

Mallard Pass Solar Farm

I am Parish Clerk to Ryhall & Belmesthorpe and Carlby Parish Councils, three villages directly affected by the Mallard Pass Solar Electricity Plant proposals. I speak on behalf of the Parish Councils as well as personally as a resident living within the proposed development area.

Firstly, I repeat the assertion previously made that the applicants have failed to comply with the non-statutory and statutory public consultations. The consultation leaflets and publicity material in both cases was obscure. In particular the plans in the consultation leaflets were very small and showed the solar plant and surrounding settlements in a very pale grey, making identification of the location and extent of the development very difficult and impossible for anyone unexperienced in reading maps and determined to work out what was being proposed. In the statutory consultation leaflet maps, the settlements of Ryhall, Belmesthorpe and Stamford were blanked out by illustrations.

Consequently the public in the area is largely unaware of where the development would be or its extent.

Further, at no time did the developer provide illustrations of what the proposed development would look like with not a single photo or illustration of a solar panel on view at the public consultation events! Given that the proposed panels would be 3.2m high, significantly taller than the vast majority of solar panel arrays installed in the UK to date, this is a very serious and misleading omission by the developer.

As the Inspectors would be able to see from the consultation material, false information was included. For example, large areas of land shown as green mitigation land which is either already land of high habitat value or is farmland where the use will not change. Then impression given was one of large areas of new green space with a diverse flora whereas the reality is very different.

This lack of clarity and inaccuracy of much of the consultation material means that the consultations have been ineffective in informing the public of the extent, scale, location and character of the proposed development, to the extent that they have been misleading.

Consequently the public and the Ryhall, Belmesthorpe and Carlby parish councils have largely been excluded from the application process to date.

We understand that the process is a legally bound structured process but many residents in our villages feel too overwhelmed by the confused picture painted by the applicants' consultations and the national infrastructure project procedure to attempt to have their voice heard.

From Parish Councils public meetings and communications we can say that the majority are against this project for many reasons. The number of registered interested parties does not begin to reflect the true feeling in the area.

The proposed deadline for submissions of comments on the proposed development were spoken about at yesterday's preliminary meeting. The Inspectors will be aware that we have only just had council elections and it is only this week that Parish Councils are reforming. In view of the complexity and scale of the proposed development, it is essential that the Parish Councils and the public are given adequate time to prepare their representations. South

Kesteven District and Rutland County Councils are in the same situation. **I would suggest that the date for representation's should be moved as previously discussed for the democratic rights of the public to be preserved**

Other matters -

I personally asked question regarding cabling and the huge impacts this would have on verges, fields, roadsides. I personally have a 2 mile privately owned water pipe that feeds Ryhall Heath which I am extremely concerned about.

The sheer size and block nature of this site has a detrimental impact on the visual landscape. Much of this land is undulating countryside and surrounds an SSSI site and protected verges. The rolling nature of various areas of this proposal make the panels even more prominent in the wider landscape

Some other Comments from residents the parish council have encountered are

Screening – I quote, “they say that screening will be planted but it will be 30 years before these panels will be anyway obscured and I will be long dead. The rest of my life will be blighted by this and an amenity I have used all my life will be lost to me.”

Carlby residents have no shop, pub or any facilities. The only amenity that residents have for leisure, health and wellbeing is footpaths and lanes to walk in. A regularly used circulate incorporates Pickworth lane which will have panels of both sides.

The collective impact in this area with this solar factory application along with other large housing development proposals and gravel extraction applications on the horizon are having an enormous impact visually as well as loss of large swathes of prime agricultural land resulting in significant food loss. At a time when as a country we are importing products which could be grown locally.

Questionable data such as the total productivity of this site and what it will produce. How as an individual could I possible question the figures that are being branding without employing experts to question this.