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11 April 2024

Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP

Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

1 Victoria Street

LONDON SW1H 0ET

Response to letter ref. ENO 10127 is as follows-

I live in the village of Carlby, just north of the proposed Mallard Solar Farm.

1. Unresolved highway matters with Rutland CC and Lincolnshire CC

1. The construction vehicles will need to use our narrow badly eroded rural lanes, many of which have lorry bans and low railway bridges. They will certainly pollute the atmosphere of the entire area with dust and noise and will present a grave danger to the schools, fragile ancient buildings, and significant Roman remains in this rural area.

2. The entrance to the lorry compound on the B1176 is located on a very dangerous crossroads with the Carlby / Pickworth Road.

3. There is no evidence that developers will create any Community Benefit apart from several kilometres of new Public Footpaths through 3-metre-high black panels which are unlikely to be of any benefit to the community as who will want to walk and enjoy the view of dead space. The very late offer of £400 per MW(AC) per annum is highly suspect.

2 Unresolved connection with Network Rail

1. The fact that Ryhall substation had spare capacity was the reason for siting of Mallard Pass Solar Farm. Yet they plan to build an additional substation in full view of Essendine on the flood plain of the west Glen. Since the developers have failed to reach agreements with Network Rail, they now plan to compulsorily purchase gardens under which to run their cables. This cavalier attitude to the local rural population is totally unacceptable.

3 The Great Crested Newt and Natural England

1. During this long application process it is unacceptable that the developer has failed to be issued with an IAPC from Natural England concerning the safety of the Great Crested Newt. This endangered species like, much of the wildlife in the area will be at risk when the rich arable landscape is covered with 3-meter-high glass panels. The existing fields provide a rich habitat for reptiles, mammals, insects, birds and wildflowers. Many fields have wide field buffer zones with large mature hedges and frequent small copses. The West Glen which flows through the

proposed solar farm provides a rich habitat for birds, otters, fish as-well as the great crested newt. Increasingly over the past few years it has frequently flooded many of the designated fields getting worse each year. The runoff from solar panel will increase the problem of the natural high-water table. The landscape will be ruined but the 10% Net Gain biodiversity has been achieved by red lining out all existing woodland from the site. This dishonest practice is now used by many developers making a mockery of Natural England's matrix to protect our landscape. The planting of thousands of immature trees and hedges around the 22-mile perimeter will take around 20 years to enhance the habitat for our present rich natural life. This development will not enhance the local ecosystem and will seriously compromise the soil drainage increasing the danger of more flooding of the West Glen.

2. Flooding is becoming of increasing concern locally with several villages being inundated during recent storms resulting in residents being evacuated and still, 3 months later, with no idea when they will be able to return to their homes. This problem seems likely to get worse if rainwater run-off is compromised even further.

The developers have made little effort to understand the environment they intend to develop; through the entire process they have shown scant interest in detail as profit is their only concern. We want sustainable energy but not on this scale in this food producing rural environment. Sadly, the output of solar panels is well known to reduce within 5 years and reduce further in subsequent time. None of the proposed energy produced will be of any benefit to the local population whatsoever,

Yours sincerely



Margaret Hawkins