

From: Lesley-Anne Webb [REDACTED]
Sent: 21 February 2023 22:08
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Cc: [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 Lesley-Anne Webb, and I live at [REDACTED]

The reasons for my objection are as follows:

The size of the development simply too big!

- Uttlesford's Policy ENV15 says that small scale renewable energy development schemes to meet local needs will be supported providing it can be demonstrated that they do not adversely affect i) The character of sensitive landscapes; ii) Nature conservation interests; or iii) Residential and recreational amenity
- This is not a "small scale" scheme.
- The land identified by Low Carbon as the site for Pelham Spring solar Farm extends to 196 acres. This important fact is not mentioned in the Planning Statement.
- If approved, this would be the biggest solar farm in Uttlesford by some margin and one of the biggest in Essex.
- The visual impact of such a huge solar farm would fundamentally change the character of the area.
- The scheme will not contribute to the energy needs of local residents [more here]

The visual impact of this huge development cannot be satisfactorily mitigated

- The land to the East of Brick House End (in front of Battles Wood) slopes upwards towards the wood [more here]
- The land to the West of the development is a huge open field – there are no existing hedgerows [more here]
- The Planning Committee must visit the site to understand the to full impact that this development will have
- The drawings of the panels submitted show that they will be 3.2 metres high
- Low Carbon’s claim that “the proposed development could be effectively integrated and assimilated into the surrounding landscape” is ridiculous
- The pictures submitted as part of the planning application were taken when there were still leaves on hedges and trees. These plants are deciduous – they will not provide effective screening in winter.
- The planting around the existing battery plant adjacent to the Substation at Stocking Pelham demonstrates that hedges do not provide adequate screening.
- The RHS says that it will take between 20 and 50 years for hawthorn hedges to achieve their full height – this is more than half of the life of the solar farm
- It is unrealistic to expect hedgerows to thrive where low quality plants are planted and then left. Young plants need to be watered in case of prolonged dry spells and/or heat waves, especially during the 2-3 first years after planting.
- During the second year of planting, between February and March, hard pruning of hedges is required to encourage new growth
- Weeding is needed around the base of new plants for the first couple of years to encourage growth
- Do Low Carbon employ gardeners – doubtful!

Farmland should be used for farming

- Low Carbon suggest that the majority of the land on the site is Grade 2 agricultural land. Over 81% of the site has been classified by Low Carbon as “best and most versatile” agricultural land.
- The Agricultural assessment is unreliable, because it does not reflect the actual site which is the subject of the planning application. For example, the area immediately to the West of Battles Hall has been included in the assessment but this is not part of the site.
- This is productive farm land which should be used for farming.
- We currently import more than 40 per cent of our food, and recent threats by countries to ban exports of vaccinations have highlighted the threat that similar bans could be imposed on food if countries are themselves short of supplies in the future.
- It is predicted that we will need to produce 56 per cent more food by 2050 due to increasing populations. We have not increased food production by 56 per cent in the last 30 years, and if we continue to build on farmland we have no hope of achieving it in the next 30 years either.

The Noise associated with the development has not been fully considered and is not acceptable

- Low Carbon claim that the noise generated from the development will be minimal. However, they say that the inverters and accompanying batteries will be located at edge of the development zones.
- Table II of their Noise Assessment indicates that noise generated by the solar farm may exceed the noise target at by 1dB at the Brick House. This will impact multiple households on Brick House End particularly as the prevailing wind direction is from the South.
- There is NO background noise at present – this is quiet rural area.
- When there are periods of exceptionally hot weather, it is necessary to install temporary cooling equipment to prevent overheating of inverters. This is extremely noisy. Low Carbon make no mention of this equipment.

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

Yours sincerely

Lesley-Anne Webb

