

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 March 2023 19:46
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 Stephen Skinner and I live at [REDACTED]

(I have family connections with the Pelhams.)

The reasons for my objection are as follows:

- 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.
- Low Carbon defines visual amenity as the “Overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area.”
- I often cycle 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 along it is a peaceful and solitary experience in the middle of the countryside.
- 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.
- 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?
- Clearly Stansted airport don't think that there is a problem with this because they have just applied for planning permission to put solar panels on their own land (see UTT/21/2664/SCO)
- 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
- 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 says that it has listened to all views expressed by local people during the pre-application consultation and has made appropriate changes to the proposed development to address and mitigate concerns raised where possible. This is not true.
- Low Carbon received 133 comments on its proposal on its consultation website. Only 7 of those comments supported the development. Therefore 95% of the people responding were against the development. In addition Low Carbon received 69 emails objecting to its proposal.