- We estimate the solar farm will increase the total amount of renewable electricity generated in Hertsmere from 5.4% to 20% bringing Hertsmere closer to the national average of 33% electricity generated from renewable sources.
- The project will support the UK's urgent need to transition to a low carbon future, producing significant amounts of renewable energy.
- The proposed site is well contained. Due to the topography and screening from the existing hedgerows/trees and built environment the visual impact of the solar farm is low.
- The proposed development will utilise bifacial modules which absorb irradiation from the front and rear side, generating c. 4% higher energy yield than mono-facial solar panels.
- This is a temporary development. A solar plant allows agricultural land to rest for the period of operation and the land use can easily be reversed to agriculture at the end of the project life.
- Compared to intensive arable farming, a solar farm gives land the opportunity for multiple uses. In addition to energy production, solar farms can support biodiversity net gain by allowing small animals access to otherwise fenced-off land, with bird and insect fodder plants and wildflowers sown around the modules (visit [www.solar-trade.org.uk/solar-farms](http://www.solar-trade.org.uk/solar-farms)).
- No protected landscape, heritage or ecological designations will be affected by the solar farm. No footpaths will be stopped up or diverted during either the construction or operation of the solar farm.
- The proposed scheme is temporary and fully reversible, returning the site to agricultural use at the end of its operational lifetime and therefore will not become brownfield land.
- We anticipate that construction will be complete in approximately 7 months. This will typically require 8 HGV deliveries to the site each day, which will not be routed through local villages.
- The proposed solar farm will not require Government subsidy.
- Enso Energy is committed to using local suppliers during construction and operation where possible.

# Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

## R014: Statement of Community Involvement

### Getting to Net Zero

The UK Government has signed up to a Renewable Energy Directive to provide 15 per cent of energy from renewables by 2020 (based on a 2008 baseline). In addition to this, the Government has made a legal commitment to cutting carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 (Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019). To achieve net zero by 2050 both the National Infrastructure Commission and the National Grid have recently reported that to meet this target will require a rapid and expanded deployment of low carbon power, including solar.

### Our Vision

At Enso Energy we are making the idea of a country run on renewable energy a reality. We are one of the UK's most experienced energy developers.

Our ambition is to use the latest solar technology to make a positive impact on our country and the communities we work with. We are firm advocates for renewable, low carbon, efficient, secure and sustainable energy that can be generated, stored and utilised locally. We are passionate about creating positive change for the UK's energy requirements and carbon commitments.

Our innovative and entrepreneurial approach to subsidy-free renewable energy is assisting the country's move towards a more secure renewable energy supply and accelerating our combined progress to net zero.



### Our approach to consultation during the Coronavirus crisis

Enso Energy agree with the guidance issued by the UK Government's Chief Planner, which emphasised that planning applications that positively impact the country and local communities must continue to come forward.

In addition, Enso Energy believes that it is vital that local communities are able to see and shape planning applications that may have an impact on them. We therefore invite you to provide feedback on our draft proposals in the following ways:

- 1 Fill in the feedback form that accompanies this public consultation brochure.

This consultation brochure contains the same information that would have been displayed at a typical public consultation event.

Please read through the brochure and provide feedback to us by way of the free post feedback form that came with the brochure.

- 2 Attend our public consultation webinar and Q&A session on Thursday 1st October 5pm-7pm

You are invited to attend our online public consultation webinar and Q&A session event. The webinar will be a ten-minute presentation by the project team where they will outline the draft proposals. During the Q&A session which will follow the webinar you'll have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the draft proposals with members of the project team.

The webinar will be recorded and hosted on our public consultation website so that you can watch it again or see it if you are unable to watch it live.

You can of course get in contact with the project team at any time, through our public consultation website: [www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/](http://www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/)

You can register to attend our online public consultation event by visiting our website [www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/](http://www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/) and completing the webinar registration form. You will then receive an email with details on how to join the public consultation webinar.

- 3 Visit the dedicated public consultation website: [www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/](http://www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/)

We have set up a dedicated public consultation website, where you can find information about our draft proposals and provide feedback.

**About Us**

Enso Energy is a successful energy developer, focussed on delivering the right results for our clients, the environment and the local community.

We all care about our climate, and we all care about where we live. We believe that considerate solar energy development can make both better. That's why our holistic approach to solar energy development includes working with all our stakeholders throughout the development process.

Our team has a proven track record in developing large scale energy projects, totalling in excess of 1,500MW of distributed generation. As an independent developer we have worked across the full spectrum of energy generation and storage technologies, deploying solutions that suit each site.

### Have your say

This brochure forms part of our pre-planning application process at which we are asking for your opinion on a proposed solar farm and battery storage facility on land North East and West of Elstree Aerodrome, near Elstree substation.

Please take your time to consider the information within this brochure, and don't hesitate to contact a member of our team should you have any questions or matters you need to be clarified.

We would be grateful if you could answer the feedback form and let us have your contact details for the purpose of informing the project design and providing feedback to the Council.

For further information, please do not hesitate to email [ryan@alpacacommunications.com](mailto:ryan@alpacacommunications.com)



### Register for Updates

Please visit [www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/](http://www.ensoenergy.co.uk/proposed-projects/hilfield/) where information about our proposals will be updated, and where you can register to be receive updates.

020 7499 2842

[feedback@alpacacommunications.com](mailto:feedback@alpacacommunications.com)

[www.ensoenergy.co.uk](http://www.ensoenergy.co.uk)

Should you require this document in large print, audio or braille then please contact us at the details provided.

Enso Energy working in partnership with Hilfield's Green Investment Group for the delivery of large scale solar projects.



Green Investment Group

Hilfield Solar Farm

### Feedback form

To return your completed feedback form please tear it from the brochure, insert into the enclosed pre-paid envelope and pop it in the post by **Friday 9th October**. Alternatively, you can return your form via email to [ryan@alpacacommunications.com](mailto:ryan@alpacacommunications.com).

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Has this local resident brochure been helpful in understanding our proposal?  
 Yes  No  Not sure
2. What is the most important issue to you about our proposal, where 1 is of highest importance and 9 is of least importance.  
 Construction traffic  Landscape impact  Greenbelt impact  
 Increasing biodiversity  Visual impact  Loss of agricultural land  
 Climate change  Residential amenity impact  Impact on footpaths
3. With regards to the proposals you have read about within this brochure, are you:  
 In favour  In objection  Of no opinion

**Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage**  
R014: Statement of Community Involvement

4. We would welcome your feedback on all aspects of the emerging design shown in the brochure, including:
- Are the proposed locations of Interpretation boards in the right place?
  - We have left a broad buffer along the footpaths across the site to preserve openness and create ecological corridors – would you like this kept open or planted?
  - Would you like the layout of the site to allow improved connectivity of footpaths?
  - Would you like to see low-key nature areas around ponds on the site that footpaths go past? This could include informal seating, signage and wildflowers.

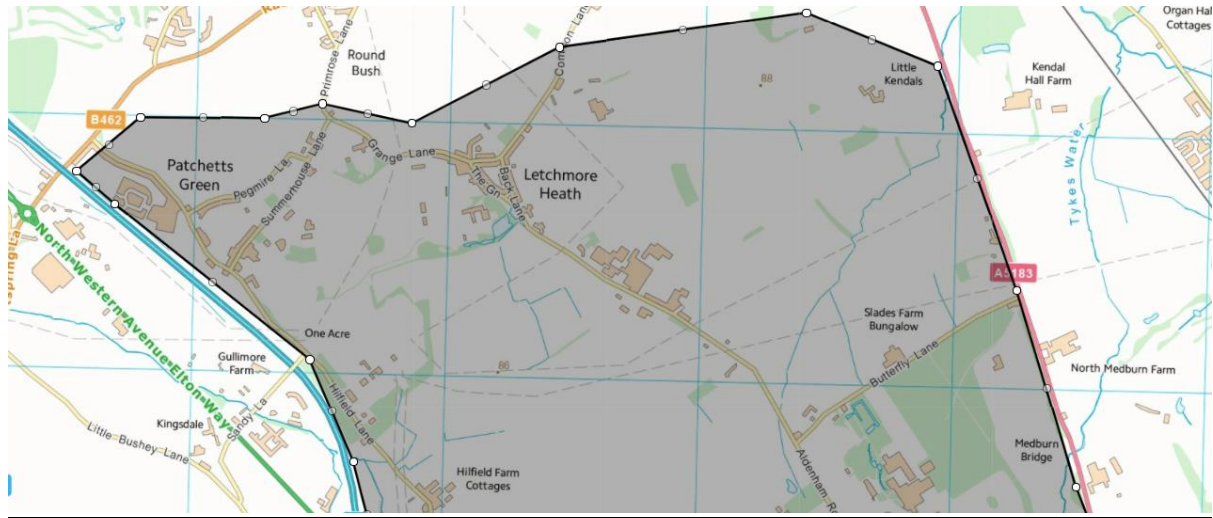
- 
5. Your views are important to us, if you'd like us to keep in touch how would you like us to contact you?

Website     Email     Newsletter     SMS

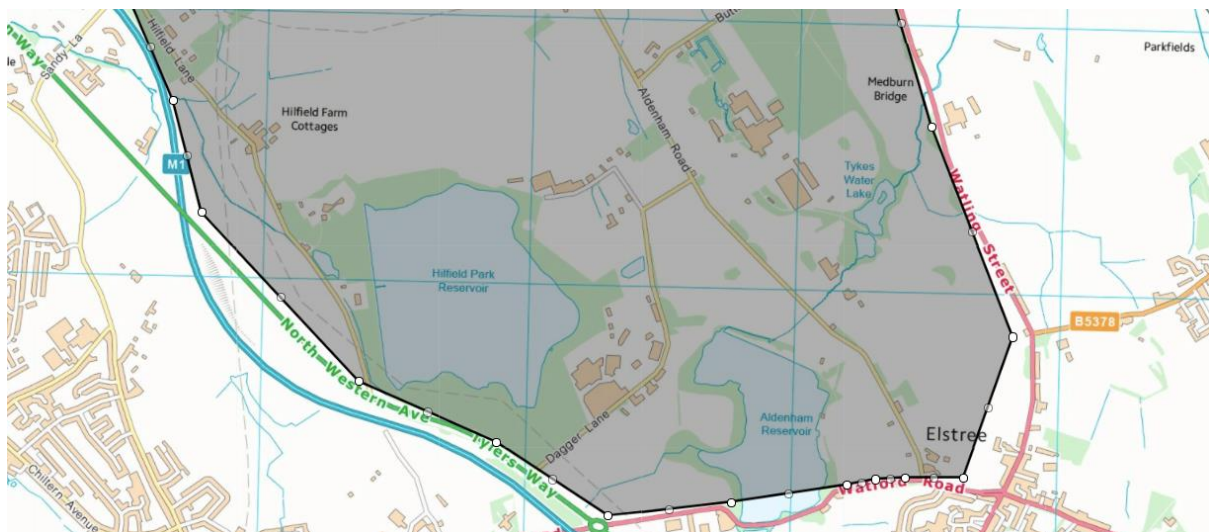
- 
6. Any other comments?

Thank you for taking the time to fill out our feedback form, your personal details including your name, address and contact details may be included as part of a consultation report submitted with this application to Hertsmere Borough Council. If you prefer your details do not be shared, please tick here .

### Appendix 7: Brochure Distribution Map

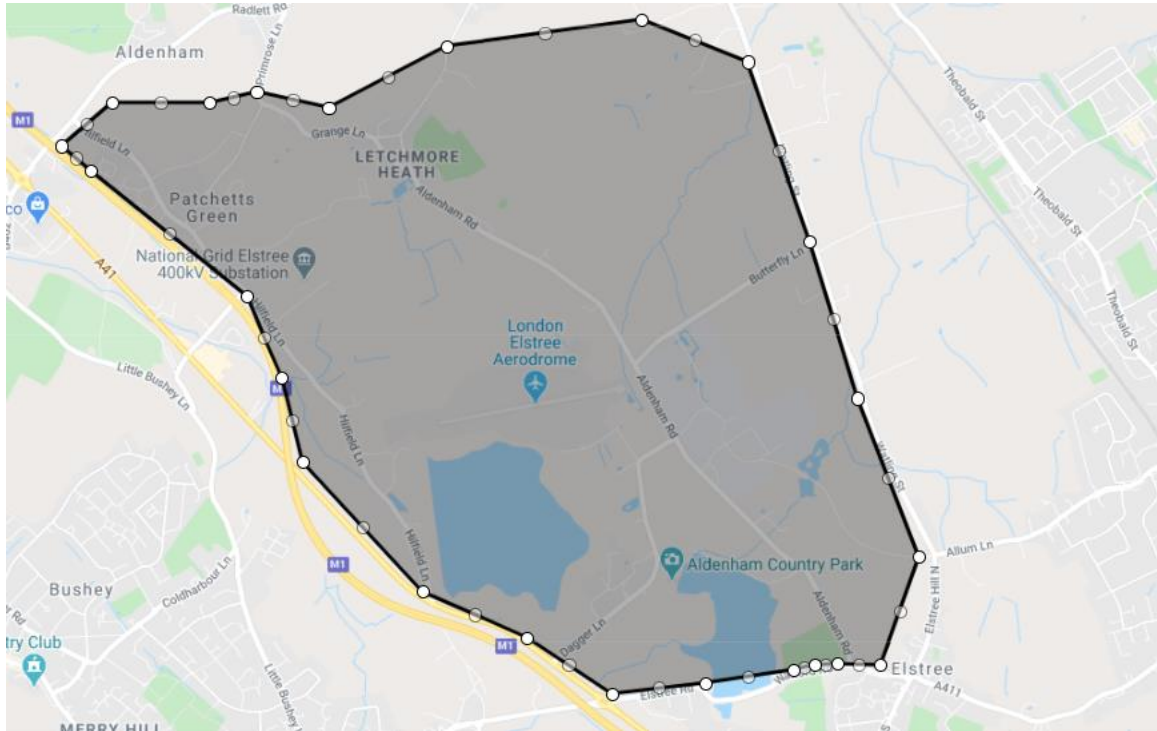


North



South

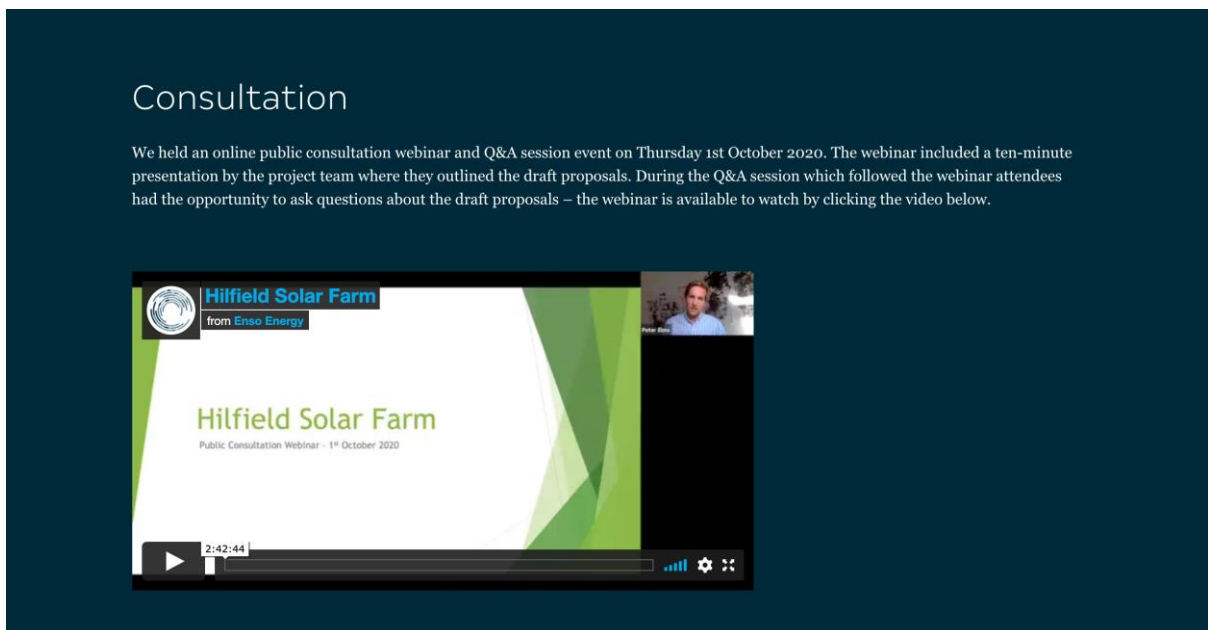
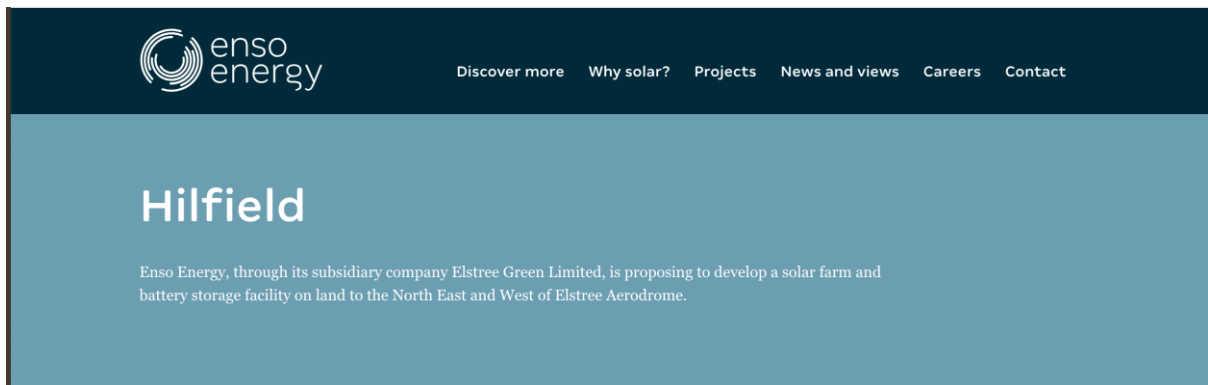
**Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage**  
R014: Statement of Community Involvement



**Overview.**



## Appendix 8: Website Home Page



**Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage**  
 R014: Statement of Community Involvement



Evolving concept design



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## Getting to net zero

The UK Government has signed up to a Renewable Energy Directive to provide 15 per cent of energy from renewables by 2020 (based on a 2008 baseline). In addition to this, the Government has made a legal commitment to cutting carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 (Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019). To achieve net zero by 2050 both the National Infrastructure Commission and the National Grid have recently reported that to meet this target will require a rapid and expanded deployment of low carbon power, including solar..

## Our vision

At Enso Energy we are making the idea of a country run on renewable energy a reality. We are one of the UK's most experienced energy developers.

Our ambition is to use the latest solar technology to make a positive impact on our country and the communities we work with. We are firm advocates for renewable, low carbon, efficient, secure and sustainable energy that can be generated, stored and utilised locally. We are passionate about creating positive change for the UK's energy requirements and carbon commitments.

Our innovative and entrepreneurial approach to subsidy-free renewable energy is assisting the country's move towards a more secure renewable energy supply and accelerating our combined progress to net zero.

## Our approach to consultation during the Coronavirus crisis

We are currently living through a pandemic, the likes of which the country has not experienced in living memory. Enso Energy agree with the recent guidance issued by the UK Government's Chief Planner, which emphasised that planning applications that positively impact the country and local communities must continue to come forward.

In addition, Enso Energy believes that it is vital that local communities are able see and shape planning applications that may have an impact on them.

We therefore held a public consultation webinar and Q&A session, a recording of which can be [viewed here](#). If you have any feedback on our draft proposals please fill in the form below.

## What are the features and benefits of the solar farm and battery storage facility?

The main benefits of the development proposed are summarised below:

- The project will assist in meeting Hertsmere Borough Councils goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with local, national and international targets and its declared Climate Emergency
- Contribute towards the security of energy supply in Hertsmere through the provision of local, competitive renewable energy supply.
- We estimate the solar farm will increase the total amount of renewable electricity generated in Hertsmere from 5.4% to 20% bringing Hertsmere closer to the national average of 33% electricity generated from renewable sources.
- The project will support the UK's urgent need to transition to a low carbon future, producing significant amounts of renewable energy.
- The proposed site is well contained. Due to the topography and screening from the existing hedgerows/trees and built environment the visual impact of the solar farm is low.
- The proposed development will utilise bifacial modules which absorb irradiation from the front and rear side, generating c. 4% higher energy yield than mono-facial solar panels..
- This is a temporary development. A solar plant allows agricultural land to rest for the period of operation and the land use can easily be reversed to agriculture at the end of the project life.
- Compared to intensive arable farming, a solar farm gives land the opportunity for multiple uses. In addition to energy production, solar farms can support biodiversity net gain by allowing small animals access to otherwise fenced-off land, with bird and insect fodder plants and wildflowers sown around the modules (visit [www.solar-trade.org.uk/solar-farms](http://www.solar-trade.org.uk/solar-farms)).
- No protected landscape, heritage or ecological designations will be affected by the solar farm. No footpaths will be stopped up or diverted during either the construction or operation of the solar farm.
- The proposed scheme is temporary and fully reversible, returning the site to agricultural use at the end of its operational lifetime and therefore will not become brownfield land.
- We anticipate that construction will be complete in approximately 7 months. This will typically require 8 HGV deliveries to the site each day, which will not be routed through local villages.
- The proposed solar farm will not require Government subsidy.
- Enso Energy is committed to using local suppliers during construction and operation where possible.

# Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

## R014: Statement of Community Involvement

### Register for updates

If you would like to be kept up to date with Enso Energy's plans for Hilfield Solar Farm then please contact Alpaca Communications via the form below or contact Jasmine, a member of the project team. Please view Alpaca Communications' [privacy policy](#) here.

t: 020 7499 2842

e: [jasmine.el-gabban@alpacacommunications.com](mailto:jasmine.el-gabban@alpacacommunications.com)

Please provide your contact details if you wish to get a response. Any information provided will only be used for the purpose of the planning application to the Local Planning Authority and will not be disclosed with any third parties. Your contact details will not be listed on the planning application documentation.

Name (required)

Email (required)

Telephone (optional)

What is your connection to Elstree? (required)

- local resident     local business  
 representative of a local group or organisation

Postcode (optional)

Message

Please confirm that you have read and agree to our [privacy policy](#)

Send



## Appendix 9: Table 2: Summary of Comments

VOTE	COMMENTS
In objection	<p>To make it clear we adamantly oppose the plans to develop a solar farm on the land marked as 'Options 1-3,' and I have detailed our reasons below. As you can see from the map attached, these fields surround our property on all sides.</p> <p><b><u>Valuation</u></b>  The value of our property is based on it being amongst beautiful agricultural land with wonderful views. The proposed solar farm will completely ruin this and devalue the house massively. This has been corroborated by independent valuers who we approached regarding this matter. A simple internet search on house buying forums also shows that many people feel that houses or land which back on to solar farms are of less value than those which do not. We simply cannot allow an external development to take place which will impact our asset value.</p> <p><b><u>Construction Noise &amp; Disruption</u></b>  Again, we chose to live in a very peaceful area. The 7-month construction process with multiple HGVs arriving per day will cause large amounts of noise and disruption for us. Our house is directly opposite the site access and such will be subject to maximum disruption. Moreover, our house is old with a void underneath and as such the vibrations caused from constant construction traffic could have a serious adverse effect on our property and its structure. The site access is also on a bend which is renowned for car accidents and the addition of the construction traffic will greatly increase this risk. This is a stretch of road we must drive down every day and this increased risk is not acceptable.</p> <p><b><u>Noise</u></b>  A sound level map in the webinar showed areas of increased noise levels as a result of the farm in close proximity to our property. Again, any additional noise in an otherwise peaceful area is unacceptable.</p> <p><b><u>Wildlife</u></b>  Firstly, we have both sheep and horses on our land. The construction disruption as well as the changes to the landscape will be extremely unsettling for them. This is especially the case for our Blue Cross rescue horses who can spook extremely easily causing harm to themselves and others. An impact which Blue Cross will certainly take a stand against. I am also not convinced that this will not negatively impact the wildlife in the surrounding area. We have wonderful deer and many species of bird which will no doubt be impacted as a result of the solar farm.</p> <p><b><u>Green Belt</u></b>  The issue of greenbelt seemed to be brushed over in the webinar. We fought a lengthy court battle some years back with regards to one of our gates which was deemed to be too high and blocking the view of greenbelt land. We were then forced to cut this down reducing the safety of our perimeter. Our court case proves that this proposal is fundamentally not acceptable on this land and we will use this in all legal matters if needed.</p>

	<p><b><u>Air Traffic</u></b></p> <p>I understand the issue of the impact on air traffic has been investigated. Our property sits directly under the flight path and many aircraft fly directly over our house. I understand you are looking to mitigate risk but any additional risk, no matter how small, is still too much as it could lead to a crash on our property. This is a danger to our lives. We will not allow this under any circumstance.</p> <p>Again, I must say that I am appalled that the only correspondence we received was a measly flyer put in our letterbox when our property is set to be so massively impacted. Perhaps the true opinions of the local community are not of real interest to the developers.</p> <p>To conclude, we adamantly oppose the plans. We have already consulted our legal team on this matter and whilst we do not wish for a lengthy battle and hope to resolve this amicably, we are fully prepared to do what it takes to protect our property and the surrounding area and will instruct our legal team immediately if necessary. As well as sending this to you we will also be contacting the council to lodge our official opposition.</p>
<p>In objection</p>	<p>I write in answer to your request for “feedback” on your proposal. I do strongly object to the proposal for the reasons set out below.</p> <p>My primary interest is in Fields 1 and 5, as depicted on the Field plan shown during your remote presentation, but I must address the whole site, in order to address the larger picture. At the presentation, you stated that there would be no solar panels on that part of Field 5, which lies nearest the Hilfield Castle and its North Lodge and North drive. This is to be welcomed. There should be no panels in Field 1 either.</p> <p><u>The proposal</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The proposal to destroy openness and beauty of hundreds of acres of green belt farmland, for 35 years or more, is outrageous. It will be the biggest destruction of open countryside, in any one proposal, in the history of Hertsmere.</li> <li>2. The proposal site is far too large. It is way out of proportion to any of the sites which the consultants said they had worked on before. A site producing 5 Megawatts is one thing but a site large enough for 49.5 Megawatts is quite another thing. The recent subsidy level was not set at 5 Megawatts for nothing. No single area should suffer an intrusion on the massive scale of the proposal.</li> </ol> <p><u>Green Belt</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. It is inappropriate development in the Green Belt, (see paragraph 147 of the NPPF). The NPPF requirement for very special circumstances has not (and cannot) be shown to justify the proposal proceeding.</li> <li>4. This site is the most valuable area of Green Belt land because it is where it is most needed to retain openness between built structures and to provide “a lung” for the towns and villages all around it.</li> </ol> <p><u>Topography</u></p>

	<p>5. The sloping ground of Fields 1 and 5 makes them very prominent. Panels in these fields will destroy the long countryside vistas, over the project site, from Bushey, the Hilfield estate and Hilfield Lane. The residents across the valley, in Bushey, should be consulted. Furthermore, the sloping ground will make any screening ineffective, as one would see the rising land above and behind the screening. The sloping ground also means that the panels will be even higher at one corner. The glint and glare of South facing panels on a West-East slope, in Field 1, will be unacceptable. (We were told at the presentation all panels would face South). The impact on North bound traffic on the A41 and M1 needs to be carefully considered.</p> <p><u>Public footpaths</u></p> <p>6. The project site is threaded with, and bounded by, long stretches of public footpaths. The enjoyment of these will be destroyed by a sea of unattractive structures and impenetrable fences, not to mention the noise from regularly placed cooling fans. These will be especially objectionable in summer, when the footpaths would normally be most used. What pleasure will there be in walking in high fenced noisy corridors, between serried rows of unattractive man-made structures? – none.</p> <p><u>Wildlife</u></p> <p>7. The proposal will lead to the loss of the wildlife which is associated with the current long-term agricultural use of the land, which involves ploughing the land and taking crops. There will also be a loss of breeding due to large areas being ring fenced. It will lead to a loss of food crops, at a time when we should be increasing sustainable UK production.</p> <p><u>Noise</u></p> <p>8. The Noise Assessment plan shown at the presentation showed, in purple, the areas where it was proposed there would be noise generation in the bracket 60-99dB(A). This is a ludicrously high noise level. Quieter cooling methods are available. 80dB(A) is the level at which long-term exposure can lead to hearing loss. 90 dB(A) is the level at which short-term exposure may lead to hearing loss. At each cooling station, we are talking about the noise of multiple petrol driven lawnmowers running all day and especially on hot days, when people are most likely to have windows open, be in the garden or out walking or cycling. It is the sort of level that will lead to Court proceedings for nuisance.</p> <p><u>Minimum amelioration measures</u></p> <p>9. The prevailing wind comes from the West in this area. This will tend to carry the noise from Field 1. We were told the noise was to be kept away from residences. That does not seem to have been done in relation to Hilfield Lodge. At the presentation you agreed to look into relocating the noise centres away from Hilfield Lodge and the creation of a swathe without panels, to protect the setting of Hilfield Lodge. This is the very minimum that should be done.</p> <p><u>The proper planning process</u></p>
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	<p>10. The proposal should be treated as one for 50 Megawatts, with the appropriate planning treatment for such a site. It is disingenuous to suggest a 49.5 Megawatt site, with the aim of avoiding a fuller consultation and consideration. A site of 40 Megawatts would be distinguishable in effect from one for 50 but the difference between 49.5 and 50 is not sufficient to merit wholly different planning treatment. We are talking about only a 1% difference. We were told at the presentation that the latest technology would be used. It is likely that the proposed panels will, in no time, be capable of a greater than 50 Megawatt output. Anyway, who can tell the output, to within 1 percent accuracy – before it is built? That said, if this proposal is not treated as a 50 Megawatts site, then the planning application should be “called in” for a decision by the Secretary of State.</p> <p><u>Listed Buildings</u></p> <p>11. The placing of panels in Fields 1 or 5 would destroy the setting of the three Listed buildings at Hilfield. Field 5 adjoins the North drive to Hilfield Castle. Field 1 is in the face of Hilfield Lodge and Field 1 rises away from the Lodge, to make the field even more prominent.</p> <p><u>Construction Traffic and machinery</u></p> <p>12. The construction traffic and machinery will be very disturbing for the many residents and will frighten away, or kill, a significant amount of wildlife. The noise of the cooling fans will discourage wildlife and destroy safe habitats for wildlife.</p> <p><u>Power Lines</u></p> <p>13. There are high voltage power lines in Field 1. If a power conductor were to fall, then serious repercussions would result. There are also power lines, feeding London, in a large tunnel running under Field 1.</p> <p><u>Judicial Review</u></p> <p>14. At the remote presentation, we were told that panels were not now proposed to be placed in that part of Field 5 closest to Hilfield. We were told this was to address Hertsmere Council’s concern over airport safety. Surprisingly, it was also stated that the Council’s main concern on environmental impact was for airport safety. If this is so, given the wide impact of the proposal, it would appear open to challenge by way of Judicial Review. Likewise, the treating of a project, already planned to be within one percent of a 50MW procedural limit, as being under the limit, would seem amenable to Judicial Review. These matters need to be thought about at the proposals stage.</p> <p><u>Flooding</u></p> <p>15. Field 1 already suffers from significant surface water build up, alongside Hilfield Brook. A sea of hard surfaces up the sloping field would lead to faster water run-off. This will pose a risk of flooding there and further downstream. We live in times of ever-increasing numbers of flash storms and floods.</p> <p><u>Consultation</u></p>
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## Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

R014: Statement of Community Involvement

	<p>The first I knew of this proposal was when the leaflet was dropped in my letterbox. It was plain, from the remote presentation, that the proposal has been some time in gestation. It is unfortunate that the public were only consulted at this late stage, when we were told that our comments to you were required by 9<sup>th</sup> October and that it was intended to lodge the planning application in November. That gives precious little time for members of the public to learn of the proposal and then give their views</p>
<p>In objection</p>	<p>I write in response to your request for “feedback” on your proposal. I write re: Hilfield North Lodge which is not even marked in red on your Noise Assessment plan. North Lodge is immediately adjacent to both Fields 1 and 5 as depicted on the Field plan shown during your remote presentation. Hilfield North Lodge will suffer, noise, visual and amenity impacts totally destroying its Green Belt setting. All these are impacts of the highest level. I fundamentally object to the proposal for these and further reasons including those set out below (your limited feedback time does not permit more detail).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1) At the presentation, you stated that there would be no solar panels or equipment on that part of Field 5, which lies near the Hilfield Castle and its North Lodge and North drive although such panels are shown in your consultation brochure. I welcome your statement that there will be no solar panels or equipment in Field 5 but this statement must be honoured in the planning application.</li> <li>2. 2) I have read the letter of objection from Mr A.M.Q. Jefferis. Will you please take all his objections as repeated here. I reiterate all his objections. Please take them as repeated in this letter and note the following further matters.</li> <li>3. 3) It was stated at the presentation that the latest technology would be used. This may be correct in relation to the solar generation panels but it is simply nonsense in relation to the noise from the associated plant. To even consider infrastructure with noise level of 60 to 99 dB(A) is ludicrous - especially as this noise will be largely as a series of monotones and so particularly pernicious. The noise levels from the solar farm and associated plant must be reduced to no more than 10 dB(A) above quietest night-time level. Such a level is entirely practicable.</li> <li>4. 4) I note that latest Government policy is now firmly directed to offshore wind away from solar which is noisy, high impact and land wasting.</li> </ol> <p>I shall be grateful if you will acknowledge receipt of this letter, sent by email.</p>
<p>In favour</p>	<p>My only real concern is the impact of HGVs on the Lane itself. We already have issues where part of the Lane is subsiding and the road surface damaged. Hopefully the lorries will be restricted to entering or exiting the Lane via Sandy Lane or from the A41 junction at the far end of the Lane. It is important to avoid the area between Sandy Lane and Hartspring Road, where Hilfield Lane narrows and lorries cause blockages.</p>
<p>In objection</p>	<p>We also note that you have distanced panels, inverters etc from a local school and from other residential properties. In light of the fact that Field 20, adjacent to our house, has more undulations, shrubs, trees and therefore, bird and wildlife species - some of which have not been mentioned and are endangered - we urge you to desist from outlining plans for any panels on the land between us and Slade Farm and</p>

	<p>behind the barn on our land. In addition all the terrain mentioned has issues due to the high water table.</p> <p>The land between us and Slade Farm is also landfill and we cannot support the excavation of such which may lead to the escape of harmful gases etc. affecting the schools and local residents and visitors. All measures will be taken by us to prevent the use of this land which is also opposite the Habs school exit and adjacent to the road, which represents yet another risk. Use of this field represents an unnecessary offence in such a large project which will already overwhelm and fundamentally alter the landscape of this beautiful, open area. Stating that you will shield with trees is a nonsense - and if you knew the area you would understand that. There are already multiple accidents along Butterfly Lane in the icy weather, the existing boundaries are often subject to being breached as there are no pavements.</p> <p>We believe that no mitigation, thus far, appears to have been taken with regards to the effect on the wildlife, bird life, noise or visual impact on our residence. We urge you to remove this field of arrays entirely from your plan, and most certainly the section behind us and between us and the farm, drawing a line from the back of the farm.</p> <p>We still believe that this is the wrong site, for such a scheme - our views relate to just a small part of the extensive project, over which we have great concerns.</p>
In objection	We do not want this proposal at all
In objection	This site is literally at the end of my garden. Nobody has approached any of us residents directly. It will have huge negative impact on our property. Why is the proposal next to schools, directly affects residents and an aerodrome?
In objection	The consultation need to be a wider area not 500 homes.
In objection	Obvious PR company interaction. No real human empathy with the local residents. This is green belt land, leave it undisturbed.
In objection	I love my walk-through fields and agricultural land. I think solar panels in fields are ugly despite the mention of wildflowers.
In objection	In practice I do not believe the land would revert to agricultural use after 35 years – which is a long time anyway. This project is huge and will be a massive loss of green belt in an area where this is constantly threatened.
In objection	<p>The plan is insufficiently detailed and appears to include land belonging to ward cottages. I cannot possibly see how you can preserve flora &amp; fauna in the area when the land is almost entirely covered by glass and metal, hardly suitable for wildlife. I appreciate we need to produce more green energy but perhaps individuals need to be encouraged to use less and install solar panels their own properties.</p> <p>The proposal means you are creating a future industrial landscape from open agricultural land. How this can improve biodiversity is unclear.</p> <p>This part of the greenbelt is, although I believe is designated as Grade 3 agricultural land, still classed as good to moderate for the production of cereal crops needed to feed increasing population.</p>
In objection	<p>Solar power does not have to be on this scale. Over 300 acres of green belt land being sacrificed is excessive. This single installation quadruples the Borough's renewable electricity generation.</p> <p>Other concerns: This is not a temporary structure, once gone green belt is lost for eternity. This is not a solar farm, it is an industrial, massive generating station.</p>
In favour	Why can't these solar panels be put on brownfield land?

## Hilfield Solar Farm and Battery Storage

### R014: Statement of Community Involvement

	I am a teacher and would like facilities for instructing children about your project. Many children never venture into the countryside!
In objection	I and many people walk these footpaths on a daily basis for the beauty, peace, and natural flora and fauna. At this terrible time the eyesore won't help our mental health, we will also hear the construction noise where we live.
In favour	I have no objections as long as local people are involved in where the panels will be located.
In objection	This brochure is very biased. You ask for feedback at the design - not allowing the response that this is a totally unacceptable development.
In objection	What you are proposing is a monstrous invasions of greenbelt land, farmland and the destruction of natural amenities for all to use. This is a disgrace.
In objection	The proposal appears to include the area of land immediately to the rear of Ward Cottages which was purchased by us in 1977 from the then Lord Aldenham
In favour	Agree with solar farms in principle.
In objection	Absolute awful proposal. So large will ruin our green belt.
In objection	There are easier ways of generating solar power
In objection	Does there have to be two sites locally?
In objection	I personally feel solar panels are ugly and an eye sore.
In objection	We adamantly oppose to the plans. This will ruin our home and area.