

I am a resident in [REDACTED] and I object to the proposal to build a massive Solar Farm near my home.

The size of the proposal is too large. Solar farms that we have seen before in the countryside were more acceptable as they are smaller and more fragmented so that they do not change the entire landscape and do not eliminate habitat for farmland species of birds in particular. This scheme is on an altogether different scale that has not been seen before in this country.

The change to the landscape around my home would be from a rural, agricultural one to an industrial one which I do not want to see happen.

I currently live in a rural hamlet surrounded by fields which are farmed for cereal crops and have been for centuries. This is not a barren wasteland, this is a living, working, farming landscape.

I choose to live at [REDACTED] because I enjoy walking around the farmland, country lanes, bridleways and footpaths. I enjoy the wide open nature of my surroundings, I enjoy watching the wildlife and the sense of tranquility. I do not want to feel hemmed in between fences or have the fields screened from view. I feel that the impact of this development would be devastating for my mental and physical wellbeing.

I understand the need for renewable energy but destroying our farmland just brings another problem, food security. We have wind turbines around this area already and its clear to see that they only take up a fraction of a field and the rest is still available to farm. The farmland around here is very productive, it is rich in nutrients and its high clay content makes it drought resistant. With climate change this could be very desirable. There are enough rooftops and car parks in this country to meet over half of the governments solar power commitments without destroying our agriculture. Furthermore brownfield sites are currently underused which would reduce further the need for rural solar farms.(UCL Energy Institute Report 2023). Of course it is cheaper for the developer to use the countryside but there is a price to pay in terms of loss of agricultural land, ruining landscapes, loss of amenity and impact on mental health that must be taken into account.

The proposed areas of solar panels are far too close to our homes in [REDACTED]. There should be minimum exclusion zone from any home to the nearest boundary of the scheme. The applicant has shown areas of grassland for wildlife mitigation alongside our lane into [REDACTED] but these areas should be removed from the scheme altogether otherwise we are at the mercy of the developer changing the design in the future and bringing solar panels within a few metres of our homes.

With reference to the proposed wildlife zones in areas 1g and 1h I would like to know more about what habitat would be created there. The farmer currently leaves winter stubble on these fields and the area close to the river floods naturally in winter, so how is this to be considered as mitigation? It seems like it wouldn't change from what is there now and so should be removed from the scheme so that some genuine mitigation could be included elsewhere in the scheme. I also would like to make the same point as above that these areas' inclusion in the scheme leaves us vulnerable to changes in design by any future owner of the solar farm.

Our only road into [REDACTED] would have the solar panels on both sides of the road. I do not believe that the buffer zone on the side currently without a hedgerow is sufficiently wide enough to prevent us from seeing the solar panels. The solar panels in the field opposite the top of our lane should also have a buffer zone so that we do not have to see it every time we walk or drive up the lane.

I do not agree with the public footpath from [REDACTED] towards Spaldington being used for vehicular access as shown in pink on the "Streets, rights of way and access plan" sheets 4(PRoW-04/05) and 5(PRoW-05/01). This is a footpath that we use regularly and would be totally unsuitable to be used for construction traffic.

The routes for moving the construction materials from the compounds to the site use roads that are totally unsuitable for such an amount of traffic. The developer says that they will use only the fields to do this but then have applied to have rights over all our local roads. I do not agree with the developer acquiring rights over all our country lanes or using them for transporting the construction materials. They are narrow single track with no passing places and are tarmac covered farm tracks, they do not have foundations, they suffer from subsidence with dry then wet weather and are in a terrible condition and get worse all the time. Walking or driving along our country lanes and bridleways will turn into a complete nightmare.

I would like to see some benefit in terms of green energy for [REDACTED] homes from this development. It is outrageous that we should bear the burden of having all this green energy produced on our doorstep but we have to buy electricity at gas related prices.

The scheme is far too large to be considered in a single application. There are too many documents for anyone to properly consider or scrutinise. There is too large an area to survey for wildlife or archaeology.

I am also worried that the Development Consent Order gives far too much power to the developer. They will have the right to compulsory purchase land and manage our roads and footpaths. We only have a single track road in and out of [REDACTED], which we do not want to be at the mercy of the developer.