

Written Submission for project EN01027 Mallard Pass
By John Crampin IP 20036113.

There are several points that I would like to make to the Examiners on this final occasion:

1. I have twice been to your open meetings and have been impressed with the detailed examination that you have given to the submissions and replies. Every point raised has been noted and considered. But now that we are reaching the end of this process, can I make a final appeal for some common-sense thinking? If this project goes ahead a not insignificant area of the English countryside, will move from being productive arable farmland to a semi-industrial use of land. (What a contradiction it is to call this project a 'solar *farm*'.) This will have a substantial impact on the lives of local people for many years to come. The positive effects on the well-being of those living in these small rural communities surrounded by fields and trees will be lost. The changes to the visual environment cannot but be negative. These aspects of this proposed change must not be overlooked; local residents must be seen to have a stake in their communities.
2. I believe that Natural England (who are charged with protecting the English countryside) has accepted Mallard Pass' figures on a net biodiversity gain. This again does not stack up with common sense thinking. To take fields and replace the crops (important to our national desire to be self-sufficient in food production) with black glass and then reaching the conclusion that this is better for our environment does not ring true to 'the man in the village'. It seems to me that allowing the developers to exclude, from the calculation, parts of the site which are good in biodiversity terms from the calculation appears very cynical. To artificially reduce the base line by removing woods, copses, field margins, hedges, ponds and rivers (where good biodiversity levels are currently found) surely calls into question any conclusion about a biodiversity gain. The idea that if arable farming is swapped for glass panels the natural environment will improve seems to be nonsense. *At the very least this has never been sold convincingly to local people.*
3. During any period of construction, roads adjacent to the sites would be put under great pressure. Currently, the state of small local roads is not good. Road edges crumble into the mud and grass and the road surface

tends to crack. There is already too much traffic using the roads (as well as cyclists, horse riders, walkers and farm machinery). There are already roads with weight restrictions and lorry bans. To allow the enormous increase of heavy traffic that the site development suggests seems destined to lead to significant problems.

4. There is of course another point. We do need to increase the production of green energy in our country. Although I don't like them, I am prepared to accept the use of solar panels to support this. However, this project (which was the largest proposal in the country when first put forward) is far too big for site and has too big an impact on the local area. We need a very substantial cut in the scope of the project to make it acceptable. The current government talks often about policies that are 'proportionate'. This proposal is out of all proportion, and should therefore be stopped or substantially cut.