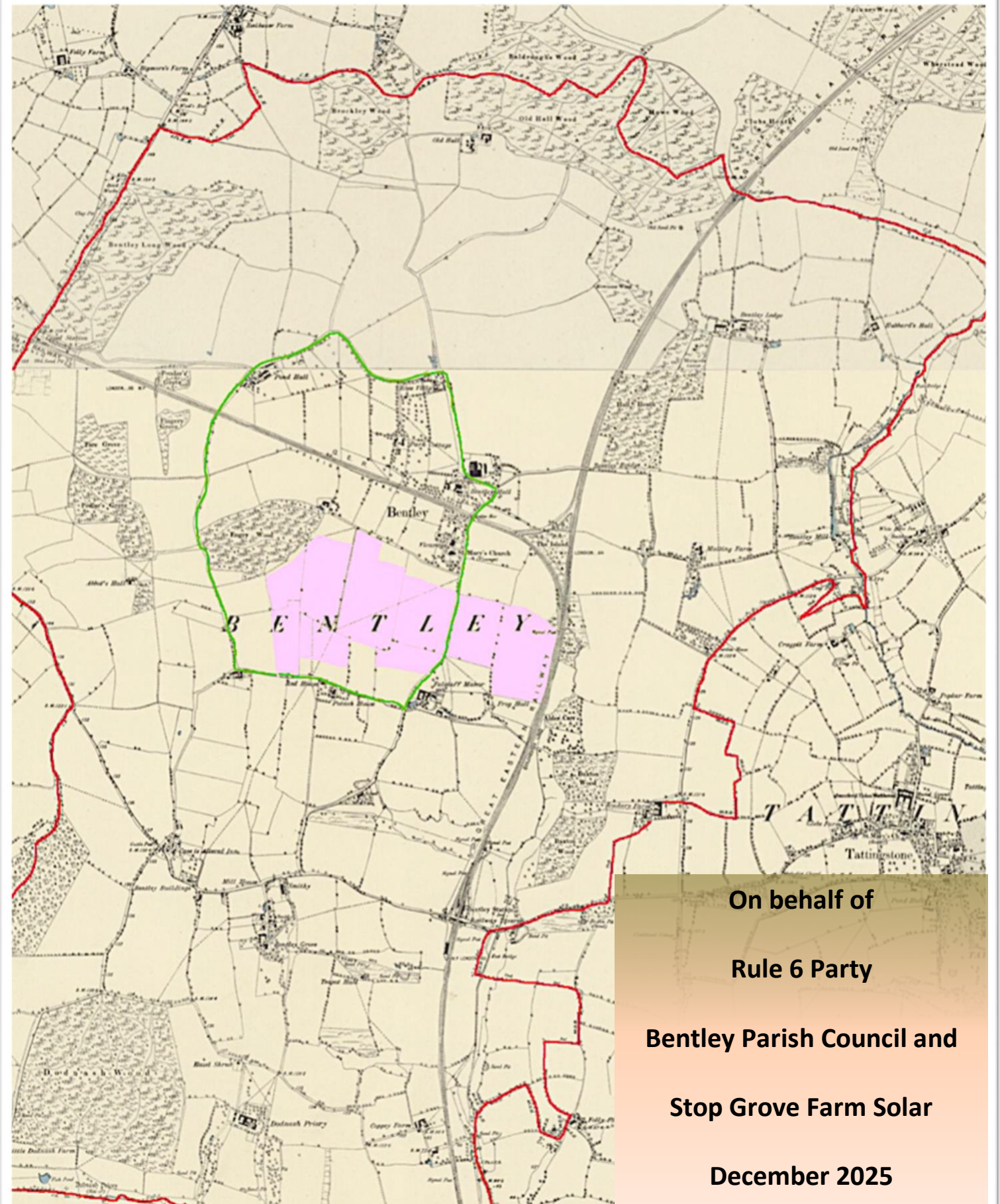


PINS Reference: APP/D3505/W/25/3370515

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL HALLOWS, HUBBARDS HALL

Grove Solar Farm, Bentley, Suffolk

Grove Solar Farm, Bentley, Suffolk



STATEMENT OF MICHAEL HALLOWS, HUBBARDS HALL FARM, BENTLEY, SUFFOLK

I am the owner of a livery and sport horse training yard at Bentley in Suffolk which is approved by The British Horse Society.

I employ three full time members of staff who all ride professionally training both young inexperienced horses and high level dressage and event horses. They regularly exercise the horses for their education and fitness around the local lanes and bridlepaths and we have a number of livery/amateur riders who also ride out. We have 26 clients' horses at our yard.

One route we ride regularly goes around three sides of the proposed Solar Farm at Grove Farm in Bentley. This application is of great concern to me for a number of reasons.

Firstly the proposed access road, yet to be built, across a field to the site, ends adjacent to the junction of a bridle path known as Pond Hall Lane with Potash Lane and the Grove Farm farmyard. The construction site will greatly impede the safe passage onto Potash Lane with horses and riders having to face up to all the construction traffic including HGV articulated lorries. There is nothing in the planning application that explains how bridle path users will be accommodated during the construction phase. The British Horse Society advise that an alternative route for equestrians should be provided during construction to minimise disruption and to ensure users' safety, which includes not forcing them to use roads as the only alternative.

Secondly as the site develops there will be much noisy and intrusive building work on the route along the bridle path and on Potash Lane and Church Road, a distance of 4km, which will again make riding very dangerous as these horses are not used to this environment, causing them stress. Church Road, a 'Quiet Lane' was designated because of the high use by equestrians, walkers and cyclists. The initial construction period was said at the public consultation to take 18 months, which is a significant period of time.

Thirdly, after the initial construction period, there could be further dangers of glint and glare reflections along Pond Hall Lane, Potash Lane and Church Road where views of the solar panels will exist for horse and rider, especially where there are open field entrances and in winter when the deciduous hedges do not provide sufficient cover, leading to an increased risk of accidents to horses after the Solar farm is constructed.

Fourthly there is to be built a substation on the east side of the main railway line. Its access point is along a designated 'Quiet Lane' which runs from the A137 to Bentley Church, and opposite the back driveway to Bentley Manor. The recent designation of a 'Quiet Lane' here has thankfully made a significant difference in the speed at which vehicles approach horses and the respect which drivers of all vehicles give us. It is a

regular, and the only ride, which we take our baby horses out on, to train them in becoming confident in meeting light traffic.

I am not relishing the thought of my staff and livery owners and their horses meeting this heavy vehicle traffic.

As an employer I have a duty of care to my staff and the welfare of the horses in our care.

I do not think it is fair for us to have our rights of way, effectively off limits for 18 months or so and thereafter have them made more hazardous to ride round.

As a highly respected employer and trainer of horses I also speak for the other riders in our area.

I will send a copy of this letter along with related forms to The Health and Safety Executive and The BHS approval team, as I have a duty to do so and to warn them of potential hazards.

Please reject this Solar Farm.

Michael Hallows BHSI (t)