



19th March 2023

By email to:

section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk
The Planning Inspectorate,
Major Casework Team,
Room 3J Kite Wing,
Temple Quay House,
2 The Square,
Bristol,
BS1 6PN

Dear Sir/Madam

**OBJECTION to Pelham Spring Solar Farm
Application No. S62A/2022/0011: Land East of Pelham Substation, Maggots
End**

I am a resident of Furneux Pelham and have lived in the village all my life, which is 60 years. I know the area intimately and feel well qualified to comment on the above application. I will highlight sufficient transport and highway grounds for me to consider that this application should be refused as it will have a hugely detrimental impact on many aspects of our local rural life, which includes our safety along the proposed access routes for the development.

1. Safety of Proposed Access

The visibility splay to the south at the proposed construction access on Manuden Road has been incorrectly drawn on the plan that has been submitted as it is not drawn to the edge of the carriageway. The actual visibility splay will encroach more than is shown on the verge.

If the correct visibility splay is to be achieved, it will require the bank on either side of the entrance to be lowered and a significant number of trees and roadside vegetation will need to be removed. This will result in an unwelcome and drastic change in the character of this section of the lane. Also, this tree removal is not mentioned in the CTMP.

2. Safety of Operational Access

The proposed operational access is currently used as an agricultural access onto Manuden Road which has very fast traffic travelling along the road between Manuden and Clavering. The visibility splay for this access may just about be OK

for occasional tractors and trailers but absolutely is not for the many HGVs that could be entering and leaving the site without the removal of significant amounts of vegetation. As there is so little current use of this access, there are no recorded personal injuries recorded.

The road is very narrow here and there is no information in the CTMP to confirm that this entrance can be used without significant risk to highway users.

3. Underestimate of HGV Trip Generation

The CTMP estimates that 100 HGV deliveries would be required for construction of the site access and 3.0km of road. An independent consultant has calculated that the actual figure for construction of the tracks is more like 500 HGV deliveries, a five-fold increase. The CTMP does not provide accurate calculations for the number of HGVs that will be needed for the removal of the all the topsoil from the site as well.

4. Proposed Access Routes

The original proposed access route through Manuden has been questioned. The Applicant must therefore have accepted that this route is just too dangerous for local residents to have the construction traffic using the carriageway as well.

The revised CTMP states that the second alternative access route to the site is through Clavering, and passes the Primary School and the Village Hall, which have vulnerable users on the footpaths and in their cars. There has been no assessment of the potential impact of proposed HGVs on safety of these users.

This route also passes through Newport, the junction with the B1383 is already seriously dangerous as it has narrow footpaths, a tight turn and many, many school children and families using the route, particularly at the start and finish of the school day. It is already difficult for a HGV lorry to turn at this junction if there is another car waiting from the Clavering Road. There has been no assessment of how this junction can be made safe for existing road users. Residents of Newport have already approached Essex County Council to express their concerns over their safety, even before this application is considered.

A second construction route is proposed via the B1038 through Hare Street, Great Hornead and Brent Pelham. There are some serious constraints along this route and none have been assessed by the Applicant. There are areas where the road is very narrow with steep embankments on either side. 2 cars can only pass if travelling slowly, this means passing one HGV in a car will be tricky, never mind the huge number that are proposed. Some of these areas have no footways so pedestrians navigating this road are at a very high risk.

One section is on a steep gradient so the stopping distance for HGVs is dangerously long if there is a pedestrian or car in the way, so the risk of accident is high.

5. Failure to consider Cumulative Highways Impact

Although the Planning Inspectorate has raised the issue of cumulative impact, the Applicant has not made adequate provision in the CTMP for the other three major solar planning applications that have been proposed in the vicinity of the Pelham Substation. They do, however, acknowledge that the roads are already compromised on safety grounds. They suggest using a layby on the road between Newport and Wicken Bonhunt, but there is insufficient information to suggest how they will be managed and how local road users will be kept safe. Never mind if there are HGVs for more than one solar development.

No assessment has been made of the cumulative impact of the various proposed schemes in the local area. One scheme will have a serious impact on the local road users and their environment. To have four schemes up and running would lead to complete gridlock on the roads serving on the local villages and chaos for the residents.

Conclusion

All the points raised above illustrate how the proposed solar farm will have a huge and very significant detrimental impact on both the local communities and the road users in the area. For this reason alone, I request that the Planning Inspectorate refuses this planning application.

In Addition

I would also like to request permission to speak at the public hearing with The Planning Inspectorate for this planning application, whenever that will be held. Please can you confirm that this is acceptable.

Yours sincerely

Sara Yarrow