

EcoPower Suffolk Solar farm proposal for Gislingham and Mellis

Having consulted with both the residents of Gislingham and my fellow Parish Councillors I would like to take this opportunity to tender our strongest objections to the proposed Mellis / Gislingham Solar Farm and the suggested area for storage facilities that will be required in addition.

I have broken our objection down into two categories , Concerns and Questions .

i) QUESTIONS

The propose area for this massive solar farm is bigger than both Mellis and Gislingham and will be too close to houses – What plans in in effect to ensure that there will be no impact on residents immediate habitat by which we mean :

Mental Health as presently this is causing much concern amongst our residents many of whom are elderly and have either lived in this area for many years or moved to Suffolk for a relaxed life in the country

We fully understand the need to reduce the electricity transmission network in order to boost energy security and long term energy security and affordability and as a nation to enable us to be more self sufficient , however the solar farm plan seeks to maximise profit at the expense of the very communities it advises that it will helm.

The prosed site is too large and needs to be made much smaller and further away from residences .

What measures have been put in place to protect the habitat of our local wildlife some of which are protected species such as newts , Roe Deer and birds of prey such as Buzzards and Rd Kites / Hawks ?

We have one bridleway in Gislingham and the proposed solar panels are too close to this and sun reflections from these panels will almost certainly cause considerable upset and panic to and horses and could endanger both horse and rider causing a strong potential for a horse bolting and possibly being a danger to traffic and road safety .

Could the solar panels not be pushed back behind the bridleway by at least 15 metres

How high will the hedgerows to obscure these solar panels be as those observed in Lincolnshire for example are totally inadequate .

The solar panels in general need to be pushed back by at least 10 to 15 metres to ensure the absolute minimum impact on residential housing as these are to close currently to the proposed Burgate and Mellis Road

What plans are in place to mitigate the effect of haulage traffic on minor roads eg Burgate road as in many cases our roads are single track .

Will there be relief roads ? If so where will they be .

Traffic will appear to have to pass through Mellis hat about the danger to the local school and pupils ?

What steps are being taken to ensure that this solar farm is well away from the railway and low railway bridges

Will there be wild flower rich margins

Under the solar panels can green hay be used with seed heads as these will benefit the grass under the panels Biodiversity for wildlife – specifically the grey partridge

Can some of the proposed panels go onto existing farm buildings as this would only reduce the area required for the solar farm but also provide an additional source of energy to farmers / landowners
Concerns

Overall the building of this solar farm and storage facilities will have a devastating effect on our precious landscape and cause widespread environmental damage .

Light and noise pollution both during and after construction will be both unwelcome and a distraction to residents and wildlife .

We do not believe that the numerous planning policies do not go far enough to protect our countryside and we feel that greater community engagement must be considered .

It does seem that initial works may have already commenced and yet planning permission has not yet been granted as we are still very much in a consultation window .

It does appear that this solar farm when added to others 9 that are or will be close by)n will potentially create the largest overall solar farm in Europe and result in the largest massacre of our wonderful landscape .

It would seem that as the solar r farm project and the Norwich – Tilbury projects rush headlong into their respective 2020 unrealistic targets there is the potential for both projects to be operating in a very close proximity for a number of years . We are concerned about the number of haulage lorries that will be required and operating to bring goods o the various site gain utilising roads that in many cases are single track eg Burgate road ,

Food security is also an issue of concern as back in 2022 the government had had a food strategy plan yet it appears that this has now gone and been replaced by a mammoth building plan .

What will happen to our local agriculture and why are you not using Brownfield sites or land that is either contaminated or not fit for agricultural use and the land hat you have proposed for this solar farm is still good agricultural land although we do understand that if a farmer only has a financial yield of say £ 200 per acre and developers offer substantially more for him not to fam it but allow it to be developed then it is almost certainly an easy decision to make for us / residents agriculture and our landscape is paramount

We believe that Sizewell for example will produce up to 100 times as much power as a solar plant . The UK has been estimated that to have over a third of Europe's total offshore wind resource which is the equivalent of three times the electricity needs of this nation at current rates of electricity consumption 9 previous figures have indicated that peak winter demand was 59.30 GW which in summer reduces to 45GW so why do we need solar projects ?

Solar farms will destroy our agriculture and its related jobs ,skills and livelihoods and create very few new skilled jobs or replace livelihoods that will have been lost . Most of the equipment will be coming from overseas eg China and probably non local labour used in its construction , this will result n a reduction of employment in an area that currently has relatively low employment opportunities

Tourism is another area that will be dramatically effected , families come to this area to spend weekends / weeks to come to the country , enjoy country walks etc ..looking at a massive solar farm will not be high on people's holiday wish list

There is no economic benefit and no obvious financial incentive for residents as nothing will make up for the dramatic reduction that is anticipated in property values for the area – Would you like to live in the immediate proximity of huge Pylons or a massive solar farm/

The carbon footprint of these installations , transport and substations and particularly the solar panels .

We all agree that electricity in the UK should be greener but it will not bbe if more carbon gases are emitted elsewhere than are saved in the UK

A 140 acre solar park is supposed to be capable of producing sufficient electricity to support 900 homes yet one North Sea wind turbine has the capacity to power 16,000 homes so a Solar farm makes no economical sense to anybody other than a developer

In terms of electricity banking i.e. the amount of electricity exported to the grid - solar rates at between 10% and 15% whereas offshore rates at 50% so not go offshore makes no economic sense at all

WHERE IS THE BENEFIT FOR RESIDENTS

FINANCIAL GAIN ---NONE

CHEAP ELECTRICITY-- NONE

LOSS OF LANDSCAPE -YES

LOSS OF GRAZING LAND – YES

LOSS OF AGRICULTURAL FARM LAND – YES

LOSS OF WILDLIFE HABITAT- YES

REDUCTION IN HOUSE PRICES – YES

ROAD CONGESTION – YES

THIS SEEMS TO BE RATHER A ONE WAY STREET ---THE WINNERS :

DEVELOPERS

FARMERS WHO ARE GETTING A GOOD GUARANTEED PRICE FOR LAND THAT PERHAPS FOR AGRICULTURAL FARMING MAY NOT THAT PROFITABLE – **EASY MONEY FOR NO WORK**

RESIDENTS GAIN NOTHING

I HAVE TO REPORT BACK TO OUR RESIDENTS AND QUITE FRANKLY NOTHING THAT I HAVE HEARD OR READ CAN BE PRESENTED AS A POSITIVE AND CONSEQUENTLY WE WILL CONTINUE TO OBJECT TO THESE PROPOSALS .