

Mallard Pass Solar Farm

I write with the following comments addressing the impact the Mallard Pass Solar Farm will have on myself personally, medically along with the commercial impact that it will have on our business.

- 1. Medical Grounds.** I am concerned at the impact that the proposed Solar Farm will have on my health, as a local resident with [REDACTED] the risk of suffering [REDACTED] from the site is high. I have previously produced a letter from an [REDACTED] Specialist advising of the detrimental impact that the solar panels will have on my health. There will be a sea of solar panels surrounding us and I drive my [REDACTED] daughter to and from school every day to [REDACTED] going along the route that they are proposing to build the Solar Farm. If I am to have a [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Living in the rural community, especially with a young child, a driver's licence is a necessity. I am awaiting a meeting with Mallard Pass Solar Farm to discuss screening but due to the undulating land I cannot foresee how the whole site will be screened from visual view.
- 2. Size of Development.** If constructed it would be one of the largest solar plant in the UK to date. Full and proper consideration is required to assess the greater impact this would have as unlike other solar plants this surrounds and engulfs villages and is not hidden within a farmers estate.
- 3. Poor Consultation and Communication.** As one of the residents with one of the largest boundary with the site despite requests and emails, Windell Energy have not been to visit or communicate with me regarding my concerns. During the consultation process the developers have failed to engage honestly and explain the proposal with the community or give answers to questions. There is no trust in the developers. This was highlighted at the East of England Showground and we are awaiting a meeting.
- 4. Compulsory Acquisitions.** Not only is the frontage to our property going to be affected but as will the access to our vineyard. We have a right of way to use the roadway, the only access off the road to our site, which if we are denied usage we will lose our livelihood. We will not be able to access the vineyard, farm and harvest our grapes as well as from a tourism perspective we will not be able to welcome the public to the vineyard. Mallard Pass Solar Farm were unaware that their documents showed that due to the Compulsory Acquisitions we would lose our right of way until we advised at the East of England Showground, we are awaiting communication on this matter.
- 5. Tourism:** Our Vineyard shares boundaries with two fields in the Mallard Pass Solar Scheme, which we are planning on opening up to the general public to visit as part of a scenic place to visit in Rutland, offering Events, Tours and Tastings, with a great source of income will be achieved by offering vineyard tours, events and supplying drinks to the public. With the planned Solar overlooking this will have a negative impact on a Tourism site and will deter potential customers.
- 6. Farm Land:** Agricultural land is a national asset that requires protection. The loss of such a large area of prime agricultural land in at a time of global food insecurity is absurd. This land grows and produces good crops of wheat, barley etc and in a time where food prices are rocketing, to lose such a substantial amount of farm land will have a long lasting effect as wheat and barley prices in the UK rise due to the war in Ukraine, it feels like this scheme is purely for profit. Agricultural land in this area does not come on to the market often, and they are now pricing out anyone wanting to buy land in the future due to the lack of land and the price the land will now be worth.
- 7. BMV Land and Testing:** Government guidance is clear that energy projects should not be built on BMV Land. The level of BMV land on this application is a clear breach of Government guidance. The testing of this land should be revisited as our adjoining land has proven that it is a suitable site to grow Chardonnay and other varieties of grapes, thus being one of the most northerly vineyards to grow Chardonnay. The value of this land for vineyards is in the region of £15,000 - £25,000/acre unplanted and £30,000 - £35,000 planted.
- 8. Damage to Biodiversity:** The area is home to an abundance of wildlife, herds of wild deer that have not been taken into consideration, otters in the river, birdlife, the assessment have not been fully explored by the developers.
- 9. Flood Risk.** There are existing flood risks and a history of flooding within the area that has not been adequately considered in this application. The field above the Vineyard was affected in the last floods, with a small pond at the bottom of the field close to the river. Our major concern is that the solar panels increase the risk of flooding.
- 10. Permissive path:** A permissive footpath is planned to go along our boundary to which we object due to the increase in trespassing and the risk of vandalism. We requested if the proposed permissive path is to be on the track or in the field to which we have not had a response. We have a right of way along the track. Secondly, it is not safe for people to cross the road from the pavement at the corner to access the permissive path, there have been numerous accidents here including fatalities over the last few years.
- 11. Traffic:** The site is not suitable for mass construction traffic, serviced by poor quality roads in open countryside and having to travel through small villages to access site. The impact that this scheme will have on Essendine will be obscene. The sheer volume of proposed traffic, lorries and cars, coming in and out of the village each day during the build phase will destroy the villages affected. They are planning on coming off the A1 and driving past 3 schools in Casterton, at school drop off and collection, this road cannot cope with the current amount of traffic and adding on the proposed lorries and cars there will be to site each day will be catastrophic. In addition, the small country roads in this area cannot cope with the increase in traffic. The road that goes between Essendine to Uffington, where they are proposing to build their primary construction compound, opposite the Ryhall sub station, along with the fields which will house solar panels, this is a small road which currently does not allow two-way traffic, when driving along, if you come across another vehicle you have to pull off the road. They have not responded if this road will be closed during the installation for their private use. They state that, "The only link within the study area required to accommodate two-way HGV flows is Uffington Lane, where the primary construction compound is to be situated," the road can only cope with one HGV travelling in one direction, there certainly is not enough room for two-way. They suggest that, "minor works" to the junction, "including widening and implementing a give-way arrangement to ensure HGV's can pass simultaneously", is absolute nonsense. Currently if a HGV wishes to pull onto the Uffington Lane road currently any vehicle already stationary on it is required to pull out onto the A6121, I believe the volume of traffic that currently utilises the A6121 has been underestimated, especially as that section of road is still a 60mph zone.
- 12. Batteries:** The inclusion of installing batteries has been omitted on the current plans but they have not confirmed if this is still on the agenda to put in at a later date.

13. Solar Panel Fires: Last summer with the heatwave we have seen images of Solar Farms on fire. It has been shown that fires start at the inverters, yet despite safety features a number of incidents of solar fires have been recorded as initiating at the inverter. They have not reassured residents that this will not happen here and what mitigation they will undertake to avoid any future fires?
14. Housing: This development will have a negative impact on property prices in this area.
15. Health: In their documentation they do not address the impact that the proposed Solar Farm will have on local residents health and wellbeing.
16. Overlooking/loss of privacy: local residential properties will lose their security/privacy, due to a large number of people who are in the area as a result of the new business, including over the weekend and bank holiday. The agricultural land will be in use daily rather than occasionally as with agricultural practices.
17. Density of Development: The dense development of the site is not in keeping with the local open countryside.
18. Design, Appearance and Materials: The appearance of the site will be greatly changed and this will affect the current dynamics of the locality.
19. Noise: Inevitably there will be noise from the site. There is limited noise from the site currently due to agricultural use. The increase in noise from the site will be over and above the usually expected in this rural community. Particularly when construction is to take place on site. Noise will be present 24 hours a day. In addition, the noise from the inverters is a constant whirring sound, is this safe to have next to a bridleway?
20. Artificial Light: Whilst it is likely that lighting will point ground wards, any new artificial lighting in the open countryside will not be in keeping and will affect the overall dynamics of the area.
21. Employment: There is no employment included in the application, which shows the development is not of benefit to the local area.
22. Security: It is noted that the applicant is located from out of the area and so will not be on site regularly meaning there will be security issues on site. This will in turn cause an issue for the local community.
23. Impact of local Residents: The impact on local residents during the build phase should be gravely considered. As this project is taking place within all sides of Essendine, we will have to endure 2 years of disruption caused by noise pollution, increase in traffic, road closures and building works. With increase in traffic and the proposed digging up of the pavements, will have an impact on local children unable to cross the road safely to get to the playground and for local buses to schools. This proposal is not in the best interests of the local people.