

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 Sue Eltringham

Address: 5 Haffenden Close, Marden, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 9TD

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Application No 22/501335/FULL

Land North of Little Cheveney Farm - Sheephurst Lane, Marden

Adverse ecological and heritage impact: It is reportedly critical that solar farm installations should not be near valued landscape or historic buildings (vi, vii). Equally, the proposals should not "fundamentally alter the landscape in a contrived way to seek to accommodate the solar panels...

Screening development from view does not negate harm to the intrinsic qualities of the landscape or make otherwise harmful development acceptable." (The Planning Inspectorate comments rejecting Great Pagehurst Farm Solar farm Ref 13/1456) (viii). In the area of Little Cheveney at the centre of the proposal, there are at least four listed properties of historical significance that would directly overlook the proposed solar farm. Their views will be blighted by the 2.4m perimeter fence, 5m CCTV cameras and solar arrays.

I can not understand how the development will have a "net gain" on biodiversity? The site encloses on three sides an ancient woodland home to countless native species including owls, adders and migrating nightingales. Nearby pondlife is home to great crested newts, water voles and wildfowl. There are migrating birds such as swallows and swifts plus a great number of bats. Wildlife will experience significant displacement, further compounded by the removal of interconnecting wildlife corridors. The land is also already classified as at severe risk of flooding & this proposal is likely to have further impact on this

Loss of Prime Agricultural Land

The Government Food Strategy makes it clear we have to "deliver a sustainable, nature positive, affordable food system..." on domestic land (i). We need to be food secure and self-sufficient. Our agricultural land is now more precious than ever given the current geopolitical climate and war in

Ukraine. It is good quality productive land grade 2 and 3a (best and most versatile) and the remaining half is grade 3b (moderate good). It is not "not relatively low grade" as claimed by Statkraft. It has been farmed since the 16th century and has huge historical agricultural significance. Solar farms "should be limited to brownfield land and poorer quality unproductive land" (ii), of which Kent has plenty of alternatives.

With the above points to consider we strongly oppose these plans.