

Written Representation

Proposed Mallard Pass Solar Farm

Interested Party Reference no. 20036353

I am objecting to the proposed development on the following grounds:

Environment:

Use /loss of prime agricultural land

The scale of the project is entirely inappropriate for the location proposed and will consume excessive amounts of agricultural land, reducing domestic food production and harming food security.

Loss of biodiversity and disturbance to wildlife

These impacts will be felt both during the construction and operation of the facility. A number of Red List birds of Conservation Concern including Yellowhammer, Linnet, Skylark and Fieldfare are known to breed within, or use the proposed site and would suffer further loss of habitat as a result. Furthermore although the applicant's Environmental Statement proposes that existing hedgerows will be retained and managed, it fails to address the drastic impact of replacing the open arable fields with hard landscaping. The hedgerows and fields are ecologically closely connected; both seed- and insect-eating birds will use the fields extensively for feeding purposes, and even if breeding birds remain in the retained hedges, they will have to travel further to access equivalent areas of open field which is known to impact negatively on chick survival and breeding success.

Security fencing is also a threat to ecological connectivity and although gaps for badgers are indicated in the proposals, other groups including amphibians can be negatively impacted by these barriers.

Loss of Visual amenity.

The term 'Solar Farm' is a misnomer since energy generation is an industrial activity which will transform the current rural and pastoral landscape into an industrial zone. The Imposition of an industrial landscape in place of rural vistas will negatively affect nearby villages and farms and visual amenity from local roads and footpaths.

Infrastructure

There will be large-scale disturbance and increased traffic on inadequate rural roads during construction and decommissioning phases.

Local roads include a number of single-track rural lanes with occasional passing places which are totally unsuited to the construction traffic generated by a large-scale industrial project.

Christopher Gardiner

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