

## Simon Says

Transcript Export

### Mallard Pass OFH 2\_17 May\_PT1

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FULL TRANSCRIPT (with timecode)

00:00:05:22 - 00:00:24:21

Good evening, everybody. It's now 7 p.m. and time to begin. I welcome you all to the second open floor hearing the application by Malabar Solar Farm Limited for an order granting developed consents for the proposed solar farm. Can I just confirm that everybody can hear me clearly?

00:00:26:28 - 00:00:27:17

Thank you.

00:00:28:20 - 00:00:33:09

Can you also confirm with Mr. Hansen that the live streaming of the recording this event has commenced?

00:00:37:12 - 00:00:38:00

Thank you.

00:00:38:28 - 00:00:49:17

My name is Mark James. I've been appointed by the Secretary of State as a member of the panel to examine this application. I'm going to ask my colleague and fellow panel member to misuse himself.

00:00:51:18 - 00:00:55:03

Good evening. My name is David Cliff and I'm the lead member of the panel.

00:00:56:08 - 00:00:56:26

Thank you.

00:00:57:17 - 00:01:30:20

Together, we constitute the examining authority for this application. Our role is to examine the application and to report to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net-zero with a recommendation as whether or not a developed consent order should be made. I also want to introduce our Planning Inspectorate colleagues with us on Nation, some of whom you may have spoken to already. Johansson is the case manager leading the Planning Inspectorate's case team for this examination. He is assisted today by Ben Chan and Michelle Gregory.

00:01:33:07 - 00:02:00:28

I will now deal with a few housekeeping matters for those attending in person. Never in the room. Please set all devices and phones to silence. Toilets. You may have already found all located in the foyer to the to the rear. There are no plans. Fire alarms this evening. And in the event of an alarm,

please exit the building following the signposted fire exit routes which ask the rear the room to my rear here as well.

00:02:03:21 - 00:02:21:28

Detailed agenda is not required for this hearing because its purpose is to hear the representations of interested parties who have registered to make oral representations about the application. The order in which you'll be invited to speak will follow Appendix B to the Agenda, which was published on our website for this meeting.

00:02:23:16 - 00:02:53:21

The meeting is being undertaken in a hybrid way, meaning that some of you are present with us in the room and some of you are joining us virtually using Microsoft teams. A recording of today's meeting will be made available on the Malabar Solar Farm section of the National Infrastructure Planning website as soon as practicable after the hearing is finished. With this in mind, please ensure that you speak clearly into the microphone stating your name and organization when you are asked to speak. A link to the planning.

00:02:53:23 - 00:03:12:12

Inspectorate's Privacy Notice was provided with this notification for the hearing. We assume everybody here has read this notice and is familiar with its contents, which establishes our policy in terms of data protection for our customers and how this is handled in accordance with principles sets out in data protection laws.

00:03:13:29 - 00:03:30:29

If you feel it's necessary to refer to sensitive personal information, we'd encourage you to speak to a member of our case team first before you do so. They will then explore with you any options in terms of sharing the information and the written format, which might be redacted before published.

00:03:33:09 - 00:03:53:14

If anyone wishes to use social media or to reports, film or record the hearing, you are free to do so. But please act responsibly and with proper consideration for the parties. This must not be misused or disruptive, and no individually recorded items may be relied upon as evidence by any party or use in submissions.

00:03:55:24 - 00:04:15:24

In terms of the purpose of the meeting, open floor hearings provide an opportunity to raise anything directly to the examining authority that is important and relevant and that you think we should know about and consider. They're not about a particular topic or location. The topic of your representation is to yourself.

00:04:17:09 - 00:04:19:23

It decided to hold early open for hearings.

00:04:26:03 - 00:04:48:04

Apologies in order to give an opportunity to local people, organizations and businesses an opportunity to make any points they wish to make. At this stage, due to the number of parties wishing to speak today, we'll be setting a time limit of five minutes per person and ten minutes for organizations. When you are speaking, we will indicate when you have a minute left.

00:04:50:15 - 00:05:06:02

It will also assist in making sure that everyone is heard. If we're a previous speaker, covers the points that you going to make. You simply indicate your agreement with those points rather than repeating

them in detail. We will have a record of all points made and you're not getting any further weight from being repeated.

00:05:09:18 - 00:05:15:27

Once you finally select to the panel, you may wish to ask questions and the panel may ask questions of you.

00:05:17:23 - 00:05:25:28

Finally, the applicant will be given an opportunity to respond to any matters raised once all speakers have been heard, either orally or in writing by deadline one.

00:05:28:06 - 00:05:43:21

Intense. Take a short break a suitable points which I expect be around 8:10. We'll take a view on how quickly we are moving through the various speakers this evening and we hope that it should be possible to accommodate all speakers registered to speak by around 930.

00:05:47:06 - 00:05:47:26

You can go.

00:05:48:21 - 00:05:52:29

In saying to the applicant, Please, can I ask who will be speaking on behalf of the applicant this evening?

00:05:58:16 - 00:06:08:26

Hello? Yes. Uh, Matt Fox, senior associate of Vincent Mason's on behalf of the applicant and or possibly Gareth Phillips, partner at Vincent Mason's.

00:06:10:02 - 00:06:10:19

Thank you.

00:06:12:05 - 00:06:31:29

I will now invite representations from interested parties who gave notice of their intention to speak in the order that they appear in Annex B of the Agenda. When invited to speak, please sit at the front table. If you're in the room or turn on your camera if you are attending online. Does anybody have any questions before we begin?

00:06:36:05 - 00:06:36:24

Okay.

00:06:39:07 - 00:06:44:14

First of all, we have a mr. Philip Britton representing Bracebridge and Woolsthorpe Parish Council.

00:06:50:00 - 00:06:50:22

Apologies.

00:06:55:23 - 00:06:58:09

Mr. Burton, you have ten minutes. Thank you.

00:06:59:12 - 00:06:59:27

Thanks.

00:07:04:08 - 00:07:45:07

Sorry. My name is. My name is Phil Britten. I'm the chair of Retford Parish Council. And the residents of Retford have some significant concerns about the proposal to build Mallard Park Solar farm over a large tract of land upstream of the village. Retford has been prone to flooding for many years. In the 1950s, the cut was built as a flood relief channel to take much of the water that used to flood the village away to the south and into the river welland at market deeping. Unfortunately, the cuts cannot handle all of the excess water and in these flood situations the river overtopped its bank at a point just outside the village, and flooding occurs in the Great Hall and Retford Gardens areas of the village.

00:07:46:21 - 00:08:20:20

Parishioners are very concerned that the covering of large tracts of land with impervious solar panels will create runoff, which will fall onto the soils below. We are concerned that these clay based soils will be compacted during the construction process and thus be unable to absorb the large volumes of water that will be running off the panels in heavy rainfall events. In this case, the water will not be steadily absorbed into the soil and instead will begin to run off the land, potentially causing erosion.

00:08:21:29 - 00:08:37:19

The water will then find its way via drains and ditches into the West glen much more quickly than is currently the case. And the river. Sorry, that was the case with the river and the uncovered land that is currently characteristic of the site. Open field Agriculture.

00:08:39:12 - 00:08:49:21

Potential to generate more rapid runoff will lead to a quicker rise in river levels closer to the village, which will subsequently give us less warning of a flood happening than is currently the case.

00:08:51:08 - 00:09:08:22

We believe there are opportunities to significantly reduce the flood risk posed by water running off from the panels by improving water infiltration rates into the soil. This can be done in part by establishing a good long term grassland well before any construction takes place and emphasis well before.

00:09:11:13 - 00:09:23:13

A well-established long term grass layer will increase the soil's resilience to trafficking and compaction, which will also help to improve IT water infiltration rates and reduce the risk of water runoff.

00:09:25:09 - 00:09:44:28

We are also have an opinion that the construction should be limited to times when the soils are dry enough to cope with trafficking and not be compacted, and that measurements of soil moisture contents around the site should be used to ascertain whether soils can be will be damaged by trafficking or not. We intend to expand on these themes in our written representation.

00:09:46:25 - 00:10:18:20

Paris is also very concerned that a large quantity of best and most fertile half farmland is being lost to food production for an unspecified or indefinite period of time when for when food security is becoming just as important as energy security. The semi detailed survey cannot, in our opinion, be relied upon to accurately determine exactly how much land is being lost across the site as it initially only sampled one quarter of the area required in the Natural England guidance to properly determine the area of soils.

00:10:20:06 - 00:10:43:10

The initial survey was followed by a more detailed survey conducted at the correct sampling of one sample per hectare properly with the apparent aim of reducing the error of BMV to below half of the

proposed site. A full hectare by hectare site should have been deployed across the whole area, as this is the standard to ascertain properly the quantity of land that is present.

00:10:45:23 - 00:11:32:15

Operations feel that the sheer scale of the proposal is completely out of character for its rural setting. It will not be possible to adequately adequately screen the site and the gentle rolling landscape in which it is proposed to be built, and it will be visible from viewpoints a considerable distance away. There is concern that the main bridleway footpath, which crosses the site and currently offers open views of gently rolling countryside will become fenced in and there will be a path passing through an industrial installation. This represents a significant loss of amenity for our village and the communities in the wider area that are affected by the proposal and the open habitats of the deer and hare which characterise the large fauna of the area, will be lost and populations will be displaced from their current ranges across the site.

00:11:32:27 - 00:11:49:13

It will be largely unable to access the solar panel areas as they will be fenced off and proposed mammal gates will do nothing to improve this situation. Fenced in. Wildlife corridors are not used by these mammals as they require open spaces and they will be lost from the environs of the site.

00:11:51:10 - 00:12:22:07

Retford village also has traffic problems with using the village as a shortcut and cars frequently speeding through the village. We know that some of the HGVs, using the village as a shortcut, are subject to existing routing agreements and that they are not complying with these agreements. And it's very difficult to police this aspect of traffic routing in our experience in one of our residents has actually tried jumping out in front of Tipper trucks and has asked them where they're coming from or going to try and ascertain they're breaking their route in agreement.

00:12:23:15 - 00:12:43:22

We fear that our situation will worsen with this development as the potential for road closures, roadworks and subsequent disruption to traffic will push this traffic to use alternative routes which will come through Retford to the further detriment of our village. We'll also expand on these objections to the proposed development in our written representation. Thank you.

00:12:55:26 - 00:12:58:04

Whenever. Mr. David Kentish.

00:13:00:06 - 00:13:03:08

Are you speaking on behalf of Race for a parish council?

00:13:04:01 - 00:13:05:15

So thank you.

00:13:07:29 - 00:13:10:21

Mr. Kansas, you have ten minutes.

00:13:11:15 - 00:13:41:29

Okay. Thank you, Mr. James. David Kent is chair Bracebridge and Woolsthorpe Parish Council. Um, just an observation. I find a certain irony in the fact that although you can't see on the screens at the moment, but when we came in, the screen showed a picture of a beautiful, open and unsullied green fields. When the discussion is being had about ruining this picture by filling our countryside with row upon row of over three metre high solar panels.

00:13:42:01 - 00:13:43:22

But, you know, maybe that's just me.

00:13:45:28 - 00:14:09:10

So I'm here representing the parishioners of Bracebridge and Walsall. And from the start of this application back in November 21st, at all of our parish council meetings and specially arranged parish meetings. The Mallard Solar Pass Farm planning application has been overwhelmingly objected to by parishioners for the following reasons.

00:14:11:14 - 00:14:42:18

Just signs of the proposed development. The site area over 2105 acres. And to give this some scale, this is the equivalent to 1300 football pitches. The solar area is a 1052 acres and if you include the field margins, it is 1312 acres and as it's currently laid out. The 530,000 solar panels.

00:14:43:04 - 00:15:00:09

And I'll repeat that the 530,000 solar panels, which is over half a million, will be spread haphazardly over this acreage on both sides of country roads and lanes and will blight the landscape for 40 plus years.

00:15:03:21 - 00:15:37:25

Lots of best and most versatile land. We all know that there is a need for us to produce more energy, but we also know that there is a cost of living crisis which has seen food in the shops and markets rise in some cases by over 100%. Approximately 55% of the land we would be losing is rated best and most versatile for growing crops. The Government's Food Strategy policy paper in June 2022 clearly wants to maintain agricultural production.

00:15:39:05 - 00:15:45:11

We have this farming land now. Why destroy it when it's needed so badly?

00:15:49:01 - 00:15:50:04

Visual impact.

00:15:52:03 - 00:16:24:17

The sheer scale of topography means that you cannot eradicate or screen all of the adverse visual impacts. For example, the new substation will be visible and audible for residents in Essendon on the A6 121. There will be field upon field of 3.3m solar panel arrays, high security fencing, approximately 1320 security cameras at a height of 3.5m, as well as security lighting, creating light pollution.

00:16:26:20 - 00:16:36:04

The lighting for containers, housing, inverters, transformers and many, many other pieces of equipment. The whole of the landscape will be transformed into an industrial park.

00:16:39:21 - 00:16:41:01

Biodiversity.

00:16:42:23 - 00:16:59:15

All of this will have huge detrimental effects on biodiversity in the area and depending on what the fencing arrangements end up being, will determine the impact of the habitat corridors of some mammals like badgers and brown hares, as well as the impact for deer.

00:17:01:03 - 00:17:25:05

And a great deal of wildlife will actually lose their habitat and the security fencing could cause serious injury to deer and other animals who inhabit the fields and the woodlands. Malpass Talk about

biodiversity net gain, which is something that the government does insist upon. This will not be realised. It will be biodiversity net loss.

00:17:28:21 - 00:18:03:25

And as to the local community. There are absolutely zero benefits to the local community. Power generated by Mallard Pass will not be channeled to the local area. It will not reduce people's bills. The only people who will benefit from this financially are the people who in principle have agreed to lease their land and Mallard Pass. Can I do Solar Now? Rebranded? And the local community will pay for this with their lives being turned upside down during construction and their peaceful countryside ruined forever.

00:18:08:01 - 00:18:38:16

And it's interesting. Mental health is going to be, I think for many, many residents, a big, big issue because amongst all of the information in this proposal, unless I've missed it, there is no understanding of the mental health issues that will arise from this development. For many, many people who have lived in this beautiful area for years, to have it so brutally transformed will cause distress and anxiety, especially those affected by the compulsory acquisition rights.

00:18:42:14 - 00:18:43:22

We public right away.

00:18:45:10 - 00:19:02:16

These will be closed or diverted during construction. And although some new additional permissive paths are promised. Where is the beauty of walking, running or cycling through a corridor of giant solar panel arrays? That's assuming that you can actually get through the security fencing.

00:19:06:13 - 00:19:49:07

Battery storage. It's interesting as far as I'm concerned, because the fact that battery storage was not included in the development at this time begs the question of when will it be installed? This development might be sold on quickly. If planning permission is granted, then the new owner may well install battery storage. And the reason? This is such a concern is the danger to life that lithium batteries present? There have been many cases of the storage batteries catching fire and cannot be put out by conventional means, with a real risk of spreading across fields to villages and setting fire to homes and endangering life.

00:19:50:10 - 00:19:59:28

You only have to look at what global warming has done with the temperatures we have experienced a year or so ago in the UK with wildfires engulfing homes and business premises.

00:20:03:05 - 00:20:04:19

Onto contractual issues.

00:20:06:21 - 00:20:39:09

2 to 3 years construction, which will mean extensive traffic measures through rail and down great Casterton and surrounding areas. Our roads and country lanes just about cope with the increase in Amazon deliveries, let alone the prospect of 80 400,000 tonnes HGV loads that will destroy verges and imperil drivers as well as walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders who, because of closure of public rights of ways, will be forced to use the roadways more often.

00:20:40:29 - 00:20:55:26

And with up to 400 workers per day on the site with their own transport for six days a week from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. being added to the lorries. This becomes a major safety hazard in the making.

00:20:59:16 - 00:21:00:25

Environmental damage.

00:21:02:22 - 00:21:37:23

The construction of this development would cause enormous damage to the environment. I've already mentioned the HGVs, but the loads of equipment they deliver from heavy piling machinery, deep mounted structures to house the solar panels and equipment will create noise, dust, air pollution and will compact the ground. This, in turn, will exacerbate the problems of flooding with water runoff from the panels and the hard surface and will cause major problems for many villages within the construction radius who already suffer flooding with runoff from fields and watercourses.

00:21:41:07 - 00:21:42:03

To conclude.

00:21:44:10 - 00:22:03:12

There are multiple planning applications for solar farms. Pretty much all of them wanting to be placed in the countryside. Lincolnshire in particular. My solar panel should be on brownfield sites and on industrial roofing. There should be no sane reason why they should take over the countryside. Thank you.

00:22:07:14 - 00:22:08:18

Thank you, Mr. Kentish.

00:22:14:09 - 00:22:27:10

Bound to our next interested party. Mr. Andrew Beamish, who I believe is online this this evening, Mr. Beamish. Are you are you ready to join us?

00:22:31:01 - 00:22:31:21

Thank you.

00:22:33:05 - 00:22:38:24

We should move on to our next speaker then. And Adele Stain speaking from village hall.

00:22:47:28 - 00:22:50:16

A survey to Mrs. or Miss.

00:22:51:05 - 00:23:24:21

Mrs.. Mrs.. THANK you, Mr.. Could I just say, before I start the presentation that I wish to make, that I feel like I should be sitting here doing some form of word search? Because obviously if we have to cut out everything that you are asking us to not repeat and we've not been able to collate collectively what we're saying, it means that speeches are very disjointed if we're not to repeat what's already been said. I don't know how that's possible. And the further down that list you get, the more impossible it's going to become.

00:23:26:16 - 00:23:34:09

I think you should afford people the opportunity to say what they wish to say in the fullness of what they've written.

00:23:35:26 - 00:23:41:07

When taking Mr. James. Please feel free to state whatever you wish in regards to the application.

00:23:41:14 - 00:23:42:00

Thank you.

00:23:42:21 - 00:24:14:23

I've been chairman of the village Hall Essendon for the past 30 years and I'd like to speak about the implications that a solar installation of the enormous size proposed will have a hugely detrimental effect on our community. Essendon is a very small village with few facilities. Over the years we've lost our shop and more recently our pub. Now our village only has its small church, a part time post office and the village hall, which is the communal hub of our village.

00:24:16:10 - 00:24:49:21

Essendon has a busy and fast main road through the A1 6186121, splitting the village into two elongated halves. It has the busy east Coast mainline railway cutting through north to south. A large industrial estate with chemical storage facilities which have been in the past storing dangerous substances. More recently, we've had a local bus company given permission to relocate into the centre of the village and create a new access from the main road.

00:24:50:09 - 00:25:25:12

So you may think, having just heard me reel off that list, but Essendon already has more than its fair share of problem areas, so why not build another industrial installation and obliterate what is good about living in and dying the wonderful countryside? We are currently lucky enough to be surrounded by. In all four seasons the fields, trees, hedgerows and verges are full of colour and bustling with wildlife. There is so much to see here that no two days are the same when walking out the footpaths and bridleways of the area.

00:25:26:01 - 00:26:01:19

The morning is filled with the cacophony of birdsong from blackbirds, skylarks and the mewing of red kites and buzzards with night time bringing the gentle calling of owls and the occasional nightingale to name but a few. When we're out walking with our dog, we see barn owls, hunting geese and swans, deers, foxes, hares and rabbits on a daily basis. Our area is indeed rich and wildlife fields burst with colours from all the flowers, dandelions, daisies, Scottish thistles, while the hedgerows are full of colour from the Hawthorn, blackthorn and elderflower.

00:26:03:16 - 00:26:41:25

And so along comes Canadian solar and wind energy. With this proposal to transform this rich and diverse landscape I've just described into an extensive jungle of glass panels, concrete posts, high security fencing, security lights and CCTV cameras. Suddenly all that is good about living in this village is swallowed up and is cut from beneath our feet With the dark cloud of this proposed solar development. No longer will you be able to meander freely by the babbling West Glen, walk and admire the wildlife, flora and fauna as we have become accustomed to.

00:26:42:00 - 00:26:54:10

Instead, we will have to walk like prisoners in a concentration camp in corridors of high security fencing, being watched by cameras and dictated to where we can walk.

00:26:56:00 - 00:27:31:24

The Countryside Act of 2000 stated that there was a right to roam and allows the public to enter and remain on open access land for the purposes of open air recreation. This right could soon be denied us. Since the start of the COVID pandemic in 2019, mental health became a very important aspect of our lives to concentrate on during those difficult few years, our right to roam in the countryside around this area became pivotal for a great many people to maintain good mental health.

00:27:32:00 - 00:28:06:01

Once again, our mental health wellbeing is at risk should this solar installation be approved. When I was reading the outline Construction Environmental Management Plan, great bedtime reading. My

concerns for the mental wellbeing of local residents is highly disturbing. Throughout the document, the author uses the statements constantly of where practical and where, as far as reasonably practicable, who decides what is reasonable and who will oversee that.

00:28:06:03 - 00:28:39:18

This is adhered to in 2015, when the construction of the first substation was underway, there seemed to be no end to the flouting of laws and regulations looking out onto it and cycling past it on a daily basis. Many of the statements I have read in this plan are ridiculous and will not be adhered to over the two year construction process. Examples I found included starting machinery sequentially, lowering heights at which materials are dropped.

00:28:39:24 - 00:29:15:29

There is also a statement limiting noise to 45dB if nighttime operation is required. 45dB is such a low noise level that frankly, snoring is louder. Who will check these noise and vibration levels? The guidelines recommend no more than 40dB to prevent adverse health effects from nighttime. Noise statements such as offsite prefabrication should be carried out are made, but again have the disclaimer of where reasonably practicable.

00:29:16:01 - 00:29:51:16

Again when reading the huge numbers of documents explaining how various issues will be overcome. I became so incensed that the developers simply seemed to have an answer for all the issues that will cause major disruption to local residents. This project, if approved, will disrupt our normal, everyday lives and increase stress levels to residents over the long period of time. The altering of road junctions, the widening of roads with passing bays constructed The huge volumes of extra traffic on the roads will make it difficult for commuting.

00:29:51:18 - 00:30:22:05

To work on a daily basis, disrupts school journeys and frankly will make it more dangerous even to cross the road. These concerns have been further exacerbated by the recent discovery of the intention for compulsory acquisition of properties situated along the main A6 one two, one of which the village hall is also affected. When we investigated this intention, we realised this right by the developers would seriously affect all these properties.

00:30:22:29 - 00:30:57:09

If the plan were to be approved, access to all properties would be severely compromised. During the laying of cables throughout the village, connecting solar panels with the substation, utility services to the properties would likely to be affected and possibly cut for periods of time. And of course, that doesn't factor in further disruption for the accidental damage caused to services when pipes and cables are damaged during trenching. Many of the residents in the village rely on their fibre broadband cables to be able to work from home.

00:30:58:03 - 00:31:41:17

The village hall itself would be directly affected by compulsory acquisition too, and it needs access via Plover road to our main vehicular entrance. It is quite likely that our booking and activities at the hall would be severely affected for all the same reasons as residential properties. Noise too of trenching machinery and the general increase in construction traffic would also be distracting for some of our quieter groups, such as yoga sessions. Many residents are very stressed about how they will create disruption to them on their individual properties, on top of the widespread disruption that will occur elsewhere in the village.

00:31:42:15 - 00:32:50:00

Considerable concern over the air quality with pollution from dust as verges are churned up and drilling carried out to install hundreds of thousands of solar panels. Why are they likely to be up to 53. five metres high when other developments are so much lower? Our whole way of life will change

forever. When considering your recommendations as to whether or not the Secretary of State should approve the building of this solar installation. Think about these questions. Is it the right location? Is it the right time and for the right reasons? Is solar on this scale really the way forward, or is it just a money making scheme for the developers who will simply sell it off? If the proposal to be given the go ahead or the greedy farmers leasing the land to lie in their pockets and governments rubbing their hands for the extra cash that the installation would generate for their coffers? It is the people of this area who need to be put at the forefront when making a decision as their lives will be made more difficult, more stressful and more constricted with their access to the countryside.

00:32:50:21 - 00:33:04:01

This should be an unrestricted right, not one for which we have to fight. I urge you to think carefully about this proposal and not about the money.

00:33:07:05 - 00:33:07:20

Thank you.

00:33:10:03 - 00:33:10:27

We're sustainably.

00:33:18:23 - 00:33:19:26

Okay, on to.

00:33:19:28 - 00:33:25:06

Our next speaker. Do we have a mr. Tony Barker in the room?

00:33:30:18 - 00:33:31:17

That's all the side.

00:33:35:25 - 00:33:38:23

Thank you, Mr. Bach. You have five minutes.

00:33:40:19 - 00:33:43:19

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak this evening.

00:33:45:23 - 00:33:57:18

My name is Tony Barker. I'm a chartered surveyor and a resident in Bradford. I'm also a parish council along with Councillor Britton, but I'm speaking on my own behalf.

00:34:00:00 - 00:34:14:17

Um, despite fully understanding and indeed supporting the UK sustainable energy policy, I remain completely and 100% opposed to this scheme.

00:34:17:11 - 00:34:18:13

The previous speakers have.

00:34:18:15 - 00:34:43:09

Already outlined some of the key issues why this proposal should be refused, but just want to concentrate on one particular issue, which accounts that Britain referred to, and that is of increased flood risk. Outside of the development area.

00:34:45:00 - 00:34:50:07

Both during the construction period and its subsequent operation.

00:34:51:18 - 00:34:53:27

I really do feel that.

00:34:54:14 - 00:35:12:27

During the public consultation period. The developer was given plenty of information regarding the risk of enhanced flood risk. The simply chosen to ignore it or pay lip service to it.

00:35:14:00 - 00:35:15:24

I've looked very carefully at.

00:35:16:21 - 00:35:31:26

Some of the documentation. And in particular, I looked at the environmental statement volume two, which was essentially prepared by their consultants Arc Arcus. This is apparent. Their brief.

00:35:32:14 - 00:35:34:15

Was purely to look at flood risk.

00:35:34:17 - 00:36:03:10

On the application site itself. Subsequently, the statement of common ground between the developer and the Environment Agency simply concludes, amongst other things, that solar panels should be sited within flood zone, should not be sited sorry, within flood zone three of the proposed development, but no reference to flood risk elsewhere.

00:36:05:05 - 00:36:23:04

In the applicant's planning statement. The flood risk issues are summarized in section 17.5 sorry, 17, 15, 17, 15 which entirely references.

00:36:24:10 - 00:36:26:21

Flood risk and surface water runoff.

00:36:26:28 - 00:36:54:19

Mitigation within the scheme itself. Only fleeting reference and it is fleeting is given for risk outside the proposal site at 1715 three, which states the proposed development is not considered to give rise to any adverse flood effects with or outside the site. And that is it.

00:36:56:05 - 00:37:29:14

Elsewhere, there is a conclusion that the impact of surface water runoff and flooding on the receiving water courses of high sensitivity are to be considered of negligible magnitude and to have negligible significance of effect. And the only mitigation. That I've seen the developer has offered is the installation of drip trays and the planting of meadow grasses between arrays.

00:37:32:12 - 00:37:49:02

I'm not a consulting engineer, but it is plainly obvious that the installation of 530,000 solar panels and I apologize here, I've been unable to accurately estimate.

00:37:49:28 - 00:37:51:23

The surface area of.

00:37:51:25 - 00:37:56:08

Those panels, but it's a very large number indeed. Everyone, a.

00:37:56:10 - 00:37:57:00

Minute left.

00:37:57:28 - 00:37:59:15

The inevitable compaction of.

00:37:59:17 - 00:38:00:21

Soil during.

00:38:00:23 - 00:38:28:20

The 24 month construction period and the hard standing on the site and the topography of the site will inevitably increase the volume and speed of runoff during periods of heavy and intense rainfall. This, in turn includes increasing flood risk elsewhere. So my question to you is, as inspectors, gentlemen, how will you be able to.

00:38:28:22 - 00:38:31:15

Assess this risk.

00:38:31:17 - 00:38:46:00

Without an appropriate brief given to independent consultants? And not those employed by the developer with a narrower with a narrower brief.

00:38:49:13 - 00:38:50:00

Thank you.

00:38:53:16 - 00:38:54:15

Thank you, Mr. Barker.

00:39:02:06 - 00:39:07:21

Our next interested party with a Linda Eileen Davis.

00:39:10:00 - 00:39:12:13

And so. Thank you.

00:39:16:07 - 00:39:20:09

Sure. If that's you, is Mrs. Davis or Mrs. Davis? Mrs.. Thank you.

00:39:22:16 - 00:39:24:08

Then Mr. Davis here for five minutes.

00:39:24:15 - 00:39:58:12

Thank you. Since learning of the Malabar Solar Farm Planning submission in November 21st, my life, my family's lives and many other residents lives have changed, some beyond all recognition. Some irreversibly. We love our home, our village, and cherish this beautiful lifestyle. We moved here 37 years ago to share this joy and have brought up our family here. Many residents have lived around this area all their lives, as have their generations before them.

00:39:59:18 - 00:40:49:21

The sheer size and status of this development shocked me into finding out more. Consequently, I began to engage, assimilate and communicate with the applicant and his many family members, friends and residents as possible in order to understand this submission. I have a job, so any time spent on doing this has been my time outside my working day. It is important for you the examination. Examination authority to understand this because I'm pushing against a corporate body

based in Canada who started planning this development minimally two years before I was informed of their intention as well as deals already done with local farmers, I knew nothing.

00:40:51:20 - 00:41:13:21

After 20 months of proactive involvement, involvement with affected parties, I sensed a real strength of feeling against this development. Many are worried, horrified, angry and even despairing with it's probably already a done deal. So I speak with them in mind too.

00:41:15:10 - 00:41:47:29

Every person understands the global warming crisis, the need for renewable energy resources and feel weighed down by their community citizenship with responsibility to save our world. This is not being this is not about being against solar energy. Quite the opposite. It's about being against using solar panels in this way. Solar panels should be placed on commercial roofs, any roofs, nowhere else.

00:41:48:22 - 00:42:14:18

However, this wonderful element intends to place 530,000 panels 3.3m tall and power drive them approximately two metres deep into rich fertile sun fields moss on roofs. The huge area is 2038 acres, plus

00:42:16:07 - 00:42:31:13

mounted security cameras and movement sensory lighting. A second huge substation is also to be built. This area is equivalent to 1300 football pitches. It's encroaches on two counties.

00:42:33:01 - 00:42:56:28

Productive land loss on this one scale will be horrific. However, only yesterday I learned that Lynx County has been asked to consider 11 solar developments. How about other counties? I'm not a NIMBY. I speak nationally. Land loss on this scale is catastrophic.

00:42:58:16 - 00:43:31:01

This farmland must be farmed to grow crops for food. The UK needs food production, security. The world has a food crisis too. UK farmland is a national asset to react to the global energy crisis by granting permission to an exploitative developer in this way and create a UK that cannot grow sufficient food to feed its growing population is madness. This development cannot be called a farm.

00:43:31:03 - 00:44:12:02

It's anything but. Construction is estimated to take two years. Realistically more. Many Essendon residents have now further been hit with compulsory acquisition. This was not mentioned during the consultation period, as were many other facts, so called facts. So this peaceful rural farming area we know and love will go the existing rural road network will be changed to accommodate massive transporters, severe pollution, unacceptable noise, traffic, chaos, delays, verge and hedgerow damage or worse, obliteration.

00:44:12:21 - 00:44:31:04

All living flora and fauna in its path. Unconsidered and annihilated, it seems a triple sigh means nothing. The increased traffic increases danger and potentially more accidents for everyone, especially schoolchildren, on their routes.

00:44:31:08 - 00:44:34:15

Coincidentally, the five minutes. Mrs. Davis, thank you. Okay.

00:44:35:02 - 00:44:37:09

Thank you so.

00:44:39:27 - 00:45:09:19

Development will officially change the landscape. Probably forever Paths and bridleways and all those beautiful things that we use are going to be straightened or rerouted or changed because they need to cater for solar panel arrays. The dog walkers and all the people that enjoy this countryside are not taken into consideration.

00:45:14:20 - 00:45:21:10

Sorry, Mr. Davis. In the interest of fairness, and I have to ask you to to wrap up as soon as you can, please. Okay.

00:45:23:13 - 00:45:27:08

I'm at a loss about this planning application and I just want to finish with.

00:45:32:01 - 00:45:59:19

After my first meeting with wind energy, we exchanged a few pros and cons to a particular person of my past solar development. I asked him if he would place this development next to his home. He replied I would, but I live in an area of outstanding natural beauty. I wouldn't be allowed. He shrugged his shoulders and continued. Somebody has to take the hit.

00:46:02:03 - 00:46:02:18

Thank you.

00:46:04:11 - 00:46:05:13

Thank you, Mr. Davis.

00:46:11:06 - 00:46:20:27

For next speaker. Do we have a Simon Henry Davis, who I believe was due to be speaking online? Is that correct?

00:46:28:11 - 00:46:30:04

The stove is present in the room at all.

00:46:31:24 - 00:46:35:05

Now. We shall move on then. Um.

00:46:36:23 - 00:46:41:03

Mr. Adrian For sale. Mr.. For sale. Are you present? Yes. Thank you.

00:46:47:25 - 00:46:49:02

Thank you for letting me speak.

00:46:49:24 - 00:47:16:13

I'm a resident of Essendon and I will from my house actually see on the horizon the solar panels that will surround the whole village. Just as an interest, I started to market my property for sale and one of the first questions the estate agent asked was Will you be affected by the solar farm? Which, of course I had to say yes.

00:47:18:28 - 00:47:30:15

We've already heard about the massive size of the farm, which really concerns me because it will surround the whole of the village, 2000 plus acres and 530,000 panels.

00:47:32:15 - 00:47:40:22

You could actually, with 200,000 square foot of commercial buildings, get 2.2MW of solar power.

00:47:42:13 - 00:47:53:12

159 buildings of that size would equate to the output of Mallard Pass. And also one of the

00:47:55:01 - 00:48:29:03

key things is why can't. If they're built on alternative brownfield sites. Can I draw your attention to a site called Shell Weston Solar? It's a renewable energy park on the Northamptonshire Bedfordshire border that uses a combination of solar, wind, power, hydrogen and in a much smaller area, will equate to almost two thirds of the output of Matlock past, just to give you some information.

00:48:32:03 - 00:49:06:03

Any of the side. Roads where I live are used by walkers, horse riders and cyclists. I'm actually a cyclist myself. And no real data has been provided by the developer. And in terms of how these people will be affected, because many of those roads, certainly at the weekends, are used by those people. And indeed, one of the roads that is going to be used that will go from this and down to Uffington, which will house the majority of the traffic, The construction traffic is, as far as I can see, going to be closed.

00:49:06:18 - 00:49:10:20

And that's that road is certainly used by those people.

00:49:12:18 - 00:49:43:03

Beside roads. You may not have seen them, but it's certainly not suitable for an HTTP traffic. The the Essendon to Uffington Road is going to be the main route for all the HGV deliveries that come into site and then from there that those materials will be distributed to around about nine other points throughout the solar farm site.

00:49:44:29 - 00:50:12:25

We're also concerned about the amount of traffic and also particularly the route that will come from the A1 through Great Karsten onto rail and then onto Essendon. Great Castleton has two schools. And a very dangerous present crossroads in the village where that traffic will come through.

00:50:16:02 - 00:50:46:25

Also, the traffic plans appear to be very general in terms of the volumes of the traffic throughout the two year construction period there. If you actually look at other solar farms like Seneca and Project Fortress in Kent. The fully detailed figures were given of the traffic during the construction period in terms of peaks and troughs. The developer here has just given us averages.

00:50:49:02 - 00:51:02:25

Also questioned the working hours, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.. What? Even in winter when it's dark. How will they be working? Will they have lighting? It doesn't seem to stack up.

00:51:05:22 - 00:51:34:03

We've also heard about the noise of the pile driving, which we will suffer as a village for over two years, let alone all the traffic works that will happen, the speed limits. Again, no fully detailed details have been given in terms of when these roadworks will happen, how long they will go on for. We are just left in the dark.

00:51:35:21 - 00:51:36:26

You're running a minute left.

00:51:37:27 - 00:51:38:12

Um.

00:51:39:01 - 00:51:45:23

Okay. My other concern is the end of life of these panels. 530,000 panels.

00:51:47:18 - 00:52:05:06

Where will they be disposed of? By whom? Who will be the developer at the time? Will they still be in business? If they're not in business, who will be responsible for removing them and reinstating the land to the farmland that is presently.

00:52:07:11 - 00:52:08:12

That's all I have to say.

00:52:11:29 - 00:52:12:22

You must have a cell.

00:52:19:12 - 00:52:22:27

Next, we have Mrs. Sue Holloway.

00:52:27:18 - 00:52:31:15

Kind of ask Mr. Holloway if you're speaking on behalf of yourself this evening.

00:52:32:07 - 00:52:36:24

Hi, Mrs. Holloway. No, I'm speaking. I'm speaking on behalf of myself.

00:52:36:26 - 00:52:38:28

Thank you. You have five minutes.

00:52:39:06 - 00:53:11:28

Okay, So apologies to all those that have heard me speak already today, but that was on behalf of Mallard Pass Action Group. I'm now speaking on behalf of myself. The more technical areas on the principle issues list I will be covering in my written representation due to the limited time tonight, but I want to share an honest personal perspective, if you will, allow, as everyone affected by this development, is an individual, not a number or faceless name.

00:53:13:25 - 00:53:39:05

I would like to think I represent a fairly typical resident from a rural community. I embrace every aspect of living in the countryside and in a green environment, whether it's the wildlife, the changing seasons, the fresh air and exercise, the harvest, the community activity and support the peace and quiet and tranquility and the well-being it brings to me.

00:53:40:05 - 00:53:42:01

I have a dog or religiously.

00:53:42:03 - 00:54:23:18

Walk every day. I cycle I horse ride. I try and maintain a garden badly and small equestrian holding. I volunteer for several charities in the local community. I've lived in the local area for over 25 years, so I feel I know the area and the people pretty well. Underpinning everything I do think and feel is my love for the outdoors and the environment. So imagine how I felt that stage one consultation when a leaflet came through my door and I found out that my property was included within the site limits.

00:54:24:23 - 00:54:35:23

It turned out to be a mistake, but it was an extremely distressing mistake. Role on the following months leading up to stage two consultation.

00:54:37:12 - 00:55:15:10

I was under the impression that the solar farm was going to be literally 15ft outside my front door. I had to live with that stress and strain for six months, along with some other tragic news. Anyhow, rolling on. So now, faced with the prospect of a solar plant just across the road in Field 36, one of the biggest on the site where I can see solar panels up to one and a half miles across to field 18, the site of the new substation and two miles across the railway line directly south.

00:55:15:20 - 00:55:45:24

It's quite overwhelming and devastating. The rapeseed this year has been particularly helpful, confirming the distance views and exactly which fields I can see perhaps useful on your site inspections. So walking the dog will be a question of where will I go to avoid seeing a sea of panels? The same can be said of the cycling. I'll be forced to choose different routes to avoid the industrial scape. Riding is a whole new ball game.

00:55:45:26 - 00:56:07:03

I have no idea how different horses will respond to the sight of infrastructure surrounding them on the bridleways like one stroke one and any noise emitted from the solar stations carried by the wind. Every time I leave the house or get in the car, I won't be able to avoid seeing solar panels.

00:56:08:18 - 00:56:44:26

The assessments for recreational and residential amenity and landscape and visual don't take into account any form of sequential experience. Wherever you are, whatever activity you're doing. Everything is being judged on specific points. Move 20m further on and the impact is completely different. All these points need to be viewed in a sequential way to give context to any assessment. Because of the sheer scale of this site, I'm many local residents will never be able to escape the effects.

00:56:44:28 - 00:56:47:15

It will permeate every aspect of our day.

00:56:49:14 - 00:57:21:27

Mitigation the Savior, a word used over 80 times in the Stage two consultation document. I hate to think how many times in the 216 application documents does not solve all the issues. In fact, it can and will make many things worse. The proposed screening will either be ineffective due to the topography and time it takes to mature, or it will completely change the character of the landscape in a negative way.

00:57:22:06 - 00:57:55:03

The long distance views will never disappear, shouldn't disappear despite the attempt to screen off every aspect of the development. The setting. A national infrastructure planning application in particular presents challenges due to the scale. Most of the assessments are desk based as a starting point and carried out from a location, not necessarily in proximity to the site. So despite survey work being undertaken, there has not been sufficient depth or local knowledge overlaid to validate these findings.

00:57:55:22 - 00:58:33:00

My thirst for knowledge in doing the right thing drives me to ask many questions and challenge the data. My conclusion is I simply don't concur with the applicant's conclusion in Chapter 17 Summary of significant effects and mitigation that, following the implementation of additional mitigation, significant adverse effects are only anticipated in relation to landscape and visual. In my view, this is an oversimplification, simplification and complete underestimation of the full effects of the proposed development.

00:58:33:15 - 00:58:34:03

Thank you.

00:58:36:02 - 00:58:37:01

Thank you, Mr. Holloway.

00:58:47:01 - 00:58:51:10

Okay. Our next interested party is a mr. Peter Milne.

00:58:53:24 - 00:58:56:08

Mr. Mel. Thank you. You have five minutes.

00:59:06:20 - 00:59:08:28

Most of us are singing off the same sheet.

00:59:09:00 - 00:59:12:04

So I'd just like to add a few bullet points to that.

00:59:13:05 - 00:59:43:16

Yesterday, in the context of the cost of living crisis, the Prime Minister said one of his main focus for the coming years was food security, which makes even less sense of robbing the area of 2500 acres of valuable farmland. With regards to the wildlife, which, you know, is plentiful, we're told, would be a system of gates and tracks for these animals. But there is no plan for their welfare during the bill process itself.

00:59:43:24 - 01:00:16:04

This bill process being at least two years and probably three, 2 to 3 years of mud, roadworks, traffic disruption and for what? To build something which is rapidly becoming old technology. And as was mentioned before, at the end of the life, not just here and what will it become, but with 530,000 panels, security fences, shake ons, batteries, the cost of disposal will be exorbitant before somebody even plans to develop it.

01:00:16:14 - 01:00:44:07

And how can they ever be farmland again? It seems incomprehensible to me that we even looking at any greenfield sites before every brownfield site is exhausted. So in the aviation industry, there are other more suitable venues that could be used. For instance, disused airfields, which even have nearby substations which used to drive their radars and airfield lighting.

01:00:46:09 - 01:00:49:20

The project cannot. Go ahead. Thank you.

01:00:54:02 - 01:00:54:28

Thank you, Mr. Milne.

01:01:05:00 - 01:01:21:02

And we seem to be moving fairly swiftly for other speakers, but I'm opposed to have a fairly short break. Now before we get too much further on, so if we say we can be back in the room, run again by 8:10, please. So we'll have a short coffee break. Thank you.