

From: planningcomments@staffs Moorlands.gov.uk
To: [Planning Comments \(SMDC\)](#)
Subject: Comment Received from Public Access
Date: 16 February 2024 17:02:17

Application Reference No. : SMD/2023/0523

Site Address: Land At Rownall Farm Rownall Road Wetley Rocks Staffordshire ST9 0BT

Comments by: D Bourne

From:

Littlewood Farm
Rownall Road
Rownall
Cheddleton

ST13 7LB

Phone:

Email:

Submission: Objection

Comments: To SMDC Councillors and Officers, as protectorates of your constituency, environment & conservation - And to the land owners, as custodians of the green belt, I respectfully ask that the voices of your electorate and of your neighbours are listened to. In response those already expressed opinions as to why this application is supportable, I put forward the following facts for consideration.

1 THE NEED FOR ELECTRIC, GREEN ENGERY & NET ZERO EMMISSIONS

I'm sure that no one disagrees with the country's need for Green Energy. However the drive to create green energy should never be at the cost of building over Green Belt, the fragility of the UK's self sufficiency to grow crops, detrimental alterations to the visual character of precious open countryside and heritage, adverse effects on eco systems, wildlife habitat, public rights of way, increased traffic & noise, intrusive floodlighting and ugly fencing, the welfare of the community, downgrading of the importance of nearby historical homes and the ruination of established rural enterprises who's livelihood is dependant on tourism.

There can be no doubt that this colossal proposal is at odds with the purpose of Green Belt, the aforementioned priciples and would introduce a discordant element to the historic landscape of this location.

In addition, the carbon emmissions from a development of this size would pump out more carbon into the atmospere over its lifetime than it actually saved, making a mockery of net zero emissions.

The mining and transport involved alone would leave a massive carbon footprint and up to 70% of the Solar Panels are manufactured in coal loving China.

2. LOCATION -

The proposal is conveniently next to a sub station, but this should not be a deciding factor, it only makes it cheaper for the developer to reap more profit.

To the contrary, clustering of developments around sub stations has a cumulative effect which just intensifies the harm caused.

There are over 300 alternative sub stations in the UK, any one of which could be in a better suited location for connection to brownfield, industrial and landfill sites.

Solar farms are suited to flat land and more efficient sunnier southern geographical locations, neither of which applies to the application.

3 CRIME IMPACT -

Ref Staffordshire Police report (15/12/23) states evidence that Solar Farms attract organised criminal gangs who will travel miles to steal copper cables and carry out hostile reconnaissance missions, especially in rural areas. It is a bad idea to invite crime into an otherwise obscure community.

4 WILDLIFE/BIODIVERSITY & CONTAMINATION -

Grazing sheep amongst panels behind massive fences is a token gesture. How does a farmer monitor a flock in a maze of glass? Transitory animals would have their traditional routes blocked and deer will often get diverted onto roads. Bird and bat deaths are common as they mistake glass for water. Panel cleaning materials can contaminate soil as can leaching chemicals from batteries. There is concern also for electromagnetic radiation emitting from industrial equipment which can affect the health of animal and nearby residents. There is no evidence that the hazardous waste could be safely disposed of upon decommission.

5 EFFICIENCY OF SOLAR FARMS & ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS -

Solar farms are not environmentally friendly and by comparison to offshore wind farms, they are hugely inefficient. To put things into perspective, the energy produced by a solar farm of this size, 49.99MW (.01 less than requiring consent by the Secretary of State) is equivalent to just ONE OFFSHORE WIND TURBINE. In terms of efficiency rating, solar power exported is around 15%, the offshore wind figure is 50%. Turbines located in the North Sea do not impact on the environment and have the lowest carbon footprint of all energy types. A single ONE could avoid all this harm!

6 IMPEDEMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES -

Due to the increased HGV traffic on single track lanes, especially during the construction period, congestion may affect emergency medical and fire services, therefore putting local residents in danger.

7 ASSOCIATED PLANNING RELATING TO THIS PROJECT -

It has become evident that several separate applications for batteries/inverters and associated infrastructure, which are now seen as obviously integral to this project, have already been quietly and swiftly passed. One could consider this to be indicative of a foregone conclusion. If so it would set a precedent for further expansions and essentially a "free for all" for any future development in equally inappropriate locations.

TO CONCLUDE -

As a dweller of this vicinity for 25yrs and one of many who has gone to great lengths and expense to ensure that their historic property remains in keeping with the area of natural beauty and heritage, it is grieving to see the creeping industrialisation into the beautiful rural hamlet of Rownall and its surrounding areas.

The number of applications for solar farms has soared nationally - in part because of the healthy rents developers pay landowners. The developers (in this case a German owned company) have no regard for the local landscapes or the impact on residents, but only promote the cheapest solutions without considering a range of feasible options.

There are far better alternatives and I cannot see any special circumstance why this application could be considered viable.

To quote the RT Hon Robert Jenrick MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government :
- "The National Planning Policy Framework expects local authorities to protect and enhance valued landscapes and recognise the character and beauty of the countryside"

Yours sincerely

Do you really need to print out this Email? Be green - keep it on the screen.

This email is intended for the addressee(s) only and may contain sensitive, privileged or confidential information that could be protectively marked. If you are not the addressee please do not use the information in any way. If you have received this email in error please notify the sender immediately and delete it from your system. Thank you.

The Council may be required to disclose this email or any responses to it under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The way in which we handle personal information is set out in our privacy notice and is available at <https://www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/YourData>
