

**From:** Darren Womack [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 March 2023 13:57  
**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

Sir

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 Darren Womack, and I live at [REDACTED]  
[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 as the site for Pelham Spring solar Farm extends to 196 acres making this the biggest solar farm in Uttlesford by some margin and one of the biggest in Essex. The would fundamentally change the character of the area and will not contribute to the energy needs of local residents. This important fact is **not mentioned** in the Planning Statement.

**The are many walkers, runners, cyclists who don't want to have to navigate a route through a solar farm.** There are eight local Public Rights of Ways within and immediately adjacent to the site comprising of one Bridleway and seven Footpaths. As a local resident I frequently walk and exercise along these footpaths and access to open countryside is particularly important and makes a significant contribution to mental well being. I do not accept that the impact can be satisfactorily mitigated by planting hedges – there is no existing hedgerow. The planting adjacent to the existing battery plant adjacent to the Substation at Stocking Pelham demonstrates that hedges do not provide adequate screening. Blakings Lane is an ancient right of which features on the Chapman and Andre Map of Essex from 1777. This will be completely ruined by the presence of large numbers of solar panels and the 10m wide corridor proposed impacts enjoying the countryside as currently experience by many.

**I am concerned about the impact of the development on the rich variety of wildlife on the site.** The site for the development is rich in ecology. Page 36 of the Ecological Impact Assessment concludes that it is possible that Greater crested newts are present on the site given that their presence has been detected in five ponds in close proximity to the site. A number of red listed bird species noted as being present on the site including skylarks, yellow hammers, yellow wagtails, linnets and song thrushes. A study carried out in 2016 estimated that utility-scale solar farms around the US may kill nearly 140,000 birds annually. One leading theory suggests birds mistake the glare from solar panels for the surface of a lake and swoop in for a landing, with deadly results. The Ecological Impact Assessment notes that hares are seen on the site but concludes that they are unlikely to be affected! How can this be true when their habitat is being ruined and the site is being surrounded by 2m high perimeter fence. I frequently see Roe deer wandering across the site because they shelter in Battles Wood. These beautiful creatures will be lost.

**There is no benefit to the local community..** There is no benefit of this development to the local community. Local residents will not get cheaper solar energy. There will be a loss of rural amenities such as footpaths with open views

**40 years is not temporary.** There are several planning appeal decisions where the Secretary of State has rejected this argument. For example, in an appeal against a solar farm at Five Oak Green near Tonbridge (ref 2226557) the SoS said that 25 years was a considerable period of time and the reversibility of the proposal was given no weight. There is another appeal which relates to Huddlestone Farm near Horsham (ref: 2218035). In this case the Secretary of State commented that just 30 years was a considerable period of time and he gave no positive weight to the claimed reversibility of the development.

**Low Carbon make frequent references to the fact that Uttlesford DC declared a climate emergency in 2019. But this is not a planning policy and is not relevant for the purposes of determining planning applications.**

Thank you

Darren Womack  
[REDACTED]