

From: Chris Ryan [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 March 2023 21:00
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 wish to object to the above applications.

I live at [REDACTED] which is located to the East of the site for the proposed solar farm. My property will not be directly affected by the proposed development although the proposed route for bringing panels and other equipment to site will be right against the northern perimeter of my property.

For the past 35 years I have walked the area between my property and the Crump, using Blakings Lane, which is a uniquely attractive and atmospheric route with extensive views across a lovely rural landscape visible through the screen of trees that lines the ancient path. The view will be destroyed by the proposed development.

I have walked from the Crump on to Brick End and then across the footpaths that head south and south east towards the Manuden to East End Road. To the west of those footpaths one has a clear views of three quite beautiful, wood-lined meadows. One of those would be covered in panels and the other two will be surrounded by them.

This is a picture I have taken from the footpath showing the one that would be covered:



It is screened on its southern boundary (to the left of my picture) by trees and bushes. In this picture, taken in November 2021 in the late afternoon, it can be seen that the field is largely in shade due to the sun's low trajectory across the sky at that time of the year. Panels in this field will be shaded. The inevitable result is that the trees and bushes will be removed or severely cut back.

The next picture shows the screen pictured from further south, along the footpath towards the Manuden to East End road.



The meadows have a tranquil beauty resulting from their location and un-managed vegetation. The footpaths across the adjacent farm land are well walked – one can see that from the ground compaction and flattened vegetation caused by human passage. But one can also see, as you walk, the delicate footprint of the fallow deer that I have seen moving across the area on many occasions over the years. Just in the last few weeks I have seen them on two sides of Battles Wood, just on the Eastern boundary of the proposed development, and across the fields towards the Manuden to East End road.

I have also seen hares, minkjak deer and foxes. The open fields to the North of the Manuden to East End road seems to be a particularly popular area for the hares – a magical sight when performing their Spring rituals. There is evidence, too, that badgers frequent the area.

If you drive at night along the road between Manuden and East End your car headlights will frequently pick up the reflection from the eyes of those creatures in the fields on either side of the road. Most of that area will be covered in panels and movement across the field will be blocked by fencing.

Last year I saw a barn owl, near the end of an October day, hunting across the fields close to Battles Wood. And kestrels, buzzards and kite are ever present. In winter I have seen visiting field fare feeding on the fields. In the past, but not recently, I have seen flocks of lapwings.

It is no exaggeration to say that the area which the solar farm will destroy is an unplanned nature reserve. It survives despite the aggressively modern farming methods that are used in the area, including copious use of chemicals. As a reserve, therefore, it is already a vulnerable one. It will be destroyed by the fencing and lighting that will surround the proposed development, just as the deep shade created by the panels themselves will destroy the ground vegetation that might otherwise sustain the smaller creatures that the birds hunt for food.

I acknowledge that the preservation of this lovely area must be weighed in the balance against arguments in favour of a solar farm. Others are better able than me to assess the strength of those arguments. But I cannot imagine that a solar farm in this area brings with it such advantages as to outweigh the importance of saving this area for agriculture (does this country have better farming conditions than here?) and for nature.

I would also point out the potential inconsistency in planning policy if the development is allowed to proceed. A very few years ago farm buildings at the back of Battles Hall were converted into homes – a change of use from commercial to domestic. A change that would have given those buying the

homes a legitimate expectation that the rural location where they were situated would remain rural. Deciding now to allow a change of use from agriculture to commercial/industrial for a large tract of land immediately adjacent to those properties will dash those expectations and evidence an inability on the planning authority's part to maintain a consistent approach to land management in this area.

Yours faithfully

Christopher Ryan

