

From Pauric McCloskey, 1 May 2025:

Thanks very much for the very useful update and please extend our thanks to the LMC for discussing Shipmeadow Solar Farm at their meeting on Monday 7th April 2025.

Thanks also for your questions/clarifications which I have put in yellow [*Rod changed these to blue font*] highlight to help you see my responses:

1. The Shipmeadow solar farm proposal is, in effect, on two sites - a north-western site and a south-eastern site. The proposal for the north-western site is essentially sorted out (in terms of access for construction), which will be from the B road to the north.
 - a. Shipmeadow Solar Farm proposal is one project which includes two sections which we refer to as the eastern and western sections. Yes, the western section will be accessed directly via the B1062 Hill Road and pending the EIA, there are no traffic concerns with this access. This access will accommodate circa 60% of the construction materials for Shipmeadow Solar Farm. As additional mitigation, we will also look to use western access off B1062 Hill Road for construction workforce access (LGVs, vans and 4x4s etc) who will then use existing laneway at Rookery Farm and Clarke's Lane to access the eastern section.
2. The south-eastern site is not sorted out, in terms of access for construction. The original idea was to have a circular route from the B road that would involve Clarke's Lane, Tooks Common Lane, Banter's Lane and Hall Road. This possibility for access for construction is not preferred due to traffic flows, narrowness of roads, conflict with farm vehicles, etc.
 - a. The original route ([Public Exhibition November 2022](#)) included a circular route as you have described that provided access to both eastern and western sections from Clarke's Lane and Hall Road. Following feedback (inc your summarised issues) from the Public Exhibition November 2022, we presented an improved access strategy at [Public Information Day May 2023](#) via the A144, Top Road, Tooks Common Lane and Clarke's Lane (south). This is an "improved strategy" because (as described above) the western access off B1062 will handle 60% of the construction materials (HGVs) and 100% of the construction workforce traffic (LGVs, vans and 4x4s etc).
3. An alternative possibility is to access the south-eastern site from the A road, Top Road, Tooks Common Lane and then Clarke's Lane. This would not be a circular route, and hence traffic needing to pass in opposite directions becomes an issue - hence the need for passing places. This possibility is the preferred solution from the point of view of Suffolk Highways.
 - a. Informal pre-application consultation with Suffolk Highways (Sept 2023) requested that we investigate alternative access routes to the eastern section.
 - b. One of the alternative options is the route via the A144, Top Road, Tooks Common Lane and Clarke's Lane (south). In Nov 2023 we presented this route (including passing bays on Common Land) to the LMC. We anticipate that this route will be used for 40% of the construction materials (HGVs) approximately 8 HGVs per day during construction phase i.e. 1 vehicle per hour (normal working 8-hour day Mon-Fri).

- i. Suffolk Highways requested we achieve “forward visibility” and hence this is where we require passing bays on Common Land
- ii. Note that the passing bays can be either temporary or permanent. I have reattached the Nov 2023 presentation again for convenience.
- c. The feedback from LMC in Dec 2023 stated that they would object to Shipmeadow Solar Farm and any access proposals. Throughout 2024, we have assessed other alternative routes and we now have all evidence to re-engage with Suffolk Highways and present the findings. Before we do this, I wanted to double-check with PC/LMC if there was an opportunity whereby we can alleviate their concerns.

RES want to deliver meaningful local benefit as part of Shipmeadow Solar Farm. Funding mechanisms have changed in recent years away from Basic Payment Schemes towards Sustainable Farming Initiatives. A community benefits package can include long term support for local initiatives such as maintenance and enhancement of Common Land in Ilketshall St Andrew.

My preference would be for any future planning application to include an access to the eastern section which has been consulted and agreed with LMC/PC. Engaging on community benefits does not restrict any future representations being made by LMC/PC against any planning application.

I would be happy to prepare an updated presentation and draft Offer / Heads of Terms for a community benefits package (subject to contract). Let me know if there is any appetite to discuss further?