

Mallard Pass Solar Proposal

Planning Inspectorate ID: 20035934

This final submission of objection to the current Mallard Pass Solar Farm proposal from CPRE and CPRE Rutland is an extension of the views already submitted, initially in writing, and then verbally and written at a hearing in Peterborough. In the interest of brevity and avoiding repetition, the starting point for these additional observations are the views already expressed by the charity in its submitted documents namely:- The 'Rutland Renewable Energy Study' (already lodged with the Inspectorate) and the jointly funded 'Landscape and Visual Review' of the proposed site prepared by Carly Tinkler for CPRE and the Mallard Pass Action Group. These present damning evidence on why the proposal is neither wanted or required and the harm it will do. Indeed it will damage the reputation of government and their policy makers in their journey to capture the 'public heart' with renewable energy solutions to meet net zero.

Helpfully CPRE has recently published a national study of relevance entitled 'Shout from the Rooftops: delivering a common sense solar revolution'. These final observations draw upon it.

CPRE recognises that some greenfield solar schemes will be required in order to meet net zero by 2050. It is also clear that these must be delivered sensitively and non controversially with local support. The policy case for relying on industrial scale solar installations such as Mallard Pass in the face of community opposition, is a battle the government and policy makers do not have to fight.

The need to protect the countryside and our landscapes lies at the heart of the CPRE mission, but so does the need to ensure sustainable countryside communities as well as the nation's urban centres.

All national studies of energy requirement (with no pecuniary linkage to solar farms as a solution) draw attention to the performance of offshore wind, the small rural footprint of onshore wind, and the potential of roof mounted solar. Small, community driven rather than commercially driven, solar installations on low grade green land are acknowledged as part of the solution, provided they are of suitable scale and location.

The lawful planning reasons for rejecting this apparently 'get rich quick' foreign money making scheme which purports to meet a national need are now well documented by the objector evidence submitted to the Inspectorate.

The scheme if approved will :-

- Damage, not improve, the countryside
- Divide the local community
- Reduce the availability of much needed agricultural land
- Conflict with the planning policies of Rutland, South Kesteven DC and Lincs CC
- Require the Minister to overturn an Inspectorate decision by virtue of available alternatives
- Introduce into a rural setting a high risk and complex industrial landscape, turning a tourism and wildlife idyl into a countryside blackspot
- Damage property values over a significant proportion of Rutland
- Heighten public opposition to solar at the very time support for it is needed.

CPRE would urge the Inspectorate to have regard for the significant evidence submitted by learned colleagues against this proposal and reject this application for planning approval.

Ron Simpson BEM Chair CPRE Rutland.