

Response from the No To Longfield scheme opposition group
Unique Reference : 20031600

We are a local action group representing local residents.
Below is our response for Deadline 6.

Route Walk

With regard to the site walk arranged on 6th Dec 2022, it was clear that the proposed areas for the solar farm was a stunning landscape and that the size and location of the scheme was inappropriate for the area.

Some images from the day are as follows:











We encourage the inspectorate to take note of the landscape character and visual amenity offered by this part of Essex enjoyed by many local and visiting walkers, and with its strong farming heritage dating back hundreds of years. This scheme would also be clearly visible from part of the Essex Way, a well known and very popular walking route established in 1972 by CPRE to celebrate some of the county's finest countryside:

https://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/files/essex_way_booklet.pdf

The developers have noted themselves that they accepted that the scale of their proposals would have an adverse visual impact and effect on the landscape.

Alfreton solar farm - Appeal dismissed

We also draw the Inspectorates attention to a recent planning decision to reject the Alfreton Solar farm.

The application can be found here:

<https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewCase.aspx?caseid=3299953>

With the notable statement here in paragraph 60:

“The need for renewable or low carbon energy does not automatically override environmental protections. I have taken into account all the other matters raised including the proximity of a suitable grid connection, but in the overall balance, the harm caused to landscape character and visual amenity is decisive. The adverse impacts cannot be addressed satisfactorily on a site of this size and character, and the suggested planting mitigation measures would be seriously out of keeping and would largely worsen, rather than mitigate for the landscape and visual impact. Objectors point out that the panels could simply be replaced after 40 years but it is difficult to predict whether national energy strategy will still require large solar installations in 2062. I consider that 40 years is a very significant period in people’s lives during which the development would seriously detract from landscape character and visual amenity.”

This comment aligns strongly with the group’s campaign issue in that mitigation planting will worsen the landscape considerably as the area benefits substantially from naturally worn borders that offer long site-lines. Mitigation planting will simply reduce those site-lines altering the look of the area substantially.

Fencing

We drew the Inspectorates attention to the effect that fencing would have on the area. Since the area is vital to a rich variety of wildlife including deer, we frequently observe movement across these fields, grazing and moving from woodland to woodland.

Fencing off these areas would force wildlife to take completely new routes and particularly with large mammals would make large areas of their habitat inaccessible.

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