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From: Beverley Morris [REDACTED]

Sent: 07 March 2023 10:21

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 Dr Beverley Morris, and I live at [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The reasons for my objection are as follows:

The proposed sites are enormous and will have a devastating effect on the countryside, the wildlife and the local people. It is heartbreaking to think that so many animals, birds and people will suffer from this industrial development in the heart of greenbelt. It is 196 acres in total. That is vast and would be the biggest solar facility in Uttlesford. Combined with all the other proposed solar capture facilities and batteries in the area this will turn a beautiful part of the UK into an alien mass of black panels and batteries that cannot be recycled and are grossly inefficient. They are the plastic bags of the future and will pollute our planet for centuries to come with very little positive impact on energy production challenges of today. In fact, local people will not benefit at all as they will have all the disadvantages of the construction work, destruction of the countryside, noise pollution and removal of rights of way without any benefits. Only the developers and energy producers will gain financially as this proposal does not have any long-term environmentally sustainable guarantees. It is greenwashing of the worst type and I object in the strongest terms to the short-sighted nature of this development.

This proposed development will fundamentally and irreparably change the character of the local area. Unlike solar facilities on the sides of motorways, the proposed site is wholly unsuitable as the topography means it is on a slope, thus making it completely visible for miles around. Walkers, cyclists, horse riders and local people will see an ocean of blackness, ripping the soul out of the verdant countryside. I walk and run every day through these fields and cannot imagine how my mental health will be affected by this destruction. I chose to live here precisely because there are so many open spaces and rights of way on my doorstep. I do not want to live in a solar prison of darkness that I know will be force me to stay in my home more and more.

As a poet, I have contributed to the collection, 'Watch the Birdie', an anthology written to highlight the birds on the RSPB red list. Many, many of these birds live in the fields and trees that will be eviscerated or cordoned off by the development. The UK already has a shocking record for the extinction of native species and this development will hasten the further demise of birds like skylarks, yellow hammers, yellow wagtails, linnets and song thrushes. Not to mention the wonderful hares that I see boxing every spring. This is one of the quintessential images of the British countryside, captured in art and story throughout our history. And the joy of encountering Roe Deer on a frosty morning is magical. How can these creatures not be affected by acres and acres of foreign materials destroying their habitat? This is merely brushed over in the ecological impact

assessment by the developer. It's clear that whoever wrote this has never actually spent any time in this countryside.

Of course, there is the very basic matter of destroying British agricultural land at a time when we have food shortages and a reliance on overseas farmers to provide us with basic foodstuffs that we should be producing for ourselves. Once this land is lost to farming it will never be reclaimed. Assurances about biodiversity and growing crops or grazing sheep beneath panels are just a nonsense. There is no evidence of this actually happening and glossy images and fine words are simply that: words and images. The lack of robust data and credible evidence of any benefits are thin at best and disingenuous at worst.

As a lifelong environmental campaigner, I would embrace solar developments that take up existing rooftop space or exploit new technologies, such as solar gain glass and flexible materials that can be wrapped around structures. These would be much more suited to bringing benefits to local people and communities as well as preventing the destruction of arable farmland and countryside.

Construction traffic is another major concern for me. Country lanes are not designed for large, heavy vehicles. The roads are already in a shocking state of disrepair, crumbling away and causing damage to cars as well as being a deathtrap to anyone on two wheels. Further erosion of these lanes will put people at significant risk. My own property can only be accessed with extreme care, using a roadside mirror to see vehicles coming along the road from one direction and being unable to see fully vehicles coming the other way (due to hedges). I am terrified at the prospect of lorry drivers, who do not know the area and who are unable to stop due to the weight of their vehicles, hitting my vehicle as I turn in or out of my access road.

I cannot emphasise enough the gut-wrenching and overwhelming sense of dread this development brings to me and so many of my neighbours. I feel that we are being bullied into submission by wave after wave of applications from enormous corporations who do not care for the planet or for us, only for their profit margin. Local people, with limited resources, are trying to defend the countryside but are being worn down by this onslaught. Please, please represent us and the future of our countryside, wildlife and way of life by rejecting this proposal.

Yours faithfully

Bev Morris