

This Mallard Pass Solar project is outrageous. The sheer scale of the sites and the relationship to the surrounding villages is completely preposterous. The site extends to a length of more than 4 miles and surrounds my childhood village of Essendine on three sides.

This is the village where I grew up, playing in the fields, walking the paths, watching the wildlife, enjoying the freedom of fresh air and quietude. This is the village I return to, to enjoy all the things I enjoyed growing up as a child. The installation of more than 500,000 solar panels will completely destroy the ambience of the surrounding landscapes

Solar energy is inefficient given the average levels of sunlight and moderate ambient temperatures in this country. The change to alternative energy sources away from coal and gas should be concentrated on Nuclear and Wind. The government should also be making homes much more efficient and encouraging subsidies to allow this.

The local infrastructure around Essendine is not suited to such a large project. The roads are not wide or robust enough to, from and at the sites proposed for the constant, or even temporary use by heavy machinery.

I have concerns with the potential future use of batteries for storage because the solar panels are useless at night or on rainy or very cloudy days. It has been proven that current battery technology has an inherent fire risk which, once alight is self-sustaining and very difficult to extinguish. The batteries use rare minerals which must be mined in difficult locations and transported to the manufacturing sites. The rare elements are difficult to break down and if they get into the soil, this would be an environmental disaster.

Essendine in the past has had two significant industrial fire episodes which caused disruption to the village and as a result of the fire brigade's efforts to extinguish the two blazes, the West Glen River was put under severe threat from the run-off from the industrial estate.

I can see that the West Glen River will again be put under threat, but from the run-off from the 500,000 solar panels. It is a small water course which is wholly unsuited to dealing with such potential run off. Under normal weather conditions, the village floods on occasion, usually at least once a year, affecting the small church and the manorial earthworks proximate to the river. Because of the topography of the land on which the panels are proposed to be installed, the run-off will enter the river from all the proposed arrays and as such could cause severe damage.

As I write this, the family home is currently being pounded by very heavy rain and thunder caused by nothing more than extreme heat. The level of rain hitting the house hitting 500,000 solar panels could well cause instant flooding.

With the ever-increasing population in this country, there is a desperate need to ensure we have food security. The use of more than 2,000 acres of food growing land for solar is madness given the current volatility in area of food supplies. We must not become at the mercy of other countries for our supplies, however friendly they are. The situation in Ukraine shows how vulnerable the UK and Europe are to being held hostage by aggressors.

We, as a country must try to retain as much self-sufficiency as possible in relation to food supply.

Thus, on the basis of the inherent inefficiency and unreliability of solar power as a generating medium, and that the proposed solar arrays will use over 2000 acres of food growing agricultural land, I advocate that Mallard Pass Solar should NOT be given approval. It should be rejected outright.