

## WRITTEN REPRESENTATION – 15 JUNE 2023

While there is no doubt that increasing the contribution of solar to the total sustainable energy needs of the UK is vital for our future energy security, this must be done in a way that takes account of the various competing demands on the land that is available to us. Such things as Carbon Sequestration, Nature Recovery and House Building all have strong reasons for increased land use to combat climate change, improve the ecological environment and cope with a growing population. It seems essential to me that individual projects are not treated in isolation, but in the context of the overall effect of similar projects. Food production needs equal attention and allocation of land must be carefully managed to ensure each requirement is being met in a balanced way to ensure one demand is not being satisfied at the expense of another.

According to the National Infrastructure Planning website there are currently 9 solar farm project applications at various stages for the East Midlands region - predominantly in Lincolnshire. This does not include other sites below the 50MW threshold that can be approved locally, or the many sites that already exist. Is any assessment made or account taken at any stage of the examination procedure of the collective impact of all these projects and how much Best and Most Valuable (BMV) Land is being sacrificed?

In their Environmental Statement – Non-Technical Study Chap 12 Table 1, Mallard Pass Solar state that 360 Ha of BMV land will be affected. A further 439 Ha of Grade 3b land will also be affected and together this makes up virtually the whole site. This is all currently used for agriculture and would be a very significant loss of food production at a time when the UK population is growing at a fast rate and food inflation is now the largest impact on the cost of living. Can we really afford to give up this land when there are alternatives to energy generation, but not food production, other than importing food with all the attendant risks and vulnerabilities.

At Chap 12 para 4.8.11 Mallard Pass state that:

*The decommissioning process would involve the dismantling and removal of the Proposed Development. Areas of access tracks and Solar Stations would be restored using soil retained onsite from the construction phase, which will have been retained on site in managed mounds.*

Where will these mounds be located? How many will there be? How large? How will they be managed? I have not been able to find any details and these mounds could have a significant additional visual impact.

There is a question over the amount of electricity that will actually be generated by this solar farm. At Chap 12, para 4.9.7, Mallard Pass make the following statement:

*The Proposed Development is anticipated to have an installed capacity of 350 MWp, a capacity factor estimated at 10 % and would be available to operate for 8,760 hours per year. This means that the Proposed Development is anticipated to generate approximately 350,000 MWh of renewable electricity per year.*

I have some difficulty understanding this claim as there are only 8760 hours in a year, which implies that the solar farm will be generating electricity into the National Grid 24 hrs a day, 365 days a year. Is this really true?

I also have concerns that the sheer scale of this project will have a disproportionate impact on the countryside, not only during construction, when clearly the disruption will be very significant, but also for the life of the project. Being able to enjoy the sights and sounds of

the countryside is an increasingly important aspect of people's mental well-being. Giving up such a large piece of land to unnatural and unsightly structures would be a daily source of anxiety for the vast majority of people living in and travelling through the area. Certainly, walking along footpaths between solar panels has no appeal.

Lastly, I wish to raise my considerable concerns about the integrity of Windel Energy and Canadian Solar as highlighted in significant detail by the Hon Alicia Kearns MP. Production of solar panels in China is not transparent and while the companies concerned give reassurances, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Equally, the carbon released in the manufacture of panels (probably using coal fired energy), the consumption of metal resources together with their transportation is a significant concern and not something that seems to be considered in the overall end-to-end cost-benefit analysis of the total project.