

## **Gate Burton – Written Representation**

I have viewed the Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (EN10131/APP/7.10) and have found that the design principles the Applicant cites have not been followed through in the design of the scheme.

The Applicant has approached the assimilation of the site into the landscape by using vegetation to screen the proposed development. Design principles as promoted by the Landscape Institute in their document; Infrastructure – Technical Guidance Note 04/20, state that to do so ‘ignores the opportunity to enhance or positively change the existing character of the landscape, improving visual experience and amenity’. The Applicant has stated in the Outline Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (EN10131/APP/7.10 – 2.1.3.) that in ‘developing the landscape design strategy, particular consideration was given to’ this document.

However, vegetation is the only method of landscape mitigation applied. Therefore, the Applicant has not adopted this principle as stated in the OLEMP.

Also, an extensive amount of existing vegetation has been proposed for removal by the Applicant. So it appears that the only approach utilised by the Applicant is to remove existing planting where the scheme is to be located and then attempt to screen it with a certain amount of new planting. This approach is not good design practice and does not achieve any positive outcomes in terms of design or mitigation.

Other good design practice as promoted by the Landscape Institute is to improve access to the landscape by providing new and/or alternative walking and cycle routes. However, as the landscape will no longer be rural but industrial, it is clear that Public Rights of Way will not be considered as enjoyable by residents and other members of the local communities. This in reality means that users will not use the PRoW's and so the net effect is that access to the countryside is reduced by the Gate Burton Scheme.

I am aware that there is a bridleway located at the corner of Marton Road that has not been identified by the Applicant. This is highly concerning as it means that no consideration has been made for users of this bridleway.

In terms of ecology and wildlife, I am also very concerned regarding the impact of the proposed scheme on the seven bat species identified by the Applicant for the Gate Burton Scheme. A report published today (8<sup>th</sup> August 2023) in the Journal of Applied Ecology by the University of Bristol examined the impact on bat activity at solar farms. It found that bat activity was lowered by solar farms.

The impact on flora and fauna by solar farms has not been established. Research and results can be based on the existing sites already built. It is evident that to build further and give permission for future solar farms at this time, without empirical evidence, is not a sound or reliable strategy and not a basis to meet land use policies.

I am against the principle and substance of the Gate Burton Scheme. The landscape will change from a rural, pastoral scene to an expansive industrial site in the middle of the open countryside. The impact on landscape character will be significant and have many negative repercussions for local communities and the region.