

Summary of Greatford Parish Council Written Representation with regard to the proposed Mallard Pass Solar Farm.

The primary concern of Greatford Parish Council is the potential effect this proposed development could have upon increasing the existing periodic flooding from the West Glen river that runs through Greatford. Other significant concerns include the loss of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, traffic implications, the degrading of scenic and productive countryside, and the transformation of a much loved local amenity. These issues are covered in detail in our written representation and summarised below.

Our key concern is that rain falling onto the solar arrays would be concentrated onto a much smaller area of soil than is currently the case, and that the clay derived soil types which are present across the site would be unable to absorb much of this water, and that the water will flow rapidly overland into the West Glen river causing more rapid flooding than is currently the case for the West Glen in Greatford.

We are concerned that there is a lack of recognition that the soils would be damaged by the extensive trafficking required to construct the solar arrays, and that if the soils are damaged these soils would be less able to absorb excess rainfall, and the concentrated runoff from the panels. These critical factors would increase the risk of flooding downstream of the solar site.

There is no plan in place to adequately prepare the soils to be better able to withstand the rigours associated with construction. For example, all of the land upon which solar arrays could be constructed should be sown with a suitable, hardwearing grass seed mixture that should be well established before construction commences. In our opinion sowing a grass sward should be twenty four months before construction so as to enable a strong root system in the sward that will support the soil structure when it is trafficked by construction machinery. This lack of preparation indicates a lack of understanding of the many challenges which need to be addressed and is a clear indication of an amateurish and risky approach to such a large and complex undertaking. There is also a complete lack of detail as to how established swards will be managed, and how the animals proposed to graze these swards will be managed.

We are also concerned about the lack of any clear guidance as to when the soils would, and would not be trafficked by construction machinery in the event of wet weather. The outline soil management and construction plans are far too vague in respect of the proposed guidelines for trafficking and soil handling to be of value in protecting the soils assets across with the site. This underscores the risks if this consortium were to be responsible for such a complex and long term undertaking

If soil damage were to be caused the proposed remediation strategy using power harrows is flawed as it would only serve to hide the damage done, it would not repair the damage.

We are concerned that the proposed development would consume a very large area of BMV farm land, and that the area of BMV has not been properly quantified because the majority of the area was only surveyed at a quarter of the necessary sample frequency, and that the ALC grading of the land has been down-played in the DCO application.

Greatford already has problems with HGV traffic using the village as a short cut, in addition to these lorries from surrounding mineral extraction sites; we are concerned that traffic associated with this proposed development will further add to this problem. This is especially an issue when proposed road works and road closures are in place, and the traffic that uses the A6121 and Uffington lane

seek alternate routes that could include routing through Greatford. We are not convinced that traffic routing agreements would be enforced because existing routing agreements in the locality are not policed or enforced adequately.

Residents in Greatford and other local villages, are dismayed about the loss of amenity value for the main bridleway that runs through the proposed Mallard Pass site, at present this route affords walkers, horse riders and cyclists expansive views over the local, rolling countryside, if this development goes ahead this much valued local amenity will be transformed into a narrow passageway between security fencing, the proposed additional permissive path will in no way compensate for the lost amenity of this local right of way.

Greatford Parish Council

13/05/2023