

A great deal of personal time, effort and money has gone into our fight to oppose the Mallard Pass Solar Farm application. As a resident and as chairman of Essendine Village Hall, I personally have sacrificed many hours of my life to help with the campaign to oppose this application. The applicants have been able to throw huge sums of money to back up their application, with a team of legal experts. Mallard Pass Action Group have had to raise money to fund any experts we have used and had to learn so much about this application to be able to put up the arguments against it. This has not been a level playing field. Throughout the process, the applicants have been economical with the truth, have not always answered promptly our request for information and have buried bad news such as their quest for Compulsory Acquisition, deep in extensive documentation. At hearings of which I have attended a number, the applicant was given much more a airtime than the Action Group and and I did not feel as a villager and Village Hall Chairman I was given the opportunity to speak fully as I should have been. At times I felt belittled and inferior by the Planning Inspectorate. Additionally the submission of all oral representation, has been quite difficult and confusing.

As Chairman of Essendine Village Hall and a resident for 33 years, the magnitude of this proposed solar development will change this village beyond recognition. The Village Hall as a community hub will have to bear the weight of the toll on the mental health of Essendine residents and the long term disruption we will all endure, should this development be approved.

The Planning Inspectorate should recommend refusal of this application, based on common sense. This project is just a money making scheme both for the developers and the local landowners, who will make large sums of money to the detriment of the villagers. Despite the arguments which the applicants have continually put forward, this development is too large for this area and as much of it is being proposed to be built on good agricultural land, our food security will be put at risk.

The benefits of solar are too small, given the lack of year round sunny days and short winter days. This development would not generate enough power to justify the long term loss of good agricultural land, the loss of our beautiful countryside and loss of habitats for our wild animals, flora and fauna throughout the area. The application to build Mallard Pass Solar Farm should be refused!