

Unique reference number : 20035512

Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council Closing Summary Statement

Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council are representing the views of our Parishioners who overwhelmingly object to the Mallard Pass solar Farm!

### **1 - Proposed output generation of the solar farm and connection to Ryhall substation.**

The applicant has insisted all along that the solar farm will produce an installed capacity of 350 megawatts (not actual yield) however Network Rail's capacity at the Ryhall sub station is a maximum 240 megawatts. The sub-station could be upgraded now or at a later date, but it will cost the applicant over £3m to do, which they say is not commercially viable. This fact undermines the whole purpose of the applicant's base assumption of producing an installed 350 megawatts of power. The applicant has not included Lithium battery storage to store the additional energy produced in their revised application, so any additional energy will not be captured and fed into the grid.

### **2 - Period of operation**

Generally, the life of a solar panel is 20 -25 years, there has been no commitment forthcoming from the applicant with regards maintaining/replacing solar panels at correct regular intervals thus ensuring maximum output. The output of the panels will reduce as they get older and now the applicant has stated the solar farm will be operational for a 60 year period not 40 years as originally proposed. The degradation of the solar panels will increase significantly over this extended term due to lack of maintenance/replacement resulting in a continuing downward tapering of power output.

### **3 - Proposed decommissioning**

There is still no bond in place to cover decommissioning and no plan to ensure that this happens correctly.

### **4 - Proposed photovoltaic arrays/panels**

530000 Panels (over half a million) are to be deployed. All we know is that the panels will be mounted and at a height of 3.3 metres. There is still no layout of where and how these panels will be situated or of their orientation.

### **5 - Proposed on-site substation**

The applicant's proposal for this is for it to be in field 19 and within the construction compound. Positioning is not known, (other than that it will be near to Glen Close), nor are the dimensions of the substation, its screening or other details. This information should be available.

### **6 - Positioning of associate infrastructure**

As mentioned above, there are no details of the positioning of the solar panel arrays and nor are the sizes and positions of storage containers for solar station inverters, transformers, switch gears, storage containers for various electrical equipment etc. Nothing that allows for assessing visual impact.

## **7 - Proposed cable routes/ Network Rail**

The applicant has proposed a cabling route, however there are relevant questions around this proposal regards its routing through fields, as opposed to down the sides of fields. This proposed route will also create unnecessary disruption to residents. Also, the proposed route of the cabling has not been fully agreed between the applicant and Network Rail. The only agreement that Network Rail and the applicant have agreed upon is confirmed with Charlotte Jones for Network Rail's letter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023 to the NI stating, 'Network Rail and the Promoter have reached an agreement in relation to the protection of Network Rail's assets and the Promoter has confirmed it will request that Network Rail's preferred protective provisions are included in the made Order' Which could mean anything that Mallard Pass want it too!

## **8 - Proposed construction phasing**

The applicant stated that the construction would be done in one go, i.e. two years plus with no gaps in between construction. However, they are unable to say when and where they will start and in which areas they will progress into. There seemingly is no construction project process, and the applicant is still committed to having up to 400 workers a day on-site working 7am-7pm Monday to Saturday. The result of this will be a continuous onslaught on the local community. Noise and pollution from the construction vehicles creating health concerns.

## **9 - Site selection and alternatives**

The applicant has selected the wrong siting for this development. Not only because of the major loss of arable land, extreme environmental damage in all areas and destroying a wonderful landscape, but because they never considered one fundamental major issue. The Ryhall substation cannot accommodate fully the power they purport to generate from the solar farm.

## **10 - Other landscaping and visual matters**

The local authorities have conducted their own assessment of the visual impact, however the Parishes point of view is broadly in line with theirs, in as much as we believe the applicant's study area is inadequate. There is potential for concerns arising on the landscape over the whole development.

## **11 - Ecology and biodiversity**

The applicant's biodiversity net gain figure is only 10%, not the higher metric that the government states. The applicant said they cannot commit to a higher number. The result will be no significant biodiversity gain, and over-all it will be a biodiversity net loss.

## **12 - The effect on BMV land**

We will be losing approximately 55% of BMV land with this development. We have this farming land now. Current and foreseeable global politics mean that we need to be growing our own food as much as possible to be more self-sufficient, why destroy it?

### **13 - Surface water run-off and flood prevention**

This has not been addressed or considered properly by the applicant and they need to answer the searching questions posed to them by the experts. The area has known serious run off from fields into rivers and caused serious flooding in many villages. Climate change will only exacerbate this issue and the runoff from the panels will only increase the flood risk.

### **14 - Community benefits**

The applicant said that a community package would not be forthcoming, which we feel is consistent with the applicant's total disregard for the local community, especially where other large solar farms have confirmed that the local area they are situated in will benefit from cheaper electricity. There are no benefits whatsoever to the local community, leisure, financial or otherwise

### **15 - Health and wellbeing**

Parishioners have voiced their concerns about their own health and wellbeing during construction and when the solar farm becomes operational. The constant rush of construction traffic and seeing the destruction of this wonderful countryside unfold daily before their eyes has created a climate of creeping stress and anxiety.

And this is not just about people, because once constructed noise pollution from the many containers and substations, combined with light pollution will have a cumulative effect on humans and the local wildlife causing stress and anxiety. Worryingly, this is dismissed by the applicant as having no significant effects! Mental health issues have a direct impact on physical health. Increased amount of light at night lowers levels of melatonin resulting in sleep deprivation, fatigue, headache, stress, anxiety, and other health problems. Combine the effect of noise and high pollution and the mental health and wellbeing of residents increases. These truly concerning issues, are dismissed as unimportant by the applicant. Going forward a few years, I fear for the future health and mental wellbeing of the people in the local area.

**16 -** [REDACTED]

Thank you for your consideration.

David Kentish – Chair Braceborough and Wilsthorpe Parish Council