

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: Mr Clinton Hemmant

Address: Bulimba, Stanley Road, Marden, Kent TN12 9EL

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: Dear Maidstone Borough Council Planning Officers,

I oppose this development for two reasons:

1) The intentional destruction of the Countryside:

Visual appearance:

Solar panels are as reflective as mirrored windows - when houses are considered for planning permission fenestration glare, number of windows, and where they are positioned are considered in detail - is this different for a huge industrial site with thousands of such reflective surfaces?

Loss of trees or other important landscape features:

Why are existing brownfield sites eg failed and underused industrial complexes not considered for industrial use - why is new countryside being considered? Industrial sites such as this are better suited to being closer to bigger cities like Maidstone - both operationally and for consumption of the power being generated in this case. The pylons and overhead wires will need upgrading for power transmission - being far from other similar industrial sites it will mean impacting the countryside for miles around the site also.

There is the potential for further loss of countryside to projects which have no long term future - resulting in the countryside being turned into brownfield industrial sites. Once sites such as these are built on they are lost to industrialisation forever - it may not be possible to use the site for

anything when the solar farm is gone in 50 years time - future generations will be left with a permanently altered and scared landscape.

Rights of way would be tunneled - altering the enjoyment of the views and use of the path

Wildlife would be adversely affected by the glare and loss of habitat - a full impact assessment needs to be done using data from other comparable large scale solar sites.

The application Proposal is misleading: it starts by describing an industrial complex, but then states "... together with the creation of woodland and biodiversity enhancements" - this is blatantly disingenuous - the proposal is clearly not to create wildlife enhancements. Creating an industrial complex of this size will never enhance biodiversity - this will site will undoubtedly have a devastating effect on biodiversity - there are no enhancements the developer could offer to make up for that.

2) The risk of situating this kind of heavy industry in the Countryside:

Flooding: turning 75 hectares of farmland into a concreted (even partially) industrial site will undoubtedly alter the water table for miles around - creating and changing flood risks in Marden and for surrounding houses and farms. A comprehensive and impartial government agency risk assesment needs to be undertaken to fully understand the impact of such a large amount of concreting in open countryside.

Chemical Pollution:

The use of chemicals to maintain the solar panels eg weedkillers to control weed growth, and cleaning chemicals for the panels will contaminate the site and surrounding waterways. The heavy metals and chemical in the batteries used in the electricity generation infrastructure to store the electricity generated are one accident away from a disasterous environmental and financial pollution incident.

Traffic the proposal would generate and effects on highway safety:

The roads around Marden are village roads - they are not suitable for heavy industry. The extra traffic that building and then maintaining a site of this size will alter the rural nature of the surrounding roads and make them far more dangerous. Many roads are not wide enough or in a sufficient state of repair and are therefore not suitable for the extra requirements of large vehicles.

In Conclusion:

Solar power is undoubtedly a good idea in principle, but please consider the environment where this heavy industry is located.

I therefore object to this planning application, and recommend it be refused.

Regards

Mr Clinton Hemmant