

Minutes of a meeting of Aldington and Bonnington Parish Council held on Monday 14th November 2022 in Aldington Village Hall at 7.30pm,

Present: Councillors: L Harman (Chairman), M Boulden, R Boulding, R Lloyd, R Spicer and S Wagstaff.

In attendance: Peter Setterfield PSLCC, Parish Clerk

Also present: 50+ members of the public, KCC Councillor C Bell and P New (Neighbourhood Watch)

1130. **Apologies for absence:**

There were no apologies for absence'

1131. **Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr M Boulden for minute 1135 Solar Projects as related to the land owner.

1132. **Public submissions:**

The temporary road signs placed along Roman Road for the resurfacing works some time ago are still located at intervals along Roman Road.

This will be raised with Kent Highways.

1133. **Neighbourhood Watch:**

See attached.

1134. **Minutes:**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 12th September were submitted, agreed as a true record to be signed by the Chairman.

1135. **Solar Projects:**

Following a brief presentation, slides attached, the floor was opened to residents to comment:

- Does the Parish Council have the necessary planning expertise or will it be employing consultants?
- When the converter station was built the plans were modified so that it was sunk into the ground, it is worth fighting.
- Buildings and car parks are the place for solar panels, not farm land.

Traffic concerns:

- From the scale of the maps used it is difficult to determine where the access points are to gain access to the fields on the opposite side of Bank Road.
- The effect of HGV's on all the roads throughout the village.
- The road from the A20 will be affected and the proposed access road could lead to a future fast track into the village
- Whilst this may be a construction road is there any guarantee it will be removed at the end of construction.
- The claim of only 7 HGV's per hour is rubbish.
- The impact of noise and on air quality.

- The close proximity to the wildlife on Aldington Reservoir.
- The effect of construction traffic on the school.
- A lot of work for a small number of panels on Goldwell Lane.
- How will the traffic be policed to keep it out of the village.
- There are known badger setts on the site
- Construction traffic from the A20 will have to make a tight right turn, the crash data published does not reflect reality

Public Rights of Way and roads

- The consultation claims a benefit of widening footpaths to 10m, this will give way to potential for off road use.
- The vistas need to be treasured.
- The definitive map on the presentation was taken from the consultants presentation'
- Wilks are taking place to ensure all paths are noted, whilst 12 are shown there are 18
- How far is cumulative effect taken into account?
- There will be a displacement of traffic as a result of the construction works.
- Does KCC have a policy on solar farms?
- It is claimed that solar panels on roofs are not viable, it is mandatory in France.
- The MP is being lobbied regarding legislation as there is no national policy.
- The only perceived benefit is the locality next to Sellindge for connection to the grid.

Location

- It is part of Aldington Ridge, determination should be by landscape character not land ownership.
- The visualisations provided are inappropriate
- Ashford Borough Council have appointed an assessor to look at the visual impact.
- The map does not show the roads making it difficult to pinpoint location.
- The definition of the map does not show the village to assess the scale, aerial photographs are needed
- Are Mersham considering the visual impact
- Pictures should be taken of the views from the top of the church.
- The heritage of buildings and their setting needs consideration
- The cumulative impact not only visually but on the environment and traffic are most important during the construction and decommissioning of the panels.
- The concurrent effect of the construction together with the Church Lane proposals.
- The visual impact is appalling
- Some of the proposed panels are in the flood zone, run off from the panels will inevitably lead to mud on the roads.
- The long views into the village will be impacted

- Food security – we need to save farmland
- The change of seasons will not be seen affecting mental health of residents
- The reflective glare from the panels
- Is it the best use of land – grade 2 and 3a must be removed
- This is arable land – what will happen in 40 years time.
- A biodiversity gain is claimed – there are skylarks on the site dogs have to be kept on leads March to September as they are ground nesting. Whilst they might return after construction it is unlikely they will nest.
- There are badgers and hares present on Goldwell Lane.
- The glint and glare from the panels has a negative impact on birds as it disorientates them.
- Planting of wildflowers does not provide good grazing for sheep
- During the construction phase the noise and vibration from the piling operations will drive away wildlife.

It was unanimously agreed by all present that the Parish Council oppose this proposal due to its inappropriate location, scale and cumulative impact.

1136. **Other Items for Information:**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.40pm.

REPORT TO ALDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL NOVEMBER 2022.

By 91725 Peter New Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch

As we enjoy this Indian summer and prepare to move from autumn into winter I may sound like a broken record. In fact, I was recently told I often write the same and sadly yes, I do because the crimes are much the same!! Many of which are preventable and avoidable!

All the trend crimes of Vehicles, Farm vehicles, Garages, Sheds, Barns, Stables, any form or Outbuilding and External Storage the risks remain the same. We just need to be extra careful and vigilant with the earlier darker evenings.

The thefts of internet shopping deliveries taken from doorsteps are still apparent with the risk now increased to rural areas as the vans are now followed. This will increase as Xmas approaches.

NUMBER PLATE THEFTS These are carried out whereby they are removed at night from parked vehicles and the plates placed on vehicles which are mainly to allow a vehicle to collect fuel at a garage forecourt and make off without paying and the CCTV pick up the registration number stolen from a car.

They can also be used to avoid congestion charges and Dartford Crossing fees. Just occasionally they are fitted onto a vehicle to commit a far more serious crime.

PLEASE ALWAYS REPORT A NUMBER PLATE THEFT IMMEDIATELY.
Prevention advice follows

Help prevent vehicle crime

Thieves steal number plates to use in other crimes




Make sure you are not the next victim.

Fitting tamper proof screws can help prevent your number plate being stolen.



Contacting Kent Police

Report a non-urgent crime online www.kent.police.uk/report
Talk to us on LiveChat – available 24/7 www.kent.police.uk/contact
In an emergency, if crime is in progress or life is in danger call 999
If deaf or speech impaired, text 'police' and your message to 60066
www.kent.police.uk   

A serious crime trend within the Ashford District in the last 2 weeks follows

HIGH END TYPE CAR THEFTS BMWs, MERCEDES, AUDIs and RANGE ROVERS TYPES

A worrying trend of high value car thefts has hit the Ashford District in recent weeks, again not in directly in your Council area but all around us and breaking now into rural areas and nearby Folkestone.

Areas hit close by were

Park Farm 4, Chilmington 1, Knights Park 2, Repton Park 1, Singleton 2, Washford Farm 1

Willesborough 2, Egerton1, Boughton Aluph to name those close by. Others have occurred in East Kent especially in Folkestone.

The car thefts in Ashford District were all high end BMWs, Range Rovers and Mercedes many with keyless ignitions.

This was a very professional organised crime. Cars would be scouted for make, address and location. There was nothing "Chance and Opportunist" about this crime the exact cars and properties were known, and cars taken in a matter of minutes.

Police investigations are underway but to date it would appear the criminals had devices that can intercept key codes from within your properties.

Advice is now given to ensure that keys are stored safely away from front hallways and front door window ledges.

As always it is a strong message into the community that if persons are seen acting suspiciously around vehicles in the early hours of the morning especially trying car doors **CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY.**

I am hugely frustrated when I read on Facebook groups what people have seen but failed to call 999.

This is '**crimes in progress**' pick the phone up and ring 999 there and then

PLEASE SEE BELOW CRIME PREVENTION ADVICE FROM KENT POLICE

Ashford residents are being warned to be on their guard following several reports of vehicles being stolen from driveways.

Over the last two weeks, several keyless entry vehicles have reportedly been stolen from outside homes and officers are urging people to protect themselves against criminals.

Keyless entry

Cars with keyless entry unlock automatically when the key comes within a short distance of the car. This can be from inside a pocket or bag. If you have to push a button on your car key to open your car, you don't have keyless entry.

Keyless car theft or 'relay theft' is when a device is used to fool the car into thinking the key is close by. This unlocks the car and starts the ignition.

Thieves only need to be within a few metres of your car key to capture the signal, even if it's inside your home. This means that even if your car and home are secure, thieves can still unlock, start and steal your car.

How to protect your keyless entry car

When at home keep your car key (and the spare) well away from the car and any windows and doors.

Put the keys in a screened or signal-blocking box, tin or pouch such as a Faraday Bag so that the signal can't be 'grabbed' from the outside and used to open your car – and don't forget to do the same with any spare set.

Reprogramme your keys if you buy a second-hand car.

Turn off wireless signals on your fob when it's not being used.

Further advice:

Consider investing in CCTV and sensors which alert you when someone walks near your vehicle or enters the driveway. Use a steering wheel lock. It might seem odd fitting a steering wheel lock to a high-tech new car that costs tens of thousands of pounds. However, a steering wheel lock could add valuable minutes to the seconds it might take to steal a car using a relay attack. Also, a criminal may think twice about stealing a car if they see a steering wheel lock. Lock all doors and close the windows whenever you leave the vehicle. Park in a garage, secure car park or well-lit area if possible. Consider having windows etched with the vehicle registration number or use an invisible ink marker pen to mark these details and your

postcode on the underside frame of the vehicle. Make a note of the chassis number. Consider installing a dash cam that offers round-the-clock protection. These dash cams usually come as a set of two – one for the front of your car, and one for the rear. These cameras generally offer 180° views, so with two cameras you can capture footage a full 360° around your car. Unlike regular dash cams, these models come with fittings that connect directly to your car's battery, so they can continue operating even when the engine isn't running. However, there's no risk of them depleting your car battery overnight – they'll automatically deactivate if they detect your battery's running too low. Some models even have built in wi-fi with dedicated apps. This way, you can get a live feed of the car's cameras, even when you're hundreds of miles away.

Officers are currently investigating these thefts. Anyone with information should contact Kent Police via the Kent Police website. You can also call the independent charity Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111. If you see anyone acting suspiciously around your vehicle or property then please do call 999.

Once again warnings about SCAMS, not just to residents but to you as councillors and council officers who may be approached by concerned residents for advice, assistance, and help.

It is essential we keep our advice to residents especially our elderly, disabled and vulnerable simple and easy to follow.

There is a scam for virtually anything and everything which can come via phones computers, laptops, tablets letters and in some cases in person on the doorstep.

They can come from 3,30,300 and 3000 miles away and as I stated face to face on the doorstep.

If in doubt residents should not even open the door. If anyone becomes aggressive or pushy call 999 immediately. You may be lucky but the elderly more vulnerable person down the road may not be so lucky.

If in doubt with phone calls and emails do nothing, Hang up! Or delete!

Check, check again and if still in doubt do absolutely nothing.

You will recall I did warn councillors and indeed our clerk that they may be approached for help and advice especially in other council events/ functions, and forums where residents may feel more comfortable asking. Food Banks, Allotments, Church events, Council events indeed even being stopped in the street and ask because you are known and trusted.

The Energy costs and worries that face us all have been seen as a fantastic “Business Opportunity” for criminals. Just about any crisis will present an opportunity.

We must be alert and vigilant with our advice, crime prevention and it must be simple to follow... **IT MUST BE “DO NOTHING IN A RUSH IF IN DOUBT DO NOTHING”**

CHECK, CHECK and CHECK again and then DO NOTHING without CHECKING FURTHER

We must be prepared to help and support our vulnerable residents, criminals will be looking for them and will strike. We know where our vulnerable residents are.....so do criminals.!!

To our residents we must be strong and clear with our crime prevention work, our advice and guidance to our community especially to our vulnerable must try to anticipate the wave of crime that difficult national situations like Energy Rising Costs bring about.

Those issues are seen as a ‘BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY’ by Criminals

OTHER CRIME TRENDS

It has also come to my attention about **HARE COURISING** in surrounding areas. Sometimes those crimes may be actioned by police officers from Folkestone so I may not be fully in the loop. Residents keeping me briefed of events once reported to the police would be a great help in the battle about getting information out about **CRIME PREVENTION**.

Please report all these incidents to the police. Again volume of calls will help me as it will attract a level of response rather than one isolated call!

USE 999 and quote "OPERATION GALILEO " for HARE COURSING

Speak up to stop rural crime.

Criminal gangs exploit our local wildlife,
environment and communities.

Your voice can
make a difference.

Speak up to our charity.
100% anonymous. Always.

crimestoppers-uk.org



CrimeStoppers.

0800 555 111

100% anonymous. Always.

Officers join forces to tackle hare coursing



Rural Task Force officers

A new approach is being taken by officers across the East of England in an effort to combat hare coursing.

Kent Police has teamed up with six other forces to offer a borderless response to tackle the illegal blood sport. This means that the seven forces signed up to the partnership can work as one when exercising certain powers such as the seizure of dogs and share interactions and movements of suspects.

The forces within **Kent's** partnership are made up of **Bedfordshire, Cambridge, Herefordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk** and **Essex**.

The agreement, which has been completed with the support of the Crown Prosecution Service, supports the national initiative, Operation Galileo, which primarily aims to combat hare coursing.

Sergeant Darren Walshaw of Kent Police's Rural Task Force said: 'This is an encouraging step in our efforts to tackle hare coursing.'

'The agreement allows us to use anti-social behaviour legislation across the counties. This means that someone who is found to be committing hare coursing offences across several borders will be dealt with as if all of their criminality had occurred in one county and a prosecution can commence sooner. In short, if someone is involved with three incidents of anti-social behaviour linked to hare coursing, they will be prosecuted regardless of where those offences have been committed.'

Hare coursing traditionally coincides with the harvest when the fields are ploughed, making them the perfect ground for the illegal blood sport. Hare coursing causes damage to crops, harms animal welfare and threatens the rural community. It can result in intimidation and even violence.

Landowners are urged to consider blocking entrances to their fields with ditches, fencing or trees or even barriers like barrels filled with concrete.

Anyone who sees hare coursing taking place is asked to contact police immediately on 999 and provide officers with a description of the people involved, any registration numbers, vehicle descriptions and the location and direction of travel. It's important people don't confront hare coursers or put themselves at risk.

OTHER CRIMES IN THE AREA

Crime Reference	Ward	Location	Offence	Date from	Date to	Property Stolen	Misc Info
46/214955/22	Mersham, Sevington South with Finberry	A2070, Mersham, Ashford	Theft from a motor vehicle	03/11/2022 21:00	04/11/2022 09:00	Number Plates	in lorry park. VRM - GDA 75126
46/215416/22	Saxon Shore	Bank Road, Aldington, Ashford	Burglary - Business And Community	30/10/2022 01:00	30/10/2022 01:00	Chainsaw	from workshop

This report confirms the number plate theft issue in nearby Mersham and also the type of theft I warned about earlier in my report from external storage building.

Your chair person has asked I remind the community about domestic heating fuel storage tank thefts. Remember the tankers are sometimes followed to locate premises with tanks.

Protect your heating oil tank

Most people who use heating oil at home or at work take steps to help keep fuel tanks secure.



Do you:

- keep your yard or drive gates closed and lock and maintain boundary fences and hedges?
- keep your tank within view from your home or office but where it may be difficult for thieves to spot?
- plant thorny shrubs around your tank to make it hard for thieves to reach without catching their skin or clothing?
- lock away tools so they can't be used to access your tank?

Have you:

- considered installing CCTV, security lighting or a level alarm which will sound if the level of your fuel drops suddenly?
-

SHED THEFTS

Protect your property

Given the opportunity, thieves will target **sheds** and **garages** for items such as high-value power tools and bikes.

Take measures to protect your valuables and reduce this risk of theft.



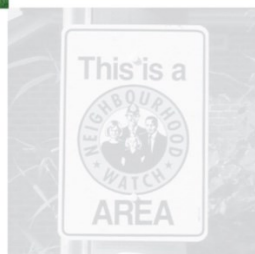
- Keep garages or sheds locked when not in use
- Consider fitting security alarms and external lights where possible
- Security mark valuable items and keep receipts somewhere safe
- Lock away tools or equipment that could be stolen or used to break in to your property
- Dispose of packaging carefully – wrapping and boxes can advertise rich pickings for criminals

Keep your shed and garden secure



Shut it, lock it, keep it

Advice on how you can help **protect** your property





Andre Portasio



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Last night (31st) at around 9pm two men entered our property and stole two trailers and this Kubota. Despite the weather they managed to transport them down the field and across our neighbours fields and onto the Aldington Rd. The men were captured on CCTV cameras, both of them are wearing the obligatory hoodies and track suit bottoms and I'd say are in their 20's/ early 30's. We've since seriously upped our security. The police were informed so if anyone hears of a Kubota and trailers for sale we'd be grateful if you could let us know. It appears that there have been a number of thefts in the area and its been reported that two males seem to be the main culprits, quite possibly part of a gang. Many thanks.



The type of theft that rural areas are vulnerable to

As we move into the run up to Christmas and Winter many criminal actions will occur.

They adjust and adapt to situations and times of the year....so must we!!

My job will be

1.To reduce the **AVOIDABLE and PREVENTABLE** crimes carried out by 'Chancers and Opportunists'

2. Combat the more sophisticated professional criminal who will use **SCAMS and HIGH TEC CRIMES** especially against our vulnerable and elderly residents.

I am very grateful for the ongoing support of the council and each of you as individuals for the Neighbourhood Watch work and for your support for me personally.

Your support is essential, gratefully received but never ever taken for granted.

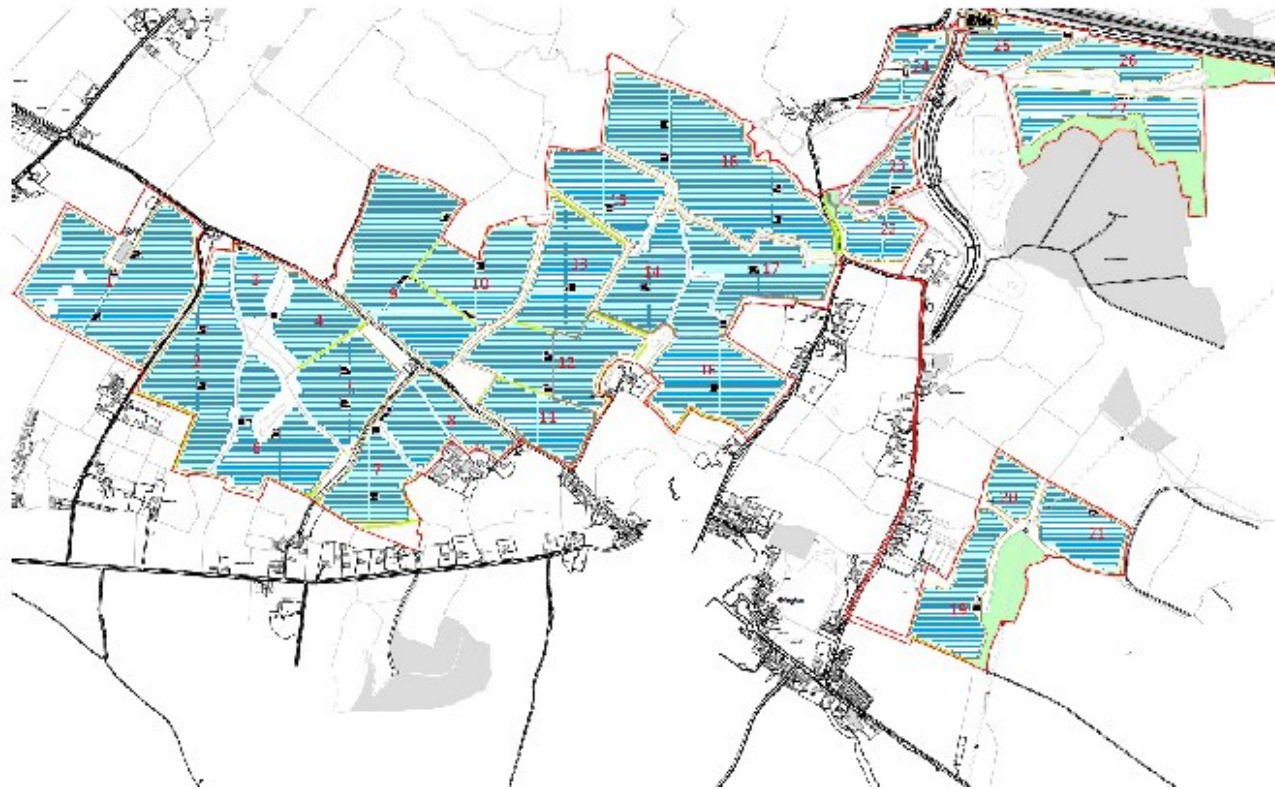
Thank you

Peter

Peter New

91725 Kent Police Volunteer & Community Neighbourhood Watch

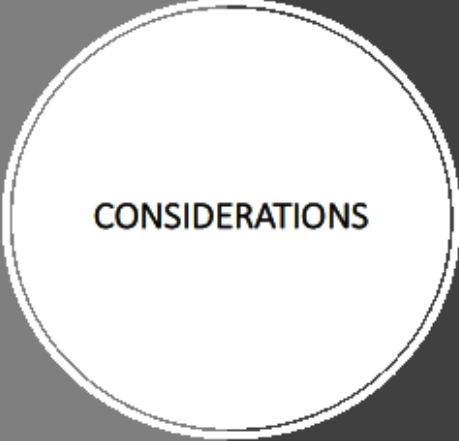
STONE STREET GREEN SOLAR PROPOSAL



THE NSIP PROCESS


6 stages of the development consent regime





CONSIDERATIONS

- NSIP evaluations made against National Policy Statements. NPS Energy came into law in 2011
- White paper for revision of NPS on Energy completed last year
- Draft revised NPS Energy published in Feb 2022
- Under the Planning Act 2008 the Secretary of State must [also] have regard to any local impact report submitted by a relevant local authority, any relevant matters prescribed in regulations, the Marine Policy Statement (MPS) and any applicable Marine Plan, and any other matters which the Secretary of State thinks are both important and relevant to the planning decision.
- Revised Draft proposes Secretary of State must balance need to meet Zero Carbon targets against any local impacts. Standard Planning phrase; does the benefit outweigh the harm?



GOV
PLANNING
ADVICE TO
LPAs

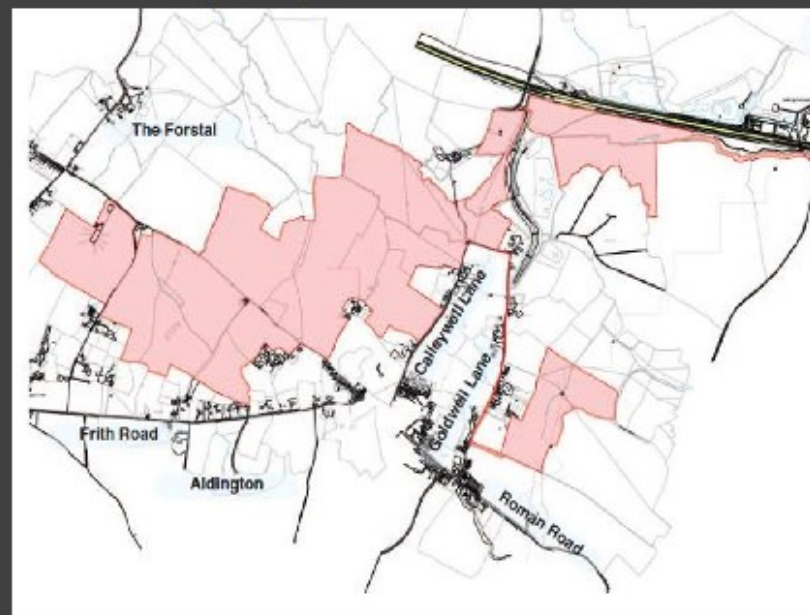
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/renewable-and-low-carbon-energy#particular-planning-considerations-for-hydropower-active-solar-technology-solar-farms-and-wind-turbines>
- “It is important to be clear that:
 - the need for renewable or low carbon energy does not automatically override environmental protections;
 - cumulative impacts require particular attention, especially the increasing impact that wind turbines and large-scale solar farms can have on landscape and local amenity as the number of turbines and solar arrays in an area increases;
 - local topography is an important factor in assessing whether wind turbines and large-scale solar farms could have a damaging effect on landscape and recognise that the impact can be as great in predominately flat landscapes as in hilly or mountainous areas;
 - great care should be taken to ensure heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, including the impact of proposals on views important to their setting;”

**A&B PC
CONCERNS;
LOCATION**

PPG for Renewable Energy (2013): What are the particular planning considerations that relate to large scale ground-mounted solar photovoltaic farms?

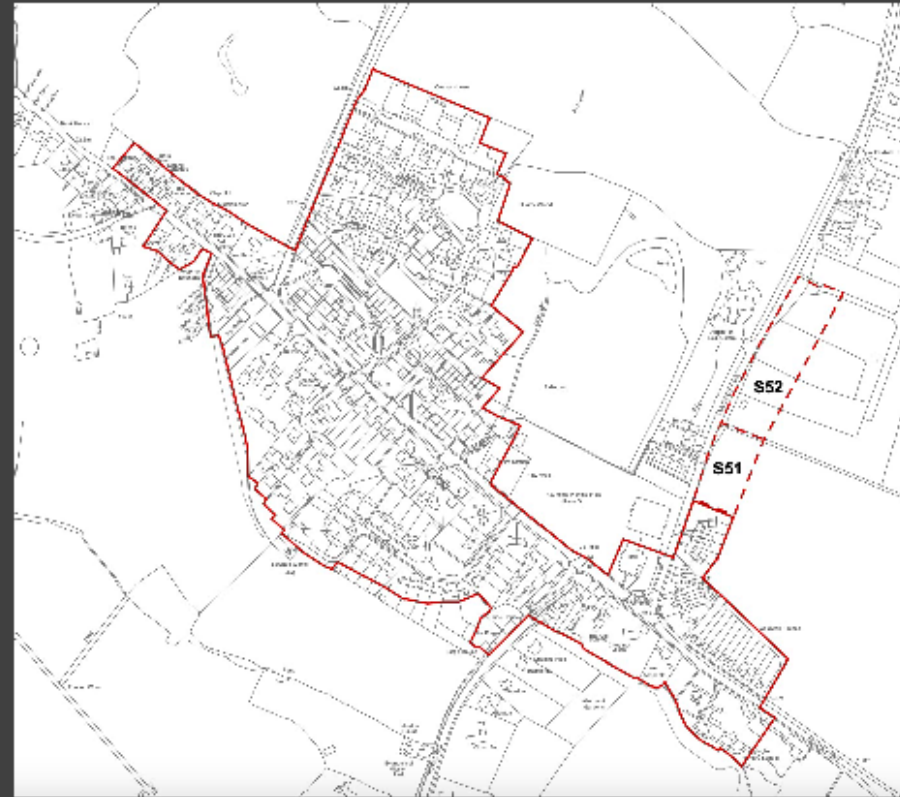
26. The deployment of large-scale solar farms can have a negative impact on the rural environment, particularly in very undulating landscapes. However, the visual impact of a well-planned and well-screened solar farm can be properly addressed within the landscape if planned sensitively.

- No consideration of alternative sites that could connect into Sellindge Converter Station

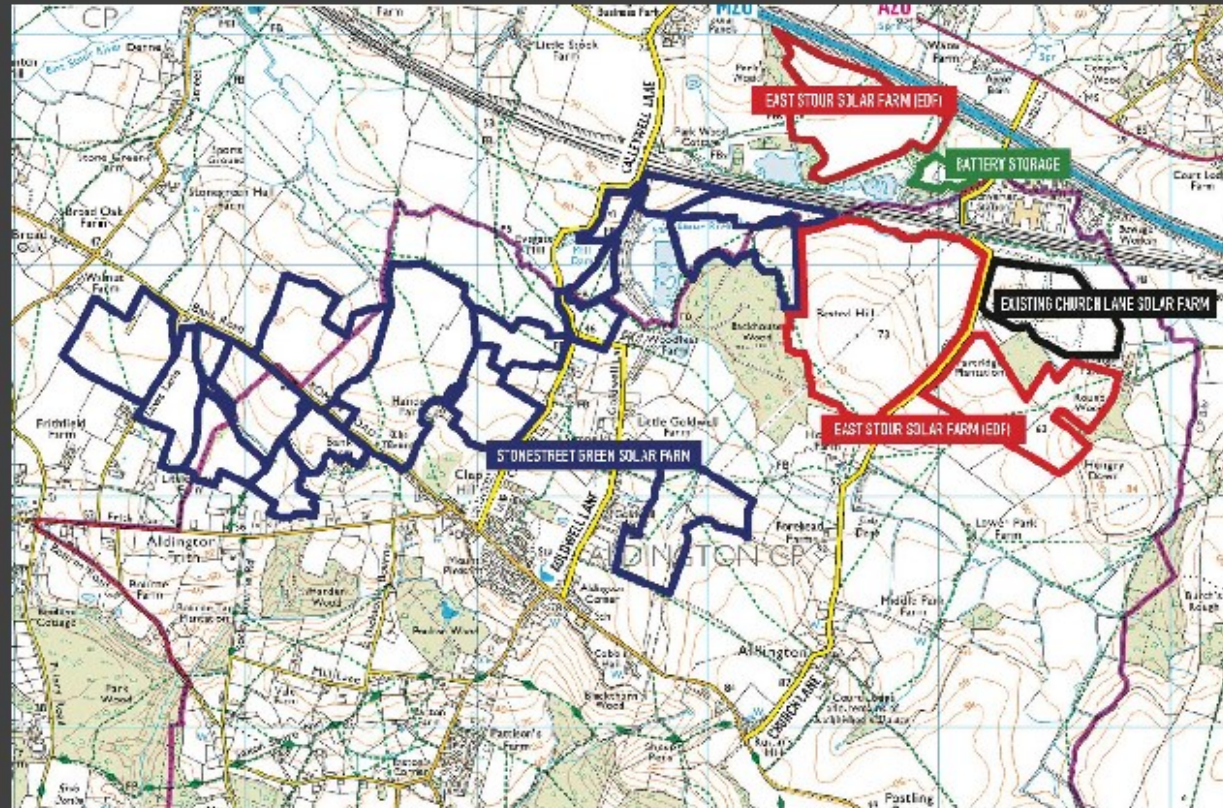


**A&B PC
CONCERNS;
SCALE**

- 467 acres will dwarf Aldington
- Village confines (core village) is approx. fifth of the size.



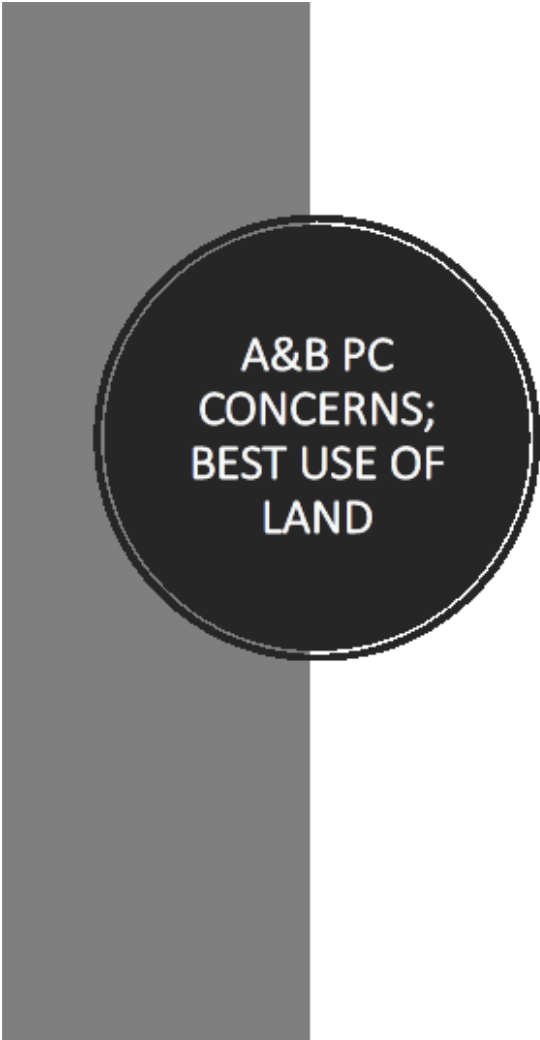
**A&B PC
CONCERNS;
CUMULATIVE
IMPACT**





A&B PC
CONCERNS;
VISUAL
IMPACT

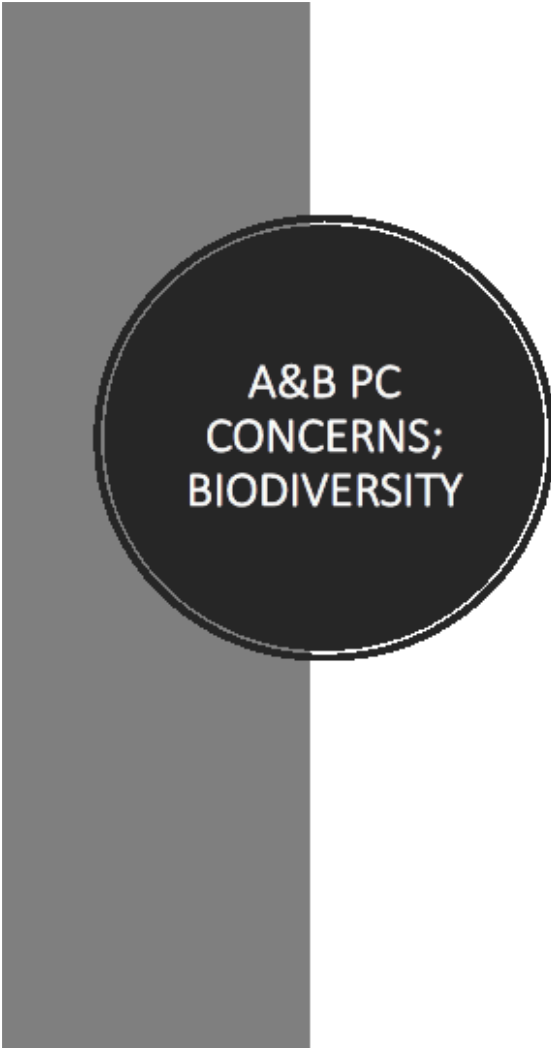
ACTION: Review the locations put forward by EP. Residents to request any additional in comments.



A&B PC
CONCERNS;
BEST USE OF
LAND

From the EP Presentation 8th Nov

- EP Preliminary Environmental Impact Assessment
 - 185 points were surveyed across the 189ha site
 - States; Approximately 80% of the site was Grade 3b (lower quality), around 20% Grade 3a and about 1% Grade 2
 - Asserts that ABC Local Plan 2030 limits residential development on Grade 1 and Grade 2 land only – suggests lots of Grade 3a land in Ashford thus justifying use
 - ACTION: Removal of best graded.
Lobby for Gov. legislation

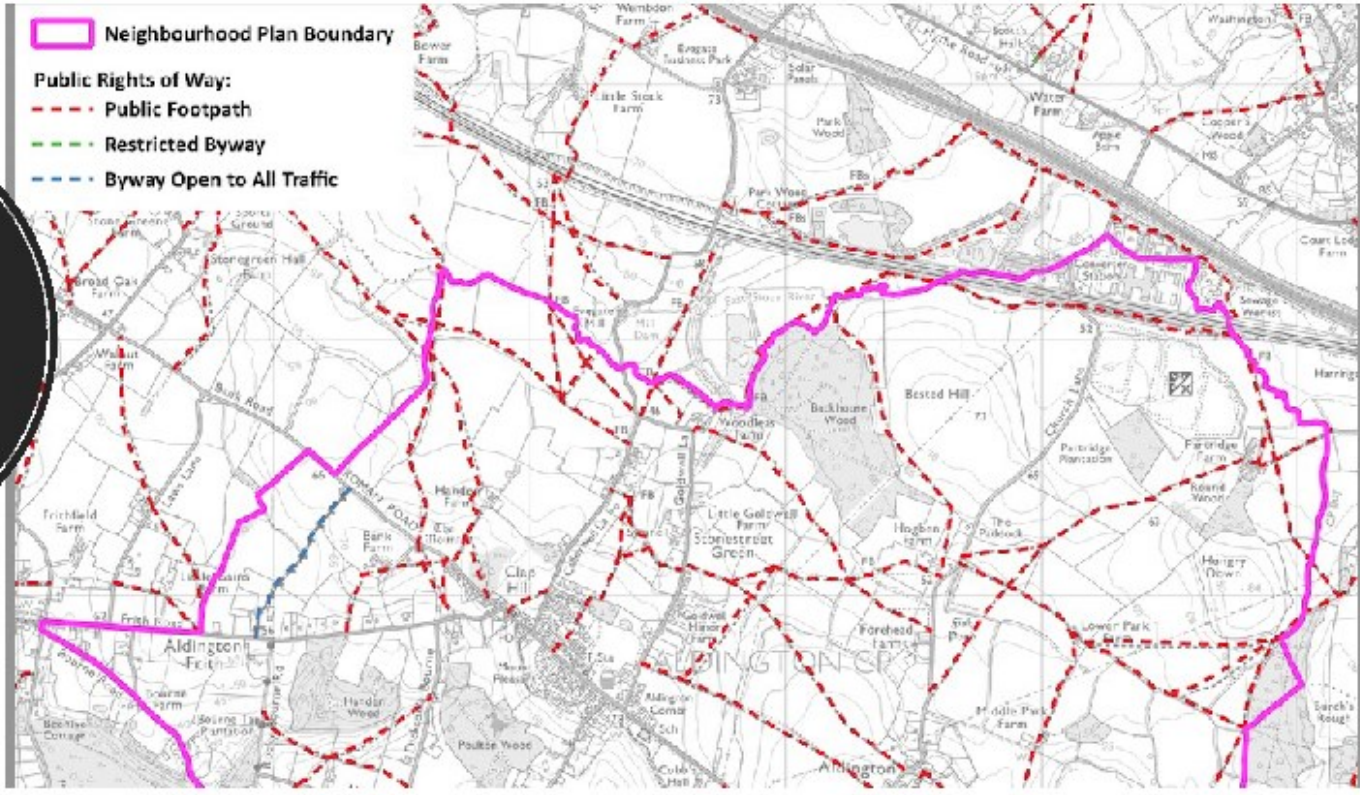


A&B PC
CONCERNS;
BIODIVERSITY

- Applicant states 100% Biodiversity Net Gain. Need this validated – and annual reporting to verify.
- Effect on Skylarks near Handen Farm?
- Effect during construction phase on nearby badger sets?
- Effect on migrating water fowl?

ACTION: work with ecologist

A&B PC
CONCERNS;
IMPACT ON
PRoWs &
RURAL
ECONOMY



NEXT STEPS:

1. Agree what we are aiming for:
 - COMPLETELY OPPOSE?
 - Support this proposal but MINIMISE AND MITIGATE?
 - SUPPORT SOLAR in general – IN THE RIGHT LOCATION (IBF, Otterpool, A20/M20 corridor) not this proposal due to inappropriate location
2. Parish Council will submit own comments to EP Statutory Consultation (closing date 29.11.22)
3. Residents must engage too – comments to be emailed to: info@stonestreetgreensolar.co.uk or by Post to: **Freepost STONESTREET GREEN SOLAR**
4. ABC response will be debated at Planning Committee 7th December. Resident delegation will be impactful.