

Mallard Pass Solar Proposal

If the proposal for the Mallard Pass solar installation is approved by the Government, this would be a betrayal of a large area of productive farmland and scenic countryside for the local population living in the area.

Britain's electricity supply is of major national importance, but this can be achieved by methods other than destroying the natural benefits of our farmland and countryside; for the gain of greedy industrialists who would have offered large sums of money to local landowners. Windfarms are less destructive to our productive countryside, and the predictability of the tides at sea could ensure a steady supply of electricity.

Our British/English countryside is the jewel in the crown of this nation, which must be preserved at all costs for future generations. Otherwise, our successors for generations to come will curse the foolhardiness of our leaders who allowed such devastation to the heart of our wonderful nation – which would then hardly merit the name of Great Britain. Our government would be wrecking our countryside at their peril.

The case against such a vast project have been described by many well-informed local people. The important considerations include:

- the loss of a vast area of good quality and productive farmland, which is a key national asset.
- the inevitable increase in flooding in the local area following the serious compaction of the soil during the construction of the solar site, and its 40-plus years of operation.
- the loss to the local population and visitors of healthy and enjoyable outdoor pursuits (physical and mental health) with the sheer pleasure and benefit (physical and mental) of walking or horse riding along rural bridleways and cycle routes, surrounded by the ever-changing natural and agricultural scenery.

Moreover, within this extensive area of land, there are many more archaeological remains yet to be unearthed over the generations to come.

These points were summarised in the following paras:

Topic 1. Increased Flood Risk

Background

During 41 years living in Greatford, there have been seven serious flooding events. Each time our house has been entirely surrounded by water up to 2ft deep and within 3ins of entering house doors. Flood water remained for several days. Flooding dates include: Feb1987, Easter 1998, Nov2000, Christmas 2012, Jan2013, Christmas 2020, Jan 2021.

The West Glen river was re-routed c1700s to drive a watermill and to follow an attractive route through Greatford Hall gardens. When the river is very high it overflows to follow its original route.

The flood risk was reduced in 1956 with the installation of the Greatford Sluice to divert excess river flow via the Greatford Cut to Welland river, but still periodic flooding.

Increased Flooding with Mallard Pass Solar Installation

Periodic serious flooding occurs periodically from the West Glen river at Essendine, Banthorpe, Shillingthorpe, Greatford, Braceborough, Wilsthorpe. With some houses surrounded by flood water up to 2 feet depth, and a few inches from entering front/back doors.

Ground compaction during 2-years construction of vast solar site, then 40 years operation, and decommission, would increase surface water run-off into West and East Glens. The rivers couldn't cope with this, with increased frequency and extent of flooding.

Ground Compaction

Once compacted, soil ability to absorb and hold water reduced, preventing water from seeping down further into groundwater stores. Therefore more flooding on surface would flow into West & East Glen rivers to further increase flood risk.

Clay soils do not uncompact naturally, and require aerating and organic matter not possible under vast area of solar panels. Surface water on compacted ground absorbed less than on cultivated land; so increased surface water into rivers would further increase flood risk.

Topic 2. Concern about the loss of productive farmland

Best and Most Versatile farmland (Grades 1,2,3a) are vital for food production.

Topic 3. The desecration of scenic English countryside.

Many of us living in Greatford and villages near the proposed solar installation gain much pleasure and healthy exercise with our superb local farmland and scenic countryside.

A very significant area of productive high quality farmland, much of it is graded 'Best and Best Versatile' (BMV).

The bridleway which runs across a central area of the proposed solar site is also valued for its superb views over a wide area, and a place to enjoy walking, horse riding, or simply being there to enjoy the views across open high-quality productive farmland through the changing seasons.

A large herd of a hundred plus deer roams this area freely, and is a common sight; but they would be restricted in their natural pattern by the terrifying metal corridors if the land were transformed into an industrial solar site.

Topic 4. The likely use of forced labour from Uighur and others in China for the production of solar panels

I understand that Uighur people and other groups in China are known to be used as forced labour in the construction of solar panels – in this case, for what would be around 500,000 solar panels for the Mallard Pass Solar Farm proposal.

This is a despicable and inhuman situation which I utterly deplore and which should be stamped out. To have such forced labour being used for solar panels and other items for Britain is unthinkable, and the Government must prevent this.

Conclusion

The Mallard Pass solar proposal should not be given approval, as it is simply an opportunist money-making venture unrelated to any specific Government policy.