

Comments for Planning Application 22/501335/FULL

Application Summary

Application Number: 22/501335/FULL

Address: Land North Of Little Cheveney Farm Sheephurst Lane Marden Kent

Proposal: Installation of a renewable energy led generating station comprising of ground-mounted solar arrays, associated electricity generation infrastructure and other ancillary equipment comprising of storage containers, access tracks, fencing, gates and CCTV together with the creation of woodland and biodiversity enhancements.

Case Officer: Marion Geary

Customer Details

Name: Mrs Alice Wright

Address: 7 Little Sheephurst Cottages, Sheephurst Lane, Marden Tonbridge, Kent TN12 9NZ

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I object to the proposal of Little Cheveney Solar farm on several grounds. Our neighbor is on the direct border of the Solar Farm plan and our natural pond will also be bordered by the HV Compound containing 132/33kV Transformer. Not only this but our 2 cottages did not even appear of Statkraft's map of the Solar farm as if our being was non-existent. We have already experienced intrusive microphones and nature cameras on our border with no warning or agreement. Most neighbors we have spoken to were not even notified of these plans last year when they began the process which is highly indecent and deceitful of Statkraft and the current farmer of the land. We live in this location for the open country, peace, and tranquility. My in-laws have lived here for 45 years in open farmland for it to be destroyed by industrial grade traffic and light pollution. We are right in the center of this proposed Solar Farm. Should these Solar panels be right next to our garden hedge's?

The transfer and storage of Solar energy that will occur right on our properties can give off radiation into the area and water. Currently there is a system of ponds and ditches in the area to prevent flooding of our properties and other residents on Sheephurst Lane. The increase of trees planned to be planted to hide the Solar panels along the ditches that are already never maintained by the farmer will only cause the ponds to overflow and flood our properties. One of the ponds is personally owned by us which we have fish in that will be endangered and are likely to die as a result. The Lithium-ion battery storage also presents a HUGE fire risk which would spread quickly damaging the land and our properties. The peace and quiet will be drowned out by large noisy fans that are used to provide cooling of inverters.

There are many deer around us that will now be run off into the roads, causing them to die through car accidents as our speed limit is 50 mph on most of the lane. Our view which is currently open

landscape right through to Maidstone is going to be extremely visually harmed and industrialised by row and rows of Solar panels. There is a high possibility that of toxic chemicals leaching out of the panels into our land. This tells me Solar Panels are not in any way environmentally friendly. The boundary of our property is going to be invaded with high security fencing and intrusive CCTV cameras.

The National Planning Policy Framework expects local authorities to protect and enhance valued landscapes and biodiversity sites, recognising the character, beauty, and heritage. They are also expected to place great importance on versatile agricultural land and food production with the current circumstances in the UK and a government aim to be self-sufficient. The grounds of Little Cheveney Farm are not of low grade agricultural ground coming in around 2a - 3 and therefore have a decent yield of crop added into food production each year that these plans will diminish completely. I thought our farmers that farm around 72% of UK land are supposed to be custodians of conservation, food alleviation and climate change mitigation but apparently not they have higher interest in the income potentials of a Solar Farm.

The local authority should be encouraging re-use of brownfield land instead of this wide area of greenfield land at Little Cheveney Farm. This does not comply with the frameworks objective to have effective use of land across the UK. We need our best land to be productive, 60% of our food is imported. Is this environmentally sustainable?

There are already 2 Solar farms and preparations for a substation (opposite) within a 5 mile radius of Little Cheveney Farm. The cumulative effect of these developments intensifies the harm caused to the area. Not only that but clustering of developments around a substation has disastrous consequences for the landscape, local amenity, and local wildlife. There will be further harm to character of public rights of way, having had various footpaths removed or relocated for developments in Marden and Collier Street in the last 5 years. Developers are simply looking for the cheapest solutions and do not consider the range of feasible options there are.

There have also been a few planning developments approved through Maidstone Borough Council on our local homes in the last 5 years (ours being one of them) which have been insistent on the biodiversity and heritage of the area having clauses of planning that are non-optional to protect bees with wildflower, birds with extra bird boxes and bats with bat boxes, yet we are considering a vast solar farm right next door. Hypocritical do you not think?

To top all these aspects off Solar Farms are MASSIVELY inefficient in comparison to other renewable energy. A 140-acre Solar Farm is said to be capable of supplying electricity to about 9,000 homes yet one wind turbine in the North sea can power 16,000 homes. In terms of efficiency i.e. the amount of power exported to the grid, Solar's rating is between 11 and 15% whereas for off-shore wind the figure is 50+%. On one day alone last year it was reported that 78% of the UK's Electricity came from off-shore wind. So why ravage our farmland?

It is highly un-likely that the land would return to agriculture in 40 years' time, there are better alternatives. I cannot help but feel our home as we know it will be shattered by this solar farm and there is a strong negative development on our health that we are to expect along with depreciation on our property value!