

I object to these plans primarily on the basis of loss of prime agricultural land. I have not seen a compelling argument, in terms of overall environmental impact that this is the right thing to do to address climate change. I am not against solar energy but believe that it should be used in the built environment.

Will the principles from the Treasury's Green Book be used in making the decision about this project and will environmental factors be considered as part of this?

Since making my relevant representation I have become an elected representative on the District Council. Many residents within my ward are opposed to this project. However, people in the neighbouring town are often still oblivious to the plans. There has been very little public engagement from the developer. Like many in my ward, I acknowledge that we must reduce our reliance on fossil fuels to meet targets on climate change. However, shouldn't other approaches should be considered first? Is this really best land use? Wouldn't on shore wind be more efficient?

There is concern about the international purchasing of PV panels, loss of agricultural land and associated threat to food security, potential pollutants from battery chemicals and, in time, the decommissioning and uncertain future use of the site. There are very real concerns about its sheer scale and the visual impact that it will have. The industrialisation of the surrounding green fields and changes to public rights of way may negatively impact both physical and mental health.

41% of the land in question has been graded as best and most versatile. Given that many similar plans are being considered nationally, negatively impacting food security could become a real risk. If additional food ends up being imported as a result of this scheme then surely any net carbon saving would be significantly undermined?

There are very few benefits to the local community within these plans and there is little public support. On 11th May 2023 the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero proposed that communities who agree to host onshore wind farms would benefit from new reward schemes including potentially lower fuel bills. Are any local reward scheme being explored here?

Finally, there is concern about traffic generation. The area around Mallard Pass is rural with multiple single track country lanes. The surrounding villages already see a high number of aggregate lorries inappropriately using these routes, as well as daily commuters and farm traffic. The proposed traffic mitigation seems inadequate to prevent destruction of verges and maintain road safety for other road users, particularly cyclists and horses. Can you explain why the use of the railway to transport material to and from the site has not been further explored?

To summarise, I object to these plans for a number of reasons. Primarily I am not convinced that this project is going to have the positive environmental impact that it should as a result of prime agricultural land being lost for development. If these plans do go ahead I think that the local residents should at least receive some compensation in terms of lower fuel bills as is being proposed for onshore wind.