

From: Gavin Mitchell [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 February 2023 19:52
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Subject: Objection to Solar Farm on Land East of Pelham substation, Maggots End Manuden - Application number: S62A/2022/0011

I am writing to object to the application to construct a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar arrays together with (among other things) battery storage, inverter cabins, a substation, fencing and CCTV cameras on land near Pelham Substation Maggots End Road Manuden CM23 1BJ

My name is Gavin Mitchell, and I live at [REDACTED]

The reasons for my objection are as follows:

The solar farm is inappropriate development in the countryside

- The development proposed by Low Carbon can only be described as industrial.
- In addition to large numbers of solar PV panels (the exact quantity is not specified) the development will include ; 26 containerised inverters; 40 containerised battery storage units a DNO substation and Customer substation.
- National policy includes an environmental objective - to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- I do not understand how a massive solar farm which is an industrial development can possibly enhance the natural environment.
- The site is very close to the numerous listed buildings and scheduled monuments I do not accept that it can possibly enhance the historic environment.
- The development is not compatible with Uttlesford's policy S7 which says that the countryside will be protected for its own sake

The land will not remain in agricultural use

- Paragraph 170 of the Planning Guidance on renewable and low carbon energy says where a proposal involves greenfield land it must proposal allows for continued agricultural use.
- Low Carbon have not provided any assurance on this point. They simply claim that "notwithstanding, the development would not result in the permanent loss of agricultural land" and that "Agricultural activities could coincide with the solar farm, such as sheep grazing, and following cessation of use, the land will be returned to full agricultural use".
- This is not sufficient and does not satisfy the requirement.
- I have visited a solar farm/several solar farms and I have never seen a sheep on the site

- This is an arable farming area – where are sheep going to come from and who is going to farm them?
- I understand from a local small holder who has sheep that he would never consider allowing them to graze on a solar farm – how would he know if one of his flock was injured? He would not be able to see it underneath the solar panels
- In their consultation Low Carbon stated that they would improve biodiversity on the site by keeping bees. There is absolutely no mention of bees in the Planning Statement.
- Berden has several bee keepers already (one at Brick House End). We do not need more bees at this location!

Low Carbon have not demonstrated that the use of high quality agricultural land is necessary

- Eddie Hughes MP, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed in June 2021 that there the statements made by Eric Pickles in 2015 are still applicable. Therefore, Uttlesford must consider whether the use of agricultural land has been shown to be necessary.
- Uttlesford's Policy ENV5 also says that development of the best and most versatile agricultural land will only be permitted where opportunities have been assessed for accommodating development on previously developed sites or within existing development limits. Where development of agricultural land is required, developers should seek to use areas of poorer quality except where other sustainability considerations suggest otherwise.
- As the land identified for development is high-quality agricultural land its use must be justified by the most compelling evidence.
- No evidence has been provided by Low Carbon to demonstrate that there has been consideration of other sites for a solar farm.

I cycle and walk along East End Lane – my enjoyment of the countryside will be ruined

- I often cycle/walk along the single track lane between Manuden and Furneux Pelham (East End Lane).
- I understand that this is listed as a Protected Lane (UTTLANE152). In its 2012 assessment of East End Lane, Uttlesford scores the lane at 15. Importantly, the score in relation to Aesthetic value is "2" which reflects the fact that the lane has a variety of aesthetic features or forms/alignment and / or a significant view
- The views along this lane will be hugely negatively impacted by the construction of huge numbers of solar panels and the associated infrastructure.
- The lane is not heavily trafficked and cycling/walking, riding along it is a peaceful and solitary experience in the middle of the countryside.

Sincerely,
Gavin Mitchell

Regards,

Gavin.