**To: Whitestone Solar Farm – Response to Statutory Consultation – 16th September to 28th October 2025**

September/October 2025

I **object** to the proposed Whitestone Solar Farm for the following reasons: -

The size of the development is totally unacceptable and there has been a total failure to evaluate any aspects of the impact the hundreds of thousands of solar panels spread over 3,500 acres of land will have on the local environment. There is no other solar farm of equivalent size in Europe and yet you believe it acceptable to do this in South Yorkshire. The farm will last for 60 years so will impact the lifetime of current residents and their children.

Whitestone has sought to avoid any meaningful consultation with local people and both the informal and now the formal consultation has been kept to an absolute minimum including the time the public has to respond. There have been no presentations, only limited drop-in sessions taking place mostly during the working day when many people are not free to attend to ask reasonable questions or raise local concerns. Whitestone has sent fliers to households which many residents have taken to be junk mail. Treeton, despite being a Parish likely to be surrounded by panels, was not offered a meeting at all and even the involvement of our MP asking for us to have our own meeting has been ignored. This is a disgrace to a village which continues to recover from years of heavy coal mining activity. We finally have flourishing wildlife again which will be hugely impacted and we have seen no evidence of any kind of meaningful environmental impact assessments. There has also been no visible engagement with Rotherham Borough Council.

No public recognition has been given to the construction of the proposed National Grid Sub Station on Long Lane which will consume another 18 acres of land around Treeton or the impact of this on the village alone during its construction. Whitestone have stated that in addition to all of this they will have over 630 construction vehicles, including over 200 HGVs doing twelve hour daily rounds at the peak of construction. A small village will drown in heavy traffic on totally unsuitable roads and local people will find it impossible to enter and leave the village to go about their daily lives. The ‘Community Benefits’ referred to during consultation are derisory and insulting.

There has been no disclosure as to where battery storage, cable corridors and primary and secondary sub stations will be sited which will only be disclosed either during or perhaps after the consultation period. This is totally unacceptable.

Whitestone consider consultation to be a "requirement" so "valuable local knowledge is built into the design" but the lack of meaningful consultation suggests this is a myth and that the project is 'a done deal' already due to it having Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project status which overrides the local planning authority. The Secretary of State has the ability to override all local opinion and even local MPs who represent us have indicated the farm will, in all probability, be approved whatever local people say. They share our concern about the economic cost of this development and the loss of 3500 acres of largely food producing land at a time of massive population increase and both the rising carbon footprint of importing necessary food and the loss of food security within our own country.

The solar panels are produced by slaves in China and have a huge carbon footprint in their own right because they require mostly coal powered energy and a significant amount of water to produce and are then not recyclable. They also have to be transported from China to South Yorkshire.

This area has seen and continues to see a massive increase in the building of huge industrial units which can, but rarely do, host solar panels. This is allowed whilst green belt is consumed by panels. Why?

There are no restrictions in place to limit 'solar sprawl' by other green energy companies which have already submitted planning applications which will consume even more hundreds or thousands of acres of green belt. These nearby schemes have excluded Whitestone Solar Farm from their environmental impact assessments ‘due to its early and uncertain status’. Local planning authorities should not allow this and should fully assess the holistic impact.

The only people to benefit from this development are Whitestone and landowners, paid generously to surrender their land. The costs for this project, which is widely opposed by the majority of the public here in South Yorkshire, are likely to be passed on to the public in the form of ever higher energy bills.

This solar panel farm should not be approved for the reasons stated.

Yours faithfully

Signed: Date:

Name in Print:

Full Address: