

Dear Mr Nesbit

Re: ZB25/00872/SCR Address: Land Adjacent To , Lords Lane, Bedale, North Yorkshire, DL8 2ET

Proposal: Solar farm screening request Case Officer: Mr Ian Nesbit

These comments are made on behalf of the British Horse Society (BHS).

It is regrettable that NYC Hambleton Area does not appear to have consulted the rights of way user representatives on this proposal to build a commercial solar panel complex on the farm land adjacent to Lords Lane Bedale, despite the fact that the installation will directly affect the amenity and safety of those on the public rights of way which pass through the site.

The location map on the council website shows that the solar panel installation will surround a right of way which is currently recorded as a public footpath linked by two public vehicular roads. The public footpath has unrecorded higher rights for which an application has been made by the British Horse Society to NYC Rights of Way Department to upgrade to a bridleway. This application also includes a bridleway link to Exelby.

Previous experience of Commercial Solar Installations on this scale in the local area of North Yorkshire Council have shown that the process is anything but benign, it results in severe damage to the surface of public routes, significant and prolonged closure of the public routes and leaves a landscape of industrial appearance and fenced in public routes.

National Planning Policy Framework: Paragraph 105. Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails

To date the BHS is not aware of any benefit for the local communities of such installations in this area of North Yorkshire, only a loss of open countryside and denied access to public rights of ways. The fencing in of the solar panel site often results in a narrow corridor for the public routes, which is intimidating and dangerous for horse riders and unpleasant for other users. Currently the footpaths and roads are not fenced giving open views across the rural landscape which is known to benefit wellbeing and encourage exercise in a pleasant location. A view of closed in hedges around fencing will not compensate for the loss of this amenity either. We are also aware that some solar installations in the area have electrified the fences around the solar panels which is a further danger to horse riders as horses are particularly sensitive to electric fencing and should a horse spook in a narrow corridor surrounded by electric fences this could result in a serious accident.

For reasons of loss of the amenity value and the effect on safety on the public rights of ways and minor vehicular highways for vulnerable road users such as horse riders, cyclist and walkers the BHS OBJECTS to this application.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Bradley

BHS CABO North Yorkshire, Western Area

