

## **Application by Mallard Pass Solar Farm Limited for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Mallard Pass Solar Project – project ref. EN010127**

Submission by David Kentish – Chair Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council  
– unique ID ref. 20035512

### **Deadline 1 - Written Submission on OFH2**

#### Intro

I do find a certain irony in the fact that the screens in this hall show a picture of beautiful open and unsullied green fields, when the discussion being had is about ruining this picture by filling our countryside with row upon row of over 3 metre-high solar panels, but maybe that's just me!

#### Overview

I am here representing the Parishioners of Braceborough and Wilsthorpe. From the start of this application back in November 2021 at all of our Parish Council meetings and specially arranged Parish meetings, The Mallard Pass Solar Farm planning application has been overwhelmingly objected to by Parishioners for the following reasons.

#### Sheer size of the proposed development

The site area over 2105 acres, to give it some scale this is equivalent to 1300 football pitches. The solar area is 1052 acres, if you include field margins it is 1312 acres. As it is currently laid out, the 530,000 solar panels, let me repeat that, 530,000 solar panels, that's 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 years plus.

#### Loss of Best and most versatile land

We know that there is a need for us to produce more energy and 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 a 100%

Approximately 55% of the land we would be losing is rated best and most versatile for growing crops. The Governments food strategy policy paper in June 2022 clearly wants to maintain agricultural production.

We have this farming land now, why destroy it when it's needed so badly?

#### Visual impact

The sheer scale and topography means' you cannot eradicate or screen all of the adverse visual impacts. The new substation will be visible and audible for residents in Essendine on the A6121.

There will be field upon field of 3.3 solar panel arrays, high security fencing approximately 1320 security cameras at a height of 3.5 metres as well as security lighting creating light pollution. With 84 containers housing inverters and transformers, the whole of the landscape will be transformed into an industrial park.

#### Biodiversity

All of this will have huge detrimental effect on biodiversity in the area, and depending on what the fencing arrangements end up being, will determine the impact on the habitat corridors for some mammals like badgers and brown hares as well as the impact for deer. 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 woodlands. Mallard Pass talk about bio-diversity

net gain, something that the government insists upon, this will not be realised, it will be biodiversity net loss.

#### The local community

There are absolutely zero benefits to the local community. Power generated by Mallard Pass will not be channelled 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/Canadian 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.

#### Mental health

Amongst all of the information in this proposal, unless I have 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!

#### Public rights of way

Public rights of way 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, assuming you can get through the security fencing!

#### Battery storage

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.

The reason this is such a concern is the danger to life that that lithium batteries present. There have been many cases of the storage batteries catching fire and they 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. 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.

#### Construction issues

Two to three years of construction, which will mean extensive traffic measures through Ryhall, Essendine, 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 and 1000 tonne HGV loads that will destroy verges and imperil drivers, as well as walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders who because closure of public rights of ways will be forced to use the roadways more often

And with upwards of 400 workers per day on the site with their own transport six days a week from 7am to 7pm being added to the lorries

This becomes a major safety hazard in the making.

#### Environmental damage

The construction of this development will cause enormous damage to the environment.

I have already mentioned the HGVs, but the loads of equipment they deliver, from heavy piling machinery, deep mounted structures to house the solar panels, containers to the vast amount of peripheral machinery and equipment will create noise, dust, air pollution and will compact the ground. This in turn will exacerbate the problems of flooding with water run-off from the panels

and the hard surface. This will cause major problems for many villages within the construction radius who already suffer flooding with run-off from fields and water courses.

To conclude

There are multiple planning applications for Solar Farms, pretty much all of them wanting to be placed in the countryside, Lincolnshire in particular.

Mass solar panels should be on brownfield sites and on industrial roofing, there should be no sane reason why they should take over the countryside.

Thank you.