

**From:** Justine Buckley [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 05 March 2023 14:35  
**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

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing with my objection to the application from Low Carbon - 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 Justine Buckley, and I live at [REDACTED]

The reasons for my objection are as follows:

1. First, 'farm' is a gross misnomer, as this application will effectively ruin farmland that is currently some of the highest quality land in the UK. This is land that's needed to grow food - and as the current shortages of produce in supermarkets have vividly demonstrated, this must be our focus more than ever.

Low Carbon suggests 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.

This is productive farmland which should be used for farming. It's 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.

And once this land is gone, it is gone. A 40-year plan - when the land will be 'returned' - 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 Huddleston 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.

2. In practical terms, everyone who actually uses the roads in the areas surrounding this application area knows just how difficult it can be to pass other cars: the road between Manuden and Clavering is typical, a small country road, where it can be difficult for two cars to pass, let alone larger vehicles. Cars currently need to stop in order to allow tractors to pass. It is completely unsuitable for articulated lorries or large HGVs.

Low Carbon estimates that there will be a total of 922 vehicle movements during construction. This includes a total of around 749 deliveries by 15.4 metre articulated vehicles and of 59 deliveries by 10-metre-long rigid HGVs. A substation measuring up to five metres long and three metres wide will be delivered to site individually by 15.4 metre artic vehicle.

And what particularly worries me is that all vehicles will pass directly in front of the primary school in Clavering – we must be concerned about the safety of primary school children. Furthermore, an access route will also pass directly in front of a secondary school – Joyce Franklin Academy - raising concerns about the safety of secondary school children, too.

This concern alone must be a powerful argument against this application.

3. The exponential speed of change in green technology means that even within a few years, the kind of solar development proposed by Low Carbon will be surpassed by technology that doesn't scar our countryside or use of it.

Furthermore, Low Carbon have not considered another low-impact site, ie roof tops.

The Building Research Establishment announced in 2016 there were around half a million acres of rooftops facing in the right direction for solar panels. Why haven't these been considered? It is no longer credible to argue that solar panels on industrial roofs can't be used because they are too heavy.

Solar panels thinner than a pencil have now been invented and which will revolutionise renewable energy.

These ultra-thin, lightweight panels are made by Singapore-based company Maxeon Solar Technologies, and are predicted to take over the European market very soon.

Why not place solar panels on the rooftops of the huge terminal buildings owned by Stansted airport?

In fact that's just what Stansted airport is planning - because they have just applied for planning permission to put solar panels on their own land (see UTT/21/2664/SCO).

There are myriad other reasons for objecting, including this being an industrial development. National policy includes an environmental objective - to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment. I do not see how this proposed development meets any of these criteria.

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Furthermore, the proposed development is not compatible with Uttlesford's own policy, which states the countryside will be protected for its own sake.

Yours  
Justine Buckley