



**Ref: Planning Application: W/23/00270/FUL submitted to Wychavon District Council**

**An open letter to RWE CEO Katja Wünschel and Thomas Glover, UK Country Chair**

We are writing to ask that you consider withdrawing the planning applications for Earls Common Road, Stock Green in Worcestershire filed with Wychavon District Council (Application number W23/00270/FUL).

Let us be clear at the outset that we are not against renewable energy and recognise its importance in terms of addressing climate change.

This site you have chosen, however, is not suitable. It has unique significance as a literary landscape, one which inspired J.R.R. Tolkien's 'Shire' in *The Hobbit* and is also productive agricultural land.

According to Tolkien biographers, Tolkien often visited his aunt's farm, called 'Bag End' in Dormston. The house of his hero, Bilbo Baggins, was called 'Bag End' and his creation of 'The Shire', a sheltered tranquil region of Middle-Earth, is thought to be inspired by the view from the real-life 'Bag End'.

More than 7800 people have now submitted formal objections to Wychavon and Redditch councils opposed to the building of your huge industrial solar power station which will destroy Tolkien's last remaining literary landscape. The objections to your scheme are coming into the councils at a rate of about 200 per week.

All four affected Parish Councils are united in their opposition to your scheme. Rachel Maclean, our local Conservative MP carried out a survey of local people and 94% were opposed. Other Worcestershire MPs, including Nigel Huddleston, have also spoken out against your proposal. The reality is that this 287-acre development only represents a tiny percentage (3.8%) of the total megawatt capacity in the RWE pipeline in the UK.

From the start, the whole process has been poorly managed and local people have been kept in the dark. An initial webinar in November 2023, excluded members of the local community and there has been little effort to engage locally. Recently, we, the Roundhill Wood Solar Farm Opposition Group (RWSF), requested an update from Wychavon District Council, but they have not been informed when JBM are submitting new planning application documents. Some documents have recently appeared on Redditch Council's website, but not on Wychavon Council's website. But even these documents are incomplete and fail to let us know how the planning applications are being updated and when.

In fact, JBM recently submitted a separate cable application to Redditch Borough Council to serve the solar plant but failed to update the local community or explain why a new application was needed.



# Roundhill Wood Solar Farm Opposition Group

We are stepping up our campaign, and now have the support of politicians, eminent Tolkien academics as well as thousands of local people.

In a recent Westminster debate, Rachel Maclean MP, our local MP, said:

“...in our Worcestershire countryside, we're very proud of our connection to J.R.R. Tolkien. That is known and said to be where he lived and worked when he was escaping from Birmingham. Some of his work is thought to have a significant inspiration taken from our beautiful fields and areas and in fact, Andrew Morton recently came to my constituency to discuss the importance of this area in inspiring Tolkien's the Shire, according to Andrew Morton, Tolkien's visits to his aunt's farm called Bag End in Dormston directly inspired the name of the house of the fictional character Bilbo Baggins. And if this application were to pass, this landscape would become a construction site. The views that inspired great works of literature would be lost forever.”

It's not too late to change your minds.

- Thousands of local people have formally objected to your scheme.
- You are destroying Tolkien's last remaining literary landscape.
- Thousands of people nationwide, upset about Tolkien's last remaining landscape being destroyed, have formally objected to your scheme.
- The scheme is being proposed on productive agricultural land.
- This scheme represents a tiny percentage of your pipeline in the UK.
- This scheme has been poorly managed from the start.
- Politicians and leading Tolkien academics are condemning your scheme.

We are asking you to do the right thing and withdraw your planning applications.

We look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards,

**Phil Coathup**

Chairman, Roundhill Wood Solar Farm Opposition Group (RWSF)  
Save The Shire Campaign.